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# From Access to Success in the California Community Colleges:



## Performance, Policy, and Practice



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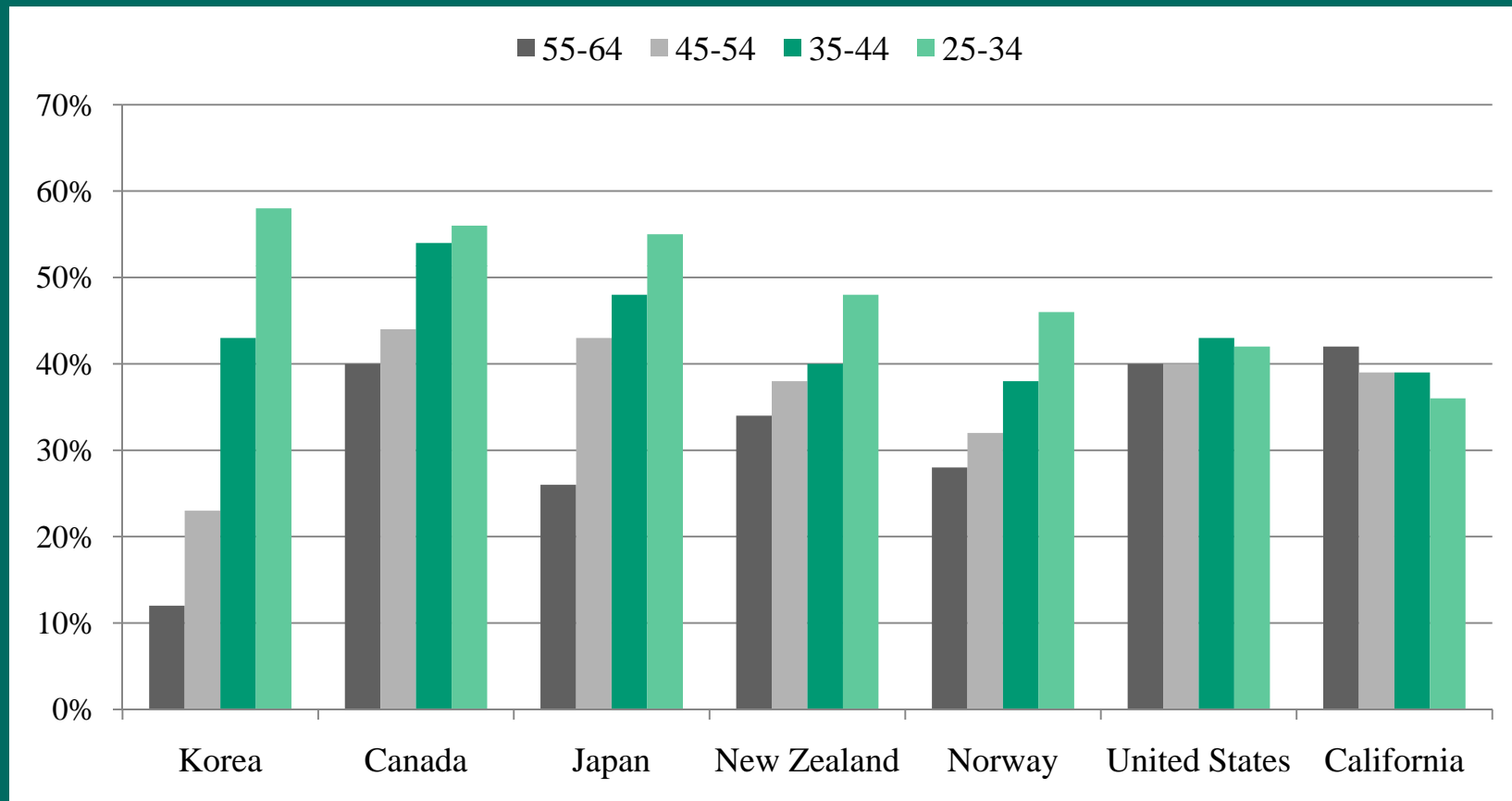
## Topics

- California higher education performance challenges
- The state policy perspective
- The campus perspective – what you can do

# *Statewide Performance*



## Percent of Adults with Associate Degree or Higher by Age Group – Leading OECD Countries, the U.S., and California



Sources: National data are from the Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation, *Education at a Glance 2010*; Not shown on the graph are Ireland, Denmark, Belgium, and Australia, which also rank ahead of the U.S. on attainment among young adults (and have increasing attainment levels among younger populations); Data for California are from the American Community Survey 2006-2008 3-year Estimates

# California Is Becoming Less Educated Than Other States

(Rank Among States in % with College Degrees)

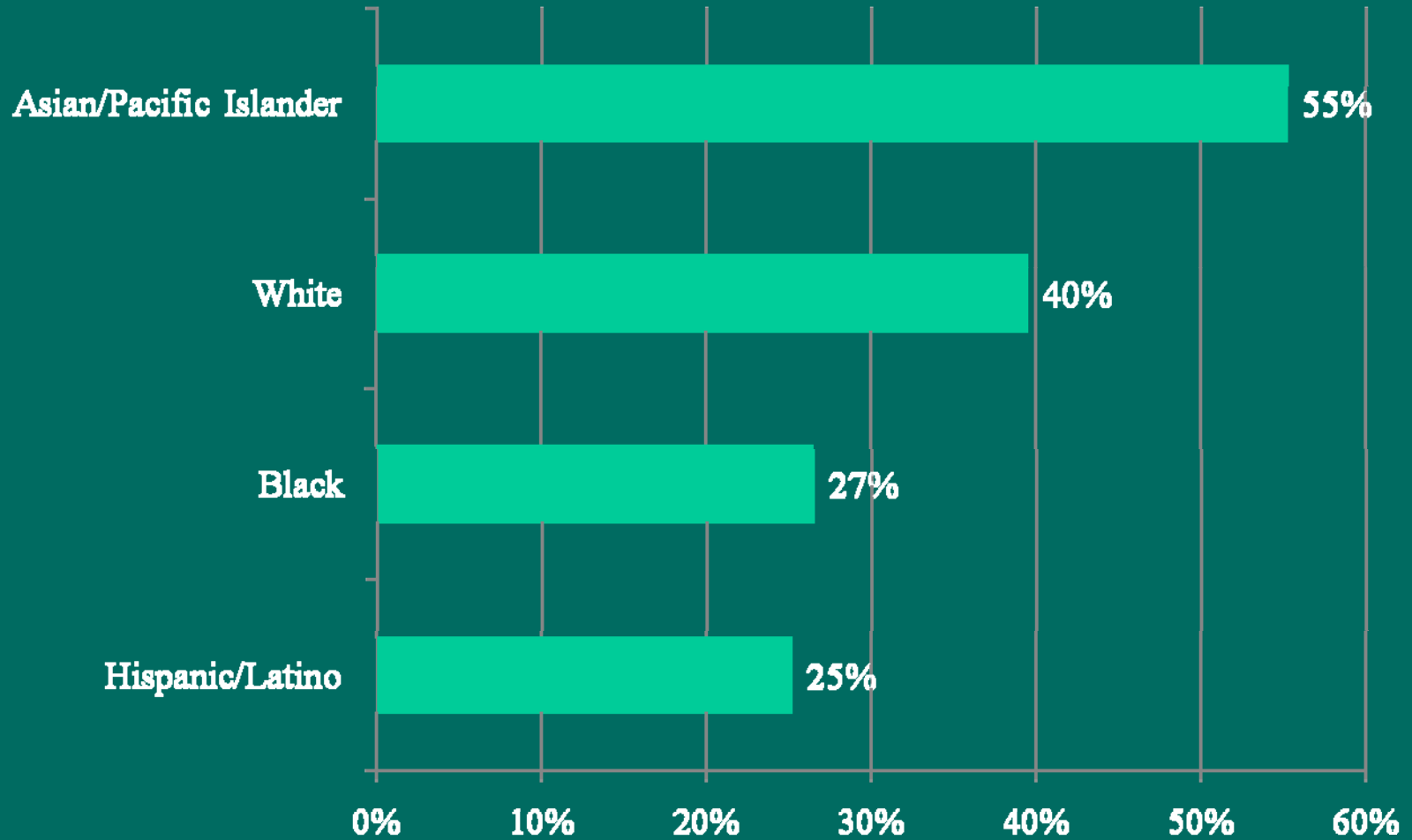
Age Group:	Assoc. or Higher	Bach. or Higher
>64	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
45-64	14 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>
35-44	26 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>
25-34	31 <sup>st</sup>	26 <sup>th</sup>

## *The Grades are In:*

California lags most other states in important aspects of higher education performance

- 45<sup>th</sup> in share of HS students taking advanced math/science
- 40<sup>th</sup> in rate of HS grads going directly to college
- 47<sup>th</sup> in number of degrees/certificates awarded in relation to enrollment
- Huge variations by region and race/ethnicity

# Racial/Ethnic Gaps in Share of HS Graduates Completing a-g

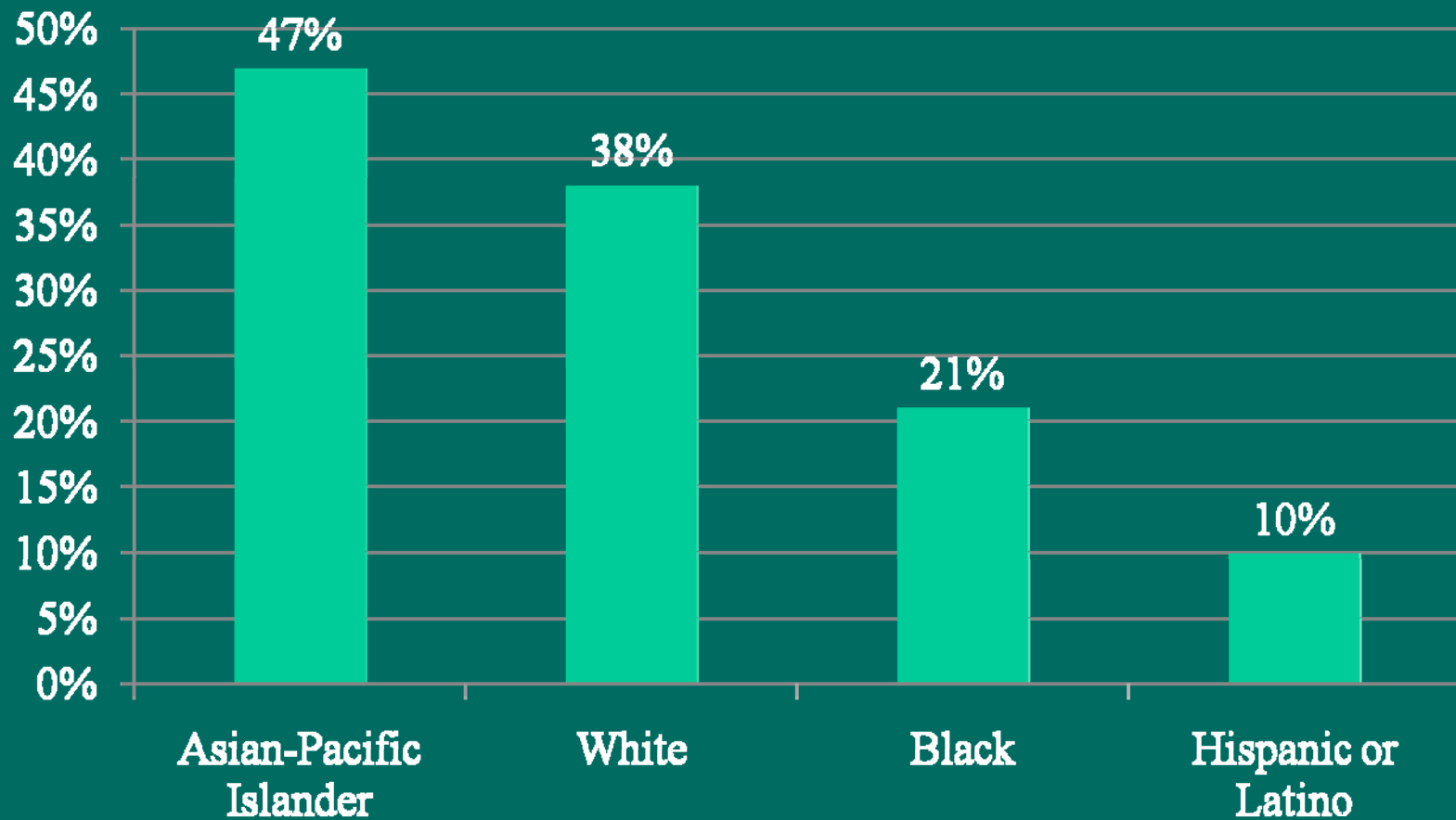


## Racial/Ethnic Gaps in College Enrollment

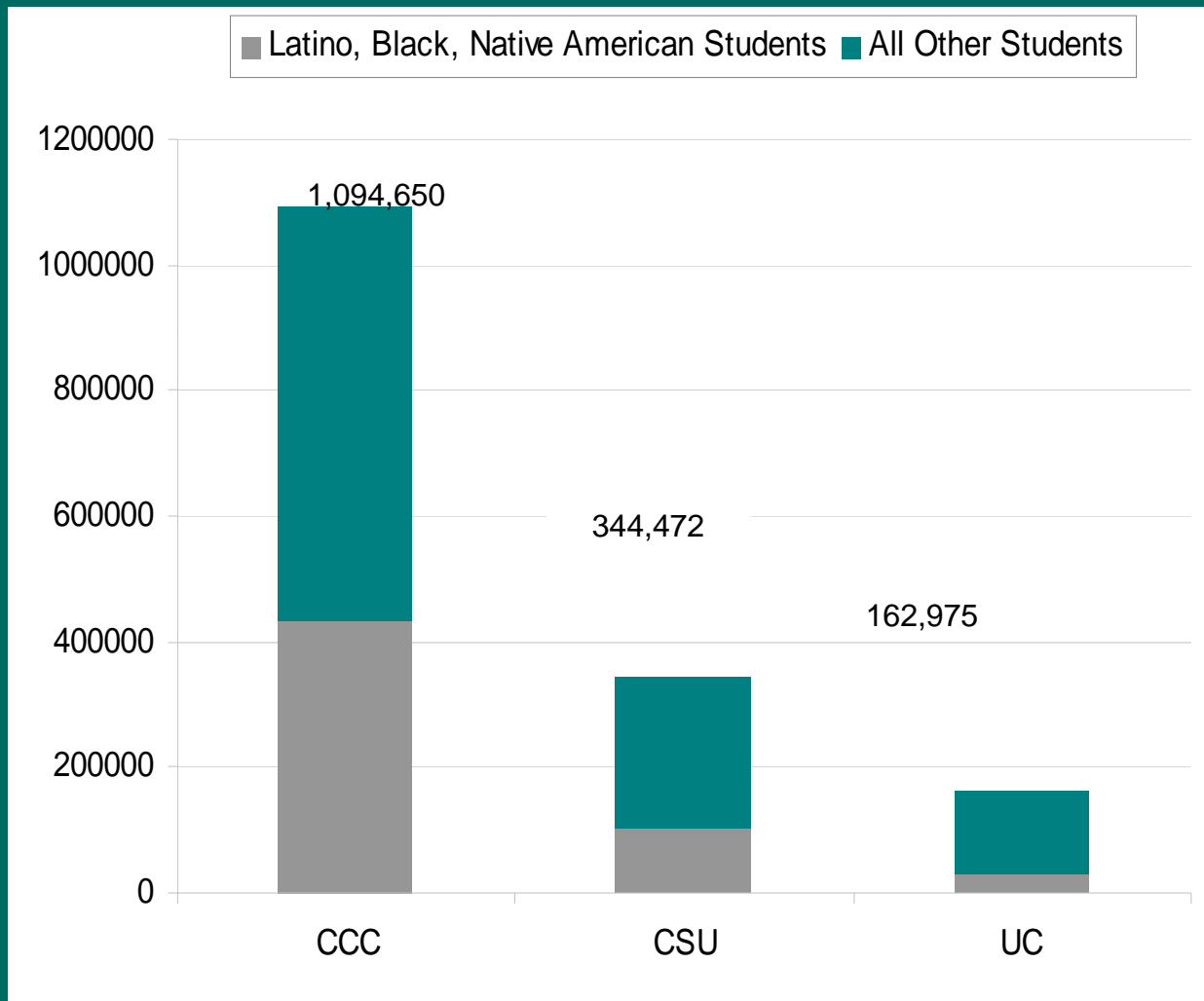
Race/Ethnicity	Percent of 18-24 Year Olds Enrolled in College
White	45%
Black	35%
Hispanic or Latino	27%



## Racial/Ethnic Gaps in Percent of Adults with a BA



# Community Colleges are Key to Improving Education Levels





## Opportunity and Challenge

### CCC students are the future CA workforce

- 75% of public postsecondary enrollments
- 80% of Latinos
- Latino % of working-age pop. from 34% to 50% by 2040
- 16% of working-age Latino adults have a college degree (associate or higher), compared to 50% of white adults

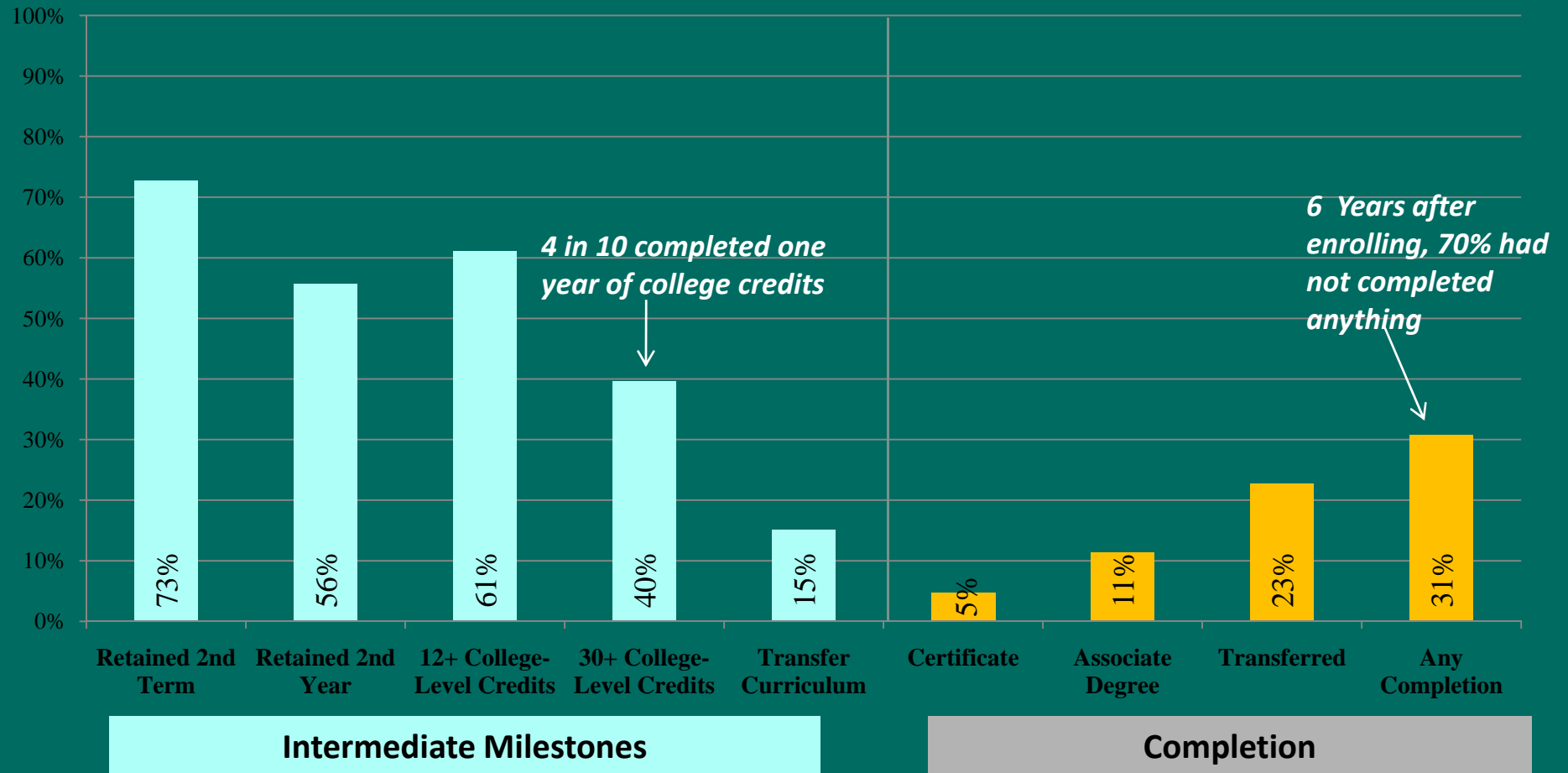
### BUT.....

- Most CCC students are not prepared for college work
- Most attend part-time; work too much for college success
- Inadequate budgets – need to do more with less

# *California Community Colleges Performance*

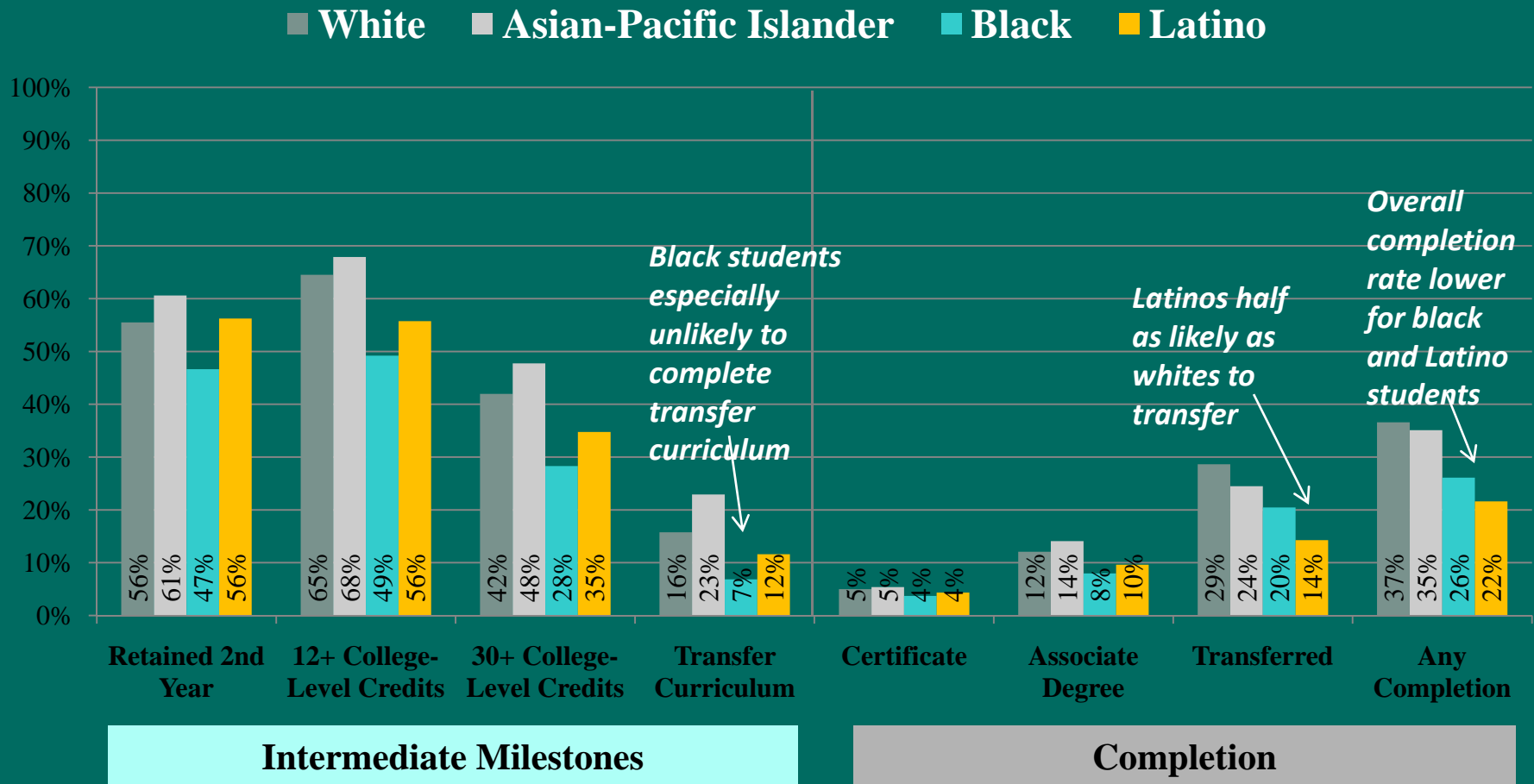


# Too Few Students Reach Milestones on the Road to Degree Completion



Note: students can be double-counted in the certificate, associate degree, and transfer measures

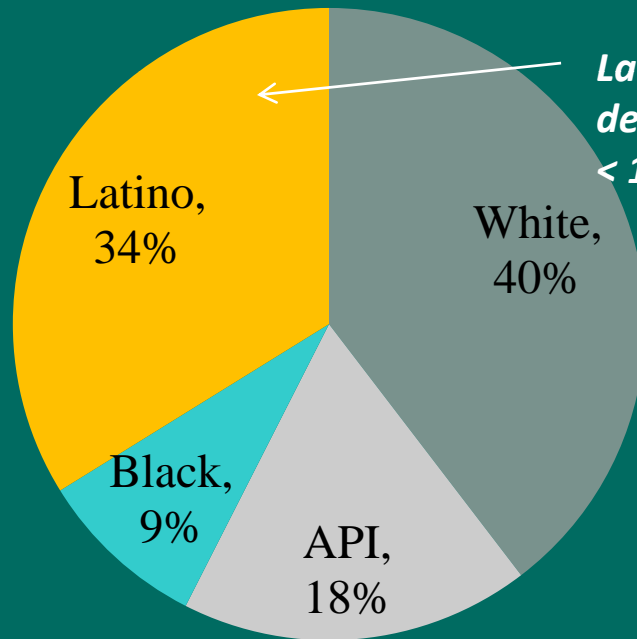
# Latino and Black Students Less Likely than White and Asian Students to Reach Milestones



Note: students can be double-counted in the certificate, associate degree, and transfer measures

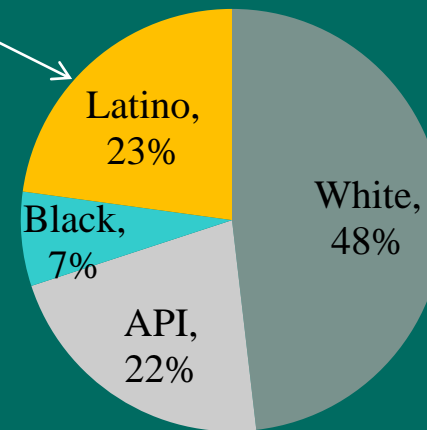
# Under-Represented Minority Students are a Smaller Share of Completers than of Degree Seekers

## Degree Seekers

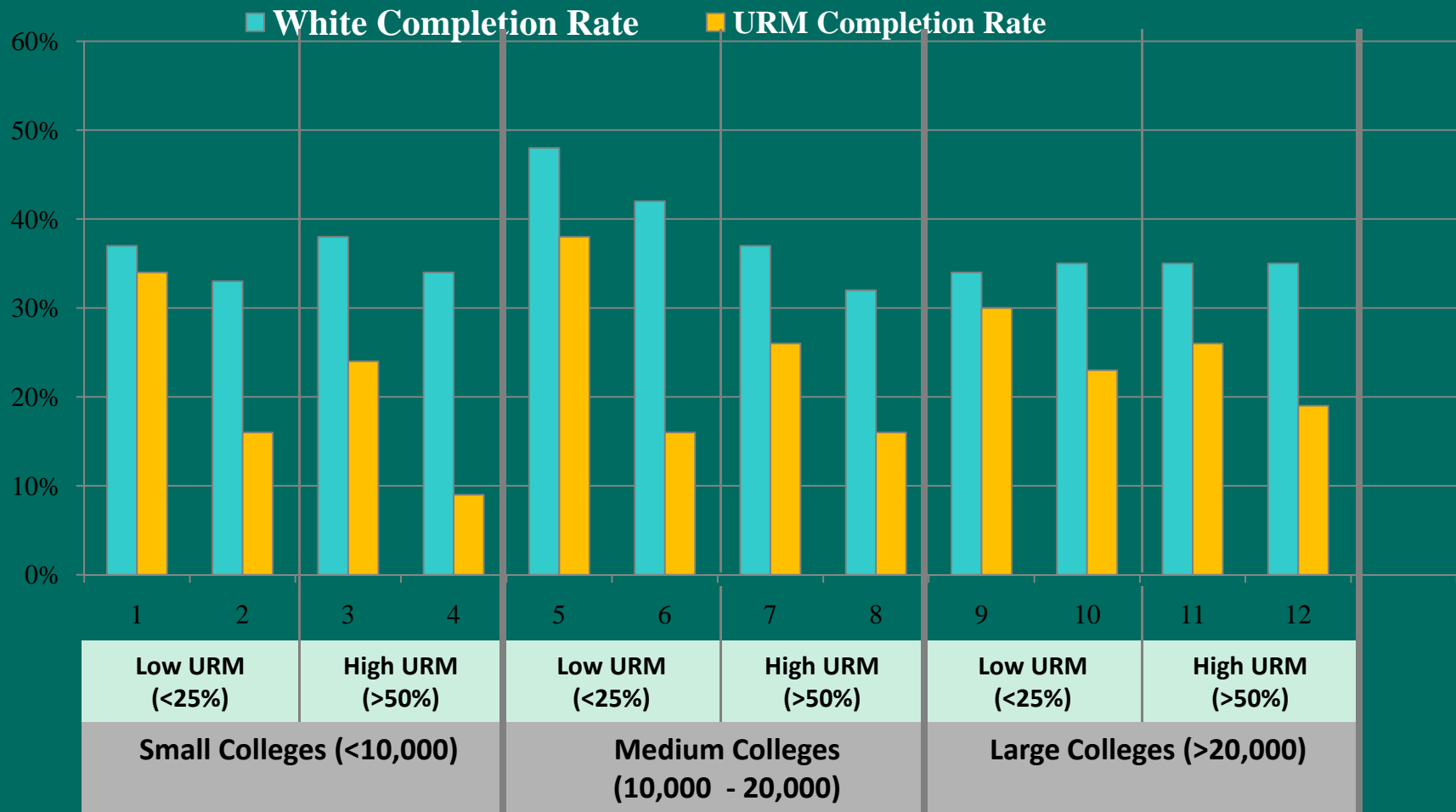


*Latinos were 1/3 of degree-seekers but < 1/4 of completers*

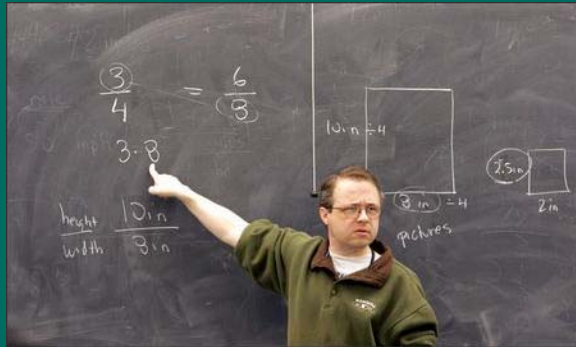
## Completers



# Demographics are Not Destiny: Colleges of Similar Size and Demographic Profile Produce Very Different Outcomes




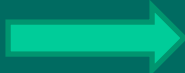


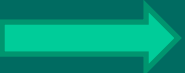





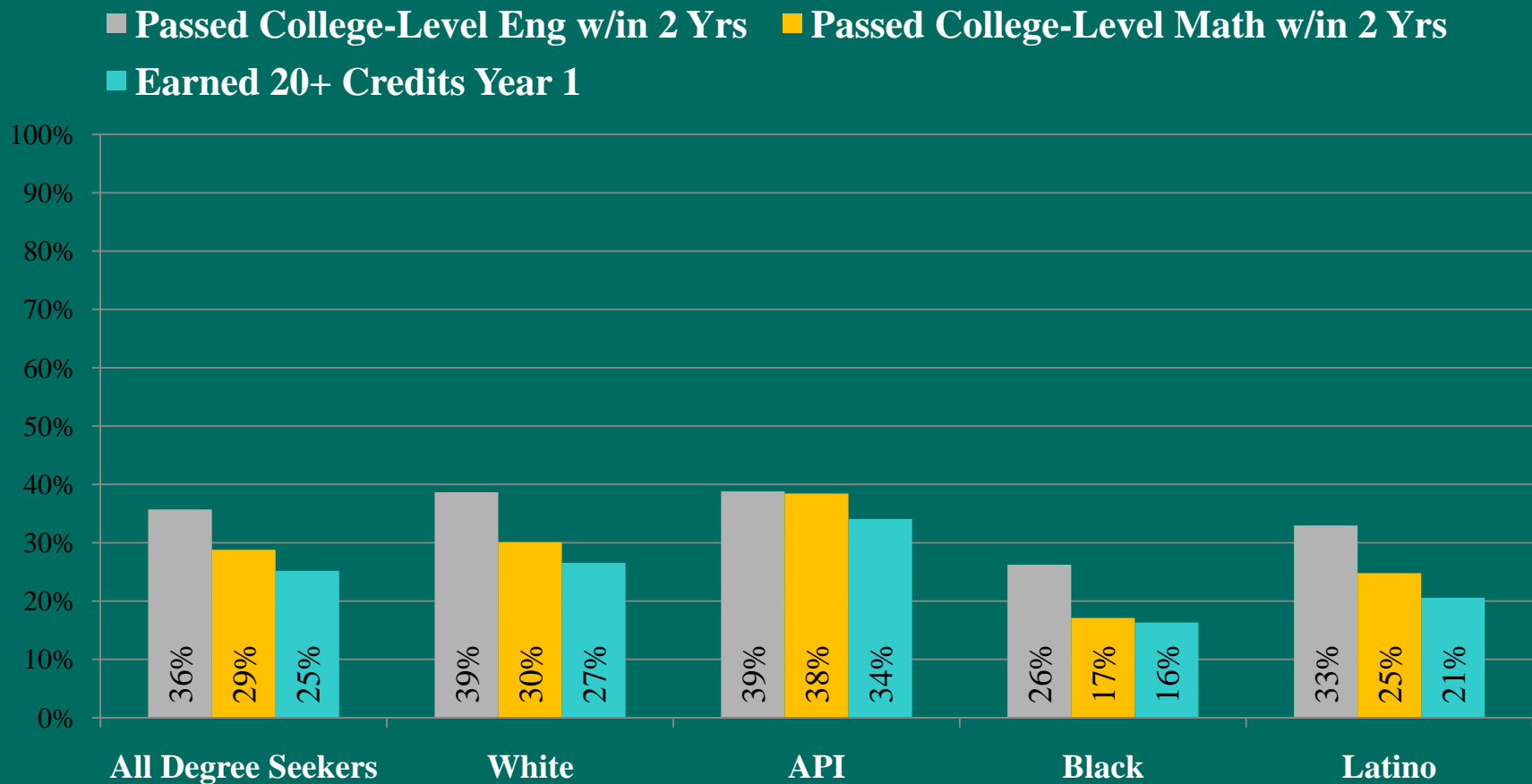
## Some Enrollment Patterns are More Successful

- Accumulate credit early, e.g., 20+ in first year
- Pass college English/math within 2 years
- Attend full-time (or close to it)
- Take “college success” course
- Enroll continuously (don’t stop out and restart)
- Earn summer credits
- Limit course withdrawals
- Limit registering late for classes

## Some Examples – Shows Value in Monitoring Patterns as Well as Progression

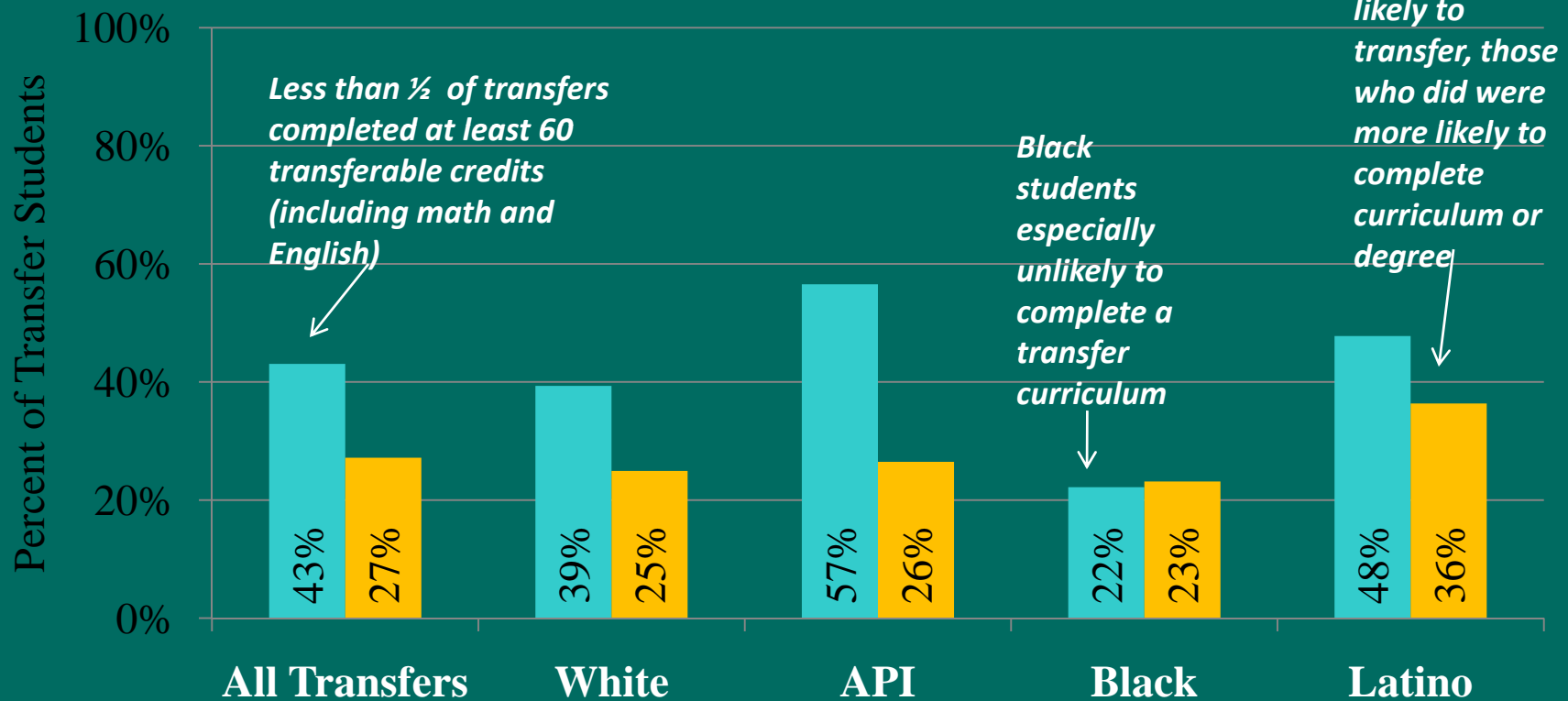
- Passed college-level English within 2 years?
  - Yes  50% completed
  - No  20% completed
- Passed college-level math within 2 years?
  - Yes  55% completed
  - No  21% completed
- Accumulated at least 20 credits in first year?
  - Yes  59% completed
  - No  21% completed

# Few Students Follow Successful Enrollment Patterns; Racial Gaps Appear Here as Well



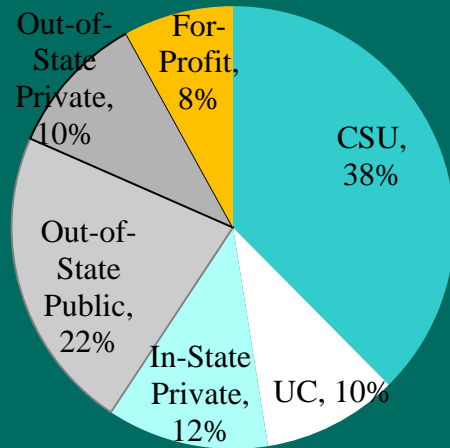
# Transfer Doesn't Mean Completing Two Years of Credit, Especially for Black Students

- % of Transfers that Completed Transfer Curriculum
- % of Transfers that Completed Associate Degree

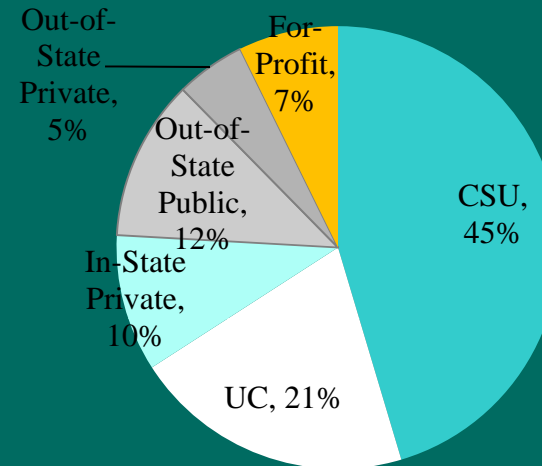


# Transfer Destination Varies by Race/Ethnicity

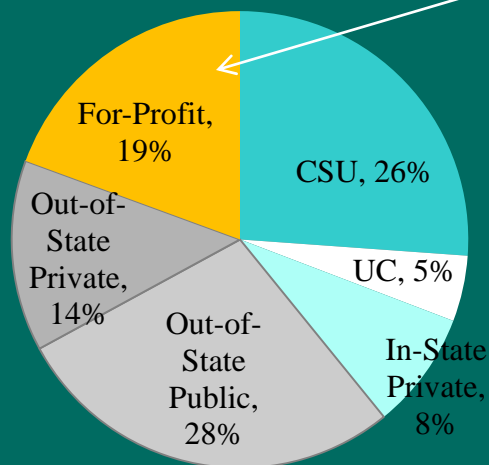
**White Transfer Students**



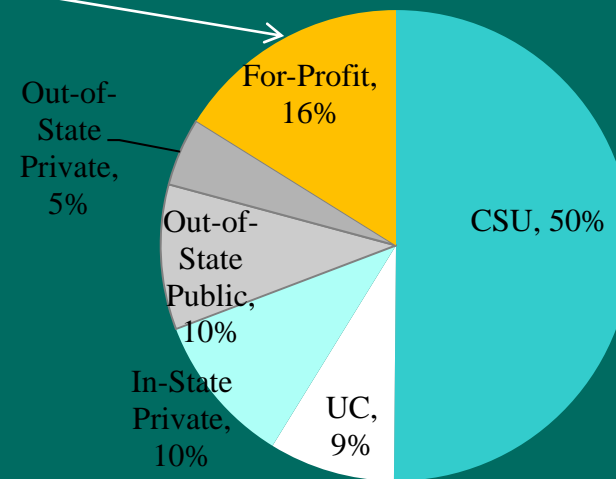
**API Transfer Students**



**Black Transfer Students**

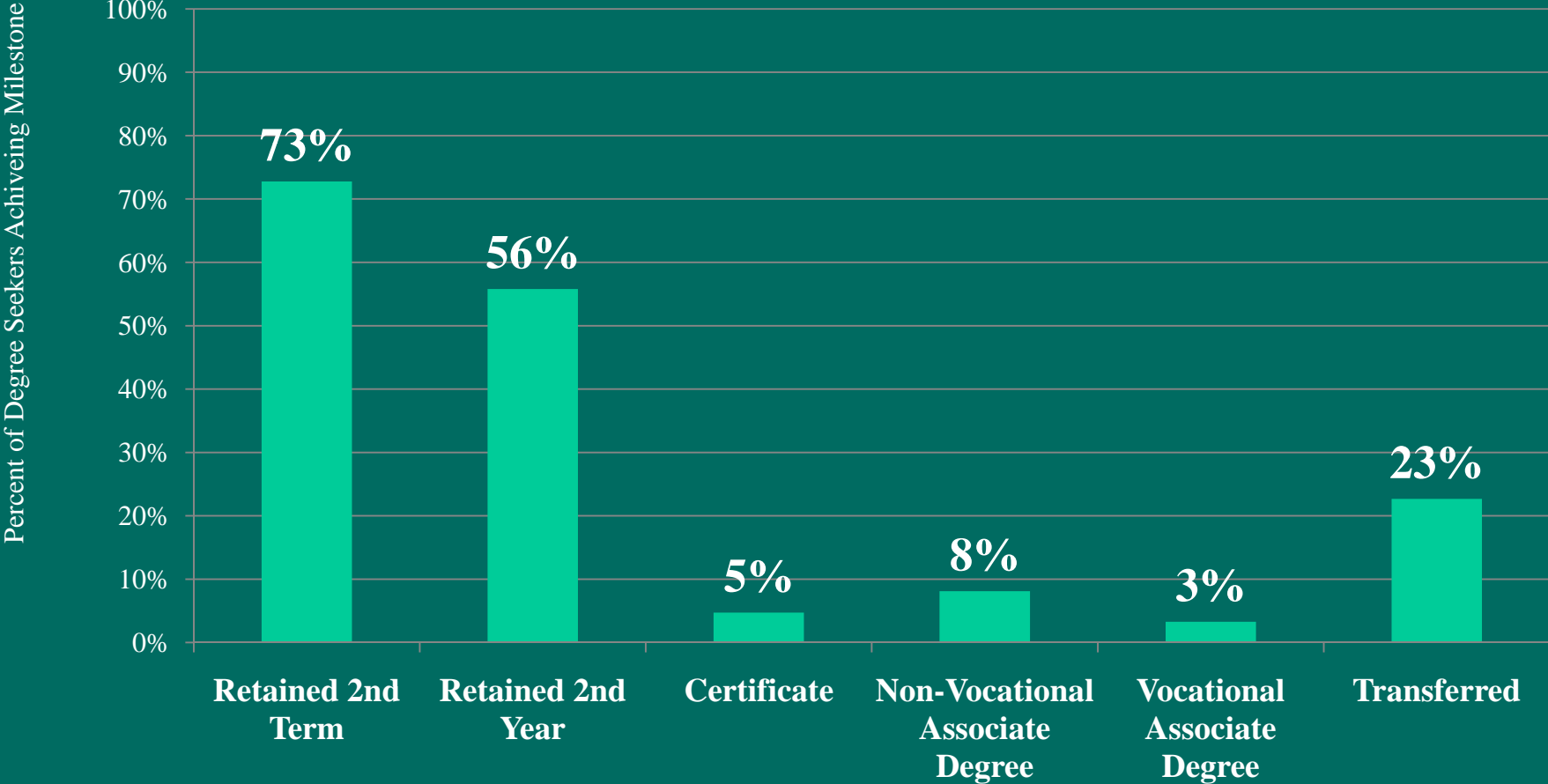


**Latino Transfer Students**

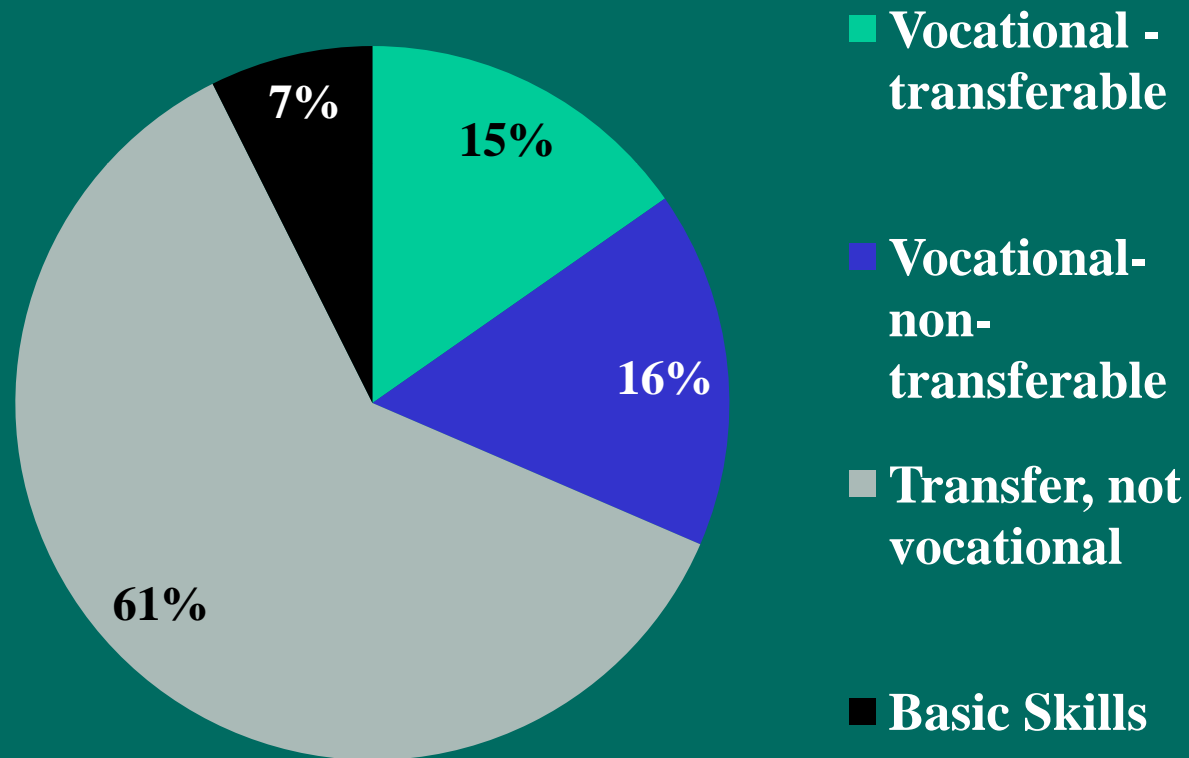


***Black and Latino students twice as likely as white and API students to enroll in a for-profit institution***

# Few CTE Completions



## Nearly One-Third of Course Enrollments are Vocational



# *Policy*







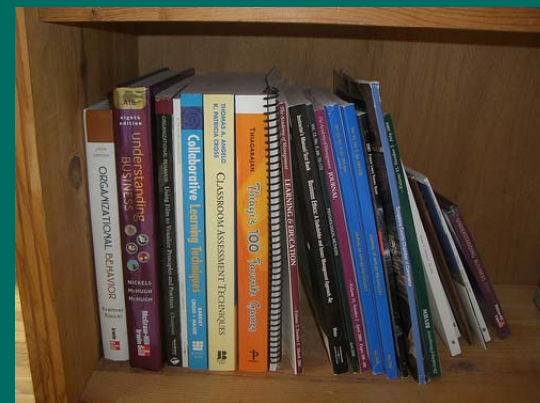
## Why Policy Matters

- Policy can make it more (or less) possible and more (or less) urgent for colleges to produce higher student success and for students to be more successful
- Commitment to a policy agenda could help the CCC achieve its student success goals – especially for under-prepared students.



## Much is Known about what Works (From Research)

- Increased readiness for college
- Early success/basic skills
- Effective enrollment patterns
- Clear goals and pathways
- Intensive, integrated student support
- Using data to inform decisions





## Many CCC Policies are not Aligned with What Works for Student Success

- Readiness
  - Few prerequisites – sends message to high schools that readiness doesn't matter
  - 112 local assessment and placement practices – conveys no clear signal of what is college readiness
  - State funding discourages concurrent enrollment
- Early Success/Basic Skills
  - Assessment and placement are not mandatory
  - Students can delay remediation
  - Minimal use of prerequisites



## Policies not Aligned with Success (cont.)

- Enrollment patterns
  - No incentives for full-time enrollment (fee or aid policies)
  - No FAFSA required for BOG waiver
  - Lax policies on late registration, repeats, withdrawals
- Clear goals and pathways
  - Counseling limited by 50% law
  - No process for declaring *program* of study
  - Matriculation policies weakly enforced – e.g. academic plans
  - Credentials not emphasized; no applied associate degree; complex variety of certificates and requirements



## Policies not Aligned with Success (cont.)

- Intensive, integrated student support
  - Categorical program requirements
  - 50% law
- Data-driven decisions
  - ARCC – no data on students with < 12 units completed
  - ARCC – no breakdowns by race/ethnicity
  - No data on who *needs* remediation
  - No consistency in “levels” of basic skills
  - No data on academic *programs*



## Some Promising Developments

- SB 1440 – transfer associate degree
- Incentives for common assessment
- Early Assessment
- Proposed prerequisite policy change
- League Commission report
- Chancellor's Student Success Task Force



## But Lost time = Lots of Catching Up

Other states' cultures more amenable to reform:

- Accept completion as measure of student success
- Fewer rules and regulations
- More able to consider statewide approaches
- More willing to impose structures on students

Other states making more progress on policy reforms:

- Financial rewards for progress and success
- Common assessment/placement; early remediation
- Clearer pathways toward certificates and degrees



## Accomplishing the Vision Requires Reconsidering Core Assumptions

1. ***Inputs*** should be monitored, not ***outcomes***
2. Extensive ***rules and regulations*** are needed; ***flexibility*** will lead to bad decisions
3. ***Choice*** for students serves them better than ***structure***
4. ***Local*** autonomy should be safeguarded against ***statewide*** approaches



## From Assumptions that Preserve Status Quo to Principles that Promote Change

### Assumptions

1. Inputs/FTE
2. Rules
3. Student choices
4. Local option



### Principles

1. Outcomes/Success
2. Flexibility for leadership
3. Structure/guidance
4. Statewide solutions



## Some Policy Reforms that Support Student Success

- ✓ Common, mandatory assessment - clear readiness message
- ✓ Major/program declaration after reasonable period of time
- ✓ Completion of basic skills in set period (2 yrs?)
- ✓ Greater use of course prerequisites
- ✓ Required academic progress for BOG fee waiver renewal
- ✓ More spending flexibility (e.g., 50% law)
- ✓ More structure and consistency in degree/certificate requirements across colleges and programs



## Make Student Success Matter – to Colleges

Change incentives built into core funding:

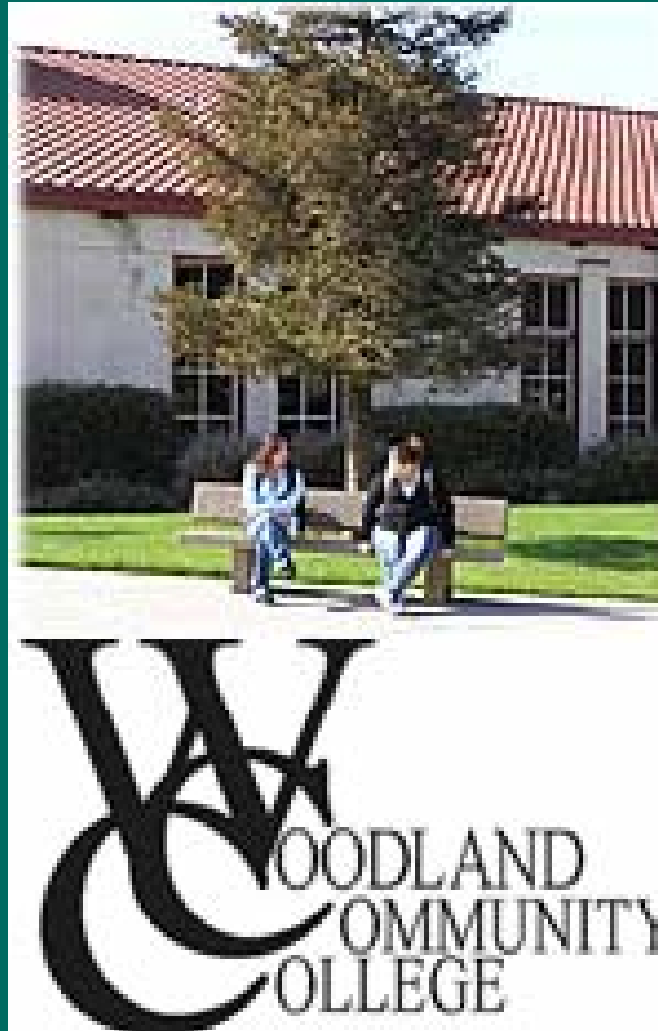
- Reward colleges for course completion and other measures of student *progression*
- Reward colleges for closing achievement gaps on relevant measures
- Give colleges flexibility to use resources to achieve these desirable outcomes – accountability for outcomes, not plans and processes

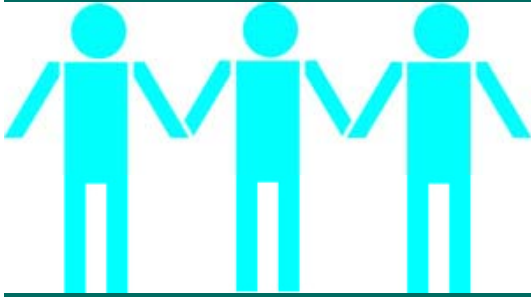


## Make Student Success Matter – to Students

- Eliminate late registration
- Reduce period for no-penalty course drops and fee refunds
- Charge more for “excessive” course repeats
- Require forward progress for BOG waiver renewal
- Provide fee or financial aid incentives for continuous enrollment, including summer
- Guarantee transfer for students who earn associate degree

## *College Practices*





## Recommendations in *Divided We Fail:* Improving Campus Practices

The Chancellor's Office should coordinate a system-wide effort by which cohort data are analyzed for every college

- Every college should set goals for improving completion and reducing disparities
- Colleges should use a common set of milestones and a set of enrollment patterns that correlate with success
- Colleges should supplement cohort analysis with in-depth study to better understand why students are getting stalled and are not following successful patterns
- A formal process should be initiated for colleges to share changes in practice and their impact on measures of student progress



## Recommended Template for Cohort Analysis



### *Milestones:*

- 2<sup>nd</sup> term retention
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year retention
- 12+ college credits
- 30+ college credits
- Transfer curriculum
- Certificate
- Associate degree
- Transfer – with curriculum
- Transfer – without curriculum

### *Enrollment Patterns:*

- Attend full time in first term
- Take college success course
- Enroll continuously
- Pass college math w/in 2 yrs
- Pass college Engl. w/in 2 yrs
- Complete 20+ credits in first yr
- Earn summer credits
- % course withdrawals
- % course late registration

# Patterns of Enrollment Provide Clues for Improvement

All Degree Seekers  
(N = 247,493)

Passed at Least One College-Level  
Math Course within 2 Years (17%)

Did NOT Pass College-Level  
Math within 2 Years (83%)

No Math Courses Taken  
Within 2 Years, (51%)

Enrolled in at Least  
One Math Course (49%)

Assessment,  
placement, advising,  
registration policies -  
to encourage early  
enrollment in math

Enrolled Only in  
Remedial Math (64%)

Enrolled in College-Level  
Math, 124 (36%)

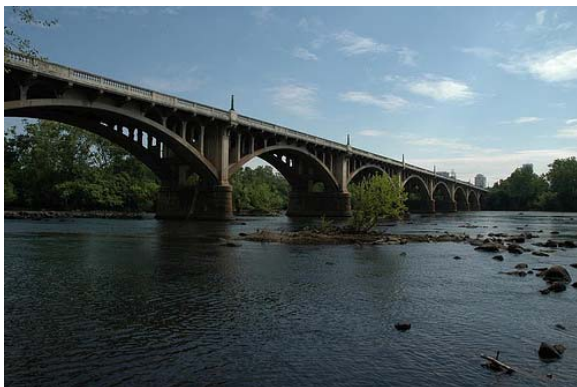
Innovations in basic skills  
(e.g., diagnostic  
assessments, modular  
coursework) to reduce time  
in remediation

Limits on course  
drops, early alert  
programs, tutoring,  
other academic  
supports

On average, these students:

- Enrolled in 2 CL math courses
- Dropped 65%
- Failed 35%





## Recommendations: Bridging Practice and Policy

Colleges should publicly report milestone data, by race/ethnicity

- To inform stakeholders and policymakers
- To help focus policy agendas on areas of greatest systemwide challenge

Colleges should identify common policy barriers

- Share among themselves information on effective practices and their impact on measures of student success
- Identify system and state policies that are impeding their best efforts to help students succeed

JUST DO IT.



## Possible College-level Innovations (that don't require policy changes)

- Require orientation and student success course
- Give students a plan and a pathway
- Optimize class schedule to allow more full-time enrollment and better course sequencing
- Assign all new students to math and English courses as default schedule
- Adopt diagnostic assessments and modular basic skills
- Use early alert systems in high attrition courses
- Redesign certificates and encourage their award – no student with 30 credits should leave empty-handed



## Regardless of Specific Reforms

- Make student success the #1 priority
- Do the data analysis – milestones, etc.
- Figure out *why* (link outcomes data with enrollment patterns and services)
- Set goals for improvement
- Understand policy and get involved
- Support and reward those at the college willing to innovate
- Use campus resources to reward success





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(916) 278-3888

[nshulock@csus.edu](mailto:nshulock@csus.edu)

### Series of reports on community college student success:

*Rules of the Game*, February 2007

*Beyond the Open Door*, August 2007

*Invest in Success*, October 2007

*It Could Happen*, February 2008

*Crafting a Student-Centered Transfer Process in CA*, August 2009

*Steps to Success*, October 2009

*Divided We Fail*, October 2010