

California Community Colleges



Multiple Measures Assessment Project

The RP Group

Student Enrollment and Success in Transfer-Level English and Math:

Analysis of AB 705 Impact in the California Community Colleges (CCC) through 2023-2024

FEBRUARY 2025

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Executive Summary

Introduction

California community colleges have been implementing the requirements of Assembly Bill (AB) 705 (Irwin 2017) since fall 2019. AB 705 focuses on maximizing students' timely completion of transfer-level English and math–a key milestone known to support student attainment of associate's degrees and transfer. This updated statewide analysis of related student outcomes in the period leading up to and since the launch of AB 705 conducted by The RP Group's Multiple Measures Assessment Project (MMAP) offers insight into how this historic legislation is affecting longstanding equity gaps in students' enrollment and success in these English and math courses.

Enrollment Highlights

Nearly all students now start in transfer-level English and math.

MMAP analyzed direct enrollments in transfer-level English and math for student cohorts starting at any of the 115 California Community Colleges in the fall term between 2015 and 2023. Direct enrollment in transfer-level English was nearly universal by fall 2021, while direct enrollment in transfer-level math was nearly universal as of fall 2023. These data indicate that the legislation created a tipping point, generating not just widespread access to but also enrollment in these courses.

Equity gaps in transfer-level course enrollments have almost closed.

All racial/ethnic groups saw significant gains in direct enrollment in transfer-level English from fall 2015 to fall 2023, with gaps *between* racial/ethnic groups nearly eliminated. Remarkably, all student groups now exhibit nearly universal enrollment in transfer-level English, regardless of gender identity; first-generation, foster youth, and veteran status; and participation in special programs (i.e., Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS); Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS); Puente; Umoja).

While equity gaps in direct enrollment in transfer-level math still existed in fall 2021, those gaps closed as of fall 2023. Transfer-level math enrollment became nearly universal as of fall 2023 across racial/ethnic groups and among those students participating in special populations programs.

Throughput Highlights

We also tracked "throughput" for each fall cohort, defined as the proportion of students who enroll in either an English or math course at any level in the fall term, and successfully complete a transfer-level English or math course within one year.

English throughput has increased significantly, including for students historically excluded from transfer-level coursework. However, opportunities remain to improve these outcomes.

The implementation of AB 705 has positively impacted students' completion rates of transfer-level English within one year of enrollment in the discipline. The largest increase in throughput was noted between fall 2017 and fall 2019 (from 55% to 68%). Since that time, this rate has plateaued, with nearly one-third of students still not reaching this milestone. Additionally, while many student groups experienced significant improvements post-AB 705, some, notably DSPS students and foster youth, continue to complete this coursework at lower rates than their peers.

Math throughput has seen slow but steady progress following an initial bump upon AB 705 implementation, though equity gaps persist.

Initial college response to the legislation improved students' completion rates of transfer-level math within one year of enrollment in the discipline, reaching 55% in fall 2020 (up from 26% in fall 2015). Since fall 2021, the system has seen another increase in math throughput, which reached 62% in fall 2023—despite significant increases in transfer-level math enrollment in recent years. However, as with English, over one-third of students still do not achieve this critical outcome. Furthermore, disproportionately lower completion rates continue among students of color, foster youth, Umoja participants, and DSPS participants.

Conclusion

A longitudinal look at the nine years leading up to and since the implementation of AB 705 suggests this landmark legislation has catalyzed dramatic improvement in direct enrollment in transfer-level English and math across the board. Similarly, data also show throughput rates increased substantially in the period immediately following AB 705's implementation. Certainly, opening the doors to these courses has allowed more students to complete them. Positively, the COVID-19 pandemic does not appear to have had a significant negative impact on these trends.

Yet, there is still considerable room for improvement in both English and math throughput, and equity gaps persist. This research suggests that it is critical for California's community colleges–guided by the Chancellor's Office–to recommit to AB 705. While new legislation (AB 1705) provides further direction on how to strengthen these outcomes, continued improvement will require dedication at all levels–state, college, and classroom–beyond the letter of the law. Policy and practice opportunities include:

- Continuing to develop an asset-based college culture that believes and demonstrates all students can succeed in transfer-level English and math with the appropriate support.
- Implementing evidence-based instructional practices and holistic support to operationalize this commitment.
- Collecting data on key metrics and equity gaps in an ongoing way to determine progress and identify areas of improvement at the institutional level.
- Continual monitoring of college compliance with AB 705 and, moving forward, AB 1705 by the Chancellor's Office.

These actions will continue to help the California Community Colleges make good on the promise of AB 705 and 1705, further ensuring that each student completes these important milestones on their road to educational attainment and post-graduation success.

Introduction

California community colleges have been implementing the requirements of Assembly Bill (AB) 705 (Irwin 2017) since fall 2019. AB 705 focuses on maximizing students' timely completion of transfer-level English and math–a key milestone known to support student attainment of associate's degrees and transfer. The RP Group's Multiple Measures Assessment Project (MMAP) conducts ongoing research to understand the impact of this historic legislation (see sidebar). This report provides current statewide analysis of related student outcomes in the period leading up to and since the launch of AB 705, 2015-2016 through 2023-2024.[1]

Significant changes have occurred in the California Community Colleges (CCC) prior to and since the passage of AB 705, reshaping student access, success, retention, and completion. These changes include the adoption of guided pathways reforms and the Student Centered Funding Formula, which have driven scaled improvements in equity and student outcomes. At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented disruptions in students' lives, institutional operations, and enrollments, further transforming the landscape of higher education. Now, colleges are ramping up to respond to AB 1705, which builds on AB 705 to further ensure students enroll in and receive the support they need to complete the transfer-level English and math courses required for their programs.

Multiple Measures Assessment Project (MMAP) Overview

The RP Group launched MMAP in 2014 to support the advancement of developmental education reform in the California Community Colleges. MMAP now supports the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office with the implementation of AB 705 and AB 1705, which seek to improve equitable placement into and completion of transfer-level English and math courses required for a student's program.

Learn more about this work at **www.rpgroup.org/mmap**.

In This Report

This report offers policymakers and college leaders at the system and college levels insights into AB 705's progress and impact to date. We examine changes in students' enrollment in transfer-level English and math and their "throughput" in these courses within one year–both in the period leading up to AB 705's fall 2019 implementation and in the years since. This longitudinal look offers insight into how the legislation is affecting longstanding equity gaps in enrollment and success in these courses. Where appropriate, we observe the interplay of the COVID-19 pandemic with these outcomes. We conclude with future considerations for both policy and practice that can further move the needle on equitable student achievement of this critical step in their college journey.

[1] MMAP published an initial assessment of impact in January 2021, looking at the period leading up to and in the first year of implementation (2019-20). Find detailed findings in *Enrollment and Success in Transfer-Level English and Math in the California Community Colleges System Fall 2015 to Fall 2019 Statewide Analysis* at www.rpgroup.org/mmap.

Key Findings

Enrollment

The RP Group analyzed "direct enrollments" in transfer-level English and math for student cohorts starting at any of the 116 California Community Colleges in a fall term between 2015 and 2023.[2]

Nearly all students now start in transfer-level English and math.

Since the launch of AB 705, direct enrollment in transfer-level English and math coursework among students entering these disciplines for the first time increased substantially (Figure 1)**.**

By fall 2023, direct enrollment in transfer-level English was nearly universal at 99.5%. While this rate was already trending upward before AB 705, the largest increase occurred in its first year of full implementation, rising 23 percentage points (from 71% in fall 2018 to 94% in fall 2019).

Direct enrollment in transfer-level math also improved dramatically, reaching 99% in fall 2023. Like English, the most significant gain happened in the first year of AB 705 implementation, jumping 36 percentage points (from 44% in fall 2018 to 80% in fall 2019).

Key Terms

Transfer-level English and math: the lo transfer-level course that satisfies a course requirement for transfer.

Direct enrollment: first enrollment in the discipline (i.e., English or math).

Course success: completion of a course in one term, with a grade of A, B, C, or P.

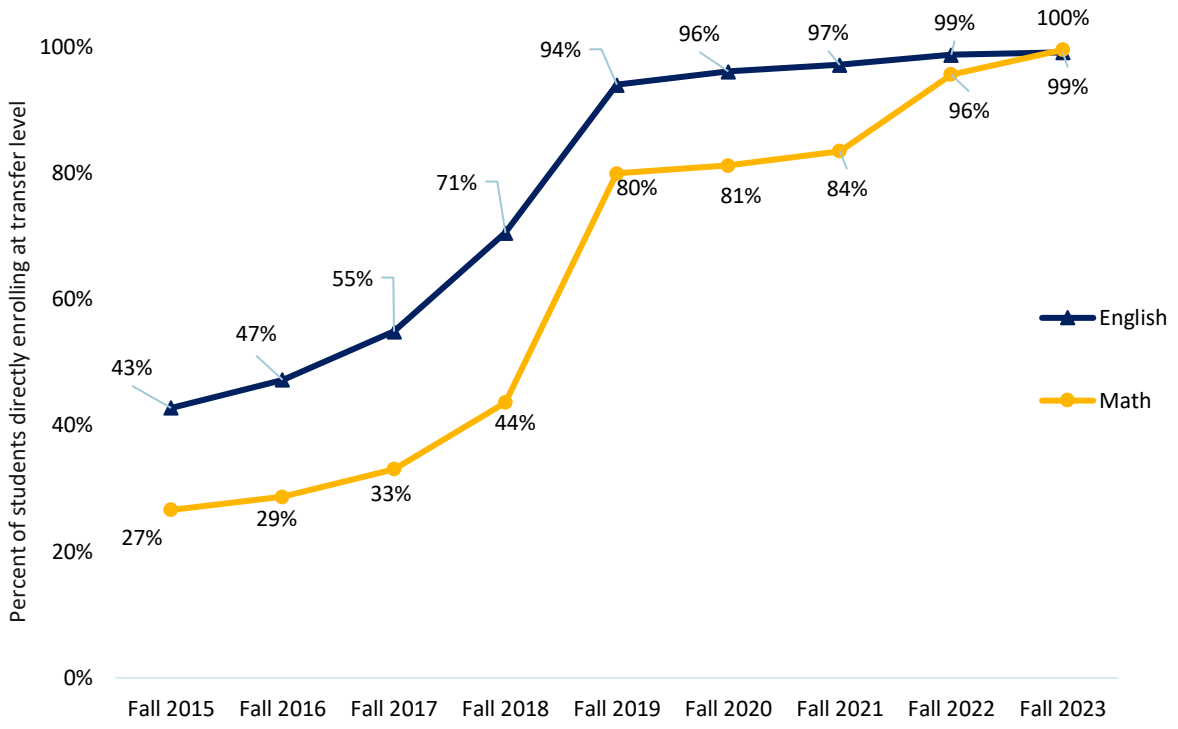
Throughput: proportion of students who enroll in either an English or math course at any level in the fall term, and successfully complete a transfer-level English or math course within one year (including fall, winter, spring, summer terms).

Default placement bands: high school cumulative grade point average (GPA) used for placement recommendations into transfer-level English and math based on low (< 1.9), middle (≥ 1.9 - < 2.59) and high (≥ 2.6) high school preparation.

While several California community colleges were already embracing reforms that allowed more students to directly enter these transfer-level courses prior to the launch of AB 705, these **data indicate that the legislation created a tipping point, generating widespread access to transfer-level English and math**. This access, in turn, had a substantial impact on student enrollment numbers across the system.

[2] Find detailed methodology in Appendix A.

Figure 1. **Direct Enrollment in Transfer-Level English and Math (Fall 2015 through Fall 2023)**

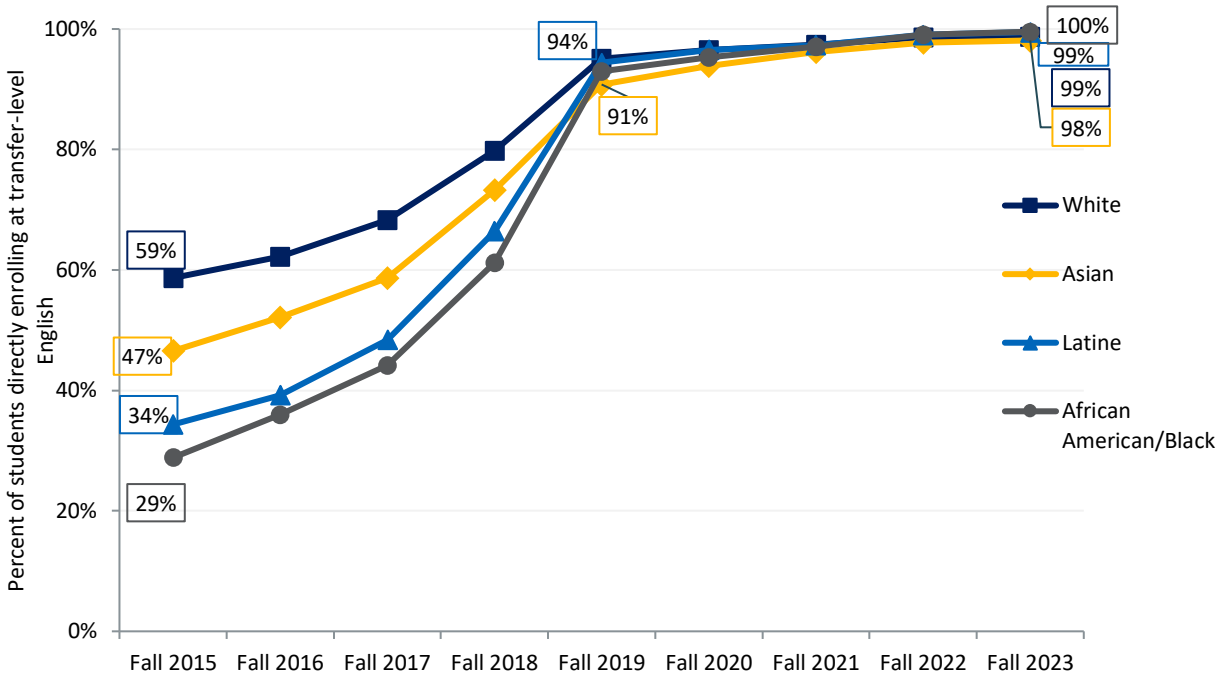


Notes: Chart includes students whose first English or math course was at transfer level in the fall term of that year. Results are rounded to the nearest whole number. See additional detail in Appendix B.

Equity gaps in transfer-level course enrollments have almost closed.

All racial/ethnic groups[3] saw large gains in direct transfer-level English enrollment from fall 2015 to fall 2023, with the largest year-to-year improvement occurring between fall 2018 and fall 2019 (Figure 2). **Gaps *between* racial/ethnic groups in transfer-level English enrollment also shrank significantly and were nearly gone as of fall 2019**. As of fall 2023, those gap closures persist as direct enrollment rates in transfer-level English are nearly universal for all racial/ethnic groups.

Figure 2. **Direct Enrollment in Transfer-Level English by Race/Ethnicity (Fall 2015 through Fall 2023)**

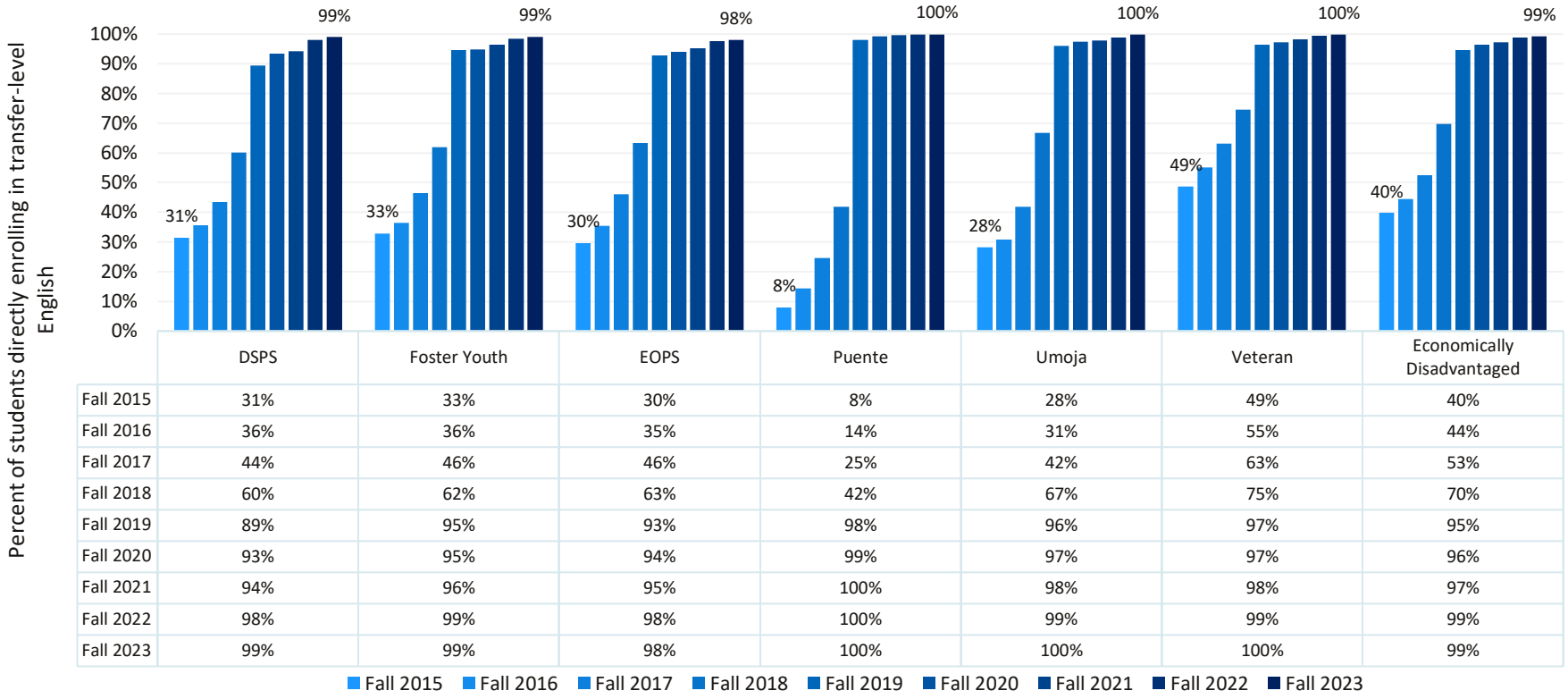


Notes: Figure includes students whose first English course was at transfer level in the fall term of that year, disaggregated by race/ethnicity. Results are rounded to the nearest whole number. See additional detail in Appendix B.

[3] Throughout this report, we use the term "Latine" (pronounced "lah-TEE-ney")—a gender-inclusive term used to describe people of Latin American descent. The RP Group has chosen to use the term Latine because it follows Spanish language grammatical structures and pronunciation and can be used in plural form.

Remarkably, all groups now display nearly universal enrollment in transfer-level English (Figure 3). We looked at the data by students' economic, foster youth, and veteran status; and participation in special programs (i.e., Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS); Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS); Puente; Umoja). Again, each group saw large gains from fall 2015 to fall 2023, with the largest year-to-year increase occurring between fall 2018 and fall 2019.

Figure 3. **Direct Enrollment in Transfer-Level English by Student Group (Fall 2015 through Fall 2023)**

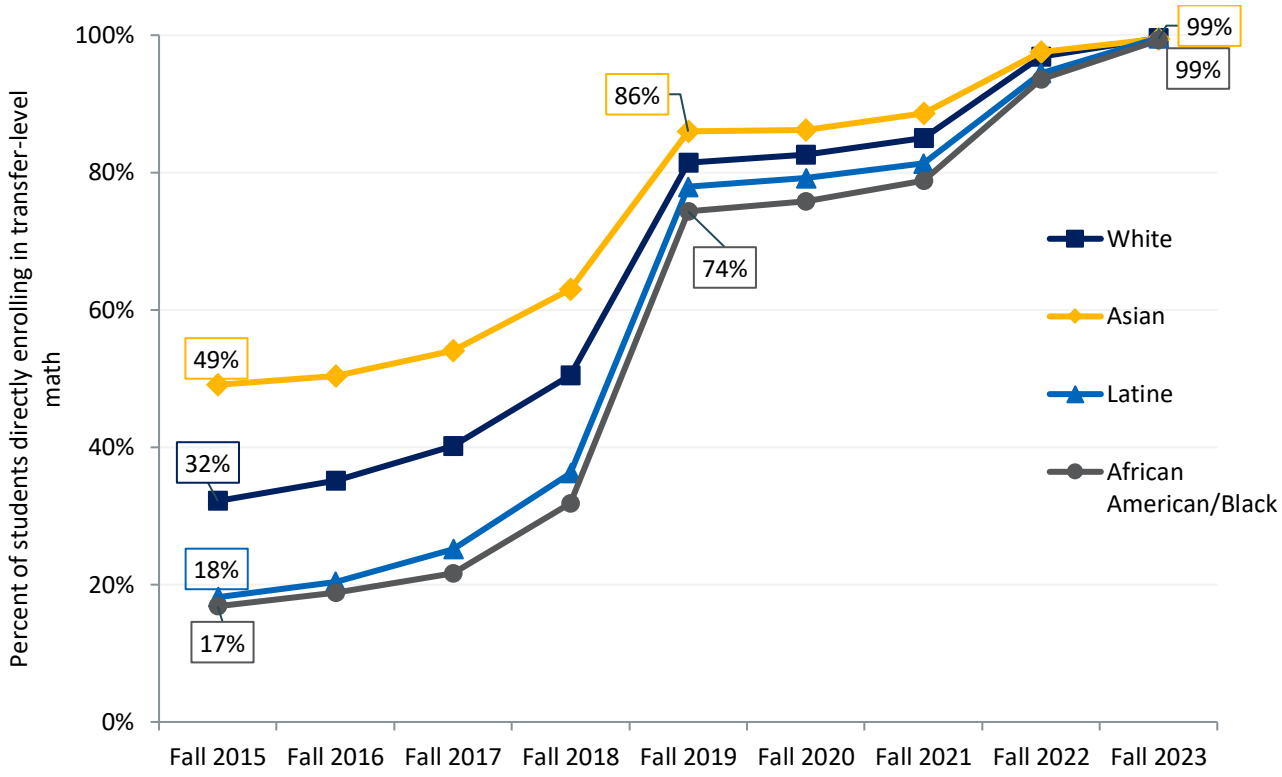


	DSPS	Foster Youth	EOPS	Puente	Umoja	Veteran	Economically Disadvantaged
Fall 2015	31%	33%	30%	8%	28%	49%	40%
Fall 2016	36%	36%	35%	14%	31%	55%	44%
Fall 2017	44%	46%	46%	25%	42%	63%	53%
Fall 2018	60%	62%	63%	42%	67%	75%	70%
Fall 2019	89%	95%	93%	98%	96%	97%	95%
Fall 2020	93%	95%	94%	99%	97%	97%	96%
Fall 2021	94%	96%	95%	100%	98%	98%	97%
Fall 2022	98%	99%	98%	100%	99%	99%	99%
Fall 2023	99%	99%	98%	100%	100%	100%	99%

Notes: Figure includes data from students whose first English course was at transfer level in the fall of that year, disaggregated by student group. Assignment to the student group reflects that the student participated in the program at any time. See additional detail in Appendix B.

While equity gaps in transfer-level English enrollment were nearly gone by fall 2021, they still existed when it came to enrollment in transfer-level math. However, **equity gaps in transfer-level math enrollment nearly closed by fall 2023** (Figure 4). As of fall 2023, those gap closures persist as direct enrollment rates in transfer-level math are nearly universal for all racial/ethnic groups.

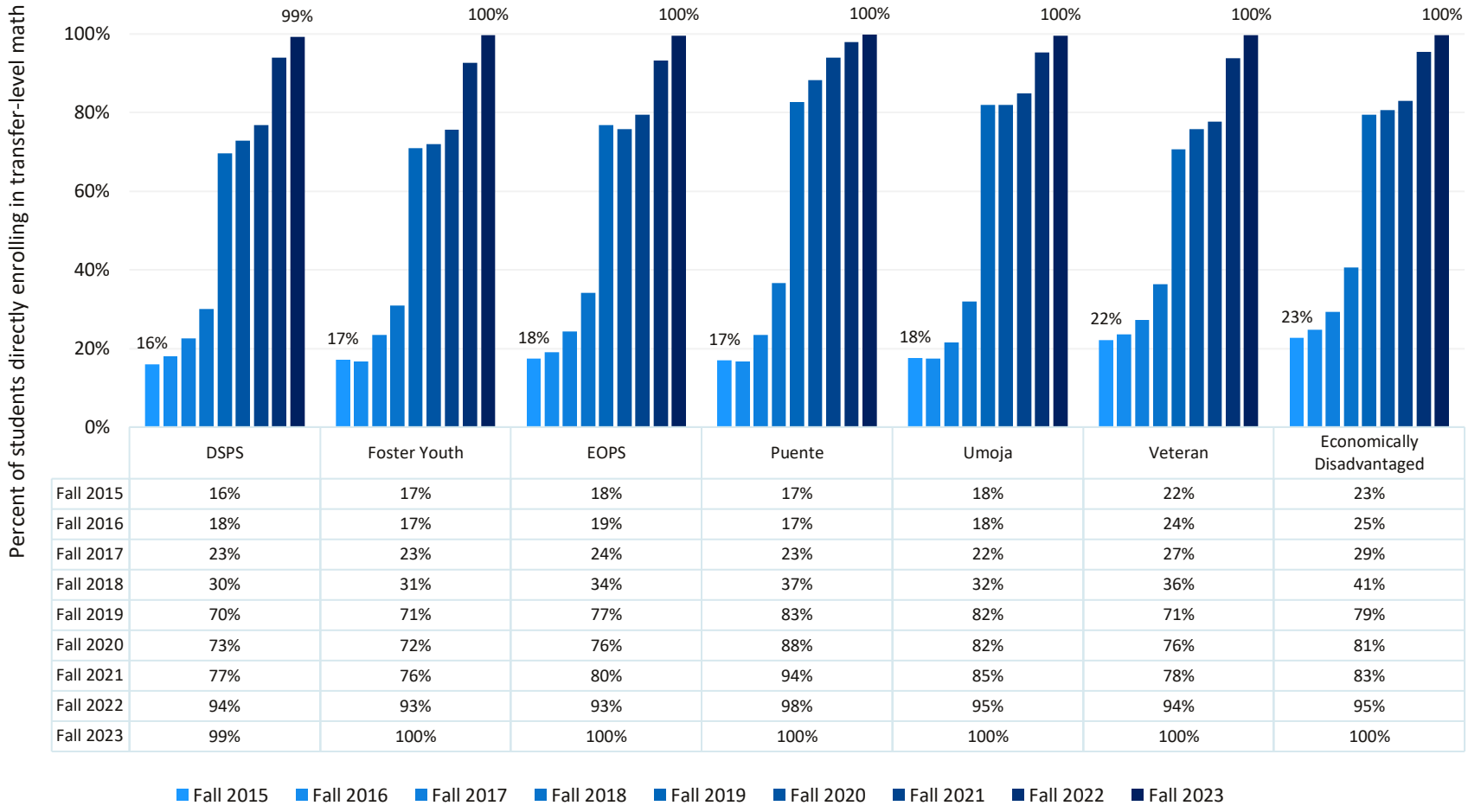
Figure 4. **Direct Enrollment in Transfer-Level Math by Race/Ethnicity (Fall 2015 through Fall 2023)**



Notes: Figure includes data from students whose first math course was at transfer level in the fall of that year, disaggregated by race/ethnicity. See additional detail in Appendix B.

Again, all groups saw dramatic increases in direct transfer-level math enrollment from 2015 to 2021, with the largest year-to-year gain occurring between fall 2018 and fall 2019 (Figure 5). As of fall 2023, enrollment rates were nearly universal for all student groups.

Figure 5. **Direct Enrollment in Transfer-Level Math by Student Group (Fall 2015 through Fall 2023)**



	DSPS	Foster Youth	EOPS	Puente	Umoja	Veteran	Economically Disadvantaged
Fall 2015	16%	17%	18%	17%	18%	22%	23%
Fall 2016	18%	17%	19%	17%	18%	24%	25%
Fall 2017	23%	23%	24%	23%	22%	27%	29%
Fall 2018	30%	31%	34%	37%	32%	36%	41%
Fall 2019	70%	71%	77%	83%	82%	71%	79%
Fall 2020	73%	72%	76%	88%	82%	76%	81%
Fall 2021	77%	76%	80%	94%	85%	78%	83%
Fall 2022	94%	93%	93%	98%	95%	94%	95%
Fall 2023	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Notes: Figure includes students whose first math course was at transfer level in the fall term, disaggregated by student group. Assignment to the student group reflects that the student participated in the program at any time. See additional detail in Appendix B.

Throughput

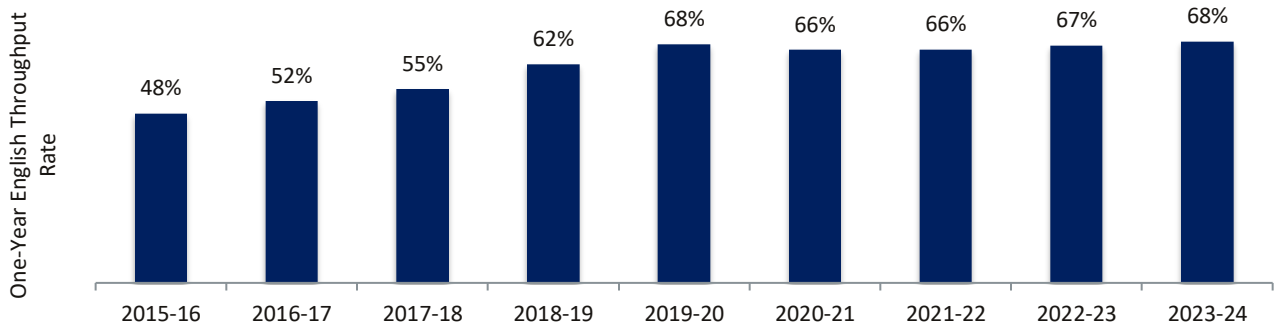
We also tracked throughput, defined as the proportion of students who enroll in either an English or math course at any level in the fall term, and successfully complete a transfer-level English or math course within one year.

English throughput has increased significantly, including for students historically excluded from transfer-level coursework. Yet, opportunities remain to improve these outcomes.

Implementation of AB 705 has positively impacted students' completion of transfer-level English within one year of enrollment in the discipline. While this rate has grown consistently over time, the largest surge occurred between fall 2018 and fall 2019 (+6 percentage points) and then leveled off in the wake of AB 705 implementation (Figure 6).

On the one hand, these results are a positive sign. Despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, students' timely completion of transfer-level English held steady. On the other hand, nearly one-third of students still do not reach this critical milestone within a year of entering the discipline.

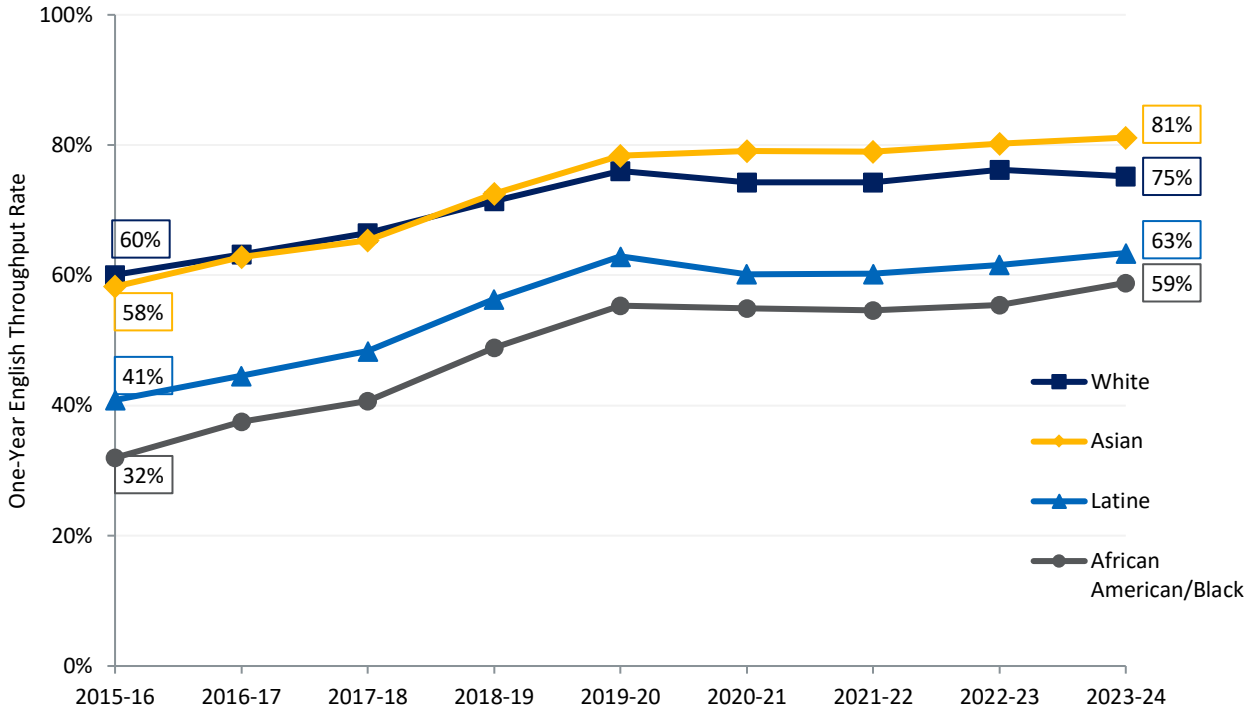
Figure 6. **Transfer-Level English Throughput (2015-2016 through 2023-2024)**



Notes: Figure includes data for students starting at any level of English (pre-transfer or transfer) in the fall term who are then tracked through the academic year (i.e., fall, winter, spring, summer terms). See additional detail in Appendix B.

When looking at English throughput by student race/ethnicity, rates have increased within each group, but gaps *between* groups persist (Figure 7). For example, the difference between African American and White students was 28 percentage points in 2015-2016, and 22 percentage points in 2023-2024. Similarly, the gap between Latine and Asian students was 17 percentage points in 2015-2016, and 12 percentage points in 2023-2024. Again, while results are trending in a positive direction, closing equity gaps in English throughput will require more attention.

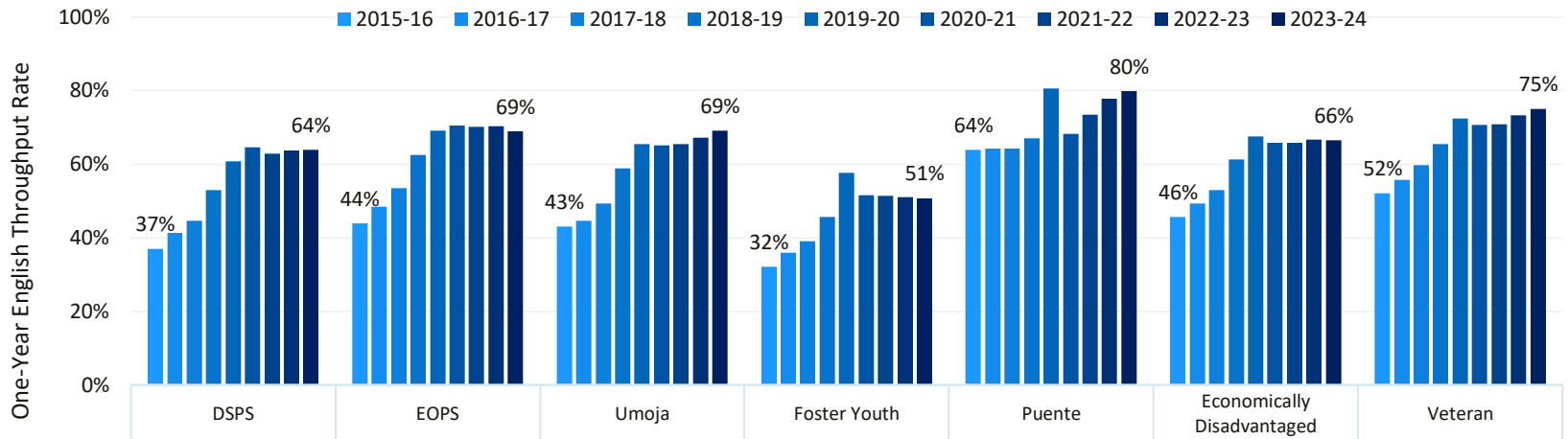
Figure 7. **Transfer-Level English Throughput by Race/Ethnicity (2015-2016 through 2023-2024)**



Notes: Figure includes data for students starting at any level of English (pre-transfer or transfer) in the fall term who are then tracked through the academic year (i.e., fall, winter, spring, summer terms), disaggregated by race/ethnicity. See additional detail in Appendix B.

Examination of English throughput by student group offers a particular bright spot, where all rates are higher in 2023-2024 than prior to AB 705 in 2015-2016. **English throughput increased for all student groups between 2015-2016 and 2023-2024, with especially notable gains among DSPS and Umoja participants** (Figure 8a).

***Figure 8a.* Transfer-Level English Throughput by Student Group (2015-2016 through 2023-2024)**

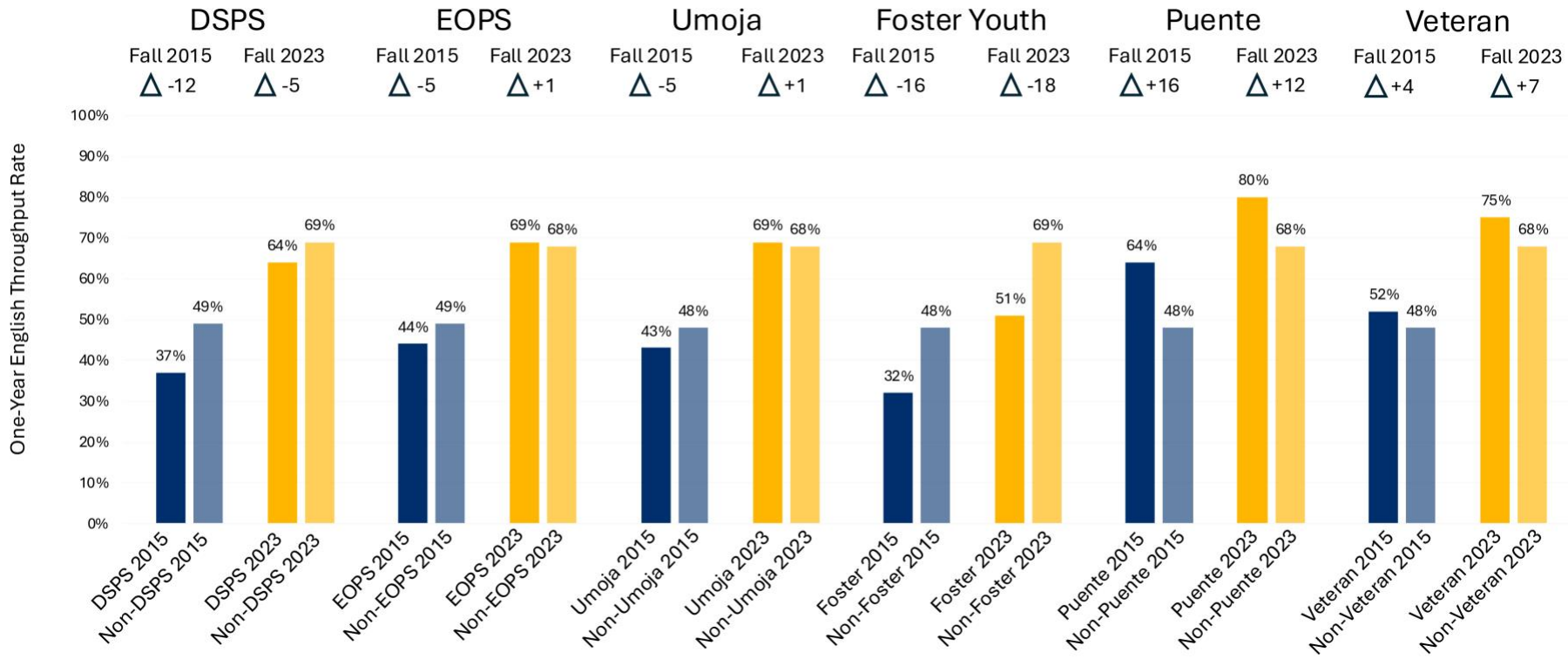


	DSPS	EOPS	Umoja	Foster Youth	Puente	Economically Disadvantaged	Veteran
2015-16	37%	44%	43%	32%	64%	46%	52%
2016-17	41%	48%	45%	36%	64%	49%	56%
2017-18	45%	53%	49%	39%	64%	53%	60%
2018-19	53%	63%	59%	46%	67%	61%	65%
2019-20	61%	69%	66%	58%	81%	68%	73%
2020-21	65%	71%	65%	52%	68%	66%	71%
2021-22	63%	70%	66%	51%	74%	66%	71%
2022-23	64%	70%	67%	51%	78%	67%	73%
2023-24	64%	69%	69%	51%	80%	66%	75%

Notes: Figure includes data for students starting at any level of English (pre-transfer or transfer) in the fall term who are then tracked through the academic year (i.e., fall, winter, spring, summer terms), disaggregated by student group. Assignment to the student group reflects that the student participated in the program at any time. See additional detail in Appendix B.

Figure 8b compares English throughput rates for various student groups (e.g., DSPS vs. non-DSPS) in 2015 and 2023, highlighting changes in throughput gaps over time. In fall 2015, DSPS students had an English throughput rate 12 percentage points lower than non-DSPS students; by fall 2023, this gap had narrowed to five percentage points. Similarly, the five-point gap between EOPS and non-EOPS students in 2015 had closed entirely by 2023, with EOPS students surpassing their peers by one percentage point (see Appendix B). A comparable trend is seen among Umoja students, whose five-point gap in 2015 was reversed by 2023, resulting in a one-point advantage. However, the gap for foster youth not only persists but has widened relative to non-foster youth.

Figure 8b. **Differences in Transfer-Level English Throughput Between Student Groups in Fall 2015 and Fall 2023**

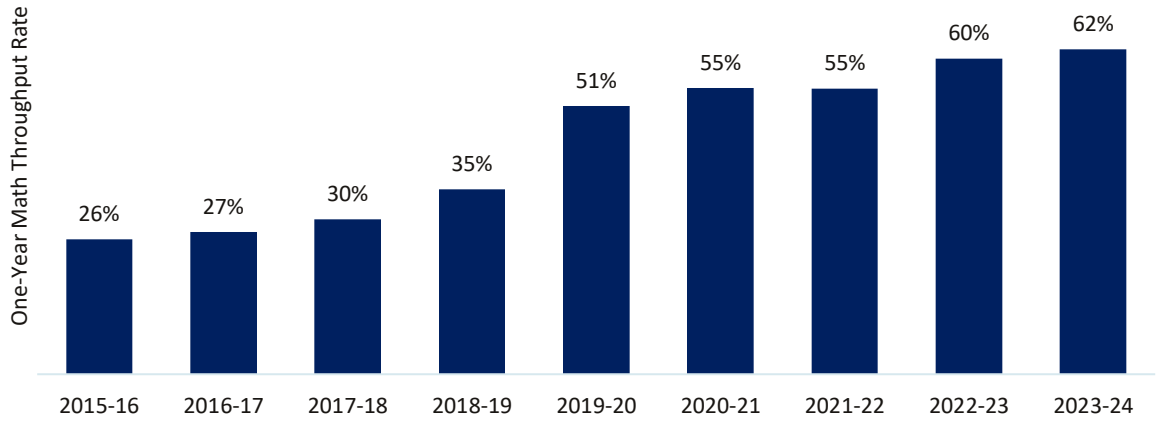


Math throughput has seen slow but steady progress following an initial bump upon AB 705 implementation, though equity gaps persist.

Initial college response to the legislation positively impacted students' completion of transfer-level math within one year of enrollment in the discipline. Throughput grew gradually from 2015-2016 to 2018-2019, then jumped 16 percentage points from 35% to 51% with AB 705 implementation in 2019-2020. It increased slightly the following year and subsequently leveled off at 55%. However, recent years have seen additional improvement, with the rate now at 62% statewide. (see Figure 9).

While math throughput is trending in a positive direction—notable in the wake of nearly universal transfer-level math enrollment—more than one-third of students are still not completing this essential milestone.

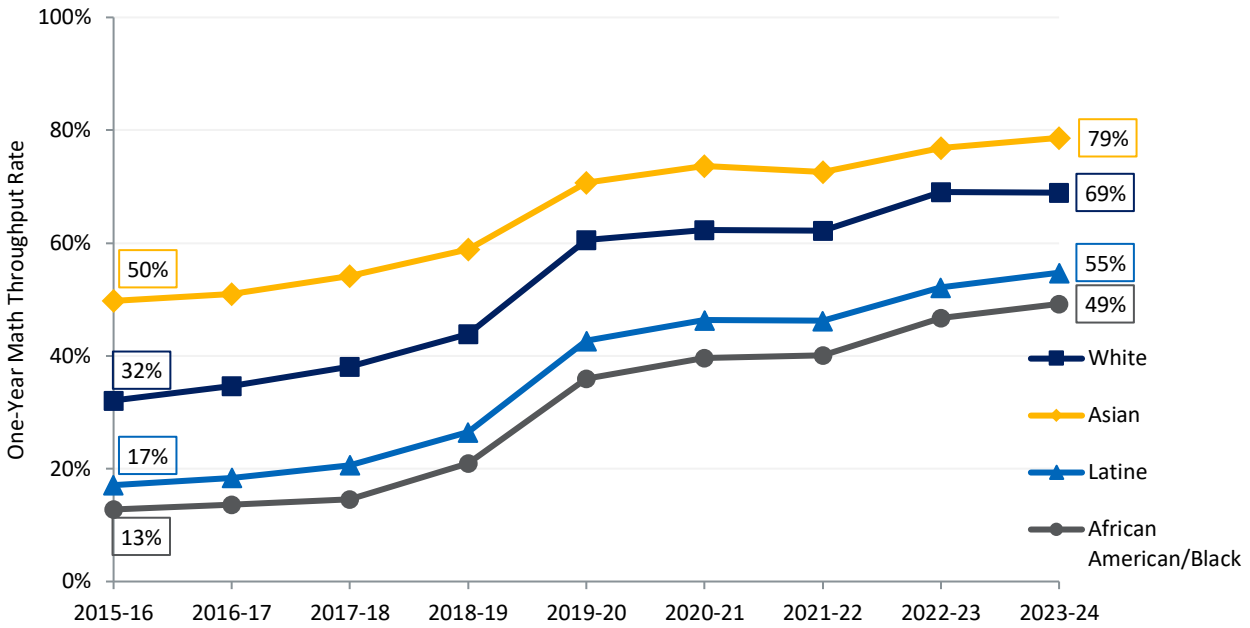
Figure 9. **Tranfer-Level Math Throughput (2015-2016 through 2023-2024)**



Notes: Figure includes data for students starting at any level of math (pre-transfer or transfer) in the fall term who are then tracked through the academic year (i.e., fall, winter, spring, summer terms). See additional detail in Appendix B.

When considering math throughput by student race/ethnicity, data for all groups is trending positive, yet equity gaps remain. The overall increase in rates within each racial/ethnic group has neither eliminated nor substantially lessened the gaps *between* the groups (Figure 10). For example, the gap between African American and Asian students closed by just 7 percentage points between 2015-2016 and 2022-2023 (from 37 to 30 percentage points, respectively). The disparity between Latine and White students closed by one percentage point from 15 percentage points in 2015-2016 to 14 percentage points in 2023-2024. While the law opened access, these data suggest that alone will not close longstanding gaps in timely transfer-level math completion.

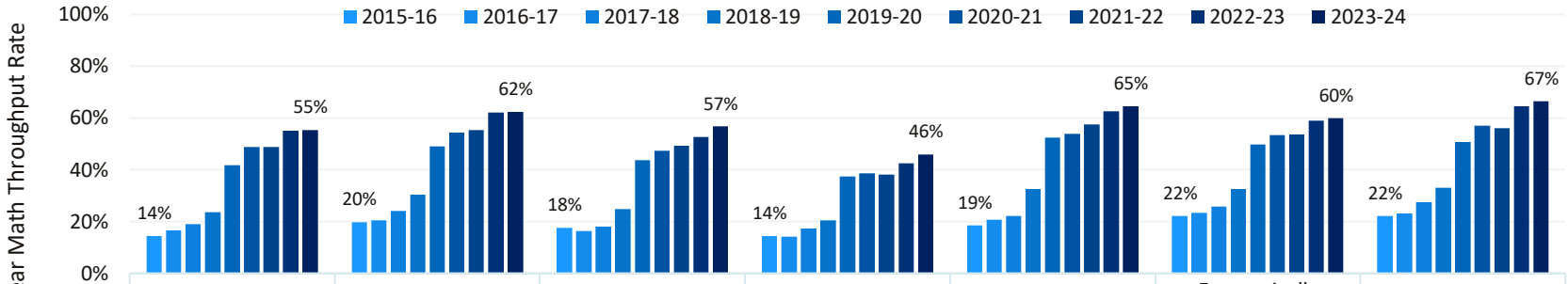
Figure 10. **Transfer-Level Math Throughput by Race/Ethnicity (2015-2016 through 2023-2024)**



Notes: Figure includes data for students starting at any level of math (pre-transfer or transfer) in the fall term who are then tracked through the academic year (i.e., fall, winter, spring, summer terms), disaggregated by race/ethnicity. See additional detail in Appendix B.

Positively, many student groups have experienced significant improvements in math throughput since AB 705's implementation (Figure 11a). As with English, rates increased dramatically for all groups during colleges' initial response to the legislation. Outcomes continued to rise in 2020-2021 and reached **their historically highest rates to date** in 2023-2024.

Figure 11a. **Transfer-Level Math Throughput by Student Group (2015-2016 through 2023-2024)**

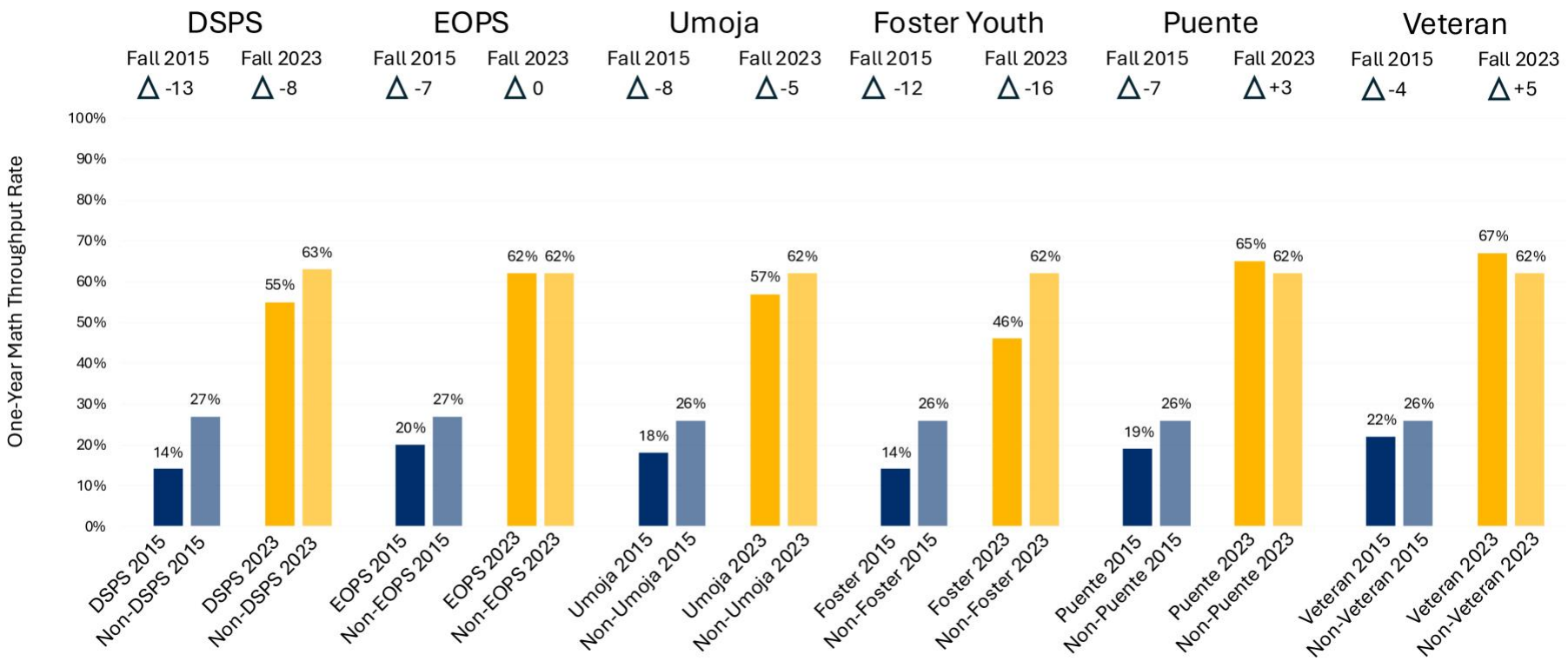


	DSPS	EOPS	Umoja	Foster Youth	Puente	Economically Disadvantaged	Veteran
2015-16	14%	20%	18%	14%	19%	22%	22%
2016-17	17%	20%	16%	14%	21%	23%	23%
2017-18	19%	24%	18%	17%	22%	26%	28%
2018-19	24%	30%	25%	20%	32%	32%	33%
2019-20	42%	49%	44%	37%	52%	50%	51%
2020-21	49%	54%	47%	39%	54%	53%	57%
2021-22	49%	55%	49%	38%	58%	54%	56%
2022-23	55%	62%	53%	42%	63%	59%	64%
2023-24	55%	62%	57%	46%	65%	60%	67%

Notes: Figure includes data for students starting at any level of math (pre-transfer or transfer) in the fall term who are tracked through the academic year, disaggregated by student group. Assignment to the student group reflects that the student participated in the program at any time.
See additional detail in Appendix B.

Figure 11b compares math throughput rates for various student groups (e.g., DSPS vs. non-DSPS) in 2015 and 2023, highlighting changes in equity gaps over time. While some disparities persist, gaps have narrowed for Umoja and DSPS students. In fall 2015, Umoja students had a math throughput rate eight percentage points lower than non-Umoja students; by fall 2023, the gap had decreased to five points. Similarly, the 13-point gap for DSPS students in 2015 had shrunk to eight points by 2023. However, as with English, foster youth continue to experience significantly lower math throughput rates, with their gap widening rather than closing. On a more positive note, gaps for EOPS students, Puente students, and veterans have closed. In fall 2015, EOPS students trailed their non-EOPS peers by seven percentage points, but by 2023, this gap had disappeared. Veterans made even greater strides, surpassing non-veterans by five percentage points in 2023 (see Appendix B).

Figure 11b. **Differences in Transfer-Level Math Throughput Between Student Groups in Fall 2015 and Fall 2023**



Conclusion

Prior to AB 705, many California community colleges had been working for years to overhaul developmental education to ensure more students fulfill the transfer-level English and math coursework required to meet their educational goals. The legislation's passage served as a systemwide call to action, requiring *all* colleges to make enrollment in these courses the standard experience for students pursuing associate's degrees and transfer and to provide the support needed to complete these courses in a timely way.

A longitudinal look at the nine years leading up to and since the implementation of this landmark legislation suggests that **AB 705 has catalyzed dramatic improvements in direct enrollment in transfer-level English and math**. Positively, the COVID-19 pandemic does not appear to have had a meaningful impact on this trend.

Nearly all students—regardless of demographic—enrolled directly in transfer-level English by fall 2021 and transfer-level math by fall 2023. When it comes to students' completion of transfer-level English and math within one year of entering the discipline, the legislation again appears to have generated **significant improvements in throughput rates in the period immediately following AB 705's implementation**. Certainly, opening the doors to these courses has allowed more students to complete them, and despite the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, throughput has remained stable since that time. This trend underscores students' capacity to succeed even in the face of unprecedented challenges and shows promise for what is to come as pandemic impacts evolve.

Yet, throughput rates still have substantial room for improvement in both English and math, and equity gaps persist. While many student groups saw remarkable gains in their completion of transfer-level English within one year, some groups continue to complete this coursework at lower rates. Math throughput also improved in the immediate wake of the legislation, but troublingly, lower completion rates for students of color, foster youth, and DSPS students remain. Across both subjects, rates of math and English throughput for foster youth are especially concerning, as rates appear to be widening instead of closing.

Looking Forward

This research suggests that California's community colleges–guided by the Chancellor's Office–must recommit to AB 705. Given that colleges have made remarkable strides in increasing direct enrollment in transfer-level English and math, the next phase of work must center on further improving students' throughput. Continuing to invest the time, attention, and resources needed to ensure students' timely success in these courses and **focusing this work on key student groups is paramount.** While new legislation (AB 1705) provides additional direction on how to strengthen these outcomes, continued improvement will require dedication at all levels–state, college, and classroom–beyond the letter of the law. Policy and practice opportunities include the following.

- **Continue developing an asset-based college culture that believes all students can succeed in transfer-level English and math with the appropriate support.** AB 705 itself required institutions to address structural changes in assessment and placement, but colleges must voluntarily work to shift their culture as it relates to equitable student access and success. This transformation will require executive leaders to set collegewide goals related to throughput for specific equity populations and articulate expectations about meeting each student where they are and serving them to the fullest capacity. For example, assessment and advising for specific student groups, such as foster youth, Umoja, and DSPS participants as well as African American/Black and Hispanic/Latine students, should embrace a growth mindset, one that believes that when given the opportunity and assistance, students can and will succeed in transfer-level math.

- **Implement evidence-based instructional practices and holistic support to operationalize this commitment.** This and other analyses strongly suggest that fulfilling the intents of both AB 705 and AB 1705 will require colleges to embrace new ways of teaching and learning within transfer-level English and math classrooms. These research findings also indicate the need for increased assistance both inside and outside of class. Corequisite support has been shown to meaningfully improve students' outcomes in this way (Duffy et al, 2025; Mann, 2023; Bahr et al, 2022; Ran et al, 2022; Complete College America, 2021; Cuellar Mejia et al, 2020; Daugherty et al., 2018; Logue et al., 2019). Specific opportunities include (1) structuring corequisites as the default student experience for those needing additional support, (2) engaging students through culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogy and with active learning strategies in the classroom, and (3) providing just-in-time assistance to address students' needs, academic and otherwise (MMAP, 2024).

  These changes will be especially important in terms of increasing math throughput in transfer-level courses needed for students' majors. AB 1705 specifically attempts to shorten the Business, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (B-STEM) pathway and requires colleges to ensure students are enrolling in the transfer-level course that increases the likelihood they will pass either Business Calculus (for non-STEM majors) or STEM Calculus 1 (for STEM majors). As more students directly enter these courses, colleges will need to provide the instructional and extracurricular supports that maximize students' success.

- **Continuously collecting data on key metrics and equity gaps to determine progress and areas of improvement at the institutional level.** Student access to and completion of transfer-level math stands out as needing specific attention. Given persistent equity gaps for students of color, first-generation students, foster youth, and DSPS and EOPS participants, colleges should closely monitor throughput for these groups. Now that enrollment in transfer-level math and English is nearly universal, attention must be paid towards ensuring students have the tools necessary to be successful in such courses. Additionally, assessing the impact of more intensive advising and holistic support inside and outside the classroom will help determine what interventions are most likely to advance equitable student outcomes.

Combined, these actions can continue to help the California Community Colleges make good on the promise of AB 705 and AB 1705. By working together, the legislature, the Chancellor's Office, and individual colleges will further ensure that each student completes these important milestones on their road to educational attainment and post-graduation success.

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Appendix A. Methodology

The RP Group obtained data for this analysis from the California community colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information System (COMIS) (*N* = 116). The data included students who started in a fall term–fall 2015 through fall 2023–tracked through summer 2024. Data used in this report reflected rates on the transfer-level completion dashboard as of January 1, 2025.[4] The samples included all students who attended a California community college and enrolled in one or more credit English or math courses. For each entering fall cohort, we tracked their enrollments and throughput in transfer-level English and math within the academic year (i.e., fall, winter, spring, and summer terms).

English courses were defined by the Taxonomy of Program (TOP) code 1501.00 (English). Math courses were defined by the TOP code 1701.00 (Mathematics) as well as specific "non-math" math courses in other TOP code areas including 0103.00 (Plant Science), 0501.00 (Business), 0505.00 (Business Administration), 0506.00 (Business Management), 0707.10 (Computer Programming), 1799.00 (Other Math), 2001.00 (Psychology), 2003.00 (Behavioral Science), 2099.00 (Other Psychology), 2201.00 (Social Sciences), 2204.00 (Economics), and 2208.00 (Sociology).

Transfer-level courses with math and English TOP codes were those courses with a CB21 code of Y (not prior to college level) and a CB05 transfer status code indicating that the course transfers to the University of California (UC) and/or California State University (CSU) system. Additionally, we included courses with pre-transfer CB 21 codes (e.g., A, B, C, or D) as below transfer level.

However, the underlying data elements and counts are the same. We assigned students to a college based on their first course enrollment in the discipline and included completion anywhere in the system.

Successful completions include A, B, C (including +/- grades where allowable), P, and CR grades, as well as incomplete grades equivalent to a passing grade (e.g., IA, IB, IC, IPP). We did not include enrollments with grade codes of ID, IF, XX, DR, MW, RD, UD, UG, RD0, RD1, RD2, RD3, RD4, RD5, RD6, RD8, IX, INP, and IP in the analysis, as they do not represent valid enrollments or letter grades. We defined non-successful completions as letter grades F, D (including +/- grades where allowable), W, and NP (see COMIS for definitions of letter grades). Excused withdrawals (EW) count as a valid enrollment and are considered a non-successful attempt.

The cohort is defined by the student's starting level and the academic year of the student's first English or math enrollment. Direct enrollment is defined by the first course a student takes in the discipline (i.e., English, math). Throughput is defined by course completion after all attempts within the specified timeframe, in this case within the academic year (i.e., fall, winter, spring, summer terms).

[4] https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Educational-Services-and-Support/transfer-level-dashboard

We designated enrollment in special programs (i.e., Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS), Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS), veterans, foster youth) if students' participation occurred at any point within the timeframe of the study. Program participation did not have to take place at the time of enrollment in a math or English course.

Limitations

This research presents a snapshot in time and can only be applied to what was happening within the system during the period of analysis. Further, the interpretation of longitudinal data comes with the caveat that the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020 precipitated several significant changes throughout the CCC system that may have impacted the results but will not be perceptible for many years.

Appendix B. Additional Tables

Table A1a. **Number and Percentage of Students Directly Enrolling in Transfer-Level English by Cohort (Fall 2015 through Fall 2023)**

Cohort	# of Students Who Enrolled Directly in Transfer-Level Course	# of Total Enrollments in the Subject at Any Level	% of Students Who Enrolled Directly in Transfer-Level Course
Fall 2015	72,875	170,363	43%
Fall 2016	81,605	172,757	47%
Fall 2017	97,308	177,317	55%
Fall 2018	126,649	179,589	71%
Fall 2019	169,114	179,858	94%
Fall 2020	152,304	158,428	96%
Fall 2021	141,876	146,025	97%
Fall 2022	154,860	156,800	99%
Fall 2023	165,631	167,045	99%

Table A1b. **Number and Percentage of Students Directly Enrolling in Transfer-Level Math by Cohort (Fall 2015 through Fall 2023)**

Cohort	# of Students Who Enrolled Directly in Transfer-Level Course	# of Total Enrollments in the Subject at Any Level	% of Students Who Enrolled Directly in Transfer-Level Course
Fall 2015	44,487	167,173	27%
Fall 2016	48,344	168,335	29%
Fall 2017	56,451	170,534	33%
Fall 2018	72,315	165,700	44%
Fall 2019	119,191	149,044	80%
Fall 2020	111,065	136,742	81%
Fall 2021	99,925	119,663	84%
Fall 2022	114,076	119,299	96%
Fall 2023	127,808	128,386	100%

Table A2a. **Direct Enrollment in Transfer-Level English by Student Group (Fall 2015 through Fall 2023)**

Student Group	Subgroup	Fall 2015		Fall 2016		Fall 2017		Fall 2018		Fall 2019		Fall 2020		Fall 2021		Fall 2022		Fall 2023	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Race/ Ethnicity	African American	2,696	29%	3,311	36%	4,031	44%	5,538	61%	8,317	93%	6,827	95%	6,424	97%	7,250	99%	7,713	100%
	Asian	9,590	47%	10,516	52%	12,600	59%	16,285	73%	19,633	91%	17,883	94%	17,523	96%	10,011	98%	18,907	98%
	Latine	29,255	34%	34,772	39%	44,981	48%	63,181	66%	91,094	94%	79,936	97%	74,617	97%	84,727	99%	90,570	99%
	White	24,924	59%	25,890	62%	27,543	68%	31,721	80%	35,070	95%	34,772	97%	31,755	97%	32,351	99%	34,052	99%
DSPS Status	DSPS	4,271	31%	4,908	36%	6,270	44%	8,717	60%	12,648	89%	9,747	93%	9,689	94%	11,1145	98%	11,405	99%
	Not DSPS	68,604	44%	76,697	48%	91,038	56%	117,932	71%	156,466	94%	142,557	96%	132,187	97%	143,715	99%	154,226	99%
Foster Youth Status	Foster Youth	1,273	33%	1,418	36%	1,791	46%	2,254	62%	4,776	95%	2,922	95%	2,607	96%	2,561	99%	2,696	99%
	Not Foster Youth	71,602	43%	80,187	47%	95,517	55%	124,395	71%	164,338	94%	149,382	96%	139,269	97%	152,299	99%	162,935	99%
EOPS Status	EOPS	6,512	30%	7,840	35%	10,554	46%	15,000	63%	21,378	93%	13,754	94%	13,230	95%	15,236	98%	13,825	98%
	Not EOPS	66,363	45%	73,765	49%	86,754	56%	111,649	72%	147,736	94%	138,550	96%	128,646	97%	139,624	99%	151,806	99%
Puente Status	Puente	91	8%	160	14%	337	25%	608	42%	1,380	98%	1,317	99%	1,386	100%	1,531	100%	1,752	100%
	Not Puente	72,784	43%	81,445	47%	96,971	55%	126,041	71%	167,734	94%	150,987	96%	140,490	97%	153,329	99%	163,879	99%
Umoja Status	Umoja	388	28%	494	31%	763	42%	1,412	67%	2,133	96%	1,552	97%	1,575	98%	2,136	99%	2,299	100%
	Not Umoja	72,487	43%	81,111	47%	96,545	55%	125,237	71%	166,981	94%	150,752	96%	140,301	97%	152,724	99%	163,332	99%
Veteran Status	Veteran	2,842	49%	3,110	55%	3,159	63%	3,371	75%	3,963	97%	3,058	97%	2,773	98%	2,789	99%	2,855	100%
	Not Veteran	70,033	43%	78,495	47%	94,149	55%	123,278	70%	165,151	94%	149,246	96%	141,309	97%	152,071	99%	162,776	99%

Table A2b. **Direct Enrollment in Transfer-Level Math by Student Group (Fall 2015 through Fall 2023)**

Student Group	Subgroup	Fall 2015		Fall 2016		Fall 2017		Fall 2018		Fall 2019		Fall 2020		Fall 2021		Fall 2022		Fall 2023	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Ethnicity	African American	1,515	17%	1635	19%	1857	22%	2,581	32%	5,042	74%	4,463	76%	4,071	79%	4,905	94%	5,484	99%
	Asian	10,569	49%	10,807	50%	11,665	54%	13,804	63%	18,083	86%	16,319	86%	15,444	89%	16,769	98%	18,283	99%
	Latine	14,992	18%	17,442	20%	22,179	25%	31,276	36%	59,061	78%	53,065	79%	4,7903	81%	56,849	94%	64,085	100%
	White	13,353	32%	14,074	35%	15,716	40%	18,613	50%	26,066	81%	27,007	83%	23,739	85%	25,508	97%	27,932	100%
DSPS Status	DSPS	2,099	16%	2,433	18%	3,001	22%	3,884	30%	7,454	70%	6,168	73%	6,161	77%	7,501	94%	8,148	99%
	Not DSPS	42,388	28%	45,911	30%	53,450	34%	68,431	45%	111,737	81%	104,897	82%	9,3764	84%	106,575	96%	119,660	100%
Foster Youth Status	Foster Youth	640	17%	623	17%	828	23%	1,052	31%	2,809	71%	1,786	72%	1,468	76%	1,691	93%	1,809	100%
	Not Foster Youth	43,847	27%	47,721	29%	55,623	33%	71,263	44%	116,382	80%	109,279	81%	98,457	84%	112,385	96%	125,999	100%
EOPS Status	EOPS	3,762	17%	4,200	19%	5,426	24%	7,536	34%	13,467	77%	9,337	76%	8,886	79%	10,531	93%	10,686	100%
	Not EOPS	40,725	28%	44,144	30%	51,025	34%	64,779	45%	105,724	80%	101,728	82%	91,039	84%	103,545	96%	117,122	100%
Puente Status	Puente	145	17%	148	17%	235	23%	364	37%	759	83%	739	88%	753	94%	903	98%	1,134	100%
	Not Puente	44,342	27%	48,196	29%	56,216	33%	71,951	44%	118,432	80%	110,326	81%	99,172	83%	113,173	96%	126,674	100%
Umoja Status	Umoja	216	18%	233	17%	325	22%	522	32%	1,242	82%	968	82%	1,009	85%	1,414	95%	1,538	100%
	Non Umoja	44,271	27%	48,111	29%	56,126	33%	71,793	44%	117,949	80%	110,097	81%	98,916	83%	112,662	96%	126,270	100%
Veteran Status	Veteran	1,349	22%	1,309	24%	1,363	27%	1,629	36%	2,617	71%	2,264	76%	2,053	78%	2,406	94%	2,791	100%
	Non Veteran	43,138	27%	47,035	29%	55,088	33%	70,686	44%	116,574	80%	108,801	81%	97,872	84%	111,670	96%	125,017	100%

Table A3a. **Transfer-Level English Throughput by Student Group (Fall 2015 through Fall 2023)**

Student Group	Subgroup	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Ethnicity	African American	2,990/ 9,350	32%	3,460/ 9,209	38%	3,721/ 9,138	41%	4,420/ 9,041	49%	4,951/ 8,941	55%	3,931/ 7,161	55%	3,617/ 6,617	55%	4,057/ 7,317	55%	4,559/ 7,748	59%
	Asian	12,003/ 20,601	58%	12,669/ 20,179	63%	14,048/ 21,481	65%	16,131/ 22,225	73%	16,940/ 21,624	78%	15,064/ 19,049	79%	14,385/ 18,220	79%	14,778/ 18,433	80%	15,640/ 19,273	81%
	Latine	34,797/ 85,193	41%	39,529/ 88,708	45%	44,943/ 92,940	48%	53,570/ 53,570	56%	60,689/ 9,6516	63%	49,835/ 82,806	60%	46,165/ 76,655	60%	52,694/ 85,563	62%	57,735/ 91,033	63%
	White	25,521/ 42,481	60%	26,326/ 41,651	63%	26,850/ 4,0362	67%	28,391/ 39,763	71%	28,051/ 36,876	76%	26,776/ 36,023	74%	24,244/ 32,617	74%	25,002/ 32,808	76%	25,931/ 34,486	75%
DSPS Status	DSPS	5,019/ 13,576	37%	5,707/ 13,786	41%	6,424/ 14,402	45%	7,693/ 14,506	53%	8,614/ 14,151	61%	6,750/ 10,437	65%	6,463/ 10,280	63%	7,247/ 11,364	64%	7,366/ 11,520	64%
	Not DSPS	76,831/ 156,787	49%	83,427/ 158,971	52%	90,888/ 162,915	56%	103,424/ 165,083	63%	113,104/ 165,707	68%	97,922/ 147,991	66%	90,171/ 135,745	66%	98,301/ 145,436	68%	106,871/ 155,525	69%
EOPS Status	EOPS	9,637/ 21,943	44%	10,744/ 22,171	48%	12,240/ 22,911	53%	14,820/ 23,701	63%	15,910/ 23,021	69%	10,316/ 14,618	71%	9,759/ 13,905	70%	10,984/ 15,599	70%	9,721/ 14,112	69%
	Not EOPS	72,213/ 148,420	49%	78,390/ 150,586	52%	85,072/ 154,406	55%	96,297/ 155,888	62%	105,808/ 156,837	67%	94,356/ 143,810	66%	86,875/ 132,120	66%	94,564/ 141,201	67%	104,516/ 152,933	68%
Foster Youth Status	Foster Youth	1,246/ 3,868	32%	1,400/ 3,899	36%	1,503/ 3,854	39%	1,666/ 3,641	46%	2,914/ 5,050	58%	1,586/ 3,079	52%	1,389/ 2,705	51%	1,326/ 2,599	51%	1,380/ 2,720	51%
	Not Foster Youth	80,604/ 166,495	48%	87,734/ 168,858	52%	95,809/ 173,463	55%	109,451/ 175,948	62%	118,804/ 174,808	68%	103,086/ 155,349	66%	95,245/ 143,320	66%	104,222/ 154,201	68%	112,857/ 164,325	69%
Puente Status	Puente	730/ 1,142	64%	719/ 1,120	64%	880/ 1,369	64%	975/ 1,454	67%	1,135/ 1,408	81%	905/ 1,327	68%	1,024/ 1,392	74%	1,194/ 1,534	78%	1,400/ 1,753	80%
	Not Puente	81,120/ 169,221	48%	88,415/ 171,637	52%	96,432/ 175,948	55%	110,142/ 178,135	62%	120,583/ 178,450	68%	103,767/ 157,101	66%	95,610/ 144,633	66%	104,354/ 155,266	67%	112,837/ 165,292	68%
Umoja Status	Umoja	593/ 1,376	43%	715/ 1,604	45%	898/ 1,823	49%	1,247/ 2,115	59%	1,455/ 2,221	66%	1,038/ 1,592	66%	1,055/ 1,610	66%	1,454/ 2,161	67%	1,592/ 2,303	69%
	Not Umoja	81,257/ 168,987	48%	88,419/ 171,153	52%	96,414/ 175,494	55%	109,870/ 177,474	62%	120,263/ 177,637	68%	103,634/ 156,836	66%	95,579/ 144,415	66%	104,094/ 154,639	67%	112,645/ 164,742	68%
Veteran Status	Veteran	3,039/ 5,836	52%	3,146/ 5,640	56%	2,991/ 5,012	60%	2,961/ 4,523	65%	2,977/ 4,106	73%	2,225/ 3,144	71%	1,999/ 2,822	71%	2,058/ 2,805	73%	2,148/ 2,861	75%
	Not Veteran	78,811/ 164,527	48%	85,988/ 167,117	51%	94,321/ 172,305	55%	108,156/ 175,066	62%	118,741/ 175,752	68%	102,447/ 155,284	66%	94,635/ 143,203	66%	103,490/ 153,995	67%	112,089/ 164,184	68%

Table A3b. **Transfer-Level Math Throughput by Student Group (2015-2016 through 2023-2024)**

Student Group	Subgroup	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Ethnicity	African American	1,148/ 8,987	13%	1,181/ 8,694	14%	1,244/ 8,561	15%	1,697/ 8,104	21%	2,438/ 6,783	36%	2,331/ 5,884	40%	2,073/ 5,168	40%	2,446/ 5,240	47%	2,719/ 5,525	49%
	Asian	10,710/ 21,529	50%	10,925/ 21,432	51%	11,676/ 21,560	54%	12,916/ 21,928	59%	14,884/ 21,036	71%	13,939/ 18,926	74%	12,654/ 17,423	73%	13,221/ 17194	77%	14,455/ 18,379	79%
	Latine	14,098/ 82,504	17%	15,679/ 85,394	18%	18,200/ 88,118	21%	22,867/ 86,310	26%	32,348/ 75,814	43%	31,056/ 67,009	46%	27,232/ 58,925	46%	31,376/ 60,168	52%	35,229/ 64,348	55%
	White	13,317/ 41,493	32%	13,860/ 40,014	35%	14,890/ 39,139	38%	16,192/ 36,900	44%	19,391/ 32,021	61%	20,380/ 32,683	62%	17,357/ 27,926	62%	18,174/ 26,322	69%	19,347/ 28,051	69%
DSPS Status	DSPS	1,892/ 13,092	14%	2,250/ 13,536	17%	2,559/ 13,367	19%	3,057/ 12,948	24%	4,471/ 10,715	42%	4,138/ 8,457	49%	3,911/ 8,008	49%	4,408/ 7,980	55%	4,552/ 8,208	55%
	Not DSPS	41,244/ 154,081	27%	43,521/ 154,799	28%	48,028/ 157,167	31%	55,534/ 152,752	36%	71,845/ 138,329	52%	70,679/ 128,285	55%	61,461/ 111,655	55%	67,535/ 111,319	61%	75,188/ 120,178	63%
EOPS Status	EOPS	4,275/ 21,553	20%	4,503/ 21,998	20%	5,394/ 22,323	24%	6,716/ 22,024	30%	8,588/ 17,537	49%	6,698/ 12,315	54%	6,184/ 11,181	55%	7,024/ 11,303	62%	6,694/ 10,732	62%
	Not EOPS	38,861/ 145,620	27%	41,268/ 146,337	28%	45,193/ 148,211	30%	5,1875/ 143,676	36%	67,728/ 13,1507	52%	68,119/ 12,4427	55%	59,188/ 108,482	55%	64,919/ 107,996	60%	73,046/ 117,654	62%
Foster Youth Status	Foster Youth	539/ 3,738	14%	527/ 3,721	14%	617/ 3,543	17%	693/ 3,396	20%	1,482/ 3,955	37%	959/ 2,480	39%	742/ 1,939	38%	776/ 1,826	42%	834/ 1,814	46%
	Not Foster Youth	42,597/ 163,435	26%	45,244/ 164,614	27%	49,970/ 166,991	30%	57,898/ 162,304	36%	74,834/ 145,089	52%	73,858/ 134,262	55%	64,630/ 117,724	55%	71,167/ 117,473	61%	78,906/ 12,6572	62%
Puente Status	Puente	159/ 852	19%	183/ 884	21%	223/ 1,005	22%	323/ 994	32%	481/ 918	52%	451/838	54%	461/ 801	58%	577/ 922	63%	733/ 1,136	65%
	Not Puente	42,977/ 166,321	26%	45,588/ 167,451	27%	50,364/ 169,529	30%	58,268/ 164,706	35%	75,835/ 148,126	51%	74,366/ 135,904	55%	64,911/ 118,862	55%	71,366/ 118,377	60%	79,007/ 127,250	62%
Umoja Status	Umoja	216/ 1,225	18%	220/ 1,334	16%	274/ 1,506	18%	405/ 1,634	25%	661/ 1,515	44%	559/ 1,180	47%	586/ 1,189	49%	780/ 1,483	53%	876/ 1,544	57%
	Not Umoja	42,920/ 165,948	26%	45,551/ 167,001	27%	50,313/ 16,9028	30%	58,186/ 164,066	35%	75,655/ 147,529	51%	74,258/ 135,562	55%	64,786/ 118,474	55%	71,163/ 117,816	60%	78,864/ 126,842	62%
Veteran Status	Veteran	1,353/ 6,082	22%	1,287/ 5,547	23%	1,372/ 4,989	28%	1,486/ 4,476	33%	1,882/ 3,706	51%	1,703/ 2,987	57%	1,482/ 2,642	56%	1,654/ 2,566	64%	1,864/ 2,799	67%
	Not Veteran	41,783/ 161,091	26%	44,484/ 162,788	27%	49,215/ 165,545	30%	57,105/ 161,224	35%	74,434/ 145,338	51%	73,114/ 133,755	55%	63,890/ 117,021	55%	70,289/ 116,733	60%	77,876/ 125,587	62%

The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges

The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (The RP Group) is a leader that supports equitable outcomes for minoritized and marginalized students through race-conscious, equity-minded research, planning, and professional development. We uplift student voices and empower researchers and planners to improve institutional effectiveness by dismantling systemic barriers and injustices.

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