Stay on the Path ILO

Institutional Learning Outcome Assessment
Institutional Effectiveness Committee
May 2025

Introduction

Through the combined efforts of Guided Pathways (now Evolve) and the Academic Senate leadership, the college adopted Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) that align with the four Guided Pathways pillars. For the 2024-25 cycle, this ILOs assessment will focus on the pillar called "Stay on the Path". The "Stay on the Path" ILO states that the college aims to "support students to persist in their chosen learning path and see it through to completion." This report will assess the following measures related to this ILO:

- Provision of student support services
- Students' use of student support services
- Students' progress towards their educational goals

This report provides 4-year trends (2020-21 to 2023-24) for the areas mentioned above and compares students who participated in a support program[1] versus those who did not participate in any support program.

Key Insights

1. **Support Programs Positively Impact Academic Planning (p. 3)**
   - Average of 71% of first-year students in a support program developed a comprehensive educational plan
   - Average of 33% of first-year students not in a support program developed a comprehensive education plan

2. **Stronger Retention Among Support Program Students (p. 4)**
   Average retention rate:
   - First-year students in a support program, 86%.
   - First-year students not in a support program, 67%

3. **Support programs build momentum toward completion more effectively**
   - Students obtained passing grade in transfer-level Math & English: 29% (support program students) vs. 8% (non-support program students) (p. 5)
   - 15 units completion in first term: 15% (support program students) vs. 4% (non-support program students) (p. 6)
   - 30 units completion in first year: 18% (support program students) vs. 4% (non-support program students) (p. 6)

4. **Faster Award Completion by Support Program Students**
   - Support program students earn degrees/certificates in 3.7 years on average, compared to 5.6 years for non-support program students (p. 7).

5. **Similar or Slightly Higher Credit Load Despite Faster Completion**
   - AA/AS: 72 units earned (support program students) vs. 70 units earned (non-support program students) (p. 7)
   - Certificates: 68 units earned (support program students) vs. 70 (non-support program students) (p. 8)
   - Support program students are not taking fewer units but likely progressing more strategically and with better course sequencing.

---

[1] Support programs are programs designed to help students succeed by addressing various needs, both academic and non-academic. The list of support programs that were included in this analysis are the following: Athletics, CalWORKs, EOP&S, F1 Visa Students, Formerly Incarcerated, First Year Experience (FYE), Guardian Scholars, Honors Transfer Students, MANA, MESA/ASEM, Project Success, Puente, Special Resource Center, Undocumented Students and Veteran students.

Assessment

1. Student Support Services

El Camino College offers a variety of success and support programs that are accessible to all students. These programs provide academic, career, and financial support that help students with persistence and completion. The 2022 RP Group report[2] offers a comprehensive analysis of the positive impact of EOPS, an example of student support program, on student outcomes and serves as a strong model that ECC could consider to enhancing its student support services. ***Over the past four years, an average of 24% of students enrolled at El Camino College have participated in a support program. Student participation in support programs has increased from 6,175 students in 2020-21 to 7,572 students in 2023-24.***

Participation in Support Programs: 2020-21 to 2023-24
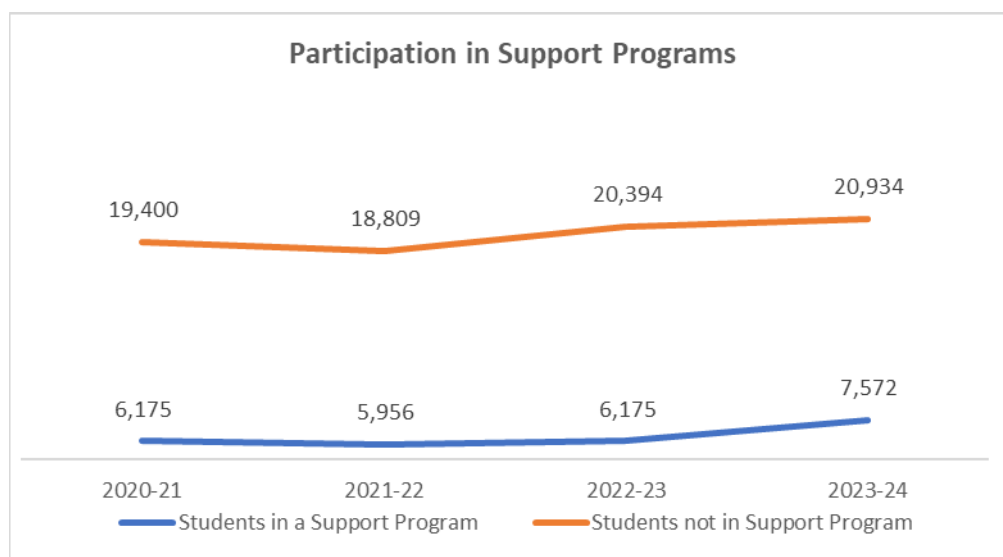
Source: Student Services Dashboard

El Camino College also offers a variety of student engagement activities facilitated by the Student Support Services Division. Currently, there is data available from the Student Development Office (SDO) that covers a four-year period from 2020-21 to 2023-24, with the understanding that disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic may have impacted data availability. This data includes participation in the Associated Student Organization (ASO), club activities, and other campus engagement opportunities offered by the Student Development Office.

At this point in time, data on student participation for all student engagement activities offered at El Camino College is limited. There are ongoing efforts to create a systematic way to gather this data. The goal is to have this data available in future assessments of this ILO.

---

[2] Reyes, M., Willett, T., Brohawn, K., & Nguyen, A. (2022). *Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS) Impact Study 2.0: 2010–2019 Technical Report*. The RP Group.

Club Activities

Year	# of Club Activities	# of Participants	Notes
2020-21	10 (virtual)	150	Limited activity due to COVID-19
2021-22	20	400	Activities began returning in person
2022-23	35	700+	In Person
2023-24	8	2250	• Inter-Club Council hosted events • SDO began tracking # of clubs

2. Development of Comprehensive Educational Plan

ECC Counseling Services assist students in developing comprehensive educational plans to help them stay on their chosen educational path. A comprehensive educational plan outlines all the necessary steps, courses, and requirements needed to complete a student's chosen program of study, major, or career goal.

In the last 4 years, the percentage of all first-year students who have developed a comprehensive educational plan has remained consistent. Over the past four years, an average of 34% of first-year students have developed a comprehensive educational plan. *If we examine students in support programs versus students not in support programs, an average of 71% of first-year students in a support program developed a comprehensive educational plan in the last 4 years. In contrast, only an average of 33% of first-year students not in a support program developed a comprehensive education plan.*

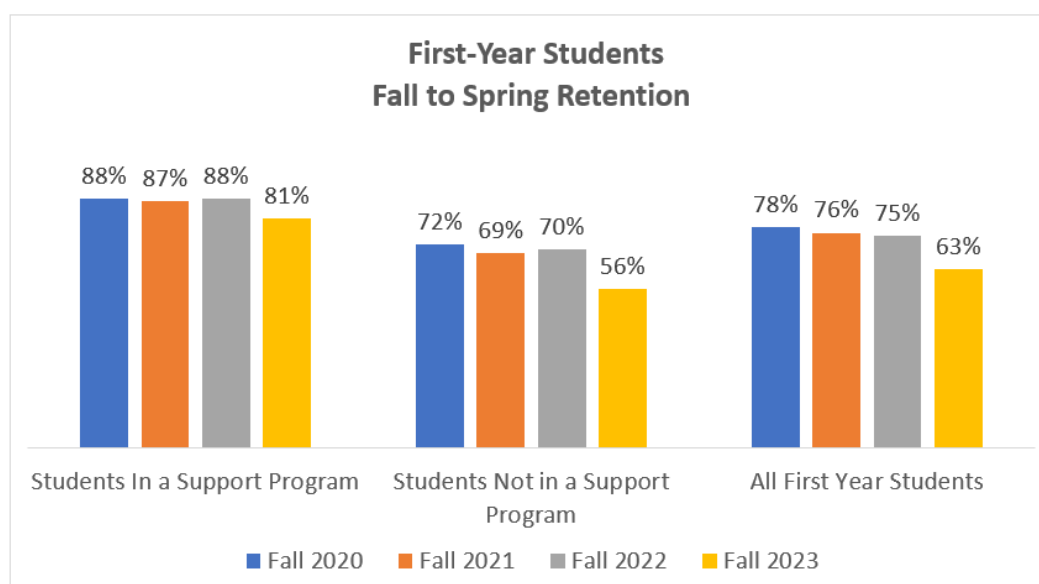*Development of Comprehensive Educational Plan: 2020-21 to 2023-24*
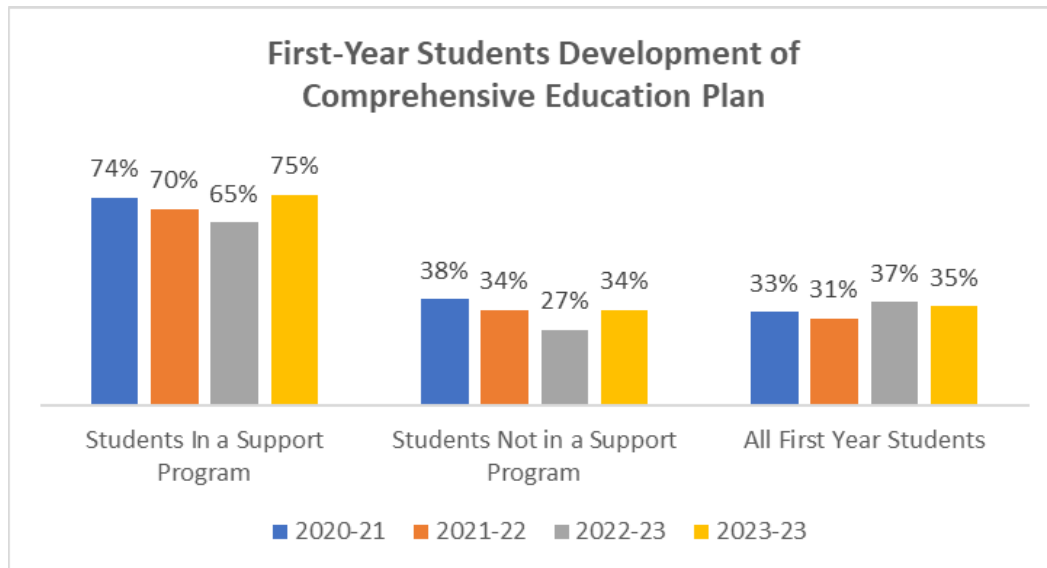
Source: Colleague

3. First-Year Student Progression

Retaining first-year students from fall to spring is a critical milestone that supports their persistence in achieving their educational goals. Over the past four years, the average fall to spring retention rate for all first-year students was 73%.

For first-year students in a support program, the average rate was 86%. In contrast, the average retention rate for first-year students not in a support program was 67%.

Fall to Spring Retention: Fall 2020 to Fall 2023[3]

**First-Year Students
Fall to Spring Retention**

	Students In a Support Program	Students Not in a Support Program	All First Year Students
Fall 2020	88%	72%	78%
Fall 2021	87%	69%	76%
Fall 2022	88%	70%	75%
Fall 2023	81%	56%	63%

Source: Colleague

There are a variety of interventions that the college has in place in order to help support student retention including having an early alert system through Starfish (ECC Connect) and offering learning communities through the First Year Experience (FYE) program. Recently, the college opened affinity centers such as the Black Student Success Center (BSSC), MICASA and MANA Center. This 2023 study[4] highlights how colleges offer universal support services (advising, financial aid, and career counseling) intentionally tailored to better serve racially minoritized and low-income students. ECC could consider this study to explore strategies that support increasing retention rates.
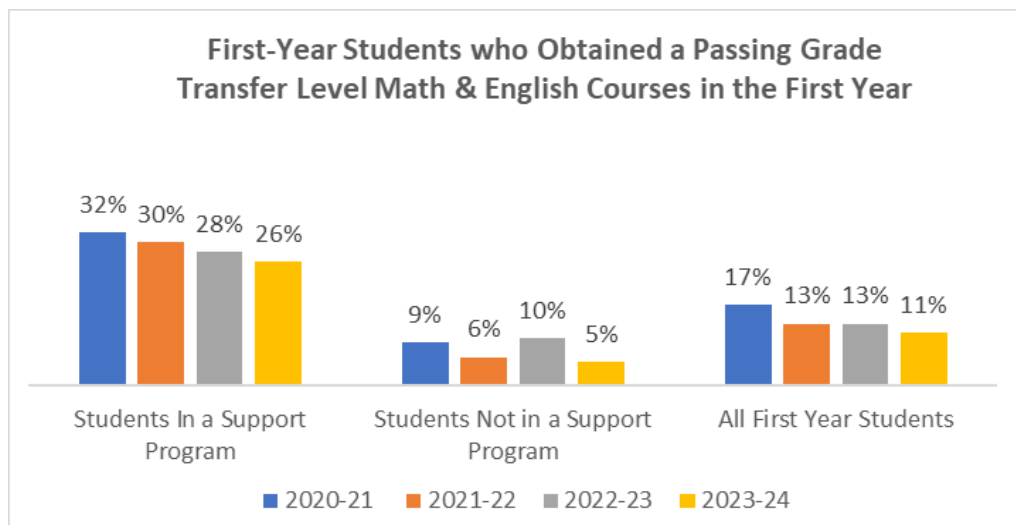
Passing transfer-level Math and English courses in the first year is also a key milestone that supports students' persistence in achieving their educational goals. In the last 4 years, the percent of first-year students who obtained a passing grade in transfer-level Math and English courses has steadily decreased from 17% in 2020-21 to 11% in 2023-24. ***In the last 4 years, an average of 29% of students who were in a support program passed***

---

[3] Data to calculate retention rate for Fall 2024 is currently unavailable. We will be able to calculate this rate at the end of Spring 2025.
[4] Kalamkarian, H. S., Lopez Salazar, A., Barnett, E. A., Lizarraga, A., Garibay, N., & Diwa, C. (2023). *Helping underserved students at higher performing iPASS colleges: An exploration of support practices.* Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University.

transfer-level Math and English in their first year compared to an average of 8% of students who were not in any support program.

Transfer Level Math and English Completion[5]: 2020-21 to 2023-24

First-Year Students who Obtained a Passing Grade
Transfer Level Math & English Courses in the First Year

Students In a Support Program: 32%, 30%, 28%, 26%
Students Not in a Support Program: 9%, 6%, 10%, 5%
All First Year Students: 17%, 13%, 13%, 11%

■ 2020-21 ■ 2021-22 ■ 2022-23 ■ 2023-24

Source: Colleague

The college has implemented strategies to enhance the completion of rates of transfer-level English and Math. Students can directly enroll in transfer-level English and Math rather than take remedial classes. In addition, corequisite support courses are provided alongside these transfer-level classes to provide just in time remediation, if needed. Despite these strategies, this first-year student progression metric has decreased. This 2021 RP Group report[6] offers a statewide analysis of transfer-level English and math outcomes from Fall 2015 to Fall 2019. The report may provide valuable insights for ECC as it considers strategies to improve transfer-level English and math completion rates.

Another crucial milestone that research indicates that supports students' persistence in achieving their educational goals is the number of units first-year students complete in their first term and first year.

An average of 15% of students in a support program earned 15 units in their first term in contrast to 4% of students who were not in a support program. Additionally, **an average of 18% of students in a support program earned 30 units at the end of their first year compared to 4% of students who were not in a support program.**
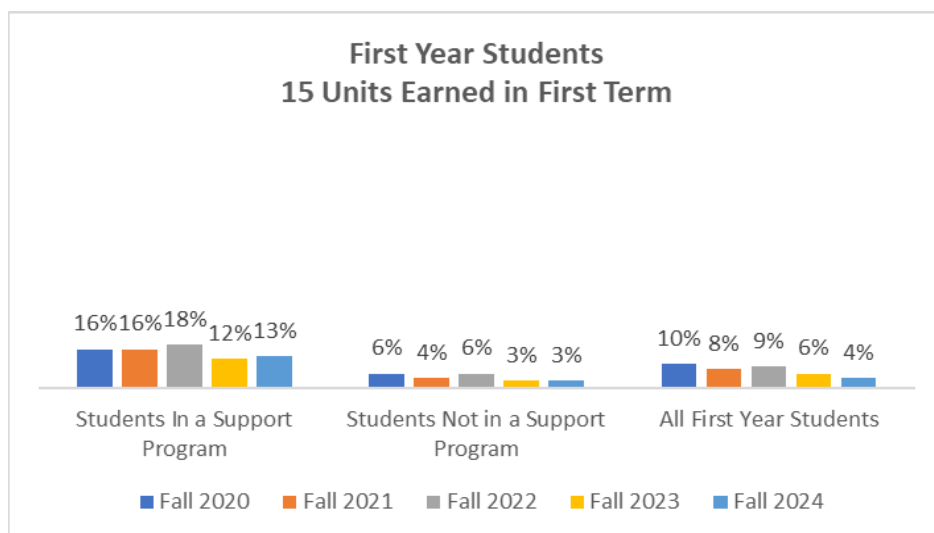
According to this 2022 study,[7] implementing a comprehensive 15 to Finish campaign can dramatically improve on-time graduation rates and reduce equity gaps if institutions commit fully, support their staff, and focus on data-informed, culturally aware communication and incentives.

---

[5] The metric Transfer-Level Math and English completion is defined as the percent of first-time students who completed Transfer-level English <u>and</u> Math within their first year. Completion, in this case, equals obtaining a passing grade. This definition aligns with the one used by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. For the ECC Comprehensive Integrated Plan (CIP), the Strategic Planning Taskforce decided to adjust the definition to the percent of first-time, full-time students with an education goal of transfer who obtained a passing grade in Transfer-level English <u>and</u> Math within their first year.

[6] Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges. (2021, January). *Enrollment and success in transfer-level English and math in the California Community Colleges system: Fall 2015 to Fall 2019 statewide analysis.*
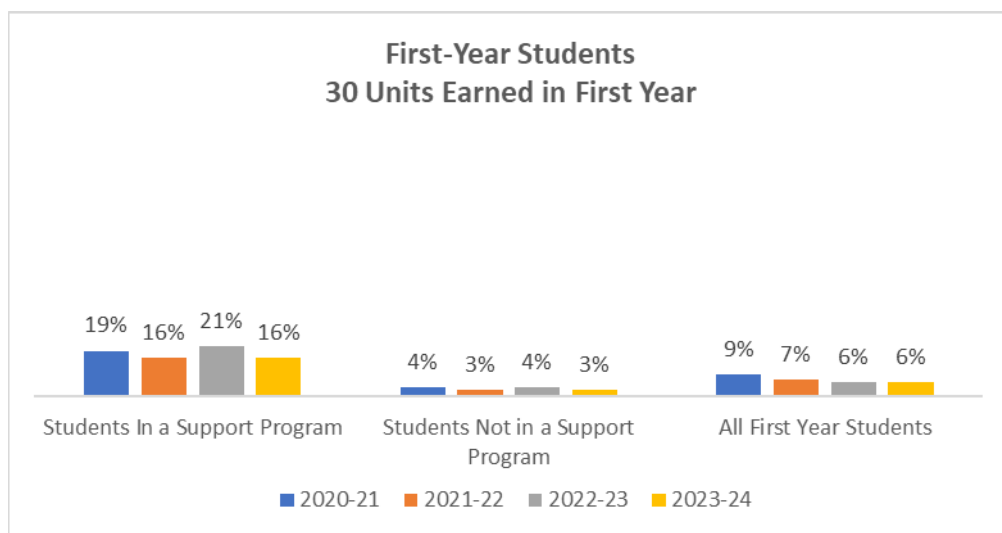
[7] Howard, M., & Harrington, C. (2022). *Essential factors of a 15 to Finish campaign: Increasing on-time completion rates for community college students. Impacting Education: Journal on Transforming Professional Practice, 7*(2).

15 Units Earned in First Term: Fall 2020 to Fall 2024

First Year Students
15 Units Earned in First Term

	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
Students In a Support Program	16%	16%	18%	12%	13%
Students Not in a Support Program	6%	4%	6%	3%	3%
All First Year Students	10%	8%	9%	6%	4%

Source: Colleague

30 Units Earned in First Year: 2020-21 to 2023-24

First-Year Students
30 Units Earned in First Year

|	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Students In a Support Program	19%	16%	21%	16%
Students Not in a Support Program	4%	3%	4%	3%
All First Year Students	9%	7%	6%	6%

Source: Colleague

4. Educational Efficiency

Educational efficiency for degree and certificate earners can be measured by different factors. One factor is the average time students take to earn a certificate or degree. On average, ECC students take 4.4 years from initial enrollment to complete a degree or certificate.

Students who participate in a support program complete their degree/certificate in an average of 3.7 years, compared to 5.6 years for those students who do not participate in a support program.

6

Average # of Years Students Take to Earn a Degree/Certificate: 2020-21 to 2023-24
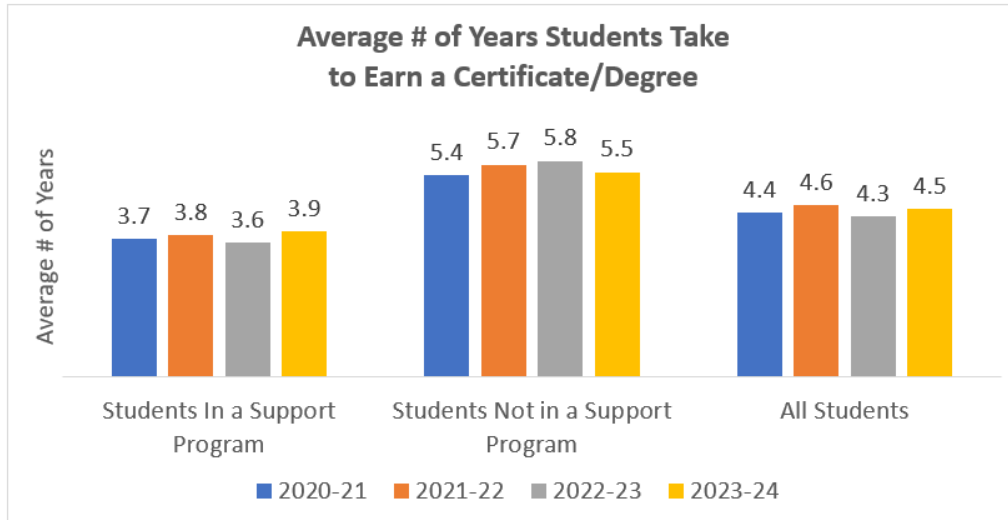
Source: Time to Completion Dashboard

Another factor that measures educational efficiency is the total units that students earned at the time they attain a degree. **The average number of units earned by students who are awarded an Associate of Arts/Associate of Science's degree is 72 units. Students in a support program averaged 72 units while students who did not participate in a support program averaged 70 units.**

*Total Average Units Earned for Associate of Arts/Associate of Science - 2020-21 to 2023-24*
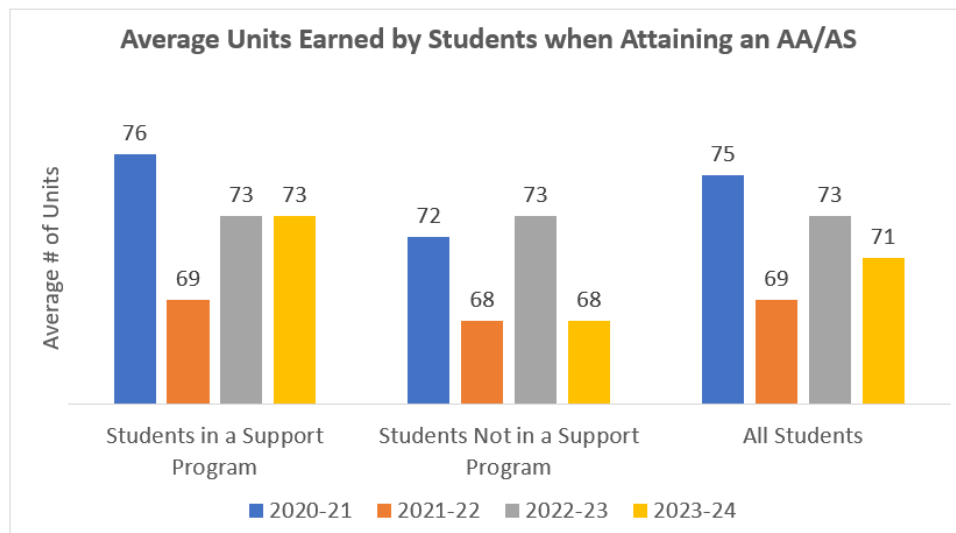
Source: Time to Completion Dashboard

The average number of units earned by students who earned a Certificate is 56 units. Students in a support program averaged 68 units while students who did not participate in a support program averaged 70 units.

Total Average Units Earned for Certificate - 2020-21 to 2023-24
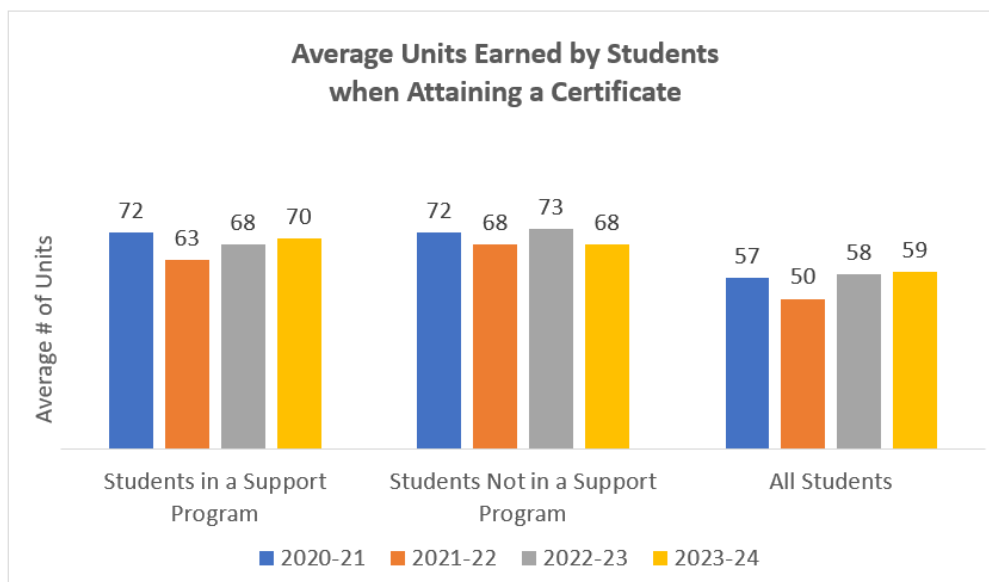
Source: Time to Completion Dashboard

Overall, students in support programs average more units and take less time to earn a degree or certificate in comparison to students not in a support programs who average less units and take more time to earn a degree or certificate. ***This finding probably reflects the effectiveness of support programs where the extra units are most likely part of their structured educational path leading students to fewer delays and shorter time to completion. Students who are not in a support program may be taking longer due to enrolling part-time and/or changing their educational path which leads to extended time to completion.***

Strategies that have been found to improve educational efficiency include integrated delivery of academic and non-academic supports (e.g. tutoring + transportation help), aligning supports with student needs across key milestones (from connection to completion) and offering "one-stop" hubs that bring multiple support services together (academic, financial, basic needs) in a centralized location.[8]

With finite resources, it would be best to make sure all students are as aware as possible of the existing resources that they may avail themselves of. It is also important to develop awareness among students that demographic-focused support centers are open to all students. Given additional resources, El Camino might explore further support services, such as reinstating the Child Development Center. Doing so would immediately benefit students in the Childhood Development program but would also immediately benefit the broader community of El Camino by providing a service that would enable more students to enroll, succeed, and persist in their education.

---

[8] Brock, T., & Slater, D. (Eds.). (2021). *Strategies for improving postsecondary credential attainment among Black, Hispanic, and Native American adults.* Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University.