



COLORADO
Department of
Higher Education

Summary: 2015 Legislative Report on Remedial Education

Need for remediation drops 3 percentage points for second year in a row to 34 percent of Colorado H.S. graduates

DENVER - June 4, 2015 - This year's remedial report finds a 3 percentage point drop in the need for remediation in Colorado for the second year in a row, reflecting the impact of a variety of innovative initiatives aimed at ensuring Colorado students are career- and college-ready.

Remedial courses - which cost students time and money and do not result in course credit -are a known barrier to a student success. Students funneled into remedial courses have far lower completion rates than those students not required to take a remedial course. Hispanic, African American and low-income students are disproportionately represented as needing remediation.

The data used in this remedial report was gathered by the Colorado Department of Higher Education for academic year 2013-2014 as required by statute.

For the first time, this report also includes data on the state's Supplemental Academic Instruction policy, which allows institutions of higher education to offer credit-bearing labs and other learning opportunities to students who may be on the edge of needing a remedial course.

Highlights from academic year 2013-14

- Overall, the percentage of the 2013 high school graduates placed into remediation in at least one subject was 34.2 percent, an improvement from the previous year of 37 percent.
- Of the 23,490 high school graduates who matriculated to college in Colorado, 6,926 students were not college ready and required at least one remedial course.
- About 36 percent of college female students were not college ready compared to 31 percent of college matriculated males.

- Eighty percent of black, non-Hispanic students at two-year colleges and 50 percent of such students at four-year institutions were not ready for college level courses.
- Almost 69 percent of Hispanic students enrolled at a two-year college required remedial education compared to 36 percent at four-year institutions.
- Fifty-one percent of free and reduced lunch participants were not college ready compared to 28 percent of non-FRL students who were not college ready.
- When examining remediation by subject, most students required remediation in mathematics, followed by writing and then reading.
- At the four-year level, the retention rate for students not assigned to remediation was 77 percent, compared to 61 percent for those needing remediation.
- Approximately 62 percent of all remedial courses were completed successfully, the same rate as the previous year.
- Combined, the estimated cost to the state and estimated tuition cost to the student for remedial courses amount to approximately \$47.1 million. This is a \$9 million savings from last year due to fewer students taking remedial courses and fewer courses being offered.

Alternatives to remediation

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education is focused on increasing the number of residents aged 25-34 who hold a high-quality, postsecondary credential to 66 percent. To reach this goal, and for Colorado to have an educated workforce to fill the 74 percent of jobs that will require a postsecondary credential by 2020, it is no longer enough to get students to college. Nearly all college students must be successful and earn a certificate or degree.

To this end, a number of initiatives across the state are targeted at reducing students' need for and lessening their time spent in remedial classes while simultaneously giving them the support they need to be successful. Here are examples of ongoing initiatives aimed at reducing the remedial rate:

- **Supplemental Academic Instruction** - SAI allows students “with limited academic deficiencies” at a four-year institution to get the academic support they need, such as tutoring labs or refresher courses, on campus rather than having to attend remedial courses off-site at a community college. For the community college system, it means fewer required

remedial courses and, ideally, improved completion rates. The 2015 remedial report for the first time includes data on SAI students and programs.

- **Concurrent enrollment** - Concurrent enrollment allows high school students to take credit-bearing college courses while still in high school. Participation in these programs is associated with a 23 percent increase in the likelihood of enrolling in college and a 10 percent decrease in the need for remediation. About 26,935 students participated in concurrent enrollment programs in the 2012-2013 school year, or about a quarter of all 11th- and 12th-graders in Colorado public high schools.
- **Colorado Academic Standards** - The Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Department of Higher Education are working closely to align Colorado Academic standards with college readiness and college admission and placement policies, as required by the so-called 2008 CAP4K legislation. Under the CAP4K, Colorado's admissions and remediation policies were revised to permit students to qualify for college by demonstrated proficiency vs. seat time. This will change the way students are assessed and placed into a remedial course and should decrease the number of students needing remediation.
- **Developmental education redesign** - In 2011, the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) implemented developmental education innovations statewide, including accelerated course sequencing, modularizing and contextualized curriculum, learning communities, test preparation strategies, combined courses, and mainstreaming. Additionally, CCCS is placing students with higher placement scores directly into a college level course; combining English and Reading into College Readiness Composition; and assigning a math curriculum based upon the student's major, such as STEM vs. non-STEM. These strategies appear to be working as the remedial rates for community colleges decreased and retention rates increased.

Learn more about remedial education at:

<http://highered.colorado.gov/Academics/remedial/>