

Tackling TRANSFER

 PUBLIC AGENDA

CCRC COMMUNITY COLLEGE
RESEARCH CENTER

TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY


THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

THE LOST OPPORTUNITY **of TRANSFER**

The vast majority of students who enroll in a community college plan to one day earn a bachelor's degree.

Most never make it.

1.7 Million

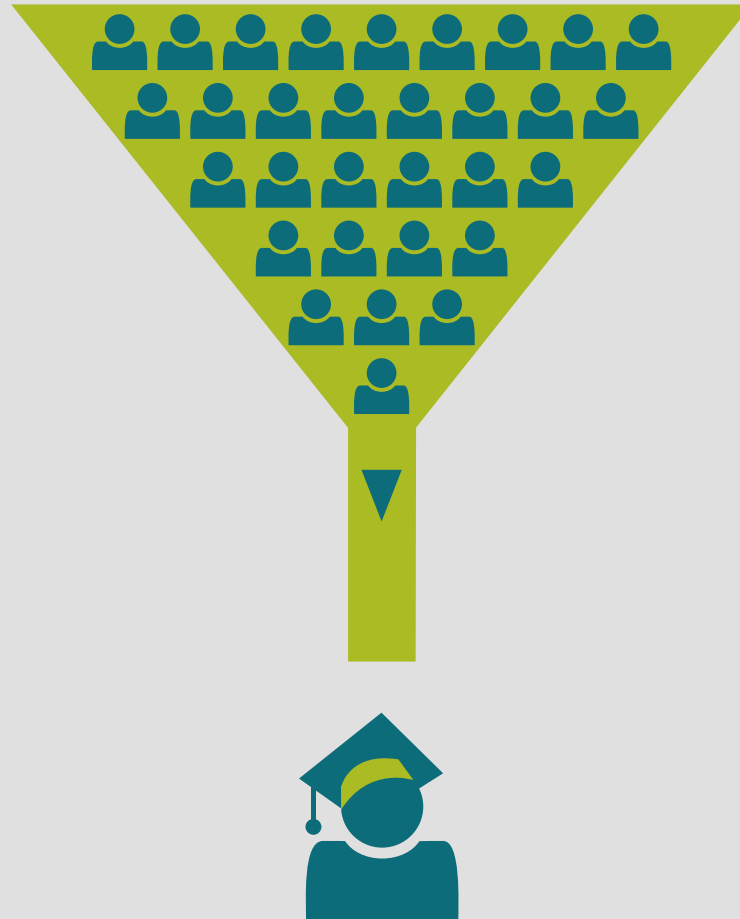
new students enroll in a
community college each year



80%

plan to get a
bachelor's degree
or higher

We tracked **720,000** community college students who started in the fall of 2007 in pursuit of a college credential



Only 100,000 earned
a bachelor's after 6 years

Too few students manage to make the leap



Just **33%** of students who started community college in fall of 2007 transferred to a four-year school

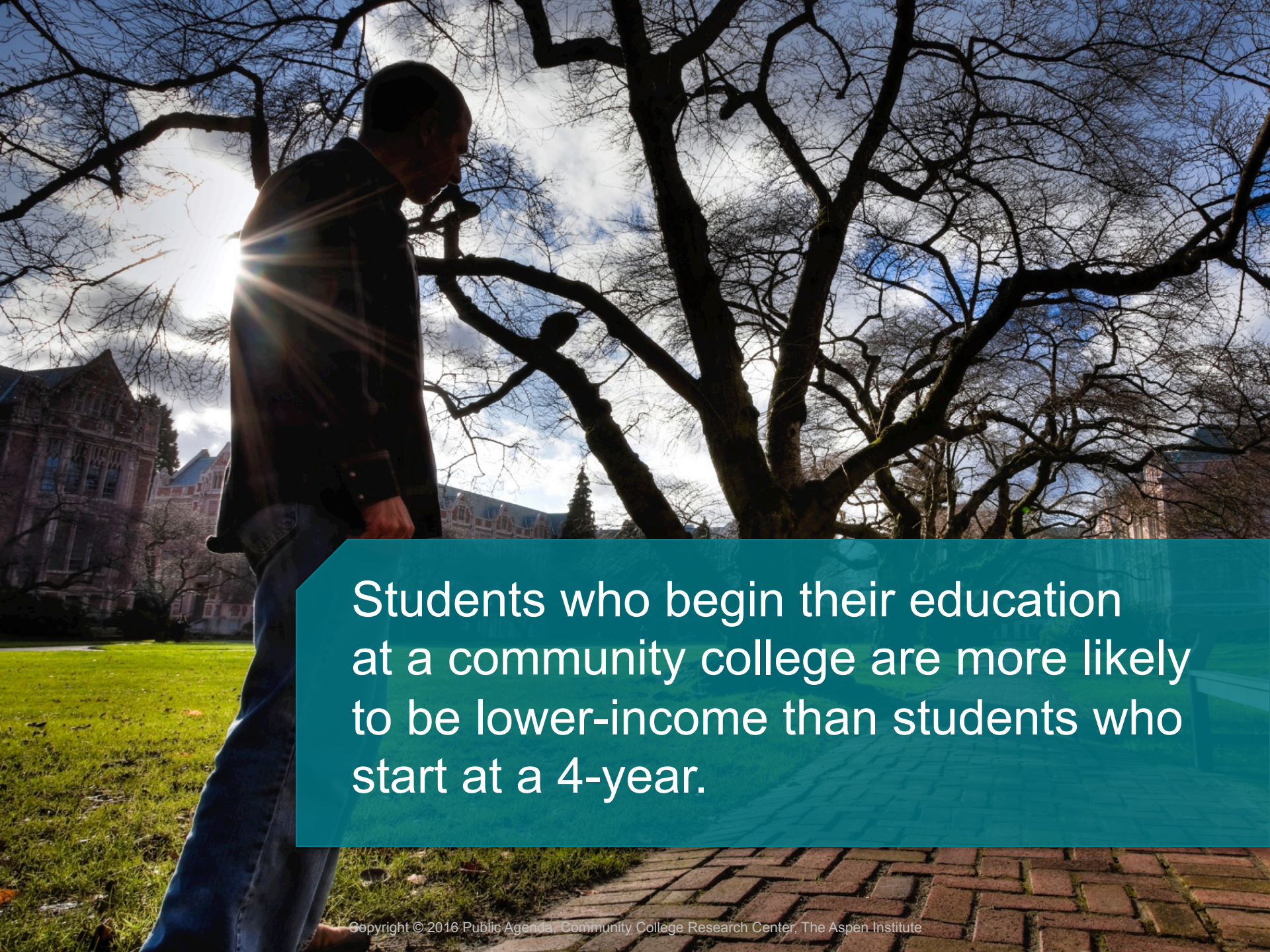
Even when they transfer, we're still failing them



Of the students who successfully transferred, **only 42%** went on to get a bachelor's within 6 years of starting



Broken transfer processes harm the students who can least afford it.

A man in a dark jacket and jeans is walking on a brick path, looking down. The background features large, leafless trees and a brick building under a bright, cloudy sky. A teal text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

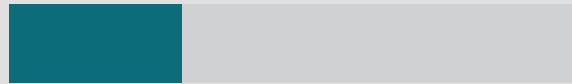
Students who begin their education at a community college are more likely to be lower-income than students who start at a 4-year.

We'll never reach our education goals
without helping these students succeed.

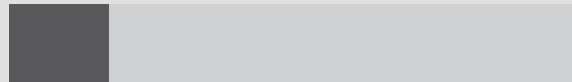


**Our country can't afford the wasted
opportunity of broken transfer.**

All community college students are struggling to transfer



36% of higher income students transfer to a 4-year school.

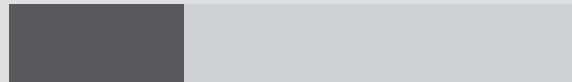


Lower income students have it worse.
Just 28% transfer.

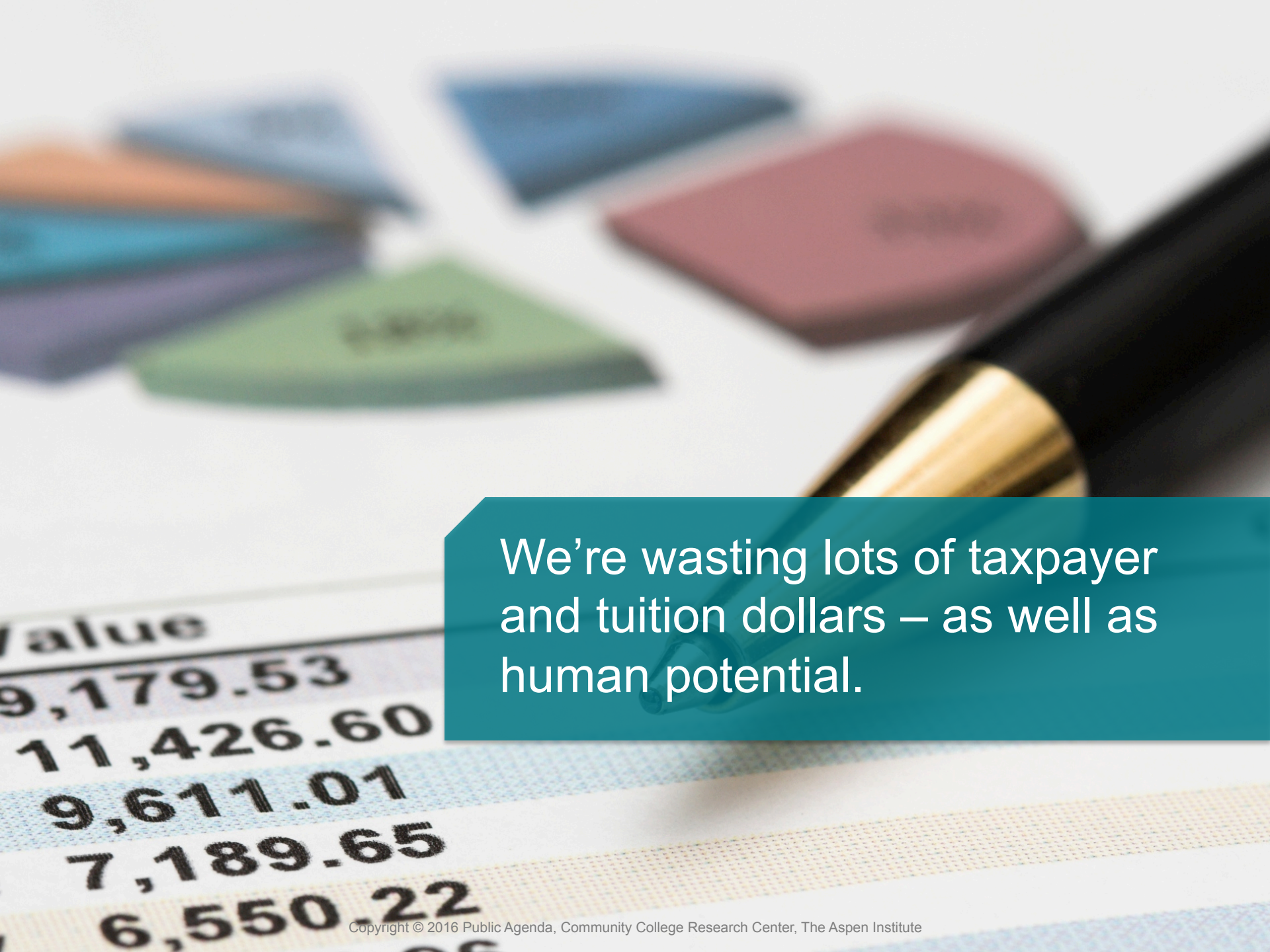
Outcomes aren't great for anybody



44% of higher income transfer students earn a bachelor's degree within 6 years.



Just 36% of lower income transfer students earn a bachelor's degree within 6 years.

The background of the slide is a blurred image of a financial document, likely a tax return, with various colored tabs (blue, green, red) visible at the top. A teal-colored text box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the main message. The document below the text box shows a column of numbers under the heading 'Value'.

We're wasting lots of taxpayer
and tuition dollars – as well as
human potential.

Value
9,179.53
11,426.60
9,611.01
7,189.65
6,550.22

Students lose
lots of credits in the

TRANSFER PROCESS.



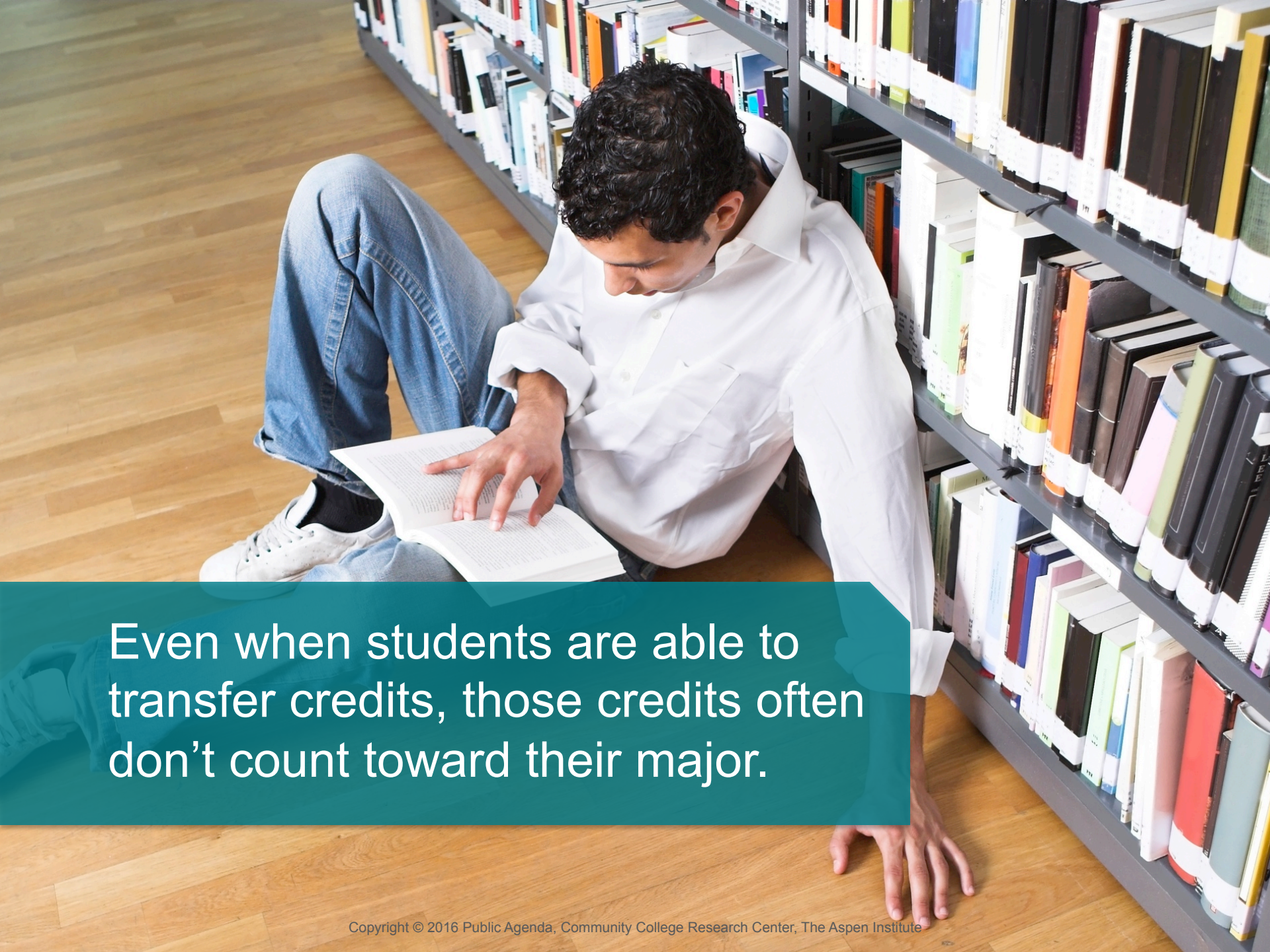
Just **58%** of students
can successfully transfer
90% of their credits.



And **15%** can't transfer
any credits at all.



Students who can transfer 90% of their credits are **250%** more likely to get their bachelor's degree, compared to those who transfer half or less.

A man with dark, curly hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, blue jeans, and white sneakers, is sitting on a light-colored wooden floor in a library. He is leaning against a tall bookshelf filled with books, and he is holding an open book in his lap, looking down at it. The bookshelf is filled with books of various colors and sizes. The floor is made of light-colored wood planks.

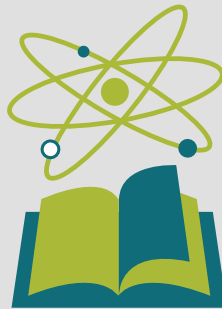
Even when students are able to transfer credits, those credits often don't count toward their major.



2

Years of
General Education

+



2

Years of
Major Courses

≠



4

Years to a
Bachelor's Degree

**Lost credits also mean
lost money**

for both students and taxpayers.

1.7 million students starting each year



If we increased the transfer rate among all new students at community colleges by **10 percentage** points, there could be about **70,000 more** students earning bachelor's degrees **EVERY YEAR**.

The Case for Fixing Transfer

HAS NEVER BEEN STRONGER

We've known for years that students have struggled to transfer successfully, but demographic, political and economic trends now make tackling the problem

more urgent than ever.



For many universities, improving transfer is a way to boost declining enrollment – and completion.

Transfer is a
SHARED PROBLEM
and a

SHARED OPPORTUNITY.

A photograph of four people—three women and one man—sitting around a white table in a library or study area. They are all looking down at documents or books on the table. The woman on the far left has blonde hair and is wearing a white top. The woman next to her has dark hair and is wearing a green top. The man in the center has glasses and is wearing a dark shirt. The man on the far right has dark hair and is wearing a blue and white striped shirt. In the background, there are wooden shelves filled with books. A semi-transparent teal banner with white text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

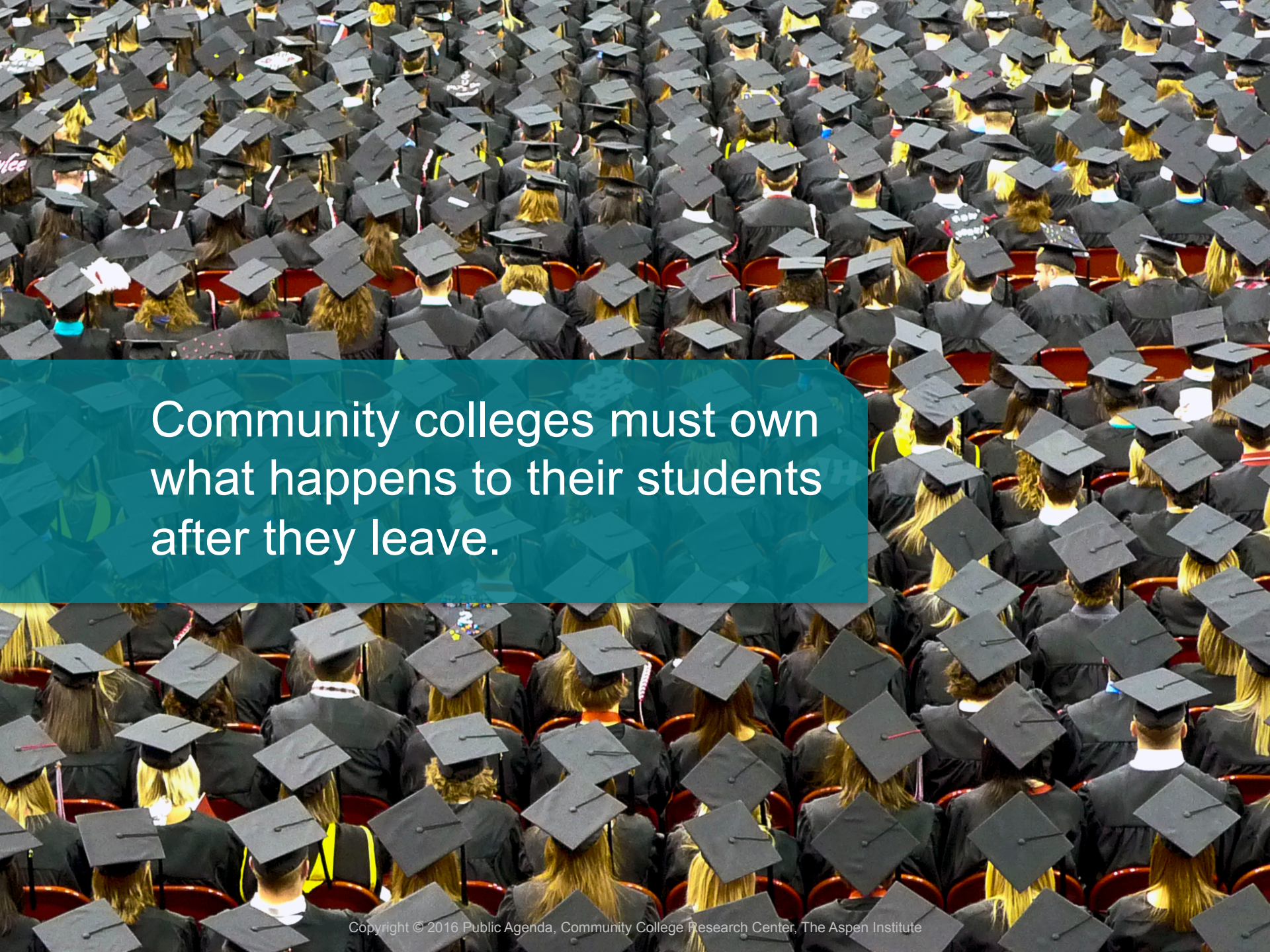
2-year and 4-year colleges need to
co-own getting students to the finish line.

4-year colleges need to pay much more attention to transfer students.

Transfer students are already a large and growing part of their student body. Universities need to help transfer students succeed instead of focusing primarily on first-year students.



REMEMBER,
80% of community college
students plan to get a
bachelor's degree or higher.

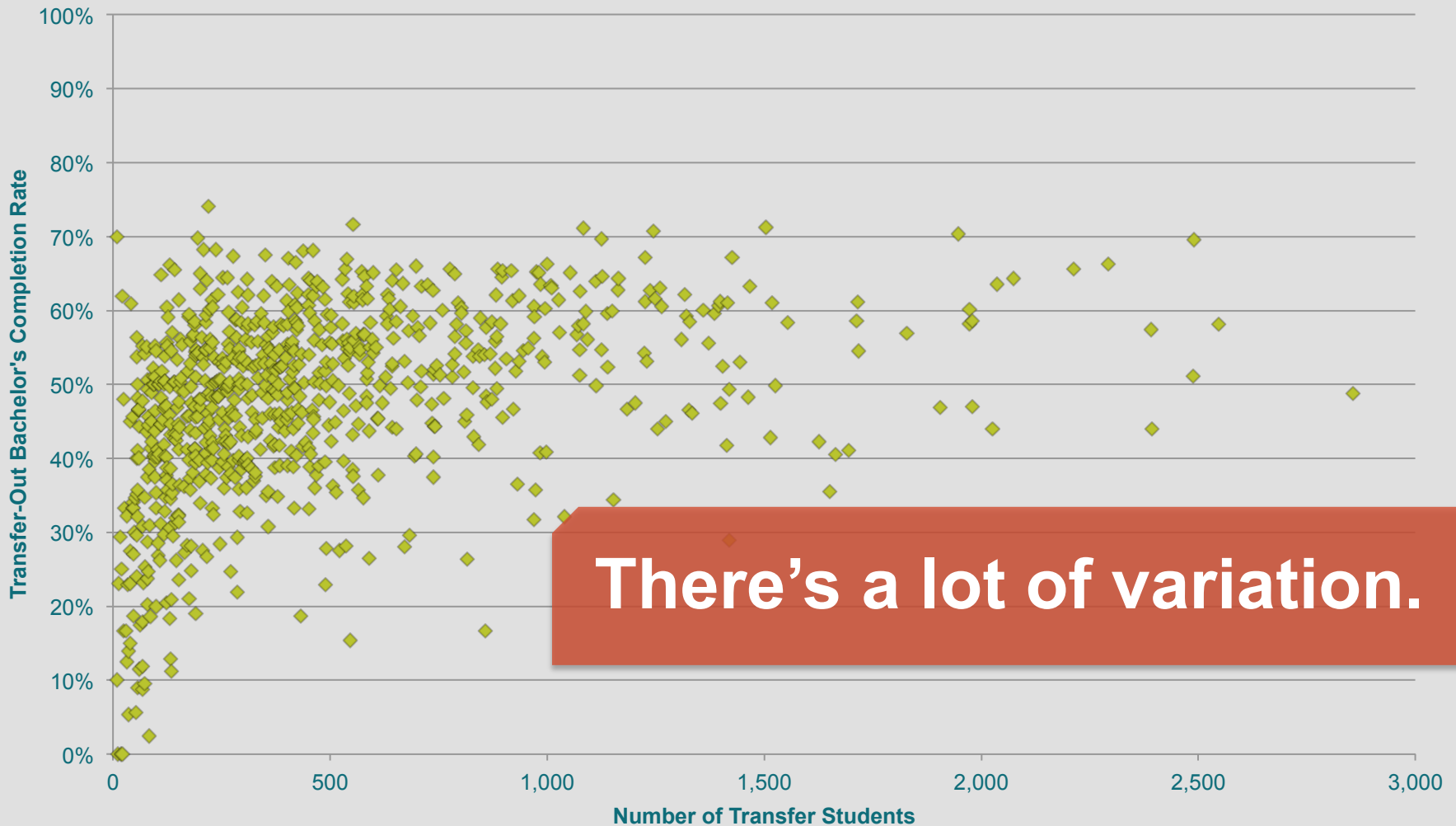


Community colleges must own
what happens to their students
after they leave.

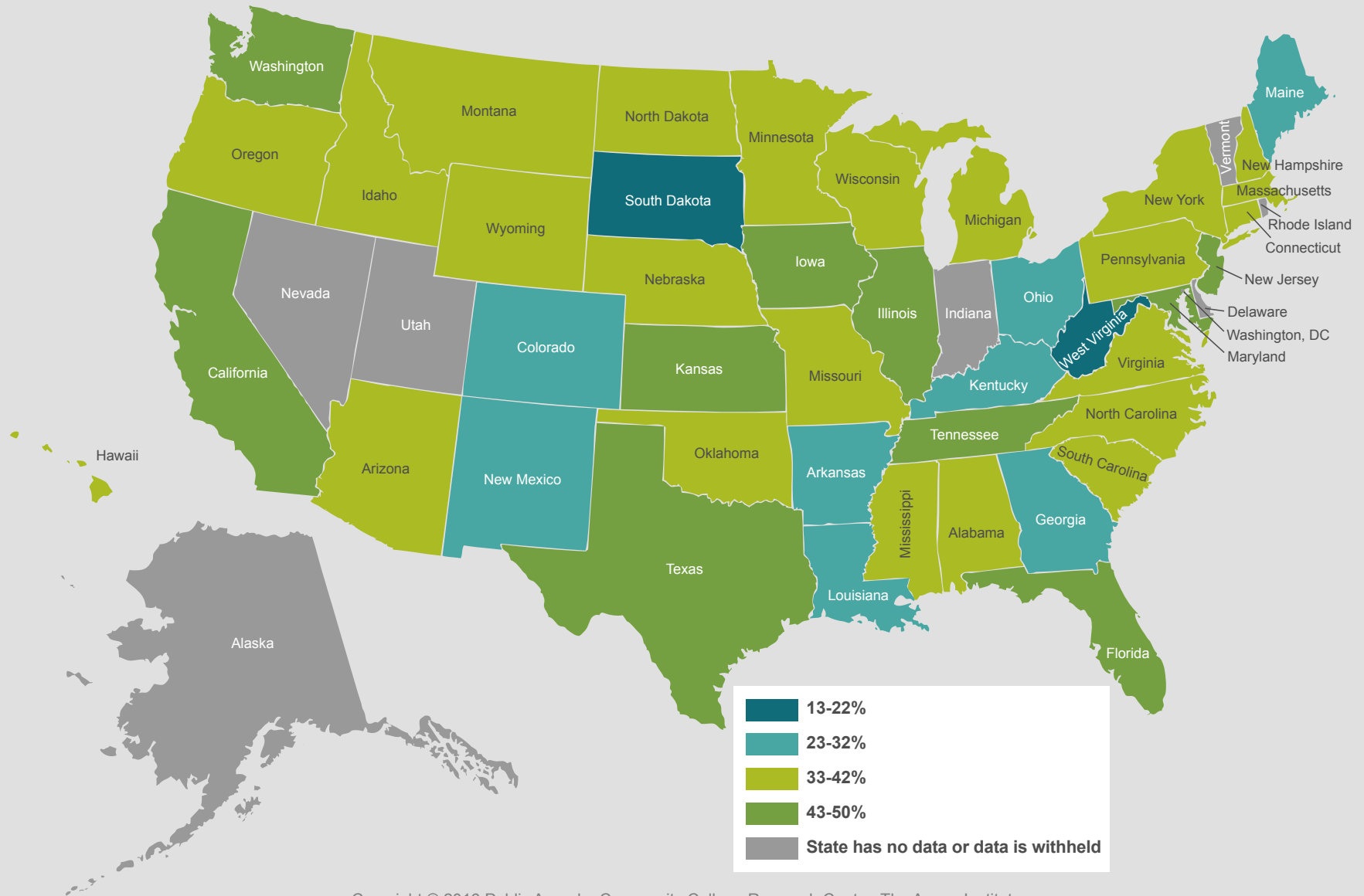
Did you know?

On transfer, what a community college does appears to matter more than the types of students it serves and where it's located.

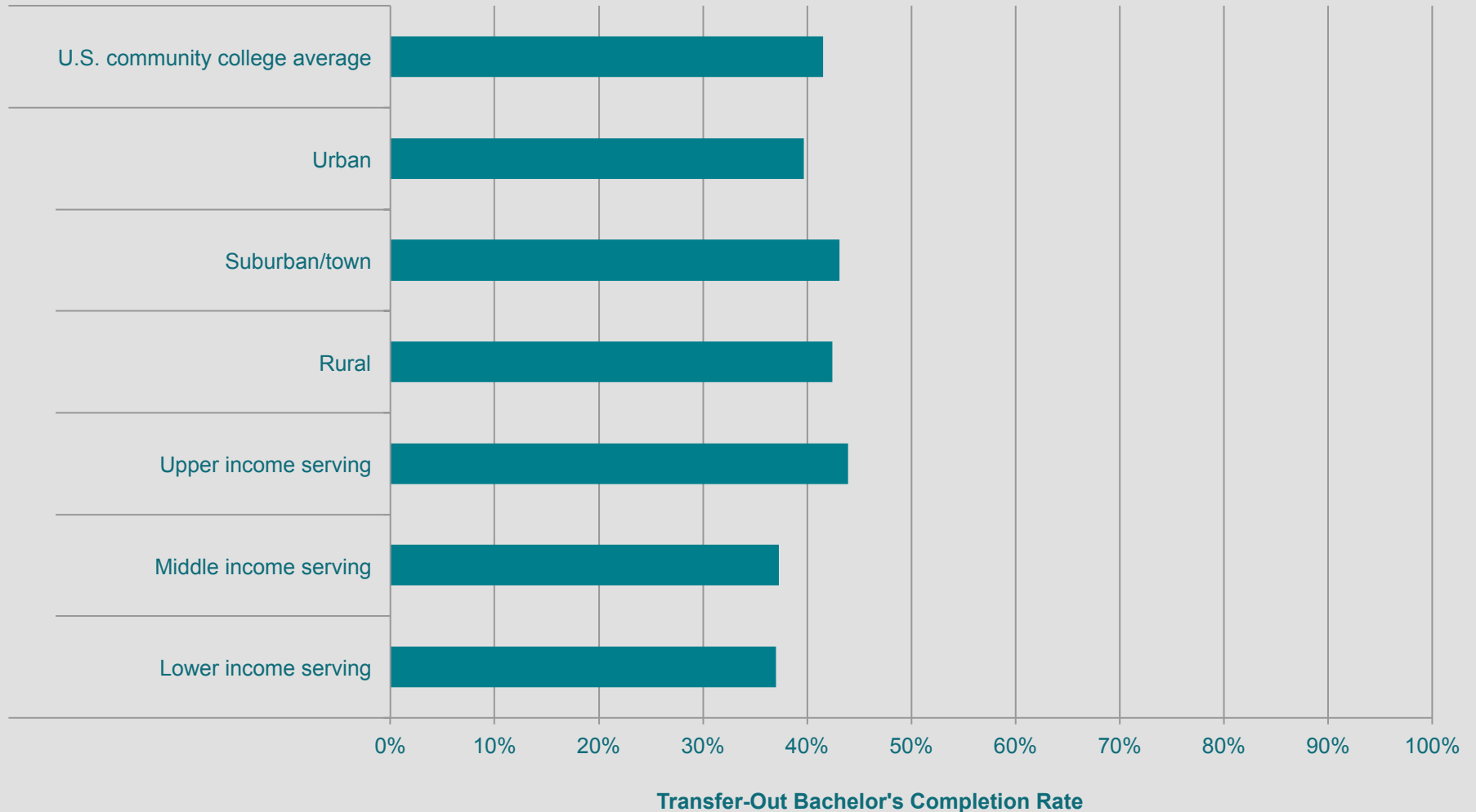
These are the bachelor's completion rates for transfer students, by individual community college.



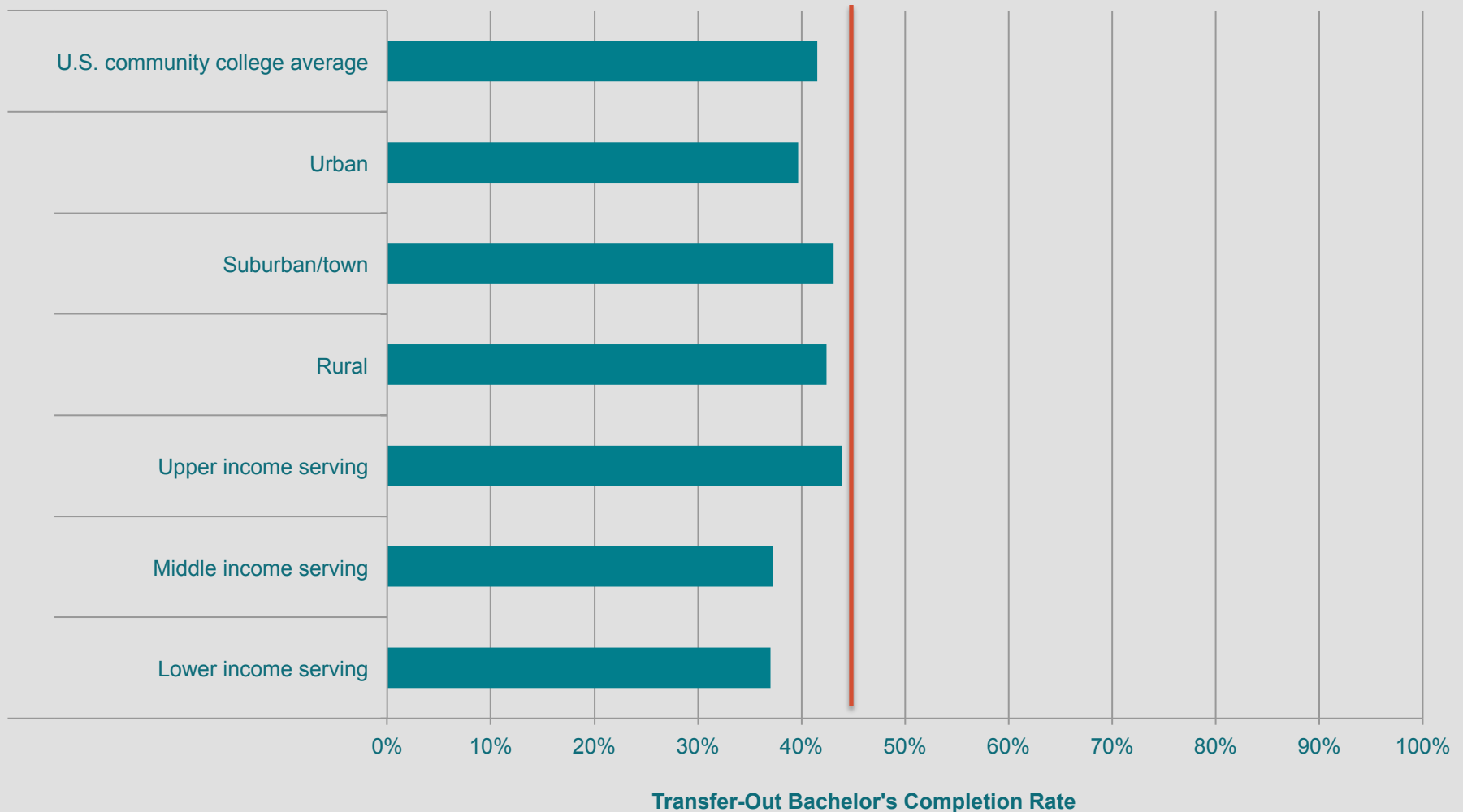
There is also huge state variation among community colleges in bachelor's attainment by their students who transfer.



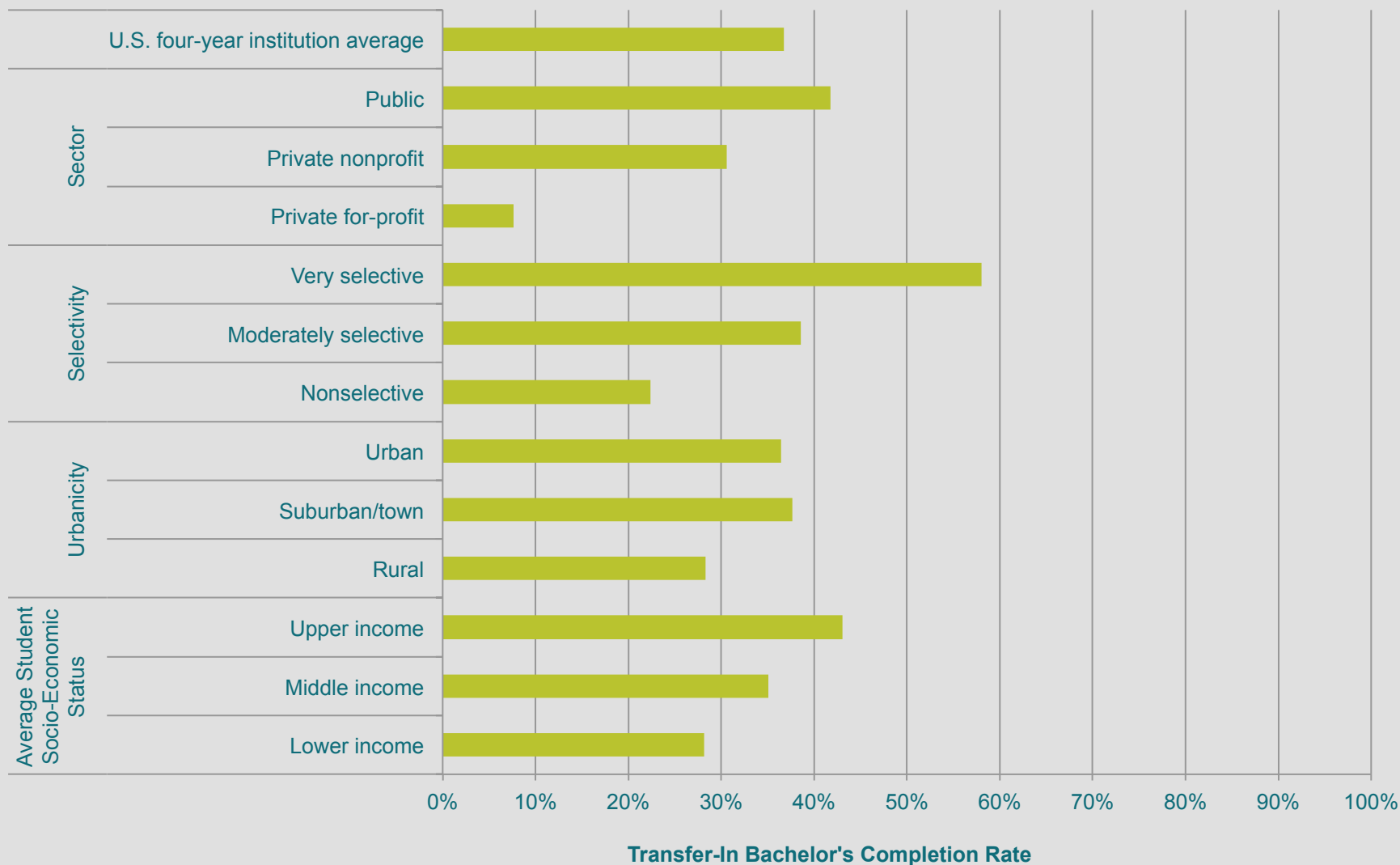
These are average bachelor's completion rates for transfer students based on the type of community college where they started.



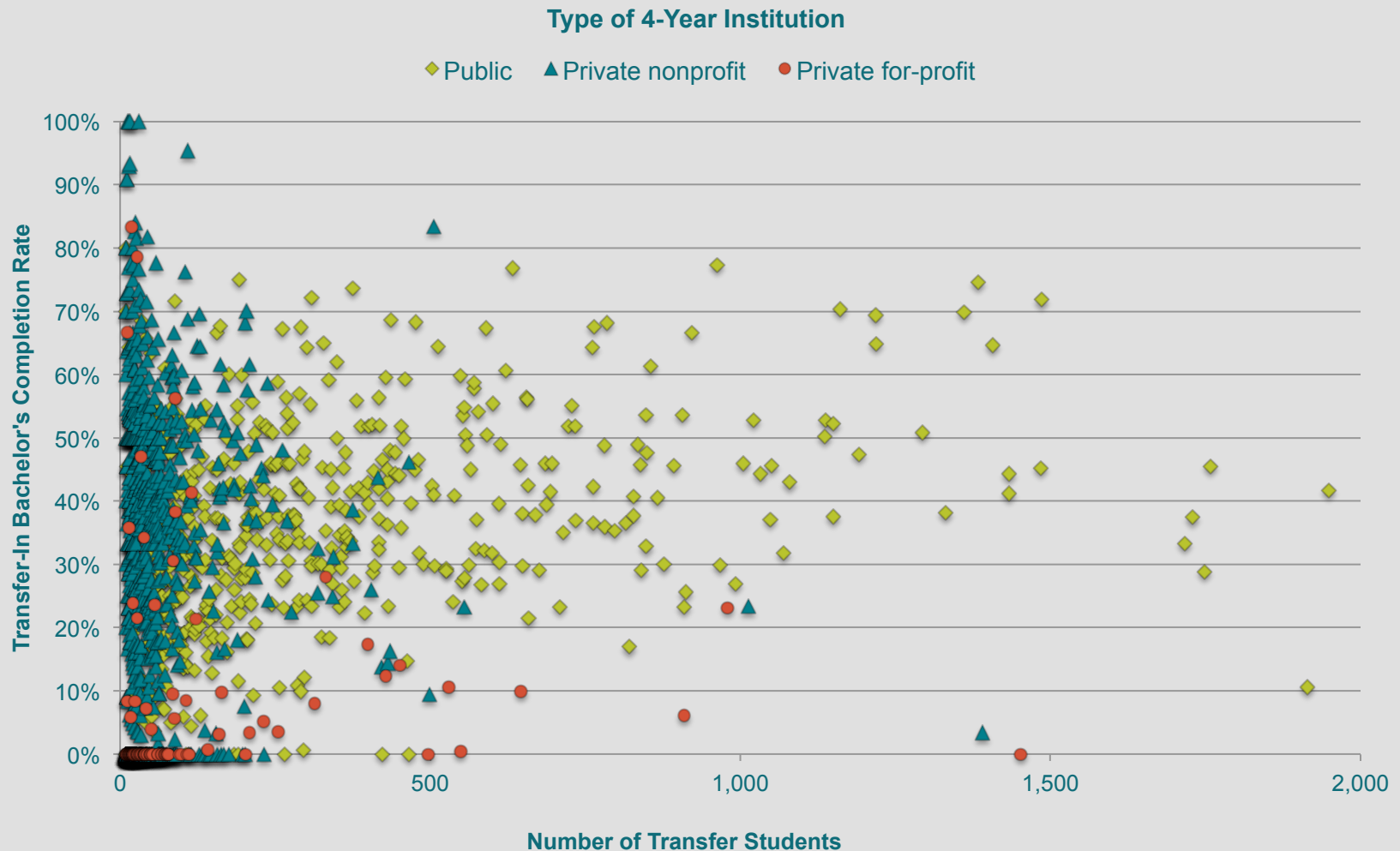
While outcomes at community colleges vary, what we might imagine would predict variation **doesn't**.




On the other hand, the characteristics of 4-year schools matter when it comes to how many transfer students get a bachelor's.



There's also huge variation in the effectiveness of individual four-year colleges in helping transfer students complete bachelor's degrees.





Our conclusion: Transfer outcomes depend on what community colleges and 4-year colleges do to teach and support their students.