

**El Camino College Compton Center  
Assessment Test Results  
New Students from High School, Fall 2007 to Fall 2010**

This report displays course placement rates for new high school graduate-aged students entering El Camino College Compton Community Educational Center (Compton Center) over 4 years. Because graduation date information is not complete and new students to Compton Center can be of any age, the “direct from high school” cohort is approximated as students aged 17 or 18 with a recent test score. Students aged 17-18 represent about 30% of all examinees who enroll in fall.

Assessment tests are offered in 5 subjects at the Center: Chemistry<sup>1</sup>, Mathematics, Reading Comprehension, Writing (Sentence Skills) and English as a Second Language (ESL). The Math test consists of 3 different levels: Arithmetic, Elementary Algebra and College-Level Math. Students are diverted to different levels of the math test depending on early pre-test questions and on performance following a computer-adaptive model. Two different ESL assessments are offered at Compton Center placing students into either non-credit or credit-level ESL courses.

Table 1 highlights the number of students, regardless of age, taking each test between March 1 and the September census date of each year listed. Students repeating the same test are counted only once. These test counts typically mirror fluctuations in college enrollment. The number of tests transitioned from a low point in 2006 to climb to a 5-year high in 2010, due to dramatic enrollment growth at both the Torrance campus and Compton Center. Table 1 includes all tests administered by El Camino College, but “tested students enrolled” (last row) represent only those enrolled at the Compton Center. Note that while individual test administrations rose, the number of unduplicated “students tested” declined, perhaps due to a reduction in related course sections.

Fall 2010 showed a continued rise in the rate of transfer-level and/or college-prep placements, especially in Reading and Math. This may be due to the increase in CSU/UC-prepared students who were diverted to the Center by enrollment constraints at our California universities.

**Table 1: Number of Students Taking Placement Tests by Test, March-September**

Test	Subject	Number of Students Taking Each Test or Level *			
		2007	2008	2009**	2010
Arithmetic	Math	5,629	6,326	6,593	6,883
Algebra	Math	7,707	8,684	9,242	9,635
College-level Math	Math	1,872	2,061	2,289	2,380
Reading Comprehension	Reading	7,706	8,506	9,219	9,489
Sentence Skills	Writing	7,703	8,491	9,196	9,481
Total Tests (duplicated)		30,617	36,076	38,548	39,878
Students Tested (unduplicated)		9,556	10,532	11,196	11,164
Tested Students Enrolled in Fall (CEC)		952	1,491	1,594	1,815

\* Repeats of the same test by the same student have been excluded.

\*\* Slight changes in cut scores within the college-prep and basic skills math categories in Fall 2009

<sup>1</sup> The number of examinees in Chemistry remains too small to include in this study (2010 count<10).

## Results

The Reading, Writing and Mathematics tests place students in a variety of levels depending on test performance. For this study, placements are grouped into categories of similarly-leveled courses. These groups are 1) transfer-level courses that are equivalent to courses at a 4-year institution, 2) college-preparatory—courses that immediately precede transfer-level courses, and 3) basic skills—courses defined by El Camino College as developmental or basic skills courses. The specific ECC courses within each group and their levels below transfer level are listed in the appendix of this report.

Placement results for the 4 years of this study are summarized in Table 2 below by number and percentage in each subject and course group. Charts tracking the placement percentages of each begin on page 3.

Placements into English 1A (transfer-level) highlighted in both Table 2 and in further discussion below refer only to satisfactory preparation for English 1A in either reading or writing. A satisfactory score on both the Reading Comprehension and Sentence Skills (writing) portions of the English test is required in order to enroll in English 1A. The number and percentage of students who actually placed into English 1A is discussed in a special section below.

**Table 2: Assessment Test Results by Test and Course Group \* for New Students**

Test	2007 (n=293)		2008 (n=435)		2009 (n=424)		2010 (n=553)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Reading *</b>								
Transfer-level	41	15.4	49	12.0	86	21.6	153	29.1
College-prep	47	17.7	73	17.8	79	19.8	127	24.1
Basic Skills	178	66.9	287	70.2	233	58.5	246	46.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>266</b>		<b>409</b>		<b>398</b>		<b>526</b>	
<b>Writing *</b>								
Transfer-level	25	9.4	39	9.5	68	16.8	110	20.8
College-prep	147	55.1	188	46.0	214	53.0	288	54.5
Basic Skills	95	35.6	182	44.5	122	30.2	130	24.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>267</b>		<b>409</b>		<b>404</b>		<b>528</b>	
<b>Math</b>								
Transfer-level	1	0.4	5	1.2	5	1.3	2	0.4
College-prep	60	22.1	123	30.6	129	34.8	227	44.2
Basic Skills	210	77.5	274	68.2	237	63.9	285	55.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>		<b>402</b>		<b>371</b>		<b>514</b>	

\* Specific courses under each “Course Group” are listed in the Appendix of this report.

\*\* The “n” figures at the top represent the total number of students aged 17 or 18 who took assessment tests between March 1 and the September census date in the year noted.

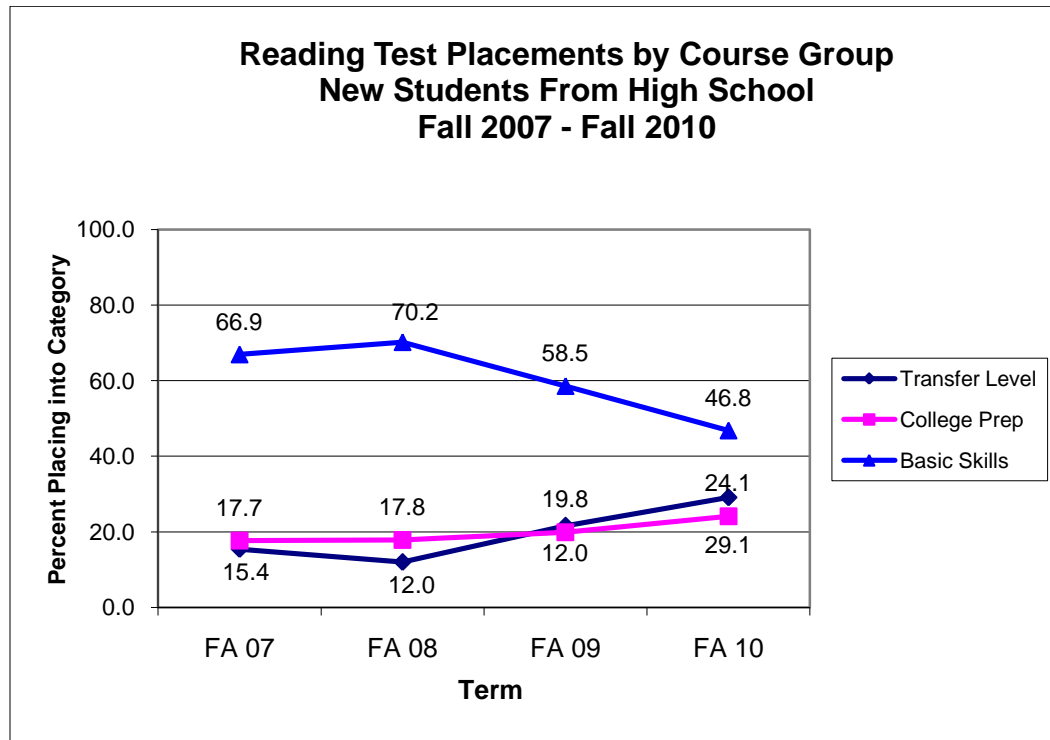
\*\*\* Transfer-level placements for Reading and Writing reflect only that portion of the test, and thus, general preparation in reading and writing. To qualify for *enrollment* in English 1A, examinees must achieve a qualifying score on both the Reading and Writing portions of the assessment test (see page 4).

\*\*\*\* Because 2006 was the first year of Compton Center’s partnership with El Camino College, the low number of new entering students is incomparable to successive years. Data from 2006 is thus excluded from this report.

## Reading

Reading placements into the transferable level (English 1A) increased over 4 points, while the college-prep reading (English 84 or 7) remained unchanged. On average, 40% of younger students place into the college-prep or transfer level in reading.

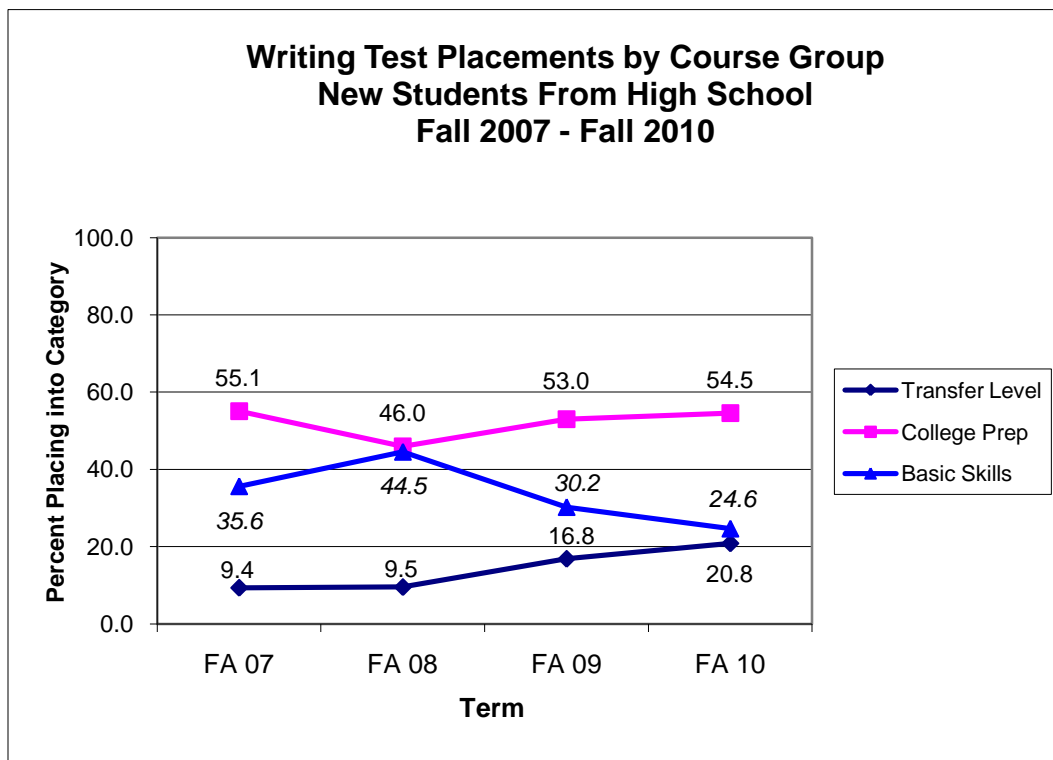
Beginning in Fall 2007, the basic skills category now consists of 2 courses (English 82 and English 80). However, no adjustment was made to cut score required to enroll in English 84. Basic skills placements decreased by 6% in 2010 with about 8% of students placing at the English 80 level. On average, 59% of younger students place at the basic skills reading level.



## Writing

Across 4 years, placements into the transfer-level course (English 1A) gradually increased from 9% in 2007 to 21% in 2010. Placements in college-prep (English A) have also increased over the years with the most recent increase of 2 percentage points to 55%.

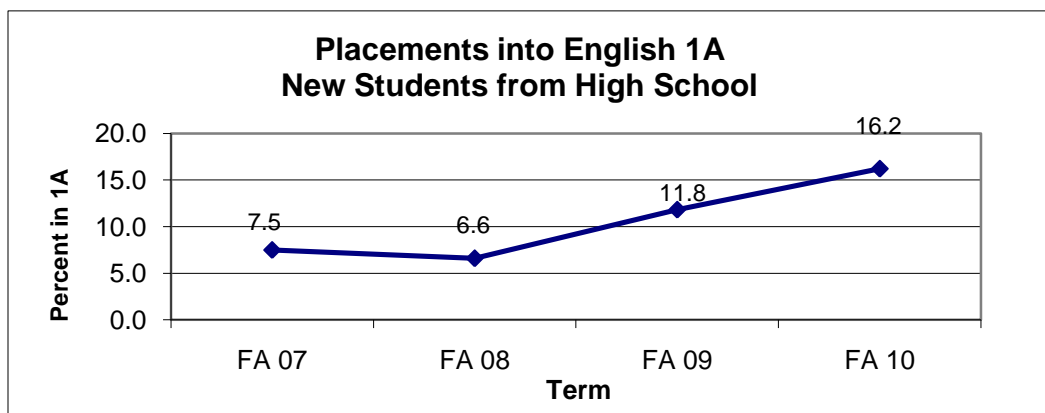
The percent of basic skills placements (English B and C) has decreased in favor of transfer level and college prep. Peaking at 45% in 2008, basic skills placements decreased by 20 percentage points to 25% in 2010.



## English 1A

To qualify for English 1A (transfer-level reading and writing), examinees must pass both the Reading and the Writing portions of the assessment test. The two tables above reflected placement rates into the transfer-level course (English 1A) based only on one of these two criteria to reflect academic preparation by subject. The table below shows actual course placement rates using both the reading and writing qualifying test scores.

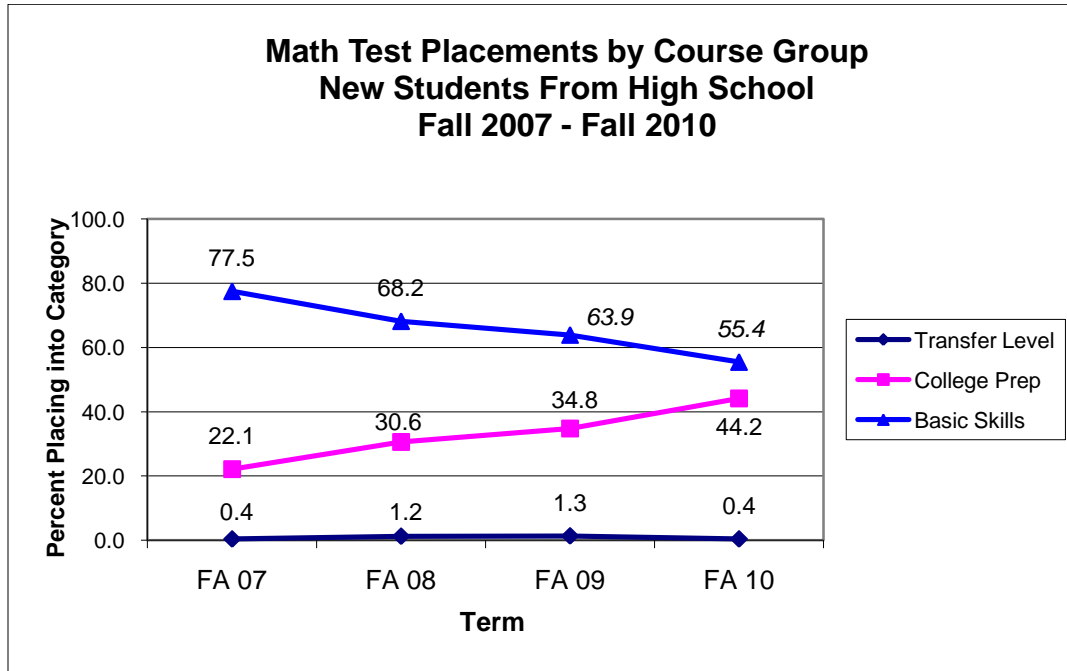
The rate of new entering students qualifying for English 1A has more than doubled in the past 4 years. In 2010, 16% of new students placed into English 1A.



## Mathematics

Placements into the transfer level courses in 2010 remained steady at a low rate over the last 4 years (see Appendix for a complete list of courses at this level), with an average rate of placement across this period of approximately 1%.

Over the four years of the study, math experienced an overall increase in college-preparatory algebra and geometry with a corresponding decrease in placements into basic skills courses (pre-algebra, arithmetic). Placements into college-preparatory math courses increased by nearly nine points to 44%. Basic skills placements correspondingly declined to 55%.



Note: New cut scores affected some basic skills and college prep courses beginning in Fall 2009.

## English as a Second Language Test Results

Two different ESL assessments are offered at Compton Center. The Combined English Language Skills Assessment (CELSA) is used for placement into the non-credit ESL series. The English as a Second Language (ESL) assessment is used for placement into the *credit* ESL course series and consists of a computerized reading skills test, a questionnaire, an English writing sample, an oral interview, and an orientation to the College.

However, only a very small percentage of students aged 17-18 take the two ESL tests and are thus not included in this study. A separate in-depth report will examine the demographics and placements of ESL examinees at Compton Center. Non-credit and credit placements will be outlined in this separate report.

## **Conclusion**

A large percentage of younger students entering Compton Center demonstrate a need for courses at the basic skills level. Close to half of tested students placed into basic skills reading and math, while 25% placed into basic skills writing. Despite the continued placement of students into basic skills, the percentages of such placements have recently decreased. Overall, 2010 witnessed an increase in transfer level and college-prep placements across all three subjects. Meanwhile, the percentage of basic skills placements decreased substantially over the last two years.

This study provided a general analysis of the Compton student coming directly from high school (or shortly thereafter). Follow up studies are planned that will examine the placements of students over 18.

## Appendix – Courses by Group

### READING & WRITING

Course Group	Levels Below Transfer	Reading	Writing
Transfer-level	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English 1A – Reading &amp; Composition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English 1A – Reading &amp; Composition</li> </ul>
College-preparatory	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English 84 (formerly Engl-2R) – Developmental Reading &amp; Writing</li> <li>English 7 – Speed &amp; Power Reading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English A – Writing the College Essay</li> </ul>
Basic Skills	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English 82 (formerly Engl-R) – Introduction to Reading Skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English B – Introduction to the Composing Process</li> </ul>
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English 80 – Basic Language Skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English C – Basic English Skills</li> </ul>

### MATHEMATICS

Course Group	Levels Below Transfer	Course
Transfer-level	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Math 190 – Calculus</li> <li>Math 160 – Business Calculus</li> <li>Math 180 – Pre-Calculus</li> <li>Math 170 – Trigonometry</li> <li>Math 150 – Elem. Probability &amp; Statistics</li> <li>Math 140 – Finite Math</li> <li>Math 130 – College Algebra</li> <li>Math 120 – Nature of Math</li> <li>Math 115 – Prob. &amp; Stats for Elementary Teachers</li> <li>Math 110 &amp; 111 – Math for Elem. Teachers</li> <li>Computer Science 1, 5, 10</li> </ul>
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College-preparatory	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Math 80* – Intermediate Algebra for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics</li> <li>Math 73* – Intermediate Algebra for General Education</li> <li>Math 60 – Elementary Geometry</li> </ul>
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Math 40 or 41B/43* – Elementary Algebra</li> </ul>
Basic Skills	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Math 41A – Elementary Algebra, Part I</li> <li>Math 33* – Extended Elementary Algebra, Part I</li> <li>Math 25 – Pre-Algebra Review</li> <li>Math 23 – Pre-Algebra</li> </ul>
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Math 10A-10B/12 – Basic Arithmetic Skills</li> </ul>

\* Math 80 replaced Math 70 (Intermediate Algebra) in Fall 2009. It is a Calculus-track algebra course.

\* Math 73 was inaugurated in Fall 2009. It is a non-Calculus track algebra course.

\* Math 33 and 43 (Extended Elementary Algebra, Parts I and II) replaced Math 41A and 41B (Elementary Algebra, Parts I and II) in Fall 2009.

## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

Course Group	Levels Below Transfer	Oral (Listening/ Speaking) *	Reading	Writing
Transfer-level	--		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English 1AX - Reading &amp; Composition for ESL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English 1AX - Reading &amp; Composition for ESL</li> </ul>
College-preparatory	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESL 51C – (Advanced)</li> <li>ESL 51B – (Intermediate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESL 52C – (Advanced)</li> <li>ESL 52B – (Intermediate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English A-X – Writing the College Essay</li> <li>ESL 53B – (Intermediate)</li> </ul>
Basic Skills	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESL 51A – Intro to English Conversation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESL 52A – Intro to Reading and Vocab. Building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESL 53A – Elementary Grammar/Writing</li> </ul>
Non-Credit Basic Skills	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESL 02A, 02B, 02C, 02D – Conversation and Grammar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESL 03A, 03B, 03C, 03D – Reading &amp; Writing</li> </ul>	

\* Although Listening/Speaking courses indicate “levels below transfer,” they do not directly lead to a transfer-level course such as English 1A.