Divided We Fail:

Improving Completion
and Closing Racial Gaps
in California's Community Colleges

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Capitol Briefing

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Context of *Divided We Fail*

- National completion agenda
  - Community colleges in the spotlight
  - Data and policy are levers for change
- CCC completion efforts
  - Build on momentum
  - Focus on closing performance gaps
- A collective responsibility
  - Colleges
  - Policymakers
  - Students
  - Stakeholders

Data-Driven Decision-making is Gaining Momentum

- Foundation-led initiatives are helping states use data

  - New focus on **progression** to understand where students get lost – "milestones"

- *Divided We Fail:*

  - Document performance gaps to be closed
  - Show where and which students get stalled
  - Show patterns that are more successful
  - Offer tool for college data analysis
 - Call for supportive policy environment

The Challenges

- Most students not prepared for college work

- Most attend part-time; work too much for college success

- Inadequate budgets – need to do more with less

- 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

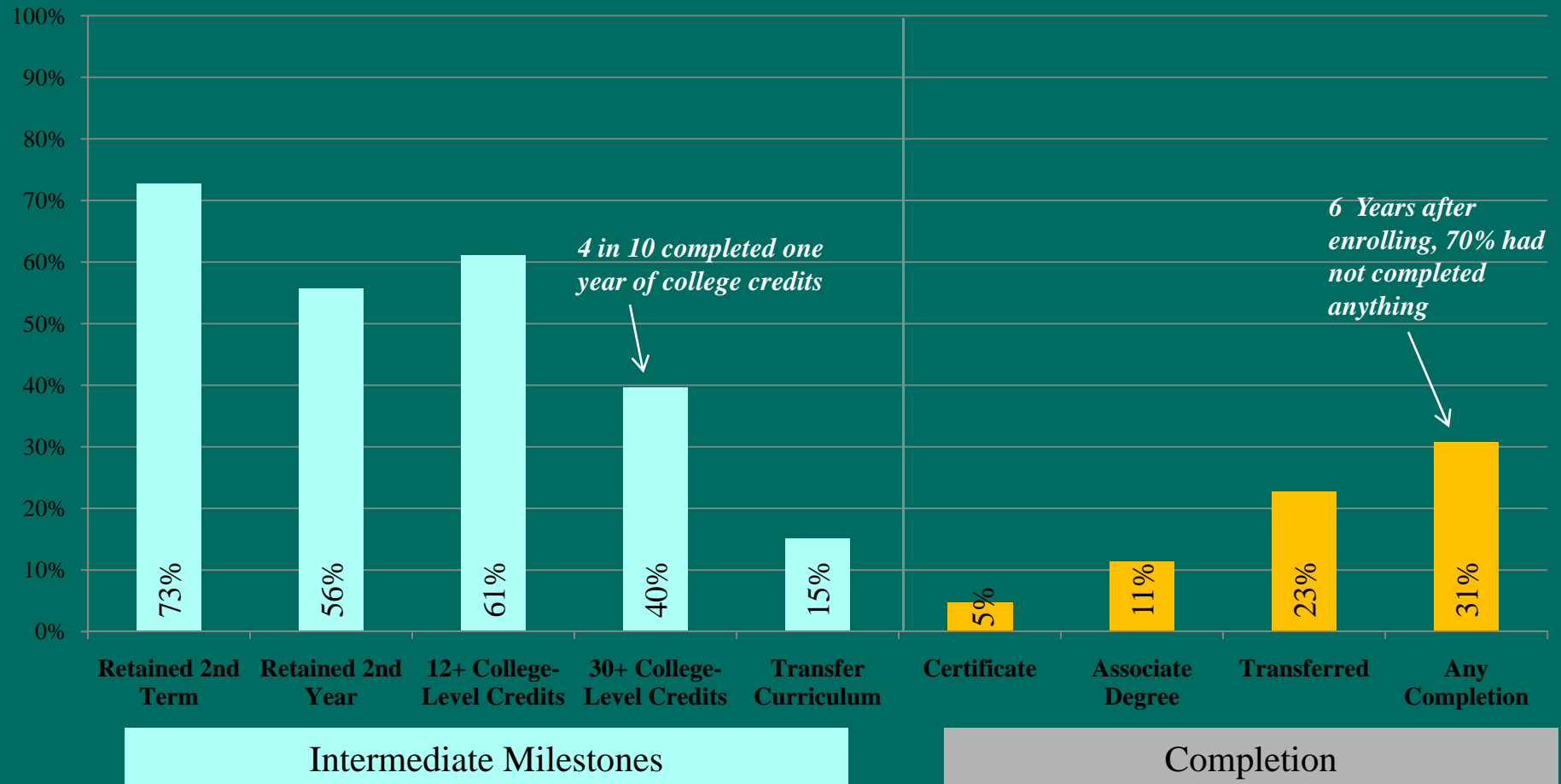# Percent of Adults with Associate Degree or Higher by Age Group – Leading OECD Countries, the U.S., and California
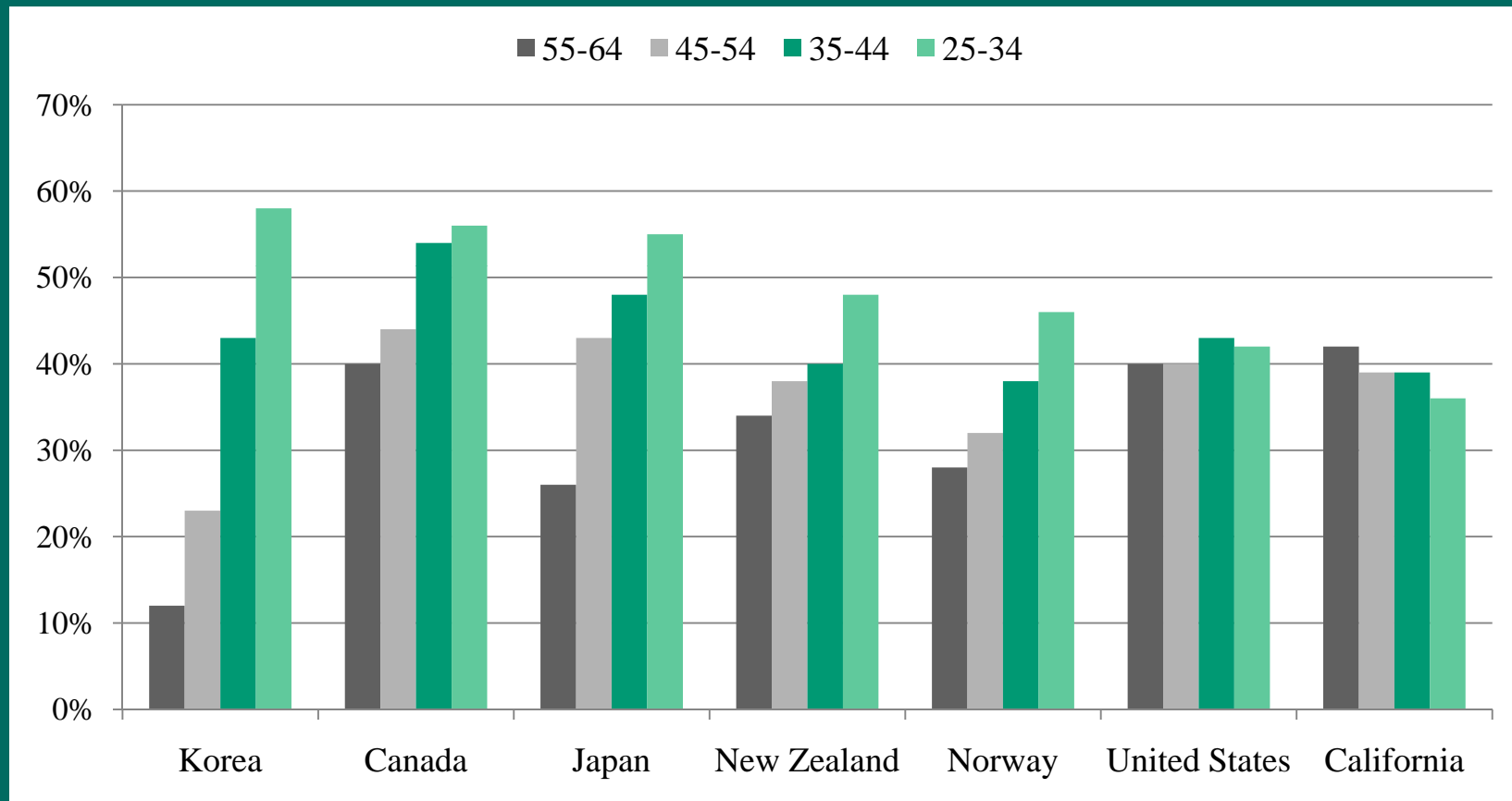
Legend: ■ 55-64 ■ 45-54 ■ 35-44 ■ 25-34

Analysis of Entering Cohort
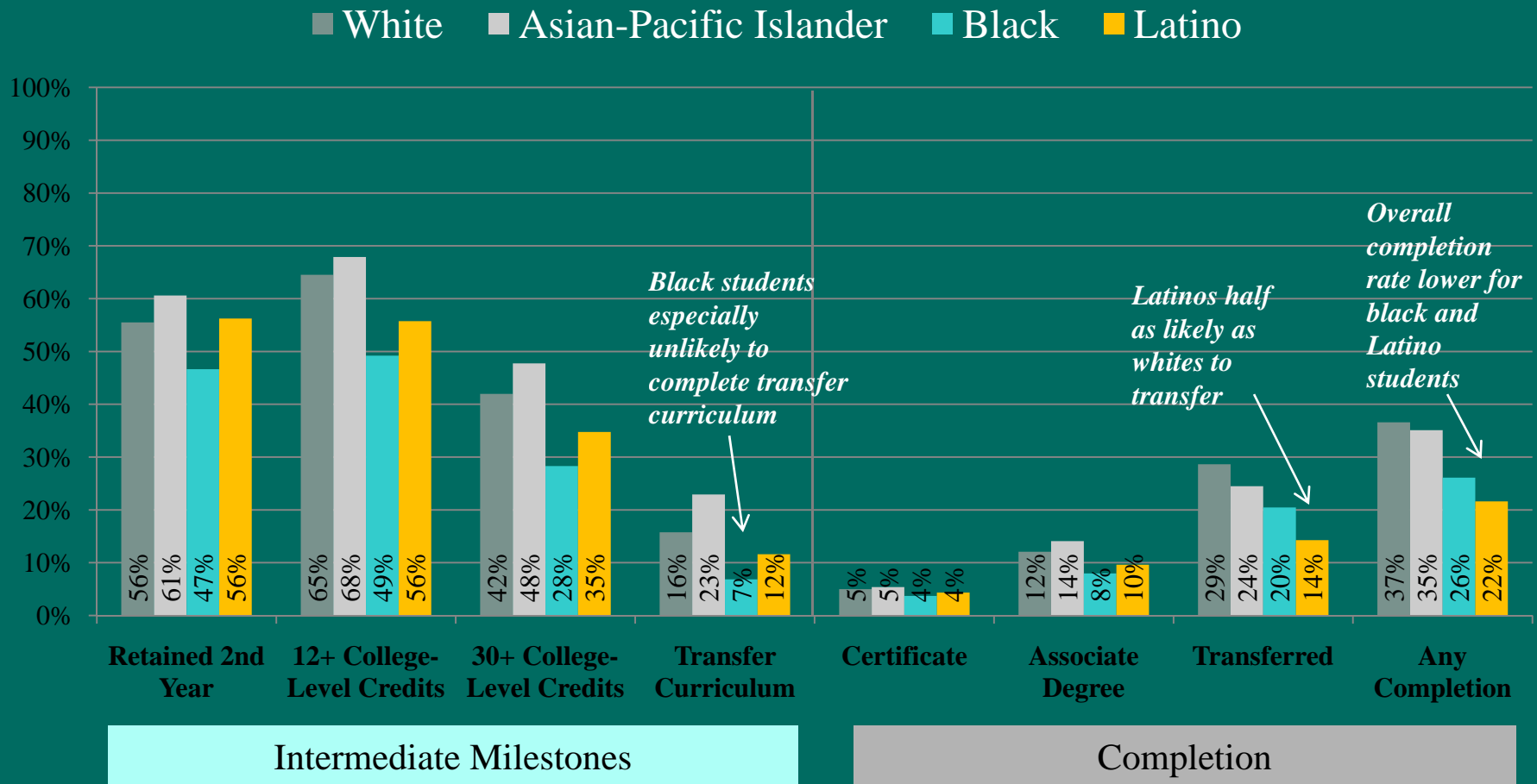
- Obtained data from CCC Chancellor's Office

- 2003-04 cohort of entering credit students in the CCC, tracked over 6 years through 2008-09

- Focus on "degree seekers," meaning those who likely enrolled with intent to complete *something* – certificate, degree, or transfer

- Defined as those enrolling in > 6 semester credits in the first year (Cliff Adelman)

- More than 250,000 students

Too Few Students Reach Milestones on the Road to Degree Completion

4 in 10 completed one year of college credits

6 Years after enrolling, 70% had not completed anything

	Intermediate Milestones					Completion		
Retained 2nd Term	Retained 2nd Year	12+ College-Level Credits	30+ College-Level Credits	Transfer Curriculum	Certificate	Associate Degree	Transferred	Any Completion
73%	56%	61%	40%	15%	5%	11%	23%	31%

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

■ White　■ Asian-Pacific Islander　■ Black　■ Latino

Black students especially unlikely to complete transfer curriculum

Latinos half as likely as whites to transfer

Overall completion rate lower for black and Latino students

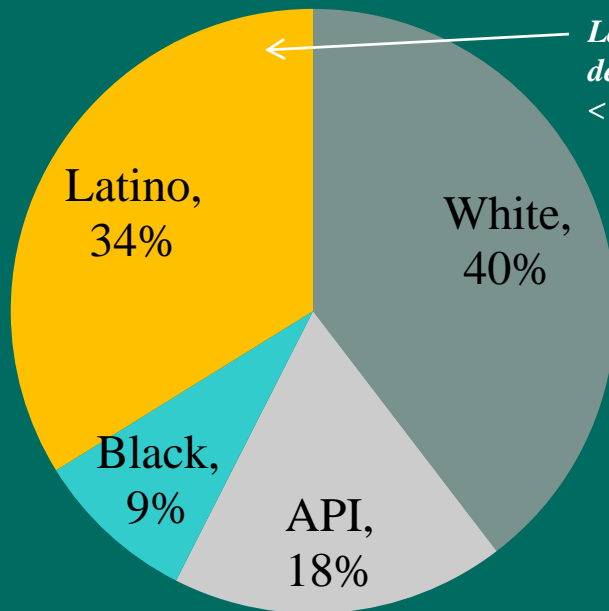|	Retained 2nd Year	12+ College-Level Credits	30+ College-Level Credits	Transfer Curriculum	Certificate	Associate Degree	Transferred	Any Completion
White	56%	65%	42%	16%	5%	12%	29%	37%
Asian-Pacific Islander	61%	68%	48%	23%	5%	14%	24%	35%
Black	47%	49%	28%	7%	4%	8%	20%	26%
Latino	56%	56%	35%	12%	4%	10%	14%	22%

Intermediate Milestones　　　Completion

Note: students can be double-counted in the certificate, associate degree, and transfer measures
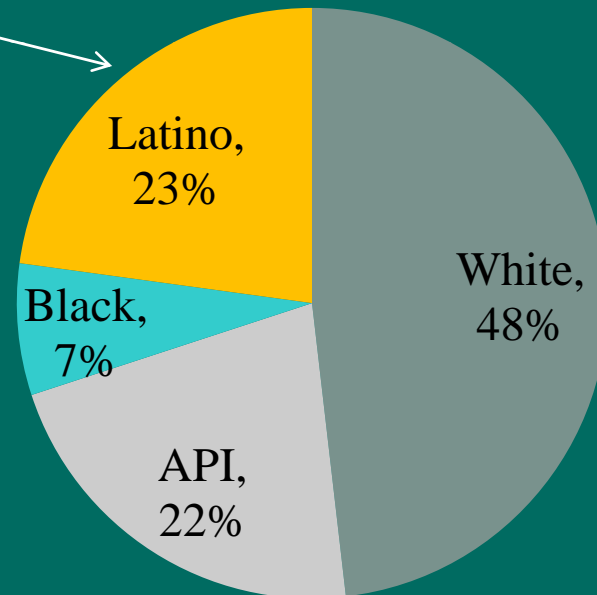
Under-Represented Minority Students are a Smaller Share of "Completers" than of Degree Seekers
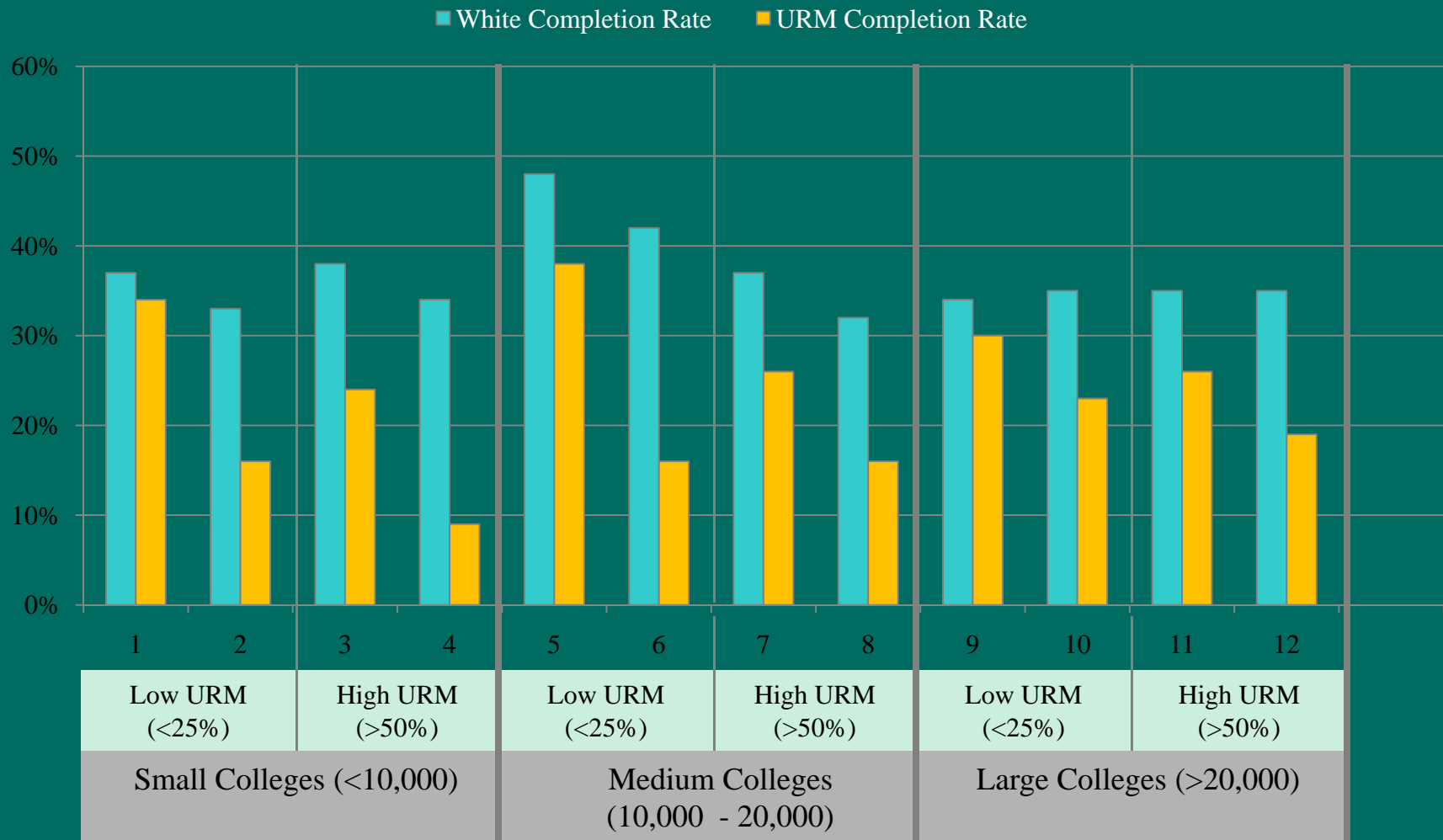
Degree Seekers

Completers

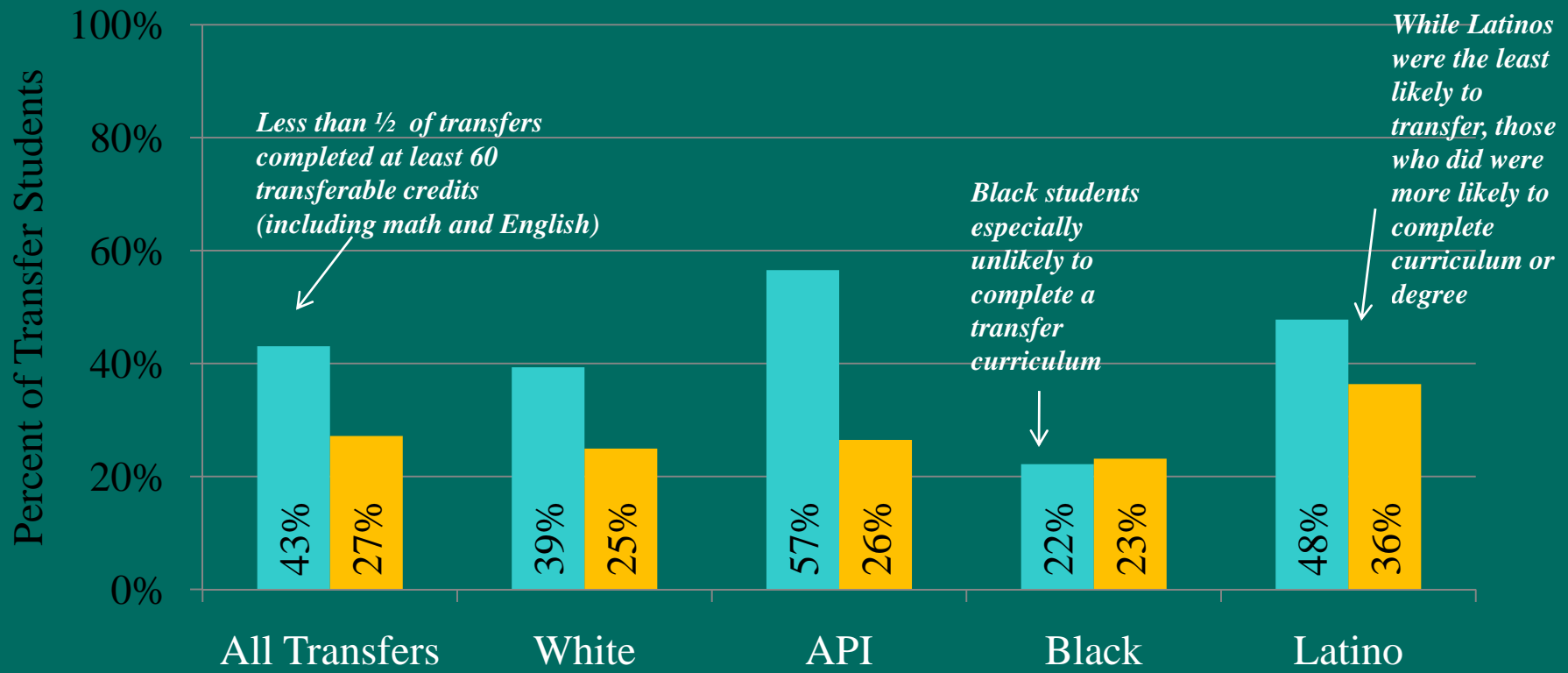*Latinos were 1/3 of degree-seekers but < 1/4 of completers*

Latino, 34%

White, 40%

Black, 9%

API, 18%

Latino, 23%
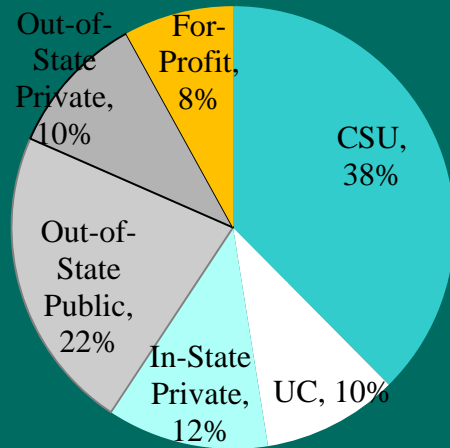
Black, 7%

White, 48%

API, 22%

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

Less than ½ of transfers completed at least 60 transferable credits (including math and English)

Black students especially unlikely to complete a transfer curriculum

While Latinos were the least likely to transfer, those who did were more likely to complete curriculum or degree

Percent of Transfer Students

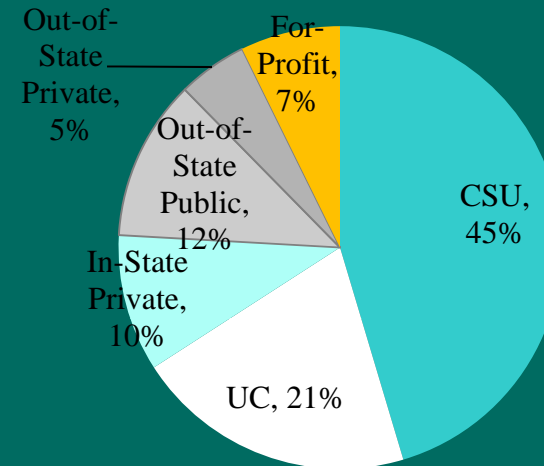|	All Transfers	White	API	Black	Latino
Transfer Curriculum	43%	39%	57%	22%	48%
Associate Degree	27%	25%	26%	23%	36%

Transfer Destination Varies by Race/Ethnicity

White Transfer Students

API Transfer Students

For-Profit, 8%
Out-of-State Private, 10%
CSU, 38%
Out-of-State Public, 22%
In-State Private, 12%
UC, 10%

For-Profit, 7%
Out-of-State Private, 5%
Out-of-State Public, 12%
In-State Private, 10%
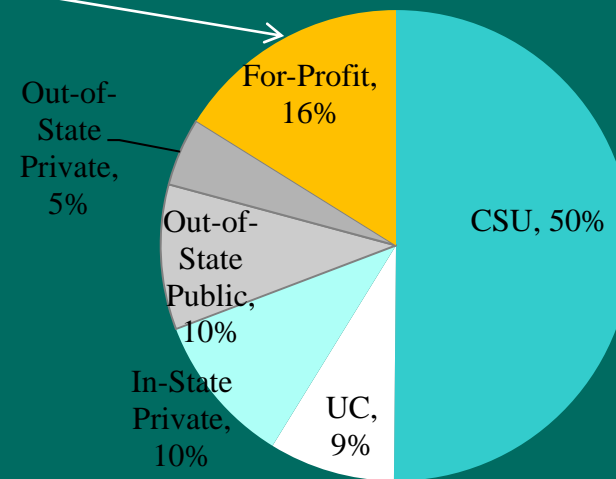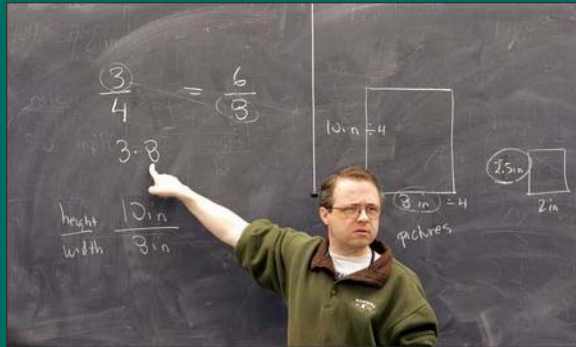CSU, 45%
UC, 21%

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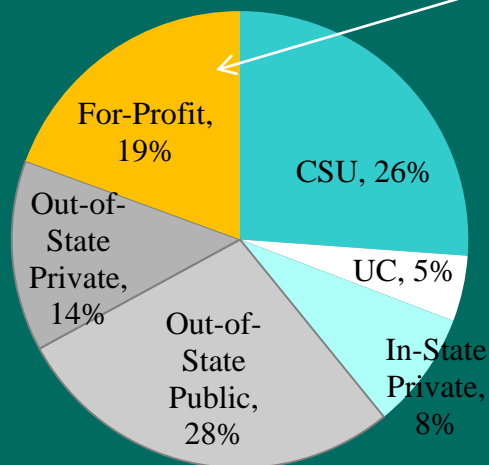
Black and Latino students twice as likely as white and API students to enroll in a for-profit institution

Latino Transfer Students

For-Profit, 19%
Out-of-State Private, 14%
CSU, 26%
UC, 5%
Out-of-State Public, 28%
In-State Private, 8%

Out-of-State Private, 5%
For-Profit, 16%
Out-of-State Public, 10%
CSU, 50%
In-State Private, 10%
UC, 9%
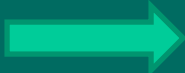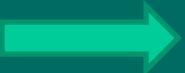
Some Enrollment Patterns are More Successful

- 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

Legend:
- ■ Passed College-Level Eng w/in 2 Yrs
- ■ Passed College-Level Math w/in 2 Yrs
- ■ Earned 20+ Credits Year 1

Group	Passed College-Level Eng w/in 2 Yrs	Passed College-Level Math w/in 2 Yrs	Earned 20+ Credits Year 1
All Degree Seekers	36%	29%	25%
White	39%	30%	27%
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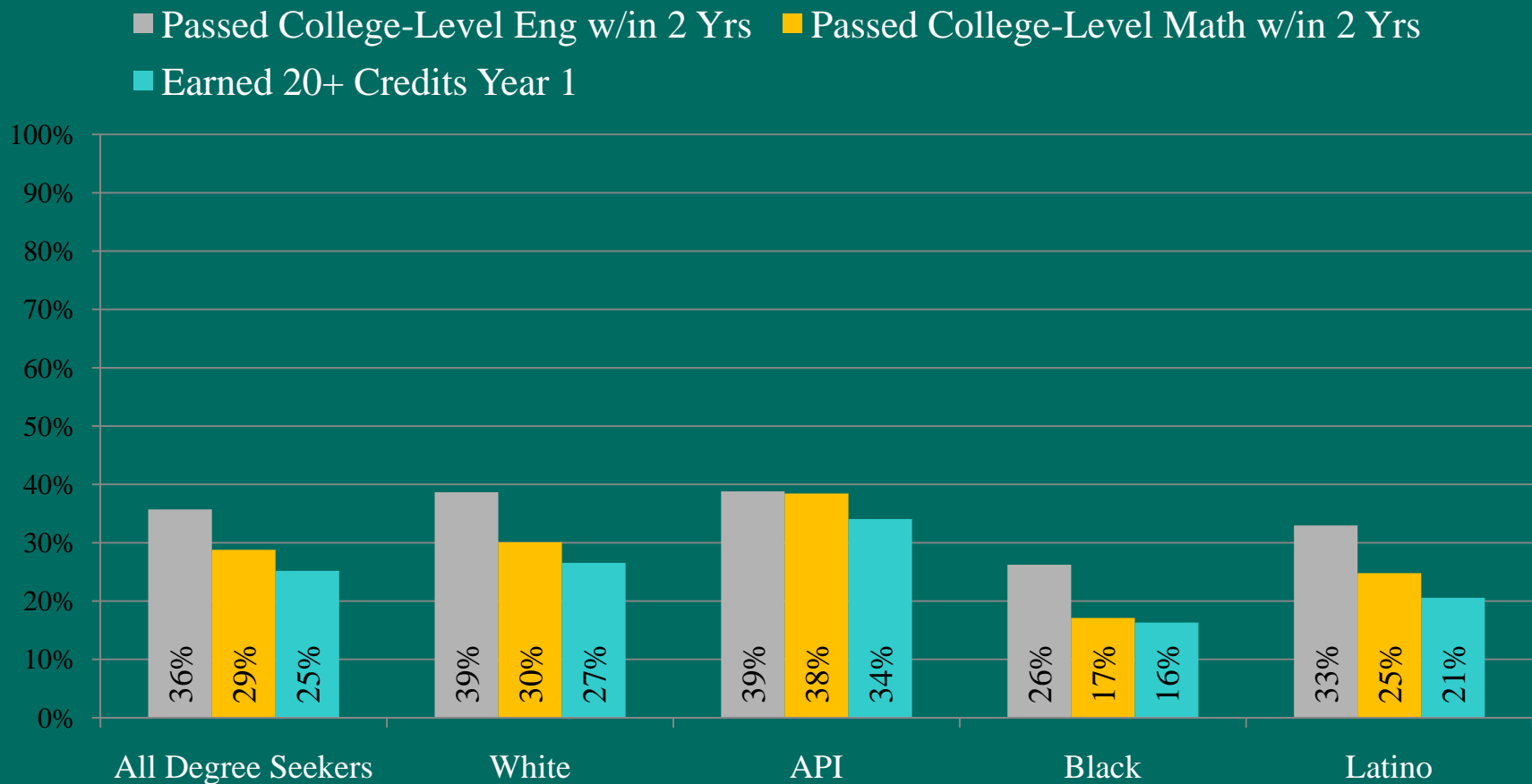
Primary Recommendation: Enhance Current Efforts with Systematic Cohort Data Analysis

- CCC is well positioned for systemwide data effort
- *Divided We Fail* shows results for CCC as a whole
- Offers template for use for each college

Milestones:
- 2nd term retention
- 2nd 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

A Model for Improving Student Outcomes

Institutional Practices → **State/System Policies**

Public reporting of milestone achievements

Institutional Practices

Colleges do cohort analysis of student progress through milestones, by race
- Where do students get stalled? Which students?
- What known successful patterns are they not following?

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Colleges do additional analysis (e.g., student interviews, data on use of services) to understand why students are getting stalled and not following successful patterns
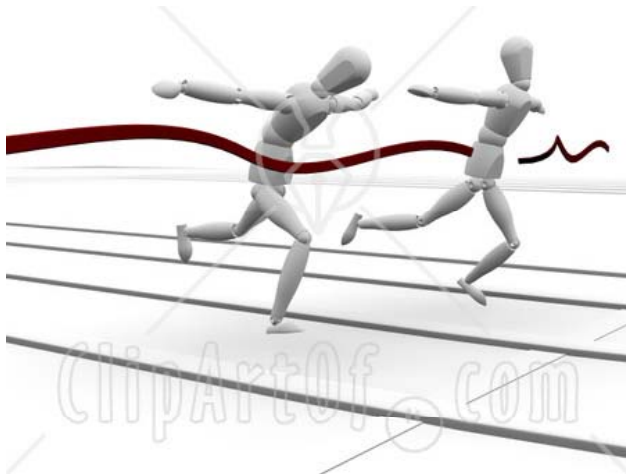
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Colleges implement new practices based on data analysis, share results with other colleges, identify effective practices as well as barriers to implementing such practices

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California Community College System

State/System Policies

Stakeholders (interest groups, community advocates, policy researchers, etc.) compare current performance with desired outcomes

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Stakeholders examine current policies to determine if they support or create barriers to student success

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Stakeholders draw from practices in other states to construct new policy agendas

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Governor, Legislature, CCC Board of Governors

Identify opportunities for policy changes to support and bring to scale successful practices

Changes in practice

Changes in policy

- Increased completion
- Reduced racial/ethnic gaps in completion

Recommendations: Improving Campus Practices

1. 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

Recommendations:
Improving System and State Policy

2. A new funding model should be adopted that rewards colleges for helping students make progress through milestones, and for helping under-prepared students meet key milestones

3. The BOG should adopt changes to system policy, and seek statutory change where necessary, to ensure that all degree-seeking students are assessed for college readiness, and are directed appropriately into courses that will expedite their transition to and success in college-level instruction

Recommendations:
Improving System and State Policy

4. The Legislature should take steps to guard against the erosion of the transfer function by:
   - Investigating recruiting practices and completion rates at for-profit colleges
   - Enacting policies that simplify the pathway and encourage completion of an associate degree before transfer
   - Ensuring sufficient capacity at UC and CSU for transfer students

5. California needs a public agenda for higher education that:
   - Sets goals across all segments for participation and completion
   - Identifies the policies and investments needed to accomplish those goals
   - Monitors progress toward achieving the goals

Recommendations:
Bridging Practice and Policy

6. 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

7. 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

IHELP Contact Information

Reports and presentations at www.csus.edu/ihelp

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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