NEW ENGLAND
SECONDARY SCHOOL
CONSORTIUM

New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC)

NESSC Metrics: Procedural Guidebook

Annual Data Profile for SY 2012-13

The procedures outlined within this document were developed by Research in Action, Inc. (dba The RIA Group) under contract with the Great Schools Partnership Inc. This document's primary purpose is to record the process used to collect, review, and publish data submitted by member states of the New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC).

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	DEFINITION
ACGR	Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate
CRI	College Readiness Indicator
EDEN	Education Data Exchange Network
ELL	English Language Learners
FERPA	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
F/R	Free or Reduced Priced Meals
FTP	File Transfer Protocol
GED	General Educational Development
GSP	Great Schools Partnership
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
LEA	Local Education Agency
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
NCES	National Center for Educational Statistics
NESSC	New England Secondary School Consortium
NGA	National Governors Association
NSC	National Student Clearinghouse
SEA	State Education Agency
SPC	Statistical Process Controls
SpEd	Special Education
SWD	Students with Disabilities
UMDI	University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute

SECTION I
GOAL, KEY TASKS, AND SELECTED METRICS

1.0 Background[1]

The New England Secondary Schools Consortium (NESSC) is five-state partnership committed to fostering forward-thinking reforms in the design and delivery of secondary education. The Consortium's vision, which was created and endorsed by education officials from each of five participating states—Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont—seeks to ensure every adolescent in the region graduates from a new generation of high-performing, internationally competitive high schools prepared for success in the colleges, careers, and communities of our interconnected global society.

The NESSC was established in the fall of 2008 with funding from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The Consortium has established performance goals to be achieved in each of the five states by 2016. These goals are:

(1) Increase graduation rates across the five states;

(2) Decrease annual dropout rates across the five states;

(3) Increase the percentage of students enrolling in two- and four-year college degree programs or pursuing industry certified accredited post-secondary certificates; and,

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

In order to track and measure progress in relation to its stated goals, NESSC brought representatives with data experience together from each state to form the "Data Team." The initial charge of the Team was to discuss data collection across the states, identify current methods used to analyze data, and specify how states could report common indicators of students' success in relation to the NESSC's four goals.

In 2011, the Team identified and hired a Data Coordinator (Research in Action, Inc.). Drawing on materials from previously published technical reports, Team meeting notes, and RIA's corporate experience, the Data Coordinator established standardized guidelines for state data submission. The University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute (UMDI) developed data templates were used by each state to submit data for each performance indicator. Finally, RIA

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[1] (Extracted from the University of Massachusetts, Donahue Institute's August 2012 Publication titled "New England Secondary School Consortium Key Indicators: Phase III Technical Report")
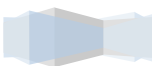
modified its data auditing procedures for used with the NESSC's data. The Coordinator and staff checked the data for consistency and accuracy, flagged data discrepancies using an internal test procedure, and coordinated with state education agency (SEA) representatives to update any inaccuracies. After the data verification procedures were completed, RIA transmitted the data to the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute. UMDI received the data from the states via RIA and reported on each NESSC indicator. The data submitted were then used by UMDI to prepare and publish of the *Annual Evaluation* and the *Phase III Technical Report.*

These key indicators were compared with statistics from the prior two years to measure progress toward the initiative's desired outcomes. UMDI staff also attended Data Team meetings and debriefed with the Team's facilitator from the Great Schools Partnership (GSP) and consultants from RIA. In order to verify the reported information, UMDI provided an initial draft of the report tables to all Team members for feedback and revisions. Once the corrections were implemented, UMDI published the final report and presented its findings to the Team.

In 2012, UMDI completed its role as the external evaluator. Given this change, the Data Team began to streamline the procedures used to collect and report on its performance goals. The data collection template, the procedures used to establish data comparability, and how each metric would be reported were incorporated within business procedures outlined within this document.

1.1 Goal

A goal of the Data Team is to promote data comparability for each performance indicator used by the NESSC member states. This goal is partially obtained by implementing standardized procedures that eliminate unwanted variance resulting from the misinterpretation of business rules and computational errors during aggregation. The Team also uses the Data Coordinator as one quality control and support mechanism available to all NESSC member states.

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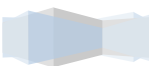
1.2 Key Tasks

The Data Team, in partnerships with Great Schools Partnership and the Data Coordinator, will meet its overarching goal by refining and executing procedural tasks. These tasks are organized into four (4) phases. In Phase I (Planning), all parties (1) identify procedures from the prior year needing improvements, (2) establish milestones for data collection, quality review, and report production. In Phase II (Pre-execution), the Data Coordinator (1) amends the procedural documentations, (2) establishes state-centric timelines, (3) develops coordination and communication guidelines, and (4) promulgates data collection tools and techniques. The Data Team (1) reviews the procedural guidelines, (2) reports any inconsistencies, (3) establishes internal timelines, and (4) identifies data "owners".

Once Phases I and II are completed, the project will enter Phase III (Execution). In the Execution phase, the Data Coordinator (1) receives updated Data Templates, (2) implements quality controls, (3) monitors timelines, (4) identifies data issues, (5) provides corrective suggests, (6) finalizes data elements, and (7) reports progress to GPS and others. During this phase, SEA representatives are (1) populating the Data Templates, (2) reporting any known data anomalies, (3) seeking clarification on business rules, (4) monitoring internal timelines, (5) requesting technical assistance, and (6) corrects any erroneous data.

During the final phase (i.e., Phase IV-Reporting), the project enters the public reporting aspect. During Phase IV, the data are reviewed, finalized, and then placed into the reporting tool, which allows end-users to view each available metric used by the NESSC. The Data Coordinator (1) populates the reporting tool, (2) conducts internal quality controls on data charts and tables, and (3) amends report narratives to match the displayed data. All parties (1) review the data displays, and (2) provide feedback draft report. Once completed, the Team will release the public report on the NESSC's website (http://www.newenglandssc.org).

1.3 Selected Metrics

The NESSC has established four (4) performance goals to be achieved in each of the five states, which include (1) increase high school graduation rates, (2) decreasing dropout rates, (3) increasing the percentage of students enrolling in two- and four-year college/programs or

pursuing industry certified accredited post-secondary certificates, and (4) increasing the percentage of students who graduate from high school college ready. The Data Team, in conjunction with external third parties, created five performance indicators based on agreed upon metrics. These common metrics, in conjunction with a standardized set of business rules, allows the reported data on each indicator to be comparable among NESSC states. To this date, 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.

1.3.1   Graduation Rate [Status: *Operational*] [Baseline Year: 2009]

Graduation rates have been computed using the formula articulated in 34 C.F.R. §200.19. This is a rate that relies on the identification and tracking of a four-year graduation cohort. All states in the Consortium currently report the federal graduation rate. The following formula is used for calculating graduation rate:

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

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

The Consortium dropout data is closely linked to those data used in calculating the adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR). 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 (NGA) has offered guidance on the dropout rate by recommending 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 as a cohort rate, using the same adjusted freshman cohort used for the graduation rate. The following formula is used for calculating dropout rate:

(# in Adjusted Freshman Cohort) - (Graduates + Students Still Enrolled + Other Completers) = Dropouts
Dropout Rate = Dropouts ÷ Adjusted Freshman Cohort

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1.3.3 Post-Secondary Enrollment [Status: *Operational*] [Baseline Year: 2009]

The rationale for collecting post-secondary enrollment is to determine the percentage of students who go on to further education after completing high school. All states in the Consortium use data collected by the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). The following formula is used for calculating post-secondary enrollment:

(# of Students Enrolled in Post-Secondary) ÷ (# of High School Graduates)

1.3.4 Post-Secondary Success [Status: *Operational*] [Baseline Year: 2011]

Post-secondary success identified high school graduates who attended two- or four-year institutions of higher education (IHEs) and graduated. At the request of the Consortium, this indicator was renamed "post-secondary success", which will eventually include enrollment and completion data for students who attend one-year post-secondary professional certificate programs (e.g., LPN). The data reported by this indicator does not reflect all students starting and completing their post-secondary education "on time." For that reason, the post-secondary success rate will be computed over a six-year period. All states in the Consortium use data collected by the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC).The following formula is used for calculating post-secondary success:

(# of Students Completing Post-Secondary Programs within Six Years) ÷ (Freshman College Cohort)

1.3.5 College Readiness Index (CRI) [Status: *Pending*] [Baseline Year: TBD]

The Data Team recommended that, since college readiness was such a complex and important metric to capture, the Consortium would use multiple measures to create a college readiness index. During its June 2011 meeting, the Team agreed that college readiness for NESSC purposes would be defined as:

Completion of 24 college credit hours of coursework and a GPA of 2.5 or enrollment in a third semester of college (2 or 4 year).

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SECTION 2
DATA COLLECTION, BUSINESS RULES, and QUALITY CONTROLS

2.0 Overview

The information found within this section provides a common understanding of the five key performance indicators for which data is being collected and reported, along with the quality controls used to ensure the comparability of the NESSC data. The production of statistical information based upon identified performance indicators requires a well defined set of business rules. These business rules describe what the indicator is intending to measure and the metric by which results are produced. Business rules are further augmented by data definitions, which operationalize and codify the data collection structures. A final set of operational definitions articulate how to process raw data into reported statistics. The business rules reported within this section define the parameters and data necessary for the New England Secondary Schools Consortium (NESSC) to satisfy its objectives.

Most states use a combination of statistical process controls (SPC), internal audit procedures, and/or end-user data verification opportunities within its quality assurance framework. These processes help to ensure that reported statistics are valid representations of actual performance, rather than data errors. The Data Team's overarching goal of comparable data across states can only be actualized by the prevention of unwanted error from entering the early stages of the report production cycle. Each member state has within their student information system internal processes to detect and correct irregularities such as duplicate records, missing data fields, illogical data, and multiple memberships. Support to local districts in the form of developing data acquisition calendars, training IT and school staff, and communicating to local officials are typical approaches used by states to promote data quality.

Each NESSC member state has agreed to adhere to the guidelines and business rules provided within this document. The role of the Data Coordinator is to ensure the aggregated data submitted in the Data Template is both credible and comparable. Meaning, the data points were derived through the correct interpretation of the NESSC business rules. All member states data are reviewed on the same quality criteria using the Data Coordinator's revised internal audit procedures.

2.1 Data Collection

The Data Team established its original data collection procedures with the UMDI at the beginning of 2009. A straight forward method was developed by which member states aggregated data from within their student information systems, along with data from the NSC, and reported those data within a customized Excel spreadsheet. Once populated, an SEA sent the spreadsheet to the UMDI for use in developing the evaluator's annual report.

Beginning in 2013, the data collection spreadsheet was streamlined to both reduce the time burden on Team members and eliminated non-reported data (i.e., not directly linked to the five performance areas). These efforts reduced the number of Data Elements to 17; however, the number of variables per Data Element increased slightly to 17. This increase was a result of the Team's decision to report the Asian/Pacific Islander race group in two distinct categories, which is consistent with federal reporting requirements. Further, minor changes to the nomenclature within the Data Template were applied to the 2013 version.

2.1.1 Data Element: # Graduating in 4 Years

● The number of students graduating from high school with a regular diploma in four (4) years or less.

# Graduating in 4 Years	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.2 Data Element: % Graduating in 4 Years

- The percentage of students graduating from high school with a regular diploma in four (4) years or less.

% Graduating in 4 Years		
	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.3 Data Element: # Graduating in 5 Years

- The number of students graduating from high school with a regular diploma in five (5) years or less; adjusted for transfers in and out all five years.

# Graduating in 5 Years		
	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.4 Data Element: % Graduating in 5 Years

- The percentage of students graduating from high school with a regular diploma in five (5) years or less; adjusted for transfers in and out all five years.

% Graduating in 5 Years	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.5 Data Element: # Graduating in 6 Years

- The number of students graduating from high school with a regular diploma in six (6) years or less; adjusted for transfers in and out all six years.

# Graduating in 6 Years	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

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2.1.6 Data Element: % Graduating in 6 Years

- The percentage of students graduating from high school with a regular diploma in six (6) years or less; adjusted for transfers in and out all six years.

% Graduating in 6 Years		
	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.7 Data Element: # High School Dropouts

- The number of students exiting high school prior to earning a regular diploma, including students exiting to enroll in a GED program.

# High School Dropouts		
	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.8 Data Element: % High School Dropouts

- The percentage of students exiting high school prior to earning a regular diploma, including students exiting to enroll in a GED program.

% High School Dropouts		
	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.9 Data Element: # High School Students Early Enrollment in Post-Secondary

- The number of high school students that earns a regular diploma before the end of their fourth year in high school who enroll in post-secondary education.

# High School Students Early Enrollment in Post-Secondary		
	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.10 Data Element: # Students Enrolled in 2-Year Program/College [Immediately]

- The number of high school graduates earning a regular diploma that enroll in a 2-year, post-secondary education program in the fall semester (NLT October 1) immediately following graduation.

# Students Enrolled in 2-Year Program/College [Immediately]	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.11 Data Element: # Students Enrolled in 4-Year Program/College [Immediately]

- The number of high school graduates earning a regular diploma that enrolls in a 4-year post-secondary education program in the fall semester (NLT October 1) immediately following graduation.

# Students Enrolled in 4-Year Program/College [Immediately]	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

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2.1.12 Data Element: # Students Enrolled in 2-Year Program/College [At a later date]

- The number of high school graduates earning a regular diploma that enroll in a 2-year, post-secondary education program after October 1 but prior to August 15th of the 2nd summer following graduation.

# Students Enrolled in 2-Year Program/College [At a later date]	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.13 Data Element: # Students Enrolled in 4-Year Program/College [At a later date]

- The number of high school graduates earning a regular diploma that enroll in a 4-year, post-secondary education program after October 1 but prior to August 15th of the 2nd summer following graduation.

# Enrolled in 4 -Year Program/College [At a later date]	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.14 Data Element: # Students Completing 2-Year Program/College

- The number of college freshman (cohort) that earn a diploma/certification by completing a 2-year program/college within four years.

# Students Completing 2-Year Program/College	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.15 Data Element: # Students Completing 4-Year College

- The number of college freshman (cohort) that earn a diploma/certification by completing a 4-year program/college within six years.

# Students Completing 4-Year College	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.16 Data Element: # Students Persistent [3rd semester enrolled]-2 Year Program/College

- The number of college freshman (cohort) that remain continually enrolled in a post-secondary education program/college in the 3rd semester after initial enrollment.

# Students Persistent [3rd semester enrolled]-2 Year Program		
	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.1.17 Data Element: # Students Persistent [5th semester enrolled]-4 Year Program/College

- The number of college freshman (cohort) that remain continually enrolled in a post-secondary education program/college in the 5rd semester after initial enrollment.

# Students Persistent [5th semester enrolled]-4 Year Program		
	Gender	All
		Male
		Female
	Ethnicity	Hispanic
		Non-Hispanic
	Race	White
		Black
		Native American
		Asian
		Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		Multi-racial
	Income	Eligible F/R
		Not Eligible for F/R
	Language	ELL
		Non-ELL
	SpEd	SWD
		Non-SWD

2.2   Business Rules

Business rules are further augmented by data definitions, which operationalize and codify the data collection structures. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) publishes data definitions that are used by state education agencies (SEAs) to report on federal performance indicators. Many of these data definitions are those found within the greater National Data Model used to collect and store federally-mandated data via the Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN) and EDFacts.

The Data Team uses data definitions consistent with federal reporting except when notated within this document. Additionally, some definitions are unique to the NESSC given the focus of the performance indicators. For example, graduation rates are reported using the most recent federal reporting formats and data definitions; however, a "six-year" rate required a new data definition. The Data Team has created 17 data variables to display aggregated performance data by gender, ethnicity, race, income (free/reduce (F/R) lunch eligibility status) language (English language learners) and special education (students with disability).

2.2.1   Graduation Rate

The Data Team felt that in addition to the common four-year rate, the Consortium should report five- and six-year graduation rates. The Data Team decided against "freezing" the number of students in a graduating cohort (the denominator in the equation). This means that as graduates (adjusted for transfers in and out) are added in the fifth and sixth years of the cohort, graduation rates will rise.   For the purpose of baseline data, the adjusted cohorts in the fifth and sixth years will be applicable once the baseline cohort (2009) reaches the five year mark. No exemptions will be included for special education (SpEd) or English language learners.

The graduation rate is calculated by using a "four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate," defined as the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for that graduating class. For those high schools that start after grade 9, the cohort is calculated based on the earliest high school grade.

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- The term "adjusted cohort" means the students who enter grade 9 (or the earliest high school grade) and any students who transfer into the cohort in grades 9 through 12 minus any students removed from the cohort.

- The term "students who transfer into the cohort" means the students who enroll after the beginning of the entering cohort's first year in high school, up to and including grade 12.

- Transfers into the cohort and out of the cohort used in the ACGR are tracked using entry and exit coding found within an SEA's student information system such as the examples below:

Entry Code	Definition	Counts as a Transfer-In
01	New to education system	YES
02	Continuous in same school with no interruption	NO
10	Grade reassignment within same school	NO
11	Transfer from a public school within same district	NO
12	Transfer from a non-district site	YES
13	Transfer from a public school in a different district	YES
14	Transfer from a different state/country	YES
15	Transfer from a non-public school	YES
16	Transfer from home-based education	YES
17	Transfer from a GED program	YES
18	Transfer from a vocational program	YES
19	Transfer from state facility	YES
40	Re-entry after dropping out from same district	NO
41	Re-entry after dropping out from different district	YES
42	Re-entry after dropping out from different state/country	YES
50	Re-entry after expulsion from same district	NO
51	Re-entry after expulsion from different district	YES
52	Re-entry after expulsion from different state/country	YES

Exit Codes	Definition	Classification Transfer Out (TO) Dropout (DO) Graduate (GR)
1	Transfer to public school in the same district	TO
2	Transfer to public school in different district	TO
3	Transfer to public school in a different state	TO
4	Transfer to private non-religious school, same district	TO
5	Transfer to private, non-religious, different district	TO
6	Transfer to private non-religious, out-of-state	TO
7	Transfer to private religious school within district	TO
8	Transfer to private, religious, different district	TO
9	Transfer to private, religious, different state	TO
10	Transfer to school outside of the country	TO
11	Transfer to an institution	TO

Exit Codes	Definition	Classification Transfer Out (TO) Dropout (DO) Graduate (GR)
12	Transfer to a charter school	TO
13	Transfer to home schooling	TO
14	Matriculation to another school	TO
15	Graduated with regular, advanced diploma	GR1
16	Completed school with other credentials	GR2
17	Death	TO
18	Illness	DO
19	Expulsion	DO
20	Reached maximum age for services	DO
21	Discontinued schooling	DO
23	Transfer to GED program	DO
24	Transfer to a postsecondary education	TO
25	Moved, not known to be continuing	DO
97	Reason Unknown	DO
98	Close of Year	TO/DO – summer
99	Other	DO

To remove a student from the cohort, a school or local education agency (LEA) must confirm in writing that the student transferred out, emigrated to another country, or is deceased. A student who is retained in a grade-level, enrolls in a GED program, or leaves school for any other reason may not be counted as having transferred out for the purpose of calculating graduation rate and must remain in the adjusted cohort.

- The term "students who graduate in four years" means students who earn a regular high school diploma at the conclusion of their fourth year, before the conclusion of their fourth year, or during a summer session immediately following their fourth year.

- The term "regular high school diploma" means the standard high school diploma that is awarded to students in the state and that is fully aligned with the state's academic content standards or a higher diploma and does not include a GED credential, certificate of attendance, or any alternative award.

An extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is defined as the number of students who graduate in four years or more with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, provided that the adjustments account for any students who transfer into the cohort by the end of the year

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of graduation being considered minus the number of students who transfer out, emigrated to another country, or are deceased by the end of that year.

- Students are aggregated into the Language-ELL and SpEd-SWD variables if a student has received services at any time during high school.

- Students are aggregated into the Race variable "multi-racial" is based upon state developed definitions.

2.2.2 Dropout Rate

A student is considered a dropout if any one of the following occurs: (a) the student is over 16 years of age, withdraws from school, and does not enroll in any other school; (b) the student withdraws, and the school does not know where the student has gone; (c) the student withdraws and enrolls in the GED; or (d) the student has not officially withdrawn and the school does not know where the student has gone. The term dropout is used to describe both the event of leaving school before completing high school and the status of an individual who is not in school and who is not a high school completer. High school completers include both regular graduates of school programs as well as those completing high school through equivalency programs such as the GED. Transferring from a public school to a private school, for example, is not regarded as a dropout event.

A person who drops out of school may later return and graduate but is called a "dropout" at the time he or she leaves school. Measures to describe these often complicated behaviors include the event dropout rate (or the closely related school persistence rate), the status dropout rate, and the high school completion rate. A clear distinction was made between students who complete a high school program that requires students to meet state standards and those who receive a general educational development (GED) diploma. Since a variety of alternative high school diplomas exist in the region, the Data Team decided:

- Only programs that required students to meet state standards would be allowed to count for the graduation and dropout rates.

- GED completers are counted as dropouts, since they do not complete a program that requires students to meet state standards.

- The adjusted freshman cohort would serve as the denominator.

The following dropout reasons are typically found within student information systems used by SEAs; however, the actual codification varies among states.

Code	Reason	Descriptor
1	Academic	Left school because of problems in academics
2	Behavior	Left school because of problems in behavior
3	Dislike experience	Left school because of dislike of experience
4	Economic	Left school because of economic reason
5	Employment	Left school to seek employment
8	Curriculum	Left school because lack of appropriate curriculum
9	Childcare	Left school because of childcare
10	Transportation	Left school because of transportation
11	Language	Left school because of language
12	Marriage	Left school because of marriage
13	Military	Left school because of military
14	Needed at home	Left school because needed at home
18	Pregnancy	Left school because of pregnancy
19	Religion	Left school because of religion
20	Substance abuse	Left school because of substance abuse

2.2.3 Post-Secondary Enrollment

The Data Team considered whether the denominator for the post-secondary enrollment rate should be the number of high school graduates or the number in the freshman (high school) cohort, since the measure seeks to report the effect of high school transformation over the course of a student's high school career. The Team determined that the denominator would be based on the number of high school graduates. The Team further delineated two enrollment (numerator) conditions: (a) immediately upon graduating from high school or (b) delayed up to 16 months from high school graduation.

The Team has, on many occasions, discussed the validity of data related to college enrollment if decision rules beyond "any instance" of enrollment are not in place. That is, "any instance" could include students enrolled at any time and enrolled for ≤ 1 day. In March 2011, the Team agreed to the "any instance" criteria, as most states received this data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) and is subject to NSC's data reporting guidelines.

- The NCS identifies students as part of the "Immediate Enrollment" subgroup when the student enrolled in a two- or four-year post-secondary institution with an enrollment status of full-time, half-time, or less-than half-time in the fall semester immediately following graduation. The fall semester immediately following graduation is defined as any term that begins before October 1st of the graduation year and ends after October 1st of the graduation year. Therefore, the student must be enrolled by October 1st AND for at least 10 days.

- The NCS identifies students as part of the "At a Later Date" subgroup when the student enrolled in a two- or four-year post-secondary institution with an enrollment status of full-time, half-time or less-than half-time between October 2nd of the fall immediately following graduation and August 15th of the 2nd summer following high school graduation. This period includes the fall and spring academic terms in the year following graduation as well as terms ending in the subsequent academic year (including all semesters, quarters, trimesters, and periodic collegiate terms within the two-year window). Therefore, the student must be enrolled by August 15th, two academic years post high school graduation AND be enrolled for at least 10 days.

Note: The NSC guidelines presented here differ from criteria specified by the Data Team during its March 22, 2011 call. The "Immediate Enrollment" metric has an added caveat of at least 10 days. The "At a Later Date" enrollment metric extends the enrollment period from a 16 month window to two (2) academic years following graduation.

2.2.4 Post-Secondary Success

The Data Team was concerned about accurately representing students in the post-secondary success rate. One concerned was based on the group of students who delay (or deferred) entering college. If the calculation for post-secondary success was predicated on

students going directly from high school to college, this population would be misrepresented as "unmatriculated" rather than simply starting school later. For this reason, the decision was made to create a new freshman (college) cohort each fall. Students would belong in the cohort in which they started their post-secondary education. For example, a student who graduated in 2009 but did not start college until fall of 2011 would be assigned to the 2011 college cohort.

- ## College Persistence – Two Year College/Program

  College persistence two-year is defined as a student's ability to be continually enrolled in a post-secondary institution in the <u>third</u> semester after initial enrollment.

- ## College Persistence – Four Year College/Program

  College persistence four-year is defined as a student's ability to be continually enrolled in a post-secondary institution in the <u>fifth</u> semester after initial enrollment.

2.2.5   College Readiness Index (CRI)

The Data Team organized College Readiness Indicators (CRIs) into four dimensions: (a) performance, (b) preparatory, (c) behavioral, and (d) attitudinal. Potential indicators were screened and vetted by the Team based upon the indicator's degree of objectivity, research foundation, comparability, and data availability. After considerable deliberation, the following CRIs were approved for testing: (a) SAT/ACT participation rates, (b) completion of Algebra II, (c) course completion and scores in dual enrollment/early college, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate, (d) SAT/PSAT/ACT scores, (e) state assessment results, (f) high school GPA, (g) attendance rates (in high school), (h) completion of FAFSA, and (i) completion of 4 years of mathematics. The above listed indicator definitions are currently under development and being beta-tested by the Annenberg Center for School Reform at Brown University. The Data Team agreed in June 2011 that the CRI data would be collected at the student-level and aggregated to two units of analysis: (1) school, and (2) state.

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2.2.5 Student Categories

The Data Team referenced the requirements within federal statutes (see 20 U.S.C. §6311) in developing the student categories for which data would be collected, aggregated, and reported. The Team selected six (6) student data categories:

a. Gender
b. Ethnicity
c. Race
d. Income
e. Language
f. Special Education (SpEd)

2.2.5.1 Gender

a) Defined as a student's reported gender as either male or female.

b) Missing data are reported within the Variable *<Gender ALL>* on the Data Template.

2.2.5.2 Ethnicity-

a) Hispanic or Latino-Defined as a student's ethnicity as being of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

b) Non-Hispanic-Defined as a student's ethnicity being other than Hispanic or Latino.

2.2.5.3 Race

a) White-A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

b) Black (African American)-A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

c) Native American (American Indian or Alaska Native)-A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community attachment.

d) Asian-A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

e) Native Hawaiian (Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander)- A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

f) **Multiracial**-A term that encompass biracial people but can also include people with more than two races in their heritage, or also may refer to the origin of more generationally distant genetic admixtures of more than one race in a person's DNA. NESSC states will report multiracial students as their data systems evolve to include this category. The following describes each member state's reporting preference:

- Connecticut (CT) will report multi-racial. These students will not be counted in any other race category.
- Maine (ME) will report multi-racial. These students will not be counted in any other race category.
- New Hampshire (NH) will report multi-racial. These students will not be counted in any other race category.
- Rhode Island (RI) will report multi-racial. These students will not be counted in any other race category.
- Vermont (VT)-included multi-racial students in the entire race categories in which they self-identified (i.e., some students are counted in more than one category). VT has agreed to roll up these students and report them as part of the multi-racial category at their discretion.

2.2.5.4 Income (Economically Disadvantaged (ED))

- Eligible F/R-Defined as students eligible at any time to receive free or reduced priced school meals.

- Not Eligible F/R-Students not eligible at any time to receive free or reduced priced school meals.

2.2.5.5 Language (English language learner (ELL) or Limited English Proficient (LEP))

- The ELL category includes those who meet the SEA's ELL enrollment criteria. All ELL students participate in the statewide assessments and are required to take the language proficiency assessment. Students are counted in the ELL cell if they are determined to be Non-English Proficient (NEP), eligible for ELL services but parents have withdrawn the student receiving ELL services of the identified as Fully English Proficient (FEP) students but are within the two year transition period.

- Students are identified as ELL if they received or were eligible to receive services at any time during their secondary school years.

  - Maine identified ELL students at the time of graduation for its graduation rate indicators.

  - Vermont – Students are identified as LEP/ELL if they received services at any time between 9th and 12th grade (do not count "monitoring").
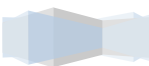
2.2.5.6 Special Education (SpEd)

- The SWD category includes those students with IEPs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Students with significant cognitive disabilities participating in statewide alternate assessments are also included in these data.

- Students are identified as SWD if they received or were eligible to receive services at any time during their secondary school years.

- Maine identified SWD students at the time of graduation for its graduation rate indicators.

2.3 Timelines

The Data Team has developed a macro-level timeline as a management tool necessary to produce its annual report. Each fall, the Data Team reviews the upcoming calendar starting with the desired publication date for the annual report, and then identifies key milestone dates.

2.3.1 Macro-level Timeline

During its November 2012 meeting, the Team approved the following:

- Data Submission Timelines and Process Discussed, Modified, and Adopted by NESSC Team: November 15, 2012.

- Data Tables – Revised as Necessary by Research in Action, Inc. and Sent to SEA Data Teams; Preliminary Posting on NESSC Site of the NESSC Metrics Procedural Guidebook: By January 1, 2013.

- Finalization of the NESSC Metrics Procedural Guidebook; Data Submission Process Reviewed and Modified, if Necessary, at NESSC Data Team Meeting: By February 28, 2013.

- Data Tables Completed and Submitted by SEAs to Research in Action, Inc. for the 2012-13 Technical Report: By May 15, 2013.

- Data Review and Refinements Completed by Research in Action in Collaboration with Each SEA: By June 10, 2013.

- Research in Action Publishes and Distributes to the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and to NESSC the 2012-2013 Technical Report and the NESSC Metrics Procedural Guidebook: By July 31, 2013.

2.3.2 Micro-level Timeline: State-centric

During its November 2012 meeting, the Data Team requested the ability to create a customized timeline anchored to the overarching timeframe. The below table reflects the submission dates and contact person by indicator for each state-

What	When				
	RI	ME	NH	VT	CT
Graduation rates (6 indicators)	Ken Gu Feb 12	Feb 15 Richard Bergeron	March 15 Sudha Sharma Sudha.sharma@doe.nh.gov	March 15 Glenn Bailey	Charles Martie April 30
Dropout rates (2 indicators)	Ken Gu Feb 12	Feb 15 Richard Bergeron	March 15 Sudha Sharma Sudha.sharma@doe.nh.gov	March 15 Glenn Bailey	Charles Martie April 30
Post-Secondary Enrollment (5 indicators)	Ken Gu Feb 12	Feb 15 Lance Gilman	March 15 Sudha Sharma Sudha.sharma@doe.nh.gov	March 15 Dan Shepard	Charles Martie April 30
Post-Secondary Completion (2 indicators)	Ken Gu Feb 12	Feb 15 Lance Gilman	March 15 Sudha Sharma Sudha.sharma@doe.nh.gov	March 15 Dan Shepard	Charles Martie April 30
Post-Secondary Persistence (2 indicators)	Ken Gu Feb 12	Feb 15 Lance Gilman	March 15 Sudha Sharma Sudha.sharma@doe.nh.gov	March 15 Dan Shepard	Charles Martie April 30

* Note: All post-secondary indicators require the use of NSC data.

**Note: All data must be received no later than May 15 for inclusion into the annual report.

2.4 Quality Controls

Quality control practices are critical in producing comparable and credible information about selected performance indicators. Quality approaches in most states constitute a combination of externally reported data, internal review procedures (i.e., field specifications and error reports), and data verification techniques. These processes allow agency officials to assert that their performance statistics are valid representations of events within the state. The judicious application of control measures is one approach within an overall quality assurance framework.

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Control procedures are used to evaluate data elements during the production cycle and mitigate unwanted error. Without such control procedures, valid inferences about performance cannot be made for the given year. The controls must be sensitive enough to detect slight changes in the performance indicators, while discerning actual change from natural variability and non-systematic error.

Regardless of the prior experience in collecting longitudinal data, all state data contain some data anomalies; some are valid while others do not represent actual facts. Several critical areas, such as primary and secondary "keys" used to link multiple years of data for a student require differing levels of error detection and controls. State and local officials have limited time and human resources to investigate each and every data point in their information systems. However, some data elements require more effort than others because of their overall influence on the final score. Accounting for every student within a state is a complex task made more difficult by diverse programs, student mobility, changing policies, political demands, and secondary data sources (e.g., NSC).

In examining the production procedures necessary to report on each NESSC performance indicator, the first step is for the SEA to implement its internal controls. These controls are those efforts used to identify and reduce unwanted error, thus improving data quality. Each member state of the NESSC provides data according to guidelines and business rules agree upon by the Team. Therefore, each Data Template is reviewed using the same quality criteria. Three (3) quality assurance techniques are implemented to ensure that the data reported to the evaluator are valid.

- Business Rule Fidelity – A qualitative approach developed to define the parameters and conditions necessary to satisfy the consortium's objectives. They promote transparency and increase comparability.
- Data Quality Checklist-A standardized, qualitative procedure used to audit the data for its comprehensiveness by ensuring each metric is responded to correctly.
- Statistical Process Control (SPC)-A quantitative procedure that requires multi-wave data to test hypotheses associated with the likelihood the observed data point represents actual performance.

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The data submitted by each state agency will be handled in accordance with regulations outlined in the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). To maintain the confidentiality of the submitted data RIA has set up a secured .ftp server to allow each SEA to transfer data securely. PII data is not transmitted under any conditions.

2.4.1 Quality Control Procedures

Step 1.   Compile the business rules and document the quality control techniques implemented by the consortium's data team. Review the business rules and quality control process with the data team and provide clarification as required.

Step 2.   Obtain Data Template from the Data Team representative submitted via FTP.

Step 3.   Apply the Quality Control (QC) Checklist (Appendix A) to each data template by documenting the state's name on the template. Screen the data submitted and annotate on the Checklist any missing data based on the elements and subgroups identified in the template provided.

Step 4.   Compare the prior three years n-counts in the template submitted with the current year's n-counts in the original template provided. Identify and notate in the QC checklist any changes made to prior year n-counts.

Step 5.   Identify possible anomalies in n-counts by summing subgroup n-counts and ensuring the subgroup total equals the full student population. Annotate in the QC checklist any n-count anomalies identified in totaling subgroup n-counts.

Step 6.   For each data point submitted, apply a 10% (+/-) threshold and/or 95% confidence interval to weighted three-year average and compare the resultants of the current year.

Step 7.   Annotate in the QC checklist any n-count (subgroup) that falls outside of the 10% (+/-) threshold and/or 95% confidence interval as a possible "red flag".

Step 8.   Finalize the state's QC checklist. Send an email with the completed QC checklist to the respective member state for investigation. Each state agency representative will investigate and resubmit data/responses based on anomalies identified.

Step 9.   Review and validate the resubmitted data based on the anomalies identified (QC Checklist).

Step 10. Migrate the finalized data into the reporting tool.

SECTION III
ANNUAL REPORT

3.0 Overview

The Data Team conducts *post hoc* analyses on the targeted performance indicators using both current and past data. These descriptive statistics are used to examine different aspects of the educational systems among the five member states. Expanding on the early work of UMDI, the Data Team created a purposeful analytical framework to apply each year to examine how the current year's data compare with that from previous years. Overall, indicator performance for each state is examined and graphically represented. Multi-year results are used for comparative purposes and to provide a context for the about current year's results. Trend data are provided graphically for each of the five indicators. Other data are reported using comparative tables.

KPI #1- Comparative Graduation Rate Demo Data Only
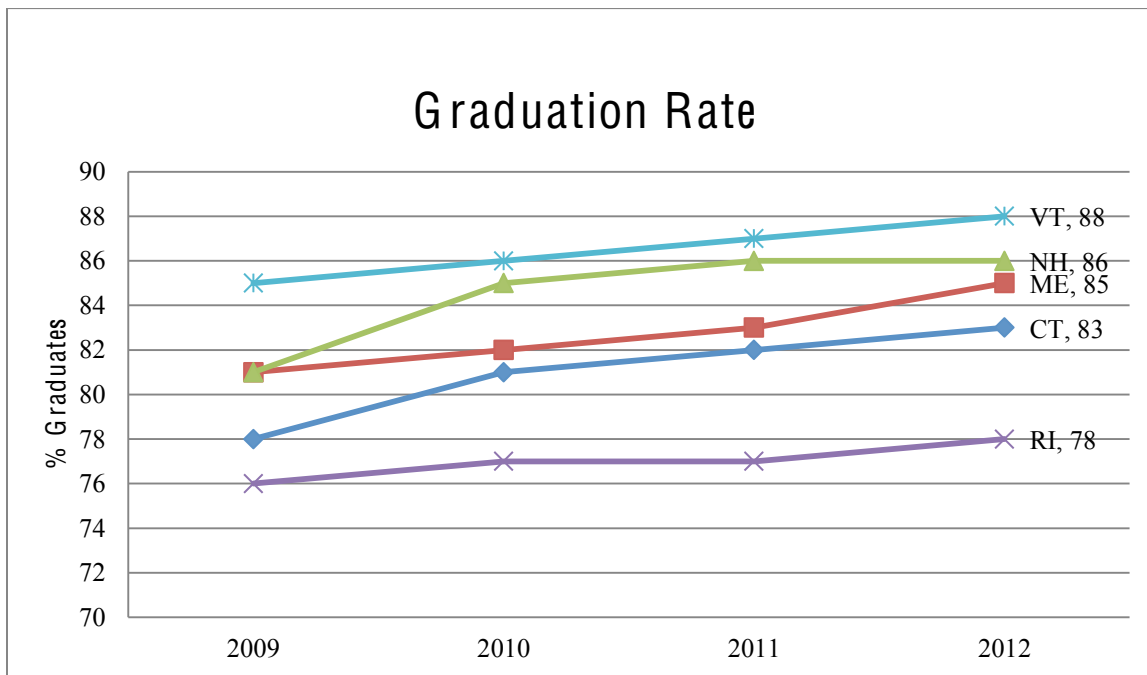
Graduation Rate

KPI #1-Subgroup Comparative Graduation Rate-Demo Data Only

The following reporting structure will be implemented for the first time in 2013-

Trend Graphics

1. Graduation Rates: 4, 5 & 6 Years

2. Dropout Rates

3. Post-Secondary Enrollment Rates

4. Post-Secondary Persistence Rates

5. Post-Secondary Completion Rates

Data Tables

1. Ethnicity

2. Race

3. Income

4. Language

5. Special Education

APPENDIX A

QUALITY CONTROL CHECKLIST 2013

KPI #1. Graduation Rate

WBS	Measure	Completion Status	Quality Status	Findings
1.1	Four Year Rate: Graduates	☐	☐	
1.2	Fifth Year Rate: Graduates	☐	☐	
1.3	Sixth Year Rate: Graduates	☐	☐	
1.4	Demographics: Gender	☐	☐	
1.5	Demographics: Race/Ethnicity	☐	☐	
1.6	Demographics: Income (ED)	☐	☐	
1.7	Demographics: Language (LEP/ELL)	☐	☐	
1.8	Demographics: Special Education (SWD)	☐	☐	

KPI #2. Dropout Rate

WBS	Measure	Completion Status	Quality Status	Findings
2.1	Leavers-Exit system (dropout)	☐	☐	
2.2	Demographics: Gender	☐	☐	
2.3	Demographics: Race/Ethnicity	☐	☐	
2.4	Demographics: Income (ED)	☐	☐	
2.5	Demographics: Language (LEP/ELL)	☐	☐	
2.6	Demographics: Special Education (SWD)	☐	☐	

KPI #3. Post-Secondary Enrollment

WBS	Measure	Completion Status	Quality Status	Findings
3.1	Early enrollment in post-secondary (On-Time Graduates Only)	☐	☐	
3.2	Enrolled in a 2-year program/college (Immediately)	☐	☐	
3.3	Enrolled in a 4-year program/college (Immediately)	☐	☐	
3.4	Enrolled in a 2-year program/college (Delayed)	☐	☐	
3.5	Enrolled in a 4-year program/college (Delayed)	☐	☐	
3.6	Demographics: Gender	☐	☐	
3.7	Demographics: Race/Ethnicity	☐	☐	
3.8	Demographics: Income (ED)	☐	☐	
3.9	Demographics: Language (LEP/ELL)	☐	☐	
3.10	Demographics: Special Education (SWD)	☐	☐	

KPI #4. Post-Secondary Success

WBS	Measure	Completion Status	Quality Status	Findings
4.1	Completion of 2-year program/college	☐	☐	
4.2	Completion of 4-year program/college	☐	☐	
4.3	Persistent (3rd semester enrolled) 2-year program/college	☐	☐	
4.4	Persistent (5th semester enrolled) 4-year program/college	☐	☐	
4.5	Demographics: Gender	☐	☐	
4.6	Demographics: Race/Ethnicity	☐	☐	
4.7	Demographics: Income (ED)	☐	☐	
4.8	Demographics: Language (LEP/ELL)	☐	☐	
4.9	Demographics: Special Education (SWD)	☐	☐	