COLLEGE MILESTONES
COMPLETION OF GATEKEEPER ENGLISH: CALIFORNIA

What Is Measured?
Percentage of students who completed gatekeeper English courses after eight years

Who Is Counted?
First-time freshmen who enrolled in California Community Colleges in 2000-01 and enrolled in developmental English

What It Tells Us
Overall, 31 percent of students who enrolled in developmental English completed a gatekeeper English course within eight years. Students who enrolled in developmental English courses one level below the college level were the least likely to complete a gatekeeper English course, while students enrolled in developmental English courses two levels below the college level were the most likely to complete one (18 percent vs. 34 percent). Students enrolled in developmental English courses three levels or four or more levels below the college level completed gatekeeper English courses at similar rates (29–30 percent).

Why It’s Important
There is general consensus that timely completion of gatekeeper courses, the lowest-level college-level courses in the core subjects of mathematics, reading, and writing, positively affects student outcomes such as attainment of certificates and degrees and transfer to a four-year institution (Roksa & Calcagno, 2008, table 4; Horn & Lew, 2007; Offenstein, Moore, & Shulock, 2010, figure 8). Completion of gatekeeper courses fulfills requirements for graduation and transfer as well as prerequisites for more advanced courses in various fields.

ABOUT THE DATA
Gatekeeper English courses: Degree-applicable nontransferable English courses.

Percentage calculated by author.

DATA SOURCE