

**2015 REPORT  
TO THE  
COMMUNITY**





## Dear Friends of the Higher Education Compact:

I would like to share with you the Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland's 2015 College Success Dashboard report. This report presents fourth-year performance data on the college readiness, access and persistence indicators adopted by the Compact in 2011. The Compact sets high goals and reports on the progress each year to maintain transparency and accountability.



**CITY OF CLEVELAND**  
Mayor Frank G. Jackson

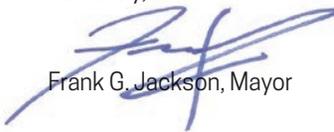
As you will see in the following pages, steady progress has been made in many of the indicators – particularly related to college readiness and persistence. The high school graduation rate among Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) students is up 10 percentage points since 2011. First- to second-year retention is up eight percentage points over last year at 57 percent, the highest rate since measuring began. Similarly, the percentage of CMSD graduates needing remediation when they arrive on college campuses is at its lowest point since assessments began, and students who do need remediation are moving through it and into college-level coursework faster than before.

While we are showing overall gains in readiness and persistence, we have not met our access goals (the number of students getting into college). Since we are not meeting the access goals set in 2011, the Compact is looking at several strategies to try to increase the number of students enrolled in college by increasing the use of college and career planning software, providing intense support to students during the college application and enrollment process, and identifying ways to address the serious financial barriers our students and their parents face.

Despite these successes, there is still a need to accelerate the pace of improvement if we are going to meet not only the goals we set as a Compact, but also the demands of a 21st century economy.

Thank you for your continued commitment.

Sincerely,



Frank G. Jackson, Mayor



## Key Takeaways from the Report

The commitment of Compact partners to increase educational attainment among Cleveland students has taken hold, and we are seeing encouraging results across a majority of measures. On the front end, college readiness indicators have improved as a result of the implementation of *Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools*, our community's educational reform plan. And on the back end, we are seeing significant progress in college persistence, once our students are on college campuses. College access indicators have seen only moderate progress in some areas and slight declines in others, and is our biggest area of concern this year. While we continue to celebrate the good news, we must make a concerted effort to make more improvement, faster.

### COLLEGE READINESS

College readiness indicators are mostly positive.

**The overall college readiness attainment goal is to increase the four-year high school graduation rate from 56 percent in 2012 to 71 percent by 2017.**

The high school graduation rate (66 percent), the percentage of students graduating with a 3.0 GPA or higher (30 percent), the percentage of graduates with an ACT score of 21 or higher (15 percent) and the percentage of students participating in advanced placement testing (5.6 percent) are at their highest rates since the Compact began measuring in 2011; and the percentage of students needing remediation in math or English (66 percent) is at its lowest point in that period. That is all encouraging news. On the other

hand, after several years of gains, the percentage of students on track to graduate among the class of 2016 (67 percent) and the percentages of students scoring a 3, 4, or 5 on the AP exam among the class of 2014 (8.8 percent) slightly declined.

### COLLEGE ACCESS

Some progress has been made in college access in the last year, but when looked at over time, this data is disappointing. **The overall college access attainment goal is to increase college enrollment within one year after graduation among CMSD graduates from 61 percent to 66 percent by 2017.** There has been a slight recovery from the two-year decline in college enrollment rate among CMSD graduates,

with 56 percent of the class of 2014 enrolling in college within one year, up from 53 percent for the class of 2013. The average number of college applications per student is rising, from 5.4 among the class of 2014 to 6.7 among the class of 2015.

FAFSA completion rose this year from 57 percent among the class of 2014 to 59 percent among the class of 2015, but again, this follows one year of decline and one year of no growth. Naviance usage declined for the second straight year, with 42 percent of students using the tool. The average number of times students take the ACT is an indicator that has fluctuated over time, and it declined among the class of 2015 to 1.64, from 1.66 among the class of 2014. The percentage of students completing at least one college application peaked among the class of 2013 and has declined for the second straight year, to 51 percent, among the class of 2015.

### COLLEGE PERSISTENCE

The college persistence data are a particular bright spot this year. **The overall college persistence attainment goal is to increase the six-year completion rate among CMSD graduates from four-year institutions from 28 percent to 47 percent and to increase the three-year completion rate from two-year institutions from two percent to seven percent by 2017.** The six-year completion rate from Compact four-year institutions was 35 percent among the CMSD class of 2009, the highest rate we have seen since we began measuring; and the three-year completion rate from Compact two-year institutions held steady at 5 percent. The first- to

second-year retention rate (57 percent), the on-time, four-year completion rate from four-year institutions (22 percent), the remedial course passage rate (78 percent), and the percentage of CMSD graduates completing at least 24 college-level courses within one year of enrollment among four-year institutions

(52 percent) are all at the highest levels we have seen since we began measuring. The percentage of CMSD graduates completing at least 24 college-level credits within one year of enrollment among two-year institutions rebounded this year to 34 percent after two years of decline. The percentage of CMSD graduates transferring from two-year to four-year institutions declined significantly, from 21 percent among the class of 2008 to 12 percent among the class of 2009.

We are seeing encouraging results across a majority of measures.

# BACKGROUND

## Our Challenge Moving Forward: Accelerating the Pace of Improvement

The need for post-secondary education has never been greater. We know that, by 2020, two-thirds of Ohio's jobs will require post-secondary training of some kind, be it a two-year or four-year degree or a technical certificate.<sup>1</sup> Yet, according to U.S. Census data, only 34 percent of Ohio's adults age 25-64 have either a two- or four-year degree, below the national average of 40 percent and falling significantly short of the 66 percent needed statewide to fulfill the future demand for skilled workers. In Cleveland, the picture is worse, with only 21 percent of working-age adults holding a two- or four-year degree.<sup>2</sup>

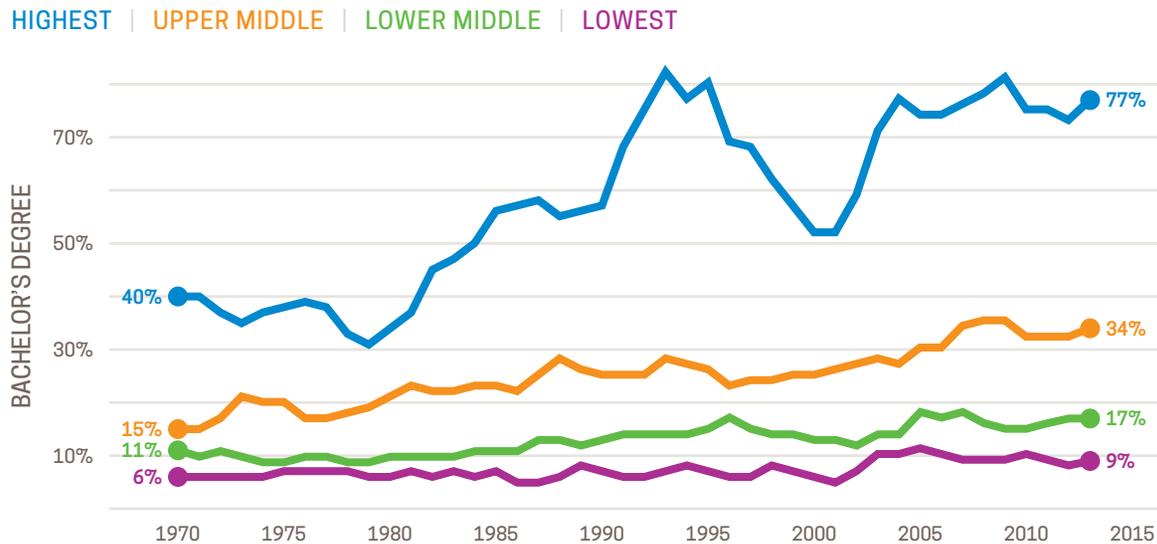
We know that, if our community is going to thrive, we must significantly increase the level of post-secondary attainment – for the benefit of individuals and the benefit of the community at large. College graduates earn an average of 65 percent more over the course of a career – or *\$1 million more* – than their counterparts with only a high school diploma.<sup>3</sup> Communities with more college graduates benefit from lower crime rates, enhanced community services, reduced reliance on government safety net services and a larger tax base.<sup>4</sup>

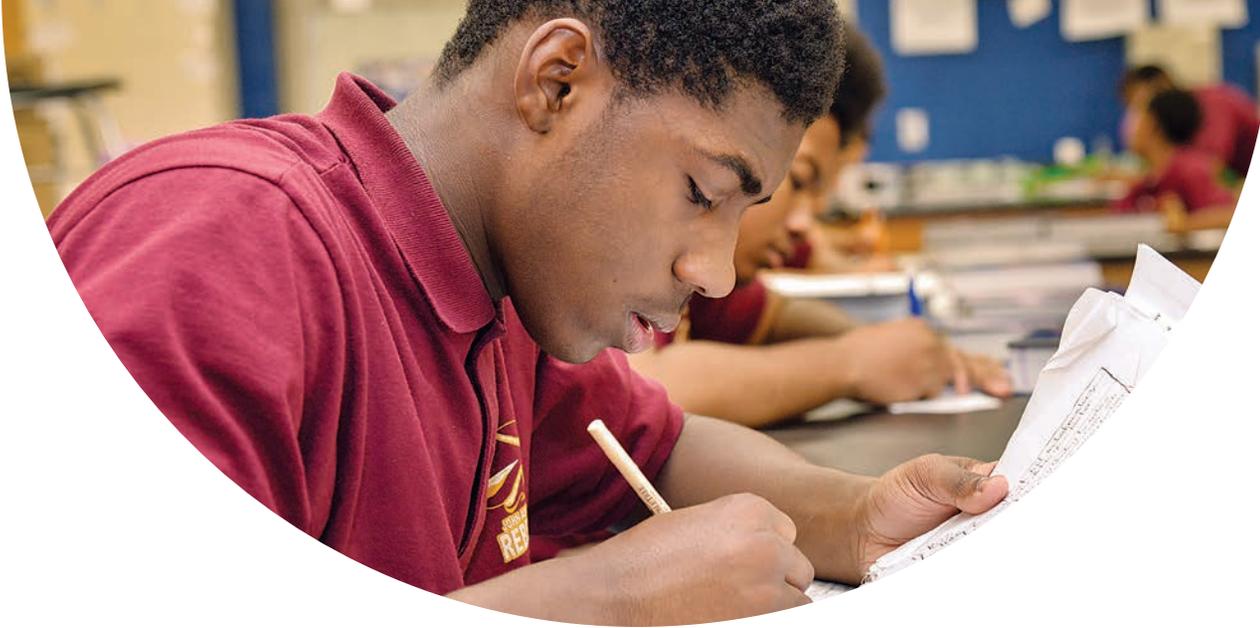
We are making incremental progress on many of the goals and indicators the Compact partners set in 2011. While this should be celebrated, the reality is that the current pace of progress will not get us where we need to be fast enough. We need to accelerate our work to quickly close the gap between the attainment level of CMSD graduates and the current and future demand for a skilled workforce.

We know, based on historical and current data, that closing this gap will not be easy. Most CMSD graduates come from low- and moderate-income families. As Figure 1 illustrates, there is a significant historical correlation between income level and educational attainment that is both pernicious and alarming. As income decreases, so does a student's chances of college completion. The completion rates among students whose family income falls in the bottom three quartiles are between 9 and 34 percent, whereas the average completion rate among students whose family income falls in the top quartile is 77 percent. Figure 1 also demonstrates that performance among the bottom two quartiles

### Bachelor's Degree Attainment by Age 24 for Dependent Family Members by Family Income Quartile: 1973–2013

FIGURE 1

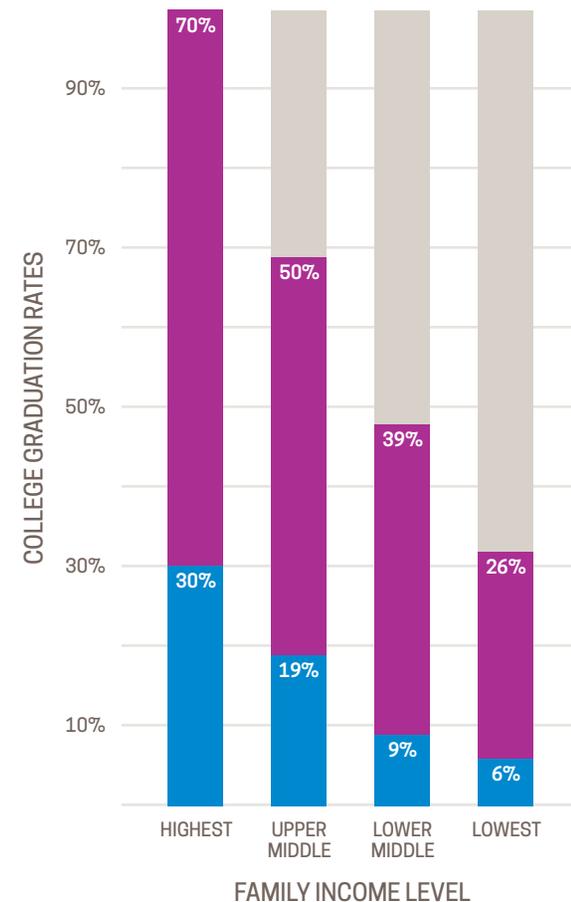




## College Graduation Rates by Family Income & Test Scores

BELOW-AVERAGE TEST SCORES  
ABOVE-AVERAGE TEST SCORES

FIGURE 2



in particular (the quartiles in which the majority of Cleveland students fall) has been fairly stagnant over the last 50 years while the top two quartiles have increased significantly.<sup>5</sup>

Figure 2 illustrates the severity of this inequity, demonstrating that high-income students with below-average test scores complete college at a rate higher than high-achieving, low-income students.<sup>6</sup> This suggests that, while college readiness is a critical part of a student's post-secondary success, the institutional, financial, social and personal barriers low-income students face are preventing them from crossing the finish line.

As a community, we must tackle the question:

**What will it take to break this disturbing pattern and make meaningful progress in closing the equity gap?**

We believe that a systematic, accelerated approach is required, and we will spend the next year thinking through how to significantly increase the pace of progress in our three targeted focus areas: college readiness, college access and college persistence. It will take a concerted effort on the part of partners to not only address the academic factors that impede progress but also the non-academic factors that influence student outcomes. We need to develop systems that build student motivation and aspiration for a future beyond high school; ensure all students who are prepared for post-secondary education enroll in their best-fit option; address the issue of college affordability; further support students once they arrive on campuses and make certain they have access to all of the resources available to increase their chances of completion.

<sup>1</sup> Anthony Carnevale, et. al., "Recovery: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2020." June 2013. <sup>2</sup> 5-year Estimate, 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau. <sup>3</sup> Education Pays, 2013. <sup>4</sup> Education Pays, 2013. <sup>5</sup> Bottom quartile: Less than \$34,160; Second quartile: \$34,160-\$63,600; Third quartile: \$63,600-\$108,650; Top quartile: \$108,650 and above. The Pell Institute, 2015: *Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States*. <sup>6</sup> Lumina Foundation, 2015: *Beyond Financial Aid*.

# COLLEGE SUCCESS DASHBOARD



The Higher Education Compact was formed in 2010 to prepare the next generation of our city's citizens and future workforce by ensuring students have access to high-quality academic preparation that puts them on pathways to college and careers. Compact partners – including government, public education, higher education, philanthropic, civic and youth-serving organizations – came together to align their work and set goals for post-secondary success, specifically, for increasing high school graduation, college enrollment and college completion rates.

To report annual progress on those goals, Compact partners created a College Success Dashboard, which includes the overall attainment goals and specific indicators associated with college readiness, college access and college persistence (see below).

The following pages present a detailed description of the 2015 dashboard data and the implications of this data for the Compact's future priorities.

## COLLEGE READINESS INDICATORS

- Percent students on-track to graduate
- Percent students graduating with a 3.0 GPA or higher
- Percent graduates with a score of 21 or higher on the ACT
- Percent students participating in Advanced Placement Testing
- Percent students earning a score of 3, 4 or 5 on Advanced Placement exams
- Percent high school students participating in Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Program (PSEOP)
- Percent high school graduates needing remediation in math or English

## COLLEGE ACCESS INDICATORS

- Percent students using Naviance
- Average number of times students take the ACT
- Percent students completing at least one college application
- Average number of completed college applications per student (of those who completed one)
- Approved Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) rate

## COLLEGE PERSISTENCE INDICATORS

- Percent CMSD graduates retained in all Compact institutions from year one to year two
- Percent CMSD graduates earning degrees from four-year Compact institutions within four years
- Percent CMSD graduates transferring from two-year to four-year institutions
- Remedial course passage rate
- Percent CMSD graduates completing at least 24 college-level credits within one year of enrollment at Compact four-year and two-year institutions

## Developments Since the Compact's 2014 Report

### INCREASING COLLEGE READINESS AND ACCESS THROUGH AN ACT PREP CAMPAIGN

When the Higher Education Compact outlined its strategic work plan for the 2015–16 year, it decided to focus on ACT scores. The Compact strategically chose 10 CMSD high schools in which to pilot a targeted campaign designed to increase scores on the ACT exam. The Compact pledged to raise the scores of those students at the threshold of college readiness – scoring either a 16/17 or 19/20 ACT score, within reach of an 18 or 21 ACT score, respectively. Threshold students were registered for the October and December 2015 ACT exam. Results of this campaign can be found on page 14 of this report.

### INCREASING POST-SECONDARY ENROLLMENT THROUGH AN EXPANDED COLLEGE APPLICATION MONTH CAMPAIGN

In 2014, the Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland sponsored its first annual College Application Month. The initiative provided six CMSD high schools with the necessary financial and curricular support to host application days, essay writing and review workshops, and FAFSA/scholarship application days during regular school hours. Building off the success of the 2014 events, the Compact expanded the 2015 Application Month campaign to include 10 CMSD schools. Between September 2015 and January 2016, 35 individual workshops were held to help low-income and first generation students navigate the college application process. These events focused on essay writing and review, application days and scholarship/FAFSA.

### INCREASING PERSISTENCE THROUGH DEEPER ENGAGEMENT WITH CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Cleveland State University and Cuyahoga Community College enroll the largest number of CMSD graduates out of all Compact higher education partners. In partnership with the Compact, these two institutions have developed a more robust transfer plan to serve students who move between their institutions. The plan is based on Complete College America's *Game Changers* strategies, which include placing students concurrently in remedial support and college-level coursework; encouraging students to take 15 credits per semester for the price of 12 to help reduce the amount of time to degree completion; developing structured schedules that help students balance school and work obligations; and introducing guided pathways to success that map out every semester of study and guarantee that milestone classes are available when needed.<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, as part of the focus on increasing persistence of CMSD students, Cleveland State University and Cuyahoga Community College agreed to explore the *Beyond Financial Aid* assessment introduced by the Lumina Foundation. *Beyond Financial Aid* expands the traditional definition of what financial resources are included in the cost of attendance to include nutrition, transportation, housing, child care, financial, tax and legal services. Cleveland State has taken the lead in this work and created a “retention roundtable.” The roundtable group has taken an initial assessment and is in early stages of discussion about what areas might be most effective for their student population.



### RAISING CAREER AWARENESS AMONG CMSD EIGHTH GRADERS THROUGH TRUE2U

The True2U program is an innovative mentoring and career awareness program that prepares eighth grade students for the transition from middle school to high school. It is a partnership between the CMSD, MyCom, Neighborhood Leadership Institute and the Greater Cleveland Partnership that began at the start of the 2015–16 school year with an initial cohort of 850 Cleveland youth. The program's goal is to serve all 2,500 eighth grade students in 68 schools by the beginning of the 2017–18 school year. Research shows that students are at highest risk of dropping out of school between the eighth and tenth grades. True2U is positioned to mobilize an extensive network of school and community resources to help youth acknowledge their strengths, develop personal and career goals, make the right high school choice, preserve innate optimism and stay on the path to graduation and a fulfilling future.

<sup>7</sup> Complete College America, 2013: *The Game Changers*

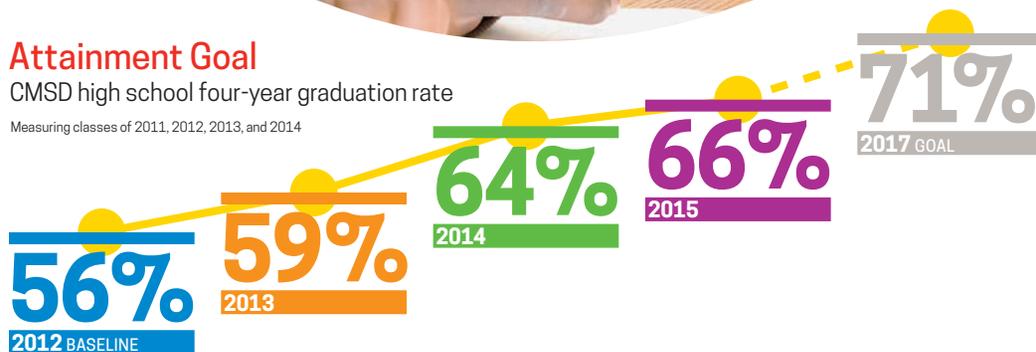
# READINESS



## Attainment Goal

CMSD high school four-year graduation rate

Measuring classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014



The Compact's college readiness goal is to increase the four-year high school graduation rate among CMSD high school students from 56 percent among the class of 2011 to 71 percent for the class of 2017. The CMSD continues to progress toward that goal with a graduation rate of 66 percent among the class of 2014, a two-point increase over the class of 2013. If current trends continue, we are on track to meet this goal.

The Compact has identified seven specific indicators related to this goal. The data is mostly positive, with four out of seven indicators at their highest rates since we began measuring. The on-track to graduate metric for the class of 2016 dropped slightly to 67 percent, as compared to 68 percent among the class of 2015, although both estimates are within each other's margins of error. The variables used to predict whether a student is on-track to graduate are credits accumulated, cumulative GPA, passage of the Ohio Graduation Test, and special education status.

The percentage of students achieving a GPA of 3.0 or higher increased from 26 percent among the class of 2013 to 30 percent among the class of 2014, a total of a seven percentage point increase from the class of 2011. Many colleges and universities use the 3.0 GPA as a cut-off for scholarships, and 3.0 is the minimum threshold students must meet in order to access elite institutions. The percentage of students scoring a 21 or higher on the ACT increased from 14 percent among the class of 2014 to 15 percent among the class of 2015. A score of 21 is the national standard for college readiness, signaling to higher education institutions that a student will likely be able to successfully complete college-level coursework.

Participation in Advanced Placement testing increased by more than 2 percentage points, from 3.2 percent among the class of 2013 to 5.6 percent among the class of 2014. This is an important rebound, as this measure fell two years in a row from a baseline of five percent for the class of 2011. The percentage of students scoring a 3, 4 or 5 on the test

**READINESS IS:**  
**Students having the content knowledge, critical thinking, research skills and academic habits to successfully complete college without remediation.**

decreased slightly for the second year in a row, from 9.2 percent among the class of 2013 to 8.8 percent among the class of 2014.

The percentage of students participating in Post-Secondary Educational Options (PSEOP) increased from 6.8 percent among the class of 2013 to 8.3 percent among the class of 2014. PSEOP allowed high school students with a 3.0 GPA or higher to earn college

credit through the completion of college courses. In 2015, the State of Ohio launched a new program, College Credit Plus (CCP), that replaced PSEOP. The CMSD's primary CCP partners are Cleveland State University and Cuyahoga Community College. In the first year of the program, 1,178 students participated in CCP, as compared to 1,013 students who participated in PSEOP in 2014.

The percentage of 2014 CMSD graduates enrolled in Ohio public colleges and universities needing remediation in math or English was 66 percent, 10 percentage points lower than when we began measuring in 2010.<sup>8</sup> This demonstrates that the CMSD is producing more students who can successfully transition from high school directly to college-level coursework when they arrive on campuses.

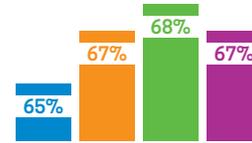
<sup>8</sup> As noted in the Ohio Department of Education's Remediation Report, the class of 2013 was not fully represented due to an error in reporting from colleges. Therefore, the 2013 rate of 63 percent is artificially low.

## Readiness Indicators

2012 BASELINE | 2013 | 2014 | 2015

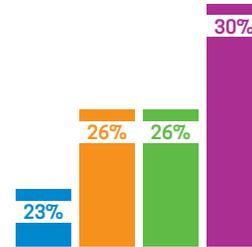
Percent students on-track to graduate

Measuring classes of 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 (error rate for each cohort +/- 2.2%)



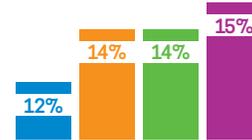
Percent students graduating with a 3.0 GPA or higher

Measuring classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014



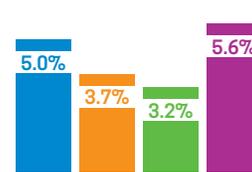
Percent graduates with a score of 21 or higher on the ACT

Measuring classes of 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015



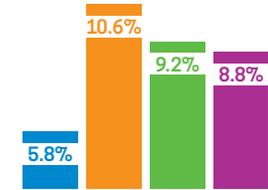
Percent students participating in Advanced Placement testing

Measuring classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014



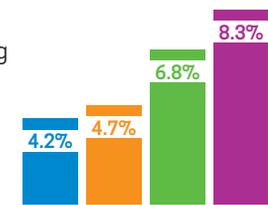
Percent students earning a score of 3, 4, or 5 on Advanced Placement exams

Measuring classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014



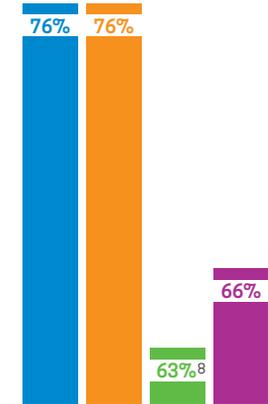
Percent high school students participating in Post Secondary Enrollment Options Program (PSEOP)

Measuring classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014



Percent high school graduates needing remediation in math or English

Measuring classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014



## READINESS MOVING FORWARD

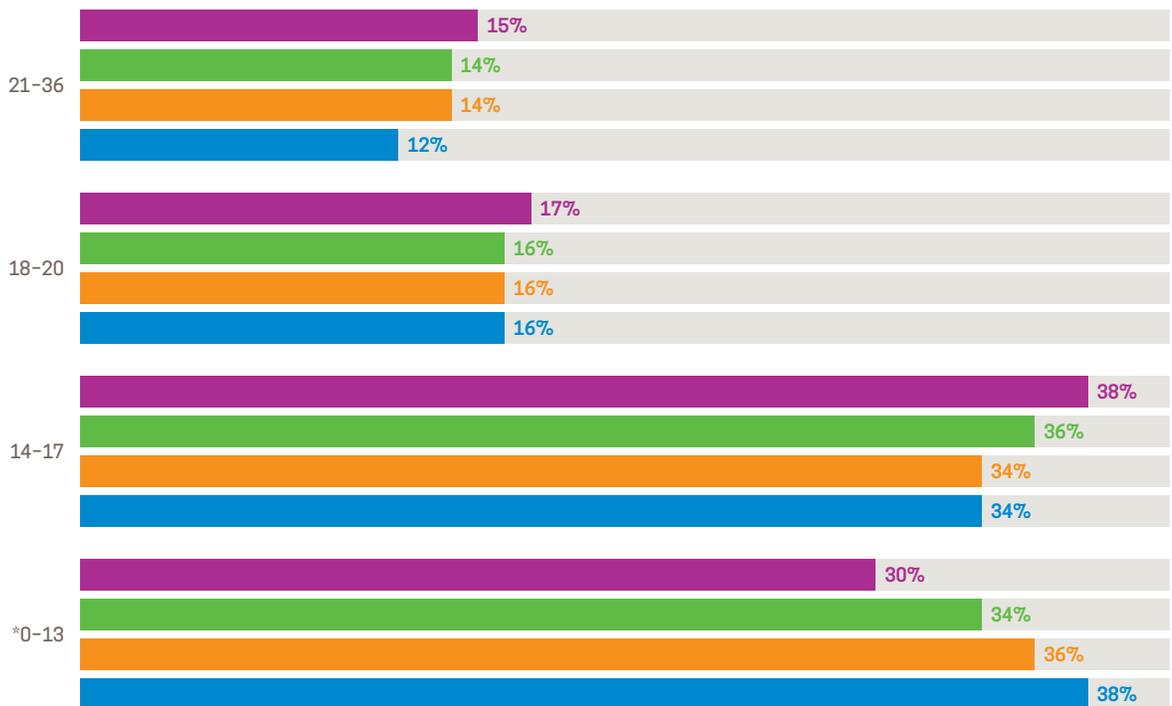


An ACT score of 21 is widely recognized as the national benchmark for college readiness. While the percentage of students scoring a 21 or higher on the ACT has increased since the Compact began its work (by three percentage points), the gains are not progressing fast enough. There is some good news: more CMSD students are taking the ACT due to district-wide administration of the test, and the average ACT score has increased to 17 among the class of 2015, up from 16 among the class of 2014.

Figure 3 shows, however, that while the percentage of students in the 0-13 range has decreased year over year, almost 70 percent of students still score below an 18. Compact partner, College Now Greater Cleveland, has found that with the right supports, students who score at least an 18 on the ACT and have at least a 2.5 GPA can also be successful in college, despite the fact that the national college ready standard is a 21.

### ACT Score Breakdown

2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | FIGURE 3



\*0 indicates students who did not take the test; for 2015 graduates, that includes 256 students, or 14.3% of all 2015 grads.

## CMSD Graduates with at Least an 18 on the ACT and a 2.5 GPA or Higher

2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2012

FIGURE 4



Figure 4 shows that the percentage of students who met Compact partner College Now's college readiness standard of at least an 18 on the ACT and a 2.5 GPA increased from 24 percent among the class of 2014 to 26 percent among the class of 2015.

### Opportunity for Increasing College Readiness: College Credit Plus Participation

In fall 2015, the State of Ohio replaced its Post-secondary Enrollment Options Program (PSEOP) with College Credit Plus. Both programs allow students to earn college credits while they are in high school – at no cost to them. That saves students time and money when they arrive on college campuses and puts them on a faster path to degree completion. Cuyahoga Community College and Cleveland State University have received state funding to expand high school teacher credentialing so they can teach college-level courses in high schools as opposed to the current model, in which students must commute to the college campus.



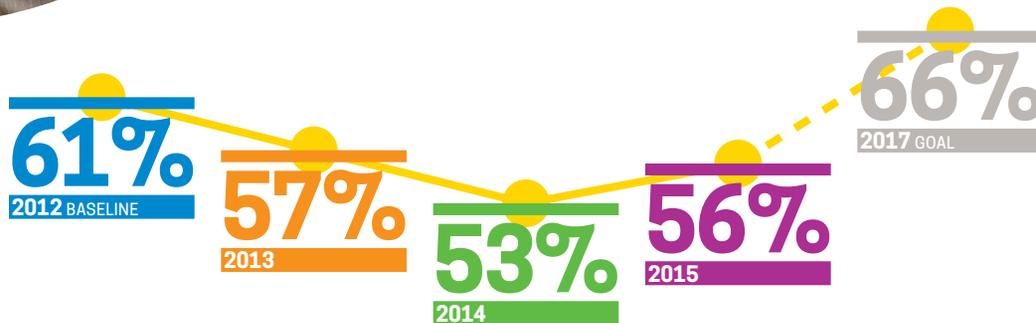
# ACCESS



## Attainment Goal

CMSD graduate college enrollment within one year

Measuring classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014



The Compact's overall college access goal is to increase college enrollment within one year after graduation among CMSD graduates from 61 percent to 66 percent by 2017. We are not on track to meet this goal. There has been a slight recovery from the two-year decline in college enrollment rate among CMSD graduates, with 56 percent of the class of 2014 enrolling in college within one year, up from 53 percent for the class of 2013. This is still lower than the 61 percent baseline in 2011. The improvement this year is significant, though, as national and state enrollment rates continue to decline. The national college enrollment rate decreased by 1.7 percent in 2015, and the statewide enrollment rate fared slightly worse, decreasing by 1.9 percent.<sup>9</sup>

The Compact has identified five indicators to support the college access goal. The most recent data shows mixed results. The percentage of students using Naviance decreased for the second straight year, from 45 percent among the class of 2014 to 42 percent

**ACCESS IS:**  
**Students having the awareness, opportunity, support and financing necessary to select and attend a college that is the “right fit.”**

among the class of 2014 to 42 percent among the class of 2015: a total decrease of 12 percentage points since our baseline measurement for the class of 2012. Naviance is a web-based college and career planning tool that was implemented in the CMSD in 2011 to help match students with their best fit post-secondary option. While overall usage among CMSD seventh through twelfth

graders decreased last year, it is important to note that students who engaged with the tool logged in more frequently than ever, particularly tenth through twelfth graders. Among twelfth graders specifically, the number of logins per student increased from 6.36 among the class of 2014 to 7.22 among the class of 2015. There is still more work to do to engage seventh through ninth graders with the tool, however.

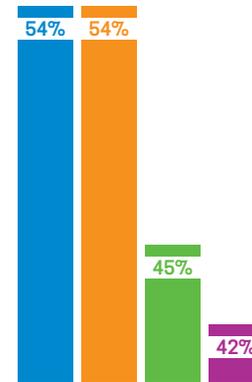
The average number of times students took the ACT continues to fluctuate year-to-year and declined slightly from 1.66 among the class of 2014 to 1.64 among the class of 2015. Among the class of 2015, 86 percent of seniors took the ACT, a slight increase from the 85 percent among the class of 2014.

## Access Indicators

2012 BASELINE | 2013 | 2014 | 2015

Percent students using Naviance

Measuring classes of 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015



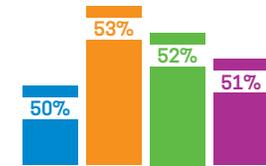
Average number of times students take the ACT

Measuring classes of 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015



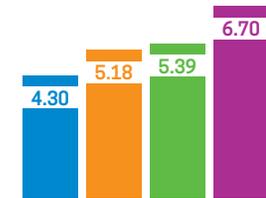
Percent students completing at least one college application

Measuring classes of 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015



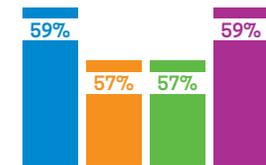
Average number of completed college applications per student (of those that completed one)

Measuring classes of 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015



Approved Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Measuring classes of 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015



The percentage of students completing at least one college application decreased for the second straight year, from 52 percent among the class of 2014 to 51 percent among the class of 2015; but the average number of completed college applications per student (among those who completed one) continues to improve, increasing from 5.39 among the class of 2014 to 6.7 among the class of 2015. Finally, the percentage of students completing the FAFSA was 59 among the class of 2015, an increase of two percentage points over the class of 2014. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is required for nearly all types of financial aid and is a widely-recognized indicator of a student’s intent to enroll in a post-secondary program.



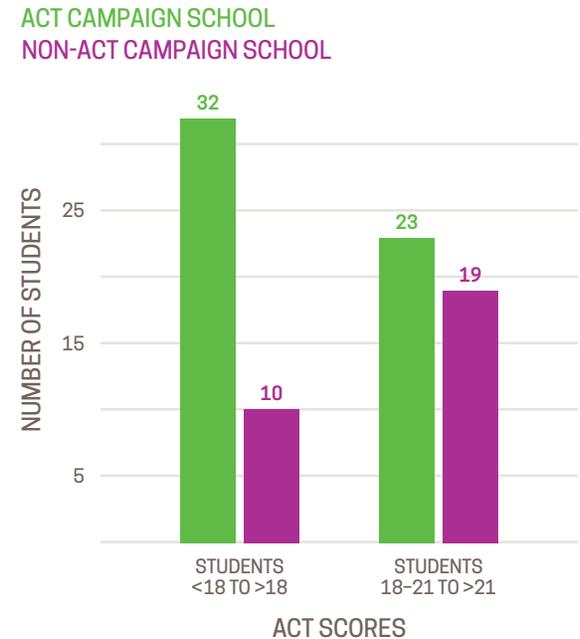
<sup>9</sup> National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

## ACCESS MOVING FORWARD

When the Higher Education Compact outlined its strategic work plan for the 2015–16 year, ACT scores were determined to be a focus of resources. The Compact strategically chose 10 CMSD high schools in which to pilot a targeted campaign designed to increase scores on the ACT exam. In order to increase scores, the Compact pledged to raise the scores of students “on the bubble,” those students who were at the threshold of college readiness scoring either a 16/17 or 19/20, close to getting their scores above 18 or 21, respectively.

## ACT Prep Campaign Results

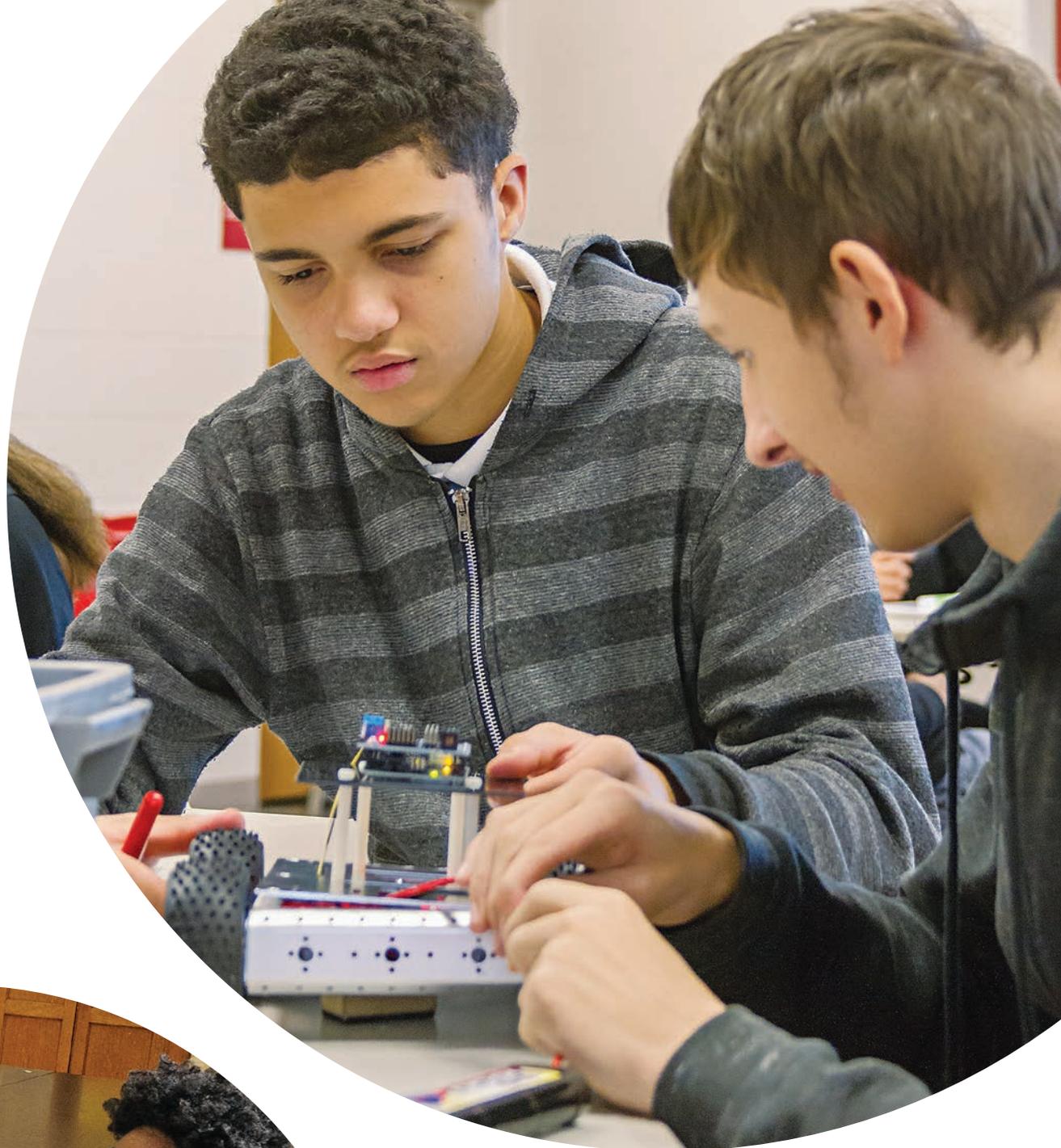
FIGURE 5



Specific goals were set for individual schools but collectively, the goal was to increase the number of college-ready students by 4% or 100 students (scoring 18+). Figure 5 indicates that ACT Campaign schools saw larger gains in both categories with the most gains occurring in moving students below 18 to over 18. Individual school goal results were mixed but increased preparation and awareness about taking the test again, resulted in the overall goal being met and moving 100 students into higher score categories and 84 being college ready by Compact standards. Additionally, 16 students that were below a 16 ACT score, moved into the 18+ category.

## Ensuring Prepared Students Enroll

Compact partner College Now works to ensure that all students who meet its college readiness criteria (18+ ACT score and a 2.5+ GPA) enroll in a post-secondary program. College Now arranges college visits, connects students to resources on campus, and hosts transition to college workshops, among other activities, to ensure that students can successfully enroll in and acclimate to the college environment. Unfortunately, there is still a significant percentage of college-ready students who do not enroll in college the fall after they graduate from high school. Among the CMSD class of 2014, in fact, 122 college-ready graduates (25 percent) did not enroll in college in the fall after graduation. To address this, College Now advisors who work in CMSD high schools identified those students and followed up with them one-on-one to identify and help address the barriers to enrollment. As a result of that intervention, an additional 45 students enrolled in college in the spring. Among the CMSD class of 2015, 101 students who met College Now's readiness criteria did not enroll in college in the fall of 2015, a slight improvement from 2014. We expect to pick-up a significant number of students in spring enrollment, as we did last year.



# ACCESS MOVING FORWARD

## College Affordability

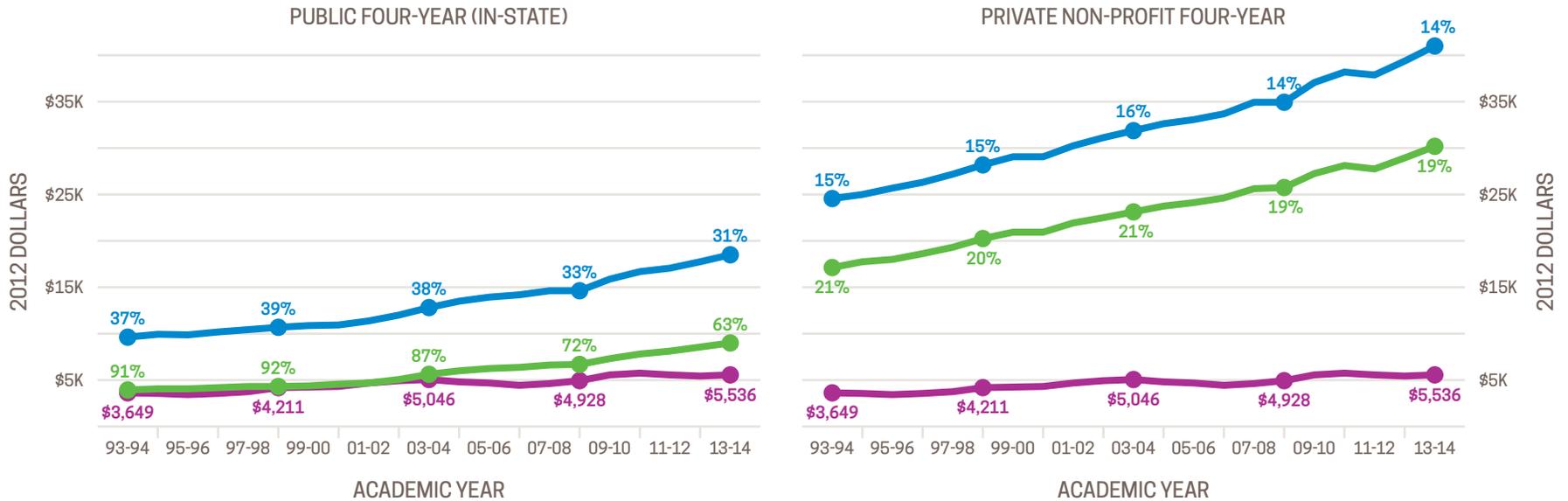
Tuition and fees at U.S. colleges and universities have more than doubled in constant dollars since 1970. In Ohio, student financial support from the state has all but disappeared.<sup>10</sup> At the federal level, the value of the Pell Grant, which is awarded to low-income students, peaked in 1975, when it covered approximately two-thirds of the cost of college.<sup>11</sup> In 2013-14, the Pell Grant covered only 31 percent of the cost of attendance at public, in-state, four-year institutions and 14 percent at private, non-profit four-year institutions, as Figure 6 shows.<sup>12</sup>



### Portion of Cost of Attendance Covered by Pell Grant 1993-94 to 2013-14

FIGURE 6

TUITION, FEES, ROOM & BOARD | TUITION & FEES | MAXIMUM PELL GRANT



Percentages displayed represent portion of Tuition and Fees, and Tuition, Fees, and Room and Board that are covered by the maximum Pell Grant (adjusted for inflation) in that academic year.

This leaves many students – particularly low-income students – in a situation in which they must work in order to fill the gap between the cost of attendance and their financial aid award. A researcher at the University of Pennsylvania calculated that, based on the cost of a credit hour at Michigan State University, in 1979, a student could pay his or her annual college tuition by working a minimum wage job 10 hours per week for 10 weeks. By 2013, that same student would have needed to work 40 hours per week – full time – at a minimum wage job for 35.5 weeks out of the year to pay for a year of college.<sup>13</sup> Beyond the work requirement, even when students take the maximum federal student loan amount, it is often still not enough to cover their costs. As a result, students (and their parents) resort to much riskier private loans if they want to enroll.

The Compact is exploring three avenues to address the issue of affordability. First, the Compact is working with other communities in Ohio to significantly expand the amount of state aid available to Ohio students. Second, we are working to increase the pool of scholarship dollars for Cleveland students. Third, the Compact is urging its higher education partners to reevaluate their scholarship renewal guidelines and processes to reduce the risk of students losing critical financial aid as a result of poor performance in one or two classes.

<sup>10</sup> According to the 45th Annual Survey Report on State-Sponsored Student Financial Aid (2014), Ohio ranks last in the Midwest and 36th nationally in terms of the availability of need-based aid per full-time students, awarding \$165 per student in 2013-14. To compare, Pennsylvania and Indiana award \$870 and \$839 per student respectively. <sup>11</sup> The Pell Institute, 2015: *Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States*. <sup>12</sup> The College Board, 2013: *Trends in Student Aid*. <sup>13</sup> Olson, Dr. Randall S., 2014: *It's Impossible to Work Your Way through College These Days*. Retrieved from <http://www.randalolson.com/2014/03/22/its-impossible-to-work-your-way-through-college-nowadays> 2/15/16.



# PERSISTENCE

The Compact's overall college persistence goal is to increase the six-year completion rate from four-year institutions among CMSD graduates from 28 percent to 47 percent by 2017 and the three-year completion rate at two-year institutions from two percent to seven percent. The data shows solid improvement in college persistence and completion among CMSD graduates. College persistence rates are up 12 percent at Compact schools, with the largest gains seen at Cuyahoga Community College. The six-year completion rate from four-year Compact institutions increased from 33 percent among the class of 2008 to 35 percent among the class of 2009, continuing its upward trend from the 2006 baseline of 28 percent. However, the pace of improvement is not on

track to meet our 2017 goal. The three-year completion rate from two-year Compact institutions remained steady at 5 percent from the class of 2011 to the class of 2012. This measure has improved from the 2009 baseline of two percent and is on track to meet the seven percent goal in 2017.

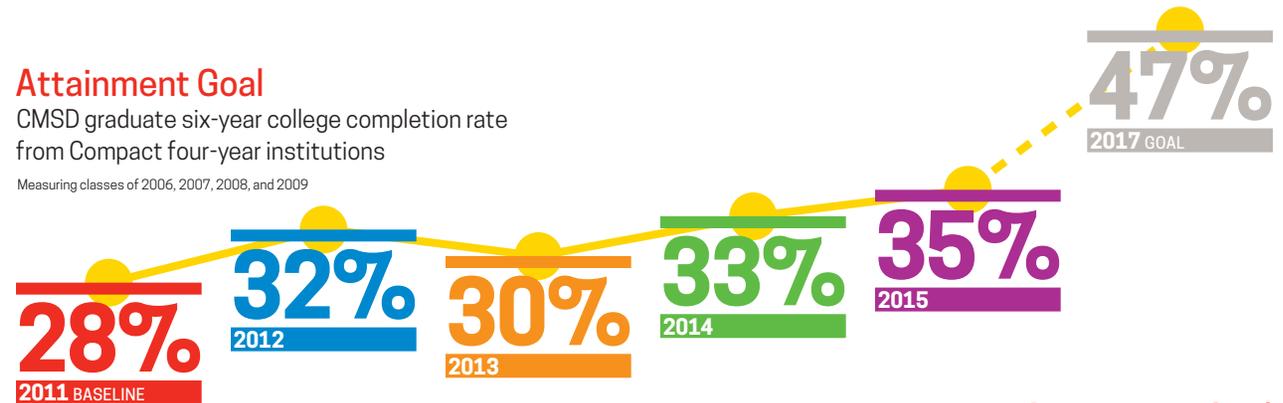
The Compact identified six college persistence indicators to measure students' progress toward degree completion. The first- to second-year retention rate among the CMSD class of 2014 enrolled in all Compact institutions was 57 percent, a significant improvement over last year's 49 percent and 11 percentage points higher than the class of 2013, a low point in our data.



## Attainment Goal

CMSD graduate six-year college completion rate from Compact four-year institutions

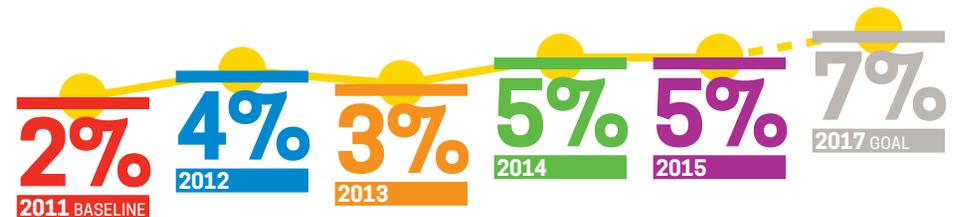
Measuring classes of 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009



## Attainment Goal

CMSD graduate three-year college completion rate from Compact two-year institutions

Measuring classes of 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012



The on-time (four-year) completion rate for the CMSD class of 2009 from four-year institutions was 22 percent, continuing the pattern of annual improvement from the baseline of

**PERSISTENCE IS:**  
**Students having the academic and self-management skills, resilience, resources and institutional support to successfully navigate and persevere through college.**

10 percent among the class of 2006. As we have discussed previously, this measure is very important, *as staying in college beyond the on-time completion timeframe does not significantly increase a student's completion odds, but does add substantially to the student's (and parent's) student loan burden.*<sup>14</sup>

For the CMSD class of 2009, the percentage of students transferring from two-year to four-year institutions is 12 percent, a

decrease of nine percentage points from last year, the first year we began tracking this data. We look at this measure with a six-year lens to determine how many of these transfers eventually complete a bachelor's degree. We discuss what happens to these students later in this report.

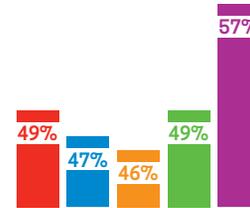
Students in need of remedial coursework when they arrive at college graduate at about half the rate of their college-ready peers. Over 1.7 million American students require remedial coursework each year, costing states and students over \$3 billion annually and increasing the time and cost of completing a degree.<sup>15</sup> Of the credit hours attempted, the remedial course passage rate for all Compact schools among the CMSD class of 2014 is 78 percent, a 15 percentage point increase over the class of 2013. This rate reflects the percentage of remedial hours attempted that were successfully passed in total. The improvement shows that the concerted effort Compact partners are making to reduce the amount of time students spend in remedial

## Persistence Indicators

2011 BASELINE | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015

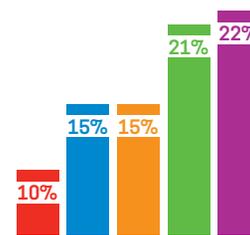
Percent CMSD graduates retained in all Compact institutions from year one to year two

Measuring classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014



Percent CMSD graduates earning degrees from four-year Compact institutions (four-year rate)

Measuring classes of 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009



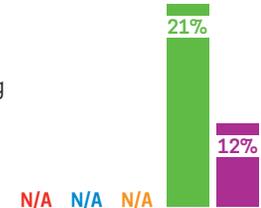
coursework is paying off. It is also encouraging that the number of enrolled students needing remediation in math or English fell from 76 percent for the class of 2010 to 66 percent for the class of 2014, as noted in the college readiness section.

The percentage of students who complete 24 college-level credits within one year of enrollment is an important measure of progress toward degree. The rate among four-year institutions increased from 46 percent among the CMSD class of 2013 to 52 percent among the class of 2014, 16 percentage points higher than when we began measuring in 2012. The rate at two-year institutions is rebounding after several years of decline, from 31 percent among the class of 2013 to 34 percent among the class of 2014.

<sup>14</sup> Complete College America, 2011. *Time Is the Enemy*. <sup>15</sup> Complete College America, 2013. *The Game Changers*.

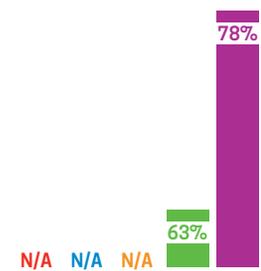
Percent CMSD graduates transferring from two-year to four-year institutions

Measuring classes of 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009



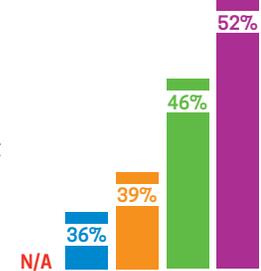
Remedial course passage rate

Measuring classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014



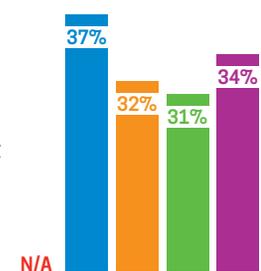
Percent CMSD graduates completing at least 24 college-level credits within one year of enrollment among Compact four-year institutions

Measuring classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014



Percent CMSD graduates completing at least 24 college-level credits within one year of enrollment among Compact two-year institutions

Measuring classes of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014



## PERSISTENCE MOVING FORWARD



### Improving Success among Transfer Students

Transfer is a frequent occurrence among college students that can significantly impact degree completion. A report from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center indicates that nationally, 39.4 percent of students who started at a two-year institution in 2008 transferred to another institution within a six-year time period. Additionally, the Aspen Institute demonstrates that lower-income students who transfer from a two-year to a four-year institution are less likely to earn a Bachelor's degree than their higher-income peers.<sup>16</sup> Nationally, low-income students who transfer from a two-year to a four-year institution have a six-year completion rate of 36 percent as compared to their high-income peers, whose transfer-out Bachelor's degree completion rate

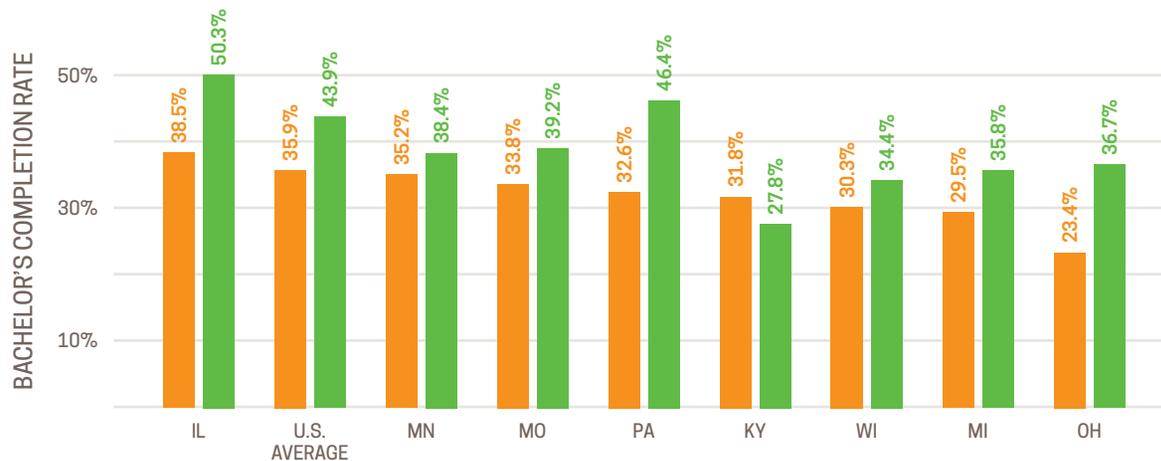
is 44 percent. The figures are worse for both sets of students in the state of Ohio, which ranks last among its Midwestern peers (Figure 7) and second to last nationally in terms of the transfer-out completion rate for low-income students, with only 23 percent of low-income transfer students completing a degree within six years. The outcomes among Cleveland students fall short of that, demonstrating the significant need for improving post-secondary success for transfer students. Last year, we reported that approximately 21 percent of graduates from the CMSD class of 2008 who enrolled in two-year colleges transferred to a four-year institution at some point. And of that group, just 17 percent ultimately completed a Bachelor's degree by 2014. Among the CMSD class of 2009, the two-year to four-year transfer rate declined significantly, to 12 percent, but the six-year completion rate among those who transferred held steady at 17 percent.

### Average Transfer-Out Bachelor's Completion Rates by Family Income and State

LOWER INCOME TRANSFERS

HIGHER INCOME TRANSFERS

FIGURE 7



To help address this issue, Compact higher education partners Cuyahoga Community College and Cleveland State University engaged in a joint project with Complete College America in October 2015 to develop a more robust transfer plan to serve students who move between their respective institutions. The advisory group for this work is focusing on data-sharing, co-advising, expanding articulation agreements and dual enrollment as practices that can make a significant impact at both institutions. We expect to be able to report on outcomes of this effort in our next annual report.

<sup>16</sup>The Aspen Institute, 2016: *Tracking Transfer: New Measures of Institutional and State Effectiveness in Helping Community College Students Attain Bachelor's Degrees.*



Deborah has excelled at Cuyahoga Community College. She completed her only remedial course her first year and has consistently completed 12 credit hours each semester while working part-time at a nursing home.

---

Now in her fourth semester, Deborah is faced with a decision that plagues many at community colleges: does she complete an Associate's degree and then transfer? Or does she transfer to a four-year institution without completing her degree?

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### NAVIGATING THE TRANSFER PROCESS

Deborah Thompson, a 2014 graduate of James Ford Rhodes High School and a first-generation college student, has a laser-like focus on her career. She wants to become a nurse practitioner so she can help people in the same way that her own nurse practitioner has helped her since childhood. Knowing that the path to becoming a nurse practitioner is long, Deborah was extremely careful when making post-secondary decisions. This thoughtfulness led Deborah to enroll at Cuyahoga Community College over a more expensive four-year institution.

Having done her homework, Deborah understands her options. She knows that if she completes her Associate's degree she will be able to bypass many of the course requirements at a four-year institution. However, she also knows that there is a chance that she might decide to "stop out" after completing her Associate's degree and that it can be hard to "stop back in." Deborah plans to make her decision with the guidance of her brother, school advising staff and informal mentors.

# PARTNERS



## Education Partners

Baldwin Wallace University

Bowling Green State University

Case Western Reserve University

Cleveland Metropolitan  
School District

Cleveland State University

Cuyahoga Community College

Eastern Michigan University

Hiram College

John Carroll University

Kent State University

Notre Dame College

Oberlin College

Ohio Board of Regents

The Ohio State University

Ohio University

University of Akron

University of Toledo

Ursuline College

## Community Partners

ACE Mentor Program of Cleveland  
America SCORES  
Bard High School Early College  
Bellaire Puritas Development Corporation  
Big Brothers Big Sisters  
Boys & Girls Club of Cleveland  
Boys Hope Girls Hope  
Breakthrough Charter Schools  
Broadway-Slavic Village P-16 Project  
CEOs for Cities  
City of Cleveland  
City Year  
Cleveland Public Library  
College Board  
College Now Greater Cleveland  
Cuyahoga County  
Educational Service Center of Cuyahoga County  
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Esperanza, Inc.  
Facing History and Ourselves  
Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland  
Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Centers Association  
Greater Cleveland Partnership  
Greater Cleveland YMCA  
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Junior Achievement  
KeyBank Foundation  
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MyCom  
NewBridge  
Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education  
Scranton Road Ministries  
Sisters of Charity Foundation  
The Literacy Cooperative  
The Presidents' Council Foundation  
Third Federal Foundation  
United Way of Greater Cleveland  
University Settlement  
Urban Community School  
WIRE-Net  
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The Cleveland Foundation  
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## Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland

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The Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland would like to acknowledge the significant contribution from College Now Greater Cleveland, which provides staff resources and office space to the Compact.

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