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Dear Colleague:

In 2001-2002, New Hampshire's 4-year cumulative dropout rate stood at 15.1%. Reducing that rate has been a high priority for Governor Lynch, the New Hampshire Department of Education, superintendents, and school boards around the state. The 2007-2008 numbers are evidence that their commitment to student success is paying off. Six years later, that rate now stands at 11.3%. The falling rate means that six hundred more students stayed in school and graduated. Furthermore, when students who have earned a GED or enrolled in college since last June are subtracted from the dropout count, the cumulative rate is 9.7%.

Today we join with business and community partners to increase awareness and encourage collaboration to facilitate action toward improving our graduation rates in New Hampshire. We know that being a high school dropout greatly impedes a child's chance for personal success and that it impacts our collective future. It is our hope that the results of this summit will include increased public awareness of the dropout problem, commitments for collaboration from community and business partners, and a desire from local leadership to become involved in community-work-school initiatives.

With the funding provided to us by America's Promise to host the Second Governor's Summit on Graduation, we hope to focus attention on the problems we face and highlight winning strategies from around the state and the nation.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to tackle the dropout issue in New Hampshire.

Sincerely,

Lyonel B Tracy

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Commissioner of Education

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