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Sustaining and Supporting Diverse Students from Inquiry through Graduation

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Topics

1. Building and Shaping Enrollment

2. Student Success

3. What can you do now?

Understanding Institutional Needs and Goals

How do you define diversity? When you hear diversity, what one word comes to mind?

Does your campus value difference in education? How?

What changes are you experiencing on your campus?

Building and Shaping Enrollment

Understanding Your Campus Population

- How well do you know your students? Do you understand how their needs, perceptions, and experiences vary?

  - Rural/Urban

  - Geographic/distance from home

  - Ethnicity

  - Religion

  - Language groups

  - Identity—LBGTQ+

- Are you surveying students and how are you using the data?

  - College Student Inventory, CYSA, MYSA

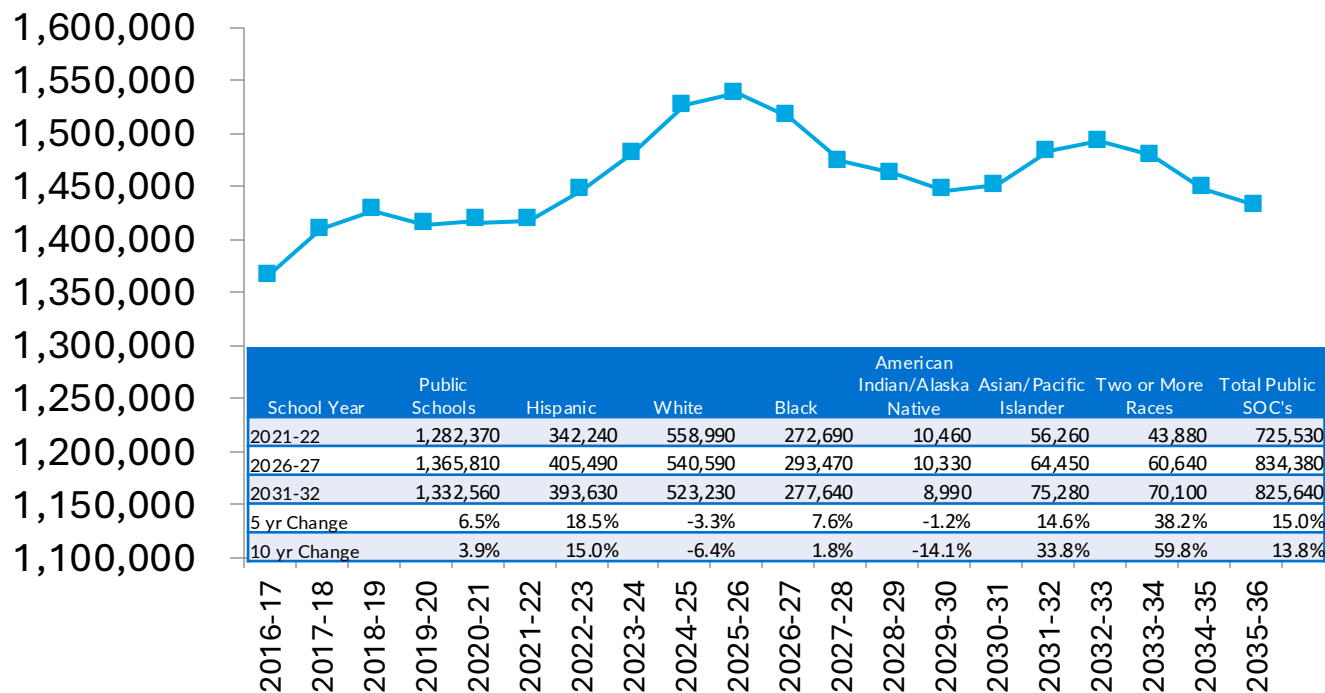 - National Survey Student Engagement

What does the data say?

Recruitment

- Market Realities

  - Fewer high school graduates means increasing demand

  - Enrollment growth will require capturing market share from other institutions

  - Gaining market share is more expensive than maintaining share

  - Competition for degree completion and graduate students increasing across in-person and online modalities

Projected Change in High School Graduates

South 2017-36

School Year	Public Schools	Hispanic	White	Black	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian/Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	Total Public SOC's
2021-22	1,282,370	342,240	558,990	272,690	10,460	56,260	43,880	725,530
2026-27	1,365,810	405,490	540,590	293,470	10,330	64,450	60,640	834,380
2031-32	1,332,560	393,630	523,230	277,640	8,990	75,280	70,100	825,640
5 yr Change	6.5%	18.5%	-3.3%	7.6%	-1.2%	14.6%	38.2%	15.0%
10 yr Change	3.9%	15.0%	-6.4%	1.8%	-14.1%	33.8%	59.8%	13.8%

(AL, AR, DE, DC, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV)

Parent Involvement is INCREASING
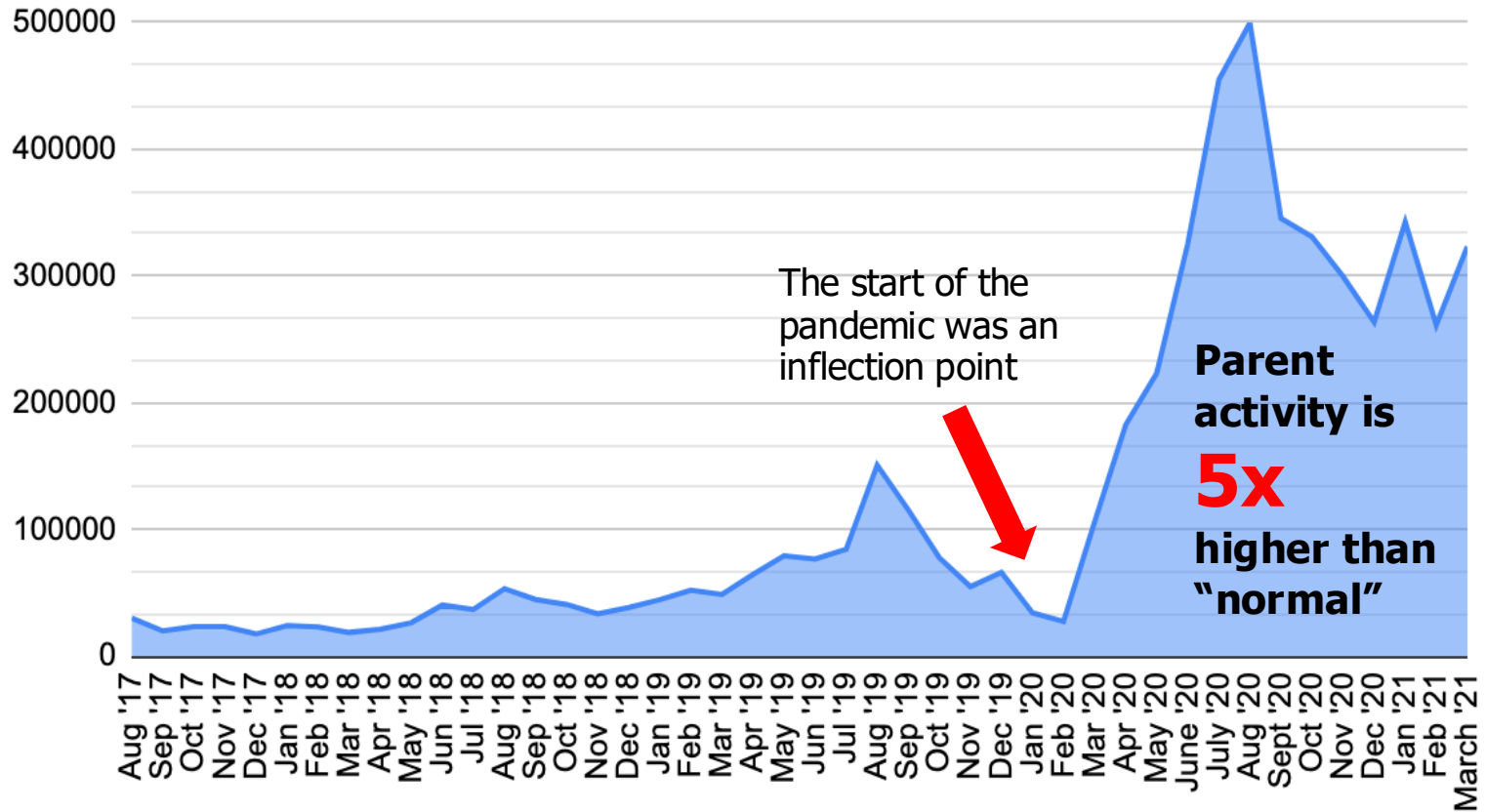
Family Engagement Data

How well does your recruitment material cover these topics?

10 Key Findings on Family Engagement

1. **80%** OF PARENTS SAY MONEY PAID ON A STUDENT'S TUITION IS A WORTHWHILE INVESTMENT.

2. **89%** OF PARENTS SAY A FAMILY PORTAL HELPED THEM ADVISE AND SUPPORT THEIR STUDENT'S ENROLLMENT PROCESS.

3. **88%** OF FAMILIES ARE OPEN TO HEARING FROM INSTITUTIONS WEEKLY.

4. **68%** ARE OPEN TO HEARING FROM THE INSTITUTION WHEN IT HAS SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO COMMUNICATE.

5. **40%** THINK INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE TEST-OPTIONAL.

6. **39%** SAY SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID ARE THE TOP FACTOR IN THE COLLEGE DECISION.

7. **75%** OF FAMILIES THINK THEIR BORROWING FEARS WILL AFFECT THEIR STUDENTS' COLLEGE PLANNING NEGATIVELY.

Family Engagement Data

How well does your recruitment material cover these topics?

68% WILL RULE OUT AN INSTITUTION BASED ON STICKER PRICE.

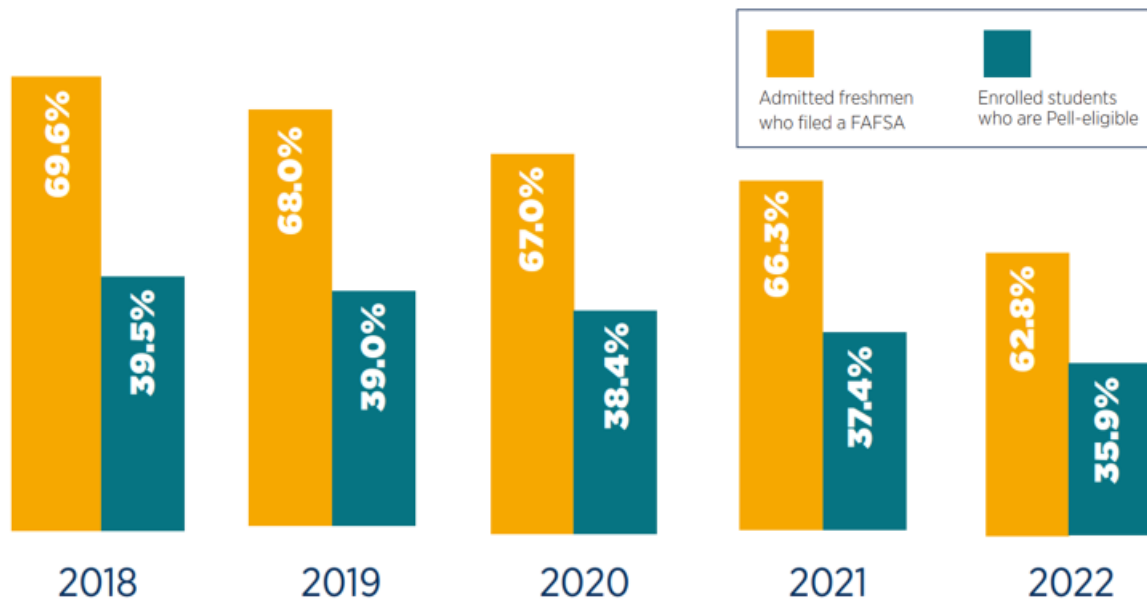**45%** OF FAMILIES SAY THEY HAVE THE LOGIN INFORMATION FOR THEIR STUDENT'S COLLEGE APPLICATION.

TOP 5 TOPICS PROSPECTIVE FAMILIES WANT INFORMATION ABOUT ARE **COST; ACADEMIC INFORMATION; ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS, APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE; AND FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS.**

About the study

Forty U.S.-based institutions invited 12,088 parents, family members and other adults who care for high school students to complete the survey.

Five-Year Trend: FAFSA Filing and Pell-Eligible Enrollment

Admitted freshmen who filed a FAFSA
- 2018: 69.6%
- 2019: 68.0%
- 2020: 67.0%
- 2021: 66.3%
- 2022: 62.8%

Enrolled students who are Pell-eligible
- 2018: 39.5%
- 2019: 39.0%
- 2020: 38.4%
- 2021: 37.4%
- 2022: 35.9%

FAFSA filing is at the lowest level since RNL started tracking in 2010. The percent of enrolled students who are Pell eligible also continues to decline, and these two trends could signify that fewer students with high financial need are pursuing enrollment at private colleges.

Where the rubber meets the road.

Strategies aligned with goals.

- What is your annual plan? Do you have a multi-year plan?

- Search strategies

  - Rural and urban

  - Identifying opportunities for growth

  - Aligned with institutional mission

- Building community relationships

  - Strategic partnerships with community colleges—ease of transfer

  - Free community college

- Visibility and cultural connections for prospective students and families—look at every step in the process and test with first gen. and second language students/families.

Where the rubber meets the road.

Recruiting diverse students in a changing environment.

- Building and Shaping the inquiry pool

    - Is your strategy diversified?

    - Who are you targeting (i.e. urban vs rural, first gen, majors)?

    - Volume of records?

    - Communication channels and messaging

        - Should vary based on the population

        - Channel is important (i.e. text, email, physical mailer)

- High school visits, college fairs

    - Presentations and conversations matter

Where the rubber meets the road.

Recruiting diverse students in a changing environment.

- Campus visits

    - Who are families meeting with?

    - Can they see themselves on campus and in the community?

        - How diverse is your student ambassador pool? Who do families see while on their campus tour.

    - Do students and families understand your messaging and content?

        - Financial aid presentations for first gen students will look very different from the presentation given to multigenerational college going families.

            - i.e. financial aid nights for accepted students

            - A financial aid brochure that explains the terminology and process in great detail and gives example offers

Student Preferences and Perceptions

Perceptions of College Planning

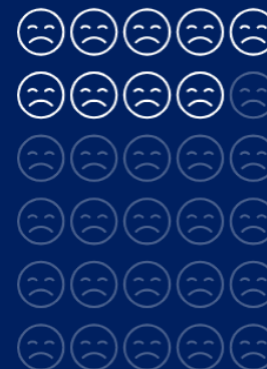**72%** — Applying to college is difficult

63% — I don't know how to choose the right college

53% — I don't know where to find help for my college planning

29% — I don't think I can find a college that fits my needs

RNL & Halda. (2024). *2024 College Planning Study.*

What Do They Want to Know?

Availability of academic programs and/or majors
95%

Admission requirements
89%

The location
87%

Financial aid and scholarships
95%

Safety information
89%

Community life and activities
86%

Cost (tuition, fees, room, and board, etc.)
94%

Housing
89%

Application process and timeline
86%

More Inclusive and Personalized Enrollment Strategies

- **Emphasis on Career Outcomes**

  Highlight the institution's support for career goals through alumni success stories, industry partnerships, and career services.

- **Showcasing Unique Offerings**

  Highlight unique programs and opportunities to attract students who align with the institution's values.

- **Networking Opportunities**

  Promote networking resources like alumni networks, mentorship programs, and career fairs to enhance students' professional prospects.

- **Peer Engagement**

  Engage prospective students with relevant content, live Q&A sessions, and virtual campus tours to foster rapport and address concerns.

- **Diversity and Inclusion**

  Communicate the commitment to diversity and inclusion, providing initiatives and support services for all students.

- **Early Outreach and Support for Late Bloomers**

  Implement outreach programs for middle school students and support late bloomers with guidance on alternative pathways.

RNL & Halda. (2024). 2024 College Planning Study.

Student Success

2

Why is retention and persistence important?

- Sense of achievement for the student

- Student experience

- Academic integrity of the institution

- Institutional revenue

- Impact on accreditation, grants, rankings, bond ratings, etc.

Retention and Persistence

What does the data say?

- RNL 2022 Four-Year Public data (**survey of 20 four-year publics) :
  - FTIC
    - Fall 2020 to Spring 2021 median: 86.5%
    - Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 median: 73.5%
  - Transfer Students
    - Fall 2020 to Spring 2021 median: 84.0%
    - Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 median: 86.5%
  - Second Year
    - Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 median: 84.0%

Retention and Persistence

What does the data say?

- National Student Clearinghouse (July, 2023):

    - 2.4 million FTIC entered in fall 2021, 75.7% returned in fall 2022

    - 67.2% were retained by their original institution

    - 8.6% transferred out

Retention and Persistence

What does the data say?

- NSC (November, 2023):

  - 2.4 million FTIC entered in fall 2017

  - Overall completion rate in 6 years – 62.2% (national decline of 0.6%)

  - All 4- year sectors saw declines with the publics down .7% to 67%

  - Declines in 33 states with the largest declines in Washington – 3.1%, NH -2.8%, and CT -2.3%

  - Black student completion fell 1.5% at 4-year publics

  - Hispanic male completion fell 1.4% and fell 0.9% for females at 4-year publics

Supporting Academic Success

Best Practices

- Are our policies and practices creating barriers or opportunities?

- Barriers to academic progress in the first year—do you know which classes are most challenging to pass in the first year?

- Models for success—built in labs for math and composition courses

- TRIO programs

- Supplemental Instruction—do you know patterns of success related to SI participation?

- First Year Experience courses—meeting student needs and contributing to success or meeting institutional expectations?

How to Support and Retain

Social

- What activities are happening on campus and how are students notified of these activities?

- Are your social activities welcoming to all?

  - Neurodiverse

  - Cultural

- Are there people they can relate to in key offices?

  - Student life, activities, engagement

  - Residential life

  - Career services

  - Health/Wellbeing

What can you do *now*?

Thank you!

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