



State Fact Sheet

Indicators of Postsecondary Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Rhode Island

NOVEMBER 2020

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's recent 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.

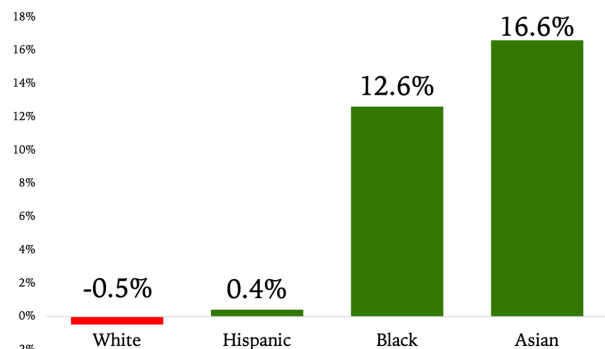
Questions around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are particularly important for New England because the region's population is rapidly diversifying. While New England's population remains predominantly non-Hispanic white, the white population is shrinking, while Black and Hispanic populations are growing.

This resource accompanies NEBHE's recent, longer brief that explore five indicators of DEI in New England: college readiness, access & enrollment, affordability & debt, post-college success, and faculty diversity. Here, we zoom in on **Rhode Island** to demonstrate how the state performs on these indicators relative to the region.

Visit <https://bit.ly/DEIreport> to read the complete New England report.

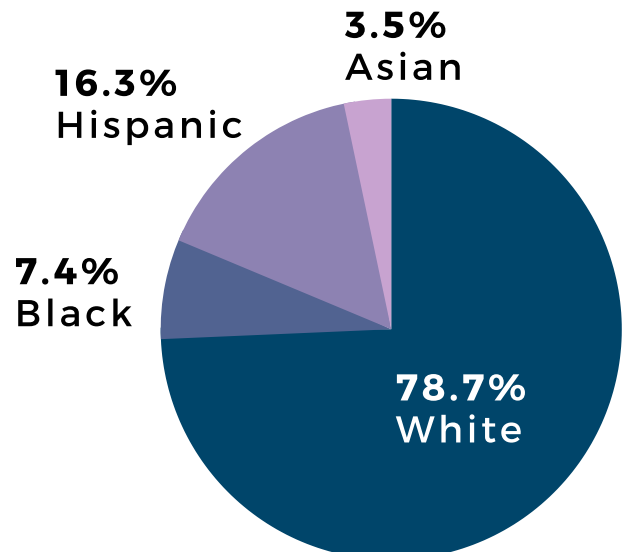
Rhode Island Then and Now

Percent Change in Population, by Race/Ethnicity: 2010-2018



Over the past decade in Rhode Island, the white population has decreased by 0.5% (New England -3.1%). By contrast Black and Asian populations have grown sharply, by 12.6% and 16.6%, respectively (New England: +13.2% and +29.5%, respectively). The Hispanic population has also grown, but only slightly by 0.4% (New England: +29.4%).

Racial/Ethnic Populations as Percentage of Total State Population: 2019



Indicator #1 | College Readiness

Public High School Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates (ACGR): 2017-18

	U.S.	Region	CT	ME	MA	NH	RI	VT
White	89%	89%	93%	87%	92%	90%	87%	86%
Hispanic	81%	78%	79%	83%	74%	76%	77%	79%
Black	79%	79%	81%	78%	80%	81%	83%	70%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.

High School Dropout Rate: High School Graduating Class of 2018

New England
Average

5.9%

Rhode Island
Average

8.7%

Rhode Island, by race/ethnicity

White

6.5%

Black

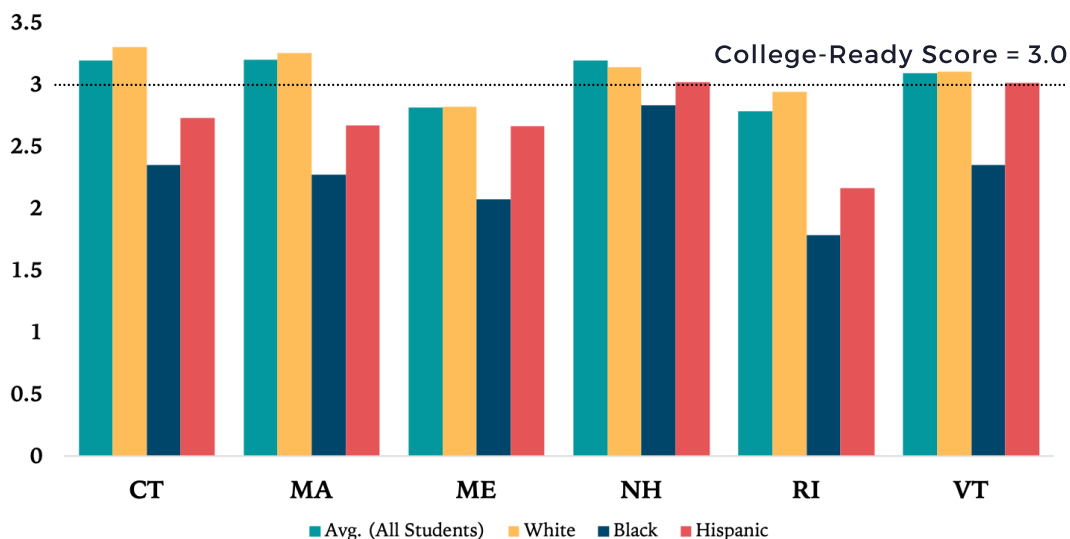
9.2%

Hispanic

13.4%

Source: The 2019 New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC) Common Data Project Annual Report and Procedural Guidebook

Mean AP Scores (All Exams): 2019



Rhode Island

State Average	2.8
White	2.9
Black	1.8
Hispanic	2.2

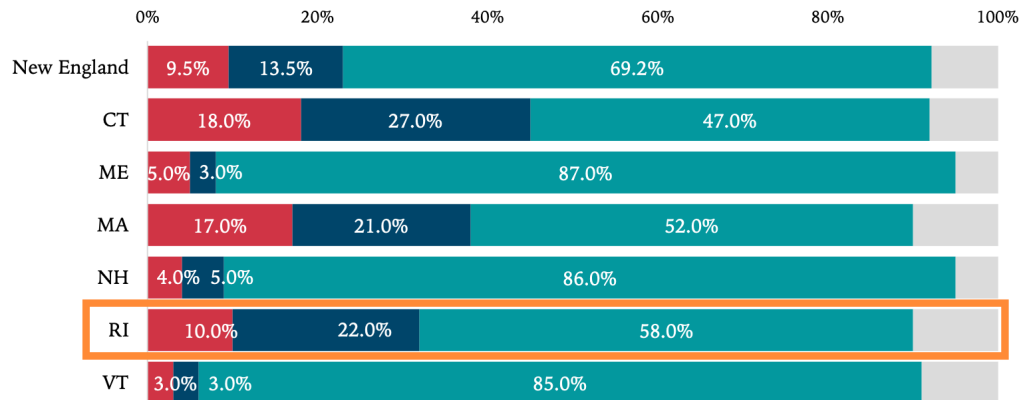
Sources: NEBHE analysis of the College Board's National and State Summary Reports for 2019.

Indicator #2 | Access & Enrollment

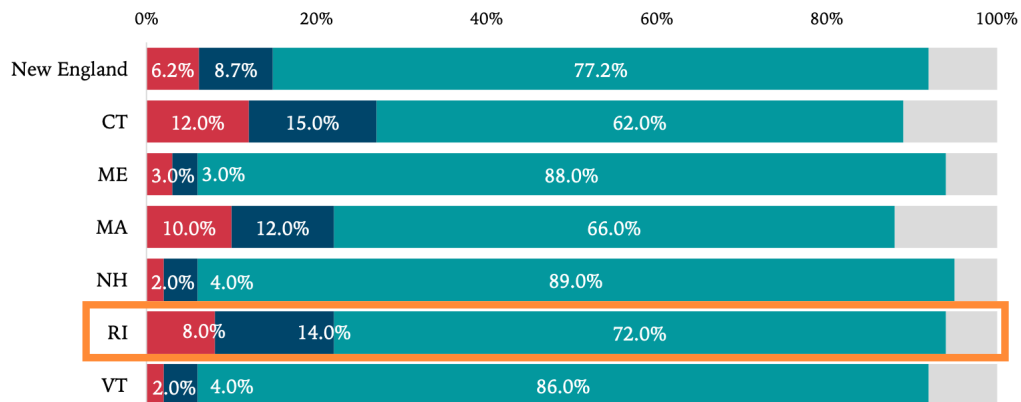
Demographic Undergraduate Student Population as a Percentage of the Total Undergraduate Student Body, by Sector: 2018

Key: **Black** **Hispanic** **White**

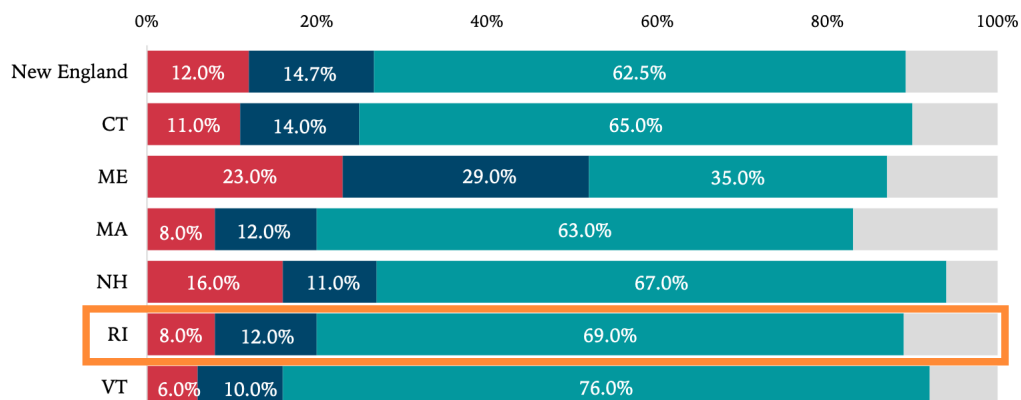
Public Two-Year Institutions



Public Four-Year Institutions



Private Not-for-Profit Four-Year Institutions



Indicator #3 | Affordability & Debt

As we stated in our larger report, research on postsecondary student borrowing, debt, and default patterns is limited because the U.S. Department of Education does not typically track borrowers by race. However, we do know a few things: Because the median incomes of Black and Hispanic New Englanders are 49-78% lower than that of white individuals, Black and Hispanic students are more likely to rely on federal and state financial aid to pay for their postsecondary education. Additionally, according to the [Federal Reserve Bank of New York](#), student loan borrowers from mostly black neighborhoods are almost twice as likely to default on their debt as borrowers from mostly white neighborhoods..

The average debt load of a Rhode Island college graduate in 2018-19 was
\$37,614,
making Rhode Island the
4th highest nationally
on this measure.

What share of Rhode Island graduates have student loan debt?



59%

of Rhode Island graduates had student loan debt in 2018-19.

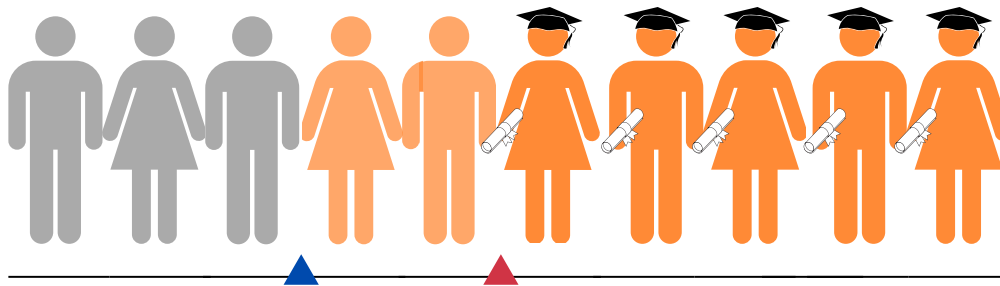
How does Rhode Island compare to the U.S. and New England?

	U.S.	Region	CT	ME	MA	NH	RI	VT
Average Debt Rank	---	---	3	6	8	1	4	19
% of graduates with debt	79%	70%	56%	67%	55%	74%	59%	60%
Avg. Debt of Graduates (2018-19)	\$28,996	\$35,497	\$38,546	\$33,591	\$33,256	\$39,410	\$37,614	\$30,566
% Change since 2008-09	+28.7%	+33.6%	+54.1%	+26.7%	+13.8%	+46.5%	+35.2%	+27.7%

Source: The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS), Project on Student Debt. Public and nonprofit colleges and universities awarding 49 percent of the IPEDS-reported state's bachelor's degrees in 2018-19 did not voluntarily report student debt data, and are not included in the state average. The New England states had the following number of usable bachelor's degree-granting institutions: Connecticut, 12; Maine, 11; Massachusetts, 50; New Hampshire, 10; Rhode Island, 8; Vermont, 7.

Indicator #4 | Post-College Success

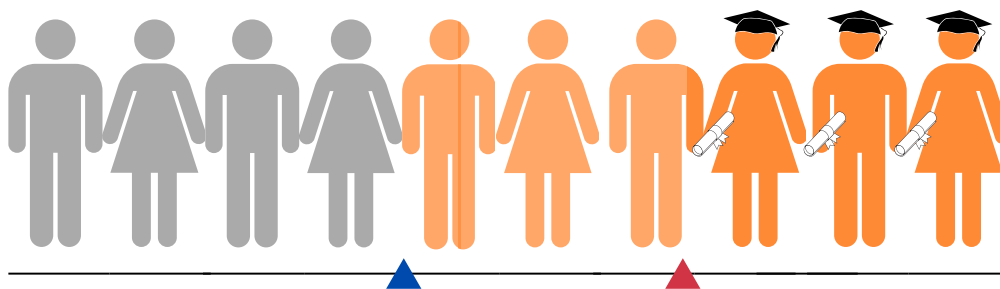
For every 10 white high school graduates in Rhode Island...



7.1
enroll in college right out of high school.

4.9
earn an associate degree or higher

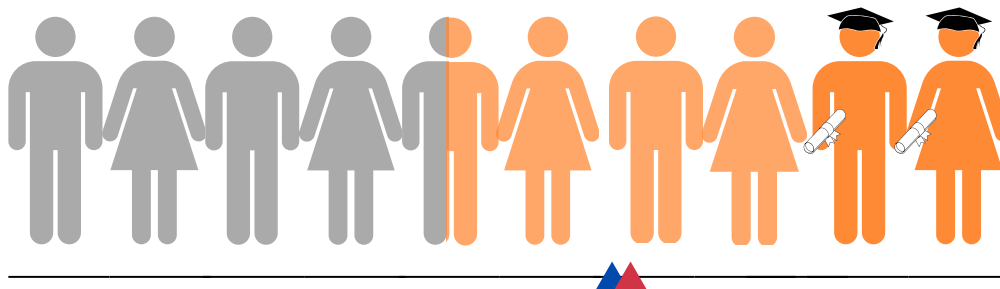
For every 10 Black high school graduates in Rhode Island...



5.9
enroll in college right out of high school.

3.2
earn an associate degree or higher

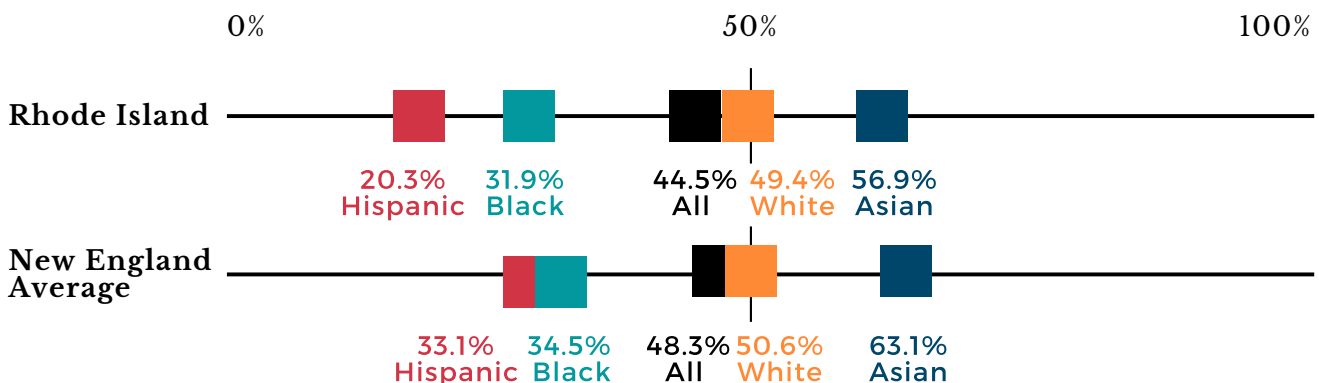
For every 10 Hispanic high school graduates in Rhode Island...



5.6
enroll in college right out of high school.

2.0
earn an associate degree or higher

Post-High School Credential Attainment Rate (Associate Degree and Higher), by Race/ Ethnicity: As of February 2020



Sources: College enrollment rates are sourced from the The National Student Clearing House for the graduating class of 2018 via the New England Secondary School Consortium 2019 Common Data Project. Attainment rates are from Lumina Foundation, A Stronger Nation Report. Values above do not include short-term credentials, only achievement of associate degree or higher by individuals aged 25-64.

Note: Data are unavailable for the attainment rate of Black individuals in New Hampshire.

Indicator #5 | Faculty Diversity

Racial Representation Among Students and Faculty

White Rhode Islanders make up 78.7% of the state's population (New England average: 85.1%), while Black Rhode Islanders account for 7.4% and Hispanic Rhode Islanders comprise 16.3% of the state's population (New England: 5.2% and 8.9%, respectively). While America's postsecondary faculty and the pool of doctoral recipients from which faculty are drawn are becoming increasingly diversified, Black and Hispanic scholars remain largely underrepresented in both categories in Rhode Island.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES	NEW ENGLAND			RHODE ISLAND		
	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Faculty (Full- & Part-Time)	5%	3.1%	80.7%	4.8%	4.6%	85.3%
Undergraduate Population	14.9%	20.5%	59.9%	10.3%	24.1%	62.2%
Mismatch in racial representation between faculty and students	-9.9	-17.4	+20.8	-5.5%	-19.5%	+23.1%

PUBLIC, FOUR-YEAR OR ABOVE	NEW ENGLAND			RHODE ISLAND		
	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Doctoral Degrees Granted	4.5%	5%	81.5%	4.3%	3.2%	71%
Faculty New Hires	5.2%	3%	81.2%	12.5%	5.4%	76.8%
Faculty (Full- & Part-Time)	2.3%	2.7%	75.5%	2.8%	3.4%	76.3%
Undergraduate Population	8.3%	11%	74.5%	7.9%	12.7%	72.2%
Mismatch in racial representation between faculty and students	-6	-8.3	+1	-5.1%	-9.3%	+4.1%

PRIVATE NOT-FOR-PROFIT, FOUR-YEAR OR ABOVE	NEW ENGLAND			RHODE ISLAND		
	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
Doctoral Degrees Granted	4.6%	7.9%	74.2%	5.8%	8%	82.6%
Faculty New Hires	6%	7.2%	79.5%	9.8%	7.8%	74.5%
Faculty (Full- & Part-Time)	4.7%	2.7%	72%	3.1%	3.5%	79.3%
Undergraduate Population	10.7%	12.2%	69.2%	7.9%	12.7%	72.2%
Mismatch in racial representation between faculty and students	-6	-9.5	+2.8	-4.8%	-9.2%	+7.1%

Source: NEBHE analysis of data from IPEDS for Title-IV participating, degree-granting postsecondary institutions. Data for faculty and undergraduate demographics are for 2018. Doctoral degree completion data are for 2019. Doctoral degrees counted include Ph.D., Ed.D., D.M.A., D.B.A., D.Sc., D.A., or D.M. as designated by the awarding institution