



PRESS RELEASE: Reaching Higher NH Issues Report to Reverse Harm and Strengthen Public Schools through the Minimum Standards for Public School Approval

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CONCORD, NH -- Reaching Higher NH released a groundbreaking report, [*Recommendations to Reverse Harm and Strengthen Public Schools*](#), that calls on the NH Department of Education and the NH State Board of Education to address major concerns with the proposed overhaul of the Minimum Standards for Public School Approval, and craft meaningful public school approval rules that advance a positive, student-centered vision for our schools.

The eight recommendations fall under four major themes: restoring equity and student protections; restoring program elements; empowering local leaders and schools; and raising standards for schools, teachers, and students.

“These recommendations serve as a necessary step in re-centering the public school approval rules around a positive, student-centered vision for our public schools -- the schools that serve over 80% of New Hampshire’s youth,” said Nicole Heimarck, Executive Director.

“Reaching Higher NH joins the public in raising serious concerns with the New Hampshire Department of Education’s proposed overhaul. As proposed, the public school approval rules would undermine the state’s public schools, eviscerate local control, and remove necessary requirements that ensure that all students, regardless of place, receive a high-quality public education,” Heimarck continued.

The report includes recommendations to ensure that all students receive a high-quality public education and remove harmful language that would open the door to privatization and commodification of learning.

“The subtle language shifts in the proposed overhaul could open the door to commodification of learning and set the conditions for the outsourcing of courses and instruction to private companies,” said Christina Pretorius, Policy Director.

“The NH Department of Education’s proposed overhaul appears to be yet another piece in the privatization movement by lowering the bar for what it means to be a public school. The proposal replaces requirements for instruction with vague terms like ‘opportunity,’ removes the authority of schools to determine which



experiences warrant academic credit, and abandons the vast bodies of research around how kids learn and how they engage. We’re calling on the NH State Board of Education to, at a minimum, address the public’s concerns and craft rules that ensure that all students have access to high-quality public schools,” Pretorius said.

The report can be found here:

<https://reachinghighernh.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Recommendations-to-Reverse-Harm-and-Strengthen-Public-Schools-October-2023.pdf>

Reaching Higher NH hosted a webinar on the recommendations on October 4, 2023. The recording of the webinar can be found [here](#), and the slides can be downloaded [here](#).

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Reaching Higher NH is a nonpartisan 501c3 public education policy resource for NH families, educators, and elected officials. Our mission is to support high-quality public education and the infinite potential of every child in New Hampshire. Learn more at www.ReachingHigherNH.org