

High School Graduation Requirements and Student-Centered-Learning

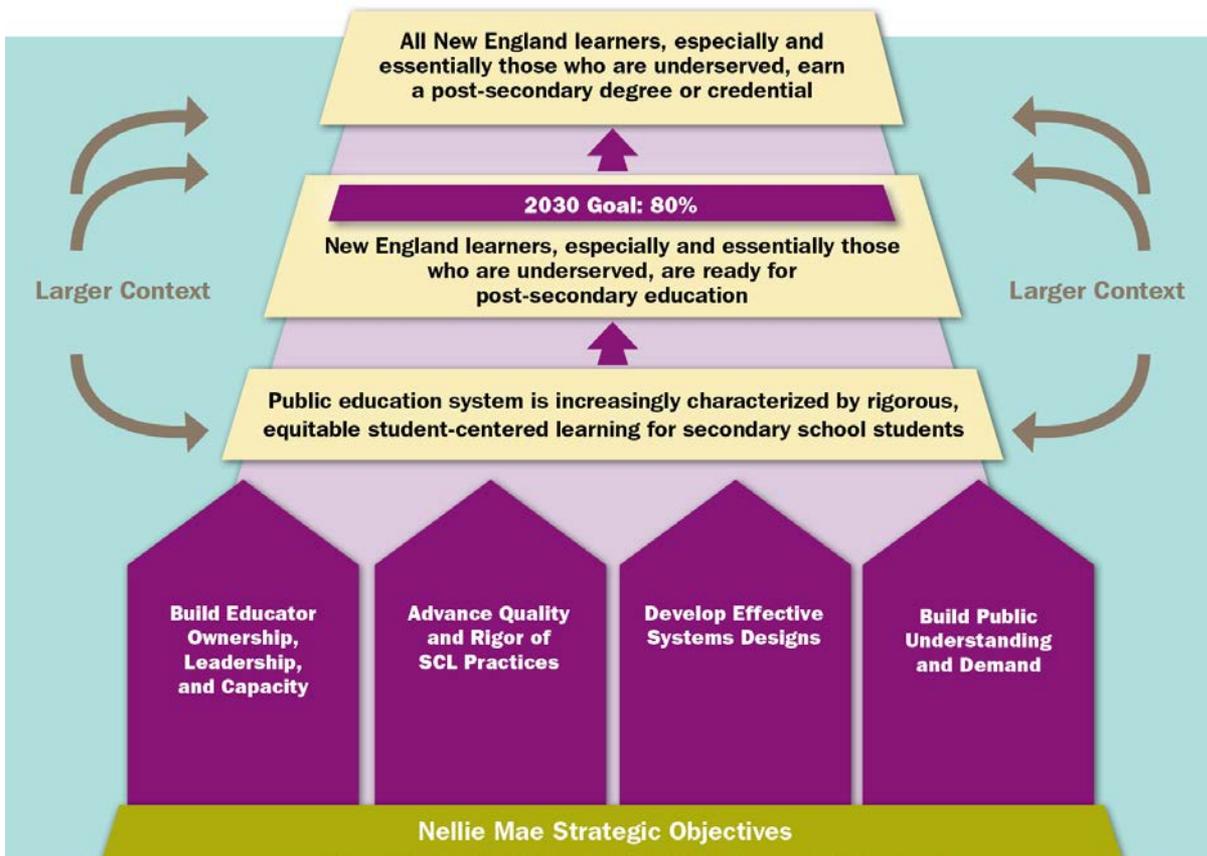
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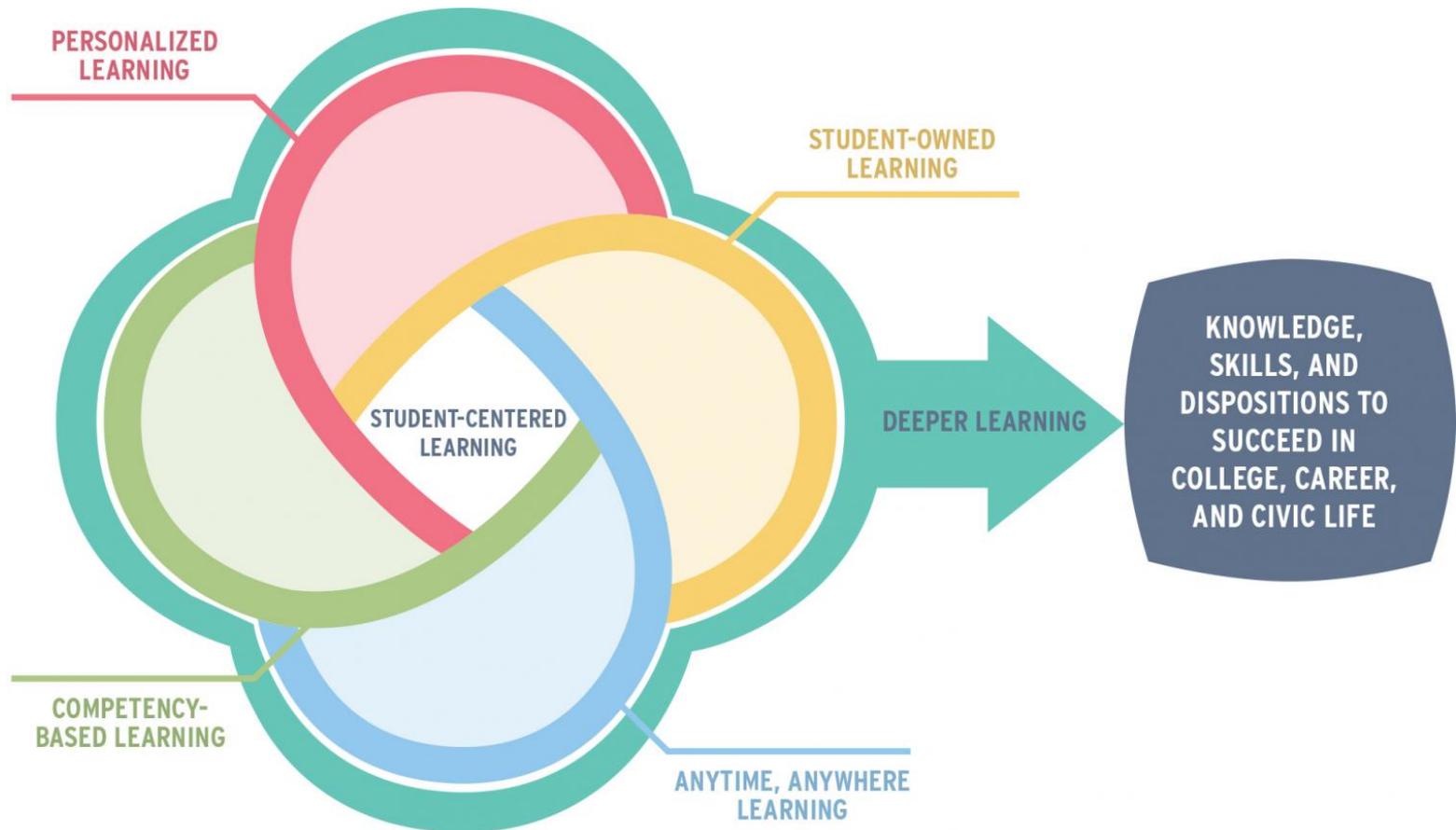
Theory of Change

Nellie Mae Education Foundation Theory of Change

**ALL NEW ENGLAND LEARNERS PREPARED FOR
SUCCESS – EDUCATIONALLY, ECONOMICALLY
AND AS ENGAGED CITIZENS**



JFF Students at the Center Framework



Where Robust and Rich HS Graduation Expectations Fit in Our Agenda

- ◆ The New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC), which includes CT and which we have funded for the last seven years, has goals to annually increase five-year HS graduation rates, decrease annual dropout rates, and increase the percentage of students enrolling in postsecondary education or industry approved certificates.
- ◆ The Nellie Mae Education Foundation's ultimate goal is that all New England learners achieve a postsecondary degree or credential new or existing; our intermediate goal to guide our work on student-centered-learning going forward is that 80% of learners graduate from high school in 2030 ready for success in postsecondary (compared to 50% now)
- ◆ We define readiness primarily as enrolled in fully credit bearing courses in a 2 or 4 year college, in the military, or in an industry certification program. Therefore, we support high school graduation requirements that, if fully met, will ensure that graduates are ready for the next step.



NESSC Policy Levers

The five member states in the NESSC (Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine) have come together on these three policy levers:

- ◆ **Proficiency-Based Graduation**
- ◆ **Multiple and Flexible Pathways**
- ◆ **Learner-centered Accountability**

NESSC Policy Levers

◆ **Proficiency-Based Graduation:**

Modify state policy to require that high school graduation decisions be based on students' achievement of learning standards using a body of evidence and multiple measures, including both student-designed and on-demand performance assessments. States would make individual decisions on specific requirements, but all would agree that schools use (a) standards-based assessments and (b) the demonstration of proficiency through interest-based projects selected and designed by the Student.

(NOTE: this is the original language defined by the Policy Committee and the Council. In practice, and today, the definition might be slight refined.)

NESSC Policy Levers

◆ **Multiple and Flexible Pathways:**

Develop or refine state policy to 1) require middle and high school programs to offer multiple and flexible learning pathways; and 2) create regional state programs that operate in collaboration with secondary schools but offer opportunities undoable for single districts (for example, virtual learning or dual enrollment programs), that all lead to a college-ready diploma. Further, the policy will incorporate a degree of latitude to support local adoption and implementation. The state expectations could include some form of personal learning plan that meets the social, emotional, career, and academic needs of the student. While the high school diploma is the objective of the policy, the diploma will certify that students have demonstrated preparedness for success in college, careers, and life.

NESSC Policy Levers

◆ **Learner-centered Accountability:**

Develop accountability processes that will ensure system integrity—measuring, understanding, and improving both student learning and school, district, and state instructional and organizational systems that support this learning. State policy will ensure student attainment of 21st century skills and knowledge for every student, require accountability for this accomplishment, and provide diagnostic support to promote a cycle of continuous learning. This system accountability should effectively and efficiently identify schools and districts that struggle the most to support high levels of student learning.

Results from the NESSC

◆ What changed?

- ME, NH, and VT have either legislation or state board policy that requires graduation based on demonstration of learning not time spent. RI has board policy requiring some aspects and allows all aspects. CT legislation allows credits by demonstration.
- All states have adopted early college and/or dual enrollment policy.
- Three states have explicit policies on personal learning plans.
- Four states have policy supporting extended learning opportunities (two actually require it)

◆ Student Results?

- Across New England, we have experienced a 6% point gain in four year high school graduation between 2009 and 2013.
- Across New England, initial college enrollment within a year of high school graduation has increased by 1% point



New Hampshire Language

- ◆ The local school board shall require that graduation be based on mastery of required graduation competencies as demonstrated by accumulation of credits. Each HS shall determine how completion of a classroom course, CTE courses, independent study, distance learning course, or extended learning opportunity can support student achievement and demonstration of district or graduation competencies.
- ◆ Credits shall be based on the demonstration of graduation competencies, not on time spent achieving those competencies. The credit shall equate to the level of rigor and achievement necessary to master competencies that have been designed to demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to progress toward college level and career work.
- ◆ Districts shall develop local policies that identify how the district shall engage students in creating and supporting extended learning opportunities that occur outside the physical school building and outside of the usual school day.

Rhode Island Language

- ◆ Each LEA shall create a composite measure of each student's proficiency in the six core academic areas, aligned to state standards and locally adopted national standards. The Board of Regents charges each LEA to ensure its students are provided with a comprehensive program of study so that its students are prepared for postsecondary education or productive employment.
- ◆ The composite measure shall be derived from a conjunctive review of three sources of evidence; 1) individual student results on the state assessment in content areas designated by the Board of Regents; 2) successful course completion (of least 20 courses that cover the 6 core content areas); and 3) successful completion of two performance-based diploma assessments (graduation portfolios, exhibitions, comprehensive course assessments, or Certificate of Initial Mastery)
- ◆ Students can meet the above requirements through enrollment in a state-approved CTE program, expanded learning opportunities, dual enrollment, online learning, and other non-traditional programs (but a local decision).

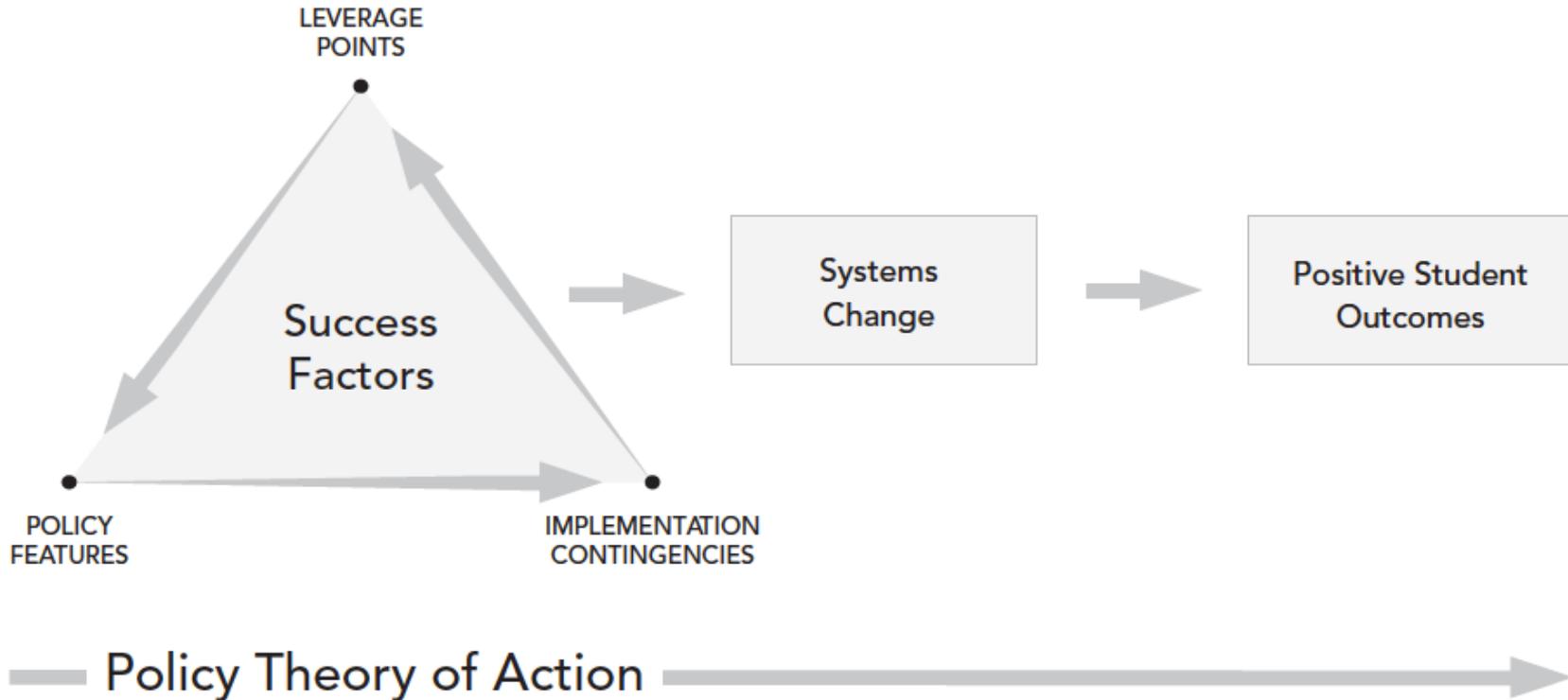
Vermont Language

- ◆ A student meets the requirements for graduation when the student demonstrates evidence of proficiency in the curriculum outlined in 2120.5 and completion of any other requirements specified by the local board. This requirement is effective no later than September 2014 for students entering seventh grade and through their secondary school progression for the anticipated graduation date of June 2020.
- ◆ Each local supervisory union shall develop and each school shall implement a local comprehensive assessment system that among other things enables decisions to be made about student progression and graduation, including measuring proficiency-based learning, and supports Personalized Learning Plans (PLP) for all students grades 7-12.
- ◆ A Flexible Pathways Initiative that creates new opportunities for secondary school students to pursue flexible pathways to graduation that are tied to their PLP and include:
 - a) applied or work-based learning opportunities including CTE/internships;
 - b) virtual learning and blended learning;
 - c) dual enrollment; and
 - d) early college programs.

Policy Strategies

Narrow the Focus: High Leverage Policy Framework - NESSC

Figure 1. HLP Framework



Questions?

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Thanks!

