



College Admissions

70 New England Institutions of Higher Education State that Proficiency-Based Diplomas Do Not Disadvantage Applicants

Over the past decade, the movement to adopt proficiency-based approaches (<http://edglossary.org/proficiency-based-learning/>) to teaching, learning, and graduating has gained momentum throughout New England and the country, as more educators, parents, employers, and elected officials recognize that high educational standards and strong academic preparation are essential to success in today's world. With some parents wondering what potential impact proficiency-based education may have on their children or the college-admissions process, the New England Secondary School Consortium reached out to institutions of higher education throughout the region. We asked them about their support of proficiency-based learning and how non-traditional grading systems and transcripts might affect the admissions process. Throughout this process, the Consortium has worked closely with the New England Board of Higher Education (<http://www.nebhe.org/>), which published a white paper (http://www.nebhe.org/info/pdf/policy/Policy_Spotlight_How_Colleges_Evaluate_PB_HS_Transcripts_April_2016.pdf) in the *New England Journal of Higher Education* summarizing insights from a conversation on the topic with admissions leaders from highly selective colleges and universities in the region. During our many conversations, the following themes emerged:

1. Admissions offices receive a huge variety of transcripts, including transcripts from international schools, home-schooled students, and a wide variety of alternative educational institutions and programs that do not have traditional academic programs, grading practices, or transcripts.
2. Students with non-traditional transcripts—including "proficiency-based" or "competency-based" transcripts—will not be disadvantaged in any way during the admissions process. Colleges and universities simply do not discriminate against students based on the academic program and policies of the sending school, as long as those program and policies are accurately presented and clearly described.
3. As long as the school profile is comprehensive and understandable, and it clearly explains the rigor of the academic program, the technicalities of the school's assessment and grading system, and the characteristics of the graduating class, the admissions office will be able to understand the transcript and properly evaluate the strength of a student's academic record and accomplishments. In short, schools use so many different systems for grading, ranking, and tracking students that a school's system can only be properly understood when a transcript is accompanied by a comprehensive school profile. A class rank or GPA, for example, doesn't mean much unless the admissions office also has the "key" (i.e., the school profile) that it needs to understand the applicant's academic accomplishments and abilities in context.

- All the colleges and universities we spoke with strongly support public schools that are working to improve student preparation for postsecondary learning and success, including instructional strategies that equip students with the essential knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits they need to thrive and persist in a collegiate academic program and earn a degree.

In response to our questions, the following 70 public and private institutions of higher education from across New England also provided statements and letters stating—unequivocally—that students with proficiency-based grades and transcripts will not be disadvantaged in any way. Each statement is available for download:

Connecticut

- Asnuntuck Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
- Capital Community College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
- Central Connecticut State University
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
- Charter Oak State College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
- Connecticut College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/CT_Conn-College.pdf)
- Connecticut State Colleges and Universities
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
- Eastern Connecticut State University
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
- Gateway Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
- Housatonic Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
- Manchester Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
- Middlesex Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)

Maine

- Bowdoin College
(http://greatschoolspartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ME_Bowdoin.pdf)
- Central Maine Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_MCCS.pdf)
- Eastern Maine Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_MCCS.pdf)
- Husson University (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_Husson.pdf)
- Kennebec Valley Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_MCCS.pdf)
- Maine Community College System
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_MCCS.pdf)
- Northern Maine Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_MCCS.pdf)
- Southern Maine Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_MCCS.pdf)
- Thomas College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_Thomas.pdf)
- Unity College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_UnityCollege.pdf)
- University of Maine (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_UMS.pdf)

- content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
12. Naugatuck Valley Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
 13. Northwestern Connecticut Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
 14. Norwalk Community College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
 15. Quinebag Valley Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
 16. Southern Connecticut State University
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
 17. Three Rivers Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
 18. Tunxis Community College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
 19. University of Connecticut (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_UConn.pdf)
 20. Western Connecticut State University
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CT_StateCollegesUniversities.pdf)
 12. University of Maine at Augusta
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_UMS.pdf)
 13. University of Maine at Farmington
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_UMS.pdf)
 14. University of Maine at Fort Kent
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_UMS.pdf)
 15. University of Maine at Machias
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_UMS.pdf)
 16. University of Maine at Presque Isle
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_UMS.pdf)
 17. University of Maine System
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_UMS.pdf)
 18. University of Southern Maine
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_UMS.pdf)
 19. Washington County Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_MCCS.pdf)
 20. York County Community College
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ME_MCCS.pdf)

Massachusetts

1. Babson College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/MA_Babson.pdf)
2. Harvard University (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/MA_Harvard.pdf)
3. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/MA_MIT.pdf)

New Hampshire

1. Antioch University New England
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_AntiochUniversity.p)
2. Community College System of New Hampshire
(http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_CCoFNH.pdf)
3. Dartmouth College
(<http://greatschoolspartnership.org/wp->)

4. Tufts University (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/MA_Tufts.pdf)
5. Wellesley College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/MA_Wellesley.pdf)

Rhode Island

1. Community College of Rhode Island (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/RI_RIC.URI_CCRI_.pdf)
2. Rhode Island College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/RI_RIC.URI_CCRI_.pdf)
3. University of Rhode Island (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/RI_RIC.URI_CCRI_.pdf)
4. Granite State College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_USofNH.pdf)
5. Great Bay Community College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_CCoFH.pdf)
6. Keene State College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_USofNH.pdf)
7. Lakes Region Community College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_CCoFH.pdf)
8. Manchester Community College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_CCoFH.pdf)
9. Nashua Community College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_CCoFH.pdf)
10. NHTI-Concord's Community College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_CCoFH.pdf)
11. Plymouth State University (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_USofNH.pdf)
12. River Valley Community College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_CCoFH.pdf)
13. University of New Hampshire (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_UNH.pdf)
14. University System of New Hampshire (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_USofNH.pdf)
15. White Mountains Community College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NH_CCoFH.pdf)

Vermont

1. Castleton State College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/VT_Castleton.pdf)
2. Community College of Vermont (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/VT_CCV.pdf)
3. Johnson State College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/VT_JSC.pdf)
4. Lyndon State College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/VT_Lyndon.pdf)
5. University of Vermont (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/VT_UVM.pdf)
6. Vermont State Colleges (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/VT_VSC.pdf)
7. Vermont Technical College (http://newenglandssc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/VT_VTech.pdf)

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