

2021-2022

The Seven Levers of Strategic Enrollment Management

September 17, 2021

Association of Colorado Independent Schools

The
**Enrollment
Management
Association**



Speaker bio

Christina

Dotchin

National Director of Business
Development



The
**Enrollment
Management
Association**



Speaker bio

Liz

Maher

National Business Officers
Association (NBOA)



Agenda

- 1 Perpetual Enrollment
- 2 Enrollment Outlook
- 3 Strategic Enrollment Management
- 4 Discussion and Questions

1

Perpetual Enrollment

1

What is perpetual enrollment?

“ An agreement signed just once by parents as each student enters the school. It never needs to be updated or re-signed, and parents do not need to make the decision to re-enroll every year. ”

Source: [NAIS Legal Advisory](#)



2

Why are some independent schools considering perpetual enrollment?

Perpetual Enrollment

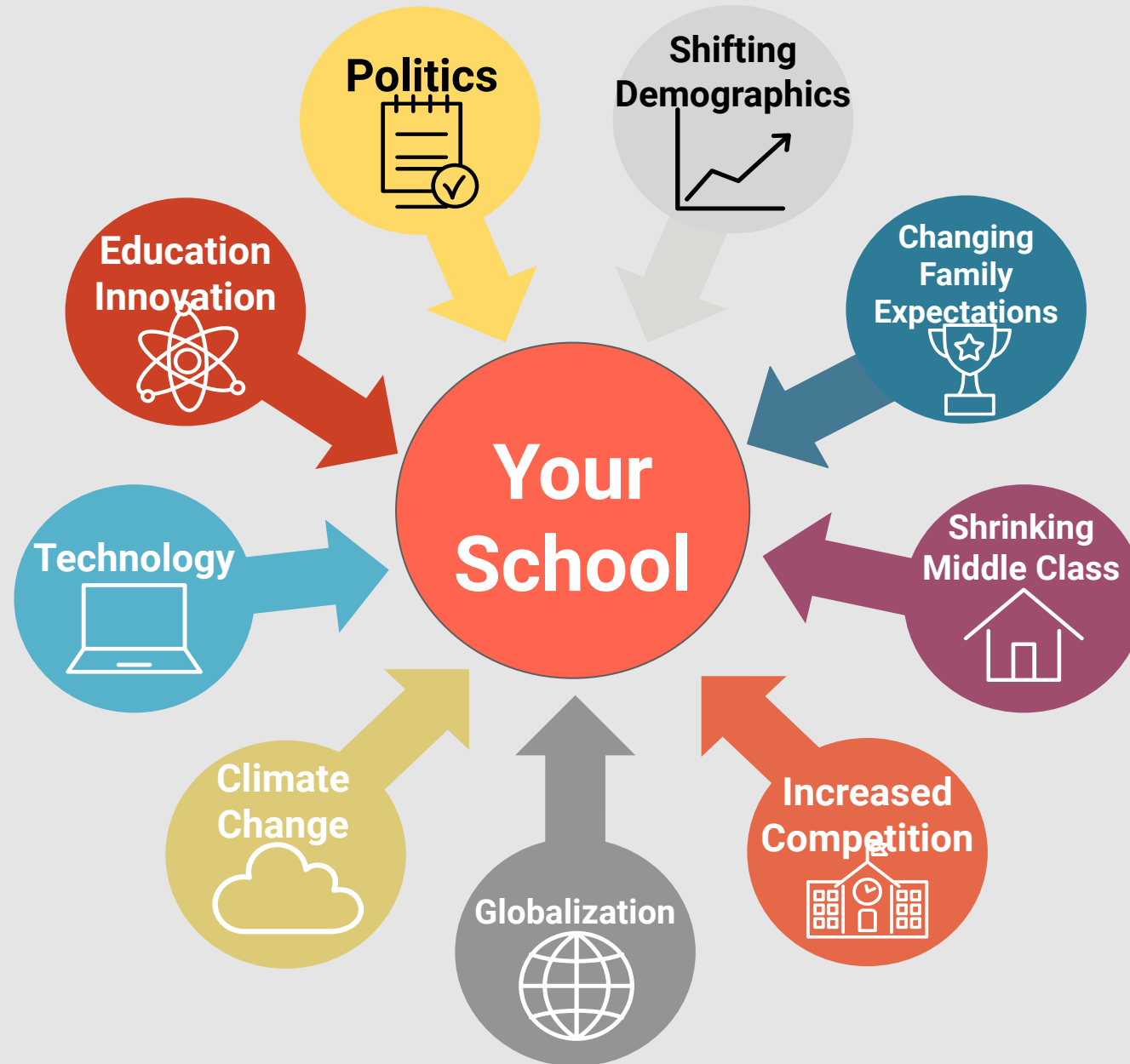
Advantages:

- Follows enrollment timeline
- Saves time for admission and business office
- Increase family responsibility
- Not reminding families they have other options

Challenges:

- New re-enrollment scenarios to consider
- Time and personnel dedicated to optimal rollout
- Process can feel impersonal
- Additional legal considerations

Enrollment Management Disruptors



Questions to Consider

- Which office owns this process?
- What is your motivation for considering perpetual enrollment? What are the problem are you trying to solve? Be honest!
- Do all school employees involved with the creation, distribution, and collection of enrollment contracts have input in the decision making process (switching to perpetual enrollment)?
- Have you sought legal counsel to begin to understand how this might/might not work?
- Who are the other stakeholders who should be included in this discussion and/or transition?

Words of Wisdom

- Seek legal advice
- Create timeline that works for all internal offices
- Decide who will receive re-enrollment emails
- Vet process to a select group of parents
- Involve communications team from the start

3

What are the financial considerations for implementing perpetual enrollment?

Tuition and Financial Aid

- Same processes
- Communication is important
- Money is a sensitive topic for families
- Financial aid ≠ scholarship

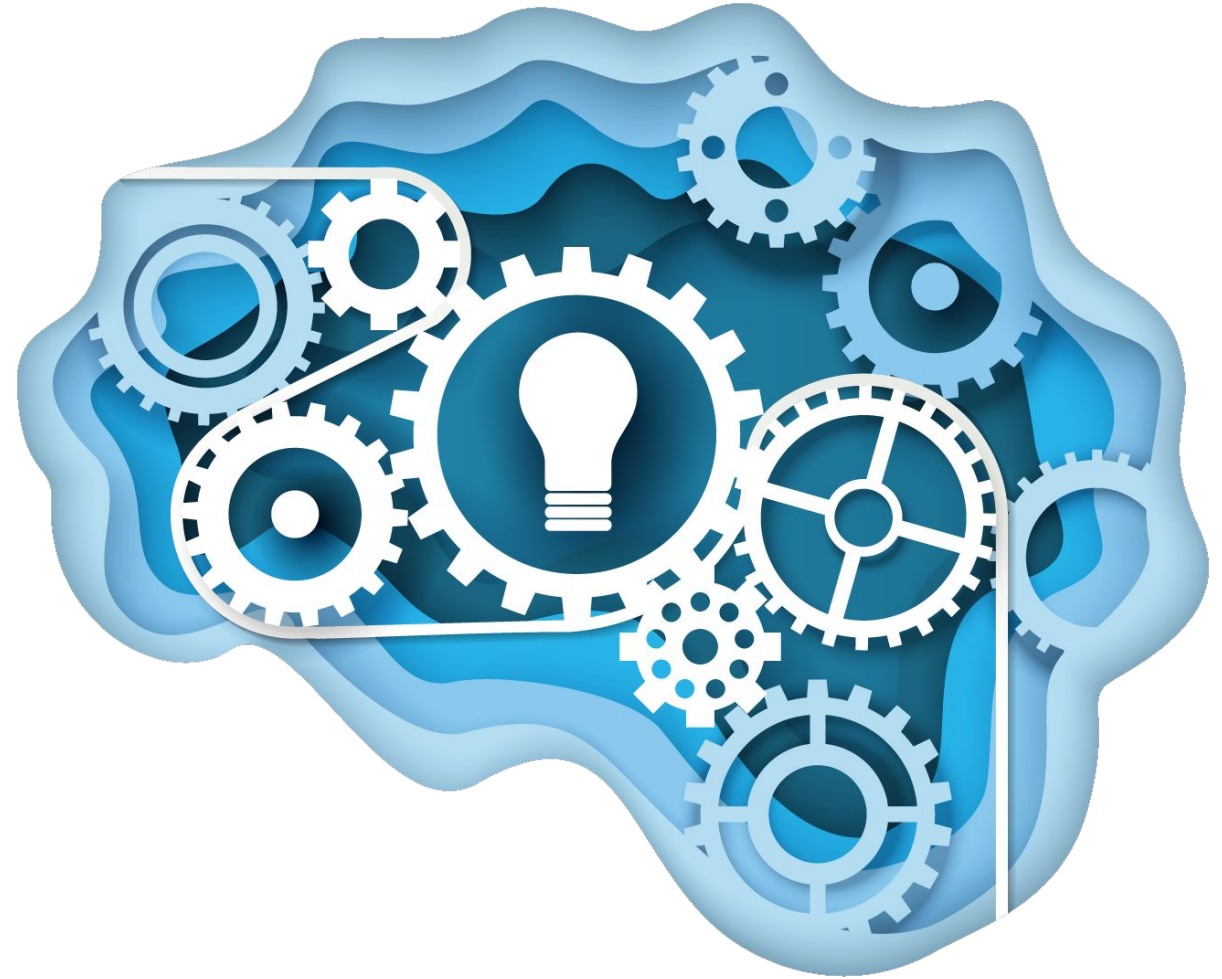


Budget & Forecast

- Opportunity to save time and money
- Know returning enrollment sooner
- Revenue from tuition is more straightforward
- Consider refundable vs non-refundable deposits

Discussion Questions

- What is motivating you to consider perpetual enrollment?
- What are the challenges (or roadblocks) you anticipate experiencing if you move to perpetual enrollment?
- Where would your school need to invest the most time and money?



2

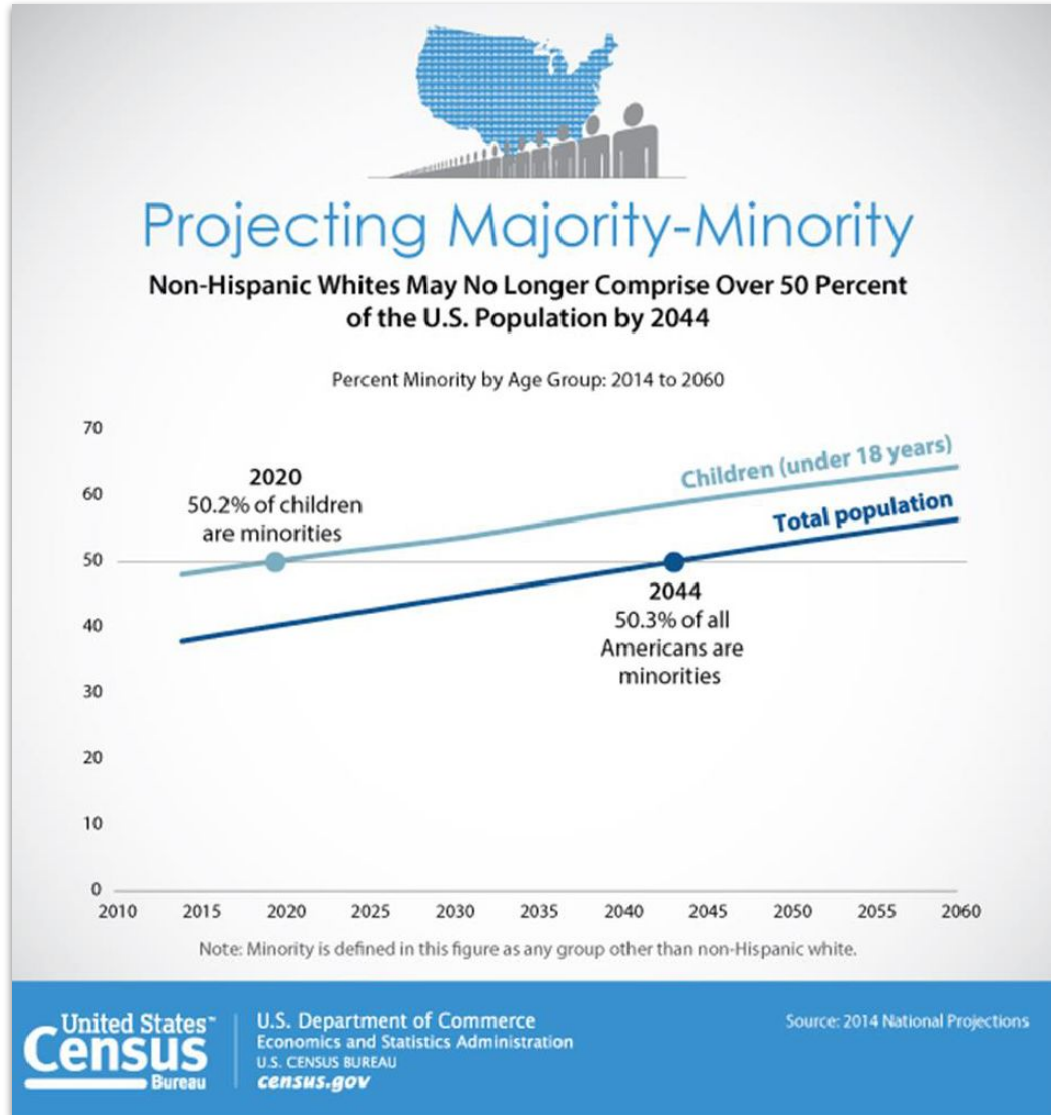
Enrollment Outlook

The
**Enrollment
Management
Association**



US Census Projections

2014-2060



- By 2020, more than ½ of U.S. children were expected to be part of a minority race/ethnic group.
- The U.S. population as a whole is expected to follow a similar trend, becoming majority-minority in 2044.
- The proportion of the population younger than 18 is expected to change little over the 2012-2060 period, **decreasing from 23.5 percent to 21.2 percent.**

ACIS Enrollment for 2021-2022

67%

Met both enrollment and net tuition revenue goals

11%

Met net tuition revenue goal, but not enrollment goal

7%

Met enrollment, but not net tuition revenue goal

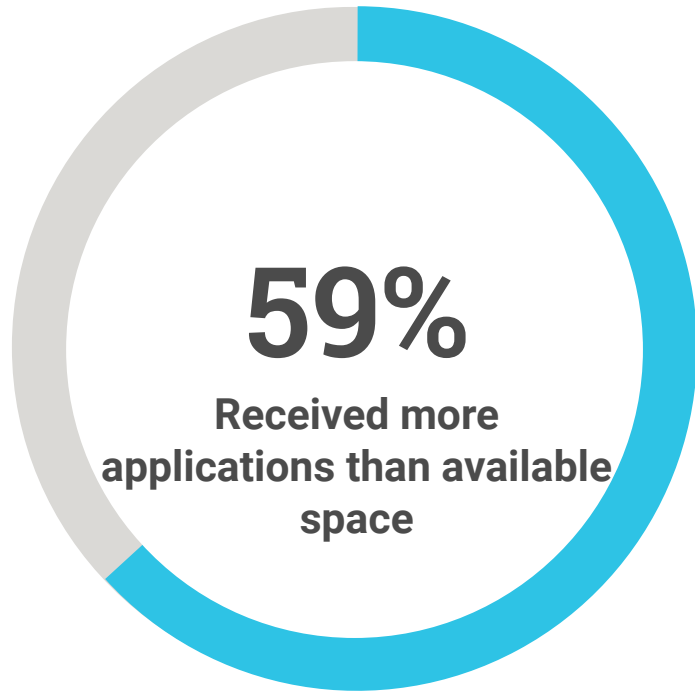
15%

Met neither enrollment or net tuition revenue goal

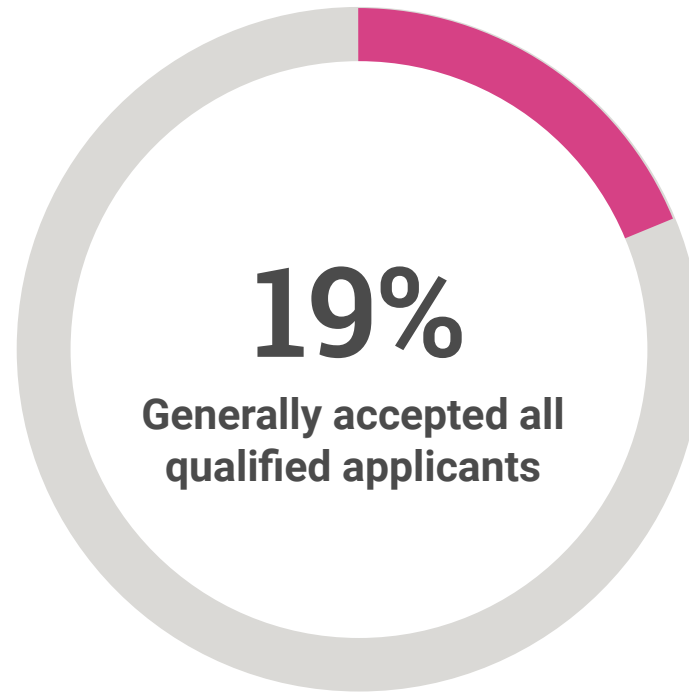
0%

Do not know

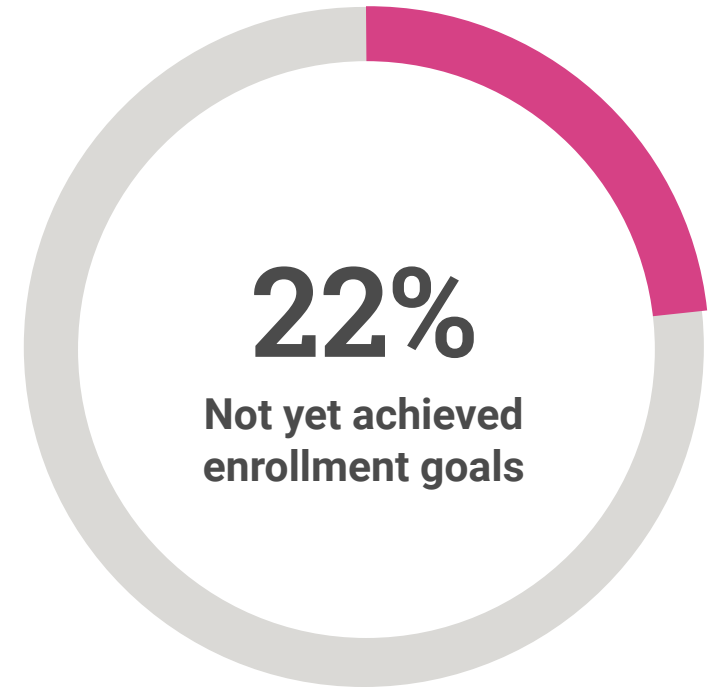
ACIS Enrollment Opportunities & Challenges



Received many more/more applications than available spaces and manage an extensive/small waitlist in many grades.



Generally accepted all qualified applicants and reached enrollment goals.



We have not yet achieved our enrollment goals, or feel we will not reach our enrollment goal for the year.

NAIS Enrollment Data

-12.2%

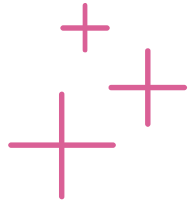
Drop in preschool enrollment
in 2020-21 (compared to
2019-20)

-5%

Median
enrollment for
schools under 101
students

-2.6%

Decline in median
enrollment for
elementary
schools



ACIS Concerns for the 2021-22 Enrollment Cycle

73%

Retention of current students

38%

Continued COVID-19 restrictions

35%

Increased requests for financial assistance

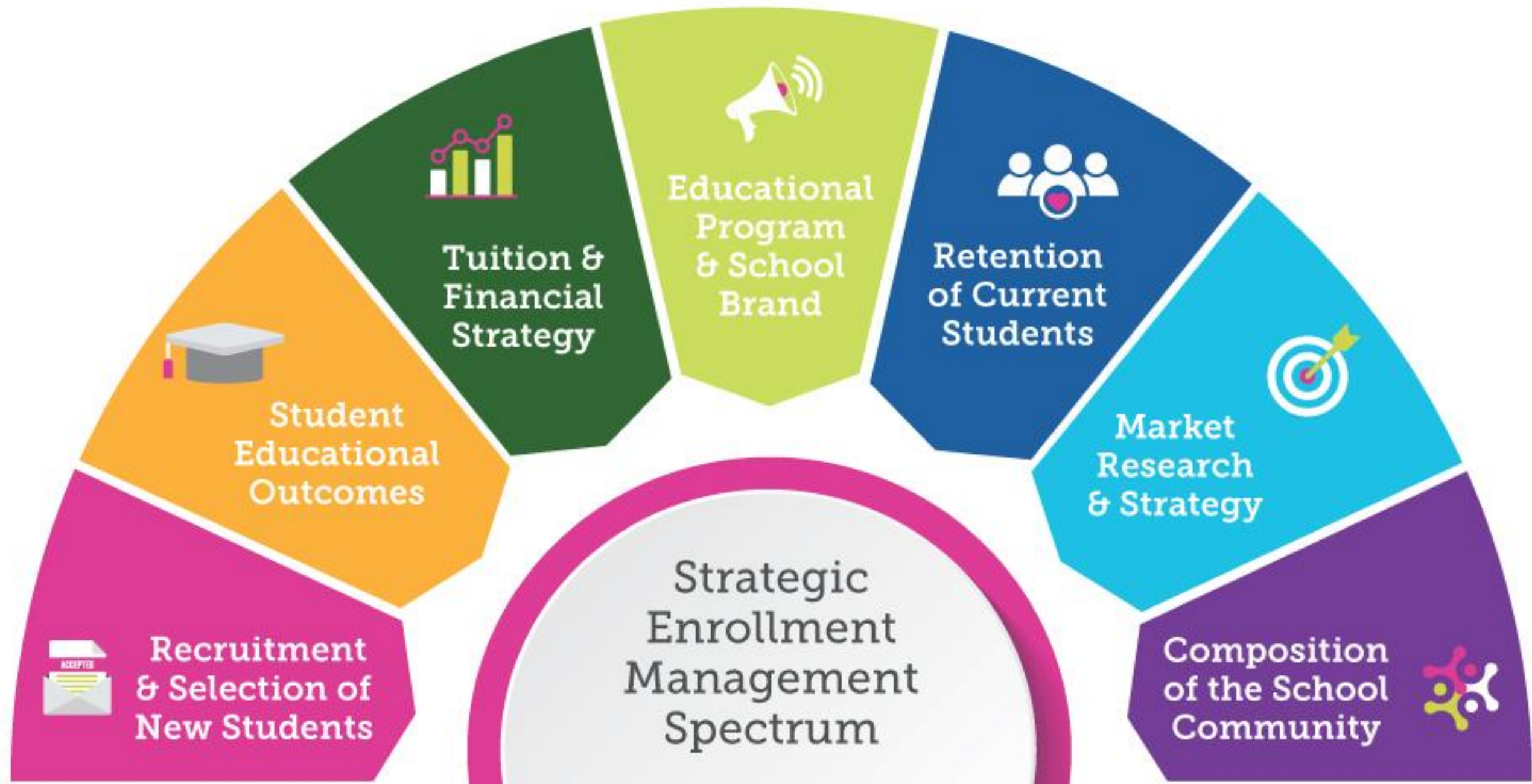
34%

Decline in applicant numbers or yield



3

Strategic Enrollment Management



1

Recruitment and selection of new students

Shift in Who's Purchasing



82%

Four-in-five parents (82%) are Gen X, while Gen Y and Boomers each account for less than 10%.

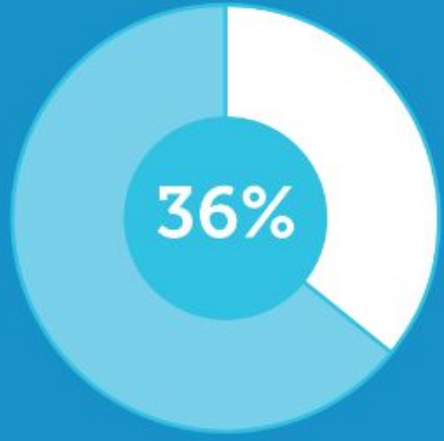
This age profile has shifted notably away from Boomers over the past three years.

GenX Purchasing

Parents in their 40's and 50's prefer **honest and clear** product and marketing messages that outline an **obvious path-to-purchase**. Gen X is more likely to conduct **online research at home** and then shop in person, while their younger counterparts conduct research on their phones, in the store. The best way to reach Gen X? Email. And while most are on social media, they are much **more influenced by email** marketing campaigns.

Millennial Purchasing

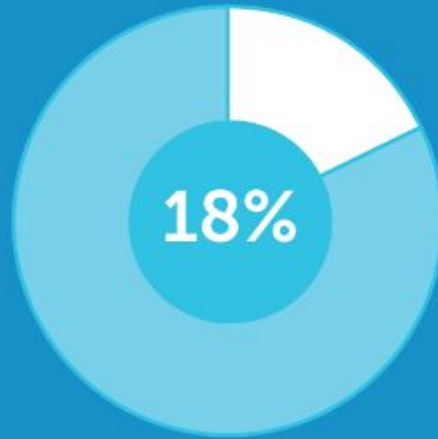
Traditional marketing has taken a backseat for parents in their 20's and 30's (less than 1% of Millennials are influenced by traditional ads), but word of mouth marketing, **user-generated content**, and social selling are much more persuasive. **Authenticity** is incredibly important to this generation and millennials are inherently suspicious of being sold or lied to by brands. Millennials want brands to **get real and rally behind a cause**, and they are willing to pay for it – in fact, they are 50% more likely to purchase from a company that supports a cause.



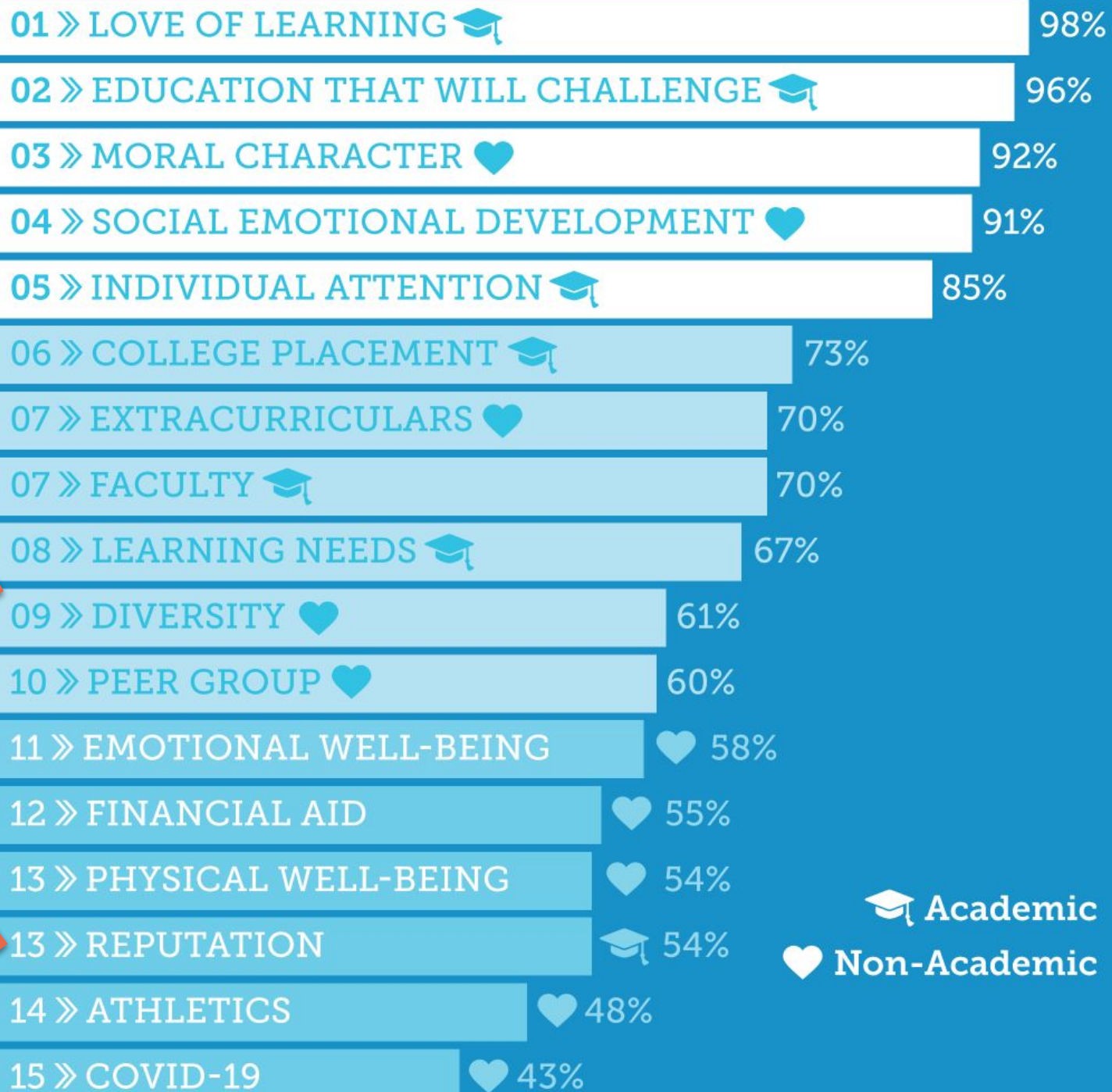
Wanted to explore other educational options



Needs to change schools because they are in their current school's final grade



Needs to change schools because unsatisfied with current educational environment



 Academic

 Non-Academic

What are the gaps?

- Parents understand their child's school experience better
- Parents also have problems they are trying to solve
- **Do you want to play college sports?** Reclassify and do an extra year at our school!
- **Did you fall behind academically?** Transfer for our tutorial program!
- **Are you worried about college?** Enroll as a junior to benefit from college counseling!
- **Is your child struggling with reading?** Our specialists can help!

Are you seeing families new to independent schools?

- Send a targeted mailer
- Purchase a list like the Student Prospect List (SPL)
- Create a new page on your website called 'New to Independent Schools?'
- Host a virtual event or reception for local real estate agents explaining the benefits of your school
- Purchase an advertisement on local radio
- Create a testimonial video featuring a new parent or student who moved to the area or switched from public school

2

Take a whole-school approach to retention

“

The easiest student to recruit is the one you already have.

EVERY ENROLLMENT LEADER EVER



Is your Attrition Healthy?

15.75%

ACIS median attrition
2020-2021

9.6%

NAIS median
attrition
2020-2021

10.70%

ACIS median
attrition 2018-2019

Retention Committees Declining

25%
2019

30%
2016

Source: EMA's State of the Admission Industry Report 2019

Best Practices

- Retention starts with the head of school
- Form a retention committee
- Calculate your attrition and compare against benchmarks
- Create 'Students on the Move' dashboard to project attrition in an unprecedented year
- Take time during faculty meeting for proactive outreach
- Develop systems for reactive outreach

Students on the Move Dashboard

Students on the Move (DEMO) x +

docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/168wQobkm2FSURhF5CeR6_NvYAKNgJDsXLr5PSWAPP0/edit#gid=0

Students on the Move (DEMO) ☆ 📄 🔄

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help [Last edit was on July 14, 2020](#)

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1			2020-2021 Enrollment													
2	Class Year	19-20 End of Year	Contracts In (Continuing)	Contracts in (New)	Contracts (Total)	TOTAL CONTRACTS THAT ARE SOFT	TOTAL IF SOFT CONTRACTS MELT	Vaccine Compliance Issues	Contemplating Moving Out of State	Considering Home School	Wants Reassurance School Will NOT Be Remote	Applied Out or Requested Transcripts for Public School	Expressed Financial Worries	Athletic Concerns	New International Students Who Don't Have a Visa Yet	Current International Student Visa Conc
3	K	20	0	21	21	-10	11	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
4	1ST	20	15	5	20	-4	16			-4						
5	2ND	20	12	8	20	0	20									
6	3RD	20	20	1	21	-3	18						-3			
7	4TH	20	12	9	21	0	21									
8	5TH	20	12	8	20	-2	18								-2	
9	6TH	20	12	5	17	0	17									
10	7TH	20	12	7	19	0	19									
11	8TH	20	11	8	19	-1	18						-1			
12	9TH	20	15	9	24	0	24									
13	10TH	20	18	7	25	-4	21			-4						
14	11TH	20	11	6	17	-3	14					-3				
15	12TH	20	6	5	11	-2	9									-2
16	PG	20	19	4	23	0	23									
17	TOTALS	280	175	103	278	-29	249	-1	-1	-9	-1	-4	-5	-1	-3	-3

Add 1000 more rows at bottom.

Source: Laurel Baker-Tew, Viewpoint School (CA), [Students on the Move](#)

Retaining Public School Switchers

- Include explicit explanation of the benefits of your school in parent emails
- Demonstrate the outcomes from this year (college list, test scores, number of days in-person, satisfaction surveys)
- Celebrate extraordinary faculty
- Emphasize your values in uncertain times (certainty is your secret sauce)
- Video testimonial featuring a passionate (and representative parent) recorded on Zoom saying 'It was a big deal for us to switch from public school and it's been the best thing we've ever done.'
- Communicate, communicate, communicate

3

Onboarding new families



Onboarding New Families

1

Communication is key

2

Create community

3

Provide volunteer opportunities

Examples

- Sunshine calls
- Advisory outreach
- 24-hour policy

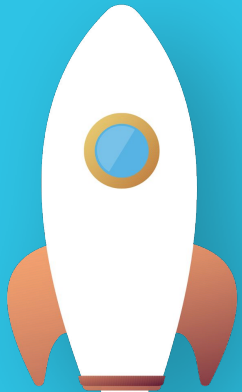


“The early interactions that parents and their children have with your school are critical in establishing the quality of the experience.”

— Chuck English

Resources

Inspiration



Episode 41

WITH **Derrick Gay**
Consultant & Thought Leader

The Double Edged Sword of Diversity [Ep.41]

Listen Now →

Episode 43

WITH **Jennifer Hillen & Amber Stockham**
National Business Officers Association

COVID-19 What We're Hearing [Ep.43] [March 13]

Listen Now →

Episode 46

WITH **Suzanne Buck**
Western Reserve Academy

Now is a Good Time to Launch an Idea Factory [Ep.46] [March 21]

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Episode 47

WITH **Mark Mitchell**
NAIS

Financial aid in uncertain times: questions every school must ask today [Ep.47] [March 21]

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Episode 61

WITH **Jay Rainey**
Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School, MO

To Lower Tuition or Not To Lower Tuition? [Ep.61] [May 28]

Listen Now →

Episode 55

WITH **Tom Sheppard**
St. Andrew's Episcopal School, MS

Reconsidering your tuition for the fall? [Ep.55] [April 27]

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Episode 58

WITH **Dr. Paul LeBlanc**
Southern New Hampshire University

Paul LeBlanc from Southern New Hampshire University [Ep.58] [May 8]

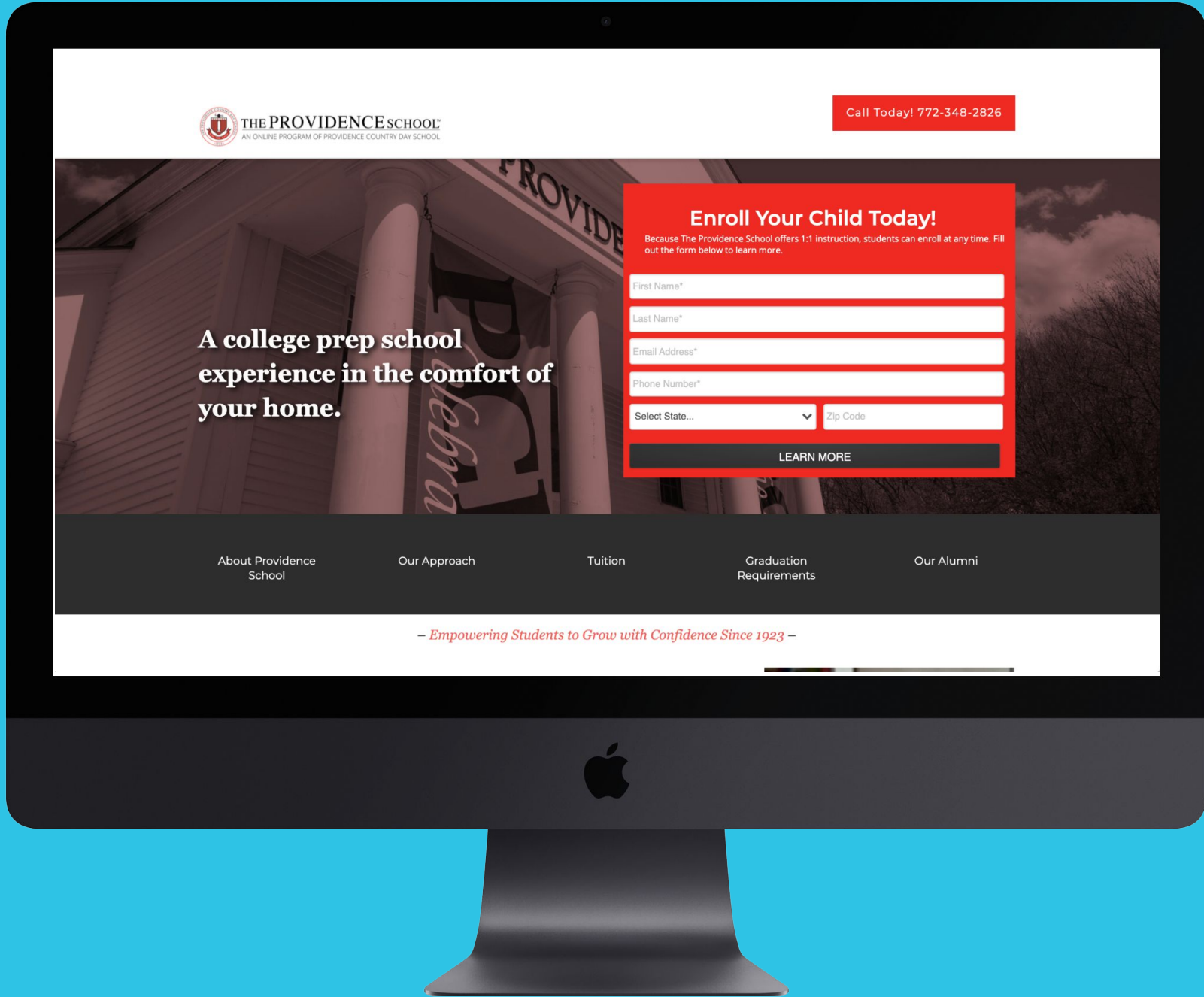
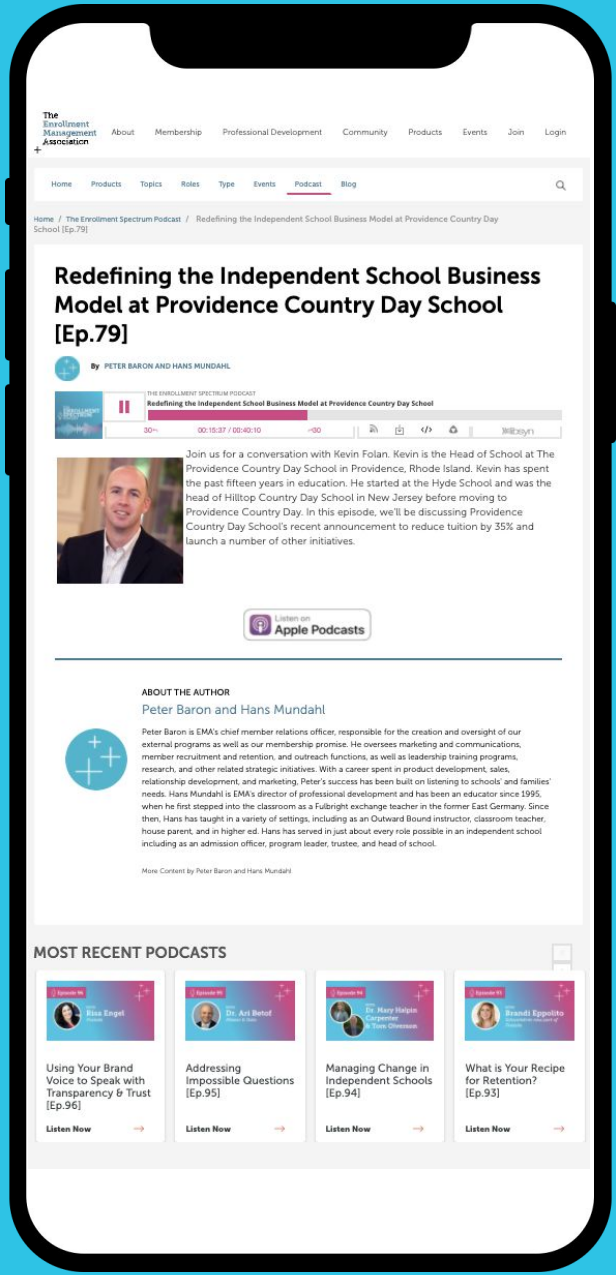
Listen Now →

Episode 21

WITH **Rik Dugan**
Princeton Academy of the Sacred Heart

Retention with Intention [Podcast Ep.21]

Listen Now →



enrollment.org/events

The logo for the Annual Conference 2021 in Seattle. It features the text "EMA|AC" in a light blue font and "SEATTLE21" in a pink and yellow font, all set against a black background with colorful circular patterns.

Annual Conference 2021

Sep 21–25

EMA's in-person and online annual conference. Are you ready to recharge, reunite, and recommit? Enrollment leaders around the world have reinvented their work, their schools, and themselves. Chances are you might be looking forward to an opportunity to fill up on inspiration, energy, and hope. AC21 is the place to start!



Anti-Bias Symposium: Continuing the Conversation

Oct 26 | 11:00am - 3:15pm ET

Join us as we continue the conversation about equity in Independent Schools. We welcome first time attendees and those who joined us in January for the initial Anti-Bias Symposium. This event promises to continue the conversation, take a deeper dive and offer diverse topics and speakers with a focus on the whole school enrollment approach to our important DEI work.



Financial Aid Symposium

Dec 7 | 11:00 am - 3:00 pm ET

SAVE THE DATE - Registration opens soon! Join experts in the field as we dive into the nuts and bolts of financial aid reviewing and planning. Don't miss keynote Mark Mitchell of NAIS as he explores the outlook and season of 2022. Members of ALC will also be sharing their expertise throughout the day.

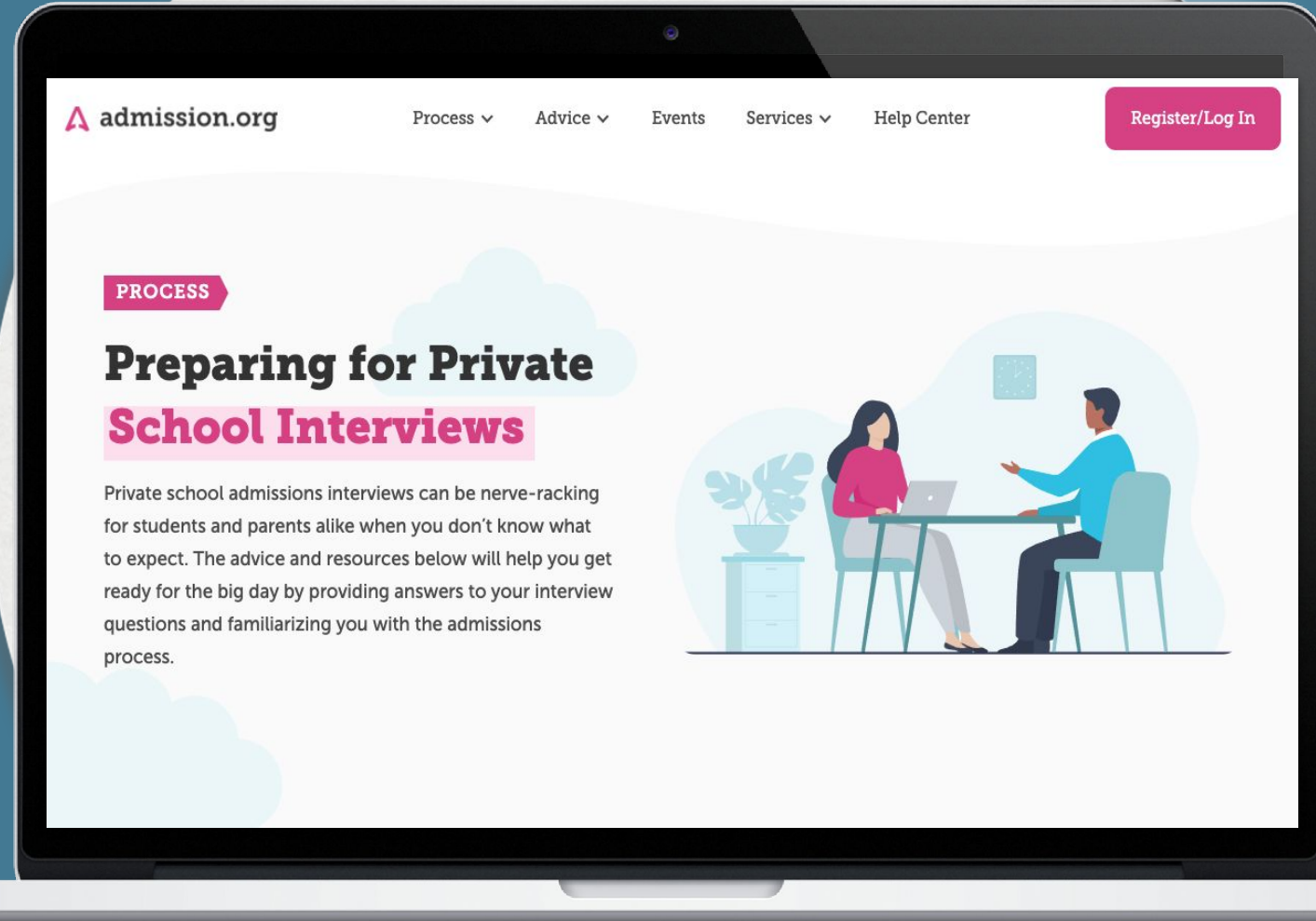


Video Production Bootcamp: 7 Videos You Can Make Right Now

This course will teach you how to make seven videos to support your school admission and marketing efforts. Also included are gear lists, production guides, and royalty-free music.

Admission.org


- Advice for parents/guardians
- #admissionchat podcast
- Admission Academy



The Enrollment Management Association
The Yield
Winter 2019/2020 Edition What's Possible

Erosion of the Base

The Lower School Applicant Pool Is Shrinking.
How Can We Adapt Our Enrollment Strategy?



Inside: Don't Fear the Future. Prepare for It.

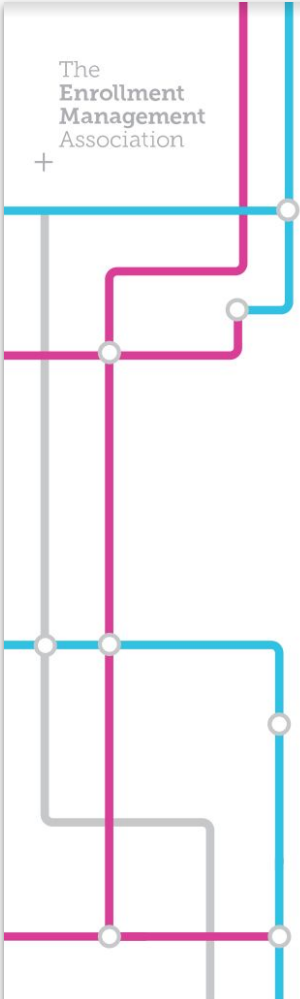
SPECIAL REPORT

2019

STATE OF THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL INDUSTRY:
Special Report on Enrollment Issues and Trends

The Enrollment Management Association

The Enrollment Management Association



2020-2021 The Ride to Independent Schools

2,887 Families Tell Us About Their Journey

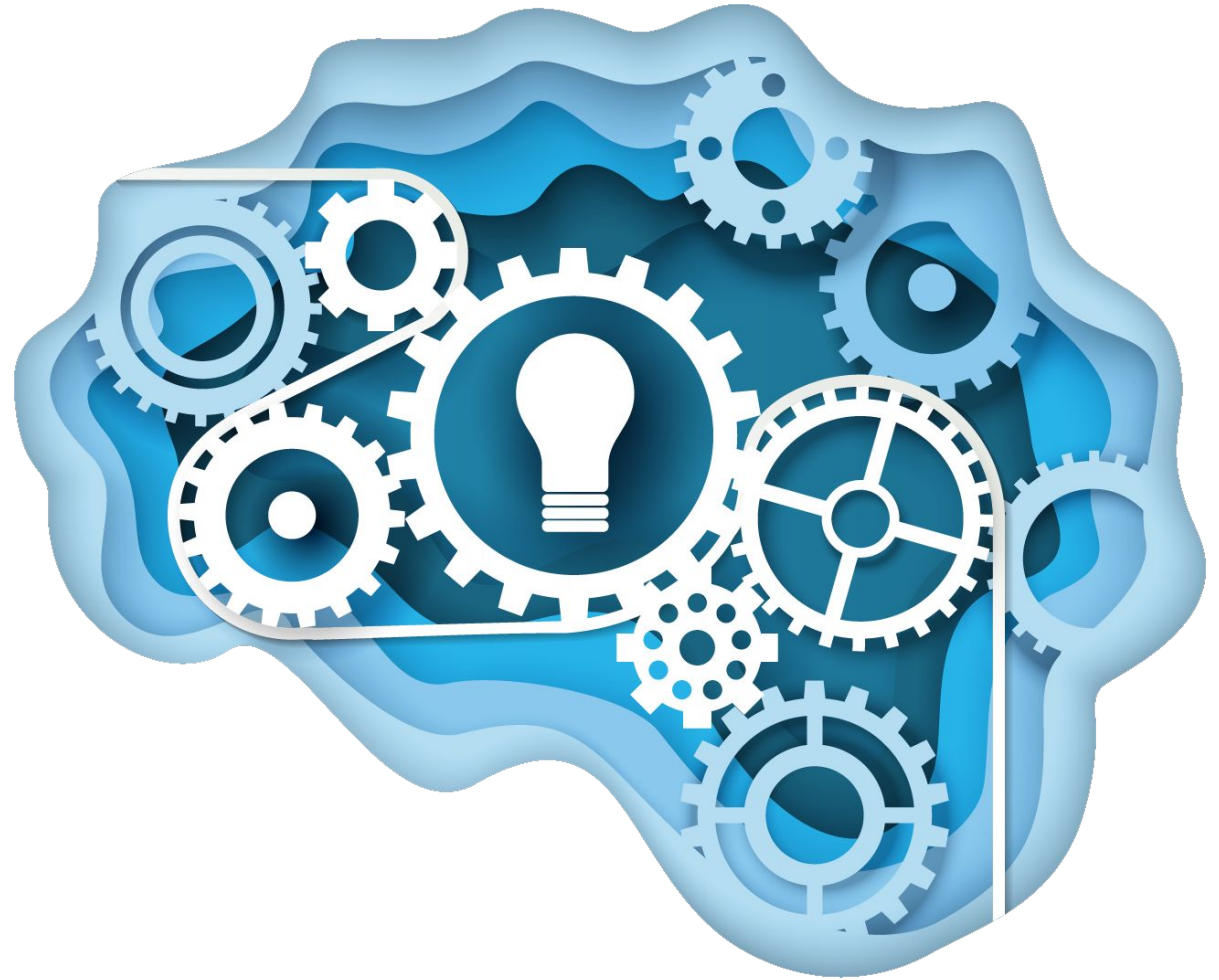
community.enrollment.org/home

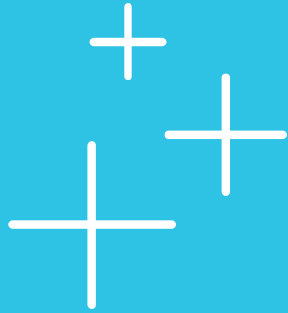
4

Group Discussion & Questions

Discussion Questions

- What steps should your school be taking to ensure you're providing the best experience for your new parents or guardians?
- What retention efforts does your school currently implement? What new ideas would you like to see implemented?
- How have you educated and empowered your faculty and staff to own their role in your school's retention strategy?





Thank You

Christina Dotchin

National Director of Business Development

cdotchin@enrollment.org

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