

DATA DIALOGUE SERIES

A New England Secondary School Consortium Resource

Week 1: Exploring a regional achievement gap

About the Data Dialogue Series

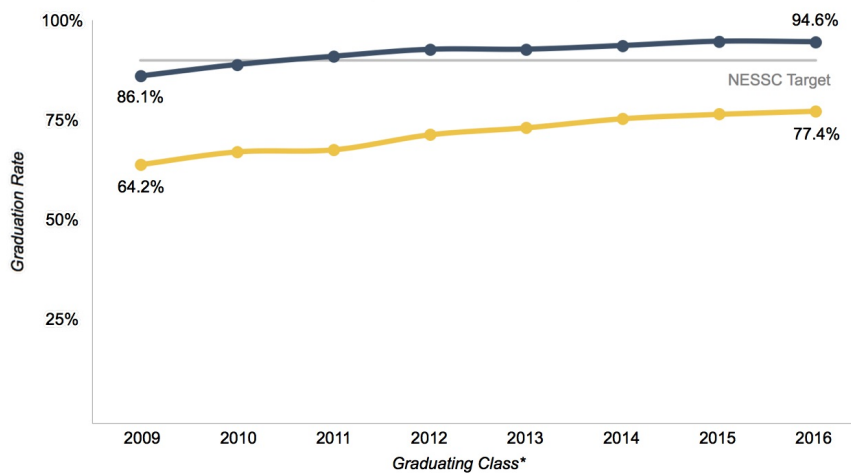
Thank you for participating in the NESSC's *Data Dialogue Series*, an opportunity to explore, reflect on, and talk about our region's education data with your students, colleagues, and community.

This week, we'll start by exploring a gap in 4-year graduation rates between economically-disadvantaged students and their non-economically-disadvantaged peers, from the graduating class* of 2009 to 2016.

Let's dive in!

Exploring the Data

In 2016, there was a **17% gap** in 4-year graduation rates between **economically-disadvantaged** students and **non-economically disadvantaged** students.



What This Means + Why It Matters

This 17% gap in 4-year graduation rates represents a significant inequity in New England's schools. While many students are completing high school within four years, far too many students are not.



The good news? The graduation-rate gap between economically disadvantaged students and their non-economically disadvantaged peers is narrowing. In the visual above, you'll notice that the gap was 21.9% for the 2009 graduating class*—4.9 percentage points wider than the gap for the class of 2016.

This suggests that, while graduation rate gaps persist, they are not impervious to our intervention and innovation.

Let's use the discussion questions below to consider together how we can effect change in our schools and communities that will continue to narrow this gap.

** The graduating class represents the number of students who enter 9th grade plus any students who transfer in grades 9-12, minus any students who transfer out grades 9-12. Massachusetts data is not reflected in these totals, as Massachusetts is a new member of the NESSC.*

Reflection + Dialogue Questions

While the visual above is a rich starting point for personal reflection, we urge you to consider the data with a group of colleagues. This topic, especially when paired with the discussion questions below, is particularly appropriate for a conversation among educators and administrators.

1. This visual shows a regional trend across New England, which was calculated by aggregating state-level data (meaning that your school's data contributed to this trend). What does the visual make you wonder?
2. What additional data might you need in order to understand whether and how this gap exists in your own school?
3. What changes can you make at your school to appreciate and meet the needs of all students so that they complete high school successfully?

Make it through 1-3? Consider taking your conversation further by tackling this bonus question: What assumptions (e.g., about students, about your role, about your community, about the purpose of school) might have been present in your analysis of the data? How might those assumptions have influenced your thinking about questions 1-3?

**Would you like to share your reflection with the NESSC?
Don't hesitate to reach out at info@newenglandssc.org.**