



COLORADO

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

TRANSFER REPORT

**FALL 2016 TO FALL 2017 STUDENT TRANSFERS TO
FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS**

MAY 2018

Students enroll in Colorado Community College System (CCCS) colleges for a variety of reasons, but the most oft-cited reason is to earn credits for transfer to an institution where they can earn a baccalaureate degree.¹ One of the statutory missions of the CCCS is the provision of two-year transfer educational programs to qualify students for admission to the junior year at four-year institutions of higher education. As a result, CCCS tracks the number of students who transfer from a CCCS college to a four-year institution of higher education to measure its success in meeting its mission and facilitating baccalaureate degree attainment for a significant segment of the student population.

CCCS actively pursues policies that will assist its students to attain their transfer goals. In 2010, it spearheaded legislation to require the creation of a minimum number of additional statewide transfer agreements and to permit academic designations, or majors, for associate degrees.² Statewide transfer agreements allow a student to graduate from a CCCS college with a 60-credit associate degree and enroll with junior status at a state four-year institution, thereby completing a bachelor's degree in no more than an additional 60 credits. This legislation was the impetus for the 34 statewide transfer agreements that exist today. These agreements provide a blueprint for students while at a CCCS college and ensure that CCCS students can complete a bachelor's degree with the same number of credits as a student who begins at a four-year institution, saving money for both students and taxpayers. When students expressed concerns about the implementation of these agreements, CCCS initiated legislation in 2018, which the governor signed, to enforce these agreements by requiring four-year institutions to pay the cost of additional courses required of transfer students.³ In addition, CCCS has incorporated its transfer mission into its strategic plan. Beginning in 2017, a two percent annual increase in transfers to four-year institutions of students who earn at least 15 credits – especially underserved populations – is a key performance measure of the strategic plan.

¹ CCCS biennial student satisfaction survey, multiple years.

² HB 10-1208 and SB 10-088

³ SB 18-069

This report contains data on students who were enrolled in a CCCS college in Fall 2016 and subsequently enrolled in a four-year institution in Fall 2017.⁴ It first provides information similar to past years: the cohort is total students who were enrolled in a CCCS college in Fall 2016. Unlike previous years, the detail of the report focuses on the non-high school, or undergraduate, students in the Fall 2016 cohort. To obtain the broadest information available on student transfers, CCCS matched its students with National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data. NSC collects enrollment and degree data from colleges and universities throughout the United States; the institutions that provide data to NSC enroll over 98 percent of the nation's postsecondary students. By using the NSC database, CCCS can obtain data on transfers to public and private colleges nationwide. Four Colorado colleges with enrollments greater than 1,000 – three private and one public – do not provide attendance data to NSC, including Colorado State University (CSU) – Global Campus with almost 8,200 undergraduate students in Fall 2016. For the Fall 2014 cohort transferring in 2015, the Colorado Department of Higher Education's transfer report found that 9.4 percent of CCCS transfer students (563 students) enrolled in CSU Global Campus.⁵ Aspen University, Concorde Career Institute – Denver, and the Art Institute of Colorado are the three private colleges that do not participate in NSC.

Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 Transfers – All Students

A total of 12,213 students attending a CCCS college in Fall 2016 were enrolled in a four-year institution of higher education in Fall 2017, or 15.5 percent of the 78,626 students submitted to NSC for matching. A student was counted as a transfer if he or she was enrolled in a four-year institution of higher education in Fall 2017, regardless of whether the student earned a credential at the originating CCCS college.

⁴ The term “students” refers to countable students, duplicated across CCCS colleges

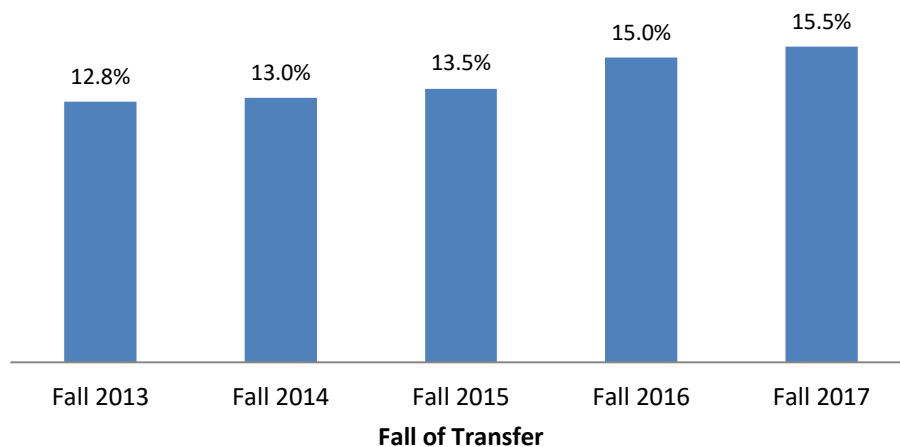
⁵ Colorado Department of Higher Education, *Transfer Summary*, https://higher.ed.colorado.gov/Publications/Reports/Enrollment/FY2015/2015_Transfer_Summary.pdf, August 12, 2016 (most recent report available).

Figure 1. CCCS Fall Students Transferred to Four-Year Institutions in Following Fall

	Fall 2016 Cohort	Percent of Cohort	Fall 2015 Cohort	Percent of Cohort
Original Cohort ⁶	78,626	100.0%	78,287	100.0%
Transfers ⁷	12,213	15.5%	11,744	15.0%

Figure 2 illustrates the change in the proportion of the Fall cohort enrolling in a four-year institution in the succeeding Fall over the last five years. The percentage of students transferring increased each year in the five-year period, from 12.8 percent for the Fall 2012 cohort to 15.5 percent for the Fall 2016 cohort.

Figure 2. Percentage of Students Who Transfer



Eighty-one percent of students remained in Colorado to earn their baccalaureate degree, and Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver) was the top transfer destination, drawing 18.5 percent of transfer students. The top five transfer destinations, illustrated in Figure 3, claimed 58.6 percent of college destinations. Eighty-five percent of students attended a public institution of higher education. Regis University was the top

⁶ The original cohort includes all countable students registered in a CCCS college in the indicated Fall, duplicated across CCCS colleges, including high school students. A student is not countable if a third party pays for the student (e.g., a Department of Corrections' inmate registered at a CCCS college).

⁷ Transfers are students who attended or graduated from a four-year institution in the succeeding Fall, according to NSC. Transfers do not include those who withdrew from the transfer institution that term. A student's enrollment status before or after the Fall term is not included in the analysis. NSC matching was performed on student name and date of birth and resulted in an 89.9 percent match rate.

private school destination of CCCS students, with 3.1 percent of the total transfer destinations.

Figure 3. Top Five Transfer Destinations for CCCS Students

Transfer Destination	Students	% of Total Transfer Institutions
MSU Denver	2,272	18.5%
Colorado State University - Fort Collins	1,475	12.0%
University of Colorado Denver	1,372	11.2%
University of Colorado Colorado Springs	1,066	8.7%
University of Colorado Boulder	1,002	8.2%
Total of Top Five Destinations	7,187	58.6%

Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 Transfers – Undergraduate Students Only

A total of 7,634 undergraduate students attending a CCCS college in Fall 2016 transferred to a four-year institution of higher education in Fall 2017, or 12.4 percent of the 61,534 students originally submitted to NSC who were not high school students (Figure 4). The number of transfer students decreased 2.9 percent from the prior year compared to a 3.7 percent decrease in the cohort. The proportion of students who transferred remained the same. As with the “all-student” group, MSU Denver was the top-drawing college, and it captured a higher proportion of the undergraduate transfer population (23.6 percent) than the all-student group (18.5 percent). As seen in Figure 5, the top five transfer destinations accounted for a slightly higher percentage of the undergraduate transfers (63.3 percent) than the all-student transfers (58.6 percent).

Figure 4. CCCS Fall Undergraduate Students Transferred to Four-Year Institutions

	Fall 2016 Cohort	Percent of Cohort	Fall 2015 Cohort	Percent of Cohort
Original Cohort	61,534	100.0%	63,903	100.0%
Transfers	7,634	12.4%	7,858	12.3%

Figure 5. Top Five Transfer Destinations for CCCS Undergraduate Students

Transfer Destination	Students	% of Total Transfer Instit.
MSU Denver	1,811	23.6%
University of Colorado Denver	945	12.3%
Colorado State University - Fort Collins	851	11.1%
University of Colorado Colorado Springs	757	9.9%
University of Colorado Boulder	490	6.4%
Total of Top Five Destinations	4,854	63.3%

Eighty-four percent of students who transferred remained in Colorado to earn their baccalaureate degree, and the vast majority – 91.1 percent – attended a public institution of higher education (Figure 6). Students who transferred to an out-of-state institution were more likely to enroll in a private institution than those who attended a Colorado institution; almost 47 percent of students who enrolled in an institution out of state attended a private college. As with the “all-student” group, Regis University was the top private school destination for undergraduate transfers, followed by Colorado Christian University. Together these two colleges accounted for 37.8 percent of the transfers to private colleges.

Figure 6. Destination of Transfer Students by Location and Type of Institution

Type	Colorado	Out of State	All
Public	91.1%	53.4%	85.2%
Private	8.9%	46.6%	14.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
% of Overall Total	84.3%	15.7%	100.0%

With regards to enrollment status, the most significant difference between the transfer population and the undergraduate cohort was in the first-time student category. First-time students were the least likely to transfer. They comprised 17.7 percent of the cohort but only 6.4 percent of the transfers. At the other end of the spectrum, continuing students comprised 68.4 percent of the cohort but 73.9 percent of the transfer population.

Figure 7. Enrollment Status in Fall 2016

Type of Student	Type as % of Transfers	Type as a % of Cohort	Transfers as a % of Cohort by Type
Continuing or Readmit	73.9%	68.4%	13.4%
New First Time Anywhere	6.4%	17.7%	4.5%
Transfer In	15.0%	13.0%	14.4%
Other*	4.6%	0.9%	61.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	12.4%

*This category includes Community College of Denver consortium students and a few students who haven't yet entered high school.

Figure 8 displays transfer students' goals in attending college, represented here by the credential they were seeking in Fall 2016. Compared to the cohort, transfer students were less likely to indicate a career-oriented credential – a certificate or an associate of applied science (AAS) degree – as their goal and more likely to indicate an associate of arts (AA) or associate of science (AS) degree as their intended credential. Transfer students were also more likely to be undeclared or non-degree seeking than the cohort as a whole.

Figure 8. Student Intent Prior To Transfer

Credential Goal	Credential Goal as % of Transfers	Credential Goal as a % of Cohort	Transfers as a % of Cohort by Credential Goal
Associate of Applied Science	15.3%	27.9%	6.8%
Associate of Arts/Science	57.9%	45.1%	15.9%
Associate of General Studies	9.2%	12.6%	9.1%
Bachelor of Applied Science	0.0%	0.1%	4.5%
Certificate	4.9%	8.5%	7.1%
Non-Degree Seeking/Undeclared	12.6%	5.8%	27.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	12.4%

Thirty-one percent of transfer students, or 2,334 students, obtained at least one credential at a CCCS institution in the year before transferring. Eighty-one percent of the 2,718

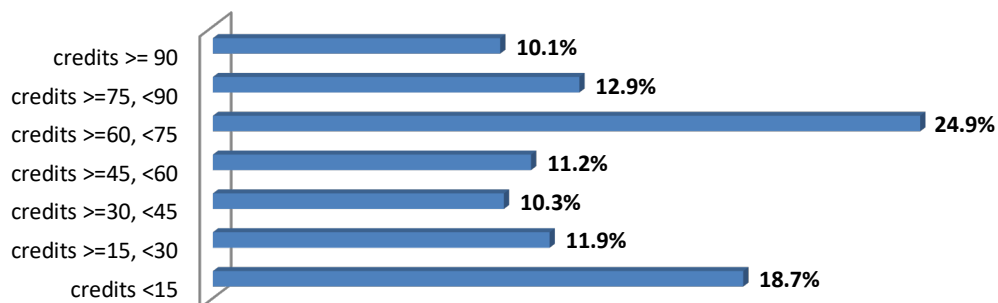
credentials earned were associate degrees; 57.7 percent were AA or AS degrees. Nineteen percent of awards were certificates (Figure 9).⁸

Figure 9. Credentials Earned by Transfer Students at CCCS Institutions in Fall 2016 or Spring or Summer 2017

Credential Type	Number of Credentials	Percent of Credentials
Certificate	516	19.0%
AAS Degree	348	12.8%
AGS Degree	283	10.4%
AA or AS Degree	1,569	57.7%
BAS	2	0.1%
Total Credentials	2,718	100.0%

Eighty-one percent of undergraduate students who transferred in Fall 2017 had earned at least fifteen credit hours at the time of their transfer.⁹ Figure 10 provides a breakout of credit hours earned by transfer students through Summer 2017 in 15-credit-hour increments. One-quarter of transfer students earned between 60 and 75 credits.

Figure 10. Credit Hours Earned by Transfer Students



Transfers by College

Community College of Denver had the highest proportion of its undergraduate cohort transfer to a four-year institution, at 17.3 percent, followed by Front Range Community

⁸ The number of credentials exceeds the number of students who earned a credential because some students received more than one credential.

⁹ There is no time limit for counting the credits earned by students.

College and Otero Junior College, at 14.1 percent and 13.3 percent, respectively. The Community College of Denver's proportion benefits from the inclusion of consortium students – students who are registered at both the Community College of Denver and MSU Denver or University of Colorado Denver. Without consortium students, the Community College of Denver's transfer rate would be 13.7 percent.

MSU Denver was the top destination for four of the thirteen community colleges, while the University of Colorado-Colorado Springs was the top destination for three, and CSU Fort Collins was the top destination for two (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Transfers by Originating College

Originating College	Transfers to Four-Year Institutions	Transfer as % of Cohort	Top Transfer Destination
ACC	719	11.6%	Metropolitan State University Denver
CCA	534	10.8%	Metropolitan State University Denver
CCD	1,321	17.3%	Metropolitan State University Denver
CNCC	76	10.6%	Colorado Mesa University
FRCC	2,177	14.1%	Colorado State University - Ft Collins
LCC	68	13.3%	University of Colorado Colorado Springs
MCC	47	6.2%	University of Northern Colorado
NJC	151	11.9%	Colorado State University - Ft Collins
OJC	139	13.3%	University of Colorado Colorado Springs
PCC	282	7.1%	Colorado State University - Pueblo
PPCC	1,180	10.7%	University of Colorado Colorado Springs
RRCC	842	12.0%	Metropolitan State University Denver
TSJC	98	9.1%	Adams State University
CCCS	7,634	12.4%	Metropolitan State University Denver

Figure 12 shows transfers as a percentage of the originating college's undergraduate cohort for this year and last, while Figure 13 illustrates the total number of transfers by originating college for the same period. Compared to last year, transfer rates were relatively stable. Morgan Community College and the Community College of Denver had the greatest percentage point increases in the proportion of students transferring to four-year institutions, at 1.6 percentage points and 1.3 percentage points, respectively.

Figure 12. Percent of Transfers by Originating College: 2016 and 2017

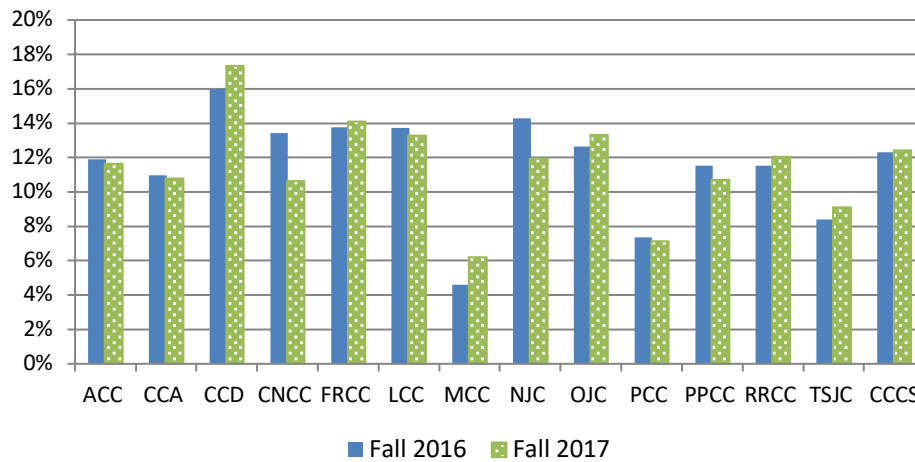
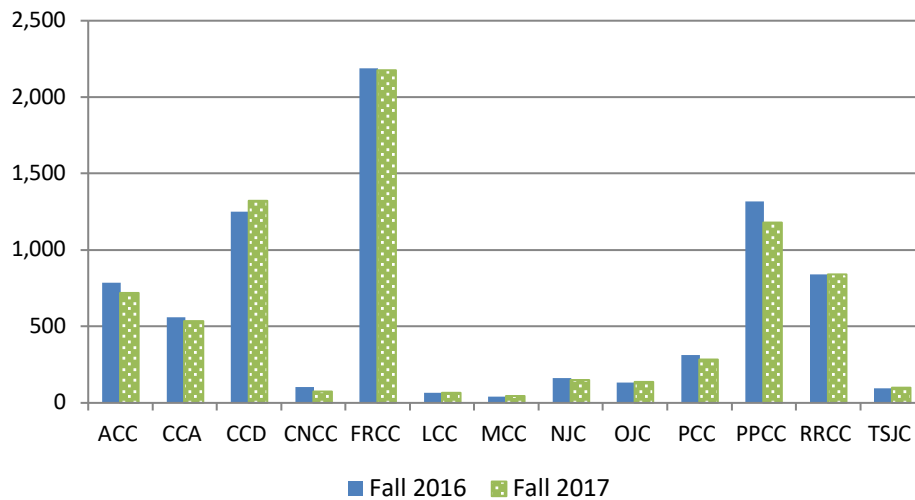


Figure 13. Number of Transfers by Originating College: 2016 and 2017



Demographic Summary of Students Who Transfer

Students in the traditional college-age population were proportionally more likely to transfer than older students (Figure 14). Fifty-three percent of transfer students were age 24 or younger compared to 59.4 percent of the undergraduate cohort. There was little difference in gender between the transfer population and the undergraduate cohort, as illustrated in Figure 15.

Figure 14. Comparison of Age of Transfer Students and Cohort

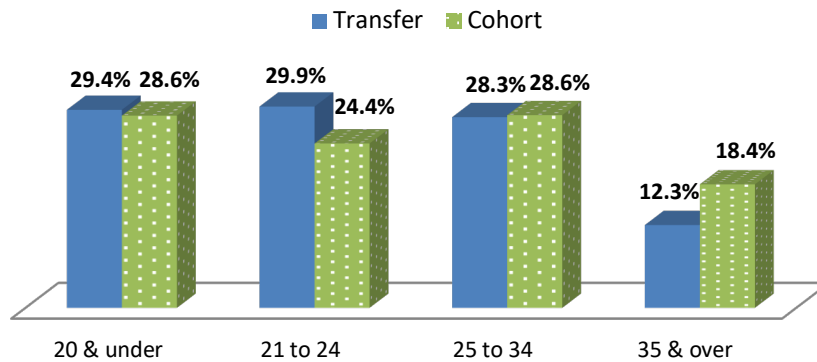
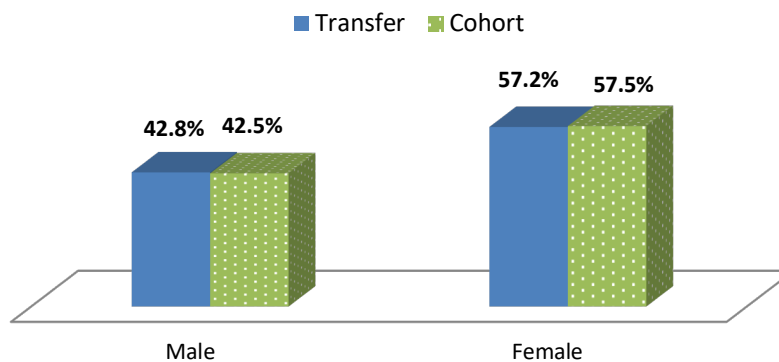


Figure 15. Comparison of Transfers and the Cohort by Gender¹⁰



Transfer students were more likely to be white than the cohort: 62.2 percent of transfer students reported as white versus 58.4 percent of the cohort (Figure 16). Students of color comprised 30.0 percent of the transfer population compared to 34.9 percent of the undergraduate cohort. Hispanic students in particular were underrepresented in the transfer group.

Figure 16. Comparison of Race/Ethnicity of Transfer Students and Cohort

Race/Ethnicity	Transfer Students	Fall 2016 Cohort	Transfer Students Compared to Cohort
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.7%	0.9%	-0.2%
Asian	3.8%	3.3%	0.5%
Black or African American	5.4%	6.2%	-0.9%

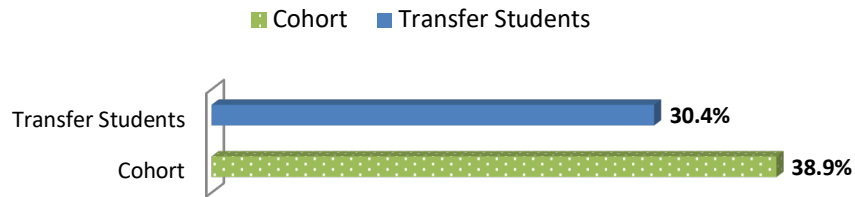
¹⁰ Percentages limited to students who reported a gender.

Race/Ethnicity	Transfer Students	Fall 2016 Cohort	Transfer Students Compared to Cohort
Hispanic	15.5%	20.1%	-4.6%
Multiple races	4.3%	4.1%	0.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%
Non-Resident Alien (International)	1.8%	2.7%	-0.8%
Unknown	6.0%	4.0%	2.0%
White	62.2%	58.4%	3.7%
Students of Color	30.0%	34.9%	-4.9%

Students of color includes students who reported their race/ethnicity as American Indian/ Alaskan Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or Hispanic or who reported multiple races, excluding international students.

The data suggests that students who transferred had more financial resources than the cohort at a whole. Thirty percent of transfer students were Pell eligible compared to 38.9 percent of the undergraduate cohort. The federal Pell program is the single largest program providing financial assistance to college students in need. While application is voluntary and not all students apply for aid under the program, eligibility for the program is the most commonly used indicator of measuring student financial resources.

Figure 17. Pell Eligibility of Transfer Students and Cohort



Students who transferred were more likely to have parents with postsecondary degrees (Figure 18). One-quarter of students who transferred reported that both parents had completed a baccalaureate degree compared to 17.5 percent of the undergraduate cohort. Transfer students were less likely to be first generation college students: 46 percent of students who transferred reported being first generation compared to 56.8 percent of the cohort.

Figure 18. Parental Education of Transfer Students and Cohort

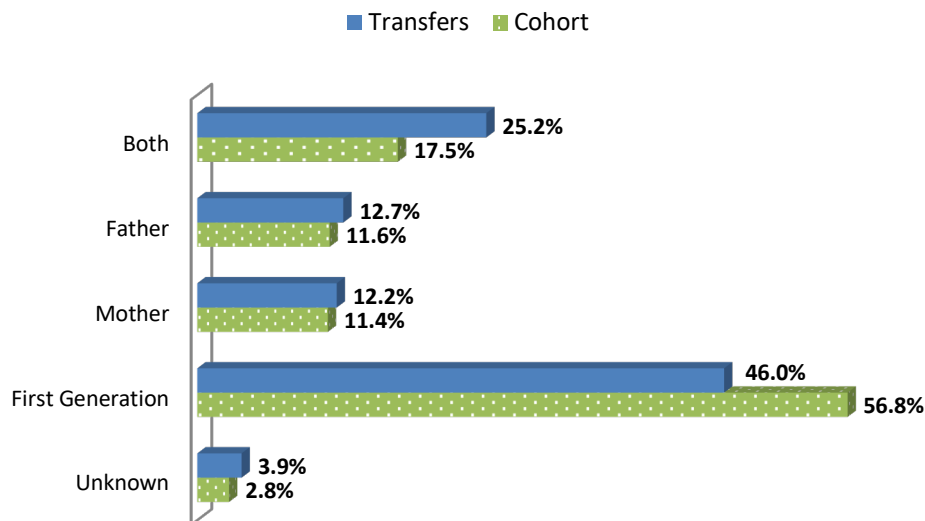


Figure 19 compares the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 transfer rates and overall cohort rates for three groups of students: students of color, students who are Pell eligible, and students who are first generation. Data is provided for all undergraduate students and for just those students with fifteen or more credit hours. The chart indicates that the most notable change in the one-year time period has been with first generation students – both the percentage of first generation students transferring increased, and the gap

between the proportion of first generation students in the cohort and those who transferred decreased.

Figure 19. Transfer Rates of Specified Demographic Groups, 2015 and 2016

Demographic Group	2015-2016 All Undergrad	2016-2017 All Undergrad	Pct Point Change	2015-2016 Undergrad ≥ 15 Credits	2016-2017 Undergrad ≥ 15 Credits	Pct Point Change
Transfer: Students of Color	29.2%	30.0%	0.8%	30.4%	30.7%	0.3%
Cohort: Students of Color	33.4%	34.9%	1.5%	33.1%	33.8%	0.7%
Difference: Students of Color	4.2%	4.9%	0.7%	2.7%	3.1%	0.3%
Transfer: Pell Eligible	31.4%	30.4%	-1.0%	36.1%	35.2%	-0.9%
Cohort: Pell Eligible	40.0%	38.9%	-1.2%	42.6%	40.9%	-1.7%
Difference: Pell Eligible	8.6%	8.4%	-0.2%	6.5%	5.8%	-0.8%
Transfer: First Generation	43.7%	46.0%	2.3%	45.8%	48.1%	2.3%
Cohort: First Generation	56.2%	56.8%	0.6%	56.2%	56.8%	0.6%
Difference: First Generation	12.4%	10.8%	-1.7%	10.4%	8.7%	-1.7%

Strategic Plan Metric

One of the goals of the CCCS 2015 strategic plan is to create education without barriers through transformational partnerships. By thinking creatively, the goal for CCCS colleges is to remove barriers that may impede student success.¹¹ A key performance measure of this goal is a 2 percent per year increase in transfers to four-year institutions of students who earn at least 15 credits, for all students and specifically for underserved populations, beginning in FY 2017. Figure 20 provides the rate of change in transfers for the Fall 2015 undergraduate cohort (transfers in Fall 2016) and the Fall 2016 cohort (transfers in 2017). As the numbers in the chart indicate, this performance measure will require improvement in the coming years.

**Figure 20. Strategic Plan Performance Measure on Transfers
Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 Transfers**

Transfer Students	Fall 2016 Transfers	Fall 2017 Transfers	Change
Overall	6,392	6,207	-2.9%

¹¹ Colorado Community College System, *Strategic Plan 2015-2025: Bold Solutions*, <https://www.cccs.edu/wp-content/uploads/documents/StrategicPlan.pdf>

Students of Color	1,941	1,904	-1.9%
White Students	4,183	3,957	-5.4%

Conclusion

In its 2017 master plan, *Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development*, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education reaffirmed a statewide credential attainment goal of 66 percent by 2025 for Colorado's adult population – an increase of 11 percentage points from today's rate of 55 percent – noting the importance of postsecondary education to the economic vitality of both individuals and the state. Transferring community college courses to four-year institutions is a cost-effective way to earn a baccalaureate degree, for both students and taxpayers. The master plan also recognized lagging educational attainment along racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, and parental education lines. A key performance measure of the CCCS strategic plan sets forth benchmarks for both increasing the overall number of students and the number of underserved populations who transfer. As the strategic plan progresses, this report will continue to chronicle CCCS progress in meeting its transfer goals.