Join the Conversation

New Hampshire’s Kids, the American Dream, and the Growing Opportunity Gap

May 6: Berlin, Nashua, Laconia
May 7: Plymouth, Pittsfield, Manchester
May 12: Lancaster, Portsmouth, Keene
May 13: Rochester, Lebanon, Concord

5:30 p.m. Doors Open
6:00–9:00 p.m. Program

Refreshments and onsite child care provided

Registration details coming to your inbox soon.

Hosted by NH Listens
When Opportunity Stops Knocking

New Hampshire’s Kids and the American Dream

Wednesday, May 6
Berlin
Laconia
Nashua

Thursday, May 7
Manchester
Pittsfield
Plymouth

Tuesday, May 12
Keene
Lancaster
Portsmouth

Wednesday, May 13
Concord
Lebanon
Rochester

A statewide conversation about the increasing barriers our state’s children face in achieving their dreams
Everyone welcome!
Welcome and thank you for joining today’s conversation.

We look forward to your questions, concerns, ideas, and hopes for addressing the opportunity gap in New Hampshire, and we welcome all perspectives. Does everyone in New Hampshire, especially the next generation of workers and community leaders, have similar opportunities to succeed economically and socially? Is it harder to get ahead now than it was in previous generations? What are some reasons that opportunity may be less available to some people than others? How can we make sure that everyone, especially our children, has access to the opportunities they need to have a good life? These are the kinds of questions at the heart of our conversation today.

This conversation is focused on your experience in New Hampshire and asks us all to consider the critical question: **What can we do together to address the growing opportunity gap in our communities and state?**

Here is the general outline of our evening:

5:30–6:00 PM  Registration and refreshments  
6:00   Welcome and purpose  
6:20   Small group conversations  
8:40   Large group summary reports  
8:55   Next steps  
9:00 PM  Adjourn

**What Is New Hampshire Listens?**

New Hampshire Listens is a civic engagement initiative of the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire. NH Listens works to strengthen New Hampshire communities by helping citizens participate directly in discussions about policies that affect their daily lives. Established in 2011, we engage state residents in local, regional, and statewide conversations on a broad range of topics to bring about informed, innovative solutions to complex issues. At the core of our work, we organize fair, nonpartisan discussions throughout the state, help communities establish their own, independent, local Listens organizations, and train facilitators for public engagement. If you are interested in more information, we look forward to you being in touch with us. We are always looking for thoughtful facilitators and local contacts in New Hampshire communities. Find us at: [www.NHListens.org](http://www.NHListens.org)

**Please Note:**

We are delighted to have this event covered by the press, local bloggers, and others who wish to record community affairs. We want to balance your interests with our participants’ ability to express themselves in a safe environment, share an incomplete thought, or convey a personal story as a part of this process. We respectfully request that all representatives of the media (formal and informal) please ask permission to tape, photograph, identify, or quote an individual participant directly. Attendees who wish to film may do so from our designated film area. Filming may not be done of or by participants from within the small discussion group. This is so we can promote an open exchange of ideas. We are happy to work with media who want to film and photograph large group activities. Thank you!
Detailed Outline

5:30–6:00  
Sign in and refreshments  
- Welcome and sign in at registration table  
- Please join your small group for the introduction and to start the dialogue immediately thereafter. We encourage you to review the background information starting on page 7.

6:00–6:20  
Welcome  
- Welcome from NH Listens and local partners  
- Remarks from NH Listens Moderator  
  • The goal of this conversation is to hear from you. Your input will be shared with local and state policy makers, civic leaders, and candidates in New Hampshire’s presidential primary.  
  • Today’s conversation was planned by a bipartisan group of civic and business leaders in New Hampshire, with the support of Our Kids New Hampshire and NH Listens. The planning group was responding to growing evidence of an increased opportunity gap for middle and working class families in America and New Hampshire. The group believes that this gap in opportunity must be addressed to assure a vibrant economy and society for our children and future generations.

  • There are three main goals for these conversations:  
    o To explore changes people see in economic opportunity and social mobility, particularly in New Hampshire  
    o To share experiences about how these changes may have affected you, your children, other young people, and your neighbors  
    o To discuss barriers to opportunity and possible approaches to overcoming those barriers

  • Note: “Social mobility,” “economic opportunity,” “opportunity gap,” and other terms are defined on page 7.

  • About the process: This conversation is...  
    • Designed to focus on what is important to you.  
    • Designed for participants to be here the whole time (please do what you need to do to be most present. Feel free to take a break or step outside for a phone call if needed).  
    • About a constructive focus and looking forward to desired actions and solutions.  
    • Organized to allow the greatest possible time for everyone to both speak and listen, which is why we use small, facilitated groups where ideas can be explored, differences understood, and preferences for action expressed.  
    • Respectful of your time. We will keep time and respect yours by ending on time.

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1 Our Kids New Hampshire (OKNH) is a bipartisan group of citizens committed to closing the opportunity gap in order to foster a healthy, productive, and prosperous future for all Granite Staters. OKNH is co-chaired by Stephen Duprey and Lew Feldstein.
Group agreements for a productive conversation...

- Share “air time.”
- If you disagree, consider asking a question rather than arguing to prove your point.
- It’s OK to disagree, but don’t personalize it. Stick to the issue, not the person who is disagreeing with you.
- Speak up if the process doesn’t seem fair.
- Speak for yourself, not for others and not for an entire group (use “I” statements).
- Personal stories stay in the group unless we all agree we can share them.
- We all share responsibility for making the group productive.
- Be respectful and use respectful language.
- Respect the facilitator’s role.
- Listen first.

6:20–6:40 Introductions in Small Groups

- Your small group has a neutral facilitator whose role is to:
  - Help with the process and keeping time
  - Serve as a reminder of our agreements to be fair and respectful
  - Make sure everyone gets a chance to participate
  - Record key information on flip charts
- Reminders: Your group will need someone to report out to the large group at the end. Notes from each small group will be compiled into a summary report.
- One benefit of these conversations is to be in groups with people whose experiences and perspectives are different from your own. As a way to get to know each other, please share your:
  - Name and hometown
  - How would you describe the opportunities you have had in life compared to your parents?
- Next, go around again and share...
  - What experiences from your life or other factors impact how you see opportunity and the American dream today?

6:40–6:55 Information Review

- Your facilitator will guide you through the information section (starting on page 7) about current trends and information related to the opportunity gap in New Hampshire. Although there is a lot of information, it by no means includes everything that is important about this topic. While we won’t be able to cover each issue in-depth, we will focus on what you find important to discuss. The main information sources focus on the period from birth into early adulthood.
- What do you notice about this information?
- What surprises you about this information? Did you learn something you did not know?
- What clarifying questions do you have about the information?

- Do any themes or “big picture” ideas come to mind when you look at this information?
- How would you connect some of the information we examined to your own experience or other information you’ve encountered? Do you see trends in your own community that relate to or challenge the data we looked at? Is there anything in the data that does not seem true when you compare it to your experience?
- What information or personal experiences do you feel we need to discuss to further understand this issue? Are there other ideas about children, education, jobs, neighborhoods, housing, or community life that you would like to share?

7:15–7:25 Sharing Thoughts

- Now that you have had an opportunity to brainstorm ideas, what issue is most compelling to you and your community? Take a moment to think, and then join the conversation online by posting your thoughts on Twitter with #NHOppGap and/or on a post-it on the wall.

7:25–8:00 Key Questions and Priorities

- Given your priorities when you came in this evening, and the information we have just reviewed, spend some time discussing the key issues and their importance to you. It might be useful for each person to speak briefly about your perspective and share what you tweeted or wrote on the post-it. The following questions may be helpful to prompt your thinking (but you will likely not have time to address each one individually—each group might choose two or three of the questions below to focus on):

What is happening in New Hampshire?
- What is happening now in your community that impacts opportunities for children and youth? Consider children from infancy to early adulthood.
- Have you noticed any changes in recent years about economic opportunities in general? How do you feel about that?
- How has raising a family changed in recent years, especially for middle and working class families? Is it harder for young people to get ahead now than it was in previous generations?
- What are some reasons that opportunity may be less available to some people compared to others?
- What do you believe are the two or three most likely causes for the increase in the opportunity gap over the past few decades?

What Does This Mean for Our Future?
- What do you think are some likely outcomes if the recent trends regarding opportunities continue into the future?
- How can we make sure that every young person has access to the opportunities he or she needs to have a good life?
8:00–8:15  Community Solutions and Next Steps
- Spend time here exploring the ideas and solutions discussed in your group. What solutions would have the biggest impact on your life? In your community?
- What positive efforts have we seen in New Hampshire or in other places that we can learn from and build on?

Whose responsibility is it to take action?
- What do you think the role should be of the following in responding to the opportunity gap?
  - Local, state, and national government
  - The private sector (business, industry, manufacturing)
  - The nonprofit sector (social service, health, educational agencies, religious organizations)
  - The civic sector (volunteer and charitable foundations)
- What types of changes seem most important for New Hampshire? Why?
- What do you believe are changes that should NOT occur with respect to this topic?

8:15–8:30  Final Priorities
Based on your group’s conversation, “Are there any common-ground thoughts or ideas in this group? If so, what do we want to say at the end of the evening? If not, what diverse points of view do we want to convey?”

A consensus is not required, but if one emerges, or perhaps if the group wants to put forward two or three primary points of view, that is fine. These will represent your key recommendations or findings.

Your group will need to select someone to speak and share the group’s top insights and priorities. The reporting out should include no more than two or three specific statements. To arrive at this point, the group should take a step back and look for both the unique ideas and those that seemed to recur. Group ideas together that seem to be related, but don’t lose track of the unique ones. List these on one page.

You will likely not have time to represent all of your ideas on the summary sheet or in the large group report out (two minutes!). All notes from the small groups will be used to provide a Summary Report to participants and decision makers. Please make note of any additional information that your group feels is important to pass along to those compiling information for next steps.

8:30–8:40  List three or four of these ideas on the OKNH cards provided by your facilitator. Take these cards with you tonight to remind you of the actions you think should be taken to address the opportunity gap, and go to the OKNH website to find out how to connect with others who want to take action.

8:40–8:55  Reporting Out
Each group will be asked to provide a VERY BRIEF summary of their most important findings, concerns, or recommendations. If you are asked to speak for your group, please be brief and share what has been compiled by your group, including common ground and divergent views. (You will have two minutes!)

8:55–9:00  Wrap up comments—NH Listens Moderator
- Please fill out the evaluation – it matters to us! Thank you!

Thank you from NH Listens!
Information Section

The information that follows has been compiled to provide background on the challenges and issues facing New Hampshire’s communities regarding the opportunity gap. Significant research has been done on these issues, so this is not meant to be all inclusive. Instead, our interest is in sharing basic, current information in order to learn from you what is significant and noteworthy to you. Data in this section have been pulled from multiple sources, which are identified after each data point.

Glossary

American Dream—including the expectation that our freedoms include the opportunity for prosperity and success for everyone, regardless of background or where they start out in life.

Opportunity Gap—exists when wages and living conditions don’t improve over time for some groups compared to others (that is, when the old adage—the rich get richer and the poor get poorer—becomes true).

Social and Economic Mobility—refers to the possibility that one generation will experience greater wealth and economic opportunity than the previous generation; that is, the expectation that children’s lives will be better economically and socially than their parents’.

Income Inequality—refers to the differences in earnings among various groups in society. Some of those differences are related to factors such as age, level of education, and the kind of job one has. Other differences are related to factors such as gender, race, and where one lives.

Poverty—we draw our definition of poverty from the federal government’s guidelines, which consider the poverty level for a family of four at $24,250 or below.

2015 Federal Poverty Guidelines for a Family of Four (Medicaid.gov):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of Poverty²</th>
<th>Income by Month</th>
<th>Income by Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$2,020.83</td>
<td>$24,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200%</td>
<td>$4,041.67</td>
<td>$48,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² 100 percent is the federal poverty level for a family of four. 200 percent is twice the federal poverty level. 200 percent or below is used to define eligibility for some federal programs such as Medicaid and Free and Reduced Price Lunches in schools.
The Opportunity Gap, the American Dream, and What They Mean to the Children and Young Adults in Our Communities

Most of us were taught in schools and by our families and friends that America is the land of opportunity, a place where anyone can get ahead and achieve his or her dreams. This ideal is found in the Declaration of Independence and has been part of our culture ever since we became a nation. But these days opportunity—an American ideal standing side-by-side with freedom as two of the most profound and deeply revered concepts in our shared value system—is at risk.

- There is a great deal of evidence that the social and economic upward mobility that previous generations enjoyed is no longer available to many families and young adults, across the country as well as in New Hampshire.
- As many as half of all Americans have seen flat wages, wealth, and earning power over the past twenty years.
- While some Americans have been able to be upwardly mobile and to become wealthier, they represent a very small fraction of the population.
- In short, the ideal of equal opportunity—an equal chance to do well compared to our neighbors—is not being realized for many of us.

To understand the problem, we focus the information below on five periods of life when opportunities to thrive, learn, and become financially independent are especially critical (see the graphic on page 9).

- **At birth, and even before**, children are profoundly affected by who their parents are—how old they are, how educated they are, what jobs they hold, if any, and how prepared they are to meet the demands of their children. Having one parent rather than two parents to care for children is especially influential.

- **Before children start school** at age 5 or 6, they may or may not have had high quality out-of-home care while their parents work; the kind of attention (and how much) they receive from parents and other adults will make a big difference.

- **When children are in school**, the kind of curriculum opportunities, like the availability of Advanced Placement classes in high school, affect their chances of getting ahead. Whether they graduate from high school, what they learned (as measured by standardized test scores), and whether they had adults who they could trust and receive guidance from all matter a great deal.

- **Attending and completing a two-year or four-year college**, how much debt is incurred for post-secondary education, and the availability of jobs **after high school** or college also influences the kinds of opportunities that young adults have.

- **Then, as they begin families of their own**, the kind of job they have, how much they are paid, the affordability of housing, and their success at becoming active citizens in their communities all are related to social and economic mobility. Today, we see that 40 to 50 percent of all families are simply not making much progress in terms of income, education, housing, and participating in civic life. Should this concern us as everyday citizens, community leaders, and elected officials? If it does, what should we do about it?
From Birth to Adulthood; When Does Opportunity Knock?

Note: Each of the numbers in the graph above correspond to the tables and graphs that begin on page 12.
Who Is Getting Wealthier, Who Is Not?

In New Hampshire, over the past fifty years the top 40 percent of families saw their incomes grow significantly, while the bottom 60 percent of families saw relatively little or no growth in income. These trends match the trends for the country as a whole.

Why Has Inequality Grown?

Why Has Inequality Grown?
% who volunteered the following as the main reason why the gap between the rich and everyone else has increased, among:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEMOCRATS/LEAN DEM</th>
<th>REPUBLICANS/LEAN REP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26% Tax system/loopholes</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8% Congress/government policies</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8% Jobs/unemployment</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8% Corporations/executives</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5% Greed</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6% Wages/gaps in wages</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6% Rich have power/opportunity</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% Recession/generaleconomy</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% Work ethic of poor/gov’t assistance programs</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Question was asked of those who said there has been an increase between the rich and everyone else in the U.S. in the last 10 years. Reasons are listed in order mentioned by entire sample that was asked the question.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

When asked what they think the primary causes of growing income inequality are, Americans are divided on many issues along party lines.

Do We Believe the American Dream Still Exists?

The New York Times Poll

Do you think it is possible to start out poor in this country, work hard and become rich?

Until recently, those of us who believe the American Dream to be achievable far outnumbered those who did not believe the Dream could come true. These days, fewer people believe the Dream can be achieved and more people say it is not possible.
1 Mother’s Age at Birth


Birth rates to mothers in their teens and early twenties have decreased since 1990, whereas birth rates for mothers 35 and above have increased. On average, mothers were 26 years of age at their first child’s birth, and 40.6 percent of mothers were unmarried. Children born to a single, young mother are more likely to miss out on social and economic opportunity compared to children born to married mothers who are in their 20s and 30s.
2 Mother’s Educational Level

From the Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data (2013).
http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/05/10/record-share-of-new-mothers-are-college-educated/

Mothers with infant children in the United States today are more educated than they ever have been. In 2011, more than six-in-ten (66 percent) had at least some college education, while 34 percent had a high school diploma or less and just 14 percent lacked a high school diploma. This is good news for children since we know that children whose parents have only a high school diploma or did not complete high school are much less likely to do well in school themselves compared to children of more educated parents.
There has been a significant increase in single-parent families where the parent has a high school education or less. The number of single-parent families with a college education has stayed about the same. Today, there are many more children being raised by a single parent with little education, and these children are less likely to be socially or economically mobile.
4 Child Poverty in New Hampshire

New Hampshire child poverty levels in the state vary widely by county. For instance, from 1999 to 2013:

- Overall child poverty in the state rose from 6.5 percent to 8.7 percent. This increase was highest for children under 5 years old, who saw an increase of over 5 percentage points in poverty levels (9.1 percent to 14.3 percent).
- However, this varied by region. Rockingham county children under 5 years old experienced poverty increases from 5.1 percent to 8.7 percent (3.6 percentage points) whereas Hillsborough county children under 5 years old experienced poverty increases from 9.4 percent to 15.2 percent (5.8 percentage points).
- State child poverty rates for children 5–17 years of age increased by about 3 percentage points (7.4 percent to 10.1 percent), but Coos County saw almost four times this increase from 10.6 to 22.5 percent.

From the NH Housing Finance Authority (2013), which pulls data from the US Census American Community Survey.
5 Early Language Development

Between 18 and 24 months, the children from a higher socioeconomic status added more than 260 new words to their vocabulary, while children from a lower socioeconomic status learned 30 percent fewer new words over this period.

By 2 years of age, the difference between infants from rich and poor families in language processing skills and vocabulary knowledge is equal to a six-month gap, which has developmental implications for children’s learning.


6 How Does Parents’ Education Affect Their Children’s Child Care Arrangements?

Over the last fifteen years, better-educated mothers of kids aged 0–4 have shifted from informal to more professional day care arrangements for their children, whereas less educated working moms have come to rely more heavily on arrangements with relatives (especially grandparents) or no regular arrangements at all. Class differences in child care for somewhat older children (aged 4–6) are even more substantial, with about 70 percent of college-educated moms using center-based, professional day care, compared to about 40 percent of high-school-educated moms.

7 “Good Night Moon” Time

Time spent by both parents working on children’s development during ages 0–4 (that is, reading to children, working on cognitive skills, learning)

1965–2013


Parents with a Bachelor’s degree or more were more likely to spend time doing activities that were developmentally appropriate and stimulating with their children than parents with a high school education or less. This would include being read to and engaging in other activities that foster learning. This might be called “Good Night Moon” time.
Parents with higher incomes increasingly spend higher amounts of money on their child’s care, education, and enrichment (music lessons, school supplies, etc.) compared to parents with lower incomes. Participating in these kinds of activities helps children to succeed in school and later in life.
9 Fourth Grade Reading Scores

Gap in 4th Grade Reading Scores by Family Income, 2013
Scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress by Free or Reduced Price Lunch Eligibility
New Hampshire


Performance on state 4th grade reading tests demonstrates that New Hampshire students from higher income families significantly outperform students from lower income families. This is true nationally as well.
10 After-School Activities

Gap in After School Activity Participation by Family Income
Percent of Kids Age 6 to 17 Participating in at Least One Organized Activity Outside of School

New Hampshire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Income</th>
<th>Percent of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200% or Less (FPL)</td>
<td>60% NH, 65% US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 200% (FPL)</td>
<td>90% NH, 90% US</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Details: School-age kids with at least one activity outside of school by federal poverty level (FPL)
Data: 2011-2012 National Study of Children’s Health
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics,
State and Local Area Integrated Telephone Survey, 2011-2012 National Survey of Children’s Health


In recent years, after-school activities have increasingly required more fees, usually charged to students or their parents. Poor children (those at or below 200 percent of the poverty level) participate less in after-school activities than children who are not poor, partly because their families cannot afford the fees. Students who are less engaged outside of school often don’t do as well academically and socially.
Who Has Access to AP Classes?

![Bar graph showing gap in access to AP courses by poverty status in New Hampshire compared to the US, 2011-2012.](image)

Details: Percent of districts in states with access to AP curriculum by national school district poverty quartile. Source: Civil Rights Data Collection 2011-2012.


In New Hampshire, all children have less access to Advanced Placement courses compared to their national peers. The poorest children in New Hampshire are far less likely to have access to AP courses, which are important for college admissions and success.
SAT Scores and Family Income

In both the United States and New Hampshire, children from families with higher incomes consistently outperform children from families with lower incomes, on both the reading and math sections of the SAT (a common college admissions exam). This has consequences for who has access to college; poorer students are likely to have lower scores and therefore are less likely to be admitted to college.

Details: SAT scores for students by family income category

High School Graduation


Children who live in poverty, as determined by eligibility for free and reduced price lunches, graduate high school at lower rates, particularly in the city of Manchester.
14 Who Has a Mentor?

Students from the poorest 25 percent of families have fewer mentors than those from the wealthiest 25 percent of families. Having a mentor as an adolescent increases the likelihood of academic, social, and economic success.

15  Do I Matter?

From the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2013).

Fewer than half of New Hampshire students feel that in their community they matter to people. This sense of “not mattering” can have consequences for mental health, substance use, and future aspirations. Boys are more likely than girls to feel they matter to others. Hispanic/Latino students are least likely to feel they matter to others.
After High School

16 Educational Attainment and Jobs

By 2020:

- 65 percent of all jobs in the economy will require postsecondary education and training beyond high school.
- 35 percent of job openings will require at least a bachelor’s degree.
- 30 percent of job openings will require some college or an associate’s degree.
- 36 percent of job openings will not require education beyond high school.


17 Community Colleges

Nearly half of all postsecondary students nationwide are enrolled in community college. Increasingly, poor kids who go on to college are concentrated in community colleges—14 percent of poor kids in college in 1972 were in community colleges compared with 32 percent in 2004. Although 81 percent of students say they plan to get a four-year degree when they enter community college, only 12 percent actually do.

Who Gets a College Degree?

Growing gap in gaining a college degree, by family income, 1970–2011


College students from higher income families graduate from college at increasingly higher rates than do students from lower income families. This trend strongly affects the future jobs and wages of these different groups.
19 Student Debt

New Hampshire has the highest in-state tuition and fees for public four-year institutions in the United States. For example, the total cost of education for one year at UNH (with room and board) is currently $26,912. New Hampshire students on average leave college with $32,795 in student loan debt, the highest average debt in the nation.

From the Project on Student Debt (http://ticas.org/posd/map-state-data#overlay=posd/state_data/2014/nh) and the University of New Hampshire (http://www.unh.edu/business-services/tuitug.html)

20 Higher Education and the American Dream


According to a 2013 poll from Gallup and the Lumina Foundation, the majority of Americans believe higher education leads to a good job and a better life.
What Do New Hampshire Workers Earn?

- New Hampshire state wage data show large numbers of people in low-paying jobs. For example, more than 48,000 New Hampshire people work as cashiers or retail sales people, according to New Hampshire wage and employment data for 2014. Their average starting pay is $8.31 an hour, the state reported.
- Another 11,800 worked in fast food jobs. They started at $8.17, and their median wage was $9 an hour.
- New Hampshire is first among the states in the portion of its public assistance dollars that go to working families, according to a study released this week by researchers at the University of California at Berkeley.

From the Union Leader (2015)
http://www.unionleader.com/article/20150417/NEWS06/150419273/0/SEARCH#sthash.juC4JGiW.dpuf
Where You Live in New Hampshire Affects How Much You Earn


Average hourly wages in some parts of the state are much higher than in other parts of the state.
People are increasingly living in areas segregated by income. This means that poor children may only see other poor children where they live, and wealthier children may only see other wealthy children where they live. This is likely to affect the ability of poorer children to succeed socially and economically.
New Hampshire residents with higher education levels and incomes are more likely to vote or contact a public official. That is, people who are more educated and earn more money are likely to be more active citizens, as measured by voting and speaking to public officials about something that is important to them.
Appendix C: Small Group Transcriptions by Site and Date
When Opportunity Stops Knocking:
New Hampshire’s Kids and the American Dream
*Note: Group letters are not always consecutive. This does not mean a group is missing.

Events held Wednesday, May 6, 2015

Berlin Group A –
Impacts on American Dream
- divorced parents – able to pay for education (questioned)
- future marriage
- childhood illness
- education
- raised by grandparents
- “strict” taught to be independent
- culture vs. generation
- head start families – differences in education
- cycles of poverty
- early intervention in early education
- high tax American exports
- business money going away
- increased debt
- rise in disability – autism diagnosed
- learning disabilities – population whole %
- changes in our own local econ loss of mill last 30 years
- lack of jobs on social fiber in community
- drugs rise
- NH low income rate – job loss
- Lack of mill job recovery
- State/federal pris. On local
- After working in factory in high school incentive to go to further education
- “school of hard knocks” – example of youth incentives to go further in education
- disability vs. disadvantage
- college in 1980’s – tuition has no increased by 400%
- college expenses
- generation older, less debt
- younger want what parents have, cycle of debt to pursue American Dream
- needs vs. wants
- work ethic
- define American Dream – older = home, younger = car/boat
- start work later
- more optimism then – more pessimism now
- haves vs have nots cycle

Brainstorm
- cost of living
- state assistance reduced for single mom if got a job
- question of data provided
- wants to research own data
- page 25: differences in rural community vs urban communities
- positive aspects to youth in rural community = better opportunity
- value of youth in rural
- wanted to know data past 12th grader – may increase as get older
- engagement level in community and motivation in age 20-30
- age 21 I feel like I matter to my community, family and mentors.
- Discussing page 25
- 1 contribute, have more time at 21
- different in support mentors
- encourages her to mentor, too
- different languages spoken at home – kids selected for ESOL statistic
- question to data above: causes?
- DLL learners – testing questions
- Push early diagnosis
- Indicators of success
- Ability to find a trade as a second language learner
- Clear that poverty is a negative variable for success
- Educational attainment of mothers
- Time at home with kids limited
- Increases with kids page 17 # 7
- Parent work nights – other day = cost of childcare
- Kids years ago spent playing outside with other kids
- Social emotional more important than academic success
- Current as kids... play with each other or by themselves
- Less kids in neighborhoods
- Less kids play outside?
- Kids access to social before school – not playing outside
- High quality childcare vs 2 working parents
- Because I work, I can’t give my children things, time that my neighbors can
- Working 2+ jobs in home to feed kids
- Explain to children, modeled hard working vs the friends who can afford
- Teaching kids what need vs want
- Family dinner

What is the most compelling issue/cause affecting opportunity gap?
- lack of drive for education, independence
- lack of early childhood education
- young enough, social emotional
- poverty, income inequality
- not allowing kids to be kids
- NH high quality in some areas and not in others
- Decrease optimism, hope and aspiring

Noticed changes? What are they? Likely Causes?
- prices in everything including education
- college unaffordable for most
- who does not have “hopeful future” – affects those in poverty plus those who have college debt, then.
- Cost of committing to college education
- High school opportunities could be better... is experiences in future work force.
- Desire to grab, take, enjoy opportunities
- Maybe an achievement gap vs opportunity gap
- Ability for AP classes vs opportunity
- Data trying to show to only fix poverty... may not
- Drive. Responsibility
- Families who are striving and not allowed opportunities
- Health barriers, transportation barriers
- No regard in working hard – leads to income inequality
- Wages you deserve – 2 jobs
- Pay for college 3 camps (1. Write check 2. Take on debt 3. )
- Work 2 jobs can’t afford ski trips or vacations

Biggest Impact Ideas
- we need shared vision without influence of money
- people who have wealth it takes away community, democracy
- we spend too much time looking at negative vs. positive stuff
- are we adding to a negative narrative?
- Culture of misery likes company
- Negative emotions lead to negative choices
- Local jobs – Wal-Mart, AVH, prisons lacking opportunity and creating employment in future as motivation for youth.
- Locally full day kindergarten 1st time
- Proven practices
- Community awareness share ideas information
- Come together – forum like this
- Balsams project NH impact? – money investment North Country
- Tourism law wage, no insurance

Share out:
1. support for early childhood
2. create ways to inspire, encourage optimism, hope and aspiration. Taking pride, get involved
3. cycles of generational poverty

Berlin Group B –
Brainstorm:
- more competitive today (jobs)
- decline – in jobs, opportunities
- decline in people willing to support community
- more stratification – different economic strata stay within that strata
- lack of guidance for future beyond high school

Surprises. What we learned, questions about info? What did you notice about info?
Brainstorm
- kids don’t know what is “out there” don’t know the world
- people just surviving
- when “stuck” in a negative pattern – economically/educationally difficult to get out
- lower income – think about today – can’t plan and think about future – living day to day
- reading – 3rd grade is the key year. Must be on grade level to succeed.
- Large increase in screen time today
- Early childhood education is so important today

Sharing thoughts – what issue is most compelling to you/community – post its and tweets
Key Questions/Priorities: What is happening in NH

- young people do not feel they can add to local economy/community – they have to concentrate on themselves – work to survive
- livable wages are hard to come by here. People may need social services
- housing is affordable but other costs are higher here
- even with affordable housing, many rent due to maintaining and other costs
- work ethic today is different
- today has added stress jobs, home, raising children, relationships, experiences for children, family time – work to maintain home
- no more stay at home parent – mom or dad – both must work
- poverty in Coos continues to grow
- 20-30 years ago you could walk out of high school and walk into the mill – even a high school drop out
- Parents cannot earn enough to support own family
- lack of morals/ethics – need more mentors and good examples.
- Adult role models needed
- Family needs to be role model but have to support work to live
- Increase in one parent family
- Society is filled with negative role models – media, movie/sport stars.

What does this mean for our future?

- culture of poverty is self-sustaining
- society of me – not we – people do not care about community
- community will take care of me attitude

Key points – final share out

1. Economic Divide – One section of society focuses on today, another focuses on near future, higher income can do/plan for the future
2. 3rd grade child reading on grade level or child will never catch up – address this
3. 0-4 years personality is being formed and solidified, early childhood education is so important – provide training and education services
4. foundation of learning – early learning is important
5. will the next generation have it better than this generation – this may not be the case.

Whose responsibility to take action?

- local government
- business and industry
- individuals need to take responsibility for our community. We, as individuals, are the government.

Berlin Group C –

Big Picture (Themes)

- depending on where you begin, your path will be different
- pride and work ethics – in past vs. now
- emphasis on education
- mentors
- moral relativeness
- more money into “programs” but gap is growing = is the money going to the right place.
- Understanding the cycle of poverty
- Mental health
- Free, mandatory preschool
- How to make change – begin when young
- Income levels relative to cost of living
- Past – one income families could survive difficult to survive – why?
- Reactive society vs. preventative approach = root of the problem is a symptom of the problem
- Entitlement – begin at the bottom and work your way up
- Opportunities

Biggest take-aways
- there is a right and wrong
- need to start at the beginning – early literacy
- graph 14
- graph 7
- a good mentor is critical – for parents
- early childhood education matters
- teach the parents how – the small details

Key issues/solutions
- need for mentors for adults and children
- share their success stories and how they got there
- community valuing education – teach a new way of thinking (reactive vs proactive)
- early childhood development matters
- paradigm shift in education
- more money so they can succeed and education
- see the research of other countries
- pay teachers
- quality costs money
- A system to fund early childhood education and after school programs – money for school facilities
- Tax structure
- Grassroots effort of change – value education (build a movement)

Themes within stories:
- importance of safety net both financial and social
- ability to learn from failures (can with safety net – without safety net = devastating)
- the cycle of poverty – culture
- Past – all adults valued education, pride, work ethic, life time career
- Now- only some value education, more flexibility needed in individuals
- Change in percent of income to cost of living

Key points
- fully funded early childhood education
- paradigm shift to a culture that values education
- grassroots (local control)

Laconia Group A –
Group Demographics –
- 2 under 40
- 6 over 40 (over 60?)
- farmers daughter – college – prof – retired
- poverty – gi bill –phone co – retired
- child of alcoholics – jobs not professions – “married well” – homemaker – retired
- single parent child @ 10 – worked hard and made it happen for myself
- 3 teachers
- 1 RI transplant
- younger more in touch with reality of what’s happening in schools (consensus)
- 6 grandparents worried about grandchildren
- 2 teachers choosing career over financial

Earlier childhood education is key  
Fewer people believe American Dream is possible  
Higher socio economic levels = more opportunities  
Poverty levels rising  
Income disparity by country  
Income = afterschool opp  
AP course opp low in NH  
Mentoring – higher wealth more access  
Fewer than ½ HS students in NH feel they don’t matter in their community  
NH – Highest student debt  
Wealthiest have most upward mobility  
NH – 1st in nation with assistance going to working families  
Housing patterns < gulags – like with like  
Community college – follow through to four year college  
Voters – income/education levels

Education  
- every child should come out of school prepared to move on – not friendly or supportive of families and children  
- settle for low wage jobs – service industry jobs  
- maybe raise the minimum wage – life needs better met – grocery store for example does better – hire/grow and pay more.  
- Bug proof tax – broad base tax structure  
- Working people should be able to afford needs/life needs  
- Self worth of high school student and mentoring available – how do we shift this?

Taxes and revenues  
- $150 yearly fee sbus  
- need long term think or with acceptable problems in data  
- cig tax/gas tax/similar hurt low income people more due to behavior patterns/ ee options  
- legislative structure – lack of willingness in two year term to make long term investments in communities  
- supporting mentorship programs – trend nationally  
- anti-government groups/individuals attempt to take power from government as in government shouldn’t address social problems  
- as a community – how do we do this in spite of pro governed and anti government  
- local decision – high impact on teachers  
- 75% tax load is on the people we trust to educate our children – we aren’t valuing in budget but relying on them – value issue

Education - early Education – Opportunity in Community  
- living classroom – alternative learning ops – ownership/pride  
- mentoring/job shadowing/ELO’s  
- ap course < cooperation between
- mentorship through scouts 4H
- personalizing education for families/children from L.I. families
- be less fearful of children from poverty
- early investment in central life stages
- tutoring – enhance skills, extra help
- opp gap for students – incase students don’t have access to technology that high income students
- accessing literacy is not with technology not paper/pencil
- low income students will be behind due to lack of technology
- Is technology the great equalizer or not?
- Mentoring – peer to peer valuable and sometimes more powerful than adult to youth mentoring
- Opportunities exist to switch thinking from teaching to facilitating learning
- Graduate level courses are full of students without life or professional experience
- Students continue to be students
- Professions that require master level for entry level increased
- Ed requirement extended schooling are hurting opportunities for youth of low socio economic status
- Look – PSU – how does someone pay for that to make 30k/year
- Paying students loans is crippling

Belknap county
- $ qq/home fee to help with budget
- need better explanations re: budget items
- are facts useful in changing peoples minds?
  - No it’s emotion, experience, background
  - 1st experience with town meeting – for 39 years someone gets up and speaks and has changed my mind
  - stories/personal exchange is more important
  - ex: NH polls – people aren’t showing up to vote for fact based issues – ex: fed elections
  - stories backed up with facts
  - don’t give facts without stories and vice versa as some hear facts, some hear stories
  - hold legislators accountable – visit at community level and explain voting actions
  - exchange thoughts/ideas
- substance abuse
  - why wasn’t this included in data
  - connection affects all socio-economic categories
  - substance abuse and mental health have high affect on children/students
  - incarceration rates – affect on family structure – students performance
  - how our system handles substance abuse and socio economic status – fire or imprisonment
  - affect on children
  - health ins – in patient vs outpatient opportunity – up for budget cuts
  - downward spiral

Education
- access for all
- intervention in early education
- affordability of higher education post – secondary
- mentoring/afterschool
- technology – available in k-12 – available post secondary
- access for low income for tech
- experience level differences in tech levels based on socio-economic levels
- individualized education plans
- educating child vs educate to the test
- being ready to learn/basic needs met at home (homeless, hunger, med care, dental care)
- community supporting and wanting a high quality education (tax issue)
- self worth of youth/community worth
- facilities reflect value on education

Taxes
- willingness to make long term investment in kids and communities
- need to change tax structure?
- Need for broad base tax?
- Sentiment that is the city/town isn’t benefitting me, why should I pay for it?
- Lack of interest in greater good
- Attitude of what’s in it for me?
- Retirement population believed to be “of means”
- Have lack of interest in community/greater good.

“War on Drugs”
- targeting wrong people
- wasting time and money on suppliers
- not reducing demand – rehab/support budget cuts counters reducing demands
- socio economic status helps chose drugs – OxyContin – money – dr backache – those with insurance
- marihuana – pricier than heroin
- heroin most affordable
- question of synthetic drugs?

Report out
- Education
  - Intervention
  - Mentoring
  - Technology opportunities
- Taxes
  - Structure change needed?
  - Long term investment for kids
  - Value on education
- Substance abuse
  - Why was this not included
  - Huge factor in opportunity gap
  - Drug use/incarcerated and affect on youth in school
  - Drug problem is across all socio-economic categories just the cost of drug charges
  - Mental health

P.S. Question: is it possible to have a conversation like this with our local or state reps? – May 22nd event locally CADY INC, Ayotte, Hassan others will be there. 6/5 Youth Summit for Laconia/Greater Lakes Region
Laconia Group D –

Brainstorm:
- Socioeconomic status drastically impacts what you are able to give to kids early on (books/activities)
- Kids that have more money have easier access to expensive activities; skiing, access to transportation to more activities
- Larger gap, lower decile has gone down while upper decile has gone up
- Organizations that are provided opportunities no longer can due to cost restrictions that they incur ie liability, school days, transportation to access
- More rural makes it tough when compared to more urban areas
- Families don’t have time to do these thinks like reading because their time is allocated to the survival essentials, food, clothing, and shelter.
- Experienced/ saw that lower income students going into college were offered less financial aid than more affluent students
- Education levels of parents directly impacted where the kids end up

What is happening in NH? What does this mean for our future?
- Education plays a high role in this
  - Many children that can’t stay in their homes due to multiple issues and are scarred already by the time they get into the “system” and then when they fall out of the “system” they are not prepared for life. Kids lost trust in their caregivers.
- Drug issue is impacting parents ability to parent
  - Kids in systems are not aware of the opportunities/recourses that are available. Lack of promotion.
- NH kids think that they are just as disadvantaged as the inner city kids that come to NH fro outside i.e. kids from inner city MA that come to summer camp in NH
- Sense of community used to be stronger when we were more accessible – neighbors knew neighbors, neighborhoods were home. Safety issues for kids being outside – they tend to stay inside more
- Latchkey situations exist more today where kids don’t have someone at home or easy to access
- Kids are scared to call home when they are sick because mom/caregiver had to work
- Future is bleak – we don’t think the next generation can get any better
- Perfect storm is brewing that is creating a scary future
- Lack of awareness of issues in most of NH

Community Solutions and Next Steps
- Level the playing field so if schools require computer access to complete work, there is access to computers. Community centers and transportation.
- More volunteer support dedicated to helping kids access/use computers. Take advantage of strong sense of community/volunteerism that exists
- Create more community involvement for kids at an earlier age. Community action programs, clubs and sports.
- Provide more transportation solutions especially in rural areas that rely on single community i.e. Wolfbororo, Tuftunboro. Effingham.
- Find ways to allow kids to get together, church, school. Community center and make sure they can get there. Develop a sense of community early in life.
- Since the kids have to be in schools anyways, take advantage of that time and existing transportation options
- More focus on funding education – we are very quick to make cuts in education/services. This perpetuates the problem,
- Spending less on incarceration and more on education or spend more on education to reduce causes for incarceration or recidivism. Provide resources to educate people on captions instead of drugs, violence, and neglect.
- Provide more targeted volunteer support mechanisms – people are there, we just need to connect people to opportunities to volunteer
- Volunteer uber
- Mentoring programs
- More funding in education, especially in early childhood education
- More funding to promote family/parent recourse centers
- More inclusive community building activities. Accessible, cheap, art
- Have colleges use info provided on financial needs in their financial aid decisions and fundraising to be dedicated to financial support
- Tap into retired teachers as a recourse for after school home work support
- Problem is so big – we need to shift our focus ot be able to identify and grade ourselves/community and start there
- As a greeting – how are the children doing?
- Have kids listening session
- Properly tax and limited soc. sec. income cannot afford increase
Who is responsible?
- kids- get them involved: kids cabinet
- stay, work, play
- civic leaders
- legislatures
- create synergies between the haves and have not’s
Final Priorities
- model “Better Together” or other mentoring programs that allow and promote community ownership in the solutions. Tap into these quality and willing volunteers who want to engage.
- More community building activities that are inclusive, accessible and promote multiple cu hures/ socioeconomic places
- Promote more family planning education for younger parents (or potential parents)
- Transportation and accessibility to community programs (be willing to look at change) vans vs school busses.
- Extreme poverty and extreme wealth creates problems
- Coordinated effort to engage active leaders in creating solutions at the state level.

Nashua Group A –
Inclusive school environment
- parent groups
- businesses – be clear about what they need. Work with educators
- focus loans for students where the job demand is
- Public/Private/Civic/Non-Profit
Too many silos: Circle of concern. Community around each journey. Community ownership.
- All roles: connection. Ex: anti-poverty – pillars in circles
- Storied and connect resources
- People matter
- Affordable school to work
- Create jobs in the US
- Business, schools, job market

Students in NH do better – income – 4th grade reading
Daycare – Home vs Out of Home by income and by environment
  - income and resources related to world view
  - Kids feel they don’t matter

Fees for activities that need to be free – layers
Access to college – to jobs by income (debt)
  - degrees- income

Exposure to possible futures
Notice? Questions? Surprises?
  - using our money? And time, talent and resources?
  - School to career (detoured?) guidance
  - School debt – ROI. – variety alts to college.
  - Job investment in US
  - Feeling they matter and can contribute – personal power.

Resources:
  - school – work connection (jobs)
  - people feel they matter and therefore they give back

Working:
  - charter schools
  - student – teacher ratio
  - community college
  - skill building – less debt
  - transfer to 4 year
  - online project based learning

Barriers:
  - regulation (hurts innovation)
  - can’t adapt to educational needs
  - not valuing alternative students and significant adults
  - drop outs at comm call.

Final Priorities:
1. Coordination and Connection and Community
   - Biz/School – Job market: transition through community college
   - Pillars – all stake holders
   - Stories: familiar to each other
   - Link time, talent treasure
2. Everyone feels they matter
3. Jobs in the US
4. Taxes?

Nashua Group B –
What do you notice about this info?
  - Why are we having kids so late, attainable in early age?
  - 12% at community college not getting 4 year degree- is it a different quality of student that can not get 4 year degree – study skills etc.?

What surprises you about the info? Did you learn something you did not know?
- kids not staying in the same schools because of high cost of housing – they move school district to school district
- Would like to see class sizes and staffing levels of the schools
- NH public policy impact on immigrants - immigrants vs. NH natives have higher educational levels.
- Immigrants more likely to start/open businesses
- Don’t allow sub income levels
- Belief opportunity is not available and actual opportunity where do they meet?

What clarifying question do you have about the info?
- Difficult to break bonds of generational poverty
- Future generations not doing as well
- All data looking at income – how about looking at locations?

What do you notice – A Brainstorm: Themes/Big Picture Ideas
- It stinks to be poor
- If we invest in early childhood, we can improve outcomes
- Headstart, see an upward trend, but back into family environments without Headstart and gains diminished.
- A lot of money goes into education
- Less recourses/opps – going way to be able to achieve same as prior generation
- NH has higher income but we are doing worse. People leave NH

How do you connect the info to your own experiences or other info you know of?
- Coach sports and scholarships are about 60% in Manchester – take things for granted and not available to some. Ex: YouTube at home Internet access or sports training.
- Where doing book report?

Do you see trends in your own community that relate to or challenge the data?
- More investments in multi-family homes, less quantity put higher quality
- Public school money is going to charter schools
- Charter schools do not get high quality because funding still lower.

What info or personal experiences should we discuss to understand the issue(s)
- did not ask question

Are there other ideas about children, education, jobs, neighborhoods, housing or community to share?
- did not ask question.

What issue is most compelling to you and your community?
- post-it on the blue wall

Key Questions and Priorities: Please speak briefly about you perspective and share what you tweeted or wrote on the post it.
- study – all kids had adults could confide in and felt belonged do better
- how are we going to redefine the American Dream w/reduction in recourses
- when did the American Dream become all about money?
- Note: Our founding fathers were wealthy
- American dream is so personal – have people define it and their environment to reflect it
- Sheet on mentors – make sure kids have connections so thee is not a lot of need for recourses
- Community college not a good end point – why no access to a BA for poor kids?
- Mentor graph – highest non family mentors rings true to actual life experience of participant
- We may have personal views of American Dream but the gov. sets the norms for American Dream. EX: Taxes etc.
- College affordability – all people should have the ability to earn a degree but without debt – many one accident or illness away from bankruptcy
Why is it that you need a degree to have quality of life?

What does your last page input mean for our future?
- Outcomes if opportunity trends continue into the future?
- How can we make sure every young person has opportunities for a good life?
- Many going to community colleges are leading to immediate job offers ex: technical manufacturing
- Chose a major that can be used for a job or liberal arts degree does give you opps.
- NHTL has some of the best opportunities for employment. EX: GE

What solutions would have the biggest impact to your life? In your community?
- Circles of greater Nashua now starting up: those in upper middle class get together to mentor to other for support and modeling.
- Mentoring would have a huge impact. Big brothers and Big sisters for not have enough mentors. Solution outside of gov.
- 180k and 40k do not live in same neighborhoods. Set incentive and policies that lead to a good mix of income sets good examples for the kids.
- If mixed income neighborhoods, then we will want to all take care of each other where gaps may be for families
- Organizations like 1 Greater Nashua – leadership and family engagement at a middle school in Nashua – cultural sensitivity etc – develop ambassadors from middle school to high school.
- Libraries, community college, adult learning to for community navigators 0 mentoring/pairing new comers with community navigators for immigrants and those with limited recourses
- Orgs like Gate City for cultural areas
- Org to connect anyone to the appropriate recourses.

Whose responsibility is it to take action? Roles of each listed.
- Local, State national government?
  - Work solutions at the local level
  - Fed gov: not very efficient at spending
  - Fed gov. can provide free college education
  - Hire as many people as possible
- The private sector
  - BAE – if built a parkway and garage and build workforce housing where existing parking lot is, then can live and work and play in Nashua.
  - The non profit sector
  - The civic sector?
  - Add the faith sector
  - Add the individual as well.

What types of changes seem most important for NH and why?
- make affordable college so I do not go out of state.
- STEAM focus for education
- Create environment of where people of of school want to start.
- NH has lowest charitable giving and volunteering – maybe tax incentive to be involved in the community.

What do you believe are changes that should not occur with respect to this topic?
- no answer

Final Priorities
1. Community involvement: mentoring, access to support recourses
2. We focused on young adults (high school/college age people.)
3. Supporting the needs/environments of the young adults in NH

**Nashua Group C**

Community Solutions: What solutions could have biggest impact on your life in your community?
- Achieve - 80% or higher - HS Graduates. Proficient in math and reading
- Produce more literate youth that can count
- Are educational standards developmentally appropriate?
- Communities that come together achieve more. Deepens understanding.
- Increase child care tax credit – require all school districts to provide before and after school programs
- Increase parenting education
- More youth in technical programs/post-secondary programs
- Increase mentoring/coaching for high school youth
- More STEM/STEAM programming
- Increase funding for extra-curricular activities to make accessible to all
- Promote and increase safest affordable housing
- Raise wages to livable wages for all
- Businesses provide childcare credit/support
- Increase awareness and appreciation of post-secondary options
- Tie teacher salaries to student academic performance

Are there any common ground thoughts or ideas to close gap or create opportunity?
- Compliments to NH Listens
- Communities that work together can achieve more (bring elders and youngsters together)
- Vocational opportunities need to be promoted
- Improving access and affordability to childcare for children 0-5 years.

**Nashua Group D**

Brainstorm
- mentorship for children
- higher ed responsibility
- online and class opportunity
- early life – motherhood transition to being a mom – people don’t have enough social support/social network – immigrants are on their own
- early bonding 18 months – critical
- USA – doesn’t provide supporting practices or work/business policies
- Early brain development for children – high stress environments have impact on time and development
- NH among bottom 5 invest in early childhood education
- Nashua fortunate in tax base – plan in Nashua to create public supported pre-school and kindergarten
- American dream – two definitions: Work hard and get rich vs prosperity and chance to achieve
- Children in academic tracks in school are pigeon holed and it sets in expectations
- Children isolated/separated by academic tracks – the effect is internalized – define self worth based on track
- Isolated by socioeconomic class
- Lower income students and learning curve
- Special ed, IQ lacking
- STEM, pressure to achieve test scores outcome measures
Industry – consultants, business – test scores are about money
- We are not as segregated by race or religion but how we live – people by income
- Data drive society data: there is an expectation of achievement and if kids don’t reach, school is a failure – students are numbers
- Single moms, age at birth, ed levels
- Interaction of all 3 as if they were orthogonal
- Need combination of factors
- Ed in MA supportive of special ed and NH – let student move on when wanted, student choice
- Figure 8 – spending on kids. We think of all action one way but if summers are growth opps for privileged
- Starting pt between kids is so unequal Treat affirmative action can’t close the gap – Affirmative action is resources/investment made in kids
- Early intervention – early prevention and integration – early education needs more money – we are always working with crisis
- It’s always been about class but today recourses for opp pool is dwindled so it affects everyone.
- Need more effective civic education brought back into ed system
- Individual in relation to community
- Media- allows anyone who has money to put out info
- Where is place for votes to get info (unbiased, unmediated) all elective debates all about money
- Fairness doctrine – politicians from different views were given = air time
- What about local news networks and ??- still cater to those with money
- Print media?
- Monitor – good source – newspapers owned by other companies
- NHPR –Boston NPR
- Info age – need to translate info into knowledge public appetite for materialism in media does not exacerbated by highly materialistic
- Reliance of idea of political party
- Segregation by schools – for title one schools – month to month
- Housing – higher income area, bicentennial, birch mills – school system has good reputation
- Segregation by age – income large, ethnicity
- No multi generational income mixing
- Rise of gated communities – affirmation of status
- 5th/middle school – too many choices – tools – yoga, meditation, mentoring, adult who believes in child
- focus more on college are a basic education – free college (4 year)
- Creating economic incentives for bringing people back in the state because that’s a business incentive – Bonus, make this area attractive for college grads, 20 something’s need training/public train spirit
- Americorp – leadership for older kids
- Role models for younger kids – mentoring
- Expanding programs like this in NH – “mandatory” service.
- Mandatory national service for 2 years – a gap year
- No public med school. Dental school – high need for doctors – her students here to serve
- Early childhood 0-3 mother and child – focuses on foreign average development – expectation to be able to speak it
- Celebrating diversity – everybody fits into one box.
- Lost value that we need an educated populace and cannot have this without putting recourses into public school – effective for democracy
- Volunteerism and service (mandatory) have to work with other people, go elsewhere and build sense of community
- NH looking at youth as cost not as investment and we need to shift this way of thinking
- Underlying economic distribution is at the root – look at taxation of groups, state budget, revenue stream, revenue economic worlds
- Find a different way to fund schools that doesn’t include property tax
- Underlying income inequality is problem at national level – national policy has to occur then we can go local/state
- Invest in support system where families don’t have recourses not just education – child care (identify single parent needs) others – broaden investment in prevention building ip support where they don’t exist
- Increase opps for children at all levels to increase world around them – every child has opportunities outside of school as well as in school – showing them something more
- Address income disparity
- Provide healthy education opportunity for 0-3, education has to be a foundation
- Support of education – structure to increase opportunity overall

Thursday, May 7, 2015

Manchester Group A –
Information Review:
What did you notice about the information? Surprises? Learned something? Clarifying questions?
- look at alternate education info: charter schools
- k-8 districts will not have AP classes – how educated % of districts
- page 10 graph – assumption that you stay in the same quintile your whole life – does this graph survey track same families over time?
- What abut wage data mapped over time?
- What is stem doing for high grad rates?
- Middle class and lower class are using technology differently for mobility. MC taking VLAX – lower class access issues to internet
- goodnight moon graph – positive reading growth for all levels of income
- graphs 6+7 – reading levels associated with income levels and not education levels ( It would be good to see this)
- real issue may be income and not education
- how do literacy rates scale outcome? – show over a number of years and not just the 4th grade
- Hart and Rise study by age 5 different in literacy is even greater for lower income
- There is a lack of understanding that 65% of jobs need a degree

Themes of Big Picture ideas after reading the info?
- #20 graph: so what? In correlation with #19 how would NH live up?
- The data shows we need to improve, outcomes for adults, we need a two generational approach. Ex. If education is a solution – we need to look at it for kids and parents.
- Mobility is impacted by family stability then environment in prior generations was more conducive to mobility and believed any kid could go to college.

Do you see trends in your community that relate to or challenge the data?
- Having the internal character to think you can go beyond – what are the characteristics to take advantage of opportunity
- Trend challenge – decision making at the community level. No state or local commitment to change. Putnam says our kids – we did everything to grow the economy and we have moved away from families.

Any info or personal experiences to discuss to better understand the issues?
- Manchester, Concord, Nashua – Good idea to look at data at a more glandular level: race/ethnicity/gender – the value is to create targeted strategies
- In Behavior Risks Survey – males felt more values than women by 10%

Key Issues + Priorities: Share what was posted and your perspective
- we need pathways to success for families and kids
- we need increased funding for education by NH government at every level of education
- side note: students learning state after graduation
- Multi-generational approach – early and post secondary prevention/support vs. intervention
- Lack of public well to provide equitable opportunities
- Providing efficient and sufficient recourses to families and communities to recourses to families and communities to provide impactful education and opportunities

Key Issues and Priorities:
- Students are so long term but our decision making is short termed
- Chart #3 in pack – try to reverse single family trend
- What is happening in NH? Overly local thinking – all property taxes and reason to think regionally
- In Manchester – has a higher poverty population in NH but we get a lot of support like 21st Century. Our mayor will never allow us to do “pay to play”.
- There are a lot of amazing alternative high school education options that are run on a shoe string – we need to show these
- From Bedford, when high school was built in Bedford – lost all the diversity from Manchester

Community Solutions and Next Steps
- The federal government is providing grants to support community projects to create change with an eye to replication in other communities and sustainability
- Shift the conversation to “hot can we...” from “can we?”
- NH needs a broad based tax to create the change so we will have more money for higher education. Do we not have enough money or we do not distribute it well?
- We need to get organized, use data, develop scope, these is currently isolation and supplication.
- How much money is going into current failing program? Can we measure this?
- The problems are systemic ex: federal policy – There are a lot of non profits not coordinating with others
- Work the solutions from outcomes. EX: what does each life stay of growth needs?
- Should we fix existing programs vs. creating new programs?
- Do we have an infrastructure to do this?

Manchester Group B –

Take Away and Key Themes: Brainstorm
- are we measuring the right thing?
- Initial costs lead to opportunity hap
- Parents, time, abilities will = kids start behind will stay behind
- Impact of single parent incomes
- Opportunity hap starts early/often
- Impact of low SES on education outcomes, stark and getting starker
- Poverty and opportunities are scissoring
- Does not reflect all views – my bubble - democrat, Republican, libertarian – distrust data
- Income determines educational stats
- Starts early and builds road blocks to opportunity
- Mentoring is critical

Most compelling Issue (post it/tweet)
- Human beings, human problem and human interactions are not reducible to data points. We must trust ourselves to think differently
- An unfair start leads to gaps in opportunities that can build over a life time
- Critically important to focus on helping children overcome opportunity deficits through mentorship and access to enrichment and all levels of education
- Early education and parent mentoring is critical
- Conversation needed to discuss what is American Dream, what is success and what is fulfillment
- Income shouldn’t determine access to education

Key Questions and Priorities: Outcomes if rent trends continue? How can every young person have access to opportunities needed for good life?
- Losing democracy – ruling class vs. serfs
- Divided nation – have and have not’s
- Two Americas
- Access to education and financial mobility is closing/narrowing
- Even more difficult for children to make up deficits
- Stratified society leads to revolution
- Dropout rates will increase
- American’s place globally will be reduced

Community Solutions
- Local, state and national government
- Private sector
- Nonprofits
- Civic Volunteers
- Families/individuals – critical component
- Mentors for parents - tools
- Fair minimum wage
- Think innovation – new ways to think

Final Priorities: How can we close the “opportunity gap” and sustain the American Dream?
- Policies of economic fairness
- Early intervention for families and kids
- Connections and mentorship
- Support early education – intervention
- Pathways to higher education
- Encourage collaboration to increase mentorship
- Change the way we view education
- Competency vs educational degrees
- Not based solely on income – change definition of school
- School choice and vouchers
- Reduce laws – re asking
- Innovative educational reform
- Affordable childhood education
- Greater financial investment in the early years
- Equal access to needs and services
Manchester Group C –

Data Observations:
- Poorest children in NH have least access to AP courses
- Diff between NH and US in AP courses available
- Fewer than ½ NH High School Students lack self worth in community and consequences
- Page 20 – Afterschool activities – pay to play
- Page 17 - Parents with BA more likely to goodnight moon time
- Page 18 – Families with more money can spend more on opportunities
- Page 26 – Community Colleges – reality intent vs. follow through
- Page 28 highest in stat tuition
- 29-30 Geography vs wages
- Page 13 – New mothers more educated – 66% have some college
- Page 32 – education level and voting public involvement
- Page 24 – mentor availability with income

Education
- High School availability
- Middle school prep for AP
- Manchester identifies it as a problem and paying attention to it – skill set, college prep.
- Parental Advocacy important to being involved in AP opportunities – English learners often miss out
- Teacher acceptance/resistance to teach vs. student interest/desire to be there
- Desire for leveling of opp amongst schools regardless of income
- Give all students confidence to go AP route
- Ties in with mentoring
- Relation to tax rate in communities
- Money talks
- Money brings opportunities
- Wealthier community often better educated adults
- Priorities - life needs, education, other
- Literacy = goodnight moon time
- Every student has different needs
- Literacy is key
- Adult ed for all especially English learners
- Complete high school and continue education
- Pass on value of education to other generations

Living Wage
- Highest % of working families receiving assistance – what does this mean? Expensive to live in NH. Is it unique to NH?
- NH views “what is wage” differently than experience in another state
- Influences food stamps, other services
- Highest % of assistance, but could be a lower amount of assistance
- In Philly $120 assistance
- In NH income $10 more only $21 assistance
- Stigma of asking for help
- Pride
- Public perception – negative image created by those who drive nice cars, have iPhones etc using WIC etc.
- Debit card/EBT card helps alleviate stigma
- The vicious circle of affording life vs improving ones position/education
- Families under stress from living this way – mental health/rate of incarceration
- 5% of world population
- 25% of incarcerated people in the US
- Mental health issues – need for services - access based on wealth
- Addiction issues
- people starting to speak up despite stigma that accompanies addiction – crosses all socioeconomic lines
- we’ve lost the concept of “It takes a village” “I take care of my own” “I don’t care”

Impact on Society
- volunteering – current parents not volunteering – people are demanding, entitlement, “too busy”
- people need to support opportunities
- “I paid my dues/taxes” – I did my part
- not instilling civic responsibility/sense of country in our children. Ex: Giving blood – older generations doing it but don’t see younger there
- sense of community parenting, no longer happens
- not okay to interfere
- wearing blinders
- “how dare you speak to my child”
- NH grades 9-12 – self worth – mattering comes from being a part of a community.
- All connected – community/extended community – mentoring
- Public achievement – program that helps young people with civic engagement. Ex: Blue lights in parks – St. S’s students idea to being to city of Manchester
- Boosts confidence – carriers over into education = life
- Younger generations involvement is key to solutions

Community College
- two years then financial obstacle to continue
- would like to see congress pass – community college 1st years free/paid
- put restrictions on GPA
- Year round education?
- Living at community college vs. commuting – different educational experience
- Mentoring/support at college level if not at home
- Offer everyone the stepping strong
- Why just community college – why not any college?
- BA is not enough – need to plan on higher degrees
- Civil jobs – battering society jobs – educating do not pay as well
- Public ache
- Mentoring/family support critical to success – supplemental with friend support/structured support
- Give youth the message you CAN do this
- Respect family unit and family values – societal issue
- We (everyone, government, our society, etc) don’t value families by not demanding a living wage for all.
- Demographic that votes is here tonight and it lies in “our” hands
Opportunity coming in new ways ex: Starbucks paying tuition @ASU – what message is this sending?

Education
- opportunities need to be equal
- value of pre-k education
- higher level education results in/lends to greater public involvement
- importance of goodnight moon time and continues upward mobility generationally
- In NH – schools creating community for students

Report Out
1. – Mentoring, family support, sense of community
   - higher self worth
   - feeling of belonging
   - greater of success
2. Education
   –equality of opportunity for all and socioeconomic groups
   - importance of literacy as early as possible
   - opening postsecondary education to all - $$ - 2 years free of college
   - Demise post grad debt – choice to support oneself with financial aid
3. How do we fix this?
   - instilling need for above in younger generation
   - instilling need in voting population
   - stop looking for a superhero – everyone needs to play their part “Raise Hell”

Manchester Group F –
Data Themes, Highlights, Surprises
- 1980-1990 – disparity really started to widen
- County kids move to matter a lot. Earlier = more effect (New York Times)
- 40% of kids in US born to unwed mothers
- 15-19 year olds not having babies like before
- Putnam: Layering of barriers early on – disconnected with perception of causes
- 81% say will get 4 year degree when they go to community college – under 15% do
- Coming into college very under prepared
- There’s a disconnect between teenagers and when the opportunities are
- Bottom 60% - no increased income for the last 50 years – top 40% increasing a lot since 80’s
- Mentoring: affluent kids have much more access and links to recourses: social capital (critical)
- Informal vs informal access to having a skill and being connected to human network
- People who have social capital probably take it for granted because they don’t realize they have it
- It takes a village
- Access to social capital affects how people see these who don’t have it
- Access to structure
- Growing up poor and alone
- School burse visits – Mon and Fri a lot because of anxiety about home
- How do we fill the parent gap with mentors for kids?
- Stakes have gotten higher for kids who lack recourses because the community used to fill the gap
- Kids join gangs because they are looking for family and structure
- No free range experiences – never independent
- Every mom wants to do what’s best but they don’t always know how. We don’t help them early so we pay more later as a society
- Banking structure changed in the 80s. Deregulation other types of landing and internet sped up.

Role Models:
- There are no homeless children in Scandinavia: Taxes support service and safety net.
- Highly school for homeless children
- Research on: prevention investment saves big ROI. Examples, universal home visitation prevents child abuse etc., every mom 1 year off, paid family leave, prevents substance abuse.

Money:
- raise minimum wage
- tax rates on top
- federal loans build in loopholes
- Companies encouraged to move over seas
- bring back ratios high school to invest earners in companies

Children:
- policy makers: we can’t afford to have children fail as a country I’s a national security issue
- well-rounded education in High School and College
- Jr. High and High School need after school boosters and support system
- Invest in 0-5 ages including their parents = layers.

All ages:
- social capital impact statements for organizations
- create agreements that people sign on to
- anomaly issue?
- Have social capital statement discussion at all different stages – keep scale up.
- Build the habit through practice and repetition

#1 Priorities
- Economic stability: count on having a job and plan how to spend money. Structures their lives = ability to support family
- Take action to reduce the gap between top 40% and bottom 60%
- Young children: healthy start to maximize their potential
- Social capital and safety net for all ages
- Kids need hopes and dreams (not anxiety and depression)
- Kids who are alone. Where did the grownups go?
- All Ages

Manchester Group G –
What do you notice?
- large increase in single parent families.
- Lack of trust in community. Used to be able to have children playing outside independently without worries
- Everyone is so busy – expectation to do more compared to previous generation that was content to stay home/local and enjoy quality time
- Many people connected virtually promote long distance relationships vs. local.
- Need to redesign our public school system to help make children successful
- Need to find a way to engage low income children and those whose parents are not involved with school
- Data “participation” – what does that mean?
- Kids are disconnected to the community.
- Need to identify important people in child’s life/ Difficult for every child and help child connect with mentor’s interests.
- Change is resisted by so many
- Change is needed – everyone agrees but little to nothing changes.
- Fear of unknown – people cannot envision a truly better education system,
- Help individual children connect to the big picture – help them understand how they fit into the world.

Key Questions and Priorities: What is happening in NH?
- College tuition makes higher education payable for many not sustainable
- college is assumed and imposed without child choosing/knowing career path
- Identify and connect internship opportunities
- Questions are being asked based on current educational system. System needs to be changed.
  Wrong questions are being asked
- Need to have these group conversations with school of employees, elected officials, parents, residents, teachers, business owners, and students
- Align business needs with educational goals
- Need to work with children to identify links/interests Needs to happen throughout school career to guide them to choose future that will suit them.
- Engage youth with business opportunities that exist within local community
- Children need to be supported and mentored throughout educational process.
- Create diverse groups within schools that become business partners in local communities
- Need to change old school ways
- Youth need to be prepared for career. Education is not stand-alone. It is career prep. Not all careers dictate college path.
- Embed college curriculum into high school so student’s graduate high school with associates degrees.
- The system we have – classrooms
- The system we need – classrooms, online, experience

Final Priorities:
1. need to connect kids to communities – connect to community/neighborhoods/identify individual worth – worth to community (mentors)
2. operationalize concept: it takes a village
3. redesign public education system
4. business needs to be a full partner with education system (mentor)

Manchester Group I –
Brainstorm: “Take-Aways”
- it will only get worse – we must do – they everyone must work together to close the gap
- well pay for the gap later – will cost us mentoring – we must address it more
- listening is necessary to liberty and we have become less egalitarian
- moving there let is the wrong bonds
- cumulative affect of the gap from early childhood to young adult for early action, intervention

Data; Comparison to your experience
- depressingly accurate
- social capital difference by income is advantage – social networks – open doors “tell me when you hang with, I’ll who you will become
- cognitive skills development happens more with educated parents
- Manchester earning too high – reference to chart
- More segregated income by neighborhood – shift in Manchester (Bedford) leaves the Manchester school district

What’s needed?
- early intervention – teachers qualified – must pay teachers to teach low income methods – pay or performance?
- Policy
- Diminish the affect of isolation of kids (low income)
- Incentives to get wealthier individuals to more info different neighborhoods
- We need a fair taxation system
- Voter
- Increase minimum wage
- Force companies to do the investment properly in US and retired opp better biggest and lowest paid workers
- People should use their shareholders power to change company behaviors
- Pre-k early education intervention
- Instill hope in there at the lower income showing the connection to the pre??? That will help their children (parenting recourse guide)
- That parent be strengthened – lay ?? the escalator – of programs that will their child achieve success
- Informal education another way to build skills
- Skills of self-advocacy

(some difficulty reading notes)

Pittsfield Group A –
ELO – Extended learning opportunity
Who is helping the parents?
Family in security – pay with time lost
Many children lack basics
Many parents are unable to provide.

Brainstorm:
- Data sets show:
  - Feels judgmental
  - Pittsfield experience does not match the data
  - Kids in Pittsfield feel they don’t matter
  - Adults unable to overcome student debt
  - Stats need stories to explain the data
  - Single parents operate with only ½ the recourses and half the time
  - People get on the mobility latter late and low rung
  - Gap pronounced by starting school
  - Information missing about recourses for 0-2
  - No info about alternative to college, mentors, training etc.
  - Where data came from, why did they choose it?
  - Different opportunities story’s here in Pittsfield
  - “Data” doesn’t limit kids choices
  - Data – raw information look at from different perspectives what can we each do?
  - Wanted to learn about information/data to share with group of youth – goal youth bring their voice conversation helping me understand that kids can feel labeled by this data
- Tsunami of challenges described in data – struck by this. (less time for kids overwhelming)
- Fewer adults in neighborhoods helping kids navigate – recourses and schools work hasn’t adapted the new reality but: NH can do something, and do have assets and know each other
- Lack of flexibility for parents (work days, sick days) – Nice to see extended families
- Early childhood – so behind: leaves lads back because 40 min drive to accredited care.
- Declined access to enrichment after school, access for low income decreases while upper income increases enrichment for kids doing more – gap growing
- Kids struggling for basic vs. kids in everything – high pressure. Come from fear?
  • Prevention?
    - Ex: after school – was free but now charge even small fee can be too much
    - Missing data: fathers more engaged with kids, kids with involved fathers better in schools, two parents provide balances – different activated and “skills”
  • In Pittsfield:
    - tap into kids passions and adapt learning to what kids are interested in “student centered learning” If internal – want to learn rather than have to.
    - Shift attitude – figure out how to make NH best place to raise kids, ask how ALL kids are doing, not just my kid. (this would link to employment, substance abuse)
    - Invest early rather than pay later
    - Noticing day cares closing – could employers have day care?
    - Balance quality and quantity
    - Do we love all of our kids?
    - Diversified tax base and spent well
    - Pittsfield has what it has – grants
    - Informed evidence based decision
    - How to reduce barriers that are widening gap – access prevention and mental health
    - Minimum wage and wage inequality
  • Who –
    - Parents – but too much for individual
    - Businesses
    - Neighbors
    - School boards
    - Churches
    - Early childhood association
    - State and fed policies – more decision makers
    - beyond austerity – repair statement
    - Every kid has one non-paired
    - Adult – past role models, adversity, supporter. Every kid can point to one person who cares – advisor assigned or informed.

Priorities:
1. Early childhood education – need stepping stones
2. Elect people who aren’t beholden to certain group. Represent us – policy
3. Each kid reliable support system/person from kids perspective – personal connection
4. Need to care about all kids not just our own family

Pittsfield Group B –
Noticed About Information:
• All about education, money, opportunity
• More colleges/universities
• Concerning that cost of education limits or creates barriers when there are more universities/colleges available
• Even with more opportunities to attend high education, more people believe that the American Dream is unattainable
• Startled by poverty jump in Coos County – reason behind jump?
• Really surprised by AP jump from nation to NH – why is NH so low?
• Connection between child raised in poverty and success is related
• Even when admittance, cost of education is so high it can’t be paid off
• Australia’s approach (3% of income)
• Wide divide in trends
• Financial aid requires those under 23 to use parent’s income. Is this a barrier for kids because parents are not willing to offer?
• Less educated have a greater distrust of the system (government in general) because of potential consequences (census o lower income)
• Pour children don’t have mentors as their less poor counterparts – this is key.
• Access to neighbor mentors was equal
• Rich get richer and poor get poorer – it is acceleration, irreversible – Baltimore as example of hopelessness
• Not surprising, extremely discouraging
• Even with education, employment is limited
• Quality of education not what it should be
• Less mentoring for poor – greater impact socially, less academically necessary
• Remembering parents reading to me
• Community/education/jobs – empower youth will benefit community
• Dynamic of employee/employer relationship with salary
• Some from small business to corporate and greed
• Tying employees back to “robber barons” and “land rich”, today is a modernized version
• Slashing assistance to poor
• Certain communities targeted because of voting power, take away power
• Slashing communities/ families – care foundation of our future is children – not using childcare to increase opportunities
• If you don’t have education values they won’t have a chance in kindergarten
• Provide tech – game changer
• NPR – giving literature to under privileged children thought tech without providing infrastructure to support
• Low income – less time for goodnight moon
• RIF reading is fundamental – sometimes the old way is better
• Vista corps/America Corps – reading vans (don’t see them often)
• Decline due to profit making educational institutions

Key Questions and Priorities
• Childcare during economic downturn – fewer hours for struggling families – hours not restored
• Efforts to improve middle high school – spring board to get people involved, grown into something bigger than original expected
• Student centered learning improves high school state standing
• Investing in community more - PYW, Pittsfield Listens, Fodd Scholarship, small business
• Youth participating more in conversations about our future – has empowered students
• Reasons less available because income plays a part (dual enrollment limited to those that can afford it if they don’t meet the parameters) – transportation limits accessibility through ELO’s. Parents not seeing value in education, taking part in opportunities
• Biggest challenge to students is lack of parental support
• Working on identifying what needs to be addresses (valuing education)
• Ignorance of situation (programs of assistance)
• Listing changes, opportunities created need to continue with awareness of gaps and how best to reach everybody and improve our community
• Tracking interests: empower youth to follow dreams – college visits with mentor
• Should be able to create programs for interests immersion
• Include business investment of children’s education
• Be careful we are not contributing to the gap – offer support
• Need to reduce choice of work vs education – choice is made for children in need (financially)
• Lot of work to do
  - need better programs
  - need better community
  - whole community fails when child fails
  - energize through awareness of what data shows
  - “our kids”
• self accountability
• losing the idea of human connection

Community Solutions: Next Steps
• Recognize the crisis
• realize a sense of urgency (for example: Pitt HS 2008 – need more business)
• we want people to be productive
• how do we compensate or budget cuts to take care of our community to compensate – set back to helping each other
• Community ambassadors
• get info from renters in town – to them about opportunities awareness
• entrance the positron of community
• Remove barrio (what’s going on? Connect to lesson if it was unsatisfactory.)

Whose responsibility to take action?
• Community individuals – personal responsibility/ accountability
• State/federal government
• Leadership (mayor/selectman) (superintendent) – to ensure it being seem through.

Final Priorities:
• Importance of early childhood supports to close gaps
• General commitment to education
• Focus on mentoring for kids facing risks
• Fostering/strengthening a sense of community
• Family foundation – strengthening
  - mental health supports
  - coping mechanisms around drug/alcohol in community
  - supports for families
  - interventions
  - prevention
• empowering youth

Plymouth Group A –

1. Name/Hometown – how would you have had opportunities in you life compared to your parents?
2. What experience from you life or other facts impact how you see opportunity and the American Dream today?

Page 10:
- last group at bottom is flat
- top wealth is growing
- implication take into consideration – it hasn’t reflected
- gap is widening between highest and lowest
- lowest at 25% - no financial progress
- 90% - 150%

Page 11:
- both groups agree on greed
- work values
- “they haven’t worked hard enough”
- White privilege
- Huge circle to taxes and loop holes (wealthy helps to fain the tax system.)
- Flatten tax structure
- American dream – does it exist? – most people it is not happening?
- If you have a financial start – then to speak with right people
- Hoe people to move ahead you want to work to get ahead. Some people are having difficulty
- Mind set is key!
- Moms go to community college – opportunities on line
- Hopeless- overwhelming
- Barriers getting bigger and bigger

Brainstorming:
Theme – Do you seem them developing?

1-8 early
- women are having children at a later age
- more children are born to single parents
- correlation between single parents without high school diploma and education
- widely education for pre-school 0-5 is largest poverty rate
- below 260 new words in vocabulary - 6 months development gap
- 40 minutes of more educational activities for higher education of parents
- activities after school clearly not access to many children
- nutrition of early childhood is missing from the data – great influence on learning
- cooking with children in Meredith (4th and 5th graders) – what can you do with the food instead of packages
- teach you to spend for healthy food
- do you know how to cook?
- Families eating makes together -

Ages 6-18
- start damage at tests have build in bias of culture
- testing a little better thrown in our USA
- poverty has lack of transportation
- down in offering AP courses
- why is NH school district AP access much lower than US schools?
- Charter schools- get 40% amazing results for children
- Public “”
- Private school – more expensive
- Math and reading - broad range
- NH graduate: Salem 94% and Manchester 57% - interesting spread in gap
- 112 homeless students in Laconia - why?
- Data on homeless is missing
- Mentors - takes a whole village to I will drop anything for a neighborhood child
- Bridges out of poverty (workshop highly recommended)
- Circle program
- Girl and Boy Scouts

Page 25
- less girls think they don’t matter – low across the board
- reflects suicide

Page 26
- future work force needs more education
- data missing bringing wage and cost for rent, childcare...
- NH people are graying over all in all
- Gap in college degree – people have a higher family income – as much more likely to go to college
- 81% students can’t get a degree in community college
- 12% really do finish community college
- more information about 10-15 years – a decline or increase of comm.
- Where you go is not who you be?
- NH parent’s can’t move to retirement because children are staying home because don’t move into retirement
- Highest debt – student debt in NH

Page 22
- average hourly wage in NH in counties – people of like minds live together
- voting – people who have education vote

Brainstorming themes that are common
- low income/high income gap
- parenting responsibilities
- the gap is widening between rich and poor
- more data on community college
- underlying “culture of poverty” – low income – quantity – high income good is being seen.
- Work effect – different is individual responsible your gas generation so professional
- Feeling of “I do not matter – why?”
- Should I show up to work?
- Lack of transportation – gas don’t have enough money
- You don’t have a choice of who they are born in and what note models you have
- Rates cultural shift
- Sense of community
- We are more predictable to take harmful pathway instead of healthy pathway
- Excusing bad behaviors with Dads not living at home
- Greatest generation of WWII good role models
- Changing individual responsibility
- IBM – modest background – we have what reading looks together as family
- Quality of life
- Drugs – rich and poor
- Property to happiness
- Structural violence
- Programs to stay
- Def – its structures violate hoe people can de successful
- Program – community actions – local access need for what they need to be successful
- Block grants – yea or nay?
- Many can in hinged so we can really need

Key Points/Take Away Point
- myth of welfare – book
- cost has lowest wage and equality – tax structure to benefit all people
- stage chart – a lot of programs to help lower income – 6 moths behind for 18 month children
- ready for kindergarten programs – high % kids that start in head start are more successful
- where do child fall down in early years?
- Are people not about to move about?
- Harmless families in need. Plymouth 0 more isolated and closer together – if you don’t have a diving license it can be difficult.
- Education is key to unlocking success
- How early/education level of parents effects your opportunities
- Build up self esteem
- How to address the growing income gap – how will this be done?
- More than ½ of the NH kids feel they do not mate is chilling - self worthy
- Not all role models are positive – encouraging success in our kids
- Community college is a “step stone” across. Great courses/incredible opportunities – nurses, chef, truck drivers
- Reducing number of births of “illegitimate births”

Plymouth Group B –
1. What did you notice?
- the wealthy are getting wealthier and the poor are sinking lower
- the income gap is widening
- there was direct correlation between parents economic and educational status and the child’s outcome in life – “goodnight moon”
- 0-5 critical learning years and sets foundation for rest of life
2. What surprised you?
- (page 24) NH 1st amongst states…. Punctures myth that people on assistance aren’t trying on working

Key Questions or Priorities
- Ensure that all students/children have access to the tools they need to thrive, achieve, excel
  - Breakfast/food (nutrition)
  - Internet
  - Social interaction/school activities
  - Too much government interference
  - Enrichment activities
• Mentors
  - We don’t take care of each other enough
    • Lack of sense of neighborhood
    • Lack of connectedness
    • Fear of litigation
  - Livable wage: minimum wage is not livable wage
• Financial education
  • How to save
  • How to spend responsibly
  • Financial mentor
• The American dream is not the same for everyone. It needs to be recognized as such.

Big Pictures
• You have to have money for your kids to do well
• My children are not going to do/dream as much as I am and I’m not earning as much as my parents did.

Community Solutions and Next Steps
• School funding needs to be changed
  • System (tax) needs to be reviewed and possibly changed
• We need to take care of each other more
  • More compassion
  • Non-judgmental
  • Love
• Review minimum wage and find a different structure that is going to ensure a livable wage
• Review tax structure and find a different structure that is going to be more equitable
• Find more job opportunities in NH that will keep youth here.

Who is Responsible?
• Economic development needs to happen including business incentives and tax breaks to bring good business here (state and local)
• Every body! It starts in the mirror!

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

Keene Group A –

What did you notice?
• Data in why inequality grown? Is stereotypical, supports perception; shows why we have public policy failure.
• Wish there was an income overlay to #1 (mother’s age)
• Does income parallel mother’s age?
• #4 child poverty info is lacking. See questions below
• improving childcare makes it more expensive
• #8 evidence of income inequality and undoing gap

Clarifying Questions
• #3 children born into single parent family or living in one?
• NH per capita income? Discrepancies between counties? NH vs US?
• Need data on food insecurities – NH hunger solutions part of kids count?
• Living wage data?
Brainstorm
- fair living wage with benefits
- respect service jobs
- support communities and families
- focus on families
- help build resiliency
- income redistribution – leveling the playing field – tax policies
- NH needs to find a way to generate more income in an equal way
- Investment in education (ages 0-grad school)
- Campaign finance reform
- Policy reform: term limits, supreme court, congressional redistricting
- Recognize that there is a problem and opportunity gap
- Disconnect between graphs and captions
- Sensitize politicians and general public
- Support honest speakers on the issue – create forums and start in NH
- Address the income tax pledge
- Enrichment programs need to be accessible to everyone

Key thoughts/priorities
- income
- education
- families
- political/party change

Keene Group B –

Data:
- work ethic stereotype
- opinions becoming more entrenched
- maternal age and education is critical (gap increasing) – ie: removing birth control
- Gap in exposure to books before school (goodnight moon time)
- Cuts to extra curricular. Students have to pay. Policy-related increases in gap.
- Needing exercise – drugs instead
- Diverging incomes and pay to play taking workforce will be less able
- School budgets vary widely = inequality
- World War Two through 70’s same participation rates then big splits. Money = access
- Poorer students have fewer mentors
- Students don’t feel they matter to anyone. Sad.
- Kids in single parent families need to connect to other positive adults.
- Need to value the resourcefulness of low income people. Something to be leaned from them – self fulfilling prophecy
- Purpose of education has changed
- Hard to get jobs after education
- Manchester low graduation rate – they have less money
- Book: Shiplay’s “working Poor” – success
- Need solutions for further good education
- Need mentors for young employees
- Options for different venues for education. Link education and employment
- Community colleges. Low graduation rate.
- Need confidence boost often.
- Every age needs a mentor
- Fundamentally: at income levels big different between lower 40% and upper 60%
- People believe education leads to a better life. Is it true?
- NH workers are in low paying jobs. No quality of life
- Catastrophic incident wipes people
- We’ve become litigious: puts restraints on mentoring = lower quality. We’re scared people.
- Voting = important. Lower income tend not to vote – disengaged.
- Complexity – you can’t do everything.
- Salaries so low that people need public assistance.

Priorities
- mental health support
- listen to the lower 20% - survey
- equalize educational opps
- spending on pre-school education
- jobs with reasonable salaries
- Mentors
- breaking the inter generational cycle
- free community college
- free people up for community endeavors
- implementing more community center for youth and seniors
- accessible transportation = access to healthier food
- Bonny Clark – lots of great consequences not from having transportation
- Survey of people in need (survey #2) Everyone
- Safety and security needs of parents (young mothers) – violence, housing, job security, lead poisoning, discrimination, keeps them disconnected from peers. Coming in with a lot of debt.
- Awareness of existing recourses for help.
- Everyone: Need for sense of community
- Education – visualize the what if scenario planning.
- How-to engage people who are more comfortable
- Local and larger levels
- Political motivation – how do we inspire it?
- How can we use the presidential campaign? (organization support: save the children.)
- Role of private, community, public, civic? Non-polarized.
- If engage people: follow through people get sick of it.

Group Priorities:
- engage and learn needs and get everyone at the table. Age and demographics
- Process: Build larger
- Build a larger process with principles X ages and demographics
- To build awareness of the opportunity gap
- To understand the impact and implication – across demographics
- Among diverse groups “we’s” people with different agendas and domains
- Build the will to act
- Build the need for a sense of community and responsibility for this
- Don’t jump to solutions

Portsmouth Group B –
Brainstorm –
- education level of mothers drags thing down to struggle – take care of that and it could help raise up
- challenger to get out of poverty less money for schools – impact
- single parents and impact on literacy rates – if not a community to help with children’s needs, they need to take riskier options for children – high impact
- where does it come from - the attitude to know you can do it?
- From genetics, or being told you can do it
- Startling – the lack of understanding of where the poverty level number comes from is so low
- Increasing concern tradition of poverty
- Graphs showing community land divisions – the centerpiece from people on the poverty in NH – the experience of concertized poverty
- Data makes me feel like I have no hope as a single mom
- Males are single men, but I see opportunity – growing
- Life integration of children across socio economic barriers is huge
- Goodnight moon data decent ring time for me as a single mom – we read
- Inequality – big division
- Single parent – mom vs dad – women get paid less than men – the impact
- Because a single parent, our individual income – now living apparently low
- Lack of affordable housing and trickledown effect
- When families have trouble getting basic necessities, how do we get help for education costs
- Basic needs need to be met in order to read books and play games
- Pull up by boot strap mentality is a real insult to people
- Some people struggle to hold a job – not all can just take care of themselves
- How can you even compete with 6 bill/year and poverty level
- 12 kids laid off in ’08, now doing entrepreneurial path
- the middle is getting hollowed out in job opps – why
- why income inequality has grown
- used to be machine op was well paying, now push better so not secure and lower pay
- weakening of unions competing with world wide market
- seeing limits to what we can do with natural recourses running out
- jobs were more available five years ago, now receive bachelors degrees - $10/hour work
- costs to get degree
- access to jobs – jobs asking too much – flip burgers without skills or go to college
- feel there are jobs out there, but don’t want to flip burgers
- unions – work for stat was need to work 10 years – no it is <0
- access certain benefits and benefits not as strong
- come into it for security or benefits and now charging dramatically
- pensions not as available. Prior people could afford to buy a house on 1 income. Also there was more community – neighborhoods
- the recourses that 1 human being can have and make so may recourses like one dollar bill and the challenges with high concentration of wealth
- system is rigger
- worldwide, income inequities has gone down as we offs have one middle class – their countries have gain as result
- voices with technology
- if Wal-Mart people can make a living wage, good thing
- rules of employment screen
- Ludicrous on impact to employee – missing out on beliefs – rules go against a healthy economy with healthy jobs
- Lack of community – people are cut off from each other – easy not to see what’s happening if not connected. Schools catch so much
- Policies and rule that have exacerbated inequality
- Policy decision that lend to that
- Education – people priced out of higher ed. Now people who spent lots and graduate can’t plug into the workforce
- Education model is broken - it worked before and now it doesn’t
- So much debt from higher ed and it follows you – hard to pay down
- Language division – across political lines we can’t even agree on family
- Care of our kids
- Starting out without parents who don’t have resources to share – lack of access and it’s a critical starting point to come together and devise the more needed solutions
- Access to early childhood education has huge impact – the early investment – good return on investment
- We need to decide in NH to invest there (early childhood)
- Inability in US to have long term vision. Need to be proactive and instead we are reactive
- What needs to shift, have in NH where we have wealth
- State? The debate, the discussion, gambling, how to address this?
- Need full day kindergarten in all communities so can’t even talk yet about early ed – it is so critical and still some communities don’t want to pay for it
- Town by town paying for school has challenges and different criticisms in communities not always schools to fund
- Pressure as teachers in schools, lack of support adds such pressure
- Like providing meals - this should be addressed
- Don’t have political will to look at but should – look to Vermont and Maine, they are looking at schools so much in those states but links to leadership and school like internships for credit
- In Dozer Biz Ed connect program at tech center. Students connect to businesses for internships get training in high school
- Portsmouth connection at Great Bay cc through alternative school – high school age to pet opportunity to take colleges classes and credit.
- We are all responsible. It takes a village. People barely holding on to make ends meet, so civic responsibility is tough. This format helps – like providing childcare.
- 6016 elections – issues teased out of this conversation to come and presidential primary
- Bond issue in Newmarket to build new school, divided town – many people who couldn’t’ afford the tax increase, others where could and didn’t want to have taxes up and lots of local control – each of these factors and we couldn’t come together to have a solution
- Idea of local control just ours
- Some think it is a virtue, but I didn’t want local control because ex of wealthy to teach ??????? but being told locally
- ???
- Pressures on commits with property taxes – failure of state that makes us rely on local taxes to fund schools – drag on families
- Further for to go into imp. Programs
- Can we pay in a way that’s more proactive – we’ll have to pay, now or later
- Kids and families without resources and access to early childhood and mentoring – that intervention early help to perpetuate what daycare
- Can provide will make a difference without ace
- Have a huge voice
- Income inequality effects future of us all

Final Priorities
- early childhood learning needs proper funding
- food security and stable housing
- schools and support – priority for adequate funding challenges with state policy dictating funding to come from local communities
- minimum wage – too low
- need for enough jobs with living wages
- middle class hollowed out
- high cost of higher education landing too much debt
- need for all people – across political lines – to have the conversation with long term thinking and planning
- need to come together across political lines to discuss this with long term thinking
- need living wage for families to provide stability
- early childhood education as well as health care and housing for whole child and whole family
- need for adequate support
- priority for adequate funding to our schools – challenge with state policy dictating funding to come from local communities
- (some difficulty reading notes)

Portsmouth Group E –

Brainstorm
- data assumes out of home care is preferred. Does not fairly focus on quality of relationships and experience, not a particular setting.
- How can we tease the “story” out of the data?
- Why are poverty rates rising when demographic trends seem to be improving?
- Graph on location and wages presented inversely?
- Upset by the incomplete data that is given, and leads to presumptions and conclusions
- 20 something limited in employment opportunity – little quality jobs, mostly entry level.
- Experience – geography/location not connected with opportunity and skill sets
- Experience around college debt conflicts with data which seems to be presented as too low
- Example: there is no “affordable” housing so you live where you can afford. – seems to be lack of social services and safety net, which makes it challenging to address poverty
- Do not see social mobility that I enjoyed in my life
- How do housing trends impact the opportunity gap?

Key Questions and Priorities
- Substance abuse – even starting in addicted babies
- Economy is stagnant and caters to the services as opposed to industry, creative, meaningful work.
- Income gap and affordable housing seem most important when addressing opportunity gap
- Lack of safety nets - need to solve both! Need strong base and structured opportunity
- Welfare cliff
- So many systems are broken and it’s leading to more abuse
- Lack of social capital – network of relationships
- Given political climate, what type of conversation are we able to have?

**Solutions and Next Steps**
- strengthening families with a livable wage
- strengthening communities, social capital
- break up large businesses to support small businesses and local ownership – Wal-Mart is out, family drug store is in
- good quality connections and education for children at an early age
- pre-school funding
- provide more recourses to support – quality rating based on best price and quality cost money
- post secondary education support
- diversified revenue sources for sources – casinos not the answer
- taxation

**Key Questions and Priorities**
- we all have a responsibility to be part of the solution – not just left for legislator but also must be solved in dynamic ways on the local level. Politics are us.
- Everyone, every sector, should be thinking about how they are a part of the solution and creating opportunity
- Understand and instilling accountability and personal responsibility, if you are given opportunity.
- Things we are doing right - lots of children have access to health care, kids are insured, child abuse going down – but neglect going up?
- Percent of income that goes toward supporting services - stats are especially regressive where no income tax
- Need more conversations about priorities – like this conversation – but meetings can be more powerful if data sets are more meaningful and relevant across political stance/positions – more conservative data.
- Lets look at how other states with more revenue and taxes address services and address opportunity gap
- Subsidizing retirees at the expense of youth? Entitlements, example – how little we are investing in public education.
- Overall high levels anxiety in relation to the future – lot of uncertainty.
- Lack of diversity among those that are showing up to these conversations, we need to go to the people to get direct experiences.
- Conflict of values and not being reflected in budget.

**Report Out:**
- data incomplete and not fully relevant
- high cost of living, income gap, and broken systems
- need to address the lack of safety nets and welfare cliff simultaneously – strong base/support and more structured opportunity for upward mobility
- major issues are high cost of living, lack of affordable housing, income gap, and broken systems that limit safety nets (support)

**Solutions and leverage points**
- we are all responsible for being part of the solutions and including at local level
- must go to the people
- need diversified revenue streams - tax at
Portsmouth Group F –

Brainstorm:
- parents have given up on parenting; conversation aren’t taking place between parents and kids in single parent and two working parent families conversations aren’t taking place
- surprised to see NH lacking in opportunities for AP classes, even when other educational indicators are high
- surprised parents with high school degrees or < actually have time to spend enriching their kids (positive)
- positive to see recognition by parents of importance of spending time reading etc with kids
- lack of accessibility to after school actives for lower income kids – is that connected to lower access to mentors? Connected to risky behaviors?
- 71 after school programs opening in NH today does not equally 200 middle schools – why isn’t every middle school offering them – 50% eligible get funded
- belief in American Dream hasn’t changed much
- Gap is enormous between who foes to college and who doesn’t – top 25%
- What percentage of lower income families depend on children to bring income for the family
- Many current college students working 20-30 hours per week (per group participant teaching college) and some high school students.
- Wonder what numbers are for immigrant and refugee families

Most Compelling
- find ways for our communities to develop after school opportunities and other activities for young people to engage in
- destruction of social capital
- mentoring via access to after school and other activities
- roots of this is that we don’t insist on a livable wage for every worker – no worker should need government support
- lack of awareness/lack of commitment – as people get more they don’t look back – they aren’t “our kids” anymore
- accessibility of afterschool programs for kids for down economic households to tie info and adult relationships – safe, trussing roles with adults.
- Break cycle of lack of opportunity – hard to see a different path/vision
- Lack of opportunity to try new things = take healthy risks
- It’s about the village – helping each other
- Supports that could help families and their children – head start, pell grants etc. have all been cut or eliminated
- Parents aren’t providing guidance’s and expectations
- Re-evaluate how we train/educate our kids to get them ready to meet societies demands, changing work requirements. Character doesn’t – not prepared to join the workforce
- Increasing economic segregation of neighborhoods
- Affordable housing is “off somewhere”
- In discussion but not graphs: how does access to health care and ones well being impact education, achievement etc.
- Health disparity

Impacts Opportunities
- barrier for <18 years: kids getting blocked from volunteering because organizations have difficulty providing supervision
- changing culture re giving kids independence and autonomy out of the home
- “the grit test” – persevering through mistakes – we are limiting our kids “grit”
- transportation limits access to opportunities
- issue with how we raise recourses in NH
- 1 of our 2 college grads leave NH
- NH < 1950’s level with in-migration
- UNH highest tuition of state universities
- w/ exception of New Castle, no towns passed funding for municipal buildings
- 1 of oldest states in country (age group)
- one of the highest property tax

Meaning/Outcomes/Future Trends
- it wont get better
- losing younger generation who have opportunities leaving less educated workforce – depleting ourselves of human recourses
- if trend continues, we will become a real oligarchy – create increasingly conflicted society – loss of hope
- per David Brooks: meritocracy has accelerated – upper middle class and elite run things; they don’t look back – leads to entire groups feeling disenfranchised
- higher addictions, higher death due to overdose

Solutions and Next Steps
- living wages
- tenacity.org – Boston; partners with youth and their families – raises it’s graduate f participants from 65-70% to 95% and 70% go to college - housed in schools, targeted at risk, scalable
- NH family recourse centers – building protective factors in families and with parents
- New heights – middle and high schools
- How do we impact the root cause – systems change
- Least culpable group in NH are the nonprofits
- Would be easy to say government is responsible, but there’s been a fundamental cultural shift – we don’t see ourselves in the boat together
- Need a feeling of community – opportunities that foster community where people can stop feeling isolated or estranged
- Get money out of politics/repeal citizens unties

Priorities:
1. community building across economic landscape
2. break the cycle of lack of opportunities
3. publicly funded early childhood development – pre K
4. we all have a stake in our kids

Portsmouth Group G –
On Research:
- all parent’s spending more time reading and learning with their kids though there is a gap
- change in housing patterns – more polarized
- much more mentoring for those in top economic tier
- Manchester high school graduation rates are low for all income levels but especially low for those in bottom tier
- The deck is stacked against poor people in multiple and complex ways
- We like to think we live in a meritocracy but when you look at this data, money matters
- College becoming less and less attainable
- NH has highest percent of people on public assistance who are working yet we are a “wealthy” state
- Wages are low, people need support to get by
- Costs of housing and transportation have skyrocketed. Wages have not kept up...
- If young adults must struggle, even after college, this impacts the perception of opportunity by them and adolescents coming up
- Big increase in the number of children among single parents without a high school education
- Family support system has weakened. Fewer relatives available to help with child care.
- Gaps emerge early – 4th grade reading score – less opportunity for extra-curricular activities. So much is tied to base income level
- Question as to whether low Y moms have more children?
- Chart of single parent families – is there another adult raising the kids?
- How do you separate the economic and social experience of children from that of their parents?
- It’s not just money. It’s parent’s education etc. too.
- Can’t just solve this by focusing on the kids. Need to focus on the parents.
- Generational aspect to persistence of poverty
- Things help people forward in prior generation – GI Bill
- It’s not just the parents income and education level. These other supports were there/systems.... Free colleges (NYC)
- People with higher incomes more likely to stay married. Fewer conflicts over money = less stress.
- Graphs show rapid rise of the top tier. The gap widens top is less reachable.

Further reflection
- Causes of gap:
  - Rich getting richer, others not
  - Wage stagnation
  - National policies – tax (capital gains_
  - Educational opportunity
  - Global competition
  - Employment landscape has changed dramatically for those lack college education
  - Government disinvestment in education
  - Racist policies
  - Classism in NH – not caring about those in poorer communities in the public schools. No cross community caring. Schools have uneven resources.
  - Children are classified, those “in” those “out.” School funding town to town perpetuates uneven education.
  - Sexism – women earning less and hap is growing. Women minimum wage earning and single parents
  - Lack of broad base tax and funding mechanism perpetuated problems, creates patchwork of

Possible Solutions/Approaches: Ideas who should be responsible
- more and better child care affordable and subsidized
- head start (1/2 day): lack o transportation – for example for handicapped
- state funded early childhood education
- sliding scare child care
- out of school “hours” child care for older children – after school, school vacation etc.
- start kids right early on. Catch up later is expensive and not always possible
- paid family medical leave (business)
- businesses – fair scheduling – give employees advanced notice about schedule to arrange for child care/transportation
- invest in workforce housing
- mixed income housing
- limits exist for low-income housing unless families are single-parent, disabled
- entire community needs to understand that helping those in need helps the entire community

Recommendations:
- support early childhood education
- support families and children with mental health issues
- change tax structure so not reliant on property tax
- institute a living wage rather than a minimum wage
- elect people who express our values
- foster greater civic engagement

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Concord Group A –
Experiences:
- Exposure as a child to role modeling – making sure that all youth have the opportunity to be involved in activities
- The importance of the joy of learning/working (not being stuck in a job – the have to vs. the get to.)
- Working with a segment of the population that feels hopeless and like they didn’t have access to the American dream.
- American Dream today – it is more of a dream and less of a reality. A lot of people struggle with making ends meat.
- Grew up in a family where men had incredible tenacity to never give up despite the circumstances and it rubbed off. – Yet, through profession has come into contact with a population that is resigned to not being able access the American Dream.
- Father encouraged me to get into technology and that was an area where the door opened to many opportunities.
- Non-stop positive interaction and support from family that lay the foundation to believe that he could pursue his goals.
- The importance of role models/mentors encouraging kids to pursue what they show an apatite for. (open window of opportunity) ex: High School student good at reading/writing – encourage to become a journalist and he did.

Brainstorm: what did you notice?
- Children from lower income families or single parent families are starting out way behind.
- Data shows strong evidence of children’s ability to be successful or stay stuck in poverty is dependent on background and opportunities presented.
- Cost of education is getting prohibitive.
- Coming out of high school or college is harder to get started today.
- People are working longer and therefore their jobs aren’t available (it could be because they want to or have to.)
- Economy is going through a change, qualifications for good jobs are changing – need to be more highly qualified now then you did a generation ago.
- American students are competing with more foreign students and young work force
- 40% has seen a rise in income, the other 60% has seen their income flat line – wonder how that data looks like related to housing
- The people who need to speak out are not here – how do we give them a voice?
- An event like this would be easier on a weekend, working parents are home with their kids making dinner, doing homework...
- How do we bring groups together that see things differently – political inequality illustrates that problem. To have productive conversation that leads to action.
- #7 goodnight moon graph – know there would be a difference, surprised that the numbers have not changed much since the 70’s – the importance of reading is being acted on.
- Is there any data that says that the American Dream was any more reasonable 40 years ago than it is today? (Is this a new problem?)
- Lower income has less people available to mentor and perhaps the upper income bracket should spend more time mentoring the lower income kids,
- Single mother – in NH, there are not groups that work with single mothers (3 slides showing how difficult it is – is there a gap in services? –lower income parents worried about stigma of partaking in class.

Key Questions and Priorities
- System reacts when things go wrong and it would be great if NH put some effort into funding programs so that things go right – it develop more mentoring for young parents/families
- the importance of support systems “it takes a village”- today people are busier, live within their own ecosystems, distracted (ex: parents on phone when picking up kids, not really interaction… 20 minutes later kid bouncing off wall wanting attention.)

Concord area opportunities:
- Relatively decent housing options
- The median income is higher
- Number of community centers, lots of children programs (also for seniors involved – integration.)
- Cultural environment
- Diversity (lack of)
- It is safe
- Healthy food environment, access to healthy good
- Adequate bussing (good transportation)
- Strong sense of community
- Good school system
- The capital offers unique opportunities – influences the community
- Early intervention – schools interact quickly
- CASA – exceptional work
- Farmers market downtown

Barriers/Challenges in Concord
- lower income families can not always afford to participate in after school activities because they cannot afford to pay. This extends to youth sports and other opportunities outside of school.
- Immigrant population in Concord has a high percentage and many begin to create some new challenged.
- Job opportunities for High School age students and young adults are slim – college graduated leave the state to find job opportunities not found in state.
- Housing for young families is outrageous – buying a house = impossible and rent = high
- NH college students have the highest rate of debt coming out of school. It is easier to be educated out of state (cheaper..)
- Concerns about college age kids being burdened with hinge debts when 1st starting out
- Hard to plan for retirement
- Demographic of NH population should be concerning – big senior population and youth who are leaving.
- Question – what percentage of the population identifying that there is a need would it take to tip the scare and actually create change?

Outcomes
- means to have a livable wage (need to address the economic situation.
- State government leading towards fiscal train wreck – aging population will cost a lot of money, jobs available are minimum wage and educated young people are leaving.
- Facility unit continue to disintegrate – need to address (NH issue) compromises community.

Community Solutions:
- Universal pre kindergarten (has been implemented in a state) this would be great to have in NH
- The opportunity for good quality education in Pre-K (not just babysitting
- There are great pre school providers in NH, but it is not really affordable for a lot of families
- Note – the House did not touch the governor’s budget for childcare subsidies.

Final Priorities:
1. Affordable quality education for pre-k and also for college/higher education
2. More support for parents with a focus on prevention (before the crisis)
3. The importance of mentors and creating incentive for those mentoring
4. Increased awareness of the effect on society of the dire consequences of poverty.

Concord Group B –
Introduction/Questions
- to get a further education (community college)
- My parents to work hard – 1st to graduate high school
- Education is essential – data shows there is a lot more to be done/education for all
- Any young person can achieve
- Youth in early years is so important
- Education – go to college
- We become vista volunteers to give back in working and helping others
- The gap is getting wider between rich to poor.
- Early childhood – earlier the better
- What we spend for each child in school/how much child each school
- Race is most addressed in data
- Income gap if riche becomes richer. Ex: Chicago 0 we do not have enough.
- Rising tide
- Pres? Question (1965) race has a choice – income and equality have stronger gap than race
- Income gap has more impact than anything else in education
- Social economy as education we have Title I
- How do we make it able to risk – take? Degree
- White power and privilege
- Data matches results
- Gap was rising and reduced lunch in schools 60% do not get sufficient nutrition
- Children lunch bags in church for kids that need for weekend – sick because are hungry
- Arts, education and government
- Peace corp: school principle challenges of a school every child should receive a peak experience – many school absences
- Health foundation/grow in ME
- Director of Merrimack Day Care
- State legislature – it would get our children to a great state start – early years
- Housing (problem)
- Nurse practitioner – early childhood and pre natal/ has major setback
- Nutrition
- Prevention specialist (substance abuse, mental illness)
- Heavy concentration of prevention
- Family support coordinator – adding support
- Nannie for a family – negative reinforcement with shaming
- Positive feed back and love and support has shown great reward
- AmeriCorps – next year
- Senior CHS
- ESL Social Worker
- Organize a grass roots – of stopping minimum way
- Went back to school for new focus.

Data
- more young people not getting married
- educated young women who wanted child but not married (independent – encourage them)
- not as many teenage pregnancy
- youth educated women who have very planned pregnancy and not married
- educated women have children who have provided great stable relationships

Take Aways
- debt incurred from higher education
- stigma around free and reduced lunch – every child
- stigma around so many poverty issues
- mentorships
- range of opportunities for children
- making sure every student matters
- school connection for students
- without a teacher connection every students have one teacher to connect with every day
- parents should have more active role in parenting – something is missing when parents are not actively involved
- earlier support for children in pre school – experience starting early with parents. Parents want to see children succeed.
- Out children, our tomorrow
- Gap with negative vs positive aspects in our home has major impact
- Charter schools objective is to educate the entire family – mom and dad were educated to be better
- at parenting
- Calmers trends of living in ’40+50s – families ate together and chat
- Past generation – family meant more to each other
- Child lack direction from parent
- Were home at same time/parents were nor so tired/ mom’s don’t have enough time
- 40-50: Income gap: owned your home, I can, now bigger houses and 2 cars
- Human Service focus only parents aren’t as good which is a rad reflection
- More behavioral management in parents getting their children to do something
- Race is not addressed in data
- Social/economic gap
- Whole community to work together
- Children having a sense of connection
- (hard to read notes at times)

Concord Group C –
- People can’t find work.
- Filing for disability – young people don’t have hope
- Public school kindergarten teacher – families not connected to kids educational experience. Ed system is leaving families behind.
- Manufacturing Towns – allowed people to have jobs without college education – middle class life
- NH does not support college education and grads – can’t afford to live in NH
- Families in distress – “we” vs. “they” society – war on poverty failing
- American Dream – how much money you have for education
- Isolating factors/social media/ in society
- NH is an old state – need young people. Have to talk about housing and opportunities for young adults – too much focus on elderly
- Were you born in NH? Immigration – 42% among native born. People who came to state brought education
- No taxes compared to other states
- Taxes haven for high income people
- Everyone income group does better than the national average
- Are we willing to think differently? What “education” means – how do we address that?
- Did not historically need this.
- Do not need college degree – count experience instead too.
- College – employers expect certain knowledge
- Cost of living is expensive
- What does American Dream look like? Not long term job, house, in suburbia
- American Dream: different choices for grandparents – earn enough money to have a house, job and time with family
- American Dream – you can work hard and get a job/ do what you want. Not true – have to think about.
- American Dream ??? – hard life for many people not always the way it was - history tells another story
- Education – is it useful? Higher/more complex thinking skills or still factory – oriented approach
- Can we take value from both?
- When poor people are down – hard to break the cycle
- System is set up to give you a certain product, that’s what you get
- Also has to do with parenting; same education as others but different parents
- You are a reflection of those you spend time with
- Universality of education suppresses individuality – needs/skills
- Families – early years – kids from recourse poor families need to include families too in early years home visiting – model good parent skills
- Montessori – hands on learning keeps kids engaged
- Invest in early childhood – high quality
- Fed. Res. Bank says this is the best investment in kids in our society – birth to age 5
- Common core – need early education experience to bring all children and families up to the same level to start
- Best physical and mental health from pre-natal onwards
- Single mothers – whatever we subsidize gets used – disability – more money if you have a kid, emotional currently acceptable need
- How do we change behavior – incentive other behavior/get other adults to mentor child
- Mentors –options depend on your economic status
- Fed Res Bank – supporting children’s saving accounts. NH working on having accounts for kids. Children with accounts 7x more likely to finish and go to college
- Job creation – people are underemployed – low wage jobs (sales people) not enough opportunities
- Young people leave state to go to college
- 25% of people live in Northern NH – 75% of land
- no representation in north – disenfranchised. Not same access to services
- economic opportunity – used to be an economic destination – not developing talent pool/ outward migration – can’t get a job
- used to be the best place to raise a kid – not true now – “NH advantage”
- How many people live in NH and commute to work – other states? 60,000 people every day.
- Biz in schools 1x per month – share info – foster development
- Health care for all people – kids and adults
- More support for family recourse centers
- Multiple choices for education = styles/approaches vouchers from government
- Home visiting model for young families – voluntary
- Government tax incentive for doing well in school
- Importance of education
- Education is vital priority of our statewide community

Concord Group D –

Brainstorm

- Information is missing on:
  - Childcare
  - Healthcare
  - Women’s issues
  - Mobility affects neighborhoods
  - Parent support
  - Ethnicity and race
- Need to hear from people that are most affected by the gap
- Communication seems 1-divisional
- How did we get here?

Solutions

- We all need to work together
- Decide what is important – success
- Concord need all-day kindergarten
- Increase early childhood opportunities
- How do we change the silent majority
- Need NH state funds to support early childhood initiatives
- Businesses need to collaborate with school
- Summer Rec programs
- Single unwed young mothers need access to birth control and education
- Earning a livable wage and education for success
- Income tax?
- Money “seems to be going away”
- Tax policies
- Campaign finance reform
- Extended families
- Drug treatment programs
- Housing the homeless
- Energy assistance
- Accessible childcare
- Education about public assistance that is and isn’t available
- Parent support
- Mentoring
- Change educational structure to Pre-K – college instead of k-12
- Accountability and effectiveness in all schools
- Support to families in early years includes access to quality childcare preschool- college support, health (including mental health and addiction), energy assistance, housing, education, mentoring, interpersonal communication – prevention

Concord Group E –
Information Review: what do you notice? What surprises you? Did you learn something new? What clarifying questions do you have?
- Page 21 – is the gap in NH due to less money spent on education? Why is this?
- NH’s access to AP courses
- Page 12 – 41% of mothers were unmarried
- Page 23 – school makeup is very different for graduation rates – big disparity
- All rates are lower than expected
- More towns would be helpful to not skew data
- Heartbreaking: page 25 – surprised there is a gap between male and female

Brainstorm: Themes, Take-Aways, Big Picture
- missing environmental factors, not thoroughly explained. Less exposure to lead, opioids
- what factors lead to poverty
- NH on page 14, rate of birth to single moms close to half born into single parent families – this issue impacts other graphs
- Correlation between income and education opportunities
- High opportunities are supported by different towns – what town you live in impacts available opportunities
- Disparities between town to town, neighborhood to neighborhood, and school to school
- Different schools and neighborhoods make diversity a success and value diversity both in backgrounds, race and economics
- Local families and communities may support different backgrounds more than others

Sharing thoughts: What issue is compelling to you and your communities
- shared costs for athletics, extra curricular, and fundraisers
- page 10 – income graph 1960 – 2010
  - lack of community that has not been
  - supported in taxes and legislative action?
Income tax sink or swim culture

Key Questions and Priorities
- Is it harder for young people to get an education? And what effect will this have on future generations (college debt, 60% of all jobs will require a degree)
- People may be sacrificing the American dream because of college debt – delay in family planning and delay in purchase of first home
- Need for full day kindergarten
- Cost of childcare - $1000/month
- Saving for college while paying off existing educational debt

Key Questions and Priorities: what is happening in NH
- earnings have not been increased to reflect expenses: food, utilities, despite working multiple jobs
- choices of career vs. stay at home parent are limited
- cost of childcare outside of school – need for bartering of services
- economy makes necessary 2+ jobs: no paid leave for health, childcare, maternity or paternity leave.
- Page 32: “The same 60 people run Concord” – all affluent – policies don’t reflect all populations
- Not just challenges for low income – challenges for all income levels
- Erosion of community
- Question: page 26 – where will the % of college educated people come from in NH if current high schools don’t reflect – how will they get education, afford education? Highest education cost in the country. Disadvantages with some youth the even get education.
- How do kids aspire to more than food service/retail? How do we support them? Previous questions do not have expectations that allow children to aspire to more.
- Is public assistance valued bad or OK? – do they know there is more?
- Is it possible for youth who want to aspire to more than “public assistance” to get there?
- Page 24: importance of mentors with advanced backgrounds or more diverse than their parents.

Key Questions and Priorities
- infrastructure of school and aftercare is not supportive of 2 working parents with 8 hour work days
- needs= reliance f many community members and services to help raise children – which influences the cultural influences they receive which may differ from parents values

Final Priorities
- Question: likely causes of opportunities gap?
- Tax policies that don’t reflect greater social need
- Significance of women in the workforce
- There are not many jobs where a single breadwinner can support a family – impacts policies/policies don’t reflect this
- Minimum wage is not a living wage
- College educated child care providers and teachers are not paid at level that encouraged entry into the field
- Subsidized by Koch bothers
- Taxes

What experiences Impact how you see opportunities and the American Dream?
- living the difference of different schools and communities
- differences in school districts/budgets – community participation – insider/outsider status within a community
- inability to reach American Dream based on socioeconomic status
- the position you “get on the ladder” affects future success
- affected by pre-existing conditions – work schedule, income, substance abuse
- stage in life of parents
- resources of parents
- connections of parents
- all people are creatures of communities and commitments there
- fear of rejection – not fitting into better opportunities
- youth not knowing they’re “worth it” and therefore not taking amount of opportunities
- lack of understanding/missed out because of recourses
- struggle to understand changes between affluence and opportunities of previous generation
- different ideas of success/cultural values of thrive for education, marriage, career from previous generation
- easy to say what American Dream isn’t – but hard to define what it is
- local stigma against poverty – people in poverty in NH feel stigmatized
- better investment of government funds in early childhood education not at age 6

**Community Solutions**
- property taxes to be decreased
- prefer a state sales tax
- property owners cannot keep paying more – everyone should pay in not just property owners
- opposition to income tax/support of income tax
- alternative to property tax
- full day kindergarten
- all of the brainstormed solutions are not possible without a shift in thinking where we reduce the shifts in economy
- community – it impacts everyone just “them”
- workforce needs more qualified employees – this is how effects het back to those in government
- composition – size of legislature is cumbersome to passing
- people need to be courageous to not be dominated by those people who are not reflected in these charts.
- Investment in early childhood health services, education
- Services support strengthening diverse family unities with diverse backgrounds
- Alternatives to a property tax to pay for what we value
- The current method is not working
- Exploring different revenue structures
- Address discrepancies in opportunities from town – town, neighborhood, neighborhood, school – school
- Shift the focus on the advancement of “my child” to understanding that the entire community needs to be advanced and thrive
- High cost of higher education and the cumulative effects of long-term debt
- Building and encouraging a political voice and force that reflects and supports these values

**Concord Group F**
**Brainstorm:**
- mom’s with less education have a harder time educating children – don’t do as well
- more finances, more positive attitude towards self
- similarities between Democrats and Republicans on taxes – different on problem with taxes
- less than 50% of children in NH feel that they don’t matter in their community
- kids could work younger 30 years ago and produce income/value for adults and self
- 60% of kids have single parents and less income and education
- 5 factors – high school, college before children, marriage before children, work 2-3 weeks in 50’s to pay for college

Sharing Thoughts – On Concord
- 2 parents unemployed no money and no benefits
- expansive childcare
- fuel assistance and food stamps
- 97% of child and family services at or below the poverty level
- job pay is inadequate to cover living expenses
- middle class gets benefits to live middleclass

Key Questions and Priorities:
- well paying jobs and opportunities
- cost of housing needs to be more affordable
- need higher incomes
- need more industry and manufacturing
- create jobs that create value outside of city (medical, technical, cyber)
- fix the tax structure – reasonable income tax
- education on tracking and educational learning
- bringing back philosophies from the 50’s on education
- poor families have access to: education, health care, housing, childcare
- more church involvement in community
- more caring of citizens for each other
- teach children how to help themselves – take risks, work, fail/succeed, coping skills
- better placement (jobs) of refugee population
- better federal support for communities with refugees
- mentoring/coaching – additional adults helping single parents with children.
- Encourage integration in friendships

Final Priorities:
- fix tax structure (increase tax regressive and reduce our income opportunity)
- help kids have more value in community
  - mentoring/coaching programs
  - community involvement in raising children
  - identify need and opportunities
  - opportunity for kids to work, take risks, fail/succeed, contribute to community
- have a more “whole person” approach – looking at all of the pieces
- How does our community make poverty less of a full time job
  - Transportation
  - Childcare
  - Healthcare
- Investing in education, health, housing = more healthy community
- Evaluate and collaborate recources that are available already
- Build a larger more diverse group for community assessment and solutions
Concord Group G –
What did you notice? What surprises you? Clarifying questions?
- Youth at risk
  - See it on a daily basis
  - Stress is always pertinent in school
  - Data supports what I see everyday
- If we think education is going to solve the problem – data seems to say this but real life doesn’t support that
- Goodnight moon – data shares surprising rend overtime that education may not make the different that we assumed
- Would have like to see data on availability of jobs for students graduating from higher education
- Chicken vs. egg – American dream still exists graph: Is the feeling of defeat keeping us from achieving or is it keeping is from achieving making us feel defeated
- The story that you can make it out of poverty and achieve you dream is real – just harder to achieve
- Data doesn’t show attitude and results of emotional support
- Happily surprised to see that both blue and red columns shoe that policy change is needed (page 11)
- Sadly surprised that graph on page 21 shows that NH does so poorly in providing access to education

What did you notice?
- housing – transitional housing data is missing. Housing stability is key to children’s success
- Segregation that happens between income levels negatively affects opportunity for children
- Data is compelling that there is a glaring early gap that can be solved but is isn’t happening
- All things being equal we have to take into effect the impact that mental health and substance abuse issues have on the issue. Especially untreated.
- Neighborhood building – “it takes a village“ community to raise a child
- We all have a responsibility to look out for each other as humans
- Community planning needs to support integration of economic levels, different cultures, all individuals
- Need to look at transitional/affordable housing of quality
- Availability of public transportation

Key Questions and Priorities
- we don’t have equal access to the things that give us equal opportunity
- livable wage jobs for families
- children in poverty are not getting the proper nutrition that they need to thrive and excel
- need all public investments that w need to think as a community
  - Libraries
  - Kindergarten
  - headstart
  - School activities/transportation
  - Transportation
  - public assistance programs
- Transparency on how services are being accessed and how often and why
- Creating good data sources about the problem that people are able to access while making decisions
- Get the criteria out to other groups, churches important
- They ways to help people in the North Country are different then the ways that work in Manchester
- Creating ways for people to give back – create new systems that support active change
  - Child co-op
  - Build skills
  - Cost benefit
- Local stake holders in the process – conversations

Community Solutions: Next Steps
- address living wage
- provide early family intervention to provide support for health development of child
- quality affordable stable child care and housing
- community task force to increase economic development
- protect and expand publically funded child and family services
- educate people/groups/officials about the issue of date and including cost benefit analysis – changed minds changed hearts
- access to mental health and substance abuse treatment
- access to dependable public transportation
- community involvement – creating the village

Final Priorities:
- Education/Awareness
- Economic
- Policy
- Family/Community

Concord Group H –
Name, hometown, your opportunities vs. your parents
- immigrant, college, job interpreting
- FL to NH contrast
- Single mom/dad
- Fewer opps for child
- Work ethic of sun
- Military service vs. ED – 60’s
- Education beyond mom and dad
- Debt – Son at University

How your experiences impact your view of opportunity and American Dream
- All vistas in Texas saw could hope vs. lost of hope in 20’s
- Pembroke and Manchester = studied and worked and believed in American Dream – See diff 1980’s – 2015
- Move and kids school your C.O.L. in NH
- Support for working family
- ??? Gap
- Colleges black box to High School kids – role adults to support
- Loss of reality of American Dream – world smaller and smaller
- Experience with people in crisis lower income – loads of success vs. strong community
- Negative feeling to individual American Dream and national focus
- Love well, deeply, care, educate of being
- Self worth/self esteem kids
- Women having to work – parental love
- Concord – health care – cost/access
- Parents manufacture living wage vs. poverty local kids
- Service economy

Brainstorm: Notice about info? Surprises? Questions?
- Cost of higher ed
- Education of Moms
- Poverty hap and location – mobility?
- Graph 6 – counter intuitive – beloved childhood
- #15 don’t matter less than 50%
- #14 role of mentors

Most compelling idea to you and your community. Key issues to you:
- trust in early childhood
- how support new parents for loved childhood
- take common responsibility and commitment to invest in early childhood
- living wage – 2,3 jobs – more family time
- disconnect in how to think about opportunity hap and talk to other with different view
- rethinking capitalism – company reinvestment into community 1% give to now 1% profit – connection led by resourceful ?
- rethink wall street and profit definition
- meta analysis – log think takeaway health care for 45 good
- do facts/data move heat and belief?
- Importance of childhood neighborhood in NH like with like increases NH property there
- Motivated by fear? Devise for ??/ of life’s safety
- Consequences of trends
- Heroine/death/ by access
- Reaches problem and all notice
- Too much disparity
- But someone to blame
- Loss of hope
- People feeling disenfranchised and not loved
- High school 2 year national service – college or work experience
- Past more kids did well not certain kids do well – without opportunity don’t do well
- Kids need member of valued pathways teach/service/mechanical/manufacturing

Report Out:
- what do we do re: people who don’t see problem’s causes/solutions
- shared solutions of those have needed
- kids single to others who see another def.
- one community wide project intervention for 100 families
- family base for moms/dads
- financial to was/actions for early childhood community
- (some difficulty reading notes)

**Lebanon Group A –**

Information Review:
- purpose and goal to attend
- public policy and data
- getting from noise to informed personal action decision making
- getting ideas for solutions
understand the problem
what are the problems with schools that need solving
understand what people see for equity in NH and what attainable items
NH – what adults think young (< 25 year) need to work on – ownership by the young people
Page 8/9 – education focus – lack of social station and safety = drugs
Odd pre birth category – healthy baby increase opportunity
Data around access to healthcare – mental health care
Housing/placement
Change public perception around poverty
Page 11 – tax hole vs work ethic – interesting – wage/gaps in wages/greed. Interesting would have been rich/poor instead of republicans/democrats
Page 12 – it is possible, might take extraordinary measures
- Poor people might not know how it is possible
- Would be nice if “they” would be participating
- People become poor – it is easy to get trapped in “instant poverty”
Mothers age – isn’t it wealth not age?
- Single mothers are more likely to be poor
- Young mothers have more/better access to contraceptives
- Is it the amount of time that is available for married couples decreasing because they both have to work?
High school and educational level has decreased, some college education is now what HS was
- Earning capacity /what employers are looking for is changing – expectation has changed
- By law it is required to give HS
- Expectation of women education has changed
- Positive data but we are discussing lack of opportunities
- Women were working in lowly paid jobs, those jobs are disappearing
- Page 17 – goodnight moon – good news, but how important is it?
- Page 18 – single parent – educational level/income level = HS single parent increasing
- Page 22 – Lebanon/Hanover - distorts the number when you think about Dartmouth etc, regional hospital – mean causes averages does distort
- Page 23 – segregation by income has always been the case in US data - concept is not new, property taxes in NH, is that the cause?
- Page 25 – who contacts – hard to talk in public if you are in poverty. Feeling invisible – it is critical to get everyone to voter, t they don’t talk then their voice is not being considered.

Key Questions and Priorities
keeping kids in school
teach teachers how to deal with “bad behavior” in class rooms
teachers need to educate kids “creative thinking” and to “advocate for themselves”
lack of living wage jobs
prenatal care
commute distance is increasing
rural males difficult to find local jobs
childcare year round with academic support. Parents don’t just work during schools hours
public services need to be available outside work hours
mentors for children and the importance
everybody votes
poor have the expectation that they cannot affect change
- Care comes to the people in Canada – family leaves policy.

Community Solutions
- We are the grassroots, we have to reach grass tops
- We need to speak up
- Anybody can make/create change
- We need charge otherwise more kids give up
- Community issues are limited to federal/state regulators
- Minimum wage needs to go up
- Benefit to work should be better than not working
- Health care and childcare – business don’t take on the cost
- Track kids from day one

Not change
- Doctors focus on prevention
- We don’t know?
- Non-profit sector

Priorities
- Access to education
- Topics of education (critical thinking etc)
- Access and delivery health care
- Access to public services
- Advocacy – target audience needs to be involved
- Access to work and living wage

Lebanon Group B –
Experiences of Group B:
- Work
- Parenting home ownership/not
- Debt load
- Exposed to others; lots of people; different cultures; diversity (nations, world views)
- American Dream” no longer relevant = ownership = entitlement like “opportunity
- Too many people think they are entitled to stuff – EBT cared – people will stop for you (food stamps)

Responses to info/data and experience
- Those with needs who have or need human services support for them to get education
- Didn’t feel like my choices were limited
- Stable family life; supportive
- Seen children growing up in less stable environments and access/aware of same choices
- Some have tones of opportunity and others have very limited choices available to them
- Haves and have not’s; segregated communities
- Manufacturing infrastructure supported real income and a livable wage; less so now.
- Some parts of the country are very poor and have less privilege – lack basic needs/provisions.
- Poverty and education influences opportunity
- Money spent on children overall
- Do I matter – would like to see by county/district
- Can be hard/sad to be a teen
- Drug and alcohol use at a young age – heroin epidemic – more likely to use
- Having fewer/more mentors impacts “do I matter”
- How does “do I matter” compare to the past
- Risky behaviors more prevalent now than in the past
- Teens have “angst”
- Self-fulfilling or perpetuating by way of circumstances leads to cycles
- How do we break the cycle
- Does system provide opportunities
- #16 – educational attainment have you been afforded the same educational opportunities will lead to low wages and less opportunity in the future. (wasn’t always true)
- having exposure to more diverse communities and more mentors/across communities
- are high paying; skilled jobs special training required not pushed in high school – has changed over time/different now. Eg welders.
- Some students lack the basic skills (math, language) for some English is not first language – need more apprenticeships
- AP classes 0 note some doing better; many not and some colleges won’t accept them
- Many variables impact the data
- What constitutes a family now.
- Many different examples within the data
- Questions as to what’s measured – how many adults influence child; resources available – could be defined in different way.
- Employees are working for low wages, less than 10 dollars and hour.
- There are 2 NH’s southeast North/Leb NH
- Community college
- There is a lot of bias – work at a charter school in Lebanon – children trying to survive - probably can’t break out of cycle of poverty because parents are extremely poor and don’t have time. They may feel they don’t matter and drugs can be a relief.
- Trade schools of value - jobs

Summarize Key Points
- money is a major factor and how it impacts opportunity
- haves and have not’s - income, funding, resources
- major disparities exist
- topic of teen years – mentors and feeling valued by others is significant (wanted more info on that)
- value/importance of very early years – education, language, development, coping skills, emotional, developmental, and social skills
- averages can make those below average (in data)

Looking to the future: Concerns and recommendations/steps
- would like to see all pre k have public early education for all ages 3 and up
- concern for lack of money/funding for prevents, eg parents as teachers; incentive funds; alcohol and drug abuse prevention; public education; mental and physical health
- money spent on impact of abuse/neglect and much less on prevention
- social return on investment
- saving by investing in prevention
- need information to argue for funding to explain costs of not doing prevention
- other costs to society (criminal justice)
- who pays? It may cost money but it saves down the road.
- Concern of those who work and pay taxes, want to keep the money they’ve earned
- Money spent on programs that don’t pan out
- Concern - need a college education to get ahead but can’t afford it – how do we justify current costs?
- Education incentives and grants have been reduced recently - maybe we need more now and into the future
- Prison costs more than education
- Goal in NH for college competition by 202 – have questions about it (what’s happening with this?)
- People have NH to afford school and to find jobs – aging populations
- Costs to care for elderly fewer to share costs. Older adults/retired have to leave to afford to leave.
- Nationally, hard to delay gratification – programs don’t get sustained – some are fantastic and then go away or get cut.
- Need a stronger sense of the long term.
- There is a lot of data on education eg. Failing algebra 1 linked to high school drop out/non completions. More focus?
- Maybe need a spirit of trying more new things – break out of the status quo. Reinvention might be good – be open to new ideas, entrepreneurial spirit for social support/health
- All social programs provide individual attention – personal connection – which can lead to success and stronger self-esteem
- Headstart teachers need more education and higher level of certification
- Poorer communities lack resources for early ed
- In NH no state money funding it
- Federal responsibilities? Supposed to support 40% and never have for special ed – currently spend 14%. Pushed to the state, gets pushed down to local and general ed/unfunded mandates.
- Unfunded mandates are a serious problem.
- Sometimes we polarize responses to problems before we seek to understand them better.
- Strong need to support mentors and related programs.
- High school costs education costs debt load
- I didn’t have to worry about this
- System isn’t helping and can hurt
- Not enough funding - gifts for coaching positions as example of priorities

Report out
- early childhood focus – need education and mentors to get ahead later.
- Prevention focus 0 saves costs later
- Money for education across the board – early, secondary and college level – RETHINK IT
- What is federal governments responsibility for the able (needs to be defined.)

Rochester Group A –
Introductions: Name, hometown, your opportunities in life? What impacts your perspective on American Dream?
Reflections on Data:
- not getting heard – who needs help (chart number 24)
- what happens when we don’t pay attention evenly
- challenges are overwhelming (chart 5)
- so much data – why can’t we do something (chart 13)
- so sad
- lower income = lower opportunity (chart 19)
- two generational approach (parents and children) (chart 7)
- more support for student = less problems (chart 15)
- in NH policy makers make decisions without realizing impact (MHSA)
- deck is stacked against most people
- it’s all about money
- make this a priority
- Ed including ECE birth
- A community responsibility – not just poor

Most Compelling Issues
1. Rising child poverty levels in NH
2. As American’s why aren’t we appalled with unmet needs of children?
3. Living wage
4. Unplanned pregnancy – teen impact
5. Unsustainable conditions from a business perspective
6. how much education matters – both children and parents
7. When children’s basic needs go unmet – really can’t move forward (educator)
8. Communities need to support families

Comments on Compelling Issues
- Living wage
- Education is everything
- Teen pregnancy and impact on education
- Community involvement, awareness and engagement
- Children’s welfare as a priority for policy makers for a healthy NH
- NH needs to do more to support families for access to education opportunities for their children
- Every kid deserves a fair chance to get ahead
- Prioritize children’s needs and bringing along parents starting at birth

What are Implications for future (kids)
1. Without support now – costs will be greater later
2. Without more support now – more crime/addiction
3. do something difference now it will set worse opportunities to succeed
4. Unsustainable
5. Group disengaged in society = crime, addiction, no future
6. Divided society – haves and have not’s
7. The state will not be able to sustain itself
8. Gated communities increase

Community Solutions/Ideas
1. Funding kindergarten
2. Listen to all members
3. Change “mill town mentality” – if you work hard you will get ahead – need more still
4. Mentoring children, parents
5. Board on children and families
6. Universal pre school screening, need to educate public and public leaders
7. More support for children with disabilities

Key priorities or Take Aways
1. educate public and policy makes about the issues and opportunity gap
2. unified messages for all – data shows outcome
3. education is crucial for success
4. identify funding streams so all children equal access to opportunities
5. make sure all families have the support they need in all ages
6. living wage
7. responsibility of media needs to improve
How can we make sure every young person has access to opportunities?

1. support everyone with needs
2. streamline costs, childcare, after school activities, college
3. Increase peoples awareness of citizenship; if everything is values on money and not cultural values
4. Better earlier childhood ed everywhere
5. Community involvement and mentoring
6. Universal access to early childhood education, enrichment activities, college not depending on ability to pay
7. Access to programs and services based on need, not how much we do and don’t want to spend.

**Rochester Group B –**

Intros – name, hometown, your opportunities – what experiences did you have or factors that impact how you view opportunity?

- schooling
- community
- parents
- mentors
- social programs
- military
- chores- work experience
- big brother and sister
- upward bound
- adversity propels

**Trends and Info**

What do you notice?

- Growing poverty
- American dream?
- Debt – credit card – education debt
- Single parenting – health care cost
- $20 per hour
- Definition of poverty

What surprised you?

- sliding scale of poverty
- birthrate - older moms Age 26
- political party
- literacy need - response to this
- top 40% up
- lower income stagnant growth
- barrio of proficient reader as a parent
- tax system

What did you learn?

- 30% fewer words by 2
daycare
- amount of reading time
- still a math gap
- 6 in 10 some college
Any clarifying questions
- single parenting and other factors
- mentors
- key person
- lacking network
- intellect?
- Target kids for educational gaps
- Mitigating factors?
- Refuse the barrier!
- Self parenting
- Community
- College visits

Responsible:
- all levels of government, community leaders and community residents

Changes: national conversation
- vote to support initiatives to overcome poverty
- family friendly policies - employer support
- business modeling family supportive policy
- livable wage!
- Tax breaks for these policies
- Fully funded pre-schools
- All day kindergarten
- Support schools and teachers

Tweets:
- More positive mentors
- Mentoring is a pathway
- Motivate people to care
- worse before better
- Income/educational hap – growth is alarming
- Harness our learning about this topic
- bring back
- lots of safety nets along life path/stages “entry points”
- national conversation/shift pre Vietnam 20%
- Awakening

Themes/big picture
- mentors for the parents
- comprehension level of programs
- relationship coaching
- enrichment gap
- student debt
- parental support of enrichment
- early ed matters
- two generations address birth
- experimental experience

How do we connect info?
- stigma – “those people” they are your neighbors
- overcoming barrios – ability to do this – teach this
- 1 person at a time
- how do we get people to volunteer
- livable wage
- education affordable
- political will – empathy
- community basis to thinking

Other ideas you would like to share?
- comprehension of poverty
- interconnectivity is gone – reinvent it
- living wages for blue labor jobs is gone
- wage shifts
- nomadic – moving around
- residents from MA – shift in resident base

Findings:
- poor poorer/ rich richer
- people don’t experience other situation
- no teaching diversity about socio/economic status
- we don’t pay for social work
- no money
- the word is not out there regarding programs/networking

Concerns:
- Income/education gap – it’s growing
- How to act at the community level – build social capital
- Lack of hope (overwhelming)

Recommendations
- life skills classes – state standard
- investment in early education
- 2 generational teaching – parent support
- national conversation – policy (creative solutions to enhance change)
- mentoring pathways
- livable wage

**Rochester Group C –**

**Observations – Data**
- data seems to assume kids are in two parents families
- regional segregation – wealthy vs poor
- not a lot of surprises – putting concrete numbers to things we know
- 5/6 group are in youth services
- 6/7 non profit
- what do we mean by the American Dream
- Page 18 – are percent of income more similar than money spent or higher?
- If we can’t do a lot do we “overdo it”
- SAT Scores? Pertinent?
- #19 – 4th grad reading scores – what is school district spending in higher income districts
- IEP vs personal money to address how does this affect reading level
- Values and value on learning
- Parent education needed on the importance of learning and development
- Barrington makes book to every child under 5 4x/yr
- Mental health struggles of parents as an obstacle to child development
- Reading = good parenting? Vs time with kids = good parenting
- Reading = quality time ex folding laundry
- Quality time - what is it?
- Over nurturing parents/helicopter parents – higher income, lack of opportunity to be independent
- The safety net available in higher income family
- Giving kids value of money
- Teaching
- Overscheduling kids = good parenting? – Families lose downtime
- Cultural dear about latchkey kids
- Unrealistic goals for kids
- When was cultural shift to American Dream = fame and fortune
- Parents need to impress values on kids verbally and by example
- Suicide of the American dream – taxed ourselves out of the middle class
- Movement away from religion?

Tweet Time
- can it be agreed that we in New Hampshire need boatloads of money for substance abuse yet these are some of the lowest paid professions
- NH is 49/50 for substance abuse help in US
- If we can stop the cycle of adverse childhood experience than we can change the statistics (2
generation approach)
- Our group has a college degree – how many people took part in conversation do not? How do we reach “those” people
- My neighborhood is not high income and do not vote
- Have the state/fed mentor voting
- How do we make voting a cultural value
- How to nurture voting from young age
- What are demographics of participants?
- 31% of eligible voters vote in NH
- flyers to 250 families in Rochester and none came

Barriers to becoming civically engaged
- feel disengaged
- intimidated by format due to experience
- reading level required for handouts
- lack of transportation
- lack of
- how is this program marketed?
- “school night”
- family logistics
- not on priority list for survival
- disbelief that change is possible
- people need to know they matter
- need direct invitation
- like shares info with like
- IEP as Ex:

  anxiety
  intimidation
  mental health problem
lack of available due to work schedule
- passed on generationally that my voice doesn’t matter
- court system as example – parents aren’t going to court, burnt out from kids and need a break
- are we assuming that their opportunities that aren’t being taken or is there ever/lack of opportunities
- NH Schools – no not hold back for failing grades/lack of attendance

Opportunities: Do they Exist?
- does this group in this room represent the community

Community
- in neighborhood
- can community problem solve
- take back the night programs
- cities trying to move toward that model
- focus on smaller community

Where do changes start?
- organized events that were seeds for change
- events happen that make people want to change
- great leaders engage as representatives of “the people”
- awful events can create awareness
- how do you create that desire in people

When does opportunity stop knocking?
- when people stop trusting
- living in the “I” vs the “we”
- instill community responsibility in youngest kids on up
- how to inspire people to feel engaged
- relationships- have personal connection
- past 5 years - whole new era with relationships through technology – disconnect
- economic choices with technology crosses socio-economic lines
- lack of relationships/disengaged hurts future youth
- engage one person in neighborhood to invite others to participate
- need community leaders/positive role models “old phone tree” concept
- positive role models reaching out to youth about life decisions
- family advocacy – great following, community support
- mental health – stigma, no identified leaders, people more in and out of issues
- creating a sense of “group” or community around issues
- if you are going to an event, meeting etc it is easier if you feel people are part of your group/community. If you don’t know anyone there I’m less likely to go. – how do you invite their existing group/community to get people civically engaged.

What does it mean when opportunity stops knocking?
- does this mean we need to take it or no longer exist
- historically, individual responsibility to go look for job – used relationships, connections but what if you don’t have those.
- What was motivation historically – does it still exist or is status quo more attractive?
- What is incentive to do better?
- Some “I” okay but can’t go overboard
- When did value system get messed up?
- Who is making sure kids have values?
Example of mom during Baltimore Riots – was it okay to champion physical violence in that case?

School becomes support system – what happens in summer? No food, no transportation, no safety net/support

8th grade students – I haven’t eaten today – parents aren’t filling out forms for free lunch

Opportunity - services that provide scholarships for summer camp/transportation

how to get parents to take opportunity’s through services

do kids resist camps that don’t represent their community

“by 3rd grade you can start seeing kids that have disengaged/checked out.”

Transient lifestyle leading to this?

Third grade highly predictive year for future success

Teachers are paid the lead for k-4

Childcare most expensive birth through k-4

Discrepancy in income/prestige when comparing those who support children (teachers, nurses, social services) vs people in industry

PT waiter makes more than ft teacher

MA degree in health and human services makes less than a teacher with a BA

Need to transfer drive of people drawn to services/teaching/etc to people currently receiving service

Sometimes it happens client becomes the counselor

How do you inspire someone to knock?

Decent income equates to opportunity

Income makes it easier

Feeling safe and secure

Strafford country is 3rd poorest in NH

Final Thoughts

movement towards individualism and away from community is contributing to the loss of opportunity

- discussed many causes, problems
- how does technology play a toll
- community needed to solve problems
- broader concept of community
- community no superhero – need local ownership hope and drive
- how does change happen – need to get participation

socio-economic class and opportunity

- how to engage civically for poorer classes
- how to instill comfort level for participation
- income makes a difference in opportunity
- income and life factors together have impact on opportunity (chicken/egg question)

Two generation approach – need to teat/educate parent and child and need to instill value/transfer values generation to generation
Appendix D: How NH Listens Collects and Reports Findings

NH Listens bases this kind of community development work on small-group facilitated dialogue (typically eight to twelve participants per group) that produces specific findings. Depending on the topic, the findings might be at a more general level, articulating broad sets of values or criteria for decision making, or quite specific recommendations, such as concrete steps for action. Whether a dialogue is constructed as a one-time event that stretches over several hours or multiple events occurring over several weeks, participants typically move through a four-stage process supported by the facilitator.

These stages include:

1. Introductions and personal stories about how participants relate to the focus topic of the dialogue (including their prior experiences with and opinions about the topic)
2. Review of the available data on the topic to ensure common, comparable levels of knowledge among participants
3. Analysis of the topic and its multiple dimensions, leading to selection by the group of a small number of key issues (three to four) that serve as the basis for subsequent discussion from which the group generates concrete actions and recommendations
4. In-depth discussion of the selected key issues and articulation of a final set of views, values, or recommended actions directed at relevant decision makers

Throughout the dialogue, facilitators and participants document the conversation on large flipcharts and identify recurring statements or themes. That is, the information that is gleaned from each small group is inductively analyzed, moving from specific comments made by group members to general statements that represent the shared ideas and perspectives of the group. Both agreements and disagreements are recorded, to ensure that all points of view are heard and documented.
Appendix E: Opportunity Gap Post-It Notes

Laconia

1. 4th grade reading test scores show that students from higher income backgrounds outperform students from low income families.
2. Education is the key to economic prosperity. NH does not value public education enough.
3. High rents and low wages lead to extreme family issues – along with high heating costs and electric bills are keeping families from providing even basic living standards.
4. Poverty is the main problem – this leads to family breakdown. Higher education of parents leads to higher scores in school.
5. We have a good lunch program in Manchester which provides lunch to many kids who qualify for the federal lunch program. This is only a summer program and for all families who go without this program many, many kids would go hungry.
6. Income disparity. Young adults facing difficult choices; denied opportunities for upward mobility many of their parents had.
7. After school activities – access to transportation to and from, CASA of has risen, parents involvement (volunteer, coach, girl scat leader)
8. Socio-economic gaps among strata’s are much wider than they were when I grew up in the 50’s and 60’s.
9. Having two parents who really wanted to parent me really mattered in my development, my success, my ability to take advantage of opportunities.
11. 1. Education = opportunity. 2. Evidence of widening opportunity gap is visible in the graphs. 3. Can we harness political power to alleviate child poverty?
12. Good education/access is essential for our kids. It isn’t a “feel good” issue, it’s a fundamental night and the policies promoted today do not ensure this happens for all kids.
13. Literacy, school breakfast provided, mentors.
14. Gap continues to grow, the disparity is alarming.

Plymouth

1. Disparity between wealth and education – that more is better for achieving the “American Dream”… but does it always mean a better quality of life or happiness?
2. Our secondary education in NH and the US is in dire distress. Teachers are hamstrung by rules and regulations not remotely related to a proper education for our kids.
3. Access to the tools for success, where is the education, basic survival needs after graduation because student debt, support, “it takes a village”
4. The path ahead for our children is not as easy as it was for us to get ahead.
5. We like to believe that everyone is equal in our country and that if you work hard you get ahead, but that isn’t always true.
6. Support, trades, vocational education
7. Close the income gap
8. Close the education gap
9. Education opportunity and encouragement
10. Structured violence
11. Culture and poverty
12. Wealth gap
13. Better educated mothers have more professional day care and less educated mothers rely heavily on relatives
14. Work ethic and individual responsibility
15. NH High schools not feeling important
16. Single parent families and education level
17. Unfair tax structures
18. 1. Keep in school because education is so crucial to opportunities. 2. Cut down on illegitimate births.

Berlin

1. Quality of education
2. Parents in North Country are strapped without earning opportunity – so limited.
3. Growing level of child poverty and relation to educational attainment/income level.
4. Today there are many more children being raised by a single parent with little education and these children are less likely to be socially or economically mobile.
5. Lack of employment opportunity with a livable wage
6. We need more mentors, we need a positive outlook, and we need to be self-guided.
7. Increase to education opportunities.
8. Need ways for poor and not poor kids to work together and learn together effectively.
9. Adequate funding for public education especially early childhood development.
10. Fully funded preschool/early education programs with a strong parent involvement/education component.
11. We need funding for early childhood development.
13. Decreasing optimism, aspirations and hope.
14. Lack of drive whether that be to be more: independent, financially better off, reach for an education.
15. Poverty and the inequality of wealth
16. Parents no providing time – (read, play, eat) together.
17. Families and children not starting out on the right path which creates a cycle of issues.
18. It is striking that NH tanks so high in so many quality of life measures but seems so behind in all of the statistics shared tonight. The most poor are at a constant disadvantage.

Lancaster

1. How can we support the struggling among us and allow them to overcome obstacles and achieve social mobility?
2. Mentors are important and so crucial
3. Providing opportunities
4. Providing a goof educational PR to college for all students
5. Children need mentors when parents can’t be there physically or mentally
6. Provide opportunities for work in Coos County – need jobs for families.
7. Education and awareness for parents – nutrition, promoting good education for families, poverty.
8. Poverty and lack of good jobs.
9. Education and community connections.
10. No more lead paint in NH.
11. Children from lower income families don’t feel they can do better.
12. We need to address poverty if we expect a chance to level the playing field for our children.
13. The overwhelming issue of poverty and the increasing gaps in income and opportunity. How can this be addressed?
14. Importance of family/community influence on value of education and “can do anything”
15. Engaging at risk youth in this conversation
16. The growing disparity in schools for quality programs between the “have and the “have-nots”
17. I would like the term “American Dream” abolished. I think it’s a mythical goal and leaves everyone feeling bad if they haven’t achieved it.
18. Lack of sense of influence leading to lack of opportunity (not voting, not mentors, all stems from poverty)
19. Poverty limits opportunity at all levels.
21. More opportunities for children to work and stay and give back to community – break poverty cycle.
22. Diverse work/industry to bring youth back to Coos.
23. Giving children opportunity a compelling reason to want to come back and contribute to this community because their experience is positive and supportive.
24. Young families moving out of the area because there aren’t job opportunities for the entire family (husband and wife).
25. Lack youth (middle and high school) with real world experience (job shadows) that help position future dreams and mentors.
26. Opportunities are everywhere you just have to find them.

**Nashua**

1. Students and children need to know they matter and we have to encourage them to surpass limitations set on them.
2. How can the entire community take responsibility for eliminating “the barriers” that will in turn benefit the entire community?
3. Debt and for what? We can do better.
4. Make big investment at very young age – money, mentor, time!
5. We are still social beings, we all make up society, it is our collective responsibility. This collective effort is much needed.
6. People don’t vote because they don’t feel they have a voice because money in politics.
7. How a parents education effects their child’s future.
8. How can we improve opportunity for low income families/youth
9. Self-identification based on economic class is the single greatest detriments of future success.
10. Youth at risk behavior survey – not feeling worthy.
11. No data – no interest for seniors and poverty.
12. What, economic inequality can be most effectively addressed in very early childhood (0-3) and how can it be measured?
13. It’s all about the Benjamins baby.
14. The vast disparity of access and opportunity for all NH families.
15. Find the lost years – end of college unable to find a job – fund your way in community.
16. Impact of income disparity on the opportunities within the state’s education system.
17. Immigrant families and engagement opportunities
18. College affordability
19. Income inequality
20. Across the board, NH children do better than the national average.
21. Is the benefits in opportunity enough?
22. Need is in responsible cultures in a responsible society to compete in the world.
23. How will we, as a nation, redefine the American Dream in a way that reflects the reduction of resources available to average citizens.

Manchester

1. Giving our kids the tools they need to succeed and keep drugs out of it!
2. Most compelling – that NH is fist among states in the portion of it’s public assistance dollars that go to working families.
3. Early childhood big worry if by 2 years old there is a 6 months gap in language skills (data graph # 5)
4. Making more community, student connections – neighborhoods, cohort of interest.
5. No state commitment to expand services and make education (early and secondary) more accessible.
6. Interaction with all economic classes of school children. How do we implement the change we need to make?
7. Early Ed an early parenting mentoring is key.
8. Equalize education for all economic categories.
9. Get the business community involved with school aged children.
10. Social capital.
11. We need to have school-aged children understand their value as a person first and then in their community.
12. Unfair start leads to hap in opportunities – the gap starts early and continues for a lifetime without interventions.
13. How will our next president make a difference?
14. Making sure everyone has access to improving literacy and reading levels inside and outside the classroom?
15. Importance of chart number 3 – need to engage in conversation about what is American Dream, success, and fulfillment.
16. Formally engaging the entire community in the education process, especially business mentorships for credit.
17. Lack of public will to provide equitable opportunity.
18. Human beings, human interactions and human problems cannot be reduced to data points. We must trust ourselves enough to think differently.

20. A total redesign of public education from a time based model to an anytime, anyplace competency – bared model.

21. Every family have be his children school to see what classes his children taking and have teach about what they doing in school if they do good work or not.

22. The most compelling info gathered from theses statistics tell me that essentially any kids from any background has a chance to succeed without the issue of income. Focus on the individual and change the way education starts or is determined by income status.

23. Why we can’t get more people engaged in these topics?

24. Reading literacy

25. We need our kids to be more connected to a positive community.

26. Providing sufficient and efficient recourses to families and communities to provide most impactful education opportunities possible.

27. Initial investments in both time and money impact the future of all of our children.

28. Reduce the income gap between top 40% and the stuck 60%.

29. Too many kids growing up virtually alone.

30. Reducing the number of single parent families (slide #3)

31. Find solutions now or pay later in the form of higher incarceration rates and less intellectual capital etc.

32. Our affluent people need to help lower income, early intervention, educate educators, open up more programs to children in poverty (arts, music, and sports)

33. Every child need to believe that he/she matters and can reach the American Dream.

34. There is enough money to do all we need done, but the money is in the wrong hands.

35. Economic stability for families to build a life – leads to better opportunities for children.

36. Inequality


38. Early literacy mean – life long liberty – we need to be more egalitarian in our investment choices.

39. Critically important to focus on helping children overcome opportunity through mentorship and access to enrichment at all levels of education.

Portsmouth

1. providing opportunities for after school activities for young people who cannot afford to access those opportunities.

2. Where issue is compelling to me and my community: mentors: lack of mentors for lower income kids.

3. The fight is continuous.

4. The wage gap – non-livable wage for many area jobs – not keeping up with living costs.

5. Lack of awareness, lack of commitment.

6. Destruction of social capital.

7. Offended by lack of affordable housing in Portsmouth as we see luxury condos rising around town. What a statement of priorities.
8. As a faith community leader. My biggest concern is the relationship between increasing disparity and the declining role of faith communities.

9. Limited opportunity for some affects us all in the long run.


11. Economic segregation is increasing (housing)

12. Access to enriching after-school programs and developing trusting supportive adult relationships (mentors)

13. It’s not about the most compelling issue that’s a trap. No single “solution” will make a difference. Focusing the right mix of “recourses” for the specifics of individuals and ages is what might make a difference, along with healthy expanding economy.

14. The money gap matters. The “race to the top” is much easier for those with the most resources. Others left behind.

15. Why mother’s demographics improving while more children are taking into poverty.

16. Metrics matter. We need data that has high levels of credibility and relevance. Some of the data sets here are just frustrating. Quintiles are more useful than overall mean figures.

17. How to change the next generation if they don’t have role models or opportunities before them?

18. Establishing real livable wages for all NH workers.

19. 1. Quality education is key, 2. Income inequality reduces future for all. 3. Make college free. 4. Have compassion not everyone can make it on their own.

20. Education

21. Setting the framework for accessible quality education throughout the state for all sectors. (tax structure, clear goals for all stages of education, realistic financial options that allow qualified secondary school graduates to continue, regardless of income.

22. Lack of parental guidance and expectations.

23. Lack of jobs with family-sustaining wages for parents with only a high school education.

24. That kids/families without recourses ($) have access to high quality day care plus ongoing mentoring for parents.

25. The lack of community support to see each other reach opportunity!


27. Lack of affordable housing should be considered.


29. Lack of affordable housing should be considered.

**West Lebanon**

1. Are we impairing our white middle class/upper class values on there who do not even have a voice at this table?

2. Need to teach children in school to advocate for what they care most about – to peers, then school board and town council.

3. Educational opportunities (or lack of) lead to life long consequences.

4. Poverty – lack of living wage jobs

5. Disconnect between job opportunities and education – i.e. education is not necessarily key to a good job.

6. Early intervention makes for better students.
7. Community really matters.
8. Healthy families, healthy children.
10. Funding for alternative schools (i.e. charter schools.)
11. Cost of higher education.
12. Community development and opportunities (statewide)
13. Expectations of the poor/working poor do not include being able to have an effect on their situation by voting, speaking to officials, etc.
14. How can we break the cycle?

**Pittsfield**

1. At the ground level – neighborhoods need to empower children to participate in local, state, federal government to make a difference to make change.
3. More early childhood supports needed – more equal readiness for school, also parent education.
4. Mind boggled where this info is gathered from.
5. Early childhood is the foundational level for education.
6. Quality childcare needs to be available for all young children regardless of income.
7. Why has child poverty grown? How do we close the gap?
8. Mentoring under privileged children.
10. Family foundation importance.
11. Why be so judgmental why not strive to change these charts?
13. Education is fundamentally important to me and my community. Public education has been key to spreading opportunity in America. It’s time to double down and fix our broken schools.
14. Every child deserves the same, strong start – early childhood education for all.
15. College costs are a barrier to access post secondary education, which impacts job opportunities and continues to gap of opportunity to widen.

**Concord**

1. Brining upper income people to intermingle with lower income people.
2. Educate young people on how to be good parents.
3. A strong commentary that takes care of kids at all stages will only develop if our excessive individualism is talked about and challenged.
4. How do we rebuild hope in our young whose lives have been without hope?
5. Invest in early childhood.
6. Invest in early childhood.
7. Providing equality with disregard for economic status.
8. The opportunity cannot be addressed without also examining mental health and substance abuse issues.
9. Bringing upper income people to intermingle with lower income people.
10. It is morally and socially unacceptable that less than 50% of youth in high school feel they matter to the people in their community! Outrageous.

11. That NH does indeed have children and families in need and that we all need to acknowledge that.

12. We can make a difference and move the needle in a positive direction.

13. Expand access to public full day kindergarten.


15. Housing patterns and income – another national study just came out last week confirming that the neighborhoods where people live determines so much about their kids lives. How do we try to move towards a society where we live more in “mixed” communities?

16. More support for the young people starting out.

17. Older generations think they know what’s best for the younger generations when the younger generations aren’t asked.

18. Living wage.

19. Peer support for single mothers.

20. Job creation – government unemployment statistics don’t reflect the real lack of jobs. State and federal government have role in job creation. We need more money to build and repair roads, bridges, and schools, provide health care, invest in people and communities.

21. To what degree has technology hindered and not helped opportunity/advancement.

22. Why is real ethnicity not a part of this conversation?

23. Parenting underprivileged and at risk children.

24. Limits to college fees (costs), tax credit for college fees.

25. Very early disparities in language development between poor and more well to do kids suggest we need to act early to support kids in optimizing their potential and limit educational attainment disparities.

26. Concord school system uses lock-step learning so all students precede at same pace – of you can’t speed up low learners, hold back fast ones to equalize everybody.

27. 60% of schools do not have any food.

28. Support parents to allow them to give their children the attention they need.

29. For profit healthcare ATE my American Dream. Data on this topic seems missing from this otherwise comprehensive examination of this critical matter.

30. Legislation to increase the minimum wage without this we will continue to see poverty rise.

31. Money is always the cause... the issue and the reason we all have. How do we direct our priorities from money to people?

32. A major reason for opportunity gap is lack of investment in high quality early childhood development/parenting support programs.

33. Physical was mental health for our youngest children.

34. Building trust and sense of neighborhood.

35. Bring the “voiceless” to the table and listen to what they have to say! We need to allow the voices in the trenches to speak of their experience. We can’t know RE an experience unless we’ve lived it.

36. Most compelling – the support and education of new parents so that children experience a beloved childhood – day 1 – 16 years old.

37. Affordable safe housing (address the problem and childhood lead poisoning)
38. High quality early education for all children.
39. 60% of children only have few meals a day.
40. Support access to health care.
41. Given the data- what is the role of government.
42. Department of Human Capital Development – researched from DHHS which is often viewed as a welfare supporter.
43. Unacceptable that children in NH/US are hungry.
44. How can we invest and support NH families (all NH families) without labeling them by establishing a d dehumanizing for eligibility in progress and services.
45. I don’t live in a neighborhood. I live on a street where people co-exist with one another.
46. Families need more time and recourses to raise healthy children.
47. The relationship between housing costs and wages must be considered an essential element of household family well being.
48. We need better access to public transportation.
49. People ar tempted to blame tenants for the terrible quality of their rental housing.
50. Education needs to be affordable.
51. We need more mental health and substance abuse treatment availability.
52. We can’t afford to fail.
53. How individual values life hard work can and have made a real difference for generational advancement.
54. We now know what kids need at each stage – we need our political, religious ad business leaders to lead and push us.
55. Build a strong foundation for every child in NH.
56. How do we fix this given what it means to be part of a community today, not 50 years ago.
57. Housing insecurity affects everything for a child.
58. Freedom in education and elsewhere brings maximum happiness to maximum numbers.
59. Concord city government encourages lo wage jobs (retail, hotel) not mfg or engineering.

**Rochester**

1. Personal responsibility plays a role but... this is overwhelming.
2. Focus on early childhood
3. Politicians fighting each other all the time does not help.
4. Need more support for families with children with disabilities
5. Surprised so many NH kids don’t have access to AP courses
6. College debt is a big barrier to low income kids going to college.
7. I learned some things I did not know.

**Keene**

1. This compilation of data speaks loud and clear to the problems that arise from the growing gap in economic well-being – it is alarming!
2. Equalize educational opportunities
3. Free college
4. Resources are necessary to move children out of poverty. Resources of: Education, policy change
5. Ensuring financial capacity for that allows self respect and consequent enablement to use education as a lifelong voyage of discovery
6. Support teachers to support/mentor jointly with parents, neighbors, communities
7. Breaking the cycle of poverty
8. Radical new approaches are needed to raise wages, create jobs, forgive debt, in order to create a level playing field for opportunity and education
9. We need grass roots efforts to change public policy resulting in income redistribution – Tax policy – government programs, supreme court judges, term limits
10. We need to invest a lot more in preschool/early childhood education; and support families with young children
11. Maybe Marx was onto something (mostly joking)
12. Stagnant wages for the lowest income increases opportunity gap
13. Federal priorities need a serious rejiggering
14. Widening income gap is affecting youth in terms of educational and social opportunities and success.
15. Jobs with reasonable salaries
16. Our society is way way behind what is being achieved and modeled by Norway in fields of education and opportunity.
17. Improvement of the educational system by equality throughout all public schools in the state
18. Citizen participation in local, state, and federal government is critical. These issues are not personal problems.
19. Are we interested in closing the gap? Can we do it?
20. The need for mentors to take an active long term interest in children and their families to provide encouragement, guidance, and to listen and acknowledge
21. Invest in our kids before it is too late. People need boots if they are going to lift themselves up by their boot straps
22. The rich have more opportunities than the poor. Mentoring seems to come from the rich as opposed to the poor. It seems that the poor are working hard to make ends meet and don’t have the time or energy to mentor.
Appendix F

Stats for Tweets with #NHOppGap
Calculated from up to about 1500 tweets – Generated 5/14/15 at 9:24 a.m.

From 4/30/15 – 5/14/15

13 New Followers
28 Mentions
### Stats for Tweets with #NHoppGap

Calculated from up to about 1500 tweets – Generated 5/14/15 at 9:24 a.m.

**Most Influential**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Username</th>
<th>Followers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>@billschick</td>
<td>2,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@carseyschool</td>
<td>2,279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@chrischrimpf</td>
<td>1,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@freshbuzz</td>
<td>1,168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@bfreshconsulting</td>
<td>1,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@unitedwaynashua</td>
<td>1,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@macashion03</td>
<td>945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@secretaryofrun</td>
<td>755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@betsyburts</td>
<td>633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@nhfpi</td>
<td>628</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Most Tweets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Username</th>
<th>Tweets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>@nhlistens</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@souppnh</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@paulhebert</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@freshbuzz</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@karenhicks</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@pittfieldlisteners</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@sandybeknapnph</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@bfreshconsulting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@nhfpi</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@nhflowerroom</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Notes*
- B: Fresh Consulting, Tech, US President's Policy, FIP, Education, Travel, Food, Pop Culture, Singularity, Music, Literature, Snark, Outer Space, Video Games
- @NH Listens: We work with citizens in local communities to support public decision making and develop recommendations to local and state decision makers.
- @NH FPI: New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute – an independent, nonprofit organization promoting economic opportunity, prosperity, and security for all NH residents.
Stats for Tweets with #NHOppGap
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Calculated from up to about 1500 tweets – Generated 5/14/15 at 9:24 a.m.

Christopher Stewart @FreshBuzz
RT @bfreshtweet: #NHOPPGAP #MHT lots of great ideas discussed in my breakout group tonight! http://t.co/2HndwdqBG4
Thu May 07 2015 21:10:43 GMT-0400 (Eastern Standard Time)

b-fresh consulting @bfreshtweet
#NHOPPGAP #MHT lots of great ideas discussed in my breakout group tonight! http://t.co/2HndwdqBG4
Thu May 07 2015 20:45:49 GMT-0400 (Eastern Standard Time)

Christopher Stewart @FreshBuzz
RT @mrssstaub: We need pathways to success for families and kids. #NHOppGap

Christopher Stewart @FreshBuzz
RT @kadesrochers: #nhoppgap - fewer than 1/2 NH students feel they don't matter in their communities.

Christopher Stewart @FreshBuzz
RT @sarah66285167: #NHOPPGap Critical to help children overcome deficits through mentorship and access to all levels of education

Christopher Stewart @FreshBuzz
RT @bfreshtweet: We are digging deep at the #MHT #NHOPPGap tonight! http://t.co/vQ9gtUopVz

Len Campbell @Soupnh
#NHOPPGap Voting by dots for top four issues.
Stats for Tweets with #NHOppGap
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Stats for Tweets with #NHOppGap
Calculated from up to about 1500 tweets – Generated 5/14/15 at 9:24 a.m.

Sarah Ambrogl @sarah66285167
#NHOppGap Critical to help children overcome deficits through mentorship and access to all levels of education
Thu May 07 2015 19:57:37 GMT-0400 (Eastern Standard Time)

NH Listens @NHListsens
What topics have you found surprising? RT @kadesrochers: #nhoppgap - fewer than 1/2 NH students feel they don't matter in their communities.

NH Listens @NHListsens
@bfreshtweet thanks for sharing the picture! #NHOppGap

NH Listens @NHListsens
@bfreshtweet thanks for sharing the picture! #NHOppGap

PITTSFIELD Listens @PittsfieldListens
RT @karenhicks: Pittsfield has some amazing things going on to increase opportunity for all kids here. #NHOppGap

NH Listens @NHListsens
RT @PittsfieldListens: Great conversation and sharing here in Pittsfield with youth, parents, and other community members #NHOppGap

PITTSFIELD Listens @PittsfieldListens
Great conversation and sharing here in Pittsfield with youth, parents, and other community members #NHOppGap
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Stats for Tweets with #NHOppGap
Calculated from up to about 1500 tweets – Generated 5/14/15 at 9:24 a.m.
Stats for Tweets with #NHOpGap

Calculated from up to about 1500 tweets – Generated 5/14/15 at 9:24 a.m.

Sandy Belknap @SandyBelknapNH
RT @PaulJHebert: Surprised to learn that almost half of babies born in NH are to single moms #NHOpGap @NHListens

Sandy Belknap @SandyBelknapNH
RT @PaulJHebert: Surprised to learn that almost half of babies born in NH are to single moms #NHOpGap @NHListens

NH Listens @NHListens
Our first round of #NHOpGap is about to wrap up - tks to everyone who attended & shared their thoughts- we look fwr to cont the convo tmrw
Wed May 06 2015 20:51:35 GMT-0400 (Eastern Standard Time)

Karen Hicks @karenlhicks
Take aways fr Laconia-mentoring, community responsibility for all kids, strong state leadership on increasing opportunity. #NHOpGap
Wed May 06 2015 20:46:40 GMT-0400 (Eastern Standard Time)

Paul Hebert @PaulJHebert
"Communities that work together can achieve more" #NHOpGap

United Way Nashua @UnitedWayGN
RT @SandyBelknapNH: The issue most compelling to me during #NHLisens revolves around poverty & lack of income growth. #NHOpGap

chris schrmpf @chrtschrimpf
RT @SecretaryofFun: #nhopgap. Learning about growing opportunity gap in NH for youngest kids. Thx Gov. Kasich for participating.
Wed May 06 2015 20:07:54 GMT-0400 (Eastern Standard Time)
Stats for Tweets with #NHoppGap
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Stats for Tweets with #NHOppGap
Calculated from up to about 1500 tweets – Generated 5/14/15 at 9:24 a.m.

Sandy Pouliot @jspouliot
The poor are living to live. The middle can just barely think ahead...the advantaged look ahead #nhoppgap
Wed May 06 2015 19:24:00 GMT-0400 (Eastern Standard Time)

Sandy Pouliot @jspouliot
What advances in early invention can level the gap? #NHOppGap

Dave Backler @DaveBackler
What role does Moral Relativism play? #NHOppGap
Wed May 06 2015 19:17:16 GMT-0400 (Eastern Standard Time)

Pittsfield Listens @PittsfldListens
Tomorrow is the day in Pittsfield for #NHOppGap. Have you registered? http://t.co/vBQH1pSPKZ

Pittsfield Listens @PittsfldListens
RT @NHListens: Does everyone have equal access opportunities to succeed and get ahead? #NHOppGap http://t.co/JX2obNsE6r
Wed May 06 2015 18:47:02 GMT-0400 (Eastern Standard Time)

NH Listens @NHListens
RT @karenhicks: In Laconia for the community conversation on the opportunity gap. Excited to start the conversation! #NHOppGap http://t.co/ld...
Wed May 06 2015 18:15:13 GMT-0400 (Eastern Standard Time)

NH Listens @NHListens
RT @karenhicks: In Laconia for the community conversation on the opportunity gap. Excited to start the conversation! #NHOppGap http://t.co/ld...
Wed May 06 2015 18:15:13 GMT-0400 (Eastern Standard Time)
Stats for Tweets with #NHOppGap
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Appendix G: Summary of Participants Evaluations

Participant Demographics (across all sites):

- Participants ranged from age 16 to 80 years of age, with an average age of 53 years old. 7 percent of participants were people under 30 years of age.
- 10 percent of participants identified as students and 23 percent of participants were retired.
- 32 percent of participants identified as men, while 68 percent of participants identified as women.
- Participants were highly educated. Most participants (58.3%) had earned a graduate or professional degree. Over a quarter of participants (25.6%) had earned a Bachelor’s degree. 4.3 percent had earned an Associate’s degree. 7.5 percent had earned some college credit. A small percentage had earned a high school diploma/GED (3.9%) or K-8 education (0.4%).
- Political perspectives leaned left. 34 percent identified as liberal, 26 percent as somewhat liberal. 28.8 percent identified as political moderates. 10.3 percent of participants identified as somewhat conservative, and only 0.8 percent identified as conservative.

Feedback on NH Listens Processes from Participants:

- 97 percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the facilitator was prepared.
- 99 percent of participants agreed that the facilitator made sure everyone took part in the conversation.
- 97 percent of participants felt that the facilitator did not impose his or her ideas or values on the group.
- 93 percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the information in the discussion guide was useful to the conversation.
- 94 of participants agreed or strongly agreed the group talks about the most important issues related to the topic.
- 97 percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that everyone had an equal chance to express his/her views.
- 87 percent of participants learned new things about this topic from other members of their group.
- 87 percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the conversation helped them to become better informed about the issues.
- 65 percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that because of the conversation, they had a better understanding of people who they disagree with and their opinions.
- 99 percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that their perspectives were respected in the conversation.
- 77 percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they understood how the results from the conversation will be used to inform next steps.
• The majority of participants (81.1 percent) felt that the time allotted for the conversations was just the right amount of time, while 12.3 percent felt it was not enough time and 6.6 percent felt it was too much time.
• 95 percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they were glad they participated in the community conversations.
• 75 percent of participants agreed they would attend another community conversation on this or a different topic, and 24 percent thought they might attend another conversation. 1 percent of participants felt they would not attend another conversation.