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June 6, 2006

Dear Superintendent,

I am proud to announce that New Hampshire is one of nine states participating in a federally funded project, the E-Learning for Educators Initiative. This initiative aims to provide effective online professional development that leads to gains in teacher content knowledge, improvements in teaching practices, and increases in student achievement. In New Hampshire, we are calling the project OPEN NH (Online Professional Education Network for New Hampshire). This summer, we are offering, and currently accepting registrations for, twenty four high quality professional development courses. In the future, OPEN NH will continue to offer courses, and develop additional courses especially tailored to the needs of New Hampshire teachers. We hope to become the preferred professional development resource for our teachers.

As part of this initiative, to examine the effect that online professional development has on teacher knowledge, teacher instructional practices, and most importantly, student learning, the Technology and Assessment Collaborative (inTASC) of Boston College will conduct four randomized experiments. Each experimental study will focus on two content areas and will include teachers from two different grade levels. A series of online professional development courses is being developed in middle school and upper elementary mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA). These high-quality courses target critical areas lacking in student achievement, and are based on state and national standards. The schools in your district are currently being asked to participate in a study that will evaluate the effectiveness of these courses.

For a school to participate, at least two teachers of the grade level and subject area to which that school is assigned must agree to take a series of online professional development courses (Small schools with only one teacher per grade are also eligible to participate). The experimental design guarantees that every participating school receives some form of professional development for its teachers. Additionally, all teachers will receive on-line feedback on the performance of their students, as well as a stipend for their participation.

I hope your district will consider participating in this study. I believe this is an exciting time for education in New Hampshire. We look forward to working with you and your school in improving the quality professional development your teachers receive. Professional development will play an integral part as we monitor the progress and achievement of each child in New Hampshire. For more information, please contact the OPEN NH Project Coordinator, Stan Freeda (603-271-5132 [sfreeda@ed.state.nh.us](mailto:sfreeda@ed.state.nh.us)), or visit OPEN NH on the web (<http://nheon.org/opennh/about.htm>).

Sincerely,

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Lyonel B. Tracy  
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New Hampshire Department of Education

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Judith D. Fillion  
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