

Early Evidence on Placement and Curricular Reforms in California Community Colleges

September 7, 2018

Olga Rodriguez, Marisol Cuellar Mejia, and Hans Johnson

Supported with funding from the California Acceleration Project
and the Sutton Family Fund



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

California community colleges are transforming developmental education

- AB 705 requires community colleges to maximize the probability of students entering and completing transfer-level courses in one year
- It mandates the use of high school records as the primary criteria for placement recommendations
- And it will lead to significant curricular reforms
- The Chancellor's Office recently released default placement rules and guidance for implementation
- All community colleges must be in compliance with AB 705 no later than fall 2019

Early implementers can shed light on AB 705's impact

- Several colleges started experimenting with placement and curricular reforms before AB 705 was signed into law
- Placement reform
 - More than half of colleges have either implemented or were in the process of doing so
- Co-requisite courses
 - Nine colleges offered co-requisite English courses and two colleges offered co-requisite math courses in 2016–17

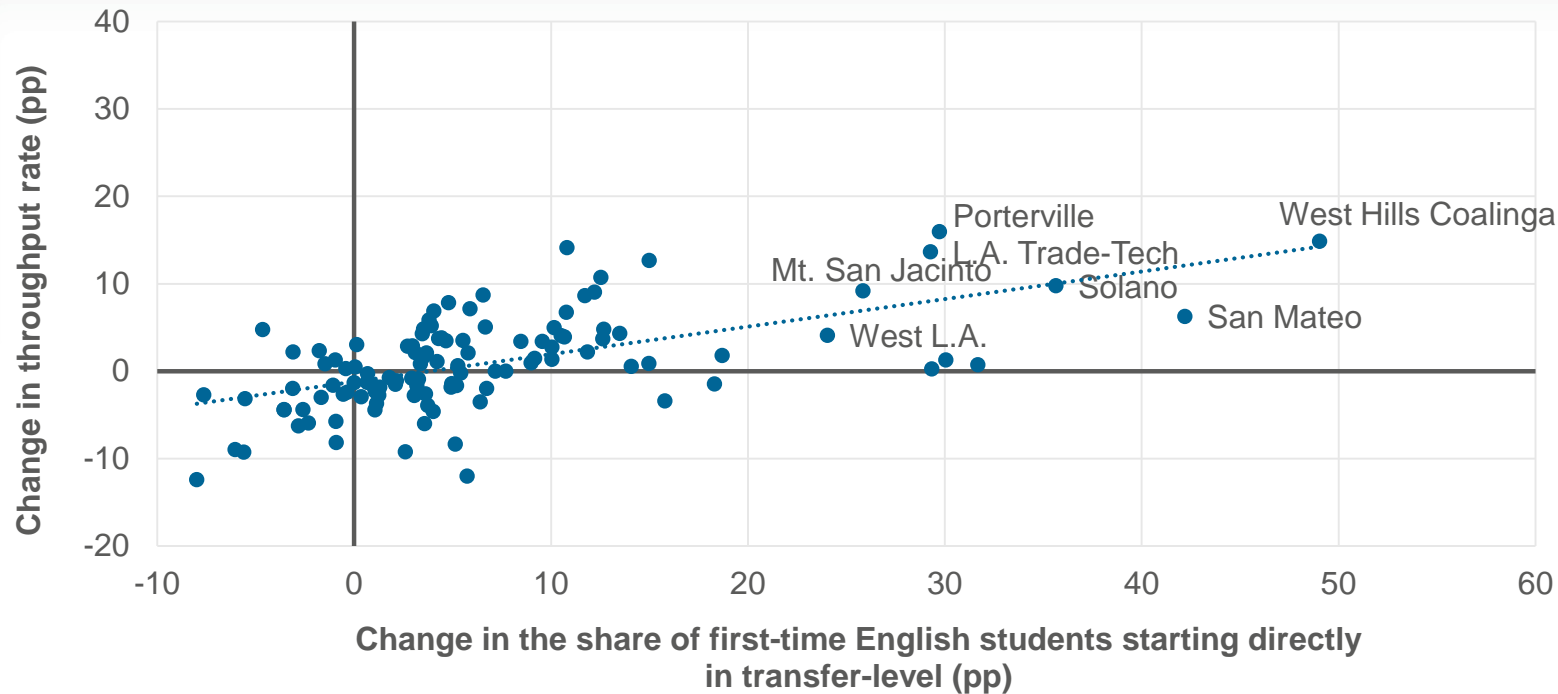
Access to college composition increased among early implementers

- At six colleges, the share of first-time English students going directly into college composition increased more than 28 percentage points
 - Two-thirds of first-time English students in these colleges started directly in college composition
- Five of these schools are using self-reported GPA rules aligned with AB 705 default placement rules
- Two have further broadened access to transfer-level English by offering co-requisites
- One made all of its gains through co-requisite courses

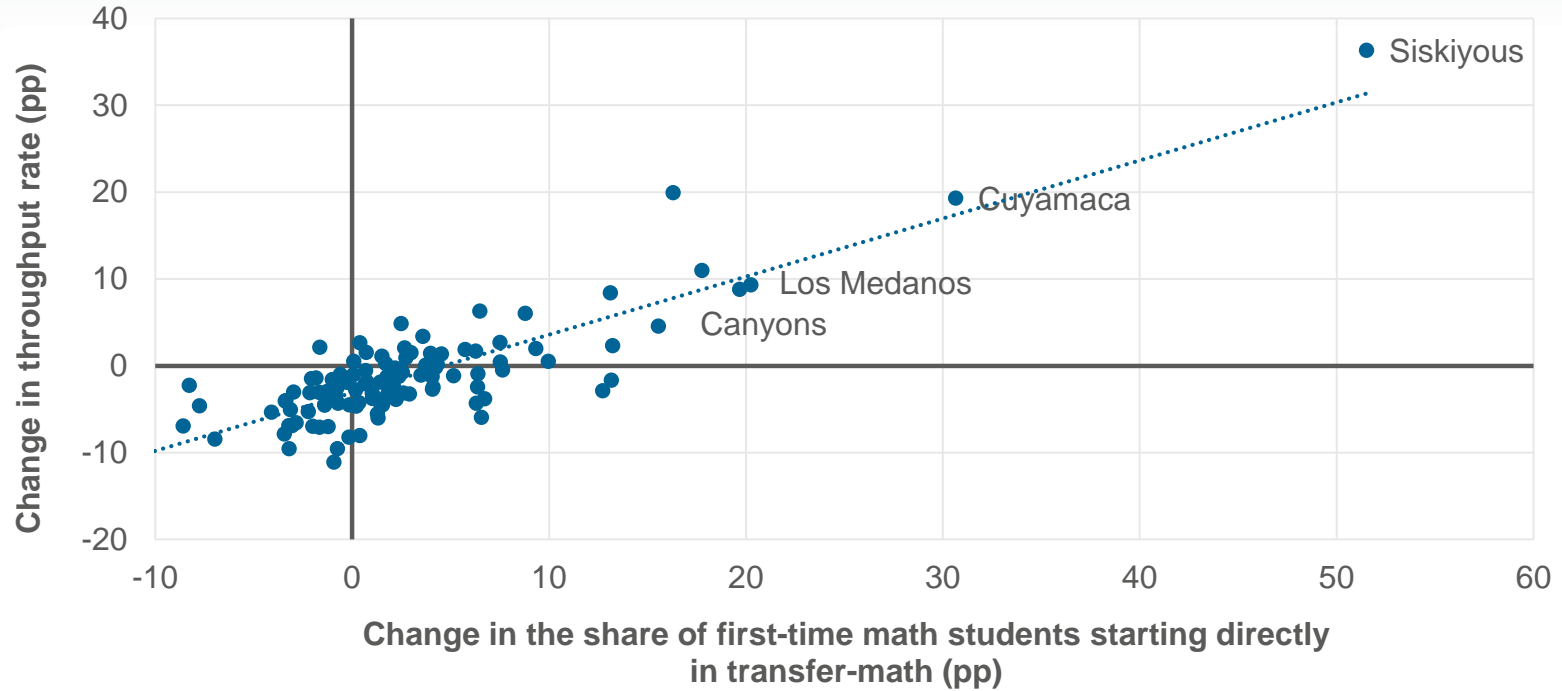
Access to transfer-level math also increased

- Three colleges—Siskiyou, Cuyamaca, and Los Medanos—had increases of 20 percentage points or more
 - Most first-time math students started in a transfer-level math course
- Cuyamaca and Los Medanos are using self-reported GPA cut-offs that are lower than the default placement rules for transfer-level statistics
 - For example, 2.8 GPA vs. 3.0 GPA
- Cuyamaca and Los Medanos colleges also offered co-requisite courses
- Siskiyou lowered lecture units and increased lab units in its statistics course

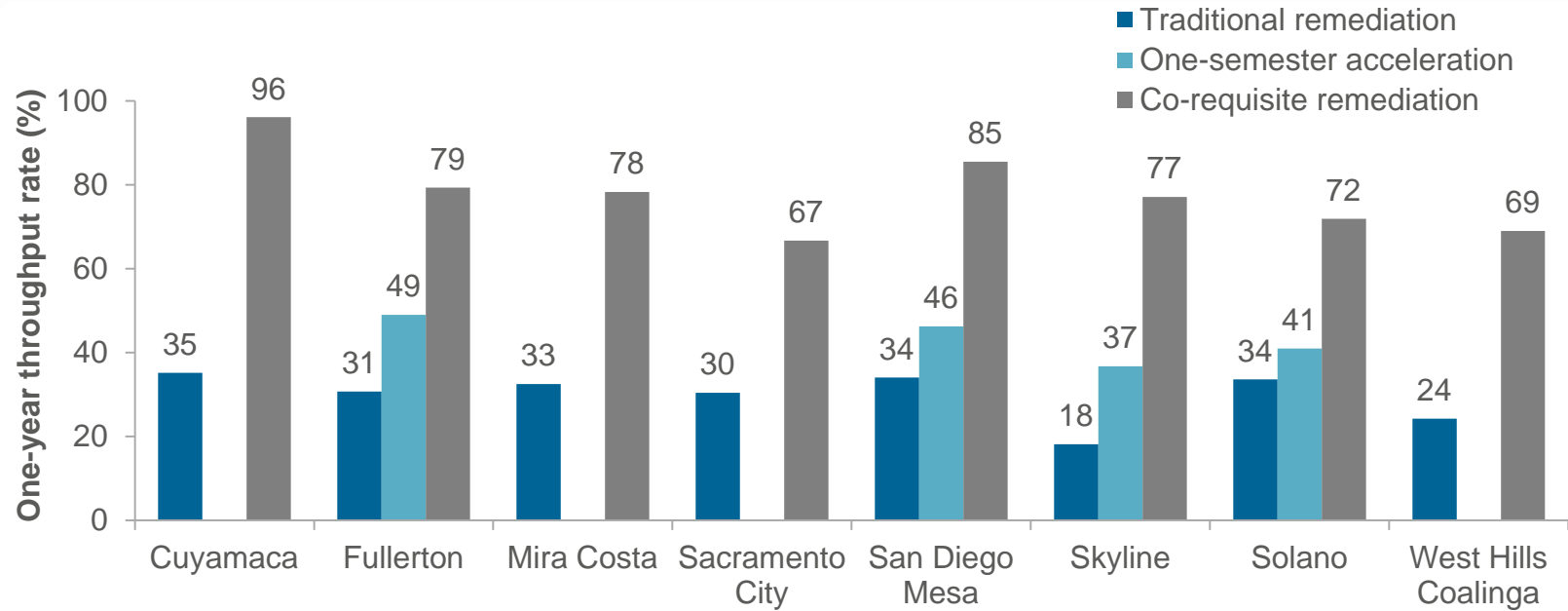
In English, increases in access are related to increases in throughput rates



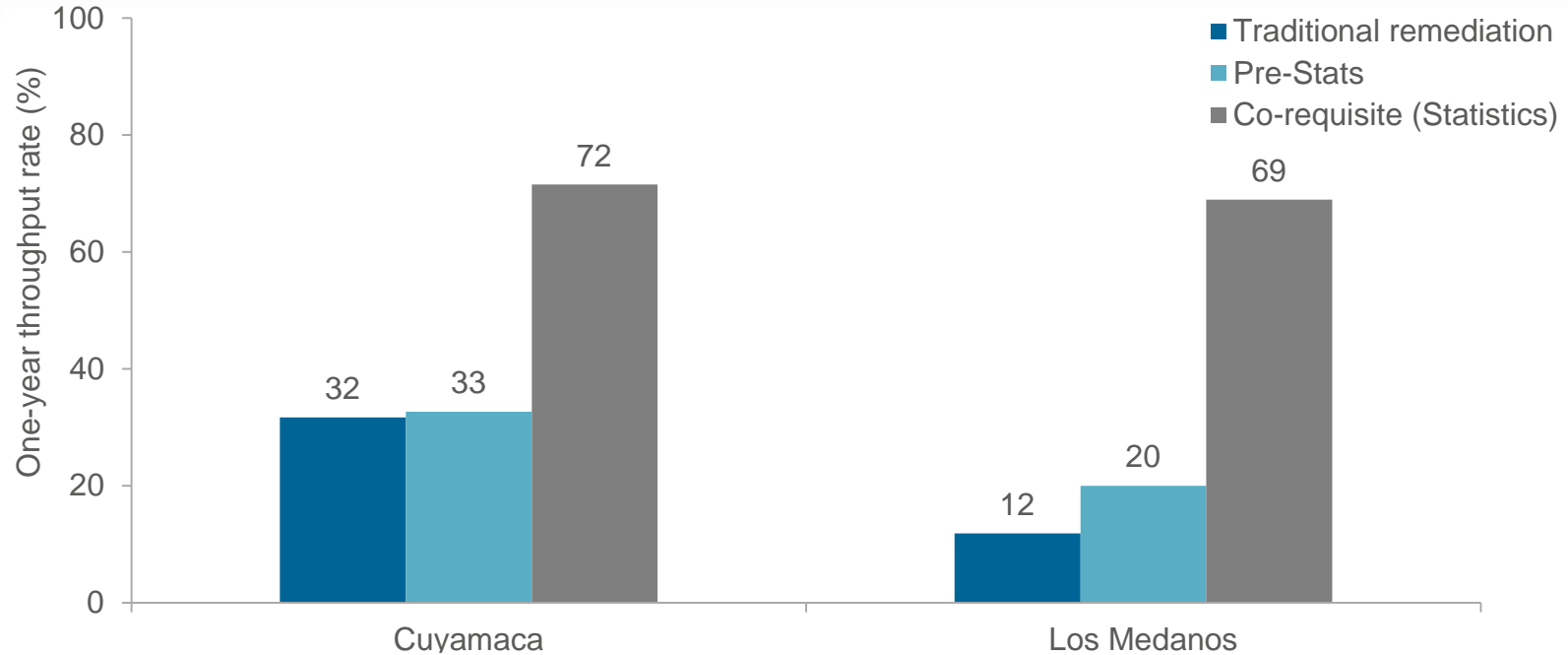
This relationship is stronger for math



Students in co-requisite courses were much more likely to complete college composition within one year



Similarly, students in statistics co-requisites had much higher throughput rates



Equity considerations

- At early implementer colleges, significantly more underrepresented students are accessing transfer-level math courses
 - The average throughput rate is more than twice the statewide average
 - Equity gaps are smaller than statewide averages
- Improvements in average college-level composition access and throughput rates are less dramatic
 - Equity gaps in English are slightly smaller than statewide averages

Looking ahead

- Accountability, monitoring, and evaluation are going to be key
- Research will continue to play a critical role
 - Types of concurrent support that work best
 - Longer-term impacts
 - Unintended consequences

Early Evidence on Placement and Curricular Reforms in California Community Colleges

September 7, 2018

Olga Rodriguez, Marisol Cuellar Mejia, and Hans Johnson

Supported with funding from the California Acceleration Project
and the Sutton Family Fund



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

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)

Thank you for your interest in this work.