We will discuss preliminary results of an NSF-sponsored active-learning plus mentorship research study, for improving math performance and STEM persistence of community college students and university transfers from Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). The talk will focus on results, successful products, and limitations tied to assessing performance of this student population using locally valid instruments (i.e., final exams) and also two nationally-used instruments, the Pre-Calculus Concept Assessment (PCA) and the Calculus Concept Inventory (CCI). (Received September 26, 2017)