



The Campaign for

College
Opportunity

November 2021

CALIFORNIA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

THE STATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION
for **Latinx Californians**

Art by Jose Ramirez @joseramirezart

The contributions of Latinx Californians have made California stronger.



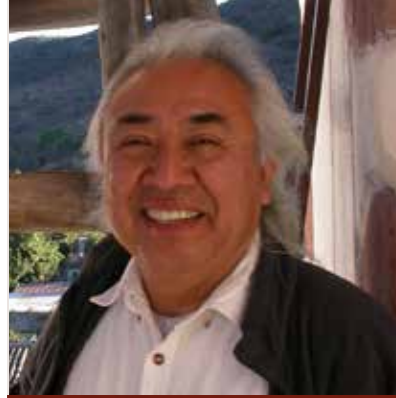
Lalo Alcaraz
Cartoonist



Gabriela Teissier
Journalist, news anchor,
and radio talk show host



Antonio Villaraigosa
41st Mayor of Los Angeles



Hugo Morales
Founder of
Radio Bilingue



Cecilia Estolano
Chair of the
UC Board of Regents



Joseph I. Castro
Chancellor of the
California State University



Isabel Guzman
Administrator of the US Small
Business Administration



Jose Hernandez
Astronaut and Regent of
the University of California



America Ferrara
Actor and activist



Ricardo Lara
Insurance Commissioner
of California



Daisy Gonzales
Acting Chancellor of the
California Community Colleges



Alex Padilla
US Senator for California



Xavier Becerra
Secretary of the US
Department of Health and
Human Services



Cesar Chavez
Labor organizer



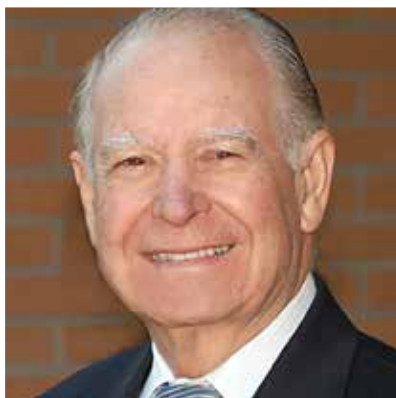
Dolores Huerta
Labor organizer



Carlos Santana
Musician



Edward Roybal
Politician



Cruz Reynoso
First Chicano California
Supreme Court Justice



Antonia Hernandez
Civil rights leader
and philanthropist



Ellen Ochoa
Astronaut



Mario J. Molina
Chemist and
Nobel Prize winner



Helen Torres
Women's rights advocate



Estela Bensimon
Professor and higher
education equity advocate



Thomas A. Saenz
Civil rights attorney



Angelica Salas
Immigrant rights
advocate



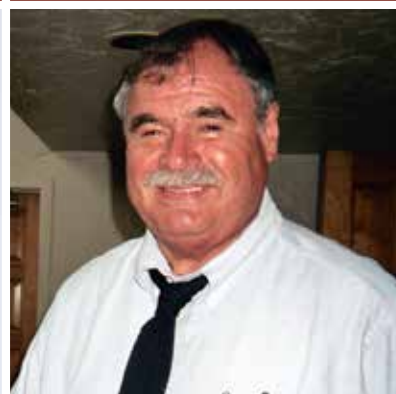
Linda Griego
Businesswoman



Mike Krieger
Co-Founder of Instagram



Monica Lozano
Businesswoman
and philanthropist



Sal Castro
Teacher



Doctora
Cervantes



FOREWORD

California continues to lead the country in enrolling the highest number of Latinx undergraduate students across all sectors of higher education. This reality is not just about the numbers presented in the data, but, moreover, the stories, the voices, and the *comunidades* (communities) they represent. The figures and findings presented are more than data—these are family, friends, and people in our neighborhoods.

The critical role of California’s community colleges cannot be stressed enough as a primary point of entry and as an essential path to transfer and bachelor’s degree attainment; no system of higher education is more important to Latinx college attainment. As we reviewed the data, we also recognized that there is an opportunity to further advance efforts to support Latinx undergraduate students on the path to the University of California, the California State University, and independent nonprofit colleges.

Whether in our scholarship or practice, we have all witnessed the opportunities within our state’s educational system, as well as the systemic barriers that prohibit access and true equity. The data presented in this report help shed light on the progress made and existing areas to improve as we seek to advance racial equity efforts and further the Latinx educational pipeline.

Equity is not abstract, it is not unattainable. As we reviewed this report, we asked ourselves, “What more can be done for our brothers, family, friends, community, and the 1.39 million Latinx undergraduates attending a California college or university?”

We invite you, the reader, to digest the presented data and interrogate the ways we think of what works and what is still needed to advance racial equity.

While equity efforts are directed toward helping students overcome known barriers within higher education, it is vital that these same efforts and attention be given to higher education structures. It is imperative to interrogate how the existing history, philosophies, and organization of American higher education continuously impact minoritized students. Our current policies—intentional and bettering as they are—need to be bolstered by more robust and comprehensive changes, such as expanding financial support for students and streamlining transfer pathways. Like students, flowers cannot grow in soil that does not supply them with nutrients: If they are not watered, if the sun does not reach them, and if we truly seek to support Latinx students, we must continue to transform our world through reflection and action.

Eric R. Felix

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INTRODUCTION

There is no California story without Latinx Californians. Throughout our state's history, Latinx Californians have contributed to building a strong and thriving place, allowing us to boast global leadership as the fifth largest economy in the world.¹ The only path to a bright future for all of us who call this place home is inextricably linked to the success of our 15 million² Latinx California neighbors, who represent the largest ethnic group in the state, with a demographic that is disproportionately young. We must significantly increase the educational opportunity and success of Latinx Californians, ensuring that more of them are prepared for college, attend college, and graduate with the skills necessary to thrive personally and to contribute to the economy of our state.

The future of California will be defined by whether we ensure better educational opportunity for Latinx Californians. Of California's 39.3 million residents, nearly 40 percent (15 million) are Latinx.³ Over half of California's K-12 students are Latinx,⁴ and more than four in 10 college undergraduates in California are Latinx.⁵ While historic numbers of Latinx students are graduating from high school prepared for college and are enrolling in higher education, these numbers are still too low. Inequitable access to college opportunity and success in graduating with a degree is very real. Today, most high schools fail to prepare the majority of their Latinx students for college. For Latinx graduates who do make it, the majority enroll in a California community college where too few are able to find a clear path to a degree or to transfer. While both access and success for Latinx students enrolling in the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) are improving, there are still disturbing gaps by race/ethnicity and gender, with Latinos attending and completing college at rates far below their Latina peers.

The purpose of this report is not to simply highlight the statistics that too few of us in education will find surprising. Instead, it is to recognize that the problem has never been Latinx students or their families, but the choices we have made as a society, as institutions, and as governments. At best, we have ignored the choice to do better for Latinx Californians and, at worst, intentionally excluded them and dismissed their potential. As a diverse state, neither serves our collective future. We call on policymakers, college leaders, and the public to be intentional in demanding and removing unnecessary barriers and in providing equitable opportunities for Latinx students to succeed. As Californians who take great pride in our state's success, we all stand to benefit.

THE GOOD NEWS. More Latinx Californians than ever before are graduating from high school, enrolling in college, and succeeding.

- Eighty-seven percent of Latinx 19-year-olds in the state have a high school diploma or equivalent credential, compared to 73 percent 10 years ago.⁶
- Forty-four percent of Latinx high school graduates in 2019-2020 were prepared for college and eligible for university admission.
- Over 1.39 million Latinx were enrolled in college in California; 43 percent of California undergraduates are Latinx.
- The percentage of Latinx community college students taking and passing college-level math in their first semester has gone from eight percent to 33 percent. The percentage taking and passing transfer-level English in their first semester has more than doubled, from 20 percent to 56 percent.
- More than half of Latinx associate degree-earners are earning Associate Degrees for Transfer – helping them save time and money, while guaranteeing them junior standing when they enroll in the CSU.
- For the first time in history, the CSU entering class of 2019-2020 reflects the diversity of the California high school graduating class.
- Over the past five years, four-year graduation rates for both Latinos and Latinas enrolling in the CSU as full-time freshmen have doubled from nine percent to 18 percent for Latinos and from 15 percent to 29 percent for Latinas.
- Half of Latinas transferring to the CSU graduate within two years at rates approaching those of white women (52 percent), and four-year graduation rates for Latinx transfer students are generally high—75 percent for Latinos and 81 percent for Latinas.
- Preliminary admissions data from the UC for fall 2021 shows an eight percent increase in Latinx admissions from fall 2020. Among California residents applying to the UC, the admission rates for Latinx applicants exceeded those of white applicants. More than half of Latinos enrolling in the UC are graduating on time—53 percent of Latino freshmen graduate in four years, and 51 percent of Latino transfer students graduate in two years. Nearly two-thirds of Latinas at the UC are graduating on time—65 percent of Latina freshmen graduate in four years, and 63 percent of Latina transfer students graduate in two years.

THE BAD NEWS. Greater progress is necessary to ensure that significantly more Latinx Californians are prepared for college, enroll when they graduate from high school, and that California's colleges and universities support them to earn a certificate, to transfer, and/or to receive a degree.

- More than half of California's Latinx high school graduates are not eligible for admission to the state's public four-year university systems because they were not offered or supported to complete the A-G courses required to apply for university admission to the UC and CSU.
- While 78 percent of Latinx students enroll in a community college seeking to earn a two-year degree and/or transfer to a four-year institution,⁷ after six years, fewer than one-third (32 percent) have been supported to transfer to a four-year college or university.
- At the CSU, fewer than one in five Latino freshmen (18 percent) are supported to graduate in four years, and only 29 percent of Latinas enrolling as full-time freshmen are supported to graduate in four years. These rates are far lower than for white men (36 percent) and white women (52 percent).
- Only 36 percent of Latino transfer students enrolling in the CSU are supported to earn their bachelor's degrees in two years, compared to 41 percent of white men and 50 percent of Latinas.
- At 53 percent, the four-year graduation rate for Latino freshmen is 17 percentage points lower than the four-year graduation rate for white men who enroll in the UC as freshmen. The gap in four-year graduation rates between Latinas and white women enrolling in the UC as freshmen is 14 percentage points.
- Roughly the same percentage (51 percent) of Latino transfer students graduate in two years, compared to 58 percent of white men. A similar gap in two-year graduation rates (seven percentage points) exists between Latina transfer students to the UC and white women who transfer to the UC.
- The UC student body still does not reflect the diversity of the state, with Latinx Californians woefully underrepresented at 25 percent.

In this report, we use the term Latinx as an inclusive term to refer to people refer to people of Hispanic and Latin American descent. While many other sources use terminology such as Hispanic, Chicano/a, or Latino/a, we intentionally use this word to be inclusive of all people who identify with one of these terms. Latinx is a gender-neutral term that includes men, women, and individuals who do not identify within the gender binary of masculinity and femininity.⁸ Where the data allow us to examine differences in educational experience by gender, we refer to Latino (male) and Latina (female) students.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The Campaign for College Opportunity proposes the following recommendations for policymakers and college leaders to improve Latinx educational success in California:

High School Recommendations



- Increase high school graduation rates for Latinx students to 90 percent and make the A-G coursework the default curriculum for all high school students in California, so that a significantly larger number of Latinx students will be eligible to apply to the UC and CSU.
- Ensure that all high school seniors complete either a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or a California Dream Act Application, so that every talented Latinx Californian can pursue college, regardless of income status.

Community College and University Recommendations



- Ensure strong implementation of California Community Colleges and CSU reforms that focus on equitable placement of students into college-level English and math, and support Latinx students to succeed in these courses. Identify strategies for intentionally closing racial/ethnic and gender gaps in enrollment and completion to degree, certificate, and transfer.
- Continue support for strong implementation of the community college Student-Centered Funding Formula, which provides additional resources to colleges based on enrollment, number of low-income students, number of first-generation students, and success of students who earn a degree, certificate, or complete the transfer requirements.
- Strengthen the CSU Graduation Initiative to improve graduation rates and close racial/ethnic and gender gaps for Latinx students who enroll as first-time freshmen and who transfer to the CSU.
- Strategically identify efforts to make sure the UC increases the number of Latinx students who enroll and successfully graduate, so that its student body and every campus is more reflective of the diversity of California's high school population.
- College presidents, campus leaders, and governing bodies must commit to identifying, hiring, retaining, and promoting Latinx faculty at California's public colleges and universities.



State Recommendations

- Commit to the ambitious statewide goal of ensuring that at least 60 percent of Latinx Californians in the workforce hold a degree or high-value credential by 2030.
- Revise and expand the eligibility requirements established under the California Master Plan for Higher Education, so that additional state funding is provided to increase enrollment of Latinx students at the CSU and UC.
- Recommit to strengthening transfer and to ensuring equitable access and success to the Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) for Latinx community college students and support the new Associate Degree for Transfer Intersegmental Implementation Committee.
- Develop a strong California Cradle-to-Career Data System to better enable policymakers and institutions to understand the data and to address gaps for Latinx students in college access and success.
- Modernize California’s financial aid system by building on recent expansions to Cal Grant and by shifting to a state aid model based on student need—rather than on outdated rationing devices, like age and time out of high school—to create a more inclusive and accessible financial aid system for Latinx students.
- Support the growing number of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) to become Hispanic-Graduating Institutions by investing additional resources specifically tied to closing racial/ethnic and gender gaps in completion of college degrees.

Federal Recommendations



- Expand federal Pell Grant access to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients to guarantee that DACAdmented students in California’s colleges and universities have access to an important source of financial support.
- Establish a pathway to citizenship for all undocumented individuals and create permanent solutions to make sure undocumented students can access the financial and social resources needed to support a college education.

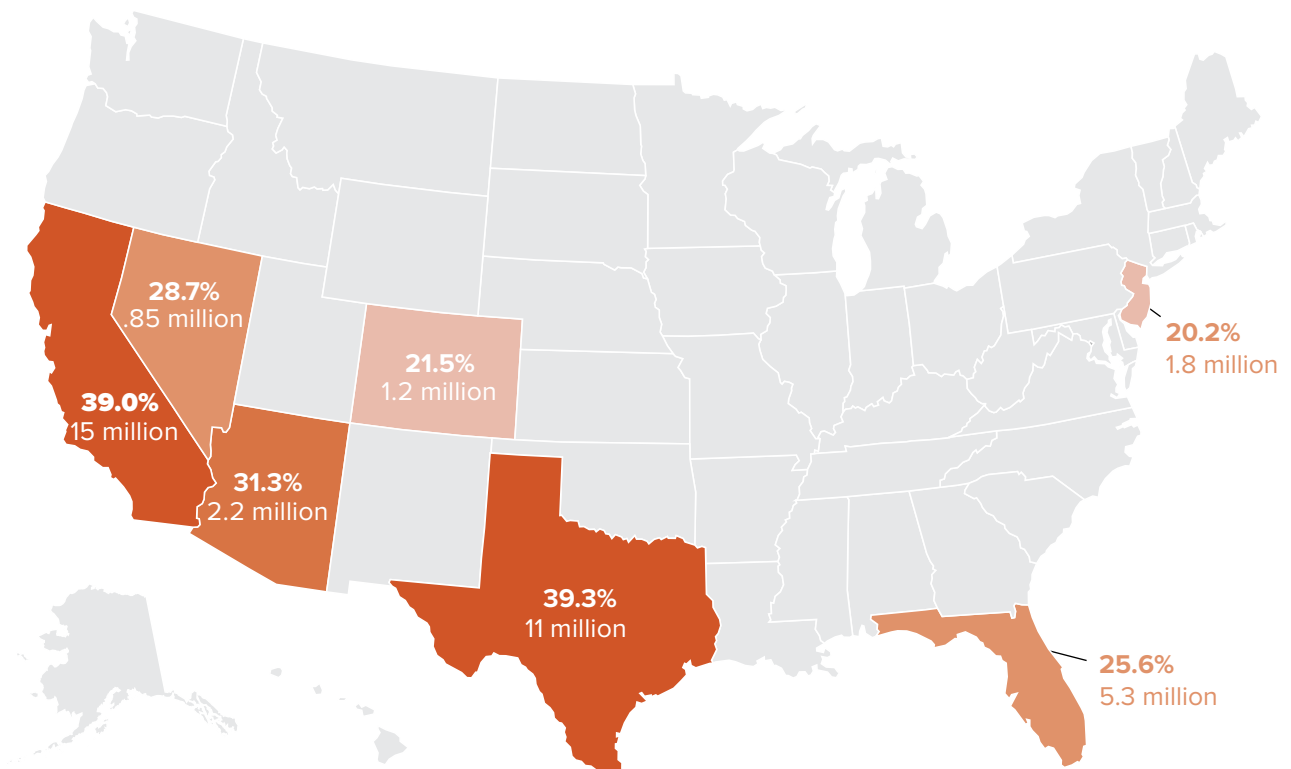


CALIFORNIA'S LATINX POPULATION

California is home to the largest Latinx population of any state in the nation,⁹ with over 15 million Latinx residents—a population that grew by 11 percent over the past decade and that, at 39 percent, is the largest single racial or ethnic group in California.¹⁰ Texas, home to over 11 million Latinx residents, and Florida, home to just over five million Latinx residents, are second and third, respectively.

California is home to one in four Latinx residents in the United States.

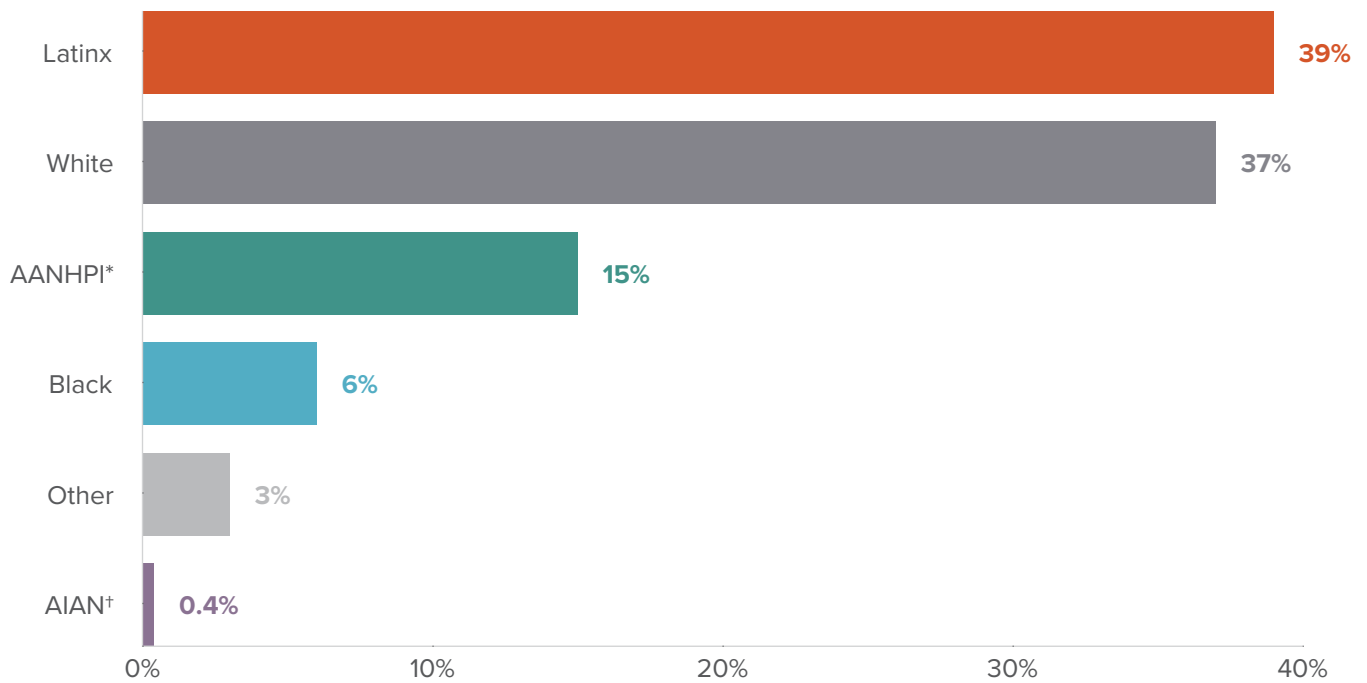
Figure 1. U.S. states with over 20 percent Latinx populations



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Table DP-05

Latinx Californians are the state's largest racial/ethnic group.

Figure 2. California population by race/ethnicity



*Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander

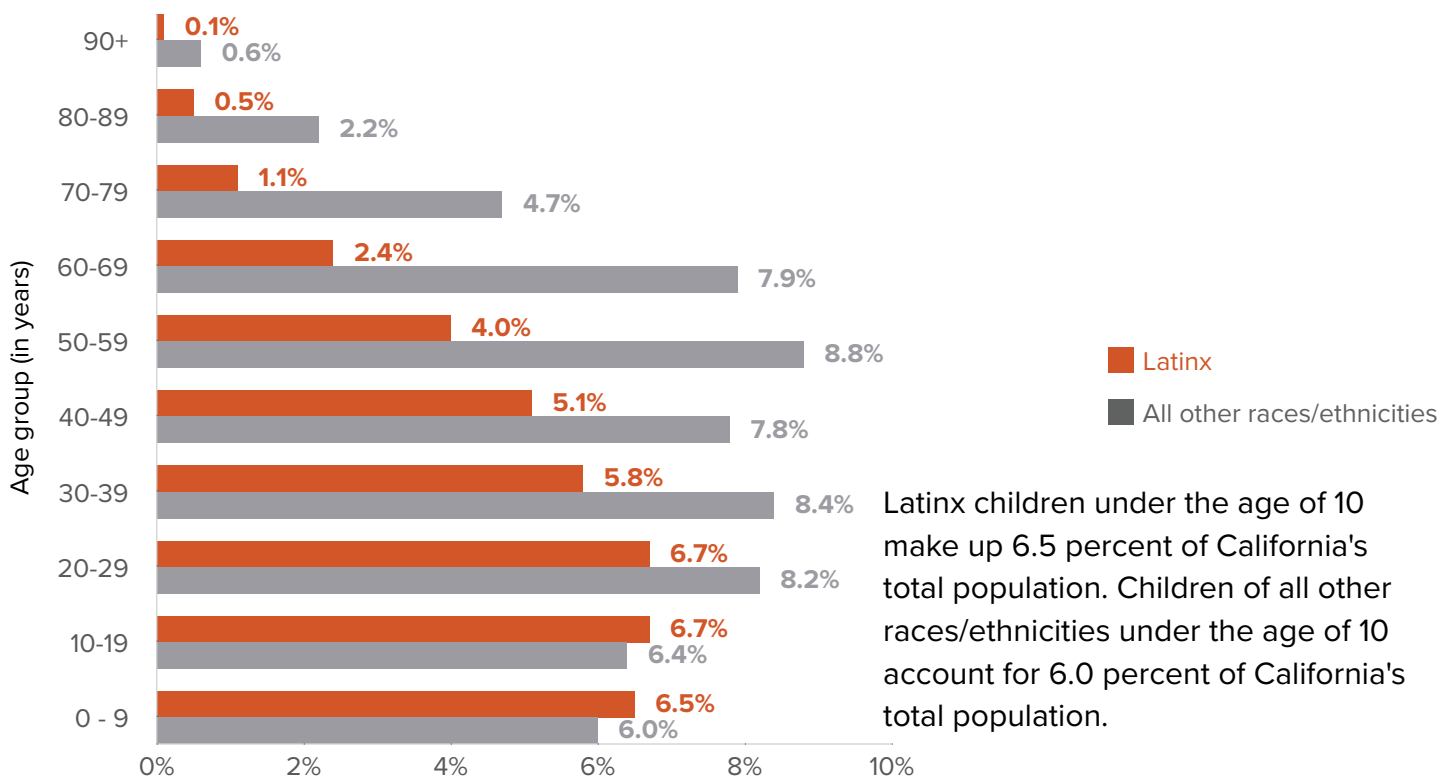
†American Indian, Alaska Native

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Public Use Microdata Sample

In addition to being the single largest ethnic group in California, the Latinx population is critical to the future of the state, with 51 percent of Latinx residents under the age of 30. Latinx Californians are a young demographic. As seen in Figure 3, among Californians under the age of 20, more than half identify as Latinx.

Fifty-two percent of Latinx residents are under the age of 30.

Figure 3. Latinx percentage of California population by age group



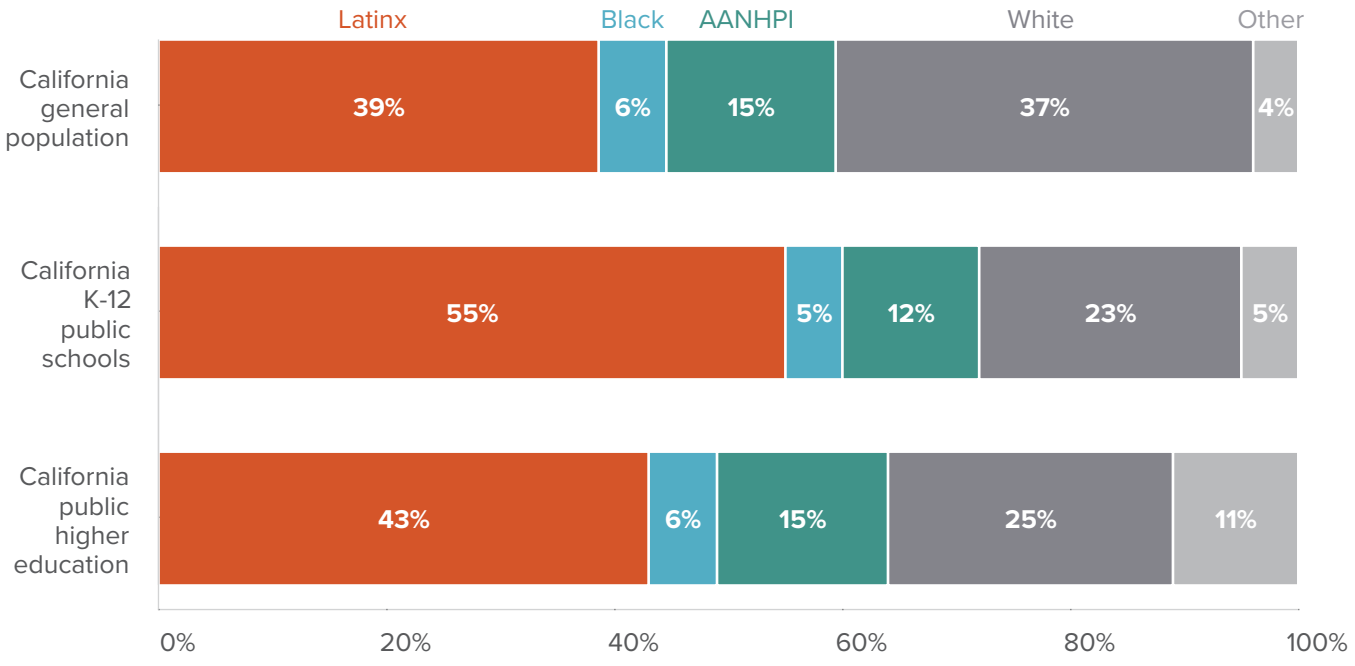
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Public Use Microdata Sample



Fifty-five percent of California’s K-12 students are Latinx, and 43 percent of undergraduates at our community colleges and public universities are Latinx.

Over half (55 percent) of California’s K-12 students and 43 percent of public higher education students are Latinx, reflecting the youth of the state’s population.

Figure 4. California population, California K-12 population, and California public higher education population by race/ethnicity

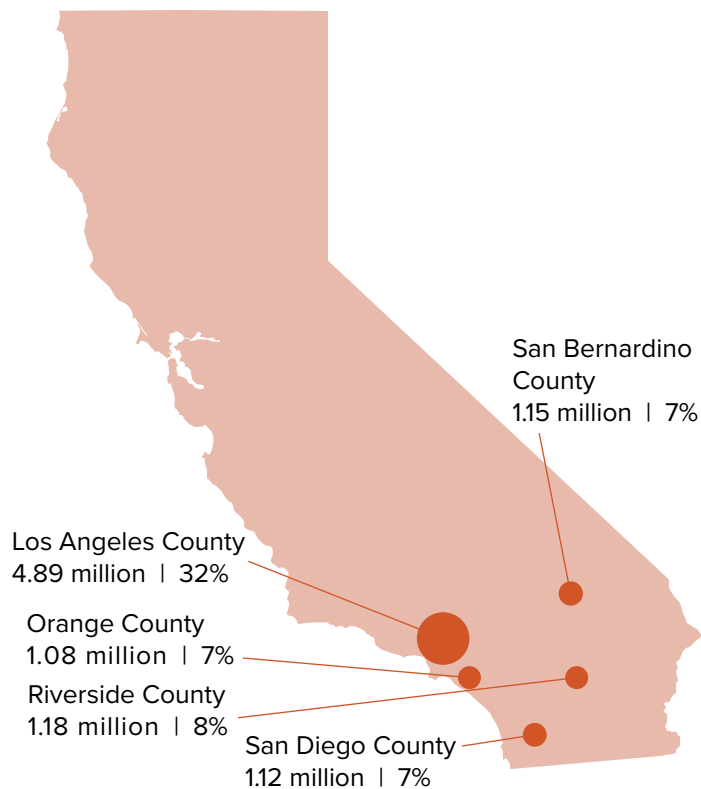


Sources: California Department of Education. (2021). 2018-19 Enrollment by Ethnicity and Grade; US Census Bureau. (2021). American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Public Use Microdata Sample; National Center for Education Statistics. (2021). Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (2021), 12-month enrollment component (2018-2019), Table: EFFY2019

California’s Latinx population resides predominantly in Southern California (61 percent), with Los Angeles County being home to almost five million (32 percent) of the state’s Latinx residents, and 29 percent residing in San Diego, Orange, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties—each with over one million Latinx residents. Within Los Angeles County, Latinx residents make up almost half (49 percent) of the county’s population. Statewide, over two-thirds of Latinx Californians were born in the United States, though over 96 percent of Latinx Californians under the age of 18 are U.S.-born.

Sixty-one percent of the state’s Latinx population resides in Southern California.

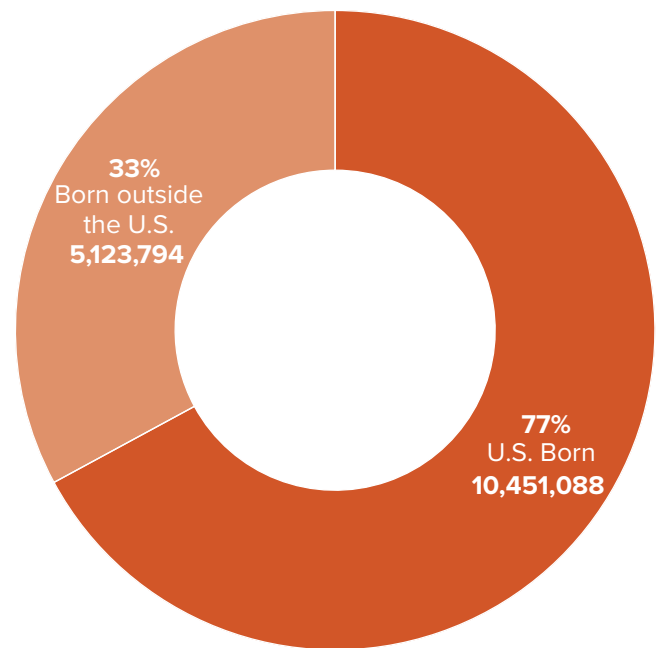
Figure 5. California counties with over one million Latinx residents



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Public Use Microdata Sample

Two-thirds of California’s Latinx population was born in the U.S.

Figure 6. California Latinx population by nation of birth



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Table B05003I: Sex by Age by Nativity and Citizenship Status (Hispanic or Latino)





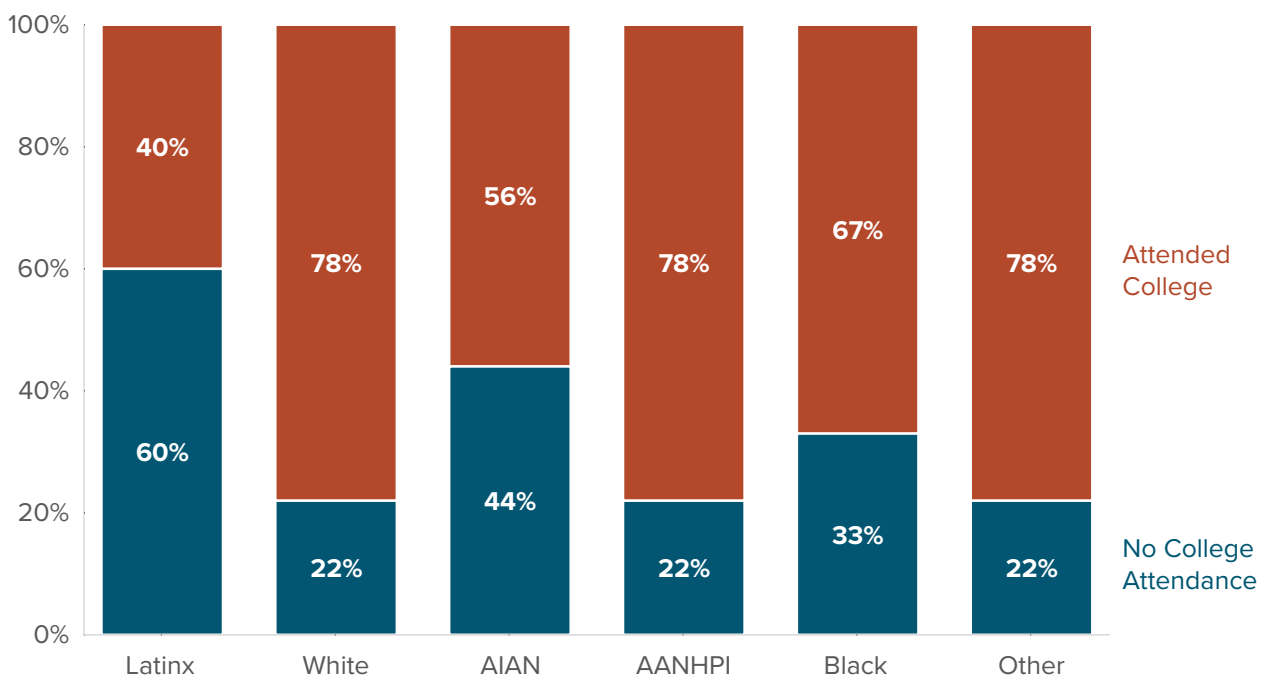
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

An abundance of untapped Latinx talent in California

Ensuring Latinx Californians are supported to be prepared for college, to go to college, and to earn a degree is critical to the future of California and its economic strength. There is no path to a strong California that leaves out Latinx Californians. Presently, less than half of California's Latinx population has attended college. That is the lowest rate of college attendance for any racial/ethnic subgroup in the state.

College attendance for Latinx Californians has increased from 28 percent to 40 percent of residents ages 25-64 over the past decade, but Latinx adults in California still have the lowest levels of college attendance.

Figure 7. College attendance among Californians ages 25-64 by race/ethnicity

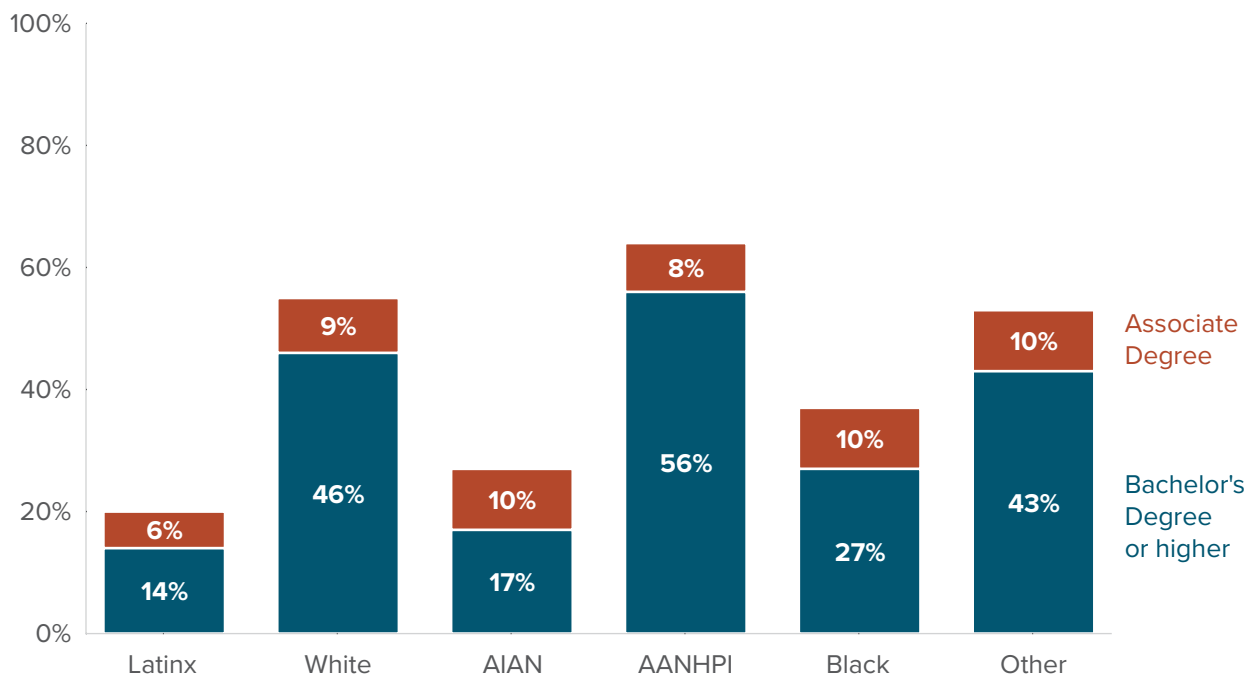


Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Public Use Microdata Sample

Given the Latinx population’s status as the largest ethnic group in the state, the low rate of college attendance represents an enormous reservoir of untapped talent. It also means that state and campus-level leaders must work to engage adult students, ensuring that programs are relevant and accessible to Latinx Californians who are not going to college directly from high school or who may have left college before completing a degree.

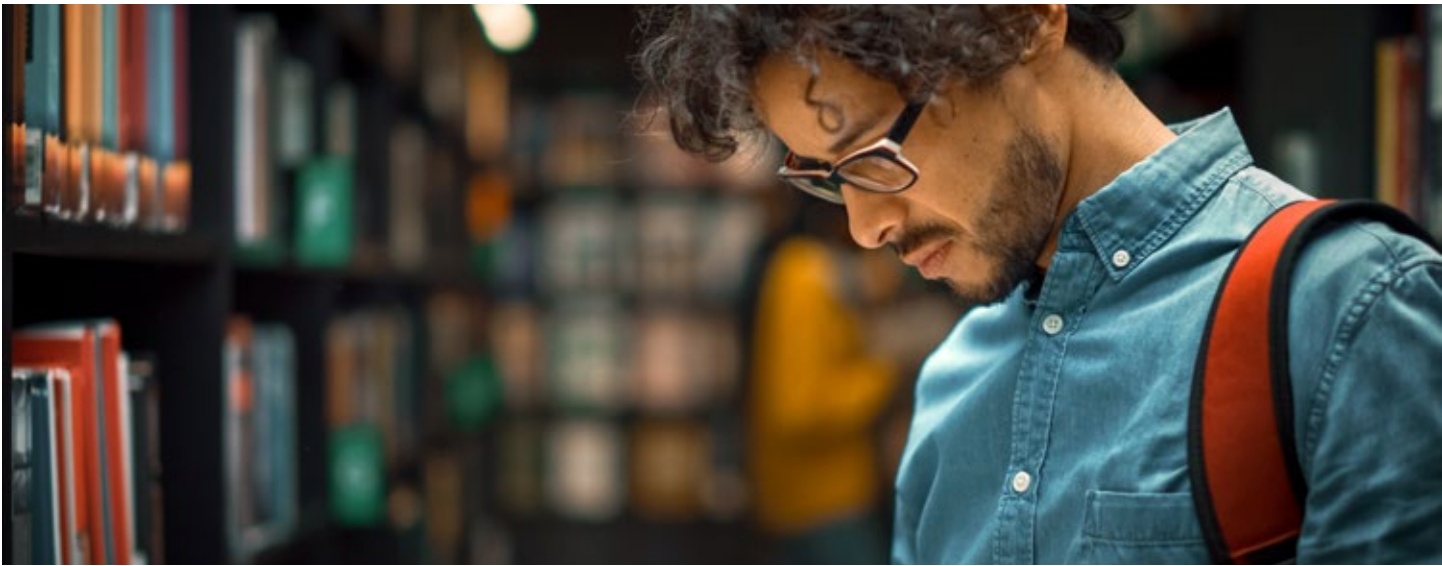
Only 14 percent of Latinx adults have a bachelor’s degree, reflecting the lowest rates of degree attainment of any racial/ethnic subgroup in California.

Figure 8. Degree attainment among Californians ages 25-64 by race/ethnicity



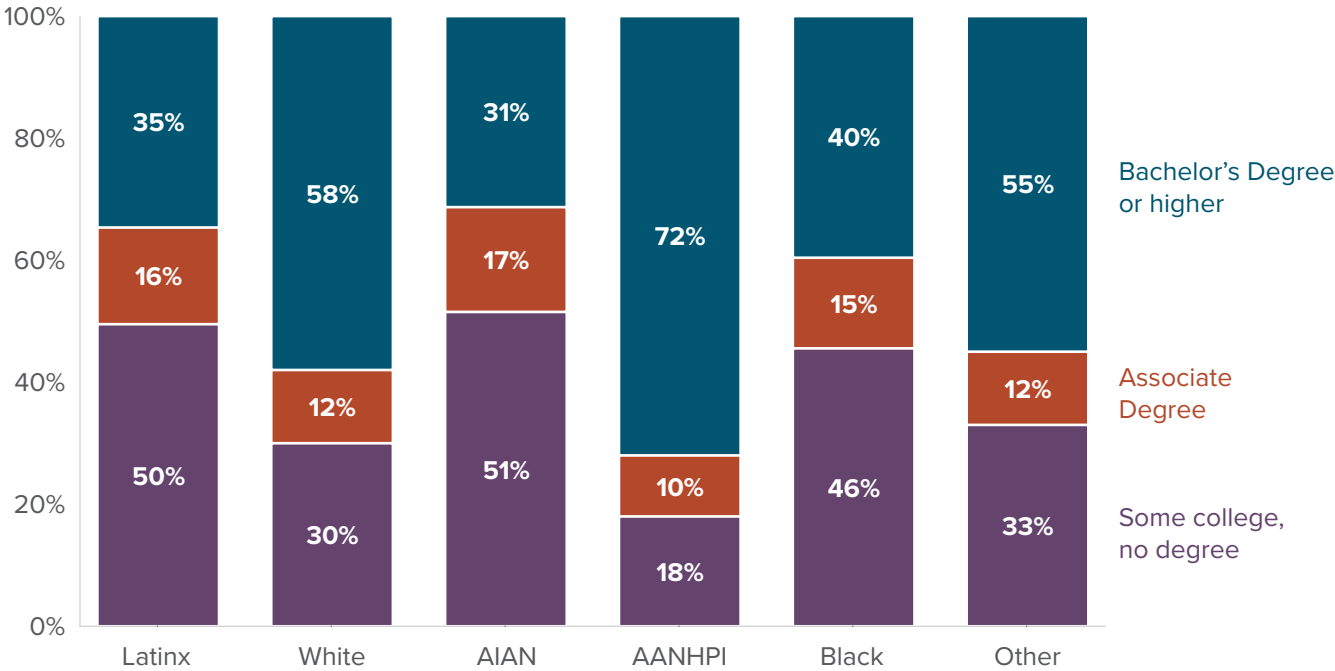
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Public Use Microdata Sample

According to US Census estimates, only 14 percent of California’s Latinx 25-to-64-year-old residents hold bachelor’s degrees, and only six percent have associate degrees, the lowest rate of degree attainment among California’s racial/ethnic groups examined. While we must work to ensure more Latinx Californians are prepared for and enroll in college, we should note that the percentage of Latinx Californians in the workforce who hold degrees has risen steadily—from 15 percent in 2006 to 20 percent by 2019.



Half of Latinx adults who went to college never earned a degree.

Figure 9. Degree attainment among Californians ages 25-64 who have ever enrolled in college by race/ethnicity



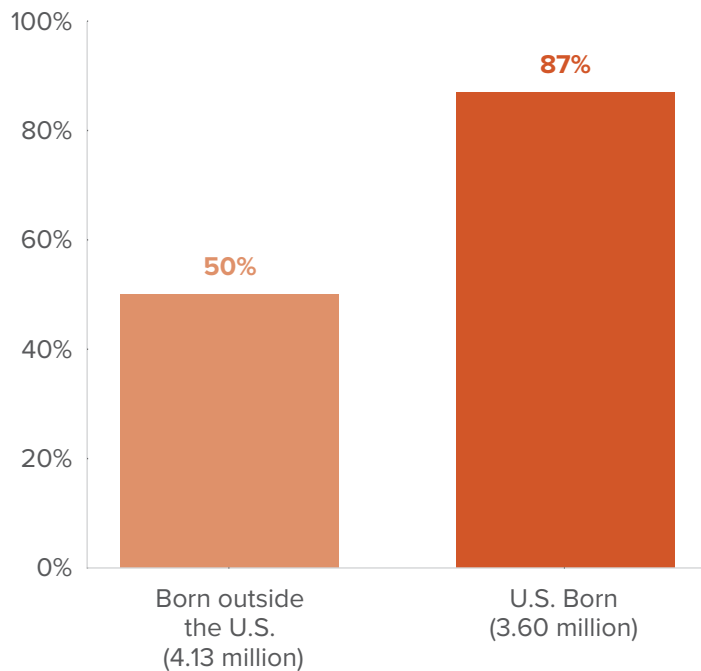
Note: Due to rounding of percentages within racial/ethnic groups, some columns may not sum to 100%.
 Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Public Use Microdata Sample

The need to better support Latinx students who are pursuing a college degree is further evident in Figure 9, which shows outcomes for Latinx students who have enrolled in college. Unfortunately, Latinx undergraduates have one of the highest rates of leaving college without a degree; half of Latinx adults who went to college never earned a degree.

Educational attainment for Latinx Californians of workforce age differs dramatically for those born in the U.S. and those born outside the U.S. Though 87 percent of U.S.-born Latinx residents have a high school diploma, just half of Latinx residents who were born outside the U.S. have completed high school, as seen in Figure 10.

Only 50 percent of non-U.S.-born Latinx Californians have a high school diploma, compared to 87 percent of U.S.-born Latinx residents of the state.

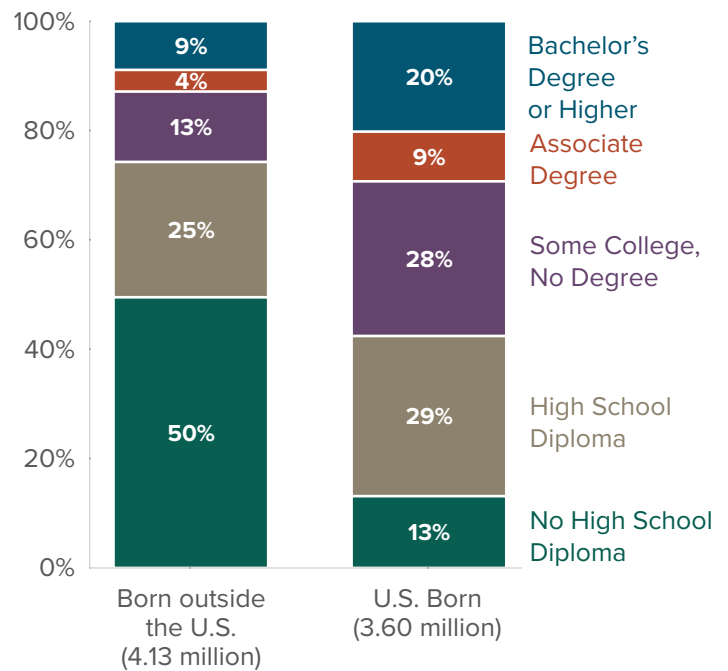
Figure 10. High school diploma or higher by U.S.-born/non-U.S.-born



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Public Use Microdata Sample

Latinx Californians born in the U.S. are twice as likely to hold college degrees as Latinx Californians who are not native-born.

Figure 11. Educational attainment for Latinx Californians ages 25-64 by U.S.-born/non-U.S.-born



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Public Use Microdata Sample

Figure 11 shows additional information about education levels by place of birth for Latinx Californians. U.S.-born Latinx residents are more than twice as likely to have a bachelor's degree (20 percent) as their non-U.S.-born peers (nine percent), and more than twice as likely to hold an associate degree (nine percent vs. four percent).



COLLEGE PREPARATION

On a host of indicators, Latinx Californians have been showing critical growth in their educational achievements. More Latinx adults have a high school diploma than ever before. Among Latinx 19-year-olds in the state, 87 percent have a high school diploma or equivalent.¹¹ Overall, 82 percent of Latinx students who entered high school in 2015-2016 graduated within four years, compared to 88 percent of their white peers.¹² While California's high schools must do more to support the state's Latinx learners, we note that this graduation rate is a substantial improvement over Latinx graduation rates reported 10 years ago: Among students in the 2009-2010 graduating class who would have entered high school in the 2005-2006 school year, only 68 percent graduated in four years. Though we cannot directly compare these numbers due to differences in the way they were calculated, they do point to growth in support for the state's Latinx high school students.

More than half (58 percent) of Latinx high school graduates from the 2017-18 school year enrolled in college within a year of graduating, but with almost 225,000 Latinx high school graduates in the state, **this means 94,366 Latinx high school graduates did not enroll in college.**

A-G Completion

A high school diploma is necessary, but is not sufficient, for California's college-bound students. Students who wish to enroll directly in a four-year institution—including the UC, CSU, and nonprofit colleges or universities in the state—must also pass the A-G courses required for admission. In 2019-2020, 56 percent of white high school graduates met these requirements, while only 44 percent of California's Latinx graduates were supported to successfully complete the A-G courses. California's high schools must ensure that A-G courses are available to students with support, so that they can earn grades of C or better to be eligible for university admission.

Indeed, college enrollment differs significantly, depending on whether a student completed A-G courses or not. While 77 percent of the 2019-2020 Latinx graduates who completed the A-G requirements enrolled in college within 12 months of graduation, that was true of only 45 percent of their peers who graduated high school but did not complete the A-G course requirements.

In 2016, the California Department of Education updated the methodology it uses to calculate graduation rates by ensuring students who transfer into a school are included, while students who transfer, emigrate to another country, or die during the four-year high school period are not. As such, caution is needed in comparing graduation rates from 2009-2010 with those from 2019-2020. We believe, however, that this comparison is indicative of better support for California's Latinx students.

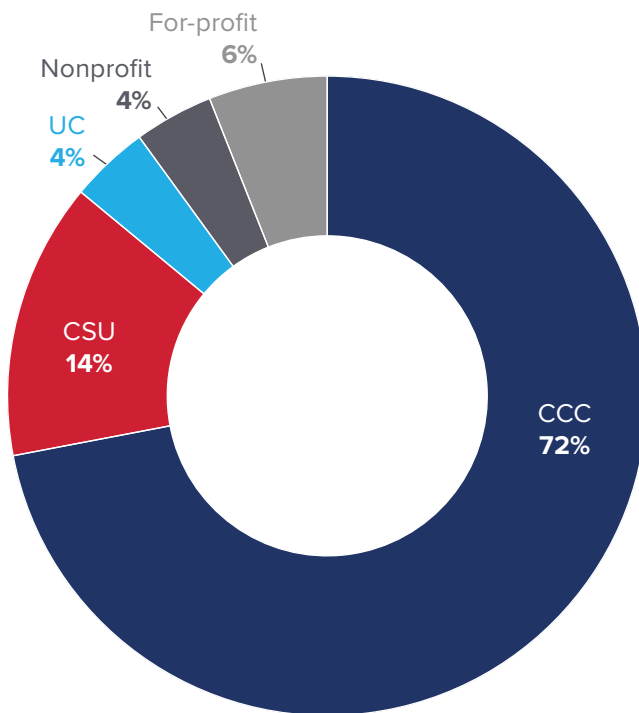


ACCESS TO COLLEGE

In the 2018-2019 academic school year, 90 percent, or about 1.26 million, Latinx undergraduates were enrolled in the UC, CSU, or the California Community Colleges, with 72 percent (1,002,127) Latinx undergraduates enrolled in one of California’s 116 community college campuses.¹³ California’s community colleges remain the single most important system of higher education that impacts Latinx students.

Nine out of 10 Latinx undergraduates in California attended a public college or university in 2018-2019.

Figure 12. California Latinx undergraduate enrollment by sector, 2018-2019



1,391,503 Latinx undergraduates enrolled in California’s colleges and universities in 2018-19

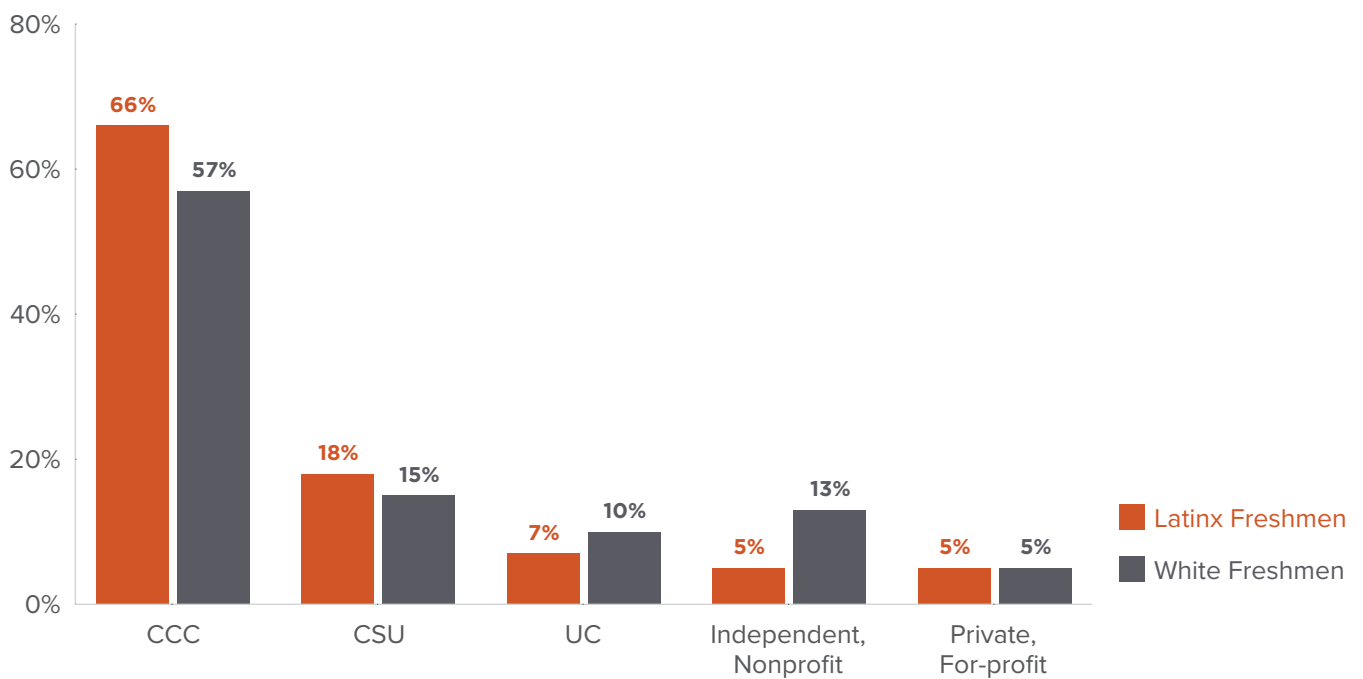
A larger percentage of Latinx students enroll in private for-profit institutions than the University of California.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) (2021), 12-month enrollment component (2018-2019), Table: EFFY2019

Two-thirds (66 percent) of California’s Latinx freshmen in 2017-2018 began their college careers on a California community college campus, compared to 57 percent of white freshmen. The CSU enrolled 18 percent of Latinx freshmen students. Only seven percent of Latinx freshmen enrolled in the UC.

A greater percentage of Latinx freshmen are enrolling in community colleges and CSUs than their white counterparts.

Figure 13. First-time freshmen, Latinx and white students, by system of enrollment

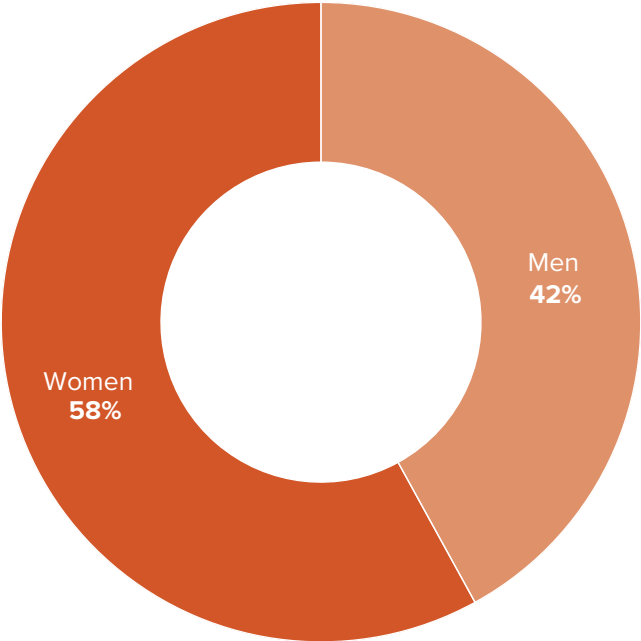


Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (2021), fall enrollment component (2018), Table EF2018A

Of the almost 1.4 million Latinx undergraduates enrolled in the 2018-19 academic year, over 800,000—58 percent—were women. Critically, the disparity in enrollment between Latinas and Latinos, shown in Figure 14, predates the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Negative gendered/racial stereotypes can limit the type of encouragement and guidance young Latino men receive to succeed in school. Furthermore, in a highly unequal economy, these young men feel significant pressure to financially support their families.¹⁴ **This pandemic has had large and disproportionate impacts on college enrollment among Latinx students in particular**, with National Student Clearinghouse data showing a 16.6 percent drop among them in community college enrollment and a 4.1 percent drop in public university enrollment when comparing fall 2019 and fall 2020 data.

Fifty-eight percent of Latinx undergraduates in 2018-2019 were women.

Figure 14. California Latinx undergraduate enrollment by gender, 2018-2019



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (2021), 12-month enrollment component (2018-2019), Table: EFFY2019

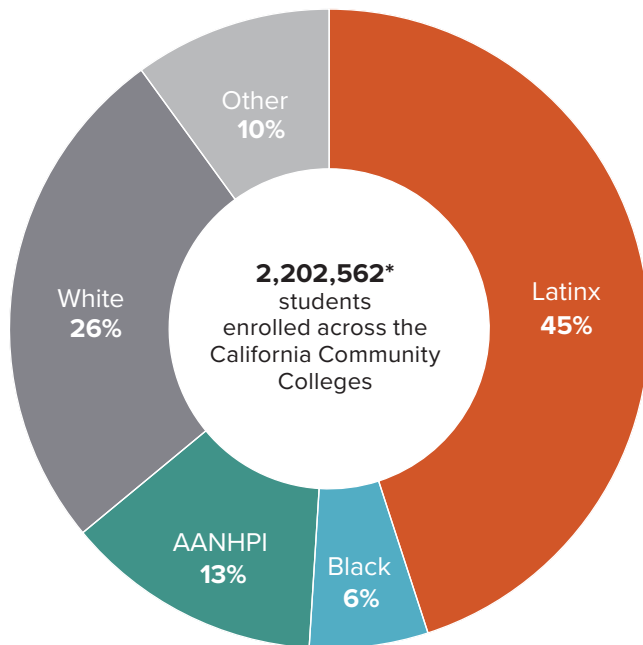


Access: California Community Colleges

The California Community Colleges is the largest higher education system in the nation with over two million students enrolling in the 2018-19 academic year, of whom 1,002,127 (45 percent) are Latinx.¹⁵

Latinx students account for 45 percent of the California Community Colleges' student body.

Figure 15. California Community Colleges, student population by race/ethnicity, 2018-2019



National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (2021), 12-month enrollment component (2018-2019), Table: EFFY2019

*Annual enrollment counts derived from IPEDS may contain minor differences from enrollment counts derived from data sources maintained by systems.



The vast majority of California's 1.4 million Latinx college students enroll in a community college. Overall, 72 percent of Latinx undergraduates are community college students, as shown in Figure 12, compared to around 66 percent of California's white college students. Two-thirds of Latinx freshmen begin their higher education journey on a community college campus, compared to 57 percent of white freshmen in the state, as shown in Figure 13.

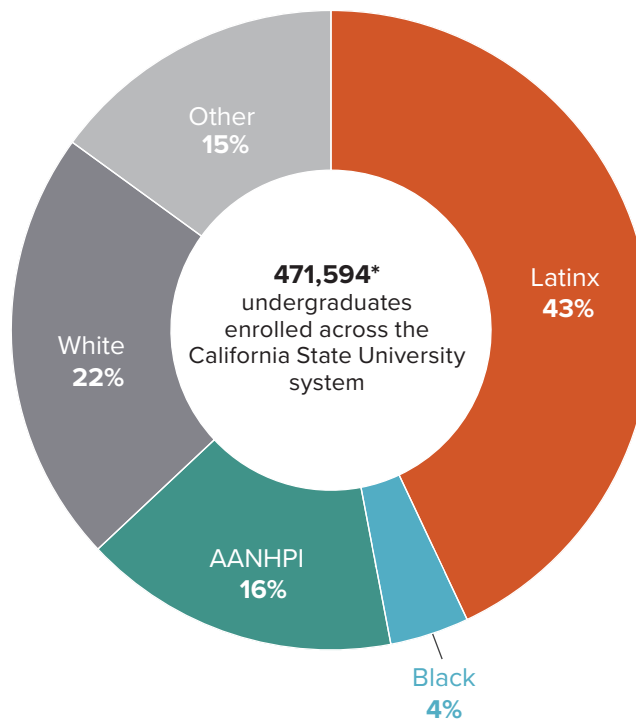


Access: California State University

Today, for the first time ever, the Latinx freshmen enrollment in the CSU is reflective of the Latinx high school graduate population. In fall 2020, the CSU enrolled 198,636 Latinx students, or 41 percent of the total 432,264 undergraduates across 23 campuses.¹⁶

Recent CSU students have helped create a CSU that is more reflective of California's diversity.

Figure 16. California State University, undergraduate population by race/ethnicity, 2018-2019



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (2021), 12-month enrollment component (2018-2019), Table: EFFY2019

*Annual enrollment counts derived from IPEDS may contain minor differences from enrollment counts derived from data sources maintained by systems.

California State University Policy Progress: Improving Latinx Student Success

Executive Order 1110

In 2017, then-CSU Chancellor Timothy White signed Executive Order 1110, eliminating the CSU's use of placement exams and phasing out remedial coursework. This reform has the potential to help large numbers of Latinx students: In fall 2017, 40 percent of Latinx first-time freshmen were placed into remedial coursework, compared to a CSU-wide average of 30 percent.¹⁷

Initial evidence presented by the Chancellor's Office to the CSU Board of Trustees showed promising signs. Among students identified as needing additional support in college-level math, just five percent were able to pass a lower-division math course in fall 2017. That number jumped to 46 percent after implementation of the reform.¹⁸ By fall 2019, this had increased to 59 percent. Recent data from the Chancellor's Office shows that Latinx students are identified as needing support at relatively high rates—32 percent of Latinx freshmen were identified as requiring additional concurrent academic support or the CSU Early Start program—a summer program to help students develop their college-readiness—in math, and 11 percent required the same in English. Among white students, 13 percent of students were identified as needing additional support in math and four percent in English.

Latinx students who were identified as requiring additional support completed their initial math and English requirements at rates nearing, though below, their white peers. In fall 2019, 58 percent of Latinx students who were identified as needing additional support in math ended up completing their math requirement, compared to 64 percent of white freshmen. In English, 64 percent of Latinx students identified as requiring additional support completed their first-year requirement, compared to 74 percent of similarly identified white freshmen.¹⁹

California State University Policy Setback: Limiting Latinx Student Access *Quantitative Reasoning*

Though Executive Order 1110 increased access to college-level coursework for thousands of students, in 2019, the CSU Chancellor's Office proposed changing admission requirements for incoming freshmen applicants by adding an additional quantitative reasoning course requirement on top of the existing A-G course requirements. Courses satisfying the requirement would include math and science, as well as an undefined set of elective courses that could include a computer science or quantitative reasoning component.

This proposal, which is still under consideration by the CSU Board of Trustees, would have a disparate impact on Latinx high school students aspiring to a CSU education. As noted previously, less than half of Latinx high school graduates in California are currently supported by their high schools to meet the existing A-G course requirements. If this requirement is adopted, Latinx students' eligibility for admission to the CSU would fall even further, from 32 percent to 26 percent.²⁰ Latinx students more often attend high schools with fewer rigorous math and science courses, have limited access to high-quality science labs, and enjoy fewer extracurricular opportunities for enrichment in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).²¹ In addition, the CSU has not made a compelling case, or provided evidence, that this additional course requirement would truly support student success, rather than simply serve as a tool to filter out students who could be successful at the CSU if provided with the appropriate support. Further, the system has failed to work closely with K-12 and high schools, in particular, on this major change. Until these issues are addressed, additional course requirements will leave fewer Latinx Californians with access to the CSU and exacerbate the racial inequalities that exist in higher education.

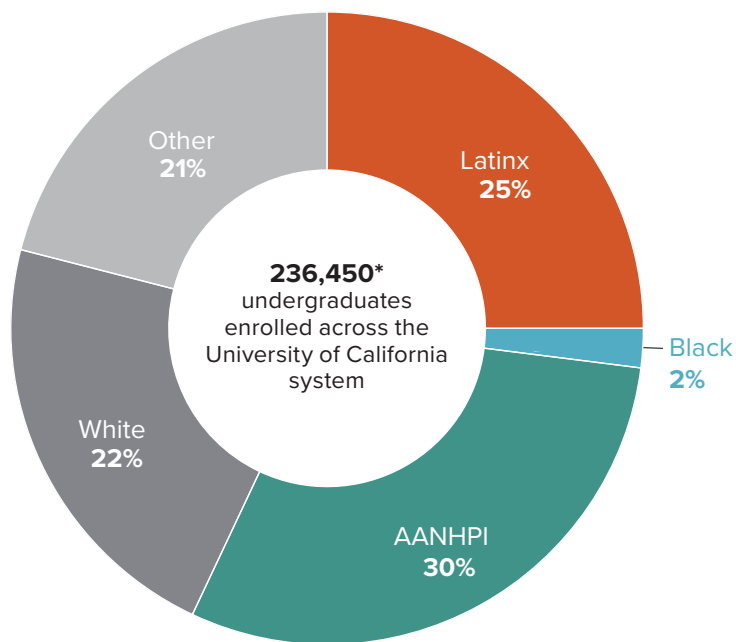


Access: University Of California

The UC is a world-renowned research university, counting 70 winners of the Nobel Prizes among its faculty throughout history.²² There are 10 UC campuses, of which nine enroll undergraduate students. Of the roughly 226,121 undergraduate students enrolled in fall 2020, only 25 percent (56,667) were Latinx.²³ Unfortunately, Latinx Californians continue to be significantly underrepresented in UC enrollment.

Only one in four UC students is Latinx.

Figure 17. University of California, undergraduate population by race/ethnicity, 2018-2019

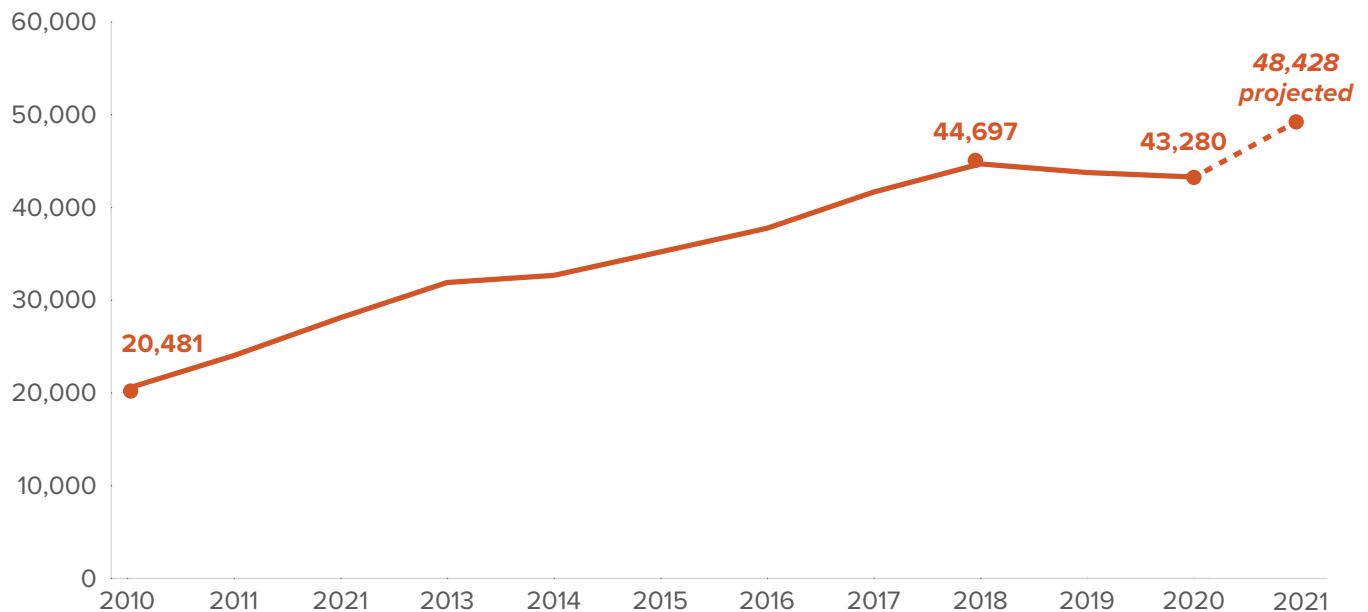


Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) (2021), 12-month enrollment component (2018-2019), Table: EFFY2019

*Annual enrollment counts derived from IPEDS may contain minor differences from enrollment counts derived from data sources maintained by systems.

The number of Latinx students applying to the UC has been rising over the past decade.

Figure 18. Latinx California resident applicants to the UC



Note: 2021 data are preliminary and are subject to modification before their final release.

Sources: University of California. (2021). California freshmen applications by campus and race/ethnicity (Table 2.1); University of California Information Center (2021). Undergraduate admissions summary [Data Dashboard].

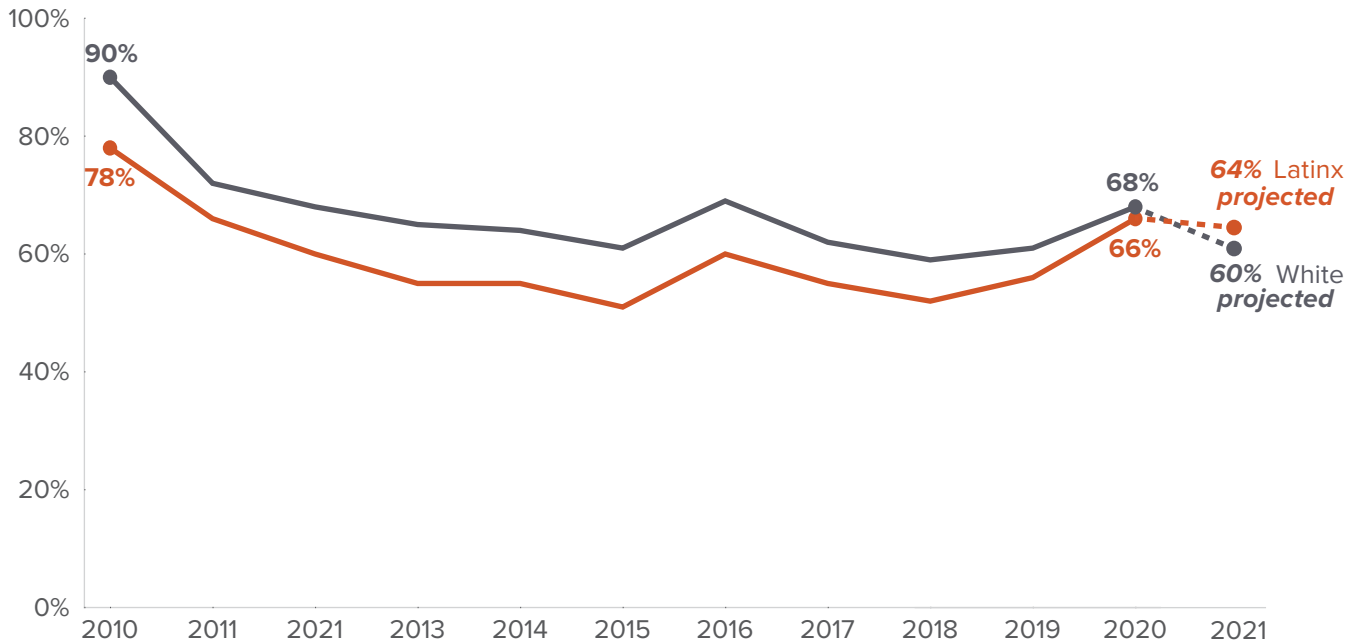
In May 2020, the UC Board of Regents made a historic and unanimous decision to eliminate the use of the SAT and ACT for eligibility and admissions until 2024, with the intent of creating an alternative UC-specific entrance exam for fall 2025 admission.²⁴ In January 2021, the Feasibility Study Steering Committee (FSSC) determined that creating a UC-specific entrance exam by 2025 would not be viable and instead recommended that the UC **not** require any standardized entrance requirement for undergraduates starting in fall 2025 or consider the possibility of incorporating an already existing test in admissions, such as the Smarter Balanced (SB) assessment.²⁵ Despite standardized tests' claims of objectivity, performance on them is strongly related to students' racial and ethnic backgrounds, the demographic characteristics of their high schools, and students' familial wealth.²⁶ Latinx students are more likely to attend low-resourced schools with fewer test preparation opportunities.²⁷

Preliminary data for fall 2021 indicates the UC had a 13 percent increase in the number of applications received from all racial/ethnic groups over fall 2020. A total of 48,428 Latinx students from California applied to the UC in 2021, an increase of 12.2 percent over 2020. Campuses that saw the largest increase in Latinx applications were UC Berkeley (24 percent) and UCLA (23 percent).²⁸

While admission rates at the UC declined sharply for applicants from California over the last decade, admission rates have risen over the past few years, with Latinx Californians now earning admission to the UC at higher rates than their white peers, according to preliminary data for 2021 applicants.

Among California residents applying to the UC, admission rates for Latinx applicants exceeded those of white applicants for the first time in 2021.

Figure 19. UC admission rates for Latinx and white California resident applicants



Note: 2021 data are preliminary and are subject to modification before their final release.

Sources: University of California. (2021). California freshmen admissions by campus and race/ethnicity (Table 2.1); University of California Information Center. (2021). Undergraduate admissions summary [Data Dashboard].

Additionally, preliminary admission data for fall 2021 indicate an eight percent increase in Latinx admission across the UC from fall 2020, with UC Irvine (23 percent) and UC San Diego (19 percent) seeing the largest increase in Latinx admission.²⁹ As we wait for enrollment data to understand the impact of this policy change for Latinx enrollment, the increase in applications and admissions shows signs of progress and is certainly cause for celebration. Still, more must still be done to ensure reflective representation of Latinx Californians in the UC.

“Latines only make up 25 percent of the UC student body despite 5 of the 9 UC campuses being HSIs. The UC and the state and federal government must take more action and invest in the enrollment and persistence of Latine students. . .”

Esmeralda Quintero-Cubillan
President, University of California, Student Association

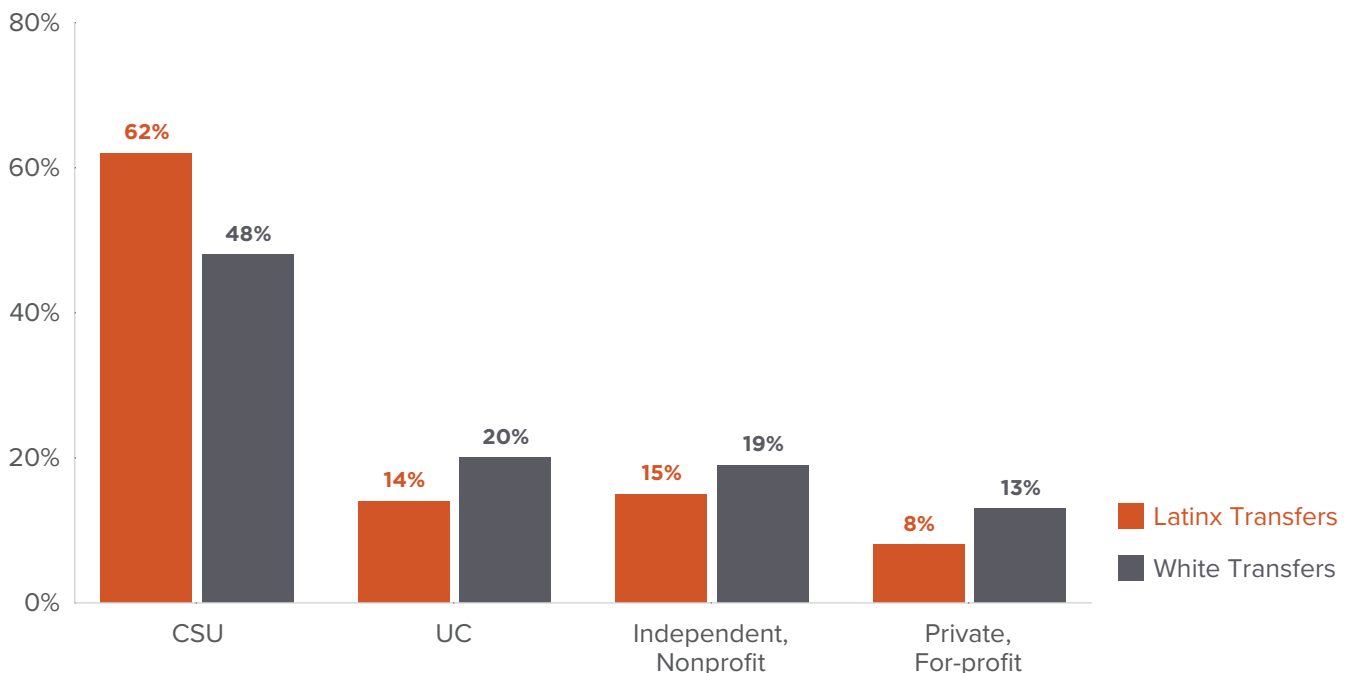
Transfer Access: Community College to Four-Year Transfer Students

California's Master Plan for Higher Education envisions a robust pathway from the state's community college system to the state's four-year institutions. Unfortunately, transfer from community colleges is not seamless. While the majority of Latinx students begin their higher education experience at one of California's 116 community colleges, only two percent transfer within two years. This number only increases to 16 percent after four years and to 32 percent after six years of enrollment. A primary reason that Latinx Californians have lower rates of attaining a bachelor's degree is a direct result of a broken transfer process.

For Latinx students who do make it from a community college to a university, as shown below, the CSU is the predominant recipient of Latinx transfer students, which enrolled almost two-thirds (62 percent) of all first-time Latinx transfer students in fall 2018. The UC, by contrast, enrolled one in five white transfer students (20 percent), compared to 14 percent of Latinx transfer students.

The CSU enrolls over 60 percent of Latinx transfer students. The UC enrolls 20 percent of white transfer students, but only 14 percent of Latinx transfer students.

Figure 20. First-time transfer students, Latinx and white students, by system of enrollment



Sources: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (2021), fall enrollment component (2018), Table EF2018A

Both the independent nonprofit sector and the private for-profit sector enroll a higher share of white transfer students than Latinx transfer students.

Access: Hispanic-Serving Institutions in California

A nonprofit college or university, public or independent, is designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) if its Latinx full-time enrollment reaches or exceeds 25 percent of its undergraduate population.³⁰ The designation allows these institutions access to federal funds intended to promote Latinx higher education equity. The three discretionary funds are aimed at 1) the development of programming and campus infrastructure to increase Latinx retention and graduation, 2) expanding access to STEM disciplines for Latinx students, including STEM transfer pathways, and 3) promoting postbaccalaureate opportunities for Latinx and low-income students.

Most of California’s public colleges and universities qualify as HSIs under this designation, but only five of the nine undergraduate-enrolling UC campuses meet this threshold. The UC campuses in Berkeley, Davis, Los Angeles, and San Diego do not. Among the CSUs, only Cal Poly San Luis Obispo (SLO) and the Maritime Academy fall short of enrolling enough Latinx students to be considered HSIs. All six of these universities meet the designation of an *emerging HSI* (eHSI), meaning at least 15 percent of their undergraduate populations are Latinx.

Table 1. Hispanic-Serving Institutions and Emerging Hispanic-Serving Institutions in California

	HSIs	eHSIs	HSIs and eHSIs	Total Institutions
California Community Colleges	106 (93%)	8 (7%)	114 (100%)	114*
California State University	21 (91%)	2 (9%) Cal Poly SLO, Maritime	23 (100%)	23
University of California	5 (56%)	4 (44%) Berkeley, Davis, UCLA, UCSD	9 (100%)	9
Independent Nonprofits	43 (39%)	32 (29%)	75 (68%)	111
Total Across All Sectors	175 (68%)	46 (18%)	221 (86%)	257

Sources: Excelencia in Education. (2021). *Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs): 2019 -20*. Washington, D.C.: Author; Excelencia in Education. (2021). *Emerging Hispanic-Serving Institutions (eHSIs): 2019 -20*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

*Analyses do not include California’s recently created online college, CalBright, or the newly created Madera College.

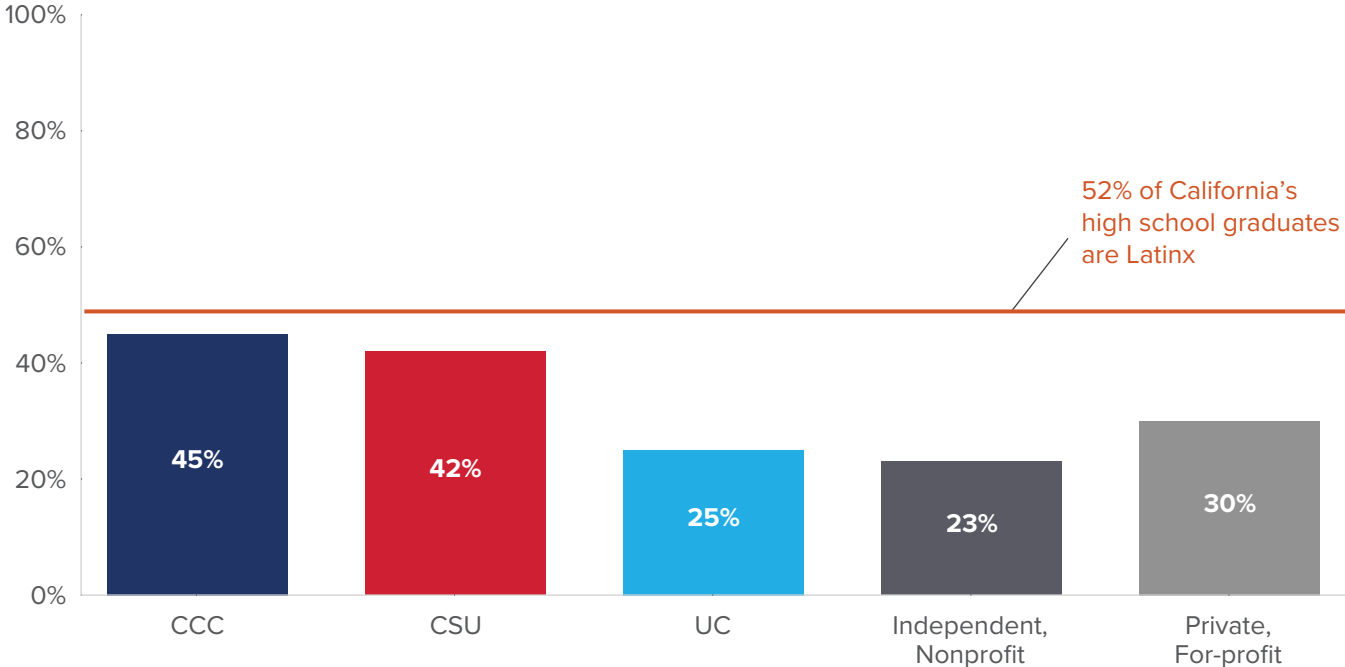
In a state where Latinx residents are the largest ethnic group, and where 48 percent of 18-to-24-year-old residents are Latinx, an undergraduate population that contains at least 25 percent Latinx students at every campus should be the norm. This is particularly true for institutions in Southern California. Although 48.6 percent of Los Angeles County is Latinx,³¹ only 22 percent of UCLA’s student body is Latinx.³² At UC San Diego, the campus population is 22 percent Latinx³³, compared to 34.1 percent of San Diego County residents.³⁴

Unfortunately, Latinx students are underrepresented across all sectors of higher education in California. While 48 percent of the state’s 18-to-24-year-old population is Latinx, 42 percent of the CSU population is Latinx. In 2019-2020, for the first time ever, the CSU freshman class reflected the diversity of California’s high school graduates. While we must ensure that our high school graduates, and A-G graduates, better reflect our state’s diversity, the diversity of more recent CSU freshmen classes is encouraging.

In the UC system, just 25 percent of UC students are Latinx. Independent nonprofit institutions must also do more to enroll Latinx students among their undergraduate populations.

Latinx students are underrepresented across all sectors of higher education in California.

Figure 21. Latinx share of enrollment by sector, 2018-19



Sources: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (2021), 12-month Enrollment Component (2018-2019), Table: EFFY2019; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates, 2015-2019, Public Use Microdata Sample



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“I know there are a lot of issues revolving around men in higher education, however, sometimes those issues would stigmatize who I was and blurred the reality of who I could be.”

My name is Hedrick K. Flores Del Cid, and I grew up in Lynwood, CA as the youngest of three children in a Guatemalan immigrant family. I am a first-generation college student and the only member of my family born in the United States. I attended California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) for undergrad where I majored in Human Services, specializing in Mental Health Recovery.

I can honestly say that during my first year at CSUDH, I was lost. I was unsure about my goals and aspirations and felt out of place in college. Latino men are underrepresented in higher education, and I often felt alone and unable to connect with other male peers because of the inconsistency I would see in the classrooms. Being Latino in the U.S. often has us choose between the importance of education or work. I had to balance both, yet despite all these challenges, I still had to do more to prove myself. I know there are a lot of issues revolving around men in higher education, however, sometimes those issues would stigmatize who I was and blurred the reality of who I could be. At one point, I did consider dropping out because of how lost I felt, but it was my peers and faculty who really made the experience worthwhile and memorable.

One class, First-Year Seminar UNV101, is the main reason why I fell in love with higher education. The class pushed me to get out of my comfort zone, reach out to my campus department, and establish a connection with the school. It was because of this class that I pushed myself to apply for a peer mentor program on campus where I worked for three and a half years and grew personally and professionally. It was beneficial that I worked on campus too because I felt that I had more exposure and insight into what was happening on campus daily.

I succeeded at CSUDH because of my support system on and off-campus. I had my family I could rely on, friends that I met at work and in my classes, professors, department advisors, department chairs, and academic advisors that I knew were there for me, and colleagues at work that were invested in my professional growth.

I completed my bachelor’s degree from CSUDH in 2019, and I am currently a master’s student at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), where I study higher education. I am invested in serving CSU students and currently work as an advisor at the office of the Center for Scholars at CSUF.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

I sometimes felt invisible and there was culture shock since it was my first time away from home.

My name is Lizbeth Anahi Ibarra, and I grew up in South Central Los Angeles, CA. I am Mexican American and a first-generation college student. I attended the University of California, San Diego where I studied Sociology with a specialization in social inequalities.

Attending college was such a big deal for me since I was the first in my family to attend, graduate, and further my education. Graduating and getting my bachelors is also a big personal accomplishment for me, especially because prior to college I was a homeless high school student. Having a UC education means it's a gateway out of poverty for my family, it means stability for my future, and it means opportunities that I didn't have before higher education.

Attending UCSD as a first-generation Latina student had its challenges. It often felt like there wasn't enough individualized support on such a large campus, and I experienced a sense of isolation from the lack of diversity in students, staff, and faculty. I sometimes felt invisible and there was culture shock since it was my first time away from home.

Through my UC experience, especially as a Latina, I quickly learned that it was important for me to figure out how to navigate a system and find support from people who understood me. I also learned that navigation looks different for everyone. I appreciated the number of resources and opportunities available within a large UC institution. I found people at UCSD I could relate to, who reminded me of home and made me feel safe. These spaces on campus included the Office of Academic Support and Student Services (OASIS) and The Hub for basic needs like housing and food security. The support I found there understood my identities and that there were certain struggles I would experience to succeed in higher education, but that didn't mean I was not capable, just because I didn't come with certain resources. This understanding and affirmation of my identities and my potential made the biggest difference for me and my experience.

Having graduated from a UC means that I can be a resource and asset to my community. I am currently working as an elementary school teacher in Watts, and I teach third grade- fifth grade. I'm so grateful to be able to come back to use my education and training to support and invest in my community.



COLLEGE SUCCESS

Although many colleges and universities in California are enrolling significant numbers of Latinx students, institutions must go beyond enrolling Latinx students toward supporting students to earn their bachelor's degrees, whether they initially enroll in a California community college or go directly to a UC or CSU.

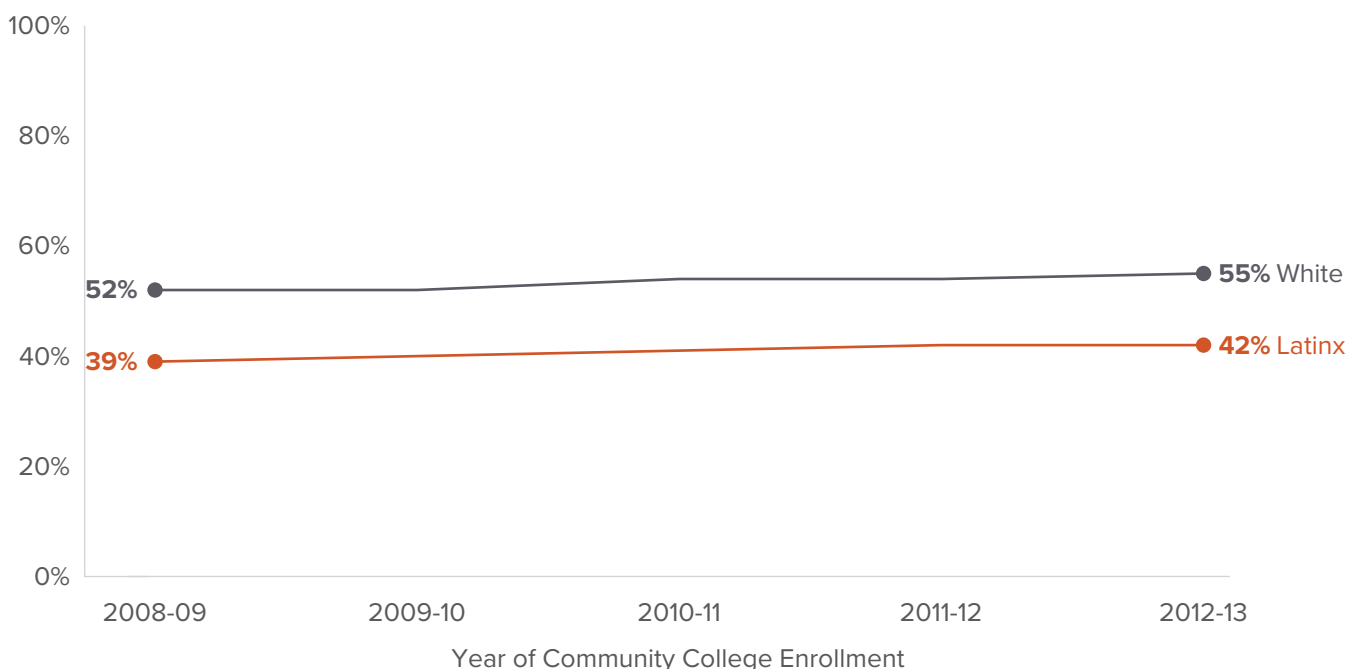
Both the UC and the CSU have increased graduation rates for incoming freshmen and entering transfer students, but still too many Latinx students do not receive the support they need to finish their degrees in a timely way or to transfer from a community college to a university. More recent data from the California Community Colleges indicates improvements among recent students entering college, but still too few Latinx students are graduating and transferring.

College Success: California Community Colleges

There is no system of public higher education more important to Latinx Californians than California's community colleges. As noted earlier, almost three out of every four Latinx undergraduates in California (72 percent, or 1,002,127 students) are enrolled at a California community college campus. The community colleges are the destination for 66 percent of first-time Latinx freshmen who go on to higher education. To fulfill their critical role as gateways to a college degree, community colleges must support Latinx students to complete their degrees and/or transfer to a university. Unfortunately, only 42 percent of Latinx community college students who enrolled in 2012-13 earned a certificate or degree, or transferred, even after six years. This constitutes a small improvement over the 39 percent of students who enrolled four years prior, but even with this modest improvement, the gap between Latinx students and their white peers has remained consistent, at 13 percent.

Only 42 percent of Latinx students who took 12 credits and attempted transfer-level English and math complete an associate degree in six years.

Figure 22. California Community Colleges, six-year graduation rates for Latinx and white students

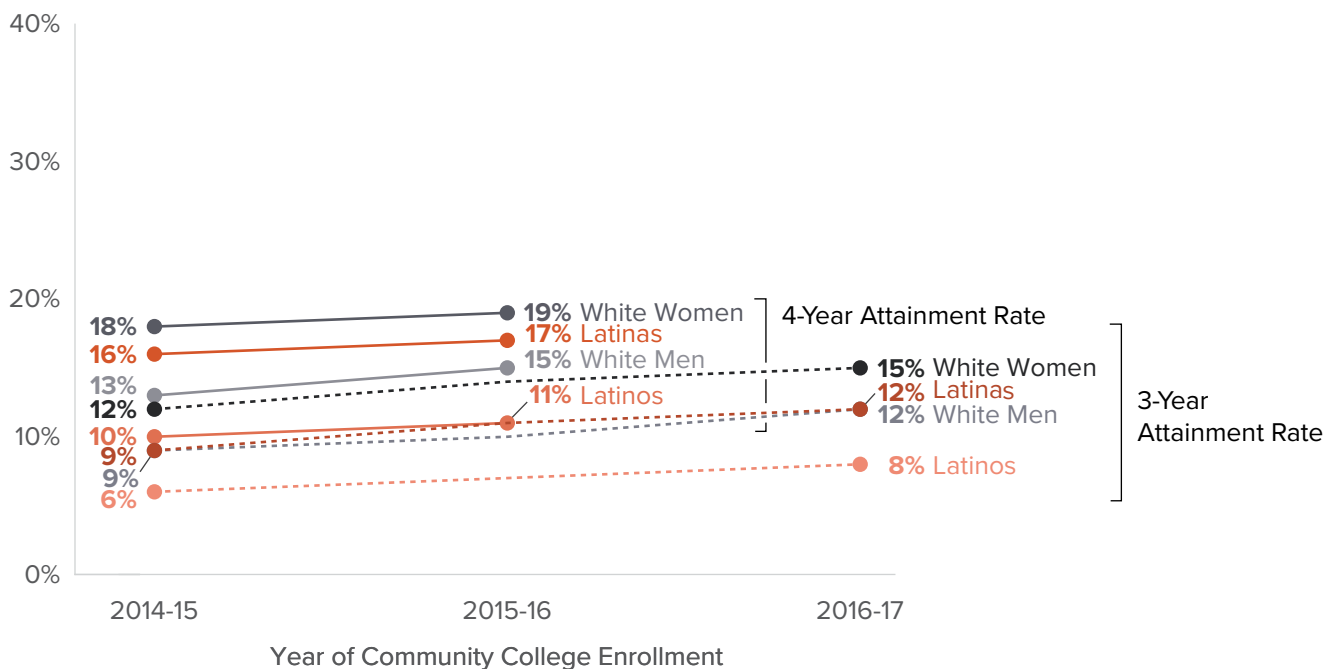


Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. (2019). Student Success Scorecard.

A drawback to the data underlying Figure 22, however, is that only students who completed at least 12 transferrable credits and attempted transfer-level English and math are included in the analysis. This excludes students who are placed in remedial courses and may never have had the opportunity to attempt transfer-level coursework, or who left community college before completing 12 units. Using data from a prototype dashboard that was recently created by the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, we can look at outcomes for all students who enrolled in more recent years. Figure 23 below shows three- and four-year completion rates for Latinx students and white students, broken down by gender. **Though the trend over the past few years is positive for all subgroups examined, fewer than one in 10 Latinos enrolling in 2014-2015 was able to graduate in three years.**

Latinx students are not supported to earn associate degrees and certificates at the same rates as their white peers at the California Community Colleges, and only one out of 10 (11 percent) of Latino students enrolling in 2015-16 graduated within four years.

Figure 23. California Community Colleges, three- and four-year cohort completion rates by race and gender

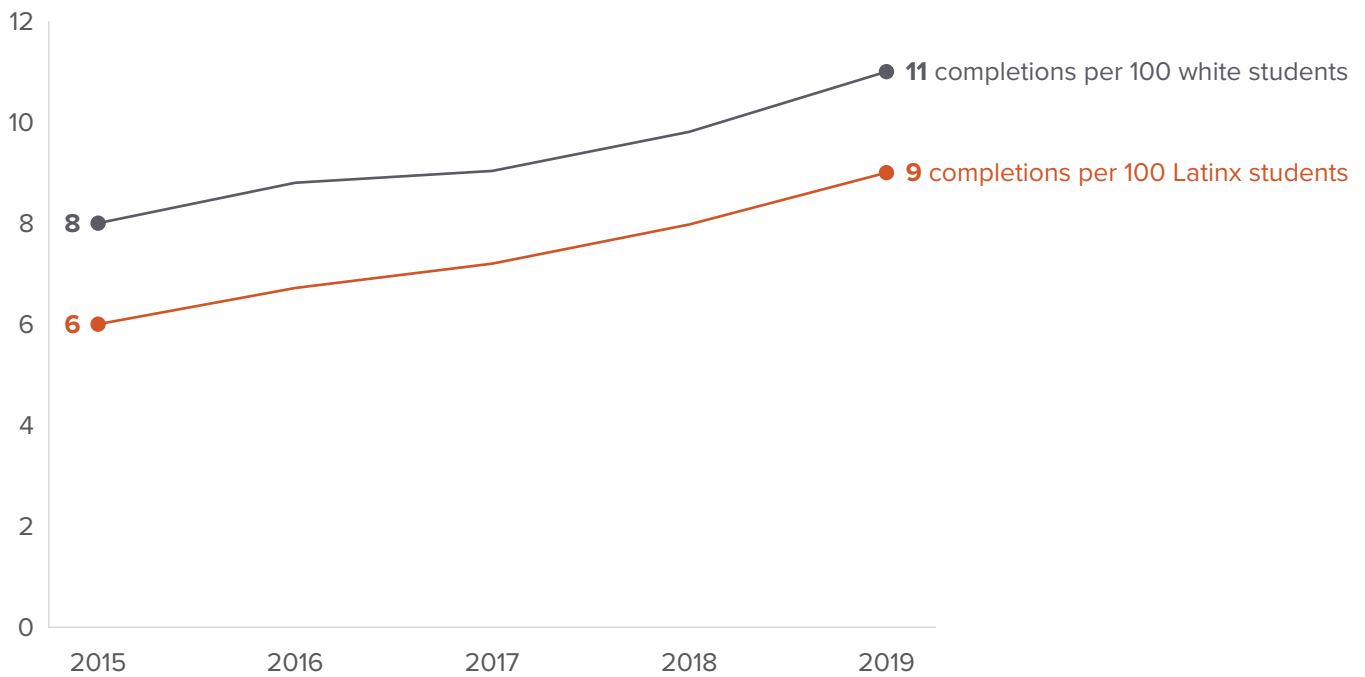


Source: Cal-PASS Plus. (2021). Student Success Metrics (all students—cohort view) [Data Dashboard]

On the bright side, Figure 23 shows that the California Community Colleges are awarding more degrees to Latinx students, and that this is not simply the product of enrolling more students, as the number of Latinx students earning an award per 100 students has steadily grown. **If the California Community Colleges system were able to support an additional two out of every 100 Latinx degree-seeking students to complete their degrees, it would see an additional 12,245 Latinx completions each year.**

The number of Latinx students earning a degree or certificate has grown in recent years, but equity gaps persist.

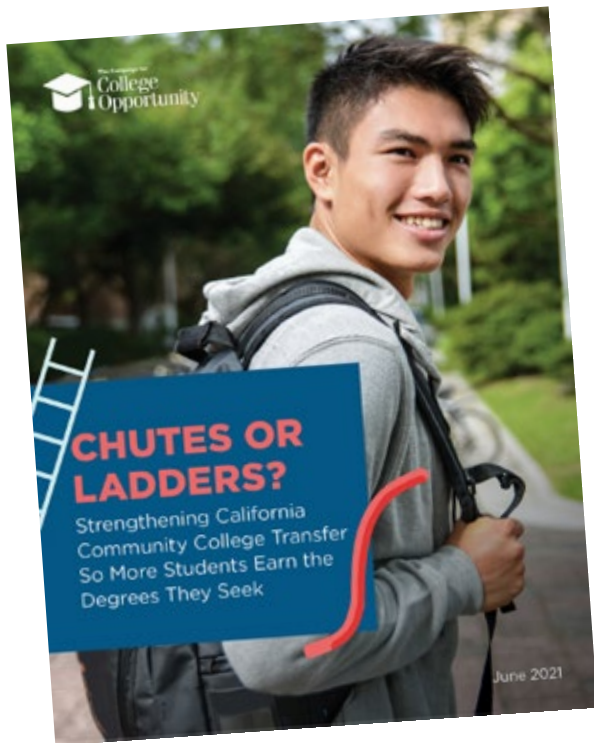
Figure 24. California Community Colleges, students achieving the *Vision for Success* definition of completion per 100 enrolled students of the same race/ethnicity



Source: Cal-PASS Plus. (2021). Student success metrics [Data Dashboard]

“California’s community colleges have always been the point of entry into higher education for Latinx ... we depend on community colleges to be the transfer pathway to Latinx BA attainment. This cannot be done without the support of faculty and I call on them to view themselves as responsible to transform every Latinx student in their classroom into a transfer success story.”

*Estela M. Bensimon, Ph.D.- University Professor Emerita
Founder, Center for Urban Education
Rossier School of Education, USC*

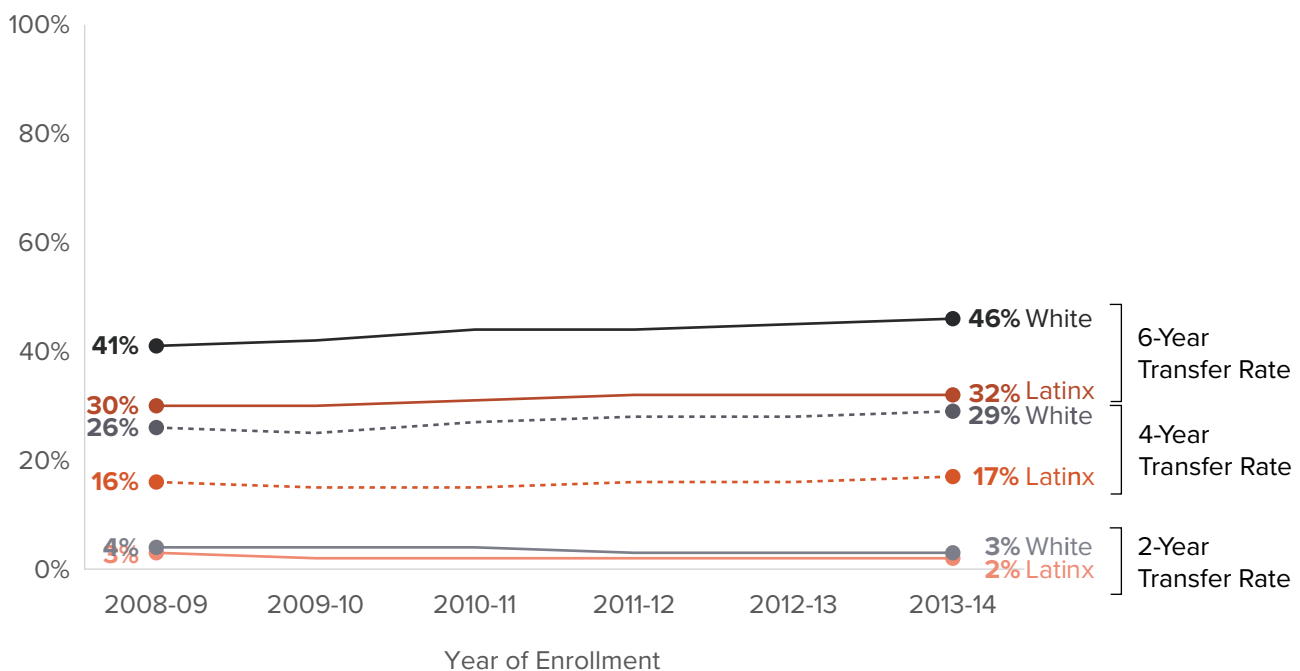


Transfer Path from Community College to University

An associate degree is valuable for students who earn it. The average associate degree-holder earns about \$14,000 more per year than someone with only a high school diploma. The rewards for bachelor’s degree-holders, however, are much larger—around \$40,000 more per year than someone with only a high school diploma. With more than six in 10 Latinx students beginning their college education at a community college, California must support a robust transfer pathway in order for more Latinx to earn a bachelor’s degree.

Less than one-third (32 percent) of Latinx students transferred to a four-year college or university within six years of enrolling in a community college.

Figure 25. California Community Colleges, two-, four-, and six-year transfer rates by year of initial enrollment

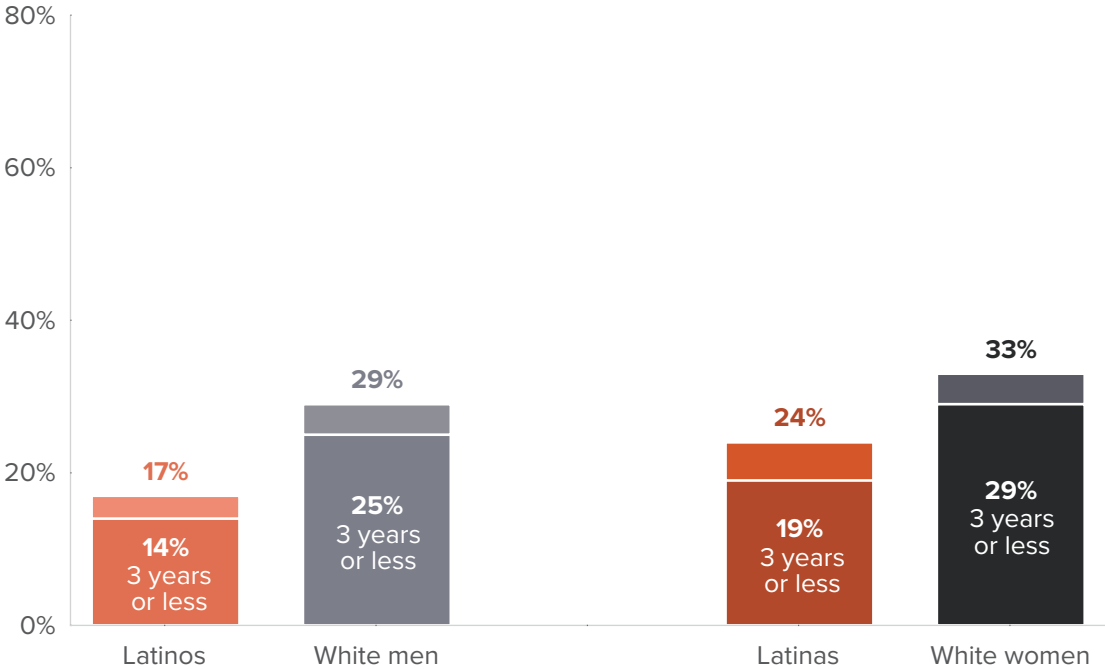


Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office. (2021). Management Information Systems Data Mart.

Unfortunately, too few Latinx students are supported to transfer: Only two percent transfer within two years of enrolling at a community college, 16 percent who enrolled in the 2012-13 academic year transferred within four years, and fewer than one-third (32 percent) had transferred after six years. The data also show a growing gap between transfer success for Latinx students compared to their white peers, from 11 percent in 2008-2009 to 13 percent for those entering community college in 2012-13. As with data on degree-completion, however, these analyses are limited to students who took at least 12 credits and attempted transfer-level English and math.

While more Latinas are transferring than Latinos, there is still a significant gap between success rates among Latinas and white women.

Figure 26. California Community Colleges, four-year transfer rates for Latinx and white students



Source: Cal-PASS Plus. (2021). Student success metrics (all students—cohort view) [Data Dashboard].

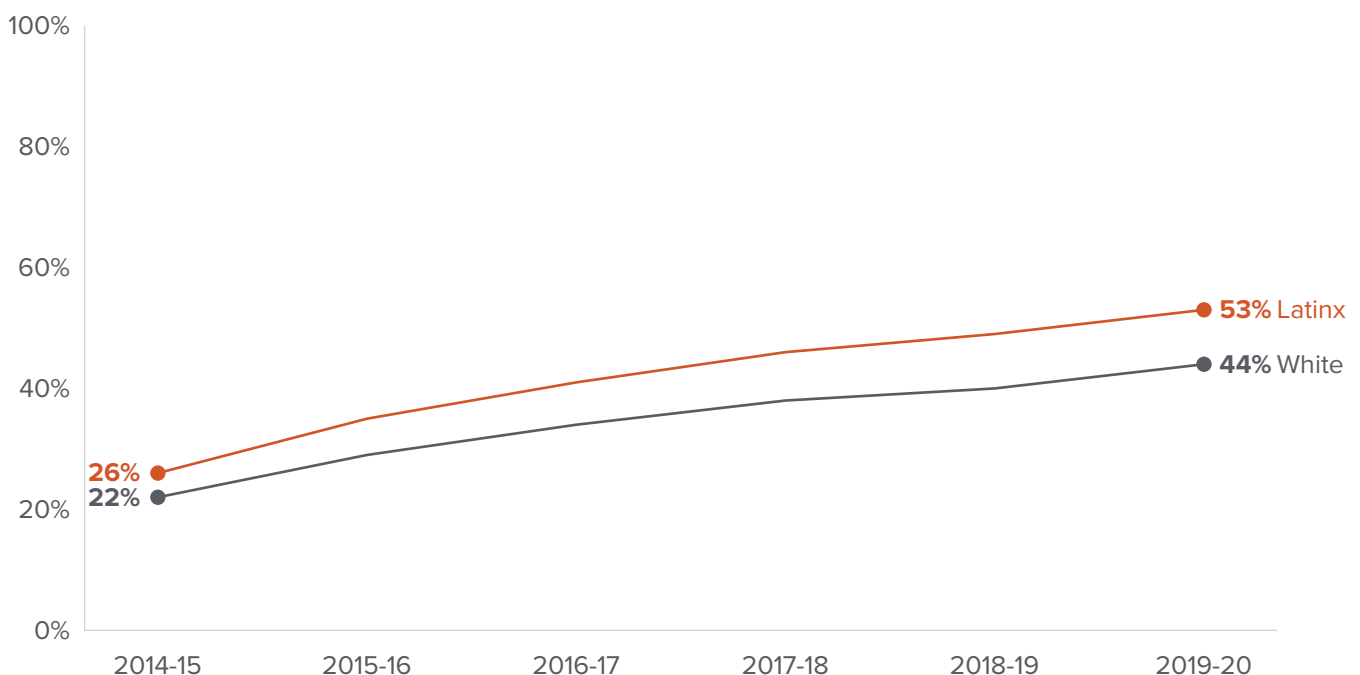
Associate Degree for Transfer

In 2010, California created the ADT to strengthen the transfer pathway and decrease time-to-degree. A student on an ADT pathway earns 60 units at the California Community Colleges, then transfers to a CSU with guaranteed admission and junior standing, where they earn their B.A. after 60 upper-division units. Importantly, the ADT also guarantees the student admission at a CSU campus, even when there is a capacity issue. During the aftermath of the Great Recession of 2007-2009, when state support for California's public colleges and universities was dramatically reduced and competition for seats was fierce, this guarantee ensured that ADT students were not turned away.

The ADT pathway is helping ensure that Latinx students are graduating from community college with fewer excess credits and completing their bachelor's degrees within two years of transferring to a CSU. As can be seen in Figure 27, the share of Latinx associate degree-earners who are earning ADTs has increased steadily over the past several years, from 26 percent in 2014-15 to 53 percent by 2019-20, when 30,327 Latinx students earned ADTs. **More than half of Latinx graduates earned an ADT—the highest share for any racial/ethnic subgroup.**

More than half of Latinx associate degree-earners are earning Associate Degrees for Transfer.

Figure 27. Students earning ADTs as a percentage of associate-degree-earners



Source: Cal-PASS Plus. (2021). Student success metrics [Data Dashboard].



Efforts to continue increasing Latinx ADT earners will help ensure that hundreds of thousands of additional students earn an associate degree and transfer with junior standing on their path to earning a bachelor's degree, while saving time and money.

Among Latinx transfer students enrolling at the CSU, however, only 28 percent did so on a guaranteed ADT pathway in fall 2020, while the system average among all students was 24 percent. Another 23 percent of Latinx transfer students enrolled with an ADT at a CSU campus, but not on their guaranteed academic path, indicating that they may need to earn more than 60 units at the CSU to earn a bachelor's degree. The remaining students transferred either with a terminal associate degree or no associate degree at all, meaning they also do not have the benefit of automatic junior standing—even if they have earned an associate of arts or an associate of science degree in their field.

In our report, [***Chutes or Ladders? Strengthening California Community College Transfer So More Students Earn the Degrees They Seek***](#), we find that the ADT is allowing students to graduate with fewer community college credits and less time spent at the CSU after transferring.³⁵ We note that even students who earn an ADT but do not enter the CSU on a guaranteed path are graduating in less time than their counterparts with a terminal associate degree.

The ADT does not have the same guarantees for transfer to a UC as it does for transfer to the CSU, though the UC has taken steps more recently to expand the ADT pathway to its nine undergraduate campuses.

The UC has worked to create 21 UC Transfer Pathways in popular majors, and six campuses participate in the Transfer Admissions Guarantee (TAG) and Pathways+ programs. These programs are also discussed in greater detail in our [***Chutes or Ladders?***](#) report. UC Berkeley, UCLA, and UC San Diego do not participate in the TAG program, however. California's leaders must do more to strengthen the transfer pathways for community college students into these campuses—two of them lie in heavily Latinx parts of the state.

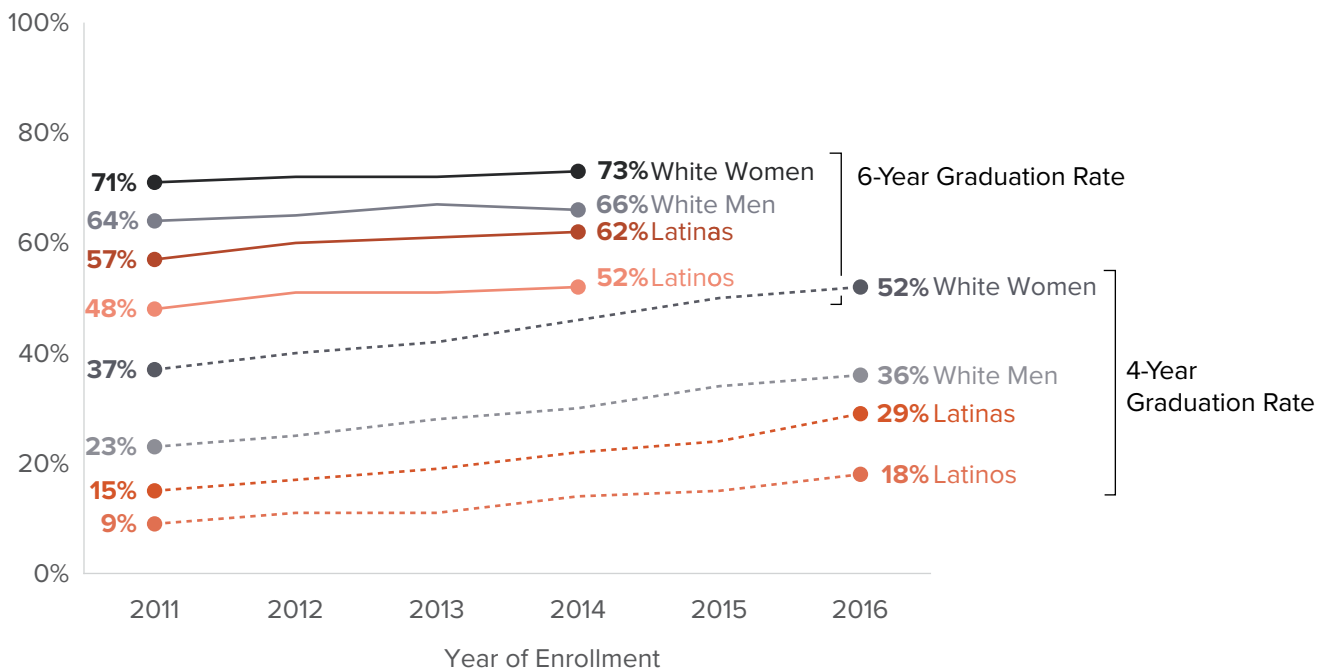


College Success: California State University

Graduation rates for Latinx students—both Latinos and Latinas—have increased over the past several years. The percentage of incoming freshmen graduating in four years roughly doubled for both Latinos and Latinas between 2011 and 2016. Still, only 18 percent of Latino freshmen graduated in four years or less—that’s less than one in five and 34 percentage points below the four-year graduation rates for white women enrolling in the CSU as full-time freshmen. **Latinas are better supported, but still only 29 percent finish in four years. This is compared to 36 percent of white men and 52 percent of white women graduating in the same time frame.**

At the CSU, only 62 percent of Latinas and only 52 percent of Latinos graduate in six years.

Figure 28. California State University, four- and six-year graduation rates for first-time, full-time freshmen

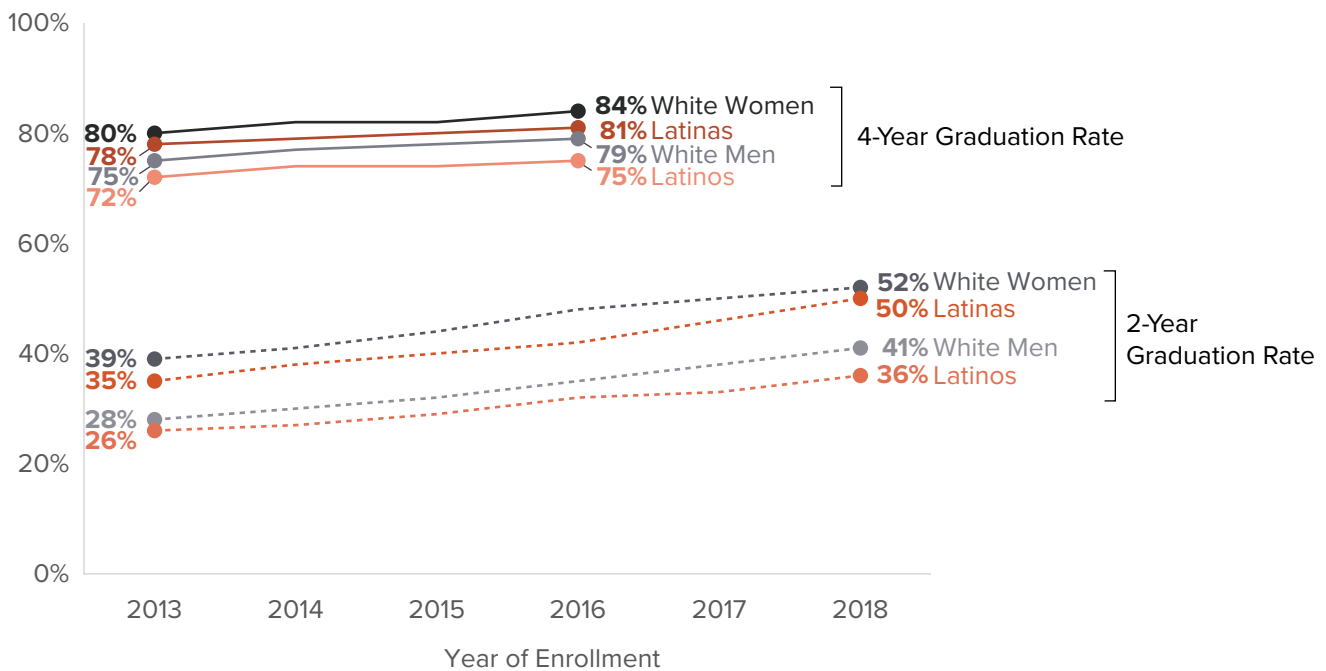


Source: California State University. (2021) Graduation and Continuation Rates [Data Dashboard].

In looking at outcomes for transfer students at the CSU, we see a much brighter picture, particularly among Latinas—half of whom earn their bachelor’s degrees within two years after transferring to the CSU. On both two- and four-year time frames, support for Latina transfer students is ensuring graduation rates that exceed the CSU average and nearly match those of white women.

Support for Latina transfer students ensures that they graduate at rates approaching those of white women transferring to the CSU. Latinos transferring to the CSU, however, are not as well supported to timely completion, with just over one in three (36 percent) graduating within two years of transferring.

Figure 29. California State University, two- and four-year graduation rates for transfer students

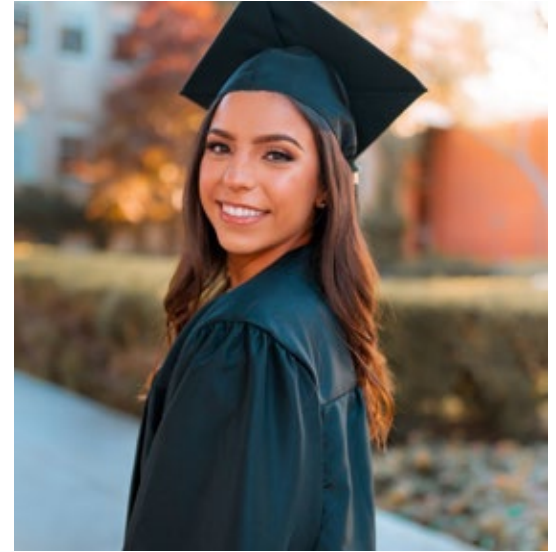


Source: California State University. (2021) Graduation and continuation rates [Data Dashboard].

Among Latino transfer students, two-year graduation rates rose by about 10 percentage points between students transferring in 2013 and those transferring in 2018, but these students fared well on a slightly longer time horizon, with 75 percent supported to earn a bachelor’s degree within four years of transferring.

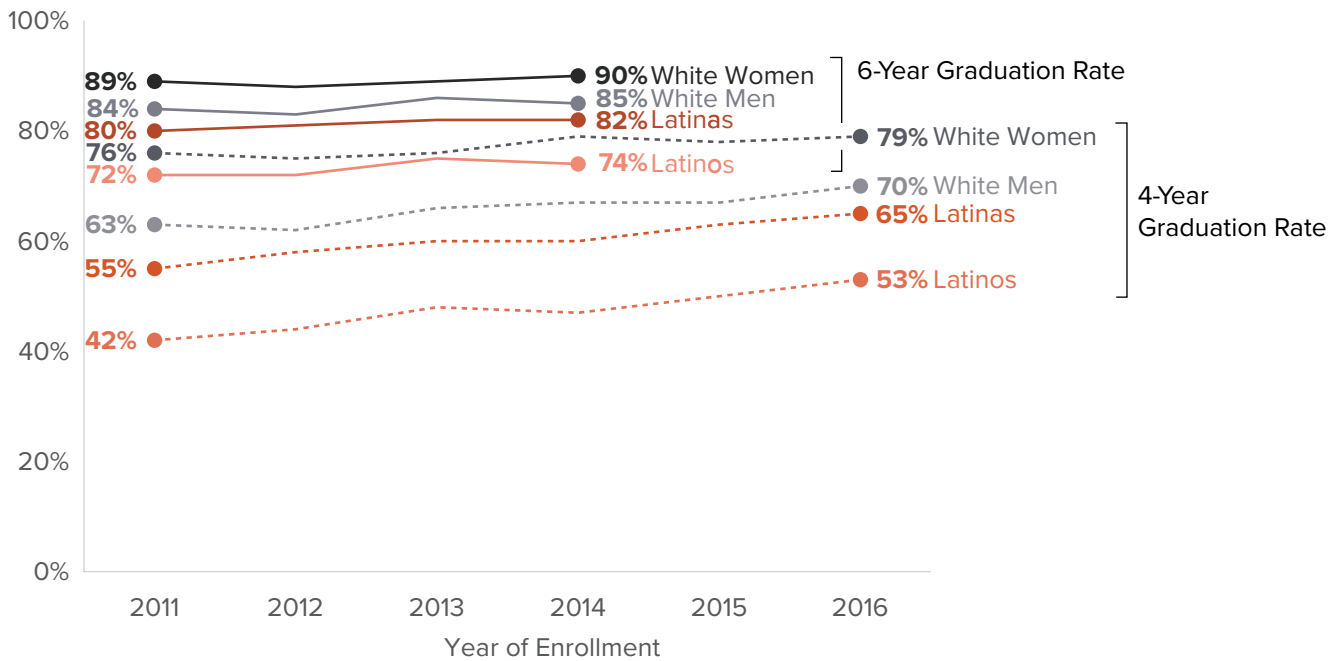
College Success: University Of California

Graduation rates at the UC are the highest of any system in the state, and the trends in Figure 30 indicate that the UC has improved support for Latinx students enrolling as freshmen. Among students who enrolled as full-time freshmen in fall 2016, more than half of Latinos (53 percent) and almost two-thirds of Latinas (65 percent) graduated in four years. These rates, however, lag those of their white peers—70 percent for white men and 79 percent for white women graduating within four years.



A growing percentage of UC Latinx freshmen are supported to earn their degrees in four years, but Latinos and Latinas are not as well-supported as their white peers.

Figure 30. University of California, four- and six-year graduation rates for first-time freshmen



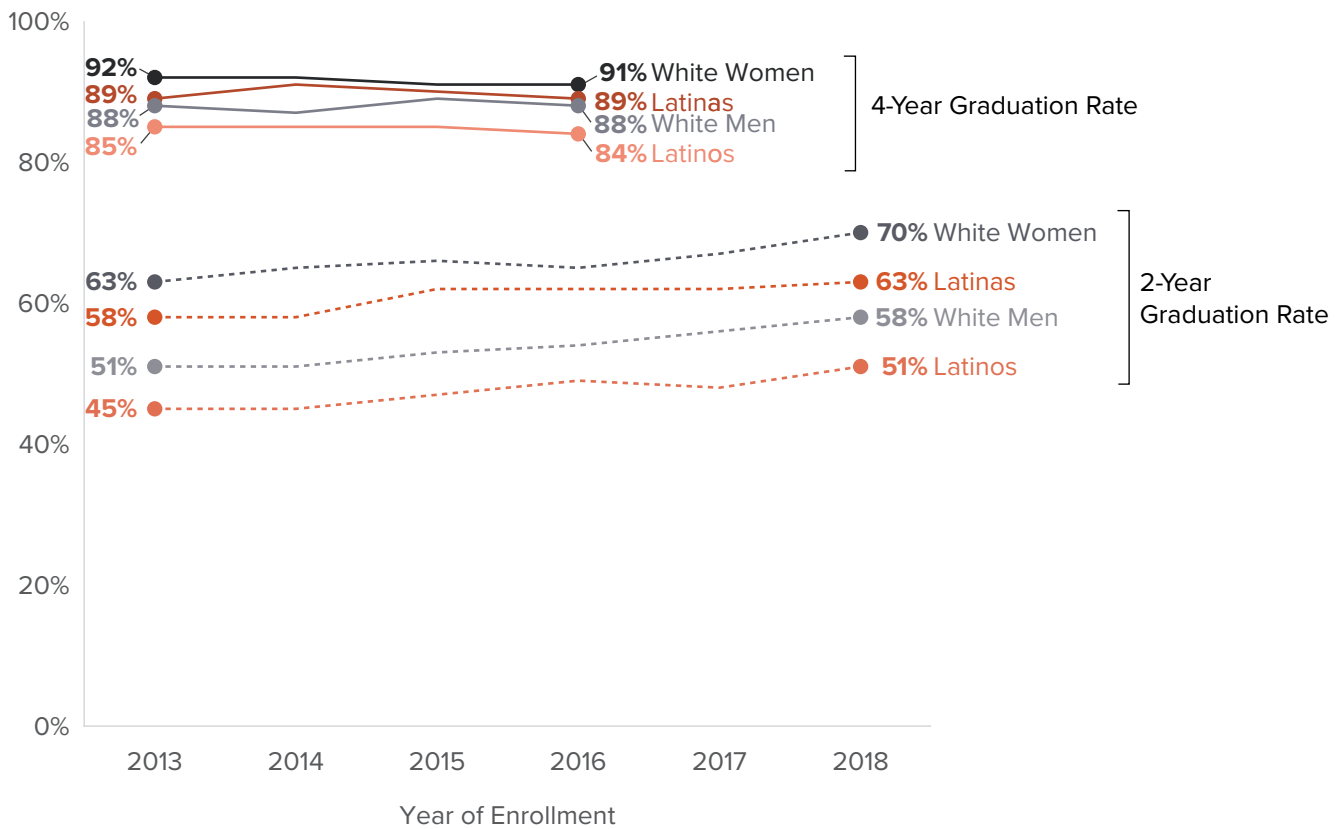
Source: University of California. (n.d.) Undergraduate graduation rates. [Data Dashboard].

By the six-year time horizon, the gap between Latinx students and their white peers is narrower, at 11 percentage points between Latinas and white men, and eight percentage points between Latinas and white women who enrolled in 2014.

In Figure 31, below, the good news is that Latina transfer students to the UC have two-year and four-year completion rates that exceed those of white men, and there are smaller gaps, overall, between Latinas and white women. While the gap between Latinos and white men at the UC is smaller, there does exist a significant 19 percentage point gap between Latino men and white women at the UC who complete two years after transferring.

Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of Latina transfer students and more than half of Latino (51 percent) transfer students are graduating within two years of enrolling in the UC. Gaps between Latinx students and their white peers close considerably on a four-year time horizon.

Figure 31. University of California, two- and four-year graduation rates for transfer students



Source: University of California. (n.d.) Undergraduate graduation rates. [Data Dashboard].

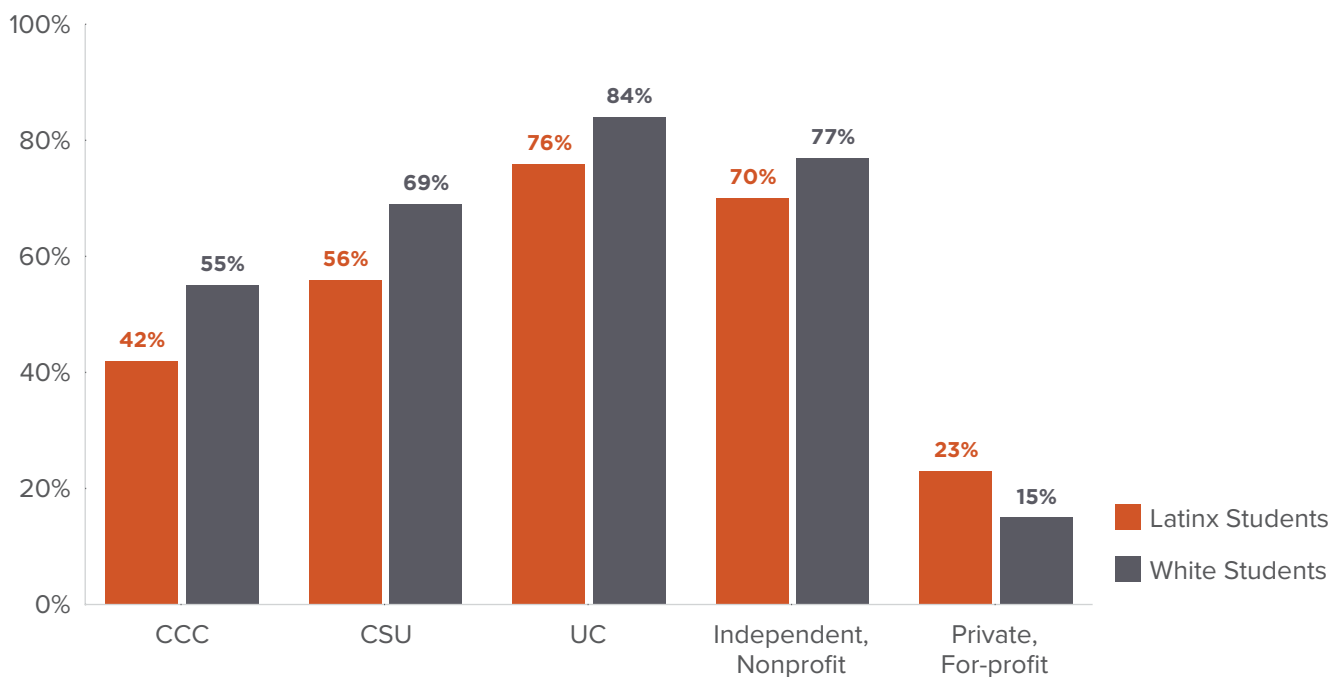
College Success: Private and Nonprofit Colleges and Universities

In Figure 32, we show six-year rates for graduation across systems in California. Latinx students enrolling in California’s nonprofit colleges and universities are generally earning degrees more quickly than their peers at the CSU, though the UC has the highest rates of supporting Latinx students to earn their degrees within six years. As noted in Figure 13, however, only 5 percent of Latinx freshmen are enrolling in independent, nonprofit colleges and universities, and this sector—with fewer HSIs and eHSIs than the public segments—must do more to ensure it reflects California’s diversity.

Graduation rates at the state’s private, for-profit institutions are substantially lower than those for any other sector. Though completion rates for Latinx students enrolling in private, for-profit institutions exceed those of their white peers, fewer than one in four is supported to graduate in six years.

Six-year completion rates are highest at the UC, while fewer than one in four (23 percent) Latinx students at private, for-profit colleges and universities are supported to earn an award within six years.

Figure 32 . Six-year completion rates by higher education sector for Latinx and white students



Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office. (2019). Student Success Scorecard; National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall component, 2018, Table: GR2018_RV.

Given these low completion rates and the generally low return on investment for a for-profit degree,³⁶ ensuring that the state’s public and independent nonprofit colleges and universities have the capacity to accommodate all students who are seeking a degree becomes even more critical.



CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED TO INCREASE LATINX STUDENT SUCCESS

High Poverty Rates

Inequities in social and educational circumstances emerge early on. According to the US Census, 24 percent of Latinx children are growing up in households with incomes that fall below the federal poverty threshold—just over \$26,000 for a family of four in 2020.³⁷ Furthermore, though Latinx Californians account for 39 percent of the state’s population, 45 percent of CalFresh food aid recipients are Latinx.³⁸

In the California’s public K-12 schools, 55 percent of students are Latinx, but Latinx students in California account for 71 percent of socioeconomically disadvantaged students, 73 percent of homeless students, and 82 percent of English language learners.³⁹



COVID-19 and California's Latinx Population

The COVID-19 global pandemic has taken a particularly brutal toll on California's Latinx population and appears to have affected college enrollment for Latinx students. According to data analyzed by the National Student Clearinghouse, Latinx undergraduate enrollment at public two-year colleges dropped by 11 percent from fall 2019 to fall 2020, with the decline driven by a 17 percent enrollment drop among Latino undergraduates nationwide. Enrollment fell by 6 percent among Latinas.⁴⁰

Latinx Californians account for over half (53.5 percent) of California's COVID-19 cases and just under 46 percent of COVID-19 deaths, and both percentages are larger than the Latinx share of the state population.⁴¹ By September 22, 2021, 1.9 million Latinx Californians had contracted COVID-19, with 30,655 dying from their illness. Latinx Californians are more likely to live in households with high exposure risk, given the likelihood that someone in the household has been deemed an essential worker, along with a higher occupant-to-room ratio than is seen in white households.⁴²

Latinx Californians account for just 30 percent of the state's vaccinated population—lower than their share of the vaccine-eligible population⁴³—with just over half (53 percent) of Latinx Californians fully vaccinated as of October 18, 2021.⁴⁴ In a recent survey of Latinx Californians, hesitancy around missing work—both to get vaccinated and to recover from potential side effects—and out-of-pocket costs were major factors listed by unvaccinated respondents.⁴⁵ Finding information about the vaccine and navigating language barriers also came up as hurdles to Latinx Californians' vaccination efforts.

In addition to the health shocks, Latinx residents in California experienced major economic shocks. Latinx workers generally are employed in sectors hardest hit by the most recent economic downturn, and consumer spending in areas with traditionally high Latinx employment—like entertainment, recreation, hotel, travel, and restaurants—has been much slower to recover than general consumer spending.⁴⁶



Enrollment Patterns: Community Colleges and Four-Year Universities

As noted above, two-thirds of Latinx students are beginning their college journeys at a community college. This has implications for degree attainment, as community colleges in California graduate a lower share of students than the CSU and the UC, and students often take a long time to complete what is traditionally called a two-year degree. Low completion rates are diverting many students from their bachelor's degree goals, and the lengthy time-to-degree experienced by community college students may well end up costing them more than they save by attending a community college.⁴⁷

Furthermore, neither the UC nor the CSU has sufficient capacity to enroll all the students who are eligible for admission. At the UC, students who are eligible, but who are not admitted to their preferred campus, are referred to other UC campuses where seats are available. This can force students to leave their geographic homes to enroll. Data demonstrates that very few students (0.5 percent, only 57) enroll at the referral campus.⁴⁸

The CSU has declared several campuses as impacted—meaning they have more eligible applicants than they can serve—across all programs, and almost all CSU campuses face constraints in one or more programs. Students applying to impacted programs or campuses face increased admission requirements when applying to their campus or programs of choice. The Campaign for College Opportunity will address this in our forthcoming report, [*Shut Out: The Need to Increase Access to the UC and the CSU*](#), to be published December 2021.

Given our discussion around college preparation, we anticipate that the issues around referral and impaction will impact Latinx students more severely than their white peers.



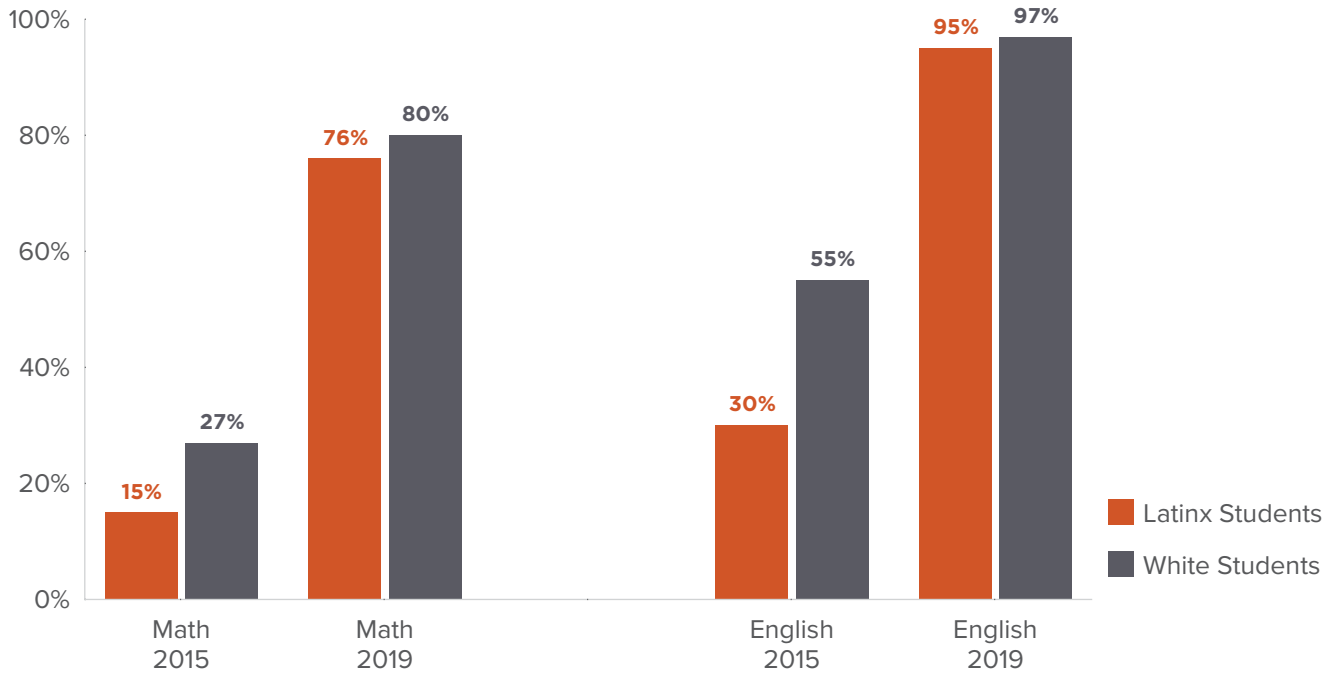
Placement and Remedial Education

The open access mission of the California Community Colleges has been a key driver of college enrollment for Latinx students. However, for far too long, enrolling in college did not mean Latinx students had access to college-level courses. High-stakes placement tests—which are less effective in predicting student success than high school grade point average—relegated the vast majority of Latinx students to remedial education courses. **In 2015, prior to recent reforms of placement practices, only 30 percent of Latinx freshmen attempted transfer-level English, and only 15 percent attempted transfer-level math in their first semester.**

In 2017, thanks to legislation passed in AB 705, sponsored by the Campaign for College Opportunity, California community college student placement practices have been dramatically overhauled. Today, colleges are required to use multiple measures of student readiness, are prohibited from using placement tests as the sole metric of student readiness, and are mandated to place students in the level of coursework that gives them the greatest chance of completing transfer-level coursework.⁴⁹ Figure 33 shows how substantially access to transfer-level courses has changed. The Public Policy Institute of California examined data on the number of students taking and passing transfer-level coursework with a C or better in their first term. After the reforms, **those percentages jumped from 15 percent to 76 percent in math and from 30 percent to 95 percent in English**, very nearly equaling the rate of access by white students enrolling in their first English or math courses.

Access to transfer-level coursework for Latinx students increased dramatically after placement reforms were fully implemented in California's community colleges. Nearly all (95 percent) of Latinx students enrolled in transfer-level English as their first English course, and 76 percent did so in math.

Figure 33. Access to transfer-level coursework, before and after placement reforms



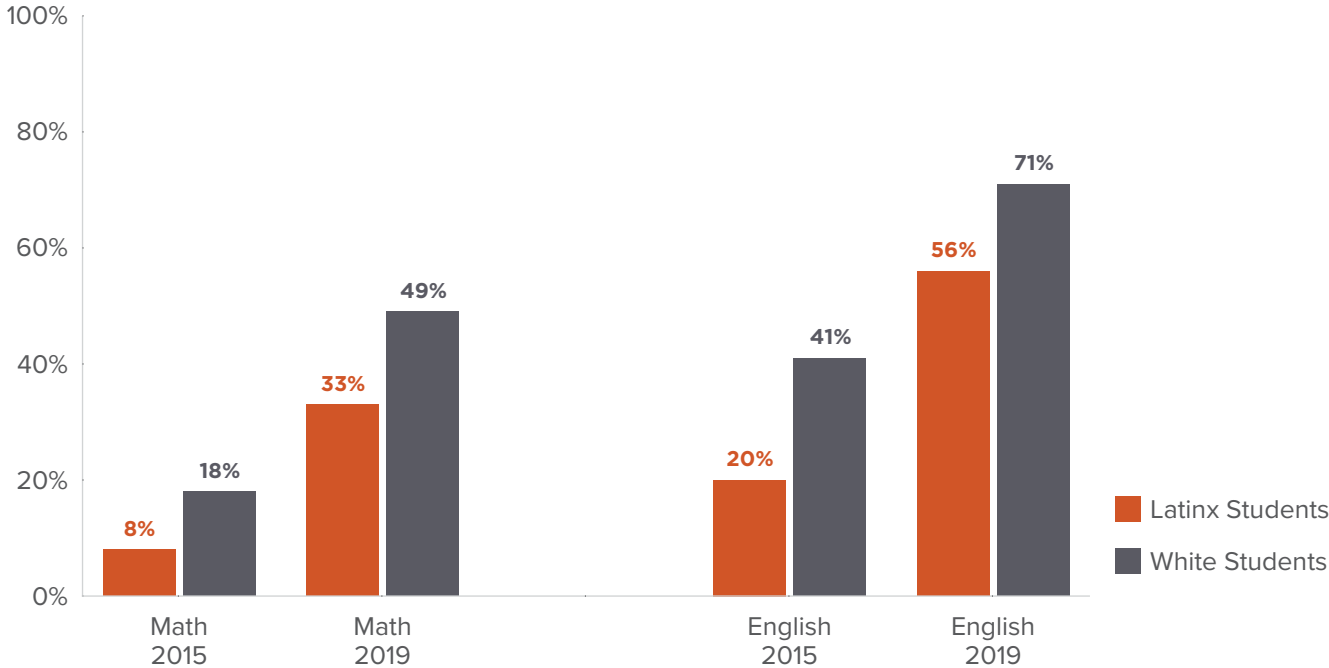
Source: Meija, M. C., Rodriguez, O., & Johnson, H., (2020) A New Era of Student Access at California's Community Colleges [Report]. San Francisco, CA: Public Policy Institute of California.



The importance of increasing access becomes clear when looking at the number of students who complete a transfer-level course in their first semester. Whereas only 20 percent of entering Latinx students passed a transfer-level English course in their first semester prior to the reforms, in fall 2019—the first semester for which the placement reforms were mandatory at all California community colleges—56 percent of Latinx students successfully completed a transfer-level English course in their first semester. In math, the percentage of Latinx students passing a transfer-level course in their first semester went from eight percent in 2015 to 33 percent, following the reforms’ implementation.

The percentage of Latinx students completing transfer-level math courses increased fourfold following community college placement reforms (AB 705) and almost threefold in English.

Figure 34. California Community Colleges, percentage of first-time students completing transfer-level coursework in first semester

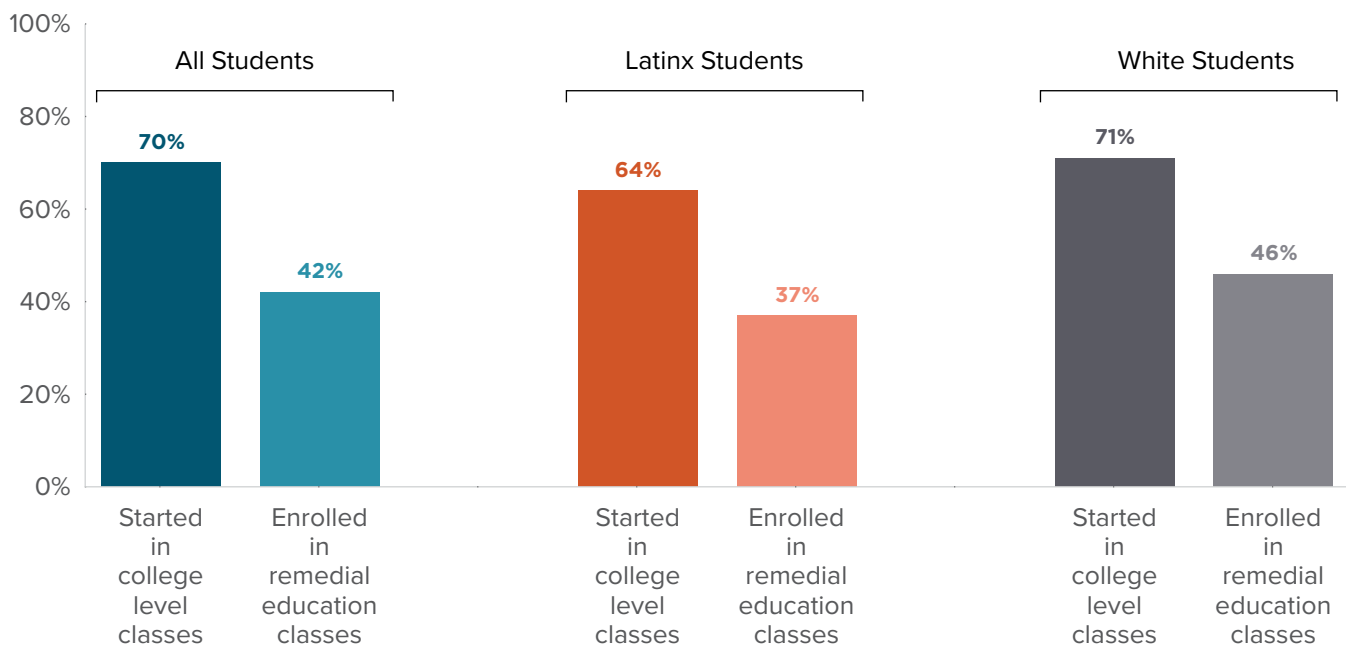


Source: Meija, M. C., Rodriguez, O., & Johnson, H., (2020) A New Era of Student Access at California’s Community Colleges [Report]. San Francisco, CA: Public Policy Institute of California.

Maintaining a commitment to these reforms and ensuring that California’s Latinx students can enroll in transfer-level courses with the appropriate supports will be critical to ensuring higher rates of college completion. While the overall six-year completion rate for Latinx students was 42 percent, as noted in Figure 35, we see dramatic differences in outcomes for students based on where they initially enroll. Among Latinx students who enrolled in the 2012-13 year, only 37 percent of those enrolling in remedial courses graduated within six years, compared to 64 percent of their peers who enrolled in transfer-level coursework.

Latinx students who begin their college education in remedial coursework are half as likely to graduate as their peers who begin in transfer-level coursework. Only one-third of Latinx students starting in remedial education graduated within six years.

Figure 35. California Community Colleges, six-year graduation rates by remedial placement



Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Student Success Scorecard, 2019. Available from: <https://scorecard.cccco.edu/>

Undocumented Students

California is home to the country's largest undocumented college student population, estimated at 94,030 and making up 22 percent of the total undocumented undergraduate population in the country.⁵⁰ While educational attendance is generally high among school-age undocumented Californians (92 percent of children ages three to 17 are enrolled in K-12), only 45 percent of undocumented youth ages 18 to 24 are enrolled in college, highlighting the continued barriers to college access for the state's undocumented students.⁵¹

Although no official enrollment data exists, it is estimated that approximately 86,000 undocumented students are enrolled across the California Community Colleges, California State University, and University of California systems. Roughly 81 percent of these students attend a community college.⁵² Across the U.S., 46 percent of undocumented college students are Latinx.⁵³ In California, however, an estimated 81 percent of undocumented Californians migrate from Mexico and Central America.⁵⁴ The California Department of Education also reported that in 2020, Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador were the primary countries of origin for the 151,920 immigrant students enrolled in K-12.⁵⁵ Although we lack official data, it can be inferred that a large proportion of undocumented college students in California are Latinx.

In July 2021, a U.S. district court in Texas ruled Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) as unlawful, permitting DACA to continue for current recipients and those seeking renewals, yet halting the program for new applicants. This followed the Biden Administration's reopening of DACA for first-time applicants after attempts in 2017 by the Trump Administration to remove protections for DACA recipients and to end DACA. Current and potential DACA holders are in a constant state of limbo, unsure about the future of DACA and their own life opportunities.⁵⁶ Due to this uncertainty, California's undocumented students are particularly vulnerable to losing out on college opportunity. Among the national DACA-eligible student population, 70 percent are Latinx, Asian American and Pacific Islanders make up 16 percent, Black students make up about 5 percent, and white students are about seven percent.⁵⁷ California is home to the nation's largest percentage of DACA recipients, with more than one in four DACA recipients living here.⁵⁸

Our 2019 report, [*In Their Voices*](#), contains a detailed examination of the challenges and opportunities experienced by undocumented students in California.⁵⁹ DACA alleviates some of these challenges, but not all students are eligible to apply, and most undocumented students pursuing higher education in the U.S. do not have DACA status.⁶⁰ Our 2019 report also documents the proactive measures California has taken to combat federal administrative and legislative actions that would be harmful to undocumented students. Additionally, it is necessary for each campus to implement resources and practices that support students whose status continues to present challenges for college opportunity. Our [California Undocumented Student Resources Map](#) highlights current available resources for undocumented students at public campuses and private nonprofit institutions in California.

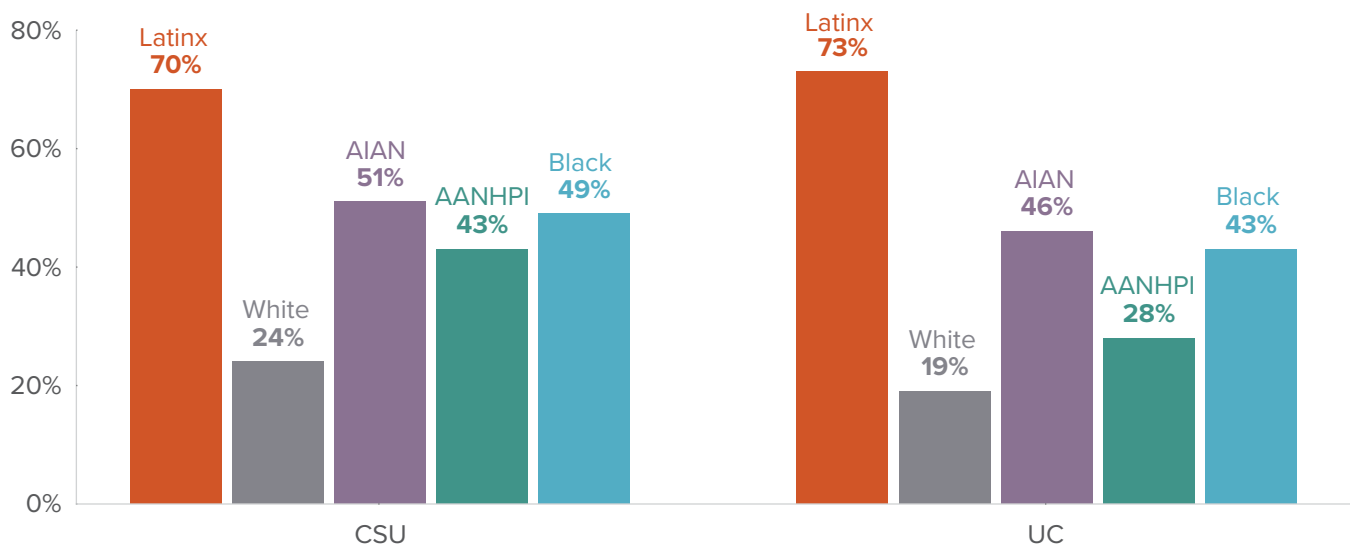
First Generation College Attendance

A large share of Latinx students at the UC and the CSU are first-generation college students. At the UC, almost three out of every four Latinx students (73 percent) are first-generation students, and that rate is similar at the CSU (70 percent). This is more than double the rate for any other racial/ethnic subgroup in the system. As system leaders consider how to better support students on their campuses, it is imperative that they recognize that the support required for students whose parents have less experience with higher education is vital.

First-generation college students face barriers and report a lower sense of belonging compared to their peers.⁶¹ Research shows that students with a stronger sense of belonging pass their classes, persist from year to year, and complete their degrees at higher rates than their peers. Students who believe they belong in college are more likely to succeed in their courses and college careers than students who question whether they are supposed to be there. California's public universities must do more to ensure that first-generation students on their campuses are supported and feel welcome.

In 2020, almost three-fourths (70 percent and 73 percent, respectively) of Latinx freshmen at the CSU and at the UC (70 percent and 73 percent, respectively) were first-generation college students—a greater proportion than any other racial/ethnic group.

Figure 36. Percent first-generation students, fall 2020 first-time freshmen by race/ethnicity



Note: Students identified as first-generation are students whose parents have not earned a bachelor's degree. As such, these students would be members of the first generation in their families to earn a college degree.

Source: CSU Institutional Research and Analysis, and UC Office of the President

The California Community Colleges enrolled 707,011 first-generation students in 2019-2020, though the data on first-generation community college students, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, is not publicly available.⁶²



FACULTY DIVERSITY

In 2021, the leaders of all three public higher education systems, as well as the chairs of all three governing bodies for the UC, CSU and California Community Colleges, the California Student Aid Commission Executive Director, and the K-12 Superintendent of Public Instruction, are all people of color.

While the diversity of our state leaders is cause for celebration, this representation is only recent and is not reflective of all campus leaders, faculty, and staff. This lack of faculty diversity hurts students of all races and ethnicities, depriving them of exposure to a diversity that reflects the state—and world—beyond their campuses.⁶³

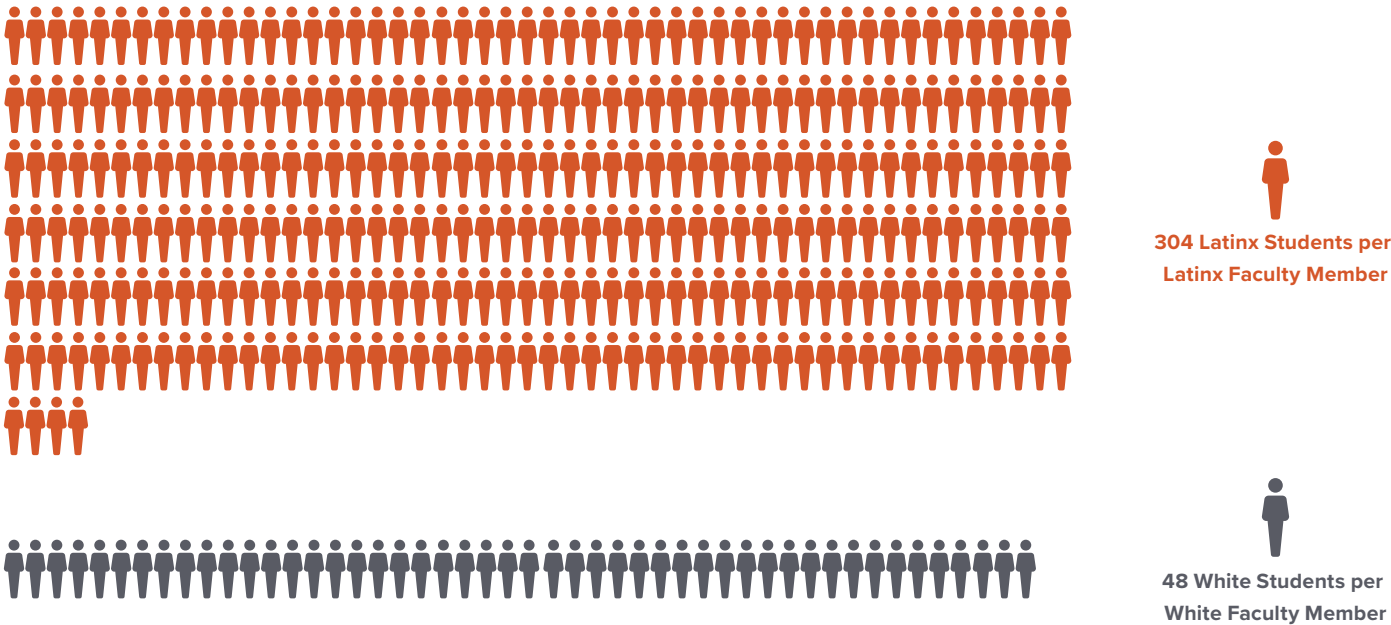
Our 2018 report [*Left Out: How Exclusion in California's Colleges and Universities Hurts Our Values, Our Students, and Our Economy*](#) indicates that diversifying the student population, though important and necessary, is only one step in supporting student inclusion and belonging. Colleges and universities have many options in fostering a sense of belonging among their students. A diverse staff, faculty, and leadership, which we discuss in greater detail below, is a critical component of ensuring a sense of belonging for Latinx students on campus. Research also indicates that institutional supports, such as social identity-based centers, high-impact educational experiences, and academic support services, can contribute to cultivating a sense of belonging among first-generation college students.⁶⁴ Creating a campus environment that validates first-generation college students also can help achieve this goal.⁶⁵

At all three public systems of higher education, there are too few Latinx faculty. This means that Latinx students have fewer role models, advocates, and mentors who have a similar lived experience, believe in the students' capacity to succeed, and understand the challenges students may be facing.



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Figure 37. California Community Colleges, undergraduate students per faculty member of the same race



Source: National Center for Education Statistics; Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS); Full-time instructional staff by academic rank, faculty and tenure status, race/ethnicity, and gender (Fall 2018) and 12-month unduplicated head count by race/ethnicity, gender, and level of student (2018-2019). Available from: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data>

In 2018-2019, there were 20,014 instructional staff with faculty status in our community colleges. Fifty-nine percent (11,765) were white, and only 16 percent were Latinx (3,299). This means there are 304 Latinx students for every Latinx faculty member in the California Community Colleges, compared to 48 white students for every white faculty member.



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Figure 38. California State University, undergraduate students per faculty member of the same race



Source: National Center for Education Statistics; Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS); Full-time instructional staff by academic rank, faculty and tenure status, race/ethnicity, and gender (Fall 2018) and 12-month unduplicated head count by race/ethnicity, gender, and level of student (2018-2019). Available from: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data>

There were fewer than 1,000 Latinx tenured or tenure-track faculty in the CSU system in 2018-19. Although 42 percent of CSU students are Latinx, only nine percent of the faculty is Latinx. This means there are 208 Latinx students enrolled for every Latinx faculty member in the system.



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Figure 39. University of California, undergraduate students per faculty member of the same race



Source: National Center for Education Statistics; Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS); Full-time instructional staff by academic rank, faculty and tenure status, race/ethnicity, and gender (Fall 2018) and 12-month unduplicated head count by race/ethnicity, gender, and level of student (2018-2019). Available from: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data>

With 661 Latinx faculty members, the UC has the lowest Latinx student-to-faculty ratio of any of the public systems in the state, with 90 Latinx students for every Latinx professor. This compares, however, to a nine-to-one ratio for white students and white professors.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

While the findings in this report are sobering, there is much to celebrate and to do to keep improving college preparation, access, and success for Latinx students. We know that it is possible to increase the number of high school graduates who are college-ready and who enroll in the UC and the CSU. We know state investments and policy reforms that increase the number of slots at our UC and CSU campuses, expand financial aid, and fix the transfer pathway are significantly improving opportunity for Latinx students. We also see the exponentially positive impact of removing hurdles, like ineffective remedial courses at community colleges and CSUs, for Latinx students. Over the past decade alone, these efforts have led to a record number of Latinx high school and college graduates.

With intentional focus to better serve Latinx students and to support their success toward graduation through explicit attention to closing racial/ethnic and gender gaps, we know the future of California can be better and stronger. We also know that California's leadership in this space can serve as a model to other states with growing Latinx populations. Because our collective future is linked to the success of Latinx residents in our state, we call on policymakers and campus leaders to act with the urgency necessary to improve opportunity and equity in higher education.

Specifically, we offer the following federal, state, and campus recommendations:



High School Recommendations

- **Increase high school graduation rates for Latinx students to 90 percent and make A-G coursework the default curriculum for all high school students in California.** Schools must work with urgency to close the gap in graduation rates for Latinx students. They should also make the A-G course requirement for UC and CSU eligibility the default curriculum for all students, to ensure that Latinx students graduate with the maximum opportunities to continue their postsecondary education.
- **Ensure that all high school seniors complete either a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or a California Dream Act Application (CADAA), so that every talented Latinx Californian can pursue college, regardless of income status.** Submitting a FAFSA or a CADAA is often one of the first steps in the college-going process, but many students do not complete the application and therefore may not understand the grant aid available to them. Completion of the FAFSA or CADAA enables Latinx students to afford college and, importantly, builds a college-going culture that supports Latinx students realistically seeing themselves in college. The 2021-22 budget for the state of California made a significant step in the right direction by requiring high schools to confirm that all high school seniors have completed a FAFSA or California Dream Act Application and allowing targeted support for undocumented students with the completion of these applications. High schools must fulfill this new policy starting in the 2022-23 school year.



Community College and University Recommendations

- **Ensure strong implementation of California Community Colleges and CSU reforms that focus on equitable placement of students into college-level English and math, and support students' success in these courses.** Identify strategies to intentionally close racial/ethnic and gender gaps in enrollment and completion to degree, certificate, or transfer. Recent reforms to broaden access to the courses that students need to obtain a degree or to transfer are beginning to close equity gaps for our Latinx students. However, the California Community Colleges and the CSU must do more to monitor the implementation progress and to ensure that every single community college and university is providing equitable access to college-level courses for Latinx students with the supports they need to succeed. Community colleges should eliminate or significantly reduce stand-alone remedial courses that do not maximize students' success, and then repurpose that funding for transfer-level and corequisite courses.
- **Align campus practices at the California Community Colleges to improve college completion rates through strong implementation of the Student Centered Funding Formula.** The formula provides additional resources to colleges based on enrollment, the number of low-income and first-generation students they serve, and who earns a degree, certificate, or completes the transfer requirements. Schools also should align campus practices with the Student-Centered Funding Formula's student success allocation metrics to increase Latinx student success outcome. This alignment includes increasing the number of Latinx students who earn an Associate Degree for Transfer and transfer, complete transfer-level math and English within their first year, complete nine or more career and technical education units, and attain regional living wages. With a large proportion of Latinx students attending the California Community Colleges, serving all community college students better means that more Latinx students will succeed.



Community College and University Recommendations (continued)

- **Strengthen the CSU Graduation Initiative to improve graduation rates and to close racial/ethnic and gender gaps for Latinx students who enroll as first-time freshmen and who transfer into the CSU.** The CSU's Graduation Initiative 2025 aims to increase two- and four-year graduation rates and eliminate equity gaps. While the CSU has recently reached reflective representation of Latinx enrollment, and graduation rates have improved significantly since the initiative was launched, white men and women are supported to graduate in four years at twice the rate of their Latino and Latina peers. The CSU should identify new strategies for meeting the goal of closing gaps for Latinx students and provide disaggregated data by race/ethnicity as it progresses toward these goals. The state should also double down on its investments for this effort by establishing progress metrics for annual evaluation and by ensuring that reporting is disaggregated by race/ethnicity.
- **Strategically identify efforts to ensure the UC increases the number of Latinx students who enroll and successfully graduate, so that it is more reflective of the diversity of California's high school population.** While the number of Latinx applicants to the UC is growing, Latinx students are still underrepresented in the UC in both total applicants and final enrollments. The UC must do more to proactively ensure that Latinx students are aware of the opportunity to enroll, have greater access to campuses of their choice and not just the referral option, and can understand and access financial aid that can make a UC education a reality for low-income Californians.
- **College presidents, campus leaders, and governing bodies must commit to identifying, hiring, retaining, and promoting Latinx faculty at California's public colleges and universities.** Campus leaders must systemize the annual collection of comprehensive data, disaggregated by race/ethnicity for campus faculty and leadership positions, and use this data in the development of plans to reach diversity goals to which campuses should be held accountable. Campus leadership should also provide unambiguous guidance to hiring committees in support of identifying, recruiting, and hiring a diverse faculty, recognizing that bans on affirmative action do not prevent campuses from ensuring that their hiring and retention efforts are truly inclusive. Campuses should commit to the promotion and retention of diverse faculty through the development of supports, such as mentorship, professional development, and clear pathways to leadership. Campuses should foster a culture of support for diverse faculty through the establishment of protocols whereby faculty, staff, and administrators can report instances of microaggression, harassment, or discrimination.



State Recommendations

- **Commit to the ambitious statewide goal of ensuring that 60 percent of Latinx Californians in the workforce hold a degree or high-value credential by 2030.** California’s economic future depends on ensuring that 60 percent of its residents—including 60 percent of its Latinx residents—hold a degree or high-value certificate. The state should formally establish a degree attainment goal, codified in law, that contains specific, separate, and trackable annual attainment targets for Latinx students and that guides state policy and budget investments to support Latinx student college access and success.
- **Revise and expand the eligibility requirements established under the California Master Plan for Higher Education with additional state funding to increase enrollment of Latinx students at the CSU and UC.** The state’s outdated 58-year-old Master Plan has eligibility requirements that do not fit the 21st century or the diversity of our state. This results in constrained access to our public four-year universities. Policymakers should update the eligibility requirements to align with statewide goals and workforce needs to increase the number of California students who are able to enroll directly at a UC or CSU campus.
- **Recommit to strengthening transfer and to ensuring equitable access to the Associate Degree for Transfer for Latinx community college students and support the new Associate Degree for Transfer Intersegmental Implementation Committee, so that access and success to ADT pathways are a reality for Latinx community college students.** Implementation and growth of the ADT varies widely by racial group. As of 2020, 54 percent of Latinx students earning associate degrees also are earning ADTs. The state can recommit to the ADT by supporting the new intersegmental implementation work group, substantially investing in increased capacity at the CSU as a guarantee for ADT students. The state also should make sure systems are committing to intersegmental data-sharing to more accurately capture demographic data about students who earn an ADT but do not transfer, so that Latinx students can see the completion benefits at the same rate they are being conferred ADTs.



State Recommendations (continued)

- **Develop a strong California Cradle-to-Career Data System to better enable policymakers and institutions to understand and address gaps for Latinx students in college access and success.** Policymakers, campus and system leaders, and faculty could do a better job of serving Latinx students if they could see more information about the individuals and families they are serving. However, California currently lacks a comprehensive statewide database that can easily provide this information. For instance, high schools do not currently know how many of their graduates meet eligibility requirements for admission to the UC or CSU but do not apply, and what happens to them. The state also is unaware of what happens to students who drop out of a postsecondary institution. To answer these important questions, policymakers must remain committed to implementation of the Cradle-to-Career Data System Act of 2019, and college leaders must use this data to improve how they serve Latinx students.
- **Modernize California’s financial aid system by building on recent expansions in Cal Grant and by shifting to a state aid model based on student need—rather than outdated rationing devices, like age and time out of high school—to create a more inclusive and accessible financial aid system for Latinx students.** Since California already offers robust need-based aid for tuition and fees, non-tuition costs are the most significant drivers of unmet need for low-income students, especially at the community colleges. The failure to adequately support community college students in meeting the affordability challenge has real implications for Latinx students who are predominantly enrolled in the California Community Colleges. The state must reform its outdated financial aid system, which does not meet the needs of its significant low-income and increasingly diverse population of college students. While policymakers made improvements recently by expanding student access to the Cal Grant by ending age and time-out-of-high-school eligibility barriers, more work is needed to simplify aid eligibility for students and to fill in the gaps of current aid to serve students who need it most.
- **Support the growing number of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) to become Hispanic-Graduating Institutions by investing additional resources specifically tied to closing racial/ethnic and gender gaps in completion.** Most of California’s public colleges and universities are HSIs—21 of the CSUs, and five of the UCs. The state should invest additional resources in these institutions, with the expectation that they be used to serve Latinx students; establish a framework for recognizing colleges for their efforts to effectively serve Latinx students; and establish a statewide HSI taskforce to identify supports needed to best serve Latinx students and to help emerging HSIs receive federal designation and access federal HSI funding.



Federal Recommendations

- **Expand federal Pell Grant access to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients to ensure DACAmented students in California’s colleges and universities have access to an important source of financial support.** An estimated 94,000 undocumented students are enrolled in California colleges and universities, with about half having DACA status.⁶⁶ However, undocumented students are barred from access to federal financial aid like the Pell Grant, which provides students with up to \$6,495 in grant aid. Expanding Pell Grant access to DACA recipients is the first step in increasing college affordability for all undocumented students and will be key to supporting Latinx communities.
- **Establish a pathway to citizenship for all undocumented individuals and create permanent solutions so that undocumented students can access the financial and social resources needed for a college education.** By establishing a pathway to citizenship for undocumented students, the U.S. can expand access to an affordable college education and to federal financial aid. Access to a quality education will then allow students to enter our workforce and contribute to our economy in increasingly substantive ways.



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DATA AND METHODS

The data for this report were obtained from a variety of sources. The primary source was the National Center for Education Statistics' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Twelve-month enrollment figures for the 2018-19 academic year were taken from the IPEDS 2019 survey year. First-time student and transfer student enrollment data for fall 2018 were taken from the 2018 survey year. IPEDS data excludes public less-than-two-year institutions.

Additional data were collected from the California Department of Education, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, the California State University Institutional Research and Analysis Office, and the University of California Office of the President. We included outcomes data through 2018-19 for all systems, as well as more recent data for systems where such data are publicly available.

The data available give us valuable information on whether we are supporting Latinx students at various points along their educational paths, but the lack of a system that incorporates data from across California's educational and economic agencies prevents us from fully understanding our students' trajectories. A *cradle-to-career* data system would allow us to better understand students' educational pathways. It also would give us more detailed information so that we can know more about the enrollment decisions of students who graduate without meeting the state's A-G course requirements. Among many other uses, it would tell us more about the differences in outcomes for students who transfer with an ADT, versus those who transfer with a terminal associate degree, and allow us to measure longer-term outcomes associated with policy interventions or specific programs.

Demographic data were taken from the American Community Survey (ACS), which is conducted by the US Census Bureau. Where appropriate, this report employs data from tables produced by the US Census Bureau. These tables draw from the ACS 2015-2019 five-year estimates. In instances where predefined census tables omitted comparisons of interest, the authors instead created estimates from Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS), which allow for more nuanced analyses.

When using IPEDS and census data, counts of Latinx students and Latinx residents include those who identified as Hispanic.⁶⁷ Data retrieved from the University of California follow a different classification system than data retrieved from IPEDS. UC data does not include students who indicate they are Black, regardless of whether they select Latinx as an additional primary race/ethnicity.⁶⁸

The A-G rates reported here are not directly comparable to those presented in prior reports. Previous A-G rates were calculated using all graduates in a given year, regardless of when they started high school. In 2016-17, the California Department of Education began reporting the percentage of graduates within a particular cohort, adjusted for student migration, transfer, and death, who met the A-G course requirements.⁶⁹

PHOTO ATTRIBUTIONS

Cover Art

A special thanks to Jose Ramirez, the talented artist who allowed us use of his artwork for this report. You can find him on Instagram @joseramirezart.

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