

Regional Listening Tour

What is Your Vision for New Hampshire Schools?

Note takers recorded stakeholder feedback during the NH Department of Education's Regional Listening Tour in **Concord on November 15, 2016**. This document highlights the high-level summary and common themes from the meeting.

Student Success

- Need to be looking at what businesses want from their employees and help our students be prepared. Can they deal with complexity, ambiguity, look at alternative solutions, collaborate, have an ability to articulate their thoughts?

School Characteristics

- Looking to see that inclusion happens all the way through the grades. Would like to see SWIFT continue to expand.
- What programs in the Arts are available at elementary, middle and high school? What is access like and are students taught by qualified professionals?
- Want the structure of the school to meet the goals of the school. Need flexible scheduling.
- Is environmental education a component? Research shows it is part of a well-rounded education with many benefits.
- Looking to see if 21st century skills are incorporated into learning as well as play-based education.
- Want to see inclusive education in schools be more consistent – promote both academics and friendships. Create a more person-centered education plan that has goals that reflect who the child is – not just a set drop down menu of choices.
- Does the school encourage parent education? Provide training and focus on helping parents help their children do better in school.
- I want a school where I can observe what my daughter is doing in class. Gain a better understanding of how the student is being taught so that as a parent I can help her.
- School should have civic and social education.

Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

- Teachers (especially middle school and high school) need training in topics related to environmental education.
- Need to support teacher education for being better able to teach to different learning styles and different types of students.

School Success

- Want to see rankings of NH schools – provide info on what is happening – create greater awareness of success.

Social Issues & Mental Health

- The emotional needs of kids have grown tremendously. Need to be looking at the Pre-K and K population – kids are coming to school not ready to learn.
- What can be done to help better support families – students are coming to school from unstable homes and it makes it hard for them to learn.

Statewide Issues

- If we are going to be a competitive state we need to have a better fusion of public schools and industry. By 2025 that will require that at least 65% of our students have a degree or certificate of some type in order to be employable. (Both college and career.)

- Will ESSA allow more attention to the whole child (not just math/ELA)? Provide focus on social emotional needs of children and opportunities to develop 21st century skills. Good shift toward personalized and competency based learning. Can the NH DOE help with removing the barriers between funding for the different Title areas so that we can have a more holistic and comprehensive approach to education?
- Can NH DOE look at the feasibility of offering better, more consistent education to all deaf students in the state? (Currently student's in more rural areas do not always get equivalent services and options.) Find ways to help districts collaborate with one another and with service agencies that can provide support.
- Would like to see the NH DOE examine how special education oversight is managed and find better ways than what currently exist.
- How do we deal with equity issues – money goes to lowest needs but the “best and brightest” don't get opportunities to really grow or be pushed further. Rural schools are especially challenged – don't have funds to offer field trips or more innovative programs in school.
- NH DOE could help by finding solutions to educate parents of special education students about how to connect with services outside of the classroom.
- How do we get entire communities to support schools? Schools need help from community based organizations.
- The NH DOE can help alter the perspective of teaching children with disabilities - not about fixing the disability but figuring out what is the best way for that child to learn.
- How do we gain a better global vision and incorporate that into our schools?