Guided Pathways: Progress, Next Steps, and Future Directions

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Executive Summary

The College Spark Washington/State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) Guided Pathways Initiative, an eight year, $7 million effort launched in 2016, involved 10 Washington community and technical colleges, with one cohort of five colleges starting in 2016 and another in 2018. The initiative provided significant support to the colleges to pursue comprehensive institutional redesign, with the goal of increasing student completion, closing equity gaps, and developing change leaders.

All of the colleges made substantial progress in at least a couple of the broad areas of Guided Pathways essential practices. Almost all completed mapping their programs, although map use is variable. Most now have mandatory entry advising, and several are working towards all students having individualized ed plans, based on maps. Most built in some career and college exploration, using a range of approaches. Almost all reduced or eliminated most precollege math and English, with several adopting a corequisite approach. Several also switched to directed self-placement from high stakes tests. Most strengthened teaching and learning practices and processes, with an emphasis on equity. Support through completion remains a work in progress for all.

Colleges that made significant progress in all areas have certain features in common, including:

- Institutional commitment, with Guided Pathways being a college-wide priority
- Guided Pathways viewed as institutional change—a challenge to existing practices and systems, from students' start to finish—and acting accordingly
- Leadership, with presidents, vice presidents, and deans actively engaged and in an ongoing way
- Broad, deep faculty and staff engagement in the work, which also helped promote culture change
- Strategic use of data—including disaggregated data—to first inform and then assess the work
- Institutional levers used to implement change (e.g., budget resources and contract negotiations)
- Change institutionalized through college structures and processes (e.g., program and curriculum review and outcomes assessment)
- Concerted, focused effort over time, required to fully implement change at scale
- A healthy appetite for innovation and improvement through multiple reform efforts over years

SBCTC data show colleges made slow, steady progress on the early student outcome measures of completion of math, English, and 15 credits in the first year, with the first cohort of colleges having gains above the system-wide average. Fourth year completion rates remained static. Data are for the years when colleges were still at work implementing Guided Pathways, so It will be important to continue to review the data over time. Disaggregated data show steady gains on the first year measures within some racial/ethnic groups--Black/African American students and Hispanic/Latino students—with the first cohort again having gains above the system-wide average. For other racial/ethnic groups, small numbers make it harder to determine, but progress seems more variable.

The work and experiences of the colleges participating in the initiative offer some lessons for other community and technical colleges. Guided Pathways is best viewed as a set of principles rather than a prescriptive checklist. This facilitates the hard work institutional change requires. To be transformational, Guided Pathways needs to be taken as a whole package, not just the individual essential practices. Also, it must be seen as the college's work, not something separate, and everyone's work. In addition, equity needs to be infused throughout. This includes renewing and expanding engagement with local communities.

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Introduction

College Spark Washington and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) launched an eight year, $7 million Guided Pathways Initiative in 2016, with the aim of increasing student completion, closing equity gaps, and developing change leaders.

The idea behind Guided Pathways, as noted by the Community College Research Center, "is straightforward. College students are more likely to complete a degree in a timely fashion if they choose a program and develop an academic plan early on, have a clear roadmap of the courses they need to take to complete a credential, and receive guidance and support to help them stay on plan." Guided Pathways entails "a systemic redesign of the student experience from initial connection to college through to completion, with changes in program structure, new student intake, instruction, and support services." [1]

As part of the initiative, two cohorts of five colleges each were selected and received College Spark grants of $100,000 per year for five years to support comprehensive implementation of Guided Pathways. The first cohort was selected in 2016 through a competitive process and consisted of the following colleges:

- Everett Community College
- Peninsula College
- Pierce College
- South Puget Sound Community College
- South Seattle College

In 2018, a second cohort was added and included:

- Clover Park Technical College
- Lower Columbia College
- Renton Technical College
- Spokane Falls Community College
- Tacoma Community College

As part of the initiative, cohort colleges developed Guided Pathways implementation work plans each year and participated in cohort retreats twice a year. The SBCTC Student Success Center convened the retreats and also provided colleges technical assistance and facilitated coaching, which was provided by current and former community college

1 Community College Research Center, What We Know About Guided Pathways (March 2015) at https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/What-We-Know-Guided-Pathways.pdf.

leaders from both in and out of the state. Some colleges also received additional College Spark grants to support their work in specific Guided Pathways areas such as math and English.

College Spark also provided funding for an independent, third party evaluation we conducted to document and evaluate the implementation of Guided Pathways and the results, provide timely feedback to the colleges to help inform their efforts going forward, and document lessons learned and their implications for policy, practice, and systems. This report summarizes these findings from our evaluation.

This report includes:

- Review of and feedback on the Guided Pathways framework that guided cohort colleges' efforts
- Examination of cohort colleges' progress in implementing essential practices in five Guided Pathways areas: pathways and program maps; entry advising and ed planning, including exploration; math and English; teaching and learning; and support through completion
- Exploration of what comprehensive implementation of Guided Pathways requires, as part of institutional change
- Review of student outcomes data
- Identification of key lessons and implications

The report is based on evaluation site visits conducted throughout cohort colleges' participation in the initiative, attendance at and participation in cohort retreats, review of colleges' implementation work plans, analysis of SBCTC student outcomes data, additional interviews with cohort colleges conducted specifically for this report, and review and analysis of evaluation products generated throughout the initiative (e.g., college self-assessments, baseline summaries, college site visit memos, and cross-cutting issue reports).

Guided Pathways Framework

At the outset of the Guided Pathways Initiative, College Spark and its partners, including the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, developed a Guided Pathways framework that included a set of essential practices and an implementation schedule – drawing heavily on the book, *Redesigning America's Community Colleges: A Clearer Path to Student Success*[2] and related Community College Research Center (CCRC) reports.

Framework

The Guided Pathways framework as well as the initiative itself focused on comprehensive change, in line with CCRC's view of Guided Pathways as "a systemic redesign of the student experience from initial connection to college through to completion." Over the five years of the initiative, cohort colleges were expected to fully implement each of the Guided Pathways essential practices (detailed below) at scale, with scale defined as reaching all credential seeking students.

This is in contrast with some earlier community college change efforts that tended to focus on specific aspects of the community college experience and reach only a portion of students.

In reflecting on their five years of experience as part of the initiative, several cohort colleges underscored the importance of this institutional, systems change aspect of Guided Pathways. For example, one college noted that the Guided Pathways framework represents a challenge to every system and practice, from students' start to finish. Other colleges' comments along these lines included:

> "It challenges the way things are done, and forces us out of practices embedded for years."

2 Thomas R. Bailey, Shanna Smith Jaggars, and Davis Jenkins, Redesigning America's Community Colleges: A Clearer Path to Student Success (Harvard University Press, 2015).

> It helped prompt critical thinking about what we're doing and could be doing better. And it's changed the way in which we do things.
>
> It represents institutional transformation - meeting students where they're at and changing what we do to better serve them.

The initiative added equity as part of Guided Pathways, and this was viewed as an important contribution. Examples of colleges' equity related efforts include: incorporating analysis of disaggregated data as part of institutional processes; incorporating inclusive pedagogy and other equity centered teaching and learning strategies; implementing practices such as corequisite math and directed self-placement that serve to reduce equity related barriers; and expanding outreach, onboarding, and retention efforts targeting specific underserved communities and focused on making connections and relationship building.

One area of the framework that was less well developed, according to cohort colleges, was teaching and learning. Despite this, colleges made substantial progress in this area, including the examination of disaggregated data as part of program and curriculum review and outcomes assessment, the building of institutional capacity such as teaching and learning centers, and the expansion of strategic professional development with incentives.

Essential Practices

The essential practices that the cohort colleges were expected to fully implement at scale covered the student experience from start to finish as well as key aspects of the change process itself such as faculty and staff engagement in the work, as shown below.

ESSENTIAL PRACTICE	DEFINITION
Engagement	Faculty and staff are engaged in developing, implementing, and refining each Guided Pathways practice; this includes cross-departmental, cross-functional teams.
Pathways and programs of study	Programs, clustered into pathways, are well designed with clearly defined learning outcomes aligned with employment and further education.
Exploratory sequence	An exploratory sequence for each pathway gives students who select a pathway upon enrollment, but have not determined their program, a taste of the field.
Program maps	Programs are clearly mapped out for students to provide a coherent pathway from entry to completion; this includes default course sequences. The maps can then be used to create individualized ed plans.
Communication	There's college-wide understanding of Guided Pathways. Information on pathways and programs, as well as related employment and further education is easily available to students via the college website and other communications tools.
Technology	Technology is in place to support full Guided Pathways implementation (e.g., advising, progress monitoring, intervening, and scheduling).
Intake	All students are helped to explore career/college options, choose a pathway upon enrollment, and enter a program within no more than two quarters, and create an ed plan based on program maps.

ESSENTIAL PRACTICE	DEFINITION
Advising	Advising is mandatory and intrusive for all students, facilitates prompt entry into a program, and monitors and supports student progress through completion. Advisors and faculty maintain close cooperation.
Degree math and college level English within one year	The majority of students earn degree math and college level English credit within their first year of enrollment. A variety of strategies may be used, including alternative placement measures (e.g., high school transcripts and guided self-placement) at scale, corequisite courses, shortening of precollege sequences and contextualized precollege courses.
Gatekeeper (or predictive) courses	For each program, courses predictive of student success are identified. This information is used to develop supports and teaching and learning strategies to increase success; and by advisors to help students make informed selections and/or transition between programs.
Math Pathways	Required math courses are aligned with pathways and contextualized to students' fields of study, where possible.
Scheduling	College course schedules ensure students can take the courses they need when they need them, and complete their programs in as short a time as possible.
Progress monitoring	Students' progress on their ed plans is monitored on an ongoing basis.
Intervening and/or redirecting students as needed	Colleges can identify when students are at risk of falling off their ed plans and have policies and supports in place to help students get back on track.

ESSENTIAL PRACTICE	DEFINITION
Ensuring learning	Learning outcomes are clearly defined for each program and aligned with employment and further education. Faculty assess student learning outcomes and use the results to improve effectiveness of instruction in their programs. And colleges create targeted professional development.

Cohort colleges reported that it's important to see the essential practices as a package, not individually. As one college noted, you can't just do program maps; that's tinkering around the edges. You can do good work on one piece or another, but you don't see changes in outcomes until all the pieces are in place. Another college noted that in the past, it would take on one thing in isolation; with Guided Pathways, it's in combination – program maps, placement, advising, and the like.

Cohort colleges also noted that the essential practices are intertwined and that needs to be taken into account in their planning and implementation. For example, program maps have an impact on advising, ed plans, and scheduling; and changes in math and placement have an impact on program maps and advising.

Cohort colleges also noted that the essential practices are best viewed as principles, not as a prescriptive checklist – this fosters the hard, deep conversations required for changing institutional policies, practices, and systems, and enables colleges to figure out approaches that work for them, given the context of the college, its programs and students. For example, most colleges wrestled with exploratory sequences, but when focusing on the broader principle of exploration, they were able to develop a range of approaches: online career exploration tools; career exploration and confirmation as part of intake, advising, and college success courses; and exploratory courses.

Implementation schedule

The implementation schedule spelled out a timeline for the cohort colleges to implement the essential practices. The first year focused on planning – for example, creating cross-departmental, cross-functional teams to engage faculty and staff in the work; communicating the Guided Pathways vision and goals throughout the college; and taking steps to develop plans for the essential practices. The following years focused on completing the plans, implementing them, and improving and/or refining them. And there was a sequence to the work on the essential practices – for example, pathways and

program maps, exploratory sequences, and technology were to be done in the first two years; intake and advising in the second and third years; and math and English, and progress monitoring and intervening in the third and fourth years.

Cohort colleges reported that having an implementation schedule was a positive – timelines and checkpoints are important and build in a degree of accountability.

However, the experience of cohort colleges suggests there are multiple ways to sequence the work and, therefore, the need for some flexibility. For example, some colleges found it beneficial to make college-wide curricular changes such as corequisite math and mandatory college success courses before developing program maps. Also, some colleges had issues with tackling technology early on, especially prior to developing their approaches to advising, ed planning, and progress monitoring.

The experience of cohort colleges also suggests full implementation of at least some of the essential practices at scale will take longer than five years. For example, ensuring consistent use of program maps in creating students' individualized ed plans and all students have approved ed plans requires concerted, focused effort over time.

Colleges also noted that the Guided Pathways work is ongoing and iterative.

Guided Pathways Essential Practices

As part of the Guided Pathways Initiative, cohort colleges were to fully implement Guided Pathways essential practices at scale. This section examines cohort colleges' starting points in the five Guided Pathways areas—pathways and program maps; entry advising and ed planning, including exploration; math and English; teaching and learning; and support through completion—and the progress they made during the course of the initiative.

Pathways and program maps

At the start of Guided Pathways, cohort colleges didn't have pathways or program maps. Schools and departments offered individual programs, with related degrees and certificates. Some of the information on this could be found on college websites, but some existed in print form only and most was not readily visible to students.

Critical courses and course sequences existed for some programs, mostly professional-technical ones. For academic transfer programs, colleges typically provided information on degree requirements and course options (long lists of courses), but these were not organized into course sequences. Some colleges had program/curriculum guides or planners, with degree requirements and course options, but these were used primarily by advisors in their work with students and weren't public facing, student-friendly documents.

Information on employment and further education opportunities was available for some, but not all, programs (again, more likely for professional-technical than academic transfer). There was a wide range of information in terms of both quantity and quality. Professional-technical programs typically focused on preparing students for employment, but not necessarily further education; and academic transfer programs for further education, but rarely for future employment.

At the start, cohort colleges assessed that their practices in this area were not systematic; they needed to be expanded to all programs consistently. In addition, information needed to be made easily accessible and user friendly.

As part of the initiative, cohort colleges have developed pathways—some common ones include advanced manufacturing; arts, humanities, and communications; business; education and social sciences; health care; skilled trades; and STEM—and aligned their programs with these pathways. Almost all colleges also now have detailed program maps.

College websites all have homepages with their pathways and related programs prominently displayed. Most also include program maps, information on employment and further education tied to pathways and/or programs, and student learning outcomes. Several also include links to career exploration tools. The graphics and information are well presented and much more student friendly than before.

Common features of colleges' program maps include:

- Suggested courses relevant to the field when options are available, rather than long lists.
- Within the first two quarters, math, English, a college success course (where required or recommended), and a content course tied to the student's pathway and/or program.
- Course sequences, mostly quarter by quarter, but also overall sequence so maps can be used by part-time as well as full-time students.
- Student action items (e.g., meet with advisor or faculty).

Approaches to map development ranged from using one or more small working groups to engaging the entire faculty in multiple day meetings within and across disciplines. Some engaged advisors and others from student services as well. The more comprehensive mapping efforts often included tools and supports such as rubrics, data on student outcomes at the program and course level, and dedicated time for the mapping work.

Colleges that created their maps in small, isolated groups tended to have trouble getting buy-in from the larger campus community. This is not a commentary on the quality of the maps, but on the larger impact on institutional change when there is broad, deep engagement in the work. Colleges that involved most or all faculty and some staff, devoted significant time to the process, and conducted regular reviews and revisions noted the work itself created a huge, college-wide culture shift becoming more student-centered, as participants in the work learned more about what students really needed, what was excess or unnecessary, and what the obstacles were to on-time completion (e.g., scheduling). These colleges have made maps and their review and updating part of institutional structures and processes (e.g., program and curriculum review).

Most colleges undertook their program mapping work in the first one or two years, as outlined in the Guided Pathways Initiative's framework and timeline. However, a couple colleges found it worked better to put some of the building blocks in place first (e.g., corequisite math and mandatory college success course).

Although almost all colleges have created their program maps, their use is extremely variable. A few of the colleges completed first iterations of their maps, but are not using them, defaulting to other, mostly pre-existing tools. At several colleges, map use is happening but not consistently. The remaining colleges are putting in the solid work required to ensure the maps are being used as tools for creating students' individualized ed plans (e.g., training advisors and faculty on their use, phasing out older program/curriculum guides or planners, and having technology supports in place).

Entry advising and ed planning, including exploration

At the start of Guided Pathways, cohort colleges had some form of entry advising and ed planning, but there was considerable variation in terms of scope, ranging from brief to more comprehensive efforts; and scale, with not all colleges requiring students to take part.

This was also the case for career and college exploration, which some colleges incorporated as part of entry advising and/or college success courses, but not consistently. Colleges also had counseling and career services available, but it was up to students to seek out these resources.

At the start, cohort colleges assessed that their practices in this area ranged from not systematic to scaling in progress. They also reported their exploration practices needed further development.

As part of the initiative, almost all cohort colleges now have mandatory entry advising, including one-on-one sessions to help students explore or confirm careers, pathways, and/or programs of study; and develop their initial ed plans. Ed plans are further developed as part of advising after entry or college success courses. This has required some colleges to add entry advising capacity.

However, full implementation of this practice takes concerted, focused effort over time. One college that's been at this for some years noted it's up to almost 90 percent of students having approved ed plans. Others are not yet at this level.

Some colleges, especially those in the second cohort, have also strengthened intake and onboarding. This includes creating welcome centers; conducting targeted outreach, with

a focus on communities of color that have been underserved (e.g., Black/African American and Native American communities); surveying students to identify their needs and connecting them to resources; and adding entry navigators to help students through the intake and onboarding process.

Contributing to this work was a Guided Pathways Initiative exercise that had colleges analyze their disaggregated data at each step in their intake and onboarding process to see who was falling out at different points in the process and outline strategies to increase the percent of students completing the process and address equity gaps. This helped to focus attention on this issue.

With respect to exploration, colleges have taken a variety of approaches, including:

- Online career exploration tools, included on their websites along with information on pathways and programs of study. For example, some colleges have Career Coach, which features a career assessment, based on interests; information on occupations as well as employment and earnings in the regional labor market; and related programs of study.

- Exploration as part of entry advising. As described above, one-on-one entry advising sessions include exploration or confirmation of careers, pathways, and/or programs of study.

- Exploratory courses. Some program maps include content courses early on that are foundational, introductory, or common to programs of study within a pathway and are broad and transferable, making it possible for students to explore within a pathway.

- Exploration as part of college success courses. Some colleges have made career research projects the cornerstone of their college success courses. At some colleges, the college success course is mandatory for all new students and at others, for certain groups (e.g., AA-DTA students, where exploration is particularly important, given the general nature of the degree).

At least early on, the primary focus of the Guided Pathways framework in terms of exploration was on the design of an exploratory sequence for each pathway to give students who haven't chosen a program of study a taste of the field.

All colleges struggled with this, but especially technical colleges. They pointed out that students at technical colleges typically choose their program first and then the college. Also, professional-technical programs tend to be highly structured, so adding additional courses can be difficult and counterproductive (e.g., creating bottlenecks, adding credits to programs, and increasing the cost to students).

By focusing on the principle or concept of exploration as well as confirmation—rather than exploratory sequences specifically—most colleges have figured out how to approach this in a way that works for the college, its programs and students. For technical colleges, this has meant bolstering upfront career, pathway, and program exploration and confirmation, including online tools, entry advising, and college success courses. Also, some of their program maps have content courses common to a pathway early on – where such courses exist.

Math and English

At the start of Guided Pathways, cohort colleges—and other colleges in the Washington state system—had already undertaken a variety of math reforms: shortening precollege math sequences, changing placement policies and practices, offering instructional models such as Statway and Emporium, and providing supports such as supplemental instruction and tutoring.

Even though some colleges had multiple placement measures, most students were still placed using high stakes tests such as Accuplacer. And while a few colleges had Statway and Emporium, these operated alongside traditional precollege and college math courses; they were add-ons and didn't serve most students. And supplemental instruction and tutoring were not embedded in the classroom.

Large portions of students were still starting at precollege levels. And far less than a majority of students were earning degree math within their first year – a Guided Pathways expectation.

Colleges had also undertaken English reforms, including shortening the path to college level English.

As part of the initiative, several cohort colleges have moved from a sequential approach of first precollege, then college level math to a corequisite approach; and from high stakes tests to directed (or guided) self-placement.

With respect to corequisite math, these colleges have used a couple of different models – college level math courses with a support course and bucket courses that incorporate both precollege and college level math. At the same time as they've implemented corequisite math, they've also reduced or eliminated their precollege math classes. For example, one college no longer has stand-alone precollege math courses and another has a prep for college math course for the few students who are not ready for corequisite math. These colleges—as well as some of the other cohort colleges—also put directed self-placement practices into broad use very quickly as a result of the Covid pandemic in 2020.

These colleges have reported positive results. For example, a couple of colleges reported that their corequisite math classes have about the same success rates as the non-corequisite college level math classes, even though the former include students who previously would have been required to take precollege math classes first.

Several cohort colleges cited the corequisite model as a game changer. And when asked if there were any combinations of Guided Pathways practices that were especially powerful, they responded "corequisite together with guided self-placement."

Factors at the college level that helped to move this work forward included examination of student outcomes data, especially math completion rates; faculty champions; funding for development of corequisite courses; and active, engaged and supportive leadership, especially at the dean level. This work was also supported through the initiative; this included cohort retreats with sessions on corequisite math featuring colleges that had already implemented the corequisite approach, SBCTC technical assistance, and targeted College Spark grants.

(Most colleges have also adopted the corequisite approach and directed self-placement in English. Work in this area tended to be less of a focus for the initiative given that most colleges had close to a majority of students earning college English within their first year.)

Beyond these several colleges, some of the other cohort colleges are piloting corequisite math or plan to do so. A few other colleges are not entirely convinced about whether the corequisite approach works or even whether completing math in

the first year is a causal factor in degree completion. Some of these colleges, as well as some of those that have implemented corequisite math and directed self-placement, have expanded use of high school GPAs and transcripts for placement.

Most colleges' program maps also include math as well as English early on. Most colleges also reported that advising emphasizes taking math and English early on. No college requires this, however, and many students still do not complete these classes.

In looking at college level data from the SBCTC dashboard, most cohort colleges have seen meaningful improvements in the overall percent of students earning degree math within their first year and within racial/ethnic groups. This holds true for colleges that have implemented both corequisite math and directed self-placement as well as some of those that haven't. It will be important to track and analyze the results of these practices over time.

Considerable work remains to be done to meet the Guided Pathways expectation that a majority of students earn degree math within their first year.

Teaching and learning

At the start of Guided Pathways, cohort colleges had program learning outcomes for most of their professional-technical programs, and these outcomes were aligned with employment. For their academic transfer programs, colleges had learning outcomes reflecting overall associate degree requirements, in addition to those at the course and college level, and they were aligned with further education.

Some colleges had dashboards with disaggregated student learning outcomes data that faculty could use as part of institutional processes such as program and curriculum review and outcomes assessment. However, the extent to which they were used varied. Some colleges also offered related professional development to help improve outcomes, but participation was mostly voluntary.

At the start, cohort colleges assessed that their practices in this area varied from not systematic to scaling in progress.

As part of the initiative, most cohort colleges have strengthened program and curriculum review, and outcomes assessment. This includes faculty analyzing disaggregated data at the program and course level and developing action plans as part of the process, with some colleges then providing supports such as professional development.

Most colleges have also expanded professional development opportunities, including new faculty onboarding courses or academies, dedicated faculty in-service days,

courses on teaching and learning strategies, instructional design support, communities of practice, and workshops. There's also been a strategic focus on equity in this area (e.g., inclusive pedagogy, TILT (transparency in teaching and learning), the Four Connections, working with tribes on indigenizing curricula, etc.).

Some colleges have integrated this work into institutional structures and processes. This includes incorporating disaggregated data analysis as part of annual program and curriculum review and outcomes assessment; creating teaching and learning centers where they previously didn't exist; negotiating faculty pay increases, release time, or other incentives tied to professional development, with pedagogy and equity being central; and incorporating equity and inclusive pedagogy into hiring, onboarding, evaluation, promotion, and tenure processes.

Some colleges have leveraged other resources and supports to advance this work (e.g., Title III grants and participation in related change efforts such as the ATD Building Capacity for Change: Strengthening Teaching and Learning through High Impact Professional Learning Community of Practice and the ATD/USC Race and Equity Center Racial Equity Leadership Academy).

At the outset, the teaching and learning area was not as well developed as other areas of the Guided Pathways framework. However, most cohort colleges have done substantial work in this area, and most are approaching it in ways that serve to integrate Guided Pathways, equity, and institutional change.

Several colleges reported that the initial work on program mapping and outcomes led to much of their current focus on improving teaching and learning. Also, the death of George Floyd with all that followed created an increased sense of urgency on improving equity in instruction, and student voices contributed to this specific focus. Both the state and College Spark have provided targeted support for developing antiracist practices and pedagogy.

Several colleges mentioned that their next steps include linking 100 level course outcomes to 200 level course needs to start making coherent curriculum paths. There is also interest in the Community College Research Center's recommendations for increasing active and experiential learning, and contextualizing math and English (at least one college has already done work on this).

Most colleges had some kind of professional development prior to Guided Pathways in which participation was voluntary. For those several colleges that are now developing college-wide approaches to participation in inclusive pedagogy, active learning, and other related practices, meaningful change for all students is a real possibility. These are the colleges that are institutionalizing the work to improve teaching and learning. Where offerings and participation remain piecemeal, improvements are likely to mirror that. Having a teaching and learning center can be a vehicle for college-wide change if college-wide participation is built in. And as with all

major changes, shifts in teaching and learning should be assessed to determine if they are having the desired impact, and course changes made if assessment shows they are needed.

Support through completion

At the start of Guided Pathways, some cohort colleges required advising after entry—for example, quarterly check ins—but others didn't, making it available to students upon request. Advising after entry typically involved handoffs from centralized advisors to program faculty, and this was not always a smooth process, and sometimes it didn't happen at all. Advising after entry could also be largely transactional in nature – for example, students having to meet with program faculty in order to register for classes the next quarter.

Colleges had some technology tools in place to support progress monitoring and intervening, as needed (e.g., advising dashboards, early alert, and degree audit), but there were a number of challenges associated with them (e.g., separate, home grown systems; functionality; accuracy of information; ease of use; extent of use; etc.).

Colleges tended to focus progress monitoring on specific groups of students (e.g., financial aid recipients, TRIO participants, etc.) or programs, especially professional-technical programs. Often, this was done by success or completion coaches or navigators funded through grants.

At the start, colleges assessed that their practices in this area were not occurring or not systematic.

As part of the initiative, most cohort colleges have developed advising models designed to support students through completion, but they haven't been fully implemented.

Common features of colleges' advising models include:

- Advisors assigned to pathways
- Pathway teams made up of advisors, program faculty, and others (e.g., guided pathways specialists, success or completion coaches, etc.), rather than handoffs
- Program faculty serving a mentoring role
- Student caseloads
- Technology supports (e.g., communications with students and among pathway team members, case notes, ed plans, progress monitoring, etc.)

Some colleges have made advising after entry mandatory while others have advisors and/or program faculty regularly reach out to students on their caseload and also provide students prompts and nudges to contact their advisors and program faculty. The colleges relying on advisor and/or program outreach report that students often don't respond.

Some colleges have added capacity to implement their advising models.

Some colleges have also expanded targeted services and supports, with the goal of increasing retention and completion among students of color along with other groups (e.g., advising, community building, mentoring, support services, etc.).

For almost all colleges, this area of the Guided Pathways framework remains a work in progress. The reasons are several.

First, full implementation of support through completion depends on colleges having already done work in other areas such as program maps, entry advising, and ed plans. Second, the advising model of pathway teams and caseloads represents a significant cultural shift for most colleges and requires capacity and supports, along with time and effort to implement.

Third, faculty's advising roles and responsibilities are covered by their contract and it takes time, energy, willingness, and effort on the part of the college and union to negotiate this.

Fourth, technology supports have proved a major challenge. Here, issues include:

- Timing. Early on, colleges were provided resources to build out the technology needed to support full implementation of Guided Pathways. However, this may have come too early in the process, before colleges had figured out their approaches to advising, ed planning, and progress monitoring. Said one college, you have to change and align your practices before technology.

- ctcLink and colleges' third party software. All colleges—regardless of whether they were in early or late rounds of ctcLink implementation or had third party software in place prior to or after ctcLink implementation—have had and continue to have major issues with the interaction between ctcLink and third party software to support Guided Pathways. This has had a negative impact of their ability to move forward with progress monitoring – tracking student progress to see if they're on-plan or off-plan and then intervening, as needed.

  Although colleges have approached use of ctcLink and third party software in different ways, the general pattern—or at least plan—is to use the latter for communications (with students and between pathway team members), case notes, ed plans, and progress monitoring.

- Adoption of technology among faculty and staff.

- Ongoing resource requirements.

A couple of the cohort colleges have moved away from at least some aspects of their advising models (e.g., sticking with handoffs from advisors to program faculty, instead of using the team approach) and use of their third party software, either revisiting the specific ways in which it will be used or abandoning it altogether. (These are the same colleges that have moved away from use of their program maps in advising students, relying on other, mostly pre-existing tools instead.)

Institutional Change

All the cohort colleges made substantial progress in at least one or two of the Guided Pathways areas (pathways and program maps, entry advising and ed planning, including exploration; math and English; teaching and learning; and support through completion). However, several colleges made significant progress in all of these areas, in line with the initiative's focus on comprehensive implementation of Guided Pathways and suggesting movement in the direction of institutional, transformative change.

Looking at the cohort colleges that made progress in all areas, certain features stand out:

- **Institutional commitment, with Guided Pathways being an institutional priority.**

At these colleges, there was an institutional commitment to Guided Pathways and it was an institutional priority. One college reported that Guided Pathways is the work of the college; it's not something separate. Another college made the same point: Guided Pathways is the work; it's not a stand-alone effort. It's grounded in its mission and mission fulfillment. Another college noted that it's a whole college effort.

This view of Guided Pathways had a major impact on how these colleges approached the Guided Pathways work.

- **Viewing Guided Pathways as institutional change and acting accordingly.**

In talking with these college, they noted that Guided Pathways forces colleges to look at existing policies, practices, and systems—including those that have been in place for years—and think critically about them – what they're doing and could be doing better. Said one college, it's a challenge to colleges to change every practice and system, from students' start to finish.

Examples of this kind of change in practice at these colleges include implementing corequisite math and eliminating or significantly reducing stand-alone precollege math courses; and implementing directed self-placement and getting rid of high stakes placement tests.

- **Leadership, especially at the president, vice president, and dean level.**

At these colleges, leadership was actively engaged and in an ongoing way. In some instances, this occurred only after changes in leadership. For example, at one college, leadership initially took a hands off approach and progress was limited. With new leadership, a clear sense of direction and expectations were set; and those in leadership were actively engaged in moving the work forward.

Especially important was the active, ongoing involvement of the vice presidents of instruction and student services. One of the colleges' vice president of instruction noted that if the college believes its work is Guided Pathways, then Guided Pathways in turn is the work of leadership, not something separate and apart. Also, leadership needs to be deeply and regularly involved in order for institutional transformation to happen.

Part of the vice president of instruction's role, according to another college, included valuing innovation with the aim of better serving students and the community, approaching the work in a way that was good for all involved—faculty and staff as well as students—and supporting faculty and staff in making change happen.

Deans also played a critical role, especially in moving Guided Pathways essential practices such as corequisite math forward.

- **Broad, deep engagement of faculty and staff.**

At these colleges, there was broad, deep engagement of faculty and staff in the Guided Pathways work, and this had an impact not only on the individual essential practices, but also implications for institutional change. For example, most or all faculty and some staff were involved in program mapping, and they devoted significant time to the process. As a result, colleges noted a college-wide culture shift to becoming more student centered. Also, the program maps and their review and updating were made part of institutional structures and processes (e.g., program and curriculum review).

- **Strategic use of data to first inform and then assess the work.**

When asked about lessons learned from Guided Pathways, these colleges noted the importance of the strategic use of data. For example, one college reported that use of data, especially disaggregated data, is critical. There's no way one can do institutional change work without the data to help people see where change needs to take place and to hold the institution accountable for making changes that are necessary. This goes beyond just looking at student outcomes and includes using data to improve processes, remove barriers, and assess how changes are working.

Some of the colleges started the initiative with this data capacity and culture around the strategic use of data; others built it during the course of the initiative.

One key aspect of this work was getting individual course level data into the hands of faculty. For example, one college noted that its math faculty wanted to see their individual course level data – they were willing to be vulnerable, and they learned from one another. This set the stage for the college's data revolution and informed its work on corequisite math, directed self-placement, and other practices.

- **Use of institutional levers to implement change.**

These colleges used institutional levers to implement Guided Pathways. Examples include allocating institutional resources to expand capacity needed to implement their advising models; leveraging Title III grants and other resources to create teaching and learning centers and expand professional development offerings; and negotiating new agreements with faculty over their role in advising and incentives for participation in strategic professional development.

- **Institutionalization of changes through the college's structures and processes.**

At the start of the initiative, these colleges created Guided Pathways teams with cross functional, cross departmental representation, in line with the Guided Pathways essential practice on faculty and staff engagement. But after the initial work on essential practices was completed, they began to integrate the work into institutional structures and processes.

Examples of this include making review and updating of program maps part of program and curriculum review; incorporating analysis of disaggregated student outcomes data at the program and course level into outcomes assessment, with resulting action plans and related professional development; and integrating Guided Pathways considerations into hiring, onboarding, promotion, evaluation, and tenure processes.

The colleges saw this as a fundamental way to take the work to scale and sustain it.

- **Concerted, focused effort over time.**

At these colleges, concerted, focused effort has been made to fully implement Guided Pathways practices at scale. For example, one college has been at work for some years to ensure consistent use of program maps in creating students' individualized ed plans and to ensure that all students have approved ed plans, which

is key to being able to monitor student progress to see if they're on or off plan. This has included working with advisors and faculty mentors, switching from its previous program planning guides and degree plans, and getting technology supports in place. It's at about 90 percent of students having approved ed plans.

- **Taking an institutional approach to improvements in teaching and learning and equity in the classroom.**

These colleges took an institutional approach to improvements in teaching and learning and equity in the classroom. This includes having or establishing centers for teaching and learning that provide faculty a range of supports; and developing college-wide approaches to participation in professional development, with a key focus on equity (e.g., inclusive pedagogy, active learning, and related practices).

- **Recognition that the Guided Pathways work is ongoing and iterative.**

At these colleges, there's recognition of the ongoing, iterative nature of the Guided Pathways work. For example, one college noted that, now that it's implemented and internalized Guided Pathways, it's essential to monitor progress, look at the data, and make further changes, as needed.

- **A healthy appetite for innovation and improvement.**

These colleges have also been part of other innovation and improvement efforts such as Achieving the Dream (ATD) and its communities of practice and leadership academies on issues such as strengthening teaching and learning and racial equity. They've used these efforts strategically, as a way to advance their missions and change agendas, with one opportunity building on another. (Other colleges also participated in some of these efforts but did not use them to build a coherent, integrated institutional shift.)

The cohort colleges that made progress in some, but not all, Guided Pathways areas also had certain features in common. First and foremost among these: leadership issues, including: churn; limited or inconsistent engagement over time; varying degrees of support for Guided Pathways, including some leaders who were antipathetic; and not having the standing, credibility, or good relationships with faculty and staff as well as others in leadership required to move the work forward.

Other features of these colleges include a lack of institutional commitment or, in some instances, resistance to change; small, isolated groups of faculty and staff engaged in Guided Pathways, which limited the reach of their work; and an inability to take practices from planning to full implementation at scale due to shifts in direction along the way, limited buy in, and/or lack of follow through.

Student Outcomes

Data from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges let us look at progress for first-time-ever-in-college students on selected outcomes that are considered to be important milestones toward completion.[3] These include:

- College math in the first year
- College English in the first year
- 15 credits in the first year
- Completion (of certificate/apprenticeship/degree) by the fourth year

The data in this section cover the years 2011 to 2020. We have chosen to omit 2021 data because of the impact from the significant disruption of college operations during the first year of the Covid pandemic, and to include data from 2011 onward in order to have a more reliable look at whether progress over time has occurred.

Colleges pursue many forms of improvement – individual and department efforts, projects such as ATD and the like, as well as broader attempts to achieve systemic institutional change such as Guided Pathways. These outcomes data reflect all of this work. While we cannot ascribe a causative effect to Guided Pathways, especially since many of the related changes were still being planned and implemented in 2020, it is valuable and important to examine where college improvement is occurring and how it may be connected to serious reform work.

3 Data are from the SBCTC First-Time Entering Student Outcomes dashboard and include students who were first-time ever in college, entered in summer or fall quarter, and had a transfer or professional-technical intent.

Changes in outcomes by college groups

The SBCTC data dashboard allows us to look at colleges grouped by their involvement in Guided Pathways, as follows:

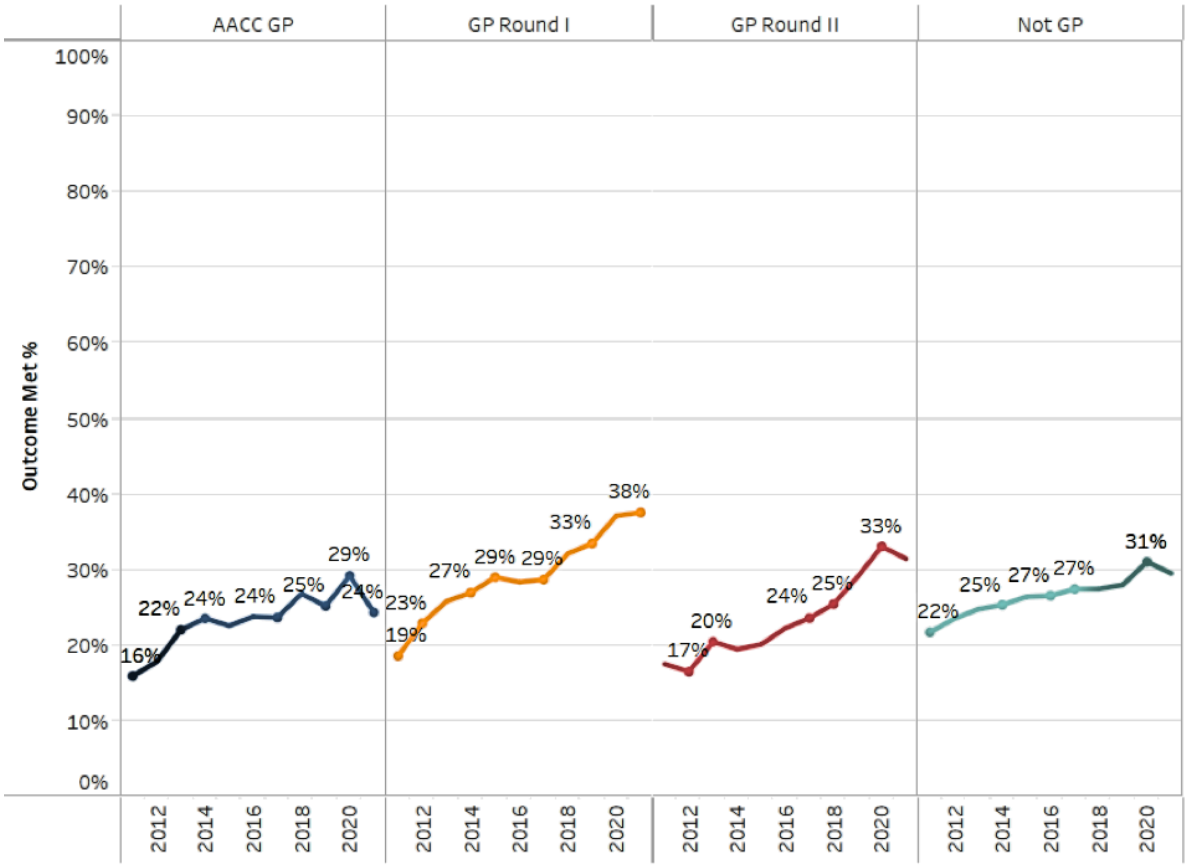
- AACC GP. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) offered early participation in an 18-month Guided Pathways training program. AACC participants from Washington State included Clark College and Skagit Valley College. (Pierce College District and South Seattle College also participated in the AACC Guided Pathways training program, but are counted in GP Round I, below).

- GP Round I and GP Round II. The College Spark/SBCTC Guided Pathways Initiative had two cohorts: GP Round I (Pierce College District, South Seattle College, Everett Community College, Peninsula College, and South Puget Sound Community College), which started its work in 2016; and GP Round II (Clover Park Technical College, Spokane Falls Community College, Renton Technical College, Lower Columbia College, and Tacoma Community College), added in 2018.

- Not GP. The rest of the community and technical colleges in the state are in the Not GP group.

College math in the first year. The following chart shows the percentage of all first year students who completed college math in the first year. All four college groups show slow, steady climbs from 2011 to 2020. They did not all start at the same level, nor were their increases of the same magnitude. In 2011, AACC GP was at 16%; by 2020, at 29%. GP Round I started at 19%, reached 37% in 2020, and is the only group that did not have a Covid drop off in 2021. GP Round II was at 18% in 2011, and 33% in 2020. The Not GP group of remaining colleges went from 22% to 31%. GP Rounds I and II increased their math completion rates by 15-18%, the other two groups by 9-13%.

Math Year 1



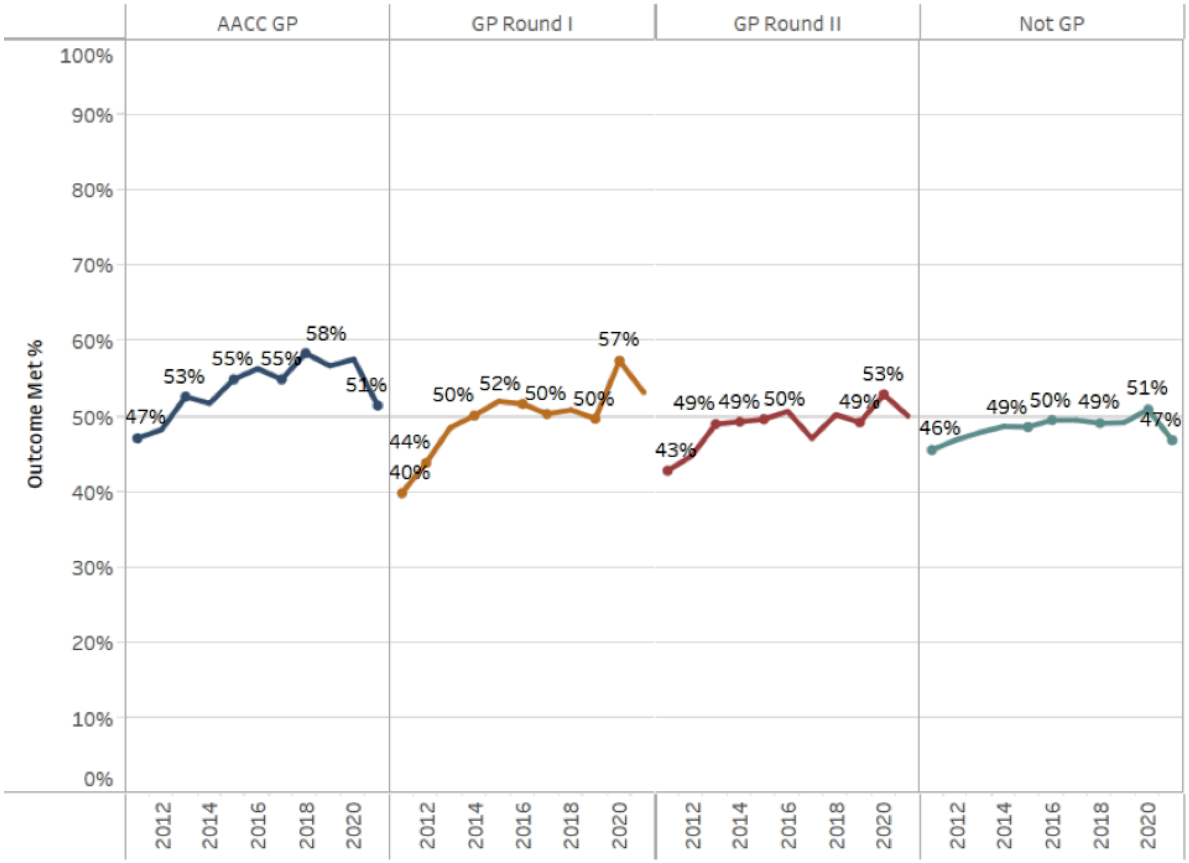
Why do we see improvement in all four groups? The SBCTC and the colleges have been engaged in an ongoing, concerted effort to shorten precollege math sequences and improve college math completion rates that started before Guided Pathways. This work was accelerated by Guided Pathways in multiple ways – by the technical assistance provided at Guided Pathways cohort retreats; by the SBCTC's math policy expert, who was very active in assisting colleges to pursue corequisite math; and for some colleges, College Spark community grants specifically targeted for improving math (and English).

The GP Round I group started at a higher rate and ended at a higher rate. It is possible that this group had high involvement in math reform before Guided Pathways. By the end of the 5-year GP Round I cohort period, two of the five colleges were starting to implement corequisite math broadly. And this first cohort had had more time to absorb and implement their Guided Pathways work in math reform. Note that when you look at individual colleges, those that did not embrace a corequisite model had completion increases as well as those colleges that did. This merits some further investigation into how these colleges achieved their increased completion rates.

College English in the first year. As of 2020, all four college groups had similar English completion percentages, in the low to high 50s. Growth from 2011 to 2020 ranged from 5% for the Not GP group to about 10% for both GP Round II and AACC GP, respectively; and 17% for GP Round I. All four groups had a drop off in Covid Year 1, 2021.

There are not a lot of notable differences here. The state system had already been working on improving English completion rates prior to Guided Pathways. The College Spark/SBCTC Guided Pathways Initiative goal for first year math and English was "a majority of students," i.e., 50% plus. Since math completion was so much lower than English completion, math received considerably more attention and effort from most Guided Pathways colleges.

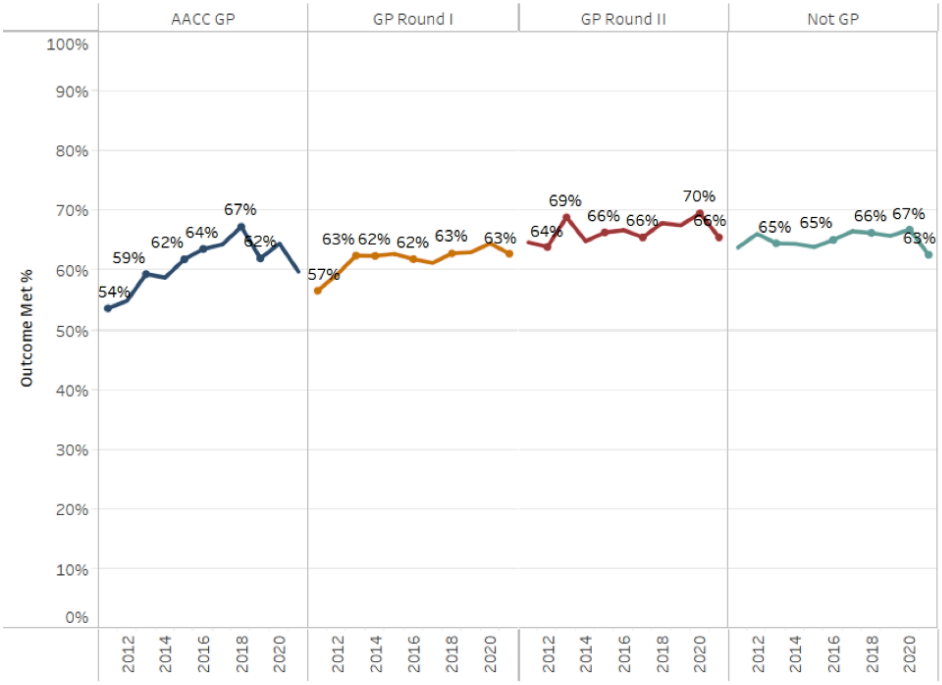
English Year 1



15 credits in the first year. All four groups show gains on this measure over time. The AACC GP group went from 54% to 65%; GP Round I, from 57% to 65%; GP Round II, 65% to 70%, and Not GP, 64% to 67%.

GP Round II, at 70% in 2020, has two technical colleges in the group. Technical colleges and professional-technical programs at them routinely have higher completion rates; indeed, part of the underlying intent of Guided Pathways was to try to have colleges make all of their programs a little tighter and more coherent so that students could finish in a timely way.

15 Credits Year 1

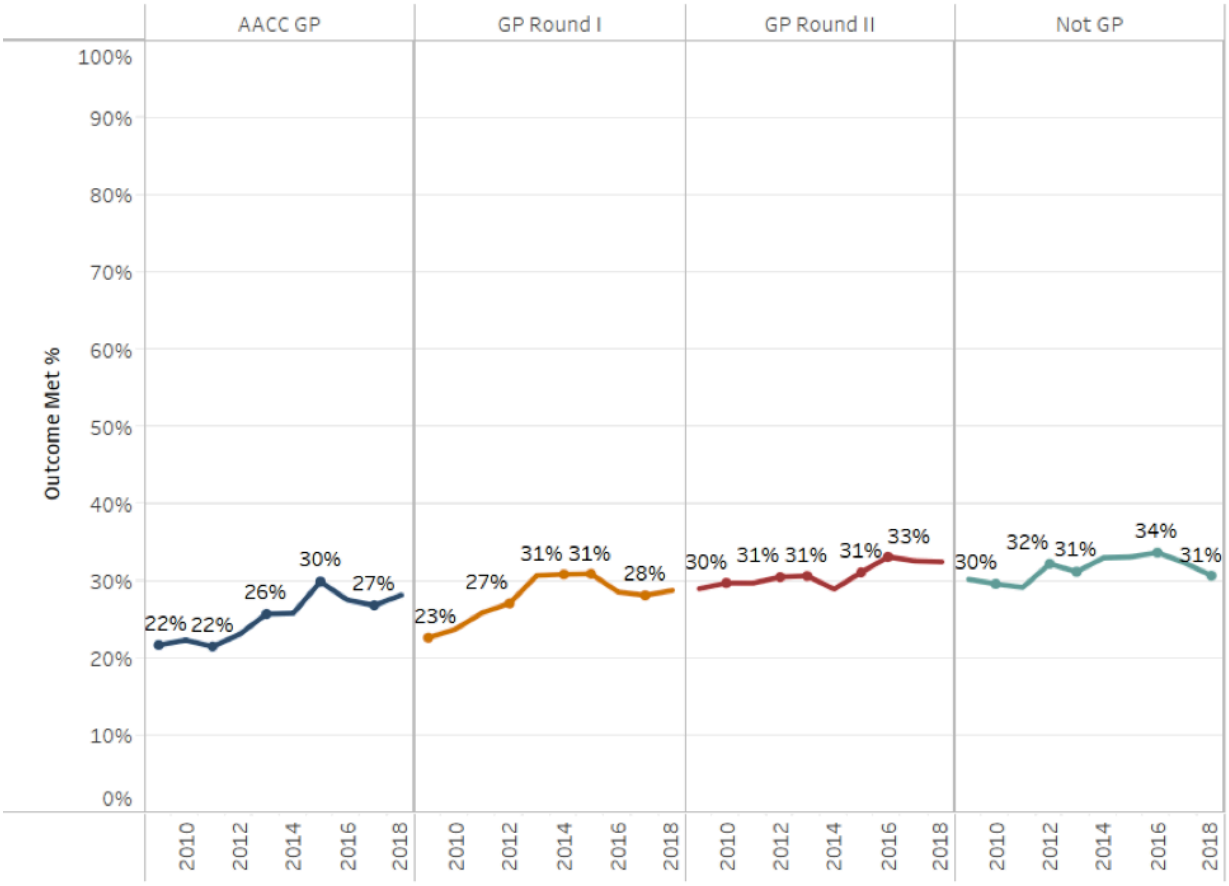


Completion by the fourth year. It is reasonable to expect that community and technical college students be able to finish, if not briskly in two years, at least by the end of four years. As the following chart shows, there has been very limited progress on this measure, with fourth year completion rates in the high 20s to low 30s.

We wondered how this measure would look if we disaggregated the data by students with transfer intent and students with professional/technical intent.

The fourth year completion rates for the former were in the mid to high 20s for all four college groups; for the latter, it ranged from the low 30s to low 40s. In part, this difference in completion rates was one of the inspirations for Guided Pathways in the first place – that is, the knowledge that professional-technical programs, which are tightly organized, cohort based, and occur on a strict schedule, have higher completion rates than transfer degrees. The intent was not to reproduce that rigidly for transfer degrees, but to apply some of the organizing principles. Whether these colleges will be successful in raising completion rates using some of these principles in a looser and more option-heavy AA DTA is an open question. Since the cohorts are now at a point where they should be able to fully implement most of their changes, this metric should be followed in the future.

Completion Year 4



Changes within racial/ethnic groups over time on selected outcome measures

Washington State has made equity a central focus in its Guided Pathways work. In this section, we look at changes in outcomes over time within specific racial/ethnic groups.[4] For example, are a higher percentage of first-time-ever-in-college Black/African American students completing college math in the first year? Has there been steady, variable, or no improvement in first year English completion for Asian students? Are American Indian/Alaska Native students completing 15 credits in the first year at a higher rate over time? Is any group increasing its fourth year completion rate? We can look at both direction and magnitude of change for each of the four outcomes measures discussed above, again by the four college groups: AACC GP, GP Rounds I and II, and Not GP. Note that small numbers in some subgroups put any analysis of change magnitude on shaky ground.[5] The SBCTC dashboard charts with these findings can be found in the Appendix.

Black/African American students

College math in the first year. Black/African American students made steady gains in all four groups of colleges, starting with first year math completion rates in the single digits/low teens in 2011, and progressing to the mid-20/low 30s by 2020. GP Round I had the highest Year 1 math completion rate in 2020, at 33%.

College English in the first year. Again, Black/African American students showed solid improvement on this measure over the years from 2011-2020, starting in the 20s and 30s and ending up in the high 30s to high 40s, with a high of 51% for GP Round I.

15 credits in the first year. Once more, Black/African American students in all four college groups showed solid progress on this measure. While the Not GP group stayed flat in the mid- 50s, the other three groups gained 12-18%, and all were at or above 50%.

4 Racial/ethnic subgroups are taken from the SBCTC data dashboard.

5 For example, total numbers in American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander subgroups, except for the Not GP group, are in the double digits.

Completion by the fourth year: As with the colleges as a whole, this measure has stayed quite flat for Black/African American students over the 2011-2018 entering classes, in the high teens for AACC GP and GP Round I, the mid-20s/low 30s for GP Round II, and the low 20s for Not GP.

Hispanic/Latino students

College math in the first year. Hispanic/Latino students made slow, steady improvement in all four groups of colleges. AACC GP started at 10% in 2011 and reached 22% in 2020. GP Rounds I and II and Not GP all started in the mid-teens. In 2020, these groups were at 33%, 24%, and 27%, respectively. The only group with Covid drop off in 2021 was AACC GP.

College English in the first year. All four groups made gains on this measure from 2011 to 2020. They had a wide range of starting points: 25% for GP Round II; 36% for GP Round I, 42% for AACC GP, and 41% for Not GP. By 2020, all four groups were in the high 40s to low 50s, with GP Round I at the highest at 54% and gains ranging from 6-7 percentage points for AACC GP and Not GP to about 20 percentage points for GP Rounds I and II.

15 credits in the first year. Increases on this measure from 2011-2020 ranged from 8% for the AACC GP group to 12% for GP Round II. By 2020, all four groups had 15 credit completion rates in the mid-50s to mid-60s – similar to the overall rate for this measure that was discussed in the first part of this section.

Completion by the fourth year: Most groups of colleges showed small gains on this measure over the 2011 to 2018 time period.

American Indian/Alaska Native students. Note that the number of American Indian/Alaska Native students in the AACC GP group is so low that we consider trends over time to be uninterpretable and do not include it here.

College math in the first year. The trend within this group of students is somewhat up over time for the other three groups of colleges, but the year-to-year pattern is uneven and variable, partly because they appear in such relatively small numbers. We do not believe these numbers can be said to show either meaningful progress or loss. All three groups had completion rates in the low to mid-teens for 2020. Interestingly, all three groups—GP Round I, GP Round II, and Not GP—had slight increases for 2021, the first Covid year when milestones drop offs were not uncommon.

College English in the first year. Some gains are seen over this time period for both GP Rounds I and II, from completion rates in the 20s for 2011 to the high 30s-40s for 2020. The same zigzag pattern shows for all groups, though, which again limits what can be said about trends over time.

15 credits in the first year. Again, patterns were variable, but GP Rounds I and II saw moderate gains of about 15 percentage points on this measure, while Not GP saw some loss. Once more, the small numbers for this racial/ethnic group make any real pattern of gains or losses over time somewhat challenging to identify.

Completion by the fourth year. Once more, we see variable patterns over time that make these numbers hard to interpret. Most groups stayed flat over time, with GP Round II showing some big ups and downs.

This group, American Indian/Alaska Native students, might benefit from concerted efforts to help them stay and complete courses and credentials. At least two colleges in the GP Rounds I and II groups are working to do this, and are going about it by working with local tribes. Such efforts merit attention, support, and follow-up.

Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students. Similarly variable patterns can be seen with this group for the same reason – that is, small numbers of students.

College math in the first year. There were some ups and downs along the 2011-2020 way, but small to moderate improvements seemed to have occurred in all four groups of colleges, from the teens for 2011 to the 20s for 2020.

College English in the first year. With similar variability along the way, moderate gains were also made by these students in first year English completion, ranging from 9% for GP Round II to 23% for GP Round I. GP Round II and Not GP ended up in 2020 with completion rates in the 40s, with AACC GP and GP Round I close to 60%.

15 credits in the first year. Again, with many ups and downs, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students seemed to make progress on this measure over time, with AACC GP at 38% in 2011 and 47% in 2020 and GP Round I at 52% in 2011 and 68% in 2020. Not GP remained mostly in the high 50s. GP Round II presents an example of the importance of looking year to year instead of just 2011 and 2020: although in 2020 they were at 47%, in several of the intervening years they were as high as 70%. Looking at the overall pattern even if it is uneven, gains appear to have been made.

Completion by the fourth year. As with the other student groups, little improvement was seen, and some decreases. GP Round II may be the exception to this, where gains were maintained over several years before 2018.

With respect to white and Asian students, there was slow, steady progress on the outcome measures of completion of math, English, and 15 credits in the first year for all four groups of colleges, but not on completion. First year math completion rates for white students went from the teens and 20s in 2011 to the 30s in 2020, and for Asian students from mostly the 30s in 2011 to

the 40s in 2020, with GP Round I at 50%. Completion of 15 credits for white students went from the mid-50s/60s in 2011 to the mid-60s/low 70s in 2020, and for Asian students from mid/high 60s to the low/mid-70s.

In summary, the SBCTC data dashboard shows slow, steady progress on the early outcome measures of completion of math, English, and 15 credits in the first year, with GP Round I having gains above the system-wide average. It also shows steady gains on these measures within some racial/ethnic groups—Black/African American students and Hispanic/Latino students—with GP Round I again having gains above the system-wide average. For other racial/ethnic groups, the patterns are more variable, at least partly due to low numbers of students in these groups. On the longer term measure of fourth year completion, the SBCTC data dashboard shows limited improvement across all colleges and racial/ethnic groups.

Given that the early outcome measures data are for 2011-2020 and the fourth year completion data are for the 2011-2018 entering classes, which was prior to the implementation of many of the Guided Pathways essential practices, it will be important to continue to review the data over time, especially for those cohort colleges that made significant progress in all Guided Pathways areas and movement in the direction of institutional, transformative change.

Key Lessons and Implications

Based on our eight years of working with the 10 cohort colleges that were part of the College Spark/SBCTC Guided Pathways Initiative and the insights from presidents, vice presidents, deans, faculty, staff, and others at the colleges, these are some key lessons learned and their implications for community and technical colleges in their Guided Pathways work.

1

Active, engaged, and ongoing leadership from the top is absolutely critical.

If colleges don't have this, Guided Pathways work will not result in institutional, transformative change. It will stay small or disappear over time. This starts at the presidential and vice-presidential levels, and strong commitment and attention to this is vital.

2

Guided Pathways is the whole package, not just the pieces

Colleges can't just focus on one or two of the essential practices; it's all of them together and at scale. Everything and everyone needs to be involved, and it needs to be seen as the central work of the college rather than an add-on.

3

Guided Pathways represents a fundamental challenge to the status quo, and it's important to approach the work with this in mind.

Two of the cohort colleges voiced this very clearly: It's a challenge to every embedded system and practice, from student start to student finish. Colleges need to be willing to turn over the stones, look at what's underneath, and be willing to change it if it needs changing.

4

Be brave about looking at and using quantitative and qualitative data to make change.

This is key to moving the Guided Pathways work forward, whether it's college level data to help guide and shape changes in institutional policies, practices, and systems, or program and course level data to help improve teaching and learning. This requires not just looking at the data but creating a culture of action based on what the data show. This too needs to include everyone—not just those who are initially interested or comfortable with data.

5

Equity work needs to be part of the whole package.

It can't be just a committee, or a hiring practice change. Its role in everything needs to be looked at, including teaching and learning, policies and practices, staff and faculty interactions with students - everything. As part of this, some colleges have turned to their communities for more involvement, working with local tribal leaders, church leaders, community organizations to learn what's needed to help students succeed and create partnerships to support this.

6

Once changes have been implemented as part of Guided Pathways, colleges need to continue to assess them, using both quantitative and qualitative data, to see if they're making a difference and make further changes as needed.

This is part of the ongoing, iterative nature of the work. Ask questions. Be willing to change what you're doing.

7

Colleges need to stick with it.

Implementation of Guided Pathways takes concerted, focused effort over time. The cohort colleges have been at this for five years or more and most still have at least some additional work to do, especially in the area of support through completion. .

Guided Pathways has helped some colleges become more student centered, meeting students where they are and changing what they do to better serve them. Some possible future directions include increasing options for part time students, including working adults; taking a skills based approach to professional-technical programs that makes it possible for students to get what they need to get a good job and keep acquiring skills; and improving transfer. Rather than trying to fit students into some idealized version of college—for example, full time enrollment and a minimum of an associate degree—take into account the real, existing needs of students. This requires going beyond using quantitative data to also gathering and using qualitative data.

Appendix

Credit Milestones Trend: *Math Year 1*
Cohort: *First-Time Ever in College*
College Entry Quarter: *1 Summer & 2 Fall*
Level: *GP Round*
Intent: *Professional/Technical & Transfer*
Disaggregation: *Race/Ethnicity (Alone)*
Race/Ethnicity (Alone or 2+ Races): *(All)*

Data will be shown only for years in which all selected quarters have outcomes data. If a year of interest is not shown below, adjust the Entry Quarter filter to include fewer quarters.

Cohort
First-Time Ever in College

Entry Quarter
Multiple values

Select College
GP Round

Education Intent
Multiple values

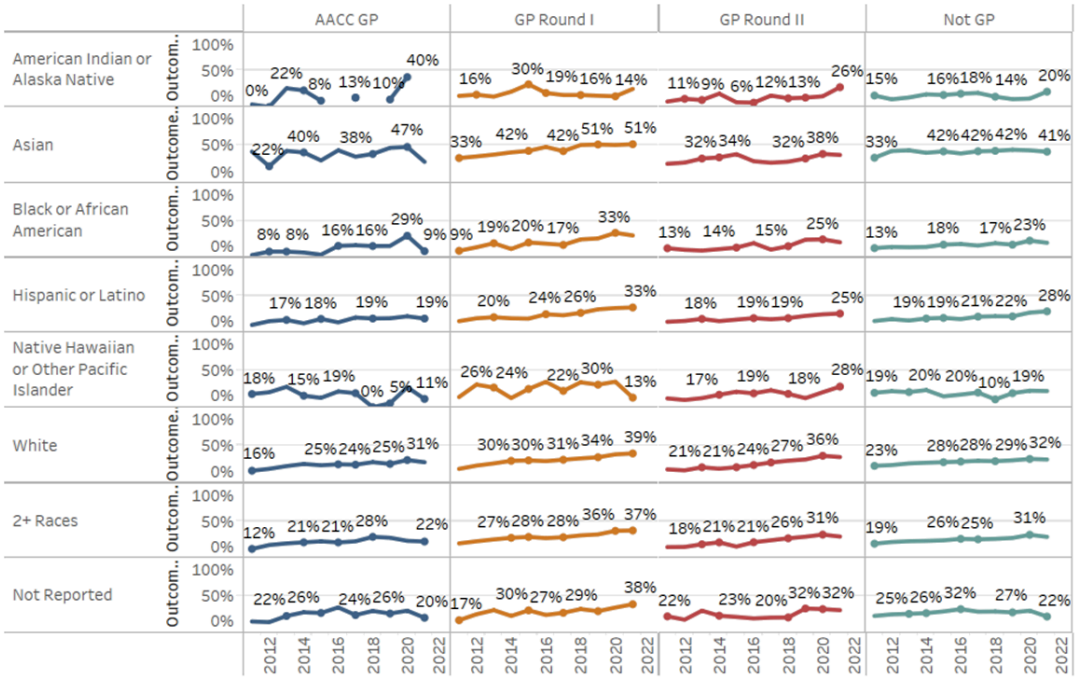
Milestone
Math Year 1

Disaggregation
Race/Ethnicity (Alone)

Race/Ethnicity (Alone or 2+ Races)
(All)

Reporting Year
Multiple values

Reporting Level
- AACC GP
- GP Round I
- GP Round II

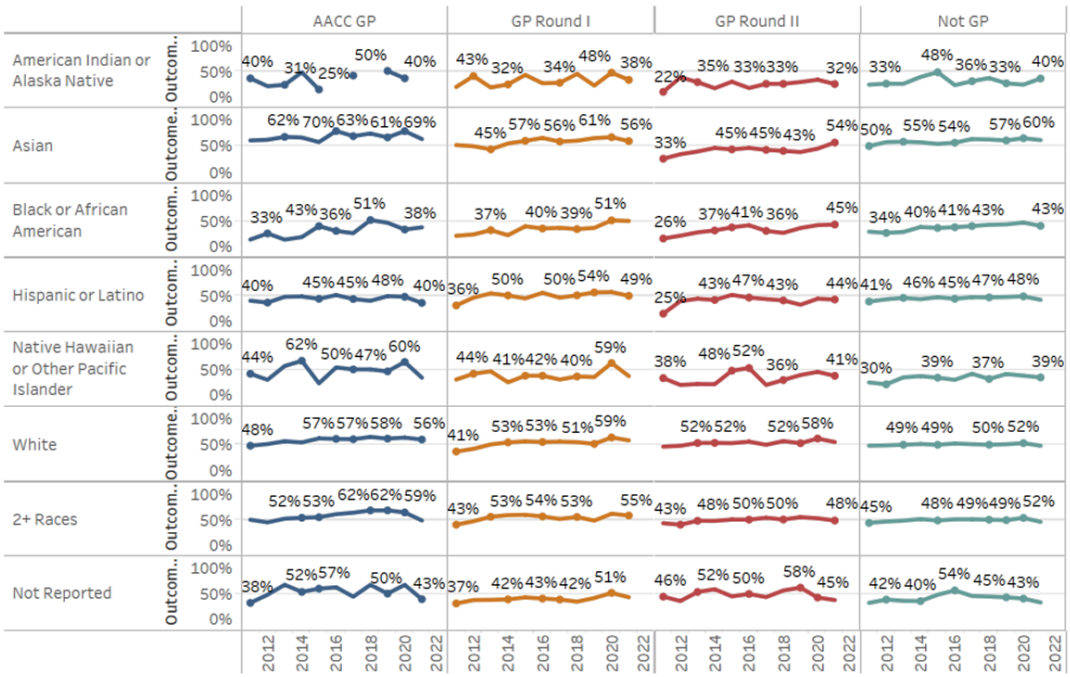


Colleges included: Bates, Bellevue, Bellingham, Big Bend, Cascadia, Centralia, Clark, Clover Park, Columbia Basin, Edmonds, Everett, Grays Harbor, Green River, Highline, Lake Washington, Lower Columbia, Olympic, Peninsula, Pierce, Renton, Seattle Central, Seattle North, Seattle South, Shoreline, Skagit Valley, South Puget Sound, Spokane, Spokane Falls, Tacoma, Walla Walla, Wenatchee Valley, Whatcom, and Yakima Valley

Note: Groups with a total of less than 10 students are suppressed to protect the release of potentially identifiable student information.

Credit Milestones Trend: *English Year 1*
Cohort: *First-Time Ever in College*
College Entry Quarter: *1 Summer & 2 Fall*
Level: *GP Round*
Intent: *Professional/Technical & Transfer*
Disaggregation: *Race/Ethnicity (Alone)*
Race/Ethnicity (Alone or 2+ Races): *(All)*

Data will be shown only for years in which all selected quarters have outcomes data. If a year of interest is not shown below, adjust the Entry Quarter filter to include fewer quarters.



Cohort
First-Time Ever in College

Entry Quarter
Multiple values

Select College
GP Round

Education Intent
Multiple values

Milestone
English Year 1

Disaggregation
Race/Ethnicity (Alone)

Race/Ethnicity (Alone or 2+ Races)
(All)

Reporting Year
Multiple values

Reporting Level
- AACC GP
- GP Round I
- GP Round II

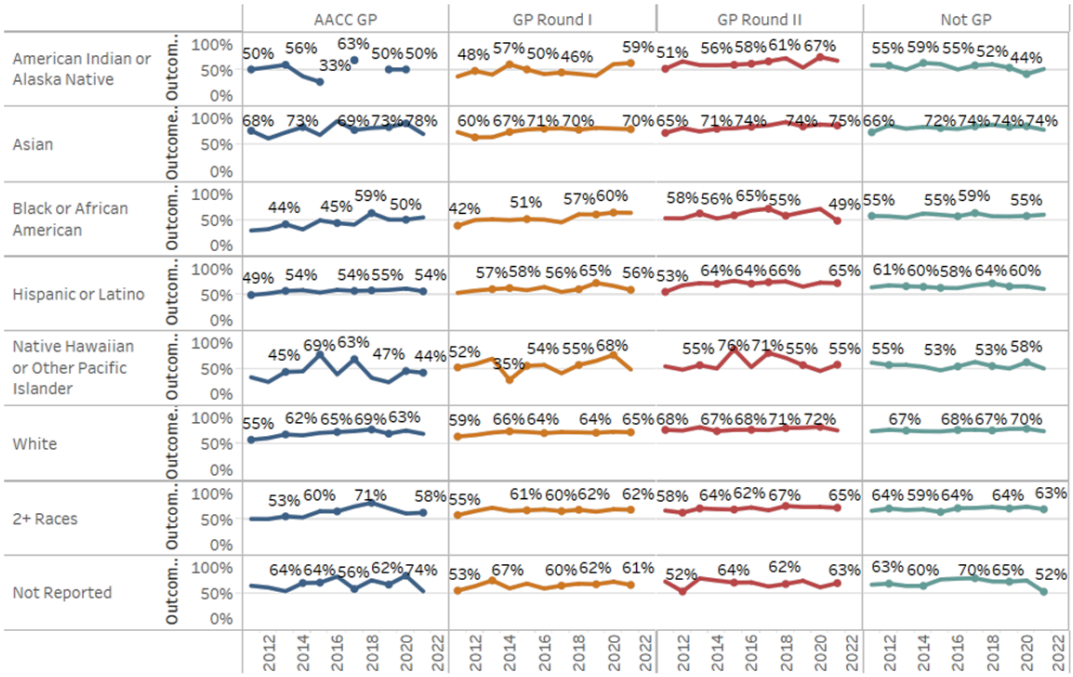
COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES
Washington State Board

Colleges included: Bates, Bellevue, Bellingham, Big Bend, Cascadia, Centralia, Clark, Clover Park, Columbia Basin, Edmonds, Everett, Grays Harbor, Green River, Highline, Lake Washington, Lower Columbia, Olympic, Peninsula, Pierce, Renton, Seattle Central, Seattle North, Seattle South, Shoreline, Skagit Valley, South Puget Sound, Spokane, Spokane Falls, Tacoma, Walla Walla, Wenatchee Valley, Whatcom, and Yakima Valley

Note: Groups with a total of less than 10 students are suppressed to protect the release of potentially identifiable student information.

Credit Milestones Trend: *15 Credits Year 1*
Cohort: *First-Time Ever in College*
College Entry Quarter: *1 Summer & 2 Fall*
Level: *GP Round*
Intent: *Professional/Technical & Transfer*
Disaggregation: *Race/Ethnicity (Alone)*
Race/Ethnicity (Alone or 2+ Races): *(All)*

Data will be shown only for years in which all selected quarters have outcomes data. If a year of interest is not shown below, adjust the Entry Quarter filter to include fewer quarters.



Cohort
First-Time Ever in College

Entry Quarter
Multiple values

Select College
GP Round

Education Intent
Multiple values

Milestone
15 Credits Year 1

Disaggregation
Race/Ethnicity (Alone)

Race/Ethnicity (Alone or 2+ Races)
(All)

Reporting Year
Multiple values

Reporting Level
- AACC GP
- GP Round I
- GP Round II

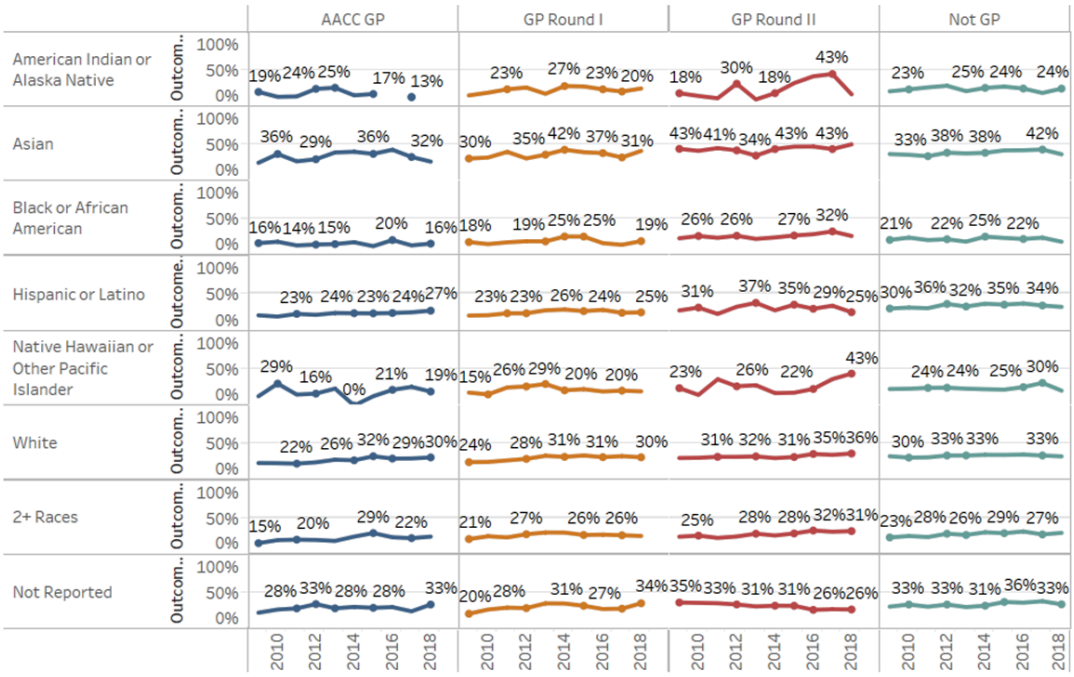
COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES
Washington State Board

Colleges included: Bates, Bellevue, Bellingham, Big Bend, Cascadia, Centralia, Clark, Clover Park, Columbia Basin, Edmonds, Everett, Grays Harbor, Green River, Highline, Lake Washington, Lower Columbia, Olympic, Peninsula, Pierce, Renton, Seattle Central, Seattle North, Seattle South, Shoreline, Skagit Valley, South Puget Sound, Spokane, Spokane Falls, Tacoma, Walla Walla, Wenatchee Valley, Whatcom, and Yakima Valley

Note: Groups with a total of less than 10 students are suppressed to protect the release of potentially identifiable student information.

Completion Trend: *Completion Year 4*
Cohort: *First-Time Ever in College*
College Entry Quarter: *1 Summer & 2 Fall*
Level: *GP Round*
Intent: *Professional/Technical & Transfer*
Disaggregation: *Race/Ethnicity (Alone)*
Race/Ethnicity (Alone or 2+ Races): *(All)*

Data will be shown only for years in which all selected quarters have outcomes data. If a year of interest is not shown below, adjust the Entry Quarter filter to include fewer quarters.



Cohort
First-Time Ever in College

Entry Quarter
Multiple values

Select College
GP Round

Education Intent
Multiple values

Completion Year
Completion Year 4

Disaggregation
Race/Ethnicity (Alone)

Race/Ethnicity (Alone or 2+ Races)
(All)

Reporting Year
All

Reporting Level
- AACC GP
- GP Round I
- GP Round II

Colleges included: Bates, Bellevue, Bellingham, Big Bend, Cascadia, Centralia, Clark, Clover Park, Columbia Basin, Edmonds, Everett, Grays Harbor, Green River, Highline, Lake Washington, Lower Columbia, Olympic, Peninsula, Pierce, Renton, Seattle Central, Seattle North, Seattle South, Shoreline, Skagit Valley, South Puget Sound, Spokane, Spokane Falls, Tacoma, Walla Walla, Wenatchee Valley, Whatcom, and Yakima Valley

Note: Groups with a total of less than 10 students are suppressed to protect the release of potentially identifiable student information.