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## Governor Hassan's STEM Task Force Report Released

Manchester, NH - The Task Force created to make recommendations for modernizing K-12 STEM education in New Hampshire released its report today, with recommendations aimed at enhancing education and pathways in science, technology, engineering and math in New Hampshire schools. The report was released at a press conference at Dyn in Manchester, NH.

The report, entitled "Pathways to STEM Excellence: Inspiring Students, Empowering Teachers and Raising Standards," outlines eight recommendations along with implementation strategies for each. The strategies are designed so that educators can focus on local approaches that are aligned with each district's priorities, resources, and existing educational initiatives while incorporating business and higher education as partners.

"Modernizing how we educate our students in the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and math is critical to helping them develop the skills needed for good jobs in the innovation economy, and I thank the members of the task force for their important work," said Gov. Hassan.

"Developed with input from leaders throughout the education and business communities, the task force recommendations outline how our schools and students can be competitive in the 21st century economy. This report will help us strengthen the foundations of STEM education, inspire our students through competitions and more hands-on experiences, and empower our teachers. By bringing our standards into the 21st century, we can ensure that our students are prepared to compete for jobs in today's global economy," Gov. Hassan said.

Recommendations are grouped in three areas: Strengthening STEM Foundations; Inspiring Students; and Empowering Teachers, and include:

- Creating more opportunities for hands-on learning experience in science courses
- Encouraging "Personal Learning Plans" that enable students as early as middle school to progress on a STEM educational and career pathway
- Expanding curriculum options to include coding and other pathways that enhance students' STEM mastery and broaden career possibilities
- Creating "early college" programs and academies to support excellence in student STEM attainment at advanced levels

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- Increasing the availability of competitions and capstone experiences for students
- Engaging and mentoring girls for STEM careers
- Increasing STEM proficiency of teachers and developing resources for teachers to enhance the transmission of STEM learning
- Supporting teachers' efforts to embed STEM learning from the earliest grades in a variety of curriculum

Jeremy Hitchcock, CEO and Chairman of Dyn and a member of the Task Force, said, "The Report identifies where employers can engage to help develop the next generation of highly-skilled, innovative thinkers and professionals. Businesses have a responsibility to collaborate with educational partners to excite their future workforce about STEM careers - a competency that this state needs to develop. Only by working together can we achieve essential workforce goals and ensure a strong future for the state's residents and the region." The recommendations call for employers in STEM occupations to act as mentors and help students learn about exciting, cutting-edge work being done in innovative STEM fields. Employers can also help educators gain insight and expertise to convey STEM-related knowledge and build skills.

Ross Gittell, an economist and chancellor of New Hampshire's community college system who chaired the Task Force, said the Task Force was driven by the significant opportunities that exist for students who choose and prepare for a STEM career pathway, as well as by the state's need for a highly-skilled population to support economic growth.

"Innovation, inquiry, creativity and problem-solving are hallmarks of STEM learning and there is a clear need to interest our schoolchildren in these endeavors from the early stages of their education all the way to choosing a career," said Dr. Gittell. He said the Task Force included representatives from business, K-12, parents of K-12 students, and higher education and its recommendations reflect the need for all segments to work together to achieve this goal. He said the recommendations recognize regional differences such as those faced by rural areas of the state.

The Task Force was created in April 2014 through an Executive Order of Gov. Hassan, and met from April through October. The group was asked to make recommendations to ensure that New Hampshire's kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade STEM education is rigorous and extensive enough to prepare students to compete globally in today's technology-driven society.

Full text of the Report and the Executive Order establishing the Task Force are available at <http://www.governor.nh.gov/commissions-task-forces/stem/index.htm> .

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