



TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Remedial Education: Assessment and Student Success

Thomas Bailey, Director
Community College Research Center
National Center for Postsecondary Research

Presented at
**New England Board of Higher Education
Annual College Ready Conference**
Worcester, MA
December 6, 2009

CCRC and NCPR Research on Developmental Education

- Community College Research Center
 - Assessment, completion, pathways and sequences, outcomes, evaluation of models and initiatives
 - <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/>
- National Center for Postsecondary Research
 - Analysis of effectiveness using state data
 - Experimental evaluations of learning communities and intensive summer bridge programs
 - <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/ncpr/>

Conclusions

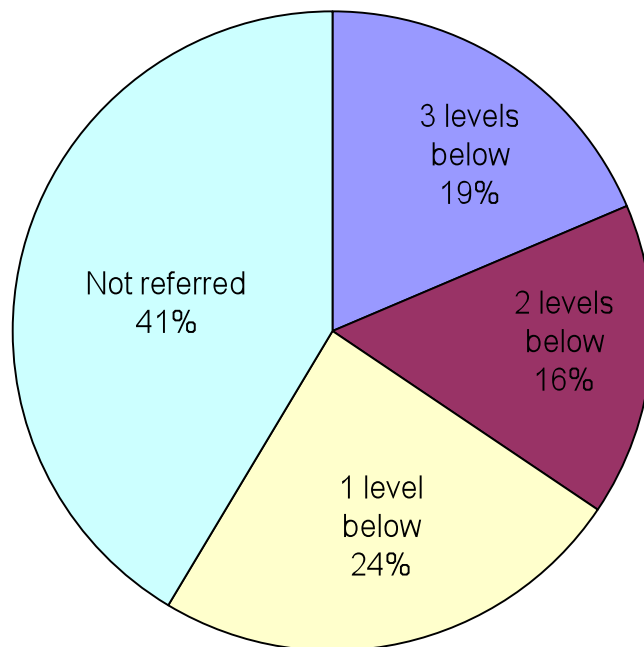
- Assessments need to provide more information to help design appropriate interventions for students
- As it is taught, remediation is not very effective
- The sharp distinction between “remedial” and “college ready” students doesn’t serve either group well
- Developmental education is overly complicated and most referred students fail to complete their assigned sequences

What is Developmental Education?

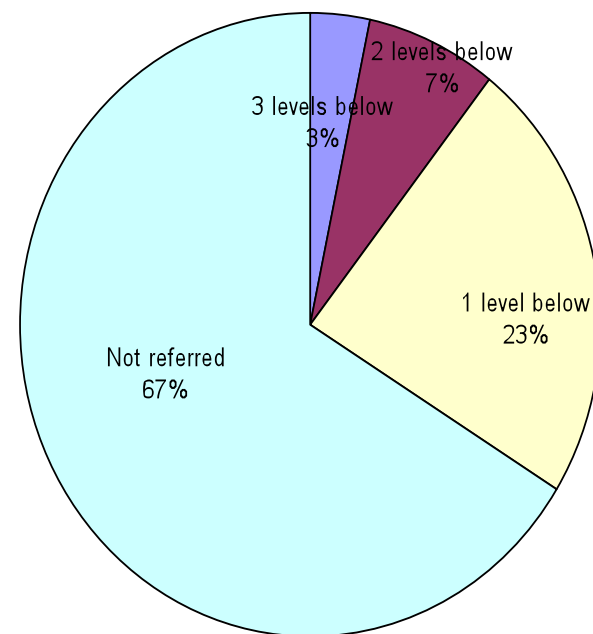
- Services to students with weak academic skills
- Remediation versus developmental education
- Referral to remediation based on some form of assessment
- No overall consensus on the meaning of being ready for college

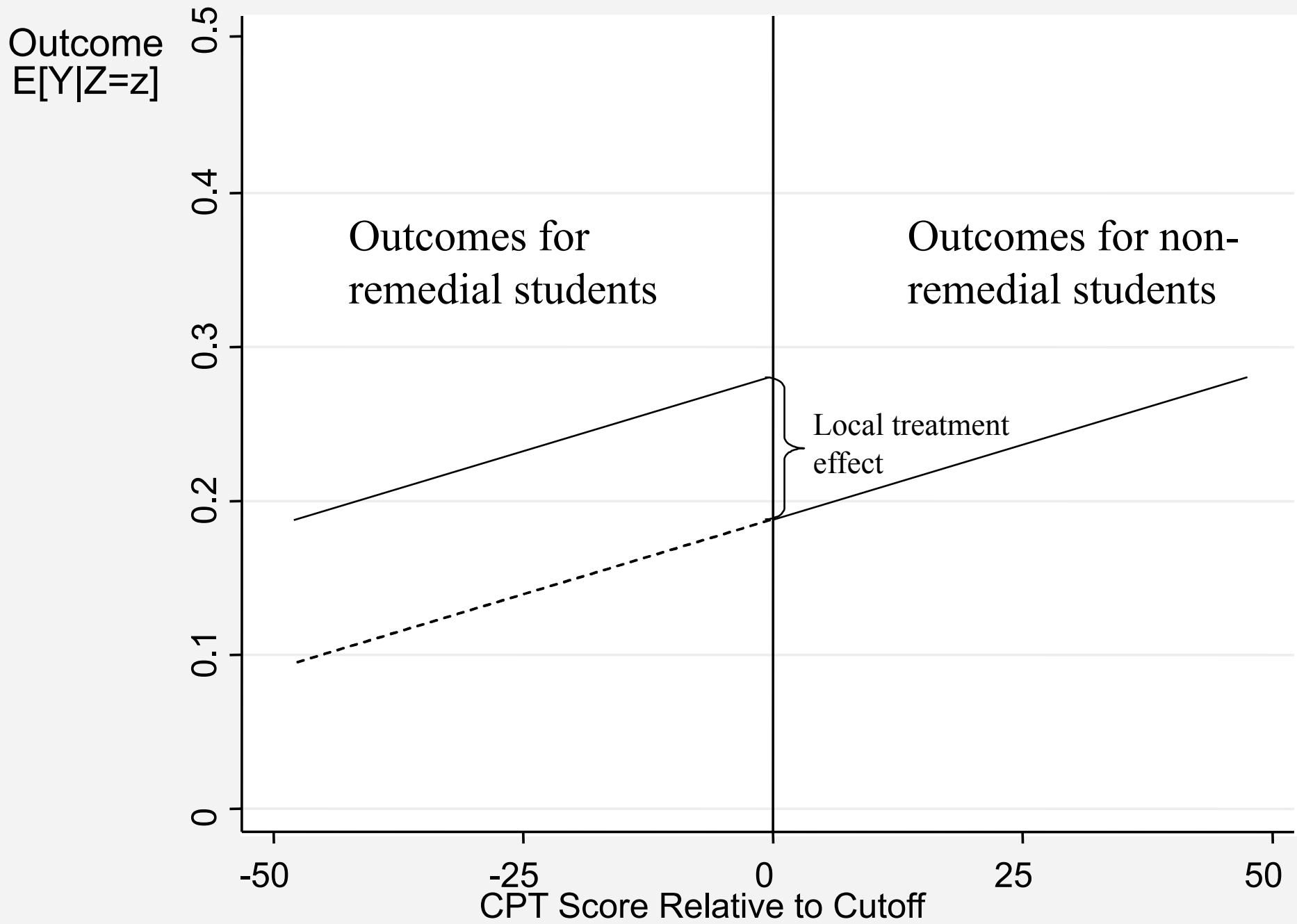
Referrals to Levels of Dev. Ed.

Math - Full Sample



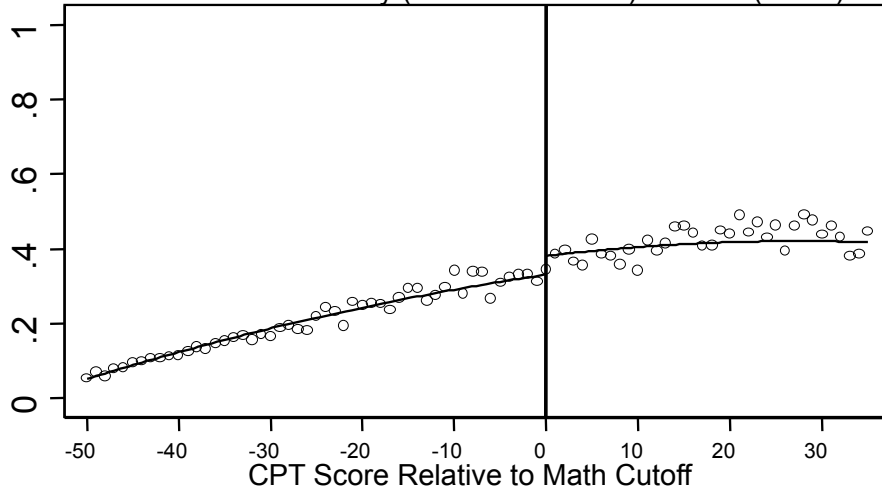
Reading - Full Sample



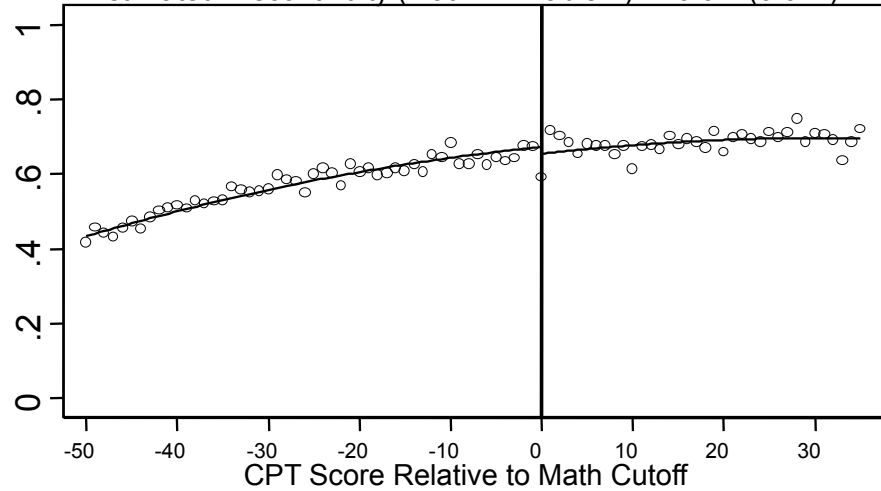


Completion of First College-Level Course and Retention by CPT Score and Subject

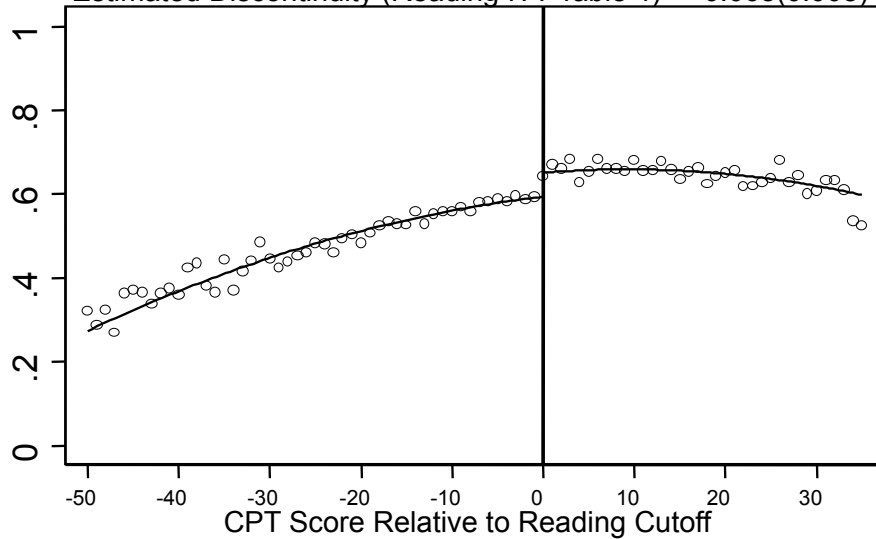
Outcome: Completion of First College-Level Course
Estimated Discontinuity (Math ITT Table 4) = $-0.061(0.013)$



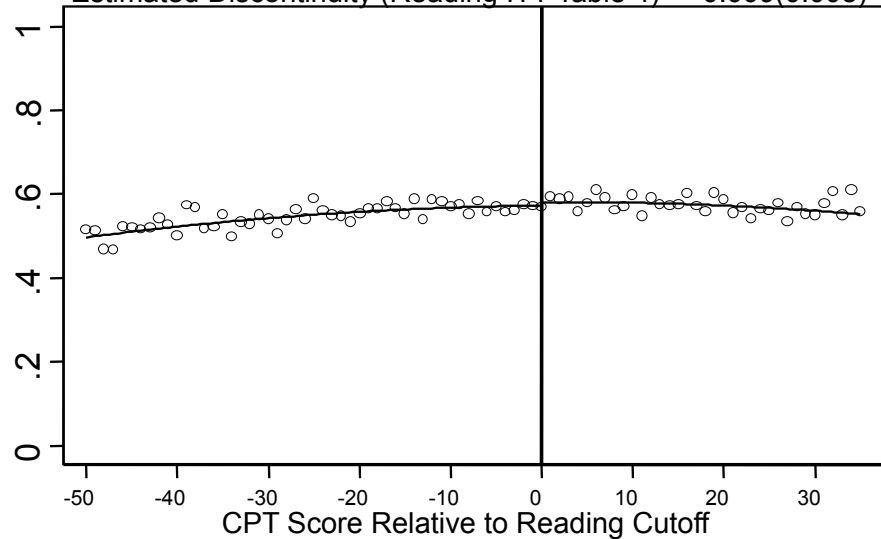
Outcome: Fall-to-Fall Retention
Estimated Discontinuity (Math ITT Table 4) = $-0.021(0.011)$



Estimated Discontinuity (Reading ITT Table 4) = $-0.068(0.008)$



Estimated Discontinuity (Reading ITT Table 4) = $-0.009(0.008)$



What Does This Say About Assessment?

- No obvious cutoff point
- Confusion about what it means to be “college ready”
- Assessments are not good predictors of future success in college
- Do they measure current skill levels?

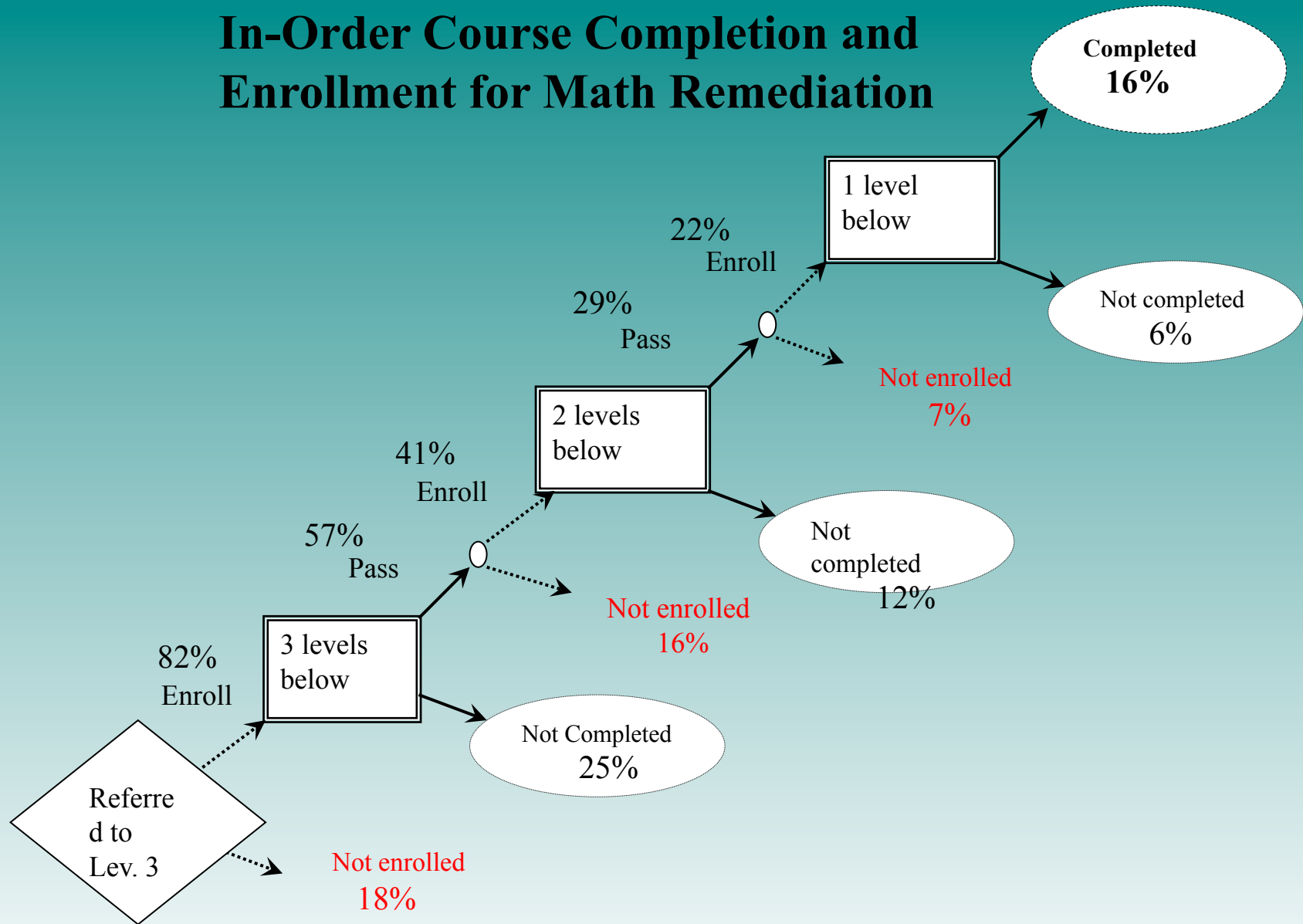
Implications for Effectiveness

- Current system neglects the academic needs of weaker “college level” students
- Applies primarily to upper level developmental ed students
- We know little about the effectiveness of services for students far from the cutoff scores
- We do know that few referred to multiple levels of remediation finish

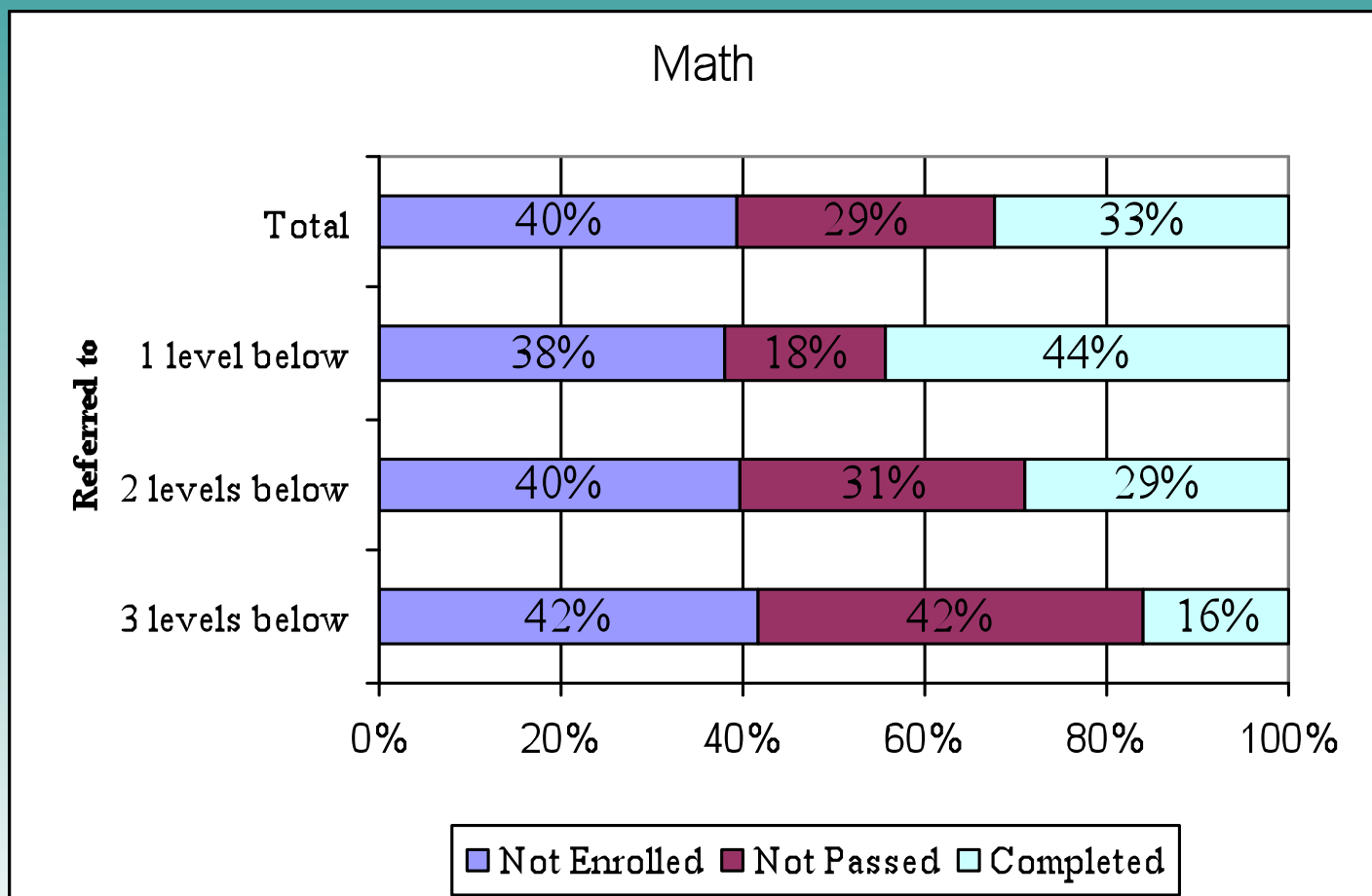
Achieving the Dream Database

- 250,000 students
- All first time (in the college) degree seeking students (full or part time)
- 57 colleges in CT, FL, NC, NM, OH, PA, TX, VA, WA
- Not representative of all CCs—similar to large, urban institutions with lower funding per student

In-Order Course Completion and Enrollment for Math Remediation

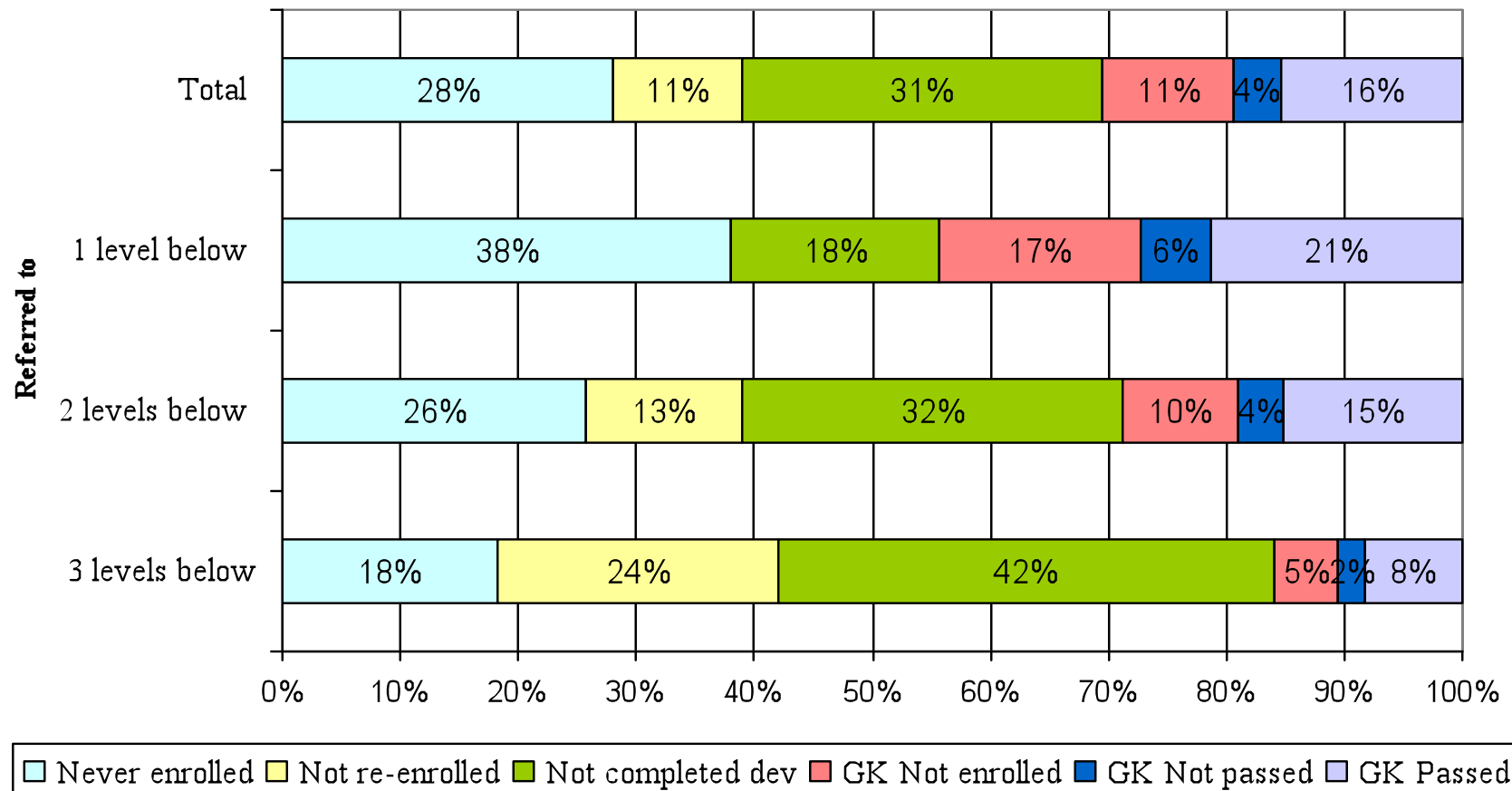


Enrollment and Progression Patterns Among Achieving the Dream Students



Student Progression by Enrollment and Gatekeeper in Math

Math - Full Sample



Reform Strategies

- Too many opportunities to leave
- Improve diagnostic power of assessments
- Combine college level and developmental instruction (help “college ready” students as well)
- Compressed schedules
- Summer bridge programs

Implications

- Rethink assessment
- Challenge the distinction between developmental and “college ready”
- Accelerate progression through remedial sequences