Equitable Placement and Completion: Summary of Colleges' Grant Progress Reports

California Community Colleges

August 29, 2025

Secretary of the Senate
Erika Contreras
State Capitol, Room 305
Sacramento, CA 95814

CA Community College Equitable Placement and Completion Grant Program Update

Dear Secretary Contreras,

Pursuant to California Education Code section 78213.2(g)(1), the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the Board of Governors for California Community Colleges are pleased to release the California Community College Equitable Placement and Completion Grant Program Update.

The report details how California community colleges invested their equitable placement and completion grant funds in professional development, aligning concurrent student support services, developing corequisite support models, and innovating course sequences. These plans demonstrate colleges' commitment to implementing equitable placement policies and practices. We are grateful to the Governor and the Legislature, particularly Assembly Member Jacqui Irwin, for their consistent leadership and support of these transformational practices to ensure all students have an equitable opportunity to succeed. This second of three reports is a general summary of progress towards intended activities. A subsequent report, due in 2027, will detail policy, practice, and curricular changes colleges have made, as well as the impact of these funds, upon reaching full implementation of AB 705/1705.

For any questions regarding this report, please contact Dr. James Todd, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, at jtodd@cccco.edu.

Sincerely,

Sonya Christian, Chancellor

Enclosure: Report
CC:
Sue Parker, Chief Clerk of the Assembly
Office of Legislative Counsel
Department of Finance

EQUITABLE PLACEMENT AND COMPLETION: SUMMARY OF COLLEGES' GRANT PROGRESS REPORTS

Prepared By

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Educational Services and Support Division

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INTRODUCTION

Recent reforms in developmental education represent a transformative step towards advancing the goals of the California Community Colleges system. Guided by Vision 2030, these reforms are designed to promote equity in success, access, and support for students in transfer-level English and mathematics courses, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to thrive and succeed. The Legislature established the California Community College Equitable Placement and Completion Grant Program under the administration of the Chancellor's Office (Education Code 78213.2). This funding supports the implementation of equitable placement and completion policies and practices across the state's community colleges.

The purpose of this report is to provide an updated summary of community college progress in implementing plans developed pursuant to subdivision (d) of Education Code section 78213.2. This report is the second of three reports to the Department of Finance and the Legislature as required (Education Code 78213.2), with a final submission due July 1, 2027.

BACKGROUND

The Legislature advanced a series of educational reforms designed to improve student assessment and placement strategies, increase completion of transfer-level English and mathematics, and close persistent achievement gaps. Assembly Bill 705 (Irwin, 2017) required community colleges to maximize the probability that a student will enter and complete transfer-level coursework in English and mathematics within a one-year time frame. To place students into English and mathematics courses, colleges must use high school coursework, high school grades, or high school grade point average. Assembly Bill 1705 (Irwin, 2022) builds upon the framework of AB 705, addressing inequities in implementation and requiring institutions to ensure that placement systems and curricular structures support equitable placement and completion outcomes. AB 1705 further ensures that students are placed directly into the English and mathematics courses appropriate for their program of study, with support if needed or desired by the student.

IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING FOR COLLEGES

The Legislature appropriated $64 million (one-time funding) in the 2022 Budget Act to establish the California Community College Equitable Placement and Completion funding allocation. Allocations were determined using the statutory formula of 34% base, 33% for colleges with below average enrollment in transfer-level math or English, and 33% for colleges with below average completion rates for transfer-level math and English within one year of their first attempt.

Colleges are required to use 10% of their allocation specifically for professional development in inclusive teaching practices and subject pedagogy. In addition, colleges may "implement equitable placement and completion policies and practices for limited-term purposes, including, but not limited to, any or any combination of the following" (Education Code statute 78213.2(e)):

(1) Faculty release time to design, implement, and evaluate corequisite transfer-level mathematics/quantitative reasoning and English courses at scale.

(2) Professional development for faculty, including subject pedagogy, classroom climate, and corequisite implementation, including evaluation and iterative improvement of the effectiveness of the professional development.

(3) Creation, implementation, and evaluation of concurrent supports or support services to increase throughput rates for transfer-level mathematics/quantitative reasoning and English courses.

(4) Faculty release time to redesign, implement, and evaluate certificate and associate degree pathways to ensure mathematics/quantitative reasoning and English courses associated with the pathways are transfer-level courses.

(5) Any other services suggested by community colleges and approved by the chancellor's office for which there is evidence of their likelihood of improving the successful completion of transfer-level mathematics/quantitative reasoning and English courses by students within a one-year time frame of their initial attempt in the discipline.

FUNDING PLAN AND PROGRESS REPORT REQUIREMENTS

In spring 2023, the Chancellor's Office released memorandum ESS 23-08, Required Action: Equitable Placement, Support and Completion (AB 1705) Funding Allocation and the Submission of Funding Plans to inform colleges of their allocation and the requirements on how funds may be invested. Based on the funding formula, allocations ranged from approximately $228,000 to $1.4 million. Details about additional technical support opportunities curated by the Chancellor's Office were also included. To access their funds, colleges were required to demonstrate a commitment to implementing equitable placement and completion policies and practices by submitting a detailed funding plan, on or before May 1, 2023. This plan would document changes in placement practices and curricular structures that the college will implement to reach the goal of full implementation of equitable placement and completion. Colleges were directed to an online submission plan form to share how they intend to invest these funds.

The 2023 report on Equitable Placement and Completion: Summary of College Funding Plans highlighted how the colleges planned to use their allocations. Overall, most colleges intended to provide professional development or technical assistance (93% of respondents). Some efforts would be made to align concurrent supports services (88%) and develop corequisite support models (85%). Some colleges noted that they would innovate course sequences (53%) or engage in other services (77%) to improve successful completion of transfer-level math or quantitative reasoning and English within one year. At least 10% of the allocation must be reserved for professional development.

To gather data on the implementation status of the funding plans, in winter 2024, the Chancellor's Office released memorandum ESLEI 24-13, California Community College Equitable Placement, Support and Completion Funding Allocation: Reporting Requirements and Timelines. The required progress reports summarized how colleges utilized the grant

allocation across the approved funding categories. The report was open from winter 2024 through fall 2024. The following section summarizes colleges' grant progress report submissions.

SUMMARY OF GRANT PROGRESS REPORTS

A total of 109 colleges (out of 115 required) submitted a grant progress report to the Chancellor's Office[1]. Overall, all colleges demonstrated commitment to equitable placement, support and completion and expressed a continued interest in professional development activities and services. When asked if the equitable placement and completion funding plan for program implementation changed since it was certified and submitted in 2023, of 109 responses, 21 percent (23 colleges) indicated their Implementation Plan has changed and 79 percent (86 colleges) indicated that their Implementation Plan has not changed. Approximately 60 percent of colleges reported challenges were encountered while implementing their AB 1705 plan. Nearly 40 percent of colleges reported no challenges were encountered during the implementation process.

HOW MUCH OF THE ALLOCATION HAS BEEN SPENT

At the time of report certifications, the total combined allocation amount spent by the colleges to-date is nearly $10.1 million and represents 16% of the total systemwide grant allocation of $64 million spent by colleges. Colleges were asked to report how much of the grant allocation funds were expended to-date[2]. Table 1 below summarizes the allocation percentage amounts colleges have spent as of the data reporting submission period of fall 2024. Of the 109 colleges that submitted a grant progress report, 12 colleges reported spending zero percent; 70 colleges spent up to 25% of their funds; 23 colleges reported spending between 26% to 50% of the allocation. Three colleges have spent between 51% to 75% of the funds. One college reported spending 75% of the allocation.

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1 Education Code section 78213.2 (g)(1)(B) requires a progress report submission to the Chancellor's Office. Calbright College did not receive an allocation and therefore is not required to submit a plan. As of fall 2024, the Chancellor's Office has not yet received a certified grant progress report from the following six colleges: Bakersfield College*, Butte College*, College of the Desert*, Imperial Valley College*, Los Angeles Harbor College, Los Angeles Southwest College (*denotes a partial submission).

2 As of the fall 2024 grant data reporting submission period

Table 1. Number of colleges reporting the percentage of their allocation.

How much of the allocation has been spent to-date?	
Percentage Amount of Allocation Spent	**Number of Responses**
100%	0
76% - 99%	1
51% - 75%	3
26% - 50%	23
25% or less	70
0%	12

HOW COLLEGES USED ALLOCATIONS

When asked how the grant allocation was utilized based on the categories outlined in statute, 78 percent of colleges reported professional development, followed by aligning concurrent supports and services at 69 percent of colleges, and developing corequisite support models for 63 percent of colleges (see Table 2). Innovating course sequences was reported by 34 percent of colleges, followed by additional improved assessments at 32 percent. Less than 10 percent of colleges reported no expenses to date, at the time the grant survey was administered during fall 2024. Colleges reported barriers that prevented them from spending the grant allocation and the most frequent responses ranged from significant executive leadership transition, lack of institutional research support, and staff shortages.

Table 2. Percent and number of colleges reporting how the allocation was used.

How was the allocation utilized at your institution?	Percent of Responses	Number of Responses
Providing professional development	78%	85
Aligning concurrent supports and services	69%	75
Developing corequisite support models	63%	68
Innovating course sequences	34%	37
Additional approved investments	32%	35
No part of the grant allocation has been spent to date	8%	9

Providing Professional Development/Technical Assistance

Of the 78 percent of colleges that utilized the allocation to provide professional development and technical assistance, the distribution of interests across professional development areas varied. Out of seven areas of professional development to invest in, colleges' top three areas included: investing in professional development for communities of practice for faculty teaching gateway courses (69% of responses), high challenge, high support equity-minded teaching practices (65% of responses), and creating safe spaces for equity conversations about section-level success rates (46% of responses). Table 3 below illustrates colleges' subsequent percentage rankings of professional development areas that were funded by the grant. The category "Other" consists of 13 percent of responses and comments included, "none at this time" or "other [PD]…not utilizing allocation funding".

Table 3. Percent and number of responses identifying professional development areas funded by the grant allocation.

Which professional development areas were funded using the grant allocation?	Percent of Responses	Number of Responses
Communities of practice for faculty teaching gateway courses	69%	60
High challenge, high support equity-minded teaching practices	65%	57
Creating safe spaces for equity conversations about section-level success rates	46%	40
Equitable grading strategies for consistent pass rates	42%	37
Collaboration between faculty and Institutional Research and Planning Professionals (IRP) for evaluation	39%	34
Participation in existing training programs supporting successful completion of math/ quantitative reasoning and English	33%	29
Targeted counseling training with an equity-minded approach	13%	12
Other (Please specify)	13%	12

Colleges that invested in professional development reported that the focus was for faculty to gain high challenge, high support, equity-minded teaching practices and equitable grading with the goal of achieving stronger, more consistent, and more equitable pass rates across sections of the same transfer-level course (77% responded "Yes" and 23% responded "No"). In addition, fewer colleges reported that they provided targeted professional development for counselors to enhance their guidance on course enrollments (only 21% responded "Yes" and 79% responded "No"). The main aspects covered in the training for counselors included analyzing institutional data on student placement and participating in culturally relevant counseling practices (i.e., support counseling with empathy and equity-minded, anti-racist, asset-based approaches to foster students' positive self-esteem and self-efficacy and to ensure that all students have the confidence and support to begin in English and math coursework for their program that maximizes the student's chances of completing courses that satisfy requirements for the intended program).

Aligning Concurrent Student Support Services

Of the 69 percent of colleges that utilized the allocation to align concurrent student support services, the distribution of interests across professional development areas varied. To align concurrent student support services, colleges will be creating, implementing, and evaluating concurrent support or support services to increase throughput rates for transfer-level mathematics/quantitative reasoning and English courses. Nearly 73% of colleges indicated an interest in investing in efforts to develop or expand support labs, tutoring centers, and embedded tutoring and incentivize student participation in these support services, as illustrated in Table 4. The lowest percentage of colleges (13%) selected the option of using early alert systems to connect struggling students with relevant supports, monitoring the efficacy of these systems, and making improvements as necessary.

Table 4. Percent and number of responses for colleges' actions to align concurrent student support services.

Activities to Align Concurrent Student Support Services	Percent of Responses	Number of Responses
Develop or expand support labs, tutoring centers, and embedded tutoring and incentivize student participation in these support services	73%	59
Integrate resources into gateway courses that connect students with support for basic needs, mental health services, stress management, etc.	39%	31
Work with Institutional Research and Planning Professionals (IRP) to evaluate the effectiveness of concurrent support and support services and make improvements	33%	26
Utilize early alert systems to connect struggling students with relevant supports, monitor the efficacy of these systems, and make improvements as necessary	13%	11

Developing Corequisite Support Models

Sixty-three percent of colleges reported that they used their allocation to develop corequisite support models with the goal of designing, implementing, and evaluating corequisite transfer-level mathematics or quantitative reasoning and English courses at scale. The data in Table 5 shows that most of the colleges focused on gateway math courses for Business, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (BSTEM) programs, statistics and liberal arts mathematics (SLAM), English composition courses, and English as a Second Language (ESL)-specific English composition. Less interest was indicated in quantitative reasoning courses outside mathematics. Additional areas of lower interest included counseling professional development, noted as "Other" in the data table below, with a response rate of ten percent.

Table 5. Percent and number of responses for colleges' activities to develop corequisite support models.

Activities to Develop Corequisite Support Models	Percent of Responses	Number of Responses
Gateway Mathematics for BSTEM Programs	75%	53
Statistics and Liberal Arts Mathematics (SLAM)	47%	33
English Composition	42%	30
ESL-Specific English Composition	17%	12
Other	10%	7
Quantitative Reasoning Courses outside Mathematics Department	5%	4

Innovating Course Sequences

When innovating course sequences, college faculty will use release time to redesign, implement, and evaluate certificate and associate degree pathways to include transfer-level courses. Of the 109 grant progress report submissions, 37 colleges indicated they would innovate course sequences. As illustrated in data Table 6, the distribution of responses was even, as colleges had the option to select multiple choices. However, 25 percent of the 28 respondents expressed interest in "develop or expand transferable quantitative reasoning options for students seeking only the associate degree" as a priority. An identical percentage (22%; 9 responses) of colleges selected the options "Ensure that for students in local associate degree programs, the default placement is appropriate transfer-level math or quantitative reasoning courses" and "Did your institution use grant funds to ensure that default placements for students in local associate degree programs were appropriate transfer-level math or quantitative reasoning courses?".

Table 6. Percent and number of responses for colleges activities to innovate course sequences.

Activities to Innovate Course Sequences	Percent of Responses	Number of Responses
Develop or expand transferable quantitative reasoning options for students seeking only the associate degree, including options taught by disciplinary faculty outside of mathematics, that articulate to the California State University (CSU) to satisfy quantitative reasoning requirements for general education (e.g., transferable quantitative reasoning courses, such as Financial Literacy taught in the Accounting or Business department, Technical Mathematics for the Trades taught by disciplinary faculty in Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, Liberal Arts Math, contextualized statistics courses taught in the Business Psychology or Ethnic Studies departments, etc.)	25%	10
Ensure that for students in local associate degree programs, the default placement is appropriate transfer-level math or quantitative reasoning courses.	22%	9
Ensure that for associate degree programs requiring coursework with pre-transfer level math/quantitative reasoning prerequisites, prerequisites are satisfied by any one of the following: 1) placement into, enrollment into, or completion of transfer-level math or quantitative reasoning to fulfill the prerequisite or 2) satisfactory completion of equivalent high school coursework.	22%	9

Additional Approved Investments

Thirty-five colleges reported that they invested in other activities and services that take a campus-wide approach to implementation. Colleges selected multiple options or skipped this section if not applicable at this time. Options included strategic communications, planning, institutional research and technology enhancements:

- Invest in comprehensive, campus-wide strategic communications (11%; 4 responses)

- Establish comprehensive research and evaluation planning. (8%, 3 responses)

- Expand the capacity of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness (IRPE) offices (26%; 10 responses)

- Partner with subject matter experts for development and evaluation (70%; 7 responses)

- Other enhancements such as technology investments, liaison with counseling, or expanded research contracts (50%; 5 responses)

- Training initiatives (30%; 3 responses)

- Hiring new staff (20%; 2 responses)

- Automating data disaggregation for equity conversations (10%; 1 response)

- Invest in Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) (5%; 2 responses)

- Training in SEM strategies (50%; 1 response)

- Support in maximizing access to transfer-level math/quantitative reasoning and English (50%; 1 response)

- Enhancing corequisite support sections availability (50%; 1 response)

- Invest in technology improvements

- Other IT needs aiding AB 1705 strategies implementation (67%; 8 responses)

- Seamless registration of students into corequisite sections (50%; 6 responses)

- Coding changes to placement processes (33%; 4 responses)

CONCLUSION

Most colleges have begun leveraging their allocated funding to advance implementation of their Equitable Placement, Support, and Completion policies and practices. With continued attention to strategic practices, research, and curricular redesign, colleges are well-positioned to make significant progress. College efforts are already beginning to show improved outcomes for BSTEM students, with enrollments among business majors in Business Calculus and STEM majors in STEM Calculus already meaningfully higher in Fall 2024—especially when compared to pre-pandemic enrollments, even though our overall system enrollment has not yet fully recovered from the pandemic. Meanwhile, success rates in those courses remain stable and slightly improved when compared to pre-pandemic success rates.

Additionally, the Chancellor's Office continues to expand systemwide professional development support, offering webinars, technical assistance, and other resources to provide colleges valuable insights, practical strategies, and opportunities for collaboration with and support from their colleagues across the system.

As the Chancellor's Office continues to monitor and support the colleges' efforts, we look forward to providing a final progress report in 2027. Through our collective dedication and collaboration, California community colleges are creating a more equitable, inclusive, and successful educational landscape, aligned with Vision 2030 goals and relentlessly dedicated to the success of every student.

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