The future of California depends heavily on increasing the number of Californians with certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor’s degrees. Educational attainment in California has been declining with each younger generation – a statistic that bodes poorly for the state’s economic competitiveness.

*Divided We Fail* is a report that tracked more than a quarter of a million students (255,253) who entered a California Community College in 2003-04 over six years and analyzed their progress and outcomes by major racial/ethnic population. Analyses were restricted to “degree-seekers” (students believed to be seeking a certificate, associate degree, or bachelor’s degree), defined as all new students enrolling in more than 6 credits in the first year.

In California, too many students fail to complete community college:

- Six years after enrolling, **70% of degree-seeking students had not completed a certificate or degree and had not transferred to a university.**
- **75-80% of Latino and black degree-seeking students did not complete.**
- **Only 23% of degree seekers transferred to a university, 11% earned an associate degree, and only 5% earned a certificate.**

### Key Findings for the Central Coast Region

(12,857 degree-seeking students)

- **At 38%, the overall completion rate of degree-seeking community college students in the Central Coast region, while still low, was higher than in any other region.**
- The share of degree-seeking community college students in the Central Coast region transferring to a university was **28%**. Black students were more likely to transfer than their Asian-Pacific Islander or Latino peers, but **nearly 1 in 5 black transfer students enrolled in a for-profit college (19%).**
- **Only 27% of black transfer students in the Central Coast enrolled in a California State University or the University of California.**
- **14% of Central Coast students earned an associate degree,** slightly higher than the state rate.
- The share of students earning a certificate in the Central Coast region, **5%**, was the same as the statewide rate.
- While the Central Coast generally had slightly higher rates of completion than the state, **lower rates of success for blacks and Latinos resulted in them making up a smaller share of completers (24%) than they did of incoming degree-seekers (37%).**
Milestone Attainment and Completion within 6 Years
California Community College (CCC) System and Central Coast Region

Intermediate Milestones

Completion

Milestone Attainment and Completion Within 6 Years by Race/Ethnicity in the Central Coast Region

Racial/Ethnic Distribution of Degree-Seekers Compared to “Completers” in Central Coast Colleges

Degree-Seekers N=12,857

Completers N=4,828
Most Transfer Students in the Central Coast Have Not Completed Two Years of Credits

Completed Transfer Curriculum
Completed Associate Degree

Transfer Destination of Central Coast Students Varies by Race/Ethnicity

White Transfer Students

CSU 36%
Out-of-State Public 23%
In-State Private 11%
UC 14%

API Transfer Students

CSU 38%
Out-of-State Public 18%
In-State Private 12%
UC 19%

Black Transfer Students

CSU 22%
For-Profit 19%
Out-of-State Private 13%
Out-of-State Public 30%
UC 5%
In-State Private 11%

Latino Transfer Students

CSU 46%
For-Profit 13%
Out-of-State Public 12%
In-State Private 10%
UC 13%

Completion Rates Vary Depending on Students’ Enrollment Patterns

Students who followed certain enrollment patterns did much better. Passing college level English and Math within 2 years and accumulating at least 20 credits in the first year increase student chances of success. As examples, 58% of students who took and passed college-level English within two years completed a certificate, degree or transfer within six years compared to only 23% who did not; 62% of students who passed college level Math within 2 years succeeded (vs. 25% who did not); and 68% of students who accumulated at least 20 credits in the first year succeeded (vs. 25% who did not). Unfortunately, few Central Coast students follow these successful patterns (see below).