What Is Measured?
Percentage of students who enrolled in developmental courses within four years, by subject

Who Is Counted?
First-time students enrolled in the summer or fall 2004 terms

What It Tells Us
About one-half (51 percent) of incoming Virginia Community College System (VCCS) students took a developmental course within four years. Students enrolled in developmental math courses at a much higher rate (43 percent) than they did in developmental writing and reading courses (21 percent and 14 percent, respectively).

Why It’s Important
For students in need of developmental education, enrolling in specific courses mandated by the placement test is the first step toward advancement to a college-level program. Many students never enroll in developmental courses at the level at which they are assessed, however (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2010). Because placements are not always binding, many students enroll in higher- or lower-level courses. Some may skip courses in the remedial sequence or skip developmental education altogether (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2010). As a result, the rates at which students enroll in developmental courses provide an incomplete picture of the need for remediation. Placement information, however, is rarely available, leaving enrollment rates as the only measure for gauging students’ college readiness.

ABOUT THE DATA
Developmental math courses: include pre-algebra (MTH01, MTH02, MTH09), algebra I (MTH03), and algebra II or higher (MTH04, MTH05, MTH06, and MTH07).
Developmental writing courses: include writing one level below the college level (ENG03) and two levels below the college level (ENG01).
Developmental reading courses: include reading one level below the college level (ENG05) and two levels below the college level (ENG04). First-time college students enrolled in a VCCS college in the summer or fall 2004 terms had no prior college credits other than those earned through high school dual-enrollment programs. The sample includes students in transfer and career-tech programs as well as those concurrently enrolled in high school. These students were followed for four years through the 2008 summer term.

DATA SOURCE