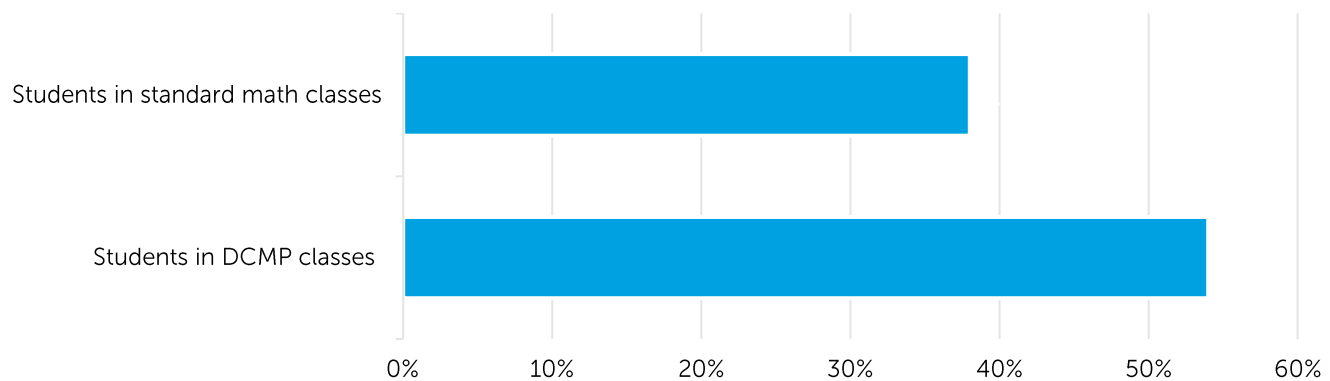


# Making Math Useful to Students

*A greater percentage of students participating in the Dana Center Math Pathways courses agreed they would use the math they learned in their everyday lives.*

Students who agreed or strongly agreed that they would use the math they learned in everyday life



Source: Rutschow, E., Sepanik, S., Deitch, V., Raufman, J., Dukes, D. & Moussa, A. (2019). [Gaining Ground: Findings from the Dana Center Mathematics Pathways Impact Study](#). New York, NY: Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness. Notes: This survey was sent to all cohorts near the end of their first semester in the study, except the fall 2015 cohort. The students in this cohort, to whom the survey was sent during their second semester, were asked to think about their math class from the previous semester when responding to questions. The survey went to 1,411 students. The overall survey response rate was 71% (71% in the program group and 70% in the standard group). Students not taking a math class were not asked to respond to these survey items. Researchers used imputed values of 0 for these students.

Students in the Dana Center Math Pathways (DCMP) classes worked collaboratively to solve multistep word problems, using problems that were contextualized using real-life situations. Students were also observed sharing strategies and demonstrating their understanding of math concepts orally or in writing. In contrast, observations of colleges' standard developmental and college algebra classes revealed that instruction was typically centered on lecture and individual student work focused around solving math equations.

In a survey of students in four Texas community colleges in both DCMP and traditional courses, 73% of DCMP students reported working regularly with others on problems compared to only 17.6% in the colleges' standard developmental and college algebra courses. Similarly, 70% of students in DCMP courses said they were regularly taught using real-life problems in comparison to 38% of students in standard courses. Finally, 54% of students in DCMP courses said they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "you use the math you learned in everyday life" while only 38% of students in standard math classes reported the same. This Points of Interest shows that a greater percentage of students participating in DCMP courses agreed they would use the math they learned in their everyday lives.

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