

# College and Career Readiness Initiative: *College Placement Testing Results for High School Students*

The State of Florida launched the College and Career Readiness Initiative to improve student readiness for postsecondary education and promote success after high school graduation. During the 2008 legislative session, s. 1008.30 (3), F.S., (also known as Senate Bill “1908”) was revised to provide an opportunity for postsecondary readiness testing of high school students and remediation prior to graduation.

This legislation, which requires cross-sector (secondary-postsecondary) collaboration, expands college/career readiness testing to 11<sup>th</sup> grade students who express a desire to attend a postsecondary institution, and provides opportunities for students with deficiencies to receive remediation during the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Participation in remediation is voluntary for students. Students are considered “college ready” or prepared to enter college credit coursework when they meet the state defined cut scores on approved common placement tests, per State Board Rule, 6A-10.0315, F.A.C.

Important goals of this law are to: 1) increase the number and percentage of students who graduate from high school ready for college credit coursework; 2) better communicate with 11<sup>th</sup> grade students and their parents the requirements of college entry, and; 3) to provide students, whose test scores in Reading, Writing and/or Mathematics indicate deficiencies in critical skills, an opportunity to attain the needed competencies during the 12<sup>th</sup> grade year prior to high school graduation.<sup>1</sup> Ultimately, this legislation will result in better prepared students, increase access to postsecondary opportunities, and promote student retention and completion from college.

In this report we explore CPT testing outcomes in mathematics, reading, and writing for SB 1908 students. We compare the pass rates of SB 1908 students with pass rates from prospective dual enrollment students and students who have enrolled in college readiness courses. Additionally, we examine trends in readiness and success course enrollments across the State of Florida from 2008-09 to 2009-10. Through this research, we hope to show how targeted instruction in high school can be valuable in assisting students to prepare for college credit coursework.

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<sup>1</sup> College and Career Readiness Initiative Frequently Asked Questions, Florida Department of Education, [http://www.fldoe.org/gr/li/CCRI\\_EPRA-QA.pdf](http://www.fldoe.org/gr/li/CCRI_EPRA-QA.pdf).

### CPT Testing Outcomes

Exhibit 1 shows the pass rate for SB 1908 students who took the College Placement Test (CPT) broken down by subject area for 2008-09 and 2009-10. In 2008-09, 30.5% of students passed the mathematics portion of the CPT. That number decreased by one percentage point to 29.5% in 2009-10. In 2008-09, 34.0% of students passed the reading portion of the CPT. That number increased by one percentage point to 34.6% in 2009-10. Finally, in 2008-09, 48.5% of students passed the writing portion of the CPT and 49% the following year. Overall, the percentages of students passing each portion of the CPT remained steady from 2008-09 to 2009-10.

**EXHIBIT 1. PASS RATE FOR SB 1908 STUDENTS WHO TOOK THE CPT, 2008-09 TO 2009-10**

Type of Student	2008-09		2009-10	
	#	%	#	%
Mathematics Test Takers	18,842		21,573	
Students Passing Mathematics	5,741	30.5%	6,359	29.5%
Reading Test Takers	17,578		20,272	
Students Passing Reading	5,971	34.0%	7,003	34.6%
Writing Test Takers	17,492		19,276	
Students Passing Writing	8,481	48.5%	9,445	49.0%

Source: Florida Department of Education, Community College/Technical Center MIS

Exhibit 2 shows the pass rate for students who took the CPT, broken down by SB 1908 students, prospective dual enrollment students and students who completed Mathematics for College Readiness, a high school course comparable to Intermediate Algebra (MAT 1033). For SB 1908 students, 29.5% passed mathematics, 34.6% passed reading and 49.0% passed writing. Comparatively, 52.1% of dual enrollment students passed mathematics, 56.2% passed reading and 69.0% passed writing. Finally, 48.8% of students who completed Mathematics for College Readiness passed the mathematics portion of the test.

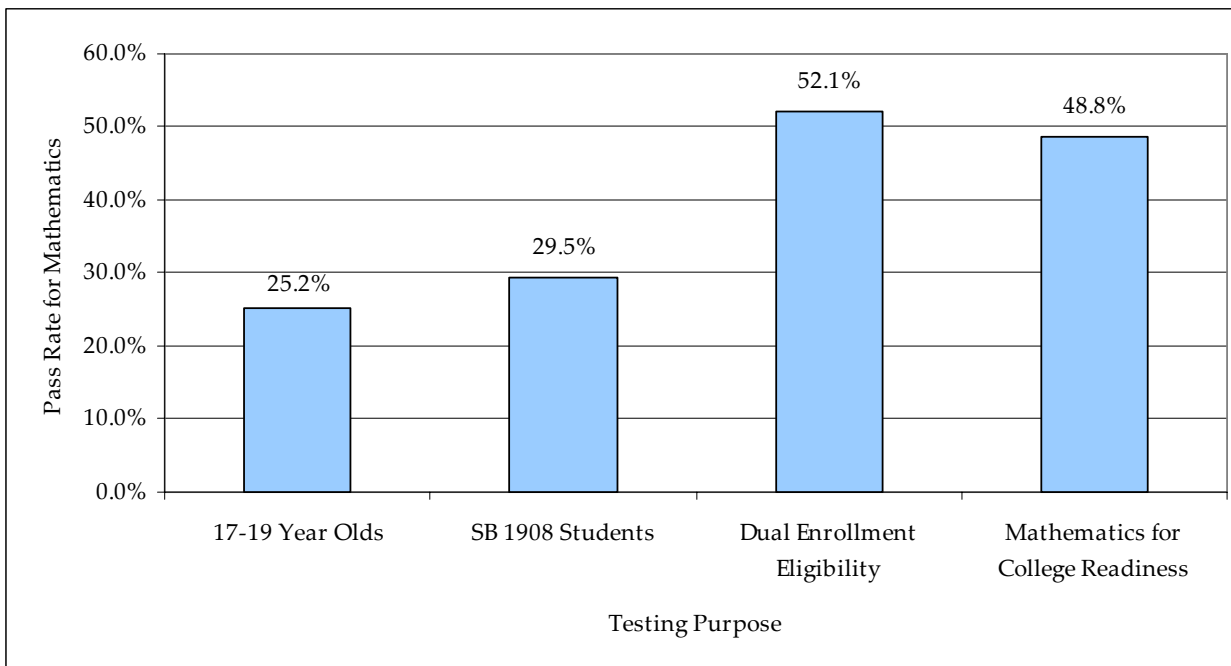
**EXHIBIT 2. PASS RATE FOR STUDENTS WHO TOOK THE CPT BY TESTING PURPOSE, 2009-10**

Type of Student	SB 1908 Students		Dual Enrollment Eligibility		Mathematics for College Readiness	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Mathematics Test Takers	21,573		13,498		642	
Students Passing Mathematics	6,365	29.5%	7,031	52.1%	313	48.8%
Reading Test Takers	20,272		13,348			
Students Passing Reading	7,003	34.6%	7,502	56.2%		
Writing Test Takers	19,276		13,170			
Students Passing Writing	9,445	49.0%	9,085	69.0%		

Source: Florida Department of Education, Community College/Technical Center MIS

Exhibit 3 shows the pass rate for the mathematics portion of the test, with four comparison groups. Each group represents a category of students who took the test for a different purpose. Seventeen to nineteen year olds (“17-19 Year Olds”) are high school graduates enrolled at a college who took the CPT for college placement.<sup>2</sup> These students passed at a rate of 25.2%. Students enrolled in dual enrollment courses have the highest pass rate at 52.1%. Students who completed Mathematics for College Readiness passed at a rate of 48.8%, almost 20 percentage points higher than SB 1908 students, who passed at a rate of 29.5%. Given that these students most likely did not pass the prior year and that the initial pass rate was 30.5%, this is a substantial improvement. The improved pass rate for students in readiness courses underscores their value.

**EXHIBIT 3. SUCCESS RATE FOR MATHEMATICS BY TESTING PURPOSE**



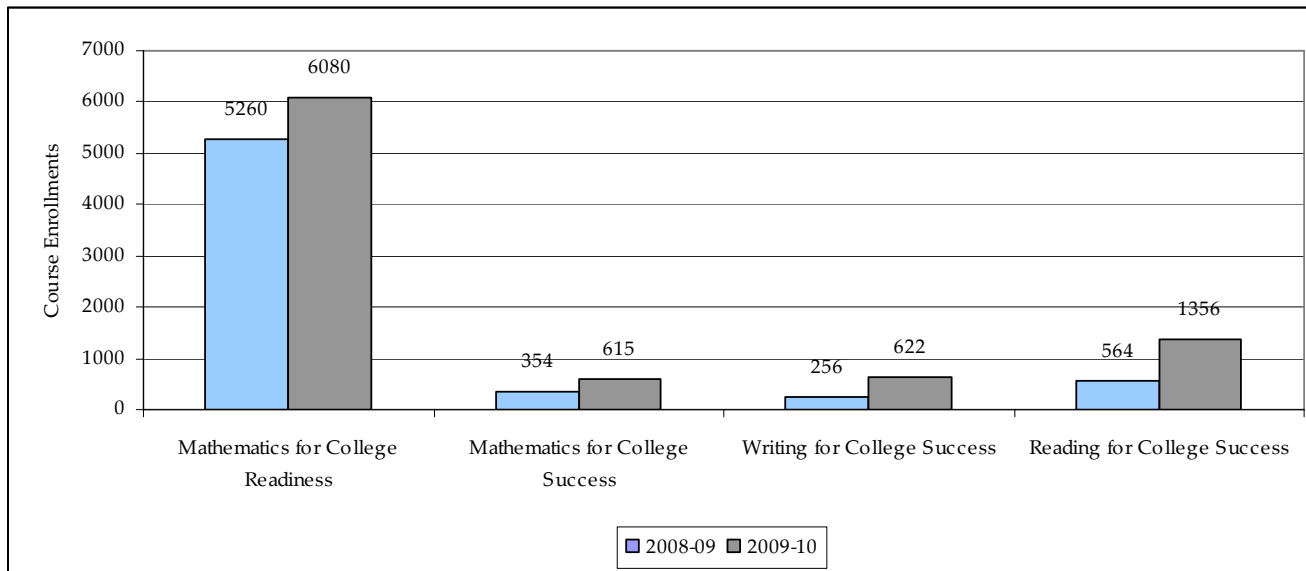
Source: Florida Department of Education, Community College/Technical Center MIS

<sup>2</sup> These students either did not take the ACT or SAT or did not meet cut scores on the ACT or SAT.

### Readiness and Success Course Enrollment Trends

Exhibit 4 shows enrollment broken down by course for 2008-09 and 2009-10. Enrollment increased in Mathematics for College Readiness by 13.5%, Mathematics for College Success by 42.4%, Writing for College Success by 58.8%, and Reading for College Success by 58.4%.

**EXHIBIT 4. ENROLLMENT RATES BY COURSE, 2008-09 TO 2009-10**



Source: Florida Department of Education, Community College/Technical Center MIS

From 2008-09 to 2009-10, a total of 48 counties in Florida enrolled students in at least one course.

- Thirty nine counties offered Mathematics for College Readiness;
- Twelve counties offered Mathematics for College Success;
- Five counties offered Writing for College Success;
- Ten counties offered Reading for College Success;
- Four counties that did not previously offer courses enrolled students in Mathematics for College Success in 2009-10; and
- Five counties that did not previously offer courses enrolled students in Writing for College Success and Reading for College Success in 2009-10.

## **Conclusion**

The number of high school students taking the CPT increased in 2009-10 with the most administrations in mathematics at 21,573, up from 18,842 in 2008-09. Overall passage rates are highest on the writing portion of the CPT at 49.0% in 2009-2010; the lowest was 29.5% for mathematics. In 2009-10, there were roughly 20,000 administrations on each CPT subtest for SB 1908 purposes. Scores indicate there is a large number of high school students who need additional preparation before enrolling in college credit coursework, especially in mathematics where only 29.5% of students met the required cut scores. It is expected that passage rates are higher for prospective dual enrollment students as well as students who completed the Mathematics for College Readiness courses; however, there remain a large number of those students with test scores indicating deficiencies as well.

It is anticipated that the number of high school students tested each year will continue to grow. As more students are identified to need additional preparation prior to high school graduation, remediation rates at the colleges are expected to decline as a result of targeted instruction in high school in skills linked with entry level college credit coursework

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