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All In! Data Report

March 2019

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Executive Summary

All In! is a public/private coalition with a goal-oriented agenda to be achieved by 2025, targeting graduates of the Hartford Public Schools. Our two major goals are as follows:

- Increase the post-secondary enrollment rate from 61% to 70%;
- Increase the post-secondary completion rate from 24% to 50%.

At the time of the coalition's founding in 2016, these goals also included an increase in the high school graduation rate. As of January 2019, the Steering Committee has elected not to continue pursuing this goal.

This report presents an overview of performance against the two major goals by graduates of Hartford Public Schools. It also includes Action Team evaluation results. Our primary findings are:

1. Enrollment appears at first glance to have taken a hit, but this is likely not truly the case. The apparent large drop from 2017-2018 is most likely a combination of an anomalously high enrollment rate in 2017, and the fact that the class of 2018's full-year enrollment rate is not yet available.
2. Hartford students continue to move away from enrolling in 2-year institutions and towards 4-year institutions, even as the overall enrollment rate inches upward.
3. The Summer Transition Program (formerly Summer Melt) has had mixed results over the last two years but encouraging enough that it is continuing in 2019.
4. The Nearlies Action Team ran a small pilot for a few months. The results are difficult to be certain about but appear marginally positive. Hartford Promise has since taken over running this initiative in-house.
5. Postsecondary persistence and completion rates hold steady. The data on these indicators does not yet reflect cohorts which the coalition has intervened with.
6. Our goal for postsecondary enrollment seems reachable, with a necessary 1-2 percentage point improvement per year between now and 2025. Our goal for postsecondary completion requires a much steeper climb.
7. Across postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and completion, disparities by race/ethnicity, special education status, English learner status, and economic disadvantage are getting neither better nor worse. The coalition has so far taken no action targeted directly at any of these disparities.

Background

All In!

All In! is a coalition of public, corporate, and nonprofit organizations dedicated to improving key outcomes for Hartford Public School students. The Steering Committee includes Capital Workforce Partners, the Hartford Consortium for Higher Education, the Hartford Promise, Hartford Public Schools (HPS), the Office of the Mayor of Hartford, and the Travelers Foundation. Achieve Hartford serves as the backbone organization.

All In! is working to meet two major goals by 2025:

- Increase the post-secondary enrollment rate from 61% to 70%;
- Increase the 6-year post-secondary completion rate from 24% to 50%.

This report is intended to give an update on progress against these goals since the last report. It also includes some indicators not included in the previous report and excludes some indicators which were.

Data

All of the data used in this report comes from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) unless otherwise specified. This represents a change from previous reports, where there was data mixed in from the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). This is partly a result of having cut our high school graduation goal (where all the data came from CSDE), and partly a result of simplifying reporting on our postsecondary goals. As a result, some of the data in the postsecondary goals has changed slightly from our previous report.

Definitions

The following definitions hold for the remainder of this report and will not be reiterated. Unless otherwise noted, this is how these terms will be used.

- *Post-secondary enrollment rate* is defined as the percentage of graduates who enrolled in any post-secondary institution within one year of high school graduation.
- *Post-secondary retention rate* is defined as the percentage of enrolled students who returned for their second year of post-secondary education.
- *Post-secondary completion rate* is defined as the percentage of graduates who completed a degree at any 4-year or 2-year postsecondary degree within four, five, and six years of high school graduation.

Other terms may be defined in the text as necessary.

Post-Secondary Enrollment

The first thing to be aware of, across every figure in this section, is that the enrollment rates for the class of 2018 only cover students who enrolled in the fall. Spring 2019 enrollment is not yet available, and historically represents an increase in 4-6 percentage points over fall enrollment. Thus, while the decrease to 56% for 2018 looks very dramatic (Figure 1), it will most likely be revised to 60-62% once spring data is

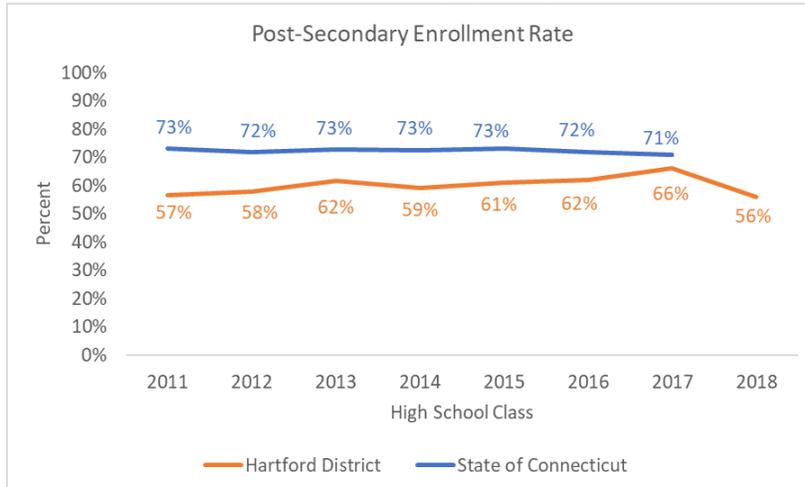


Figure 1. State of Connecticut data for 2016 and 2017 from CSDE, none available for 2018. All other data from NSC.

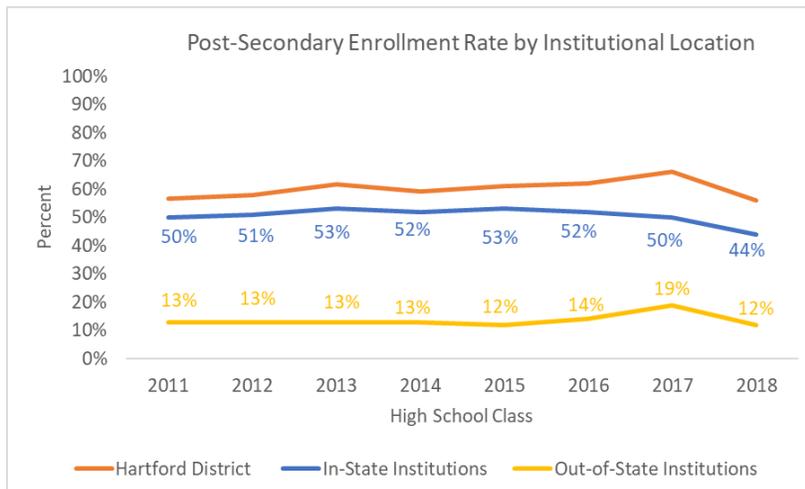


Figure 2.

only an extra 1-2 percentage points being added in the spring. Still, it is something we will continue to watch.

Updating our enrollment rates by institutional level (4-year vs. 2-year schools) reveals what is probably the most encouraging trend in this report, even if we cannot take credit for it. Since 2011, students have gradually shifted in favor of attending 4-year institutions, even as more attend school overall (Figure 3). While we support students attending whatever program is most appropriate for their goals and preparation levels, this is a heartening trend, as retention and completion rates are substantially higher for students at 4-year schools.

available— which is right in line with recent years. Unfortunately, this would still mean that rates had not improved.

More interesting is the large increase in enrollment for the Hartford class of 2017 (Figure 1). Looking at the other graphs in this section (Figures 2-5) which disaggregate by various factors, you can see that the increase occurred almost equally across subgroups.

The only case in which this is not true is when comparing in-state versus out-of-state institutions (Figure 2), and there we find our answer: the increased enrollment went entirely to out-of-state schools. We have not been able to determine why or how this happened in 2017, and it did not continue with the class of 2018, so it appears to be an anomaly.

It is possible that when spring 2019 data is available, 2018 will have similar out-of-state enrollment numbers. We consider this unlikely, as historically, out-of-state enrollment takes place almost entirely in the fall, with

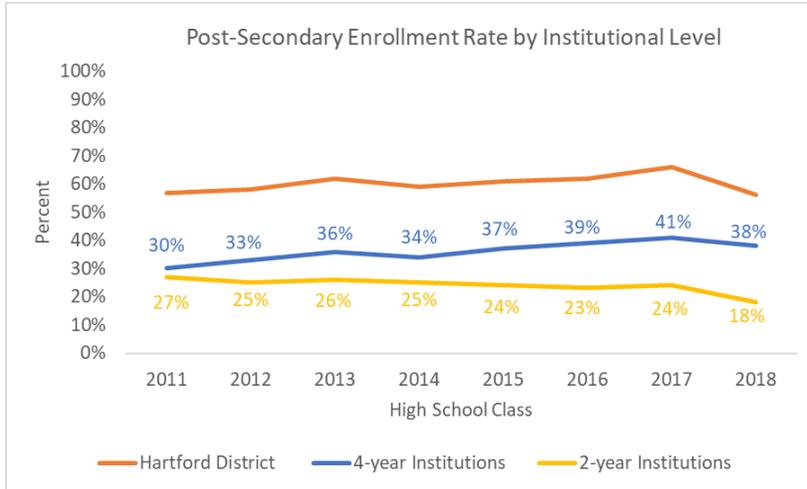


Figure 3.

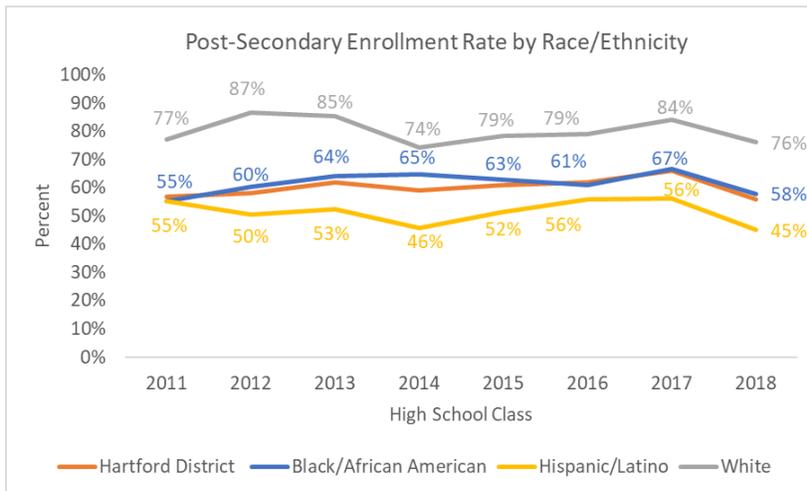


Figure 4.

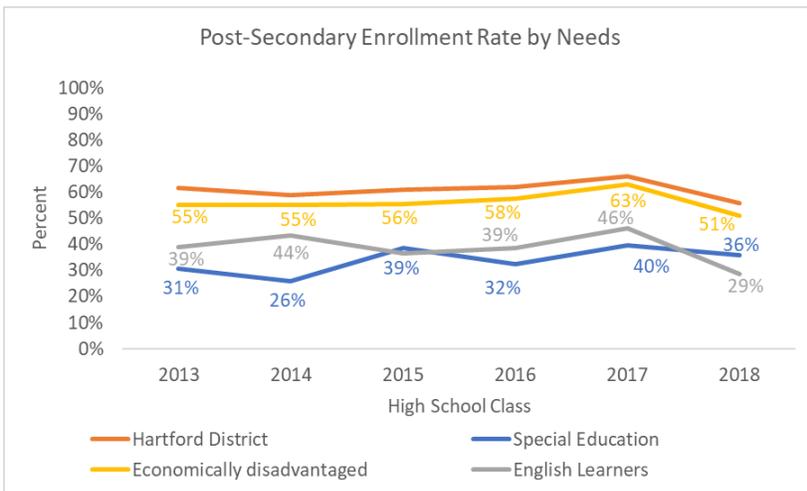


Figure 5.

Figures 4 and 5 display demographic breakdowns of student outcomes. You will notice that these lines seem less smooth than the others; this is partly due to the simple fact that they each represent fewer students, which means small numerical changes can lead to percentage changes that look large.

Overall, as alluded to earlier, most of these lines follow the same pattern from 2016-18 as the overall district trend: anomalous bump in 2017, and a dip in 2018 which we predict will be less severe than it appears once full data is available.

Two other divergences from that pattern emerge. Among special education students, the enrollment rate does not seem to have dropped as severely as it did for other groups in 2018. In any given year, only around 50 of these students enroll in college after graduating from a Hartford Public Schools high school. This is probably a case where the trend line looks unusual because of small numbers.

Hispanic/Latino students, on the other hand, are the only demographic group which did not experience an enrollment bump in 2017. Again, because we have been unable to conclusively determine what caused that bump, we are uncertain why this should be the case. It bears further investigation, and may be a clue to the ultimate answer.

Action Team: Summer Transition Program

The Summer Transition Program (previously referred to simply as “Summer Melt”) aims to increase the enrollment rate by hiring college students to spend the summer helping new graduates through the enrollment process. Those students are hired and supervised by the Hartford Consortium for Higher Education, and in 2018, were provided training by a researcher from the University of Connecticut.

The program has run for two summers now, with mixed results. For these two years, students were nominated for the program by their school counselors, based on the individual counselors’ determinations

Year	2017	2018
# students in cohort	127	163
# students participated	80	121
# students enrolled	66	49
% participated	63%	74%
% enrolled	52%	30%

Figure 6.

of which students truly intended to attend college, yet were still at risk of not attending in the fall.

Because of that, it was interesting when half of the 2017 cohort enrolled—for a supposedly high-risk group, that’s hardly lower than the district’s overall results. We temporarily believed, after seeing the 2017 enrollment bump for the district, that the program had been responsible. The data now suggests that bump camp

from out-of-state enrollment, so this is unlikely to be the case, since comparatively few of our students left Connecticut for school.

In any case, for our second year, we recruited a larger cohort and successfully engaged with a greater percentage of those students, thanks to improved collaboration with the school counselors. But in the end, their results were worse. Obviously, two data points don’t make a trend, but this is still concerning. We are not certain what caused this decrease, but suspect two major factors: first, that the anomalously high enrollment district-wide in 2017 inflated our results in 2017; and second, that in recruiting a larger cohort in 2018, we captured a greater number of students who did not seriously intend to enroll.

Action Team: Nearlies

The Nearlies Action Team was a brief experiment for the coalition in early 2018. Junior and senior students who were nearly eligible to become Hartford Promise Scholars were dubbed, appropriately, “Nearlies,” and targeted for intervention. The goal was to pair them with adult mentors who could help them get

Participating School	Yes	No
# of junior nearlies	16	39
# of senior nearlies	14	37
# of seniors who became eligible	5	9
% of seniors who became eligible	36%	24%

Figure 7.

over the eligibility line through small improvements in GPA and attendance.

The program was piloted at 3 participating high schools Bulkeley High School, Global Communications Academy, and Pathways Academy), with the intent of expanding to the others if successful. In the participating

schools, 36% of senior Nearlies became eligible, while only 24% did the same at non-participating schools. The numbers are much too small to conclusively call this a success, and the program was only able to run for a few months.

Ultimately, the Steering Committee opted not to pursue another year with this initiative, but the Hartford Promise has continued it on their own.

Post-Secondary Persistence

The post-secondary persistence rate is the rate of students who enroll in college during their first year after graduating high school and then return for their second year. While the coalition has not defined a specific goal for persistence, data on this measure is presented here because it is often cited as one of the largest stumbling blocks to post-secondary completion and is thus a good leading indicator of post-

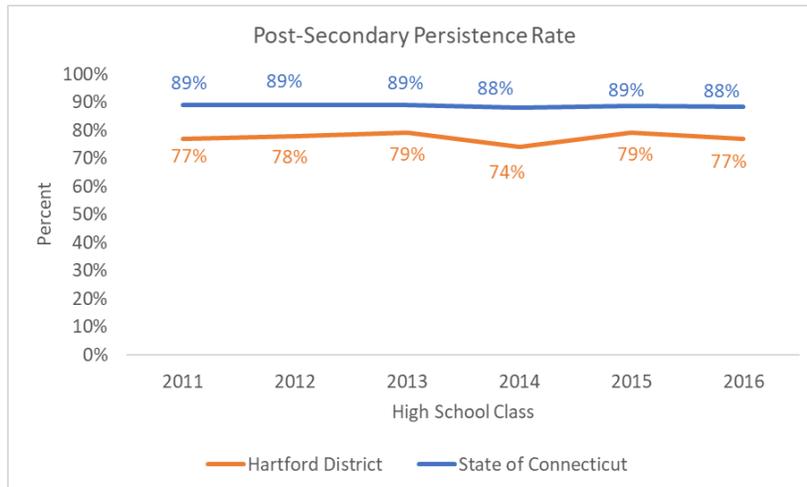


Figure 8. State of Connecticut data for 2015 and 2016 from CSDE, all other data from NSC.

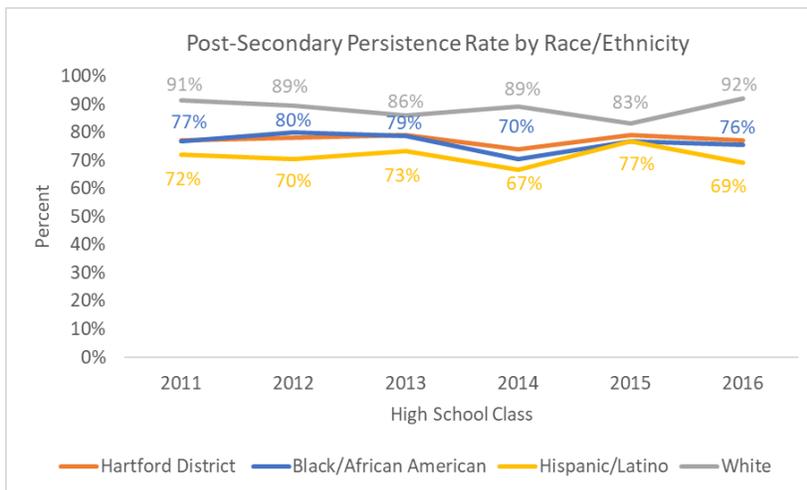


Figure 9.

Black/African-American students are closely in line with the district averages; white students are consistently above it, though by inconsistent amounts; and Hispanic/Latino students, are just below the district average. This makes sense, as there are comparatively few white students in the district, so their data should not have much effect on the average. The gap between Hispanic/Latino and Black/African-American students varies from year to year, ranging from none to 10 percentage points. This gap does not seem to be following any particular pattern over the years included in this data.

secondary completion. Because this data necessarily lags by a couple of years, the most recent data available for this metric is for the class of 2016. This means that none of the data presented represents any effect the coalition may be having, since the first cohort we worked with was the class of 2017. Additionally, the first cohort we're doing *persistence* work with is the class of 2018, so we have no outcomes data on that work yet.

As one would expect given the other data presented above, there is a large gap between Hartford and Connecticut at large (Figure 8), though not quite as large as the gaps for other indicators. Our last report ended with the class of 2014, so we were concerned with whether the large drop that year was the beginning of a trend. Luckily, this does not appear to be the case.

Disaggregating the data by student race/ethnicity (Figure 9) reveals similar patterns to the ones seen above in enrollment:

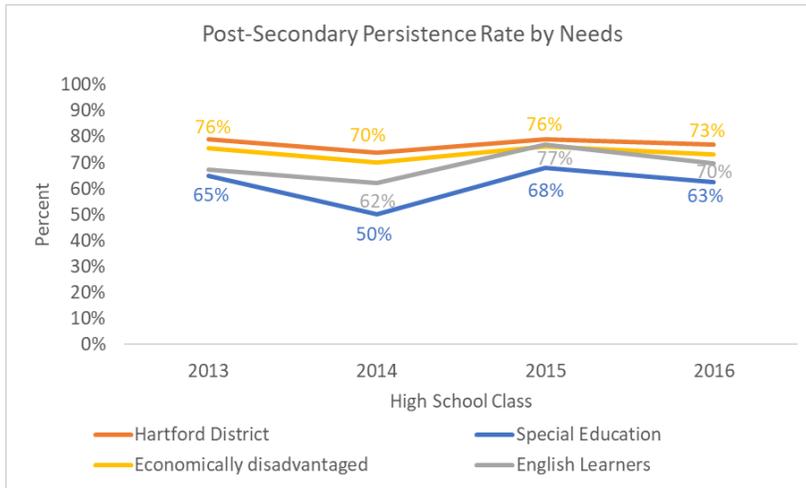


Figure 10.

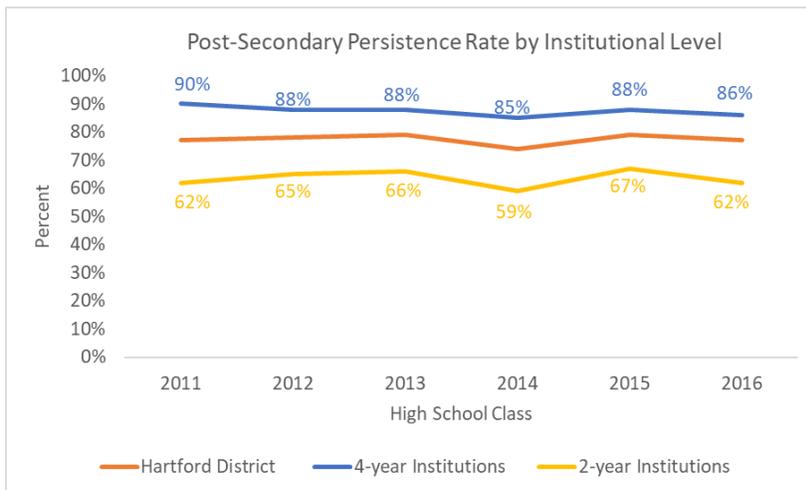


Figure 11.

Checking the disaggregated results by need categories does not reveal any surprises, nor contain any particularly illuminating trends. Special education students and English learners both have results which fluctuate a lot, and as before with the enrollment data, this is due to very small numbers (around 50, in each case) amplifying any small changes.

A comparison of students attending 4-year and 2-year institutions shows that students at 4-year schools are consistently persisting at rates just under 90%, which is very good news. Students at 2-year institutions are not faring as well, and their results are a bit more inconsistent. However, as stated above, the trend among Hartford's graduates is leaning more towards 4-year schools every year, which will hopefully contribute to a gradual improvement in overall persistence rates.

Post-Secondary Completion

Once again, this data does not in any way reflect on the activities of this coalition. In fact, this outcome is not something we will be able to definitively take credit for improving for a few years, still. It seems probable that the first cohort whose post-secondary completion rate will be affected by this coalition is the class of 2017, unless students currently enrolled in college from earlier cohorts are targeted for some

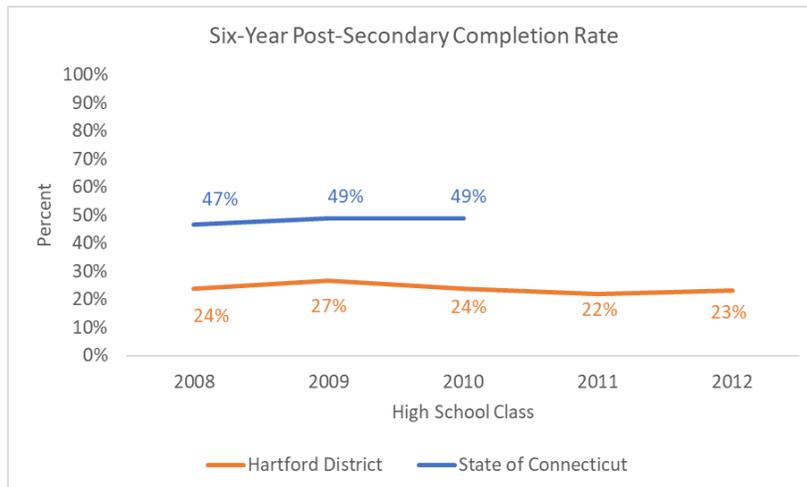


Figure 12. State of Connecticut data for the classes of 2011 and 2012 not available.

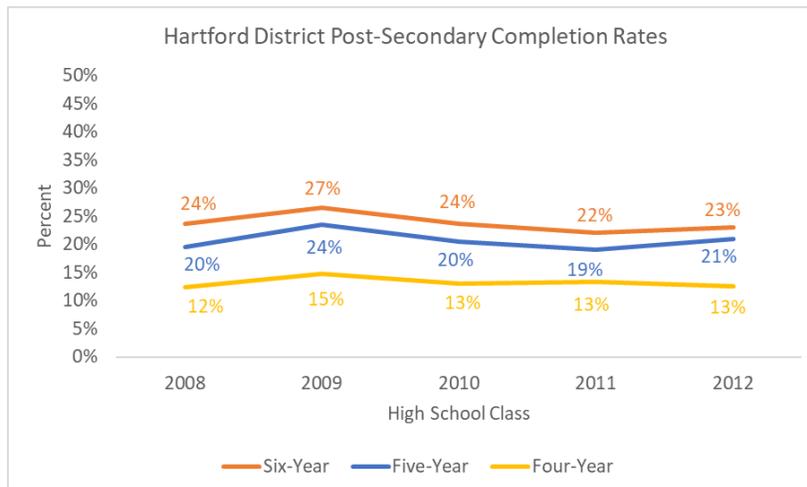


Figure 13.

kind of intervention. We will not be able to see the six-year completion rate of the class of 2017 until late 2023, though we should be able to see their four-year completion rate by late 2021.

As you can see in Figure 12, the trend is basically flat, with the exception of the class of 2009. While this is discouraging, it should at least simplify our analysis of what, if any, impact the coalition has had once cohorts we've intervened with start graduating.

The four- and five-year graduation rates are strong leading indicators of the six-year graduation rate, and so are included in Figure 13.

Unfortunately, as can be seen in Figure 1, the four-year rate is trending flat for at least the next couple of cohorts. Given that, it is unlikely that the six-year rate will move for several years. But this highlights the urgency with which we must act to improve outcomes for the class of 2017 and beyond—there's no time like the present.

Reaching Our Goals

This update to our original Baseline Data Report makes it clear how ambitious our three primary goals are. While progress is unlikely to take place in a linear fashion, it is revealing to give a rough idea of what kind of linear progress would be required to reach our goals.

Necessary Yearly Progress to Reach the Goal										
High school cohort	2016 (current)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Post-secondary enrollment	62%	66%	56%	58%	60%	62%	64%	66%	68%	70%

Figure 14.

Necessary Yearly Progress to Reach the Goal										
High school cohort	2010 (current)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Post-secondary completion	24%	22%	23%	27%	31%	35%	39%	43%	47%	50%

Figure 15.

In these two tables, you can see the current data in red (meaning the most recently available data, as presented in the rest of this report), the first All In! intervention cohort in blue, and the 2025 goals in orange (note in Figure 15 that for 6-year post-secondary completion, the 2025 goal must be met by the high school class of 2019). The rate of progress for post-secondary enrollment (Table 1) does not seem particularly steep, at only two additional percentage points per year; plus, it is likely that the true rate for the class of 2018 is 60-62%.

The rate of progress needed to reach the goal on post-secondary completion is much more daunting. Over the course of the next 7 cohorts, Hartford will need to attain an average yearly increase of nearly 4 percentage points. Again, the earliest cohort for whom we will see the impact of All In! interventions is the class of 2017. Given that, our interventions must be strong enough to more than double this rate within three cohorts.

The coalition must focus deliberately on post-secondary persistence and retention to have any hope of accomplishing that goal. While not yet far enough along to be included in this report, the coalition has indeed launched an Action Team aimed at improving the retention of first-year students. We look forward to including the results of that intervention in our next report.