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# Engaging in Legislative Policy Conversations in Vermont

## League of Innovative Schools

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# Outcomes

1. Build understanding of the NESSC Theory of Action (Policy-Practice-Community Engagement);
2. Share Insight into current/upcoming legislative session and the current state policy landscape; and,
3. Support the development of actionable skills to engage in state legislative policy conversations

# NESSC Meeting Norms

1. Building on and supporting one another's efforts
2. Acknowledging and encouraging different approaches as we collaborate
3. Trusting in the integrity of NESSC colleagues
4. Monitoring our air time in group gatherings
5. Communicating openly, clearly, and directly
6. Acknowledging and honoring different perspectives
7. Assuming positive intentions of all members

# Opening

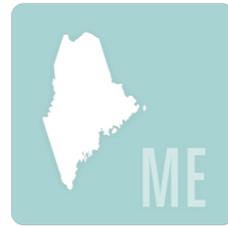
1. Find a partner - someone who you don't work with
2. Introduce yourself - name, role, school
3. Share what interests you about policy and why you are here today

How does policy impact your role, work, students?

What comes to mind for you when you think of policy?



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High  
Leverage  
State  
Policies

League of  
Innovative  
Schools

School  
Redesign  
in Action

Leadership in Action  
Data Reports  
College Statements



GREAT  
SCHOOLS  
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# Theory of Action

## Personalized-Learning Levers

- Proficiency-based graduation
- Multiple and flexible pathways
- Learner-centered accountability



## State and Regional Support Strategies

- Changes in state and district policy
- Changes in district and school practice
- Increased public will, understanding, and support



## State and Regional Performance Goals

- Increase five-year graduation rates
- Decrease annual dropout rates
- Increase the share of students enrolled in two- or four-year degree programs or pursuing industry-certified accredited postsecondary certificates

# Why Policy Matters

If we are going to scale practices that address equity and ensure readiness for all students across our state, we need policy that will compel, incentivize, and require schools to adopt these practice

# Why Your Voice Matters

1. You are closest to the work - you have the most important perspective to share and you will be impacted the most by state education policies
2. The legislature hears regularly from professional advocates and yours would be a welcome, fresh, and grounded voice
3. While professional organizations play an important role advocating on behalf of their members, legislatures appreciate every opportunity they have to hear from the actual members of these groups

# Crafting Testimony: Tips

1. Be sure to clearly state your full name, your role, your school/district, and your town
2. State your position at the beginning of your testimony
3. Build your argument clearly
4. Be succinct
5. Stick to the time limit

# Crafting Testimony: Tips

6. Be factual
7. Avoid jargon
8. Make sure you understand the proposed legislation, including whether it changes existing statutes or creates new ones
9. Support your argument with evidence
10. Talk about your local context

# Crafting Testimony: Tips

11. Bring written copies of your testimony (25 in ME)
12. If your arguments have already been made, don't repeat them - abbreviate/summarize
13. Close by reiterating your position.
14. Offer to answer any questions and express interest and availability to engage further
15. If you are unable to attend in person, the legislature accepts electronically submitted testimony

# Let's practice!

1. Move to school/district-based groups
2. Identify policy area to lift or protect (10 min.)
3. Determine position (5 min.)
4. Develop argument (30 min.)
5. Gallery walk and feedback (15 min.)
6. Refine (10 min.)
7. Debrief (10 min.)

# Next steps & resources

1. GSP sample Proficiency-, Competency-, Mastery-Based [local policies](#)
2. We're available by email or phone for support
3. Monthly email update while legislature is in session



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# THANK YOU

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