

## FACT SHEET: THE FACTS ON COLLEGE PREPARATION, REMEDIATION, PERSISTENCE AND GRADUATION

### **Unprepared students are likely to require remedial courses**

- Only one-third of students graduate from high school “college-ready”. College readiness rates for American’s fastest growing student populations - African Americans and Hispanics- are much lower.(Greene and Winters, 2005)
- To accommodate the lack of preparedness of graduating high school students, about 76 percent of degree-granting, two- and four-year institutions offer at least one remedial course (NCES, 2003).
- Nearly all public-two year colleges offer remedial courses. They offer more remedial courses than other institutions and they enroll the greatest proportion of first-year students into remedial courses (about 42%) (NCES, 2003).
- More students are enrolled in remedial mathematics coursework than in remedial writing or reading courses (NCES, 2003).
- Black, Hispanic and low-income students are more likely to be placed in remedial courses at both two- and four-year institutions (Bettinger and Long, 2006)

### **Remedial courses are expensive and can slow time to graduation**

- Only 10 to 15 percent of higher education institutions give credit toward a degree for remedial coursework (NCES, 2003).
- About 28 percent of institutions report that students spend at least one year in remedial programs while in college (NCES, 2003).
- The cost of remedial courses across all of higher education is estimated to cost around \$1 billion dollars (Bettinger and Long, 2006).
- In most cases, students and families are expected to cover the cost of remedial classes – financial aid dollars are allocated rarely toward funding remedial coursework (Bettinger and Long, 2006).

### **The outcomes of students who take remedial courses are mixed**

- About 75 percent of the students enrolled in remedial reading, writing, or mathematics courses pass or successfully complete those courses. The percentage of students passing remedial classes tends to be lower in public two-year institutions and also at institutions with high minority enrollment (NCES, 1996).
- Remedial first-year students tend to persist to their second year at lower rates than their peers who do not take remedial courses. Only 23 percent of institutions report that their remedial students have a high retention rate (i.e. 75-100 percent continuing) (NCES, 1996).
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- Students who test as college-ready on the ACT Assessment are more likely to earn higher grade-point averages in college and 83 percent return to college after the first year (ACT, 2004).
- Thirty-nine percent of students who take remedial education courses earned bachelor's degrees, compared to 69 percent of students who took no remediation. Poor high school preparation, rather than remedial coursetaking, explains these lower rates of college completion (Adelman, 1999).

**What is the bottom line?** When students enter college unprepared, they face academic and financial barriers in higher education that no student should have to overcome. When higher education leaders make an effort to increase the academic preparedness of high school students in their state, college success rates will increase.