



Campus Compact for New Hampshire



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**Date: November 19, 2008  
PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Hundreds of educators and business leaders engage in talks to better prepare today's students for New Hampshire's workforce**

**CONCORD** – By 2012, 88% of New Hampshire's fastest growing jobs will require a college degree. Educators and business leaders want to ensure that New Hampshire's students are graduating high school prepared for college and career. The State Scholars Initiative does just that. *New Hampshire Scholars* is part of a national program that brings business leaders into the classroom to motivate students to complete a more rigorous course of study in high school.

In an effort to strengthen the education and business partnerships across the state, the NH College & University Council hosted a breakfast event on November 18, 2008 at the Grappone Conference Center in Concord, New Hampshire. Two-hundred (200) educators and business leaders from K-12, Higher Ed and the community discussed the importance of collaboration to better prepare tomorrow's workforce.

“Collaboration between a school and the business community demonstrates an increased support system for students. When students hear local business professionals talk about the importance of gaining a high skill set, developing interview skills and understanding how to handle oneself outside of school, it really hits home,” says Tom Raffio, President & CEO of Northeast Delta Dental and State Board of Education member. “When local business people explain to them that 21st century skills are critical, students listen.”

Through the New Hampshire Scholars program, school districts not only develop educational plans and encourage rigorous coursework for their students, but they invite the business community to provide classroom presentations and activities to reinforce the importance of challenging coursework.

With growing momentum statewide, already twelve school districts actively participate and their students are gaining valuable 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as critical thinking and problem solving, not only through rigorous courses but also via job shadowing, job site tours, and business mentorships. As Tom Raffio points out “while there is a need for high-level skills in science, math and the humanities, employers

today put an emphasis on communication skills, the ability to work in teams and the desire to be a leader.”

In today’s struggling market, it is as important for students to understand the skills needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. Trish Regan, renowned CNBC Anchor/Correspondent, and New Hampshire native, energized the audience with her opening remarks. “We now live in a knowledge-based economy; it is critical for today’s students to not only attain high-level skills in high school, but to understand the changing climate,” says Trish Regan. “It’s important for students to be aware of topics such as financial literacy as we compete in the growing and competitive workforce.”

New Hampshire Scholars partners with key stakeholders across the state. Organizations such as the Workforce Opportunity Council, part of NH Works, provide job training for the current workforce. New Hampshire Scholars on the other hand focuses on preparing today’s students/tomorrow’s workforce with the incentives and motivation to challenge themselves beginning in middle school.

“Even in the competitive college admission environment the truth is too many students are not prepared for the academic challenges they encounter at the college or university level. A consistent message from the business community that conveys to all students the importance of challenging themselves academically will go a long way to ensure their future success,” says Dr. Mark Huddleston, President of the University of New Hampshire.

School districts and business leaders interested in participating in New Hampshire Scholars should visit [www.NHscholars.org](http://www.NHscholars.org) or call (603) 225-4199.

*The NHCUC was founded in 1966 and is dedicated to the advancement of public and private higher education throughout New Hampshire. Through collaborative efforts between its 17 member colleges and universities, the consortium enhances educational opportunities for nearly 70,000 students currently attending member institutions. State Scholars was established in New Hampshire in January 2007 as the 25<sup>th</sup> state in the U.S. to join the State Scholars Network.*

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