What Is Measured?
Percentage of students continuously enrolled

Who Is Counted?
All degree-seeking students who entered Achieving the Dream community colleges between 2002 and 2006

What It Tells Us
Among degree-seeking students at Achieving the Dream community colleges who initially enrolled full time, 19 percent had been continuously enrolled for three years, compared with 14 percent of students who initially enrolled part time. Students who initially enrolled full time were also more likely to have completed or transferred by the end of their third year of college than students who initially enrolled part time (20 percent vs. 12 percent).

Why It’s Important
Students who enroll continuously in community college are more likely to complete an associate degree (Adelman, 2005, table 33), transfer to a four-year institution (Adelman, 2005, table 32), and earn a bachelor's degree (Skomsvold, Radford, & Berkner, 2011, table 2.1-B) than students who do not enroll, or “stop out,” for a significant period of time. Continuous enrollment is usually defined as enrollment every consecutive term exclusive of summer terms (Clery, 2010, note 7) or enrollment with no break greater than four months (Skomsvold, Radford, & Berkner, 2011, p. G8), though some research allows a break of up to one semester (Adelman, 2005, p. 85). Students who stop out are not earning credits during their absence and may find it difficult to resume their momentum in community college afterward.

ABOUT THE DATA
Degree-seeking students: include students seeking a credential, such as a degree or certificate.
Full-time students: include students attempting 12 credits or more.
Continuous enrollment: enrollment with no stopouts during the regular academic year (i.e., excluding summer terms and mid-winter short terms).
Estimates were calculated from the original source.

DATA SOURCE