

El Camino College Compton Center

Assessment Test Results

New Students from High School, Fall 2008 to Fall 2012

This report displays course placement rates and numbers for new high school graduate-aged students entering El Camino College Compton Center over 5 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 Compton Center: Reading Comprehension, Writing (Sentence Skills), Mathematics, Chemistry, and English as a Second Language (ESL)¹. The Math test consists of 3 different levels: Arithmetic, Elementary Algebra and College-Level Math. Accuplacer’s computer-adaptive model diverts students to different levels of the math test depending on early pre-test questions and on performance. 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 in the unduplicated counts. These test counts overall typically mirror fluctuations in college enrollment. The number of tests continued to decrease in 2012 after reaching a 5-year peak in 2010. This is likely due to a decrease in first-time students². Table 1 includes all tests administered at both ECC and Compton Center, but “tested students enrolled” (last row) represent only those enrolled at Compton Center. The decline in “tested students enrolled” may be influenced by the shift in student demographics (fewer new students) and a reduction in related course sections.

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

Test	Subject	Number of Students Taking Each Test or Level				
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Reading Comprehension	Reading	8,506	9,219	9,489	8,606	8,386
Sentence Skills	Writing	8,491	9,196	9,481	8,604	8,406
Arithmetic	Math	6,326	6,593	6,883	6,365	5,944
Algebra	Math	8,684	9,242	9,635	8,818	8,565
College-level Math	Math	2,061	2,289	2,380	2,097	2,245
Total Tests (duplicated)		34,068	36,539	37,868	34,490	33,546
Students Tested (unduplicated)		10,621	11,633	11,431	10,272	9,945
Tested Students Enrolled in Fall (Compton)		1,491	1,594	1,815	1,530	1,451

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

¹ The number of examinees in Chemistry and ESL remain too small to include in this study (2012 count < 10).

² Compared to Fall 2011, the number of new students of all ages decreased by 4% in 2012.

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 (in most cases, more than one level below transfer). The specific ECC courses within each group and their levels below transfer-level are listed in the appendix of this report.

Compton Center assessment results for the 5 years of this study are summarized below in Table 2 by number and percentage in each subject and course group. Charts tracking the placement percentages and numbers of each subject begin on page 3. Overall, Fall 2012 showed an increase in basic skills placements, especially in Writing.

Table 2: Assessment Test Results by Test and Course Group* for “New Freshmen”

Test	2008 (N=435)		2009 (N=424)		2010 (N=553)		2011 (N=437)		2012 (N=438)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Reading **										
Transfer-level	49	12.0	86	21.6	153	29.1	130	30.8	125	29.6
College-prep	73	17.8	79	19.8	127	24.1	94	22.3	92	21.7
Basic Skills	287	70.2	233	58.5	246	46.8	198	46.9	206	48.7
Total	409		398		526		422		423	
Writing **										
Transfer-level	39	9.5	68	16.8	110	20.8	97	23.0	94	22.2
College-prep	188	46.0	214	53.0	288	54.5	254	60.2	229	54.1
Basic Skills	182	44.5	122	30.2	130	24.6	71	16.8	100	23.6
Total	409		404		528		422		423	
Math										
Transfer-level	5	1.2	5	1.3	2	0.4	15	3.5	18	4.3
College-prep	123	30.6	129	34.8	227	44.2	180	42.6	170	40.5
Basic Skills	274	68.2	237	63.9	285	55.4	228	53.9	232	55.2
Total	402		371		514		423		420	

Note: 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.

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

** 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 10).

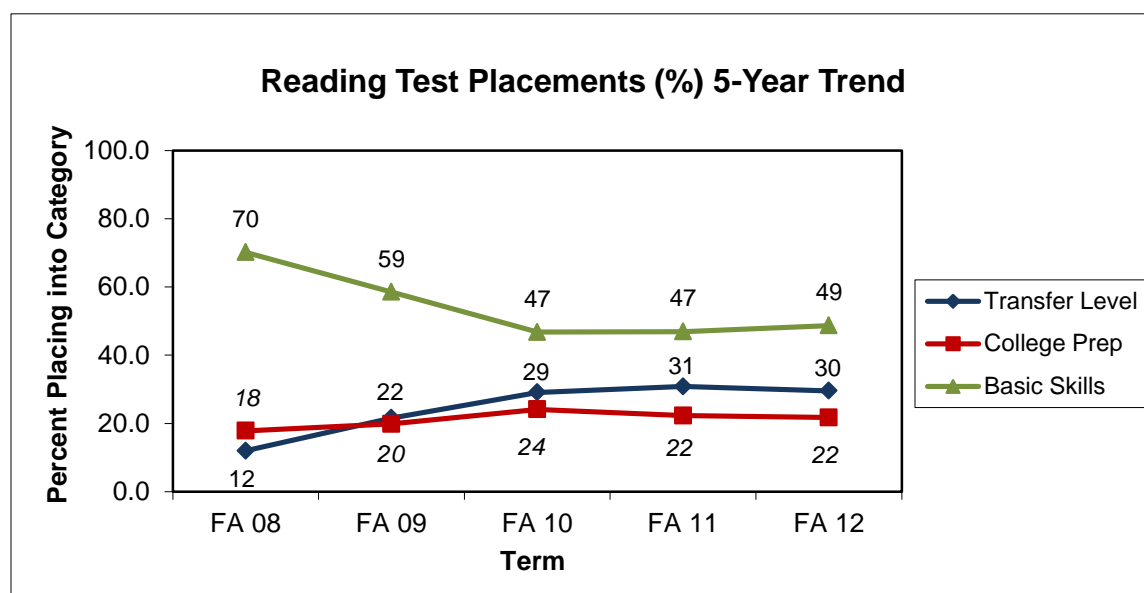
READING

Placement Rates

Reading placements overall remain stable over the last three years. On average during the 5-year period, 46% of 17 or 18 year-old students placed into the college-prep or transfer-level in reading.

Between 2008 and 2010, basic skills placements decreased by 23 percentage points and have since remained level. In 2012, 49% placed into basic skills, with one out of five placing at the English 80 level. On average, 54% of younger students placed at the basic skills reading level between 2007 and 2011.

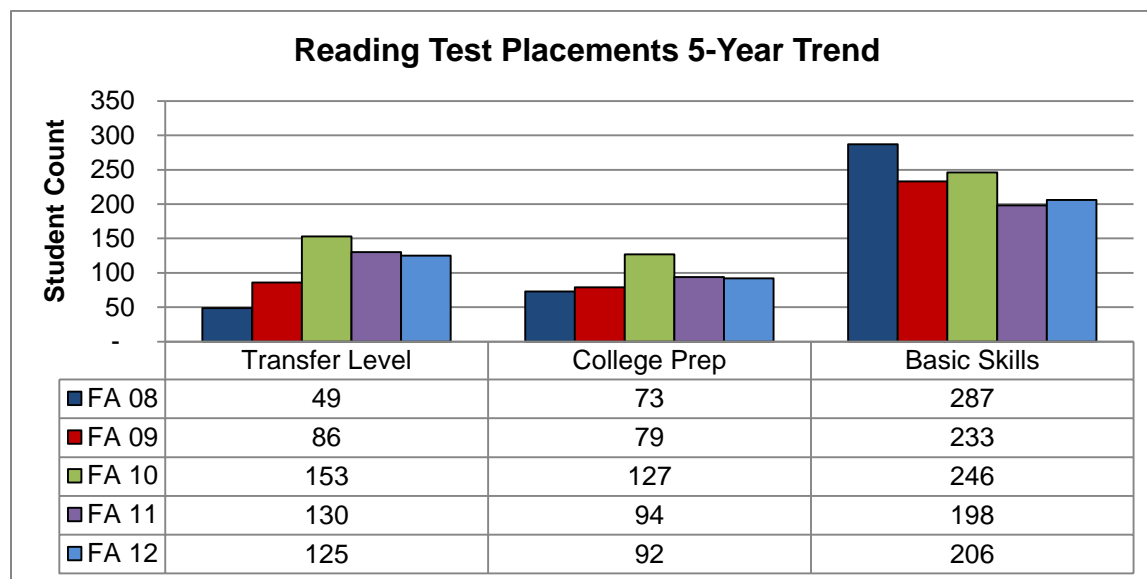
Table 3: Reading Assessment Test Placement Rates



Placement Numbers

As evident in Table 4, placement counts peaked, for the most part, in 2010. Since the decrease in 2011, however, reading placements have remained level. Transfer-level and college prep placements experienced small percent decreases—4% and 2%, respectively. Conversely, basic skills placements increased to 206, a 4% increase from 2011.

Table 4: Reading Assessment Test Placement Numbers



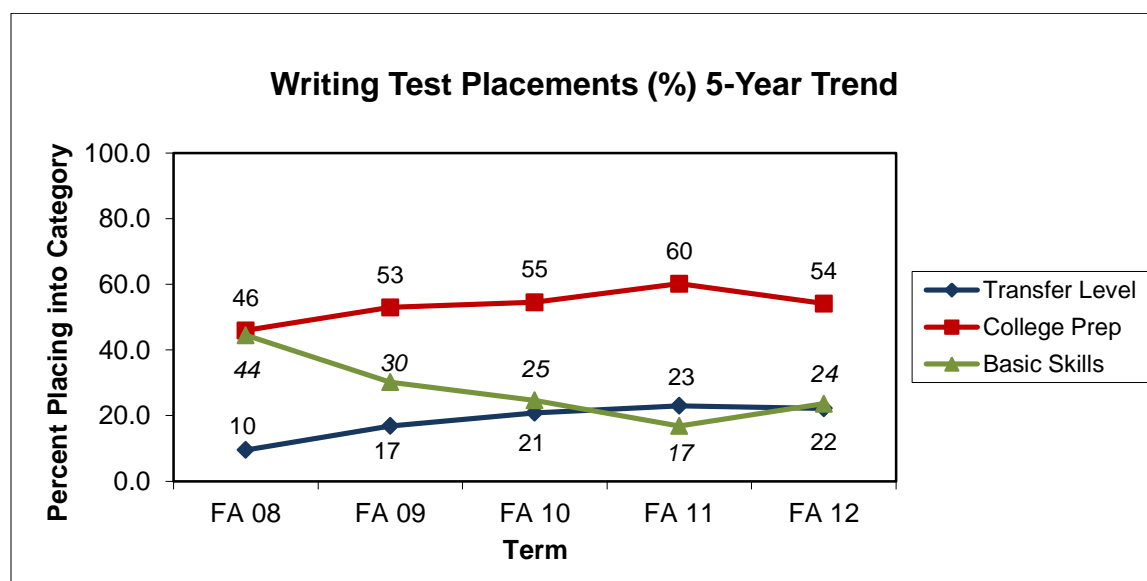
WRITING

Placement Rates

Across the 5-year period, placements into the transfer-level (English 1A) gradually increased from 10% in 2008 to 22% in 2012. College-prep placements (English A) have also increased over the years, but decreased by 6 percentage points in 2012 to 54%.

With the decrease in college-prep, the percent of basic skills placements (English B and C) consequently increased in the last year. From a 5-year low point of 17% in 2011, placements increased by 7 percentage points to 24% in 2012.

Table 5: Writing Assessment Test Placement Rates

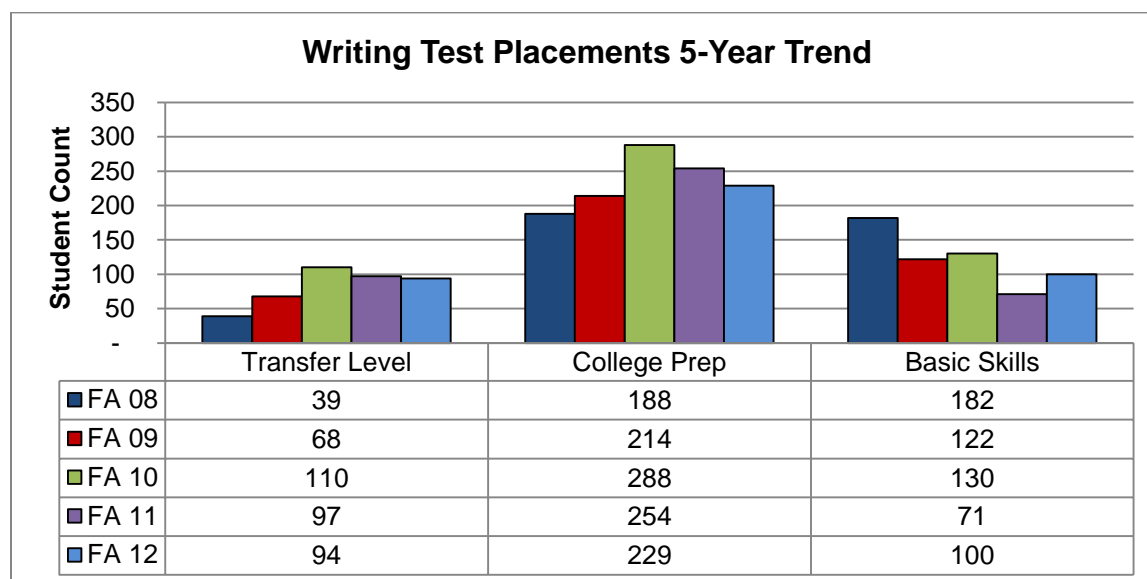


Placement Numbers

Similar to placement trends for reading, writing placements also decreased slightly in transfer-level and college prep placements but increased in basic skills. In 2012, placements into transfer-level and college prep each decreased by 3% and 10%, yielding placement counts of 97 and 254, respectively.

Basic skills did not continue its decreasing trend. Instead, placements increased by 41% with a placement count of 100. Despite this increase in 2012, the student count was lower than its respective 5-year average of 121.

Table 6: Writing Assessment Test Placement Numbers



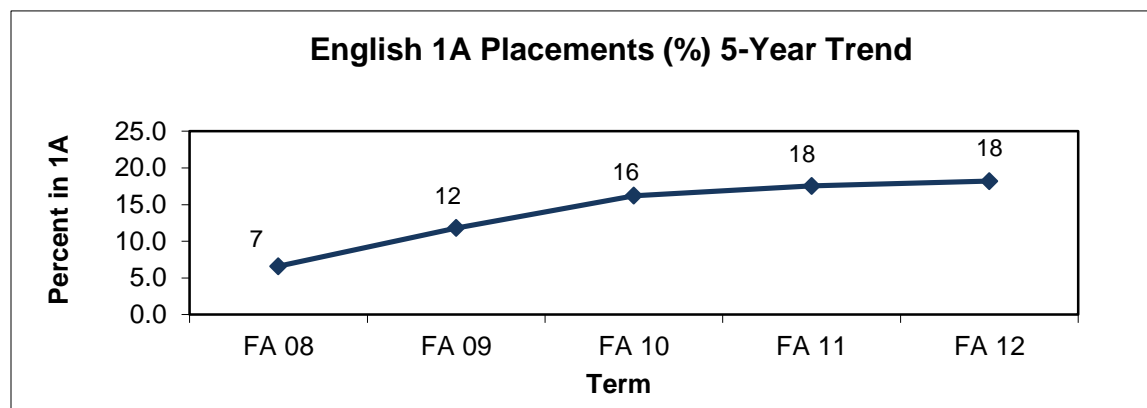
ENGLISH 1A

Placement Rates

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 in order 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 compared to 5 years ago. In 2012, 18% of new students placed into English 1A, which is higher than the 5-year average (13%).

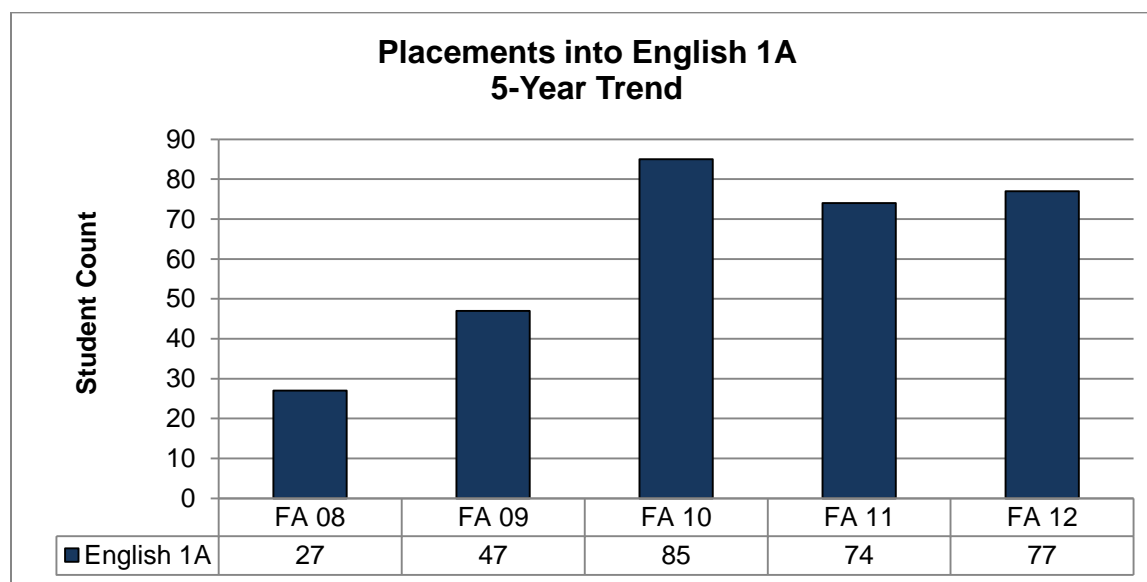
Table 7: English 1A Placement Rates



Placement Numbers

Similar to the placement rates, counts have also progressively increased over the last five years. In 2012, English 1A placements increased by 4%, yielding a count of 77 students. The 5-year average was 62.

Table 8: English 1A Placement Numbers



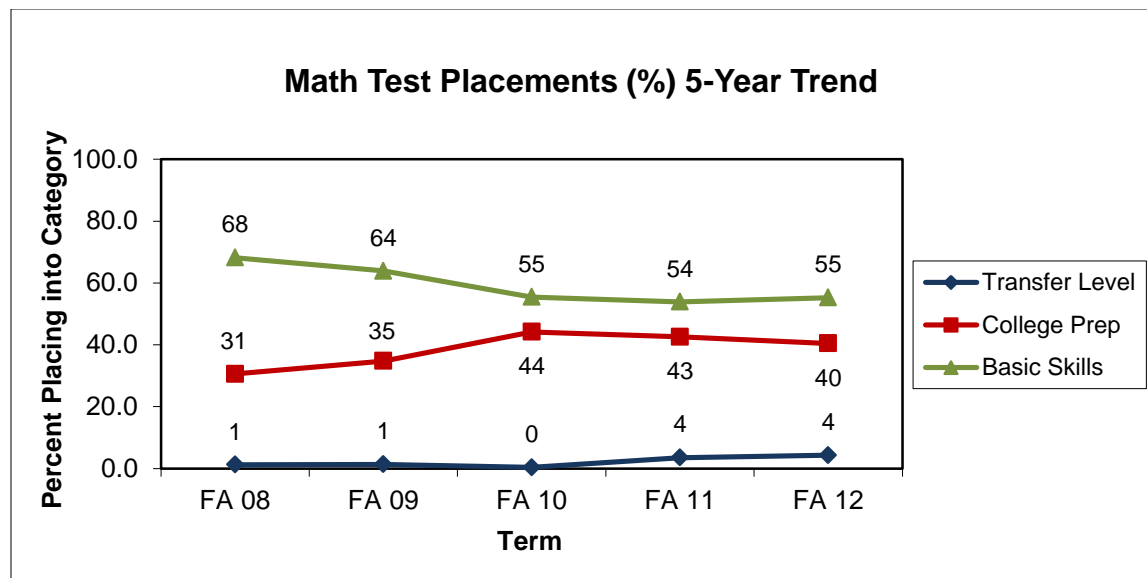
MATHEMATICS

Placement Rates

Placements into the transfer-level courses in 2012 remained the same compared to the previous year. New students continue to place into transfer-level math at 4% (see Appendix for a complete list of courses at this level). The period's average rate of placement is approximately 2%.

As with reading and writing placements, math also experienced a decrease in college-prep and a slight increase in basic skills placements. On average, 39% and 59% of students place into college-prep and basic skills math, respectively.

Table 9: Math Assessment Test Placement Rates

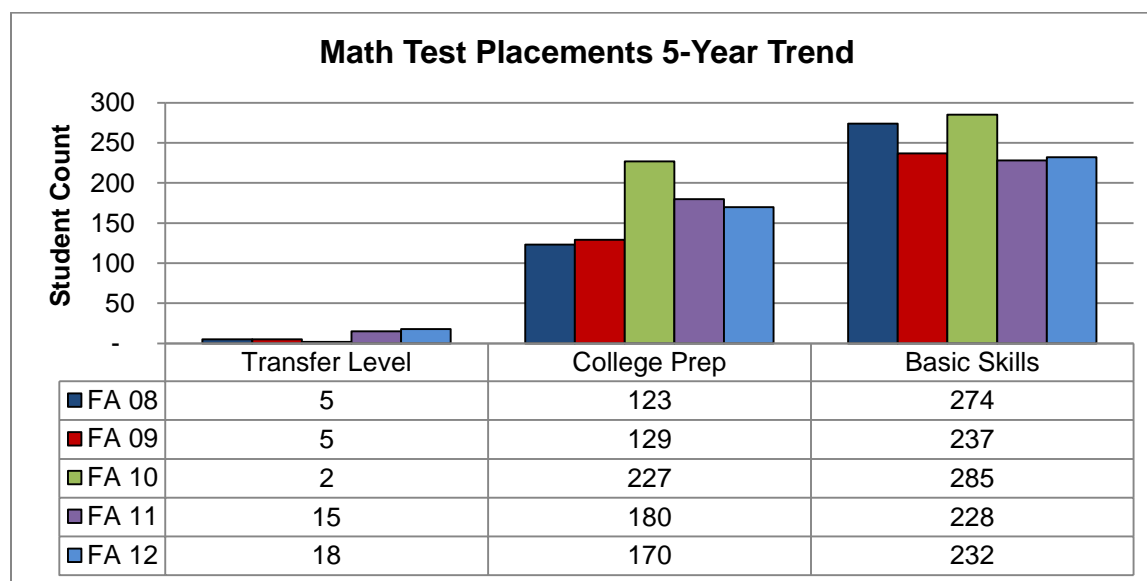


Note: New cut scores affected some basic skills and college prep courses beginning in Fall 2009.

Placement Numbers

Of the three course groups (reading, writing and mathematics), the fewest number of tested students placed into transfer-level math. However, this is the only course group that experienced an increase in transfer-level placements. Placements increased by 3%, yielding a 5-year high of 18 in 2012. Most students placed into the college-prep and basic skills level at a 5-year average of 166 and 251, respectively.

Table 10: Math Assessment Test Placement Numbers



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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.

CONCLUSION

A large percentage of younger students entering Compton Center demonstrate a need for courses at the basic skills level. Approximately half of tested students placed into basic skills reading and math, while 24% placed into basic skills writing. Overall, basic skills placements have decreased over the last five years. It is unclear, however, why 2012 experienced a decrease in college-prep and an increase in basic skills. A possible explanation may be the relaxed enrollment restrictions at CSUs; as more students enroll at a 4-year university immediately following high school, a greater percentage of basic skills students are diverted to Compton Center.

This study provided a general analysis of Compton Center students coming directly from high school (or shortly thereafter). This group tends to perform the best on average than any other age group, so older students tend to be less prepared for college compared to students with a recent high school experience. For example, the 5-year average placement rates for all assessed students into basic skills reading, writing and math were 59%, 37% and 73%, respectively. In comparison, recent high school graduates placed into the same categories of basic skills at 54%, 28% and 59%, respectively. Placement numbers overall decreased slightly for transfer-level and college prep but increased respectively for basic skills in all three course groups.

APPENDIX – COURSES BY GROUP

READING & WRITING

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

MATHEMATICS

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

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

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