

# NH Scholars Scoop

College Ready, Work Ready, Ready for Life

December 2007

Volume 3

## NH Scholars Participates in New England Summit

Nearly 400 leaders of education and government, along with regional and national policy experts, convened on November 30, 2007 for this important day-long event focused on expanding college and career readiness in New England. Presented by the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) as part of their College Ready New England campaign, this summit addressed every college access and college & career readiness objective that New Hampshire Scholars stands for. Our state was well represented with thirty-six (36) attendees including key members from the Department of Education, the University System, the NH College & University Council, state legislators and several school-level counselors.

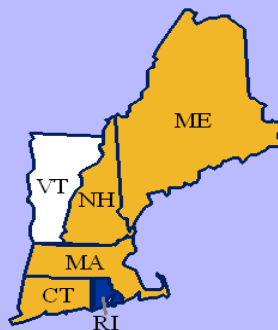
The one component missing from the discussion was business leaders. Expert speakers talked about what states and schools could be doing to better prepare their students for college and careers, but the one voice not heard was business leaders – the experts soon to hire these students. To best prepare our students, we need support from all three areas: school systems, business communities and family.



## What Are Other States Doing?

We know that a rigorous curriculum better prepares students. Some experts argue that students should not have a choice between a rigorous core curriculum and one that simply serves basic requirements to graduate. It's been said that within the next decade, the demanding workforce will require students to have high-level skills in math, science and English among others. We can all agree that a rigorous core course of studies will best prepare students for college and work. Why then, do we continue this culture of making this rigorous curriculum optional? Why should only students who understand *and* are motivated to enroll in this type of curriculum, be privy to it? Why not make a **college- & career-ready core curriculum** mandatory for all students?

### Where do the New England States Stand?



- **Connecticut** reports that it is planning to align its content standards with college- and career-ready expectations.
- **Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire** are in the process of aligning their standards.
- **Rhode Island's** college- and career ready standards are well aligned with ADP benchmarks

- Nine (9) states have now made this curriculum the default option.
- Six (6) other states have made the core mandatory for their students.
- Here in New England, Massachusetts is considering a voluntary core curriculum.

This debate is for legislation in each state. In the meantime, by spreading the word through *New Hampshire Scholars* in our own state, we can change the culture without any legislative mandate. Three words can help school districts throughout New Hampshire increase the number of students taking a rigorous college- and career-ready core curriculum: ***awareness, encouragement and reinforcement.***

### **Data Collection Update**

Thank you for providing your school data in such a timely manner this fall. WICHE was very pleased that we provided data from four of the six pilot schools. We are hopeful to include all six pilot schools in the next round of data.

Data from this semester is due to WICHE on **February 22, 2008**. WICHE was convinced to push back an earlier request since our terms do not end until the end of January for most schools. May I suggest beginning to compile any data you can now, so that when grades are finalized, the upload is less time consuming for you. Please contact Scott Power, [spower@nhcuc.org](mailto:spower@nhcuc.org) or Cyndy Carrier, [cyndy@seresc.org](mailto:cyndy@seresc.org) with any questions when preparing this next round. Thank you for your efforts!

### **School Spotlight**

Sharing best practices and ideas amongst ourselves will enable us to provide the best possible programs at our individual school districts. Here is a recent highlight.

***Winnisquam Regional High School: The New Hampshire National Guard*** sponsored December's NH Scholars activity. Students were provided breakfast while they had the opportunity to choose at least three business leaders to participate in an informational interview. These *NH Scholars* prepared first by thinking about some key questions to learn more about a particular career field. Students were encouraged to inquire about topics such as: education and skills required, relative courses and proficiencies needed to excel in the field and the daily responsibilities of the position. At the conclusion, students had the opportunity to establish a mentor with these business partners for future dialogue in their chosen field of study.



This type of monthly activity not only creates valuable experiences for active *NH Scholars*, but it generates a buzz around the school about the program. I commend WRHS and its business partners for their ongoing commitment to provide continuous reinforcement to these students.

I encourage every school to establish activities and business-partners similar to this. Your students will benefit tremendously from these *NH Scholar*-specific events.

### **Business Mentors**

New Hampshire Scholars encourages business partners and schools to establish relationships and to provide available resources to their students. Remember, the business connection is what makes State Scholars unique from other initiatives. Please create these mentorship opportunities properly. New Hampshire Scholars will be posting recommended documents such as parental permission and business volunteer guidelines online, <http://www.nhscholars.org/BusiToolkit.cfm>

Following these guidelines will provide confidence to businesses, schools and families that all activities are closely monitored and handled properly.

A graphic showing the number 55% in a large, bold, blue font, with a white shadow effect behind it.

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### In the News

**The 55% Initiative aims to convince more college grads to live and work in New Hampshire.** Results of more than 3,100 surveys of New Hampshire college seniors and recent alumni released this month demonstrate a very positive perception of the quality of life in the state, but show that many of these educated individuals leave the state because they are concerned about job opportunities here. As part of the *55% Initiative*, an effort to retain more college graduates in the state, the University of New Hampshire Survey Center released results from surveys at the Forum on the Future breakfast event, co-sponsored by the NH College and University Council (NHCUC) and the NH High Tech Council (NHHTC).

About 50 percent of the 16,000 individuals who earn degrees or certificates each year leave NH, representing a huge “brain drain” that darkens the overall employment outlook and hinders the state’s growth. The *55% Initiative* sets a goal of convincing 55% of new graduates to “work, play, and stay” here, as compared to the roughly 50% who currently stay.

Some next steps include developing marketing campaigns to encourage more to stay (marketing students at UNH, Keene State College, and Plymouth State University will take this on as part of class projects in the spring), working with the business community to improve ways job opportunities are promoted, and linking these efforts with complementary efforts at the Department of Tourism and Department of Resources & Economic Development.

**Thank you for all of your hard work involving *New Hampshire Scholars*. Please call me with any questions or concerns. We are developing a customized NH brochure that will be available by the spring.**

Please consider the following objectives for December and January:

- **Connect with your business partners to provide presentations and workshops not only for 8<sup>th</sup> graders, but also in the high school** (potential workshops may include mock interviews, resume writing, etc).
- **Think about creative ways to motivate and engage your students and parents concerning *NH Scholars*** (activities, lunch meetings, workshops, contests, name recognition board, morning announcements, start a club, school newsletters, school web site, etc).
- **When organizing presentations, please remember to collect the performance evaluation surveys; [www.NHscholars.org/SLToolkit.cfm](http://www.NHscholars.org/SLToolkit.cfm)**

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