STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES EXPERIENCES STUDY

MAY 2024

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Executive Summary

Existing research emphasizes the importance of student support services in student retention and success. Student support services (SSS)—which include academic, career, financial, health, and student life services—are services and programs designed to help students thrive in their learning environments, network and build meaningful connections, and prepare them for careers. To better understand the impact of student support services at the San Diego & Imperial Counties Community Colleges, the San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence (COE) commissioned this study to evaluate current and former students' experiences with these services, and to understand employment outcomes upon leaving the community college system. Specifically, the following research objectives guided this study: 1) identify the types of SSS most used by regional community college students, and assess use by gender, race/ethnicity, enrollment year, and special population status; 2) evaluate students' experiences with SSS; and 3) understand key employment outcomes based on the utilization of SSS.

According to the survey results, current and former students reported having positive experiences with student supports services and with the regional community college system as a whole. This study includes the following insights from the survey:

1. **Student support services play a pivotal role in whether students perceived their community college experience to be a worthwhile investment, and the community colleges should prioritize access and student engagement with these services.**

2. **Focus marketing and outreach efforts to increase awareness of student support services using a multi-pronged approach to communication, but also ensure that communication emphasizes the *why* and *when* students would need specific services.**

3. **Utilizing career services facilitated students getting a job related to their field of study and feeling that the college helped them reach employment goals; therefore, the colleges should concentrate on career services and job search guidance, particularly for BIPOC students.**

4. **Health services and student life services—key programs and services that support students' mental health and connectedness to their campuses—are underutilized by students, and the colleges should focus on efforts to promote these services, leveraging faculty and staff to support these efforts.**

These insights can provide the community colleges with an understanding of the relevance of student support services, and guide recommendations for ways to promote student engagement with these services at their respective institutions.

Introduction

Community colleges play an integral role in higher education by offering students low-cost, accessible education and training.[1,2] In addition to educational programs, community colleges also offer other academic, career, financial, health, and student life services, which are collectively referred to as "student support services" (SSS) for the purpose of this study.[3] Student support services cover a wide range of student needs; from advising students through program prerequisites and requirements, offering financial aid programs that help cover college costs, providing access to affordable health exams and mental health counseling, and facilitating supportive student networks.[4,5] Student support services are key to addressing student retention and engagement,[6] and these programs help students navigate the system to achieve personal, educational, and career goals.

The San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence (COE) commissioned this study to evaluate current and former students' experiences with SSS at the San Diego & Imperial Counties Community Colleges. As part of this study, the research team developed the following research objectives:

- Identify the types of SSS that are most utilized by community college students, and assess use by gender, race/ethnicity, enrollment year, and special population status;
- Evaluate the experiences of students who utilized SSS; and
- Understand key employment outcomes based on the utilization of SSS.

Between April and June 2023, COE researchers and contractors administered a quantitative survey, which collected 292 responses from current and former San Diego & Imperial Counties Community College students. The survey asked participants about whether they used student support services while they attended community college, their experiences with the community college system, current employment status, and their ease of finding employment once they graduated. For more information about the research methodology and survey instrument, see Appendix B: Methodology and Appendix C: Survey Instrument. In addition to summarizing survey responses, this report provides recommendations for the San Diego & Imperial Counties Community Colleges regarding students' experiences with SSS, and ways to prioritize efforts to market and promote these services among students. The COE encourages the region's community colleges to use this study for strategic planning and meaningful discussions about SSS.

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1 "4 Reasons to Consider Community College," The Princeton Review, accessed May 1, 2024, princetonreview.com/college-advice/community-college.
2 "Services That May Help Low-Income Students Succeed in Community College. Opening Doors," MDRC. eric.ed.gov/?id=ED484621.
3 "Student Support Services Website Experience Study," San Diego & Imperial COE, June 2023, coeccc.net/san-diego-imperial/2023/06/student-support-services-website-experience-student.
4 "Services That May Help Low-Income Students Succeed in Community College. Opening Doors," MDRC. eric.ed.gov/?id=ED484621.
5 icangotocollege.com/student-support-services#card-2.
6 "California Community College Student Outcomes Abroad Research Project," The Center for Global Education, globaled.us/cccsoar/college-student-retention-and-success.asp.

Overview of Survey Respondents

Between April and June 2023, a total of 292 survey respondents who had attended a community college in the San Diego and Imperial region participated in the survey.[7] In terms of demographics, 53 percent of respondents identified as female, 44 percent were between 25 and 54 years old, and 42 percent identified as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colors (Exhibit 1). Information about the methodology can be found in Appendix B: Methodology.

Exhibit 1. Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents

Gender*	n=292
Female	53%
Male	35%
Non-Binary / Transgender	3%
Prefer not to answer / Blank	10%
Age	**n=292**
18-24 years	8%
25-34 years	15%
35-44 years	15%
45-54 years	14%
55-64 years	11%
65 years and older	25%
Prefer not to answer / Blank	12%
Current Employment	**n=292**
Employed (1 Job)	46%
Retired	27%
Self-employed	10%
Unemployed, Not Seeking Employment	8%
Employed (More than 1 Job)	6%
Unemployed, Seeking Employment	2%
Prefer not to answer / Blank	1%

*May not total 100 percent due to rounding; multiple options could be selected for 'Race/Ethnicity'

Race/Ethnicity*	n=292
White / Caucasian	37%
Hispanic / Latino	24%
Black/African American / African	6%
American Indian / Alaska Native	6%
East / Southeast Asian	6%
Middle Eastern	4%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	1%
Prefer not to answer / Blank	21%
Language	**n=292**
English	65%
Spanish	14%
Tagalog	2%
Other Language	2%
Prefer not to answer / Blank	17%
Identifies as Special Population[8]	**n=292**
Yes	38%
No	31%
Prefer not to answer / Blank	31%
Current Residence	**n=292**
San Diego County	88%
Imperial County	12%

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7 Data was collected from students who attended community colleges outside of the region, but this study only focuses on students who attended a San Diego & Imperial Counties Community College. For more information about the methodology, see Appendix B: Methodology.
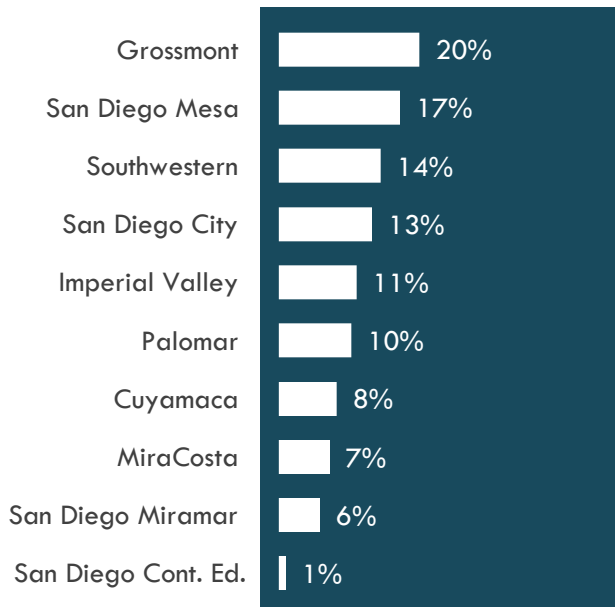
8 Definition of special populations can be found in the following report: "Perkins V Comprehensive Regional Needs Assessment," San Diego & Imperial COE, November 2023, coeccc.net/san-diego-imperial/2023/11/perkins-v-comprehensive-regional-needs-assessment-2.

Community College Enrollment

Exhibit 2 summarizes the community colleges that respondents attended in the San Diego and Imperial region, and the most recent year they enrolled in coursework. The colleges most represented were Grossmont College, San Diego Mesa College, and Southwestern College. The majority of students attended a community college in 2018 and earlier (72 percent), while 29 attended in 2019 and later.

Exhibit 2. **San Diego & Imperial Community College Enrollment and Status, n=292**

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

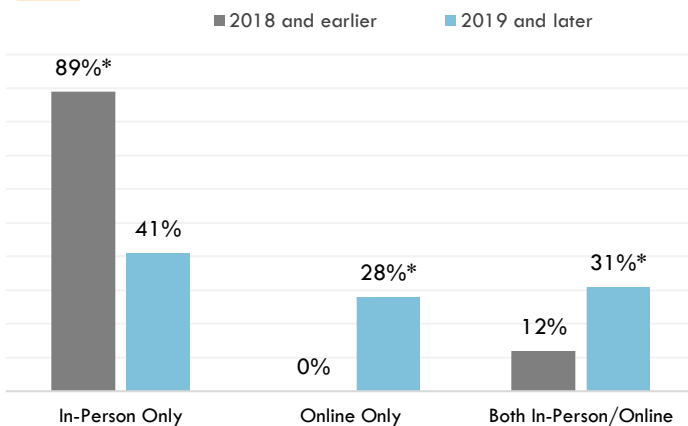| College	Percent
Grossmont	20%
San Diego Mesa	17%
Southwestern	14%
San Diego City	13%
Imperial Valley	11%
Palomar	10%
Cuyamaca	8%
MiraCosta	7%
San Diego Miramar	6%
San Diego Cont. Ed.	1%

Multiple options could be selected

YEAR ATTENDED COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Currently enrolled (2023)	12%
2022	6%
2021	4%
2020	3%
2019	4%
2018 or earlier	72%

May not total 100 percent due to rounding

Exhibit 3. **San Diego & Imperial Community College Course Format, n=292**

COURSE FORMAT

Legend: ■ 2018 and earlier ■ 2019 and later

	In-Person Only	Online Only	Both In-Person/Online
2018 and earlier	89%*	0%	12%
2019 and later	41%	28%*	31%*

*Significantly higher than comparison group, p<.05; may not total 100 percent due to rounding

In terms of course format, the majority took in-person courses only (89 percent) in 2018 and earlier (Exhibit 3), which was significantly greater than the proportion of students in 2019 and later (41 percent; $p<.05$). Students who enrolled in 2019 and later were also significantly more likely to take courses online, and both in-person and online, than earlier years ($p<.05$).
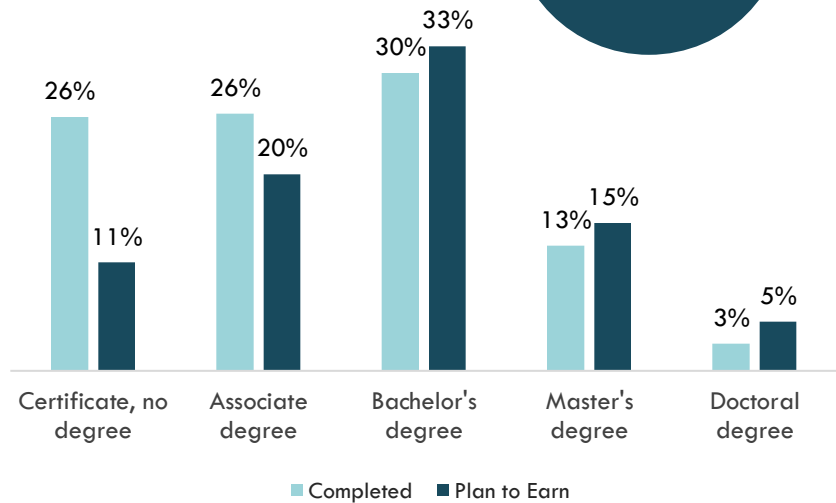
The survey asked respondents about their primary goal for enrolling in the community college system, and the majority indicated they wanted to earn a degree/certificate or transfer (82 percent) and only 8 percent took courses to update job skills or renew licenses (Exhibit 4). Approximately one-third had completed and planned to earn a bachelor's degree (30 and 33 percent, respectively), whereas 26 percent had completed and 20 percent planned to earn an associate degree (Appendix A, Exhibit 15 summarizes enrollment goal by year). Given that most respondents were not currently enrolled in courses (88 percent; Exhibit 2), the survey also explored the primary reason why respondents were not currently enrolled. Nearly half indicated that their educational goals were already met, whereas 12 percent got/changed jobs, and 11 percent transferred to a university (Exhibit 5; Appendix A, Exhibit 16 shows reason not currently enrolled by year).

Exhibit 4. *Enrollment Goal and Degree Students Completed and Plan to Earn*

GOAL FOR ENROLLING IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

	%
Earn a degree/certificate or transfer	**82%**
Take classes to update job skills or renew license/permit	**8%**
Take classes for self-enrichment only	**8%**
Other	**2%**

n=287

13% were unsure what they plan to earn

Completed / Plan to Earn bar chart:
- Certificate, no degree: 26% / 11%
- Associate degree: 26% / 20%
- Bachelor's degree: 30% / 33%
- Master's degree: 13% / 15%
- Doctoral degree: 3% / 5%

■ Completed ■ Plan to Earn

Exhibit 5. *Reason Not Currently Enrolled in a Community College*

REASON NOT CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Educational goals were met	**49%**	Didn't have enough time	**8%**
Got a job or changed jobs	**12%**	Classes I need were unavailable	**6%**
Transferred to a university	**11%**	Financial reasons	**5%**
Took a break	**10%**	No longer interested	**2%**
Family or personal reasons	**10%**	Other	**6%**

n=197, individuals not currently enrolled only; Multiple options could be selected

The survey asked respondents about their experiences at the community colleges. Notably, nearly all respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the education and training they received at the community college they attended. Specifically, participants agreed that it was a worthwhile investment (93 percent) and that they learned practical skills that were useful in the workplace (89 percent). Appendix A, Exhibit 17 summarizes these attitude statements by whether students used each type of SSS, and those who used academic, career, health, and student life services were significantly more likely than those who did not use these services to "Strongly Agree" that it was a worthwhile investment, $p<.05$. Over 80 percent also agreed that the community colleges helped them achieve their personal, educational, and employment goals (Exhibit 6).

How satisfied were you with your education and training at [San Diego & Imperial Community College]?

98%

of students were "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with their education and training

n=287

Exhibit 6. *Attitudes Towards Experiences at San Diego & Imperial Counties Community Colleges*

	n	% Strongly Agree/Agree
My time at the community colleges was a worthwhile investment	286	93%
I learned practical skills that were useful in the workplace	285	89%
Overall, the community colleges helped me achieve my personal goals	285	86%
Overall, the community colleges helped me achieve my educational goals	288	83%
Overall, the community colleges helped me achieve my employment goals	286	81%

Student Support Services

The survey asked respondents whether they had used each type of SSS while attending a community college. Overall, 177 survey respondents (or 61 percent) reported using at least one student support service, while 39 percent did not use any. Among students that used any SSS, nearly half reported using 3 to 5 services, suggesting that many students were generally using multiple services. See Appendix A, Exhibit 19 for the breakdown of the number of services used and Appendix A, Exhibit 20 for the percentages that used each service among these students. When evaluating use of each type of SSS across the sample (291 respondents), the services most used were academic services (47 percent of all respondents used these services), career services (38 percent), and financial services (35 percent; Exhibit 7). For the percentage of students that used each type of service, see Appendix A, Exhibit 18.
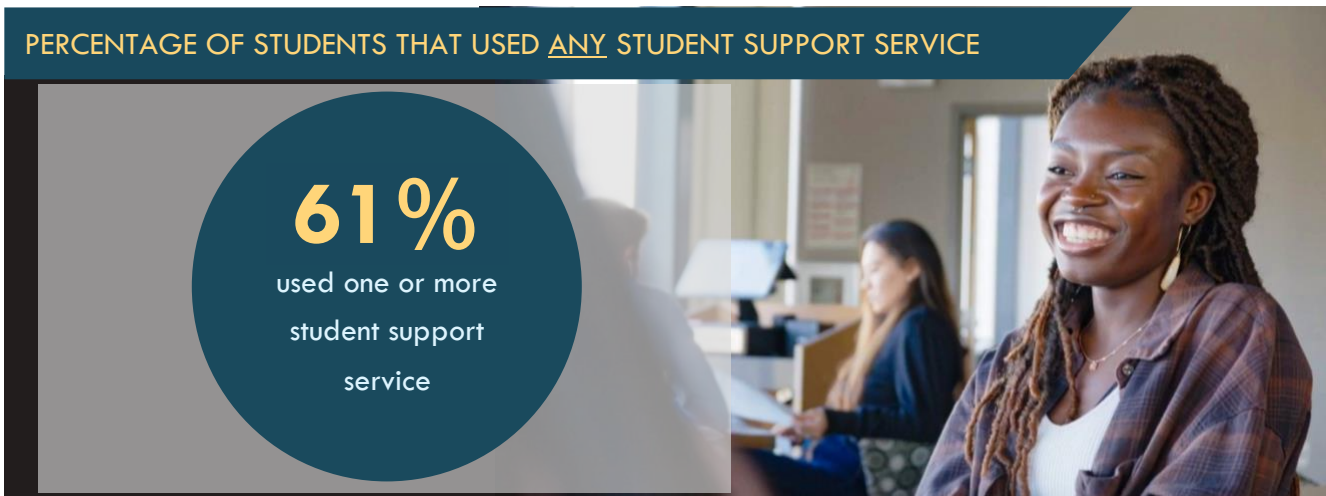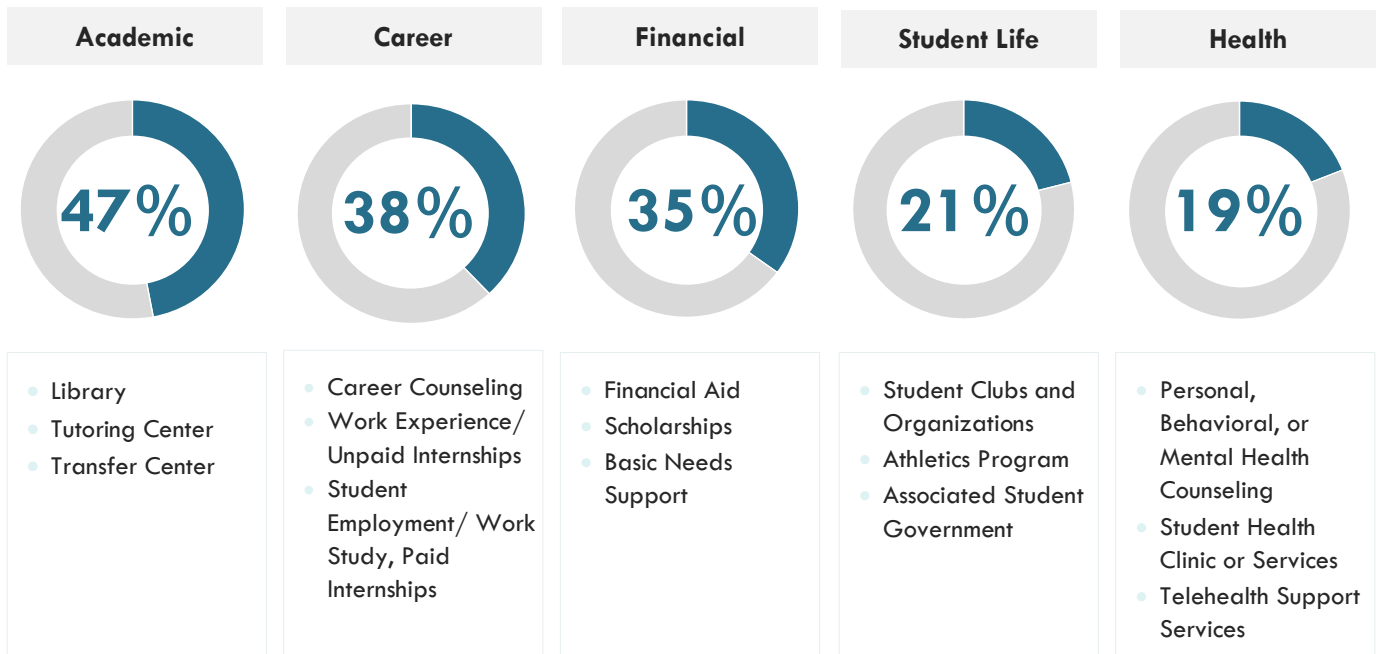

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS THAT USED <u>ANY</u> STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICE

61%
used one or more student support service

Exhibit 7. Percentage that Used Each Type of SSS and Top Programs/Services, n=291

Academic	Career	Financial	Student Life	Health
47%	**38%**	**35%**	**21%**	**19%**
• Library • Tutoring Center • Transfer Center	• Career Counseling • Work Experience/ Unpaid Internships • Student Employment/ Work Study, Paid Internships	• Financial Aid • Scholarships • Basic Needs Support	• Student Clubs and Organizations • Athletics Program • Associated Student Government	• Personal, Behavioral, or Mental Health Counseling • Student Health Clinic or Services • Telehealth Support Services

The research team also conducted statistical comparisons to determine whether there were any significant differences in use between gender, race/ethnicity, enrollment year, and special population status. Results demonstrated that for career, financial, student life, and health services, results showed that a significantly greater proportion of BIPOC students, enrolling 2019 and later, and special populations used these services compared to their respective comparison groups (Exhibit 8). See Appendix A, Exhibit 21 for percentages.

Exhibit 8. Use of SSS By Gender, BIPOC, Enrollment Year, and Special Population (SP)

MOST LIKELY TO USE STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

SSS	Academic	Career	Financial	Student Life	Health
Gender	Females	No Differences	No Differences	No Differences	No Differences
Race	BIPOC	BIPOC	BIPOC	BIPOC	BIPOC
Year	2019 and later	2019 and later	2019 and later	2019 and later	2019 and later
Special Population	Identifies as SP	Identifies as SP	Identifies as SP	Identifies as SP	Identifies as SP

n=291; Gender=A significantly greater proportion of females compared to males, $p<.05$; Race=A significantly greater proportion of BIPOC students compared to white students, $p<.05$; Year=A significantly greater proportion of students enrolled 2019 and later compared to 2018 and earlier, $p<.05$; Special Population=A significantly greater proportion of students that identify as a special population than those who do not.

The survey asked students that had used any type of SSS to rate agreement or disagreement with the statements featured in Exhibit 9. Overall, approximately three out of four students agreed with each statement, suggesting students had positive experiences with staff and that these services helped them achieve their educational, personal, and employment goals.
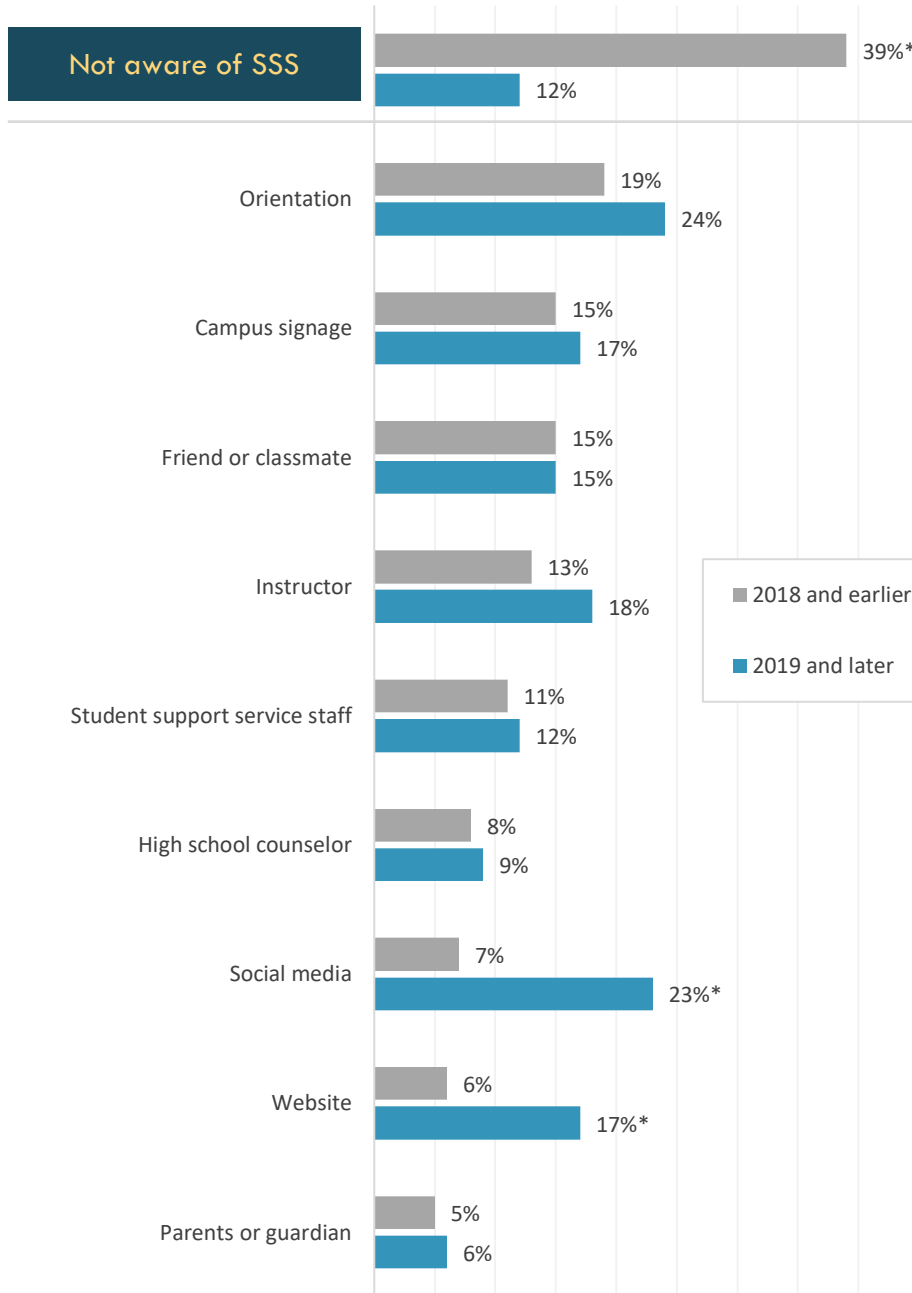
Exhibit 9. Experiences with SSS

	n	% Strongly Agree/Agree
The student support services staff cared about me	143	90%
Student support services helped me achieve my educational goals	147	86%
I was satisfied with the student support services I received	147	86%
Student support services helped me achieve my personal goals	147	79%
Student support services helped me achieve my employment goals	145	74%

n=147, students who used any student support service, excluding respondents who selected 'not applicable'

Overall, students were significantly more aware of SSS in 2019 and later compared to earlier years (Exhibit 10). In terms of how students learned about the SSS their colleges offered, the top method in 2018 and earlier was through orientation (19 percent), signage on campus (15 percent), and a friend/classmate (15 percent). In more recent years (2019 and later), the top methods were orientation (24 percent), social media (23 percent), and instructors (18 percent).

Exhibit 10. *How Students Learned About SSS By Enrollment Year, n=290*

Method	2018 and earlier	2019 and later
Not aware of SSS	39%*	12%
Orientation	19%	24%
Campus signage	15%	17%
Friend or classmate	15%	15%
Instructor	13%	18%
Student support service staff	11%	12%
High school counselor	8%	9%
Social media	7%	23%*
Website	6%	17%*
Parents or guardian	5%	6%

Significantly more students knew about student support services in 2019 and later compared to 2018 and earlier

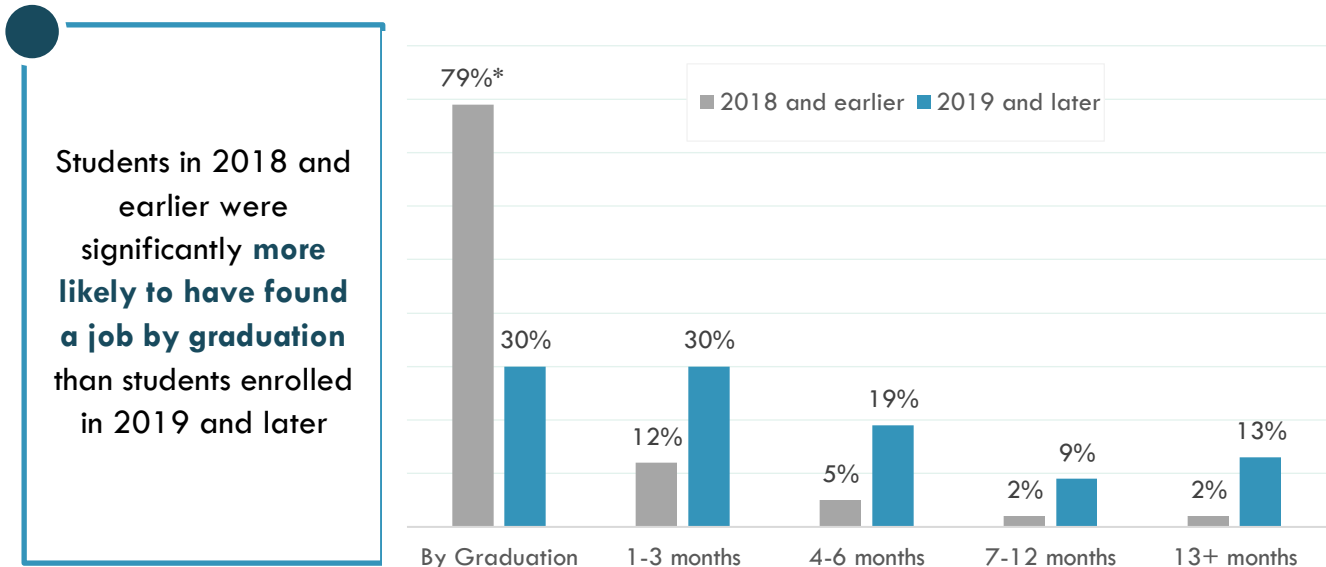The top source for learning about student support services was through orientation

Students in 2019 and later were significantly more likely to learn about student support services from social media and the college website than 2018 and earlier

*p<.05, significantly higher than comparison year

Employment Outcomes

To determine employment outcomes of San Diego and Imperial Counties Community College graduates, the survey asked respondents various questions about employment after graduating. Exhibit 11 demonstrates that the majority of students had found employment by the time they graduated from their programs, but this was significantly more likely among students that graduated in 2018 and earlier (79 percent) compared to more recent years (30 percent; $p<.05$).
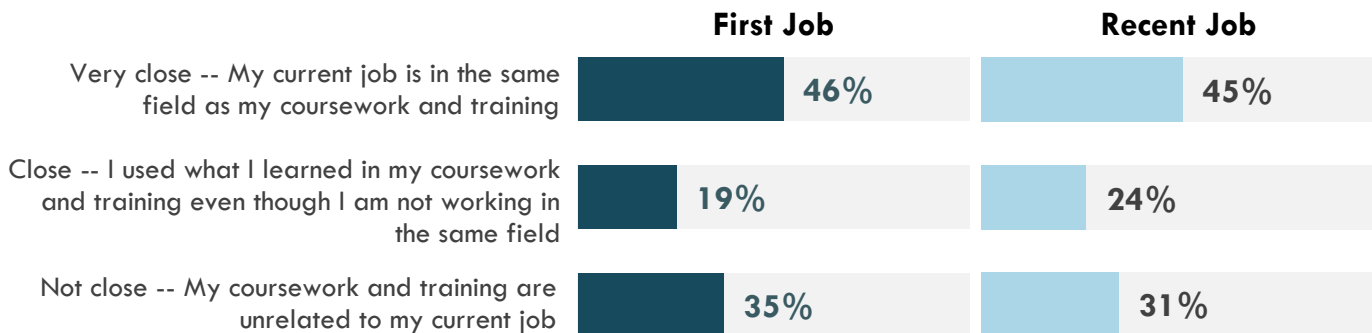
Exhibit 11. How Long It Took Respondents To Find Employment After Attending Community College

Students in 2018 and earlier were significantly **more likely to have found a job by graduation** than students enrolled in 2019 and later

*$p<.05$, significantly higher than comparison year. May not total 100 percent due to rounding

Similar to the CTE Employment Outcomes Survey,[9] the survey asked respondents how closely related their first job and most recent job was to the coursework and training they received in their program of study. Results showed that nearly half of students were employed in jobs that were "very close," whereas approximately one-third of students were in jobs that were unrelated (Exhibit 12).

Exhibit 12. How Closely Related First and Recent Job Is to Coursework and Training

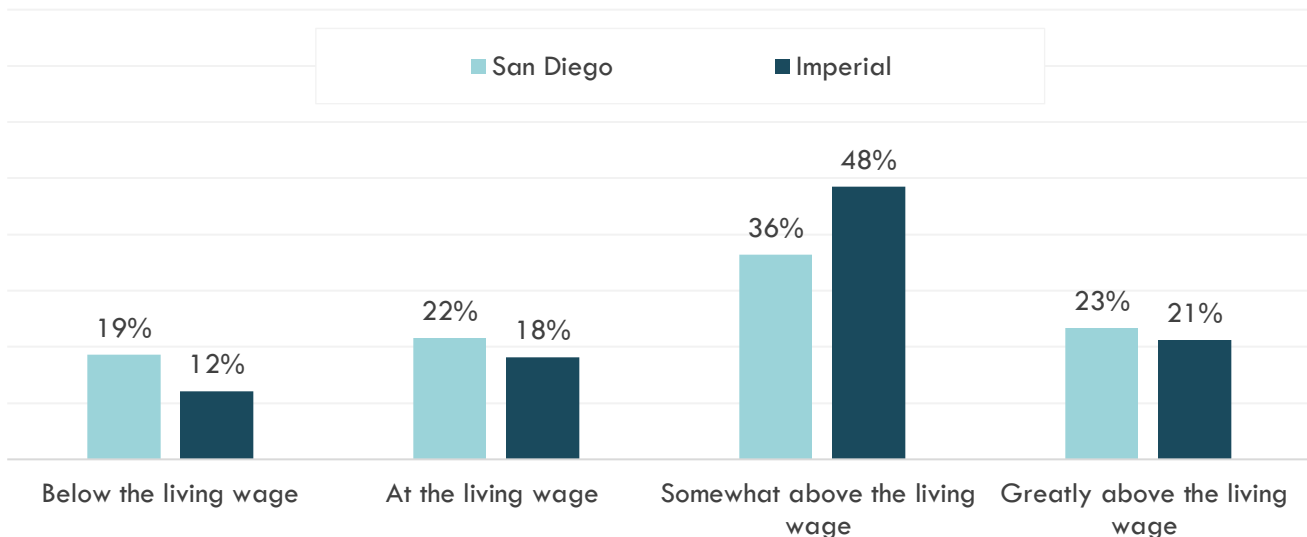|	First Job	Recent Job
Very close -- My current job is in the same field as my coursework and training	46%	45%
Close -- I used what I learned in my coursework and training even though I am not working in the same field	19%	24%
Not close -- My coursework and training are unrelated to my current job	35%	31%

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9 cteos.santarosa.edu/reports

The top industries that respondents were currently employed in were Educational Services (24 percent), followed by Health Care (10 percent), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (10 percent; Exhibit 13). Survey results also demonstrated that most respondents were making at or above the living wage in San Diego County (e.g., $20 per hour at the time of the study; 81 percent) and Imperial County (e.g., $15.50 per hour at the time of the study; 88 percent), and approximately one in four students were making greatly above the living wage (Exhibit 14).

Exhibit 13. Industry of Current Employment

Industry	%	Industry	%
Educational Services	24%	Transportation and Warehousing	3%
Health Care	10%	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	3%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	10%	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3%
Accommodation and Food Services	9%	Public Administration	3%
Construction	5%	Wholesale Trade	3%
Administrative Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	5%	Other Industry	3%
Finance and Insurance	4%	Manufacturing	2%
Social Assistance	3%	Real Estate Rental and Leasing	2%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3%	Information	1%
Retail Trade	3%	Utilities	1%

Exhibit 14. Reported Wages by County

San Diego ■ **Imperial**

	Below the living wage	At the living wage	Somewhat above the living wage	Greatly above the living wage
San Diego	19%	22%	36%	23%
Imperial	12%	18%	48%	21%

May not total 100 percent due to rounding

Insights and Recommendations

The San Diego & Imperial COE commissioned this study to understand community college students' experiences with student support services, and to understand employment outcomes upon leaving the community college system. This section summarizes insights from the survey findings and provides the following recommendations for the San Diego & Imperial Counties Community Colleges:

1. **Student support services play a pivotal role in whether students perceive their community college experience to be a worthwhile investment, and the community colleges should prioritize access and student engagement with these services.**

2. **Focus marketing and outreach efforts to increase awareness of student support services using a multi-pronged approach to communication, but also ensure that communication emphasizes the *why* and *when* students would need specific services.**

3. **Utilizing career services facilitated students getting a job related to their field of study and feeling that the college helped them reach employment goals; therefore, the colleges should concentrate on career services and job search guidance, particularly for BIPOC students.**

4. **Health services and student life services—key programs and services that support students' mental health and connectedness to their campuses—are underutilized by students, and the colleges should focus on efforts to promote these services, leveraging faculty and staff to support these efforts.**

Student support services play a pivotal role in whether students perceive their community college experience to be a worthwhile investment, and the community colleges should prioritize access and student engagement with these services.

The survey showed that San Diego & Imperial Counties Community College students had positive experiences, and nearly all were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the education and training they received while attending (98 percent). These are critical outcomes for the community colleges that can be used as a testament to the efforts of regional colleges to meet and exceed students' expectations. When asked specifically about what students valued, the most endorsed statement is that students believed it was a worthwhile investment; importantly, students who had used any type of student support service reported significantly greater endorsement of this statement ($M=4.49$, $SD=.78$), compared to students who did not use any student support services ($M=4.28$, $SD=.73$), $t(356)=2.56$, $p<.05$. Although prior research illustrates the key role that student support services play in retention and success,[10] these findings further substantiate the meaningful importance of student support services among the regional college's student population. The San Diego & Imperial COE encourages colleges to prioritize and advocate for these services on their campuses by using these findings to underscore their importance.

> Students who used any type of SSS reported significantly greater endorsement of the statement "My time at the community colleges was a worthwhile investment" compared to students who did not use SSS

Survey responses also showed that students who identify as a special population were more likely than those who did not to use all types of student support services, which are encouraging findings that complement the San Diego & Imperial region's Perkins V Comprehensive Regional Needs Assessment.[11] These findings can be used by the colleges to supplement their local needs assessment, given that it is intended to show how the community colleges are serving special populations. The San Diego & Imperial COE encourages the community colleges to use the reflection questions in that report, and below, to identify strategies to continue to support and engage individuals from special populations in navigating the community college system. For colleges that may not have prioritized these services or understood the value that they add to student experiences, the COE strongly recommends that community colleges use these findings to reconsider the role their services play for students, and note ideas about ways to promote access and the utilization of them on their campuses.

10 "California Community College Student Outcomes Abroad Research Project," The Center for Global Education, globaled.us/cccsoar/college-student-retention-and-success.asp.
11 "Perkins V Comprehensive Regional Needs Assessment," San Diego & Imperial COE, November 2023, coeccc.net/san-diego-imperial/2023/11/perkins-v-comprehensive-regional-needs-assessment-2.

Reflection Questions

1. How does utilization of student support services enhance students' perceptions of their community college experience as a worthwhile investment?

2. What are the specific needs of BIPOC students that student support programs should address?

3. What are the barriers to accessing student support services for students from special populations?

4. How can we increase the number of students from special populations in using SSS, and further support them in navigating the community college system?

5. Reflecting on the existing student services programs offered at your community college, how can they be evaluated and enhanced to more effectively provide targeted support for BIPOC students?

Focus marketing and outreach efforts to increase awareness of student support services using a multi-pronged approach to communication, but also ensure that communication emphasizes the *why* and *when* students would need specific services.

The survey showed that most students were aware that student support service offerings existed on campus (88 percent indicated they had learned about student support services); despite high awareness, however, less than half of students used each student support service when separated by type. In a study by Tyton Partners' Driving Toward a Degree (D2D),[12] they note that although awareness is a key factor to consider when promoting academic services, they point out that awareness is only one part of improving engagement, which is also validated by this study's findings. They recommend that it is important for students to understand *how* these services will support them, and encourage those promoting services to focus on covering topics that are relevant to student challenges. In the Student Support Services Website Experience Study,[13] the San Diego & Imperial COE also recommended attempting to use consistent language and messaging across the colleges to address the finding that students were often confused about the services provided. The study recommended that the colleges clearly define specific student support services by explaining *why* students would access certain services because not all students know what resources they need, especially if they are first-generation college students. The San Diego & Imperial COE encourages the colleges to apply the findings from both these studies, ensuring that communication about these services continues to promote awareness, but also taking messaging one step further to ensure that messaging is clarifying *why* and *how* these services are important.

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12 "Driving Toward a Degree 2023: Awareness, Belonging, and Coordination," Tyton Partners, July 2023, accessed May 2024, tytonpartners.com/driving-toward-a-degree-2023-awareness-belonging-and-coordination.

13 "Student Support Services Website Experience Study," San Diego & Imperial COE, June 2023, coeccc.net/san-diego-imperial/2023/06/student-support-services-website-experience-student.

Notably, students are learning about support services primarily through orientation, which is an effective way to reach many students at once as they begin coursework. Tyton Partners' work also recommends, however,[14] that institutions consider active, ongoing methods of communication to ensure that continued promotion of these services throughout students' time enrolled is happening. In more recent years, digital forms of communication, such as social media and the website, played an important role in students learning about student support services, suggesting that the community colleges should continue to leverage these platforms as a way to reach students. To guide these efforts, the Student Support Services Website Experience Study[15] also evaluated students' perceptions of student support services' websites and offered community colleges insights and recommendations to improve students' experiences with these sites. That study pointed out the importance of using the website as a way to engage students, inform them of what type of support is available, and to create appointments to use services, and the COE provided numerous recommendations aimed at optimizing how students interact with these services on community college websites. Overall, the current survey highlights the importance of recognizing that a multi-pronged approach to marketing these services is necessary, and the colleges should use these findings to evaluate their current approach and identify potential opportunities.

Reflection Questions

1. *Can students easily differentiate between different types of student support services, especially on the college website? Do we use similar language for different services? Do different departments (e.g., academic counseling, career center) seem to offer similar services?*

2. *How does your college solicit feedback from students for resources that pertain to them (e.g., support services)? What processes are in place to inform and make adjustments with the student in mind?*

3. *Can students easily schedule an appointment with an advisor or representative using an online system? Is this process automated? How quickly does a student receive a response from a college representative after they make a request?*

4. *How can the colleges increase awareness and communication of student support services? Are instructors or staff providing SSS resources in syllabi and other materials, for example?*

5. *What measures can be taken to ensure that support services are consistently presented and promoted across different college departments and units?*

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14 "Student Support Services Website Experience Study," San Diego & Imperial COE, June 2023, coeccc.net/san-diego-imperial/2023/06/student-support-services-website-experience-student.
15 "Student Support Services Website Experience Study," San Diego & Imperial COE, June 2023, coeccc.net/san-diego-imperial/2023/06/student-support-services-website-experience-student.

Utilizing career services facilitated students getting a job related to their field of study and feeling that the college helped them reach employment goals; therefore, the colleges should concentrate on career services and job search guidance, particularly for BIPOC students.

Survey results demonstrated that only 38 percent of students had used career services. Career services are an important resource that assist students in career planning and goal-setting, finding employment opportunities, and preparing for the job market. Survey responses showed that finding employment by graduation had been significantly more challenging in recent years, and a significantly lower proportion of students had found a job by graduation in 2019 and later (30 percent) compared to 2018 and earlier (79 percent). When considering race/ethnicity, a significantly lower proportion of BIPOC students had found a job by the time they left community college (57 percent) compared to white students (93 percent; Exhibit 23). These findings illustrate that BIPOC students are in even more pressing need for guidance and support in searching for employment.

Survey responses showed that there was a relationship between participating in career services and finding a job that was related to their field of study; students that used career services were significantly more likely to attain a job after community college that was "very close – in same field as coursework and training" (57 percent) compared to students who did not use career services (39 percent, $p<.05$; Exhibit 22). Career services can help students by exploring job opportunities based on career goals and guiding them into programs that are the right fit, and by helping students transition into the workforce. According to the State of the System Report published by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office,[16] the vision for success is to increase the number of students who get jobs in their field of study to 76 percent. The current survey showed that within this sample, despite a promising trend, there is still room for improving employment outcomes among San Diego & Imperial Counties Community College students.

When students were asked whether the community colleges helped them achieve their employment goals, survey respondents who had used career services were significantly more likely to "Strongly Agree" with the statement "*Overall, the community colleges helped me achieve my employment goals*" compared to students who did not use career services (Exhibit 17; $p<.05$). Importantly, a significantly greater proportion of BIPOC students agreed with this statement compared to white students, demonstrating the value that these services have for BIPOC students. Overall, the current survey results showed that despite recent trends demonstrating that more students are using career services, the colleges should continue to advocate for these services given its important role in employment outcomes.

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16 "2021 State of the System Report," California Community College Chancellor's Office. cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/report/2021-sosreport-final-a11y.pdf?la=en&hash=AE8C0968E6E6D05F26582B33924AB1E3BFA7F0D6.

Reflection Questions

1. *How can the college ensure equitable access to career services and related support for BIPOC students? How can student support services be modified to better meet the needs of BIPOC students and help them overcome any barriers in using such services?*

2. *How can the college foster a culture that encourages students to utilize career services throughout their academic journey?*

3. *What are the potential barriers preventing students from utilizing career services, and how can the colleges help them overcome these barriers?*

4. *How can career services be tailored to align with the evolving job market and workforce needs?*

Health services and student life services—key programs and services that support students' mental health and connectedness to their campuses—are underutilized by students, and the colleges should focus on efforts to promote these services, leveraging faculty and staff to support these efforts.

Across all student support services, the current survey showed that health services and student life services are the least utilized among students. Across colleges, health services provide general medical care and exams for free or minimal charge, and include mental health services that support students' physical, mental, and emotional well-being. These types of services are critical for students, and a survey by the American Council on Education (ACE) indicated that the mental health of student populations and the utilization of these services, particularly after COVID-19, is one of the most pressing issues facing college campuses.[17] Mental health problems among student can impact their academic performance and success,[18] and it is important for community colleges to understand the barriers and factors affecting students' utilization of these resources. For one, community colleges should aim to understand the state of their student populations' mental health and well-being, and employ an approach that meet the needs of their student populations. Given that the promotion of health services is critical, the colleges could consider developing a resource that outlines a referral process and the resources available for faculty and staff as they often assist in connecting students to campus resources.[19]

17 "New Pulse Point Survey of College Presidents Shows Increase in Mental Health Concerns, Ongoing Impact Of COVID-19," American Council on Education (ACE), Retrieved May 2024, acenet.edu/News-Room/Pages/New-Pulse-Point-Survey-of-College-Presidents-Shows-Increase-in-Mental-Health-Concerns-Ongoing-Impact-of-COVID-19.aspx.
18 Scherer, Layne A., and Alan I. Leshner, eds. Mental health, substance use, and wellbeing in higher education: Supporting the whole student. National Academies Press, 2021.
19 "Faculty, Staff Members Serve as Key Mental Health Resources for Students," Inside Higher Ed, Retrieved May 2024, insidehighered.com/news/student-success/health-wellness/2024/03/06/how-empower-faculty-staff-talk-student-mental.

The other student support service least utilized by students was student life services, with approximately one in five students participating in these programs. In other studies, student life activities and student-centered programs are designed to engage students in the college experience, which helps build a sense of belonging on campus that is critical to students' success and engagement.[20] The San Diego & Imperial COE encourages the colleges to consider ways to engage students in these programs, particularly those that are centered on student organizations that celebrate diverse backgrounds, cultures, and identities. For example, the community colleges could highlight students leaders on social media or feature organizations based on holidays and days of advocacy on the college website.[21] Additionally, college faculty and staff play a central role in promoting a *Caring Campus*, an initiative based on research showing that students who feel more connected to college campuses are more likely to be retained and reach their academic goals.[22] Therefore, faculty and staff can also collaborate with student organizations to further promote student engagement in student life services.

Reflection Questions

1. *How can we better understand the mental health needs of our student population and tailor our services accordingly? What improvements could be made?*

2. *What strategies can we implement to encourage faculty and staff to actively support students' emotional well-being and mental health?*

3. *How can we enhance student life services to increase participation and foster a sense of belonging?*

4. *How can we measure the effectiveness of our efforts to promote student support services and track their impact on student well-being and success?*

5. *How can we ensure that all students, regardless of their background or identity, have equitable access to and benefit from student support services? What barriers (e.g., stigma, lack of awareness) contribute to lack of use?*

20 O'Keeffe, Patrick. "A Sense of Belonging: Improving Student Retention." College student journal, (2013), 605-613.
21 "22 Creative Ways To Promote Student Orgs Beyond Flyers & Club Fairs," Modern Campus, Retrieved May 2024, sapro.moderncampus.com/blog/22-creative-ways-to-promote-student-orgs-beyond-flyers-club-fairs.
22 "Caring Campus: Improving Student Retention and Success," Institute for Evidence-Based Change, Retrieved May 2024, iebcnow.org/caring-campus.

Conclusion

The San Diego & Imperial COE commissioned this study to explore the role of SSS in students' experiences in the regional community college system. Although prior research has long noted the importance of these services and programs in students' success and retention, the current survey findings substantiate the value that these services provide for the regional community colleges' student population. The San Diego & Imperial COE encourages the San Diego & Imperial Counties Community Colleges to consider the findings of this study to prioritize students' engagement and utilization of student support services, and to use the reflection questions embedded in this report to promote meaningful discussions.

Appendix A: Data Tables

Exhibit 15. *Enrollment Goal by Year*

	Total		2018 and earlier		2019 and later	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Earn a certificate	48	17%	33	16%	15	18%
Earn an associate degree	92	32%	59	29%	33	40%
Transfer to a four-year university	53	18%	40	20%	13	16%
Earn a bachelor's degree at a community college	42	15%	32	16%	10	12%
Take classes to update job skills or renew a license/permit	24	8%	18	9%	6	7%
Take classes for self-enrichment	23	8%	19	9%	4	5%
Other	5	2%	4	2%	1	1%

May not total 100 percent due to rounding

Exhibit 16. *Reason Not Currently Enrolled in a Community College by Year*

	Total		2018 and earlier		2019 and later	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Educational goals were met	96	49%	80	53%*	16	36%
Got a job or changed jobs	23	12%	21	14%	2	4%
Transferred to a university	21	11%	17	11%	4	9%
Took a break	20	10%	17	11%	3	7%
Family or personal reasons	19	10%	15	10%	4	9%
Didn't have enough time for classes	16	8%	12	8%	4	9%
Classes I needed were not available	12	6%	5	3%	7	16%
Financial reasons	9	5%	5	3%	4	9%
No longer interested in a community college education	4	2%	1	1%	3	7%

*$p<.05$, significantly higher than 2019 and later; multiple options could be selected

Exhibit 17. *Percentage of Students that Selected "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" with Statement by Students that Used and Did Not Use Each Type of Service*

		% that Selected "Strongly Agree" (SA) and "Agree" (A)									
		Academic Services		Career Services		Financial Services		Health Services		Student Life Services	
		Used	Not Used	Used	Not Used	Used	Not Used	Used	Not Used	Used	Not Used
My time at the community colleges was a worthwhile investment	SA	61%*	44%	68%*	42%	54%	51%	67%*	48%	74%*	46%
	A	31%	51%*	27%	51%*	36%	45%	25%	45%*	21%	47%*
I learned practical skills that were useful in the workplace	SA	36%	43%	49%*	33%	35%	41%	25%	42%	43%	38%
	A	54%	46%	43%	54%	53%	49%	61%	48%	48%	51%
Overall, the community colleges helped me achieve my personal goals	SA	50%	40%	53%*	39%	42%	46%	33%	47%	45%	44%
	A	32%	50%*	28%	49%*	34%	45%	31%	44%	26%	46%
Overall, the community colleges helped me achieve my educational goals	SA	38%	44%	47%	37%	34%	44%	24%	44%	37%	42%
	A	49%*	35%	31%	49%*	39%	44%	32%	45%	28%	46%
Overall, the community colleges helped me achieve my employment goals	SA	31%	44%*	48%*	31%	35%	38%	27%	39%	41%	36%
	A	53%*	34%	27%	54%*	35%	49%*	29%	48%	26%	49%

*p<.05, significantly higher than comparison group (used or not used). Significant comparisons are featured in the table if each cell was represented by a sample size of 30 or more.

Exhibit 18. **Percentage of Students that Used Each Type of Student Support Service**

Academic Services	n=291
Library	28%
Tutoring/learning center	14%
Transfer center	7%
Childcare services	6%
Admissions and records	4%
Disability support services	3%
Veteran services	2%
Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)	2%
Testing services	2%
TRIO	1%
Other, please specify	0%
None of the above	53%
Career Services	**n=291**
Career counseling	24%
Work experience or unpaid internships (course credit)	8%
Student employment (work study, paid internships)	6%
Service learning and volunteer opportunities	6%
Other, please specify	1%
None of the above	62%
Financial Services	**n=291**
Financial aid (FAFSA, Pell Grant, Promise Program)	13%
Scholarships	13%
Basic needs support (diapers, food pantry, transportation, housing resources)	5%
Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)	4%
Emergency grant (HEERF - Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, CARES Act)	2%
CalWORKs	1%
Other, please specify	1%
None of the above	65%
Health Services	**n=291**
Student health clinic/services	9%
Personal, behavioral, or mental health counseling	7%
Telehealth support services	4%
Other, please specify	1%
None of the above	81%
Student Life Services	**n=291**
Student clubs and organizations	15%
Athletics program	4%
Associated student government	2%
Other, please specify	0%
None of the above	79%

Multiple options could be selected

Exhibit 19. **Number of SSS Used Among Students Who Used Any Student Support Service**

Number of SSS Used	n=177
Used 1 SSS	27%
Used 2 SSS	25%
Used 3 SSS	22%
Used 4 SSS	9%
Used 5 SSS	17%

Exhibit 20. **Type of SSS Used Among Students Who Used Any Student Support Service**

SSS	n=177
Academic Services	77%
Career Services	63%
Financial Services	58%
Health Services	31%
Student Life Services	35%

Exhibit 21. *Percentage of Students that Used Each Type of Student Support Service by Gender, Race, Enrollment Year, and Special Population Status[23]*

	n	Academic	Career	Financial	Health	Student Life
			% Used Student Support Service			
Overall	291	47%	38%	35%	21%	19%
Gender[24]	*n*					
Females	154	52%*	41%	36%	21%	17%
Males	101	39%	32%	32%	11%	23%
Race	*n*					
BIPOC	130	65%*	54%*	58%*	28%*	30%*
White	101	27%	24%	17%	8%	18%
Year	*n*					
2019 and later	83	66%*	59%*	63%*	43%*	43%*
2018 and earlier	208	39%	30%	25%	9%	13%
Special Population	*n*					
Identifies as SP	112	61%*	50%*	51%*	34%*	34%*
Does not identify as SP	90	32%	29%	23%	4%	11%

*Gender=A significantly greater proportion of females compared to males, *p*<.05; Race=A significantly greater proportion of BIPOC students compared to white students, *p*<.05; Year=A significantly greater proportion of students enrolled 2019 and later compared to 2018 and earlier, *p*<.05; Special Population=A significantly greater proportion of students that identify as a special population compared to students who do not.

23 The research team also evaluated whether there were any significant differences by language and age group. There were no significant differences between English and Other language speakers, except for use of Student Life Services; Other language speakers were less likely than English speakers to use Student Life Services, *p*<.05. By age group, older age groups (55+) were less likely to have used any SSS compared to younger individuals, *p*<.05. Please note, however, that a large proportion of students were enrolled in 2018 and earlier, so it is unclear how old these students were when they attended, which limits conclusions related to age. Additionally, for students that used services, the majority used one program/service per category; however, nearly 50 percent used three or more different types of support services, suggesting that some students were overall more apt to utilize services overall.

24 Non-Binary/other comparisons could not be conducted due to a small sample size which was less than 10.

Exhibit 22. Percentage of Students that Used Career Services and Employment Outcome

		Career Services	
	n	% Used	% Not Used
Very close -- My current job is in the same field as my coursework and training	106	57%*	39%
Close -- I used what I learned in my coursework and training even though I am not working in the same field	43	16%	20%
Not close -- My coursework and training are unrelated to my current job	82	27%	41%*

*p<.05, significantly higher than comparison group (used or not used); Respondents who selected "does not apply to me" were excluded.

Exhibit 23. How Long It Took Students to Find Employment by Year and BIPOC

		BIPOC			Year	
	n	BIPOC	White	n	2018 and earlier	2019 and later
0 months (I found a job by the time I left the community college)	119	57%	93%*	141	79%*	30%
1-3 months	26	21%	7%	33	12%	30%
4-6 months	15	13%	3%	17	5%	19%
7-12 months	7	7%	0%	8	2%	9%
13+ months	4	2%	3%	9	2%	13%

*p<.05, significantly higher than comparison group; Respondents who selected "does not apply to me" were excluded.

Appendix B: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to understand the role of student support services for students who are currently attending or previously attended a community college in the San Diego & Imperial region. This study was intended to provide insight into the role that these services and programs serve for students, particularly those who are no longer enrolled (e.g., alumni students) and for which limited data is available. In September 2022, the research team met to discuss key ideas for the research project and identified the following research objectives: 1) identify the types of student support services that are most utilized by community college students, and assess use by gender, race/ethnicity, cohort, and special population status; 2) evaluate the experiences of students who utilized student support services; and 3) understand key employment outcomes based on the utilization of student support services.

The research team developed a quantitative survey based on the research questions and programmed the survey into Qualtrics. The survey included skip logic and tailored questions based on whether respondents were a current or former community college student, and whether or not they attended one or more of the ten community colleges in the San Diego & Imperial region. The research team launched the survey in April 2023 and recruited participants via phone and email distribution, leveraging relationships with partners that could distribute the survey among students in the community college system. Data collection lasted from April to June 2023. Upon completion, respondents could opt to receive a $5 Amazon gift card as a "thank you" for participating.

The final dataset included 470 total respondents. The research team cleaned the data to ensure surveys were more than 50 percent complete, and focused on respondents that attended a San Diego & Imperial Community College, which resulted in a final sample size of 292 respondents. Although the research team collected some data from students that attended community colleges outside of the region (n=74) and those who did not attend any community college (n=107), they were excluded from the final analysis and this report to ensure findings focused on the experiences of local community college students.

Appendix C: Survey Instrument

Section 1: Respondent Profile Questions

This section will ask about your background and general experiences with the community colleges.

Q1. Have you taken a course at any of the following community colleges? Select all that apply.
a. Cuyamaca College
b. Grossmont College
c. Imperial Valley College
d. MiraCosta College
e. Palomar College
f. San Diego City College
g. San Diego College of Continuing Education
h. San Diego Mesa College
i. San Diego Miramar College
j. Southwestern College
k. I took a course at a different community college (i.e., outside of the San Diego-Imperial region)
l. I have not taken a course at a community college [exclusive; show Q8-Q10 and Q:16-Q19 in this section]

Q2. When did you last take a community college course?
a. I am currently enrolled (2023) [do not show Q3 and Q11]
b. 2022
c. 2021
d. 2020
e. 2019
f. 2018 or earlier

Q3. Why are you no longer enrolled in the community college system? Select all that apply. [Do not show to respondents who are currently enrolled in response to Q2]
a. Educational goals were met
b. Didn't have enough time for classes
c. Got a job or changed jobs
d. Family or personal reasons
e. Relocated
f. Classes I needed were not available
g. Transferred to a university

h.   Transferred to a different community college

i.   Financial reasons

j.   Took a break

k.   No longer interested in a community college education

l.   Other, please specify: _____

Q4. How satisfied were you with your education and training at the following community college(s)?

a.   Very satisfied

a.   Satisfied

b.   Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

c.   Dissatisfied

d.   Very dissatisfied

1.   Cuyamaca College

2.   Grossmont College

3.   Imperial Valley College

4.   MiraCosta College

5.   Palomar College

6.   San Diego City College

7.   San Diego College of Continuing Education

8.   San Diego Mesa College

9.   San Diego Miramar College

10. Southwestern College

Q5. What was your primary goal for enrolling in the community college system?

a.   Earn a certificate

b.   Earn an associate degree

c.   Transfer to a four-year university

d.   Earn a bachelor's degree at a community college

e.   Take classes to update job skills or renew a license/permit

f.   Take classes for self-enrichment

g.   Other, please specify: _____

Q6. Did you take in-person courses, online courses, or both in the community college system?

a.   In-person courses only

b.   Online courses only

c.   Both in-person and online courses

Q7. What program of study (certificate or major) did you pursue at the community college(s)?

    a. [Open-ended]

Q8. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

    b. Certificate, no degree

    c. Associate degree

    d. Bachelor's degree

    e. Master's degree

    f. Doctoral degree

    g. Other, please specify: _____

Q9. What is the highest level of education you plan to earn?

    a. Certificate, no degree

    b. Associate degree

    c. Bachelor's degree

    d. Master's degree

    e. Doctoral degree

    f. I do not know yet

    g. Other, please specify: _____

Q10. What best describes your current employment status?

    a. Self-employed

    b. Employed at one job

    c. Employed at more than one job

    d. Unemployed, seeking employment

    e. Unemployed, not seeking employment (not retired)

    f. Retired

Q11. How long did it take you to find a job after leaving the community college system? [do not show to respondents who are still enrolled in community college (Q2: A); Do not show Q1: L did not enroll in community college)

    a. 0 months (I found a job by the time I left the community college)

    b. 1-3 months

    c. 4-6 months

    d. 7-12 months

e. 13+ months

f. Does not apply to me

Q12. What was your first job after you left the community college system? If it does not apply to you, please type 'NA.'[do not show to respondents who are still enrolled in community college (Q2: A; Do not show Q1: L did not enroll in community college)

a. [Open-ended]

Q13. How closely related was your first job to what you studied at the community college(s)? [do not show to respondents who are still enrolled in community college (Q2: A); Do not show Q1: L did not enroll in community college]

a. Very close -- My first job after community college was in the same field as my coursework and training

b. Close -- I used what I learned in my coursework and training even though I was not working in the same field

c. Not close -- My coursework and training were unrelated to my first job

d. Does not apply to me

Q14. What is your most recent job title? If it does not apply to you, please type 'NA.' [do not show to respondents who are still enrolled in community college (Q2: A); Do not show Q1: L did not enroll in community college]

a. [Open-ended]

Q15. How closely related is your most recent job to what you studied at the community college(s)? [do not show to respondents who are still enrolled in community college (Q2: A); Do not show Q1: L did not enroll in community college]

b. Very close -- My current job is in the same field as my coursework and training

c. Close -- I used what I learned in my coursework and training even though I am not working in the same field

d. Not close -- My coursework and training are unrelated to my current job

e. Does not apply to me

Q16. What industry is your most recent job in? [do not show to respondents who are still enrolled in community college (Q2: A)]

a. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting

b. Accommodation and Food Services (e.g., restaurant server, bartender)

c. Administrative Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services

   d.   Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation

   e.   Construction

   f.   Educational Services (e.g., teacher, tutor)

   g.   Finance and Insurance

   h.   Health Care

   i.   Social Assistance (e.g., childcare, caregiving)

   j.   Information

   k.   Management of Companies and Enterprises

   l.   Manufacturing

   m.   Mining

   n.   Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (e.g., veterinary technician, accountant, paralegal, legal assistant, graphic designer)

   o.   Public Administration (e.g., court operations clerk, firefighter, police officer)

   p.   Real Estate Rental and Leasing

   q.   Retail Trade

   r.   Transportation and Warehousing

   s.   Utilities

   t.   Wholesale Trade

   u.   Other, please specify: _____

   v.   Does not apply to me

Q17. Where are you currently living?

   a.   San Diego County [skip to Q18]

   b.   Imperial County [skip to Q19]

   c.   Other, please specify: _____ [Skip to end of survey]

Q18. The current living wage in San Diego County is approximately $20 per hour. How close are you to making the living wage?

   a.   Below the living wage (less than $20/hour)

   b.   At the living wage ($20/hour)

   c.   Somewhat above the living wage ($21 - $39/hour)

   d.   Greatly above the living wage (more than $40 per hour)

Q19. The current living wage in Imperial County is approximately $15.50 per hour. How close are you to making the living wage?

   a.   Below the living wage (less than $15.50/hour)

   b.   At the living wage ($15.50/hour)

c. Somewhat above the living wage ($16 - $29/hour)

d. Greatly above the living wage (more than $30 per hour)

Q20. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your experience at the community colleges?

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neither agree nor disagree

d. Disagree

e. Strongly disagree

1. My time at the community colleges was a worthwhile investment.

2. I learned practical skills that were useful in the workplace.

3. Overall, the community colleges helped me achieve my educational goals.

4. Overall, the community colleges helped me achieve my employment goals.

5. Overall, the community colleges helped me achieve my personal goals (e.g., self-enrichment).

Section 2: Student Support Services Experience

[Show section if selected that attended a community college in Q1] This section will ask you about your experience with student support services at the community college you attended.

Q21. Which academic services did you use at the community college? Select all that apply.

a. Library

b. Tutoring/learning center

c. Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)

d. Disability support services

e. Admissions and records

f. Testing services

g. Veteran services

h. Transfer center

i. Childcare services

j. TRIO (hover over description: "TRIO Programs (TRIO) are Federal outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds")

k. Other, please specify: _____

l. None of the above

Q22. Which career services did you use at the community college? Select all that apply.

    a. Career counseling

    b. Student employment (work study, paid internships)

    c. Work experience or unpaid internships (course credit)

    d. Service learning and volunteer opportunities

    e. Other, please specify: _____

    f. None of the above

Q23. Which health services did you use at the community college? Select all that apply.

    a. Personal, behavioral, or mental health counseling

    b. Student health clinic/services

    c. Telehealth support services

    d. Other, please specify: _____

    e. None of the above

Q24. Which financial services did you use at the community college? Select all that apply.

    a. Scholarships

    b. CalWORKs (hover over description: "CalWORKs is a public assistance program that provides cash aid and services to eligible California families with children in the home")

    c. Financial aid (FAFSA, Pell Grant, Promise Program) [call center instructors: Promise Program = free tuition]

    d. Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)

    e. Emergency grant (HEERF – Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, CARES Act)

    f. Basic needs support (diapers, food pantry, transportation, housing resources)

    g. Other, please specify: _____

    h. None of the above

Q25. Which student life services did you use at the community college? Select all that apply.

    a. Athletics program

    b. Student clubs and organizations

    c. Associated student government

    d. Other, please specify: _____

    e. None of the above

Q26. How did you learn about the student support services (academic, career, health, financial, student life) at your college? Select all that apply.

    a. Community college website

b. Community college social media

c. Saw it on campus (signage)

d. Friend or classmate

e. Parent, guardian, or other family members

f. Instructor

g. Student services staff

h. Orientation

i. High school counselor

j. Nonprofit organization

k. Other, please specify: _____

l. I was not aware of any student support services

Q27. Thinking about your overall experience with student support services (academic, career, health, financial, student life) to what extent do you agree with the following statements? Please select "NA" if the statement does not apply to you.

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neither agree nor disagree

d. Disagree

e. Strongly disagree

f. NA

1. The student support services staff cared about me.

2. Student support services helped me achieve my educational goals.

3. Student support services helped me achieve my employment goals.

4. Student support services helped me achieve my personal goals.

5. I was satisfied with the student support services I received.

Q28. If you did not have a positive experience with any of the student support services, could you please explain why?

Section 3: Demographics

This section will ask you about your demographic background and whether you'd like to partner with the community colleges. This information will help the community colleges understand how to better serve diverse populations in San Diego & Imperial Counties.

Q29. Do any of the following apply to you? Select all that apply.

    a. U.S. Veteran or active duty

    b. First-generation college student (e.g., parents did not graduate from college)

    c. Caregiver for adult(s) 18 years old or older

    d. Parent to child under 18 years old

    e. Person with physical or mental disability

    f. Dependent on third-party transportation or public transportation

    g. Single parent

    h. English language learner

    i. Homeless individual

    j. Currently or previously in the foster care system

    k. Low-income resident

    l. None of the above

    m. Prefer not to answer

Q30. What is your gender?

    a. Cis female (female at birth)

    b. Cis male (male at birth)

    c. Non-binary

    d. Transgender

    e. Other, please specify:_____

    f. Prefer not to answer

Q31. What is your age range?

    a. 18-24 years

    b. 25-34 years

    c. 35-44 years

    d. 45-54 years

    e. 55-64 years

    f. 65 years or older

    g. Prefer not to answer

Q32. Which category most closely identifies your race/ethnicity or your racial/ethnic descent? Select all that apply.

    a. American Indian, Native American, or Alaska Native

    b. Black, African American, or African

    c. East/Southeast Asian

    d. Hispanic/Latino

e. Middle Eastern

f. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

g. North African or West/Central/South Asian

h. White or Caucasian

i. Other, please specify: _____

j. Prefer not to answer

Q33. What is the primary language spoken in your home?

a. English

b. Spanish

c. Arabic

d. Korean

e. Mandarin

f. Vietnamese

g. Cantonese

h. Japanese

i. Farsi

j. Swahili

k. French

l. Portuguese

m. Russian

n. Tagalog

o. Thai

p. Hmong

q. Pashtu

r. Hindi

s. Other, please specify: _____

t. Prefer not to answer

Q34. Are you interested in partnering with the community colleges in any of the following activities?
Select all that apply.

a. Participating in a follow-up interview for this study for an additional $25 gift card

b. Being a guest speaker for a course

c. Advising curriculum

d. Providing mock interviews for students

e. Mentoring students

f. Contributing to a community college foundation

g. Providing a company tour for students

h. Offering internships or participating in job fairs

i. Other, please specify: _____

j. All of the above

k. None of the above

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IMPORTANT DISCLAIMERS AND LIMITATIONS

All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. This study examines the most recent data available at the time of the analysis; however, data sets are updated regularly and may not be consistent with previous reports. Please note that the findings and recommendations in this report are limited due to small sample sizes within each college, only represent the experiences of the individuals who participated in student support services, and may not represent all services available at each college. The colleges should use the information provided in this report to better the experiences of students with these services, and potential ways to improve engagement. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the report findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE), COE host district, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for the applications or decisions made by individuals and/or organizations based on this study or its recommendations.