



COLLEGE SUCCESS REPORT

State of Delaware

Class of 2015



College readiness in Delaware on a slow climb, more attention is needed

The Delaware College Success Report highlights district- and state-level data on college remediation to help Delaware educators better prepare all students to take credit-bearing courses in college math and English. As a state, Delaware has targeted resources to increase students' readiness for and enrollment in college. Students have access to AP and Dual Enrollment courses, and all juniors take the SAT, but we have more work to do to ensure that students are prepared for college-level courses when they enroll.¹

Previous reports focused on remediation rates in Delaware, the 2016 report also highlighted a link between high school performance and college remediation. Under the recently passed Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states are required to ensure educators provide effective transitions for students at all levels, in particular middle and high school.

The 2017 report takes a deeper dive into last year's recommendations regarding English, math, targeted interventions and the design of an equitable system to gauge Delaware's progress and provide additional insights to support students during the transition from high school to post-secondary education.

Now in its third year, this report also shows that the First State saw a 3 percent increase in the number of Delaware high school graduates enrolled in college. With increased college enrollment, the state's remediation rates for students attending Delaware college and universities² remained flat. Of the 4,969 students in Delaware's Class of 2015 who enrolled in college, 70 percent chose to enroll in a Delaware public or private college. Forty-one percent of these students required remediation courses in college.

Remedial classes require students to develop math, reading comprehension or writing skills before they can take college courses for credit. These courses offer no credits towards degree completion and, because of the additional courses required, increase the overall cost of their college education. Students who require remediation start college behind their peers and face more challenges graduating compared with students who do not require remediation.

Complete College America has found that fewer than 20 percent of students taking remedial courses complete a degree. And more than 50 percent of students enrolling in a community college require remediation. Reducing remediation is a critical step to increasing college graduation rates and reducing the cost of attendance.

Delaware educators and policymakers must identify: **What stands in the way of students entering college ready for credit-bearing courses?**

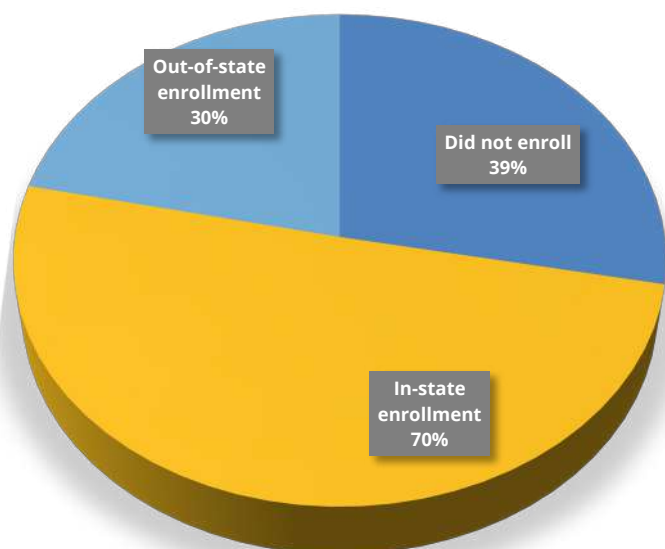
¹ Delaware uses various measures to define college readiness. Students can demonstrate a score of 3 or better on Advanced Placement tests, a C or higher in Dual Enrollment classes, or earn a 480 in English Reading and Writing and a 530 math on the SAT.

² Data for students taking remedial courses is only available for students attending colleges in Delaware. All remediation data included in this report is targeted toward students who enrolled in one of the following colleges: University of Delaware, Delaware State University, Delaware Technical Community College, Wesley College, Goldey-Beacom College, and Wilmington University. Out-of-state colleges do not provide this data to state agencies or school districts.

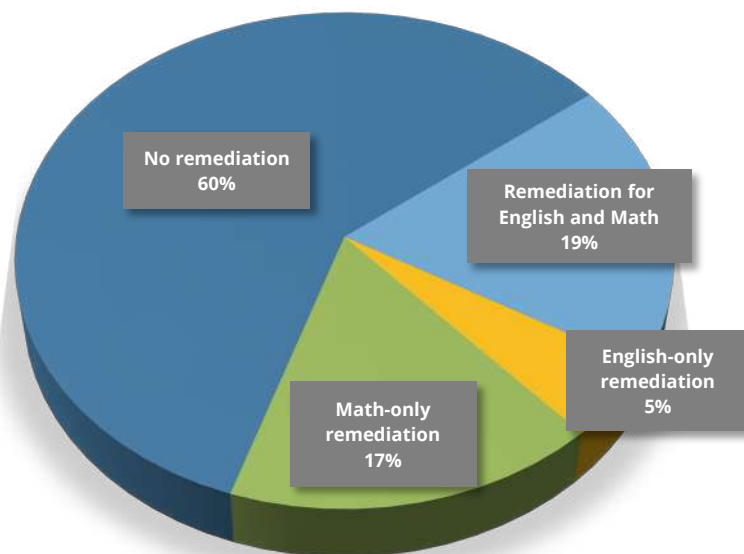


3 in every 10 students who require remediation in college never graduate with a bachelor's degree

CLASS OF 2015 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT RATE INCREASED TO 61 PERCENT (3 PERCENT INCREASE) WHILE REMEDIATION RATE REMAINED FLAT (41 PERCENT)



College enrollment for Class of 2015 (public and charter schools)



Remediation rates for Class of 2015 enrolled in Delaware higher education institutions

4 Key Recommendations to Eliminate Remediation:

Recommendation #1: All students should graduate high school ready for college-level math courses.

Recommendation #2: All students should graduate high school ready for college-level English courses.

Recommendation #3: Provide targeted interventions prior to 11th grade for students not meeting college-ready benchmarks.

Recommendation #4: Design an accessible and equitable K-12 system that ensures all students can succeed in college-level courses upon graduation.

Recommendation #1: All students should graduate ready for college-level math courses.

Students entering college should — at minimum — be prepared to take a college algebra course, yet 36 percent of students entering Delaware colleges are not ready for college-level math. These students are required to take remedial courses that reteach concepts taught in middle and high school math classes. A 2008 report from WestEd indicates a rigorous math course sequence — Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2 — best prepares students for college-level courses. Yet, most Delaware students complete this sequence by the end of 11th grade, and still 36 percent require remediation in math. To understand this disconnect, educators and policymakers must evaluate the course quality and rigor by asking:

- Are these courses delivering the full-grade level standards?
- Are these courses addressing gaps in student mastery and proficiency at each grade level?
- How do we measure and address gaps in competency prior to graduation?
- What happens for students entering 12th grade math courses after several years of failing to meet proficiency in math standards?

All Delaware students are required to complete four years of math; however, students complete these four years with varying degrees of preparation for college courses. For a second year in a row, data suggests that students entering Algebra 2 or Statistics in 12th grade are less likely to show math proficiency, in comparison to their peers enrolled in Pre-Calculus or Calculus. Students are more likely to transition to advanced courses in 12th grade based on SAT performance rather than grades. This raises questions about the reliability of grades as a measure of readiness and the need to identify other ways to measure students' readiness to transition to advanced courses. Educators and policymakers should ask:

- Are grades a strong indicator of student performance?
- What message does a student receiving a B or higher in a course send regarding readiness for the next level?
- For students receiving a C or lower, what supports and interventions are available in 12th grade courses to ensure they achieve proficiency by graduation?

¹ Huber, T. A., & Corbett, G. C. (2008). *Rethinking High School: Supporting all students to be college-ready in math* (J. Zimmerman, Ed.). Retrieved from https://www.wested.org/online_pubs/GF-08-01.pdf

Parent/Community Actions:

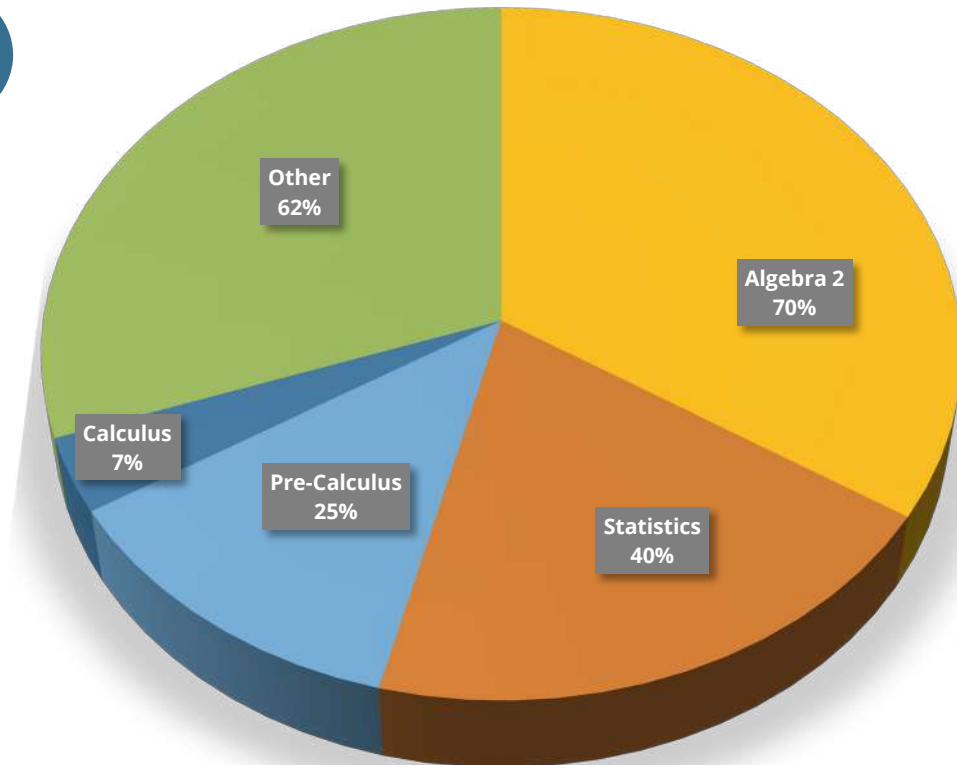
- Discuss with your student's classroom teacher content gaps that need to be addressed. Ask what strategies or classes can help your student to improve in these areas to reach college readiness.
- Encourage students to take the highest-level courses possible. Students should seek to stretch themselves as soon as they are ready.
- Identify summer camps and afterschool programs that teach STEM concepts and help students to link science and math concepts.
- Eliminate the language that reinforces a fear of math. Find ways to connect math to real-life scenarios to show its value to students.



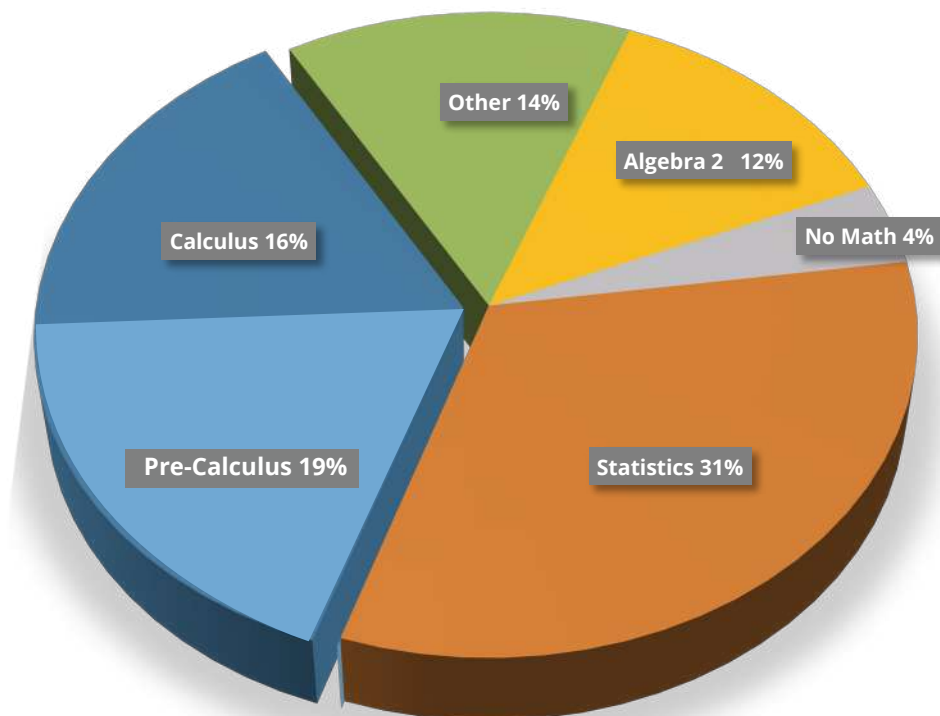
MORE THAN 60 PERCENT OF 12TH GRADERS ENROLLED IN COURSES CONNECTED TO HIGH REMEDIATION RATES

*Percentage of students requiring remediation
by math course (Class of 2015)*

3,495
students
overall

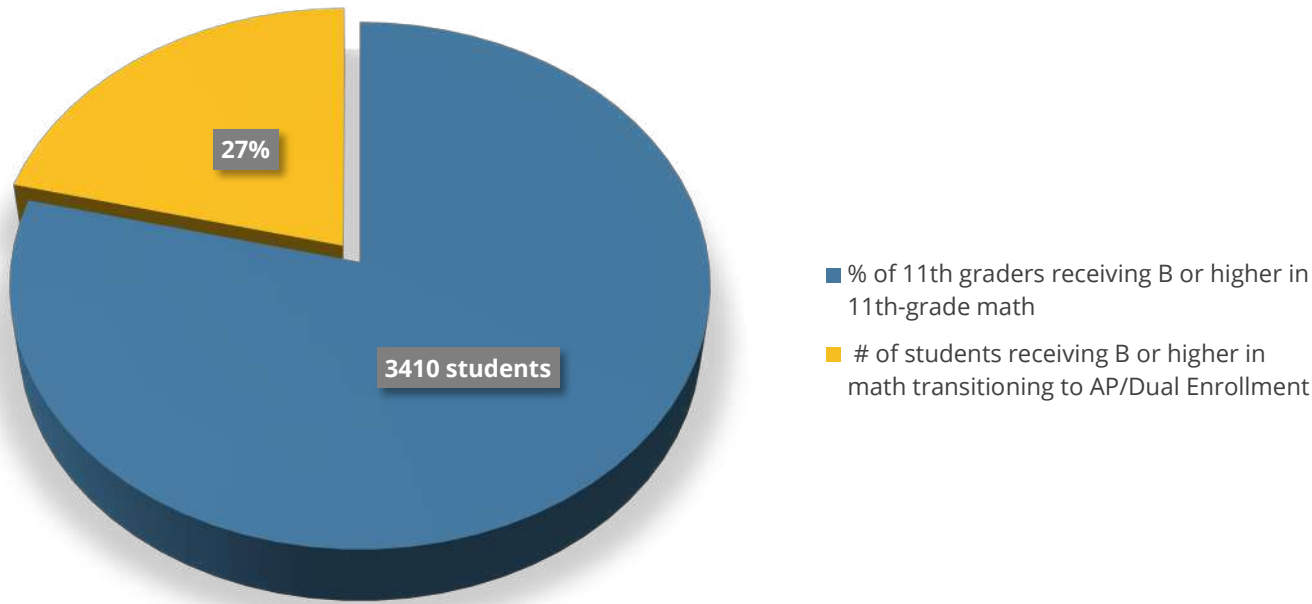


*Percentage of students enrolled in
12th grade math courses (Class of 2015)*

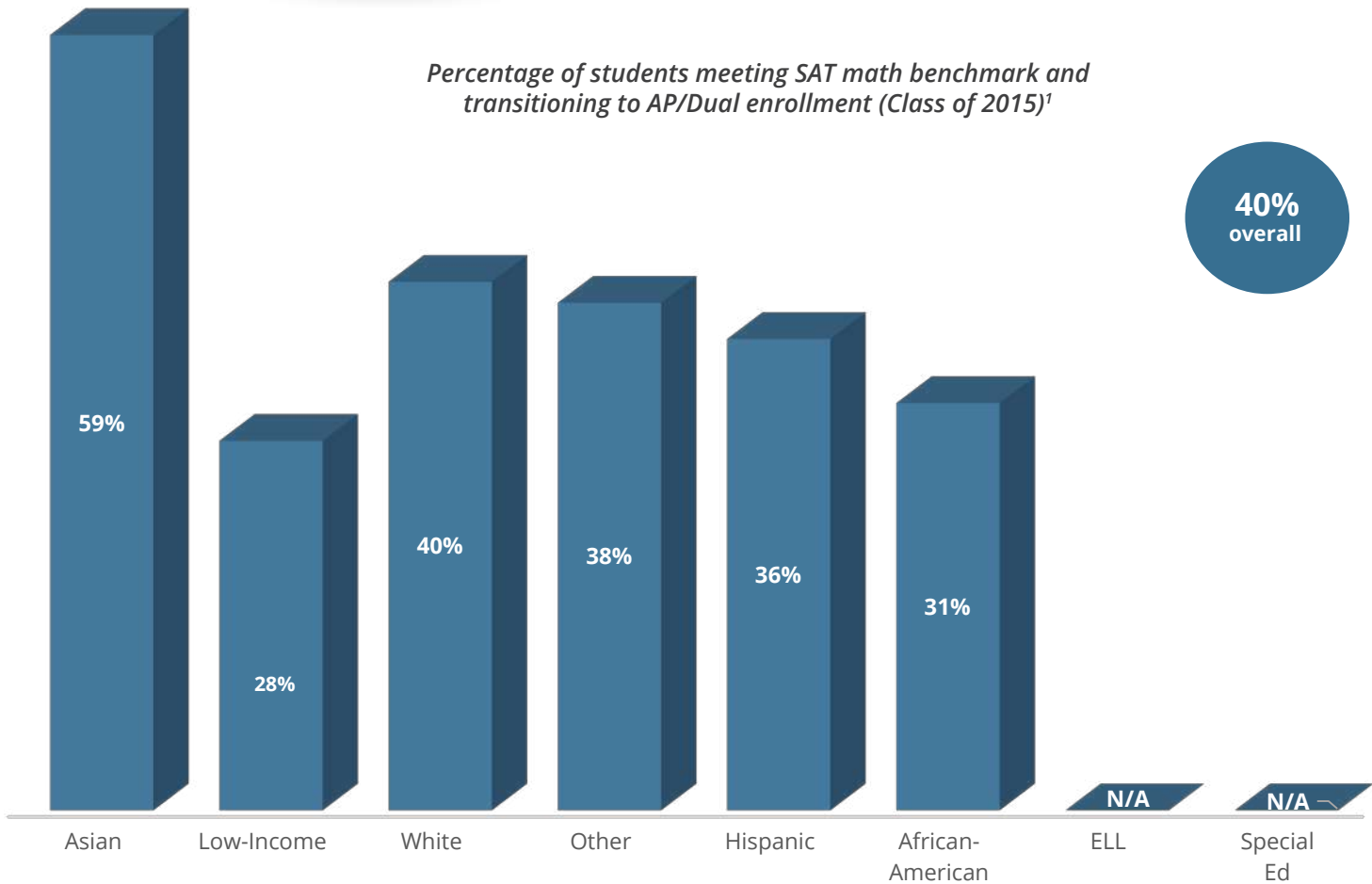


STUDENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO TRANSITION TO AP/DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSES BASED ON SAT SCORES RATHER THAN COURSE GRADES

Percentage of students receiving B or higher and transitioning to AP/Dual Enrollment math (Class of 2015)



Percentage of students meeting SAT math benchmark and transitioning to AP/Dual enrollment (Class of 2015)¹



Note: N/A appears when the number is below a reportable amount.

Recommendation #2: All students should graduate from high school ready for college-level English courses.

First-year college students are required to demonstrate reading comprehension and writing skills and the ability to interpret and analyze complex text in college-level courses. Weaknesses in these areas affect a student's success in a college English course and all other courses. Students taking college-level courses, including Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment, require remediation at a far lower rate (4 percent for Class of 2015) than their peers. In comparison 36 percent of their peers taking a College Prep English course required remediation in English.

Twenty-four percent of the Class of 2015 required remediation in English upon entering college. All high school students are required to complete four years of English; however, students complete these four years with varying degrees of preparation for college courses. Nearly 40 percent of students in the class of 2015 taking a 12th grade college prep or honors-level English enrolled in college. Nearly one third of those students required remediation in English. To understand this barrier for students, educators and policymakers should consider:

- Schools offer various course levels including general, college prep, honors and Advanced Placement. How do we ensure that students in lower-level courses access the full grade-level standards?
- Course titles, curriculum standards, course grades and even high school graduation signal college-readiness to students and parents. How do we ensure that all students are given access to achieve proficiency and fulfill the goal of college readiness upon graduation?
- Students receiving a C or lower in a course often have gaps in their mastery and understanding of the content standards. How are these gaps addressed from one course to the next, one grade level to the next?

Students must have access to full grade-level standards in literacy and writing regardless of whether they are in general, college prep or honors-level English, so they can graduate with a high school diploma that means they are ready for college. Districts and charters need systems to ensure students are on a path to interpret and analyze complex text by the end of 11th grade and to help students in need to attain these skills by upon graduation.

Of the almost 2,000 students receiving a B or higher in their 11th grade college prep and honors-level English courses, only 486 students (24 percent) transitioned to a higher-level English course (Honors, Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment). Similarly to Recommendation #1, educators and policymakers should ask:

- Are grades a strong indicator of student performance?
- What message does a student receiving a B or a in his or her course send regarding readiness for the next level?
- For students receiving a C or lower, what supports are available in 12th grade courses to ensure they achieve proficiency by graduation?

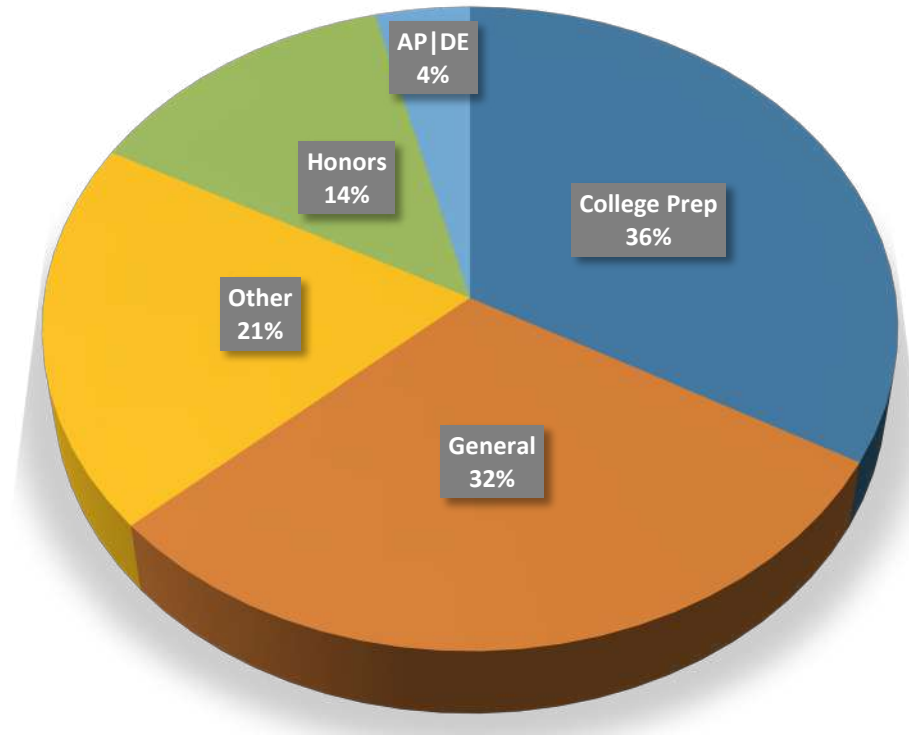
Parent/Community Actions:

- Engage your student in reading activities. Read a book together and discuss as a family.
- Evaluate your student's homework and tests to ensure he or she is receiving writing instruction.
- Encourage students to take the highest courses possible. Students should seek to stretch themselves as soon as they are ready.

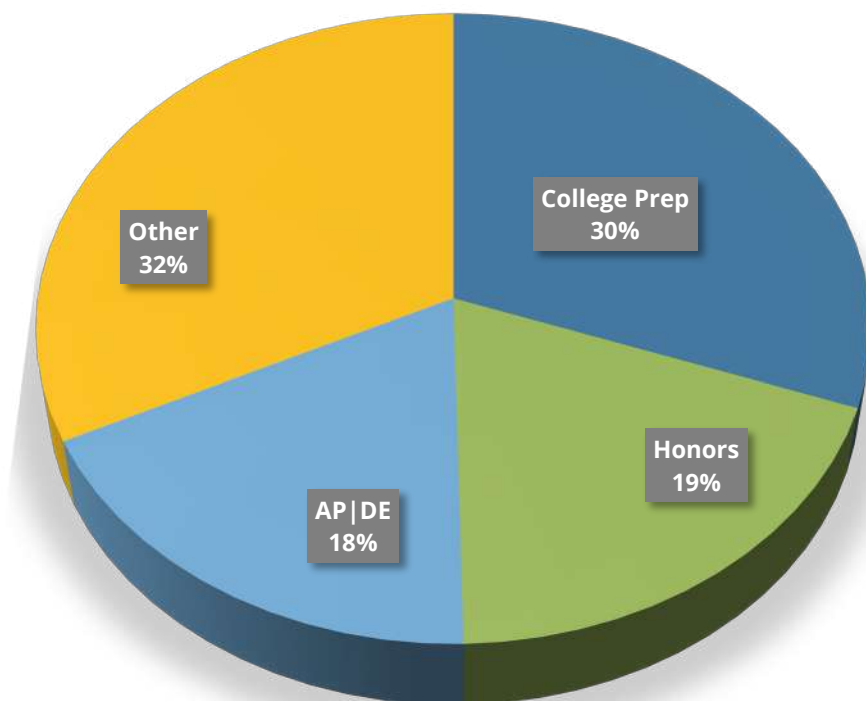


THE MAJORITY OF 12TH GRADERS COMPLETED ENGLISH COURSES CONNECTED TO HIGH REMEDIATION RATES

*Percentage of students requiring remediation
by English course (Class of 2015)*

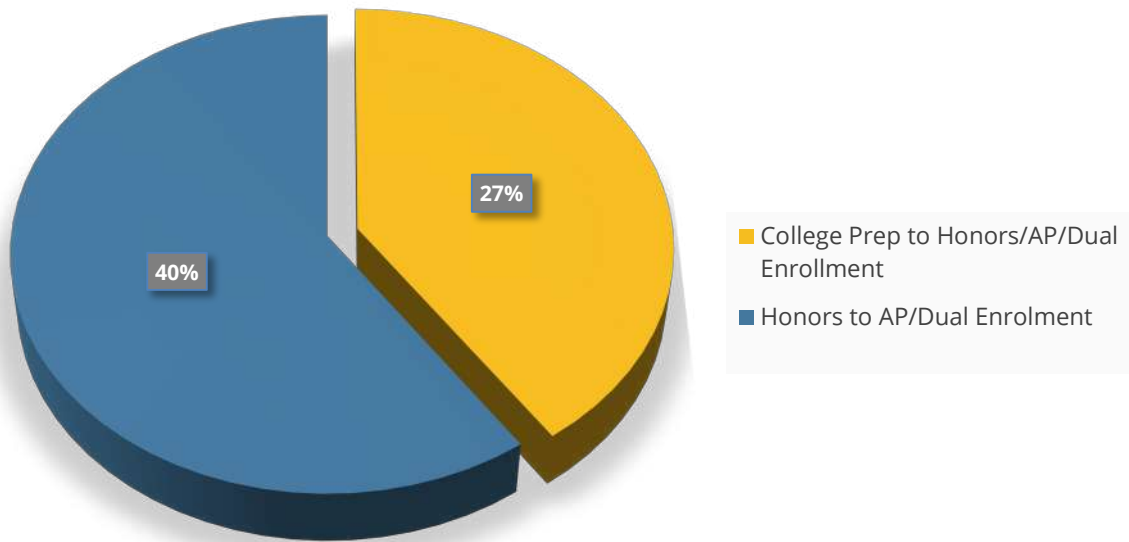


*Percentage of students enrolled in
12th grade English course (Class of 2015)*

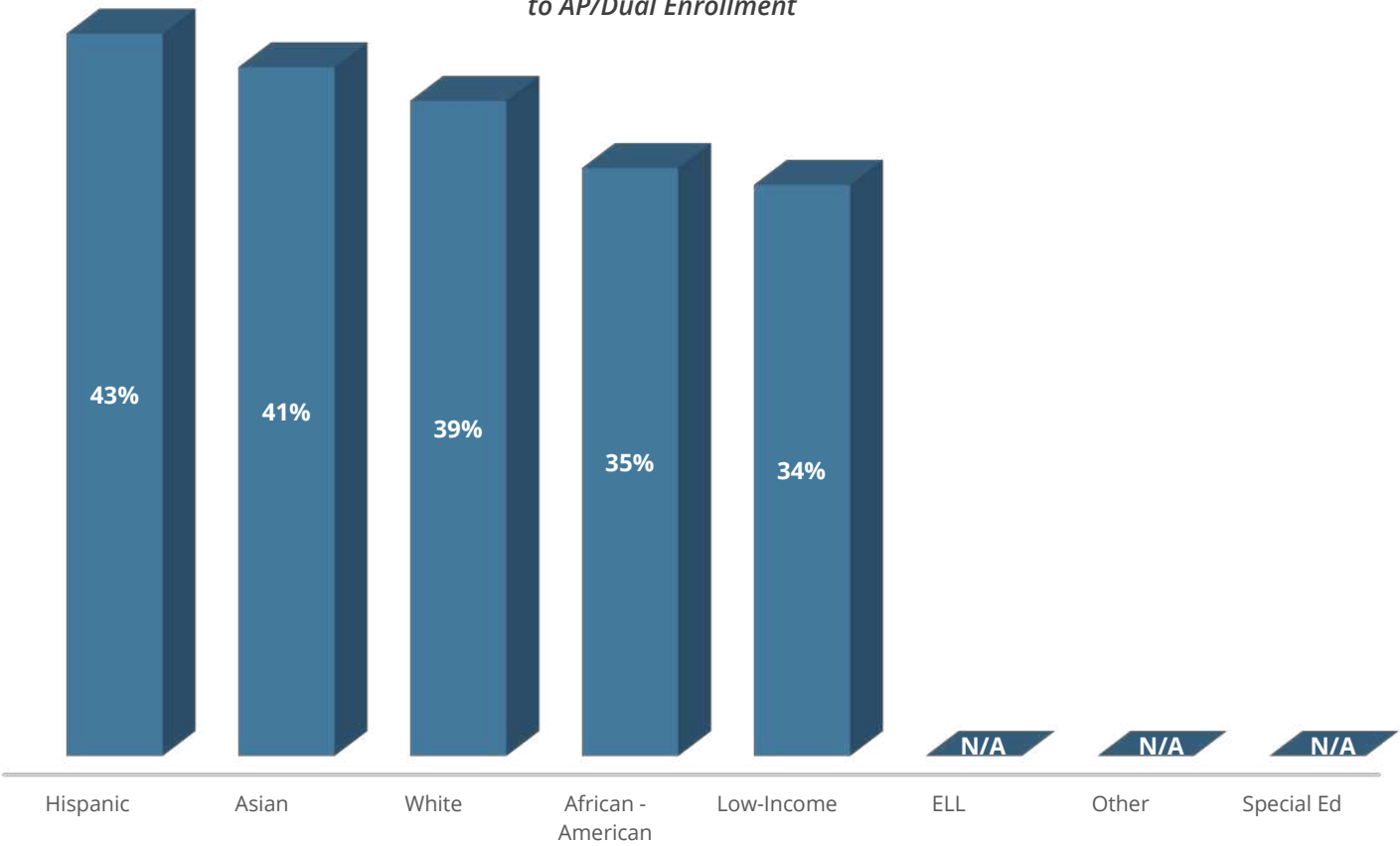


STUDENTS WERE MORE LIKELY TO TRANSITION TO AP/DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSES BASED ON SAT SCORES THAN COURSE GRADES.

Percentage of students receiving B or higher transitioning to a higher level English course (Class of 2015)



Percentage of students meeting SAT benchmark and transitioning to AP/Dual Enrollment



Note: N/A appears when the number is below a reportable amount.

Recommendation #3: Provide targeted interventions prior to 11th grade for students not meeting college-ready benchmarks.

The data since Delaware's first College Success Report in 2015 have highlighted that to ensure college readiness students must be prepared for more rigorous courses, such as AP English and Pre-Calculus. The end goal is to ensure 100 percent of students graduate ready for post-secondary education (including certificate, associate, and bachelor's degrees). For many students, the 12th grade becomes a critical year to ensure they are prepared for college-level coursework before graduation.

This report encourages educators to identify students who are not meeting college-ready standards by the end of 11th grade, and to help them reach college readiness by the end of 12th grade. Educators have already established a successful path from higher-level coursework to college readiness for a portion of students. Now schools must learn from this success and use their resources to ensure all students access this path, with the necessary supports, and graduate college-ready. **How do we ensure all students — not just some students — graduate college- and career-ready?**

For students not achieving college readiness by the end of 11th grade, 12th grade courses must be designed to provide students with the rigor and supports they need to achieve college readiness by graduation.

It is important to note that educators have valuable data prior to 11th grade, including student performance on 8th grade Smarter Math, Smarter English Language Arts and the 10th grade PSAT. These measurements provide early indicators of students' progression towards college-readiness and the need for interventions way before 12th grade.

By providing structure and support to students earlier, schools can ensure more students are entering 12th grade ready to tackle college-level courses. Educators and policymakers should ask:

- What actions can schools and districts take to ensure students have access to rigorous instruction?
- What course-level changes support students who meet the PSAT or SAT college-readiness benchmark?
- How effective are Response to Intervention (RTI) programs in elementary and middle school in supporting students successfully transitioning to high school ready for grade-level standards?
- What additional resources are available to help students reach the college-ready benchmark before graduation?
- What gaps in curricular standards lead to low student performance on the SAT and higher remediation rates? What is the effectiveness of credit recovery programs and other existing interventions for increasing student proficiency in the standards?

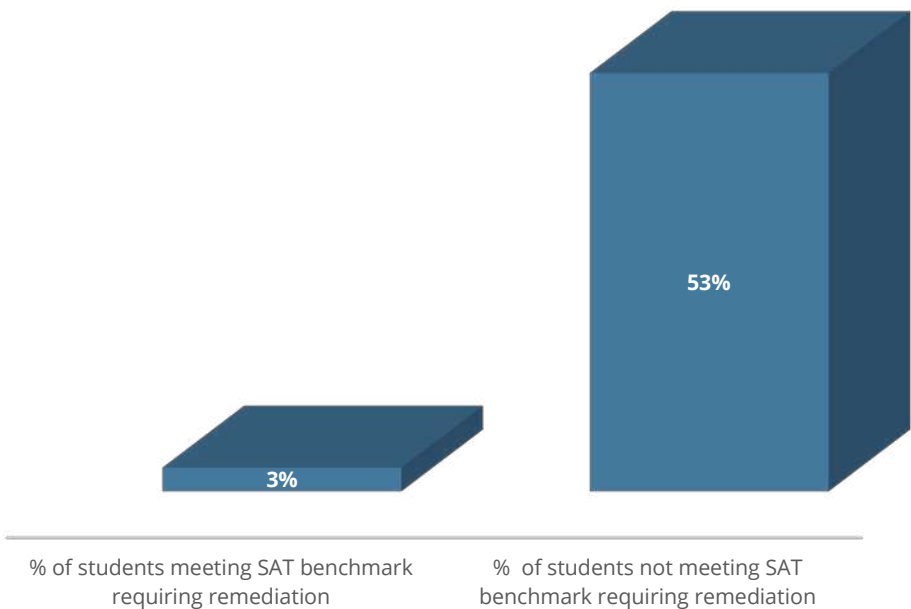
Parent/Community Actions:

- Review your student's assessment score report to determine when additional interventions are needed.
- Enroll in summer academies and after-school programs to help your student reach and exceed the college-readiness benchmark.
- Use free SAT prep and resources available through Khan Academy at <http://satpractice.org>
- Encourage students who are demonstrating success to take Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment courses before high school graduation.

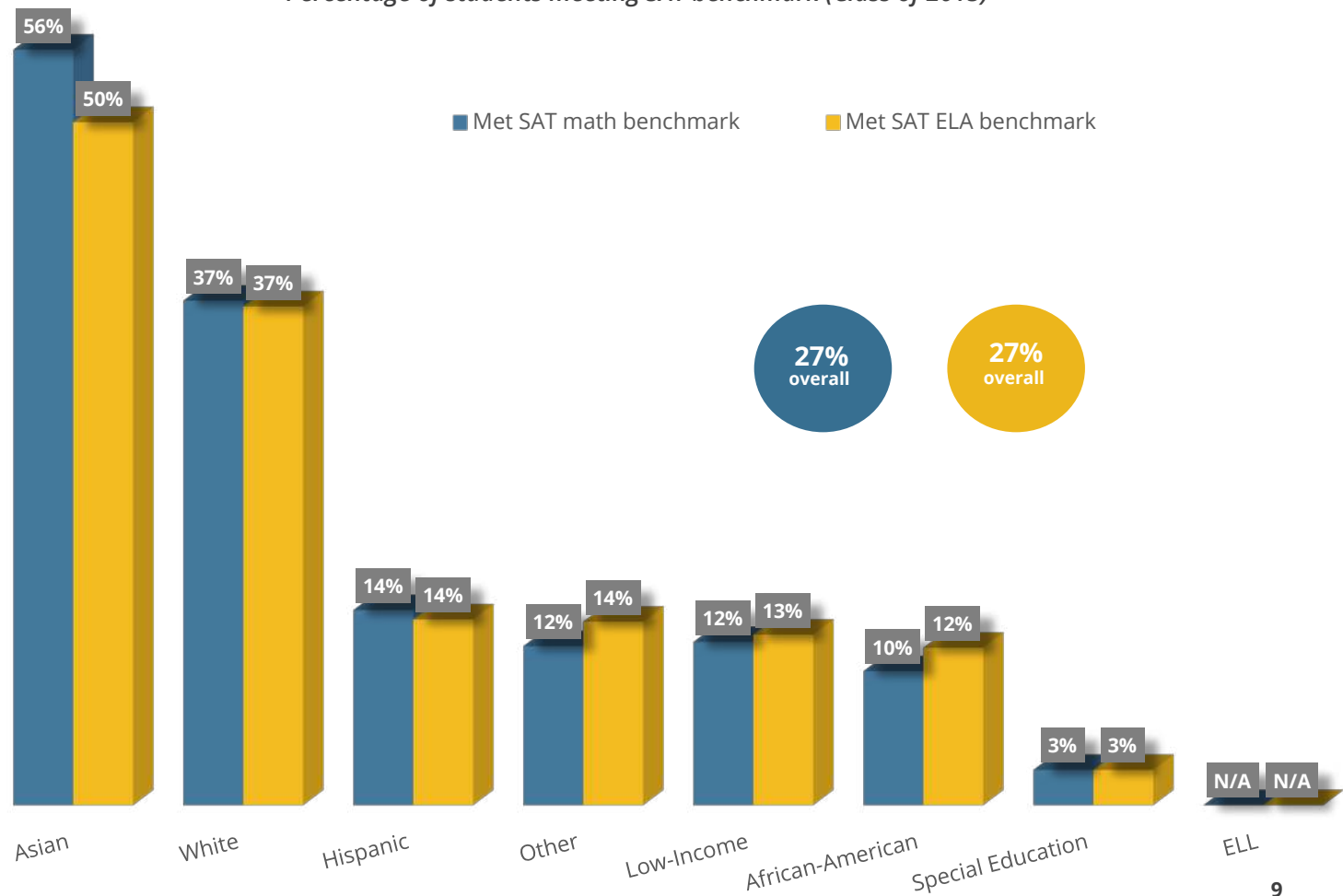


STUDENTS MEETING THE SAT COLLEGE-READINESS BENCHMARK
(1550) WERE LESS LIKELY TO NEED REMEDIATION

Percentage of students requiring
remediation by SAT (Class of 2015)



Percentage of students meeting SAT benchmark (Class of 2015)



Recommendation #4: Design an accessible and equitable K-12 system that ensures all students can succeed in college-level courses by graduation.

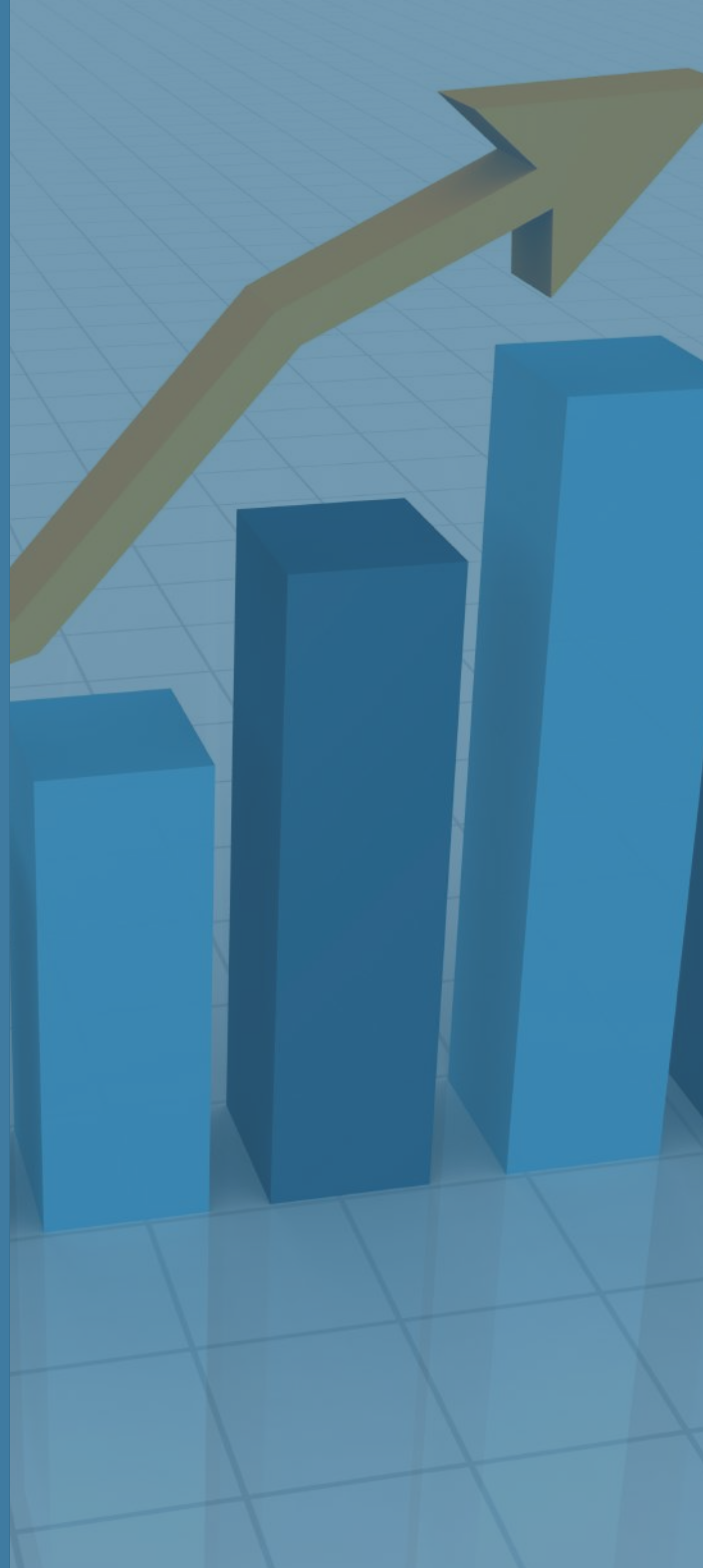
Equity in our school systems is a national concern. Data from Delaware's College Success Report demonstrate that students of color, those from low-income families, students with special needs, and English-language learners are more than 1.5 times more likely to be placed in remedial classes compared to their peers.

Recommendations #1 and #2 show that as a state we need to do more to ensure students master the full grade-level standards and provide interventions when needed. In Recommendation #4, the data show that even when students are ready for college-level courses, access to these courses is not guaranteed. The lack of access affects students of color, those from low-income families, students with special needs, and English-language learners at even higher rates.

For example, 34 percent of African-American students received a B or higher in their 11th grade College Prep English course, just below the statewide average of 40%. As students transitioned to college, 54 percent of African-American students required remediation, compared to a statewide average of 41 percent. Similar comparisons can be made for students in other subgroups. Grade inflation, advanced course access, and quality of instruction are possible reasons for this gap and must be examined.

Districts and charters must create systems that ensure all students have access to the full grade-level standards in all courses. Similarly, students demonstrating the same level of content mastery and course grades should have equitable access to the most advanced courses available in their school to ensure all students are prepared for credit-bearing college courses.

How can Delaware educators design a system that meets the needs of all students and prepares them for college upon graduation?

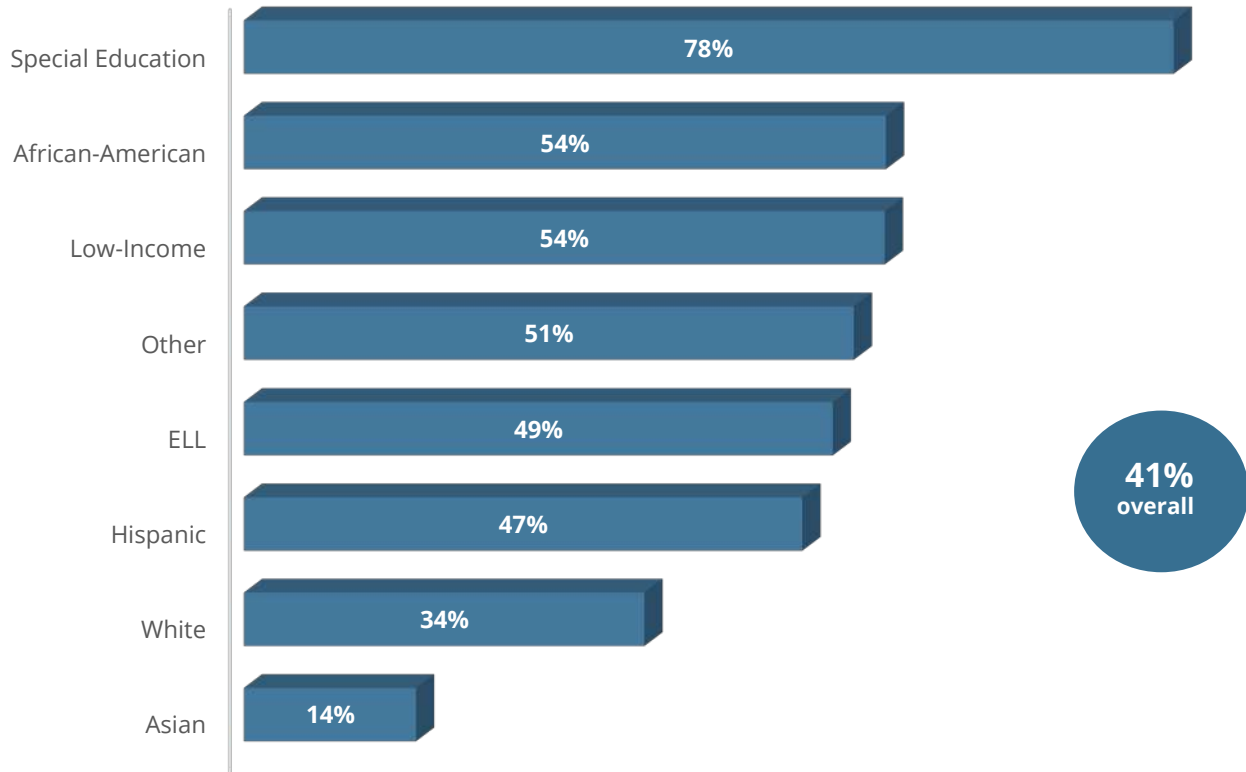


Parent/Community Actions:

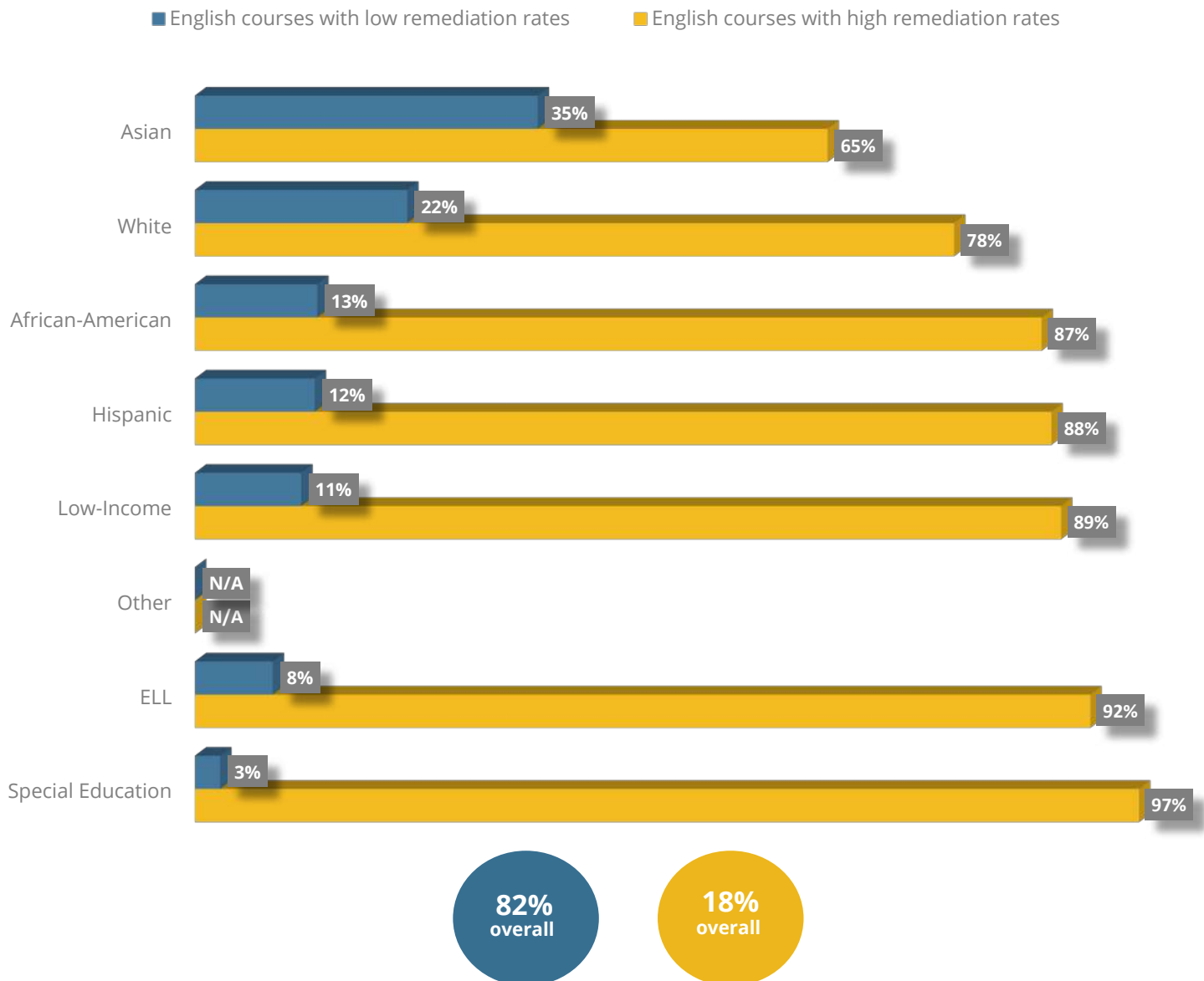
- Talk with your student's classroom teachers and school counselors to determine course selections each year. Is your child registered for the most rigorous courses possible?
- Work with your student's classroom teachers to develop a personalized plan to address academic weaknesses in core classes: math, ELA, science and social studies. What supports and interventions are available to help them address these gaps?
- Seek to understand your student's grades and what they mean. How can your student improve as he or she moves to the next grade level?

REMEDATION RATES VARIED BY SUBGROUPS

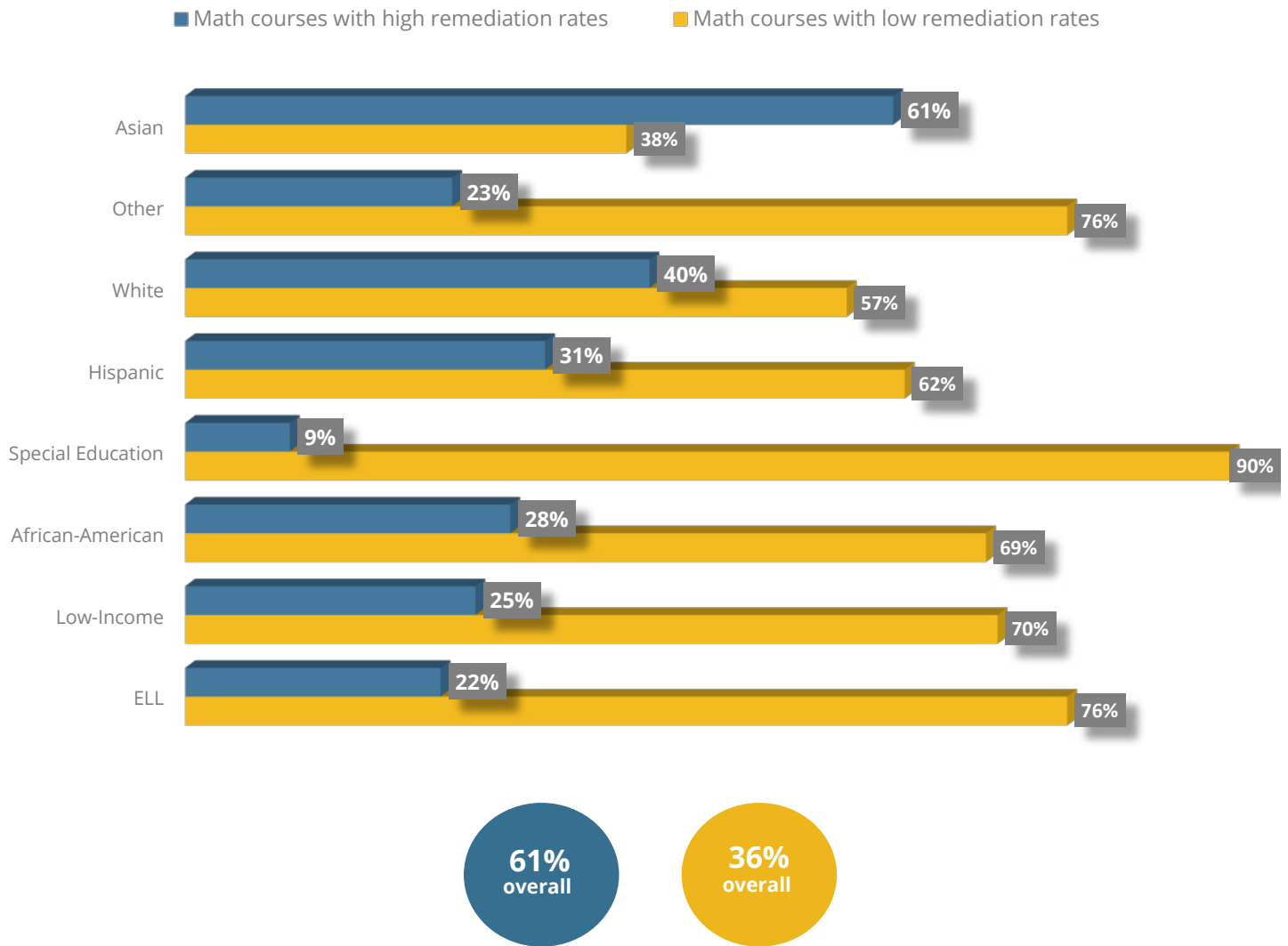
*Percentage of students requiring remediation
by subgroup (Class of 2015)*



ENROLLMENT IN COURSE TIED TO LOWER REMEDIATION RATES VARIED BY SUBGROUP

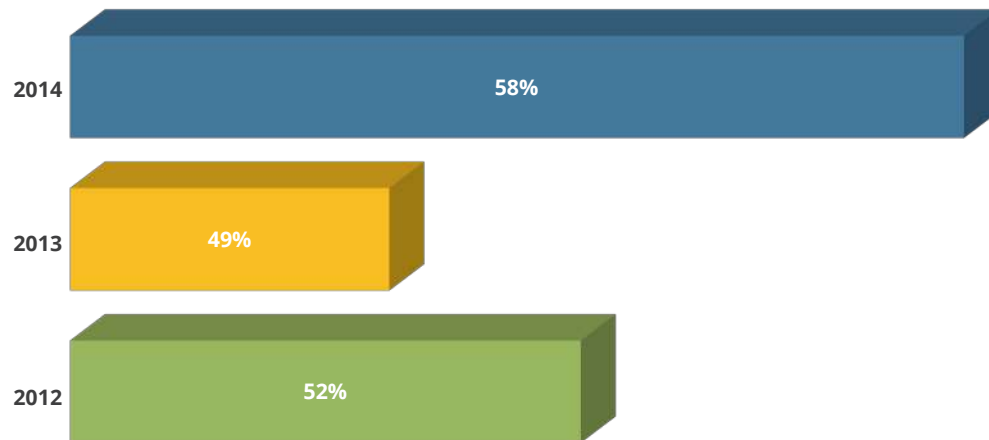


*Comparison of students enrolled in math courses
with high vs low remediation rates*

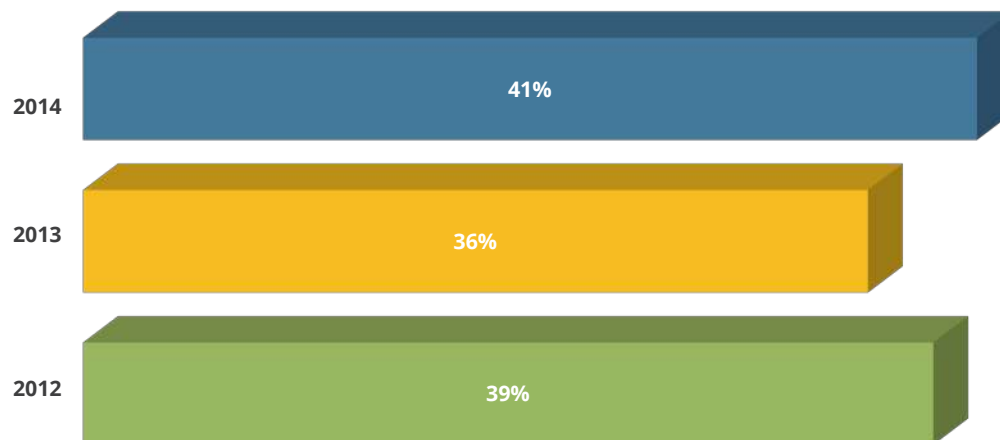


Appendix A: College Enrollment and Remediation Data (Class of 2012-2014)

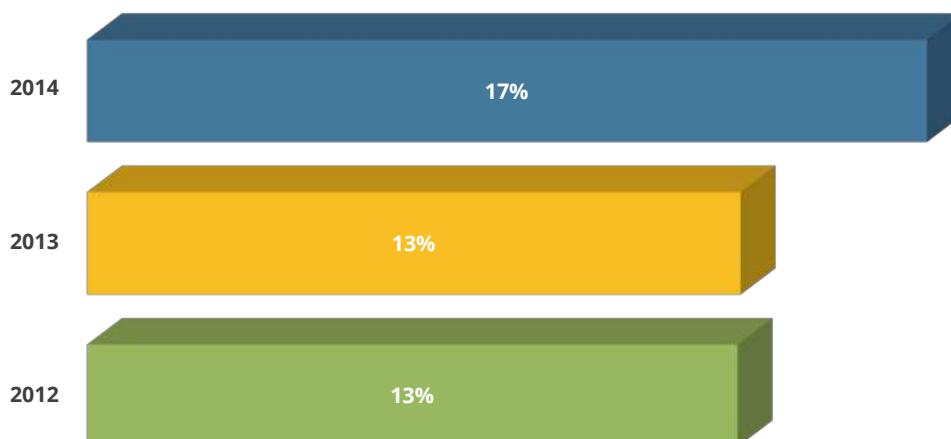
COLLEGE ENROLLMENT RATE FOR DELAWARE PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATES



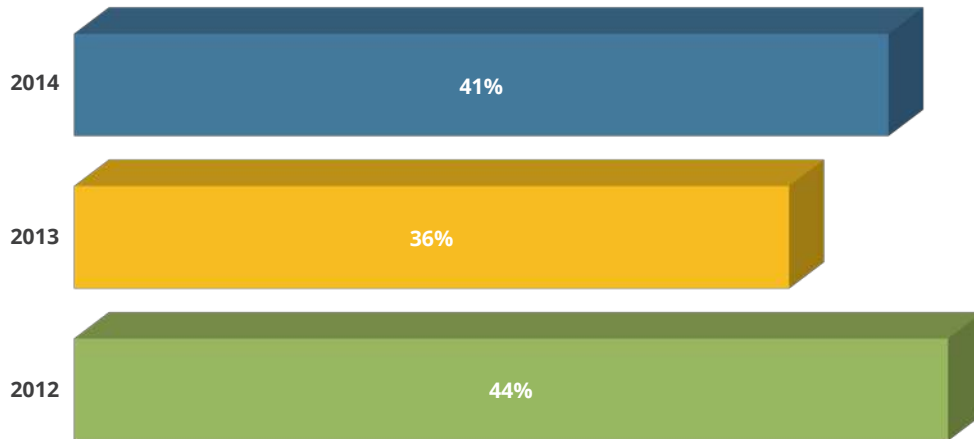
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ENROLLING IN-STATE



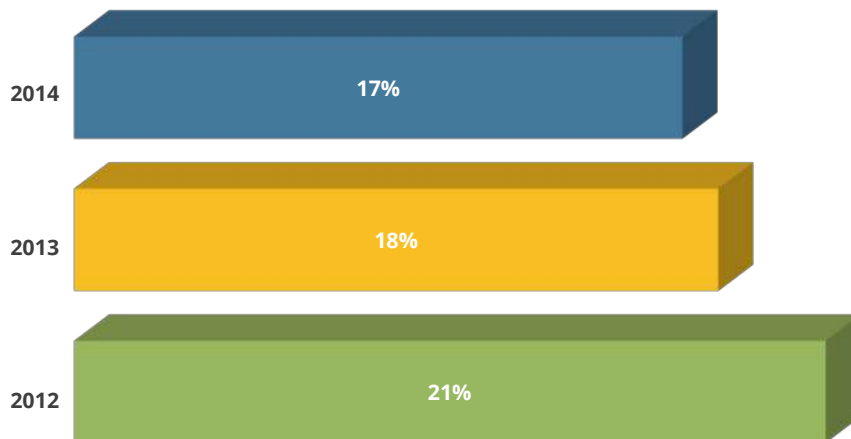
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ENROLLING IN OUT-OF-STATE COLLEGES



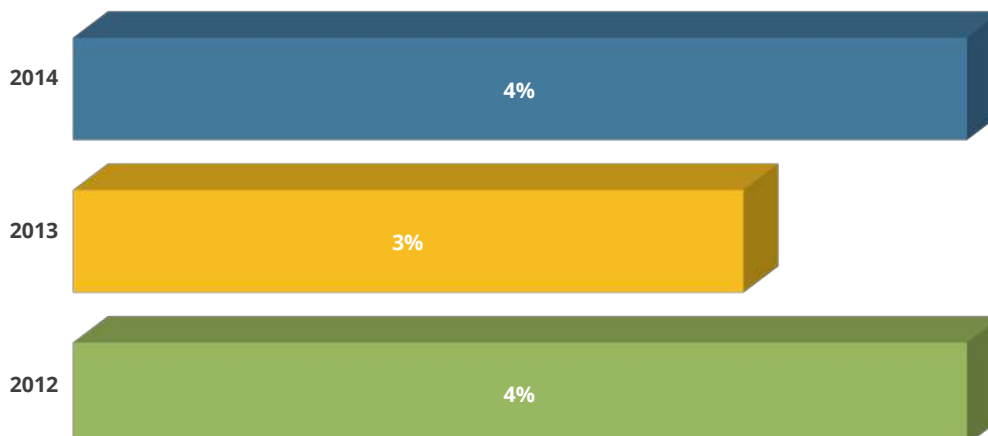
REMEDiation RATE FOR DELAWARE STUDENTS ATTENDING DELAWARE COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES



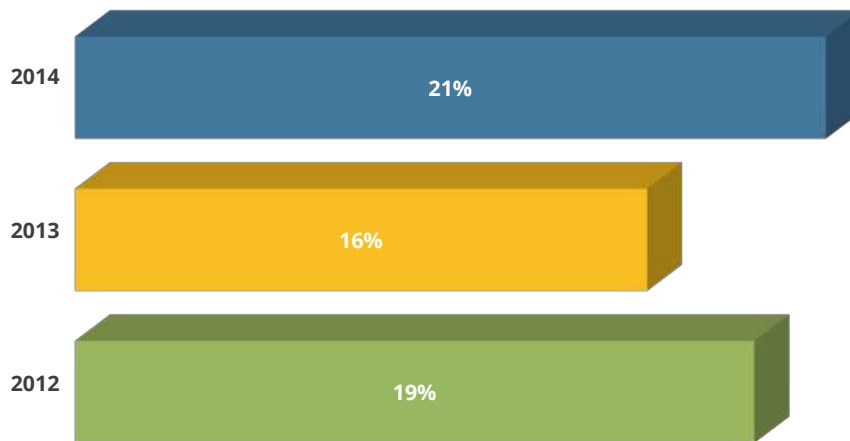
MATH-ONLY REMEDIATION RATE



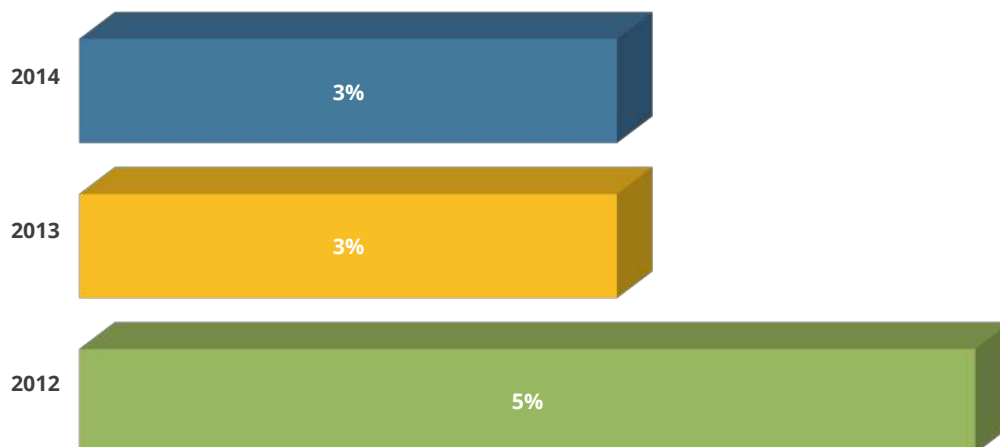
ENGLISH-ONLY REMEDIATION RATE



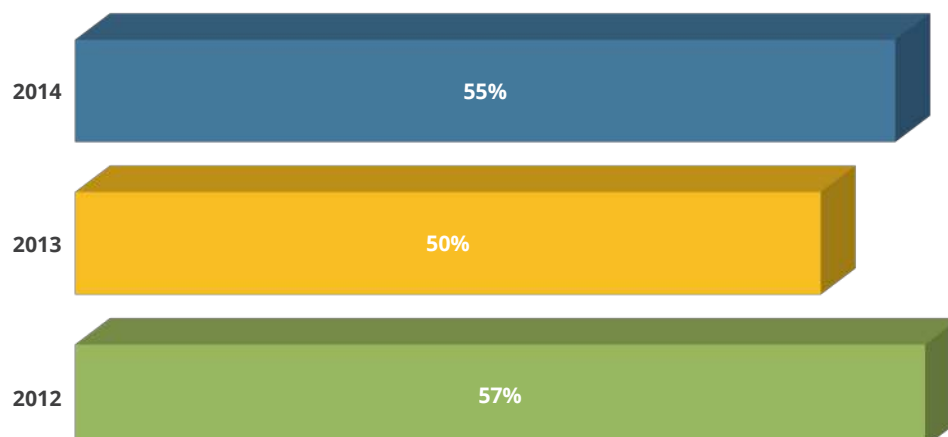
REMEDiation RATE FOR BOTH MATH AND ENGLISH



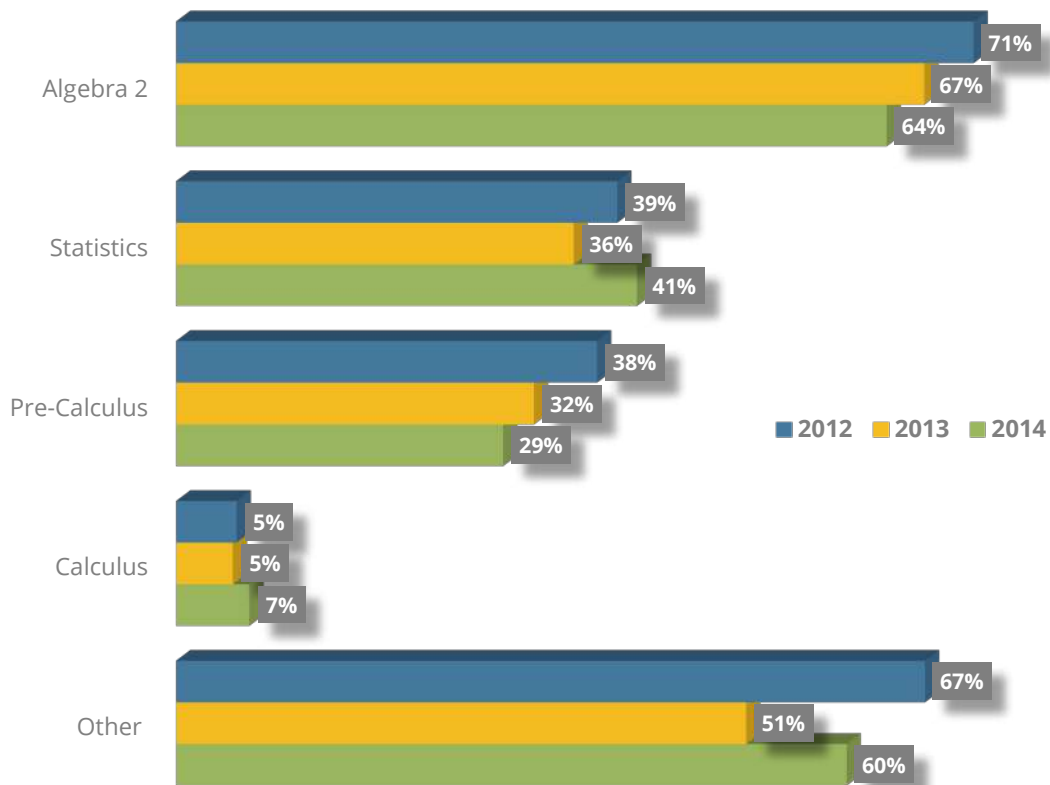
REMEDiation RATE FOR STUDENTS MEETING SAT BENCHMARK (1550)



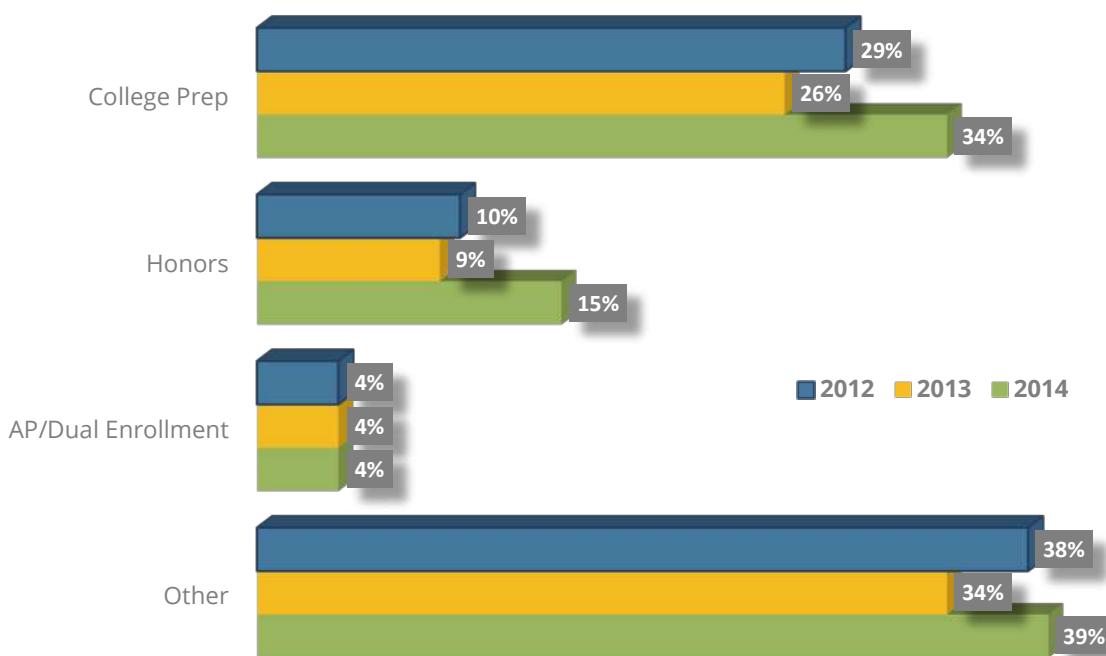
REMEDiation RATE FOR STUDENTS NOT MEETING SAT BENCHMARK (1550)



PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS REQUIRING REMEDIATION BY MATH

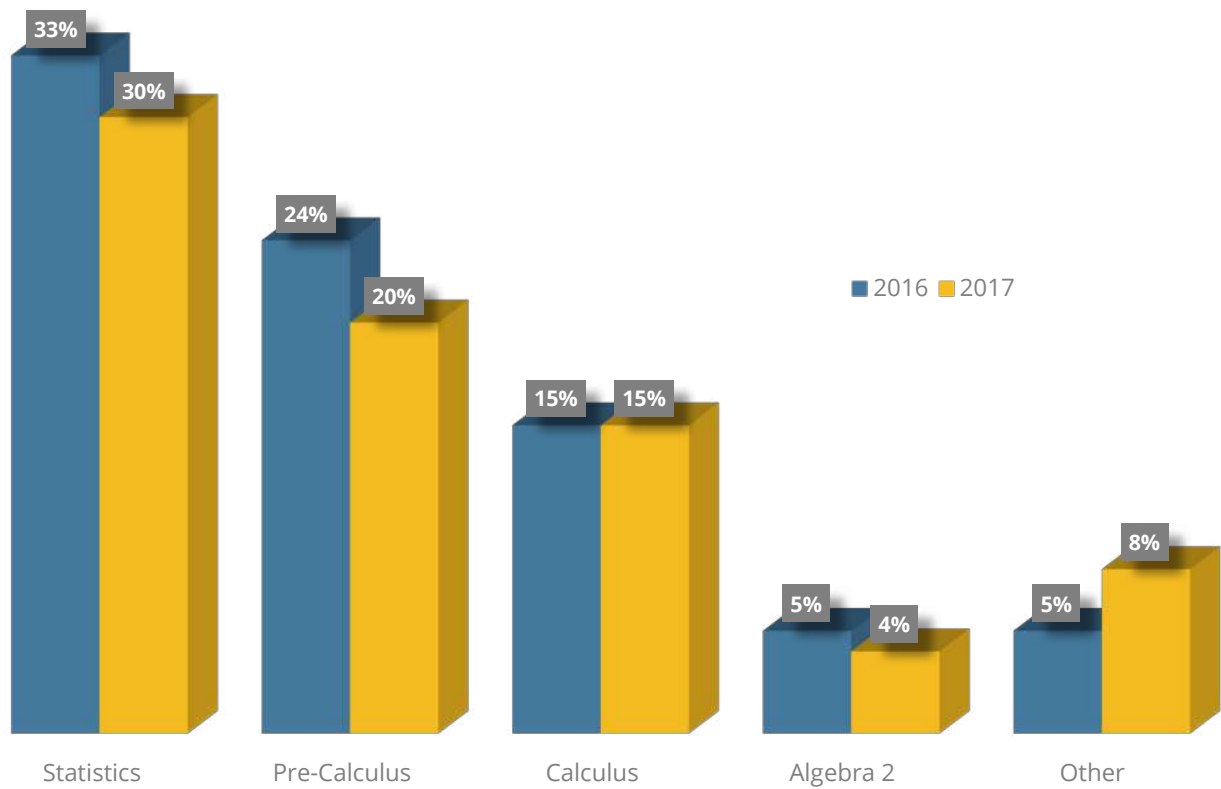


PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS REQUIRING REMEDIATION BY ENGLISH COURSE

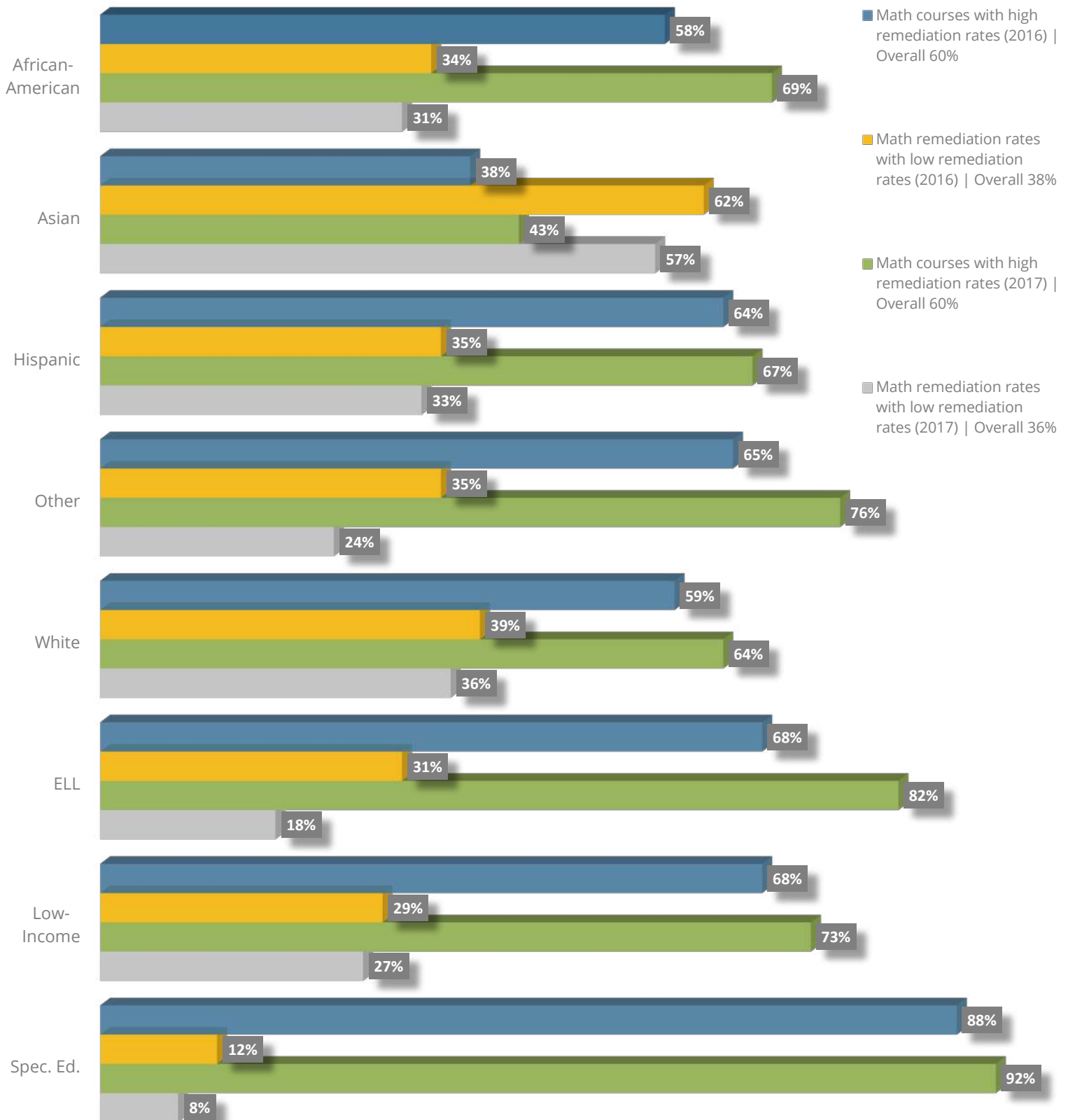


Appendix B: Classes 2016-2017

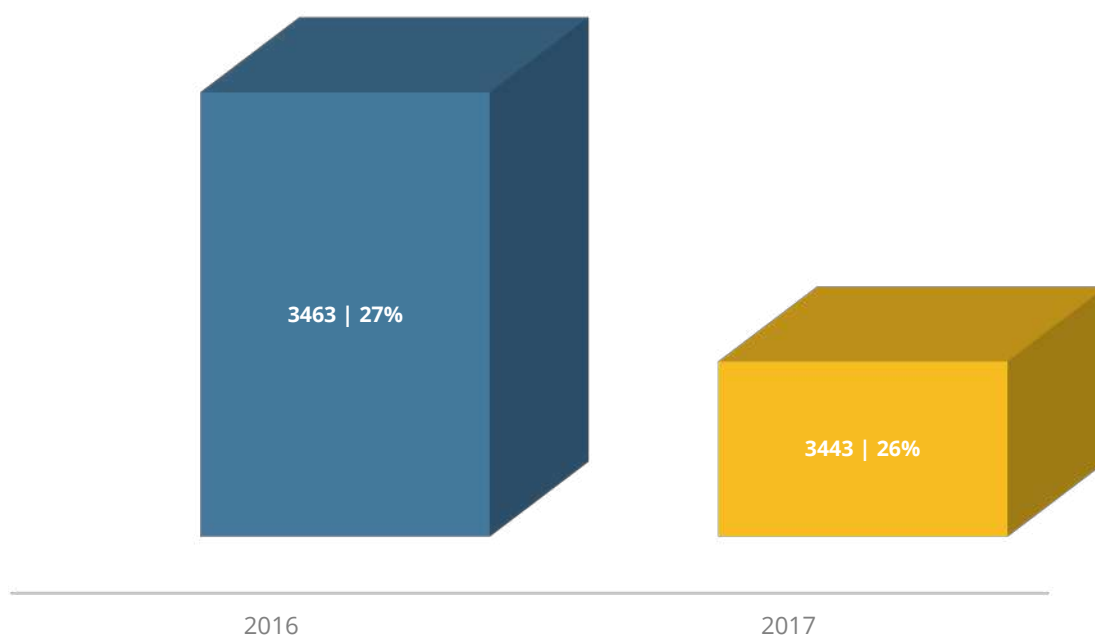
12TH GRADE MATH COURSE ENROLLMENT



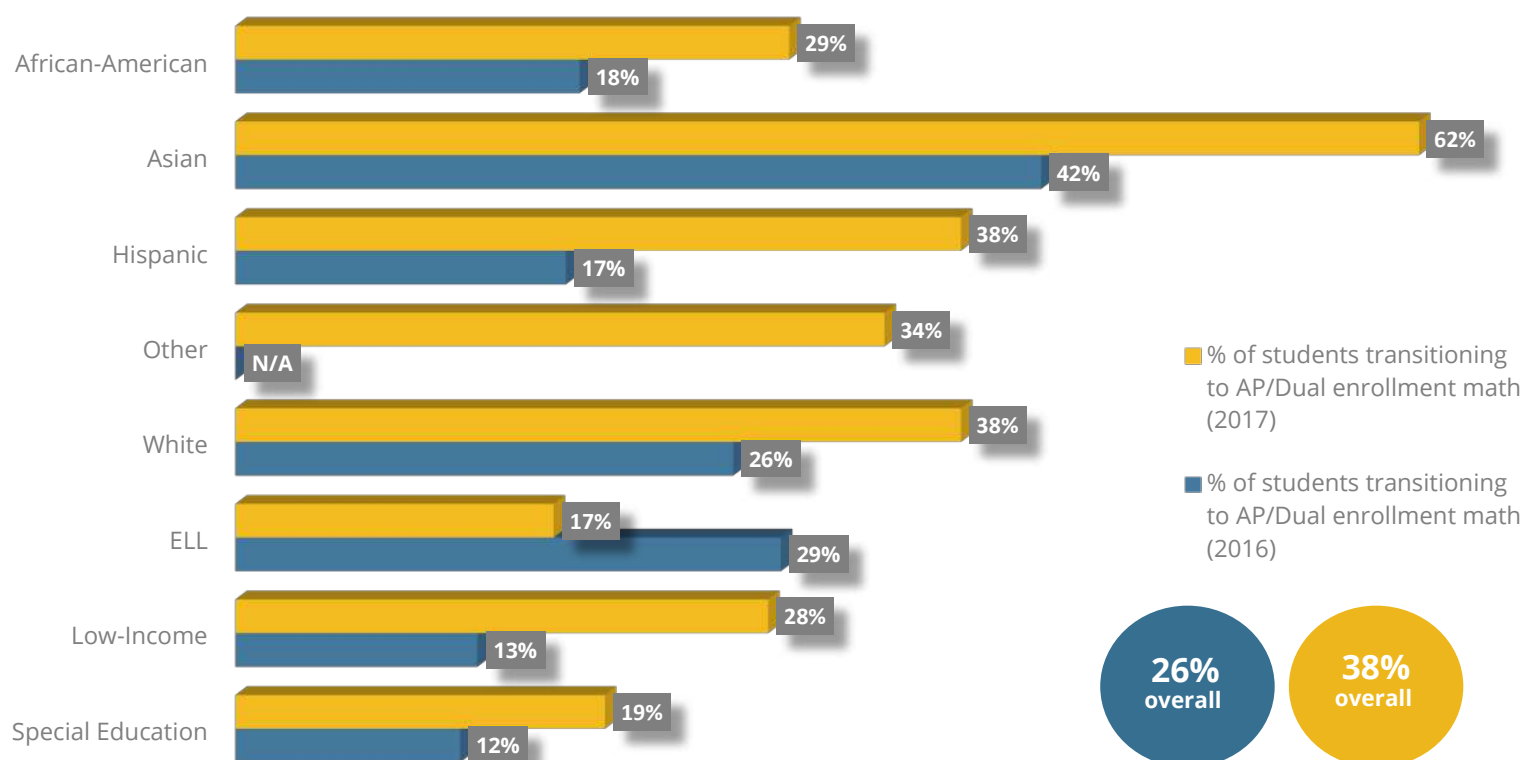
COMPARISON OF STUDENTS ENROLLMENT IN MATH COURSES WITH LOW VS HIGH REMEDIATION RATES (Class of 2016-2017)



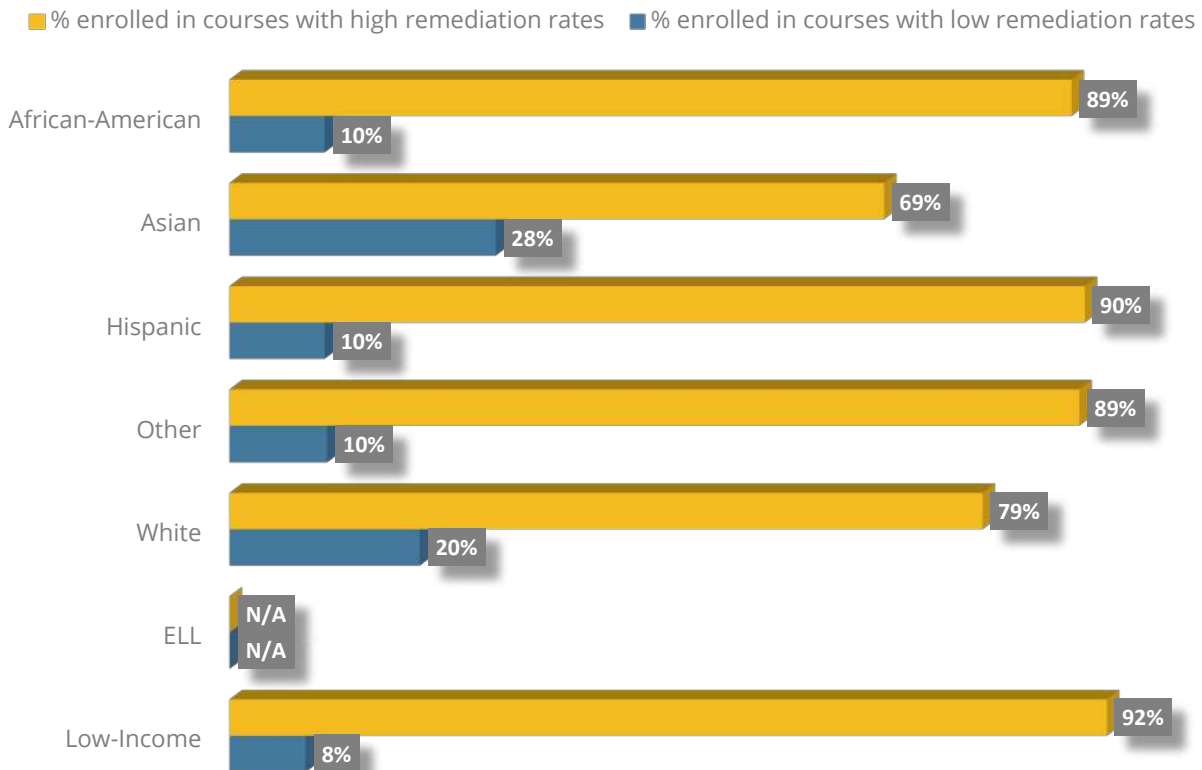
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS RECEIVING B OR HIGHER AND TRANSITIONING TO AP/DUAL ENROLLMENT MATH (Class of 2016)



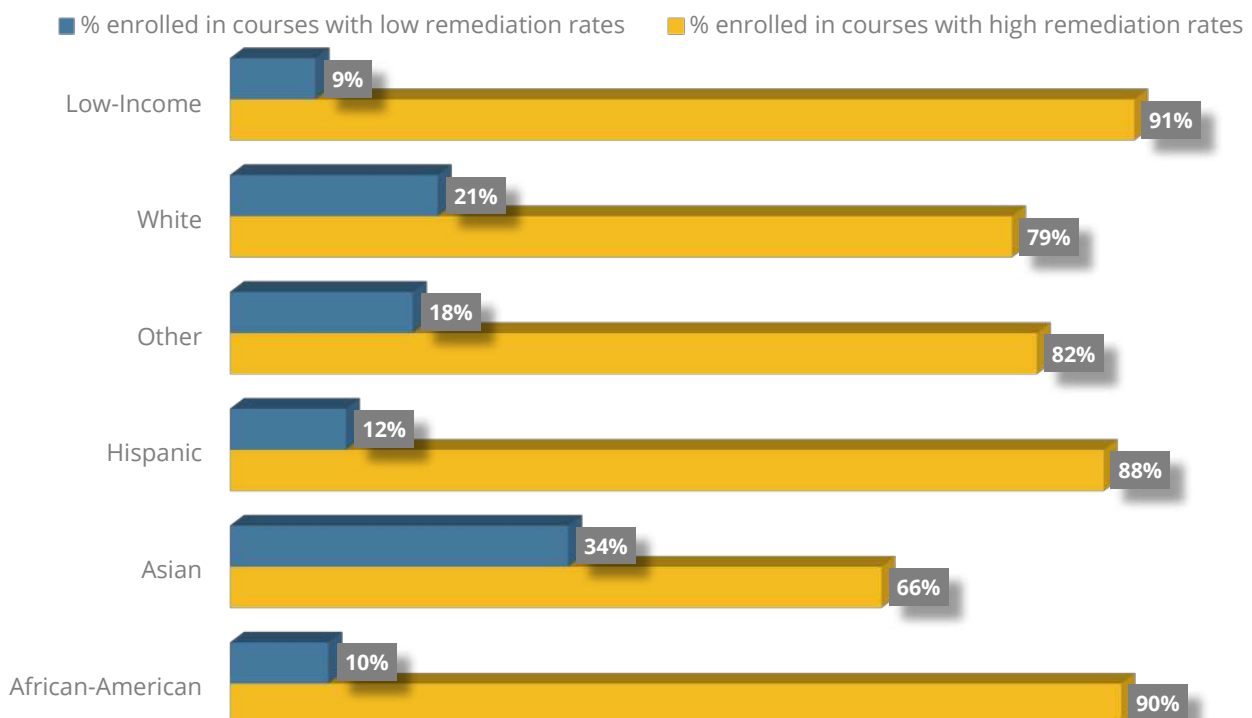
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING SAT MATH BENCHMARK AND TRANSITIONING TO AP/DUAL ENROLLMENT



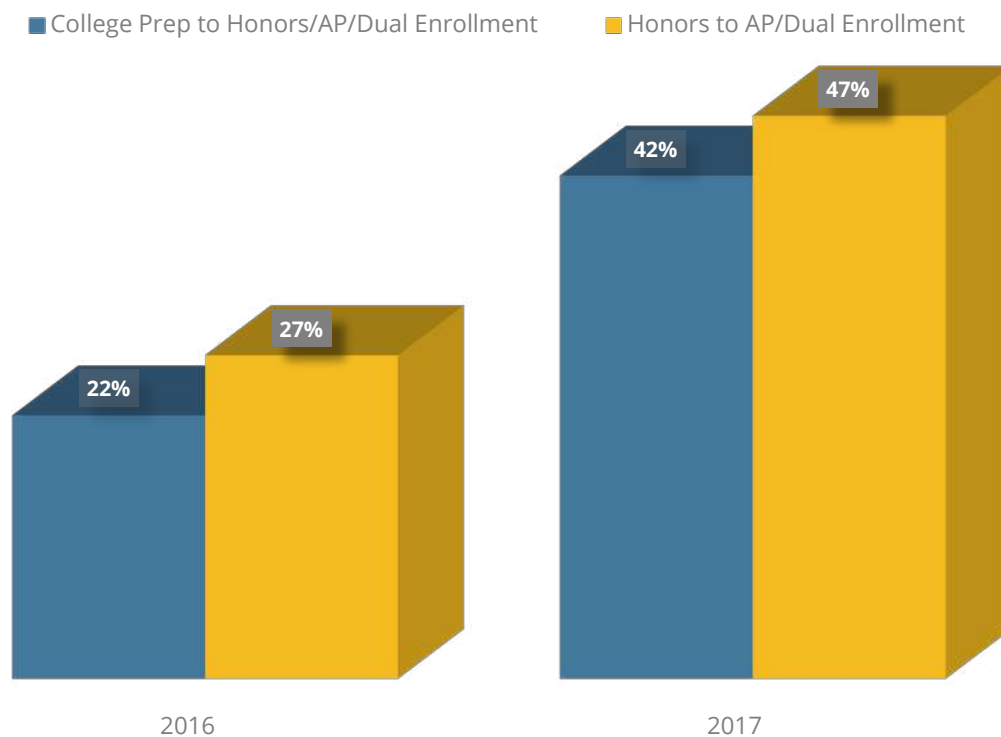
COMPARISON OF 12TH GRADE COURSE ENROLLMENT IN ENGLISH COURSES WITH HIGH VS LOW REMEDIATION RATES (2016)



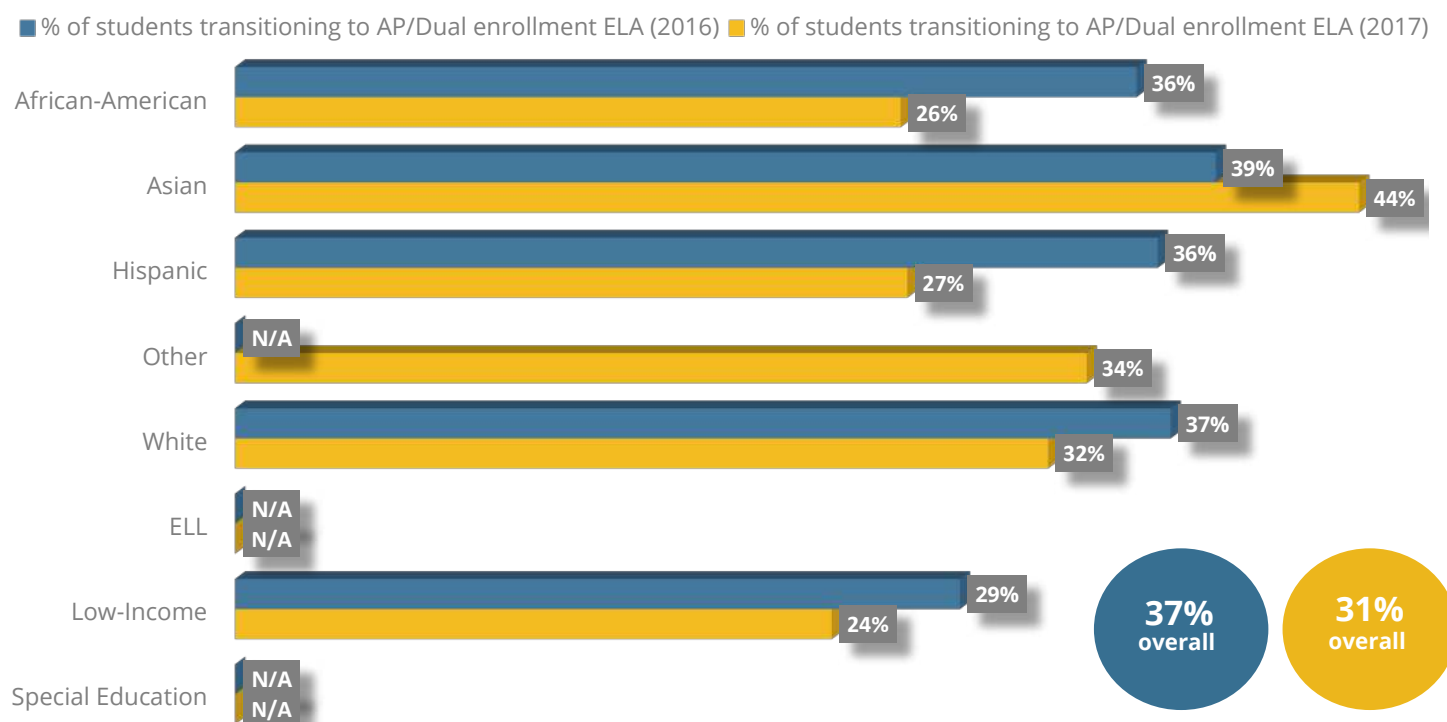
COMPARISON OF 12TH GRADE COURSE ENROLLMENT IN ENGLISH COURSES WITH HIGH VS LOW REMEDIATION RATES (2017)



PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS RECEIVING B OR HIGHER AND TRANSITIONING TO HIGHER ELA LEVEL COURSES



PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING SAT ELA BENCHMARK AND TRANSITIONING TO AP/DUAL ENROLLMENT



Delaware



Department of Education

Delaware Higher Education Office

Delaware Department of Education

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Dover, DE 19901

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