Washington Student Achievement Council
Pave the Way Webinar
April 2021

Multi-Faceted Support Programs:

Using Evidence to Address Multiple Barriers to Student Success and Advance Equity

Agenda:

1) Intros & Overview of MDRC
2) Challenges and obstacles in higher education
3) Summary of current research evidence
4) Questions & panel discussion

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About MDRC

- Nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with experience conducting demonstrations in postsecondary education
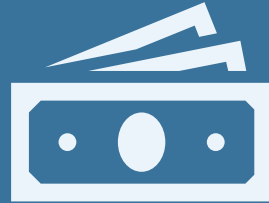

Specializes in:

- Random assignment evaluations

- Qualitative studies

- Program enhancement & technical assistance

Why are college completion rates low?

Academic Challenges

Financial Barriers

Work-Life-School Balance

Lack of College Know-How

Institutional Barriers

Equity and Achievement Gaps

- Three-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time freshmen in community colleges is only 35 percent.[1]

    - Community colleges serve a disproportionate share of students of color, low-income, part-time, and first-generation students.[2]

- Black and Hispanic students earn college-level credentials at a rate ~20% lower than their peers.[3]

- Adult learners complete college at a rate ~15% lower than "traditional-age" students.[4]

- Rural students enroll in and complete college at lower rates than their urban and suburban peers.[5]
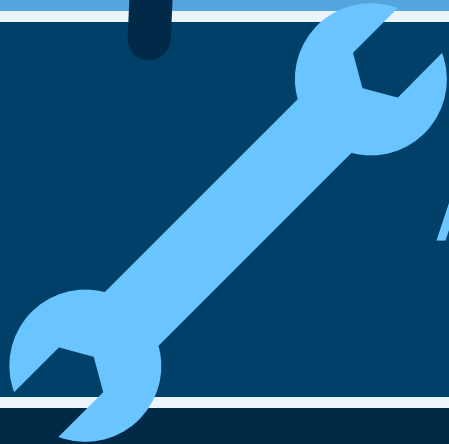
Randomized Controlled Trial or "RCT"

- Random assignment is a lottery-like process to place students into a "program group" and a "standard services group" (aka control group).

- Allows researchers to measure the impacts (effects) on outcomes for each group.

- A fair way to determine who receives program services when resources are limited.

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Random Assignment

Program Group circle:
Eligible for intervention services

May participate in all other college services

Program Group

OR

Standard Services Group circle:
May participate in all other college services

Standard Services Group

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Postsecondary Interventions + Policies

What does the evidence say?

Big Picture: What Works

- **Short-term** interventions designed to address just one or a few barriers can lead to positive, but modest, effects.

- **Comprehensive programs** that integrate different strategies and are sustained over time are more likely to produce long-term impacts on student success.

- Examples:
  - CUNY ASAP
  - ASAP in Ohio
  - Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement
  - Bottom Line
  - One Million Degrees

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Long-term, Multifaceted Interventions

- Students face many barriers to success.

- Programs that <u>simultaneously</u> address multiple barriers can more effectively improve student success rates.

- Examples of intervention components:

  - Financial aid

  - Expenses:

    - Books, transportation

  - Academic preparation/transitions

  - Coaching/Advising

  - Summer engagement

  - Job programs on- or off-campus

  - Outreach + communication

Transition to College

What does the evidence say?

Texas Developmental Summer Bridge Study

- 8 summer bridge programs in Texas.

- Positive outcomes: college-level course completion: math and writing.

- No long-term impacts.

Learning Communities Demonstration

- 6 learning communities across the country.

- Small positive effects on subject and overall academic progress.

- Small long-term impacts depending on design.

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Developmental Education

What does the evidence say?

Multiple Measures Assessment Project

- <u>Problem:</u> Mis-placement into developmental courses based on placement tests is common.
- 7 community colleges in New York.
  - Status quo placement process vs. multiple measures.
- More students placed into, enrolled in, and completed college-level math and English.
- Especially helps in English and for students "bumped up."
- Effects fade over time as control group students catch up.

Dana Center Math Pathways

- 4 Texas colleges.
  - Pathways align with career interest
  - Accelerated dev ed math
- Positive impacts: developmental math completion, passing college-level math, & math credits earned.
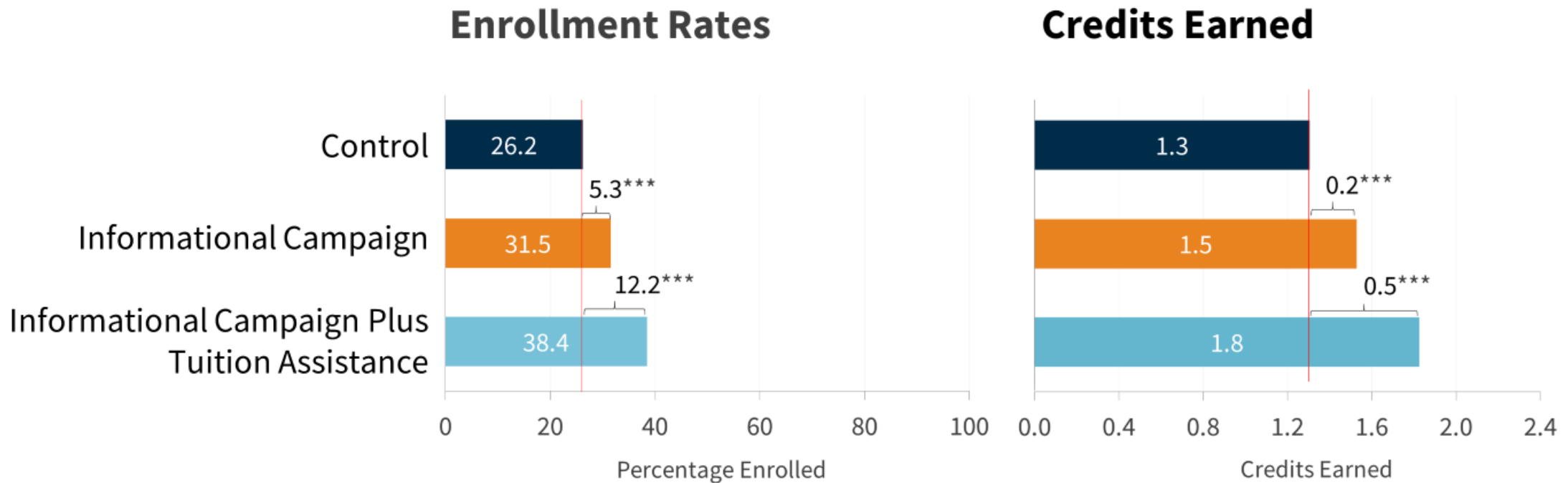
CUNY Start

- 4 New York colleges.
- Matriculation delayed one semester: intensive math, reading, writing instruction.
- Positive impacts: college readiness, credit accumulation, graduation rates.

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Summer Enrollment

What does the evidence say?

The Encouraging Additional Summer Enrollment (EASE)

- 10 community colleges in Ohio.
- Behavioral science + financial incentives to boost summer enrollment.

Enrollment Rates

	Percentage Enrolled
Control	26.2
Informational Campaign	31.5 (5.3***)
Informational Campaign Plus Tuition Assistance	38.4 (12.2***)

Credits Earned

	Credits Earned
Control	1.3
Informational Campaign	1.5 (0.2***)
Informational Campaign Plus Tuition Assistance	1.8 (0.5***)

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Advising and Financial Aid
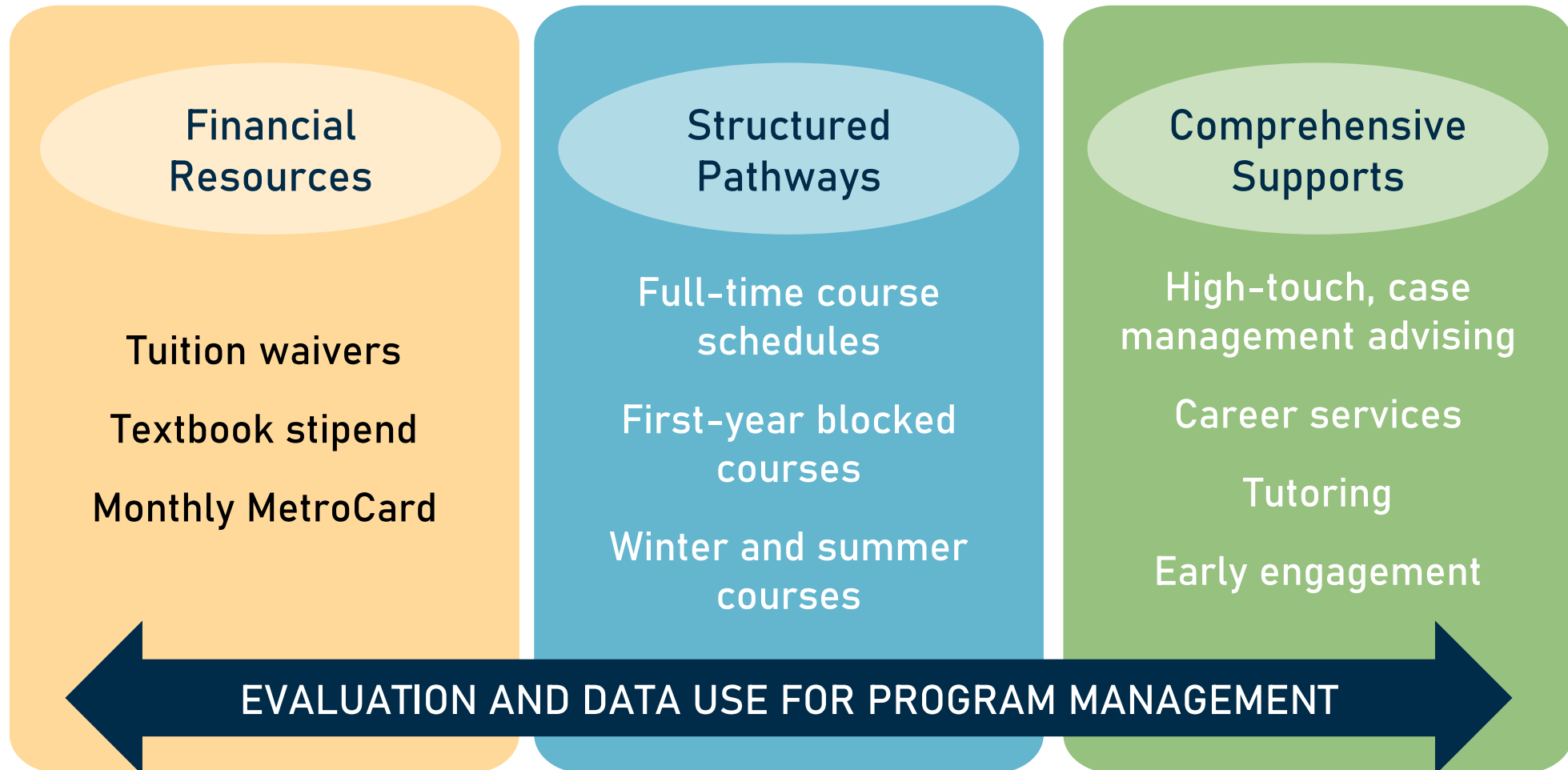
What does the evidence say?

Advising and Financial Aid Interventions

- The best advising and coaching are case management models using proactive outreach – different from traditional ad hoc, drop-in models
- Tying additional financial aid to milestones can increase take-up
  - Performance-based Scholarships tied additional aid to FT enrollment, attending advising, completing developmental math, and other milestones
- Effects are clear during program semesters and tend to fade after the intervention ends.
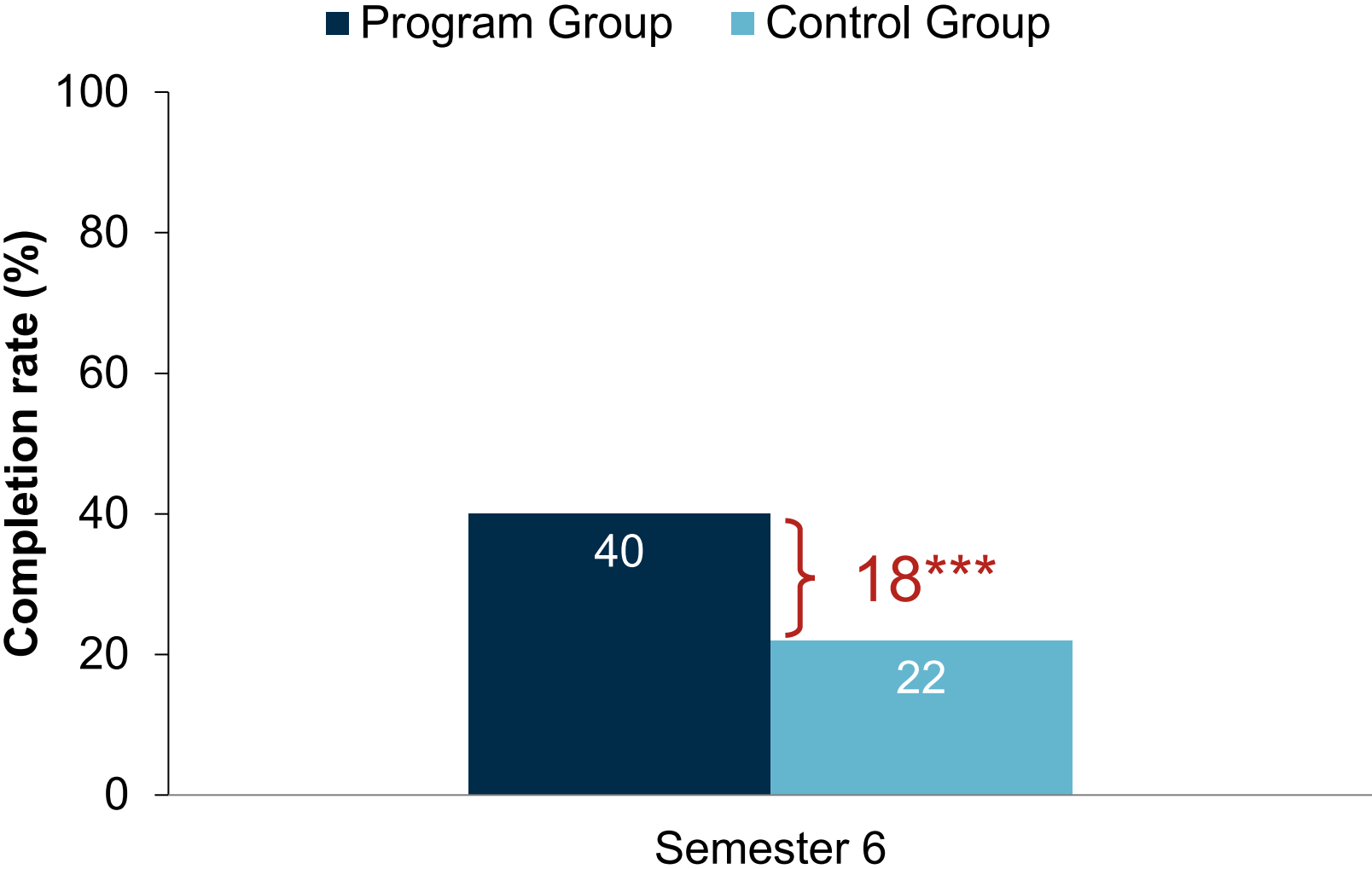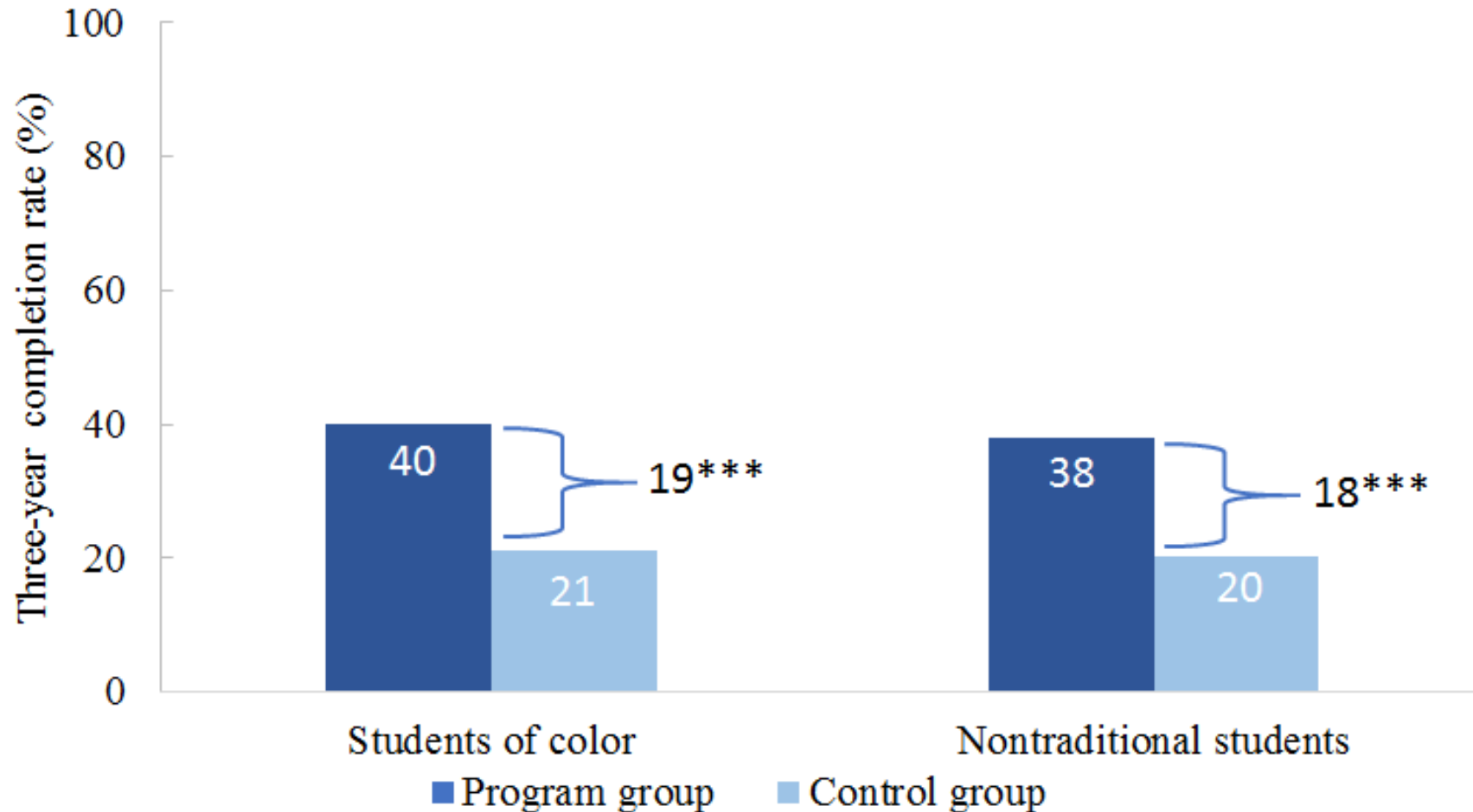
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Multifaceted Interventions

Putting the pieces together

CUNY ASAP Program Model

Financial Resources

Tuition waivers

Textbook stipend

Monthly MetroCard

Structured Pathways

Full-time course schedules

First-year blocked courses

Winter and summer courses

Comprehensive Supports

High-touch, case management advising

Career services

Tutoring

Early engagement

EVALUATION AND DATA USE FOR PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

CUNY ASAP Increases Graduation Rates for Students of Color and Nontraditional Students

Could ASAP work in another state? With a different student population?

ASAP Demonstration in Ohio

Ohio Program Model

Programs based closely on CUNY ASAP

Financial Supports

- Tuition Waiver
- Gas/Grocery Card
- Textbook Vouchers

Student Responsibility and Messaging

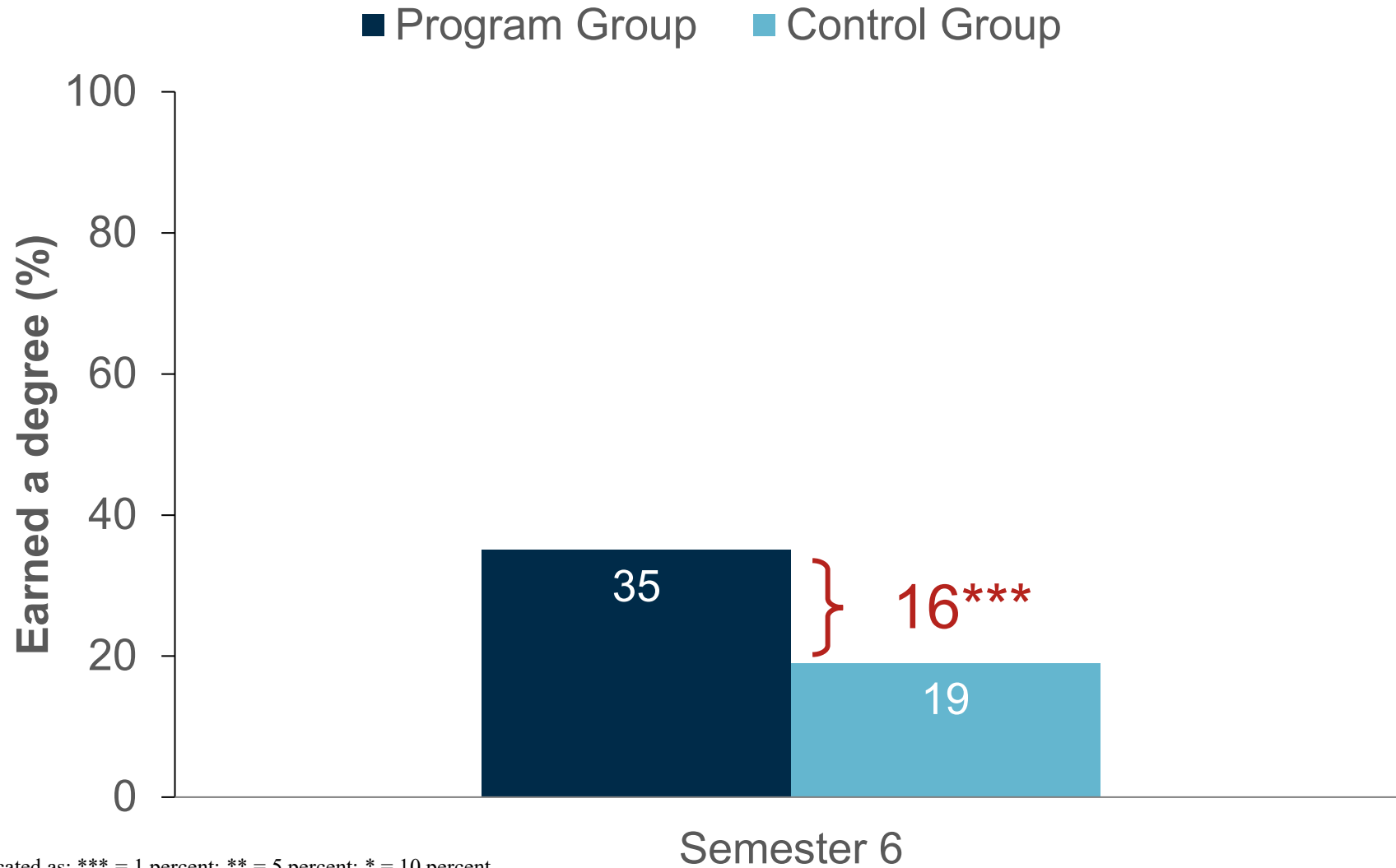- Enroll Full-time
- Take Dev. Ed. Early
- Graduate in 3 Years

Student Services

- Triage Advising
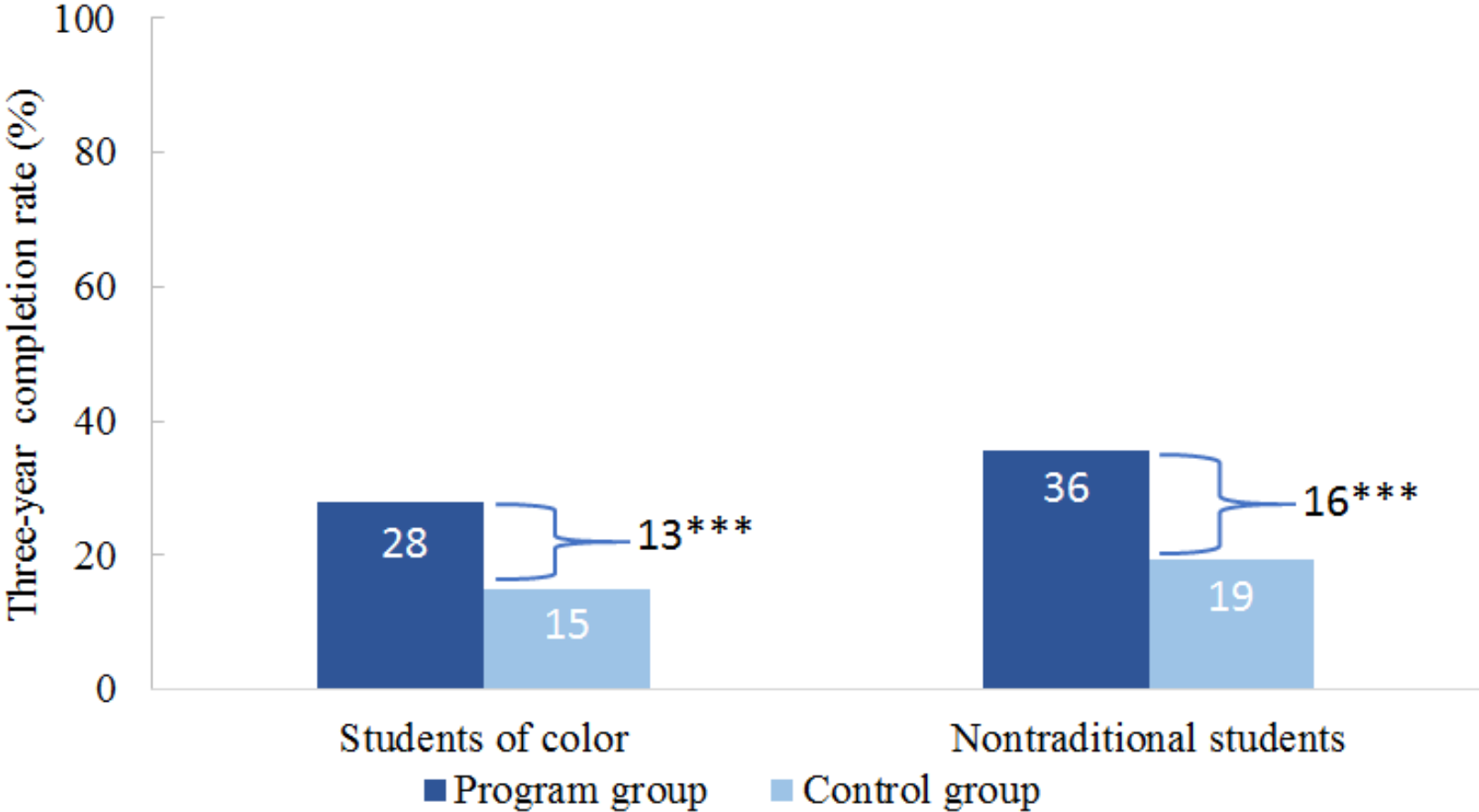- Tutoring
- Career Services

Course Enrollment

- ASAP Seminar
- Course Schedules
- Early Registration
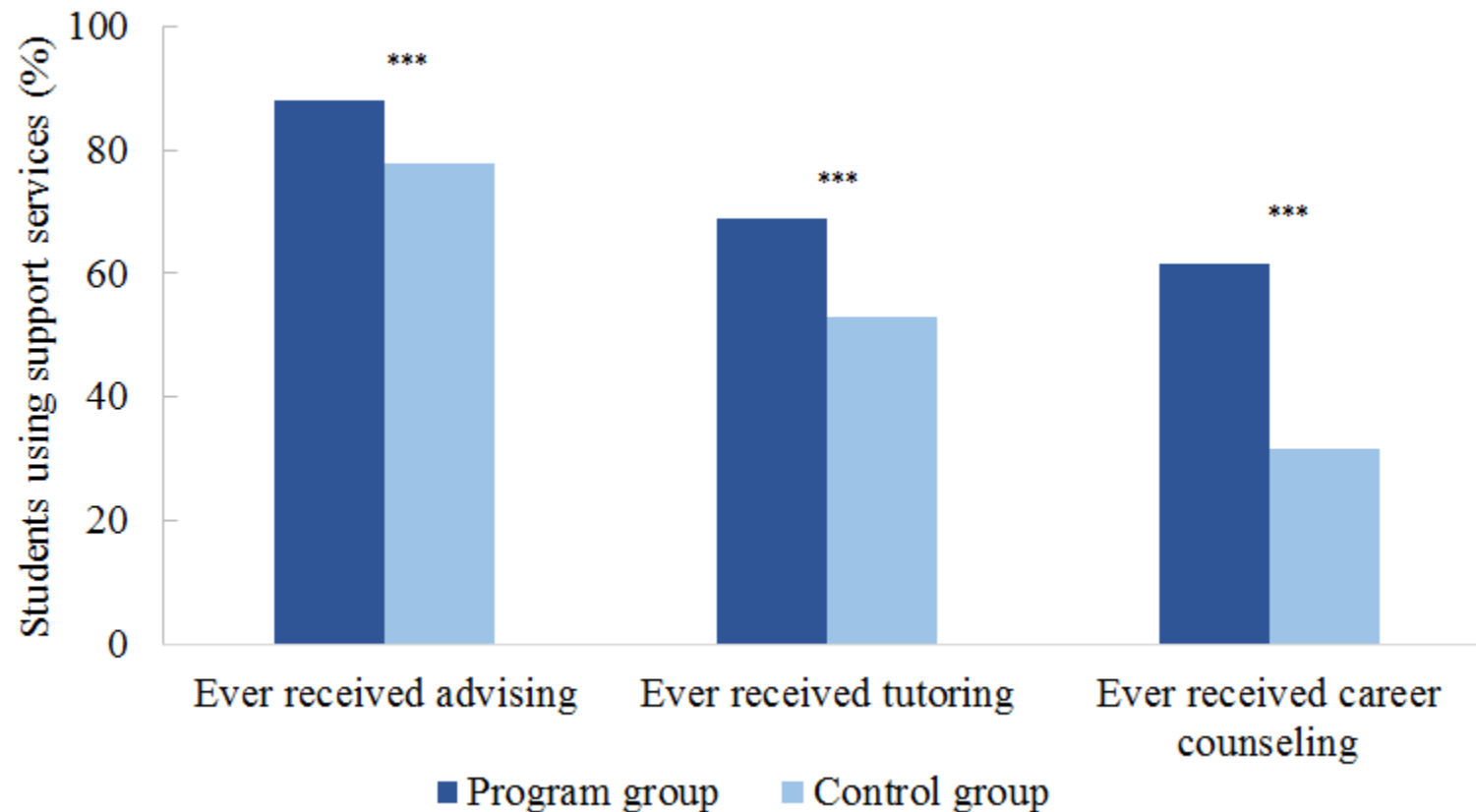
Ohio Programs Almost Double Graduation Rates

Earned a degree (%)

- ■ Program Group
- ■ Control Group

35

19

} 16***

Semester 6

Ohio Programs Almost Double Graduation Rates for Students of Color and Nontraditional Students

Statistical significance levels are indicated as: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent

Ohio Programs Boost Use of Student Support Services Among Students of Color

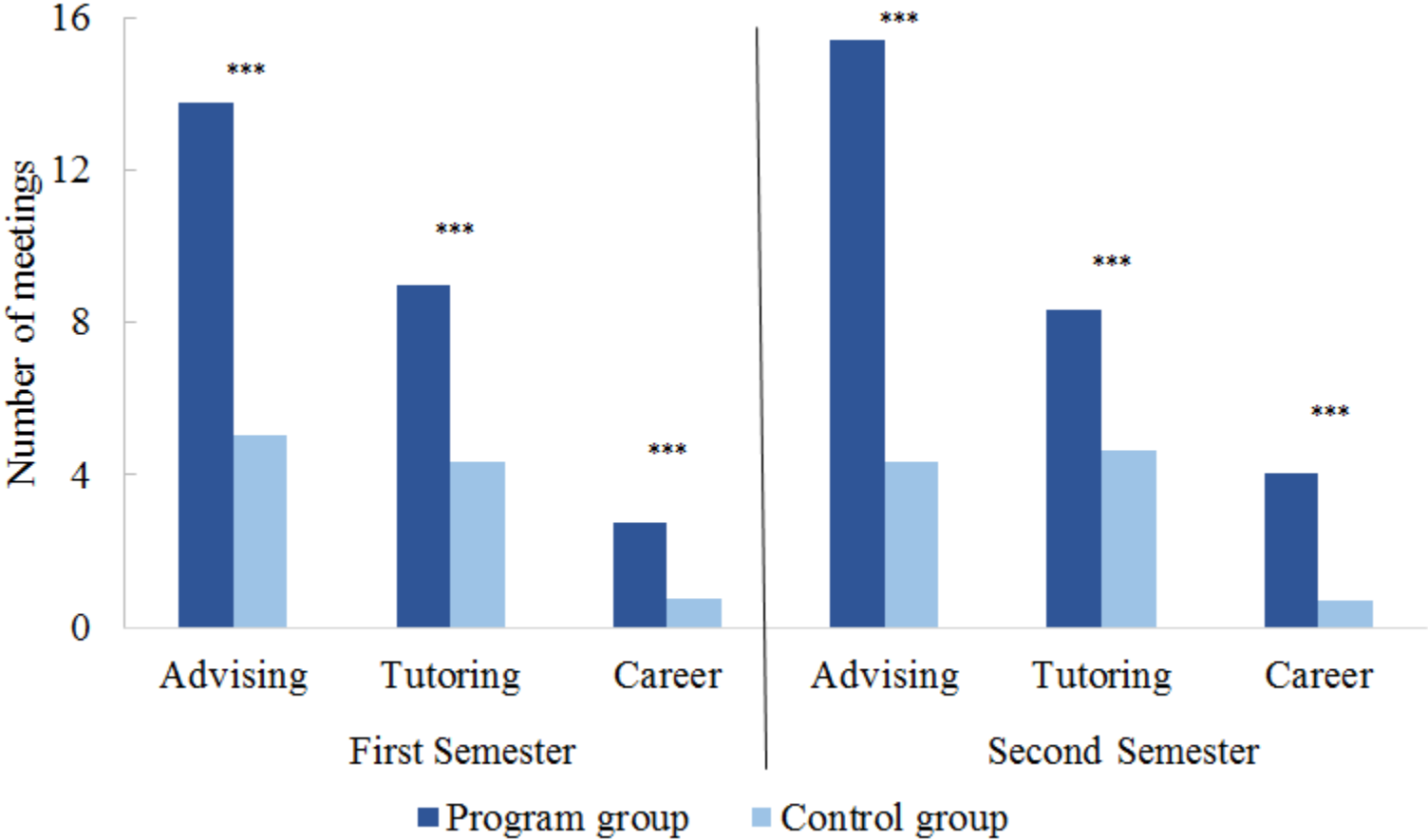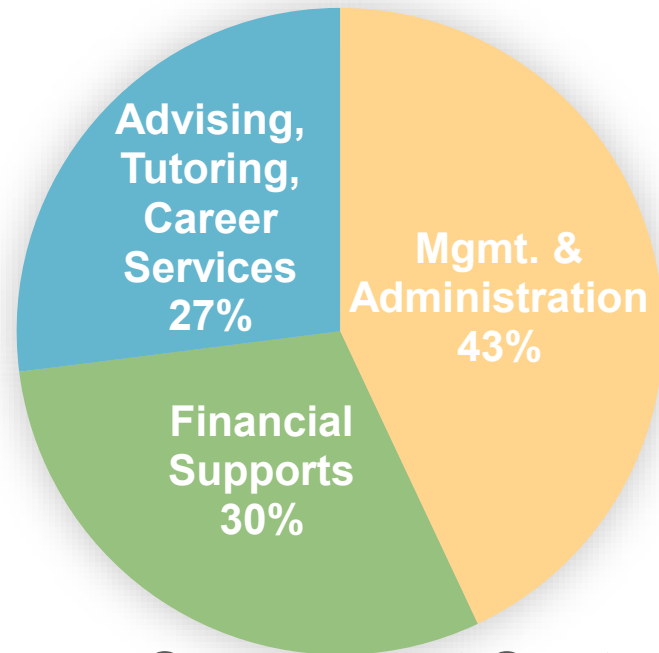Statistical significance levels are indicated as: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent

Ohio Programs Boost Use of Student Support Services Among Students of Color

Ohio Programs Cost More But Lower the Cost per Degree

- About $1,800 = direct cost *per program group student* per year

Program Component Costs (percentage of total)

Cost per student was higher, but the Ohio Programs lowered cost <u>per degree</u> by 22%.

ASAP Programs: Cost

- Annual direct cost per student
  - CUNY ASAP: $3,400
  - ASAP Ohio Programs: $1,800

  - It's a cost-effective investment! 16-18 percentage point impact on graduation.
  - It's still a big investment in an era of decreasing state investment in two-year colleges.

SUCCESS

Multi-faceted, long term program that builds on MDRC's 15 years of postsecondary research

Combines the most effective elements and uses existing resources to create lower-cost programs that are more likely to be sustained and scaled

SUCCESS Model

Coaches who reach out **proactively** and meet **frequently** with students

Financial incentives to encourage students to satisfy program requirements and to provide additional funding

Programs that serve students for at **least three years** and focus on strategies to increase **academic momentum.** Students earn 24 credits per year through **full-time** enrollment in main semesters and summer term enrollment.

Management information systems (MIS) that provides data to support program management and improvement

Commitment to program **affordability** and **sustainability** by **leveraging** and **consolidating existing resources**

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The State Role in SUCCESS

- **Evaluation support:** Encourage colleges in the state to commit to learning through evaluation and ongoing continuous improvement efforts. Provide MDRC with state data as needed.

- **Network support:** Coordinate and support a cross-site learning network of SUCCESS colleges and share learnings with other colleges in the state.

- **Financial support:** Identify existing funding streams or new resources that could be used to support SUCCESS.

- **Scaling support:** Develop a plan for sustaining SUCCESS and expanding it to additional colleges in the state. Engage key stakeholders to get buy-in and support for SUCCESS.

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Discussion and Q&A

References:

1. National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). 2020. "Winter 2019-20, 200 Percent Graduation Rates component (provisional data)." Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. Website: https://nces.ed.gov/.

2. The Institute for College Access and Success. 2019. "Inequitable Funding, Inequitable Results: Racial Disparities at Public Colleges." Website: https://ticas.org/wp-content/uploads/legacy-files/pub_files/inequitable_funding_inequitable_results.pdf

3. Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Huie, F., Wakhungu, P., Yuan, X., Nathan, A & Hwang, Y., A. 2017. "A National View of Student Attainment Rates by Race and Ethnicity – Fall 2010 Cohort (Signature Report No. 12b). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Website: https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/Signature12-RaceEthnicity.pdf

4. Causey, J., Huie, F., Lang, R., Ryu, M., & Shapiro, D. December 2020. "Completing College 2020: A National View of Student Completion Rates for 2014 Entering Cohort (Signature Report 19)." Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Website: https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/Completions_Report_2020.pdf

5. Wells, R., Manly, C.A., Kommers, S., & Kimball, E. 2019. "Narrowed Gaps and Persistent Challenges: Examining Rural-Nonrural Disparities in Postsecondary Outcomes over Time". American Journal of Education. 32. Website: https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/705498

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