

A New Era of Student Access at California's Community Colleges

November 20, 2020

Marisol Cuellar Mejia, Olga Rodriguez, and Hans Johnson

Supported with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the College Futures Foundation, the ECMC Foundation, the Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, and the Sutton Family Fund



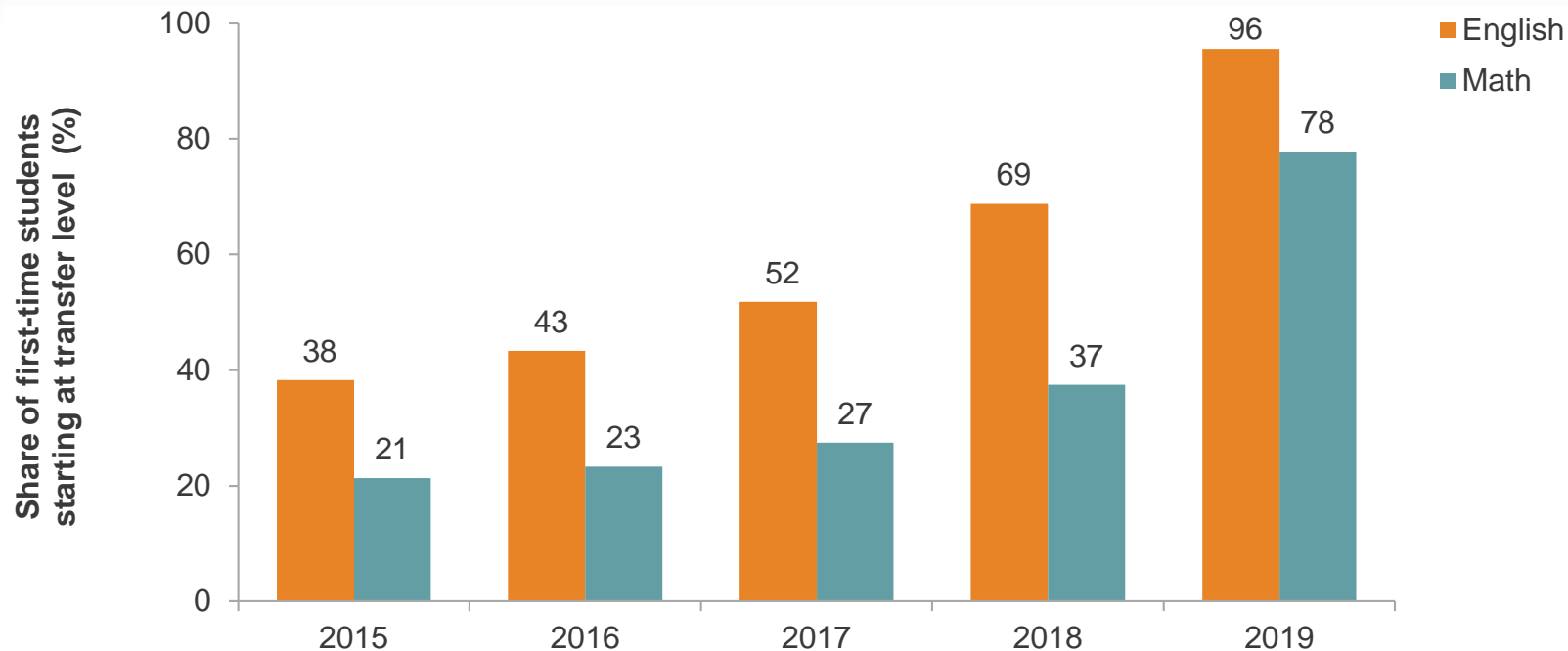
PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

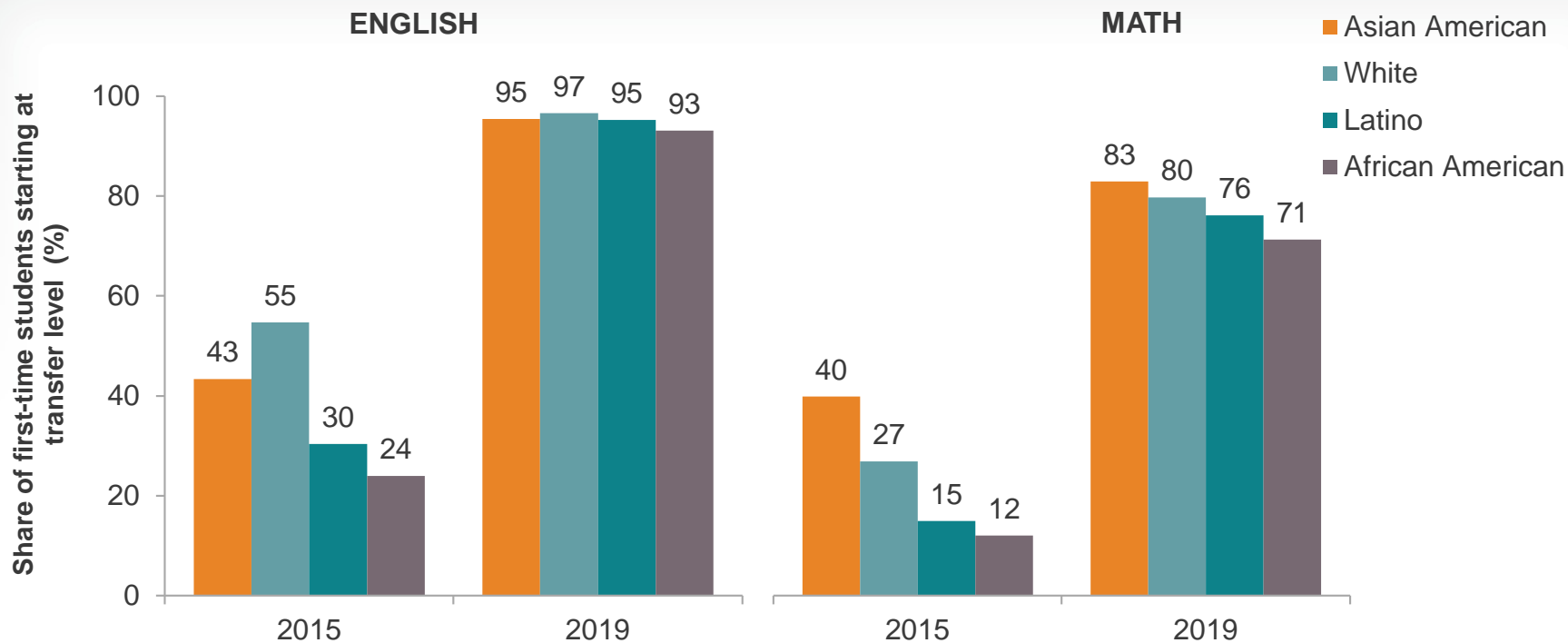
A landmark law has transformed access at California's community colleges

- Remedial education was a major obstacle to student success
 - Vast majority of students were placed in remedial courses
 - Poor outcomes and deep inequities highlighted need for change
- AB 705 dramatically transformed placement and remediation
 - Requires that colleges maximize students' chances of completing transfer-level English and math within one year
 - Mandates the use of high school records as the primary criteria for placement
- We examine access, outcomes, and racial equity after AB 705

In fall 2019, the vast majority of students enrolled directly in transfer-level courses



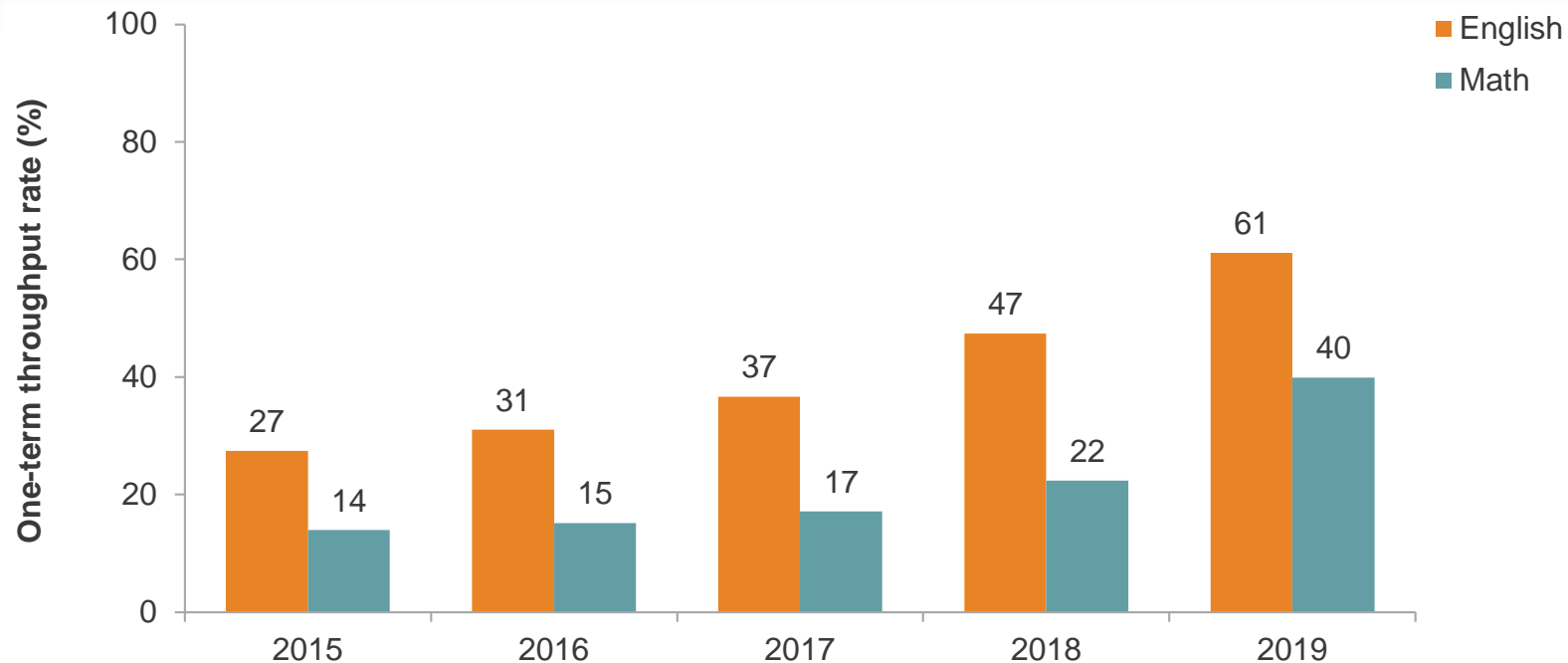
Racial/ethnic gaps in access narrowed dramatically



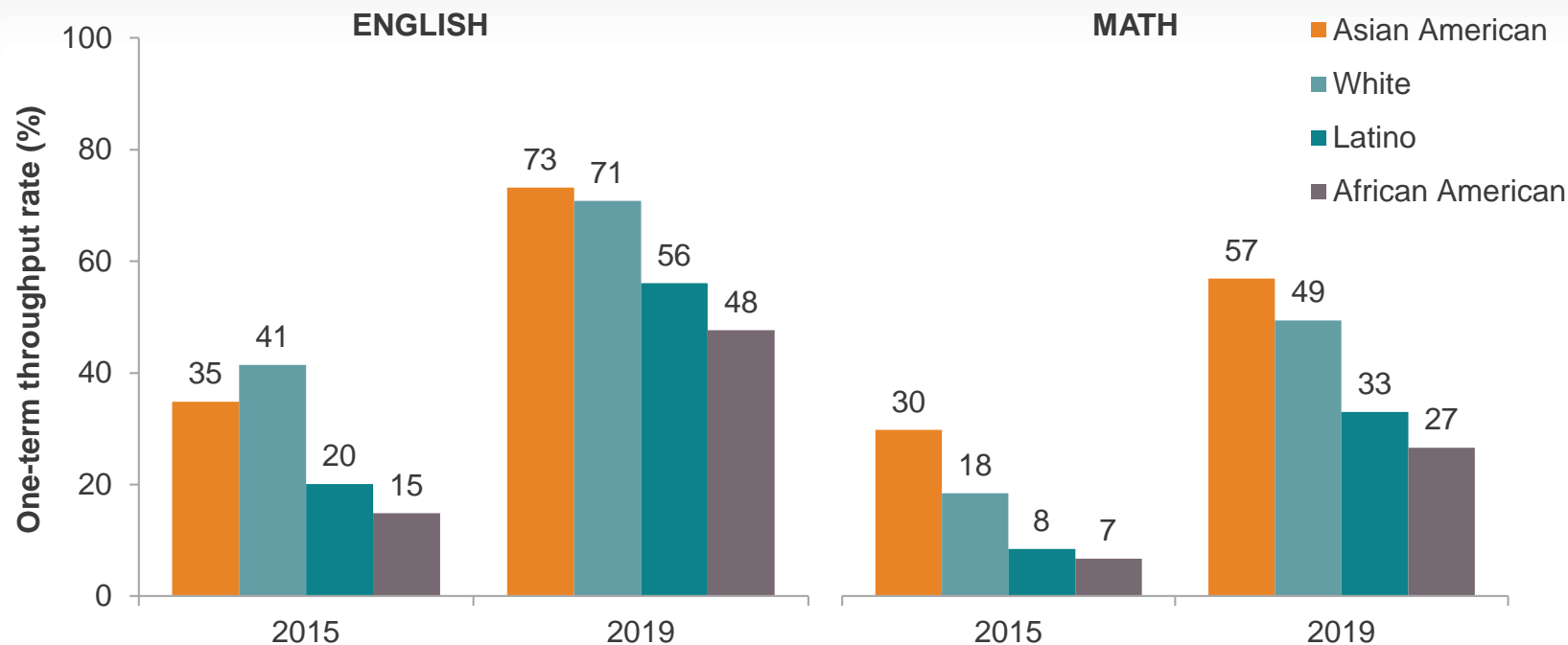
Placement policies vary across colleges

- Among first-time English/math students:
 - 21 colleges enrolled 10% or more in English remediation
 - 23 colleges enrolled 35% or more in math remediation
- Certain placement policies may limit access
 - Placement rules and requiring remediation
 - Using counselors to gather “multiple measures” data
 - Sample readings/writing and math problems
- Still, even lower-access colleges today would be considered successes when compared to the old system

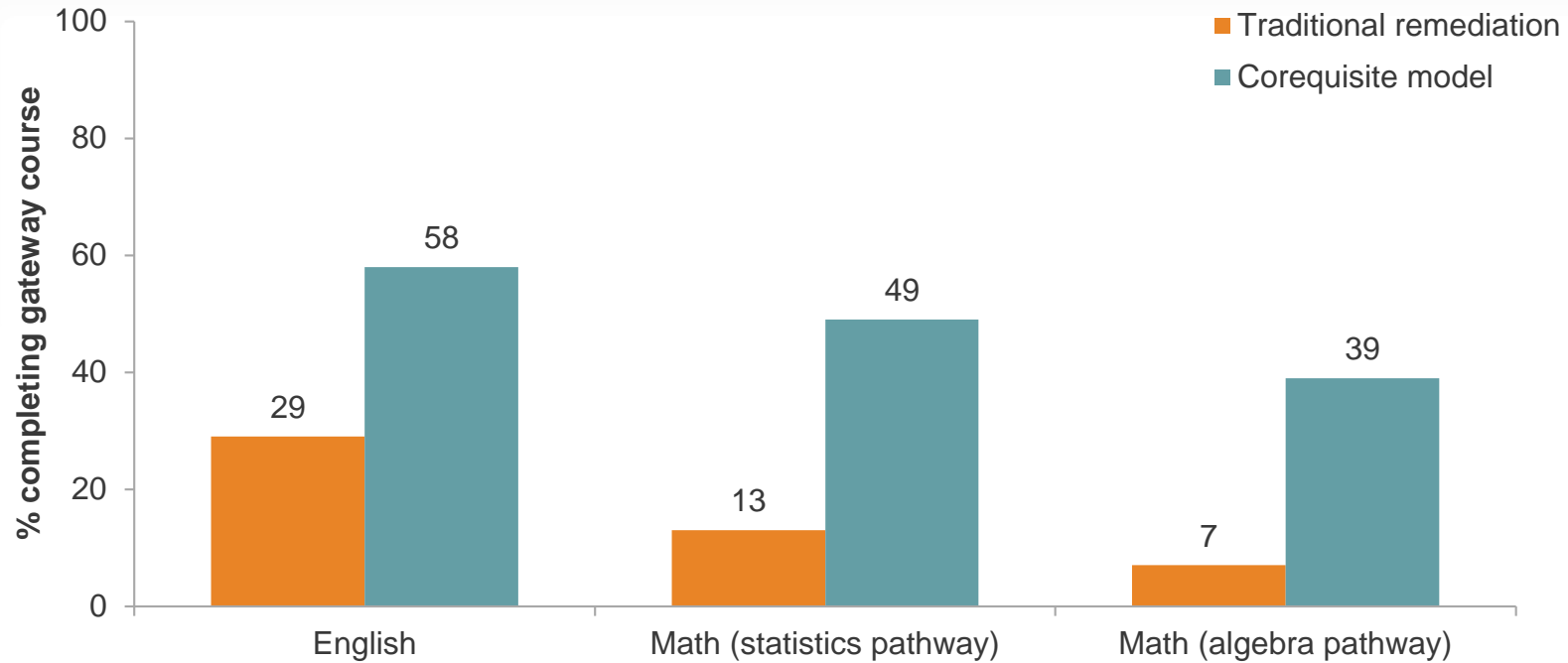
More students are completing gateway courses on their first attempt



Progress is across the board, but equity gaps persist



Corequisite courses are more effective than traditional remediation



Recommendations

- Ensure placement methods broaden—rather than limit—access
 - Encourage placement into corequisite courses
- Refocus advising and counseling
- Prioritize closing racial equity gaps
- Gain a better understanding of how to serve students with varied academic skills and backgrounds
 - Pandemic has highlighted wide-ranging challenges
- Commit to evidence-based continuous improvement

Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

Marisol Cuellar Mejia (cuellar@ppic.org; 916-440-1135)

Olga Rodriguez (rodriguez@ppic.org; 415-291-4457)

Hans Johnson (johnson@ppic.org; 415-291-4460)

Thank you for your interest in this work.

A New Era of Student Access at California's Community Colleges

November 20, 2020

Marisol Cuellar Mejia, Olga Rodriguez, and Hans Johnson

Supported with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the College Futures Foundation, the ECMC Foundation, the Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, and the Sutton Family Fund



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA