

## PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Audrey Dow  
213-744-9434 Office  
310-402-8858 Cell  
[Audrey@collegecampaign.org](mailto:Audrey@collegecampaign.org)

# **New Report Finds Transfer Process for Community College Students Improved Since Historic 2010 Reforms but More Progress Needed**

***Study by The Campaign for College Opportunity calls on majority of Community Colleges and California State University (CSU) campuses to enroll and graduate more Associate Degree for Transfer earners and calls on Legislature to leverage funding to achieve better outcomes***

**Los Angeles (March 15, 2016)** – The Campaign for College Opportunity today released a new report, **“Keeping the Promise: Going the Distance on Transfer Reform,”** which found significant improvements in the creation of a seamless transfer pathway between California Community Colleges and the California State Universities (CSU) but more progress is needed to ensure that every student who wants to transfer is directed to the pathway and reaches their goal of a Bachelor’s degree.

The report is a comprehensive, independent examination of the community college to CSU transfer pathway since state lawmakers enacted Senate Bill 1440, the Student Transfer Achievement Reform (STAR) Act, in 2010 to significantly increase the number of students who transfer. The report cites that only 4% of California community college students transfer annually, boding poorly for California’s economy that is predicted to be 1.1 million bachelor degrees short by 2030. “When 70% of all college students in California attend a community college, a successful transfer path is key to producing the bachelor degrees the state needs and that the majority of students in community college hope to gain,” stated Michele Siqueiros, president of the Campaign for College Opportunity.

Under SB 1440, students who successfully complete 60 units of transferable coursework in community college can now be awarded an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) and receive guaranteed admission, with junior standing, into the CSU system to finish their final 60 upper-division credits and earn a bachelor’s degree.

The study released today reports that a strong framework for improving transfers has been built since the bill’s enactment. The number of ADT earners has nearly doubled annually up to 20,646 ADT earners in 2014-15, coordination between CSU and community colleges has improved, and more students have benefitted from the admissions guarantee to a CSU campus evidenced by 90% of admitted ADT earners enrolling in a CSU campus. But community colleges and CSU campuses have yet to go the distance to see more students through to earning ADTs and their bachelor’s degree on the pathway. Only 37% of all ADT earners transfer to the CSU on the ADT pathway and only four of the 23 CSU campuses are responsible for enrolling 66% of all ADT transfer students.

“This report shows that good policy, if faithfully implemented, will improve educational outcomes for our students. The fact that the number of students earning an ADT has nearly doubled every year and nearly all of those students who apply to CSU enroll, tells us this is working. Students want the clarity of this pathway and the guarantees it affords – the proof is in the data. But, if we are going to move the needle on producing more bachelor’s degrees to meet state economic demand, then we still have to go the distance and ensure this is the primary way by which a majority of community college students transfer to the CSU,” said Siqueiros.

California Secretary of State Alex Padilla, who as the State Senator who authored SB 1440 and follow up legislation, said, “California has made tremendous progress in building a community college transfer pathway that helps students reach their education goals and receive a college degree. That’s a big difference from where we were just six years ago when confusing and conflicting requirements kept so many California community college students from transferring to a four-year university.”

Among the report’s key findings:

- The number of ADTs nearly doubled every year: Over 20,000 students earned one in 2014-2015, and 90% of ADT students admitted to the CSU enrolled.
- California community colleges and CSU have improved their coordination: Almost 2,000 degree pathways are now available from the community colleges to CSU.
- More students have benefitted from the admissions guarantee to four-year universities: Almost 6,500 ADT students have enrolled in the CSU system.
- The ADT is not the preferred transfer pathway to the CSU system: Only 8% of CSU transfer students have an ADT.
- Ten community colleges award 33% of the ADTs in the state.
- Only 37% of ADT earners enroll in CSU.
- Only four of the 23 CSU campuses are responsible for enrolling 66% of all ADT transfer students.

The study provides several recommendations for strengthening the new Associate Degree for Transfer pathway so that more community college students can get to the four year university. These include:

- Policymakers should continue legislative oversight and require better data collection to ensure a seamless and preferred transfer pathway is realized
- State funding and policy priorities for community colleges and the state’s public universities should support success of the ADT pathway
- Community College and CSU campuses should strengthen the ADT pathway on their campuses while expanding regional collaboration to produce and enroll more ADT students
- Communications and counseling must be improved so more students take advantage of the pathway and go on to earn their college degrees.

“I thank the Campaign for College Opportunity for its continued attention and follow up studies on implementation. Only through this kind of vigilance can we build a better, more responsive higher education system that benefits students, taxpayers and our economy,” concluded Secretary of State Padilla.

To access the complete “**Keeping the Promise: Going the Distance on Transfer Reform**,” visit

[www.collegecampaign.org/resource-library/our-publications/](http://www.collegecampaign.org/resource-library/our-publications/)

***About Campaign for College Opportunity:***

*The Campaign for College Opportunity is a California non-profit research and advocacy organization focused on a single mission: to ensure all Californians have an equal opportunity to attend and succeed in college in order to build a vibrant workforce, economy and democracy. For more information, visit [www.CollegeCampaign.org/](http://www.CollegeCampaign.org/) [Facebook.com/CollegeCampaign](https://www.facebook.com/CollegeCampaign) or follow [@CollegeOpp](https://twitter.com/CollegeOpp).*