

NEW ENGLAND BOARD
OF HIGHER EDUCATION



ANNUAL REPORT
2021

Our Mission

Higher education is New England's most critical sustainable resource. The region's governors knew that over 60 years ago when they founded the **New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE)**.

Today, NEBHE promotes **greater education opportunities and services** for the residents of New England and its more than 250 colleges and universities. It works across the six New England states to **help leaders assess, develop and implement sound education practices and policies of regional significance;** to promote regional cooperation and programs that **encourage the efficient use and sharing of educational resources;** and to **strengthen the relationship between higher education and the economic well-being and quality of life in New England.**

All contents © 2021 New England Board of Higher Education. NC-SARA, Packback, CollegeSource, Creative Commons, MHEC logos © their respective owners.

Contents

- 2 Message from the President**
- 4 Message from the Chair**
- 5 Highlights From Our History**
- 7 Tuition Break**
- 10 State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)**
- 15 Policy & Research**
- 23 Legislative Advisory Committee**
- 24 Reparative Justice**
- 27 Cost Savings**
- 31 Open Education**
- 35 Transfer Initiatives**
- 38 *The New England Journal of Higher Education***
- 42 Online Events**
- 44 Our People**

From the President

Dear Colleagues:

As New England continues to navigate through the pandemic and other challenges, NEBHE provides leadership, data and analysis, cost-saving programs, insightful events, advocacy and the timely sharing of information with the region's postsecondary leaders.

In the past year, we have worked with leaders and partners across the region to:

- Save more than 9,100 New England residents \$63.1 million on their annual tuition bills, an average of \$8,265 per student, through our Tuition Break program, which now offers more than 2,000 academic programs in specialized or high-demand fields of study, such as new offerings in Indigeneity, Race, Ethnicity and Politics, Outdoor Leadership, and Conservation Law Enforcement—to name a few
- Support states' efforts to re-envision their public higher education systems in light of changing demographics, employer needs, economic imperatives and the needs of new groups of learners
- Partner with employers and postsecondary institutions to launch the development of digital credentials to help grow tech talent and the digital skills sought by business and industry
- Expand collaborative multistate programs to increase student transfer from two-year to four-year institutions and promote effective and seamless transfer policies
- Accelerate adult learners' attainment of quality credentials by improving the recognition of prior learning and experience and bringing greater transparency to postsecondary and other credentials and how employers value them
- Bring issues of inequity, including among the region's postsecondary faculty, to the forefront and promote opportunity, equity, diversity, inclusion and a resolve for change
- Support New England states and more than 340 traditional and nontraditional postsecondary institutions to expand their online learning delivery, as well as elevating standards for high-quality online learning and more effective consumer protection

- Convene leaders of the region’s postsecondary systems and institutions—public and independent—to share information, best practices and pandemic-related strategies
- Convene legislators from all New England states to share policy perspectives on timely topics impacting the region’s institutions and students.

Thanks for your support for these critical efforts, projects and leadership initiatives. We look forward to working with partners like you in the year ahead to help leaders and policymakers address the region’s challenges and opportunities.

Sincerely,



Michael K. Thomas
President and CEO
New England Board of Higher Education



From the Chair



Dear Friends:

As we help one another navigate the uncertain path of the pandemic, we must not forget some other priorities, including redoubling our dedication to racial, gender and broader social equity.

Among the challenges, we need to ensure access to quality mental health services, including intervention services for children with prenatal exposure to opioids.

We need to ensure full opportunities for people with disabilities, including intellectual and developmental disabilities.

We need to battle deaths of despair, especially child suicide.

We need to make sure our schools are safe, not only from violence but also from neglected facilities and underprepared staff.

We need to redouble consumer protection for students and others in a time of too many false promises.

We need to invest in talent to foster innovation in 21st century fields such as green technology and advanced healthcare.

Pursuing all these goals shares one thing in common: accessible, quality education. We must continue to champion that.

Pat Haddad

Patricia A. Haddad

Representative, Massachusetts General Court

Chair, New England Board of Higher Education

Highlights From Our History

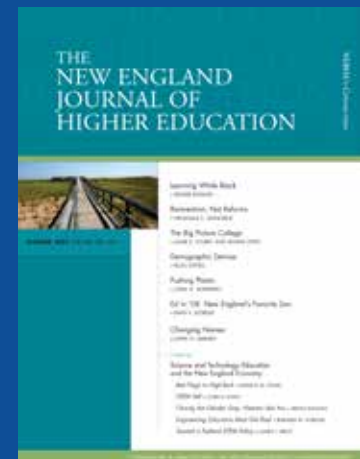
Presenting landmarks in NEBHE's work through the years on behalf of New England's educators, legislators, policymakers, students and parents.



1955 The New England Board of Higher Education is established to implement the New England Higher Education Compact, expand educational opportunity and foster cooperation among the region's colleges and universities.

1957 NEBHE establishes the [New England Regional Student Program \(RSP\)](#), enabling New England students to pay a lower tuition rate at out-of-state public land-grant universities within New England if they pursue certain academic programs that are not offered by their home state's public institutions. The RSP would invite community and technical colleges in 1967 and state colleges in 1972, and later transition to the name [Tuition Break](#).

1986 NEBHE begins publishing its quarterly journal, *Connection: New England's Journal of Higher Education and Economic Development*. In 2007, the journal is rebranded as *The New England Journal of Higher Education*, and in 2010, moves entirely online at nebhe.org/nejhe.



1989 NEBHE issues *Equity and Pluralism: Full Participation of Blacks and Hispanics in New England Higher Education*. The benchmark report of NEBHE's Task Force on Black and Hispanic Student Enrollment and Retention in New England offers 20 major recommendations to ensure greater participation and success among Blacks and Hispanics in New England higher education and the educated workforce.

► Highlights From Our History

1994 NEBHE and its sister compacts, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), joined together to form the **Compact for Faculty Diversity**, a unique initiative to increase the number of Black, Native American, Asian and Hispanic faculty members in colleges and universities around the region.



2003 NEBHE launches the **New England Higher Education Excellence Awards** to honor New England individuals and organizations who show exceptional leadership in behalf of higher education, public policy or the advancement of educational opportunity.

2015 NEBHE launches the New England component of the national **State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement**, or SARA, funded by grants from the Lumina Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Accredited degree-granting institutions in a SARA state that offer distance education courses can then seek approval from their state to participate in SARA. NEBHE now coordinates SARA for all six New England states, as well as New York and New Jersey.



2019 Program offerings available through NEBHE's **Tuition Break** program expanded significantly in 2019 to a record high number of more than 1,200. Participation of four-year institutions in the program's new "flexible" policy option increased about 60%. The flexible policy allows participating institutions the option to offer any of their undergraduate or graduate programs to residents of the other five states.



2021 NEBHE enlists new Faculty Diversity Fellows to introduce a **Reparative Justice** Framework for advancing faculty equity and develop the North Star Collective, which is designed to restore, nourish and uplift Black, Indigenous, and people of color faculty in the region, and support leaders as they transform institutions around racial equity.

Tuition Break

NEBHE established Tuition Break as the Regional Student Program in 1957, forging a reciprocal agreement among the six New England states to expand access and affordability for their residents at the region's public colleges and universities.

Tuition Break **incentivizes students** to pursue their college education in New England—providing eligible New England residents with upfront **tuition savings** and access to **hundreds of out-of-state degree programs**, many of them in specialized or high-demand fields of study leading to career opportunities in the region, while **enhancing out-of-state recruitment** and **enrollments** at the region's public colleges and universities.

Tuition Break enrollment held steady at four-year public campuses, but declined at community colleges

The 2020-21 academic year was like no other, as a pandemic caused unprecedented disruptions on college campuses. Most public colleges and universities in the region saw drops in their overall enrollments driven by a persistent decline in the numbers of high school graduates and exacerbated by the coronavirus.

Total enrollment through Tuition Break at the participating New England public HEIs decreased only slightly in fall 2020 (down 1%) following a strong increase in the previous year (up 14%). Of the 81 participating HEIs, 40% reported enrollment increases.

Enrollment at four-year HEIs increased 1% over the previous year, but community college enrollment decreased 12%. Increases were partly attributed to enrollment under the Flexible Programs policy, an eligibility option that took effect in 2019 and was implemented that year by 12 of the 38 four-year public HEIs.

► Tuition Break

The Flexible policy, approved by the Board of Delegates in 2018 and first implemented by community colleges, allows four-year HEIs the option to offer any or all of their programs to residents of any other New England state.

Program offerings expand

The participating colleges and universities allow eligibility for a wide array of degree programs, including specialized programs that are not offered by public HEIs in the students' home states. A significant number of Tuition Break programs are in specialized or high-demand career areas, such as bioengineering, cybersecurity, homeland security, justice studies, environmental engineering, allied health, nursing, pharmacy, energy technology, advanced manufacturing technology, sustainability studies, wildlife ecology and zoology.

More than 2,200 degree programs are currently offered through Tuition Break—in all fields of study and for all degree levels as well as certificate programs. Program offerings are considered and approved on an annual basis through a peer review conducted by NEBHE. The roster of programs approved for 2021-22 includes the following additional specialized programs:

- **Associate** programs including Conservation Law Enforcement (White Mountains Community College), Forensic Science (Central Maine Community College) and Urban Forestry and Arboriculture (University of Connecticut)
- **Bachelor's** programs including Health Sciences: Pre-Occupational Therapy (Bridgewater State University) and Outdoor Leadership (University of Maine)
- **Master's** program in Indigeneity, Race, Ethnicity and Politics (University of Connecticut).

Promoting Tuition Break

Because of Covid, NEBHE's outreach throughout the six-state region went virtual. We provided webinars at local, state, regional and national virtual college fairs and events geared to college-bound students and families, school counselors and college advisors. We shared information with high schools, libraries, outreach organizations, colleges and students by email and phone, posted on scholarship websites and directories, and engaged constituents on our Twitter, Facebook and Instagram channels. nebhe.org/tuitionbreak is a key hub of detailed information that gathered more than 150,000 pageviews from July 2020 through June 2021.

► Tuition Break

Tuition Break provides millions of dollars per year in savings for New England students and families. The savings for 2020-21 are below.

Tuition savings to 9,142 participating students	\$63,081,028
Average savings to a full-time student	\$8,265
Tuition revenue to New England public HEIs	\$123,687,276



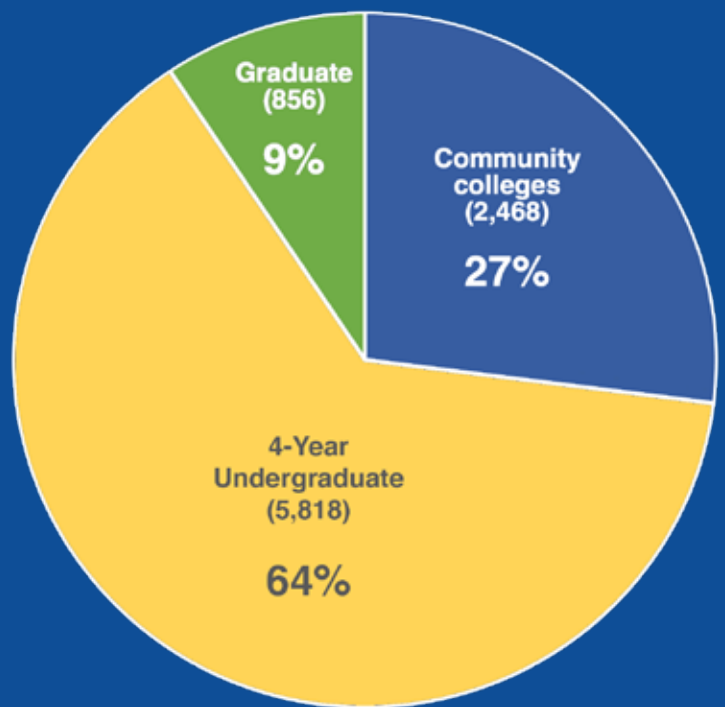
"Here at MEFA, our mission of college affordability since our founding has been to help students and families access and afford higher education and reach financial goals. We regularly advise students to research the programs covered by Tuition Break, as they allow students to reduce their college costs while obtaining their degree of choice. Families are so pleased to know they have this option."

Julie Shields-Rutyna

Director of College Planning, Education, and Training
Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA)



New England's 82 public colleges and universities offer more than 2,000 undergraduate and graduate degree programs through Tuition Break.



The 2020-21 enrollment percentages by institution type (9,142 students total).

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA)

As the Covid pandemic caused institutions across the country to turn to distance learning, the number of students who access postsecondary education opportunities online continues to grow. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 35% of all U.S. postsecondary students took at least one online course in 2019, and the number of students who are taking online courses exclusively jumped to 3.25 million.

The radical switch toward distance learning caused by the coronavirus pandemic will change the way higher education is delivered for the foreseeable future, as students across the country realize they can complete a degree in innovative and flexible ways. Recognizing the growing demand for distance learning opportunities, NEBHE and other national stakeholders—including state regulators and education leaders, accreditors, the U.S. Department of Education and education institutions—joined together in 2013 to establish the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA), which streamline regulations around distance education programs.

As of August 2021, 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are members of SARA. More than 2,300 colleges and universities participate in SARA.



SARA provides a **voluntary, regional approach** to state oversight of postsecondary distance education. Participating states agree to follow uniform processes for approving participation by their eligible institutions. They also agree to deal with other states' SARA institutions in a **common way** when those institutions carry out activities in SARA states other than their own.

► State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements

Regional participation in SARA continues to grow as institutions expand distance and online learning opportunities:

- 169 institutions in the six New England states and 178 institutions in NEBHE's SARA-affiliate states of New Jersey and New York participate in SARA
- According to NC-SARA's most recent data enrollment report, in fall 2019, 1.4 million students enrolled in SARA programs nationally outside their state of residence. Of these students, approximately 170,000 (12%) enrolled in distance education programs at NEBHE SARA institutions.

Regional Steering Committee

NEBHE's SARA Regional Steering Committee serves as an important regional platform for the consideration of emerging SARA and distance education-related issues. This year, we met quarterly to discuss policy changes, state renewals and other SARA questions. The pandemic also gave us the opportunity to meet more regularly with our State Portal Entities to encourage virtual state collaboration and discussion.

Distance learning meetings

In 2019, SARA member states across the country began hosting convenings and webinars for participating SARA and non-SARA institutions located in their state. The states of Connecticut and Rhode Island hosted events with the support of NEBHE, the NC-SARA staff and the NC-SARA board. This practice continued to grow and develop in 2020 and 2021, as institutions navigated the shift to online learning and the regulatory and compliance imperatives that came with the pandemic. We worked closely with our colleagues in different states to teach about best practices. Those interested in convening a SARA state meeting in New England may contact NEBHE to learn more.

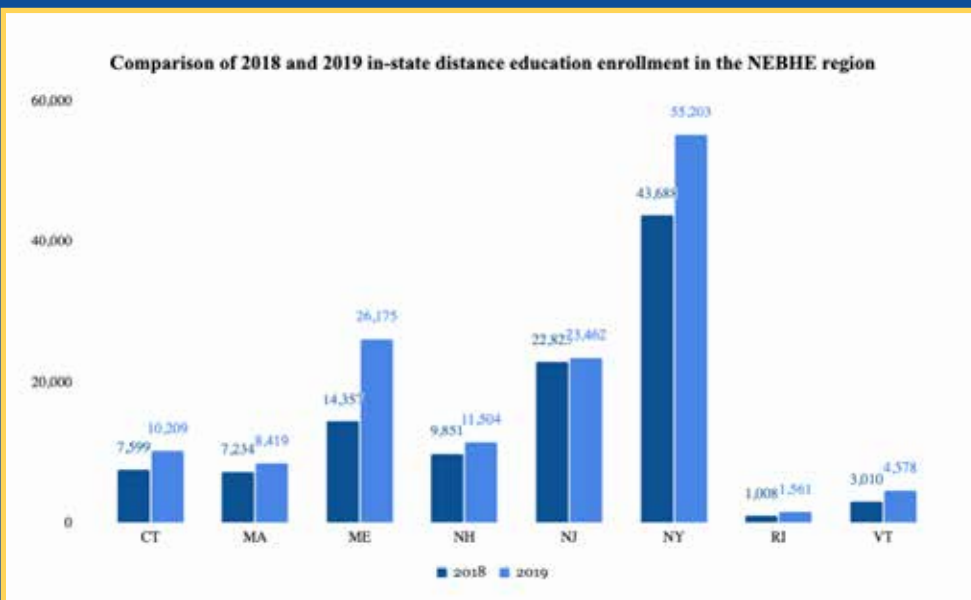
Covid

In March 2020, postsecondary institutions suddenly needed to rapidly deploy online course delivery at an unprecedented scale to continue student learning despite campus closures. The continued use of hybrid and online programming is crucial to lessen disruption to the personal, academic and career goals of students as the pandemic continues.

► State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements



From left: **Sean Seepersad**, Division Director Academic Affairs at the Connecticut Office of Higher Education (CT OHE); **Rachael Stachowiak**, former NEBHE SARA Associate Director; **Emily Bjornberg**, Senior Consultant, CT OHE; **Mary Agnes Larson**, Director for Student and Institution Support at NC-SARA; and **Cheryl Dowd**, Director for WCET's State Authorization Network from before the pandemic.



The most recent regional distance education enrollment data available, from 2018-19.

Full data for 2019-20 will be published in December 2021 and reflects an even more extreme increase in national distance education enrollment at participating SARA institutions.

DISTANCE EDUCATION ENROLLMENT NEARLY DOUBLES

93% ↑ Increase in distance education enrollments at SARA-participating institutions between Fall 2019 and Fall 2020

2019 **3,016,944**

2020 **5,825,723**

► State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements

States retain their authority to regulate distance education activities within their borders. Institutions operating outside their state borders found themselves subject to additional out-of-state regulations specific to online and distance learning in spring 2020. Participation in SARA reduces the burden of seeking individual state approvals, thus allowing institutions to confidently operate in all participating states, districts and territories.

We anticipate that as programs continue to move online due to the precedent set in 2020, the SARA agreement to help facilitate distance education will become more important than ever.

A change of leadership



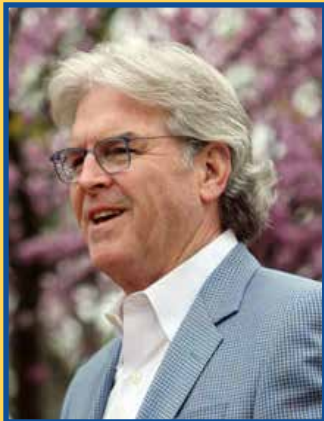
Rachael Stachowiak

In June 2020, **Rachael Stachowiak** left NEBHE and her tenure as N-SARA regional director to accept a job at WCET-SAN, an affiliate of our sister compact, WICHE. We thank Rachael for her five years of dedicated service, and look forward to continuing to collaborate with her in her new role. We have since hired a new director, **Jared B. Abdirkin**, who joins us from his previous position as Assistant Dean of the University of Rhode Island College of Engineering. Jared and NEBHE State Policy Engagement Specialist **Sheridan Miller** will work together to help facilitate SARA in the northeast United States.



Jared Abdirkin

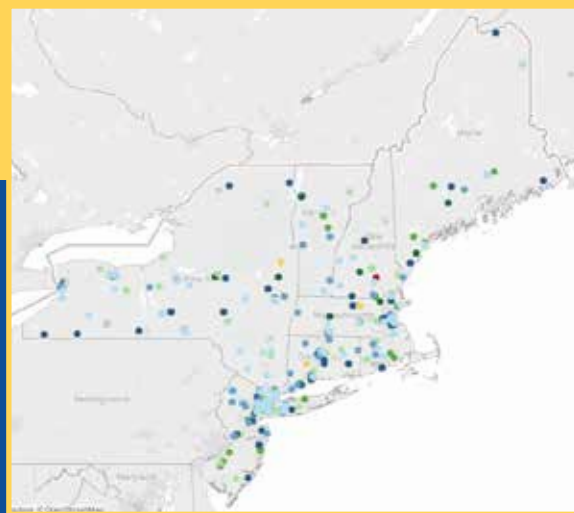
► State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements



"Being one of the first major providers of online education, Post University has experienced first-hand the challenges colleges and universities face when working with numerous agencies having varying requirements. Affiliation with NC-SARA has relieved us of this burden and allows us to focus on what we do best-serving our students by providing diverse program offerings through the doctoral level. NC SARA's accomplished administration and staff have completed the research for us and provide standards that guide us to excellence. Membership offers countless benefits to Post University from professional development opportunities to timely updates on changes to regulations. We continually find SARA playing a vital role in providing information upon which we make many of our operational and strategic decisions."

John L. Hopkins

President & CEO
Post University



Nearly 350 SARA institutions participate in SARA in New England, New York and New Jersey.



"NC-SARA is pleased to serve as a collaborative partner with NEBHE in the implementation of State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA). We are each dedicated to putting students' needs at the front and center of our work. Through SARA, NEBHE states advance critical student consumer protections and accountability in interstate distance education across the country, and NEBHE institutions that participate in SARA are able to enjoy several benefits, including streamlined regulation processes and cost savings. Most importantly, NC-SARA and NEBHE have a shared goal of strengthening access to high-quality learning opportunities for all students."

Lori Williams

President & CEO

National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA)

Policy & Research

NEBHE's Policy & Research (P&R) team serves as a critical resource to higher education decision-makers, policy leaders, legislators and heads of enterprises across New England, informing action through research, analysis and best practices shaped by strong collaboration and shared expertise.

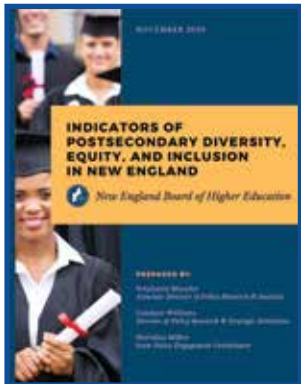
The P&R team's agenda continues to be guided by the NEBHE Board of Delegates' endorsement of four strategic priorities for the region:

- Enhance and expand postsecondary opportunities for adult learners through increased access, affordability and targeted programs to promote successful completion
- Advance PreK-16+ alignment to promote college- and career-readiness and the successful transition from PreK-12 to postsecondary opportunities and success
- Develop new models for cost-saving collaboration to help institutions change business practices, lower operating costs and contain student tuition and fees
- Demonstrate the value of postsecondary education to New England and its residents through expanded advocacy and outreach to key stakeholders.

The Policy & Research team provides **timely, original research** and analysis on higher education issues that are relevant to decision-makers and the public in New England. It is committed to **developing and sharing data and insights** that advance the region's understanding of critical topics such as **timely completion of in-demand credentials**, the **barriers to postsecondary education** experienced by adult learners, and **institutional sustainability and success**.

Research and analysis is conducted in direct response to issues of the day in statehouses, on college campuses and in public discourse. Read our work at nebhe.org/policy/reports.

Original Research & Reports



Read the report at nebhe.org/policy/dei-indicators

[Indicators of Postsecondary Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in New England](#)

Diversity. Equity. Inclusion.

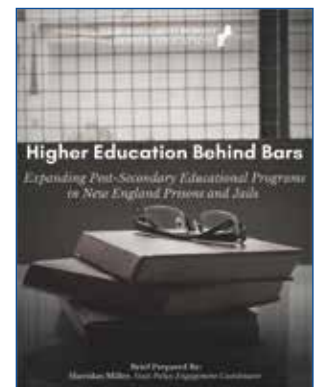
These words have dominated the national conversation in recent weeks. From the racial justice protests that have sprung up across the U.S. since the death of George Floyd, to the White House executive order against the “malign ideology” of diversity training efforts in federally funded programs, individuals from both sides of the political aisle have had a lot to say on the matter.

This report examines the disparities that exist in the region along racial and ethnic lines, many of which begin at birth and persist through young adulthood and beyond. The report draws from multiple data sources to provide measures of postsecondary equity, diversity and inclusion in five areas: college readiness, access and enrollment, college affordability, post-college success, and faculty diversity at New England’s postsecondary institutions.

[Higher Education Behind Bars: Expanding Postsecondary Educational Programs in New England Prisons and Jails](#)

This report explores the effects of postsecondary opportunities for the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated in New England. Among other key findings in the report:

- There are 201,860 people incarcerated, on parole or on probation in New England, or 1.4% of the region’s population.
- Of the 45 New England prisons that publish educational data, 40 (89%) offer GED or high school courses, 28 (62%) offer associate degree-granting courses, and 8 (17%) offer bachelor’s degree-granting programs. Nationally, only 35% of state prisons offer college programming.
- Lower education levels are associated with higher rates of recidivism. Nationally, those without a high school education relapse at a rate of 60%, compared to 19% with some college experience.



Read the report at nebhe.org/policy/behind-bars

► Policy & Research

- Educating the formerly incarcerated not only reduces recidivism, but also improves our regional economy. For every dollar spent on educational programming behind bars, taxpayers save \$4 to \$5, depending on the state.
- Higher education can be life changing for a formerly incarcerated person. Having some college experience makes it easier to find a job after release, which has a resounding personal impact, as well as a significant long-term generational one.



[Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion of New England's Postsecondary Faculty and Scholars: State Data Sheets](#)

These state-specific fact sheets examine the data around faculty diversity at New England's postsecondary institutions, including the demographic "mismatch" between BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) faculty and BIPOC students, the production of BIPOC doctoral scholars in the region, and the distribution of academic rank by race and ethnicity at our region's institutions of higher education. Read the fact sheets for [Connecticut](#), [Maine](#), [Massachusetts](#), [New Hampshire](#), [Rhode Island](#) and [Vermont](#).

Read your state's data sheet at nebhe.org/policy/reports

[The Monthly Dispatch](#)

This monthly newsletter, which launched in January 2020, shares the latest research and announcements from our P&R team. Featured articles covered topics such as:

- New England campuses' fall 2021 Covid vaccine rules
- Takeaways from NEBHE's 3-part webinar series on international students
- New Reparative Justice Initiatives for BIPOC Faculty in New England
- Demand for Digital Generalist Skills in New England.



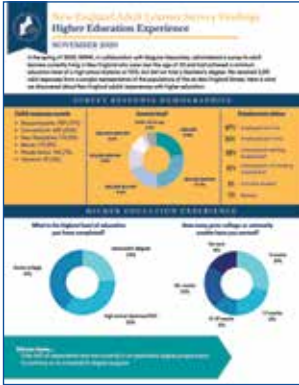
Sign up for *The Monthly Dispatch* at nebhe.org/policy/dispatch

Innovative Programs & Initiatives

All Learning Counts: New England

[All Learning Counts: New England](#) (ALC:NE) seeks to increase and accelerate adult attainment of quality credentials in New England through new policies and programs related to broad recognition of learning, stackable credential pathways, new tools and resources and convenings of state policymakers, postsecondary education leaders and adult learners.

► Policy & Research



Read the survey results at nebhe.org/policy/maguire-survey

To date, NEBHE has worked in partnership with Maguire Associates to [conduct a survey](#) of adult learners currently living in New England who are over age 25 and have achieved a minimum education level of a high school diploma or GED, but did not hold a bachelor's degree. The survey requested information on these individuals' experiences with higher education, their familiarity with prior learning assessment as well as their interest in broader recognition of learning policies that may award academic credit for their work and life experiences. NEBHE also hosted a webinar based on these results, incorporating state and institutional policymakers, current students and other stakeholders. In addition, NEBHE published a [state policy brief](#) and an [institutional practice brief](#) that highlight survey results and contain policy and program recommendations for the continuation of this work.

In our current phase of work, NEBHE has partnered with the Community College of Vermont to map up to three Vermont-based industry-recognized credentials to academic credit with an aim to re-engage these credential holders on an accelerated pathway to a postsecondary degree. More information on this partnership will be published in fall 2021.



Digital Talent Ecosystem Initiative



The **Connecticut Digital Talent Ecosystem Initiative**, a partnership between NEBHE and the Business Higher Education Forum (BHEF), aims to create a Digital Generalist microcredential to be offered by Connecticut's postsecondary institutions. This microcredential will connect students with high-value education pathways and prepare them for in-demand, technology-enabled occupations across critical industries, including manufacturing, healthcare and finance.

The microcredential is a bundle of curricula and/or courses that, together, fulfill six buckets of Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) and learning outcomes approved by industry and institutional partners. NEBHE and BHEF have convened a working group of industry and institutional partners to strategize on program design and delivery modality. We expect the Digital Generalist microcredential to be implemented by fall 2021.

High-Impact Presentations and Convenings

Here's a look at the influential webinars and online meetings convened by NEBHE in 2020-21. To watch videos and view presentations from each meeting, visit nebhe.org/webinars.

  **Upskilling New England**
NEBHE conducted five state-specific webinars featuring industry leaders focusing on NEBHE's research in partnership with Strada Education Network, as well as state-specific initiatives and best practices. Watch the webinars for **Upskilling Connecticut**, **Massachusetts**, **Rhode Island** and **Vermont**.


All Learning Counts Implementers' Meeting



NEBHE convened experts, students, policymakers and institutional leaders to discuss existing prior learning assessment policies and programs as well as the merits of broadening recognition of prior learning for academic credit to account for work and life experiences, particularly for adult learners. This webinar featured results from our Adult Learner Survey, conducted in partnership with Maguire Associates.



International Student Webinar Series

NEBHE held three webinars focusing on international students and how they are affected by professional licensure compliance, workforce development, and pre-arrival expectations and the realities of campus life.

 **Connecting Policy and Practice** addressed complex but necessary professional licensure compliance to help students make informed program enrollment decisions to support their professional goals. **The Student On-Campus Experience Matters** discussed nontraditional postsecondary student populations experiencing unique academic and social integration challenges, including international students studying at American institutions who frequently encounter a mismatch between pre-arrival expectations and the realities of college life on campus. And **A New Vulnerable Workforce** explored ways in which the region's higher education leaders can effectively advocate for policies that not only encourage international students to attend New England's postsecondary institutions, but also support their entry into the region's workforce after graduation.

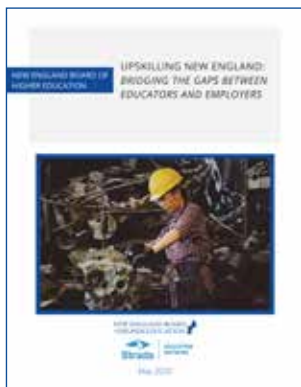
 

Mental Health on College Campuses During a Pandemic

At our webinar co-sponsored with WICHE, experts and students discussed needed support as the return to school ushered in a "new normal." They identified key challenges, addressed increased demand for clinicians, and discussed the most successful practices dealing with Covid.



Upskilling New England: Bridging the Gap Between New England's Educators and Employers



Read the white paper at nebhe.org/ar/upskilling

In 2020, NEBHE expanded on the Upskilling New England initiative, in partnership with Strada Education Network, by publishing a [white paper](#) and conducting five state-specific webinars featuring subject-matter experts, institutional and industry leaders and policymakers who discussed the challenges and opportunities for upskilling in each state.

The white paper articulates recommendations for industry-education partnerships, state policy and delivery models. Recommendations include convening cross-sector working groups focused on eliminating structural barriers that prevent the implementation and scaling of collaborative upskilling programs; postsecondary education providers' redesigning programs to include stackable credentials, transferable credits and pathways to further advance education and training opportunities; and policymakers supporting and incentivizing provider-employer partnerships to expand the validation and recognition of prior learning and work experience, reducing the time to credential attainment and promoting worker participation in upskilling programs. [Explore the white paper](#) for a full list of recommendations, and [watch videos of the webinars here](#).

High Value Credentials for New England (HVCNE)

HVCNE provides states, systems and institutions with tools to enhance the transparency of postsecondary education credentials in order to improve individuals' ability to navigate their education and career pathways.

In 2021, NEBHE worked closely with Advance Vermont to publish credentials to the Credential Registry. Vermont has since published nearly 2,000 credentials to the Registry from two- and four-year institutions as well as Vocational Technical centers across the state.

Additionally, NEBHE continues to support Connecticut in implementing a [legislative call](#) to improve credential information collected by the Office of Higher Education using the Credential Registry and Credential Transparency Description Language. In partnership with Connecticut's Office of Higher Education and Office of Workforce Strategy, NEBHE has supported a pilot to publish credentials awarded by the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities and will continue to assist the state in implementing credential transparency to fulfill goals of the legislation.

Covid Response



View the dashboard at nebhe.org/coronavirus

The most ubiquitous focus of work in the past year was the global pandemic. From March 2020 onward, NEBHE's Policy & Research team tracked New England institutions' responses to Covid and produced a biweekly newsletter with timely information on several topics related to the pandemic and its effects on higher education in the region.

Throughout this period, NEBHE has convened a Regional Higher Education Action Group, composed of leaders from public and independent higher education sectors in New England to discuss Covid-related issues. These conversations led to a number of tools and resources including:

- [Covid Institutional Response Tracker and Dashboard](#)
- [Covid and Higher Education Newsletter](#)
- [Projected Impact of the Decline in International Student Enrollment in New England Due to Covid](#)
- [Covid Vaccine Requirements at New England's Colleges and Universities](#)

State And Federal Legislative Engagement on Covid Topics

The P&R team worked extensively with state legislators, legislative staff and state agencies across the region, and we actively engaged with our federal Congressional Delegation on a number of issues that matter to higher education in New England. Initially focused on the Covid pandemic, NEBHE subsequently urged federal action on issues such as emergency aid to students and institutions, institutional sustainability during the pandemic, the supplemental stimulus and doubling the Pell Grant.

P&R's advisory briefs and summaries included:

- [Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act of 2020: Higher Education Summary](#)
- [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021: Higher Education Summary](#)
- [National and Regional Perspectives on Postsecondary Institutional Closure, Merger, or Consolidation](#)

In addition, NEBHE supported the [Select Committee on the Future of Public Higher Education in Vermont](#) to develop an integrated plan for a future of public higher education in Vermont connected to preparing a high-quality workforce.

P&R has spearheaded the board's efforts to educate lawmakers and other federal officials on matters of importance to New England higher education.

► Policy & Research

This work has often featured information-based letters, sent individually to New England members of Congress, to provide leaders with background on key national policies.

- [On Covid relief](#) (March 20, 2020)
- [Follow-up letter on Covid relief](#) (April 8, 2020)
- [Support for legislation for a federal safe harbor from liability for higher education institutions](#) (June 5, 2020)
- [Concerns about the Trump administration's treatment of international students](#) (July 13, 2020)
- [Regarding the supplemental stimulus](#) (August 7, 2020)
- [On policies to welcome and support international students](#), sent to the Dept. of Homeland Security (October 26, 2020)
- [Calling for additional relief](#) (November 24, 2020)
- [Calling for additional relief](#) (February 22, 2021)
- [On doubling the Pell Grant](#) (March 17, 2021)
- [On doubling the Pell Grant](#) (April 5, 2021)

Legislative Advisory Committee

Since 2013, NEBHE's Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) has served as a liaison to strengthen state higher education policymaking in New England, promote regional dialogue and interstate collaboration, and inform NEBHE's policy analysis, research and program activities.

Meeting twice a year, LAC members have opportunities to share current legislation and ideas across state lines and participate in shaping NEBHE's vision for higher education's role in New England's economic and social wellbeing. The legislators benefit from sharing key issues raised each legislative session, as well as the opportunity to troubleshoot common challenges raised by the disruptions caused by the current global health crisis.

Recent LAC meeting topics have included "Transitional Workforce Strategies State Governments Can Implement to Stimulate Job Creation" and "Growth and The Risk of a 'Lost Covid Cohort': Mitigating a Covid Postsecondary Transition Slide Due to K-12 School Closures and Learning Loss."



"NEBHE's LAC provides a valuable opportunity to connect with state legislators from across New England to exchange ideas

around education and workforce development. I'm delighted to be part of this unique group, and I look forward to seeing the LAC continue to evolve and grow."

Sen. Lou DiPalma

*Member, Senate Committee on Education
Rhode Island General Assembly*

Members of the Legislative Advisory Committee have the opportunity to:

- Engage with other New England legislators in regular conversations regarding key legislative activities and agendas
- Exchange higher education policymaking perspectives in New England and support increased interstate collaboration among legislators
- Access timely research and information through presentations by state, regional and national policy experts.
- Inform and advise NEBHE's policy research activities.

The list of LAC members can be found on the inside back cover.

Reparative Justice

Currently, more than one-third of America's college students are people of color. But only about 5% of college faculty are African American, about 3% are Hispanic and about 1% are Native American.

Expanding faculty diversity is a necessary condition for achieving equitable attainment outcomes for students of color, truly inclusive institutions and highest-quality learning for all. In early 2021, NEBHE set out to develop a regional strategy to expand faculty diversity and other equity and inclusion efforts.

To expand its leadership on these critical issues, NEBHE appointed two professors, **Kamille Gentles-Peart** of Roger Williams University and **Tatiana Cruz** of Simmons University to serve in the newly-created roles of Faculty Diversity Fellows and provide the vision, leadership and development of a regional strategy related to expanding faculty equity with activities, including helping to curate content for relevant convenings, research and policy work related to faculty diversity.



Kamille Gentles-Peart

Notably, the fellows introduced a **Reparative Justice Framework** for advancing faculty equity and have developed the **North Star Collective (NSC)**, which is designed to restore, nourish and uplift Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) faculty in the region, and support leaders as they transform institutions around racial equity.



Tatiana Cruz

Reparative Justice Framework

HEIs are deeply embedded in structures of racial hierarchy that systematically oppress and disadvantage BIPOC faculty. At predominantly white institutions (PWIs), BIPOC faculty experience regular harm in numerous overt and insidious ways including: everyday racial microaggressions, tokenism, discriminatory teaching evaluations, campus policing, the added labor of mentoring BIPOC students and leading diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts, the lack of support for their scholarship and recognition for their service, as well as lower rates of tenure and promotion. Additionally, BIPOC faculty often have difficulty finding mentorship, building community, and the racial trauma they face in academia can negatively impact their health and overall wellbeing.

► Reparative Justice

Many institutions have taken up DEI initiatives to try to change this reality, however, they have not been effective in addressing systemic racism and racial inequalities, and often do not center the needs and wellbeing of BIPOC faculty. While DEI work may be useful for providing some small-scale, short-term programs to “stop the bleeding,” this model for achieving racial justice can only take us so far. It is only through repair and transformation that true racial justice can be realized. For this reason, we are promoting reparative justice as the lens through which NEBHE approaches faculty equity.

Unlike popular DEI efforts, [reparative justice](#) centers the needs of BIPOC faculty, prioritizes the repair and prevention of harm done to them in the academy, and supports their restoration, healing and upliftment.

We organize reparative justice around three pillars. Each pillar addresses specific areas of historical and ongoing harm to BIPOC faculty created by their intentional and systemic exclusion from higher education.

These pillars are:

- **Transformation:** leveraging power, influence, and resources to revolutionize the policies, practices, and operations of institutions, including those related to hiring, tenure and promotion, and pay equity
- **Restoration:** taking steps to repair the cultural and epistemic damages done to BIPOC faculty in the academy, including supporting and amplifying the voices and work of BIPOC scholars within their campuses and wider communities
- **Nourish and Uplift:** tailoring and targeting investments in services and programs that holistically nourish BIPOC faculty and create spaces for their healing, imagination, and innovation, such as mentorship and affinity groups.

[North Star Collective and Faculty Fellowship](#)

As a part of the broader reparative justice initiative, we developed the [North Star Collective](#) and its first pilot program, the **North Star Collective Faculty Fellowship**. Given the uncertainty of Covid, we expect this pilot year will be held almost entirely virtually, though we will re-evaluate the possibility of in-person gatherings for 2022.

The Collective is a group of colleges and universities in New England that are committed to transforming their institutions and uplifting BIPOC faculty on their campuses. As a member of the Collective, institutions get the benefits of participating in a community of institutions that pool resources, share best practices and expertise, and provide support and accountability for

► Reparative Justice

each other as they pursue racial justice on their campuses.

We are seeking at least 10 founding members to launch the Collective. As of September 2021 we have secured five institutions: Clark University, Eastern Connecticut University, Framingham University, Salem State University, and the University of Southern Maine. In addition to a community of support, institutions of the Collective will also access webinars on topics related to reparative justice, facilitated roundtable discussions for chief diversity officers and affiliates, two guaranteed faculty fellow seats in the fellowship's pilot year, a curated resource toolkit and recognition as an NSC member.

To become a member of the Collective, institutions contribute yearly membership fees of \$5,000 and share periodic updates with the Collective on transformative, restorative, nourishing and uplifting projects undertaken by the institution. Members are also encouraged to provide in-kind support, such as faculty or administrator volunteers to lead or facilitate Faculty Fellow virtual workshops.

The North Star Collective Faculty Fellowship provides a nourishing community of care, mentorship and professional development for early career BIPOC faculty in New England. The Fellowship is created *by BIPOC faculty for BIPOC faculty*, to support their professional development. It is focused specifically on supporting fellows' writing and publishing endeavors and overall wellbeing, which are both essential to advancement, tenure and promotion. The Fellowship will provide a support network for BIPOC faculty to help navigate the challenges they face in their academic careers, to promote wellness and healthy work-life balances, and to foster a community of care for fellows' holistic growth.

Other Activities

- Our [Reparative Justice webpages](#) link to explanations of reparative justice, the need for a reparative justice approach to faculty equity and resources for further reading.
- Our proposal *Beyond DEI: Reparative Justice as a Path for BIPOC Faculty Equity in New England and Beyond* was accepted for inclusion in the 2021 SHEEO Higher Education Policy Conference in Washington, D.C.
- In May and June 2021, we held four informal roundtables on BIPOC Faculty Equity to discuss our reparative justice framework and get feedback on the North Star Collective program. The roundtables included leaders from a range of institutions across the region including community colleges, liberal arts colleges, and Research 1 universities.

Cost Savings

Our cost-savings programs leverage group purchasing power to reduce the burden of sourcing solutions so HEIs can do what they do best: serve their students. NEBHE offers a range of tools for institutions to operate more efficiently and sustainably.

In addition to our established cost-savings programs with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), we have added two additional partners to offer even more innovative services to help HEIs increase both student access and financial flexibility.

Working with our partners Packback, CollegeSource, Creative Commons and MHEC, our cost-savings programs offer cost-containment strategies, in addition to efficiencies and market influence. This initiative also offers solution accessibility in technology goods and services as well as insurance coverage. All contracts can be used by HEIs and many can also be leveraged by K-12, states and local governments in the six New England states.

NEBHE continues to work with partners to identify additional opportunities to help institutions lower operating costs.

Creative Commons

Creative Commons has been recognized by NEBHE as an international nonprofit organization dedicated to helping build and sustain a thriving commons of shared knowledge and culture. Through workshops, consultations and their CC Certificate, CC helps community members develop open licensing expertise, and a deeper understanding of recommended practices for sharing.

In 2021-22, Creative Commons is offering discounts on professional development courses. Online CC Certificate Courses, CC Certificate Bootcamps (in-person and online) and Custom CC Workshops (online) all receive a 15% discount when purchased in association with NEBHE and MHEC.

Packback

NEBHE is helping to make online learning more accessible especially during the pandemic by establishing [a partnership with Packback](#). This partnership has been created as part of NEBHE's cost-savings mission to bring quality innovative higher education products and services to HEIs at discounted prices for the benefit of faculty instruction and student learning.

[Packback](#) is an online discussion platform equipped with artificial intelligence (AI) instructional support technology that acts as a "Digital TA," allowing faculty to deliver engaging online courses. Packback enables faculty to improve student curiosity, engagement and critical thinking through highly structured, rigorous discussion. In using Packback, students are taught the life skill of how to ask great questions and are coached on their critical thinking skills as they formulate responses to questions each week.

The platform's features include gamification to promote student engagement and serve as the Digital TA to automate administrative tasks such as grading and class participation while enabling instructors to scale high-quality student feedback in short amounts of time.

Packback has been used by more than 500,000 students in courses from over 2,000 faculty at 200-plus HEIs across the country in face-to-face, hybrid and online environments.



NEBHE's partners help us supply a wide range of cost-containment strategies.



CollegeSource

NEBHE entered into a [cost-savings agreement with CollegeSource](#) for two products to advance efficient student transfer and mitigate credit loss.

[CollegeSource](#)'s Transfer Evaluation System (TES) can be used by registrars, enrollment managers and transfer coordinators to compare the content and course outcomes from one institution to another. TES can be used by college staff to quickly locate course descriptions; route and track the evaluation process; store, manage, group and publicize the resulting equivalencies; and employ powerful algorithms to generate lists of equivalencies between institutions.

Transferology assists transfer advisors, students and parents in making educated decisions when transferring credit. Students can enter coursework and instantly see how credits transfer to member institutions. TES and Transferology can be fully integrated to allow credit evaluators to make decisions based on real student usage data, thus creating a seamless and holistic transfer solution.

Technology Solutions

[Technology agreements offered through MHEC](#) aggregate volume purchases to lower product and services costs and reduce the time institutions must spend developing and conducting an RFP process and reviewing bids. Public and independent HEIs and organizations can purchase the goods or services knowing that the due diligence in selecting the vendor has been accomplished.

Collaboration between recognized education leaders ensures that vendor offerings are kept current and new features are added as the market demands. Contracts include:

- Computers, hardware and software: desktop and laptop computers, printers, software licensing
- Security and support: security information and event management solutions, mobile device management, technology support services
- Network and cloud: data and voice networking, e-transcripts, cloud services.

New contracts are continually constantly in development, so institutions can look forward to future a steady stream of added market technology solutions.

Cyber Insurance

NEBHE's Cyber Insurance program, offered through MHEC and Marsh Insurance, is tailored to deliver the right mix of risk transfer and advisory solutions for institutions to assess, manage and respond to their risk.

As a leader in the higher education marketplace, Marsh's cyber insurance specialists understand the unique risk factors of higher education and are well positioned to:

- *Assess and analyze*: understand attack scenarios and risk profile when addressing cyber risks
- *Secure and insure*: managing cyber risks means preparing institutions for the inevitable event. Marsh's cyber team will work with institutions to optimize the security controls that protect and detect threats, and transfer exposures off the institution's balance sheet
- *Respond and recover*: quick, effective response to a cyber event is crucial for business. Marsh's cyber team will guide and support institutions through the event and enhance protection moving forward.

MHECare Student Insurance Solutions

NEBHE's comprehensive **insurance solutions through MHECare** respond to increasing costs and concern for student health. Benefits and services include coverage for a wide array of student groups, as well as a commitment to promote the value of student health and student insurance to HEIs. The program offers a contract with a national underwriter, UnitedHealthcare StudentResources.

Master Property Program (MPP)

The **Master Property Program** offered through MHEC is a regional collaborative venture that provides comprehensive property coverage, specifically tailored to the needs of HEI campuses, while reducing insurance costs and improving asset protection. More than \$20 million in dividends have been distributed to the 65 campuses across the country participating, with total insured values of \$43 billion. Lexington (AIG) and Zurich Insurance currently serves as the programs' lead insurer, supported by a panel of global underwriters, administered by Marsh USA Inc. and supported by Captive Resources, LLC Inc. under the direction of a leadership committee representative of the insured institutions.

Open Education

Open Educational Resources remove the cost of textbooks, a **core barrier to student success**, and enable faculty to provide **more authentic, equitable and culturally relevant teaching and learning** experiences. Open Pedagogy creates opportunities to **invite students into the scholarly conversation** and **rectify the inequities** historically woven into the fabric of postsecondary learning materials.

NEBHE is grateful to the Hewlett Foundation for its support as we continue our work to expand the awareness and effective use of Open Education in the region. A [2020 Bay View Analytics and WCET report](#) suggests that while faculty and institutions have shown increasing knowledge and acceptance of OER, many remain unfamiliar with what these resources are or how to use them. When faculty understand and feel confident navigating the licensing structures of OER creation and revision, opportunities emerge to engage students in the content co-creation process.

This pedagogy, sometimes referred to as OER-enabled pedagogy or **Open Pedagogy**, centers the student as the authority on knowledge creation that will be used by others to teach and learn, and organically creates opportunities to encourage the diversification of the curriculum, as commercial textbooks are far less likely to be inclusive of scholars of color and representative of underrepresented voices. NEBHE's current focus is on bridging the gap between faculty OER adoption and student-led OER creation to better understand the effects on teaching and learning.

National Consortium for Open Educational Resources (NCOER)

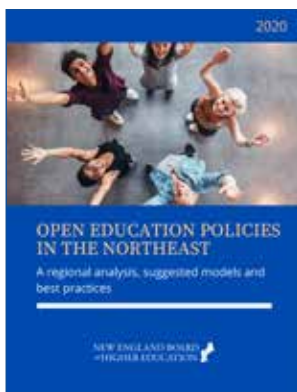
In November 2020, NEBHE and its sister compacts MHEC, SREB and WICHE, with support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, formed the **National Consortium for Open Educational Resources (NCOER)**. The

► Open Education

consortium's goal is to research and educate the community on key issues of equity, sustainability and capacity-building, which all assist in the development and enhancement of OER adoption at a national scale. NEBHE is focusing on the effects of OER on teaching and learning, while the other compacts focus on issues such as cost-savings metrics, OER use in dual enrollment and K-12, and OER and its relationship with equity.



Tweet from Robin DeRosa, Director of Open Learning and Teaching, Plymouth State University and NEBHE Open Education Advisory Committee member



Regional Policy Report

While there is no one-size-fits-all policy, model or practice in Open Education, several New England states engaged in this work have identified and demonstrated practical approaches to advance initiatives at both the state and institution level. This [regional analysis](#) published in December 2020 shares exemplars and observations of sound practices observed by NEBHE Fellow for Open Education Lindsey Gumb.

Read the regional analysis at nebhe.org/ar/open-ed-policies

Faculty Community of Practice

NEBHE's community of practice has brought together regional faculty members to refresh their fundamental knowledge of OER and work toward a deeper understanding of how to utilize open educational practices to increase student engagement, success and ownership of the cultural content present in their learning materials. With a faculty member from each of the six New England states, New York, and New Jersey, this group is learning how to best support their students in this open environment to center their lived experiences, agency and emerging identities as contributors to the scholarly conversation.

Faculty of note in the community include:

Kathleen Brinegar is an associate professor of education at the University of Vermont. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses related to equity and cultural responsiveness, critical literacy, curriculum development and assessment, and school organization and pedagogy. She is committed to a research agenda that promotes equity and cultural responsiveness by honoring the



► Open Education

experiences of young adolescents with marginalized identities. She is particularly interested in OER as a vehicle for equity both in decreasing the cost of education and in enacting culturally responsive and humanizing pedagogies.

Manu Samriti Chander is an associate professor of English at Rutgers University-Newark, where he specializes in nineteenth-century literature. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the MHz Foundation, which works to connect people with global cultural resources and perspectives through open knowledge, and the Executive Council of the Newark Chapter of the Rutgers AAUP-AFT. He sees OER as an essential component in preparing diverse learners to shape urgent cultural debates and participate actively in the public sphere.



Practitioner Perspectives

NEJHE continues to publish a series of Practitioner Perspectives which elevate the voices of regional faculty, senior leadership, librarians and staff who consistently move forward the work of Open Education in the Northeast. If you're new to Open Education, [Open Matters: A Brief Intro](#) and [What's "Open" During Covid?](#) highlight integral components of Open Education such as cost savings, sustainability, engaging students in their learning, and OER as a means to promote social justice and equity.



"Open Educational resources give students the opportunity to make informed decisions about which courses and programs fit not only their career goals but also their budgets—and that includes the price of course materials."

Kevin Corcoran

Executive Director, Digital Learning

Connecticut State Colleges and Universities

Our Open Education Resources Webinars

Here's a look at OER-related webinars and online meetings convened by NEBHE in 2020-21. To watch videos and view presentations from each meeting, visit nebhe.org/webinars.



Leveraging Open Educational Resources During Covid

Helping students, faculty and institutions navigate the potential challenges and burdens imposed by traditional learning resources in a global pandemic.

Boots on the Ground: Leveraging Practitioner Perspectives on Open Education in New England

The Practitioner Perspective series aims to elevate the voices of our regional practitioners ranging from faculty, senior leadership, librarians and staff who consistently show up to move forward the work of Open Education in the Northeast.



Supporting Students Through Creating Accessible High-Quality Open Education Resources

As OER awareness continues to increase in postsecondary education, faculty are becoming more curious about how they might invite their students into the creation process, often referred to as Open Pedagogy. As editors and/or creators of OER, students have the opportunity to make existing course content more culturally responsive and representative of their own lived experiences.

Open Pedagogy in Practice: Faculty Perspectives

This webinar was intended for faculty, librarians, and anyone interested in seeing real examples of what Open Pedagogy looks like in practice and advice for getting started on your campus.



Where is the 'Justice' in Open Education?

Open education frameworks address high-cost course materials, but with an increase in the adoption of open educational materials, conversations about inclusive teaching, social justice, and anti-racism pedagogical practices need to be at the center of open practices.

Transfer Initiatives

NEBHE supports New England public and independent higher education institutions by supporting, developing and reporting on effective transfer policies and practices.

Transfer Initiatives promote **seamless transfer and collaboration** among states and institutions in New England, with the goal of **reducing credit loss and increasing degree completion**. The support includes the grant-funded New England College Transfer Guarantee, briefs, convenings, workshops and project development. Transfer Initiatives is committed to increasing higher education access and opportunity **irrespective of a student's race, socioeconomic status or zip code**.

Transfer Initiatives promote seamless transfer and collaboration among states and institutions in New England, with the goal of reducing credit loss and increasing degree completion. The support includes the grant-funded **New England College Transfer Guarantee**, briefs, convenings, workshops and project development. The Transfer Initiatives team is committed to increasing higher education access and opportunity irrespective of a student's race, socioeconomic status or zip code.

New England College Transfer Guarantee

In order to unify state transfer and move beyond one-to-one agreements, NEBHE has partnered with community colleges, state public higher education systems and independent college associations and four-year institutions to establish an admission transfer guarantee, known as the New England Independent College Transfer Guarantee (simply referred to as the Guarantee) in **Connecticut**, **Massachusetts** and **Rhode Island**. The Guarantee is currently funded by the Teagle Foundation and Davis Educational Foundation.

► Transfer Initiatives

The initiative is modeled on state transfer policy and offers associate degree-holders who have met the GPA eligibility criteria guaranteed admission into participating four-year independent institutions, with a focus on the liberal arts. Additional features of the Guarantee include an application fee waiver, financial aid and scholarship incentives, and full transfer of associate degree credits. Community college graduates can now transfer directly to participating four-year independent colleges in their state. The Guarantee provides a clear, affordable path for associate degree holders with an eligible GPA to complete a bachelor's degree at 30+ independent colleges across New England, admission guaranteed.

Students benefit from the Guarantee by expanded four-year choices of major, guaranteed admission with full credit transfer and no admissions fees. Educators are aided by a simple, one-stop process for all HEIs, better matches for individual students and fewer financial hurdles. The states benefit from a more efficient statewide college transfer system fewer barriers for diverse students and higher rates of degree completion.

Despite the raft of pandemic challenges, the Guarantee has made continuous progress during the first year of implementation. The Guarantee is fully implemented in both Connecticut and Massachusetts, with Rhode Island slated for the fall 2021. In Connecticut, nine independent institutions, along with the state's 12 community colleges, have signed memorandums of agreement (MOA). In Massachusetts, 20 independent institutions to date, as well as the state's 15 community colleges, have signed MOAs. In Rhode Island, two institutions have signed MOAs and more are expected to sign onto the agreement.

In July 2021, NEBHE was awarded an eight-month planning grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation and the Teagle Foundation to begin scaling the Guarantee to Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. NEBHE is collaborating with state partners to determine the feasibility of expansion and to develop a strategic plan to streamline and unify transfer for both in-state public and independent colleges and universities.

Find out more at nebhe.org/transfer-initiatives.



“Many of our member institutions are thrilled to be collaborating with NEBHE in this important effort to promote transfer pathways for Massachusetts community college graduates. Many community college students in Massachusetts have found our member institutions to be a highly accessible and affordable option for transfer to complete their bachelor’s degree and jumpstart their career. This new initiative will expand opportunities for more seamless transitions and allow even more transfer students to attend an institution in Massachusetts that best meets their educational aspirations and increases their opportunity to be successful.”

Richard Doherty

Former President

Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts (AICUM)

MORE OPTIONS, MADE EASY

Choose the new route to a bachelor's degree.

Community college graduates can now transfer directly to participating four-year independent colleges in their state. The Guarantee provides a clear, affordable path for associate degree holders with an eligible GPA to complete a bachelor's degree at 20+ independent colleges across New England; admission guaranteed.

It's simple, seamless, smart.

<p>STUDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More four-year choices than ever. • Guaranteed admission with full credit transfer. • No admissions fees, no financial support. 	<p>EDUCATORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple, one-stop process for all schools. • Better matches for individual students. • No lost time and fewer financial hurdles. 	<p>STATES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more efficient statewide college transfer system. • Lower barriers for diverse students. • Higher rates of degree completion.
--	---	--

FIND YOUR PATH »

Visit your state's Guarantee website to "own your path" to a 4-year degree.

CT CONNECTICUT [connecticut.edu/transfer/guarantee](#)

MA MASSACHUSETTS [mass.edu/transfer/guarantee](#)

RI RHODE ISLAND [rhodeisland.edu](#)

Download the New England College Transfer Guarantee info sheet at nebhe.org/transfer/find-your-path.

The New England Journal of Higher Education

The New England Journal of Higher Education (NEJHE) offers **cutting-edge commentary and expert analysis** about **New England higher education** and its connections to **the economy and quality of life** in the region and beyond.

Talk about a new normal. ...

Last year, we banded together at a distance as higher education and New England life suffered a killer pandemic, wrenching economic dislocation and an overdue reckoning with racial inequities. Although “annual reports” would seem to recast reality on a yearly basis, none of last year’s challenges have fully receded into the past.

And indeed, *The New England Journal of Higher Education (NEJHE)* continues to explore these tough issues and the innovative solutions they’ve precipitated.

NEJHE offers cutting-edge commentary and expert analysis about New England higher education and its connections to the economy and quality of life. Easily accessible online, *NEJHE* is essential reading for New England leaders who are interested in higher education and its effects on regional wellbeing.

Among recent *NEJHE* articles:

- Noting that Black faculty still account for only 6% of all full-time college faculty, **Gilda A. Barabino** **traced her passion for mentoring faculty of color** from 1989 when she was a mentor in NEJHE’s Role Model Network for Underrepresented Students through her work today as president of Olin College of Engineering.
- UMass Boston Chancellor **Marcelo Suárez-Orozco** **introduced himself to New England** by unveiling a scholarship fund in the name of George Floyd and appointing a Special Advisor to the Chancellor for Black Life.

► *The New England Journal of Higher Education*

- University of Vermont President **Suresh Garimella** [outlined UVM's strategic vision](#) to boost the health, quality of life and prosperity of Vermont.
- University System of New Hampshire's Chancellor Emeritus, and former NEBHE Chair **Todd J. Leach** explained why institutions that focused solely on surviving the short-term challenge of Covid [must now respond to the long-term threats](#) posed by enrollment and cost pressures after Covid.
- Working with NEBHE's Open Educational Resources initiative, *NEJHE's Practitioner Perspectives* focused on how OER could grant all students equitable access to quality instructional materials at low or no cost, and also how OER figures in the faculty tenure and promotion process.
- A Franklin Pierce University sociology professor [explained how the January 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol](#) argues for a robust, new version of civic education.
- **Tom Mortenson**, the longtime publisher of the newsletter *Postsecondary Education Opportunity*, [warned that simmering issues](#) such as income inequality, men disengaging from the labor force and family life and higher ed becoming an engine of division have led to our current predicaments.
- New England attorneys [advanced exclusive arguments](#) on questions such as mandating vaccines for employees, rewarding college athletes and estate planning in the time of Covid.

NEJHE featured hard-hitting, issue-oriented pieces authored by NEBHE sponsors:

- **Thomas Jorling**, an advisor to NEBHE sponsor Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehan, [outlined how the existing interstate highway network could be transformed into a smart grid](#), perhaps including broadband and related innovations in higher ed delivery.
- Former UMaine System Chancellor **Richard Pattenau**, on behalf of NEBHE sponsor Packback, [explained how institutions can better support students](#) in online programs.
- The founder of NEBHE sponsor Maguire Associates [explored the "integrity" of the enrollment process](#).

[*NEJHE Newslink*](#) tracked "Comings and Goings" of key people at New England campuses and in other relevant arenas, revealing increasing diversity in major posts and the region's continued prominence in national leadership positions. *Newslink* also featured our "DC Shuttle" column on higher education news from the U.S. capital through a partnership with the New England Council. Our occasional "Data Connection" presented a thought-provoking assortment of facts and figures.

► *The New England Journal of Higher Education*



*"The New England Journal of Higher Education's comprehensive coverage of news, practices, policies and events on New England college campuses is especially important given the many changes now happening in higher education. My interaction with the *Journal* dates back more than 20 years, when I wrote about how the Boston College program I led combined nontraditional admissions criteria such as positive self-concept with academic counseling to help African American, Hispanic, Asian and Native American students succeed ... up through the more recent "racial reckoning," when I wrote about the Legacy Alumni of Color of Springfield College. These and other articles in the *Journal* speak to institutions of higher education becoming more welcoming and inclusive places."*

Donald Brown

*President & CEO, Brown and Associates Education and Diversity Consulting
Former Director, Office of AHANA Student Programs, Boston College*



Each piece we publish in the *Journal* and *Newslink* automatically goes out via Twitter and is covered in our weekly *NEJHE NewsBlast* emailed to thought leaders. [Subscribe to NEBHE's weekly NEJHE NewsBlast here!](#)

▶ *The New England Journal of Higher Education*

We also report on state legislative sessions and the hard-hitting reports of NEBHE's Policy & Research team and other programs. *NEJHE* also works with the New England Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC) to [post Joblink job openings in higher education](#).

All *NEJHE* posts are also distributed via Twitter and emailed to opinion leaders in our [free weekly NEJHE NewsBlast](#), which also features other news from NEBHE, and is, itself, further disseminated via Facebook and LinkedIn.

Online Events

NEBHE hosted numerous webinars and online meetings in 2020-21. To watch videos and view presentations from each meeting, visit nebhe.org/webinars.



Career Connections in the Age of Coronavirus: What's Lost, What's Gained and What's Ahead

Helping students, faculty and institutions navigate the potential challenges and burdens imposed by traditional learning resources in a global pandemic.

Leveraging Open Educational Resources During Covid

Helping students, faculty and institutions navigate the potential challenges and burdens imposed by traditional learning resources in a global pandemic.



Upskilling New England

NEBHE conducted five state-specific webinars featuring industry leaders focusing on NEBHE's research in partnership with Strada Education Network, as well as state-specific initiatives and best practices. Watch the webinars for Upskilling Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Vermont.

Introduction to Packback

New England's businesses need to make upskilling programs available to employees to improve skills matching, retention and work productivity. The successful implementation of upskilling programs will require greater collaboration and alignment between regional educators and employers.



All Learning Counts: Implementers' Meeting

NEBHE convened experts, students, policymakers and institutional leaders to discuss existing prior learning assessment policies and programs as well as the merits of broadening recognition of prior learning for academic credit to account for work and life experiences, particularly for adult learners.

This webinar featured results from our Adult Learner Survey, conducted in partnership with Maguire Associates.



Boots on the Ground: Leveraging Practitioner Perspectives on Open Education in New England

The Practitioner Perspective series aims to elevate the voices of our regional practitioners ranging from faculty, senior leadership, librarians and staff who consistently show up to move forward the work of Open Education in the Northeast.



► Online Events

DECEMBER

1

2020

The “New Normal”: Lessons Learned from the COVID Age and New Approaches for Spring 2021

The “new normal” has brought with it a host of new questions: Is it possible to foster student engagement in an online setting? How can students, not to mention faculty and staff, stay motivated with limited face-to-face interaction?

Prosperity vs. Survival: The Power of Partnerships, Affiliations, and Alliance

A collaborative virtual workshop between NEBHE and AGB to help college and university leaders face critical questions about enrollments, financial sustainability and post-pandemic plans.

DECEMBER

3

2020

JANUARY

29

2021

Knocking at the College Door: What Does the Declining Number of High School Graduates Mean for the Future of Higher Education?

A collaborative virtual workshop between NEBHE and AGB to help college and university leaders face critical questions about enrollments, financial sustainability and post-pandemic plans.



Demystifying Professional Licensure Compliance for Connecticut

Open pedagogy, OER-enabled pedagogy, Open educational practices — you may have heard these terms in passing or maybe you’ve heard a lot about them but still find yourself asking the question, “but what does this actually look like in practice?”

MARCH

25

2021

MARCH

29

2021

Supporting Students through Creating Accessible, Quality Open Educational Resources

As OER awareness continues to increase in postsecondary education, faculty are becoming more curious about how they might invite their students into the creation process, often referred to as Open Pedagogy.



Open Pedagogy in Practice: Faculty Perspectives

New England educators share what Open pedagogy looks like in their classrooms, lessons learned they’ve learned along the way, and why their praxis is ever-changing.

APRIL

12

2021

APRIL

26

2021

Where is the ‘Justice’ in Open Education?

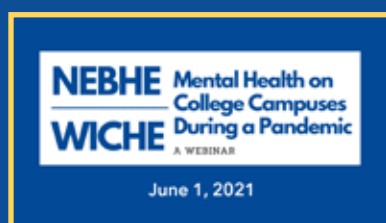
OER frameworks address high-cost course materials, but with an increase in the adoption of open educational materials, conversations about inclusive teaching, social justice, and anti-racism pedagogical practices need to be at the center of open practices.

► Online Events

International Student Webinar Series

NEBHE held three webinars focusing on international students and how they are affected by professional licensure compliance, workforce development, and pre-arrival expectations and the realities of campus life.

APRIL 26 2021 **Connecting Policy and Practice** addressed complex but necessary professional licensure compliance to help students make informed program enrollment decisions to support their professional goals. **MAY 3 2021** **The Student On-Campus Experience Matters** discussed nontraditional postsecondary student populations experiencing unique academic and social integration challenges, including international students studying at American institutions who frequently encounter a mismatch between pre-arrival expectations and the realities of college life on campus. And **MAY 26 2021** **A New Vulnerable Workforce** explored ways in which the region's higher education leaders can effectively advocate for policies that not only encourage international students to attend New England's postsecondary institutions, but also support their entry into the region's workforce after graduation.



Mental Health on College Campuses During a Pandemic



At our webinar co-sponsored with WICHE, experts and students discussed needed support as the return to school ushered in a “new normal.” They identified key challenges, addressed increased demand for clinicians, and discussed the most successful practices dealing with Covid.

AUGUST 3 2021 **Connecticut Credential Registry Initiative: Bringing Transparency and Credential Literacy to the Marketplace**

At our webinar co-sponsored with WICHE, experts and students discussed needed support as the return to school ushered in a “new normal.” They identified key challenges, addressed increased demand for clinicians, and discussed the most successful practices dealing with Covid.

Our People

Board of Delegates

Connecticut Delegates: Senator **Mae Flexer** Connecticut General Assembly • **G. Duncan Harris** *Chief Executive Officer* Capital Community College • Representative **Gregg Haddad** Connecticut General Assembly • **Elsa M. Núñez** *President* Eastern Connecticut State University • **Mark Scheinberg** *President* Goodwin College • **Jennifer Widness** *President* Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges • **Gregory Woodward** *President* University of Hartford

Maine Delegates: **Daniel Chuhta** *Deputy Commissioner* Maine Department of Education • Senator **Mattie Daughtry** Maine Legislature • **Rachel Hendrickson** • **Dannel Malloy** *Chancellor* University of Maine System • Representative **Rebecca Millett** Maine Legislature • The Hon. **Joan M. Nass** • **Karen T. Pardue** *Dean*, *Westbrook College of Health Professions* University of New England • **James C.Q. Weggler**

Massachusetts Delegates: **Michael B. Alexander** *President* Lasell University • **Frederick W. Clark, Jr.** *President* Bridgewater State University • Representative **Patricia Haddad** Massachusetts General Court • **M. Howard Jacobson** • The Hon. **Joan M. Menard** • Senator **Marc Pacheco** Massachusetts General Court • **Patricia A. Marshall** *Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success* Massachusetts Department of Higher Education • **David J. Wahr**

New Hampshire Delegates: **Stephen Appleby** *Director, Division of Educator Support and Higher Education* New Hampshire Department of Education • **Michele D. Perkins** *President* New England College • The Hon. **Andrew R. Peterson** • **Catherine A. Provencher** *Interim Chancellor* University System of New Hampshire • **Mark Rubinstein** *Chancellor* Community College System of New Hampshire • Senator **David Watters** New Hampshire General Court

Rhode Island Delegates: Representative **Gregg Amore** Rhode Island General Assembly • **Kathy M. Collins** *Vice President for Student Affairs* University of Rhode Island • Senator **Louis P. DiPalma** Rhode Island General Assembly • **Daniel P. Egan** *President* Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Rhode Island • Senator **Hanna M. Gallo** Rhode Island General Assembly • **Frank D. Sánchez** *President* Rhode Island College • Representative **June Speakman** Rhode Island General Assembly

Vermont Delegates: **Heather Bouchey** *Deputy Secretary* Vermont Agency of Education • **Suresh Garimella** *President* University of Vermont • Representative **Kathleen James** Vermont General Assembly • **Joyce M. Judy** *President* Community College of Vermont • Senator **Andrew Perchlik** Vermont General Assembly • **Michael Wool** *Partner* Langrock, Sperry & Wool, LLP • **Sophie Zdatny** *Chancellor* Vermont State Colleges

Legislative Advisory Committee

Connecticut General Assembly: Senator **Mae Flexer** • Representative **Gregg Haddad**
Connecticut General Assembly • Senator **Will Haskell** • Senator **James Maroney** •
Representative **Gary Turco**

Maine Legislature: Senator **Mattie Daughtry** • Senator **Lisa Keim** • Representative
Rebecca Millett • Representative **Matthew Pouliot**

Massachusetts General Court: Representative **Sean Garballey** • Senator **Anne Gobi**
• Representative **Patricia Haddad** • Senator **Michael Moore** • Senator **Marc R.**
Pacheco • Representative **David Rogers** • Representative **Jeffrey Roy**

New Hampshire General Court: Senator **Jay Kahn** • Representative **Rick Ladd** •
Senator **David Watters** • Senator **Ruth Ward**

Rhode Island General Assembly: Representative **Gregg Amore** • Senator **Louis**
P. DiPalma • Senator **Hanna M. Gallo** • Representative **William O'Brien** •
Representative **June Speakman**

Vermont General Assembly: Representative **Peter Conlon** • Representative **Kathleen**
James • Senator **Andrew Perchlik**

Staff

Michael K. Thomas *President & CEO*

Administration & Finance: **Genevieve Davis** *Chief Financial Officer* • **Daren Follweiler**
Coordinator of Technology and Programs • **Michelle Pelletier** *Director of Finance and*
Administration • **Marla J. Phippen** *Assistant to the President/Events Coordinator*

Programs: **Jared Abdirkin** *Associate Director, State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement*
(SARA) • **Emily Decatur** *Associate Director, Transfer Initiatives* • **Lindsey Gumb** *Fellow,*
Open Education • **Sara Jean-Francois** *Assistant Director, Regional Student Program Tuition*
Break • **Wendy A. Lindsay** *Senior Director, Regional Student Program Tuition Break*

Policy & Research: **Tatiana Cruz** *Fellow, Faculty Diversity* • **Charles F. Desmond**
Senior Fellow • **Kamille Gentles-Peart** *Fellow, Faculty Diversity* • **John O. Harney**
Executive Editor, The New England Journal of Higher Education • **Sheridan Miller**
State Policy Engagement Specialist • **Stephanie Murphy** *Associate Director of Policy*
Research & Analysis • **Stafford Peat** *Senior Consultant for Policy & Research* • **Charlotte**
Peyser *Senior Policy & Research Analyst* • **Donald Allen Sarra** *Policy & Research Analyst* •
Candace Williams *Director of Policy Research & Strategic Initiatives*

Notes



