




MASSRECONNECT
Legislative Report

Submitted to the Massachusetts Legislature
May 15, 2025

MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Higher Education

CONTENTS

This report is submitted, pursuant to Chapter 140 of the Acts of 2024, line item 1596-2418, to the Joint Committee on Higher Education and the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means. It outlines the metrics and benchmarks being used to measure the success of the MassReconnect program and shares detailed data on the first two fall cohorts, as well as a snapshot of unduplicated headcount in the first full fiscal year. All data in this report is accurate as of February 3, 2025.

Letter from the Commissioner	2
Program Overview	3
Metric 1: Enrollment of Adult Students & Number of Grant Recipients	4
Metric 2: Race/Ethnicity of Adult Students & Grant Recipients	6
Metric 3: Gender of Adult Students & Grant Recipients	9
Metric 4: Age Group of Adult Students & Grant Recipients	11
Metric 5: FAFSA or MASFA Completion Rate Among Adult Students	13
Metric 6: Retention of Adult Students & Grant Recipients	18
Metric 7: Annual Unduplicated Headcount of adult Students (Snapshot)	20
Planning for Additional Metrics & Assessment	23

LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Dear Honorable Members of the Committees on Ways and Means and the Joint Committee on Higher Education:

I am pleased to submit this legislative report on the MassReconnect program, as we advance through the second implementation year.

The report outlines the metrics being used to measure the MassReconnect program's success, while comparing the Fall 2024 cohort's outcomes with those of the Fall 2023 cohort and the baseline of fall 2022. It also includes a first look at enrollment for FY2024, the first complete fiscal year since the implementation of MassReconnect. As required by the FY25 GAA, this report has been developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC).

This report indicates that MassReconnect is decisively driving enrollment upward among adults at our fifteen (15) community colleges, with further increases seen in the second year of MassReconnect across every subgroup examined herein.

In FY2025, we also have seen a further increase in the FAFSA completion rate among students in the MassReconnect-eligible population. FAFSA completion ensures that students access all available aid, maximizes federal funding, and keeps students' costs and potential debt as low as possible—all of which are outcomes worth celebrating.

On behalf of our Massachusetts community college sector and the thousands of students who benefit from MassReconnect, I thank you for the continued support for the program. Questions about this report may be directed to Alex Demou, Director of Constituent and Legislative Affairs, at ademou@dhe.mass.edu.

Sincerely,

Noe Ortega
Commissioner of Higher Education

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Now in its second year and with a \$4 million increase in its annual appropriation, MassReconnect provides a pathway to affordable higher education for the nearly two million Massachusetts residents over the age of 25 who do not hold a college credential.

Since the implementation of MassReconnect in Fall 2023, community colleges have experienced sharp increases in enrollment. In the first Fall of MassReconnect, enrollment of community college students 25 years and older increased +12.0% (+2,638 students) over the prior fall. This was followed by an increase of +26.8% (+6,594 students) this fall, making for a combined increase of +42.0% (+9,232 students) from fall 2022 to fall 2024. Particularly in this second fall of implementation, the demand for free community college among adult learners remains high.

As a “last dollar” financial aid program, MassReconnect covers any remaining financial need for adults age 25 or over without degrees who enroll in community colleges. After the application of other federal and state aid for which each student qualifies, MassReconnect funding ensures that their tuition and fees are fully covered, and it also provides an allowance for books, supplies, and other approved costs.

To be eligible for a MassReconnect grant, students must:

- be at least 25 years of age or older as of the first day of classes;
- have physically resided in Massachusetts for at least one year, as of the start of the enrolled term, with an intent to remain in Massachusetts consistent with Board of Higher Education (BHE) policy;
- have not previously received an associate or bachelor's degree or the equivalent;
- complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Massachusetts Application for State Financial Aid (MASFA) as applicable for eligible students under the Massachusetts Tuition Equity Law annually;
- be a U.S. Citizen, lawful permanent resident, or non-citizen eligible under Title IV regulations; or have an approved eligibility status designated by the BHE pursuant to the Massachusetts Tuition Equity Law;
- be enrolled in at least six credits per semester; and
- meet satisfactory academic progress according to the institution's requirements and federal standards.

Awards are made directly by the community colleges at the point of enrollment throughout the academic year. The Massachusetts Department of Higher Education continues to partner with the community colleges and the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges to streamline the process of delivering assistance to those students.

METRIC 1: ENROLLMENT OF ADULT STUDENTS & NUMBER OF GRANT RECIPIENTS

As a “last dollar” financial aid program, MassReconnect covers any remaining financial need for tuition and fees for adults without degrees who enroll in community colleges, after the application of other federal and state aid for which each student qualifies. It also functions as a messaging platform to encourage adults to enroll or re-enroll in college, including some who will find their costs fully covered by Pell Grants and/or other aid. Therefore, all of our metrics examine adults age 25 or over and whether they received a MassReconnect grant, as well as MassReconnect grant recipients specifically. This metric tracks enrollment by student type (various types of new students, as well as continuing).

Metric

Enrollment of adults age 25 or over in community colleges and number of MassReconnect grant recipients, overall and among new student types.

Fall 2024 Summary

- From Fall 2023 to Fall 2024, overall enrollment of adults age 25 and over increased +26.8% (+6,594). Over the two-year period from Fall 2022 to Fall 2024, overall enrollment of adults age 25 and over increased +42.0% (+9,232).
- From Fall 2023 to Fall 2024, among new students (new first-time, new transfer, and readmitted / reactivated students) age 25 or over, enrollment increased +39.6% (+3,327).
 - First-time freshman enrollment among adults age 25 and over increased +65.3% (+1,688). First-time freshmen are students who are enrolling in college for the first time ever.
 - New transfer enrollment among adults age 25 and over increased +39.4% (+977). New transfers are students who have previously attended college elsewhere.
 - Readmitted / reactivated enrollment among adults age 25 and over increased +19.8% (+662). Readmitted or reactivated students were previously degree-seeking students at the same institution and have reapplied after a lengthy period of non-enrollment, as defined by the institution’s policies.
- Comparing the population of 7,835 MassReconnect grant recipients and the overall population of students age 25 or over, the grant recipients were more likely than the overall population to be first-time freshmen (16.6% and 13.7% respectively) or readmitted/reactivated students (15.2% and 12.9% respectively). Grant recipients and the overall population of students age 25 or over were just as likely to be transfer students (11.4% and 11.1% respectively).

Baseline and Trend Data

Adult Students Age 25 or Over

Fall Cohort	2022	2023	2024
First-Time Freshman	1,590	2,585	4,274
Transfer	1,946	2,477	3,454
Readmitted/Reactivated	2,271	3,349	4,011
Continuing / Other	16,174	16,205	19,467
All Students	21,981	24,616	31,206

MassReconnect Grant Recipients

Fall Cohort	2022	2023	2024
First-Time Freshman	n/a	670	1,299
Transfer	n/a	542	892
Readmitted/Reactivated	n/a	866	1,188
Continuing / Other	n/a	2,423	4,456
All Students	n/a	4,501	7,835

METRIC 2: RACE/ETHNICITY OF ADULT STUDENTS & GRANT RECIPIENTS

This metric, like all others, looks at the entire group of students who are eligible for MassReconnect to better measure the impact that the message “free community college” is having on enrollment of adult learner subgroups (by race/ethnicity in this case), as well as the distribution of the direct aid by subgroup.

Metric

Enrollment of students age 25 or over in community colleges and number of students receiving MassReconnect grants, disaggregated by race/ethnicity.

Fall 2024 Summary

- From Fall 2023 to Fall 2024, there was enrollment growth among every racial/ethnic group in the overall population of adults age 25 or over, including an +30.6% increase (+1,696) in Hispanic or Latino students, a +23.8% increase (+1,131) in Black or African American students, and a +25.9% increase (+2,777) in White students.
- Over the two-year period from Fall 2022 to Fall 2024, Hispanic or Latino students experienced the highest increase of +57.4% (+2,637), followed by Black or African American students with an increase of +43.0% (+1,771), and White students with +33.3% (+3,371).
- From Fall 2023 to Fall 2024, among new students (new first-time, new transfer, and readmitted / reactivated students) age 25 or over, there was enrollment growth within every racial/ethnic group, including +31.8% (+524) for Black or African American students, +42.0% (+847) for Hispanic or Latino students, and +40.0% (+1,463) for White students.
- Comparing the population of MassReconnect grant recipients and the overall population of students age 25 or over (students of known race only), the racial/ethnic diversity is comparable, but the grant recipients were more likely than the overall population to be Hispanic or Latino (25.5% and 24.6% respectively) or White (49.0% and 45.9% respectively), and less likely to be Black or African American (17.1% and 20.0% respectively).

Baseline and Trend Data

Adult Students Age 25 or Over

Fall Cohort	Race/Ethnicity	2022	2023	2024
New Students	American Indian or Alaskan Native	14	19	43
	Asian or Pacific Islander	274	341	464
	Black or African American	1,049	1,667	2,172
	Hispanic or Latino	1,341	1,966	2,864
	Two or more races	211	375	491
	White	2,643	3,667	5,116
	All Known Races/Ethnicities	5,532	8,035	11,150
All Students	American Indian or Alaskan Native	50	56	95
	Asian or Pacific Islander	1,127	1,164	1,375
	Black or African American	4,135	4,811	5,890
	Hispanic or Latino	4,576	5,442	7,242
	Two or more races	767	895	1,313
	White	10,142	10,762	13,491
	All Known Races/Ethnicities	20,797	23,130	29,406

MassReconnect Grant Recipients

Fall Cohort	Race/Ethnicity	2022	2023	2024
New Students	American Indian or Alaskan Native	n/a	7	12
	Asian or Pacific Islander	n/a	80	124
	Black or African American	n/a	361	522
	Hispanic or Latino	n/a	499	866
	Two or more races	n/a	92	135
	White	n/a	993	1,626
	All Known Races/Ethnicities	n/a	2,032	3,285
All Students	American Indian or Alaskan Native	n/a	10	20
	Asian or Pacific Islander	n/a	212	299
	Black or African American	n/a	814	1,303
	Hispanic or Latino	n/a	1,084	1,941
	Two or more races	n/a	190	312
	White	n/a	2,058	3,727
	All Known Races/Ethnicities	n/a	4,368	7,602

Note: "New Students" includes first-time freshmen, transfer, and readmitted/reactivated. Students of unknown race/ethnicity, including U.S. non-residents, are excluded from these tables.

METRIC 3: GENDER OF ADULT STUDENTS & GRANT RECIPIENTS

This metric, like all others, looks at the entire group of students who are eligible for MassReconnect to better measure the impact that the message “free community college” is having on enrollment of adult learner subgroups (by gender in this case), as well as the distribution of direct aid by subgroup.

Metric

Enrollment of students age 25 or over in community colleges and number of students receiving MassReconnect grants, disaggregated by gender.

Fall 2024 Summary

- From Fall 2023 to Fall 2024, overall enrollment of male adults age 25 or over increased +32.5% (+2,313) and of female adults age 25 or over increased +24.4% (+4,223).
 - Over the two-year period from fall 2022 to fall 2024, enrollment of male adults age 25 or over increased +55.4% (+3,366) and of female adults age 25 or over increased +36.4% (+5,742).
- From Fall 2023 to Fall 2024, among new students (new first-time, new transfer, and readmitted / reactivated students) age 25 or over, male enrollment increased +39.7% (+1,024) and female enrollment increased +39.1% (+2,261).
- Comparing the population of MassReconnect grant recipients and the overall population of students age 25 or over, both were predominantly female, but grant recipients were more likely to be male than the overall population (33.7% and 30.5% respectively).

Baseline and Trend Data

Adult Students Age 25 or Over

Fall Cohort	Gender	2022	2023	2024
New Students	Female	4,103	5,775	8,038
	Male	1,675	2,578	3,605
	Another Gender	n/a	n/a	»
	All Known & Reported Genders	5,778	8,353	11,643
All Students	Female	15,793	17,295	21,531
	Male	6,074	7,122	9,437
	Another Gender	n/a	n/a	»
	All Known & Reported Genders	21,867	24,418	30,968

MassReconnect Grant Recipients

Fall Cohort	Gender	2022	2023	2024
New Students	Female	n/a	1,396	2,254
	Male	n/a	667	1,107
	Another Gender	n/a	n/a	»
	All Known & Reported Genders	n/a	2,063	3,379
All Students	Female	n/a	3,051	5,139
	Male	n/a	1,431	2,641
	Another Gender	n/a	n/a	»
	All Known & Reported Genders	n/a	4,482	7,835

Note: "New Students" includes first-time freshmen, transfer, and readmitted/reactivated. Students of unknown gender are excluded from these tables.

» DHE introduced the category of "Another Gender" in its data collection in fall 2024 and, as is typical with new fields and variables, expects to begin reporting it publicly after normalizing its use.

METRIC 4: AGE GROUP OF ADULT STUDENTS & GRANT RECIPIENTS

MassReconnect is intended to offer all adults who do not have college degrees the opportunity to benefit from a college education. Whether they are just beginning their career or are entering or returning to college later in life, benefits may include achievement of personal, academic, and career goals along with societal benefits such as greater civic engagement. This metric indicates which age groups are taking advantage of this opportunity and at what scale.

Metric

Enrollment of students age 25 or over in community colleges and number of students receiving MassReconnect grants, disaggregated by age group.

Fall 2024 Summary

- From Fall 2023 to Fall 2024, among all students age 25 or over, there was enrollment growth within every age group, including a +22.9% increase (+3,258) in the 25–34 group and a +31.5% increase (+2,090) in the 35–44 age group.
- Over the two-year period from Fall 2022 to Fall 2024, there was an enrollment increase of +33.3% (+4,373) in the 25–34 age group and +52.3% increase (+2,998) in the 35–44 group.
- From fall 2023 to fall 2024, among new students age 25 or over, there was enrollment growth within every age group, including an +36.8% increase (+1,788) in the 25–34 group and a +42.8% increase (+3,292) in the 35–44 group.
- Comparing the population of MassReconnect grant recipients and the overall population of students age 25 or over, both were predominantly ages 25–34 (56.7% of grant recipients and 56.1% of the overall population).

Baseline and Trend Data

Adult Students Age 25 or Over

Fall Cohort	Age Group	2022	2023	2024
New Students	25–34	3,558	4,853	6,641
	35–44	1,511	2,304	3,292
	45–54	547	926	1,368
	55 or over	191	328	438
	All 25 or over	5,807	8,411	11,739
All Students	25–34	13,144	14,257	17,512
	35–44	5,739	6,643	8,735
	45–54	2,244	2,640	3,593
	55 or over	854	1,076	1,366
	All 25 or over	21,981	24,616	31,206

MassReconnect Grant Recipients

Fall Cohort	Age Group	2022	2023	2024
New Students	25–34	n/a	1,246	1,862
	35–44	n/a	514	943
	45–54	n/a	240	428
	55 or over	n/a	78	146
	All 25 or over	n/a	2,078	3,379
All Students	25–34	n/a	2,880	4,439
	35–44	n/a	1,080	2,096
	45–54	n/a	405	957
	55 or over	n/a	136	343
	All 25 or over	n/a	4,501	7,835

Note: "New Students" includes first-time freshmen, transfer, and readmitted/reactivated.

METRIC 5: FAFSA OR MASFA COMPLETION RATE AMONG ADULT STUDENTS

Of all MassReconnect grant criteria, the requirement to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the new Massachusetts Application for State Financial Aid (MASFA) likely presents the greatest barriers for students, as these forms are perceived as complex and stressful to complete, particularly for families who are new to the college and financial aid application process. A [2023 paper from Brookings](#) states:

The FAFSA has historically been a very difficult form to navigate. The process can be especially challenging for low-income students, who tend to have fewer academic supports and whose parents are less likely to have been through the college application process. Financial challenges and anxieties associated with poverty can further strain families' ability to navigate complex processes.

Through MassReconnect, any Massachusetts resident age 25 or older without a prior degree who enrolls at a community college for six or more credits per term is guaranteed aid to cover tuition, fees, and an allowance for books and supplies—as long as they complete the FAFSA or MASFA. This metric tells us what percentage of students who meet all other criteria for MassReconnect have checked the final box of completing the FAFSA or MASFA and claimed all aid available to them, up to and including a MassReconnect grant if needed. The Department of Higher Education is working jointly with the Department of Elementary Secondary Education to improve FAFSA completion rates. While there is more work to be done, the data below indicate that the rates are improving year-over-year.

Metric

Percentage of adult students who completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Massachusetts Application for State Financial Aid (MASFA), along with meeting all other primary MassReconnect grant criteria (Massachusetts residency, no prior degree, enrolled for six or more credits per term).

Note: With the very recent implementation of MASFA in January 2024, no completion data has yet been published, but it will be provided in future reports.

Fall 2024 Summary

- In Fall 2024, among all students age 25 or over who met MassReconnect's residency, credit and prior education requirements, FAFSA completion was 88.3%, an increase of +4.7 percentage points from Fall 2023.
- Over the two-year period from Fall 2022 to Fall 2024, the FAFSA completion rate increased among this population by +11.0 percentage points.

- In Fall 2024, among new students age 25 or over who met MassReconnect's residency, credit & prior education requirements, FAFSA completion was 91.3%, an increase of +3.9 percentage points from Fall 2023.
 - Over the two-year period from fall 2022 to fall 2024, the FAFSA completion rate increased among this population by +12.1 percentage points.
- Within the all-student subpopulation:
 - From Fall 2023 to Fall 2024, there were increases in FAFSA completion rates among every racial/ethnic group except for American Indian or Alaskan Native students (-3.4 percentage points).
 - White students had the largest increase of +6.2 percentage points, followed by Asian or Pacific Islander students at +4.3 percentage points, students of two or more races at +4.0 percentage points, Hispanic or Latino students at +3.4 percentage points, and Black or African American students at +3.2 percentage points.
- Over the two-year period from Fall 2022 to Fall 2024, White students have had the largest increase in FAFSA completion at +13.8 percentage points, followed by Asian or Pacific Islander students at +12.3 percentage points.
 - FAFSA completion rates among Asian or Pacific Islander and Black or African American students within this population were lower than the overall rate, at 80.0% and 87.2% respectively. Rates among Hispanic or Latino and White students were near the overall average at 90.1% and 89.7% respectively.
 - There were also increases in these rates among every gender group dating back to Fall 2023, including an increase of +7.7 percentage points for male students and +3.6 percentage points for female students. The 83.9% rate for male students still trails the overall rate.
- Over the two-year period from Fall 2022 to Fall 2024, male students had an increase in FAFSA completion of +17.6 percentage points.
- Within the new student subpopulation:
 - From Fall 2023 to Fall 2024, there were increases in FAFSA completion rates among every racial/ethnic group.
 - Among the larger racial/ethnic groups, Asian or Pacific Islander students had the largest increase of +4.9 percentage points, followed by Black or African American students at +4.4 percentage points, White students at +3.8 percentage points, and Hispanic or Latino students at +2.8 percentage points over 2023. Nonetheless, FAFSA completion rates among Asian or Pacific Islander and Black or African American students within this population were lower than the overall rate, at 85.9% and 90.1% respectively.
- Over the two-year period from Fall 2022 to Fall 2024, Asian or Pacific Islander students have had the largest increase in FAFSA completion at +18.5 percentage points, followed by White students at +14.0 percentage points.

- Among the smaller racial/ethnic groups, American Indian or Alaskan Native student had the largest increase of +7.3 percentage points, followed by students of two or more races at +6.4 percentage points.
- There were also increases in these rates among every gender group since Fall 2023, including an increase of +6.1 percentage points for male students and +2.9 percentage points for female students. The 87.9% rate for male students still trails the overall rate.
 - Over the two-year period from fall 2022 to fall 2024, male students had an increase in FAFSA completion of +17.5 percentage points.
- While these improvements in FAFSA completion rates among the target population are significant , according to this analysis, there were 2,398 enrolled students who otherwise qualified for MassReconnect but did not complete FAFSA. These included 557 Black or African American students, 563 Hispanic or Latino students, and 999 White students or, by gender, 1,475 female students and 1,125 male students. Additional emphasis on FAFSA completion efforts may improve the rates and equitable access to this program.

Baseline and Trend Data

FAFSA Completion Rate of Adult Students Age 25 or Over who meet MassReconnect residency, credit & prior education requirements

Fall Cohort	2022	2023	2024
New Students	78.8%	86.2%	91.3%
All Students	77.0%	82.2%	88.3%

FAFSA Completion Rate of Adult Students Age 25 or Over by Race/Ethnicity who meet MassReconnect residency, credit & prior education requirements

Fall Cohort	Race/Ethnicity	2022	2023	2024
New Students	American Indian or Alaskan Native	100.0%*	83.3%*	90.0%*
	Asian or Pacific Islander	67.0%	80.2%	85.9%
	Black or African American	79.0%	84.9%	90.1%
	Hispanic or Latino	83.9%	88.7%	92.2%
	Two or more races	88.8%	89.0%	95.9%
	White	78.3%	87.8%	92.1%
All Students	American Indian or Alaskan Native	94.3%*	91.2%*	90.2%*
	Asian or Pacific Islander	67.9%	74.5%	80.0%
	Black or African American	78.0%	82.9%	87.2%
	Hispanic or Latino	82.8%	85.9%	90.1%
	Two or more races	83.5%	89.4%	92.5%
	White	75.8%	82.8%	89.7%

Note: Students of unknown race/ethnicity are excluded from this table.

* Use caution when interpreting rates marked with asterisks as they are based on very small numbers of students (n's range from 9 to 61).

FAFSA Completion Rate of Adult Students Age 25 or Over by Gender who meet MassReconnect residency, credit & prior education requirements

Fall Cohort	Gender	2022	2023	2024
New Students	Female	82.7%	88.9%	93.0%
	Male	69.7%	80.6%	87.9%
	Another Gender	n/a	n/a	»
All Students	Female	81.4%	85.5%	90.4%
	Male	66.1%	74.9%	83.9%
	Another Gender	n/a	n/a	»

Note: Students of unknown gender are excluded from this table.

» DHE introduced the category of "Another Gender" in its data collection in Fall 2024 and, as is typical with new fields and variables, expects to begin reporting it publicly after normalizing its use.

FAFSA Completion Rate of Adult Students Age 25 or Over by Age Group who meet MassReconnect residency, credit & prior education requirements

Fall Cohort	Age Group	2022	2023	2024
New Students	25–34	79.9%	86.5%	91.7%
	35–44	78.7%	86.8%	91.4%
	45–54	73.2%	84.8%	90.0%
	55 or over	69.6%	81.9%	88.8%
All Students	25–34	78.5%	83.0%	88.6%
	35–44	77.1%	83.2%	88.4%
	45–54	69.8%	78.7%	87.9%
	55 or over	63.0%	71.3%	83.6%

METRIC 6: RETENTION OF ADULT STUDENTS & GRANT RECIPIENTS

A key metric is the percentage of enrolled students who return for a second year at their initial institution.

Metric

Percentage of students enrolling in community colleges in the fall term who return in the subsequent year at their initial institution, for the overall population of students age 25 or over enrolled for six or more credits, and for students receiving MassReconnect grants.

Fall 2023 Summary

- Comparing the Fall 2022 cohort (pre-MassReconnect) to the Fall 2023 cohort (the first MassReconnect cohort), among new students (new first-time, new transfer, and readmitted / reactivated students) age 25 or over, retention rates were mostly stable.
- First-time freshman students age 25 and over enrolled full-time experienced a retention rate of 52.5%, a decrease of -6.9 percentage points over fall 2022. First-time freshman students enrolled part-time experienced an increase of +2.6 percentage points (51.9% for the fall 2023 cohort compared to 49.3% for the fall 2022 cohort).
- The retention rates of transfer students age 25 and over were essentially flat. The rate for transfer students enrolled full-time was 56.2%, +0.3 percentage points higher than the Fall 2022 cohort. Transfer students enrolled part-time had a retention rate of 51.4%, +0.3 percentage points higher than the fall 2022 cohort.
 - The retention rates of readmitted/reactivated students age 25 and over were also essentially flat. Those enrolled full-time had a retention rate of 46.7%, +0.3 percentage points higher than the fall 2022 cohort. Readmitted/reactivated students enrolled part-time had a retention rate of 49.5%, -0.4 percentage points lower than the fall 2022 cohort.
- Comparing the fall 2022 cohort (pre-MassReconnect) to the fall 2023 cohort (the first MassReconnect cohort), among continuing students age 25 or over, retention rates were mostly stable. The retention rate of continuing students enrolled full-time was relatively flat (54.3% for the fall 2022 cohort and 54.0% for the fall 2023 cohort). Continuing students enrolled part-time had a retention rate of 53.5%, a decrease of -1.9 percentage points from the fall 2022 cohort.

Baseline and Trend Data

Note: Cohort indicates the starting term for the retention analysis. The number of students in the cohort is adjusted to remove any students who completed a credential before the subsequent fall. Also, since the FY2024

report, we have redefined retention to refer to students being retained at the same community college only, rather than retained in any college or university; as such, the baseline rates differ from the FY2024 report.

Retention Rate of Adult Students Age 25 or Over who met MassReconnect credit requirement

Fall Cohort	Enrollment Status	2022	2023	2024
First-Time Freshman	Full-Time	59.4%	52.5%	TBD in early 2026
	Part-Time	49.3%	51.9%	
Transfer	Full-Time	55.9%	56.2%	TBD in early 2026
	Part-Time	51.1%	51.4%	
Readmitted/Reactivated	Full-Time	46.4%	46.7%	TBD in early 2026
	Part-Time	49.9%	49.5%	
Continuing	Full-Time	54.3%	54.0%	TBD in early 2026
	Part-Time	55.4%	53.5%	

Retention Rate of MassReconnect Grant Recipients

Fall Cohort	Enrollment Status	2022	2023	2024
First-Time Freshman	Full-Time	n/a	59.1%	TBD in early 2026
	Part-Time	n/a	64.7%	
Transfer	Full-Time	n/a	64.7%	TBD in early 2026
	Part-Time	n/a	59.6%	
Readmitted/Reactivated	Full-Time	n/a	56.7%	TBD in early 2026
	Part-Time	n/a	57.5%	
Continuing	Full-Time	n/a	66.4%	TBD in early 2026
	Part-Time	n/a	61.2%	

METRIC 7: ANNUAL UNDUPLICATED HEADCOUNT OF ADULT STUDENTS (SNAPSHOT)

For this report, we primarily use data on students enrolled in the Fall semester, as it is the most recent data available at the time of drafting and provides the most detailed information on student characteristics, such as student type and demographics. To complement this data, we include annual enrollment data based on the fiscal year as a secondary, lagging metric. Fiscal year data becomes available later and lacks the same level of detail on student characteristics, rendering it less suitable for detailed analyses but useful for looking backward at overall enrollment trends and a comprehensive take on number of students served.

Metric

Number of unique (unduplicated) students age 25 and over in community colleges and unduplicated number of MassReconnect grant recipients, per fiscal year.

FY2024 Summary

- From FY2023 to FY2024, overall enrollment of adults age 25 and over increased 19.0% (+6,001).
- There was enrollment growth within every racial/ethnic group in the overall population of adults age 25 or over, including +29.0% (+1,810) for Hispanic or Latino students, +18.5% (+1,073) for Black or African American students, and +15.1% (+2,128) for White students.
- Overall enrollment of male adults age 25 or over increased +25.6% (+2,235) followed by female adults at +16.2% (+3,642).
- The 25–34 age group, which is double the size of the next largest age group, increased enrollment by +14.8% (+2,755). The 35–44 age group increased +23.5% (+1,952).

Baseline and Trend Data

Adult Students Age 25 or Over

Subgroup	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Overall	31,596	37,597	TBD in late 2025
<i>By Race/Ethnicity</i>			
American Indian or Alaskan Native	74	93	TBD in late 2025
Asian or Pacific Islander	1,539	1,681	TBD in late 2025
Black or African American	5,810	6,883	TBD in late 2025
Hispanic or Latino	6,242	8,052	TBD in late 2025
Two or more races	896	1,377	TBD in late 2025
White	14,061	16,189	TBD in late 2025
<i>By Gender</i>			
Female	22,497	26,139	TBD in late 2025
Male	8,725	10,960	TBD in late 2025
Another Gender	n/a	»	
<i>By Age Group</i>			
25–34	18,643	21,398	TBD in late 2025
35–44	8,299	10,251	TBD in late 2025
45–54	3,325	4,189	TBD in late 2025
55 or over	1,329	1,759	TBD in late 2025

MassReconnect Grant Recipients

	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Overall	n/a	8,665	TBD in late 2025
<i>By Race/Ethnicity</i>			
American Indian or Alaskan Native	n/a	19	TBD in late 2025
Asian or Pacific Islander	n/a	357	TBD in late 2025
Black or African American	n/a	1,457	TBD in late 2025
Hispanic or Latino	n/a	2,179	TBD in late 2025
Two or more races	n/a	385	TBD in late 2025
White	n/a	4,019	TBD in late 2025
<i>By Gender</i>			
Female	n/a	5,712	TBD in late 2025
Male	n/a	2,899	TBD in late 2025
Another Gender	n/a	»	
<i>By Age Group</i>			
25–34	n/a	5,380	TBD in late 2025
35–44	n/a	2,109	TBD in late 2025
45–54	n/a	888	TBD in late 2025
55 or over	n/a	277	TBD in late 2025
Unknown	n/a	11	

Note: Annual unduplicated headcount means that any individual student is only counted once per institution and fiscal year, even if they are enrolled in multiple terms. Students of unknown race/ethnicity and/or gender are excluded from the disaggregated sections of these tables.

» DHE introduced the category of “Another Gender” in its data collection in fall 2024 and, as is typical with new fields and variables, expects to begin reporting it publicly after normalizing its use.

PLANNING FOR ADDITIONAL METRICS & ASSESSMENT

- **Other Barriers to Enrollment:** The metrics outlined in this document only examine the enrolled population. Metrics that measure barriers leading up to enrollment are difficult to define. Going forward, we expect to engage in qualitative analysis to gain a better understanding of why potential participants are not applying or enrolling, with a particular emphasis on ensuring the program is being accessed equitably by different subgroups.
- **Longer-Term Success Metrics:** After more time has elapsed, we will be able to report on longer-term success metrics. This will include ongoing evaluation to establish whether receiving a MassReconnect grant or any associated interventions has a positive impact on student retention and completion. It should however be noted that MassReconnect was designed as an access tool, not a completion tool. The community college segment has identified the SUCCESS program, funded through a separate appropriation, as a tool to help with completion.