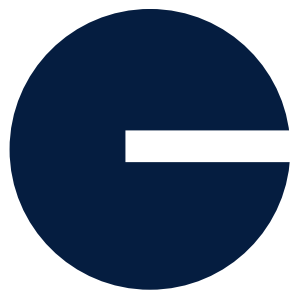
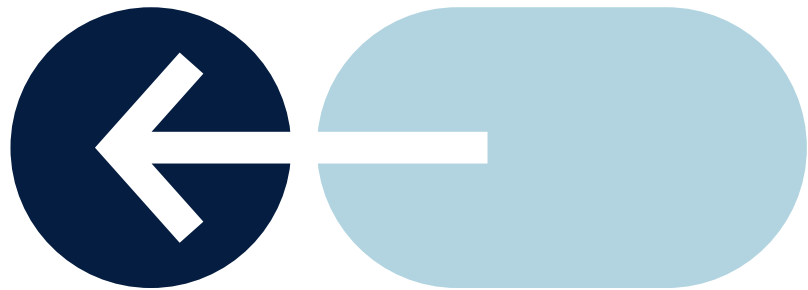


New England Prison Education Collaborative



Accelerate. Support. Collaborate.

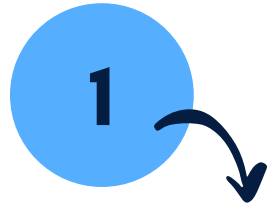


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About us

The New England Prison Education Collaborative (NEPEC) is a regional initiative led by the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE). In February 2024, NEBHE was awarded five years of grant funding from Ascendium Education Group to establish NEPEC to build upon the recommendations of the 2023 New England Commission on the Future of Higher Education in Prison, a nine-month regional convening of leaders from across multiple sectors aimed at preparing the region for the reinstatement of federal Pell Grants for all currently incarcerated learners.

Through this initiative, NEBHE seeks to accelerate, support, and collaborate to help actualize a future where every incarcerated person in New England has access to high-quality, workforce-aligned, equitable postsecondary opportunities with a diverse range of educational pathways.

**New England Commission on
the Future of Higher Education
in Prison**

The Commission's Report

**Funding from Ascendium
Education Group**

**New England Prison Education
Collaborative**

3

Growing the Team



Sarah Kuczynski
DIRECTOR



Nicole O'Neal
PROJECT MANAGER



Zeia Fawaz
PROJECT MANAGER

Spring 2025 Intern

In September, the NEPEC team began the search for an intern to assist with planning and implementing events, responding to stakeholder requests, and various administrative tasks. The intern will also support the promotion of NEPEC's initiatives through social media and the NEPEC newsletter.

Expected start date: January 2025

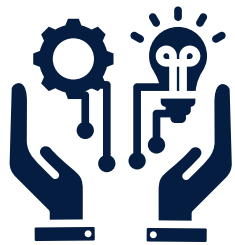
Project Coordinator

In October, the NEPEC team started the search for a Project Coordinator. Once onboarded, the Coordinator will play a key role in supporting the NEPEC Team (consisting of a Director and two Project Managers) in planning, coordinating, and executing initiatives related to the development of NEPEC.

Expected start date: January 2025

4

Our Work



State Strategic Planning

NEPEC will support all New England states in the development of state strategic plans (SSPs) that aim to expand the quality and quantity of prison education program (PEP) portfolios.



Higher Education Engagement

NEPEC will work to increase overall higher education institution readiness to improve student access and success upon release. A regional steering committee will be key to driving this part of the project forward.



Data and Research

In collaboration with subject matter experts, NEPEC will facilitate states' progress toward increasing public availability of higher education in prison data -both related to student access and student success.

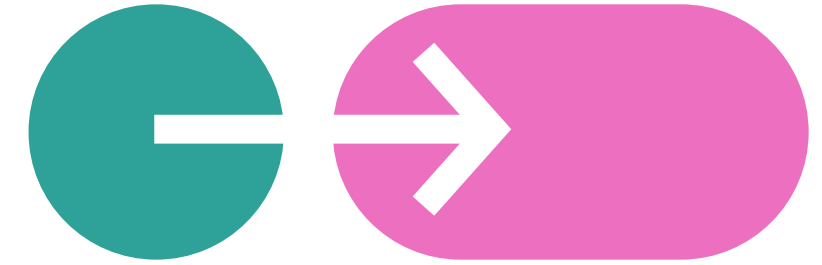


Workshops

Beginning in March 2025, NEPEC will host quarterly workshops to support all involved stakeholders. Topics will be selected collaboratively and the workshops will be open to the public.

5

State Strategic Planning (SSP)



- **Overview**

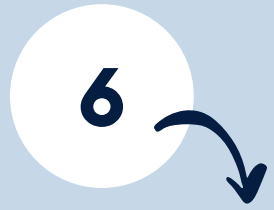
- NEPEC will support two New England states each year in a year-long strategic planning cycle starting January 2025, to be repeated annually for all six states. The plans will focus on improving the quality and accessibility of higher education in prison programs.

- **State Strategic Planning Group Members**

- Commissioner of Corrections
- Education Lead from the Department of Corrections
- State Higher Education Executive Office
- Formerly Incarcerated Leaders
- An additional education provider

- **Funding**

- \$50,000 for state strategic planning activities
- \$25,000 for technical assistance needs



SSP Required Commitments



Baseline assessment

To gauge barriers to increasing access to higher education in prison and student success. Includes: space and tech infrastructure availability, student enrollment rates, student eligibility, and student success outcomes.



Policy and practice review

An access-oriented review to determine where impediments to eligible learner access might originate.



Barriers to continuity

Identify barriers to continuity of academic programs and campus access upon release.



Vision statement & goals

Based on findings from the assessment, states will formalize a vision statement with concrete, actionable goals that articulate where higher education in prison will be in five years' time.

7

Timeline - SSP Cycle One



Feedback on Process

September 2024 - November 2024

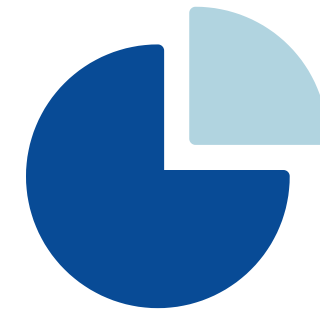
During this time we will gather feedback on our proposed process from multiple stakeholders.



States Commit

November 2024 - December 2024

States will need to formalize their commitment to the SSP process by mid-December.



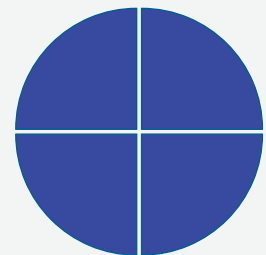
Four Quarter Process

January 2025 - December 2025

States undergo the year-long strategic planning process, which is marked by various milestones over the four quarters.

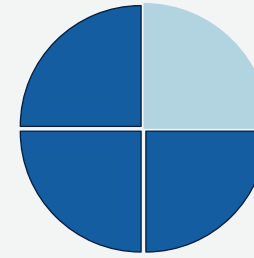
8

The SSP Process



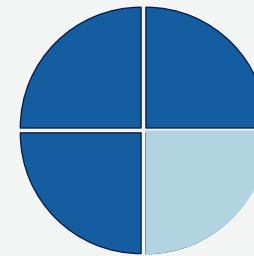
The four quarters of activity

This is a high-level overview of what the typical timeline of a state going through a strategic planning process will look like. Of course, each state is unique and we expect this to vary across the region.



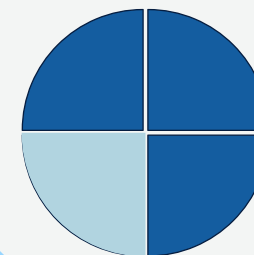
Quarter One

Group assembles, sets in motion the process for a baseline assessment if one has not already been set in motion.



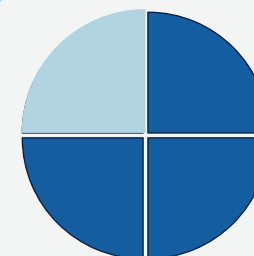
Quarter Two

Group reviews the findings of the assessment and sets vision and concrete numeric goals for increasing student access and success.



Quarter Three

Group sets concrete, actionable strategies to achieve their goals and realize their vision and identifies specific technical assistance needs.



Quarter Four

Group works to revise their state's plan and prepares to update state stakeholders who will be key to the plan's successful implementation.

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Higher Education Engagement



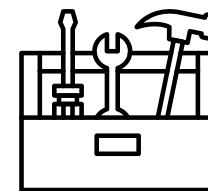
Steering Committee

Some key initiatives in this workstream will be guided by members of a steering committee, which will create a strategy for NEPEC intervention to ensure the transferability of credits.



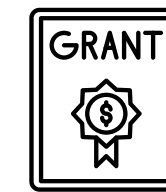
White Papers

Drawing on the expertise of the steering committee, the Collaborative will develop two white papers: one focused on supporting students throughout the intake-to-reentry continuum, and the other addressing credit mobility.



Returning Student Ready Toolkit

The NEPEC team will work with subject matter experts to develop a Returning Student-Ready Toolkit for higher education institutions throughout New England. It will include a policy guide around credit transfers and Pell usage.



Accelerator Grants

Starting in 2025, the Collaborative will solicit, evaluate, and award a limited number of grants to higher education institutions across New England.

10

Communications Strategy



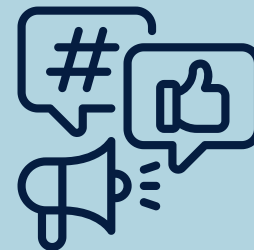
Stakeholder Engagement

Through external events and one-on-one engagements, the NEPEC team will maintain high-touch engagement with key stakeholders, particularly those involved in the State Strategic Planning (SSP) process.



Newsletter

Through our bi-monthly newsletter, we will keep stakeholders updated with all the latest NEPEC news and our upcoming engagements.



Social Media

Through a LinkedIn showcase page, the NEPEC team will be posting at least weekly to expand our reach, increase brand awareness, and engage virtually with other folks in the higher education in prison space.



Website

Through NEPEC page on the NEBHE website, the team plans to raise awareness around the Collaborative's work and strengthen brand legitimacy through a professional online presence.

Key Dates

OCT
2024

Newsletter Launches

The inaugural edition of our newsletter will go out to all subscribers in October, and every other month after that.

DEC
2024

Virtual Q&A

We will host a virtual q&a session for all interested SSP applicants.

JAN
2025

Steering Committee Meets

Inaugural regional steering committee meeting takes place, with meetings every quarter thereafter.

JAN
2025

States Begin SSP Process

On January 1st, 2025, two New England states will begin their year-long state strategic planning process.

FAQ

Q

How many states are going through our state strategic planning (SSP) process? And will each state have its own SSP group?

A

Two New England states will each complete the SSP process each cycle until all states in the region have engaged in the process. Yes, each state will have its own SSP group, in order to create a plan that is unique to the state in question.

Q

How will you engage higher education institutions (HEI)?

A

We plan to do this a variety of ways, most notably through our regional steering committee, which will work on ensuring credit transferability and effectively supporting students across the intake to reentry continuum.

Q

Will each state have its own Steering Committee?

A

The Steering Committee is regional in nature, in line with the grant project's aims to encourage cross-state idea exchange.

Q

Will there be any sub-granting to various entities to support this initiative?

A

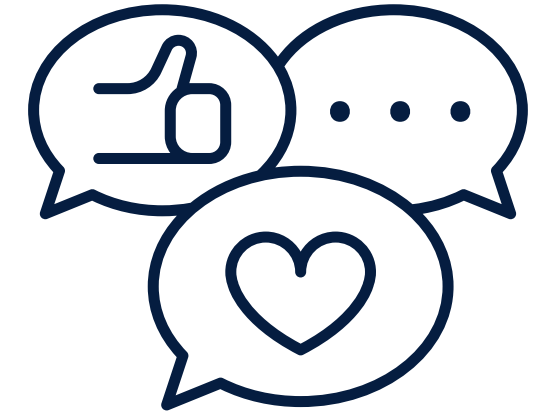
Other than the technical assistance and state planning grants we mentioned, we will be soliciting, evaluating, and sub-granting a few accelerator grants to higher education institutions that are doing important work in this space.

Q

How do I keep track of NEPEC activities?

A

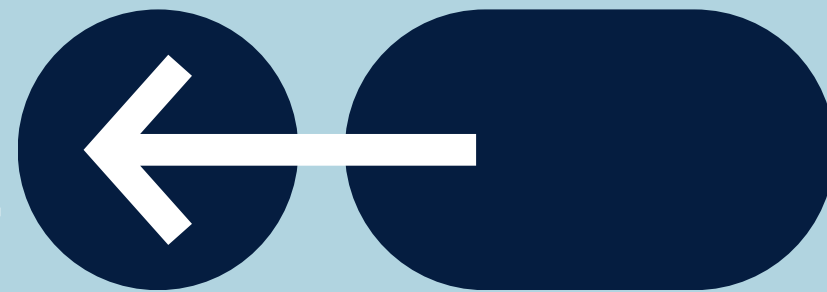
You can subscribe to our newsletter and follow our LinkedIn to stay up-to-date with all of our activities and the project's progress.



Questions & Feedback



Stay in Touch



With Us



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 Website

www.nebhe.org

 Newsletter

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 LinkedIn

www.linkedin.com/showcase/new-england-prison-education-collaborative