



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
BY HIS EXCELLENCY
CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU, GOVERNOR**

Executive Order 2023-06

**An Order Establishing the Public Higher Education Task Force to Study the Strategic
Alignment of Public Higher Education in New Hampshire**

WHEREAS, the Community College System of New Hampshire and the University System of New Hampshire, collectively known as New Hampshire public higher education, serve a vital role in creating access to high-quality education that benefits individuals, communities, the state's economy and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of New Hampshire public higher education include: accessible and diverse opportunities for learning and meaningful participation in the State's workforce; economic, cultural, and civic wellbeing in each community throughout New Hampshire; and academic research that enhances learning with regional and global significance; and

WHEREAS, significant changes in demographic and workforce trends, the expectations of students, and downward pressure on enrollment require optimizing public higher education for New Hampshire's future; and

WHEREAS, net revenue has been declining in both component systems of New Hampshire public higher education since 2018. And, while significant and ongoing efforts to find efficiencies and control expenses have yielded results, concerns remain about the long-term sustainability of the current model of public higher education in the state; and

WHEREAS, the performance and financial sustainability of New Hampshire public higher education is critical to ensure that students have opportunities that correspond to workforce needs and that bolster economic, competitive, civic, and cultural strength throughout the State and our local communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU, GOVERNOR of the State of New Hampshire, by the authority vested in me by Part II, Article 41 of the New Hampshire Constitution, do hereby order, effective immediately, that:

1. There is hereby established the Public Higher Education Task Force to Study the Strategic Alignment of Public Higher Education in New Hampshire (the Task Force) to identify the long-term needs of the citizenry and to recommend changes needed to meet those needs.
2. The Task Force shall:
 - a. Investigate the strategic alignment of the Community College System of New Hampshire, the University System of New Hampshire and the State's anticipated needs for how postsecondary education will drive timely advancements for NH citizens.
 - b. Conduct meaningful due diligence on identified relevant issues inclusive of exploring and identifying models and methods to:
 - Increase opportunities to raise education attainment levels, in part, to meet workforce needs;
 - Improve accessibility and compatibility for students;
 - Avoid duplication of academic programs, where appropriate, while optimizing access;
 - Create potential for economies of scale and synergy;
 - Enhance regional growth and development; and
 - Streamline administrative costs and obligations.
 - c. Solicit input from a variety of stakeholders impacted by New Hampshire public higher education to identify strengths and weaknesses measured against current and projected demands and to inform decisions about necessary changes and investments.
3. The Task Force shall consist of the following:
 - a. The Governor, or designee
 - b. The Chancellor of the Community College System of NH
 - c. The Chief Administrative Officer of the University System of NH
 - d. The Commissioner of Education, or designee
 - e. One member of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate
 - f. Two members of the House of Representatives, one from each political party, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives

- g. Two members of the Community College System Board of Trustees, appointed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees
 - h. Two members of the University System Board of Trustees, appointed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees
 - i. Two representatives of business and industry, appointed by the Governor.
4. The Governor shall select the Chair of the Task Force from the members of the Task Force.
 5. Each of the appointed members shall serve until the work of the Task Force is complete or until replaced in accordance with the above.
 6. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.
 7. Task Force members shall perform their duties without additional compensation and shall not be entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred in attending meeting of the Task Force.
 8. The Task Force may, as it deems appropriate, appoint subcommittees for the purpose of examining specific topics within the charge of the Task Force.
 9. The first meeting shall occur on or before thirty days after the issuance of this Order and as frequently as the Chair determines thereafter.
 10. All meetings of the Task Force shall be open to the public and be subject to the requirements of RSA Chapter 91-A.
 11. The Task Force shall provide a report of its findings no later than March 31, 2024.
 12. The Task Force shall disband and discontinue its charge thirty days after delivery of filing its report of findings, unless such term is extended or modified by subsequent duly issued Executive Order or as otherwise required by law.

Given under my hand and seal at the Executive Chambers in Concord, this 25th day of October, in the year of Our Lord, two thousand and twenty-three, and the independence of the United States of America, two hundred and forty-six.


GOVERNOR OF NEW HAMPSHIRE