



Priorities for New Hampshire Public Education

2022

Great Public School Indicators

All students deserve great public schools—schools that instill a love of learning, that prepare them academically and socially for bright futures. Through three years of research and collaboration with leading education policy and practice efforts, we have identified the seven areas critical to the success of public schools and students.

School Readiness: Great schools provide quality programs and services that meet the full range of all children's needs so that they come to school every day ready and able to learn.

Standards and Curriculum: Great schools set high expectations and standards with a rigorous and comprehensive curriculum for all students.

Conditions of Teaching and Learning: Great schools provide quality conditions for teaching and lifelong learning.

Workforce Quality: Great schools have a qualified, caring, diverse, and stable workforce.

Accountability and Assessments: Great schools are the result of stakeholders at all levels sharing responsibility for appropriate school accountability.

Family and Community Engagement: Great schools facilitate parental, family, and community involvement and engagement.

School Funding: Great schools are supported by sufficient, equitable, and sustainable funding.

Fulfilling these indicators will help raise achievement for students, close the achievement gap, and ensure that all children, regardless of background, color, culture, or zip code can reach their potential.

We hope you take the time to get to know just how great our public schools are, and know they can't do it alone. Never underestimate your role in helping to defend and improve them.

Committed to Improving Student Achievement and Education Quality

Our students' job is to learn, and our job is to make sure they can. Our democracy will flourish only when we ensure every school is fully funded, every child is treated with dignity, and every learner has the freedom to pursue their passion. We must pass laws and fund policies that push forward the arc of justice—laws that protect all children's access to a great public education, regardless of age, background, need, or zip code.

This upcoming year will be a challenge because of the sheer volume of bills that have been filed having to do with education and the nature of the bills themselves.

NEA-New Hampshire has identified 3 legislative priorities for 2022:

Defeat legislation that expands school privatization and school voucher programs.

This includes legislation such as retained bill HB 607, establishing local school voucher accounts, and newly crafted HB 1298 which would expand the education tax credit program eligibility to up to 500% of the Federal Poverty Level. We also aim to use proactive legislation to highlight for the public the pitfalls of the recently passed voucher program by supporting an overall repeal of the program, to bills that aim to make the program more accountable to the taxpayers paying for these vouchers.

Defeat legislation that would further expand or fortify the recently passed banned concepts law.

This would include various types of curriculum restrictions and penalties seeking to be put into law, such as HB 1255, the "teacher loyalty" bill that would ban more accurate curriculum from being discussed about the nation's founding in our schools. We will also seek to push legislation to talk about the importance of protecting students' freedom to learn from the mistakes of our nation's past rather than punish educators for teaching them (i.e. HB 1090, which protects an educator's ability to teach accurate current and historical discrimination).

Defeat legislation that would make our members' and their students' less safe in schools.

There are dozens of bills in this category that range from mask requirements (HB 1131 which would prohibit a school from adopting mask requirements) to issues around vaccines. But there are also important efforts we can support to improve our public schools and their safety including:

- school infrastructure by improving building safety like air quality
- improving the school funding formula for communities who struggle to raise adequate funds locally,
- and improving student health through the expansion and improvement of school meal programs.

As a civilized society focused on the well-being of our children and their future, our priorities must result in:

BIAS-FREE SCHOOLS

Safe and affirming schools are a core element of student success. When students feel that they are not welcome, their ability to learn and thrive is diminished. We can create schools where every student can learn, regardless of their skin color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or ability.

ADEQUATE FUNDING OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The only way to make sure all learners have the tools and schools they need to succeed is to properly fund every aspect of public education.

SUPPORT FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

High-quality early childhood education is one of the best investments we can make. Comprehensive early childhood programs should be widely available and affordable for children from birth to age five—particularly for those from low-income families.

SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

Funds for improving school conditions are critical to providing an effective, equitable education for students. Far too much learning and teaching is happening in schools that pose health and safety risks to students and staff. Twenty-first century learning requires 21st century tools, classrooms, and schools.

ACCESS TO NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Throughout the pandemic, school support staffs continued to deliver meals to students across the state. Access to nutritious meals is key to ensuring the health and well-being of all students. Food is a need, not a want, and if we want kids to be able to concentrate and grow and be healthy and happy, we must see to it that they are fed.

CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

As taxpayer-funded schools, charter schools must be held to the same safeguards and high standards of accountability, transparency, oversight and equity as public schools. NEA-NH is committed to advocating for measures ensuring that all charter schools operate in a high-quality manner that is equitable, accountable, and transparent.

OPPOSING VOUCHERS IN ALL ITS FORMS

Voucher programs rob students of educational equity and opportunities. Scarce funding for public schools should not be siphoned off to unaccountable private and religious schools. No matter how you look at it, vouchers undermine strong public education and student opportunity. They take scarce funding from public schools—which serve 90 percent of students—and give it to private schools—institutions that are not accountable to taxpayers.



NEA-NH Mission:

To advocate for education professionals and unite our members and the nation to fulfill the promise of public education, to break down the barriers to racial equity, and to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world.

NEA-NH Vision:

A great public school for every student.

NEA-NH Core Values:

NEA-NH believes every student, regardless of family income or place of residence, deserves a quality education. In pursuing our mission, we will focus the energy and resources of our 17,000 members on improving the quality of teaching, increasing student achievement and making schools safer, better places to learn.

Equal Opportunity. We believe public education is the gateway to opportunity. All students have the human and civil right to a quality public education that develops their potential, independence, and character.

A Just Society. We believe public education is vital to building respect for the worth, dignity, and equality of every individual in our diverse society.

Democracy. We believe public education is the cornerstone of our republic. Public education provides individuals with the skills to be involved, informed, and engaged in our representative democracy.

Professionalism. We believe that the expertise and judgment of education professionals are critical to student success. We maintain the highest professional standards, and we expect the status, compensation, and respect due all professionals.

Partnership. We believe partnerships with parents, families, communities, and other stakeholders are essential to quality public education and student success.

Collective Action. We believe individuals are strengthened when they work together for the common good. As education professionals, we improve both our professional status and the quality of public education when we unite and advocate collectively.

NEA-NH's legislative priorities are rooted in our mission, vision, and core values.



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