


UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

A Briefing on Emerging NESSC Phase III Evaluation Findings

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Overview of Presentation

- Overarching themes
- Early phase III highlights
- Presentation of selected findings related to:
 1. NESSC Theory of Action
 2. Increased Focus on Policy Implementation
 3. Lack of Clear and Consistent Understanding of Key Consortium Strategies
 4. Cross-Team Sharing and Integration
- Strategic plan considerations
- Questions and discussion



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Overarching Themes

- Political and economic transitions continue to influence the Consortium
- Continues to be high commitment and enthusiasm among core membership
- Significant work devoted to two major aspects with the potential for significant influence on the NESSC
 - ESEA Waivers and Strategic Planning



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Early Phase III Highlights

- Emphasis on the value of cross-state networking
- GSP support and resources
- Increased engagement of commissioners through commissioner meetings
- ESEA waiver opportunity catalyzed discussion on new state accountability systems/vision
- High enthusiasm League of Innovative Schools



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NESSC Theory of Action

- Relationship between policy, practice, and will
 - Described as occurring simultaneously, not jointly
 - Different implicit sequencing
- Different views of the Consortium
 - Consortium as states collectively pursuing one or more common and predefined programs/goals
 - Consortium as states pursuing individual programs/goals through networking, resources, and GSP support
- Either approach may be valid; differences may need to be considered as part of strategic planning



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Increased Focus on Implementation

- SEAs describe a shift away from creating new policy towards building districts' and schools' capacity to implement new and existing policies
- Articulated need for resources and support in this area in many states
- Differences in state approaches to how policies will be implemented



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Lack of Clear and Consistent Understanding of Key Consortium Strategies

- Role of League in broader practice goals
 - Gradual expansion vs. lab schools
- Purpose and expectations for messaging
 - About the Consortium vs. about reform
 - Internal (communication) vs. external (messaging)



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Cross-Team Sharing and Integration

- Limited understanding of work of some teams, particularly data and messaging
- Articulated desire for improved cross-team communication vehicles
- May be reflective of structures
 - Focused strategic action teams
 - Challenges with in-state implementation teams



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Strategic Plan Considerations: Theory of Action

1. Discuss varied perspectives of nature of the Consortium and any potential implications
2. Engage in a cross-state conversation about practical implications of the Policy-Practice-Will approach
3. Clarify how the League will contribute to school transformation at scale
4. Acknowledge diversity in HLP implementation, and discuss whether/how this could affect NESSC



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Strategic Plan Considerations: Organizational Design

1. Consider governance and leadership in light of increased Commissioner involvement
2. Consider ways in which NESSC structures can support “champions” and other partners
3. Consider ways to enhance cross-team collaboration, including reconfiguration of structures (i.e., SATs and in-state teams)



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Next Steps for the Evaluation

- NESSC stakeholder survey
- High Schools in Action educator survey
- Spring visits to states (additional informants)
- Report of LIS school characteristics
- Data technical report
- Support with determining measurable progress indicators for future years



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