

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



## **NESSC Welcomes the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**

**PORTLAND, ME – December 13, 2017** - Today, the New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC) announced that the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has joined with the state education agencies of Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont as a member of the NESSC. Together, the NESSC's six member states represent over 950 public high schools with over 640,000 students.

"Rhode Island and Massachusetts have a long and proud tradition of partnership and collaboration, and the addition of Massachusetts to the NESSC will enhance the collective work of the Consortium and its member states around the region," says Mary Ann Snider, deputy commissioner of the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). "We are all stronger when we work together in the best interest of students, and RIDE looks forward to working with our neighboring state in this new capacity."

The New England Secondary School Consortium is a groundbreaking collaboration of the New England states to share ideas, learn with and from one another, and support innovative secondary schools that will meet the learning needs for all students to be successful. The NESSC is coordinated by the Great Schools Partnership, a nonprofit school-support organization located in Portland, Maine.

"Joining the NESSC will give Massachusetts districts that are interested in innovative approaches access to resources and thought partners to inform their work. We are pleased to make this opportunity available to our districts," says Cliff Chuang, a senior associate commissioner at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The NESSC is also pleased to announce the collaborative efforts of the Massachusetts Personalized Learning Edtech Consortium ([MAPLE](#)) as a key partner in supporting Massachusetts secondary schools interested in joining and participating in the NESSC's League of Innovative Schools, a regional professional learning community for schools. Currently, 116 secondary schools across New England participate in the League of Innovative Schools, and membership is expected to grow in the next several years.

The League of Innovative Schools hosts state-specific and regional events for its members—secondary schools committed to educational equity, student-centered learning, and ongoing improvement. This year's fall

conference for League of Innovative Schools members brought together 250 educators from across New England to network, exchange professional expertise, and create better learning experiences for their students.

MAPLE, a public-private partnership between the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the nonprofit LearnLaunch Institute, will collaborate with the Great Schools Partnership and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to convene League of Innovative Schools activities in Massachusetts.

MAPLE was established in 2016 and has a current membership of 36 districts. MAPLE member secondary schools will now have the option to join the League of Innovative Schools to share ideas, receive technical assistance, and pursue funding opportunities together.

“This collaboration will help us bring together the most innovative school districts in Massachusetts with innovative schools throughout New England, to the benefit of all our students,” says David O’Connor, executive director of MAPLE.

“The NESSC is the premier learning and leadership group for New England’s education policy leaders, a vibrant network of schools and districts seeking to advance change, and the heart of a regional community committed to ensuring that all students are prepared for success—educationally, economically, and as engaged citizens,” says Nick Donohue, president & CEO of the Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

“Massachusetts joining the consortium is a welcome addition, given the Commonwealth’s position in the region and nationally. Their participation will support the Consortium to continue its central role in accelerating personalized, student-centered learning throughout New England.”

## **ABOUT NESSC**

The New England Secondary School Consortium is a regional partnership working to advance forward-thinking innovations in secondary education that will empower the next generation of citizens, workers, and leaders. The Consortium is funded by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and coordinated by the Great Schools Partnership.

## **ABOUT LEARNLAUNCH**

LearnLaunch Institute Catalyzes a community that drives innovation to transform learning and increase achievement. Our education innovation ecosystem mobilizes educators, entrepreneurs, learners, investors, and industry affiliates. As a nonprofit, the Institute offers learning opportunities and connections to individuals, support services to schools, and a district network. We believe in expanding access to learning that is engaging, personalized, and effective. Edtech is a critical component of achieving this vision at scale. For more information, visit [www.learnlaunch.org](http://www.learnlaunch.org), follow us @LearnLaunch or #LearnLaunch2018.

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