



The Alliance for Regional Collaboration to Heighten Educational Success (ARCHES) is a voluntary confederation of collaboratives focused on improving student outcomes and closing the achievement gap through collective action among schools, community colleges, baccalaureate-granting colleges and universities, business, and community and family-centered organizations.

MONTEREY BAY EDUCATIONAL CONSORTIUM (MBEC)

History

Santa Cruz County Superintendent of Schools, University of California, Santa Cruz Chancellor, and their community college and school district colleagues began the Monterey Bay Educational Consortium (MBEC) in 1994. MBEC's initial purpose was to increase educational achievement of all students; yet, its enduring focus remains on increasing regional college-going rates, especially in low-income and under-served areas. Today, MBEC is a strategic and collaborative alliance to improve curriculum, pedagogy, and educational policy in order to:

- build partnerships of educational and other entities to align services and reduce duplication;
- raise student achievement and improve student learning; and,
- deliver services to students and families in order that they succeed in pursuing college goals.

MBEC has the Educational Partnership Center on the Santa Cruz campus as its operational arm to reach its goal. This Center has leveraged over \$37 million -- federal, state, and private grants and contracts -- for institutional and regional activities with policy implications

Membership

The Consortium's membership includes all three county offices of education and over 50 school districts, four community colleges (Cabrillo, Gavilan, Hartnell, and Monterey Peninsula), California State University, Monterey Bay, and the University of California, Santa Cruz.

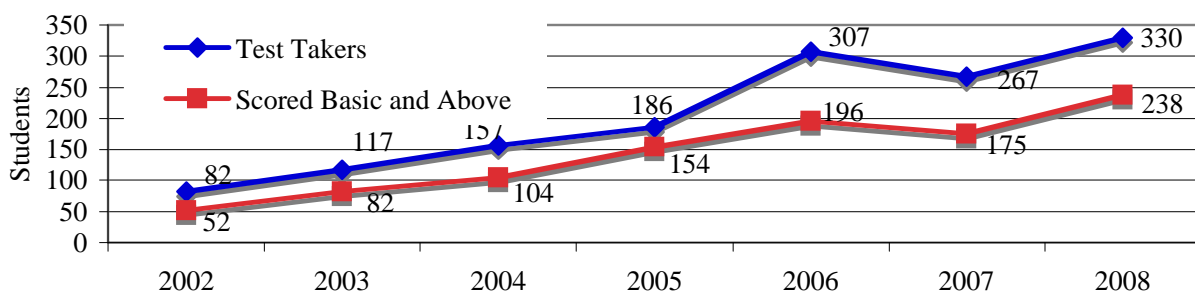
Regional Demographics

In most of this region of over 715,000 residents, the White population is predominant. However, Latino students increasingly comprise a large proportion of the student body of the schools in these counties. The poverty rate averages about 11.5 percent and the proportion of residents with at least a Bachelor's Degree ranged between 17.1 percent and 34.2 percent in the 2008 census. Agriculture and tourism are the predominant businesses in the Tri-County area.

Impact

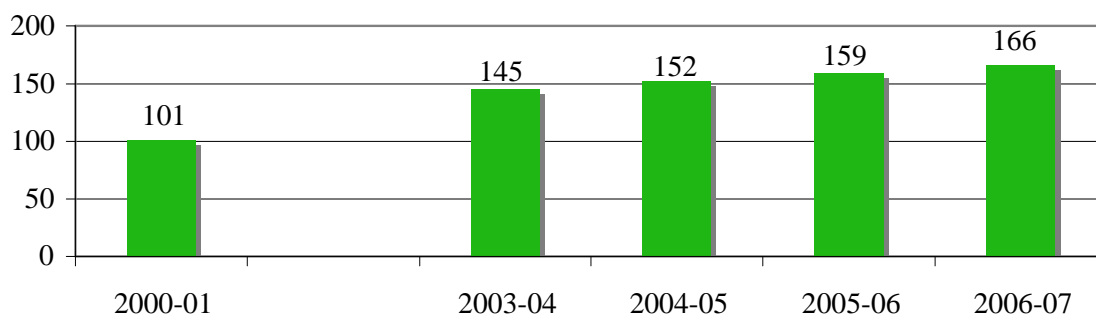
Various measures constitute MBEC's assessment of its progress in improving regional academic attainment, particularly in schools in which at least half of the students -- often from the Latino community -- live below the federal poverty level. Displays 1-3 on the next page show improvement in these measures: 1) enrollment and performance of eighth graders in the Pajaro Valley District on the California Standards Test in Algebra; 2) percentage of Watsonville High School students completing the full range of courses required for admissions to the state's public universities; and, 3) combined college-going rates at North Monterey County, Pajaro Valley, Seaside, and Watsonville high schools in 2008 compared to the statewide average.

Display 1
Achievement of Eighth Graders in the Pajaro Valley Unified School District in Algebra



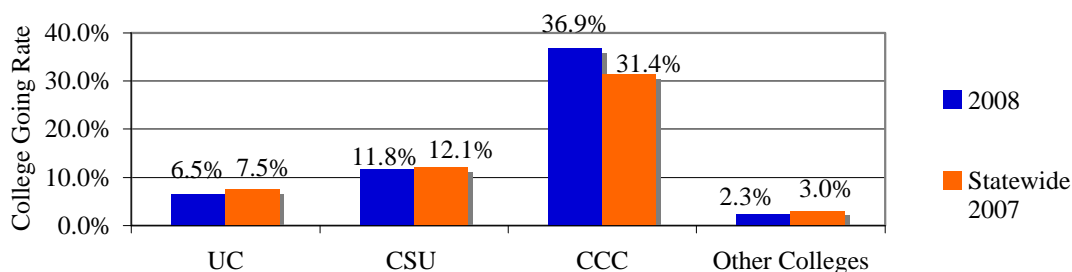
- Over four times as many eighth graders who were enrolled in Algebra in this District took the California Standards Test in 2008 than in 2002.
- The proportion of eighth grade students in this District scoring at the Basic or above level on the California Standards Test in Algebra grew by more than 350 percent during this time period.
- In 2002, 63 percent of the eighth graders enrolled in Algebra scored at the Basic or above level; that proportion rose to 72 percent in 2008.

Display 2
College Preparatory Course Completion at Watsonville High School



- In 2001, nearly 19 percent of this school’s graduating class had completed the full sequence of courses; by 2006-07, that proportion rose to more than 37 percent.
- Over this time, 64 percent more seniors completed the college preparatory course sequence.
- Although not presented in this display, the number of students across this region who completed this college preparatory course sequence nearly doubled from 2001 to 2005.

Display 3
Combined College-Going Rates of Students at Four Low-Income High Schools in 2007



- Over 57 percent of high school graduates from these four low-income high schools enrolled in higher educational institutions in 2008.
- The statewide college-going rate in 2007 -- the last year of available data -- was 54 percent.
- Although not presented in this display, the number of high school graduates from this region who attended the state’s public universities increased by about 30 percent from 2000 to 2005.

Future Initiatives

- Develop leadership among parent communities in the region that will engage all members.
- Engage with Cal-PASS to track students that will lead to pipeline alignment discussions.
- Infuse college preparation into STEM career pathways with small learning communities.