

Fall 2023 Update on Transfer Student Enrollment, Pathways, and Outcomes

National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

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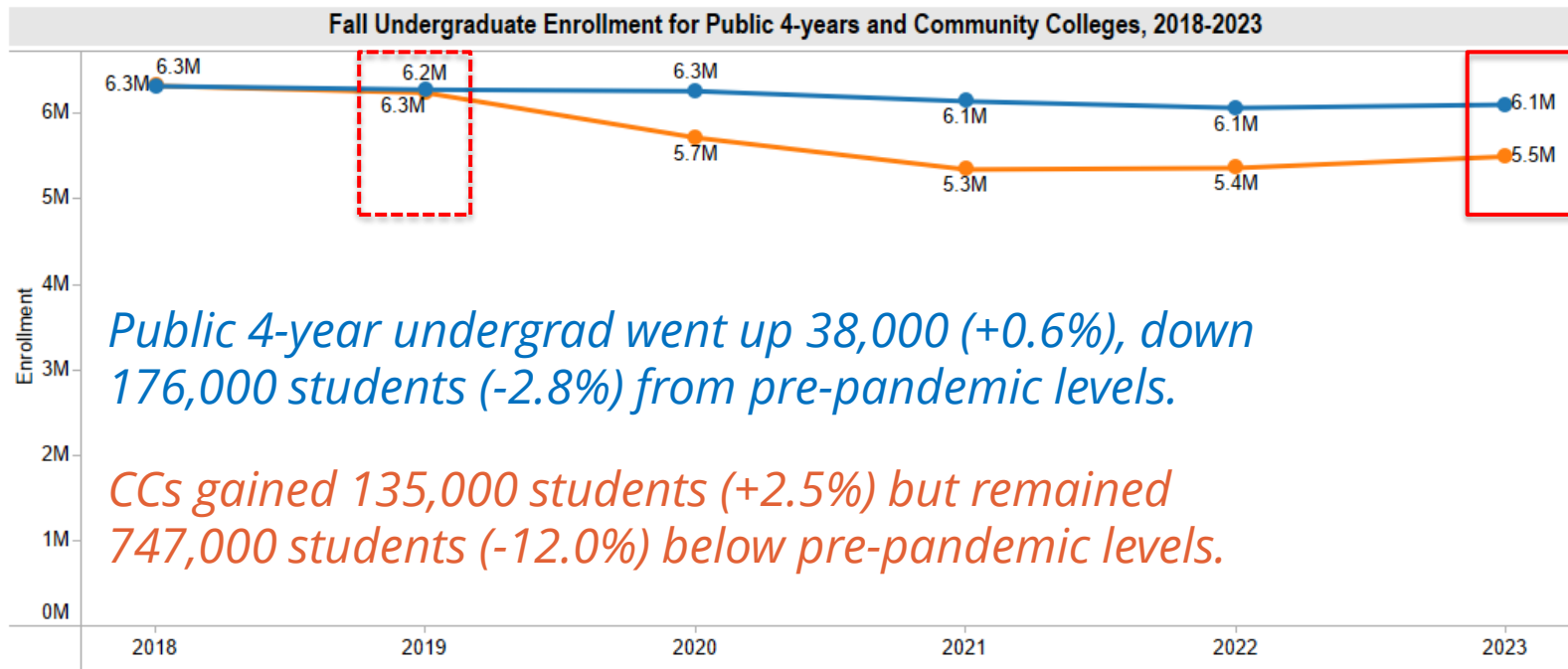
Sarah Karamarkovich, Ph.D., Research Associate

Agenda

- Section I: Fall 2023 Transfer Enrollment
 - How did transfer opportunities and pathways shift in recent years?
 - Who is transferring and where are they going?
- Section II: Entering Community College Cohort
 - How did the pandemic impact who enrolled in community college and their early transfer behaviors?
- Section III: Summary and Implications
- Section IV: Data Dashboard Exploration

**How have transfer
opportunities and
pathways shifted in
recent years?**

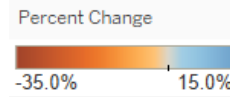
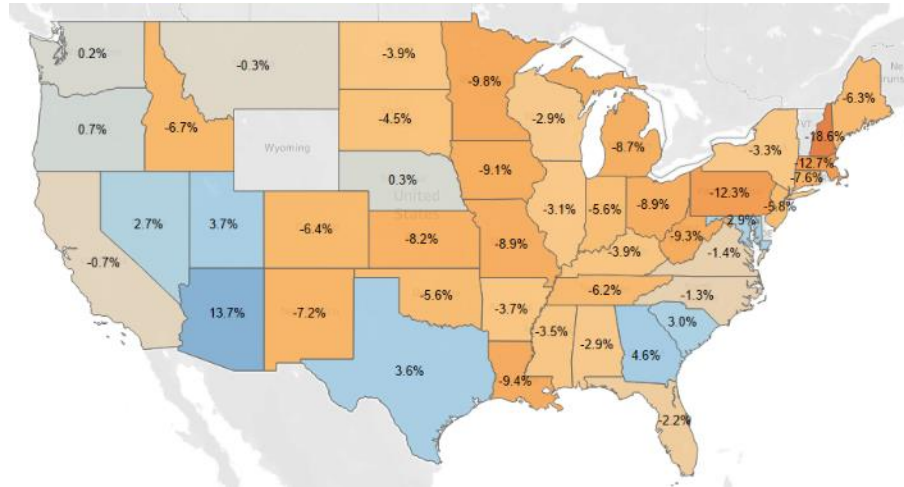
Despite large growth at community colleges in fall 2023, enrollment still below pre-pandemic levels



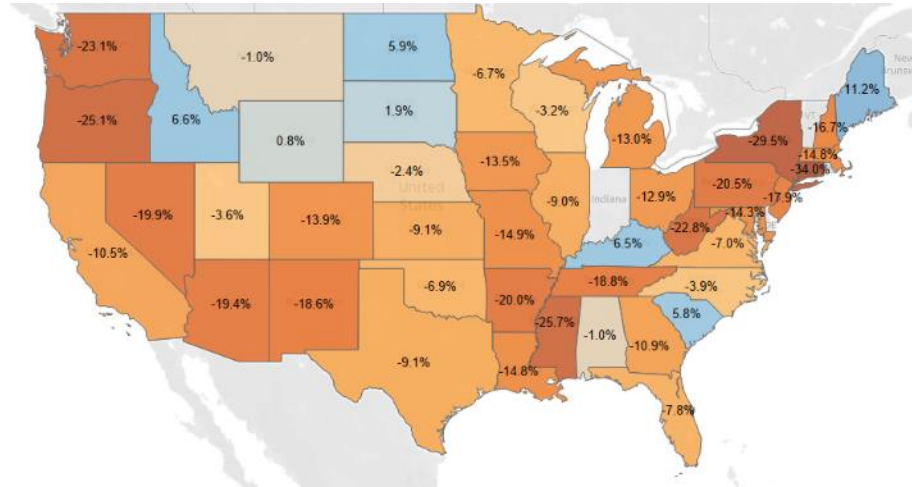
* Community colleges include both Public 2-years and Public PABs.

Cumulative Enrollment Changes Fall 2019 to Fall 2023

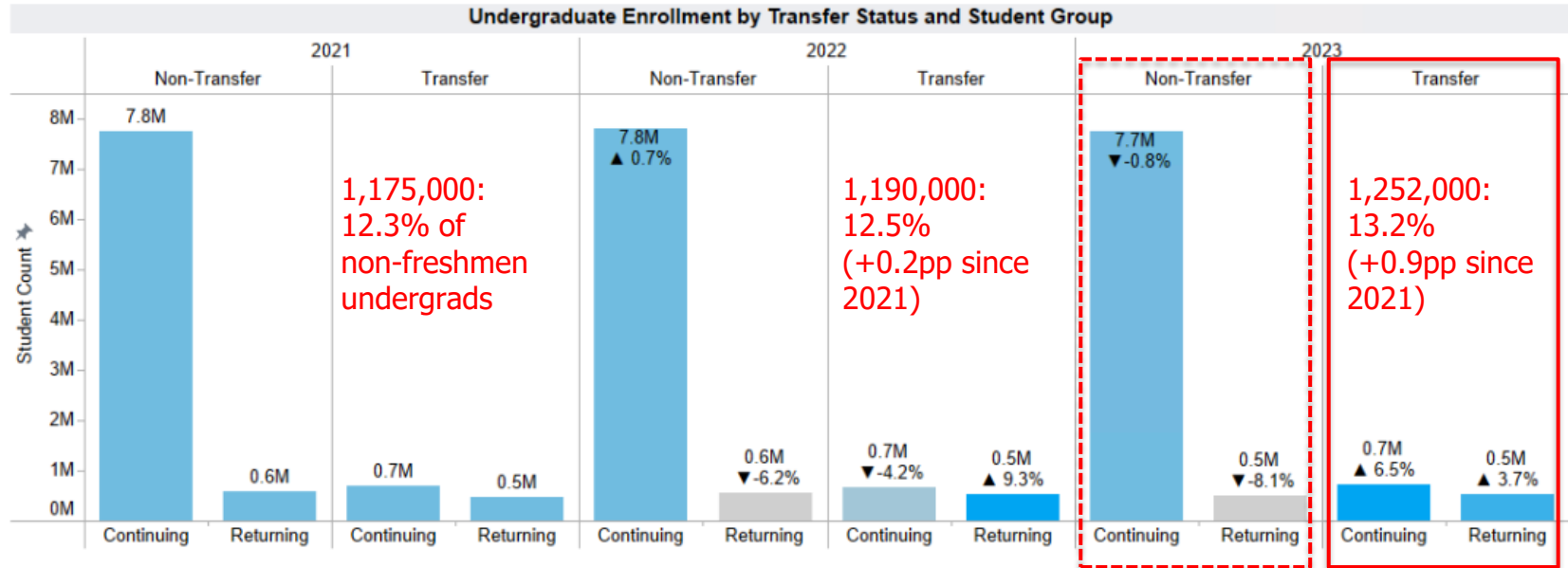
Public 4-Year Undergraduate
-2.8% (nationally)



Community Colleges
-12.0% (nationally)

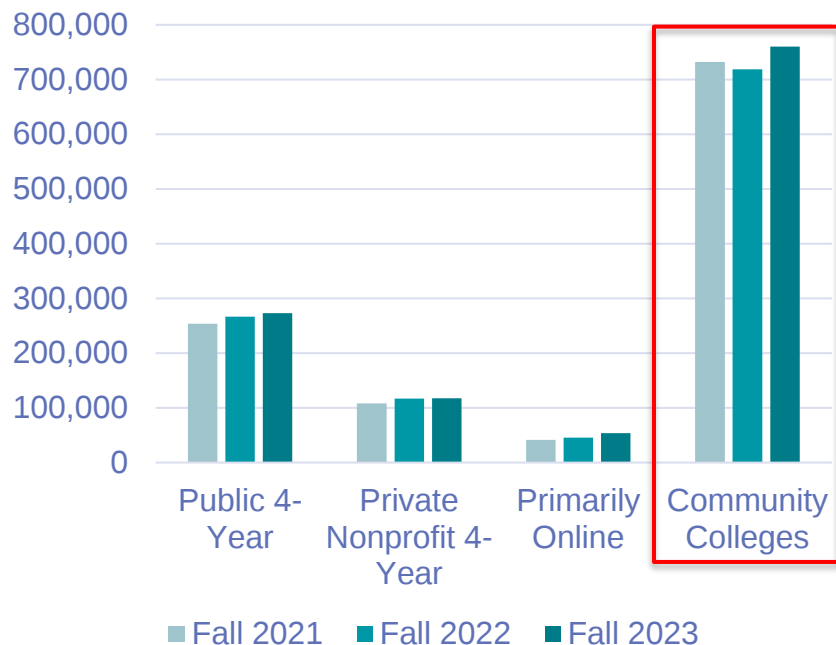


Transfer enrollment represent 13.2% of undergraduates in fall 2023

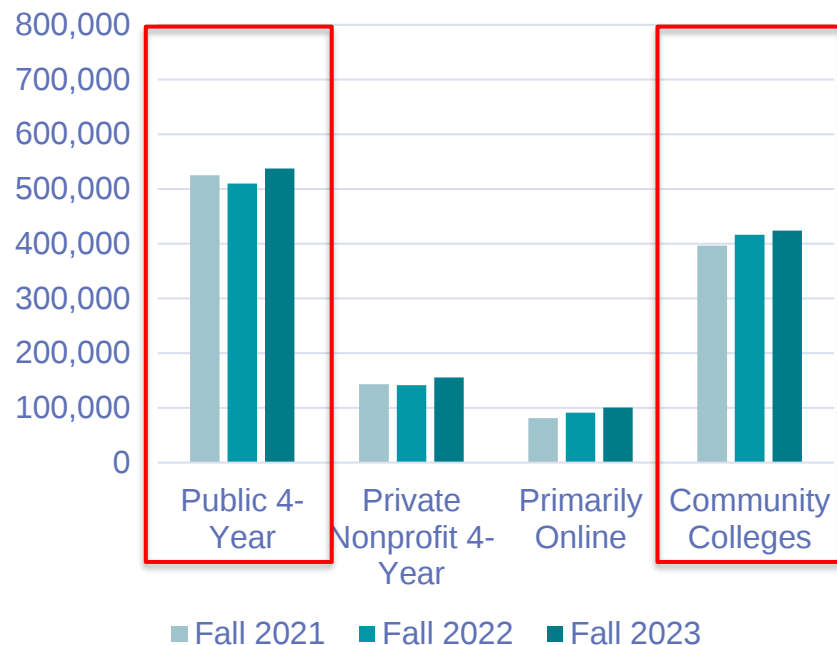


60% of Transfers Originate at Community Colleges

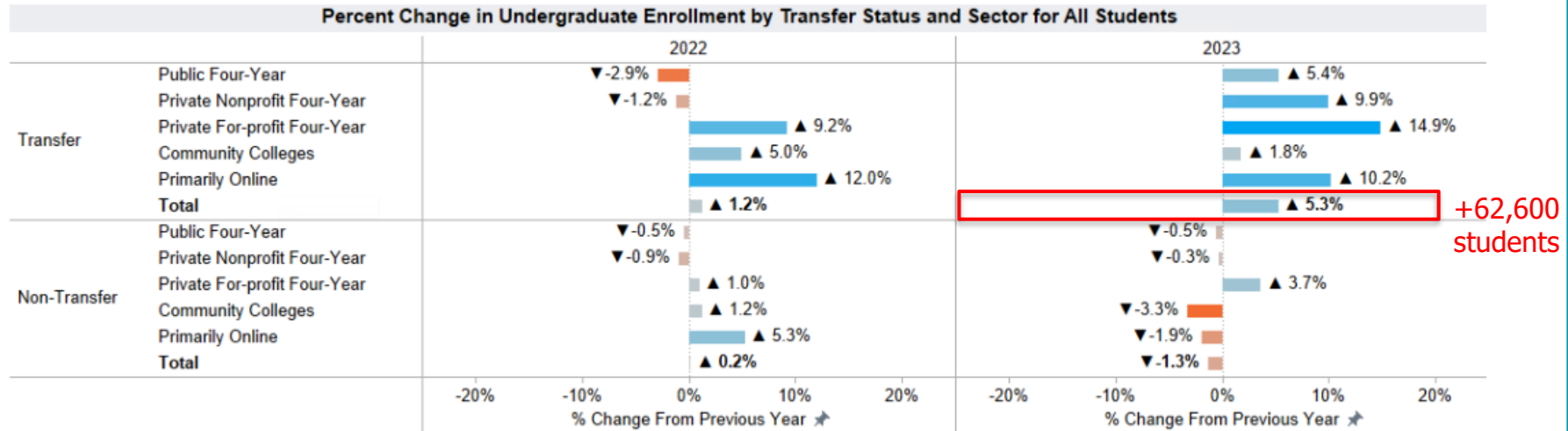
Prior Sector



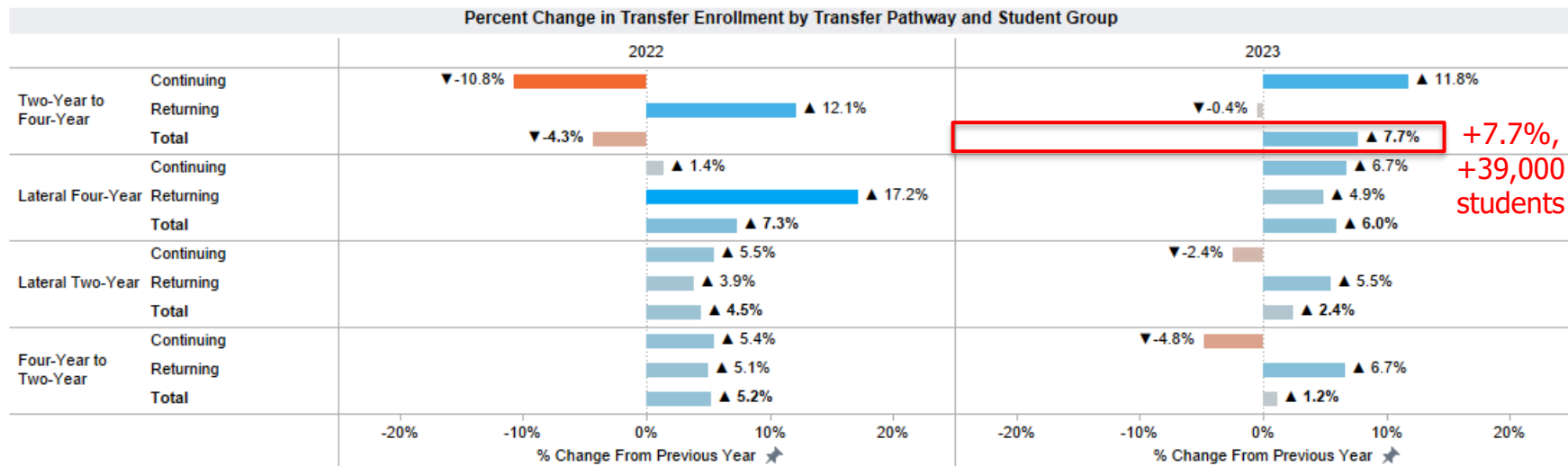
Current Sector



Fall transfer enrollment grew 5.3% compared to fall 2022

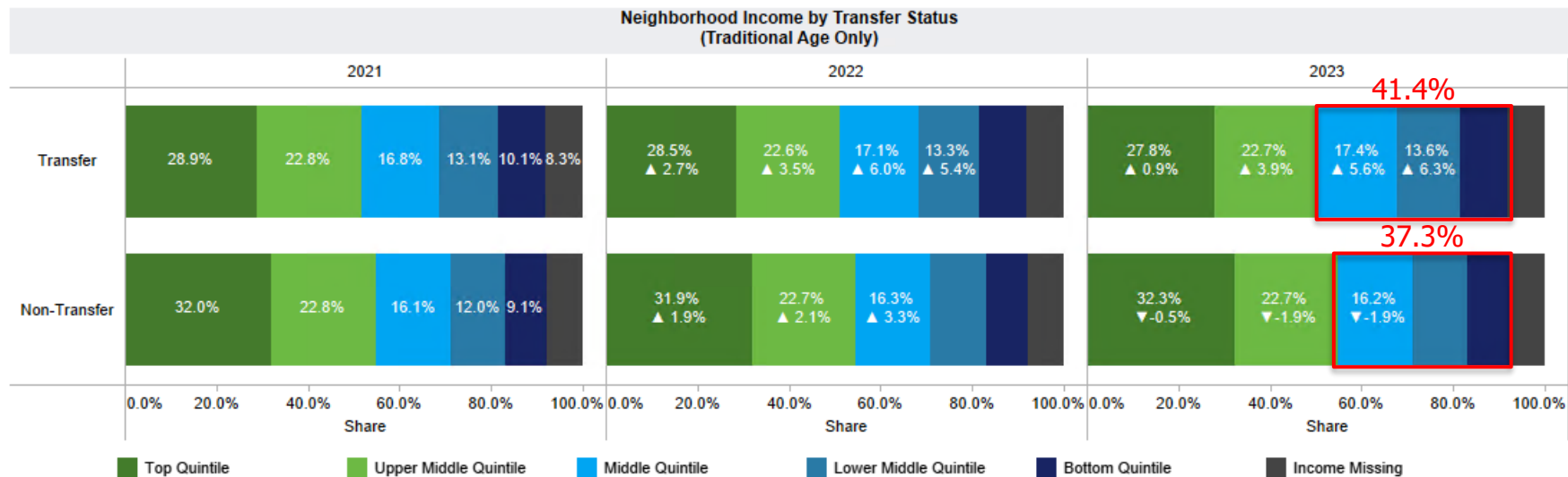


Students transferring from two-year to four-year institutions led growth, increasing 7.7%

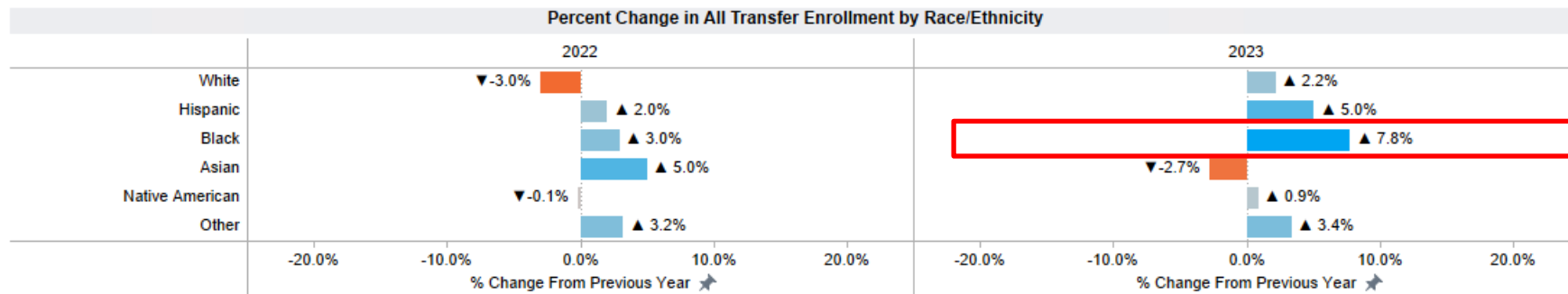


Who transferred and where did they go?

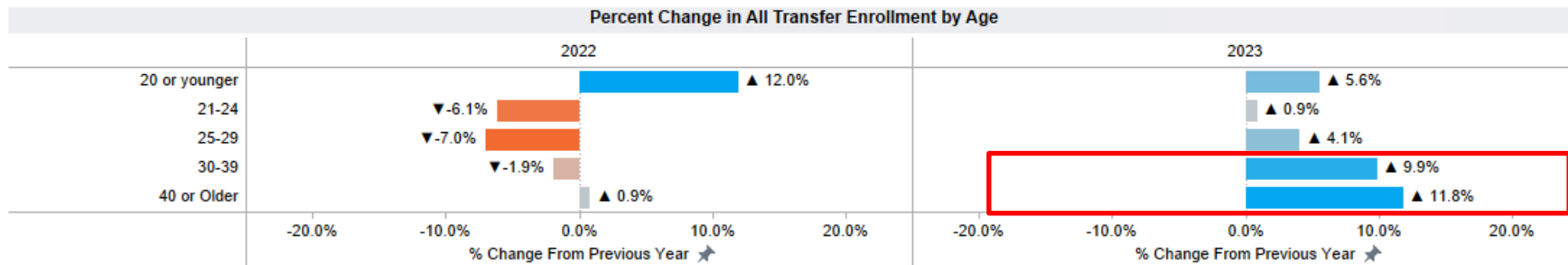
Students from middle- and low-income neighborhoods saw the highest growth in transfer enrollment



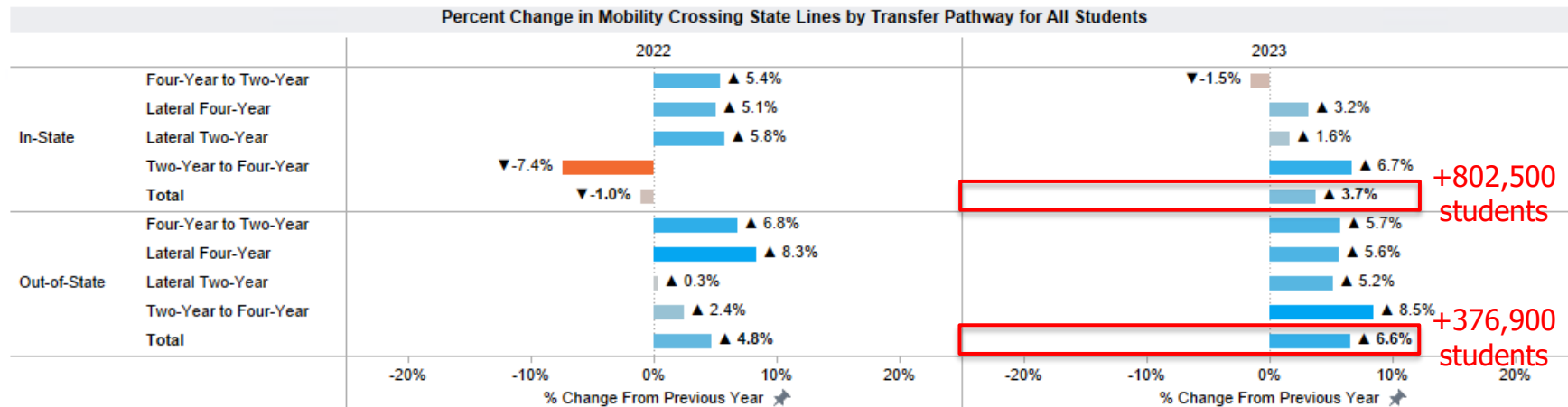
Black students had the highest growth in transfer, driven by returning transfer students



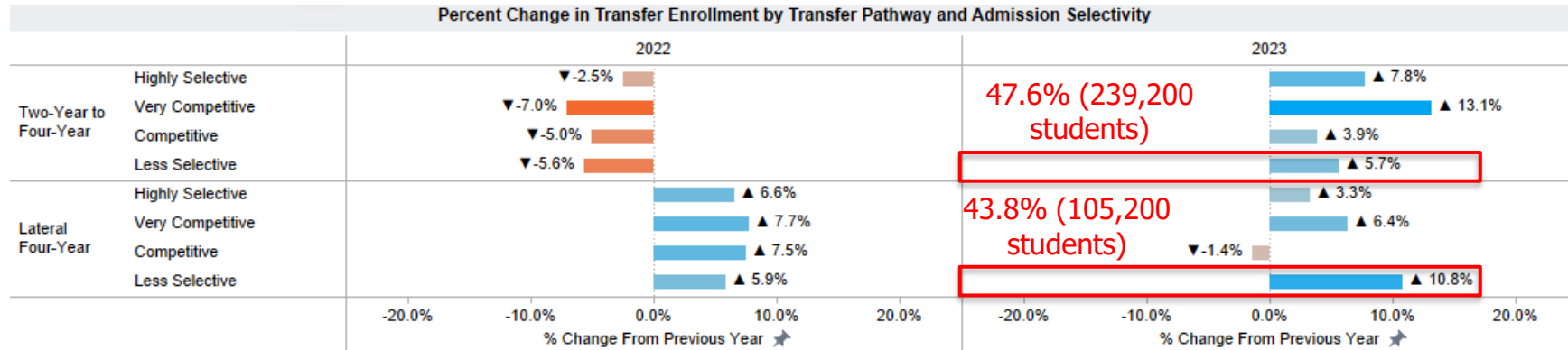
Transfer grew across all age groups with students over 30 making the most gains



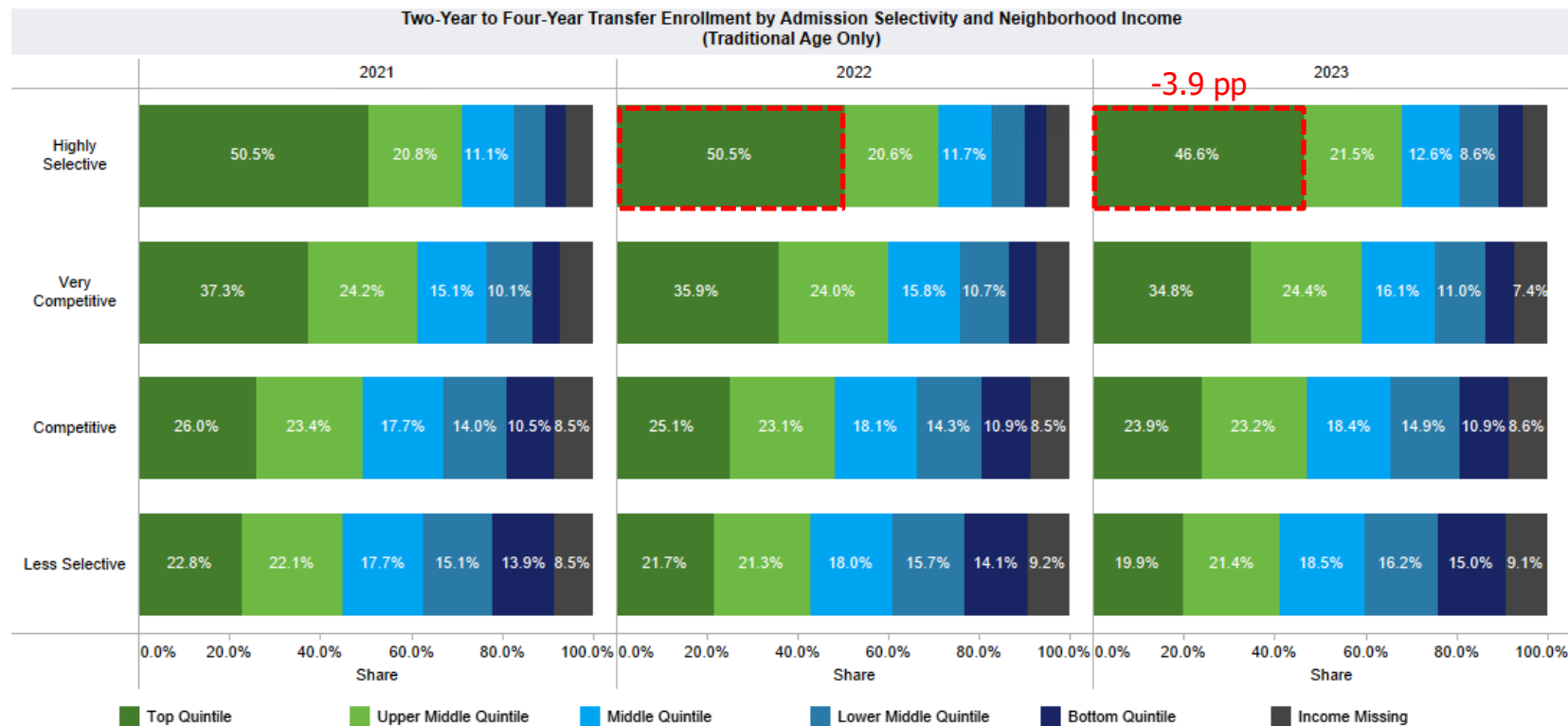
Students mostly stayed in-state (68%) but out-of-state transfers increased at a higher rate across all pathways



Most students transferred into a competitive four-year institution, even with the decline in lateral transfers



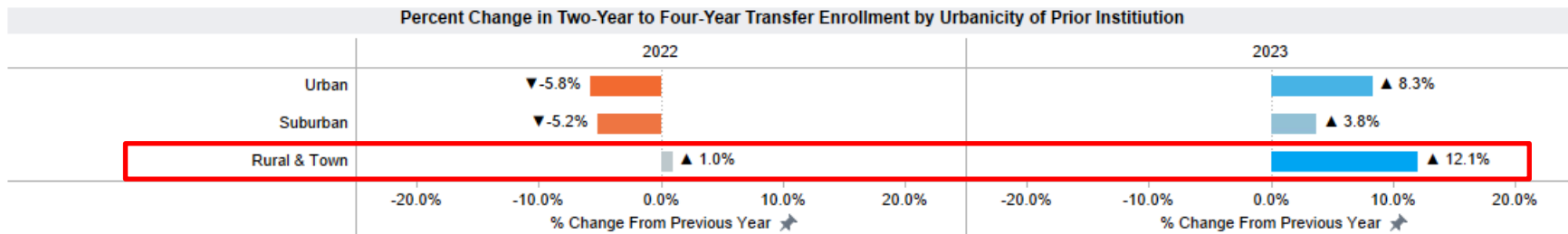
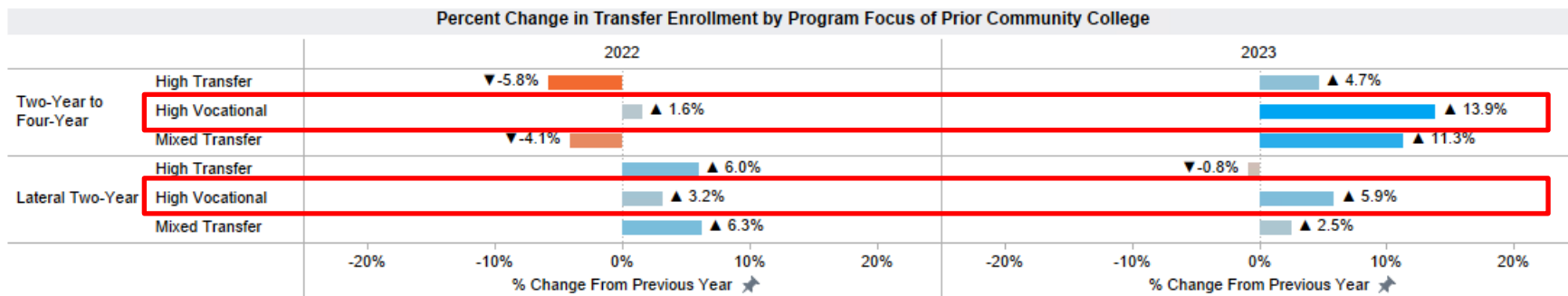
Two to four-year transfer students from highest income neighborhoods declined as a share at highly selective institutions...



...while students from the two lowest neighborhood income quintiles saw large enrollment growth

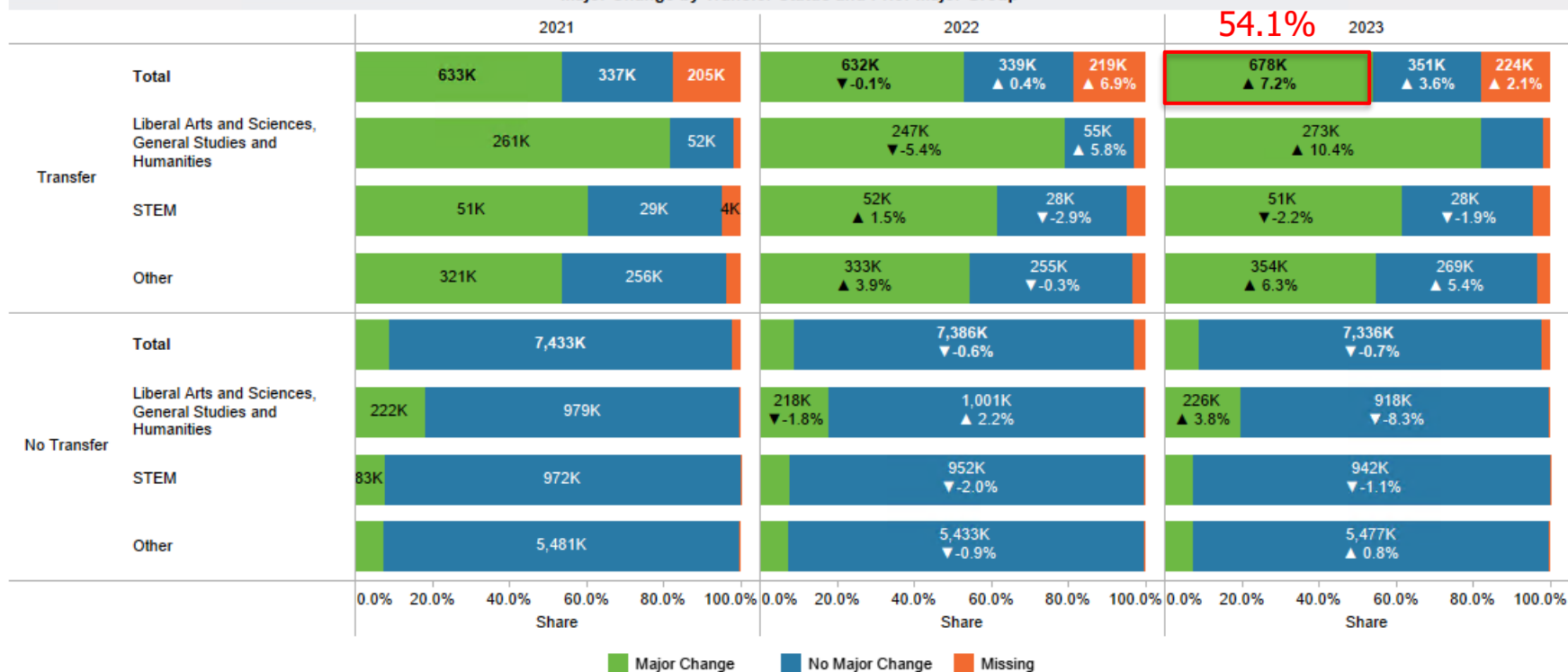


Students from rural community colleges as well as those from vocational focused colleges experienced particularly large growth

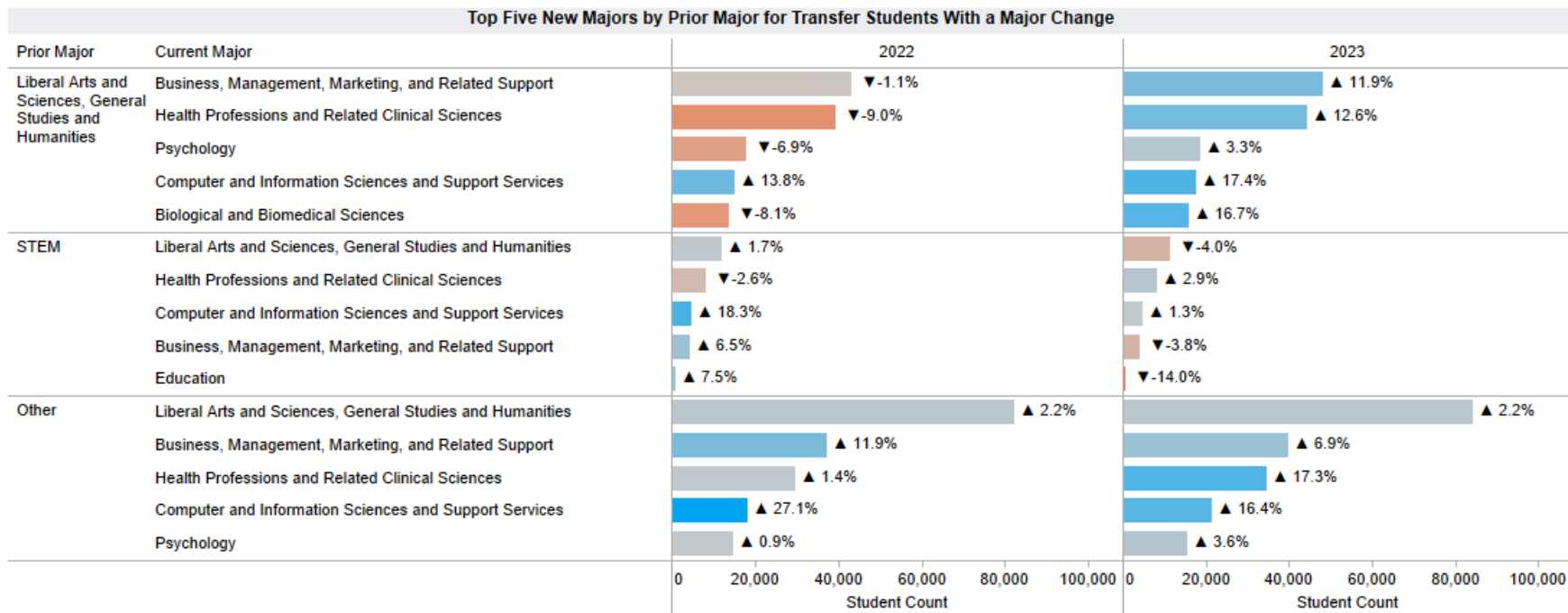


Transfer students more commonly changed their major when moving to a new institution

Major Change by Transfer Status and Prior Major Group

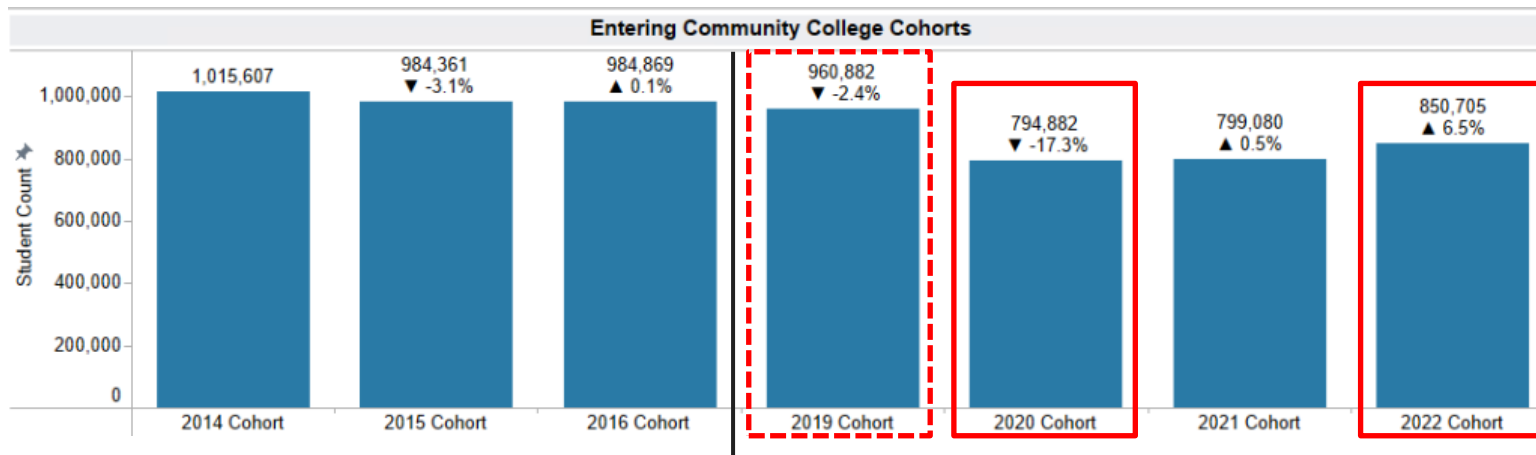


With Liberal Arts, Business, and Health Professions being the most popular majors to transfer into

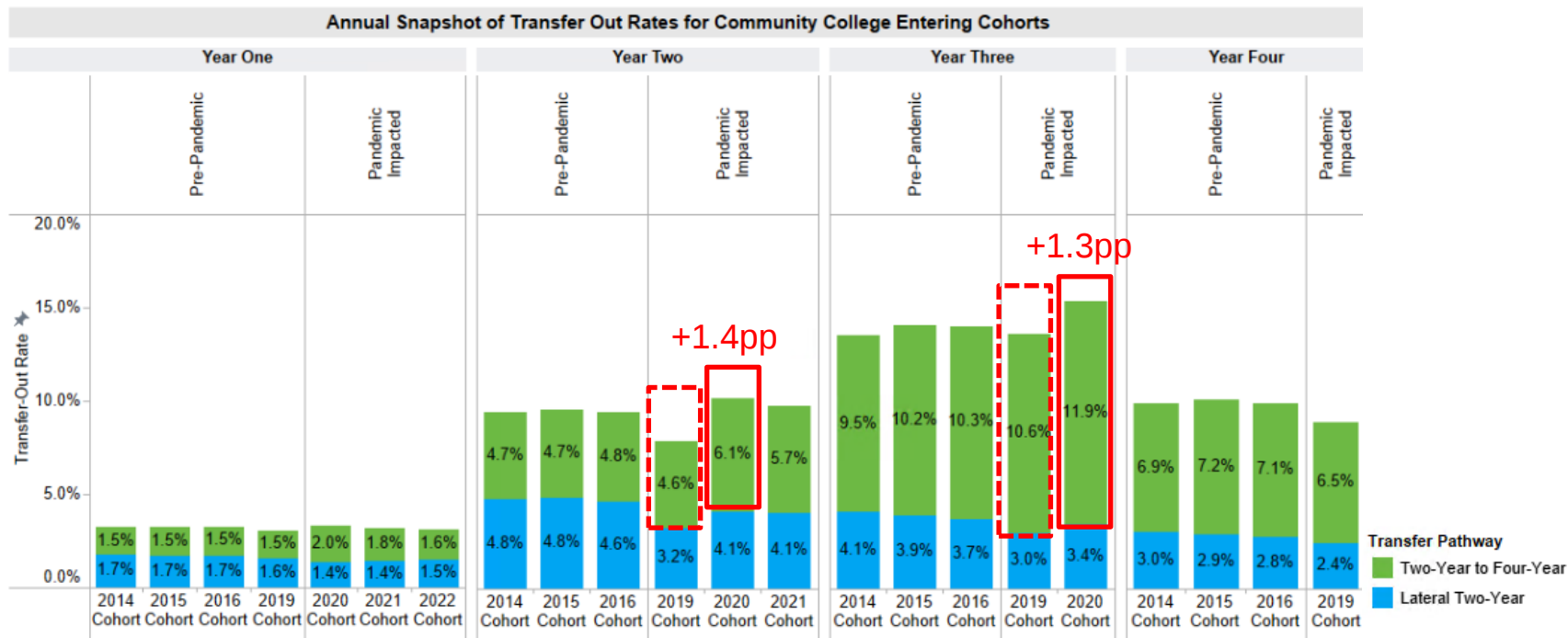


**How did the
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who enrolled in
community college
and their early
transfer behaviors?**

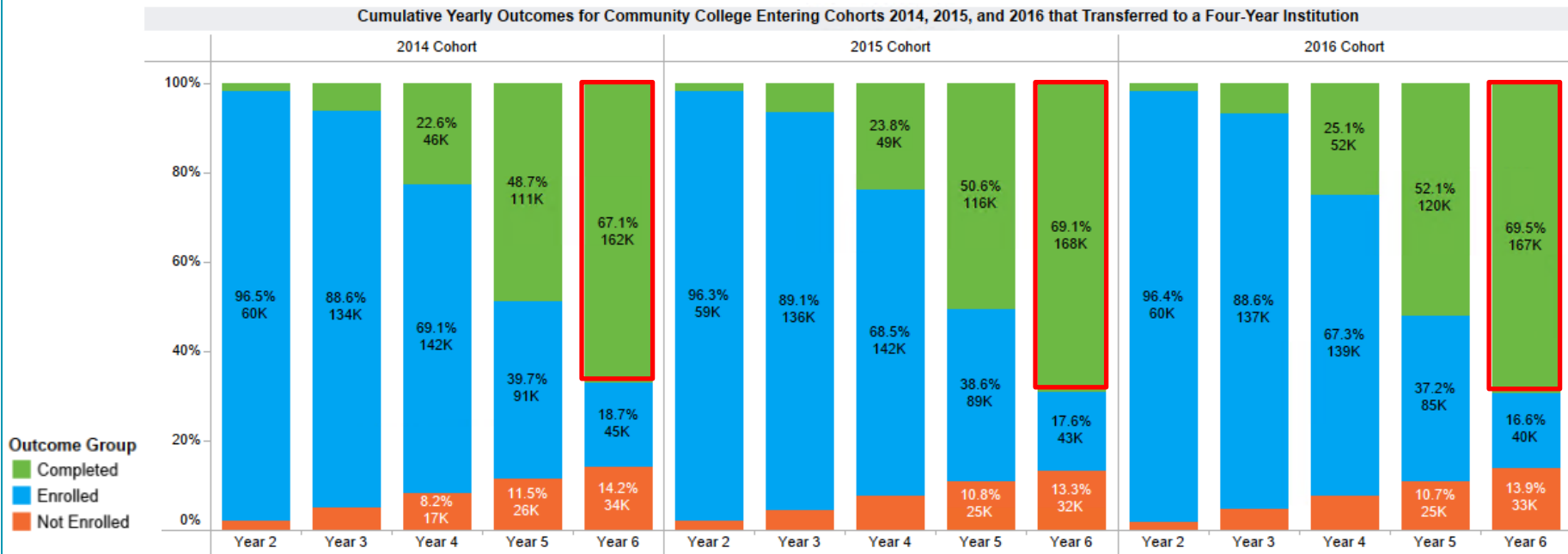
Size of 2022 cohort grew 7% compared to 2020 cohort but this is still about 100,000 students fewer than the pre-pandemic 2019 cohort



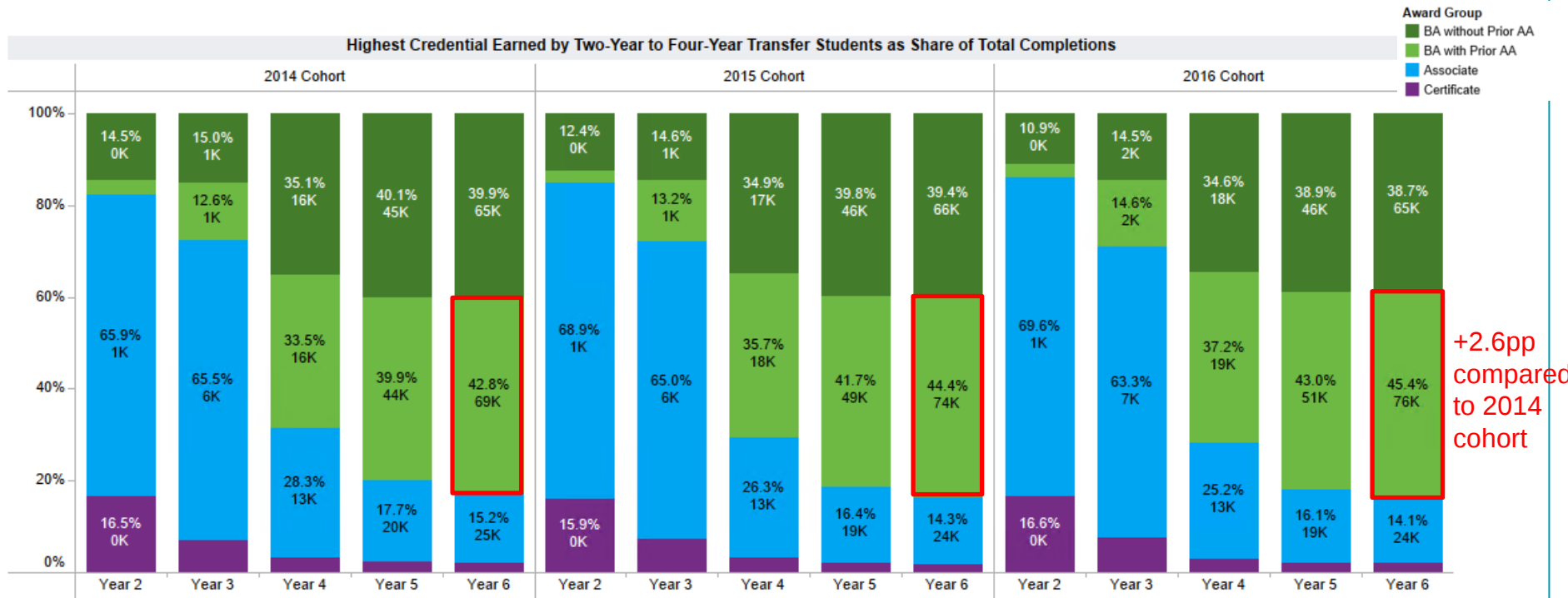
However, even those pandemic-impacted students are seeing gains in transfer rates to four-year institutions



More than two-thirds of community college starters that transferred to a four-year institution completed a credential within six years



A higher share of credentials earned by transfer students in the 2016 cohort were BAs with a prior associate degree



Summary and Implications

Summary and Implications

- Overall transfer enrollment trends present positive news. Student mobility is increasing.
- Two-year to four-year transfers, in particular, led the growth, indicative of entering the path to pandemic recovery among community colleges.
- However, these trends need to be considered against the backdrop of severe pandemic enrollment losses at community colleges.
- Continued growth in lateral transfers indicates students are taking advantage of more options for finding institutions and/or programs that best fit their needs.

Summary and Implications

- Increases in transfer among students traditionally underrepresented in higher education (lower-income, Black and Hispanic, rural community colleges) signals a healthy recovery from declines seen prior years.
- Two-year to four-year transfer gains among students from lower-income neighborhoods to more selective four-year institutions represents an increase in access to bachelor's degrees for students who might not be able to afford four years at a four-year institution.

Summary and Implications

- Transfer rates into four-year institutions increased for pandemic-impacted community college students who started in 2020.
- Six-year baccalaureate degree attainment rates also improved for community college starters transferring to four-year institutions even during their pandemic-impacted years.

Data Dashboard Exploration

Transfer and Progress Dashboard



- To read and explore the data dashboard, and download the appendix, visit:
<https://nscresearchcenter.org/transfer-and-progress/>
 - Transfer enrollment overview
 - Transfer enrollment by demographic background
 - Transfer enrollment by pathways
 - Transfer enrollment by major and state
 - Entering community college cohort overview
 - Outcomes of entering community college cohorts

Transfer and Progress Dashboard: Guiding Questions



- How did six-year completion rates differ by race/ethnicity for students who transferred into four-year institutions for the fall 2014, fall 2015, and fall 2016 community college entering cohorts?
- How has the share of in- versus out-of-state transfer students in my state change in recent three years?
- What are the majors transfer students more likely to switch to after transferring? Do those majors vary by students' prior major at previous institution?

Thank you!

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Upcoming NSCRC Publications

May 2024:

Spring Current Term Enrollment Estimates

June 2024:

Some College, No Credential

The new report series was created with support from the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, through grant R305X220022 to Teachers College, Columbia University as part of the Accelerating Recovery in Community Colleges (ARCC) Network, for the expanded analyses on the pandemic recovery for community colleges; and Ascendium Education Group for student income analyses. The opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Institute or the U.S. Department of Education, nor Ascendium Education.