SUCCESS Fund Initiative

FINAL REPORT: 2021-2022 PROGRAM YEAR

Spring 2023 | Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges | Marlene Clapp, PhD

Contents

Executive Summary

The Need for SUCCESS

- SUCCESS was created in fiscal year (FY) 2021 specifically for Massachusetts state-funded community colleges to strengthen and bring-to-scale proven models for wraparound supports and services that help strengthen outcomes for students facing systemic barriers.

- There has been little overall progress both nationally and within Massachusetts during the past several years in moving the needle on college completion, especially for community college students who have historically experienced the lowest completion rates.

SUCCESS Personnel & Services

- More than 460 full-time and part-time positions were supported by SUCCESS funding at the community colleges in program year one (FY 2021-2022). Mentors, faculty/staff engaged in professional development, coaches, and academic advisors accounted for more than half of these positions.

SUCCESS Participants

- SUCCESS focuses on supporting students who have historically been underserved by higher education, including economically disadvantaged students, first-generation college students, minoritized students, students with disabilities, and LGBTQIA+ students.

- All students were new to SUCCESS in FY 2022, the inaugural launch of the initiative. Overall, 6,359 matriculated, degree or certificate-seeking students were served during the year. FY 2022 participants largely attended part-time and were first in their families to attend college. About 3 out of 5 were 18 to 24 years old, identified as Hispanic/Latino or Black/African American, and were economically-disadvantaged. The highest level of engagement most had with SUCCESS was two to four meaningful interactions in a term.

SUCCESS Participant Early Outcomes

- Overall, 63% of SUCCESS participants who were enrolled and engaged with SUCCESS in Fall 2021 persisted to the following fall. Persistence rates increased with higher levels of engagement and also varied by race/ethnicity.

- A subset of Fall 2021 participants was matched to peers who were also enrolled during that term and did not engage with SUCCESS. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the participants persisted to the following fall as compared to 51% of peers who did not engage with SUCCESS. Fall-to-fall persistence (i.e., Fall 2021 to Fall 2022) among participants exceeded that of non-participants for every subgroup examined (e.g., by gender, race/ethnicity).

Engagement with SUCCESS Services

- Colleges offered a variety of support services in FY 2022 with several being offered by all or most colleges. All colleges offered coaching and case management and about 90% offered student planning; academic, transfer, and career advising; and community events.

- Most colleges offered the services with which SUCCESS participants highly engaged but mentoring services were offered at a lower rate than other top services like academic advising.

SUCCESS Spending Activity

- SUCCESS was funded by the Massachusetts legislature at $10 million in FY 2022. Personnel comprised the largest share of expenditures at $8,944,669 ($8.9M) or about 68% of spending.

SUCCESS Program Year 2

- Looking ahead to the second program year (FY 2022-23), preliminary data on Fall 2022 indicates that 8,022 students were served by the program. This is nearly double what was reported for the previous fall (i.e., Fall 2021 at 4,201 students).

Background

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report provides final data on the first full year of the Supporting Urgent Community College Equity through Student Services (SUCCESS) Fund Initiative. Data included in this report focus on the students served by and the personnel and services behind SUCCESS in the 2021-2022 program year. A look at the impact of SUCCESS, including fall-to-fall persistence rates for students who did and did not engage with the initiative, is also included. The funding and expenditures that fueled the work of SUCCESS are also detailed. Finally, a preliminary look at SUCCESS as it enters its second program year is also provided.

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

SUCCESS was created in fiscal year (FY) 2021 specifically for Massachusetts state-funded community colleges to invest in wraparound supports and services using models proven to strengthen outcomes for students facing systemic barriers. Supports and services are those, such as individualized academic advising, coaching, and mentoring, proven from federal TRIO and similar programs to demonstrably improve student outcomes. SUCCESS is currently focused on serving matriculated, degree and/or certificate-seeking students.

WHY IS SUCCESS NEEDED?

SUCCESS funding is needed to strengthen and bring-to-scale existing supports for the large number of students seeking a credential at one of the fifteen state-supported community colleges in Massachusetts. Due to historical barriers, many of these students struggle to complete their coursework, reenroll, graduate and/or transfer to a four-year institution. According to the National Student Clearinghouse, completion rates have stalled nationally (Causey et al., 2022). The six-year completion rate for first-time, degree or certificate-seeking students entering U.S. colleges and universities in fall 2016 was 62.3%. This is a mere 0.1 percentage point increase over the fall 2015 cohort completion rate of 62.2%.

As completion rates stall, progress made nationally to boost attainment rates may be jeopardized, especially for certain subgroups of the population. According to the latest data from the Lumina Foundation (2023), while attainment rates have increased for all adults aged 25-64 by race/ethnicity, long-standing opportunity gaps still exist. For example, while the national attainment rate (i.e., associate degree or higher) stands at 45.7%, the rates for individuals who identify as Black and Hispanic are 34.2% and 27.8%, respectively.

The same opportunity gaps exist in Massachusetts where the overall attainment rate of 57.1% exceeds that of the nation, but not for those residents identifying as Black (42.8% attainment) or Hispanic (29.2% attainment) (Lumina Foundation, 2023). When looking at attainment further by race/ethnicity and gender, greater disparities are present. For example, national attainment for Black males is 28.9% as compared to 39.1% for Black females (Lumina Foundation, 2023).

Community colleges are not immune to the overall trends being observed nationally. For example, the opportunity gap in six-year completion rates between male and female students who started at two-year public institutions in fall 2016 stands at 5.5 percentage points (40.8% versus 46.3%, respectively) (Causey et al., 2022). A recent report by *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Field, 2022) notes that the completion rate of males has been markedly lower than that of females for decades. Black and Hispanic males have particularly low completion rates with the largest opportunity gap currently between Hispanic males and females (Figure 1).

Figure 1. The six-year completion rate of **Hispanic women** outpaces **Hispanic men** by 8 points.
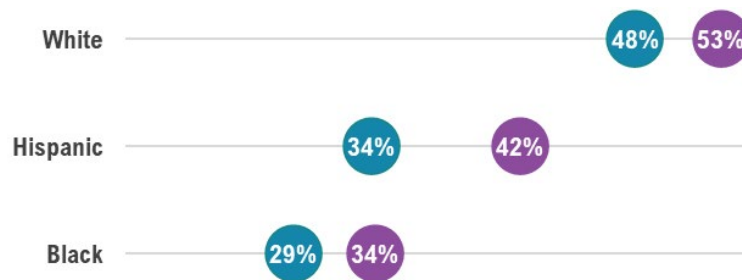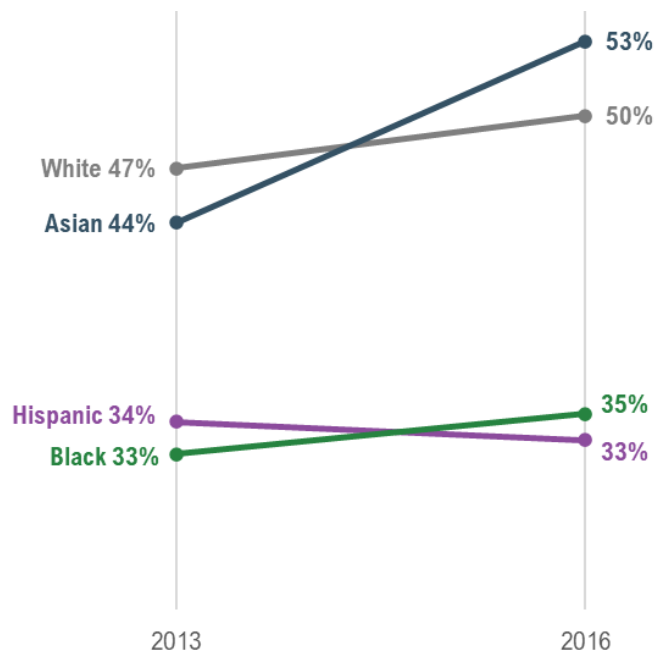

Data source: National Student Clearinghouse 2022 Completing College National and State Reports (Fall 2016 entering cohort, public 2-years)

Overall, three-year graduation rates among degree or certificate-seeking students who attend public two-year institutions are markedly lower than their peers who attend private two-year institutions (de Brey et al., 2019). This distinction is especially pronounced for minoritized students. For example, first-time full-time Black students who entered public two-year institutions in fall 2013 realized a 13% completion rate versus 50% of their peers who entered private nonprofit two-year institutions (de Brey et al., 2019). As of fall 2020, Hispanic students were more likely to enroll at public two-year institutions while Black students were overrepresented at private nonprofit two-year institutions (NCES, 2022). Despite a leaning towards enrollment at public two-year institutions, Hispanic enrollment dropped substantially at public two-year institutions from fall 2019 to fall 2021 (UnidosUS, 2022). The share of Black men enrolling at community colleges is estimated to have fallen the most among community-college going students during the Covid-19 pandemic (Camardelle et al., 2022). Overall, enrollment and completion for both Black and Hispanic students, especially men, seems to be faltering at public two-year institutions.

Among Massachusetts public two-year institutions, there was a modest increase in the six-year completion rate between the fall 2015 (38.9%) and fall 2016 (40.2%) first-time entering cohorts. Yet, there has been little overall progress during the past several years within the state, especially for community college students who have historically experienced the lowest completion rates. While Asian students realized a nearly 10 percentage point gain in their six-year completion rate at Massachusetts public two-year institutions between 2013 and 2016, the trend for other student groups remained relative flat (Figure 2). Moreover, the six-year completion rate for first-time entering Hispanic students declined by one percentage point from 2013 to 2016. Both Black and Hispanic students continue to experience much lower completion rates than their peers.

Figure 2. The six-year completion rate for **Hispanic students** at public two-year institutions in Massachusetts dropped by 1 point between 2013 and 2016.

First-time full-time entering students who receive Pell or other federal grants are increasingly likely to attend a two-year institution over a four-year institution (Cahalan et al., 2022). Moreover, students from families within the lowest income quartile remain the least likely by income quartile to complete a four-year degree by age 24 (Cahalan et al., 2022). Additionally, first-time entering students at two-year institutions who identify as *both* low-income and first-generation have a six-year bachelor's degree completion rate that is 20 percentage points lower than their peers who identify as neither first-generation nor low-income (i.e., 6% versus 26%) (Cahalan, 2022). The share of first-generation college students among minoritized students, including Hispanic and Black students, remains high (Cahalan et al., 2022).

SUCCESS Personnel & Services

More than 460 full-time and part-time positions were supported by SUCCESS funding[1] at the community colleges in FY 2021-22. Ten types of positions accounted for 84% of funded positions (Figure 3). Mentors, faculty/staff engaged in professional development, coaches, and academic advisors[2] accounted for more than half of funded positions (Figure 3). Faculty and staff members were largely supported in professional development efforts aimed at improving the campus climate for SUCCESS participants. For example, at Cape Cod Community College, faculty were supported with redesigning courses to be offered in a HyFlex modality, which the college sees as an equity game changer because students can flex their attendance pattern (i.e., in-person or online) day to day to fit their needs. Ambassadors, who often help coordinate programming in certain areas, such as career readiness and wellness, were also among the top ten positions supported through SUCCESS. Program coordinators and directors, tutors,
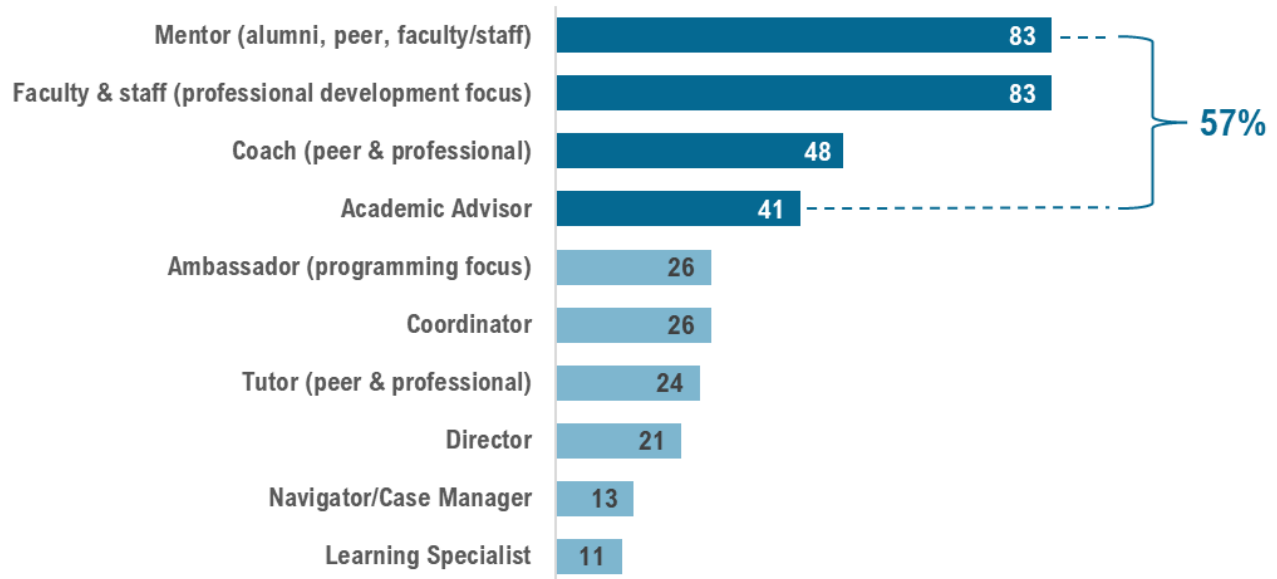
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[1] Includes partially-funded and split positions; total positions were 466 but an exact count of tutors supported by SUCCESS funding at one college was missing.
[2] Exact titles varied for this role, including advisor/coach, academic coordinator, and academic counselor.

navigators/case managers, and learning specialists were other commonly supported positions. The additional staffing that has been made possible by SUCCESS is making a difference. For example, at MassBay Community College, wait times for meeting with an academic advisor have been cut by nearly 70% (i.e., from 90 minutes to 30 minutes during peak enrollment season).

Figure 3. Mentors, faculty, coaches, and academic advisors engaged in student support efforts represented **more than half of staffing supported by SUCCESS funding** in FY 2022.

Count of positions by type for the top ten positions funded by SUCCESS in FY 2022

Position	Count
Mentor (alumni, peer, faculty/staff)	83
Faculty & staff (professional development focus)	83
Coach (peer & professional)	48
Academic Advisor	41
Ambassador (programming focus)	26
Coordinator	26
Tutor (peer & professional)	24
Director	21
Navigator/Case Manager	13
Learning Specialist	11

57% (Mentor, Faculty & staff, Coach, Academic Advisor)

SUCCESS Participants

POPULATIONS SERVED

SUCCESS supports students historically underserved by higher education, including minoritized students, economically disadvantaged students, first-generation college students, students with disabilities, and LGBTQIA+ students. For instance, dedicated programs at Bunker Hill Community College, Holyoke Community College, Roxbury Community College, Quinsigamond Community College, and Springfield Technical Community College serve ALANA men.

A participant with Mount Wachusett Community College's SUCCESS program remarked, *"Having a success coach really helped me get through the year. Whenever I had a question I never hesitated to ask because I felt really comfortable and was constantly reassured and was told I wasn't alone."*

Looking to increase their efforts to serve LGBTQIA+ students, Middlesex Community College and Mass Bay Community College added a question to their admissions applications during 2021-2022 to help identify LGBTQIA+ students to better serve them through SUCCESS. It is anticipated that more of the community colleges will build upon this work at their own

institutions. Also, colleges including Cape Cod Community College and Holyoke Community College have adopted peer mentors to better connect with LGBTQIA+ students as well as other SUCCESS students. For example, at Cape Cod, peer mentors have helped to build a powerful sense of community on campus, which has particularly helped attract LGBTQIA+ students to the SUCCESS advising space, where they can receive support and professional academic advice. The Student Ambassador Mentorship Program (SAMP) at Holyoke Community College (HCC) offers peer mentorship, community building, and opportunities for leadership and professional development to cultivate the academic success and retention of first-year students and continuing students (with a college GPA between 1.75-2.99). SAMP is open to women, non-binary and transgender students enrolled in at least six credits and particularly aims to serve the most vulnerable student populations at HCC.

## NUMBER SERVED & DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The colleges outreach to thousands more potential participants than those they ultimately serve. Outreach efforts can differ depending on whether a college follows an opt-out or opt-in approach to managing participants, but may include recruitment events as well as phone, email, text, and social media campaigns. For example, Middlesex Community College partnered with their Admissions Office to outreach to new students from their identified cohort populations, including 1,702 in fall 2021 and 1,494 in spring 2022. Students received a welcome email asking them to complete a form to receive more information and to be matched with a mentor. Additionally, Middlesex explained that a highlight of their recruitment efforts this past program year was implementing a process for self-identifying LGBTQIA+ students. In April 2021, the college implemented a new CRM and online admissions application, which, as aforementioned, was updated to allow LGBTQIA+ students to self-identify. The update included new questions adapted from college partners with the Leading 4 Change (L4C) consortium housed at Bridgewater State University. A report based on the new admissions data is now used to recruit LGBTQIA+ students into Middlesex's SUCCESS program.

Overall, 6,359 students were served by SUCCESS in FY 2022 (Appendix, Table A1). Initial data from the colleges indicated that a larger number of students (6,816) were served during the year. However, after accounting for students with no annual enrollment activity at their reported SUCCESS college as well as students who did not have a confirmed unique ID in the state HEIRS data system, the number served was revised to 6,359. All participants were new to SUCCESS in FY 2022 (Figure 4). The majority (73%) joined their colleges as first-time freshmen

and were enrolled part-time in FY 2022 (66%). The highest level of engagement for nearly half of participants (46%) during the program year was moderate (Tier 2: two to four meaningful interactions per term). A nearly equal proportion of participants identified as male and female while 18- to 24-year-olds accounted for 59% of participants. A sizeable share of participants also identified as Hispanic/Latino (35%) or Black/African American (24%). SUCCESS participants were largely first-generation college students (69%) and economically disadvantaged (58%)[3]. Twelve percent of participants were students with a documented disability.

Figure 4. SUCCESS participants, all of whom were new to the initiative in FY 2022, largely attended part-time, first joined their institutions as freshmen, and were first in their families to attend college. About 3 out of 5 were 18 to 24 years old, identified as Hispanic/Latino or Black/African American, and were economically-disadvantaged. The highest level of engagement most had with SUCCESS was moderate at two to four meaningful interactions in a term (Tier 2).
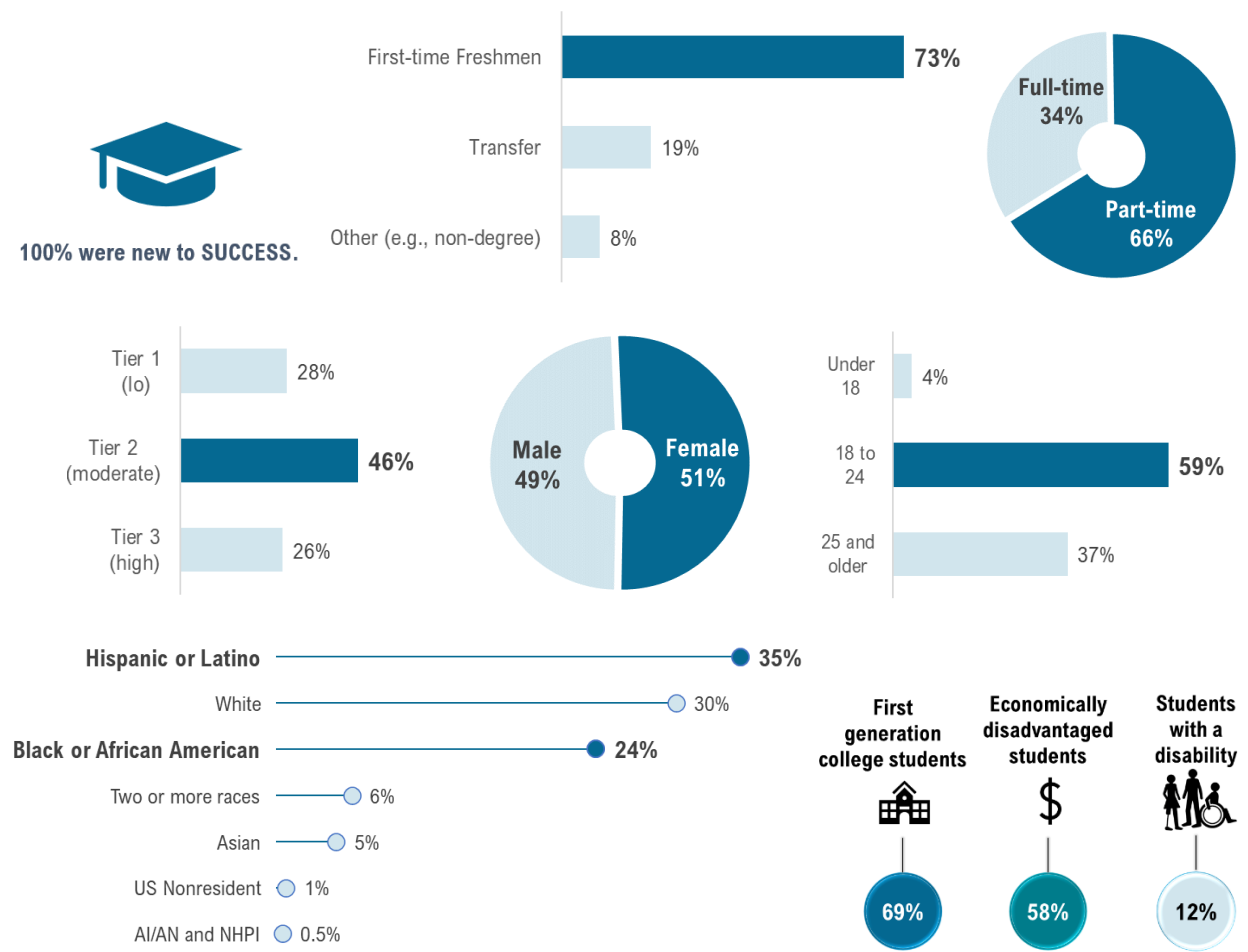
Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding; AI/AN and NHPI = American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

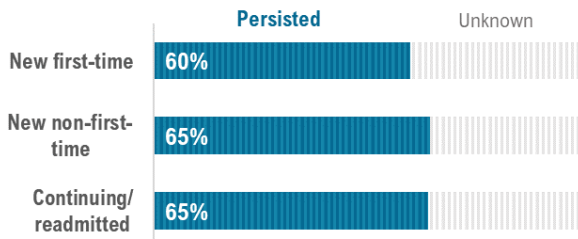[3] Definitions for these demographics vary by college.

Early Outcomes for SUCCESS Participants
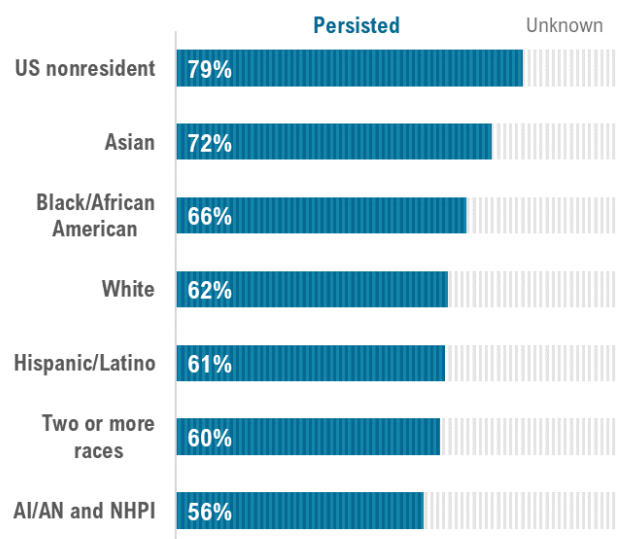
FALL -TO-FALL PERSISTENCE

Overall, 63% of SUCCESS participants who were enrolled and engaged with SUCCESS in Fall 2021 persisted to the following fall. Figure 5 provides an overview of persistence rates by various groups of interest. Table A2 (Appendix) provides additional detail on disaggregated persistence rates for FY 2022 SUCCESS participants and the related methodology.

Figure 5. SUCCESS Participants Persistence Dashboard (Fall 2021 to Fall 2022)
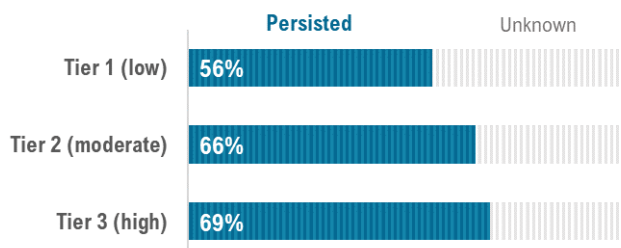
New students and continuing/readmitted students exhibited similar persistence rates.
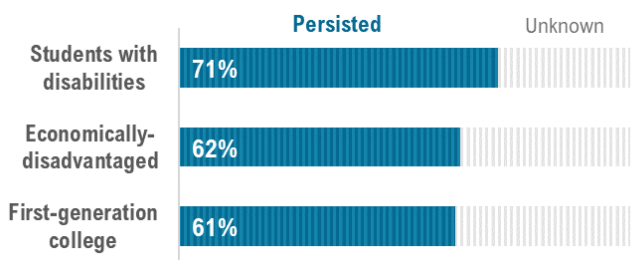
	Persisted	Unknown
New first-time	60%	
New non-first-time	65%	
Continuing/readmitted	65%	

Persistence rates increased as participants engaged at higher levels with SUCCESS.

	Persisted	Unknown
Tier 1 (low)	56%	
Tier 2 (moderate)	66%	
Tier 3 (high)	69%	

Male and female participants exhibited similar persistence rates.

	Persisted	Unknown
Male	65%	
Female	61%	

Participants 18-24 years of age exhibited the highest persistence rate.

	Persisted	Unknown
Under 18	55%	
18-24	64%	
25 or older	62%	

More than 20 percentage points separate the highest and lowest persistence rates by race/ethnicity.

	Persisted	Unknown
US nonresident	79%	
Asian	72%	
Black/African American	66%	
White	62%	
Hispanic/Latino	61%	
Two or more races	60%	
AI/AN and NHPI	56%	

Strong persistence rates were realized for students with disabilities, economically-disadvantaged students, and first-generation college students.

	Persisted	Unknown
Students with disabilities	71%	
Economically-disadvantaged	62%	
First-generation college	61%	

Persistence *reflects **continued enrollment at the institution or transfer to another** institution by the fall of the second year of college **or completion of a certificate or associate degree** by the end of the first academic year (Data source: National Student Clearinghouse).*

COMPARISON GROUP FINDINGS

Students who were enrolled and participated in SUCCESS during Fall 2021 were matched to comparable students from that same term who did not engage with SUCCESS. Seven community colleges submitted records through the state HEIRS data system for their SUCCESS eligible students who did not engage with the initiative in Fall 2021. These students were matched with SUCCESS participants based on select demographic variables (see Table A3, Appendix, for detailed methodological notes). The resulting dataset included 1,986 matches (i.e., 1,986 SUCCESS participants and 1,986 comparison students).[4] Overall, 67% of matched SUCCESS participants who were enrolled and engaged with the initiative in Fall 2021 persisted to the following fall as compared to 51% of their peers who did not engage with SUCCESS. Figure 6 provides an overview of FY 2022 SUCCESS participant persistence rates as compared to their peers. Table A3 (Appendix) provides additional detail on disaggregated persistence rates for SUCCESS participants and their peers as well as the related methodology.

Figure 6. Fall-to-fall persistence from Fall 2021 to Fall 2022 among **SUCCESS Participants** exceeded that of **comparable Peers** for every subgroup examined.
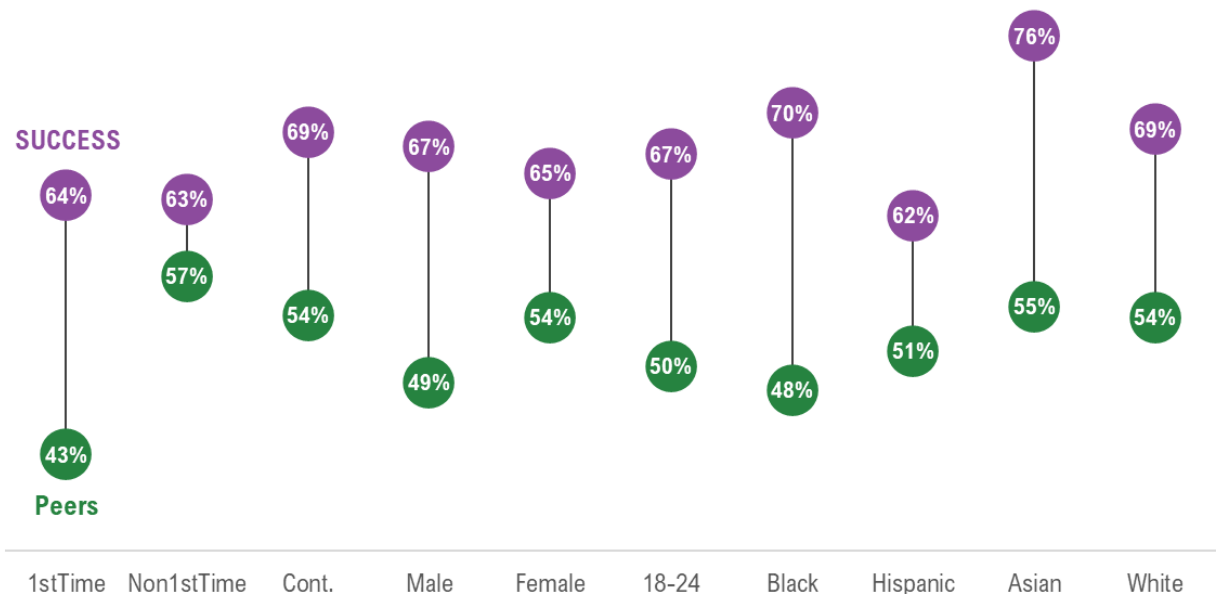
Notes: "1stTime" = new first-time students (i.e., freshmen); "Non1stTime" = new non-first-time students (i.e., transfers and second credential-seeking students); "Cont." = continuing/readmitted students.

COLLEGE-SPECIFIC FINDINGS

The Male Initiative for Leadership Education (MILE) program at Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) designed and launched its first ever summer bridge program in summer 2022. Twenty-one recent high school graduates participated in the program and 100% of participants registered for classes in fall 2022. MILE Summer Bridge participants were eligible to earn up to six college credits all while receiving the support of dedicated peer mentors and tutors. Wraparound supports also included workshops, community events, networking and engagement opportunities, as well as complimentary meals throughout the program. Most

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[4] There was insufficient data for American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students to include them in the matched data set (even as a combined group).

participants (76%) also took advantage of the MILE Chromebook Lending Program. The SUCCESS program at Massasoit Community College similarly held a career readiness bootcamp in summer 2022. Students were able to participant in an internship as part of the experience.

A participant with North Shore Community College's Rise. Achieve. Persist. (RAP) Experience program offered, *"...the RAP staff not only introduced me to all the different available campus resources, but they also were very supportive in helping me choose a program of study. They also explained in detail all aspects of choosing a career and provided me with the support necessary for making a correct decision for my future. I am so thankful for their support and dedication..."*

Holyoke Community College offers two distinct student support programs through SUCCESS: the ALANA Men in Motion program and the Student Ambassador Mentor Program (SAMP). A SAMP participant, who is a student parent, expressed appreciation for her ability to help "make positive changes for other student-parents and their needs." An ALANA participant praised the support available through the program noting that "mentors hold you accountable and ensure they check in as much as possible. They listen and always try to get the resources to help you succeed." This student went on to stress how crucial the ongoing support from dedicated staff is by saying, "I went through a traumatic situation, and if it weren't for ALANA, I would not be in school..."

Greenfield Community College (GCC) administered the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to its student population during 2021-2022. As compared to all GCC respondents, SUCCESS students had higher ratings on the Support for Learners benchmark. For example, when asked "How much does this college emphasize providing the support you need to help you succeed?" the mean rating was 3.54 for SUCCESS students and 3.39 for all GCC respondents (i.e., response choices were Very much (4), Quite a bit (3), Some (2), Very little (1)). Similarly, Northern Essex Community College (NECC) used a homegrown instrument, the Integrated Student Experiences (ISE) Survey, to measure students' sense of belonging during 2021-2022. Eighty-two percent of SOAR scholars strongly or somewhat agreed that they feel welcome on NECC campuses and 77% also agreed that they feel part of the NECC community.

A participant with Mount Wachusett Community College's SUCCESS program remarked, *"Having a success coach really helped me get through the year. Whenever I had a question I never hesitated to ask because I felt really comfortable and was constantly reassured and was told I wasn't alone."*

The target student population for SUCCESS at Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) is part-time students with a specific focus on Black and Latinx students, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students. Students are supported by academic coaches using a developmental advising model. However, QCC's web of supports is far reaching. For example, QCC used SUCCESS funds to implement Quinn. Quinn is a chatbot offered through Persistence Plus that sends behavioral nudges to students via text. By implementing Quinn, QCC was able to engage with an entirely new subset of students. Twenty-nine percent of students who were not responding to their advisor's outreach actively engaged with Quinn. In spring 2022, the QCC SUCCESS team also launched "The QCC Experience" midterm programming series, which

reflected four dynamic weeks of both online and in person programming. Workshops included "Secrets to Success," "Speak Up! A Discussion on Self-Advocacy," "Career Exploration and Goal Setting," "Career Goals and Setting Up Your Future," "Money Matters," and a registration workshop at the start of Fall registration.

NECC's "Track My Journey Student Conference" was an on-campus conference developed internally and held in May 2022. NECC's Seize Opportunities, Aspire to Rise (SOAR) program collaborated with the college's TRiO program, Career Services, and Office of Professional Development for the conference. Following hearing from a keynote speaker, students could choose from various tracks including a transfer track, career track, or exploratory track. One student who attended the conference remarked, "Completely life changing and inspiring! I feel so empowered."

A focus of Roxbury Community College's SUCCESS program involves the creation of Student Success plans. Each plan is student-driven. The student and their coach both lay out goals that will help the student to realize their vision for how they define success during a set time. Coaches then connect students with supplemental resources and workshops as well as meet with them regularly, as desired, to review progress and alter plans when setbacks necessitate a change in action.

One of Bristol Community College's SUCCESS team members provided an account of why the resources offered through SUCCESS make so much of a difference: *"I coached a returning student (non-traditional age) for the Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 semesters. This student had attempted college twice before, but each time ended up struggling too much and withdrawing from all of his classes. This time around, I talked with him about what kind of support he might need and helped to connect him with resources. The most important service I connected him with was disability services. Both times he attended Bristol before, the student never knew that it existed! With the help of a learning specialist from [disability services] and regular coaching check-ins, this student was finally able to finish a semester and pass his classes."*

Cape Cod Community College has historically posted the lowest math completion rates of any of the 15 Massachusetts state-funded community colleges. Because Black students and multi-racial students disproportionately experience low math completion rates at the college, mathematics programming and support has been a cornerstone of the institution's 4Cs4U SUCCESS program. SUCCESS funds have made it possible to implement a new mathematics placement and remediation tool called ALEKS Placement, Preparation, and Learning (ALEKS PPL). ALEKS PPL has led to demonstrable improvements in students' math placement and readiness as well as their attitude and enthusiasm towards mathematics. For example, one student with the 4Cs4U SUCCESS program wants to be a nurse but initially feared and hated math. Her math readiness scores initially placed her into developmental math, but, after working with ALEKS PPL, she retested into a college level math course. As of fall 2022, she had experienced a complete attitudinal shift towards mathematics and was happily enrolled in a statistics course and regularly utilizing weekly Math Learning Center drop-in hours.

Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) analyzed enrollment and retention data on students that participated in their Halting Oppressive Pathways through Education (HOPE) initiative. HOPE, which receives support from SUCCESS, is "aimed at transforming inequitable systems and structures so that Black and Latino males can thrive." Students who engaged with HOPE in fall 2021 persisted to spring 2022 at a much higher rate (77%) than both BHCC's overall degree-

seeking student population (65%) and Black and Latino male students overall (62%). Likewise, at MassBay Community College, the fall-to-fall retention rate for their fall 2021 SUCCESS participants (both full-time and part-time) was (69%, including graduates), which compares to an overall college retention rate of 51%. In the 2021-22 academic year, Berkshire Community College also found that students who engaged with SUCCESS services had a higher rate of credit completion than students who were eligible for SUCCESS but did not engage with offered services (i.e., 79% versus 65% completion). Speaking about the program, one of Berkshire's SUCCESS participants remarked, "...by working with my academic success coach, I've been able to regain confidence in myself as a student."

Engagement with SUCCESS Services

During FY 2022, all 15 community colleges offered coaching and case management services (Figure 7). More than 4 out of 5 also offered student planning services, academic advising, transfer advising, career advising, and community events.

Figure 7. All colleges offered **coaching** and **case management** in FY 2022 and about 90% offered **student planning**; **academic, transfer, and career advising**; and **community events**.

| Service	Percent
Coaching	100%
Case Management	100%
Student planning	93%
Academic Advising	93%
Transfer Advising	87%
Career Advising	87%
Community events	87%
Academic support workshops	80%
Peer mentoring or other mentoring	73%
Scholarship Advising	67%
Discussion groups	67%
Tutoring and/or study groups	60%
Publications	60%
Counseling	60%
Affinity groups	60%
Summer programs	53%
Assessment/inventory	47%
Field trips to 4-yr colleges/universities	33%

Note: "Counseling" includes services like financial aid counseling and mental health/wellness counseling.

ENGAGEMENT LEVELS ACROSS SERVICES

Among the 6,359 students served by SUCCESS in FY 2022 (Appendix, Table A1), 42% engaged with SUCCESS for one term during the program year, 44% engaged with SUCCESS for two terms during the program year, and 13% engaged with SUCCESS for 3 or 4 terms during the program year. Student-level data provided by the colleges indicated which services students engaged with during the program year. Figure 8 indicates the percentage of students who engaged with each type of service at least once during the program year[5] as compared to the percentage of colleges offering a service.

Figure 8. Most colleges offer the services with which SUCCESS participants highly engage but mentoring services are offered at a lower rate than the other top services of coaching, academic advising, and case management.
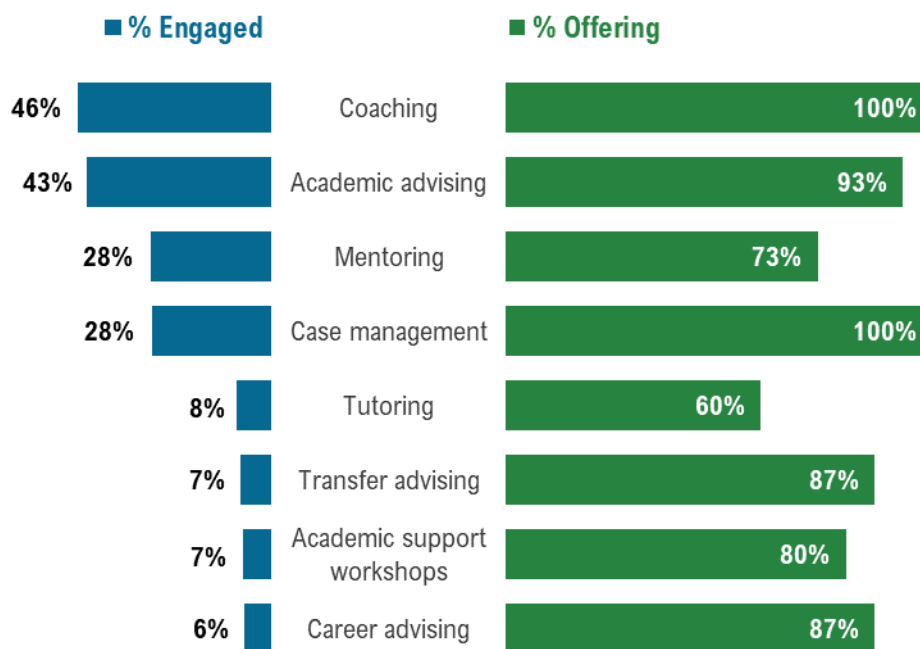
Note: "% Engaged" based only on students for whom at least some service engagement was reported by colleges during FY 2022 (n=5,490).

SUCCESS Spending Activity

EXPENSE TYPES AND MIX

SUCCESS was funded by the Massachusetts legislature at $10 million in fiscal year 2021-2022 (FY 2022). Personnel comprised the largest share of expenditures during FY 2022 at $8,944,669 ($8.9M) or about 68% of spending (Table 1 and Figure 9). Overall, expenditures fell within the spending parameters for FY 2022 that were agreed upon by the colleges and the SUCCESS leadership team. The guiding parameters were 65% personnel, 27% non-personnel, and 8% fringe.

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[5] Based on students for whom at least some service engagement was reported by colleges during FY 2022 (n=5,490).

Figure 9. At $8.9M, personnel accounted for the largest share (68%) of FY 2022 expenditures.

FY 2022 Expenditures (in millions $)

Administrative and Indirect Costs equated to about 10% of total expenditures at roughly $1.3 million. About $1.2 million (9%) was spent on Technology & Equipment. Around a million dollars (7%) was expended on Professional/Operational Services & Payments (e.g., professional development, such as consultants in areas like mental health). Finally, just over $720,000 was spent on Facility/Operation/Education Expenses (e.g., supplies, food), which comprised about 5% of expenditures (Table 1 and Figure 9).

Table 1. FY 2021-2022 Program Year Expenditures

Expense Category	FY 2022 Expenditures	
	$	%
Personnel	8,944,669	68
Administrative & Indirect Costs	1,335,283	10
Technology & Equipment	1,191,040	9
Professional/Operational Services & Payments	987,806	7
Facility/Operation/Education Expenses	720,526	5
TOTAL	13,179,324	100

Percentages do not sum to 100% due to rounding; expenditures reflect spending against FY2022 funds as well as FY2021 carryover funds (FY2021 included fringe charges and FY2022 did not); totals include summer spending during 2022 for relevant colleges (i.e., Bristol, Cape Cod, Holyoke, and Quinsigamond).

COST EFFECTIVENESS AND ROI

Programs like SUCCESS have generally been found to be both cost-effective and consistent in realizing return on investment for both taxpayers and students. A recent cost-effectiveness analysis of a comprehensive student support program in Ohio modeled after the Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) of the City University of New York (CUNY) found the program costs more to educate participants than students who receive typical college services (Miller et al., 2020). However, even after taking both direct costs and additional costs of the program (e.g., expenses due to increased course enrollments) into consideration, the sizeable increase in completion among program participants overall led to a much lower cost per degree for participants (i.e., 22 percent lower) (Miller et al., 2020). A cost-effectiveness study of CUNY ASAP resulted in similar findings (Levin & Garcia, 2013). Further, when considering return on investment and benefits to taxpayers (e.g., increased tax revenues from income, property, and

sales tax), the CUNY ASAP study found that "for each dollar investment in ASAP by taxpayers, the return was between three and four dollars" (Levin & Garcia, 2013, p. 9).

A report by MassInc. noted that per-student state funding for community college students within Massachusetts is below the sector's national average (Forman & Ngongi-Lukula, 2022). It was argued that additional investment, specifically in areas like comprehensive student supports, could realize greater return on investment through higher completion rates. Their analysis indicated that an intervention designed to boost completion would result in returns to state taxpayers if the cost per participant was kept below $160 for each percentage point increase in the likelihood of completion (Forman & Ngongi-Lukula, 2022).

Based on similar student support programs nationally and within the Commonwealth, the direct costs of SUCCESS are estimated to be $1,500 to $2,000 per student participant. Overall, there was a 16 percentage point advantage in one-year persistence (i.e., 67% versus 51%) between SUCCESS participants who were enrolled and engaged with the initiative in Fall 2021 and their peers who did not engage with the initiative. Based on the upper-end direct cost estimate for SUCCESS ($2,000) and the 16 percentage point observed difference in persistence rates, there is an estimated $125 direct cost per percentage point increase in persistence for SUCCESS participants. While this estimate does not take into consideration all associated costs (e.g., the indirect costs of students taking more credits) and it is too early in the initiative's history to make estimates for completion, this is a promising preliminary finding.

SUCCESS Program Year 2

FALL 2022 PRELIMINARY ENROLLMENT

Looking ahead to the 2022-2023 program year, preliminary data on Fall 2022 indicates that 8,022 students were served by the program. This is nearly double what was reported for Fall 2021 in the prior year report (4,201 students). Additionally, the number of students estimated as served during the first term of the new program year reflects a 26% increase over the number served during the entirety of the first full program year in 2021-2022 (i.e., 6,359 students).

> ... preliminary data on Fall 2022 indicates that 8,022 students were served by the program. This is **nearly double** what was reported for Fall 2021 in the prior year report (4,201 students).

SUCCESS participants in Fall 2022 largely resembled those who participated in the initiative during the first program year. The only sizeable differences were by gender and first-generation college student status. The percentage of male participants decreased by 12 percentage points from 49% to 37% while female participants increased from 51% to 61%. The reported percentage of first-generation college participants also declined from 69% to 60% (Figure 10).

Figure 10. The largest demographic shifts between **program year 2021-2022** and **Fall 2022** were by gender and first-generation college student status.
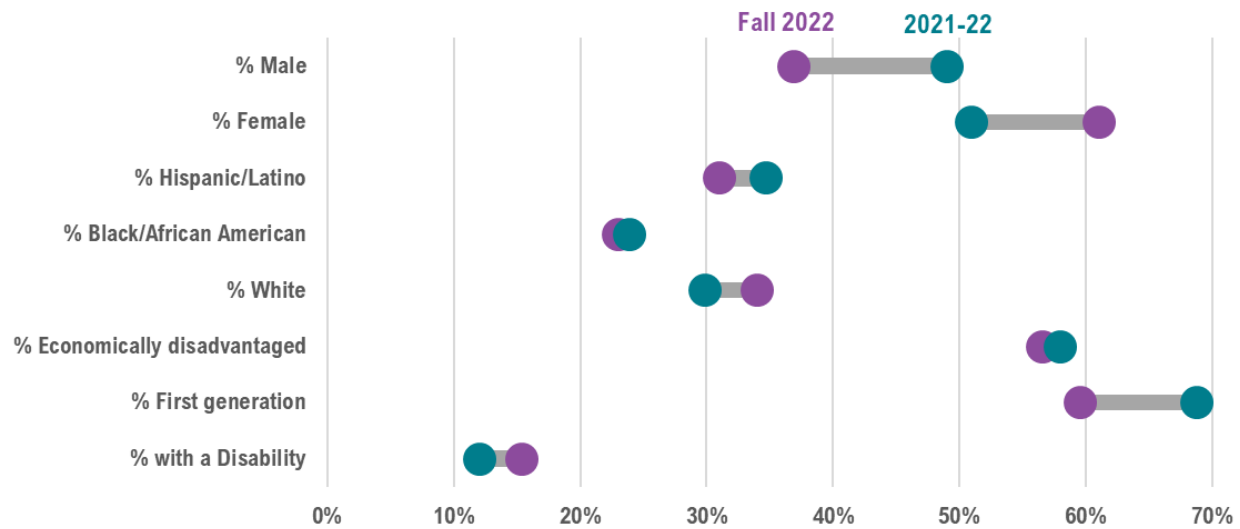
Percentages exclude missing values/unknowns.

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Appendix (tables & methodological notes)

Table A1. FY 2021-2022 Program Year Participants: Demographic Profile

	Unduplicated Participants	
	n	%
Status with SUCCESS during program year		
New	6,359	100.0
Continuing		
Student type at entry to the college		
First-time Freshmen	4,627	72.8
Transfer	1,214	19.1
Other (e.g., non-degree)	518	8.1
Enrollment status during program year[1]		
Full-time	2,140	33.7
Part-time	4,219	66.3
Highest engagement level during program year[2]		
Tier 1 (low)	1,293	27.5
Tier 2 (moderate)	2,164	46.1
Tier 3 (high)	1,242	26.4
Gender[3]		
Male	3,093	49.0
Female	3,214	51.0
Age[3]		
Under 18	258	4.1
18-24	3,730	58.7
25 or older	2,370	37.3
Race/ethnicity[3]		
Hispanic/Latino	2,099	34.7
White	1,808	29.9
Black/African American	1,447	23.9
Two or more races	343	5.7
Asian	273	4.5
US nonresident	45	0.7
AI/AN and NHPI	30	0.5
Economically-disadvantaged[3]	1,714	58.0
First-generation college[3]	1,419	68.8
Students with disabilities	417	12.0
LGBTQIA+ students	*	*

1/ Enrollment status: follows IPEDS convention for 12-month reporting and is based on attendance status in the "first full term enrolled (i.e., typically the fall or spring terms for academic reporters), even if that status changed during the 12-month period." IPEDS defines a full-time undergraduate student as one "enrolled for 12 or more semester credits, or 12 or more quarter credits, or 24 or more clock hours a week each term." 2/ Engagement level: as defined by the HEIRS SUCCESS Fund Initiative data collection dictionary, reflects a student's highest level of engagement across all terms in the academic year. Tier 1 = 1 meaningful interaction with a SUCCESS service or program per term; Tier 2 = 2-4 meaningful interactions with SUCCESS services/programs per term; Tier 3 = 5 or more meaningful interactions with SUCCESS services/programs per term. 3/ Data sourced from HEIRS SUCCESS Fund Initiative data collection for FY 2022. All demographic data sourced from HEIRS except for that on students with disabilities, which is shared in aggregate from the colleges that serve these students through SUCCESS to protect student privacy. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding and exclude missing/unknown cases. AI/AN and NHPI = American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. * = unable to report due to total student count less than 10 (only one college reported data for FY 2022).

Table A2. 2021-2022 Program Year Early Outcomes for SUCCESS Participants

	Persistence[1]	
	n	%
All SUCCESS (enrolled and engaged Fall 2021)	4,063	63.1
New Fall First-time[2]	1,394	60.3
Full-time students	610	67.4
Part-time students	784	54.7
New Fall Non-first-time[2]	545	64.8
Full-time students	168	69.0
Part-time students	377	62.9
Fall Continuing/readmitted	2,124	64.5
Full-time students	702	67.8
Part-time students	1,422	62.9
Highest engagement level during program year[3]		
Tier 1 (low)	726	56.1
Tier 2 (moderate)	1,392	66.3
Tier 3 (high)	774	69.4
Gender[4]		
Male	2,225	64.5
Female	1,814	61.4
Age[4]		
Under 18	44	54.5
18-24	2,548	64.1
25 or older	1,458	61.7
Race/ethnicity[4]		
Hispanic/Latino	1,541	61.1
White	971	61.7
Black/African American	1,111	65.8
Two or more races	147	59.9
Asian	184	71.7
US nonresident	28	78.6
AI/AN and NHPI[5]	16	56.2
Economically-disadvantaged[4]	1,009	62.4
First-generation college[4]	974	61.3
Students with disabilities	417	70.7

1/ Persistence: continued enrollment at the institution or transfer to another institution by the fall of the second year of college or completion of certificate or associate degree by the end of the first academic year. Data source (except for students with disabilities): National Student Clearinghouse (while NSC data provides a comprehensive review of outcomes by looking across postsecondary institutions, there are still some students for whom current enrollment, transfer, or graduation status is unknown); persistence for students with disabilities from college reports.
2/ New Fall First-time and Non-first-time: degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates who entered as new students in the fall term of the fiscal year; broken down by new first-time students (i.e., freshmen) and new non-first-time students (i.e., transfers and second credential-seeking students). IPEDS defines a new non-first-time student as one that is "new to your institution but has prior postsecondary experience."
3/ Engagement level: as defined by the HEIRS SUCCESS Fund Initiative data collection dictionary, reflects a student's highest level of engagement across all terms in the academic year. Tier 1 = 1 meaningful interaction with a SUCCESS service or program per term; Tier 2 = 2-4 meaningful interactions with SUCCESS services/programs per term; Tier 3 = 5 or more meaningful interactions with SUCCESS services/programs per term.
4/ As reported in HEIRS for Fall 2021. All demographic data sourced from HEIRS except for that on students with disabilities, which is shared in aggregate from the colleges that serve these students through SUCCESS to protect student privacy.
5/ AI/AN and NHPI = American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.
Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding and exclude missing/unknown cases.

Table A3. 2021-2022 Program Year Comparison Group Outcomes

	SUCCESS Persistence[1]		Peer Persistence[1, 2]	
	n	%	n	%
All Students (enrolled Fall 2021)	1,986	66.5	1,986	50.8
New Fall First-time Students[3]	609	63.5	609	42.7
Full-time students	265	71.7	265	54.0
Part-time students	344	57.3	344	34.0
New Fall Non-first-time Students[3]	193	63.2	193	57.0
Full-time students	60	61.7	60	60.0
Part-time students	133	63.9	133	55.6
Fall Continuing/readmitted Students	1184	68.6	1184	53.9
Full-time students	340	74.1	340	60.0
Part-time students	844	66.4	844	51.4
Gender[4]				
Male	1128	67.4	1128	48.5
Female	857	65.3	857	53.7
Age[4]				
Under 18	22	72.7	21	47.6
18-24	1,324	66.8	1,134	49.8
25 or older	640	65.6	831	52.1
Race/ethnicity[4]				
Black/African American	629	70.1	629	47.9
Hispanic/Latino	873	61.9	873	51.0
Two or more races	41	65.9	41	61.0
Asian	97	76.3	97	54.6
White	337	68.8	337	53.7

1/ Persistence: continued enrollment at the institution or transfer to another institution by the fall of the second year of college or completion of certificate or associate degree by the end of the first academic year. Data source: National Student Clearinghouse (while NSC data provides a comprehensive review of outcomes by looking across postsecondary institutions, there are still some students for whom current enrollment, transfer, or graduation status is unknown).

2/ SUCCESS peers are based on a matched comparison group of students from the HEIRS universe who did not participate in SUCCESS or any other major support program like TRIO or STEM starter. Matches were created using SPSS case-control matching. Students were matched based on gender, race/ethnicity, age, fall 2021 student type (i.e., new first-time freshmen, new non first-time students (e.g., transfers and second credential-seeking students), and continuing/readmits), fall 2021 enrollment status (full-time, part-time), and college. No significant differences in the matched dataset were found for these variables between SUCCESS participants and the comparison students.

3/ New Fall Students, First-time and Non-first-time: comparisons are made for degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates who entered as new students in the fall term of the fiscal year; broken down by new first-time students (i.e., freshmen) and new non-first-time students (i.e., transfers and second credential-seeking students). IPEDS defines a new non-first-time student as one that is "new to your institution but has prior postsecondary experience."

4/ As reported in HEIRS for Fall 2021. All demographic data sourced from HEIRS.

Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding and exclude missing/unknown cases.

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