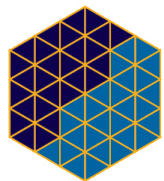


# Developmental Education: What Policies and Practices Work for Students?

**Thomas Bailey, Heather Wathington, Tom Brock**

Webinar based on September 2010 Conference

December 15, 2010



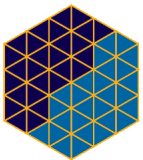
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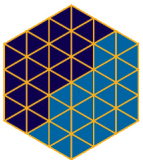
# What is NCPR

- Partners
  - Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University
  - MDRC
  - Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
- NCPR is funded by the Institute for Education Sciences, US Department of Education
- Projects also funded by the Houston Endowment and the Gates, Lumina, Kresge, Ford, and Robin Hood Foundations



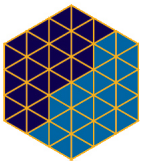
# Outline of Webinar—Three Segments

- What is the problem and overview of the Webinar and Conference—Tom Bailey
- Models evaluated by NCPR—Heather Wathington
  - Learning communities
  - Developmental summer bridge program
- Future directions—Tom Brock



# What is the Problem?

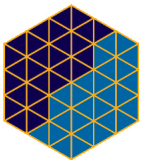
- Over 60 percent of entering students are referred to developmental education
- Developmental education is not very effective for students near the cutoff (Calcagno & Long, 2008)
- Farther below, mixed results—dev ed influences students differently depending on their level of academic preparedness (Boatman & Long, 2010))
- A majority of students do not complete the sequences to which they are referred (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho)
- Current system neglects the needs of weaker “college ready” students



# Assessment

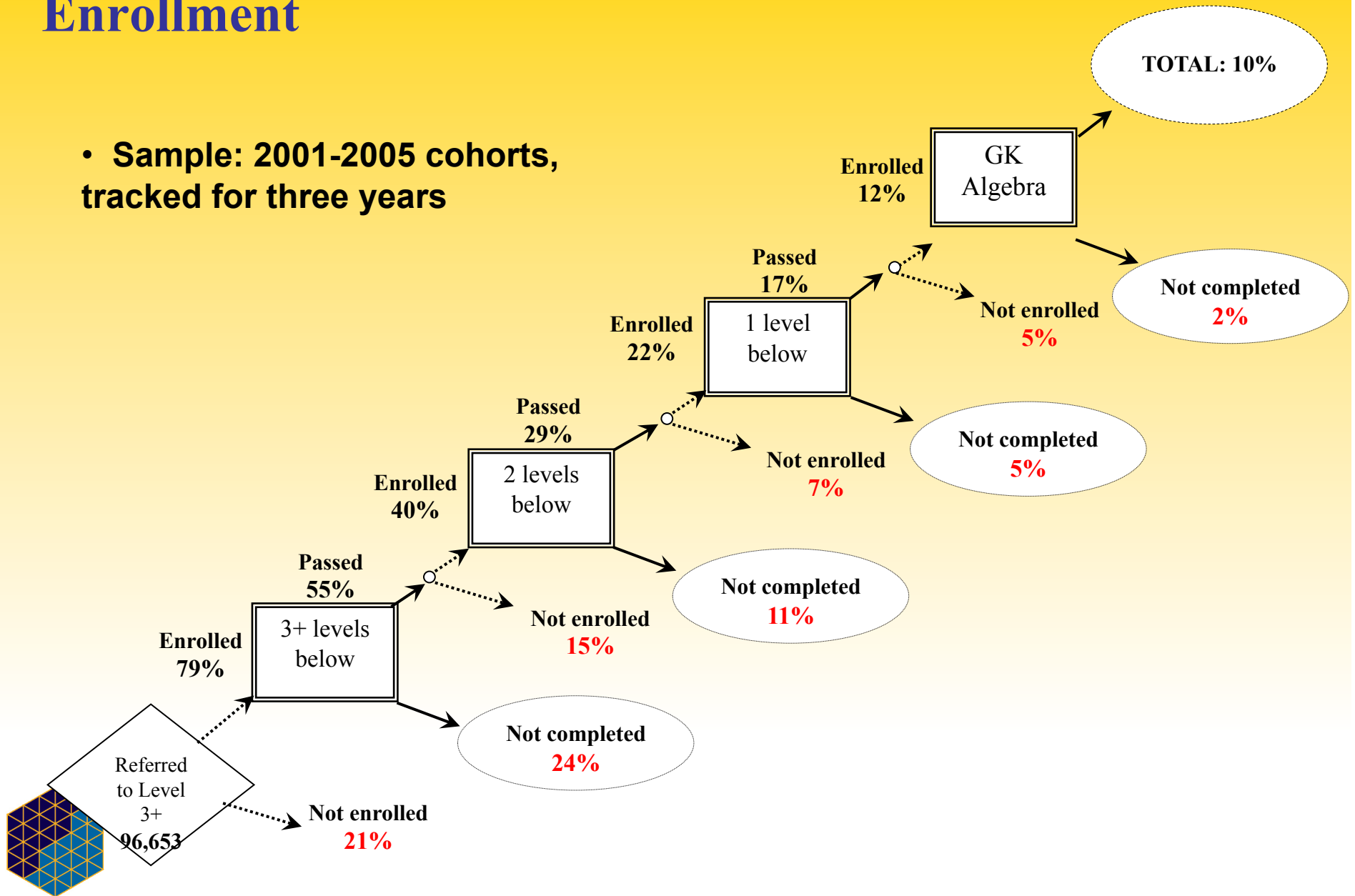
(Hughes & Scott-Clayton, 2010)

- Confusion about what it means to be “college ready”—no obvious cutoff point
- Tests may be reasonable predictors of college-level success, but less effective at identifying who is likely to benefit from dev ed (or alternative interventions)
- Assessments do not provide adequate diagnostic information
- A single cutoff point exaggerates the distinction between developmental and college ready—need for multiple measures including non-cognitive
- Students are confused about the process and not well advised (Venezia, Bracco, & Nodine, 2010)



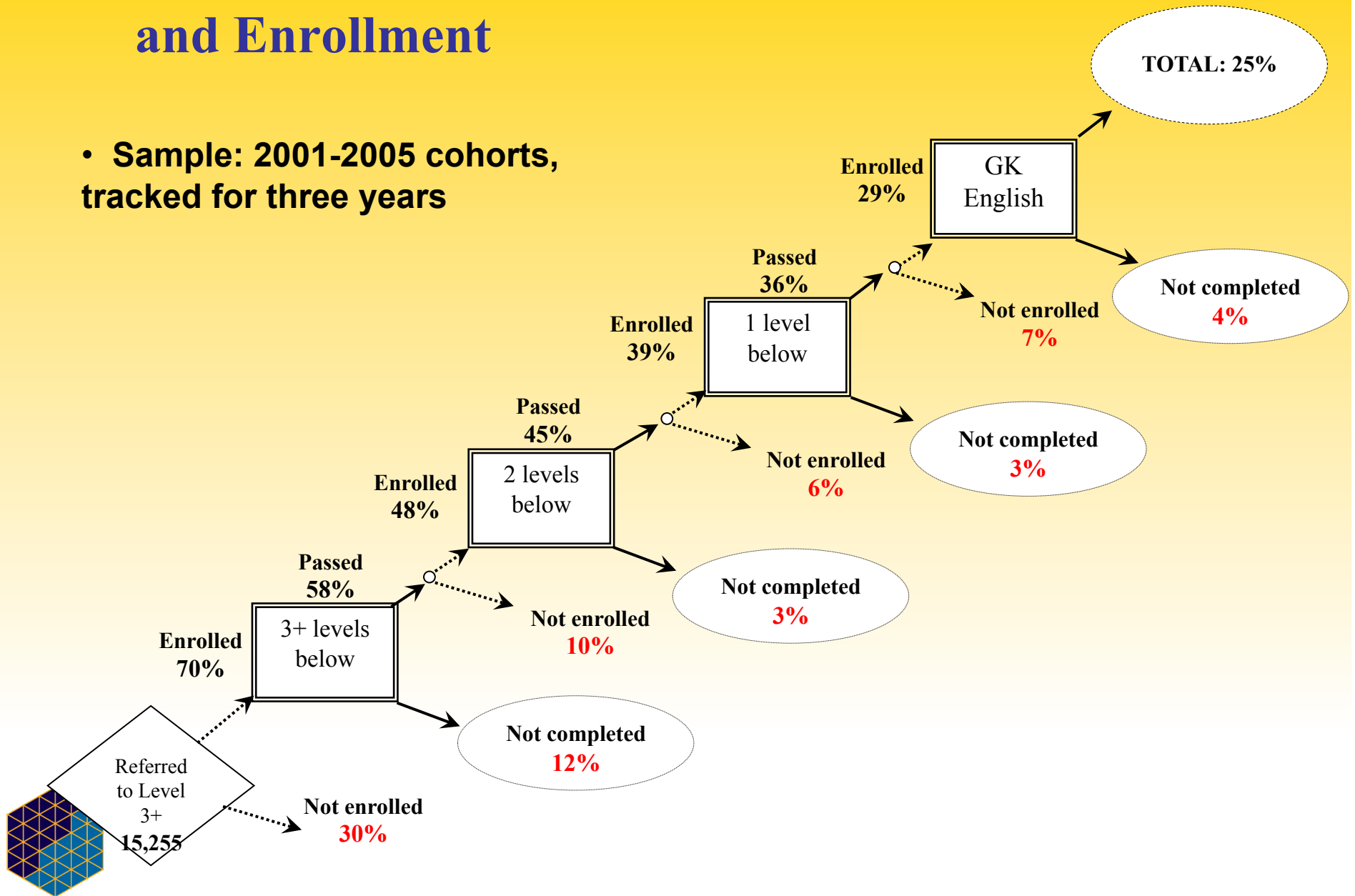
# Math In-Order Course Completion and Enrollment

- Sample: 2001-2005 cohorts, tracked for three years



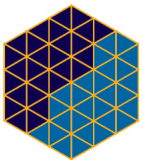
# Reading In-Order Course Completion and Enrollment

- Sample: 2001-2005 cohorts, tracked for three years



# Potential Solutions to Specific Pipeline Problems

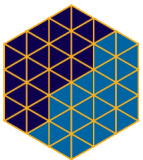
- Students fail to enroll—summer bridge programs, improved and earlier assessment
- Students fail or withdraw from courses—learning communities, improved pedagogy including contextualized instruction
- Students exit long sequences—acceleration, diagnostic assessment, redesign and alignment of curriculum





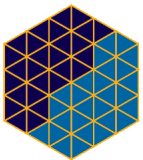
# **NCPR Developmental Education Research: Findings and Implications**

**Heather Wathington**  
University of Virginia

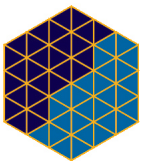
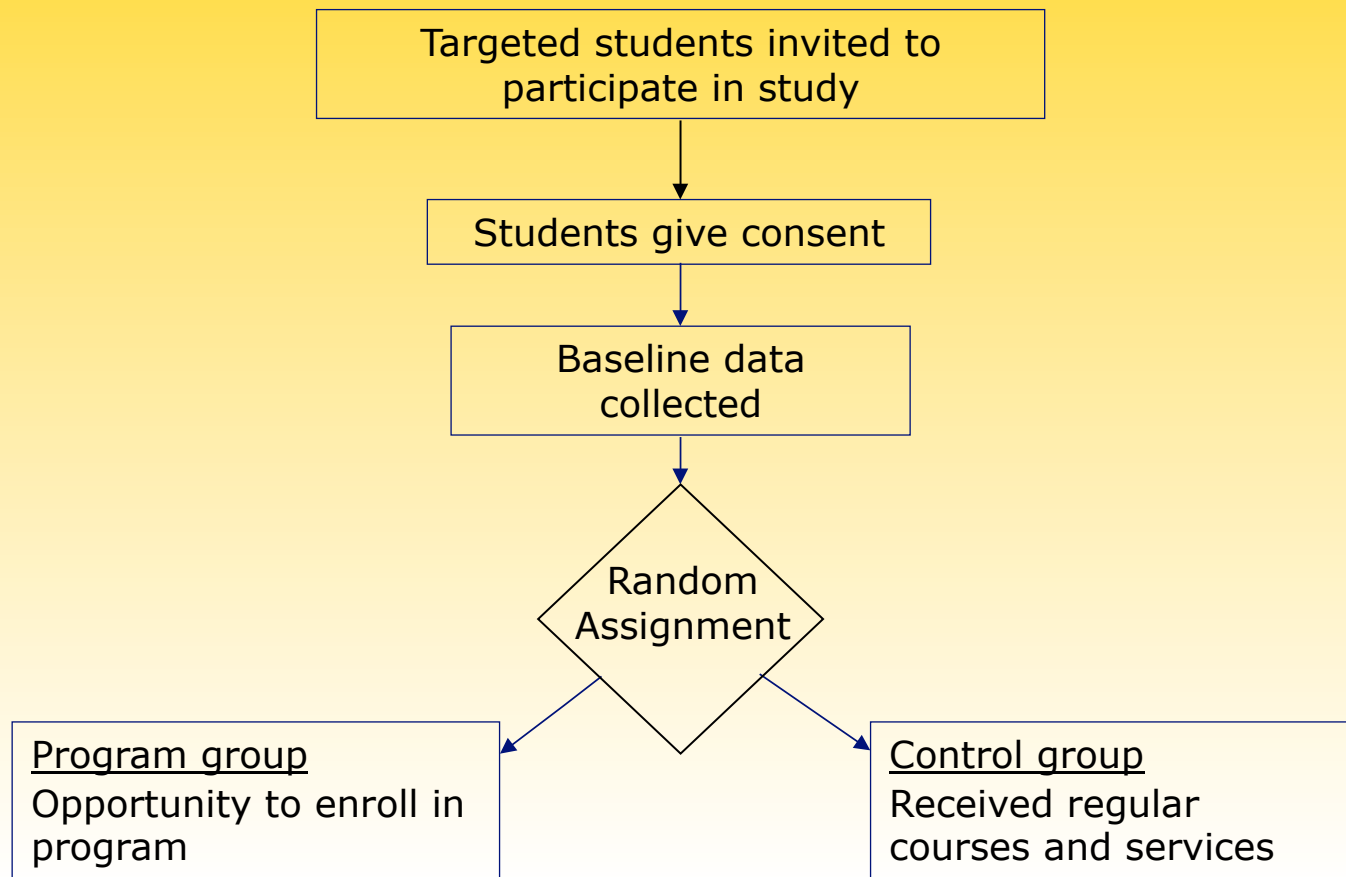


# Overview

- Two studies linking developmental education practice to research designed to support causal inferences
  - Study 1 – Learning communities to improve academic outcomes of students in need of remediation
  - Study 2 - Summer bridge programs to improve academic outcomes of students in need of remediation prior to college entry

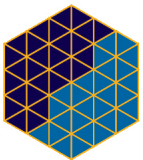


# Random Assignment Design



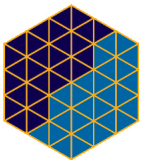
# Learning Communities

- Purpose: Assess the effectiveness of learning communities in improving college preparation and success for students.
- Seven studies: only sharing results for four  
---Kingsborough (Opening Doors - MDRC), Hillsborough, Houston, and Queensborough.



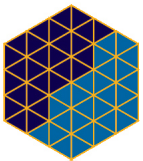
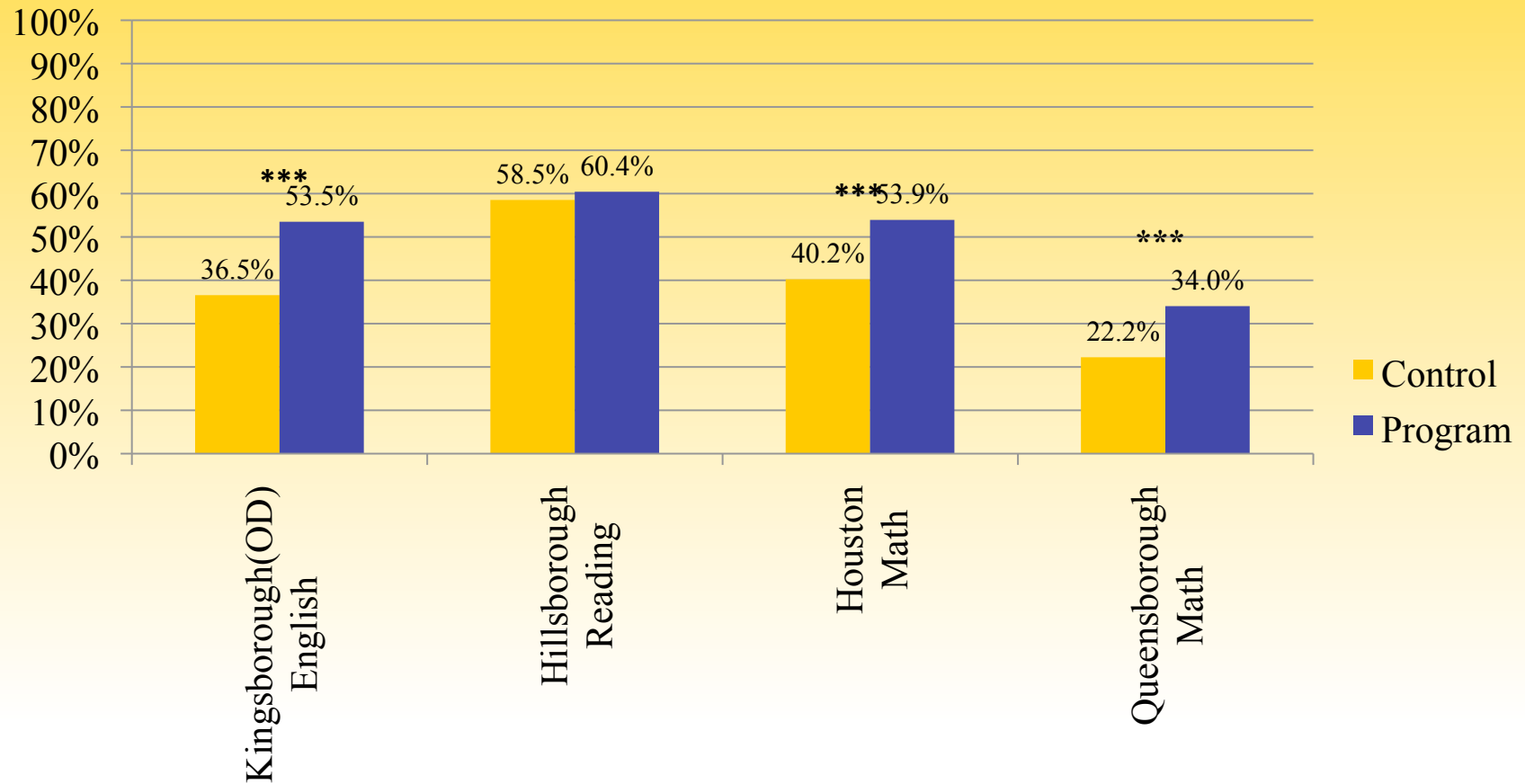
# Learning Communities

- Co-enrollment of students in two or more classes
- Faculty Collaboration
- Integration
- Extra student supports



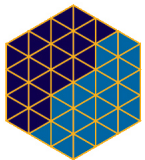
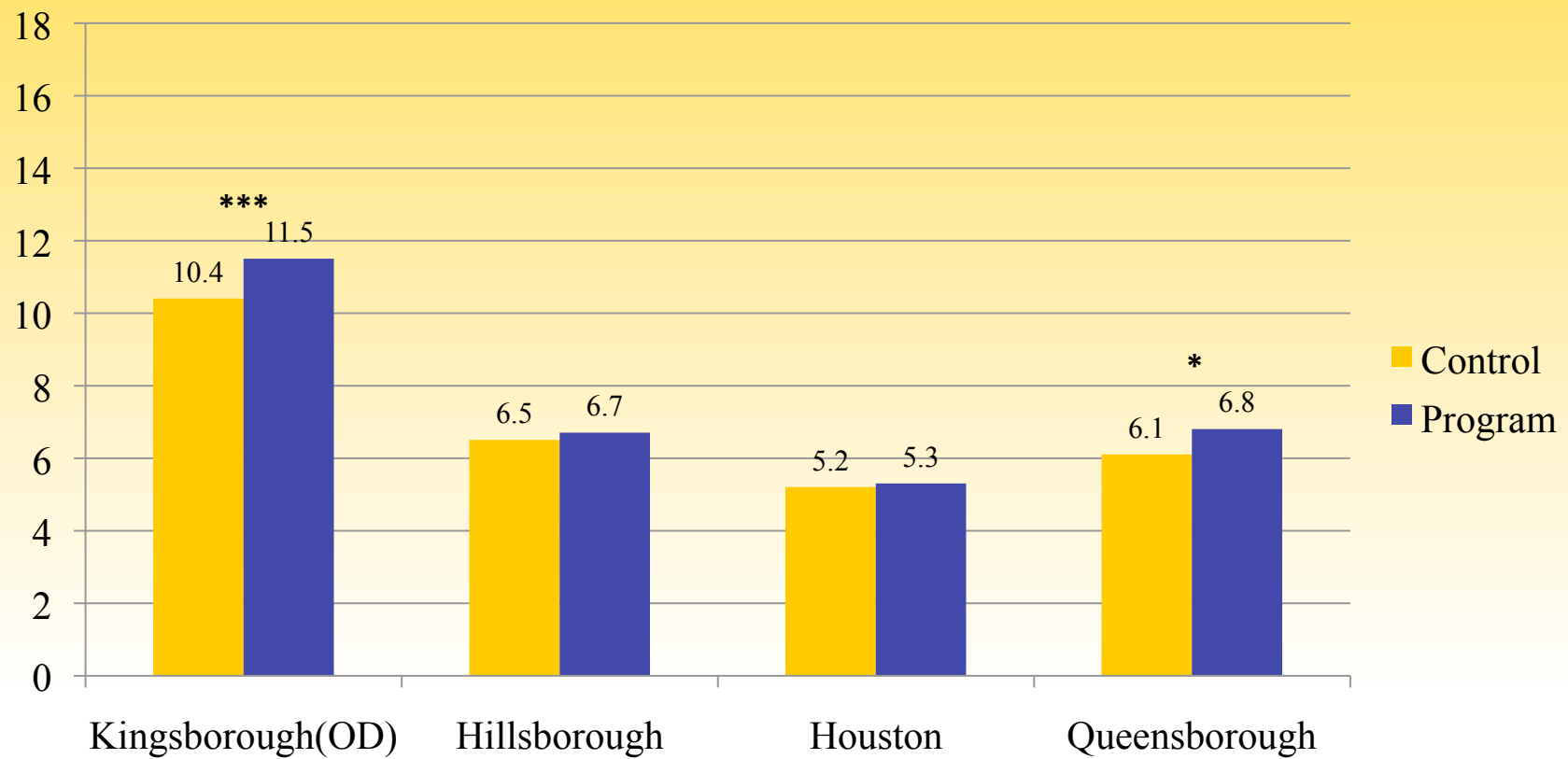
# Passing Developmental Education Courses

Percent Pass Dev Ed Course in LC Link (Program Semester)



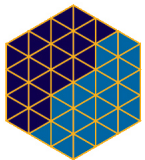
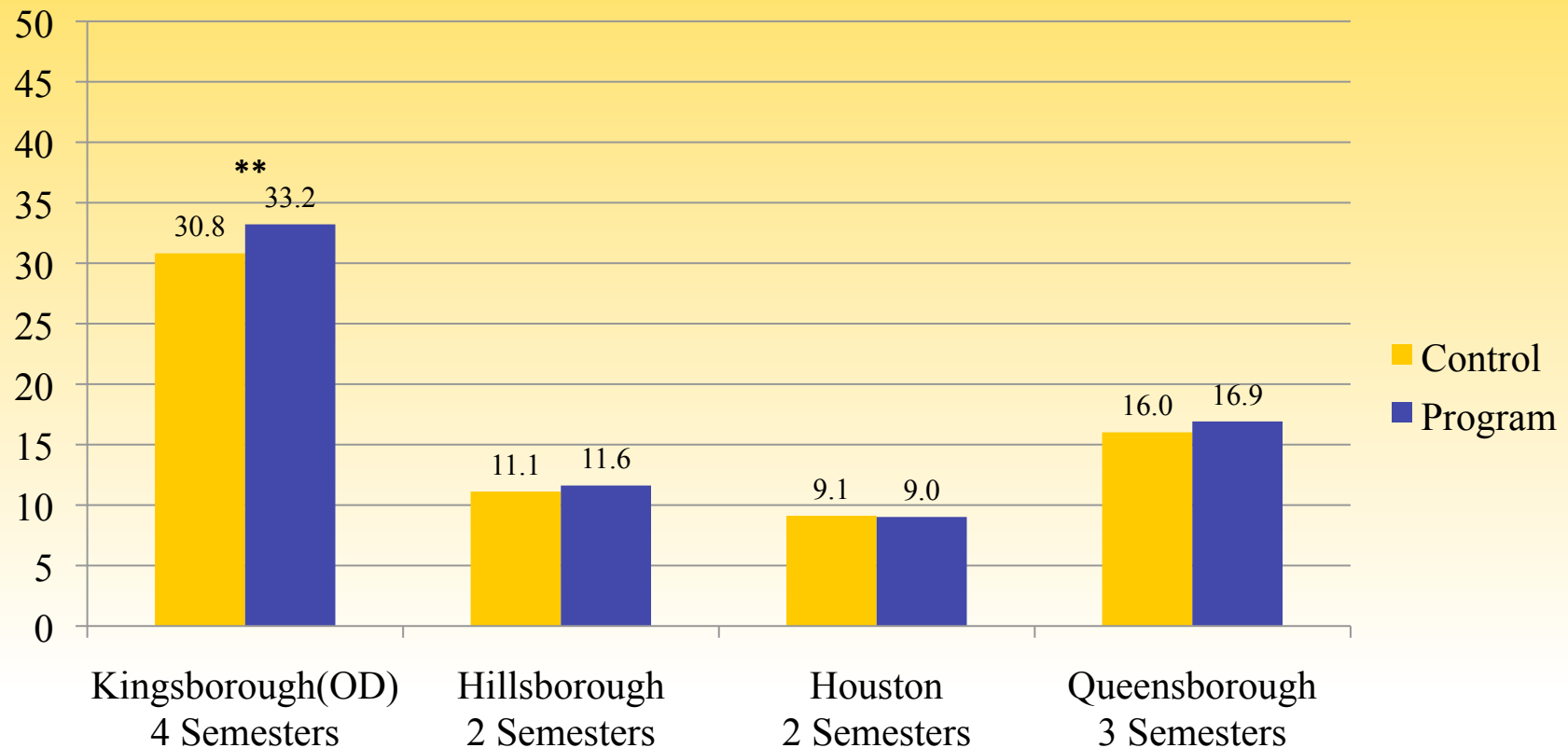
# Overall Credit Accumulation

Total Credits Earned (Program Semester)



# Overall Credit Accumulation

Total Credits Earned (Cumulative)

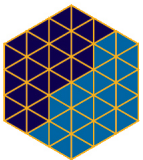




# Evidence suggests that, compared to business as usual, learning communities...

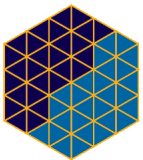
- are better at helping students progress through *a particular* developmental education course sequence (during the program semester)
- are no better at helping students make meaningful progress through their *overall* developmental needs (during the program semester or beyond)
- are sometimes better at helping students accumulate credits (mostly during the program semester)
- are generally no better at improving rates of persistence or long term credit accumulation

Stay tuned – Findings at other colleges and longer follow-up may change the story.



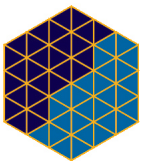
# Forthcoming reports

- Queensborough and Houston: Spring 2011
- Kingsborough's Career Focused Learning Communities for Continuing Students: Summer 2011
- CCBC and Merced: Fall 2011
- Final Report: Summer 2012



# Texas Developmental Summer Bridge Study

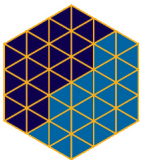
- Purpose: Assess the effectiveness of a summer bridge model in improving college preparation and success for students in need of remediation.
- Conducted in cooperation with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.



## Eight Programs in the Texas DSB Study

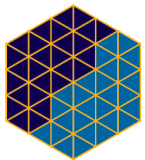
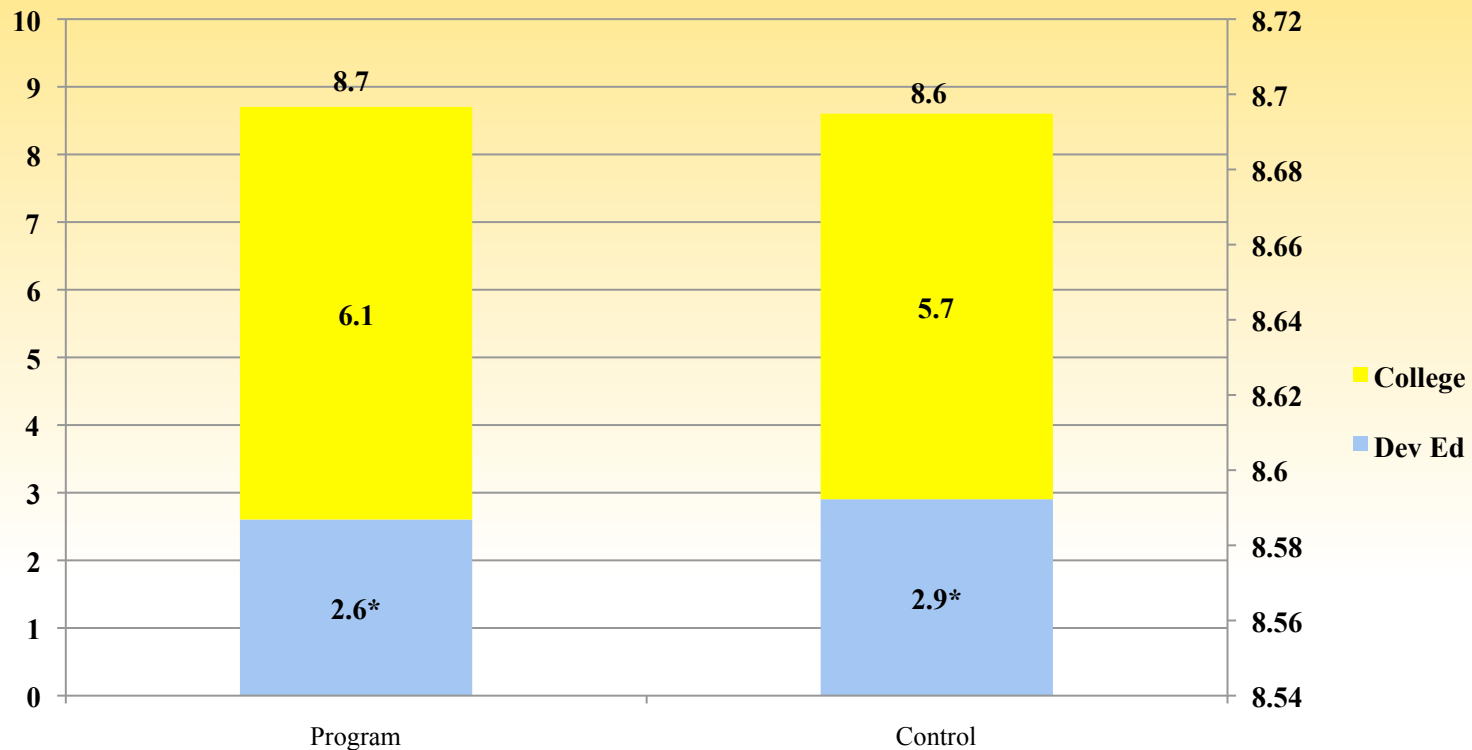
- Four to five weeks (64 -100 hours)
- Accelerated instruction in developmental math, English, and/or reading at the college
- Student cohorts
- Academic and student services support
- “College knowledge” component
- Student stipend of up to \$400 for completers

*Programs were generally well-implemented and a fair test of the program model.*



# Early Impact Findings Fall 2009

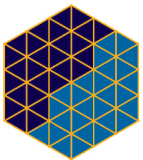
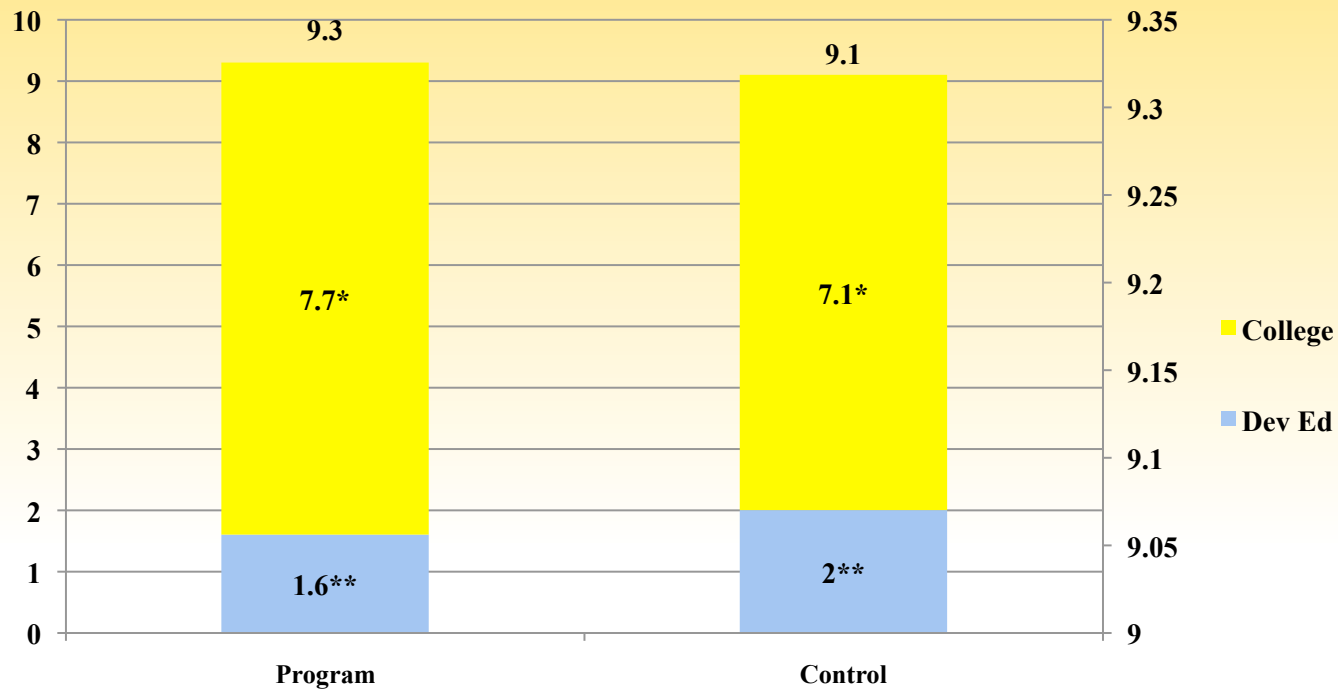
- No program impacts on college enrollment or total credits.
- Impacts on the types of credits attempted:



# Early Impact Findings

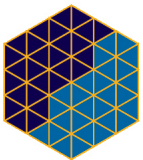
## Spring (plus Flex terms), 2010

- Again, no impacts on college enrollment or total credits.
- Continued impacts on the types of credits attempted:



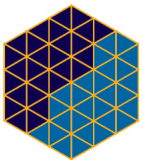
# Overview of Preliminary Findings

- Did not impact college enrollment or persistence.
- Shifted average courseload from developmental towards college-level credits.
  - Reduced developmental credits attempted, and increased college-level credits attempted in the spring.
  - Increased students' ability to meet TSI (Texas Success Initiative) standards in reading, writing and math.
- More data and longer follow-up to come.



# Texas Developmental Summer Bridge Study Next Steps

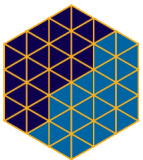
- Interim report, early 2011
  - Program implementation description and lessons
  - Early impacts on additional measures of college progress
- Final report, early 2012
  - Two years of follow-up on program impacts and student success





# Future Directions: What Can Be Done Now?

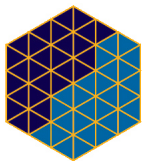
Tom Brock  
Director, Young Adults and Postsecondary Education  
MDRC



# Learning Communities and Summer Bridge: Some Promise, but No Magic Bullet

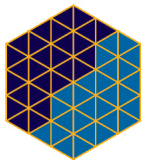
:

- Interventions can make a positive difference for students
- Effects generally modest
- Too few students are progressing to college-level courses and degrees



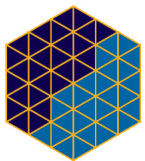
# How Might Learning Communities and Summer Bridge Programs Work Better?

1. Allow time for new programs to mature.
2. Encourage more professional development for participating faculty and staff.
3. Increase program intensity.
4. Focus on the transition points. What happens to students once they leave the program?



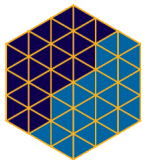
# Other Approaches to Developmental Education Reform

- No shortage of innovation.
- Challenge: Without a good comparison group, hard to know what difference a program made for students.
- Next three slides point to programs that have some evidence of effectiveness.



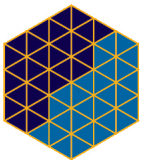
## (1) Early Assessment Programs

- *Objective:* Help students avoid developmental education in college by testing them in high school
  - Use same tests
  - Report back to students on the skills they need to master
- *Examples:* California's Early Assessment Program; El Paso Community College's College Readiness Program



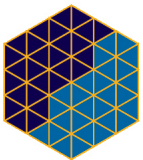
## (2) Accelerated Learning Programs

- *Objective:* Get students into college-level courses sooner
  - Fast-track courses
  - Modularized instruction
  - Placement into college-level courses with additional support (“mainstreaming”)
- *Example:* Community College of Baltimore County’s Accelerated Learning program



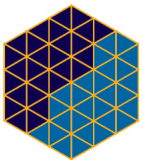
### (3) Contextualized Instruction

- *Objective:* Integrate developmental education instruction into occupational fields or majors that students want to learn.
- *Example:* Washington State's I-BEST Program.



# New Program Models Sorely Needed

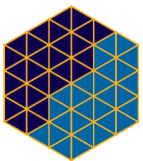
1. Basic skills assessment and placement
  - More comprehensive strategies – not predicated on single test scores
  - Better messaging to students on high stakes
  - Practice and review sessions prior to testing
2. Reforms in curriculum and pedagogy
  - Tailor subject matter to what students need to know to function in school and society
  - Statway example: Emphasizes quantitative reasoning and basic statistics





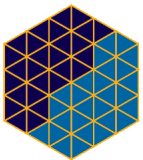
# Closing Thoughts

- Problems faced by developmental education students not likely to be solved by short-term, single-shot interventions
- Need to focus on broader institutional context
  - Quality and frequency of academic guidance counseling
  - Availability of tutoring and other support
  - Transition points from developmental to college-level courses
  - Delivery of financial aid



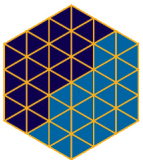
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