



Charting the Course: Using Data to Support Foster Youth College Success

[Charting the Course: Using Data to Support Foster Youth College Success](#) is a landmark report with new insights into the educational experiences of foster youth attending a subset of community colleges and universities in California. This report builds on the work of the [California College Pathways](#) (CCP) initiative, a public and private partnership that supports campuses and community organizations to help foster youth succeed in postsecondary education.

The report, presented in two parts—Part 1: Community Colleges and Part 2: Universities—aggregates data across 31 CCP campuses and demonstrates how foster youth students are faring on a common set of key indicators of access and success in community colleges and universities. The quantitative data for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 academic years were supplemented with qualitative data from various student and stakeholder focus groups conducted on a subset of individual campuses in 2014.

[California College Pathways](#) would like to acknowledge the commitment of the 31 campuses that converged on a shared set of metrics and shared their data in an effort to better understand the opportunities and challenges facing foster youth. *Charting the Course* is the first in a series of reports to support policymakers and practitioners with improving the educational experiences of foster youth.

Key Findings

- While there are some bright spots, foster youth often fare worse than other students on key indicators of academic achievement.
- Substantial percentages of foster youth are required to take remedial courses in math and/or English.
- Foster youth do not consistently access financial aid or certain federal and state student support programs.

Policy and Practice Implications

- Major state-funded programs, including the [California Foster Youth Educational Support \(CAFYES\)](#), to strengthen the capacity of community college districts to support foster youth and the [California Fostering Connections to Success Act](#), which extends foster care through age 21, demonstrate the public's interest in supporting foster youth's successful transition into adulthood.
- As a result, foster youth are likely to be entering college at greater numbers and the data shows that they are not accessing available financial aid and other support resources, which makes it imperative that we improve the accuracy of foster youth identification, methods of verification and effectiveness of outreach on campuses.
- Improved data-sharing practices and policies between K-12 education, post-secondary, child welfare, and youth-serving organizations are required to better *equip* foster youth for college, coordinate essential services once *enrolled*, support their path to *earn* a degree or certificate and *embark* on a career.

About California College Pathways - [California College Pathways](#) (CCP) is a statewide public and private partnership that provides resources and leadership to campuses and community organizations to help foster youth succeed in postsecondary education.