

TO AND THROUGH COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE PATHWAYS IN SOUTH SEATTLE AND SOUTH KING COUNTY



REPORT SUMMARY

In today's economy, it is tough for young people to secure to a stable, living wage job without some kind of postsecondary credential. This is especially true in South Seattle and South King County — the Road Map Project region — where the booming local economy is creating unprecedented opportunity, but also intense competition for skilled workers. In order to compete for living wage jobs, students in the region must navigate a local education system in which only three out of ten ninth graders earn any kind of postsecondary credential within six years of high school graduation. Our students of color face even greater barriers in the local education system, and therefore, experience lower rates of postsecondary completion.

This report aims to shed light on the educational experiences of Road Map Project region students by examining the pathways of those who graduated from local high schools and directly enroll into the region's community and technical colleges (CTCs). Key findings include:

- Sixty-three percent of Road Map Project area high school students directly enroll in any kind of postsecondary institution. The proportion of students who enroll within a year of high school graduation ("direct enrollments") vary by district, from a high of 74 percent to a low of 57 percent.
- Forty-seven percent of students graduating from Road Map Project region high schools directly enroll in a local community and technical college.
- There are clear enrollment patterns for each of the seven Road Map Project school districts. For example, 78 percent of Federal Way Public Schools students who enrolled in a local CTC right after high school did so at Highline College.



Further analysis of persistence and completion rates for the Road Map Project region’s high school class of 2012 who directly enroll in a local CTC finds:

- **Sixty-nine percent of students in this cohort persist to a second year** and 43 percent complete and/or transfer within three years.
- **There are major differences in three-year completion and/or transfer rates by CTC** (varying from 21 percent to 63 percent), and by a student’s K-12 school district (varying from 26 percent to 58 percent).
- **Stark gaps by race and ethnicity across persistence and completion** rates and other indicators of college success.

This report also highlights factors that are associated with higher on-time completion and/or transfer rates. Among the several factors identified, Running Start participation, accumulation of 30 credits in the first year of college, and passing college-level math by the end of the second year appear to be the strongest predictors of transfer and/or on-time completion. Improving rates of college enrollment and success will not be easy, but the future of our students and region depend on it. School district and community and technical college leaders in the Road Map Project region must work together to:

1. **Support students of color to close racial and ethnic opportunity gaps**
2. **Build “hand-offs” to improve rates of direct college enrollment**
3. **Create opportunities to become “college ready” at enrollment**
4. **Support students to accumulate 30 credits in their first year of college**
5. **Build understanding of student access to, and experiences in, Running Start**

Additionally, CTC practitioners should work to identify opportunities to help more transfer students earn some kind of credential before they move on to a four-year institution. Leaders can look to comprehensive solutions—including guided or structured pathways and college promise programs—as possible approaches to bring about large-scale improvement.

Download the report: www.roadmapproject.org/toandthrough

The Road Map Project is a collective impact initiative to improve student achievement from cradle through college and career in South King County and South Seattle. Through multisector collaboration with hundreds of partners, the Road Map Project aims to increase equitable policies and practices in education systems to close opportunity gaps, and for 70 percent of its youth to earn a college or career credential by 2030.