

Eisa, M., & Blanshteyn, V. (2011), *Closing the Achievement Gap*, Pleasant Hill, CA: Diablo Valley College Office of Planning, Research and Student Outcomes.

This is a Powerpoint presentation based on community colleges in CA and the target audience would be faculty, staff and administrators. . It has the slides but no additional material that may provide greater context. It explains what the achievement gap is, looks at the different types of gaps, and offers explanations about why they exist. It provides indicators of academic performance. It shows the correlation between attainment and income. It mentioned the stereotype threat. It provides concrete strategies to overcome the achievement gap. It provides various examples from California, such as the Puente program, EOPS and Care, to demonstrate how to close the gap.

www.dvc.edu/events/events/AchievementGapDV02-10-2011.ppt

Closing the Achievement Gap

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Introduction



Measuring Up, 2008

- In December 2008, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (San Jose) issued its fifth bi-annual report card, called *Measuring Up*, that grades all 50 states on the performance of higher education systems in six categories: Preparation, Participation, Affordability, Completion, Benefits, and Learning.

The Grades Are In, 2009

- In February 2009, the Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy (Sacramento) issued a report entitled *The Grades are In – 2008: Is California Higher Education Measuring Up?* that explored California's grades on the report card in more depth and provided additional analysis of performance by region and by race/ethnicity.

The Conclusion

- **The Conclusion in both reports is that ...**

“There is no substitute for an educated populace in California’s drive for economic and social health. The data reveals some positive developments but some serious challenges that must be addressed to ensure a prosperous future.”

Divided We Fail, 2010

- **With nearly one-fourth of the nation's community college students enrolled in California, success of the Obama Administration's college attainment agenda depends on California increasing completion rates and reducing the performance gaps in its 112 community colleges.**

(Colleen Moore and Nancy Shulock: Institute for Higher Education Leadership & policy, October 2010)

Some Key Findings

- **Too many students fail to complete.**
- **Six years after enrolling, 70% of degree seeking students had not completed a certificate or degree and had not transferred to a university (75% of African Americans and 80% of Latinos)**
- **The report offered several recommendations for improving student outcomes.**

A Call for Change (Black Males), 2010

- **In eighth grade**, only 9% of black males across the country performed at or above the proficient level in reading, compared with 33% of white males nationwide. Math results were similar in both grades.
- **In college and career preparedness**, black males were nearly twice as likely to drop out of high school as white males. In 2008, 9 percent of black males dropped out of high school compared with 5 percent of white males.
- **A Call for Change: The Social and Educational Factors Contributing to the Outcomes of Black Males in Urban Schools. (Council of the Great City schools), November 2010**

Black Males

- **In school experience**, black students were less likely to participate in academic clubs, more likely to be suspended from school, and more likely to be retained in grade than their white peers.
- **In postsecondary experience, the unemployment rate among black males ages 20 and over (17.3 percent) was twice as high as the unemployment rate among white males of the same age (8.6 percent) earlier this year.**
- In 2008, black males, ages 18 and over, accounted for **5%** of the college population, while black males accounted for **36%** of the nation's prison population.

Newsweek, August 2010

- A Newsweek article entitled “How to Close the Achievement Gap” provided an international perspective on what works in the best schools around the world.
- Examples from Chile to Finland and Singapore show that narrowing the achievement gap is doable, given concerted efforts and commitment at all levels (federal, state, local, and institutional).

This Presentation...

- **Explores one of the most challenging areas in higher education...the academic achievement gap.**
- **The setting is DVC, one of the largest community colleges in California**

Institutional Setting



Background

- Location: Pleasant Hill (25 miles E. of SF)
- Enrollment: 34,000 annual unduplicated count
- Ethnicity of Students:

Student Enrollment, Fall 2010	
African American	6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	16%
Native American	1%
White	42%
Two or More Races	7%
Unknown	16%

Background

Institutional Achievement, 2009-2010	
Awards	1,200
Transfer to UC and CSU	1,700
Overall Transfer	2,300
Transfer Rank	Top 10
Success Rate	70%
Retention	82%

Some Challenges

- **Paradigm shift from emphasis on teaching to a focus on learning.**
- **Academic achievement gap between certain student groups.**
- **Increasing number of students in need of remediation.**

Objectives of this Presentation

- **Enhance understanding of the issues related to the achievement gap.**
- **Seek ideas for improvement.**
- **Share ideas and experiences related to best intervention strategies.**

Outline

- **What** is the Achievement Gap?
- **Why** Does the Gap Exist?
- **How** to Narrow the Gap?

WHAT ?



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Achievement Gap?

- Disparity in **academic performance** among groups of students.
- The achievement gap is most often used to describe the academic performance gap between ethnic groups, especially between African American and White students and between Hispanic and White students.

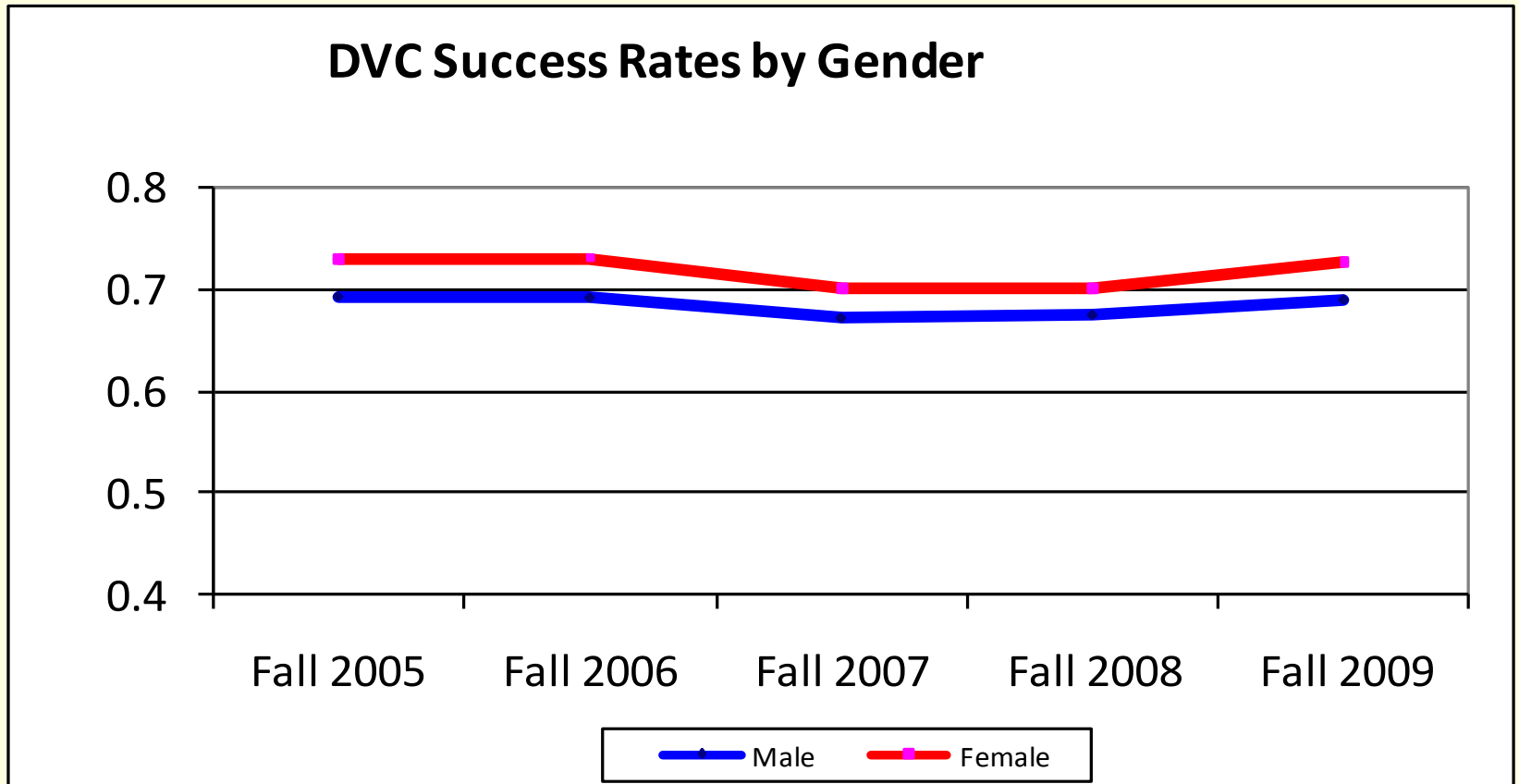
Indicators of Academic Performance

- **Course success rates** (Grades C or better)
- **Course retention rates** (All grades except W)
- **Degrees and certificates awarded**
- **Transfer to 4-year institutions**
- **GPA**
- **Standardized test scores**
- **Placement in college-level courses**

Different Achievement Gaps

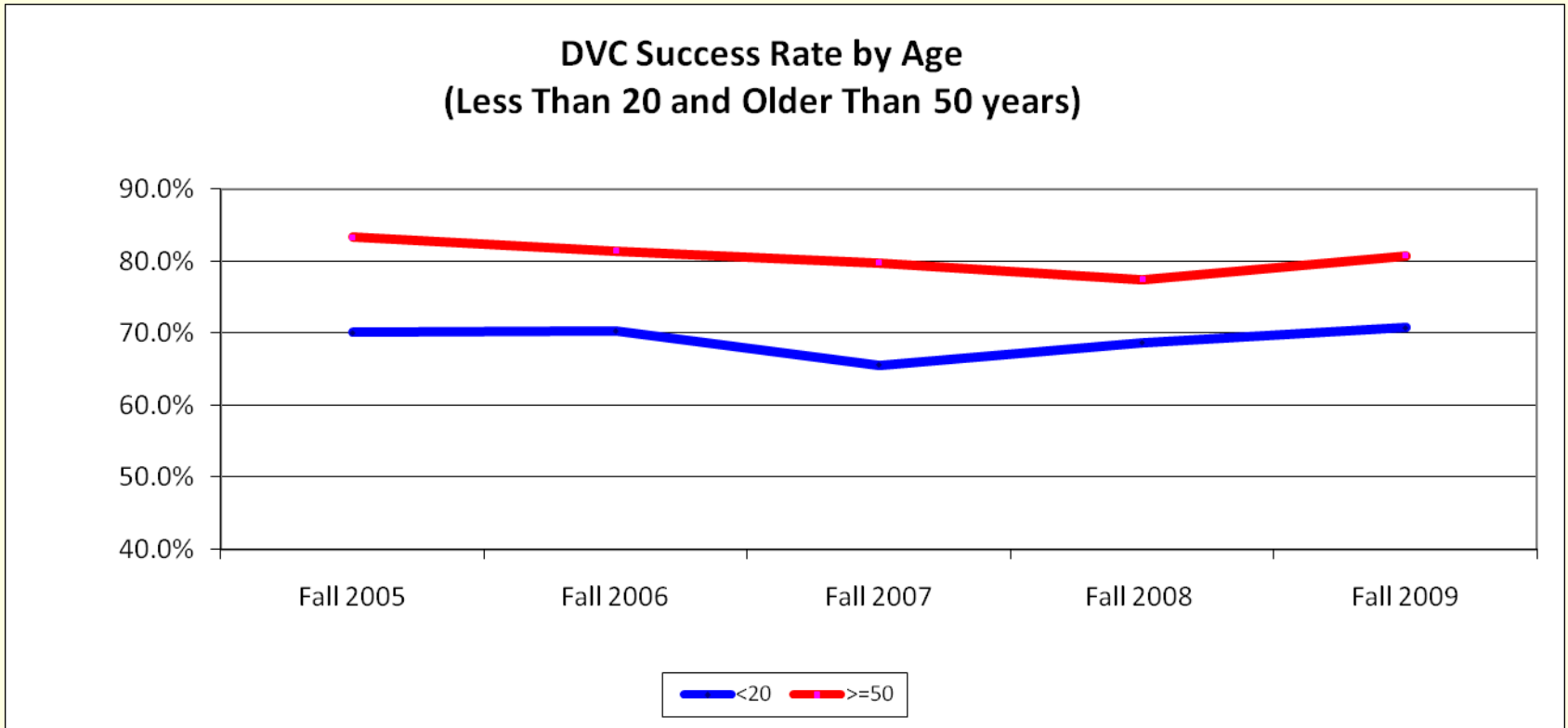
- **Gender**
- **Age**
- **Ethnicity**
- **Full-time and part-time**
- **Disciplines**
- **Modes of delivery**
- **Full-time and Part-time**
- **Other**

Success Rates by Gender



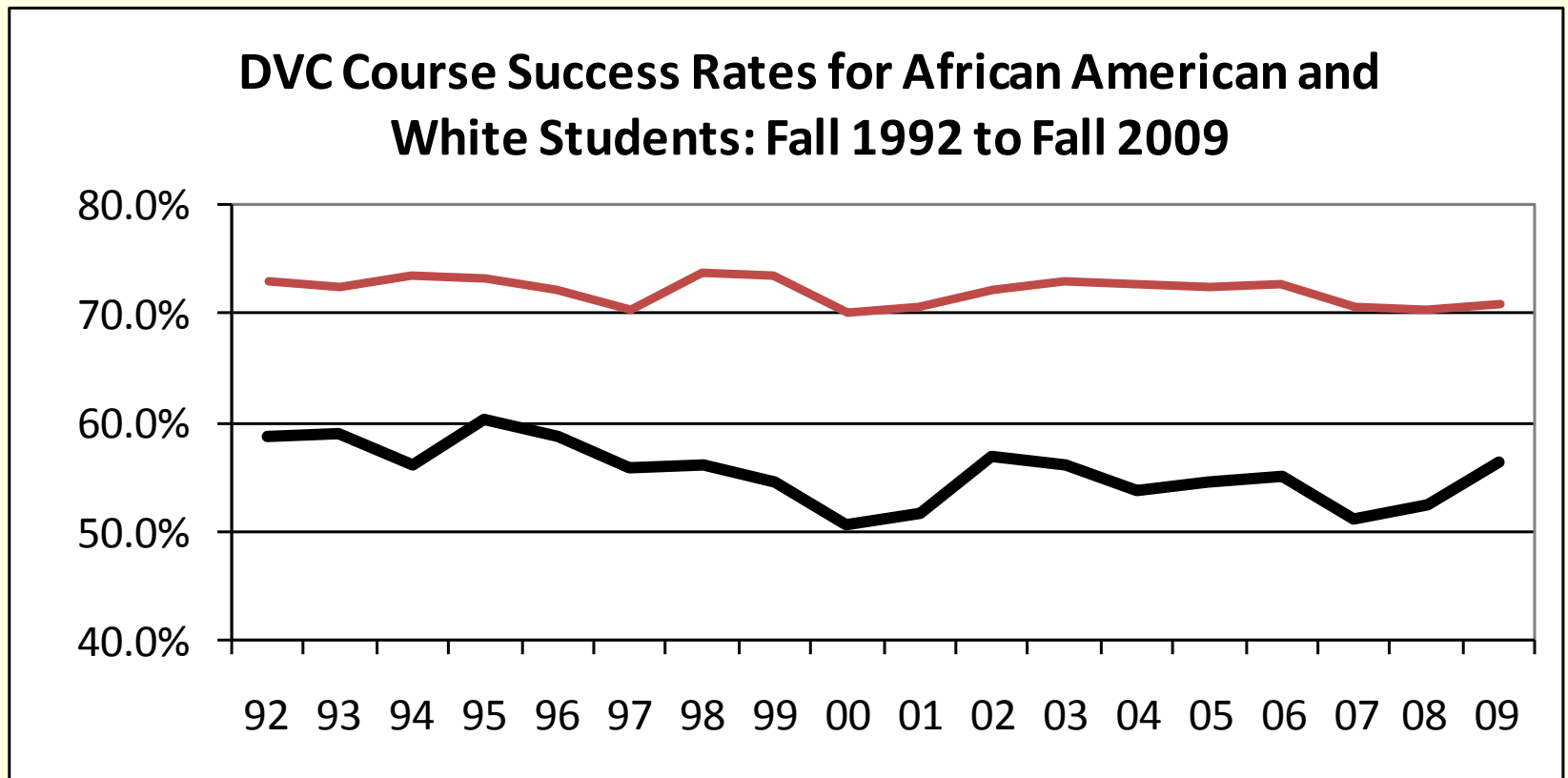
Women tend to spend more time on the task, better time management, and higher success rates

Success Rates by Age



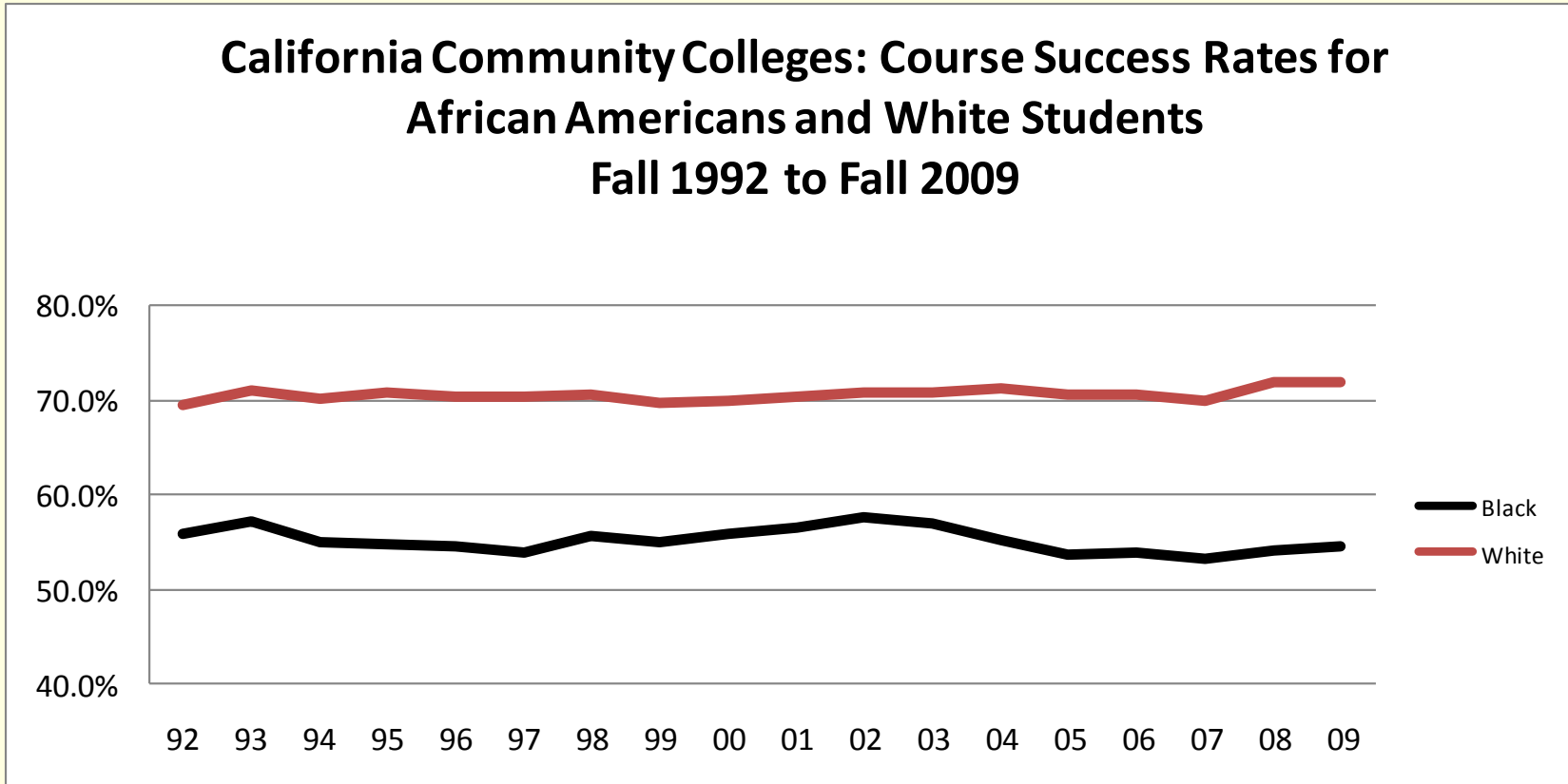
Older students have better time management , more focus on their studies, and better success rate

Success Rates by Race



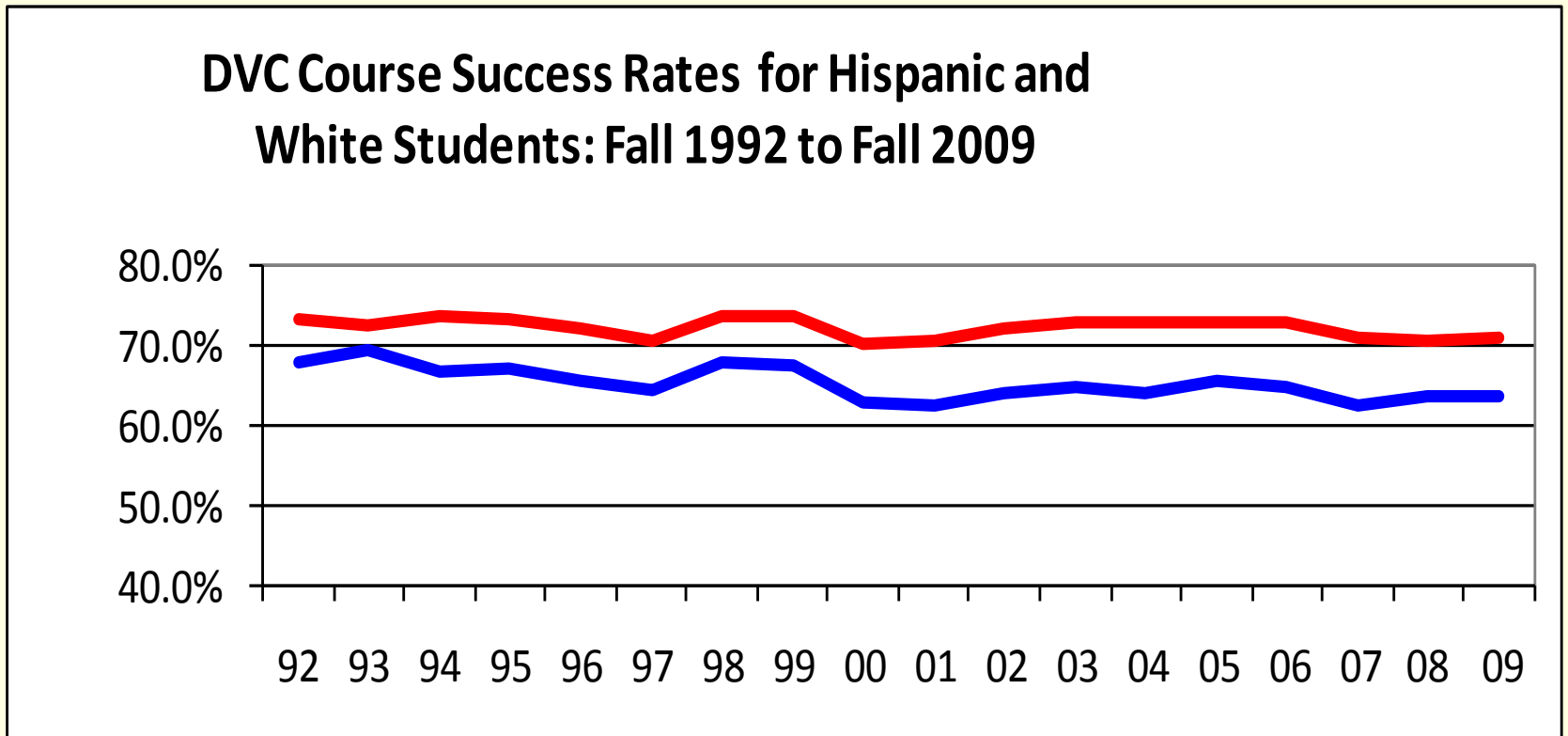
The widest achievement gap exists between African Americans and Whites

Course Success Rates: California Community Colleges



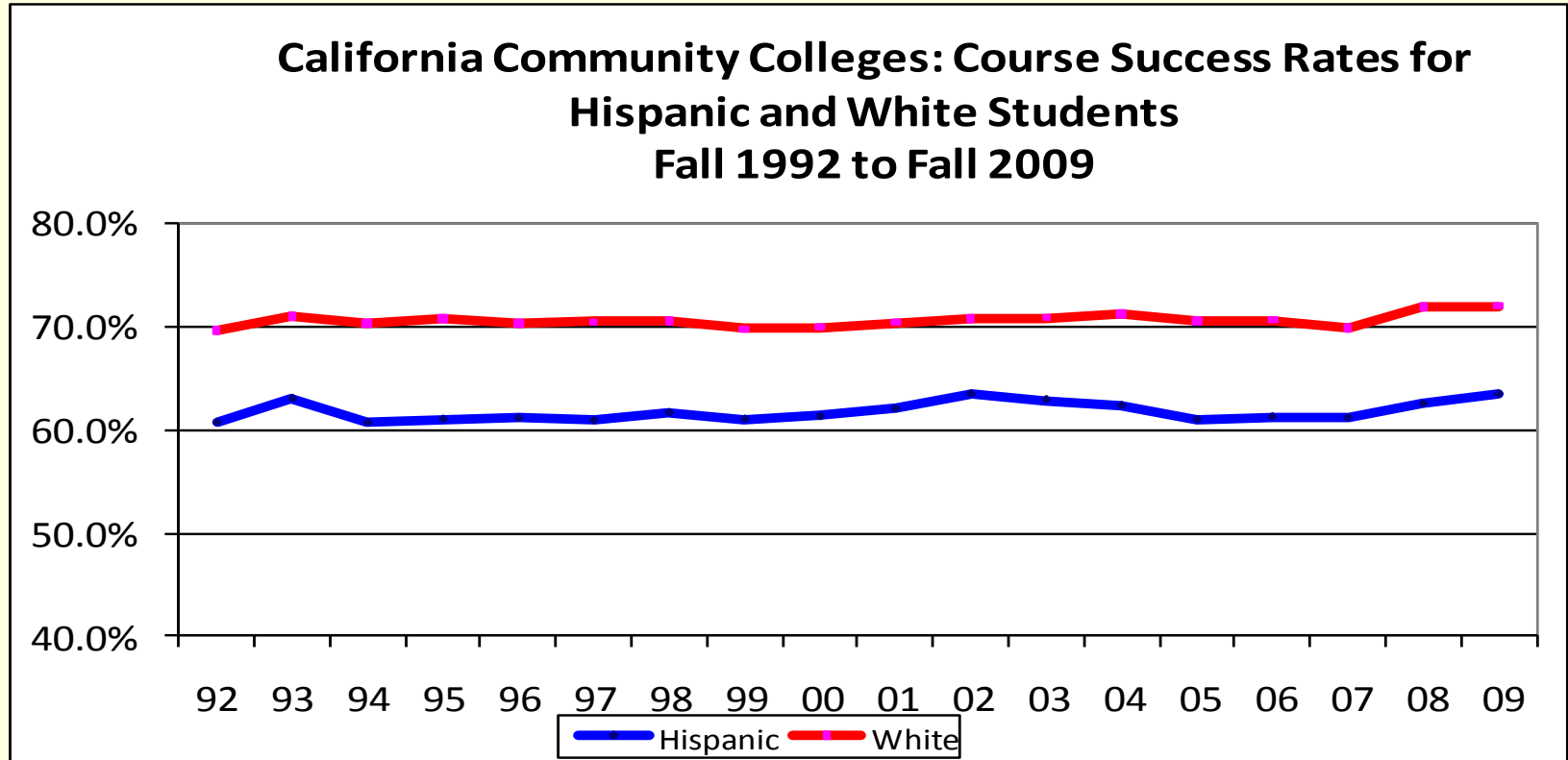
The achievement gap also exists at other community colleges in the state.

Success Rates by Race



A relatively smaller gap exists between Hispanic and White students

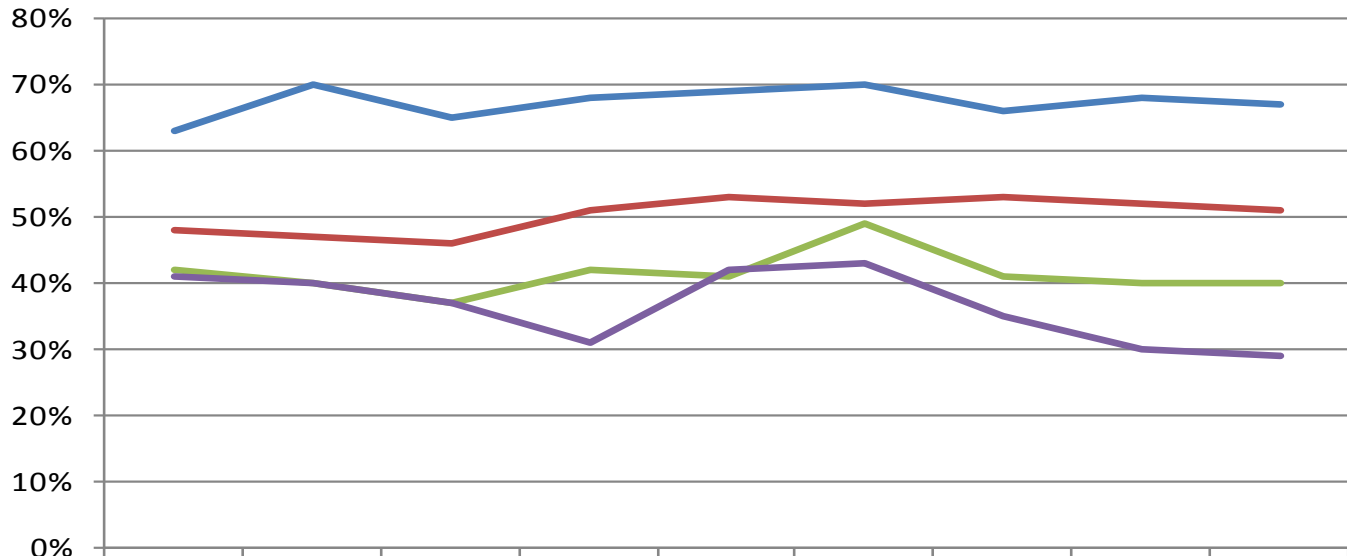
Course Success Rates: California Community Colleges



A wider gap exists between Hispanic and White students at state community colleges.

Six-Year Transfer Cohort Rates

Six-Year Transfer Cohorts by Ethnicity



	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Asian	63%	70%	65%	68.0%	69.0%	70.0%	66%	68%	67%
White	48%	47%	46%	51.0%	53.0%	52.0%	53%	52%	51%
Hispanic	42%	40%	37%	42.0%	41.0%	49.0%	41%	40%	40%
African-American	41%	40%	37%	31.0%	42.0%	43.0%	35%	30%	29%

— Asian — White — Hispanic — African-American

Relative Shares: Cohort vs. Transfer

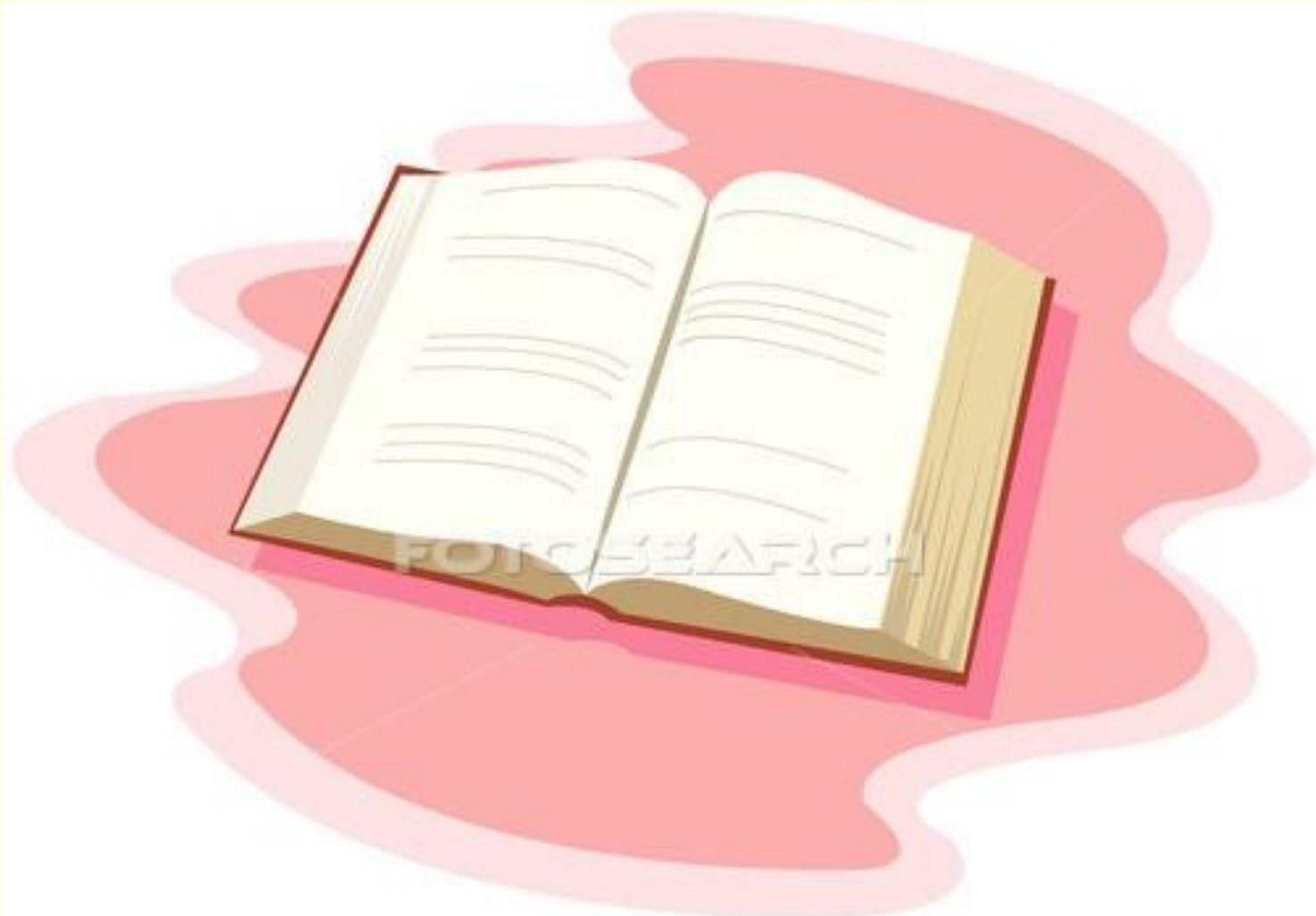
Gap between Proportionate Share of Transfer and Proportionate Share of Cohorts, 1995-96 to 2003-04

Ethnicity	Transfer Count	Cohort Count	% of Transfer	% of Cohort	Transfer vs. Cohort	Gap
American	369	1,006	2.5%	3.6%	-1.0%	-29%
Asian	2,672	3,963	18.3%	14.1%	4.2%	30%
Hispanic	1,106	2,680	7.6%	9.5%	-2.0%	-20%
White	7,609	15,161	52.2%	53.9%	-1.8%	-3%
Total	14,590	28,119	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0%

Summary

- Achievement gaps exist among genders, age groups, and ethnic groups, etc.
- The magnitude of the gap is widest for African Americans and Hispanics.
- The gap manifests itself in different ways:
 - Course success and retention
 - Transfer
 - Awards of Degrees and Certificates

WHY?



Why Does the Gap Exist?

Socioeconomic factors:

- **Educational Attainment**
- **Income**
- **Family Responsibilities (Single Parents)**
- **Immigration**
- **Working hours per Week**

Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment of the Population 25 Years and Over- U.S. Census 2009			
Educational Attainment	USA 198,300,000	California 23,219,217	Contra Costa County 670,930
None-8 th grade	5.5%	10.4%	5.7%
9 th grade-11 th grade	7.8%	9.1%	6.2%
High school graduate/Equivalency	31.1%	21.9%	20.2%
Some college, no degree	17.2%	21.2%	22.1%
Associate degree	8.9%	7.6%	8.1%
Bachelor's degree	19.0%	19.1%	24.2%
Graduate or Professional degree	10.5%	10.7%	13.4%
Percent High school graduates or higher	86.7%	80.5%	88.1%
Percent Bachelor's degree of higher	29.5%	29.7%	37.7%

Educational Attainment and Income

- The higher the educational attainment of the population, the higher the income and the lower the unemployment rate.
- Locations with higher educational attainment have better schools and high academic achievement.
- Locations with lower educational attainment have challenging schools and lower academic achievement.

Educational Attainment and Income

- Locations with higher educational attainment and higher income tend to subsidize public schools and therefore contribute to even higher quality.
- Many public schools in our service area pride themselves on having a private-school mentality.
- These disparities tend to continue throughout various stages of education from elementary school all the way to college.

Educational Attainment and Income

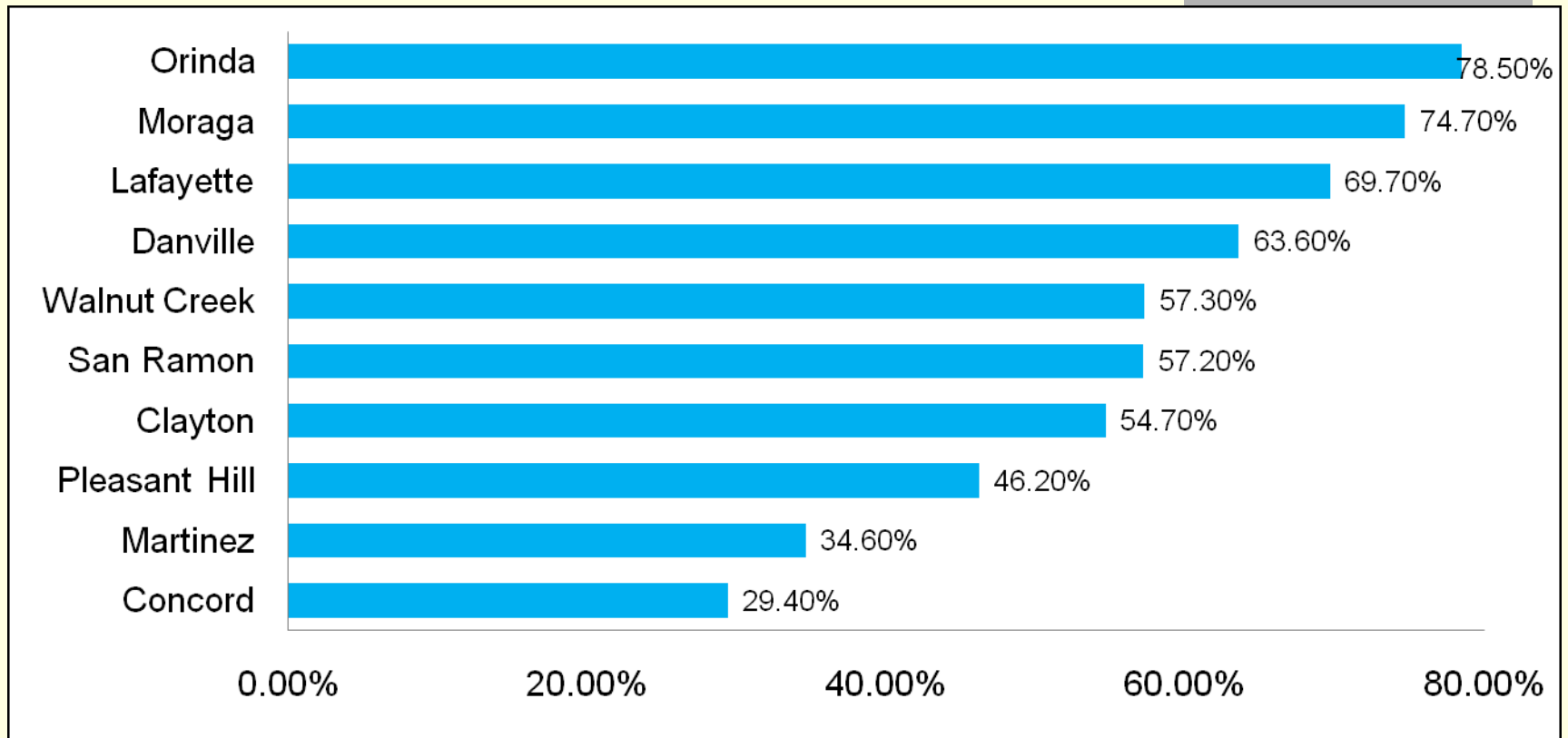
- Three cities (Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda) have the highest educational attainment and the highest income among the cities in Central Contra Costa County.
- In contrast, Concord has the lowest educational attainment and the lowest income.
- Students who attend schools in the three cities tend to perform better in college, compared to students who attend schools in Concord.

Educational Attainment and Income

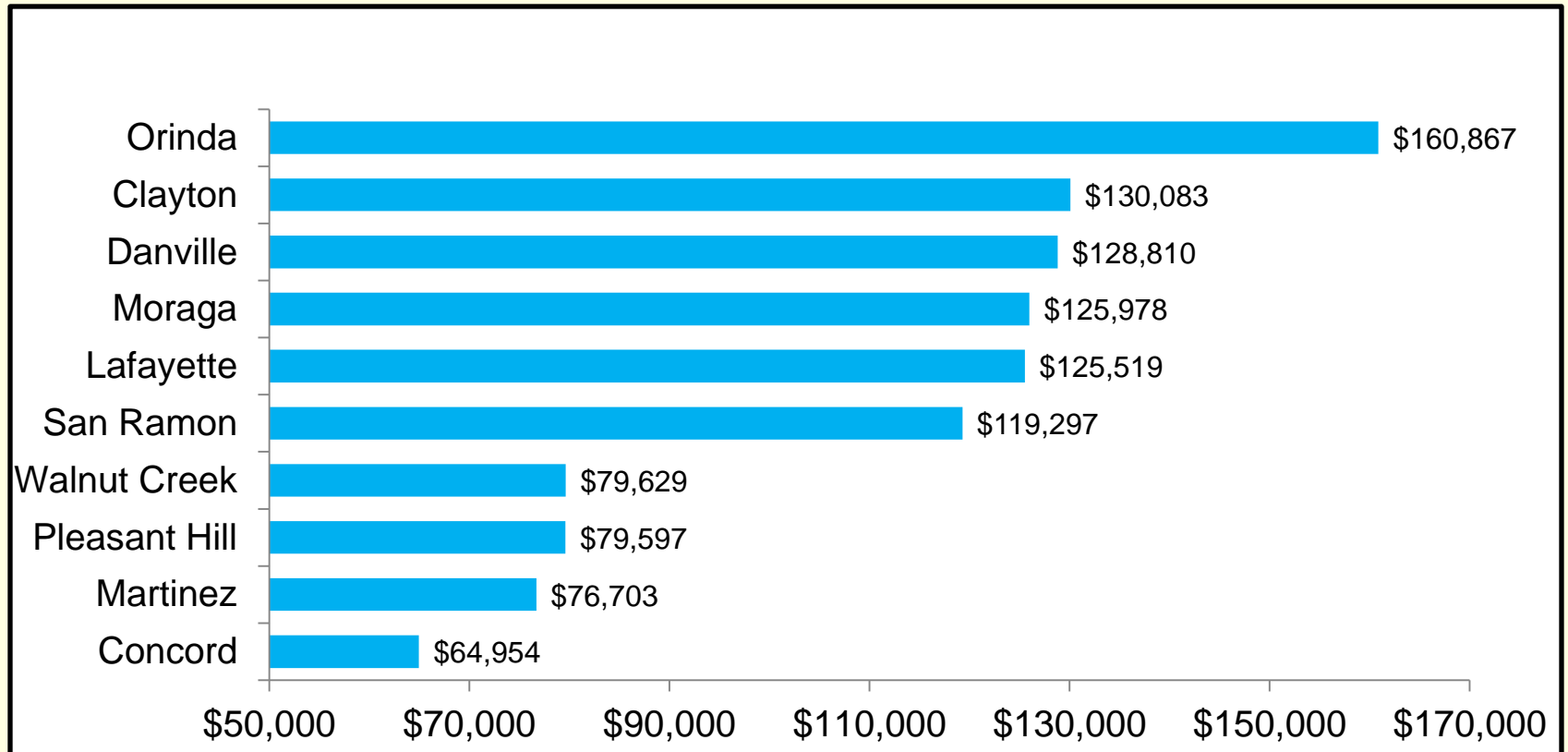
- The White and Asian populations tend to have higher educational attainment and higher income. These populations tend to send their children to better schools (private or public).
- Hispanic and African American populations tend to have lower educational attainment and lower income. These populations tend to live in a more affordable locations where the level of subsidies and the quality of schools are much lower than their counterparts in other locations.

Educational Attainment by Cities

BA or Higher



Median Income by Cities

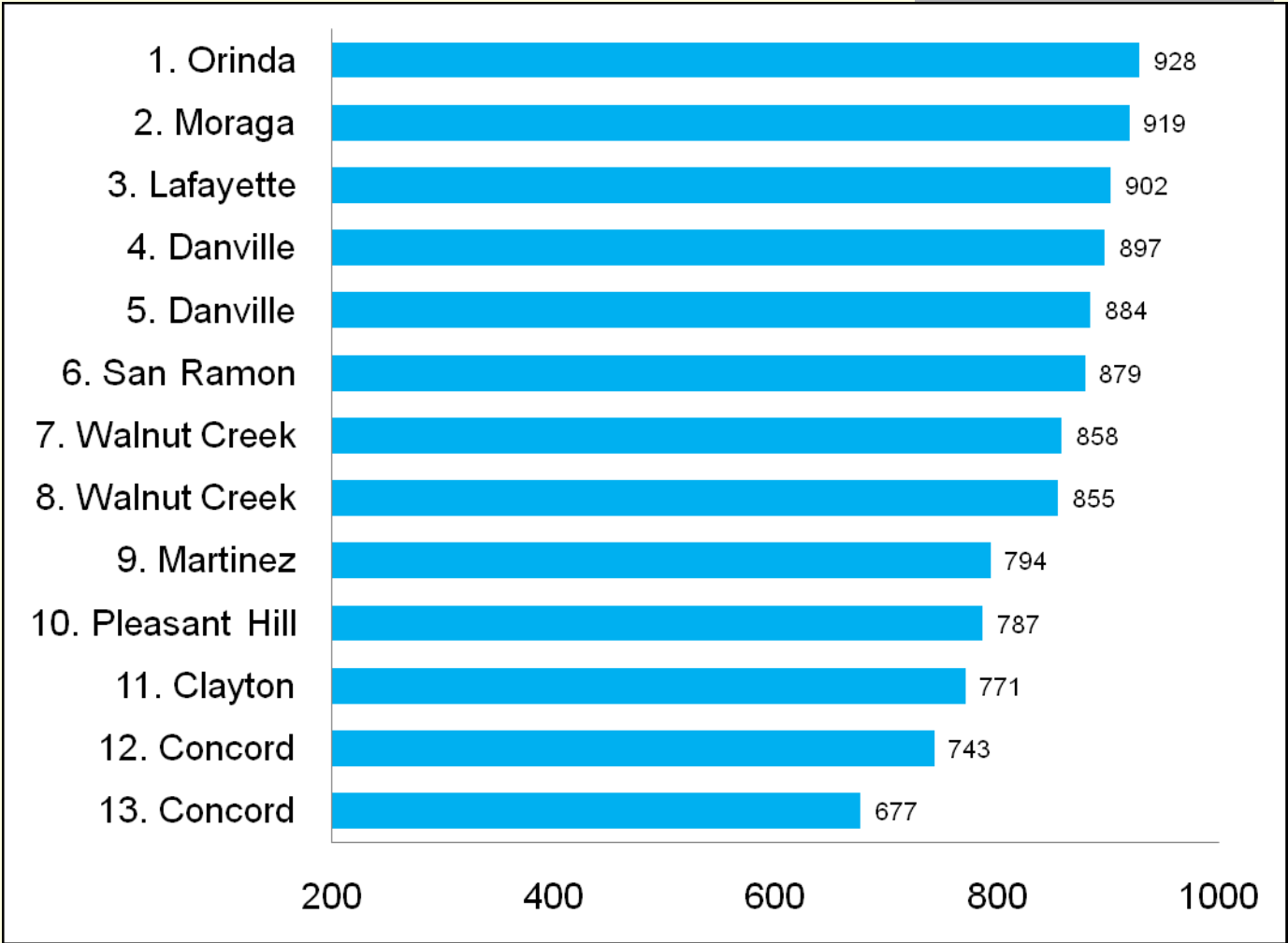


Academic Performance Index (API)

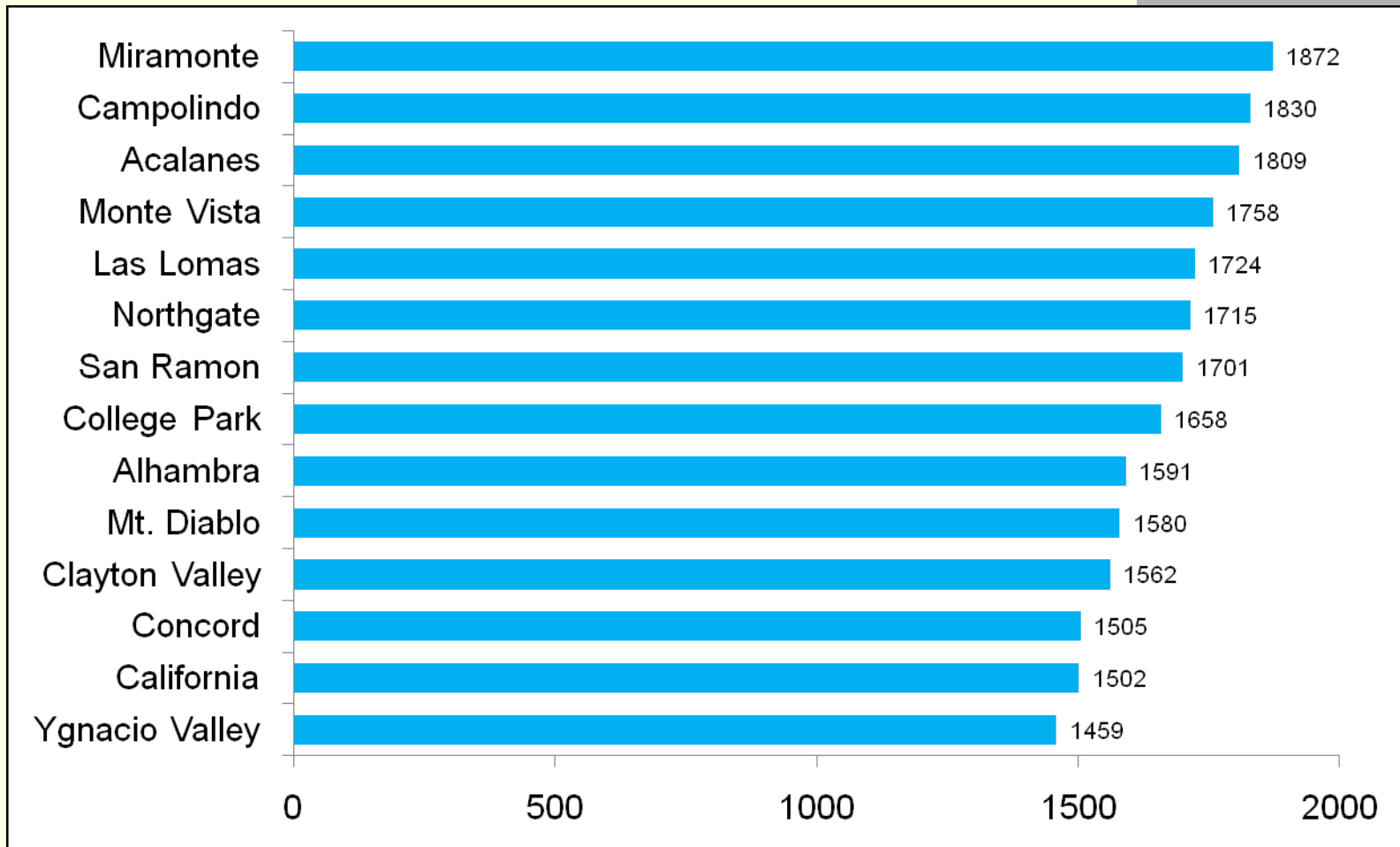
- **The API measures performance of schools based on the test scores of students in grades 9 through 12.**
- **API is a single number on a scale from 200 to 1,000 that measures how well students in a school performed on the previous spring's tests.**
- **Scores on the API translates later to student success and achievement in college.**
- **The gap in API among schools is a reflection of the differences in population characteristics, educational attainment, and household income.**

Academic Performance Index (API)

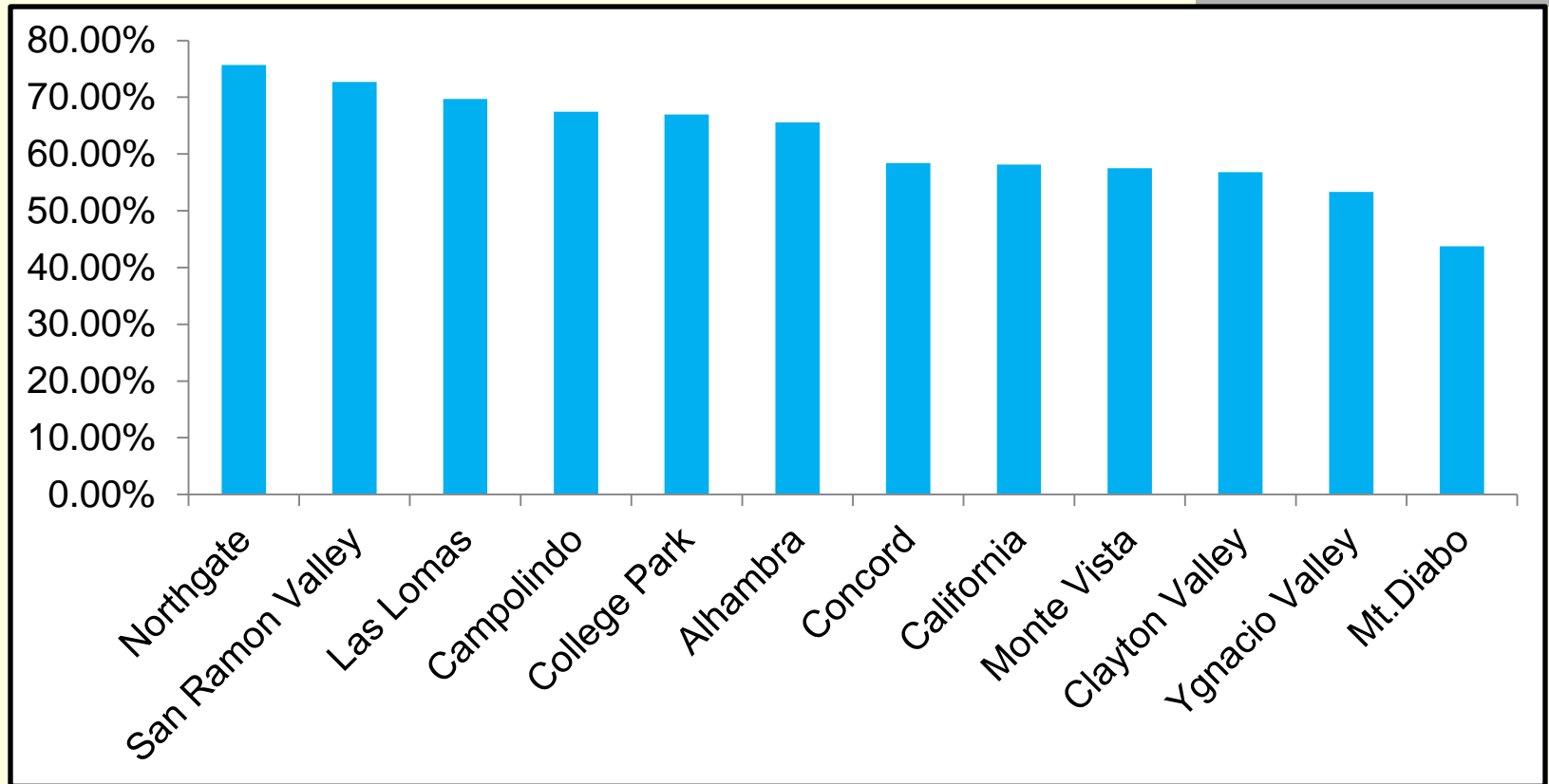
- 1. Miramonte
- 2. Campolindo
- 3. Acalanes
- 4. Monte Vista
- 5. San Ramon
- 6. California
- 7. Las Lomas
- 8. Northgate
- 9. Alhambra
- 10. College Park
- 11. Clayton
- 12. Ygnacio Valley
- 13. Mt. Diablo



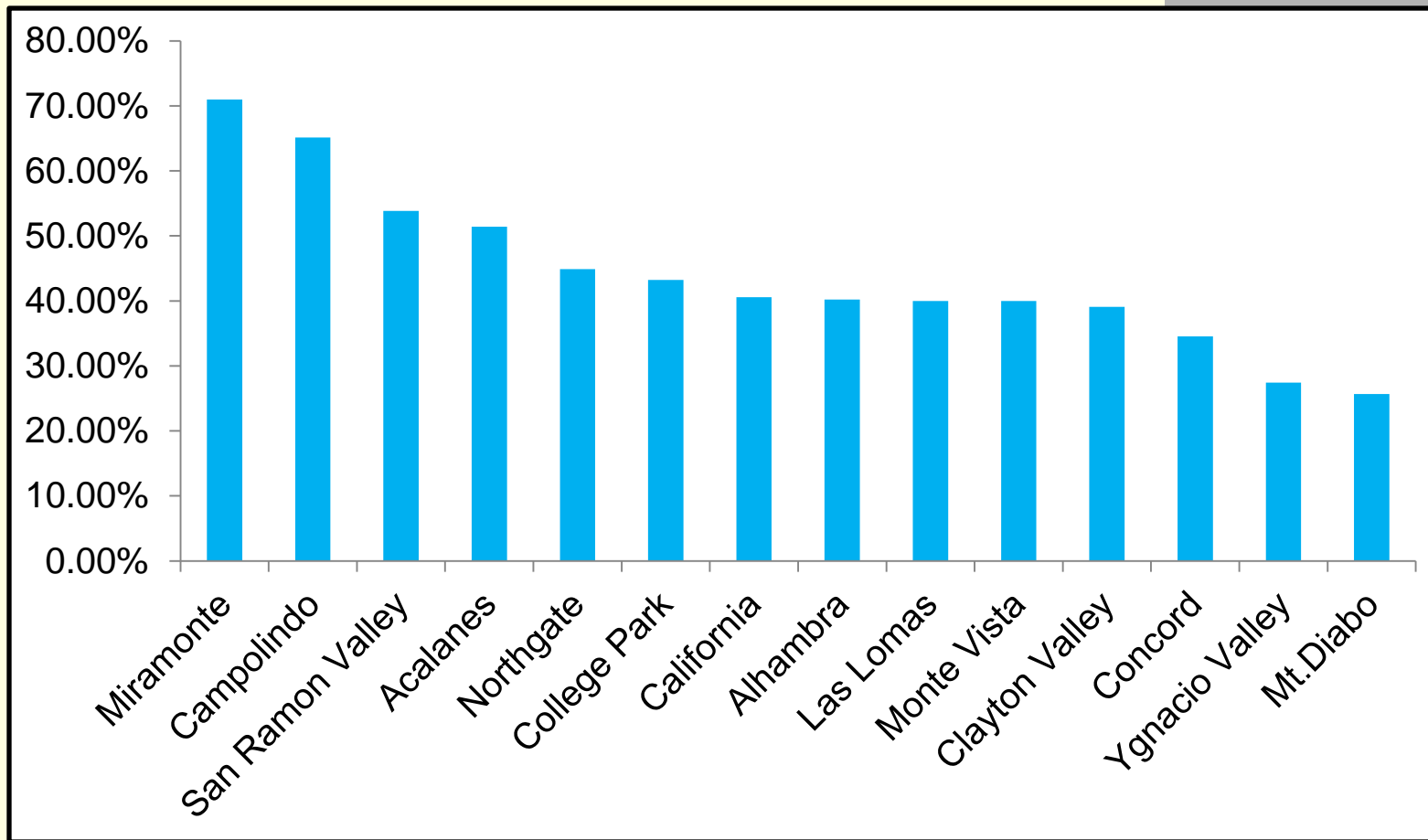
Ranking of Public High Schools in Central County by Average SAT Scores



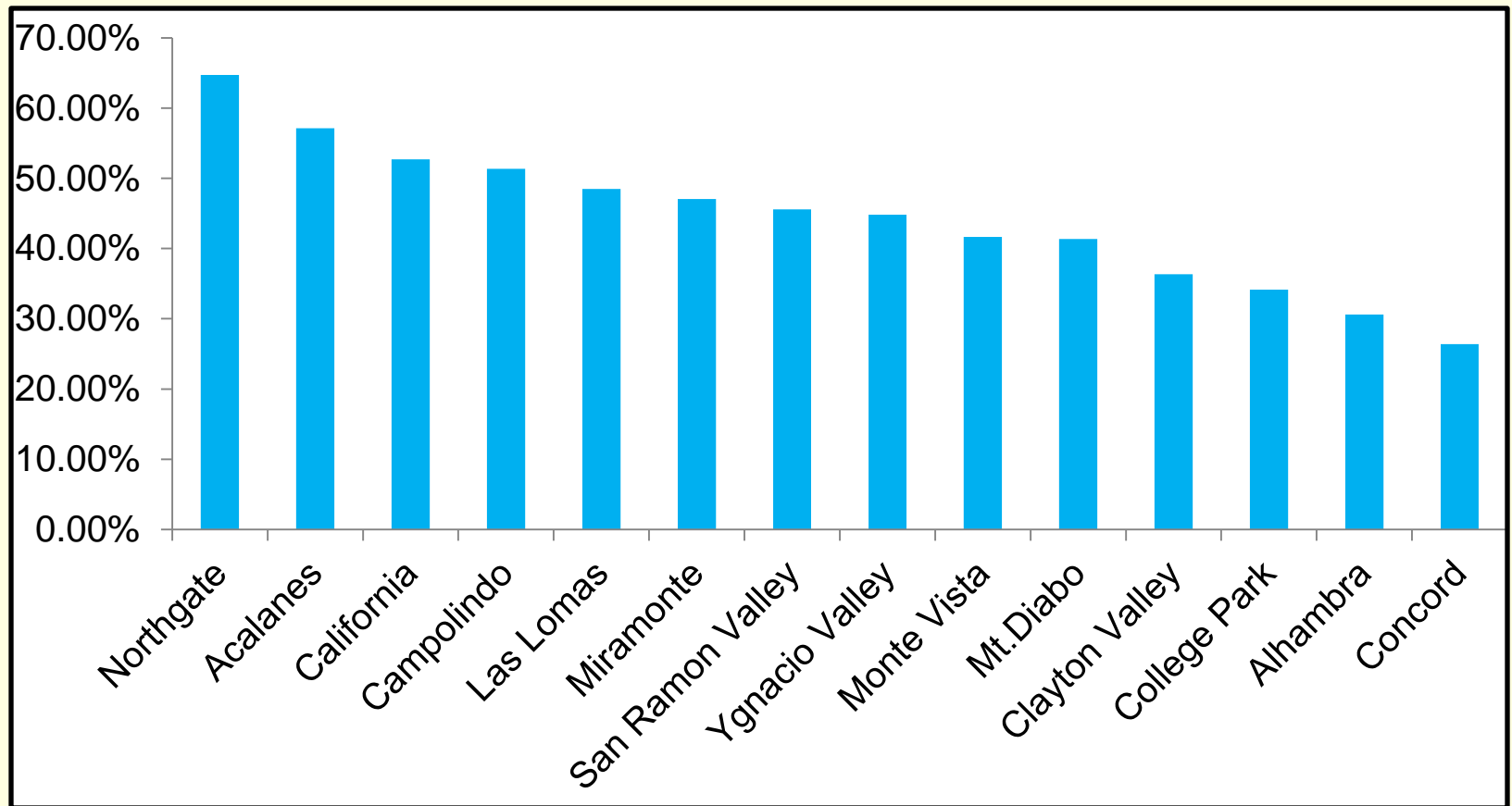
Ranking of High Schools by Assessment Scores in Writing ENG 122 Fall 2010



Ranking of High Schools by Assessment Scores in Reading ENG 122 Fall 2010



Ranking of High Schools by Assessment Scores in MATH 121 and above Fall 2010



Some Thoughts

- **The culture and environment in which children are raised play a role in the achievement gap.**
- **The achievement gap that begins early in life is carried through college education as well.**

Some Thoughts

- **There is a fair amount of research that supports the idea that some minorities begin their educational career at a disadvantage.**
- **The large number of single-parent households and the increase in non-English-speaking parents put the children at a disadvantage.**

Implications

Student academic preparation is impacted by:

- **Educational attainment of the parents**
- **Household Income**
- **School location**

Implications

- **The achievement gap is a serious challenge for all colleges.**
- **Instituting new programs to help underprepared students bridge this gap is a necessity not a luxury.**
- **Educating leaders and training the work force of the future dictate that we address this challenge now not in 20 years.**

Whistling Vivaldi and Other Clues to How Stereotypes affect Us, Claude Steele and Colleagues.

- ❖ Steele, an African American, is a social psychologist who is currently serving as provost at Columbia University. He also taught at Michigan and Stanford.
- Stereotype Threat Theory
- Self-evaluative threat disturbs performance

Whistling Vivaldi- Stereotype Threat

- **Activation and heightened awareness of stereotypes**
 - Divided attention
 - Alters achievement and motivation
 - Self-handicapping
 - Devaluation of the domain

- **Who is impacted?**
 - Minorities
 - Women in math
 - White men

Whistling Vivaldi- Stereotype Threat

■ Reducing Stereotype Threat

- Non-diagnostic (Addressing fairness)
- Deemphasizing social identities
- Emphasizing higher standards
- Incremental view of intelligence

HOW?



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How to Narrow the Gap?

- **The deficit model:** Blame the students and their families.
- **The equity model:** Educational institutions take responsibility and create programs to narrow the gap.

How to Narrow the Gap?

- “We know what works but we don’t do it“ was the conclusion reached by the Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy in February 2008. In its publication entitled:

It Could Happen: Unleashing the Potential of California Community Colleges to help Students Succeed and California Thrive.

Successful Strategies

- ❖ The Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy identified the following strategies that have been shown to promote student success:
 - Increase students' ***readiness*** for college before they arrive.
 - Help students achieve ***early success*** by directing them to the right classes at the beginning, including remedial work if they need it.

Successful Strategies

- Help students establish ***clear educational goals and pathways*** for achieving their goals.
- Encourage students to follow ***effective enrollment patterns***—such as attending full-time and continuously (without stopping out and re-starting).

Successful Strategies

- Provide the ***intensive support services*** students need to succeed in and out of the classroom.
- ***Use data to inform decisions*** about helping students succeed.

Embracing the students

- The ACT Survey (DVC) repeatedly showed that ***feeling of isolation*** is listed as one of the barriers to education at the college.
- Richard Wright (Harvard), one of the key elements for success in college is to get to ***know one professor well each semester.***

Whistling Vivaldi- Stereotype Threat

- Knowing how to ***address the stereotype and identity side of the human character*** is an increasingly important skill for our teachers, managers, and leaders.
- By ***changing the way you give feedback***, you can dramatically improve minority students' motivation and receptiveness.

More Embracing (Vivaldi)

- By ***fostering intergroup conversations*** among students from different backgrounds, you can improve minority student's comfort and grades.
- By ***allowing students to affirm their most valued sense of self***, you can improve their grades.
- Fostering ***a sense of belonging*** can improve student achievement.

The International Perspective

- Finland *recognizes the value of individualized attention*. Students who start to struggle receive one-on-one support from their teachers. Roughly one in every three students gets extra help from a tutor each year.

The International Perspective

- Singapore *invests heavily in training teachers*. The education system is choosy about recruiting; they invest in training and continuing education; they evaluate teachers regularly; and they award bonuses only to top performers.

The International Perspective

- USA KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program) is a network of free, open-enrollment, college-preparatory public *schools* throughout the United States. KIPP schools enroll students from the poorest families and ensure that everyone of them graduates from high school. KIPP ***students spend 60% more time in school. They arrive earlier, leave late, attend more regularly, and go to school every other Saturday.***

The International Perspective

- Chile *extended its school day* to add the equivalent of more than two more years of schooling.

Successful Interventions at DVC



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Puente

Students are enrolled in the Puente program as a cohort for one year. The academic program, which started in 1997, focuses on three aspects:

- **Counseling**
- **Teaching (English and Counseling)**
- **Mentoring**

These three components combine to ***create a multi-layered support system*** to enhance student retention and success.

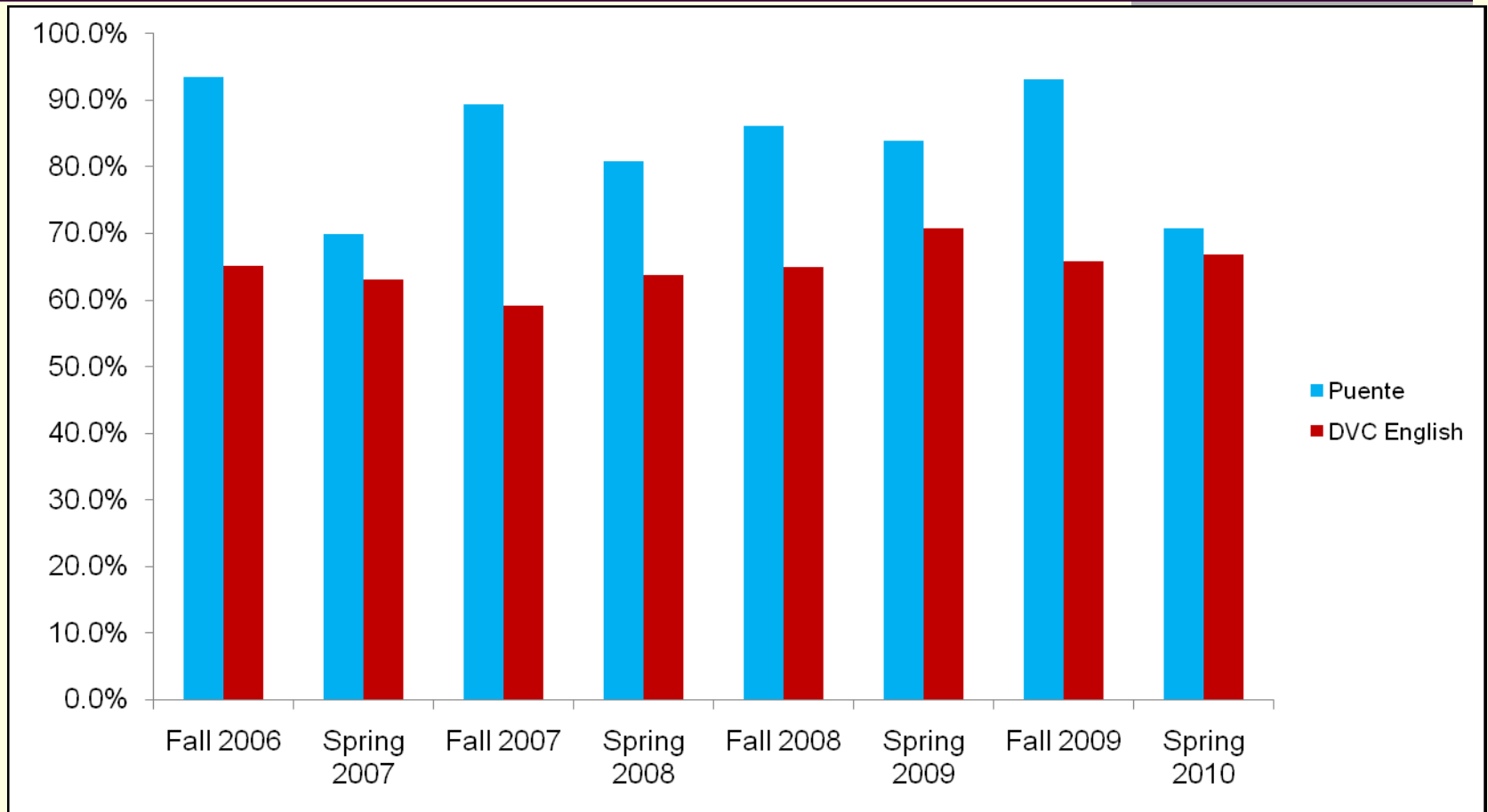
Puente

- The program enrolls students into a pre-transfer level English course (English 118) in the fall semester, along with either a counseling course or a personal development psychology course.
- In the spring semester, successful students move on to a transfer-level English course (English 122) and continue with either counseling or psychology.
- The final part of the program is the mentoring that is available to the Puente students during the academic portion of the program.

Puente

- Once the academic portion of the program is over, Puente students continue to receive services through sustained counseling until they transfer. Hispanic students represent the majority of students enrolled in this program.

Success of Puente Students



Puente

- Students who participated in the Puente program have higher success rates in English courses (English 118 and 122) compared to their counterparts enrolled in the same courses.

Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)

- EOPS is designed to help low-income and educationally disadvantaged students have a successful college experience and complete their career goals.

CARE (Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education)

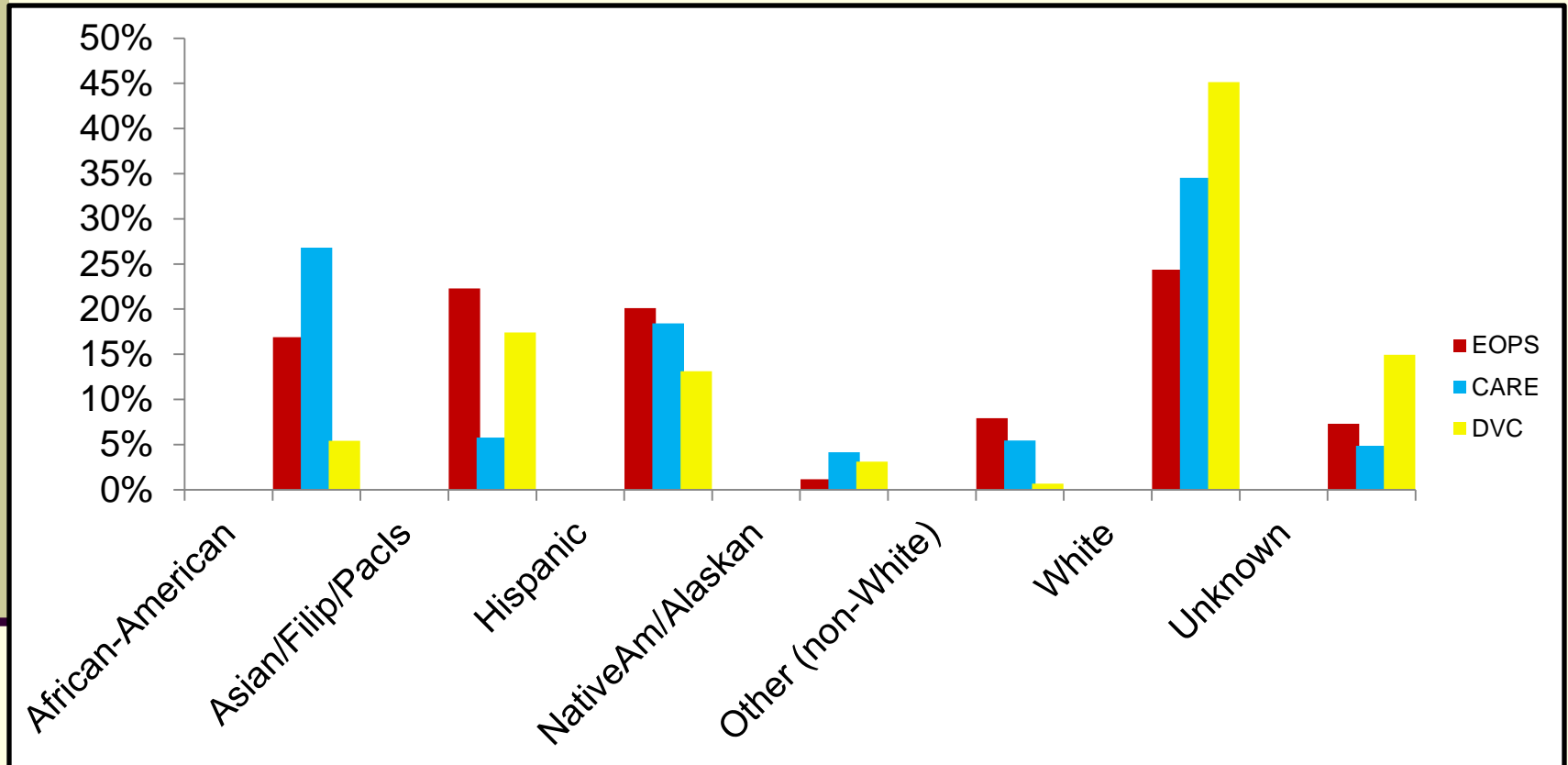
- CARE provides child-care grants and support services to assist students who are single parents with children 13 years of age or younger and recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy families (TANF).
- The objective of CARE is to help students complete college-level studies.

EOPS/CARE Head Count

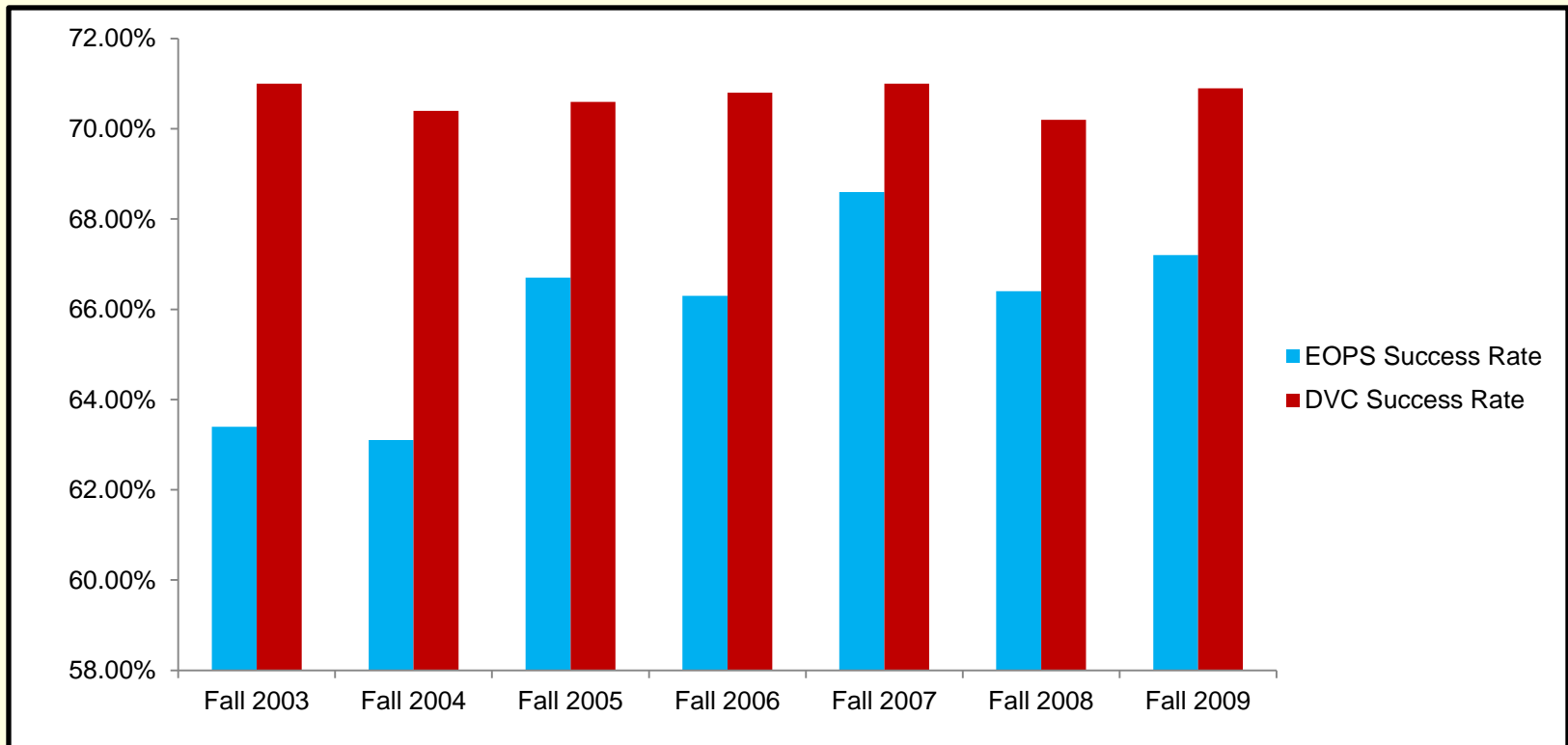
Diablo Valley College EOPS and CARE Headcount for Six Fall Terms

Category	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Total/Average
EOPS Headcount	1070	721	716	771	830	750	4858
Care Headcount	57	42	47	50	77	67	340
Care % of EOPS	5.3%	5.8%	6.6%	6.5%	9.3%	8.9%	7.0%
DVC Headcount	21,112	20,603	20,476	21,095	22,005	22,567	127,858
EOPS% of DVC	5.1%	3.5%	3.5%	3.7%	3.8%	3.3%	3.8%

EOPS Ethnicity



EOPS Success Rates



- Improved Success Rates and Narrowed the Gap.
- Staff Efforts and Dedication Plays a Crucial Role.

Some Thoughts

- **Successful interventions have a positive impact on student success.**
- **An integrated program that includes teaching, counseling, tutoring, and mentoring can enhance student achievement.**

More Thoughts

- **Some educators believe that investing time and energy in narrowing the achievement gap means compromising academic standards.**
- **The real intention is to continue to hold high academic standards, while helping all student rise up to them.**

More Thoughts

- **The faculty may want to engage in more dialogs to share best practices related to closing the achievement gap.**
- **Perhaps there is a need for a repository of best practices that help close the achievement gap among different groups of students.**

Student Equity and Basic Skills

- **State funding for basic skills should be used more effectively to close the achievement gap among students.**
- **Student equity plans should establish benchmarks for narrowing the academic achievement gap among students.**

Strategic Plans

- **The college intentionally included the goal of narrowing the achievement gap in its strategic plan.**
- **The District Chancellor is taking the lead to make everyone aware of the issues and to devise effective solutions.**
- **Two meetings were held in fall 2010 to address the issues.**

District Strategic Plan 2009-14

- 1.1 Increase the percentage of students who transfer to a variety of four-year institutions while narrowing the transfer gap across subgroups.
- 1.2 Increase the percentage of students who receive relevant and timely training for the workplace while narrowing the achievement gap across subgroups.

District Strategic Plan 2009-14

- 1.3 Increase the percentage of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students who become proficient in the English language.
- 1.4 Increase the percentage of students who are proficient in Basic Skills while narrowing the proficiency gap across subgroups.

Reality Check 1

- **The achievement gap has existed for more than several decades. Narrowing the gap is a difficult task that will test the real character of the institution.**
- **Closing the gap requires institutional commitment, resources, and focused efforts over time.**

Reality Check 2

- **Empowering students who have educational limitations to succeed is an important part of the community college mission.**

Reality Check 3

- **Competition will be keen among the limited institutional resources.**

Should colleges devote more time and resources to closing the achievement gap? OR should they focus on other areas of their mission?

Questions?



Thank you