NEW ENGLAND
SECONDARY SCHOOL
CONSORTIUM

Common Data Project
2017 Annual Report
School Year 2015–2016

Improving the Quality and Comparability of State Educational Data in New England

The New England Secondary School Consortium
Common Data Project: 2017 Annual Report: School Year 2015-2016

This report was written by the Great Schools partnership in collaboration with Research in Action, Inc. The report was produced with the departments and agencies of education in the New England Secondary School Consortium's five member states of Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

For questions related to the *Common Data Project: 2017 Annual Report* please contact:

J. Duke Albanese
Senior Policy Advisor, Great Schools Partnership
dalbanese@greatschoolspartnership.org

Dr. Lauren Leigh Hinthorne
Director of Research and Evaluation, Great Schools Partnership
lhinthorne@greatschoolspartnership.org

Dr. J.P. Beaudoin
CEO, Research in Action; Inc.
jbeaudoin@riagroup2013.com

General Inquiries
Great Schools Partnership
482 Congress Street, Suite 500
Portland, Maine 04101
207.773.0505

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ABOUT THE COMMON DATA PROJECT

Since 2009, the five state education agencies (SEAs) participating in the New England Secondary School Consortium have been collecting, calculating, and reporting graduation rates, dropout rates, and college-enrollment, -persistence, and -completion rates using consistent procedures and methodologies developed by a regional team of data specialists from the departments and agencies of education in Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. To our knowledge, the New England Secondary School Consortium's Common Data Project is the first initiative of its kind in the United States.

Recognizing the critical importance of high-quality data to effective school improvement, our five participating states decided to proactively address data quality, reliability, and comparability, rather than waiting for an outside entity to establish new guidance and regulations.

To promote more accurate and reliable data comparability across the five Consortium member states, the Common Data Project develops and implements standardized procedures designed to eliminate unwanted variance that may result from divergent data systems, the misinterpretation of agreed-upon rules, or computational errors. The Data Project has also created a series of quality-control mechanisms that further improve the reliability and comparability of state-reported data.

How the Project Works

- Data specialists from the participating SEAs, along with representatives from higher education and other data experts, meet throughout the year to discuss best practices, refine agreements, and coordinate the collection and reporting of data. Each participating SEA shares and discusses its data practices with other SEAs. Several refinements of in-state data procedures have resulted from lessons learned from other states.

- All five states use common metrics, procedures, and rules when compiling, calculating, and reporting data. A full description of these procedures can be found in the *Common Data Project 2017 Procedural Guidebook*. The goal is continual improvement of data reliability and comparability across the region.

- The common procedures and rules are published under a Creative Commons license, which allows for the free use of all content. Other SEAs and educational organizations are encouraged to use and adapt our work.

- Each year, the Consortium produces a comprehensive report on graduation rates, dropout rates, and college-enrollment, -persistence, and -completion rates for each of the five member states. The Consortium, and its participating SEAs and partners, use these annual reports to help assess the impact of state policies and initiatives designed to improve secondary schools and student achievement.

- Each year, the five SEAs publish the Consortium metrics on their websites, making the data available to educators, policy makers, and the public.

- The common data procedures and metrics are compliant with all state and federal rules, regulations, and guidance related to data quality and reporting.

- The common-data reporting is used to track statewide and regional improvements in school and student-subgroup achievement within and across states. The comparable data set—in place since the baseline year of 2009—allows for more reliable cross-state comparisons.

Project Innovations

- **Common Metrics:** The Common Data Project has produced a set of common formulas that are used to calculate secondary graduation rates, secondary dropout rates, and college-enrollment, -persistence, and -completion rates.

- **Common Rules:** All five departments of education follow the same "business rules" and procedures when collecting, calculating, and reporting common data to improve consistency, comparability, and quality.

- **Common Definitions:** Each variable in the common regional data set is determined using consistently applied definitions. For example, all five departments of education follow the same definitions for economically disadvantaged students, English learners, students with disabilities, and other student subgroups.

- **Common Reporting Windows:** All five departments and agencies of education follow common data-collection and data-reporting timelines. Since most large-scale databases are continually updated, common reporting windows improve the consistency and comparability of multi-state data sets.

- **Common Quality-Control Procedures:** The Common Data Project uses both internal (state-by-state controls) and external (third-party coordination and auditing) as part of its common quality-control framework. The redundant, multistage protocol is designed to improve data quality throughout the collection, calculation, and reporting cycle.

Selected Indicators

The New England Secondary School Consortium has established four achievement goals to be met in each of the five member states:

1. Increase high school graduation rates.

2. Decrease high school dropout rates.

3. Increase the percentage of students enrolling in two- and four-year college programs or pursuing industry-certified and accredited certificates.

4. Increase the percentage of students who graduate from high school college ready.

The Data Team, in conjunction with external third parties, created five achievement indicators using agreed-upon metrics. The common metrics, in conjunction with a standardized set of business procedures and rules, significantly increase the comparability of reported data on each indicator across the five Consortium states. To our knowledge, only the federal government, via the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), has attempted to provide the public with comparable metrics on key educational initiatives.

High School Graduation Rate [Status: Operational] [Baseline Year: 2009]
High School graduation rates have been computed using the formula articulated in federal regulations, specifically 34 C.F.R. §200.19. The rate relies on the identification and tracking of a four-year graduation cohort. An extended graduation rate, which relies on the identification of a six-year graduation cohort, is also reported. All states in the Consortium currently report the federal graduation rate. The following formula is used for calculating the graduation rate:

(# of Graduating Seniors) ÷ (# of First-time Freshmen +/- Transfers In or Out)

Dropout Rate [Status: Operational] [Baseline Year: 2009]

The Consortium's dropout data are closely linked to the data used in calculating the graduation rate. Data Team members recognize that, as the graduation rate and dropout rate have often been reported using disparate methods, a clearer relationship between these measures would be helpful. The National Governors Association recommended that dropouts be counted as those students who have not completed high school and are no longer enrolled in high school. This rate is calculated using the same freshmen cohort used for the graduation rate. The following formula is used for calculating dropout rate:

(# of First-time Freshmen +/- Transfers In or Out) - (Graduates + Students Still Enrolled + Other Completers) = Dropouts | Dropout Rate = Dropouts ÷ (# of First-time Freshmen +/- Transfers In or Out)

College-Enrollment Rate [Status: Operational] [Baseline Year: 2009]

The rationale for collecting college-enrollment data is to determine the percentage of students who go on to further education after completing high school. All five Consortium member states use data collected by the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), and NSC reports are run during a common reporting window to reduce variance associated with ongoing updating of the national NSC database. The following formula is used for calculating college enrollment:

(# of Students Enrolled in College) ÷ (# of High School Graduates)

College-Persistence Rate [Status: Operational] [Baseline Year: 2011]

The Consortium's business rule states: "The number of college freshmen (by cohort) that remain continually enrolled in a college program in the third semester after initial enrollment." This business rule is similar to that used by the NCES in reporting the number of first-time, full-time students who are retained (i.e., return to college) the following fall (see National Center for Education Statistics, 2015-144, *The Condition of Education 2015*).

(# of Students Enrolled in 3rd Semester) ÷ (# of Freshmen College Cohort)

College-Completion Rate [Status: Operational] [Baseline Year: 2011]

College completion is determined by the percentage of the first-time college freshmen cohort who earn a two- or four- year college diploma. The college completion rate is computed over a six-year period. All NESSC states use data collected by the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). The following formula is used for calculating college completion in two- and four-year programs:

(# of Students Completing College within 6 Years) ÷ (# of Freshmen College Cohort)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Common Data Project: 2017 Annual Report: School Year 2015-2016* summarizes the reporting of the five consortium-wide achievement indicators developed and adopted by the New England Secondary School Consortium. The reported data focus on graduation, dropout, college-enrollment, college-persistence, and college-completion rates among the five Consortium member states: Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. New to this year's report, the graphs depicting the Extended Graduation Rate have been modified to include four-year graduation data for the same cohort. The graphs now illustrate the change in graduation rates when students are afforded up to six years to meet graduation requirements. Additionally, the axis scales on some graphs have been adjusted to improve comparability across graphs throughout the report. This may mean that some graphs look a bit different from the same graphs published in previous years.

Key Findings

1. **Four-Year High School Graduation Rates**

   ▪ No state rate reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 90 percent high school graduation. While the overall trend remains positive, graduation rates have remained relatively stable for the past three years. All member states have graduation rates higher than the national average (83 percent). The graduation rates of economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities continue to lag behind those of other student subgroups. For all member states, female students graduate at higher rates than male students.

2. **Extended (Six-Year) High School Graduation Rates**

   ▪ Three states, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Vermont, have reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 90 percent high school graduation when students are given up to six years to meet graduation requirements. While Rhode Island's six-year graduation rate continues to trend upwards, Maine's six-year graduation rate has shown little change over time. All subgroups show gains when students are afforded up to six years to meet graduation requirements. While economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities experience the largest improvements, they continue to lag behind. For all member states, six-year graduation rates remain higher for female students than male students.

3. **Dropout Rates**

   ▪ No state rate reached the Consortium's long-term goal of a dropout rate lower than 1 percent. All member states have demonstrated an overall decrease in the dropout rates since the baseline year (2009); however, only Connecticut reported a decrease in dropout rate when compared to the prior year. The dropout rates of economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities remain higher than those of other student subgroups. For all member states, dropout rates are higher for male students than female students.

4. College-Enrollment Rates

- No state rate reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college enrollment. All member states except New Hampshire reported college-enrollment rates slightly higher than the baseline year (2011). The college-enrollment rates of economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities lag behind those of other student subgroups. For all member states, female students enrolled in post-secondary education at higher rates than male students.

5. College-Persistence Rates

- Connecticut was the only state to report a college-persistence rate above the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent. College-persistence rates in three states, Connecticut, Maine and New Hampshire, have remained relatively unchanged since the baseline year (2011). Two states, Rhode Island and Vermont, have reported overall decreases in college persistence since the baseline year; however, Rhode Island's rate in 2015 increased from the prior year. The college-persistence rates of economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities lag behind those of other student subgroups. For all member states except Vermont, female students remained enrolled in post-secondary education at higher rates than male students.

6. College-Completion Rates

- No state reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college completion. The college-completion rates of economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities lag behind those of other student subgroups. For all member states, female students completed their post-secondary education at higher rates than male students.
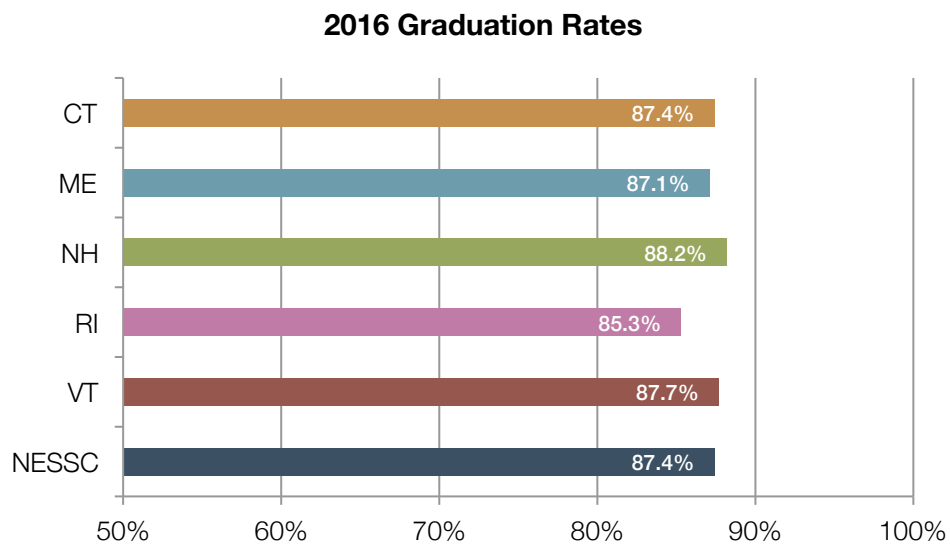
High School Graduation Rates

1.0 Four-Year High School Graduation Rates: Cross-State Comparison

Guiding Question

How did four-year high school graduation rates in 2016 compare across member states?

2016 Graduation Rates

Major Findings

- Graduation rates varied by approximately 3 percentage points across member states. This represents a considerable narrowing in the difference in graduation rates across states since the *Common Data Project Annual Report* was first published in 2013. That year, the range was approximately 11 percentage points.

- The highest reported graduation rate was 88.2 percent (New Hampshire).

- No state rate has yet reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 90 percent high school graduation.

- The national graduation rate in 2014–15 was 83 percent. The NCES method used to calculate this statistic is less precise than that used by the NESSC member states.

*NOTE: Throughout this report, the "NESSC" value represents the median rate among the five member states.

1.1 Four-Year High School Graduation Rates: Eight-Year Trend

Guiding Question

To what degree have four-year graduation rates changed over the past eight years?
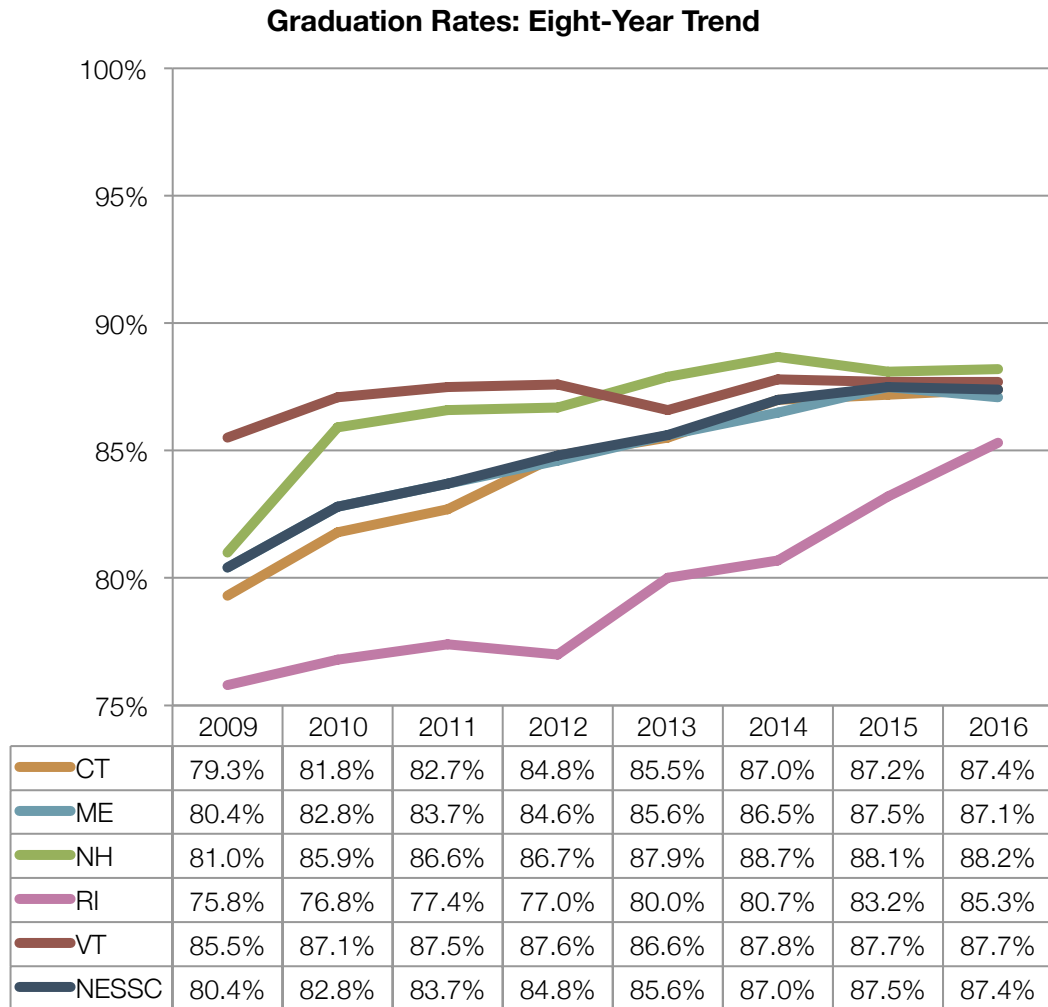
Graduation Rates: Eight-Year Trend

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
CT	79.3%	81.8%	82.7%	84.8%	85.5%	87.0%	87.2%	87.4%
ME	80.4%	82.8%	83.7%	84.6%	85.6%	86.5%	87.5%	87.1%
NH	81.0%	85.9%	86.6%	86.7%	87.9%	88.7%	88.1%	88.2%
RI	75.8%	76.8%	77.4%	77.0%	80.0%	80.7%	83.2%	85.3%
VT	85.5%	87.1%	87.5%	87.6%	86.6%	87.8%	87.7%	87.7%
NESSC	80.4%	82.8%	83.7%	84.8%	85.6%	87.0%	87.5%	87.4%

Major Findings

- Graduation rates have remained relatively stable for the past three years, in contrast to the notable increases in high school graduation that occurred between 2009 and 2014.

- Since 2009, the NESSC median state high school graduation rate has increased by approximately 7 percentage points. The largest change has been seen in Rhode Island (9.5 percentage points), followed by Connecticut (8.1 percentage points).

- National graduation rates have demonstrated a gradual upward trend since 2009.

*NOTE: The 2009 New Hampshire data were estimated. The 2009 Connecticut data may not be comparable with previous years.

1.2 Four-Year High School Graduation Rates: Economically Disadvantaged Students

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 four-year graduation rates for economically disadvantaged (ED) students compare across member states?

2016 Graduation Rates: Economically Disadvantaged Students
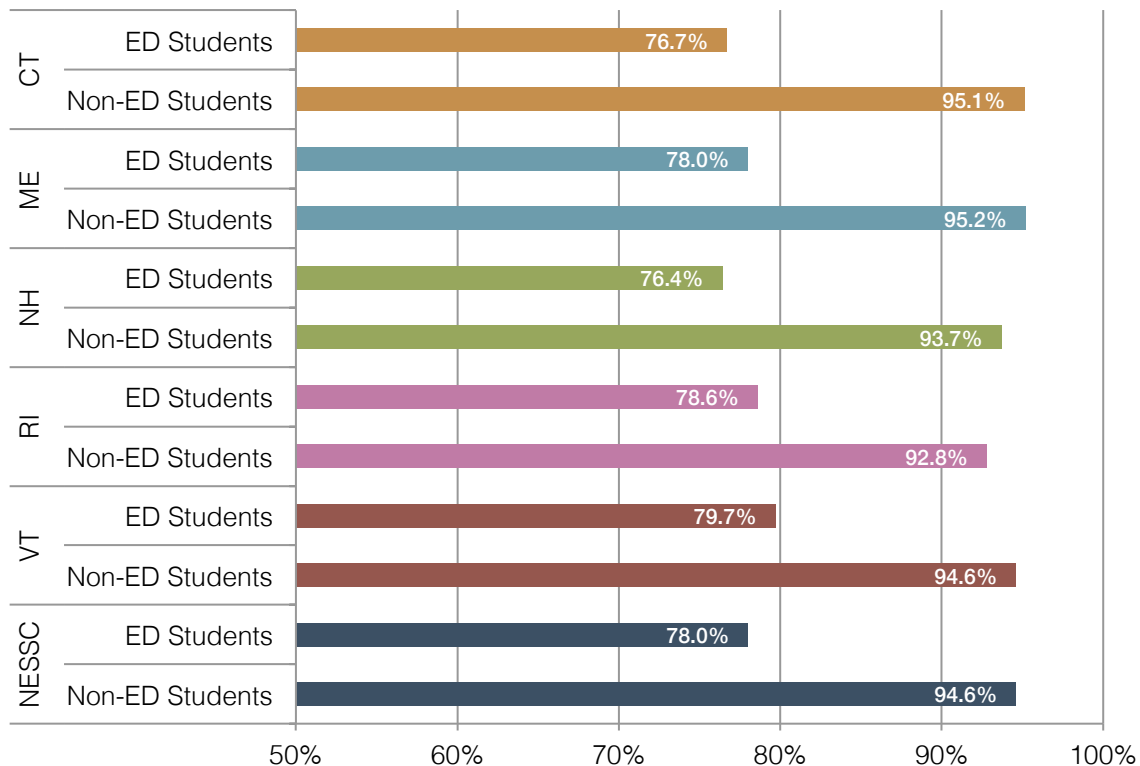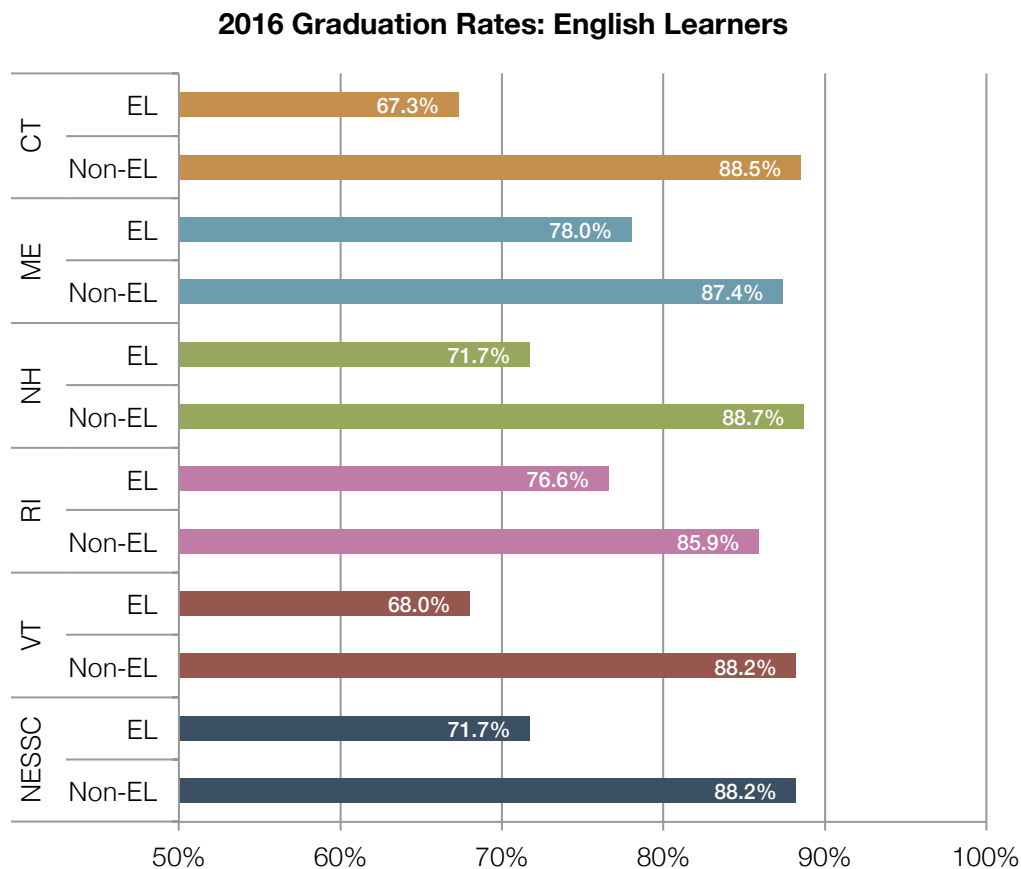

Major Findings

- The graduation rate for Non-ED students in all states exceeded the Consortium's long-term goal of 90 percent for the fourth consecutive year, with the graduation rate for ED students lagging behind by between 14 and 18 percentage points.

- The graduation rate for ED students varied by approximately 3 percentage points across member states.

- The highest reported graduation rate for this group was 79.7 percent (Vermont), still well below the Consortium's long-term goal of 90 percent high school graduation.

- The average gap in graduation rates between ED and Non-ED students was approximately 16 percentage points, with Connecticut (18.4 percentage points) reporting the largest gap.

*NOTE: For each state on this metric and all disaggregation metrics that follow, the top line represents the achievement of students within a specific subgroup (the top line in this graph, for example, depicts economically disadvantaged students who graduated from high school). The bottom line of data for each state represents the achievement of students who were not in the subgroup (the bottom line in this graph, for example, depicts students who are not economically disadvantaged and graduated from high school).

1.3 Four-Year High School Graduation Rates: English Learners

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 four-year graduation rates for English learners (EL) compare across the member states?

2016 Graduation Rates: English Learners

Major Findings

- The graduation rate for Non-EL and EL students alike remained below the Consortium's long-term goal of 90 percent, consistent with previous years. The EL graduation rate lagged behind by between 9 and 21 percentage points.

- The graduation rate for EL students across member states varied by approximately 11 percentage points.

- The highest reported graduation rate for this group was 78 percent (Maine).

- The average gap in high school graduation between EL and Non-EL students was approximately 15 percentage points, with Connecticut (21.2 percentage points) reporting the largest gap.

1.4 **Four-Year High School Graduation Rates: Students with Disabilities**

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 four-year graduation rates for students with disabilities (SWD) compare across member states?

2016 Graduation Rates: Students with Disabilities
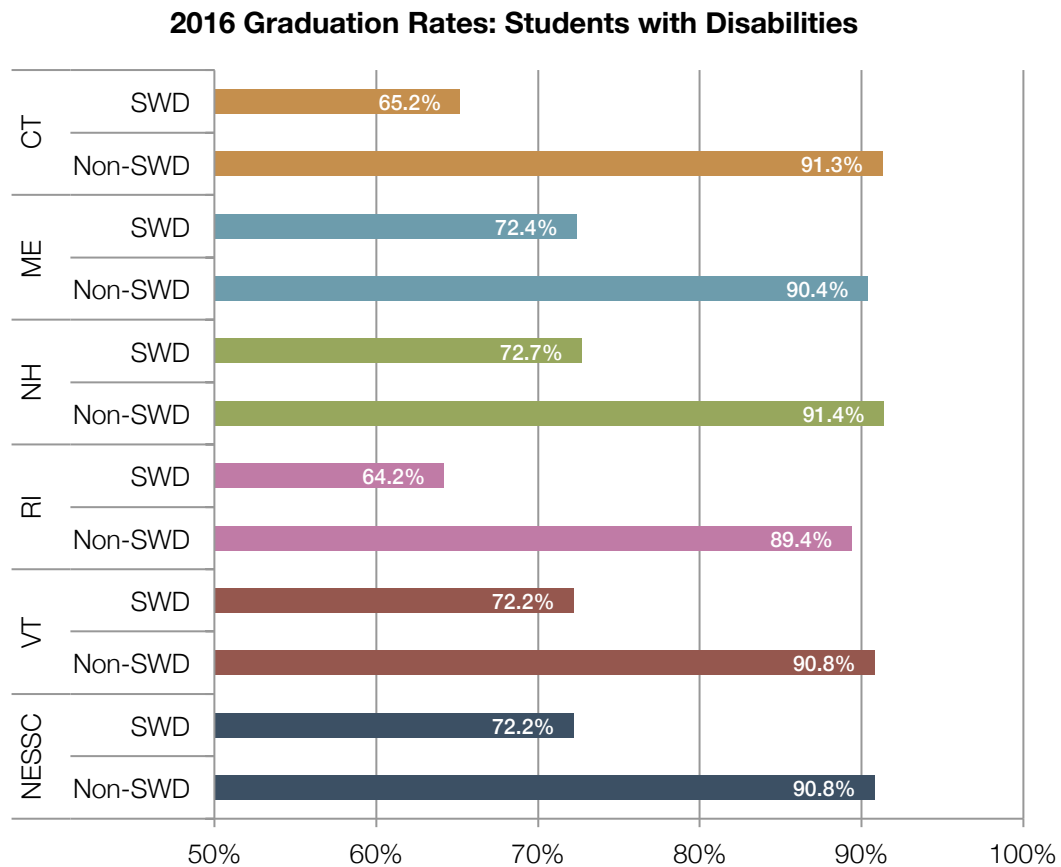
Major Findings

- The graduation rate for students *without* disabilities exceeded the Consortium's long-term goal of 90 percent in four out of five states for the second year in a row. The SWD graduation rate lagged behind by between 18 and 26 percentage points.

- The SWD graduation rates across member states varied by approximately 9 percentage points.

- The highest reported graduation rate for this group was 72.7 percent (New Hampshire), still well below the Consortium's long-term goal of 90 percent high school graduation for all students.

- The average gap in high school graduation between students with disabilities and their peers was approximately 21 percentage points, with Connecticut (26.1 percentage points) reporting the largest gap.

1.5 Four-Year High School Graduation Rates: Gender

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 four-year graduation rates for males and females compare across member states?

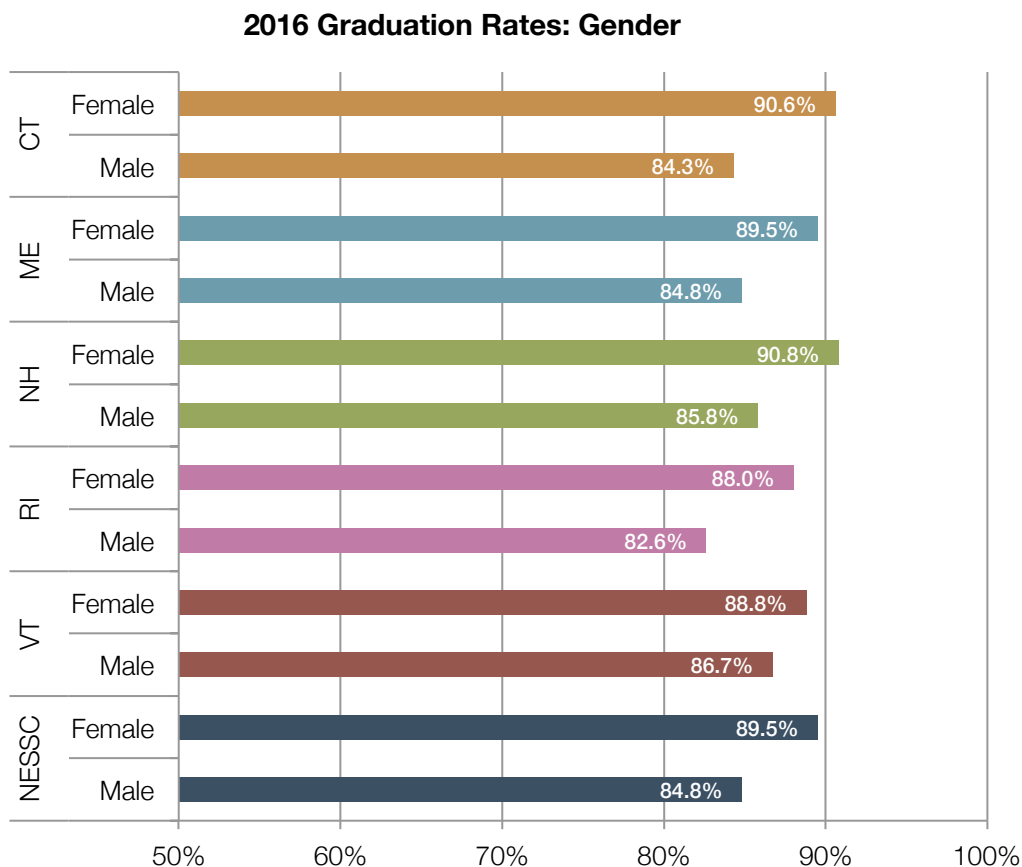**2016 Graduation Rates: Gender**

| State	Gender	Rate
CT	Female	90.6%
CT	Male	84.3%
ME	Female	89.5%
ME	Male	84.8%
NH	Female	90.8%
NH	Male	85.8%
RI	Female	88.0%
RI	Male	82.6%
VT	Female	88.8%
VT	Male	86.7%
NESSC	Female	89.5%
NESSC	Male	84.8%

Major Findings

- The graduation rate for female students met the Consortium's long-term goal of 90 percent in Connecticut and New Hampshire, and hovers near this target in the other three states. The graduation rates for male students are between 2 and 6 percentage points lower than those for female students in the same state.

- The graduation rate for female students varied across member states by approximately 3 percentage points, and the highest reported graduation rate for this group was 90.8 percent (New Hampshire).

- The graduation rate for male students varied across member states by approximately 4 percentage points, and the highest reported graduation rate for this group was 86.7 percent (Vermont).

- The gender achievement gap was approximately 5 percentage points, with Vermont reporting the smallest (2.1 percentage points) gap and Connecticut (6.3 percentage points) reporting the largest.

1.6 Six-Year High School Graduation Rates: Cross-State Comparison

Guiding Question

How did the six-year graduation rates compare across member states?
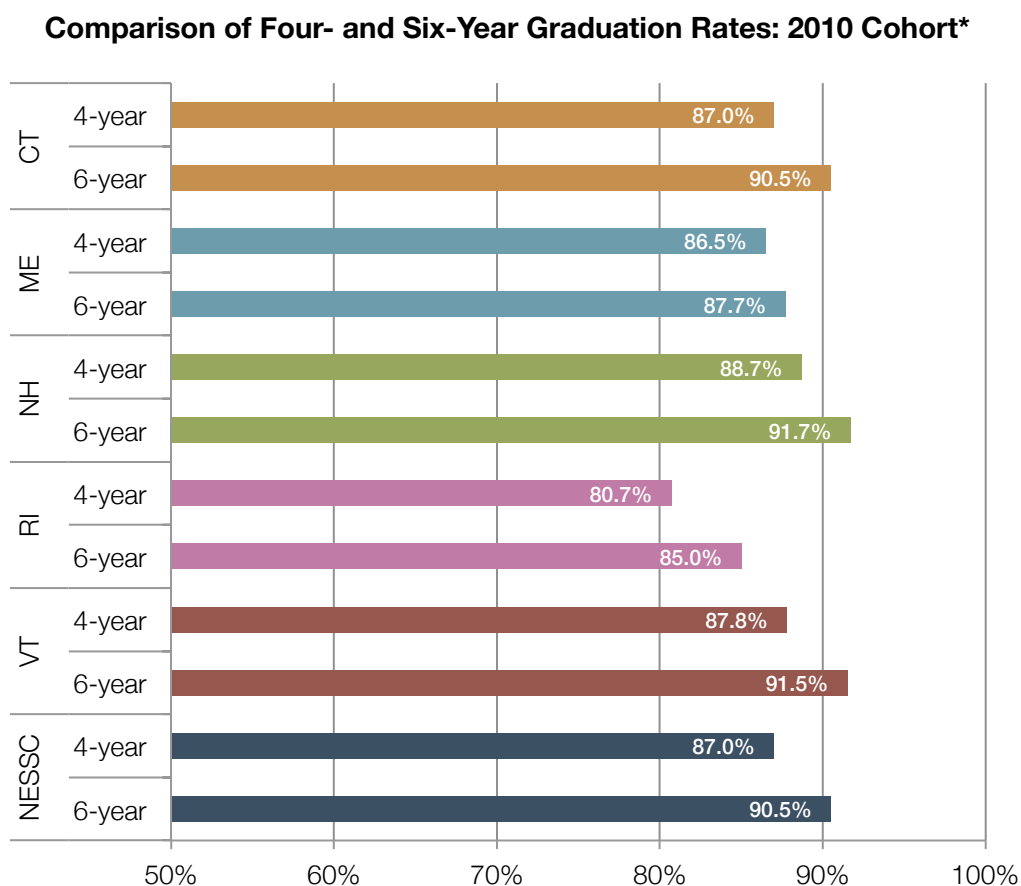
Comparison of Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rates: 2010 Cohort*
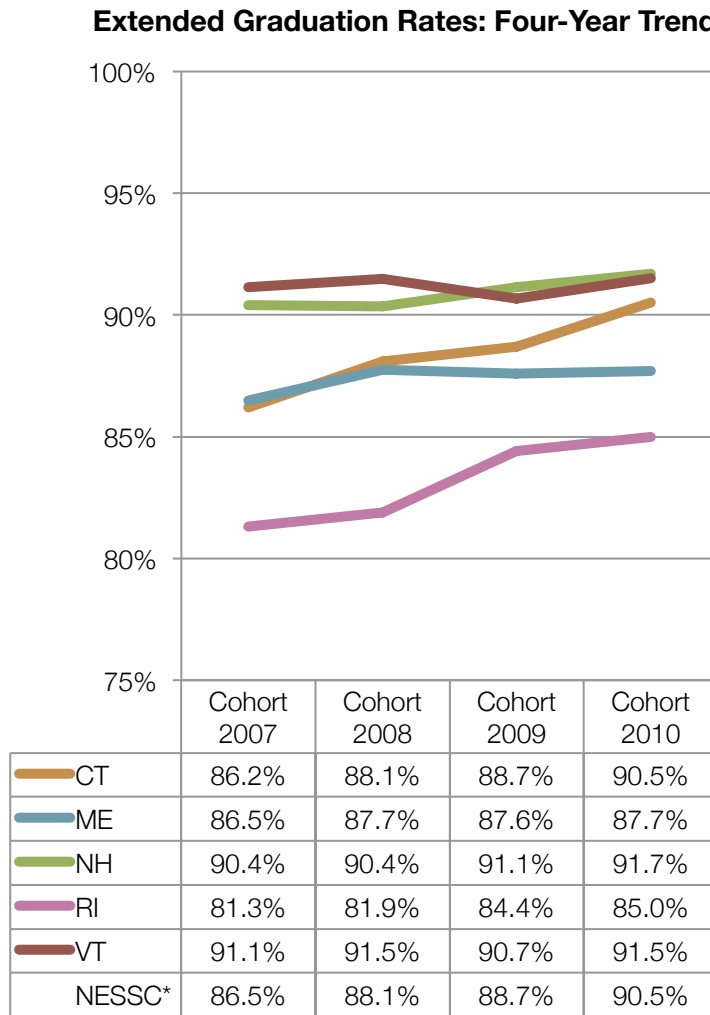

Major Findings

- When students were given six years to graduate from high school, rather than the traditional four, the graduation rates in three states surpassed the Consortium's 90 percent graduation target.

- Graduation rates improved across all states when students were afforded up to six years to meet graduation requirements. The increase in graduation rates ranged from 1.2 percentage points (Maine) to 4.3 percentage points (Connecticut).

- The six-year graduation rates varied by nearly 7 percentage points across member states.

- New Hampshire reported the highest six-year graduation rate for the second year in a row (91.7 percent).

*NOTE: The graphs in this section show the four- and six-year graduation rate data for students who entered high school in 2010. The graphs in the previous section about four-year graduation rates *only* use data for students who entered high school in 2012 and graduated in 2016 after spending four years in high school.

Guiding Question

To what degree have six-year graduation rates changed over a four-year period?

Extended Graduation Rates: Four-Year Trend

	Cohort 2007	Cohort 2008	Cohort 2009	Cohort 2010
CT	86.2%	88.1%	88.7%	90.5%
ME	86.5%	87.7%	87.6%	87.7%
NH	90.4%	90.4%	91.1%	91.7%
RI	81.3%	81.9%	84.4%	85.0%
VT	91.1%	91.5%	90.7%	91.5%
NESSC*	86.5%	88.1%	88.7%	90.5%

Major Findings

- While all states have experienced an increase in six-year graduation rates, this increase ranges from less than 1 percentage point in Vermont (where the six-year graduation rate is over 90 percent) to more than 4 percentage points in Connecticut.

- Six-year graduation rates in two states (New Hampshire and Vermont) have exceeded the Consortium's 90 percent graduation target for four consecutive cohorts.

*NOTE: Throughout this report, the NESSC trend line represents the median state rate from each year. In the graph above, the median extended graduation rate was reported by Connecticut for three out of four years; the 2007 cohort median was reported by Maine. The NESSC trend line is, therefore, approximated by the trend line for Connecticut.

1.8 Six-Year High School Graduation Rates: Economically Disadvantaged Students

Guiding Question

What is the difference between four-year and six-year graduation rates for economically disadvantaged students across member states?

**Comparison of Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rates:
Economically Disadvantaged Students**
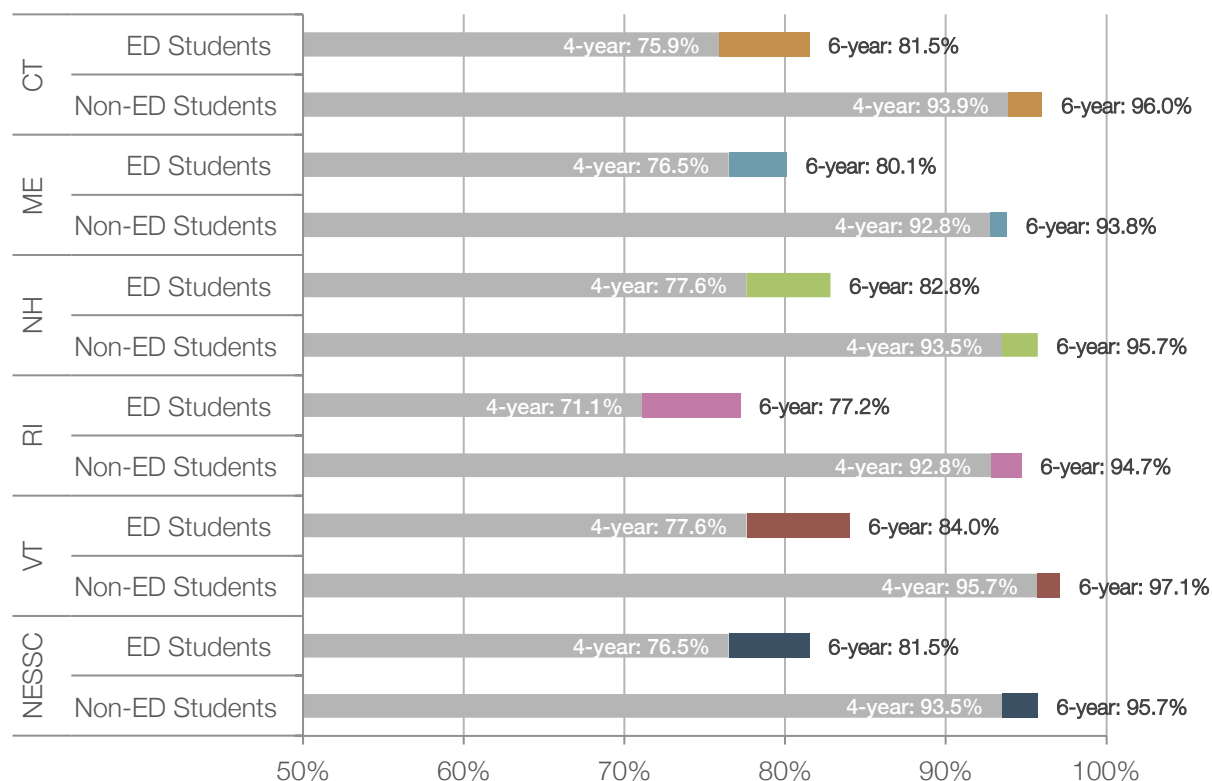
Major Findings

- When students were given six years to graduate from high school, rather than the traditional four, the graduation rates for ED students rose by between 3.6 percentage points (Maine) and 6.4 percentage points (Vermont). Increases in graduation rates for Non-ED students ranged from 1 percentage point to just over 2 percentage points.

- The six-year graduation rate for ED students remains, on average, 9 percentage points below the Consortium's 90 percent graduation target. The state closest to reaching that goal for ED students is Vermont (84 percent).

- The achievement gap between ED and Non-ED students narrowed by approximately 3.5 percentage points, on average, across member states when students were afforded up to six years to graduate. The achievement gap decreased the most in Vermont (from 18.1 percentage points to 13.1 percentage points) and remains largest in Rhode Island (17.5 percentage points).

*NOTE: The graphs in this section show the four- and six-year graduation rate data for students who entered high school in 2010. The graphs in the previous section about four-year graduation rates *only* use data for students who entered high school in 2012 and graduated in 2016 after spending four years in high school.

1.9 Six-Year High School Graduation Rates: English Learners

Guiding Question

How did the six-year graduation rates for English learners (EL) compare across member states?

**Comparison of Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rates:
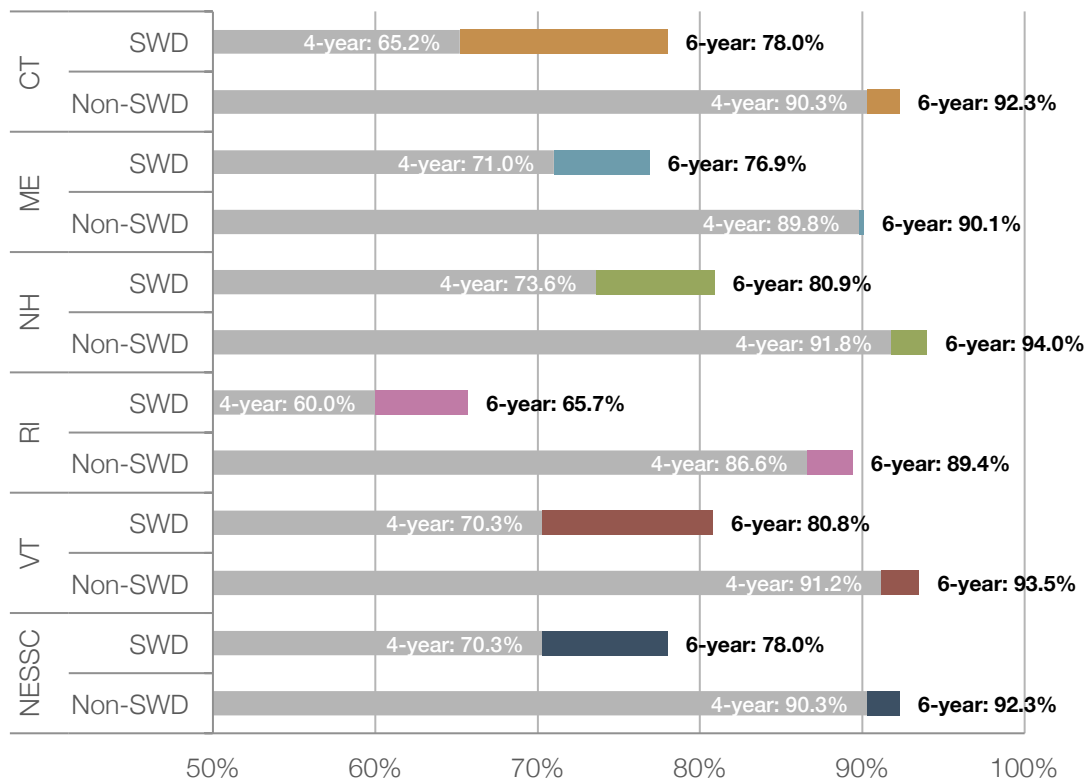English Learners**
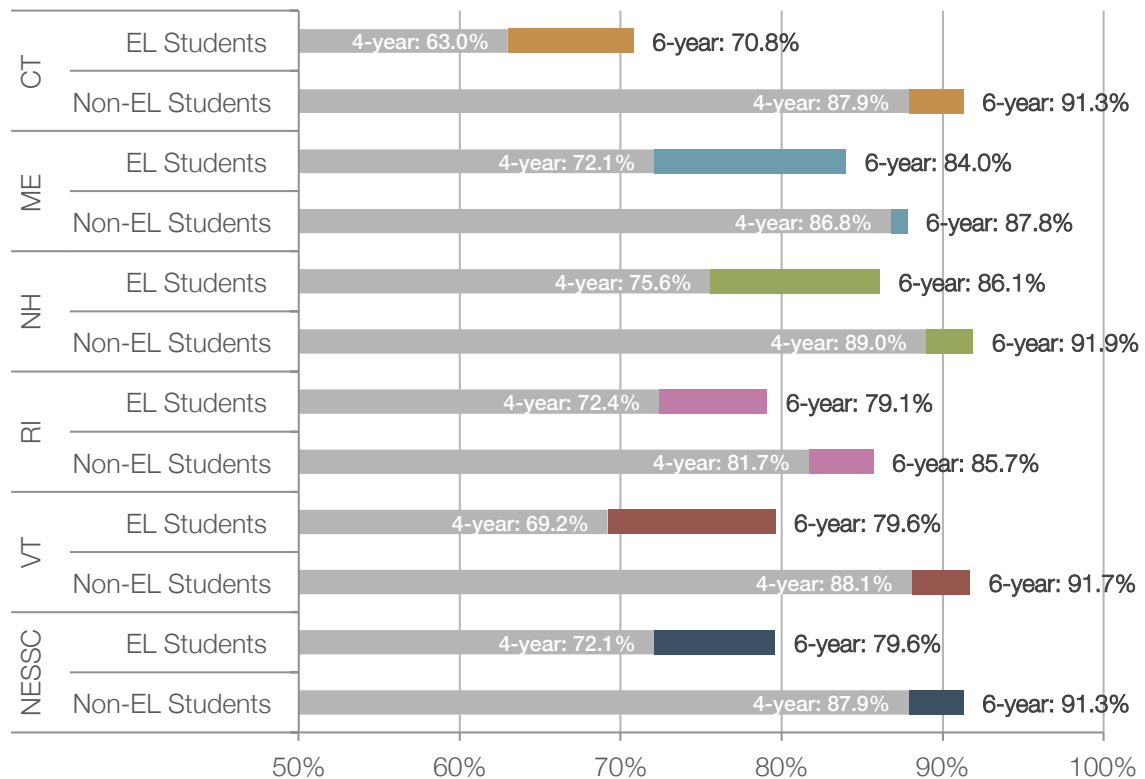
Major Findings

- When students were given six years to graduate from high school, rather than the traditional four, the graduation rate for EL students rose by between 6.7 percentage points (Rhode Island) and 11.9 percentage points (Maine).

- Increases in graduation rates for Non-EL students ranged from 1 percentage point (Maine) to 4 percentage points (Rhode Island). In three states—Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Vermont—these gains pushed the graduation rate for Non-EL students over the 90 percent target.

- The six-year graduation rate for EL students remains, on average, 10 percentage points below the Consortium's 90 percent graduation target. The state closest to reaching that goal for EL students is New Hampshire (86.1 percent).

- The achievement gap between EL and Non-EL students narrowed by approximately 6.5 percentage points, on average, across member states when students were afforded up to six years to graduate. The achievement gap decreased the most in Maine (from 14.7 percentage points to 3.8 percentage points) and remains largest in Connecticut (20.5 percentage points).

1.10 Six-Year High School Graduation Rates: Students with Disabilities

Guiding Question

How did the six-year graduation rates for students with disabilities (SWD) compare across member states?

Comparison of Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rates: Students with Disabilities
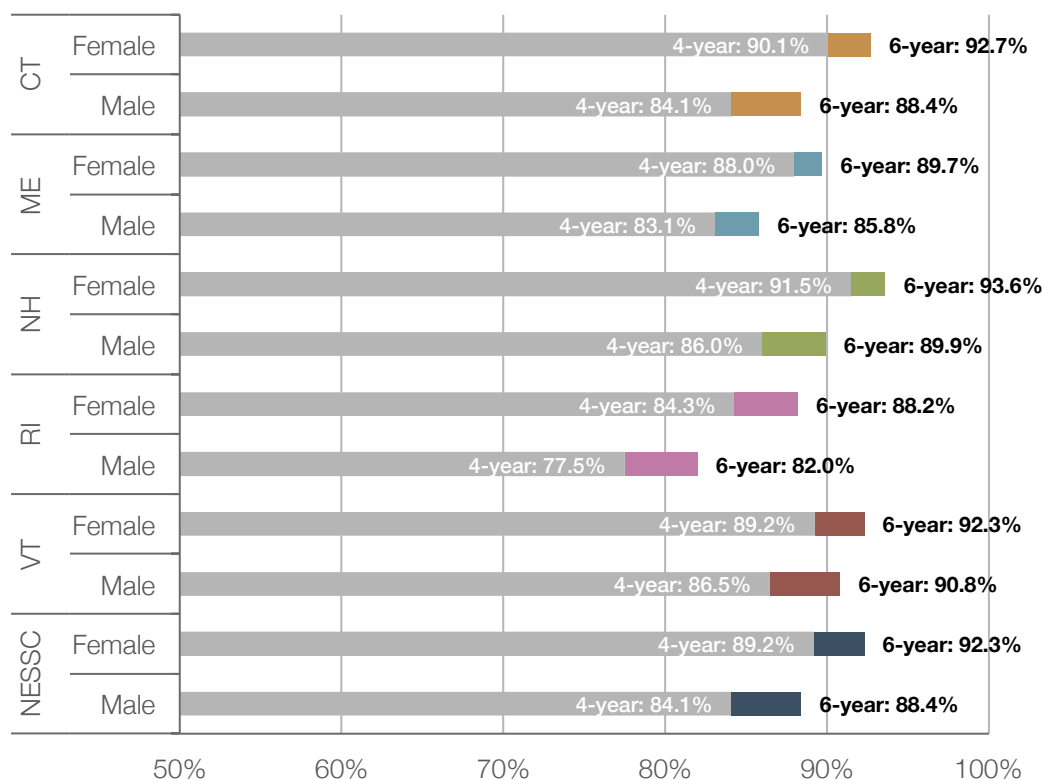

Major Findings

▪ When students were given six years to graduate from high school, rather than the traditional four, the SWD graduation rate rose by between 5.7 percentage points (Rhode Island) and 12.8 percentage points (Connecticut). Increases in the Non-SWD graduation rate ranged from less than 1 percentage point (Maine) to almost 3 percentage points (Rhode Island).

▪ The SWD six-year graduation rate remains, on average, 13.5 percentage points below the Consortium's 90 percent graduation target. The states closest to reaching the SWD graduation target are New Hampshire (80.9 percent) and Vermont (80.8 percent).

▪ With the exception of Rhode Island, which has a Non-SWD six-year graduation rate of 89.4 percent, member states have reached the 90 percent graduation rate target for students without disabilities when students have up to six years to meet graduation requirements.

▪ The achievement gap between SWD and Non-SWD narrowed by approximately 6.5 percentage points, on average, across member states when students were afforded up to six years to graduate. The achievement gap decreased the most in Connecticut (from 25.1 to 14.3 percentage points) and remains largest in Rhode Island (23.7 percentage points).

1.11 Six-Year High School Graduation Rates: Gender

Guiding Question

How did the six-year graduation rates for males and females compare across member states?

Comparison of Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rates: Gender

State	Gender	4-year	6-year
CT	Female	4-year: 90.1%	6-year: 92.7%
CT	Male	4-year: 84.1%	6-year: 88.4%
ME	Female	4-year: 88.0%	6-year: 89.7%
ME	Male	4-year: 83.1%	6-year: 85.8%
NH	Female	4-year: 91.5%	6-year: 93.6%
NH	Male	4-year: 86.0%	6-year: 89.9%
RI	Female	4-year: 84.3%	6-year: 88.2%
RI	Male	4-year: 77.5%	6-year: 82.0%
VT	Female	4-year: 89.2%	6-year: 92.3%
VT	Male	4-year: 86.5%	6-year: 90.8%
NESSC	Female	4-year: 89.2%	6-year: 92.3%
NESSC	Male	4-year: 84.1%	6-year: 88.4%

Major Findings

- When students were given six years to graduate from high school, rather than the traditional four, the graduation rate for female students rose by between 1.7 percentage points (Maine) and 3.9 percentage points (Rhode Island). Increases in graduation rates for male students ranged from 2.7 percentage points (Maine) to 4.5 percentage points (Rhode Island).

- The six-year graduation rate for female students passed the Consortium's 90 percent graduation target in three states: Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Vermont; Maine's six-year graduation rate for female students (89.7 percent) is also close to the target.

- The six-year graduation rate for male students remains, on average, 2.6 percentage points below the Consortium's 90 percent graduation target. Only Vermont reached that goal (90.8 percent) and the state farthest from reaching it is Rhode Island (82.0 percent).

- The achievement gap between male and female students narrowed by approximately 1 percentage point, on average, across member states when students were afforded up to six years to graduate. The achievement gap decreased the most in New Hampshire (from 5.5 to 3.7 percentage points) and Connecticut (from 6 to 4.3 percentage points), and remains largest in Rhode Island (6.2 percentage points).
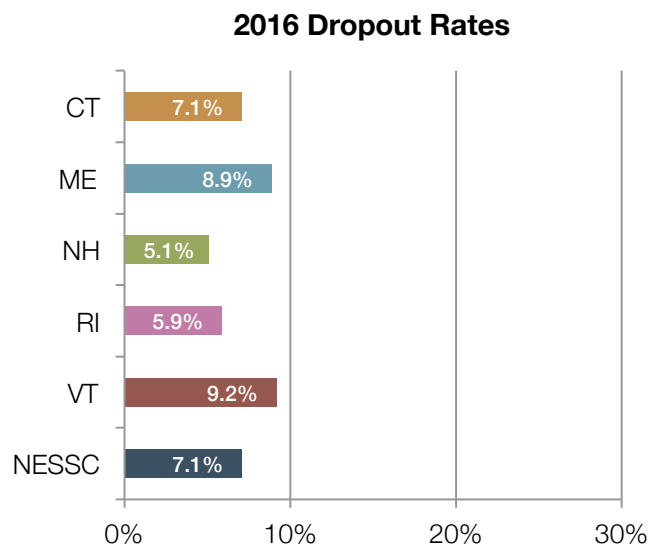
Dropout Rates

2.0 Dropout Rates: Cross-State Comparison

Guiding Question

How did the dropout rates in 2016 compare across member states?
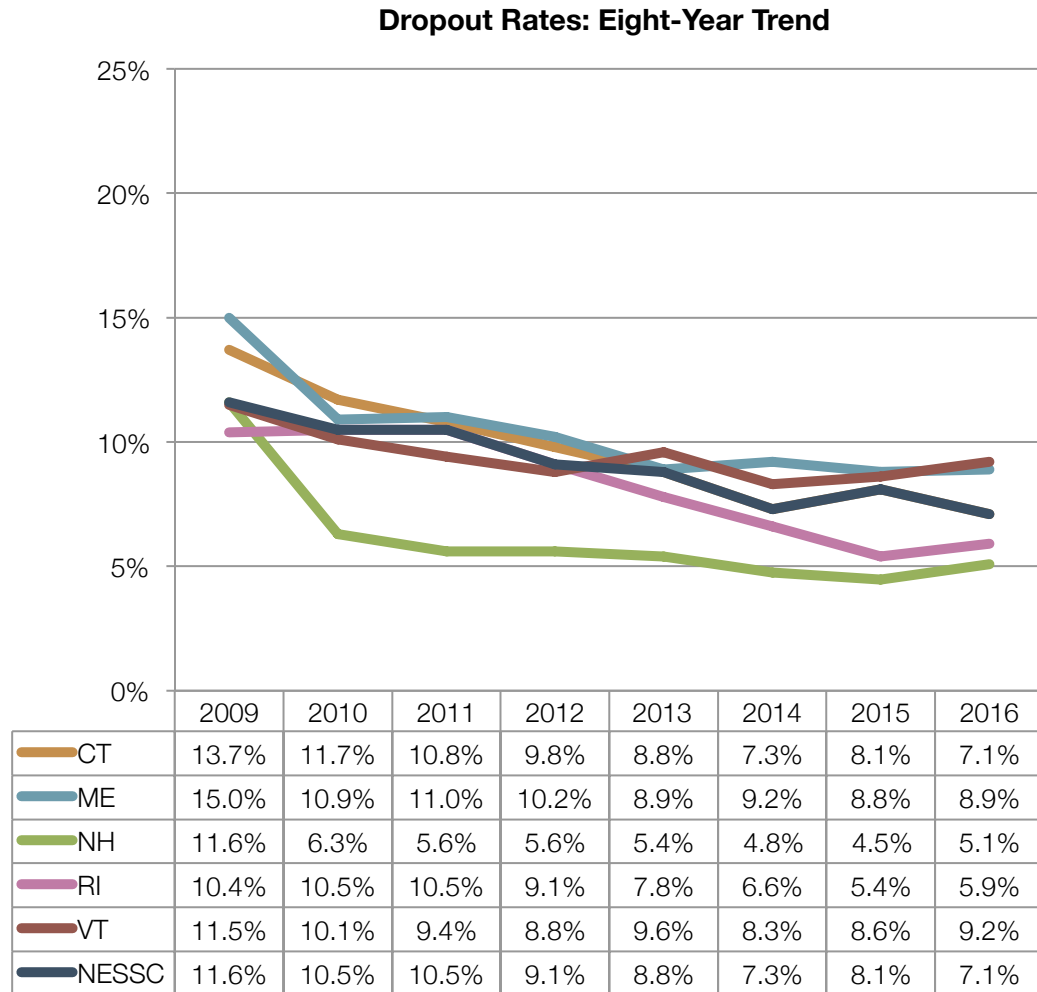
2016 Dropout Rates

Major Findings

- Dropout rates varied by approximately 4 percentage points across member states.

- The lowest reported dropout rate was 5.1 percent (New Hampshire).

- No state achieved the ambitious long-term goal of a dropout rate of less than 1 percent.

- The national dropout rate, as reported by the National Center for Education Statistics, for 2015 was 5.9 percent; however, the method used to produce this statistic was slightly different than that used by the NESSC member states.

Dropout Rates: Eight-Year Trend

Guiding Question

To what degree have dropout rates changed over the past seven years?

Dropout Rates: Eight-Year Trend

|	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
CT	13.7%	11.7%	10.8%	9.8%	8.8%	7.3%	8.1%	7.1%
ME	15.0%	10.9%	11.0%	10.2%	8.9%	9.2%	8.8%	8.9%
NH	11.6%	6.3%	5.6%	5.6%	5.4%	4.8%	4.5%	5.1%
RI	10.4%	10.5%	10.5%	9.1%	7.8%	6.6%	5.4%	5.9%
VT	11.5%	10.1%	9.4%	8.8%	9.6%	8.3%	8.6%	9.2%
NESSC	11.6%	10.5%	10.5%	9.1%	8.8%	7.3%	8.1%	7.1%

Major Findings

- All member states have demonstrated an overall decrease in dropout rates since the baseline year (2009). This downward trend reflects that observed at the national level.

- Only Connecticut reported a decrease in dropout rates from the prior year.

- Since 2009, the NESSC median state high school dropout rate has decreased by 4.5 percentage points. Connecticut, Maine, and New Hampshire have all experienced decreases of over 6 percentage points.

- The sustained decrease in dropout rates is particularly notable because many NESSC states have worked to implement more rigorous graduation requirements since 2009, raising expectations for all students.

*NOTE: The 2009 New Hampshire data were estimated.

2.2 Dropout Rates: Economically Disadvantaged Students

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 dropout rates for economically disadvantaged (ED) students compare across member states?

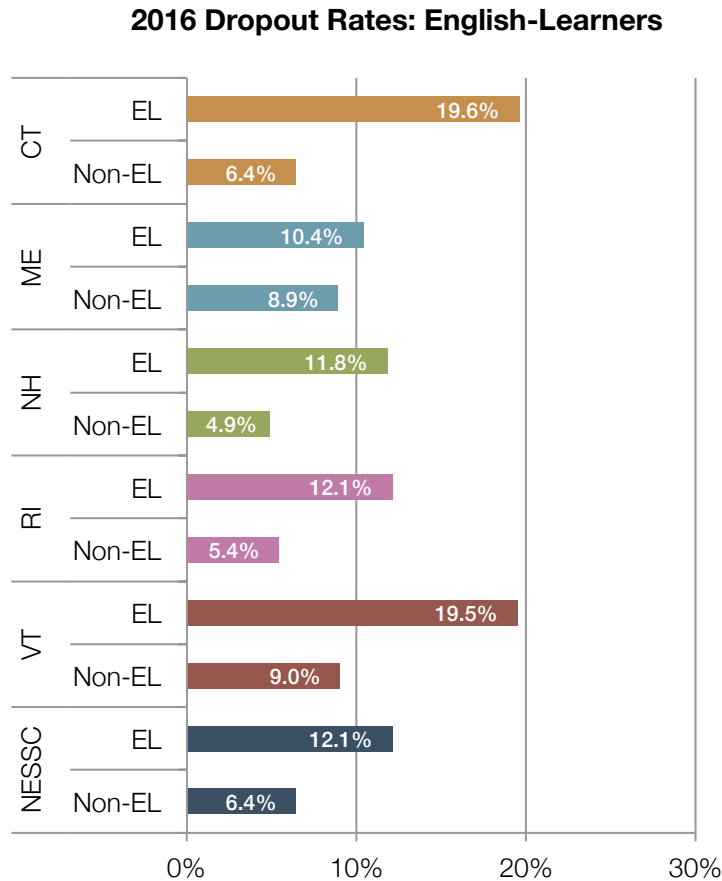**Dropout Rates 2016: Economically Disadvantaged**
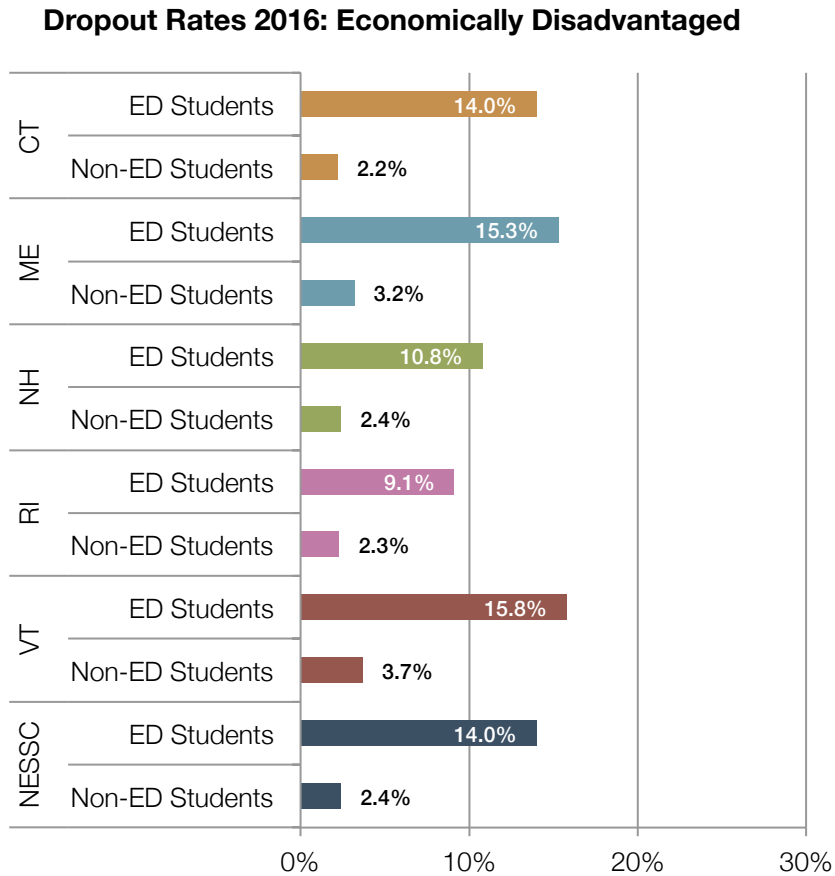
Major Findings

- The dropout rate for ED students varied by 6.7 percentage points across member states.

- The lowest reported dropout rate for ED students was 9.1 percent (Rhode Island).

- No state rate reached the Consortium's long-term goal of dropout rates lower than 1 percent for ED or Non-ED students.

- The average gap in dropout rates between ED and Non-ED students was approximately 10 percentage points, with Maine and Vermont both reporting the largest gap among member states (12.1 percentage points).

2.3 Dropout Rates: English Learners

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 dropout rates for English learners (EL) compare across member states?
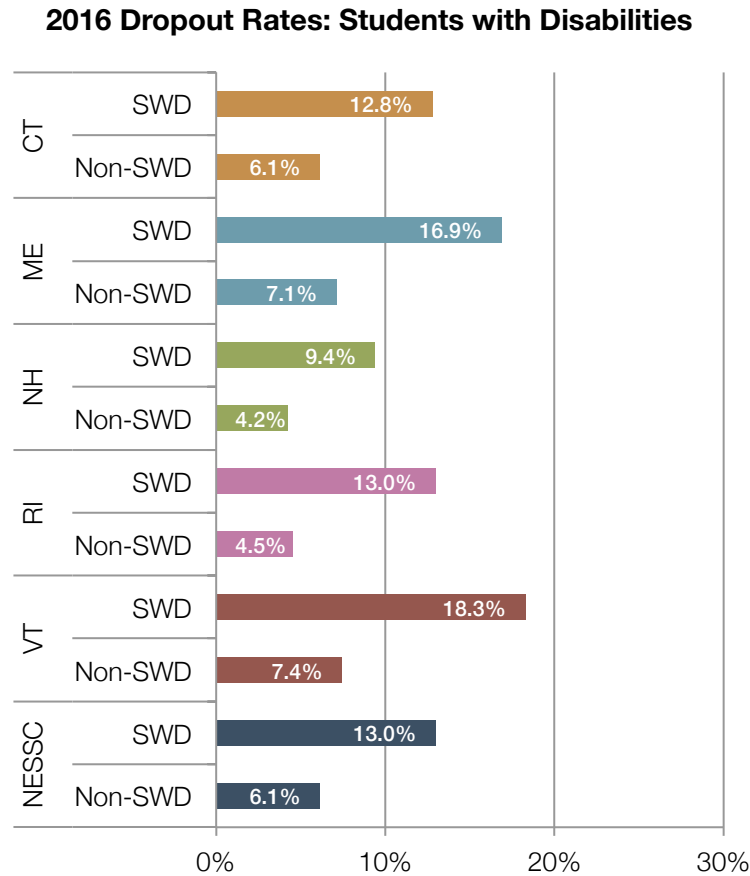
2016 Dropout Rates: English-Learners

Major Findings

- The dropout rate for EL students varied by approximately 9 percentage points across member states.

- The lowest reported dropout rate for EL students was 10.4 percent (Maine).

- No state rate reached the Consortium's long-term goal of dropout rates lower than 1 percent for EL or Non-EL students.

- The average gap in dropout rates between EL and Non-EL students was approximately 8 percentage points, with Connecticut (13.2 percentage points) reporting the largest gap among member states and Maine reporting the lowest (1.5 percentage points).

2.4 Dropout Rates: Students with Disabilities

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 dropout rates for students with disabilities (SWD) compare across member states?

2016 Dropout Rates: Students with Disabilities

Major Findings

- The SWD dropout rate varied by approximately 9 percentage points across member states.
- The lowest reported SWD dropout rate for this group was 9.4 percent (New Hampshire).
- No state rate reached the Consortium's long-term goal of dropout rates lower than 1 percent for students with or without disabilities.
- The average gap in dropout rates between students with disabilities and their peers was approximately 8 percentage points, with Vermont (10.9 percentage points) reporting the largest gap among member states.

2.5 Dropout Rates: Gender

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 dropout rates for males and females compare across member states?

2016 Dropout Rates: Gender
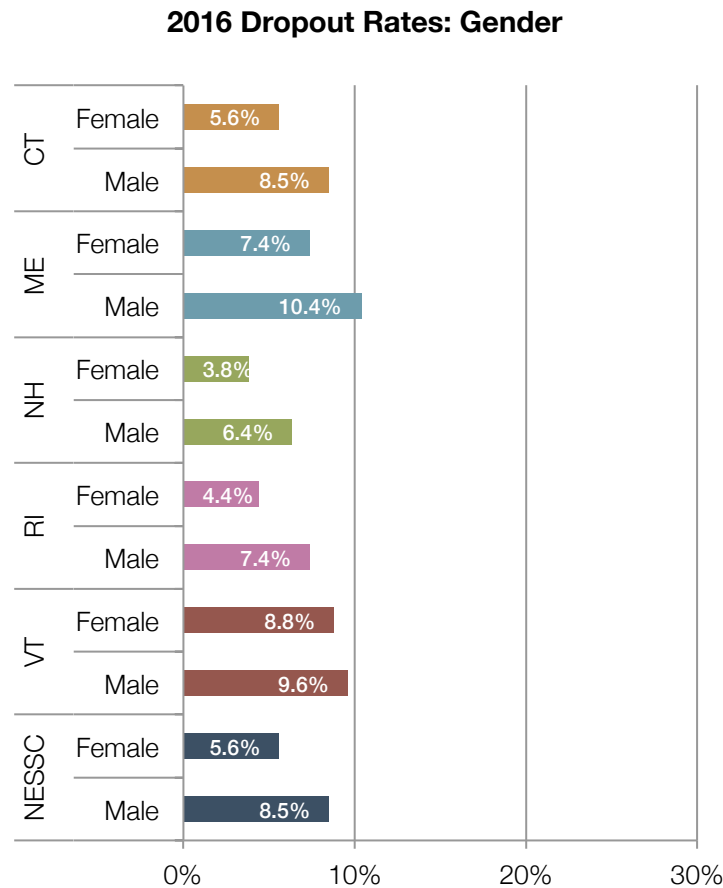
Major Findings

- The dropout rate for female students varied by approximately 5 percentage points across member states, while the dropout rate for male students varied by approximately 4 percentage points across states.

- New Hampshire reported the lowest dropout rates for both female (3.8 percent) and male (6.4 percent) students.

- No state reached the Consortium's long-term goal of dropout rates lower than 1 percent for female or male students.

- The average gap in dropout rates between female and male students was 2.5 percentage points, with Vermont reporting a gap of less than 1 percentage point, the smallest among member states.
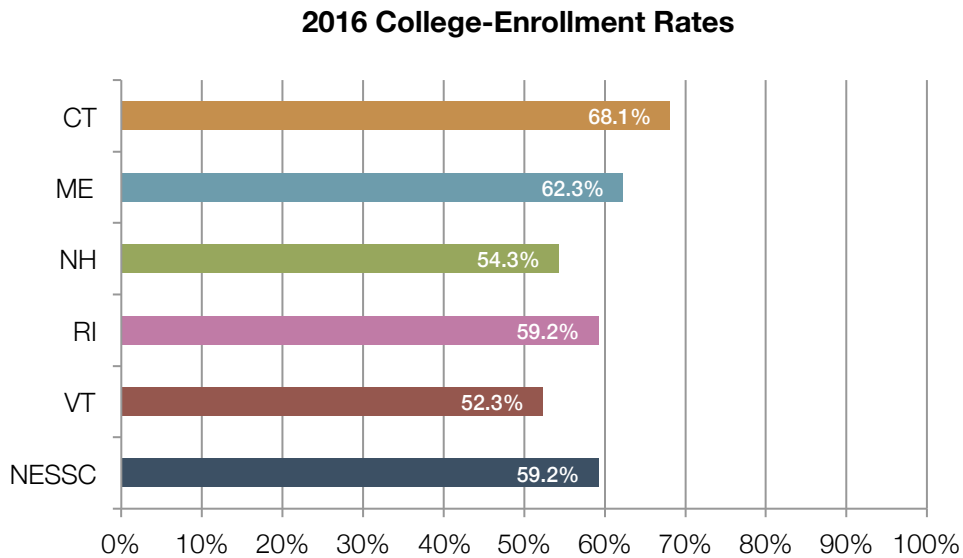
College-Enrollment Rates

3.0 College-Enrollment Rates: Cross-State Comparison

Guiding Question

How did college-enrollment rates in 2016 compare across member states?

2016 College-Enrollment Rates

Major Findings

- The college-enrollment rates varied by approximately 16 percentage points across member states. The median state rate was 59.2 percent and the highest reported rate was 68.1 percent (Connecticut).

- No state reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college-enrollment.

- The data indicate that more than 25 percent of high school graduates in our region do not immediately enroll in post-secondary education.
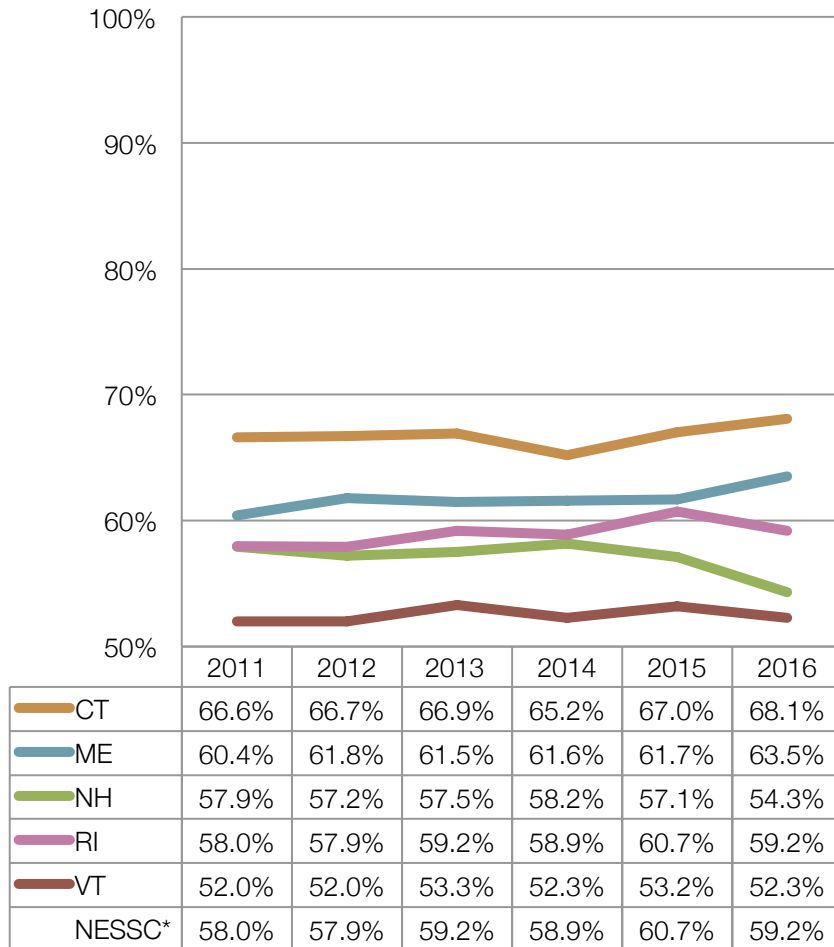
*NOTE: Only data from students who enroll in college immediately after graduating from high school are included in this section. All college-enrollment data come from the National Student Clearinghouse (StudentTracker for High Schools), which collects enrollment data from approximately 98 percent of all postsecondary students enrolled in public and private institutions in the United States. While this captures the majority of college enrollments, it may not include vocational, military, and international institutions or apprenticeship programs.

3.1 College-Enrollment Rates: Six-Year Trend

Guiding Question

To what degree have college-enrollment rates changed over the past six years?

2016 College-Enrollment Rates: Six-Year Trend

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
CT	66.6%	66.7%	66.9%	65.2%	67.0%	68.1%
ME	60.4%	61.8%	61.5%	61.6%	61.7%	63.5%
NH	57.9%	57.2%	57.5%	58.2%	57.1%	54.3%
RI	58.0%	57.9%	59.2%	58.9%	60.7%	59.2%
VT	52.0%	52.0%	53.3%	52.3%	53.2%	52.3%
NESSC*	58.0%	57.9%	59.2%	58.9%	60.7%	59.2%

Major Findings

- College-enrollment rates have remained relatively stable over the past six years.

- The largest increase in college enrollment has occurred in Maine (3.1 percentage points).

- The largest overall change was reported by New Hampshire, which has experienced a decrease in college enrollment of 3.6 percentage points since 2011 (see note below). By comparison, the national college-enrollment rate has decreased by 1 percentage point since 2009.

*NOTE: Throughout this report, the NESSC trend line represents the median state rate from each year. In the graph above, the median college enrollment rate was reported by Rhode Island for all years, so the NESSC trend line is the same as that for Rhode Island.

New Hampshire uses the National Student Clearinghouse as a data source for college-matriculation and persistence information. Student records are submitted to NSC and NSC then matches to college enrollment records. For this report, New Hampshire's match percentage was 49.1 percent of all student records submitted.

3.2 College-Enrollment Rates: Economically Disadvantaged Students

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 college-enrollment rates for economically disadvantaged (ED) students compare across member states?
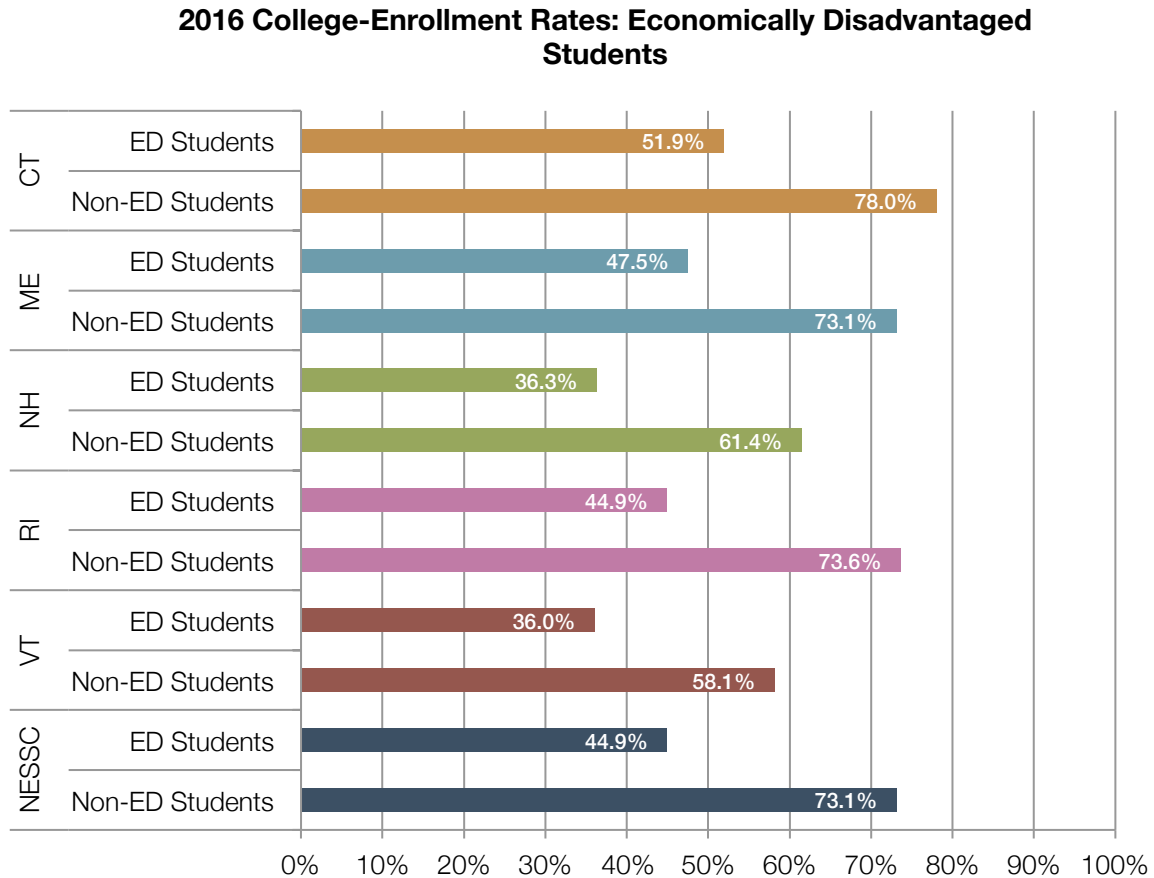
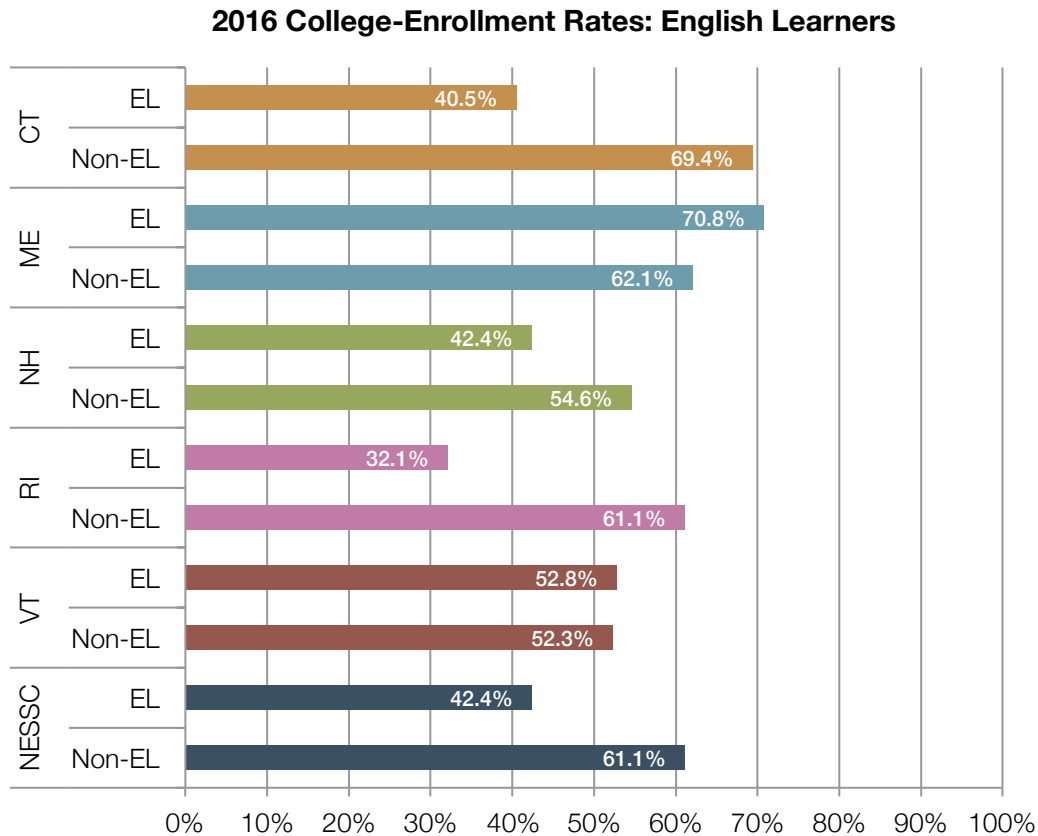**2016 College-Enrollment Rates: Economically Disadvantaged Students**

Major Findings

- The college-enrollment rate for ED students varied by approximately 16 percentage points across member states.

- The highest reported college-enrollment rate for ED students was 51.9 percent (Connecticut).

- No state reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college enrollment for either ED or Non-ED students. Connecticut came closest to this target for Non-ED students (78 percent).

- The average gap in college enrollment between ED and Non-ED students was 25.5 percentage points, with Rhode Island (28.7 percentage points) reporting the largest gap.

3.3 College-Enrollment Rates: English Learners

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 college-enrollment rates for English learners (EL) compare across member states?

2016 College-Enrollment Rates: English Learners
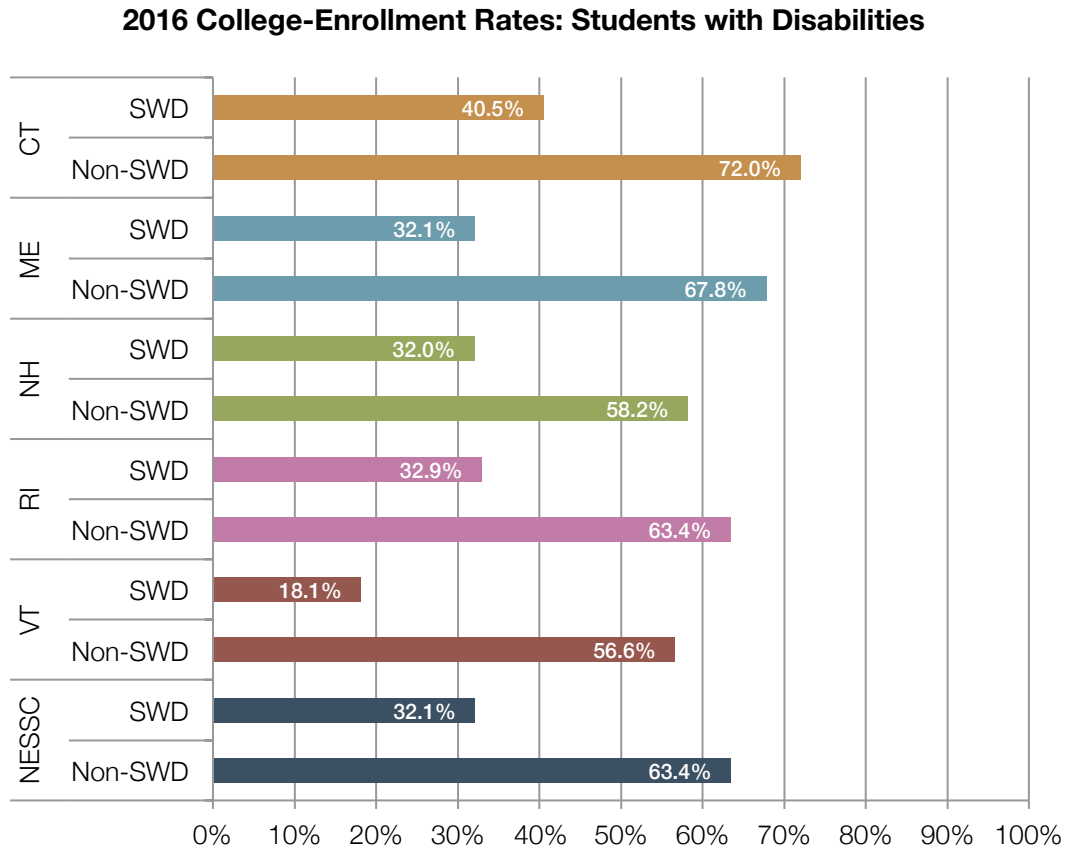

Major Findings

- The college-enrollment rate for EL students varied by approximately 39 percentage points across member states.

- The highest reported college-enrollment rate for EL students was 70.8 percent (Maine).

- No state reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college enrollment for either EL or Non-EL students. Connecticut comes the closest to this target for Non-EL students (69.4 percent).

- The average gap in college enrollment between EL and Non-EL students was approximately 12 percentage points, with Rhode Island (29 percentage points) reporting the largest gap among member states. In Vermont, the gap in college enrollment is less than 1 percentage point.

  *NOTE: The college-enrollment rate for EL students in Maine is an outlier at least partially attributable to the small number of students that fall into this subgroup.

3.4 College-Enrollment Rates: Students with Disabilities

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 college-enrollment rates for students with disabilities (SWD) compare across member states?

2016 College-Enrollment Rates: Students with Disabilities
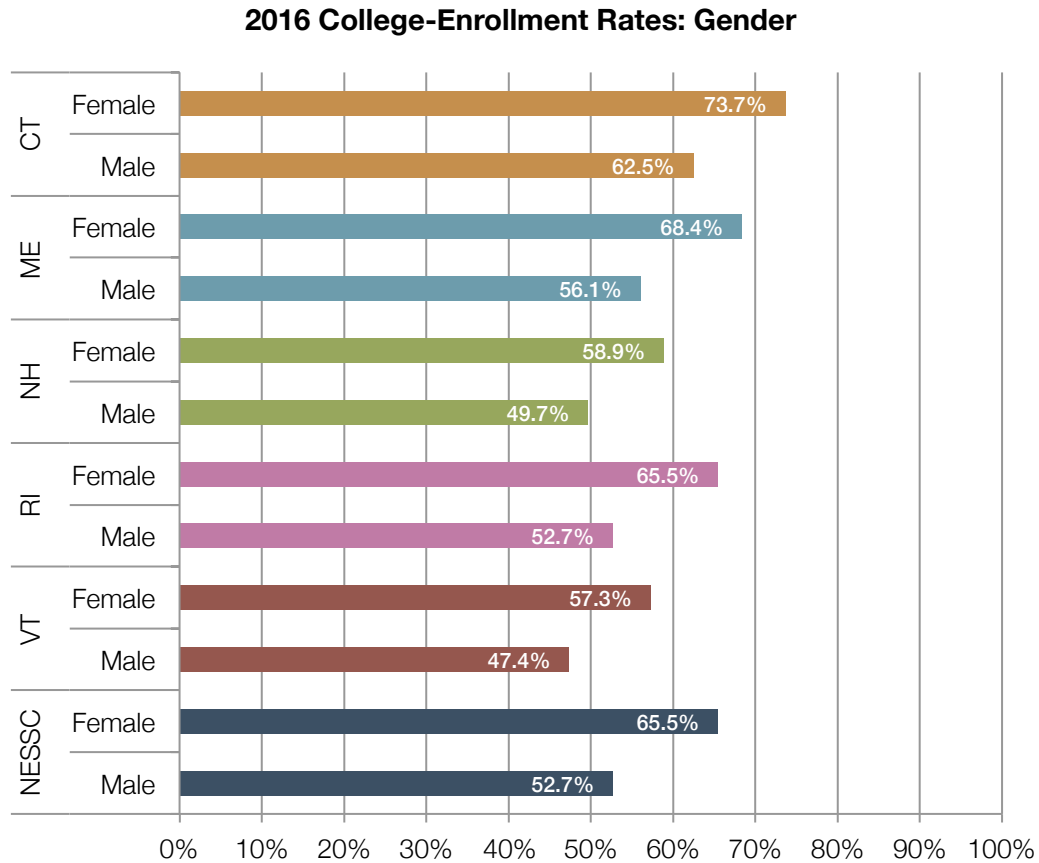

Major Findings

- The SWD college-enrollment rates varied by approximately 22 percentage points across member states.

- The highest reported SWD college-enrollment rate for this group was 40.5 percent (Connecticut).

- No state rate reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college enrollment for students with or without disabilities.

- The average gap in college enrollment between students with disabilities and their peers was 32.5 percentage points, with Vermont (38.5 percentage points) reporting the largest gap among member states.

3.5 College-Enrollment Rates: Gender

Guiding Question

How did the 2016 college-enrollment rates for males and females compare across member states?

2016 College-Enrollment Rates: Gender

Major Findings

- The college-enrollment rate for female students varied by 16.4 percentage points across member states, while the college-enrollment rate for male students varied by 15.1 percentage points across states.

- Connecticut reported the highest college-enrollment rates for both female (73.7 percent) and male (62.5 percent) students.

- No state rate reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college enrollment for female or male students.

- The average gap in college enrollment between female and male students was approximately 11 percentage points, with Maine and Rhode Island both reporting gaps over 12 percentage points.
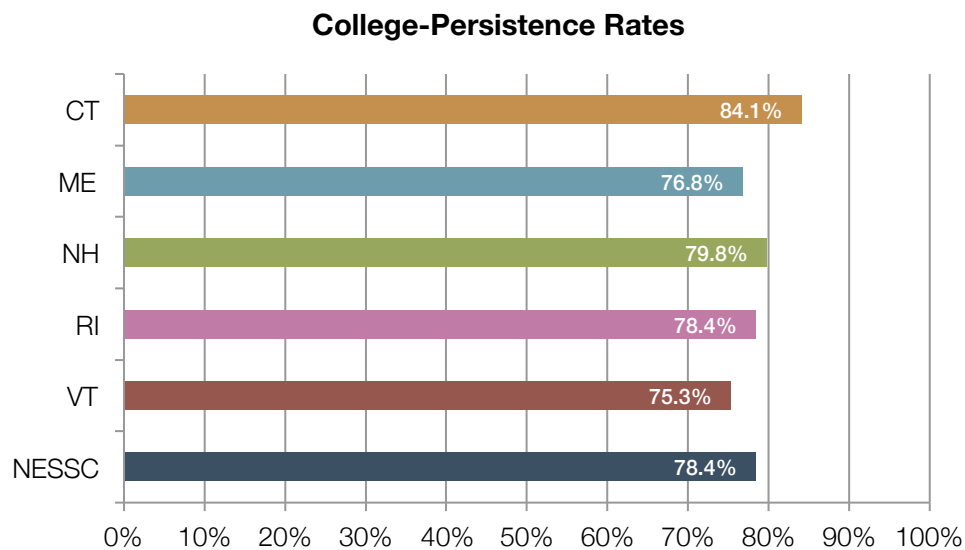
College-Persistence Rates

4.0 College-Persistence Rates: Cross-State Comparison

Guiding Question

How did the college-persistence rates compare across member states?

College-Persistence Rates

Major Findings

- The college-persistence rate varied by approximately 9 percentage points across member states.
- The highest reported college-persistence rate was 84.1 percent (Connecticut).
- Connecticut was the only state to report a college-persistence rate above the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent.
- Nationally, four-year institutions had overall retention rates of 80 percent in 2013, while two-year institutions had retention rates of 60 percent.
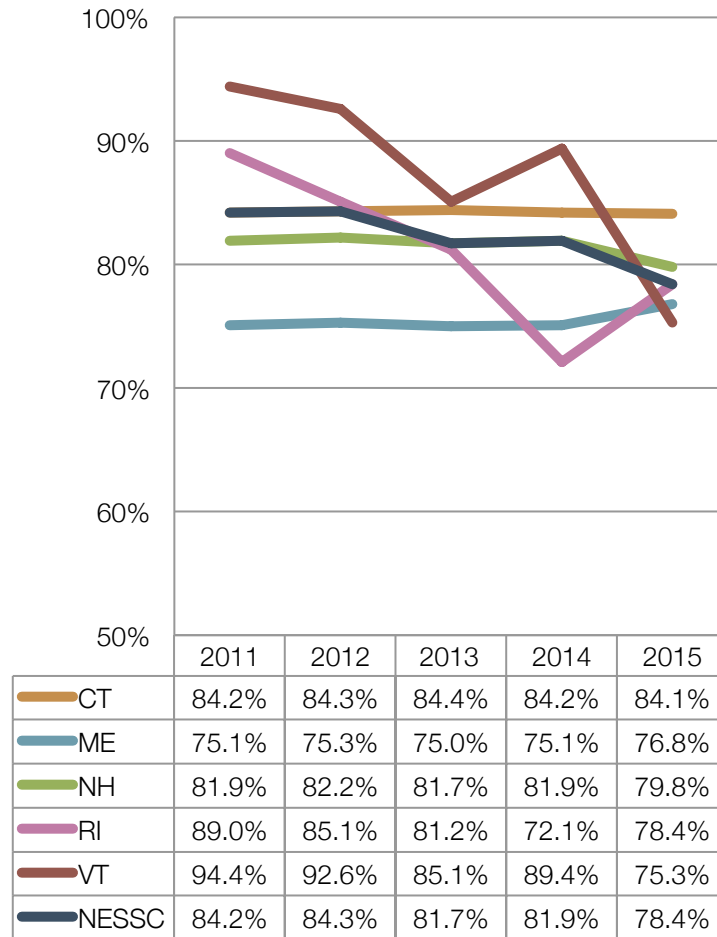
*NOTE: The data in this section are for students who entered college in 2014 and remained enrolled for three consecutive semesters. This indicator combined information from two-year and four-year institutions.

Guiding Question

To what degree have college-persistence rates changed over the past five years?

College-Persistence Rates: Five-Year Trend

|	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
CT	84.2%	84.3%	84.4%	84.2%	84.1%
ME	75.1%	75.3%	75.0%	75.1%	76.8%
NH	81.9%	82.2%	81.7%	81.9%	79.8%
RI	89.0%	85.1%	81.2%	72.1%	78.4%
VT	94.4%	92.6%	85.1%	89.4%	75.3%
NESSC	84.2%	84.3%	81.7%	81.9%	78.4%

Major Findings

- College-persistence rates in three states—Connecticut, Maine, and New Hampshire—have remained relatively unchanged since the baseline year (2011).

- Two states, Rhode Island and Vermont, have reported overall decreases in college persistence from the baseline year; however, Rhode Island's college-persistence rate in 2015 increased from the prior year.

- The NESSC median state college-persistence rate has decreased by approximately 6 percentage points since 2011. The only overall increase has been seen in Maine (1.7 percentage points).

- Connecticut was the only state to reach the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college persistence in 2015.

4.2 College-Persistence Rates: Economically Disadvantaged Students

Guiding Question

How did the college-persistence rates for economically disadvantaged (ED) students compare across member states?
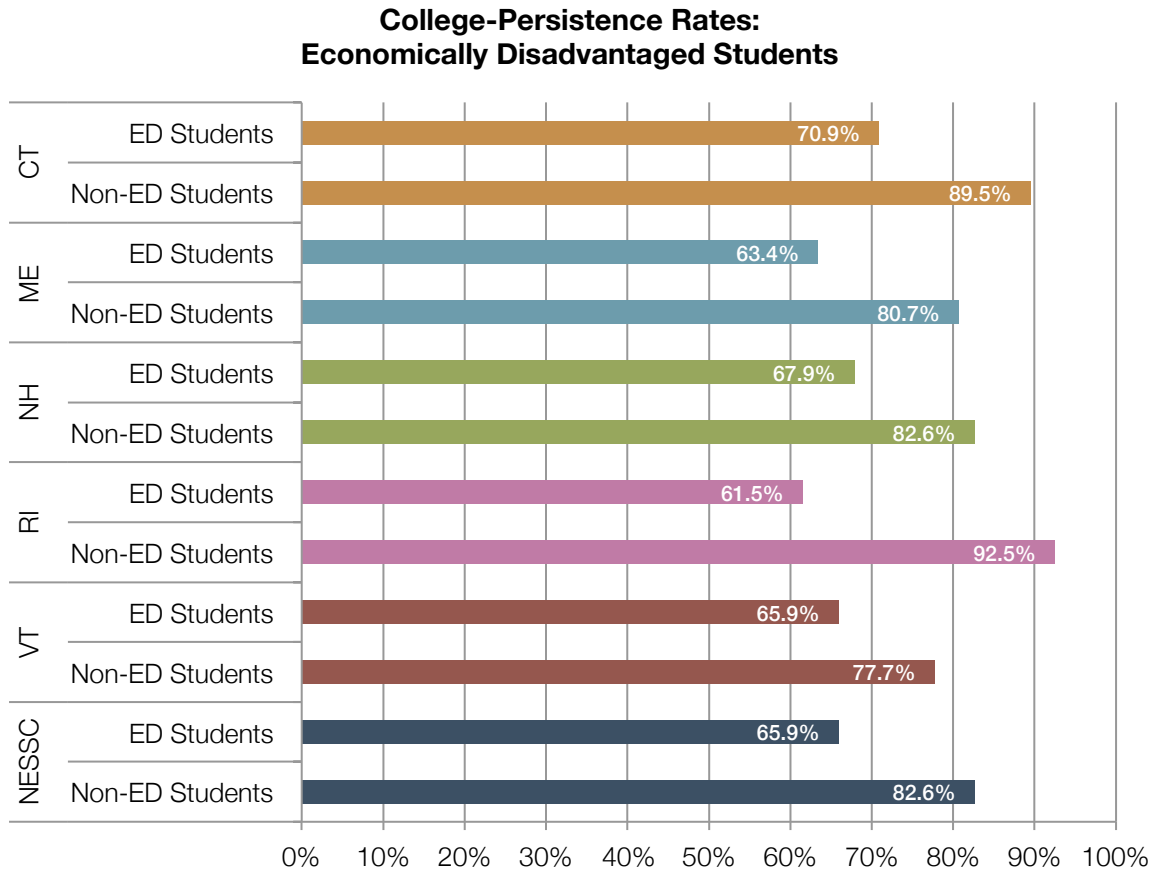
**College-Persistence Rates:
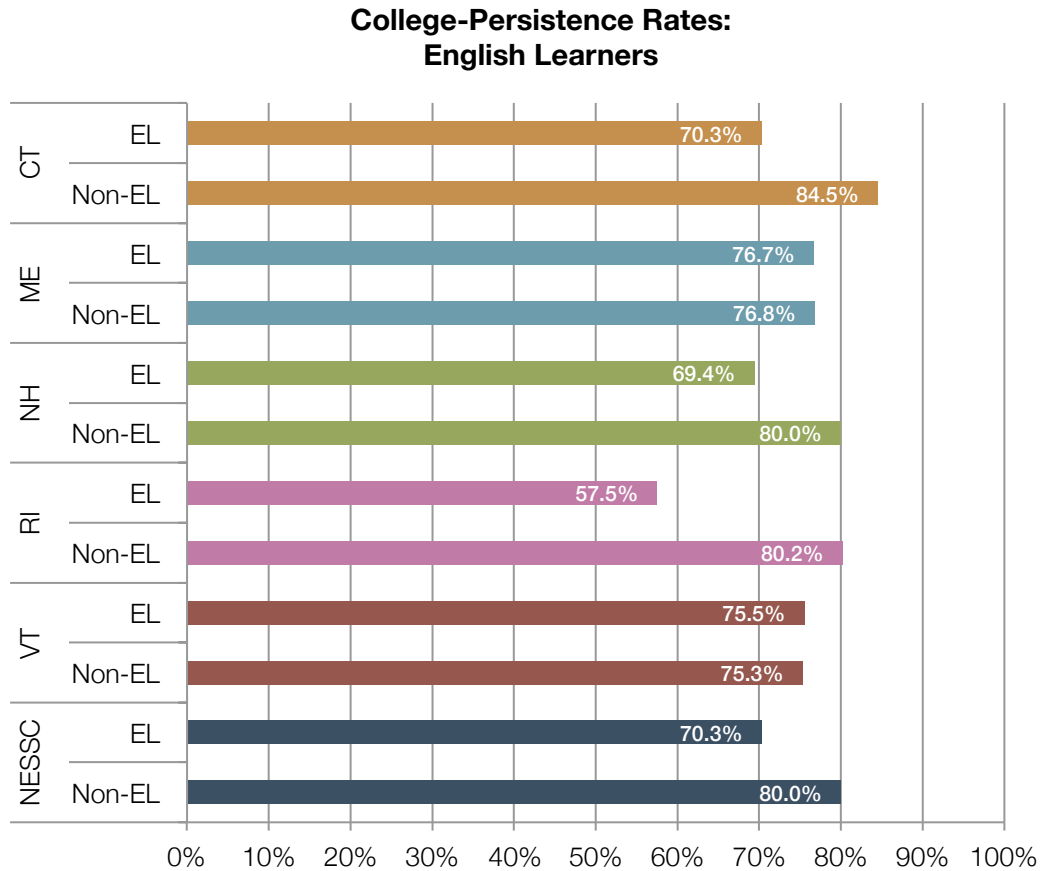Economically Disadvantaged Students**

Major Findings

- The college-persistence rate for ED students varied by approximately 9 percentage points across member states.

- The highest reported college-persistence rate for ED students was 70.9 percent (Connecticut).

- No state has reached the Consortium's 80 percent college-persistence target for ED students; however, four states reached or exceeded this goal for Non-ED students.

- The average gap in college persistence between ED and Non-ED students was approximately 19 percentage points, with Rhode Island (31 percentage points) reporting the largest gap among member states.

4.3 College-Persistence Rates: English Learners

Guiding Question

How did the college-persistence rates for English learners (EL) compare across member states?

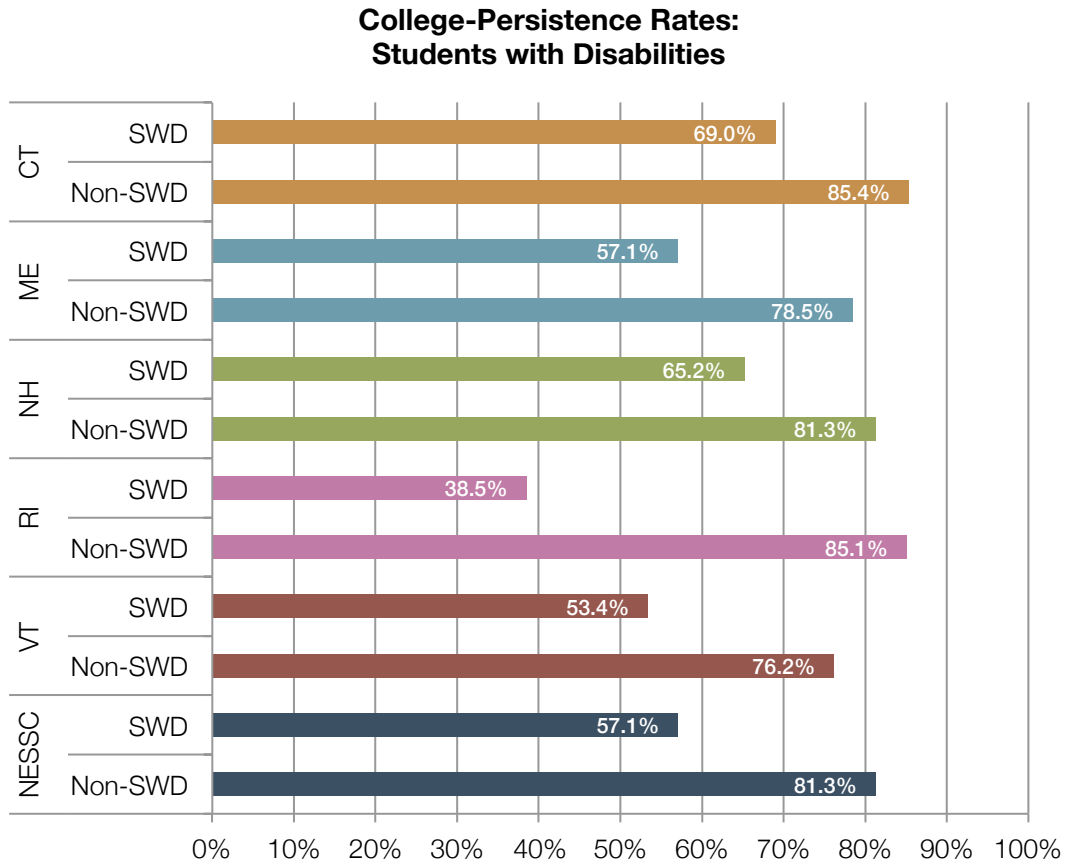**College-Persistence Rates:
English Learners**

Major Findings

- The college-persistence rate for EL students varied by approximately 19 percentage points across member states.

- The highest reported college-persistence rate for EL students was 76.7 percent (Maine).

- No state has reached the Consortium's 80 percent college-persistence target for EL students; however, three states—Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island—reached or exceeded this goal for Non-EL students.

- The average gap in college persistence between EL and Non-EL students is 9.5 percentage points, with Rhode Island (22.7 percentage points) reporting the largest gap among member states. In Maine and Vermont, the college-persistence gap is less than 1 percentage point.

4.4 College-Persistence Rates: Students with Disabilities

Guiding Question

How did the college-persistence rates for students with disabilities (SWD) compare across member states?

College-Persistence Rates: Students with Disabilities

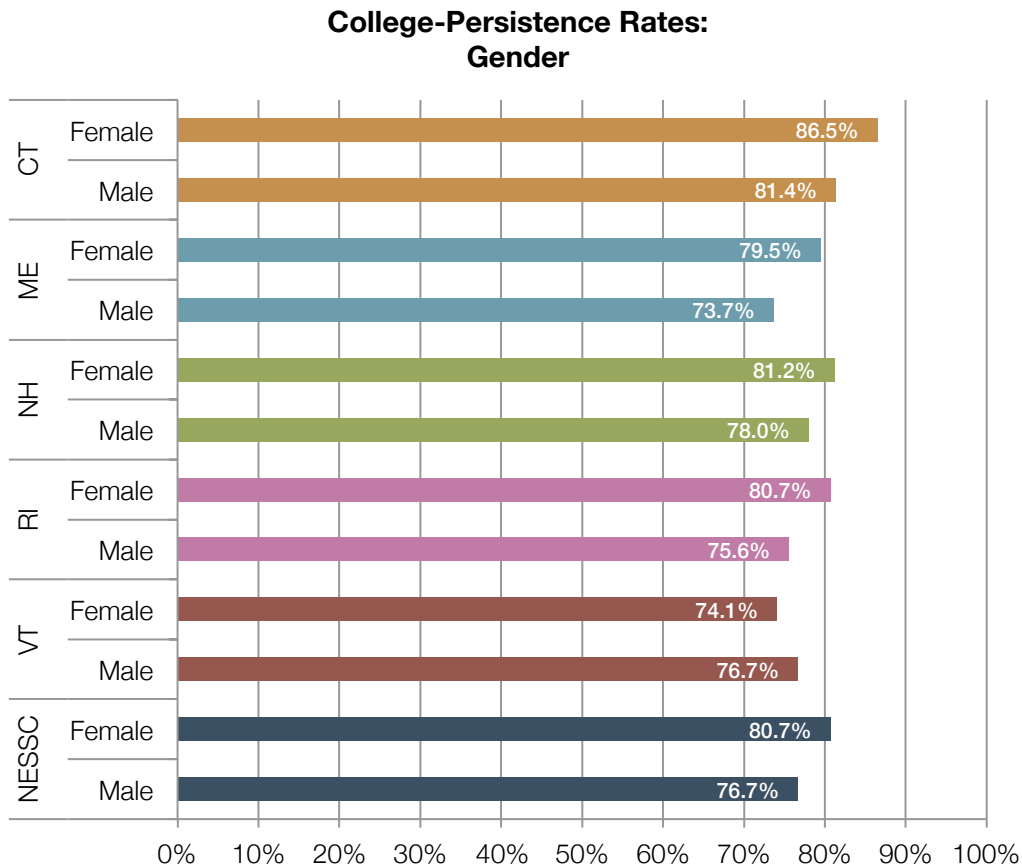| State	Group	Rate
CT	SWD	69.0%
CT	Non-SWD	85.4%
ME	SWD	57.1%
ME	Non-SWD	78.5%
NH	SWD	65.2%
NH	Non-SWD	81.3%
RI	SWD	38.5%
RI	Non-SWD	85.1%
VT	SWD	53.4%
VT	Non-SWD	76.2%
NESSC	SWD	57.1%
NESSC	Non-SWD	81.3%

Major Findings

- The college-persistence rate for SWD varied by approximately 30 percentage points across member states.

- The highest reported SWD college-persistence rate was 69 percent (Connecticut).

- No state's SWD college-persistence rate reached the Consortium's long-term 80 percent target; however, three states—Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island—reported Non-SWD college-persistence rates that exceeded that goal.

- The average gap in college persistence between students with disabilities and their peers was approximately 25 percentage points, with Rhode Island (46.6 percentage points) reporting the largest gap among member states.

4.5 **College-Persistence Rates: Gender**

Guiding Question

How did the college-persistence rates for males and females compare across member states?

College-Persistence Rates: Gender

State	Gender	Rate
CT	Female	86.5%
CT	Male	81.4%
ME	Female	79.5%
ME	Male	73.7%
NH	Female	81.2%
NH	Male	78.0%
RI	Female	80.7%
RI	Male	75.6%
VT	Female	74.1%
VT	Male	76.7%
NESSC	Female	80.7%
NESSC	Male	76.7%

Major Findings

- The college-persistence rate for female students varied by approximately 12 percentage points across member states, while the college-persistence rate for male students varied by approximately 8 percentage points across states.

- Connecticut reported the highest college-persistence rates for both female (86.5 percent) and male (81.4 percent) students.

- Female college-persistence rates in Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent. Only Connecticut reported a college-persistence rate for male students that met this goal.

- The average gap in college-persistence between female and male students was approximately 3 percentage points. Vermont (2.6 percentage points) reported the smallest gap in college-persistence and was the only state where college persistence was higher for male students than female students.
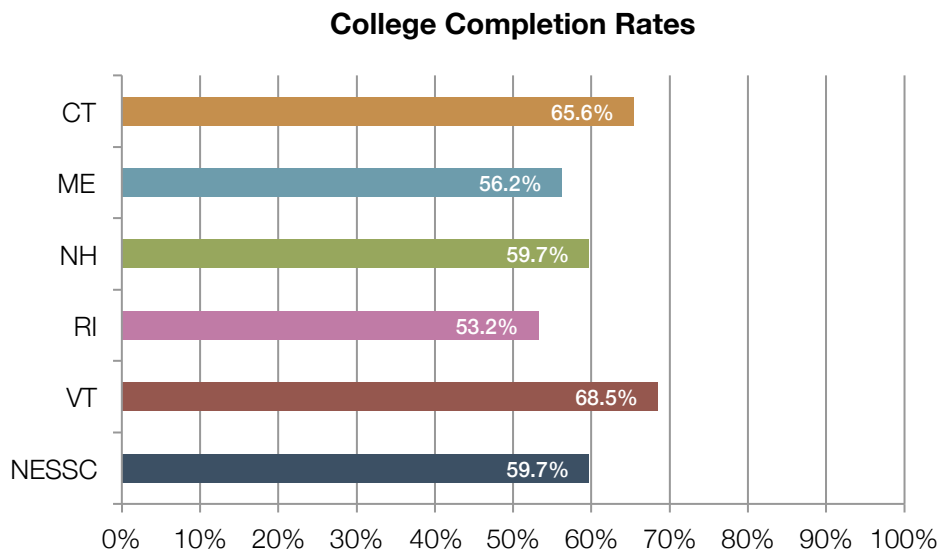
College-Completion Rates

5.0 **College-Completion Rates: Cross-State Comparison**

Guiding Question

How did the college-completion rates compare across member states?

College Completion Rates
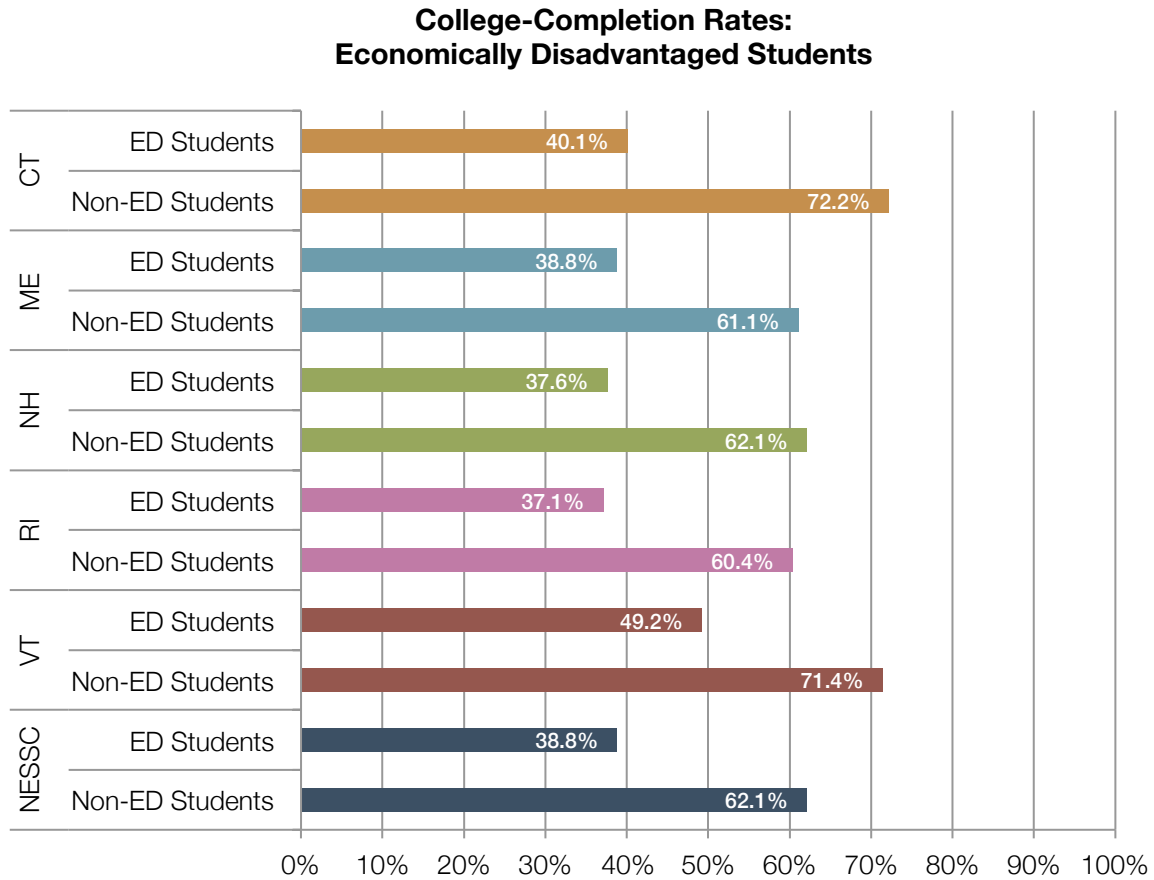

Major Findings

- The college-completion rate varied by 15 percentage points across member states.
- The highest reported college-completion rate was 68.5 percent (Vermont).
- No state reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college completion.

*NOTE: The data in this section reflect college completion by students who entered college in 2010 and graduated within six years. This indicator combined information from two-year and four-year institutions.

5.1 College-Completion Rates: Economically Disadvantaged Students

Guiding Question

How did the college-completion rates for economically disadvantaged (ED) students compare across member states?

**College-Completion Rates:
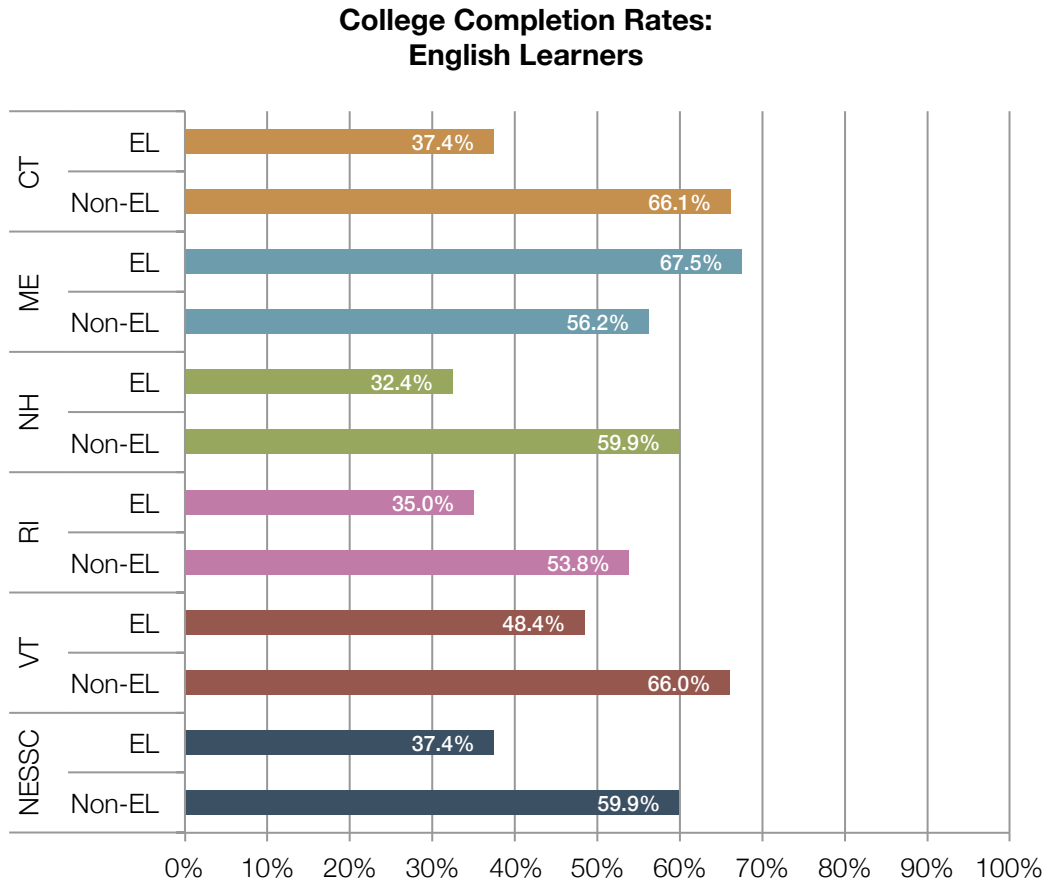Economically Disadvantaged Students**

Major Findings

- The college-completion rate for ED students varied by approximately 12 percentage points across member states.

- The highest reported college-completion rate for ED students was 49.2 percent (Vermont).

- No state rate reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college completion for ED or Non-ED students.

- The average gap in college completion between ED and Non-ED students was approximately 25 percentage points, with Connecticut (32.1 percentage points) reporting the largest gap among member states.

5.2 College-Completion Rates: English Learners

Guiding Question

How did the college-completion rates for English learners (EL) compare across member states?

**College Completion Rates:
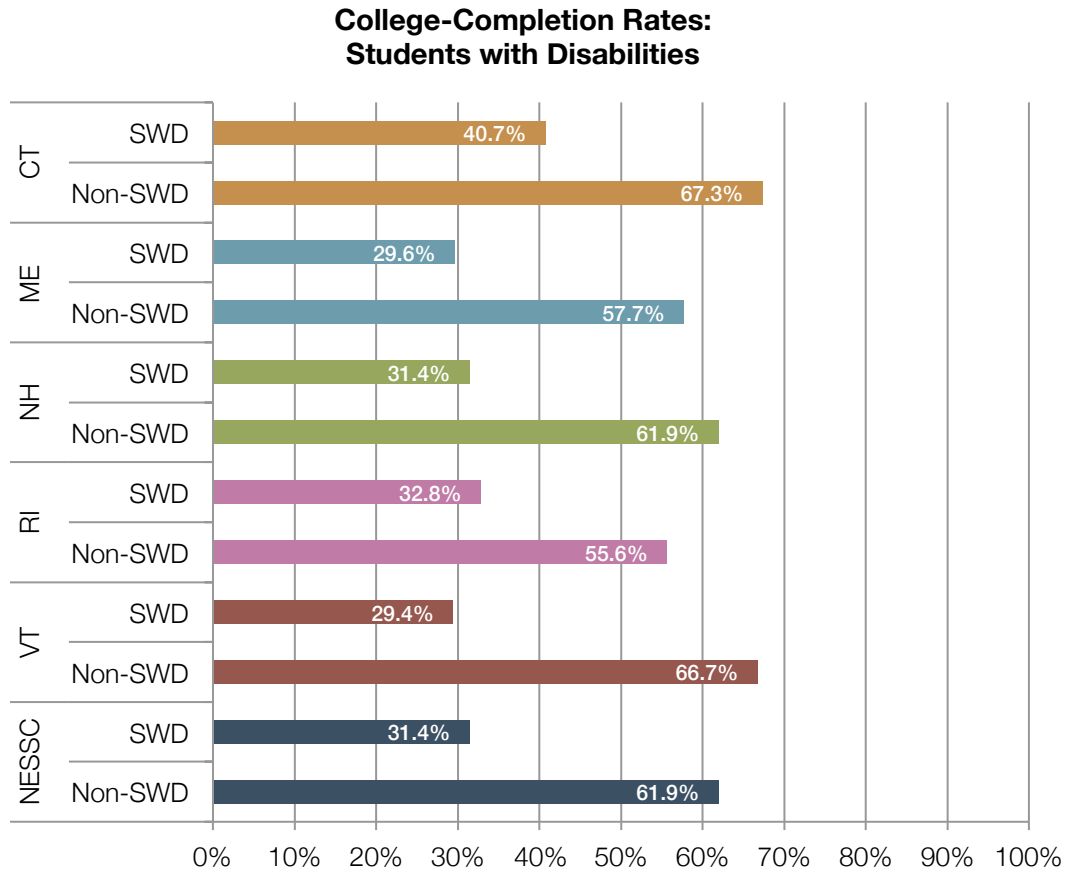English Learners**

Major Findings

- The college-completion rate for EL students varied by approximately 35 percentage points across member states.

- The highest reported college-completion rate for EL students was 67.5 percent (Maine).

- No state reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college completion for EL or Non-EL students.

- The average gap in college-completion between EL and Non-EL students is approximately 21 percentage points, with Connecticut (28.7 percentage points) reporting the largest gap among member states.

*NOTE: The college-completion rate for EL students in Maine is an outlier at least partially attributable to the small number of students that fall into this subgroup.

5.3 College-Completion Rates: Students with Disabilities

Guiding Question

How did the college-completion rates for students with disabilities (SWD) compare across member states?

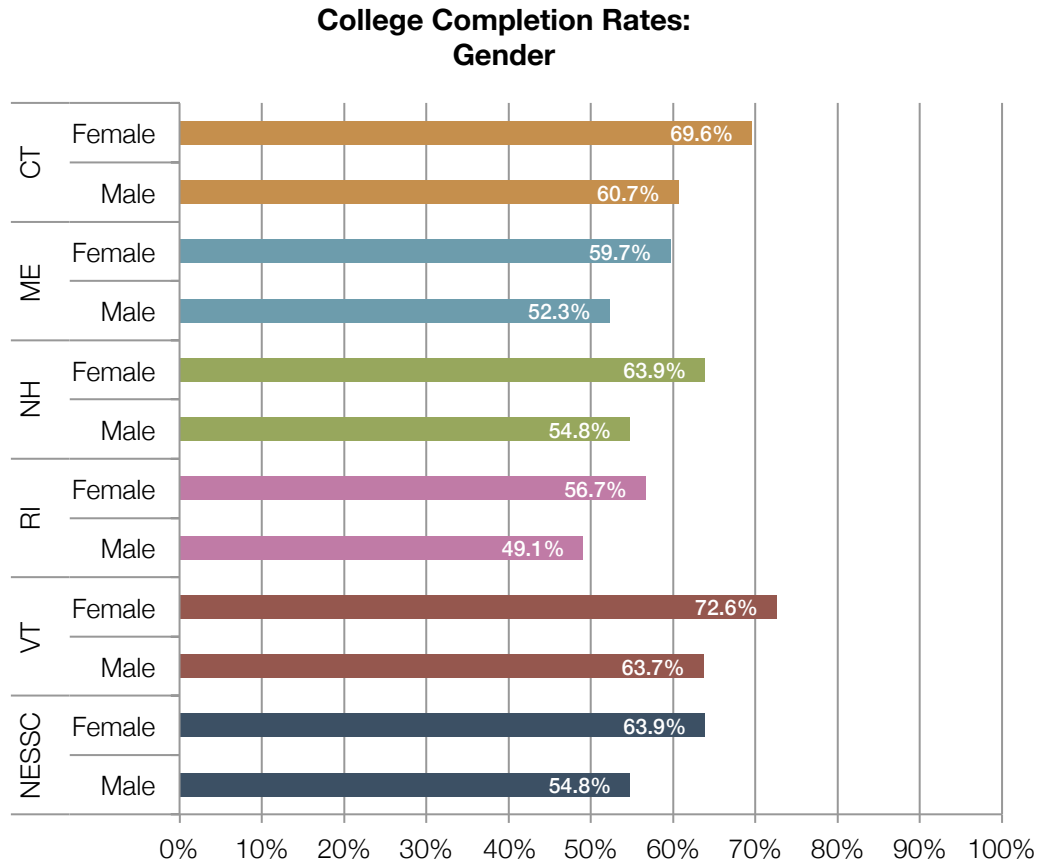**College-Completion Rates:**
Students with Disabilities

Major Findings

- The SWD college-completion rate varied by approximately 11 percentage points across member states.

- The highest reported SWD college-completion rate was 40.7 percent (Connecticut).

- No state reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college completion for students with or without disabilities.

- The average gap in college completion between students with disabilities and their peers was approximately 29 percentage points, with Vermont (37.3 percentage points) reporting the largest gap among member states.

College-Completion Rates: Gender

Guiding Question

How did the college-completion rates for males and females compare across member states?

**College Completion Rates:
Gender**

Major Findings

- The college-completion rate for female students varied by approximately 16 percentage points across member states, while the college-completion rate for male students varied by approximately 15 percentage points across states.

- Vermont reported the highest college-completion rates for both female (72.6 percent) and male (63.7 percent) students.

- No state reached the Consortium's long-term goal of 80 percent college completion for female or male students.

- The average gap in college completion between female and male students was approximately 8 percentage points, with New Hampshire (9.1 percentage points) reporting the largest gap among member states.

About the Common Data Project

Recognizing the critical importance of high-quality data to effective school improvement, the five state education agencies from Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont have been collecting, calculating, and reporting graduation rates, dropout rates, and postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and success rates using consistent procedures and methodologies developed by a regional team of data specialists from the five departments of education. To our knowledge, the New England Secondary School Consortium's Data Project is the first initiative of its kind in the United States.

To promote more accurate and reliable data comparability across the member states, the Data Project develops and implements standardized procedures designed to eliminate unwanted variance that may result from divergent data systems, the misinterpretation of agreed-upon rules, or computational errors. The Data Project has also created a series of quality-control mechanisms that further improve the reliability and comparability of state-reported data.

FMI: newenglandssc.org/resources/common-data-project/

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