



Student Equity Plan Analysis 2024

Institutional Research and Planning
Palomar College

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Introduction

The purpose of this study was to assess the college's progress in achieving equity among students in terms of five Student Equity Metrics: Successful Enrollment, Retention, Completion of Transfer-level Math and English, Completion, and Transfer. In a previous report, *Student Equity Plan Disproportionate Impact Analysis 2022*, disproportionate impacts among Palomar College students were identified. Two subpopulations exhibited consistent and pervasive disproportionate impacts. Specifically, both the Black or African American and Hispanic subpopulations were disproportionately impacted on most of the equity metrics examined in the disproportionate impact analysis. Therefore, these subpopulations were the target populations in Palomar College's *Student Equity Plan 2022-25*, and are the focus of this report. This report describes the data, assesses the progress made on the focal metrics, and provides a brief summary.

Methodology

Data

The California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) provided a student equity dataset in 2022 that allowed for the identification of disproportionate impacts at Palomar College. The CCCCCO provided updated datasets in 2023 and 2024 which allow the college to monitor the progress made in reducing the disproportionate impacts experienced by the focal subpopulations as indicated by the prescribed Student Equity Metrics. This data was derived from the collective MIS data submissions of the California community colleges as well as data from CCCApply.

Disproportionate Impact

Disproportionate impact is the situation in which a subpopulation experiences significantly more negative outcomes relative to others in the larger population. For example, if first generation students had a lower transfer rate compared to other students, first generation students would be said to be disproportionately impacted on with respect to transfer rates. A description of how disproportionate impact is determined has been described in previous disproportionate impact and student equity reports (<https://www.palomar.edu/irp/student-success-and-equity/>).

Metrics

The five Student Equity Metrics included in the dataset dovetail with the student journey, starting with Successful Enrollment and moving through Completion and Transfer. These metrics are described below:

- **Successful Enrollment** – Of applicants who indicated an intent to enroll at Palomar in a given year, excluding special admit students, the percent who enrolled at Palomar in the next year.

- **Retention** – Of first-time students enrolled in a primary term, the percent who enrolled in the subsequent primary term. Primary term refers to fall or spring.
- **Completed Transfer-level Math and English** – The percent of students who completed both transfer-level math and English in their first academic year of credit enrollment within the district.
- **Completion** –The percent of first-time cohort students who attained the Vision for Success Completion goal, that is, earned a Chancellor's Office approved certificate or associate degree within three years.
- **Transfer** – Of first-time students in a given cohort who earned 12 or more units at Palomar and exited the college in the selected year, the number of students who enrolled in any four-year postsecondary institution in the subsequent year.

The baseline year for each metric is the most recent year for which complete data was available at the time that the initial dataset was constructed. Because different metrics allow for different spans of time for completion, the baseline year differs by metric. For example, the Completion of Transfer-level Math and English metric requires math and English to be completed within the student's first academic year, so the baseline year is 2020-21. However, the Completion metric allows for three years for the student to complete a degree or certificate, so the baseline year for this metric is 2017-18. The baseline year for each metric is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Baseline Year by Metric	
Metric	Baseline Year
Successful Enrollment	2020-21
Retention	2019-20
Transfer-Level Math and English	2020-21
Completion	2017-18
Transfer	2016-17

Data Disaggregation

The analysis involved examination of each of the success metrics by the subpopulations below, split out by gender. AB 504 specifies that the equity metrics be disaggregated by the subpopulations below with the exception of first generation status. While not legislatively required, the data provided includes a first generation status indicator, so it was included in the disproportionate impact analysis.

- Race and Ethnicity
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Some Other Race
 - More Than One Race
- LGBT
- Economically Disadvantaged
- First Generation Status
- Foster Youth
- Disability Status
- Veterans
- Homeless

In the initial analysis these subpopulations were assessed for disproportionate impact on the metrics at an overall level, and further disaggregated by gender. However, the analysis of Successful Enrollment was limited to (a) race and ethnicity and (b) gender. Unlike the other metrics, Successful Enrollment relies, in part, on data from CCCApply. Data from CCCApply, alone, is not sufficient to classify students into the other subpopulations effectively. Therefore, the student equity dataset does not include disaggregation for the other subpopulations on the Successful Enrollment metric.

Disproportionate Impacts from the Baseline Analysis

Previous Analysis

Baseline data from the 2022 student equity dataset was used previously in order to determine which subpopulations were disproportionately impacted on the student equity metrics described above. For that previous disproportionate analysis, each metric was examined to determine if any subpopulations at the college experienced disproportionate impact on that outcome. Through that analysis, a number of subpopulations were identified as disproportionately impacted on the student equity metrics. The results of that analysis were described in detail in a previous report, *Student Equity Plan Disproportionate Impact Analysis 2022*. The results from that analysis are summarized in Table 2. For the present report, these disproportionate impacts were re-examined with data updated for the 2024 dataset to determine what progress had been made on these inequities.

Table 2. Disproportionately Impacted Subpopulations at Baseline Summary

Successful Enrollment	Retention	Transfer-Level Math and Eng.	Completion	Transfer
				DSPS (M)
			American Indian/Alaska Native	
Asian				Asian
Black or African American	Black or African American	Black or African American	Black or African American	
Filipino (F)				
	Hispanic (M)	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic
Pacific Islander or Hawaiian Native				
	First Generation Student	First Generation Student	First Generation Student (M)	First Generation Student
			Foster Youth	
Female				
	LGBT	LGBT		
	Economically Disadvantaged (M)	Economically Disadvantaged (F)	Economically Disadvantaged	Economically Disadvantaged (M)
	Veteran		Veteran	

Note: Successful Enrollment was disaggregated by Race and Ethnicity and Gender only.

Data Changes in the Student Equity Dataset

There were some changes to the student equity data in 2023 as well as 2024 from the initial 2022 dataset which provided the initial baseline results. The key changes are described below.

Successful Enrollment

Cases of confirmed fraud were eliminated from the denominator of the Successful Enrollment metric. This reduced the number of applicants included in the denominator. In the course of making these changes, the CCCCO found and fixed a coding error. This adjustment resulted in a significant change in the Successful Enrollment rates across all of our subpopulations. While these adjustments affected the data for colleges throughout the system, the extent to which they impacted the data varied by college. The adjustments for Palomar College were relatively large.

Transfer to a Four-year Institution

There were two relevant changes that impacted the transfer metric: one to the metric definition and one to the process of matching data with the UC, CSU, and National Student Clearinghouse systems. The numerator of the transfer metric now includes the condition that the student exited the system and had earned 12 or more units. Additionally, more information was exchanged between the systems resulting in a more effective matching process. These factors had a minor net impact on the transfer metric.

Variations in the data, including those described above, resulted in changes in some of the metrics, but did not alter the disproportionate impact status of the target populations for the Student Equity Plan. These changes mean that the baseline outcome rates identified in the previous report had to be adjusted for some metrics, and consequently, some of the targets for closing equity gaps were adjusted accordingly.

Results

Overall Metrics

The different metrics have different timeframes for determining whether or not the outcome was achieved, therefore baseline years varied by metric. Table 3 displays overall outcome rates for both the baseline year of the metrics and the years following the baseline year. Successful Enrollment, Retention, Completion, and Transfer rates all increased over their baseline rates.

Table 3. Overall Metrics from Baseline					
		Years Since Baseline			
Metric	Baseline Year	0	1	2	Change from Baseline
Successful Enrollment	2020-21	6.3%	18.4%	22.4%	16.1%
Retention	2019-20	66.3%	67.5%	69.2%	2.9%
Transfer-Level Math and English	2020-21	12.0%	12.2%	10.3%	-1.7%
Completion	2017-18	9.6%	10.8%	12.0%	2.4%
Transfer	2016-17	25.0%	28.6%	28.1%	3.1%

Student Equity Plan Target Populations

Black or African American

The Black or African American subpopulation was one of the two subpopulations given focus in Palomar College's *Student Equity Plan 2022-25*. Table 4 shows the yearly targets from the equity plan for eliminating the equity gaps for the Black or African American subpopulation. For each of the metrics, the goal was to close the equity gaps completely by the end of the three-year plan. For example, on the Completion of Transfer-level Math and English metric there was an initial gap between the target group retention rate and the outgroup retention rate of 7.1 percentage points. The goal described in the Student Equity Plan was to narrow the gap on this metric by 1.5 percentage points after the first year, another 2.5 points in the second year, and 3.1 percentage points in the third year. Because the data for the Successful Enrollment metric changed substantially, the targets for this metric are different from those in the equity plan, but close the equity gap at the same rate as the original targets.

Table 4. Palomar College Student Equity Plan 2022-25 Target Outcomes for Palomar's Black or African American Subpopulation				
Equity Metric	Baseline Gap	Gap Target Year 1	Gap Target Year 2	Gap Target Year 3
Successful Enrollment	2.2%	1.7%	1.0%	0.0%
Retention	13.1%	9.6%	5.1%	0.0%
Completed Transfer-Level Math and English	7.1%	5.6%	3.1%	0.0%
Completion	5.7%	4.7%	2.7%	0.0%

Table 5 shows the Outcome Rate for Black or African American students, as well as the reference rate to which they were compared. The Reference Rate for a given subpopulation is all students who are not in the target population. The differences between the Outcome Rates and the Reference Rates are displayed in the table as the DI (disproportionate impact) Gap or equity gap. For example, the Retention Rate for Black or African American students in the baseline year was 53.6% and for their reference population it was 66.7%, yielding an equity gap of 13.1 percentage points. As evidenced in Tables 5 and 6, the equity gap for the Black or African American subpopulation narrowed for two of the four metrics on which they were disproportionately impacted. The gap for Retention decreased substantially, reducing to a single percentage point. The gap for Completion of Transfer-level English and Math also decreased.

Table 5. Equity Metrics for Black or African American Students					
Equity Metric	Year	N	Subpopulation Outcome Rate	Reference Rate	DI Gap
Successful Enrollment	2020-21	2,286	4.1%	6.3%	2.2
	2021-22	485	18.4%	18.4%	0.0
	2022-23	592	18.4%	22.5%	4.1
Retention	2019-20	194	53.6%	66.7%	13.1
	2020-21	121	63.6%	67.6%	4.0
	2021-22	110	68.2%	69.2%	1.0
Completed Transfer-Level Math and English	2020-21	121	5.0%	12.1%	7.1
	2021-22	110	11.8%	12.2%	0.4
	2022-23	143	4.2%	10.5%	6.3
Completion	2017-18	222	4.1%	9.8%	5.7
	2018-19	206	6.8%	10.9%	4.1
	2019-20	194	6.2%	12.2%	6.0

Table 6. Equity Metrics Outcomes and Targets for Black or African American Students			
Equity Metric	Baseline Gap	Current Gap	Narrowed Gap
Successful Enrollment	2.2	4.1	No
Retention	13.1	1.0	Yes
Completed Transfer-Level Math and English	7.1	6.3	Yes
Completion	5.7	6.0	No

Hispanic

The Hispanic subpopulation was also identified in the *Student Equity Plan 2022-25* as one of the college's target populations. Table 7 shows the targets for closing the equity gaps for the Hispanic students. As with the Black or African American students, the goal was to close the equity gaps completely for each of the metrics by the end of the third year of the plan.

Table 7. Palomar College Student Equity Plan 2022-25 Target Outcomes for Palomar's Hispanic Subpopulation				
Equity Metric	Baseline Gap	Gap Target Year 1	Gap Target Year 2	Gap Target Year 3
Retention (Male)	6.0%	4.2%	2.2%	0.0%
Completed Transfer-Level Math and English	3.6%	2.7%	1.5%	0.0%
Completion	3.7%	2.7%	1.5%	0.0%
Transfer	10.2%	7.7%	4.2%	0.0%

Table 8 displays the Outcome Rates, Reference Rates, and equity or DI Gaps for each of the metrics on which Hispanic students at Palomar were disproportionately impacted. Table 9 reveals that the college did not reduce the equity gap for Hispanic students on the Retention or Completion of Transfer-level Math and English metrics. Further, the reduction on the Completion metric was only 0.2 percentage points which does not represent a meaningful move towards the college's target. The gap was narrowed by over 3 percentage points on the Transfer metric.

Table 8. Equity Metrics for Hispanic Students					
Equity Metric	Year	N	Subpopulation Outcome Rate	Reference Rate	DI Gap
Retention (Male)	2019-20	1,507	61.8%	67.8%	6.0
	2020-21	1,135	62.2%	68.3%	6.1
	2021-22	1,043	63.4%	71.7%	8.3
Completed Transfer-Level Math and English	2020-21	2,304	10.1%	13.7%	3.6
	2021-22	2,068	9.7%	14.6%	4.9
	2022-23	2,686	7.5%	13.4%	5.9
Completion	2017-18	2,865	7.6%	11.3%	3.7
	2018-19	3,082	8.7%	12.8%	4.1
	2019-20	2,951	10.2%	13.7%	3.5
Transfer	2016-17	901	19.2%	29.4%	10.2
	2017-18	957	22.7%	33.0%	10.3
	2018-19	1,076	24.3%	31.3%	7.0

Table 9. Equity Metrics Outcomes and Targets for Hispanic Students			
Equity Metric	Baseline Gap	Current Gap	Gap Narrowed
Retention (Male)	6.0	8.3	No
Completed Transfer-Level Math and English	3.6	5.9	No
Completion	3.7	3.5	Yes
Transfer	10.2	7.0	Yes

Data Windows and Plan Implementation

Table 10 displays the time frames that the Student Equity Data covers. The last two years in the table represent the first two years of the implementation period of the Student Equity Plan. For example, the completion metric baseline cohort was the 2017-18 cohort, and data window relevant to this baseline cohort is 2017-18 through 2019-20. For the Completion cohort two years subsequent, the window for which the data was collected is 2019-20 through 2021-22. Considering the data windows for the available cohorts for each of the metrics and the timing of the implementation of the *Student Equity Plan 2022-25*, activities delineated in the plan could only impact the available data for some of the metrics, particularly considering the time required to roll out the implementation of the activities.

Table 10. Data Windows by Metric and Year									
Metric	Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Successful Enrollment	Baseline								
	Year 1								
	Year 2								
Retention	Baseline								
	Year 1								
	Year 2								
Transfer-Level Math and English	Baseline								
	Year 1								
	Year 2								
Completion	Baseline								
	Year 1								
	Year 2								
Transfer	Baseline								
	Year 1								
	Year 2								

Summary and Discussion

The five student equity metrics were examined to determine where improvements have been realized for Palomar students, and where progress has or has not been made. Most of the metrics, overall, have shown some limited improvement.

Given the results of the initial disproportionate impact study, the *Student Equity Plan 2022-25* focused on disproportionate impacts experienced by the Black or African American and Hispanic subpopulations. There is a difference in the pattern of results for these two subpopulations. The Black or African American subpopulation experienced a very large reduction in inequity on the Retention metric, but no substantial narrowing of equity gaps on the other metrics on which they were disproportionately impacted (Successful Enrollment, Completion of Transfer-level Math and English, and Completion). Hispanic students, on the other hand, saw equity gaps widen for Retention and Completion of Transfer-level Math and English. Hispanic students did see a reduction in the equity gap for the Transfer metric.

There were three metrics on which both target subpopulations were identified as disproportionately impacted: (1) Retention, (2) Completion of Transfer-level Math and English, and (3) Completion. Both subpopulations were flat with respect to the equity gap they experienced on Completion. However, for the other two metrics, the equity gaps for the two subpopulations moved in opposite directions. That is, on the Retention and Completion of Transfer-level Math and English metrics the gaps narrowed for Black or African American students, but widened for Hispanic students.

The equity gaps have varied over time in patterns that make interpretation challenging. For example, the gap for Black or African American students on the Completion of Transfer-level Math and English, as indicated in Table 5, was 7.1 percentage points at baseline, dropped to near 0 the next year, and returned to 6.3 the year after that. This U-shaped pattern was present for most of the metrics for Black or African American Students, but not for Hispanic students.

There are two caveats that should be considered when reviewing these results. First, the Successful Enrollment data has changed so much that it would be pragmatic to interpret related results with caution until this data has stabilized. Second, considering the limited overlap of the data windows for the metrics and the activities identified in the student equity plan, these results should not be considered as a thorough evaluation of plan activities.