

# Lessons Learned from Academic Catch-Up Programs

**Michigan Student Success Summit  
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# The Plan for Today



The Landscape of ACUs

Case Study Colleges

Our Panel of Experts

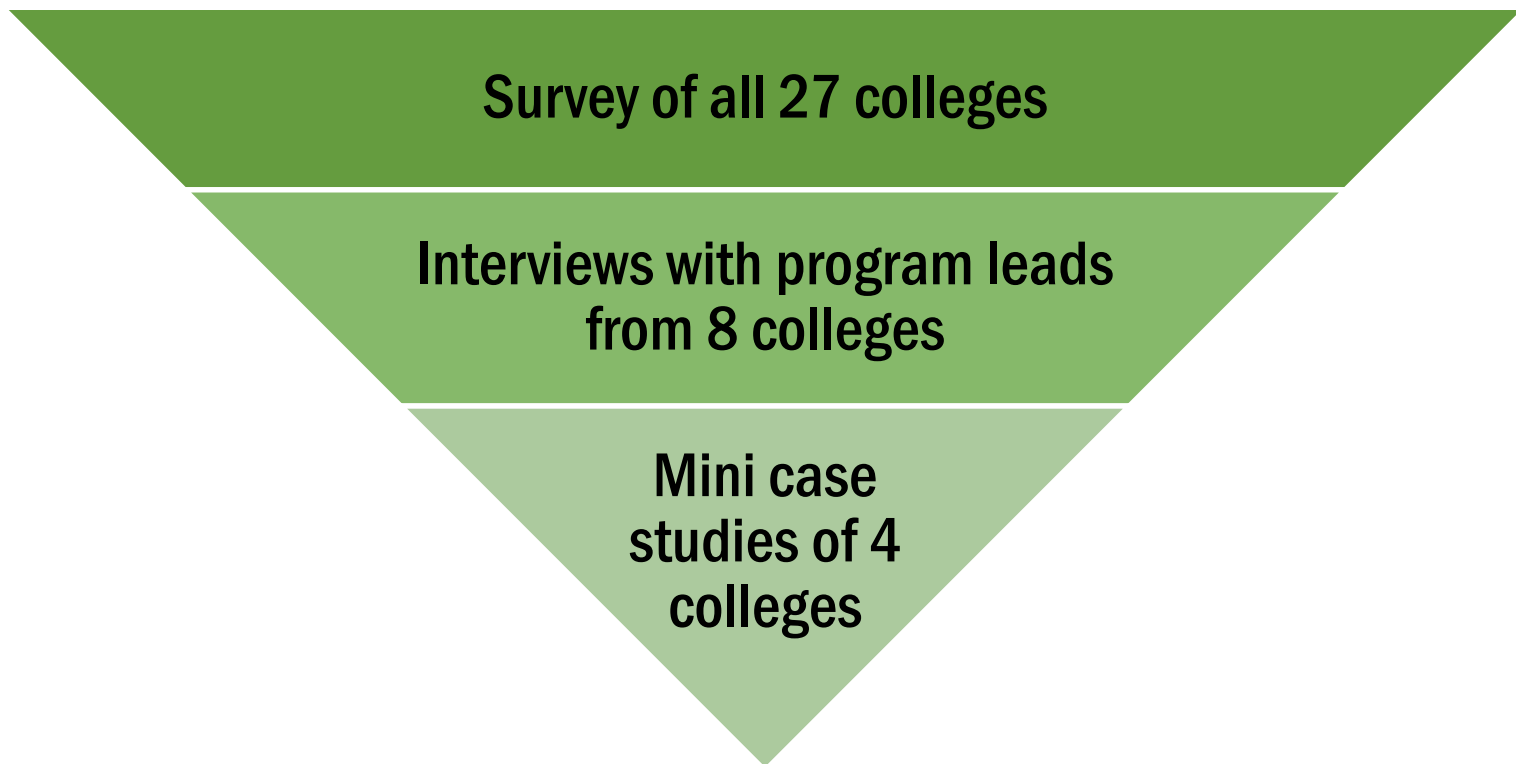
Emerging Best Practices

Questions

# Introduction

In Summer 2023, 25 community colleges and two tribal colleges offered free summer programs to address learning loss due to the pandemic.

To explore the landscape of Michigan's Academic Catch-Up (ACU) programs, a three-phase, mixed methods study was conducted.



# Recruitment

**Programs were promoted through a variety of mediums: social media, press releases, radio and television, college websites and dedicated webpages, flyers, brochures, postcards, emails, direct mail, and phone calls**

**Programs were promoted at a variety of events: college admissions and recruiting events, new student orientation, college tours, and dedicated information sessions**

# Recruitment

**Programs targeted a variety of potential audiences: new applicants, dual enrollment and early college, TRIO, student athletes, Michigan Reconnect, currently enrolled students who had not yet completed math or English**

**Programs also worked through a variety of intermediary audiences: high school counselors, principals, superintendents, TRIO advisors, Adult Education directors, educational partners**

# Program Design

**Programs varied widely in structure and content, ranging in length from 2-10 weeks, meeting 1-5 days per week, for 3-7 hours per day.**

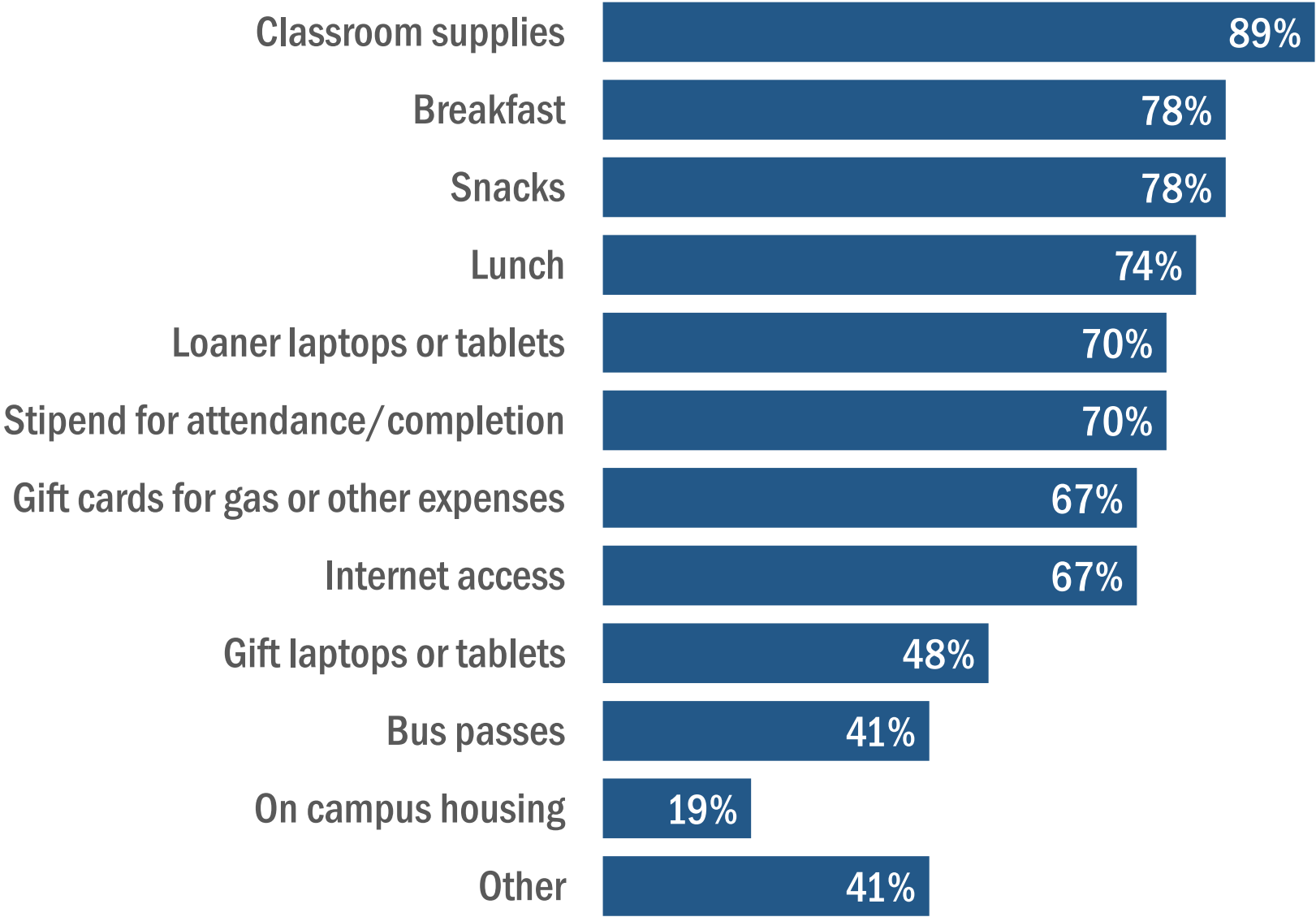
**Math and English content was provided primarily through special non-credit course sessions (74% of colleges); a few offered no cost enrollment in developmental English and math or open labs with instructor or tutor support.**

**College Knowledge content was provided primarily through dedicated course sessions (93% of colleges) facilitated by advisors and success coaches; colleges also offered individual appointments, online modules, and other formats.**

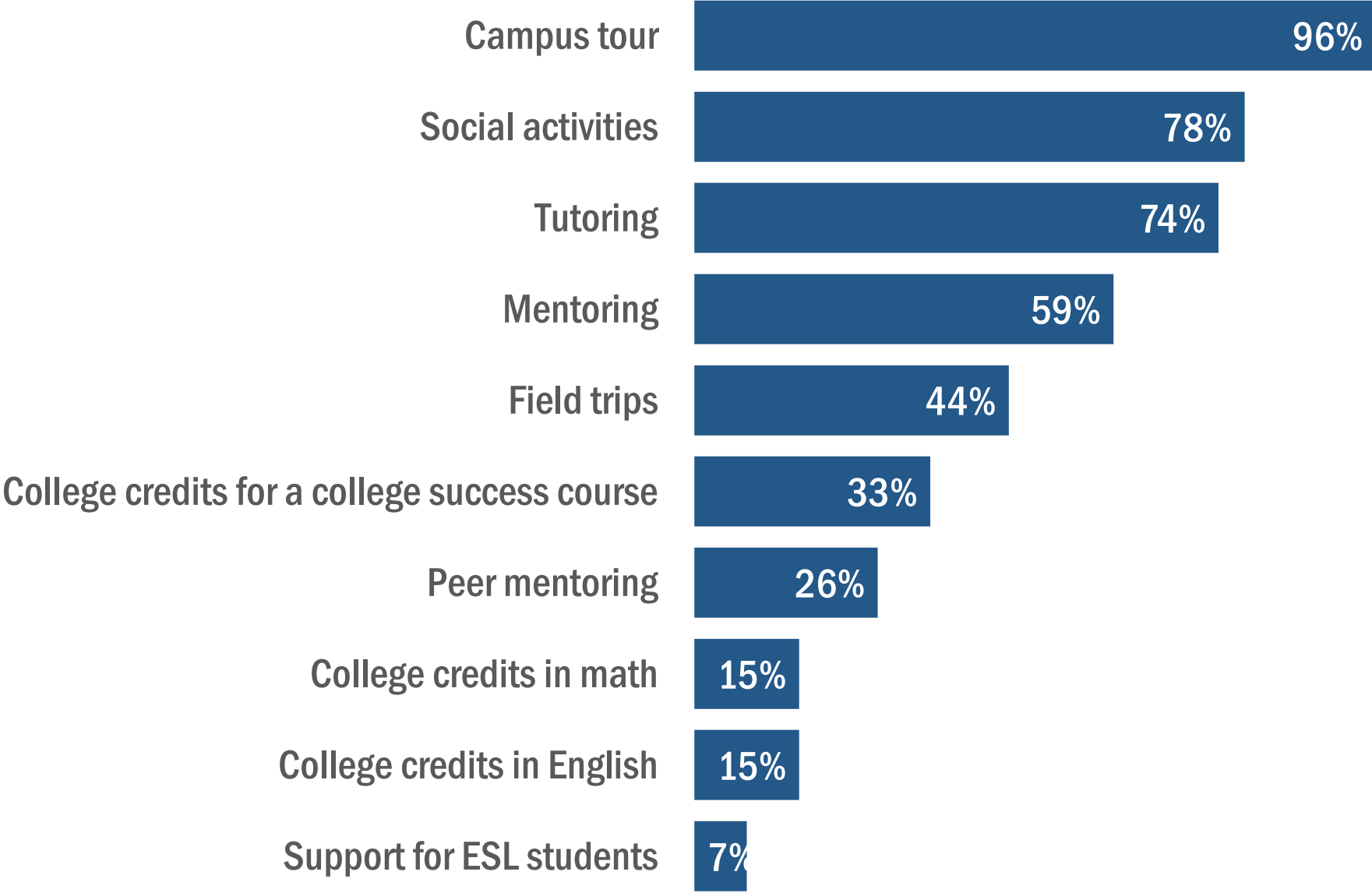
# College Knowledge Topics Covered



# Addressing Students' Basic Needs



# Additional Activities and Supports



# Successes and Challenges

## Successes

- Students enjoyed and were engaged in the program
- Students improved their skills in math and English
- Students were exposed to valuable college resources
- Students made connections with other students, faculty, and staff
- Students increased self-confidence and self-efficacy (especially in math)

## Challenges

- Low enrollment
- Students registering but not starting
- Lack of student engagement and low attendance
- Logistical issues (staffing, scheduling, distributing stipends, transportation)
- Teaching students with a variety of skill levels and support needs

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# College ABLÉ (Macomb)

## Program Design (Summer 2023)

- Four-week hybrid program
- 1 day per week in person (2 hours of math + 2 hours of English) + 4 days online + optional tutoring day on campus or online

	Morning cohort	Evening cohort
English Ready and Able: Writing about the College Experience	Tuesdays 8:00-9:55	Tuesdays 6:00-7:55
Math Able: Mastering Fundamentals and Effective Study Skills	Tuesdays 10:30-12:25	Tuesdays 8:00-9:55
College Knowledge	6 hours of student success workshops	6 hours of student success workshops

# Connections to College (Saginaw Chippewa)

## Program Design (Summer 2023)

- 3 weeks of English → 1 week of College Knowledge → 3 weeks of math
- 4 hours per day (including lunch)
- 1 day per week of excursions and activities

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Weeks 1-3	10-2:00	English (and lunch)	English (and lunch)	English (and lunch)	Excursions and Activities
Week 4		Break			
Week 5	10-2:00	College Knowledge (and lunch)	College Knowledge (and lunch)	College Knowledge (and lunch)	Excursions and Activities
Weeks 6-8	10-2:00	Math (and lunch)	Math (and lunch)	Math (and lunch)	Excursions and Activities

# Kick Off (Muskegon)

## Program Design (Summer 2023)

- 4 days per week for 5 weeks
- 2 hours of CSS + 1.5 hours of math or English on alternating days

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
College Success Seminar (2 hours)	College Success Seminar (2 hours)	College Success Seminar (2 hours)	College Success Seminar (2 hours)
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Mathematics (1.5 hours)	Reading and Writing (1.5 hours)	Mathematics (1.5 hours)	Reading and Writing (1.5 hours)

# Valley Advantage (Kalamazoo Valley)

## Program Design (Summer 2023)

- 4 days per week for 3 weeks
- Breakfast or Lunch (covering resources) + 75 minutes of College Knowledge + 1.5 hours math or English on alternating days

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Morning Cohort	8:00-8:30	Breakfast/ Resources	Breakfast/ Resources	Breakfast/ Resources	Breakfast/ Resources
	8:30-9:45	College Knowledge	College Knowledge	College Knowledge	College Knowledge
	10:00-11:30	Mathematics	Reading/Writing	Mathematics	Reading/Writing

Afternoon Cohort	1:00-1:30	Lunch/ Resources	Lunch/ Resources	Lunch/ Resources	Lunch/ Resources
	1:30-2:45	College Knowledge	College Knowledge	College Knowledge	College Knowledge
	3:00-4:30	Mathematics	Reading/Writing	Mathematics	Reading/Writing

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# Panel Discussion

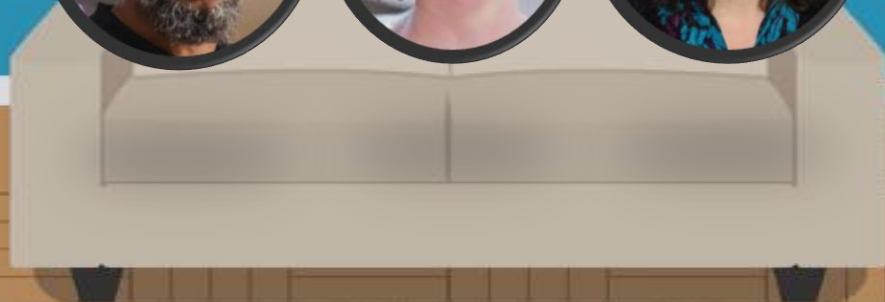
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# Take a Team Approach

**ACU programs were often team efforts led by representatives from student services and academics, with input from multiple departments and offices.**

**Representation from multiple areas of campus was valuable for program logistics, ensuring different perspectives were considered when designing the programs, and exposing students to multiple faculty and staff in different roles who could support them in the future.**

**“It’s easy sometimes to feel like that department doesn’t care as much as our department, but when we all get on the same page, you see that we all do care, we’re just doing it in different ways, and when we do it all together, what we can accomplish is pretty amazing.”**

# Take a Team Approach

**Involve faculty and staff with a passion for student success.**

**“You see instructors who just come in and teach their classes and leave, and we needed instructors who were going to build connections with each student and check on them a bit and get to know them and provide a little bit of individualized learning.”**

**Rely on team members’ expertise to avoid reinventing the wheel.**

**“We thought ‘What are we already doing that we know is amazing?’ as opposed to saying, ‘Who’s got time to create something from scratch, and by the way we need it in two months’.”**

# Offer a Supported Introduction to College

**ACU programs eased students into the college experience.**

**Colleges supported students with embedded tutors and introduced students to college resources that could help them not only during the summer program but also into their first semester at college.**

**“It introduced them to the college and its resources at a time when it maybe wasn’t as overwhelming as it might have been starting in the fall in the midst of other students and more distractions.”**

**Many colleges continued to support ACU students who enrolled in the fall semester, checking in on them, assigning them to success coaches, and holding reunion events.**

# Offer a Supported Introduction to College

## Mitigate students' technology challenges.

**“So many challenges students face is they just need some one-on-one time with help to get logged into their account and get their multifactor authentication set up...every new student should get this.”**

## Address students' confidence and self-efficacy.

**“Objective number one is to make sure you address students' beliefs in themselves, their growth mindset, that you address their past experiences with math.”**

## Provide stipends and other tangible supports.

**“It's the hook to get them signed up, but it's also the hook to get them to do the work when there's no grades attached.”**

# Build community in an engaging environment

Meeting other students helped ease the transition into college and meeting faculty and staff helped connect them with people dedicated to their success.

Although several colleges reported that this group bonding happened organically, colleges also emphasized the importance of intentionally building community among students and between students and faculty/staff.

**“Kind of like a grumpy family, they didn’t always get along, but by the end they all knew that they were there to help each other out.”**

**“I could feel their rapport just by walking in...They had created a sense of community. I wasn’t there to witness how they created it, but I could feel it when I walked into the room.”**

# Build community in an engaging environment

**Humanize faculty and staff to help build connections.**

**“Being able to identify those students over the summer is just so valuable, because in the mix of a fall start with all of our students on campus, those are the students who are much more likely to slip through the cracks.”**

**Have fun and celebrate successes!**

**“I would never want to do this without [the celebration], because it helps the students, they’re feeling some pride inside about what they’ve done and to be able to voice that and verbalize that in front of others and to be able to hear their instructors say great things about them, I think that was a real good springboard into starting the next semester.”**



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The full report can be found at:

<https://www.mcca.org/academic-catch-up-report>