



DATA HIGHLIGHT:

How have English and math course failure rates changed for California community college students since AB 705?

Research Overview

Developmental education reform resulting from AB 705 now allows nearly all California community college students to enroll directly in transfer-level English and math. In this new context, how are students' failure rates trending compared to when most started in basic skills English and math? [The Multiple Measures Assessment Project](#) tracked failed attempts in any English or math course—developmental education or transfer level—among nearly 4 million California community college students across two key periods:

Pre-AB 705: Enrolled between 2014-2015 through 2018-2019

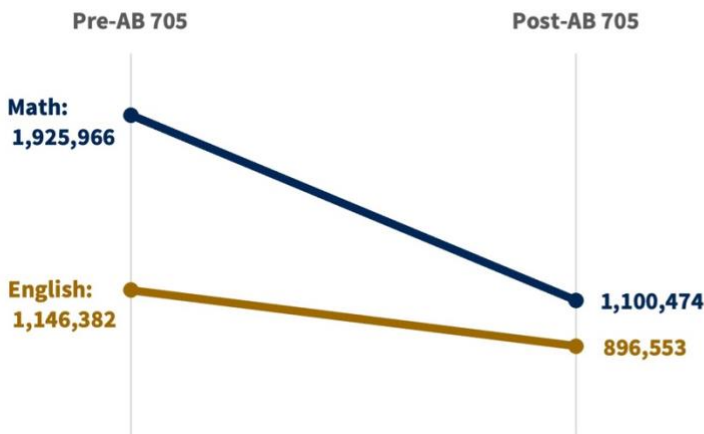
Post-AB 705: Enrolled between 2019-2020 through 2023-2024

A Failed Attempt Is...

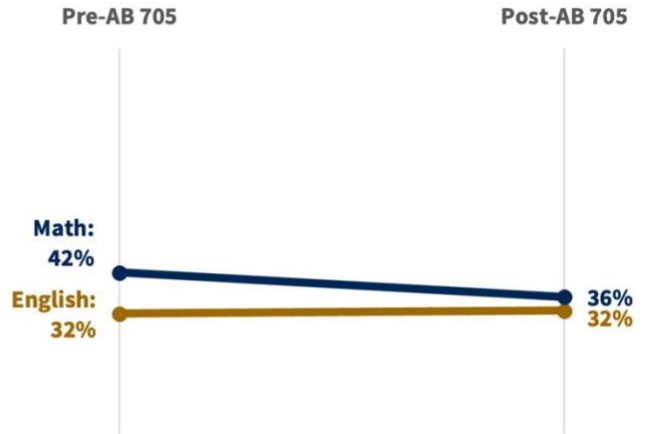
When a student was enrolled at census¹ in a course and ultimately received a standard, plus, minus, or in progress grade of D, F, NP, or W,² excluding excused withdrawals.

Overall, there have been ~825,000 fewer failed attempts in math and ~250,000 fewer in English since implementation of AB 705 beginning fall 2019. Fail rates are flat in English and lower in math. After AB 705 implementation, California community colleges observed a significant reduction in failed attempts in math and English, despite the increase in transfer-level enrollments.

TOTAL FAILED ATTEMPTS



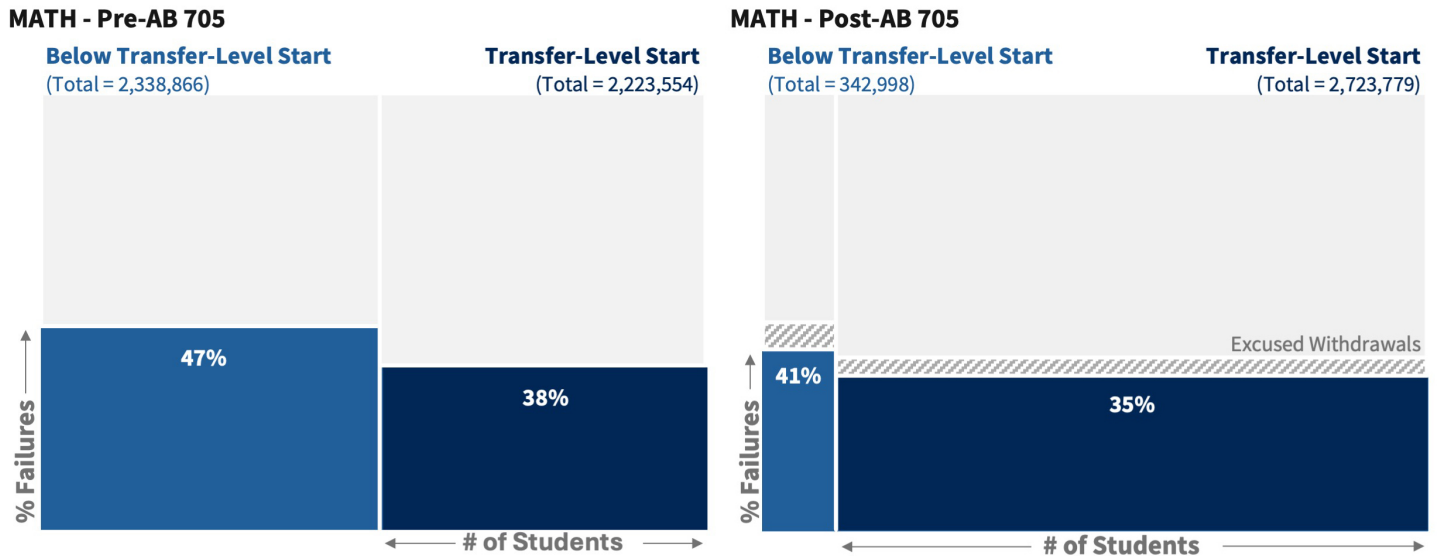
FAIL RATE



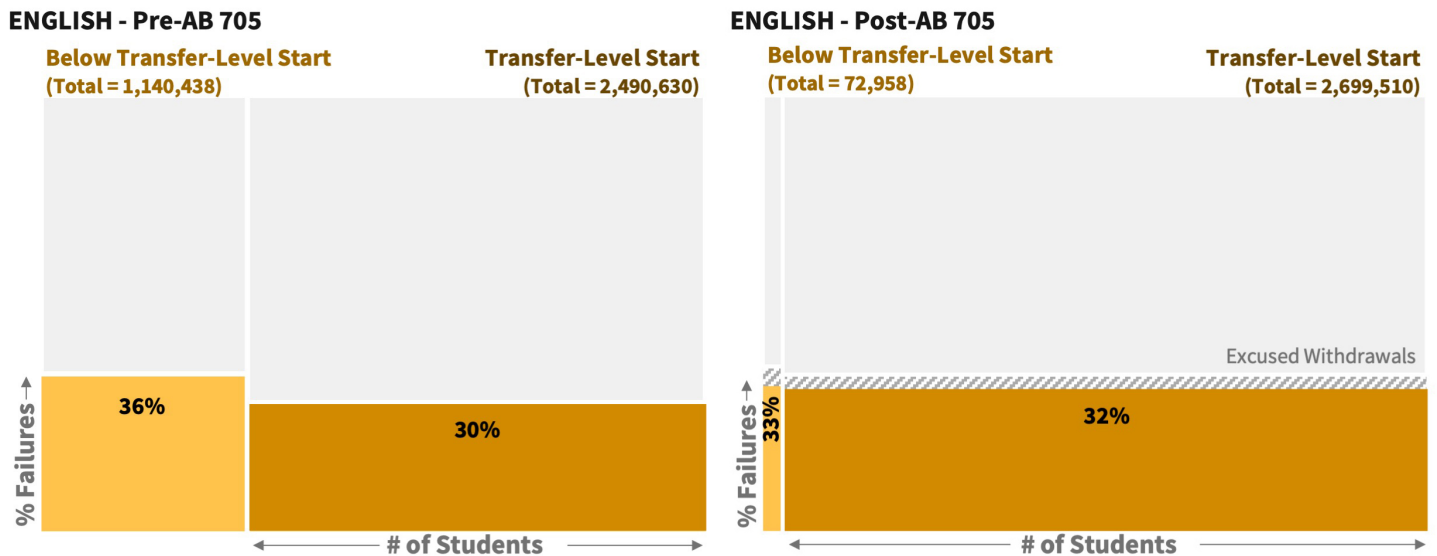
¹ Includes all census enrollments in non-support math and English courses at any level in the California Community Colleges between 2014-2015 and 2023-2024. Math courses include 1701.00 TOP codes and courses in other disciplines that meet transfer-level math or quantitative reasoning requirements. For more information on other TOP codes included, see the [BSTEM/SLAM View Methodology and Definitions](#).

² Includes D+, D, D-, F+, F, FW, ID, ID-, ID, ID+, IF, INP, NP, W., but does not include excused withdrawals (EW).

In math, the number of students enrolling in transfer-level courses has increased while fail rates have decreased post-AB 705.



In English, while virtually all students now enroll in transfer-level courses, fail rates have only increased slightly since AB 705.



Overall English and Math Outcomes for California Community College Students Pre- and Post-AB 705

Course	Pre-AB 705		Post-AB 705	
Math	4,562,420		3,066,777	
Successful Attempts	2,636,117	58%	1,832,830	60%
Failed Attempts	1,925,966	42%	1,100,474	36%
Excused Withdrawals	337	<1%	133,473	4%
English	3,631,068		2,772,468	
Successful Attempts	2,484,480	68%	1,776,820	64%
Failed Attempts	1,146,382	32%	896,553	32%
Excused Withdrawals	206	<1%	99,095	4%