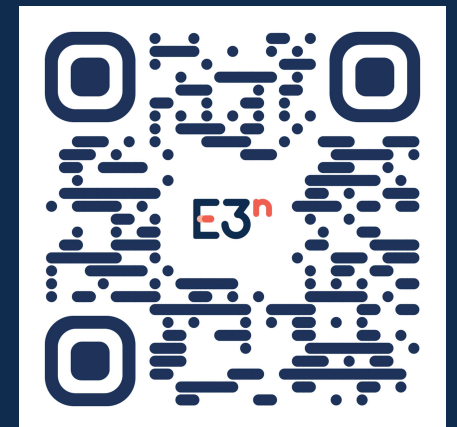


An Independent School Education: Family Perceptions of Value and Affordability

ACIS Spring Admissions Meeting
May 8, 2026



Christina Dotchin

Chief Program Officer

E3ⁿ



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Our mission speaks to what makes us unique

We deepen school impact and foster whole student growth with data-driven insights that serve, develop, and cultivate a community of enrollment and academic leaders.

E3n

**Enroll.
Educate.
Excel.**

Our Vision

**Exponential impact for
schools, their students, and
their leaders.**



$$1 + 1 = 3$$

Admissions

- Admission.org Search
- International Recruitment
- Prospect Lists
- Standard Application Online



Enrollment

- ISEE
- SSAT
- Character Skills Snapshot



Thriving

- Academic Achievement
- Student Well-Being
- Social-Emotional Skills
- Writing Skills

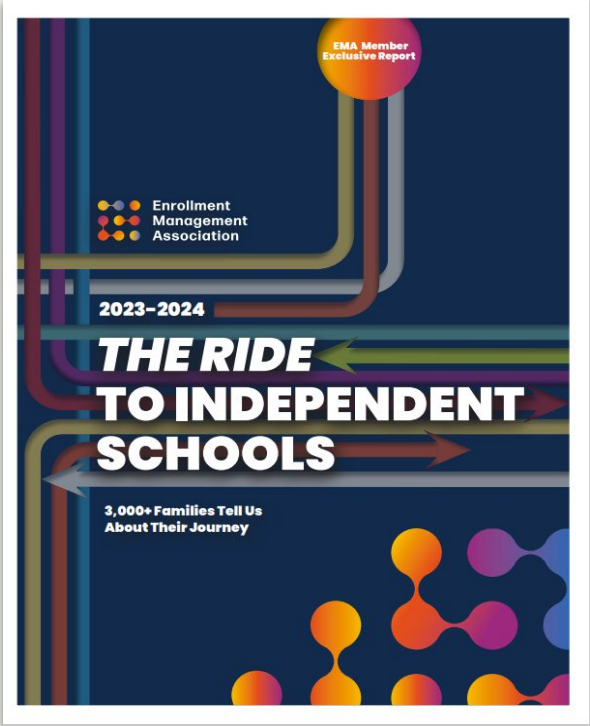


Professional Growth

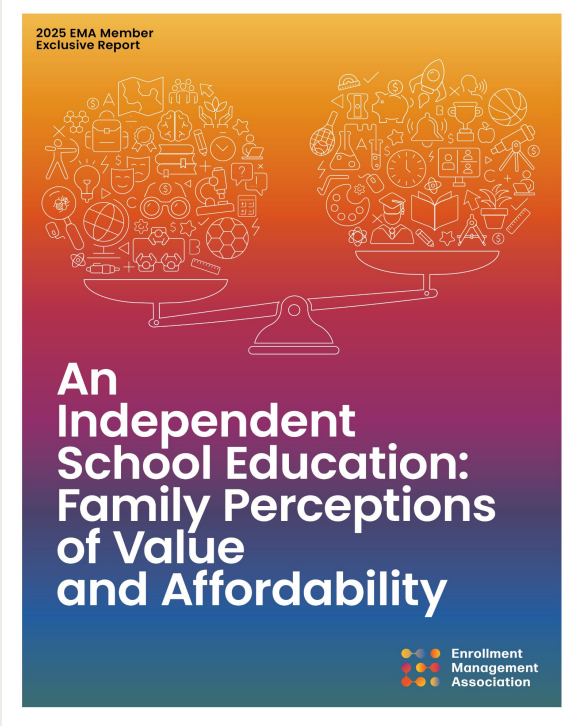
- Regional Events
- Reports & Data Insights
- Annual Conference
- *The Yield*

EMA Special Reports

2024



2025



2026



Agenda



- Current Enrollment Landscape
- Families Desire Savings Without Sacrifice
- The Mythological Perfect School
- Many Families Are Getting Help...Not Just From Schools
- Preliminary Findings: State of the Independent School Enrollment Industry
 - Optimizing Mission-Aligned Enrollment & NTR
 - Filling the Funnel: Marketing & Outreach
 - Emergence, Infusion, and Risks of AI
- Questions, Discussion, Takeaways, and Scenario Activity



It's a tough time
for enrollment.

#1 Risk for Independent Schools = Admissions and Retention



2026 Top Risks Report: Insights for Independent and Charter K-12 Schools



Top 10 Risks

- | | |
|---|---|
|  1. Admissions and Retention |  6. Student Mental Health |
|  2. Public Safety |  7. Accidents (Vehicles) |
|  3. Operational Pressures |  8. Recruitment and Hiring |
|  4. Facilities and Deferred Maintenance |  9. Protecting Minors |
|  5. Data Security/Cybersecurity |  10. Employee Misconduct |



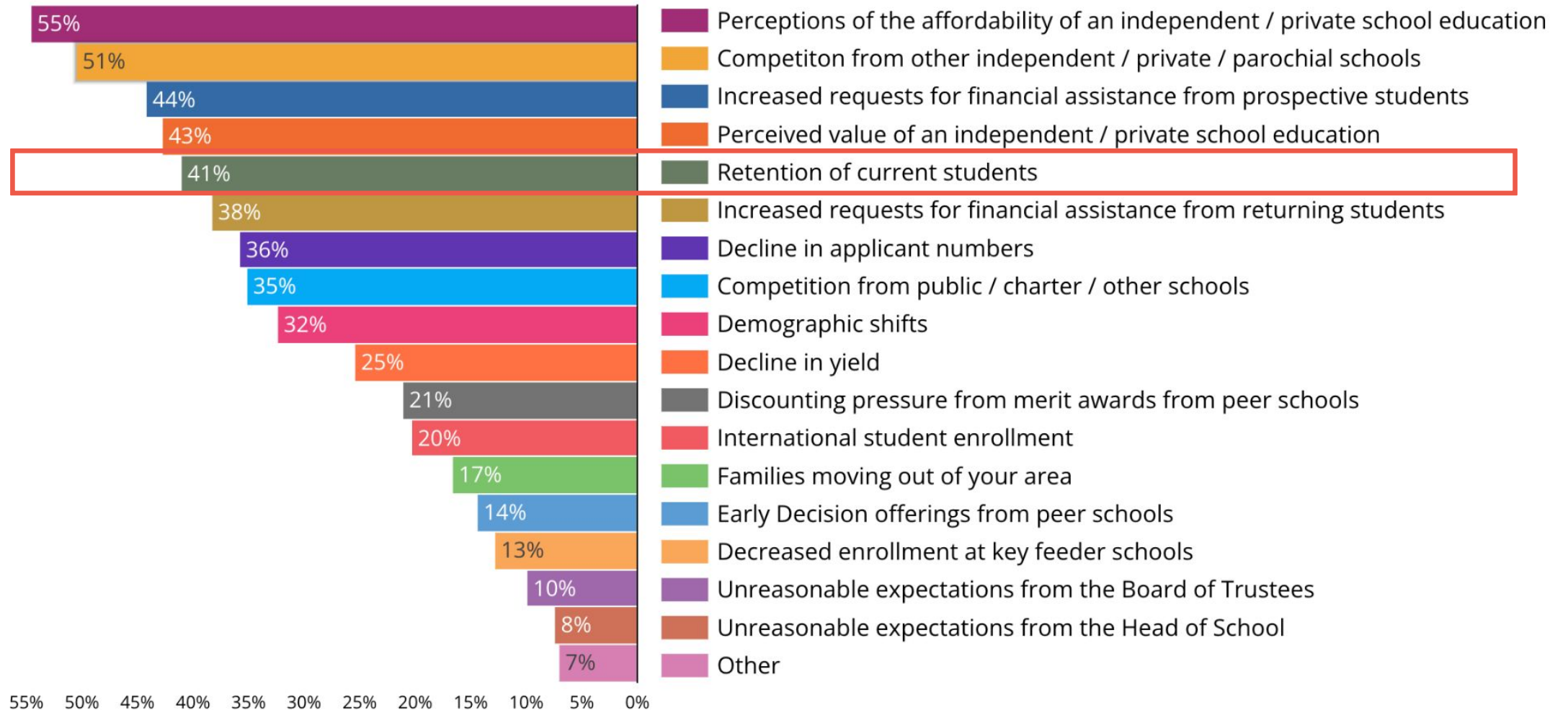
01. Admissions and Retention

53%

Mitigation Efforts:

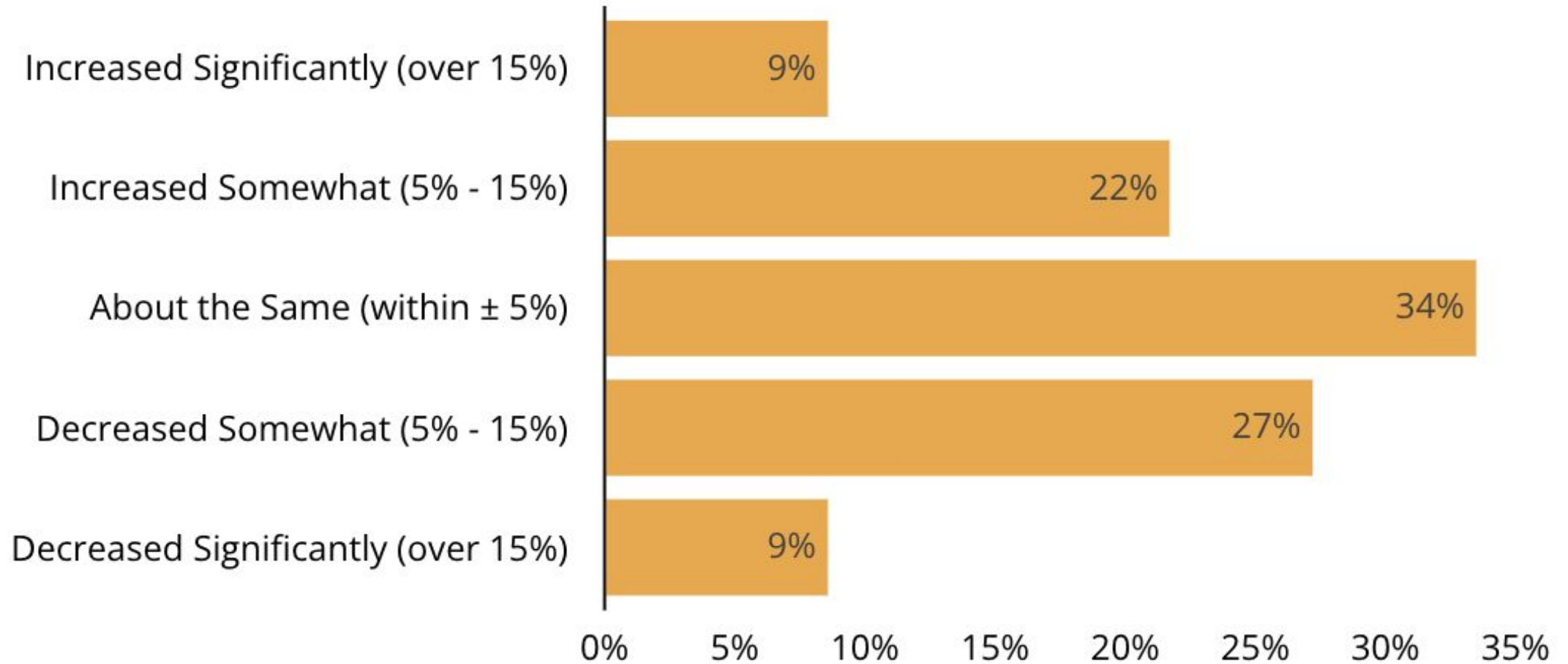
- Consider school-wide strategic enrollment management plan.
- Review tuition pricing model and financial aid strategy.
- Reduce admission selectivity.
- Expand health and well-being services.
- Invest in strong belonging and community-building programs.
- Communicate school's value proposition.

What are your top concerns for the remainder of the enrollment season?



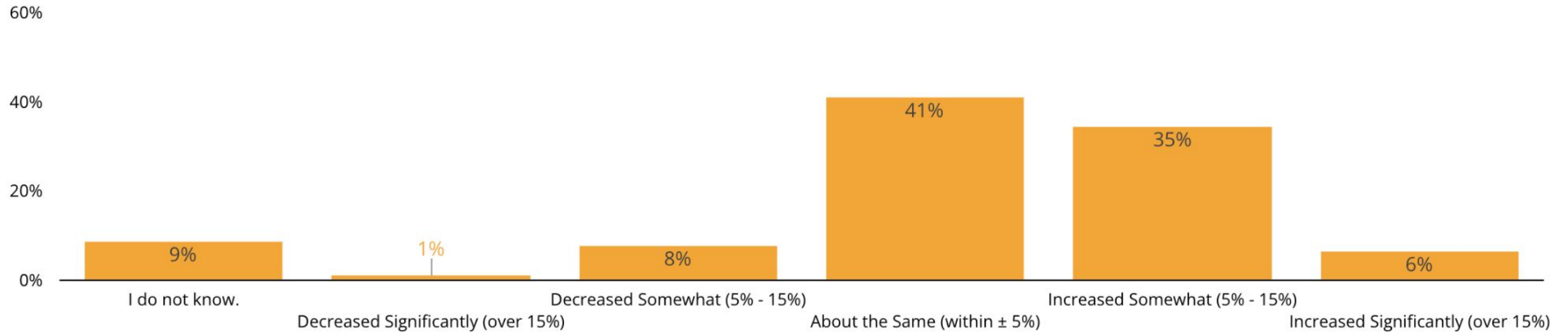
Source: E3n (EMA + ERB) Enrollment Flash Survey, February 2026.

Comparing data as of February 1 this year to last year, completed admission applications at your school have/are:



Source: [E3n \(EMA + ERB\) Enrollment Flash Survey](#), February 2026.

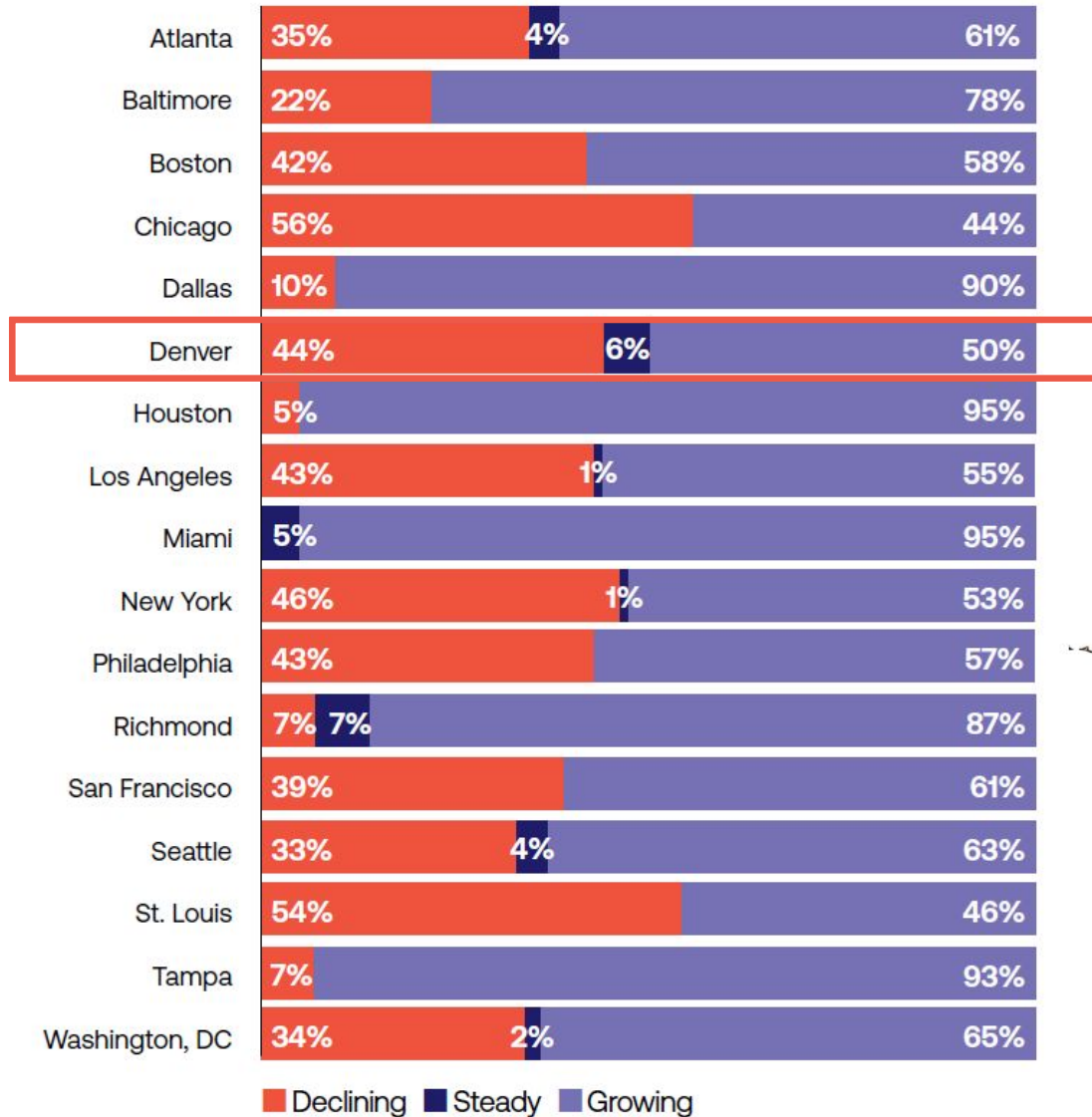
Comparing data as of February 1 this year to last year, completed financial aid applications for prospective students at your school have/are:



Source: [E3n \(EMA + ERB\) Enrollment Flash Survey](#), February 2026.

SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTH CONTINUE TO SEE HIGH LEVELS OF GROWTH.

ENROLLMENT CHANGE BY METRO AREA, 2019–2020 TO 2024–2025

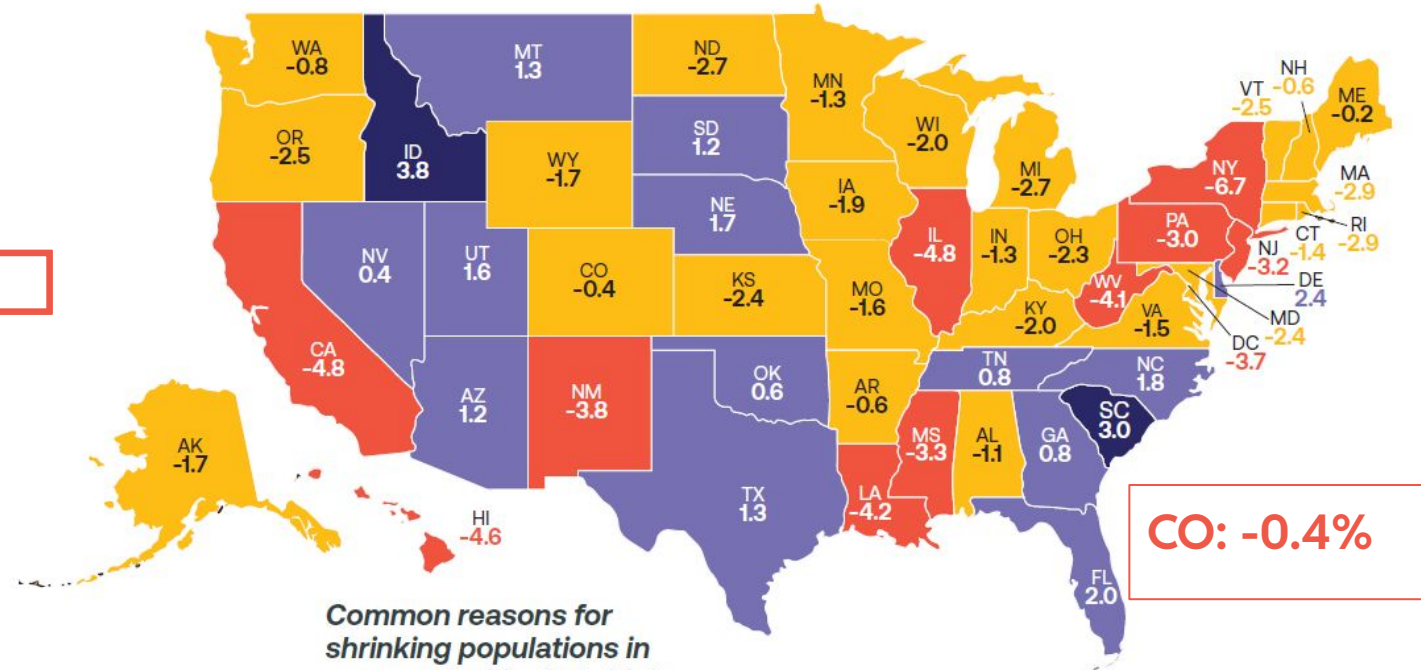


Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Source: NAIS, Data and Analysis for School Leadership (DASL)

THE POPULATION OF CHILDREN IN A MAJORITY OF STATES HAS DECLINED SINCE THE PANDEMIC.

PERCENT CHANGE IN THE POPULATION OF CHILDREN BY STATE, 2020–2024



Source: USA Facts, "Our Changing Population"

- Growing 3% or more
- Growing 0% to 2.9%
- Shrinking 0% to -2.9%
- Shrinking -3% or more

Source: NAIS Demographic Center

Boarding Outlook

51%

International student enrollment is a top concern for schools with a boarding component.

15%

Decline in international SAO applicants.

39%

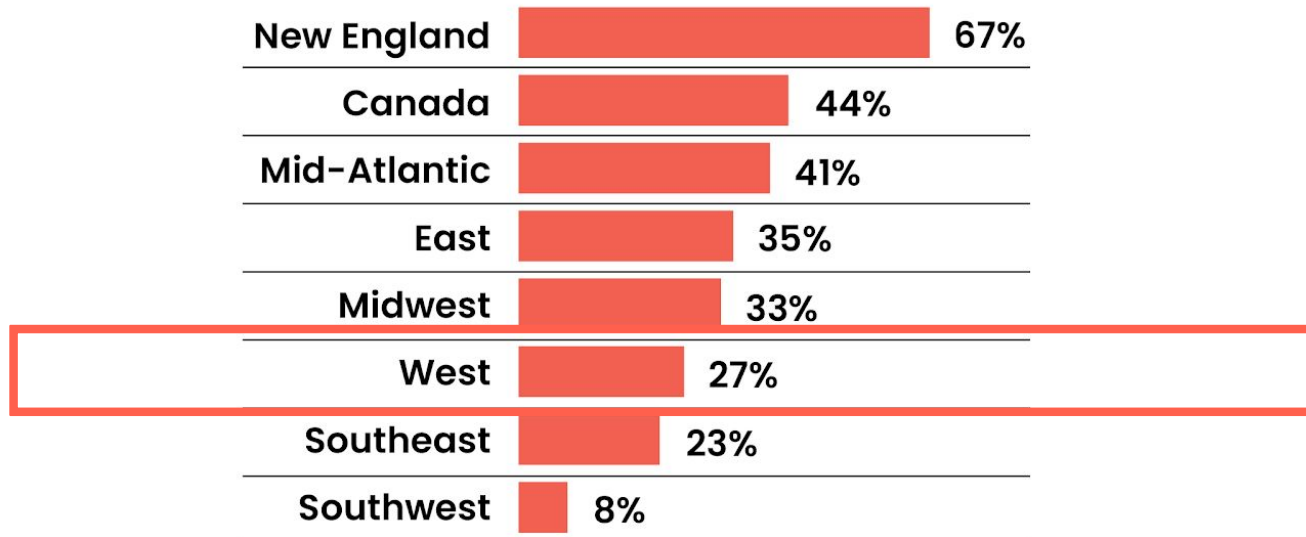
Completely and fairly confident will reach NTR goals.

47%

Completely and fairly confident will reach enrollment goals.

International Recruitment

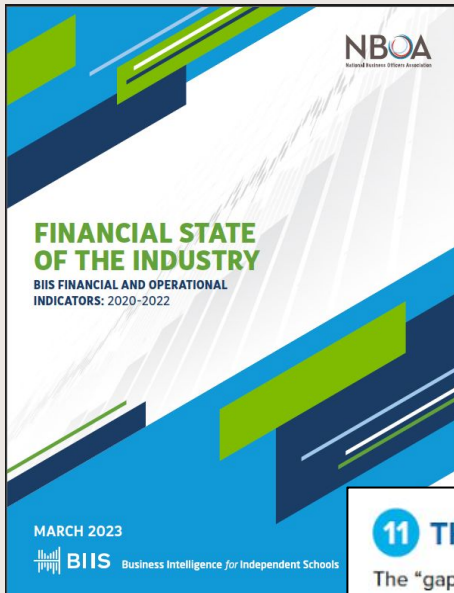
Share of schools where someone travels abroad to recruit international students



Top Sending Countries and Territories

			Change from 2023
China	77%		↓ 5%
Hong Kong	29%		↑ 12%
Canada	25%		↑ 6%
Germany	23%		↑ 4%
Mexico	19%		↑ 2%
Spain	19%		↑ 5%
Korea (Republic Of)	18%		↑ 5%
Vietnam	18%		↑ 2%
Japan	16%		
United States	16%		
United Kingdom	15%		
Brazil	11%		

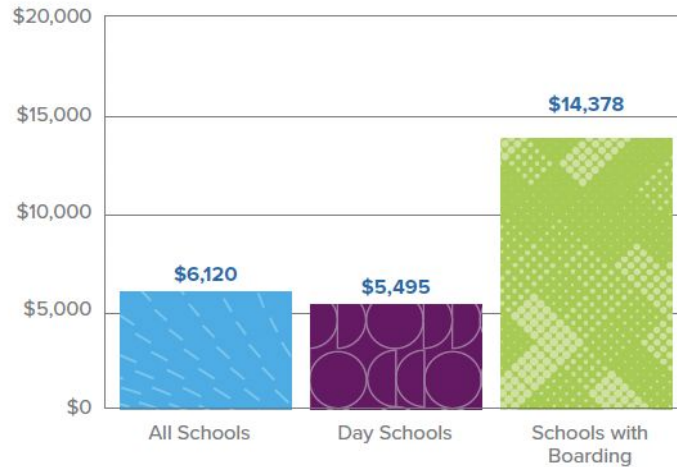
Independent School Education as a Premium (Not a Luxury) Expense



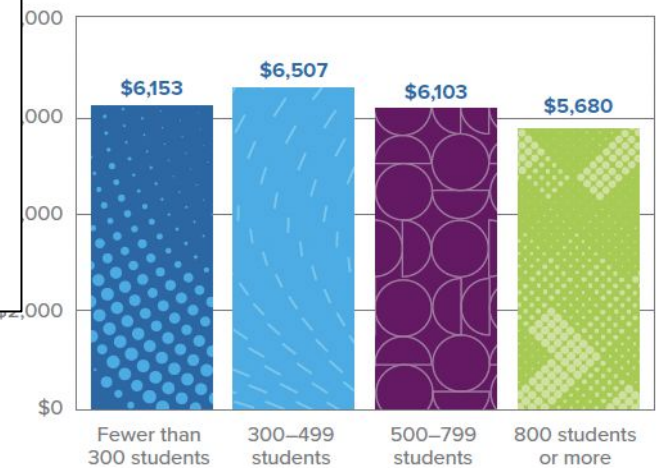
11 THE "GAP" per student

The "gap" is the difference between *total operating expense per student* and *net tuition and fees per student*. A school must make up a deficit with other revenue sources such as annual giving, endowment draw and auxiliary income (like summer programs, facility rentals or campus store). The advancement office often cites the gap in its pitch to parents and alumni for the annual fund. A widening gap indicates that operating expenses are growing faster than net tuition and fees.

MEDIANS BY SCHOOL TYPE (2022-23)



MEDIANS BY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (2022-23)



NBOA's report, *Financial State of the Industry: BIIS Financial and Operational Indicators 2021-2023*. Reprinted with permission.

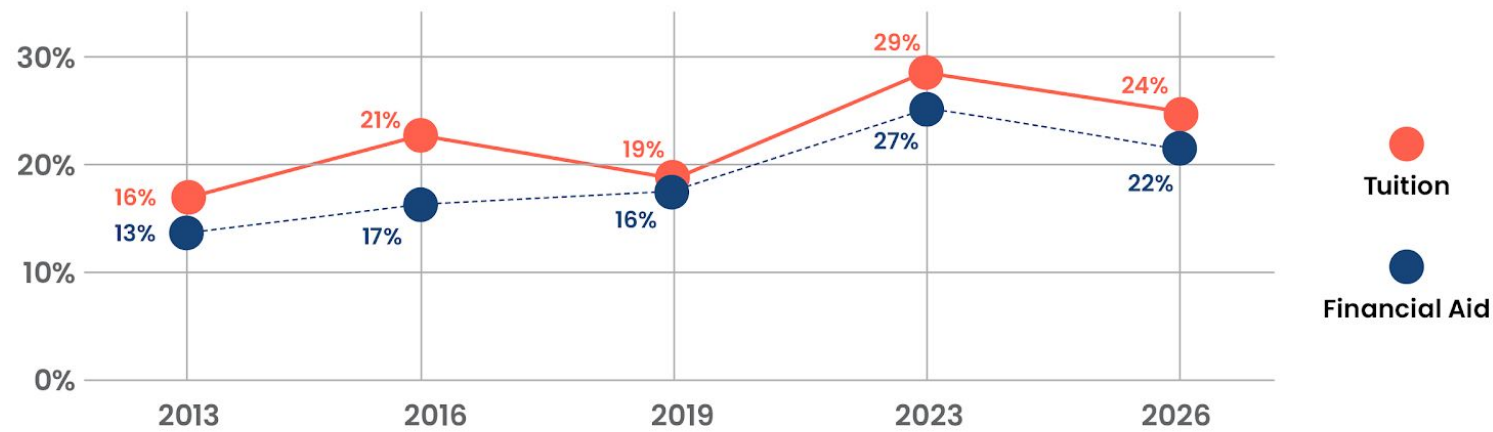
95%

of independent schools
reported less net
tuition revenue than
operating expenses
for the 2022-2023
school year

(NAIS DASL, 22-23 school year)

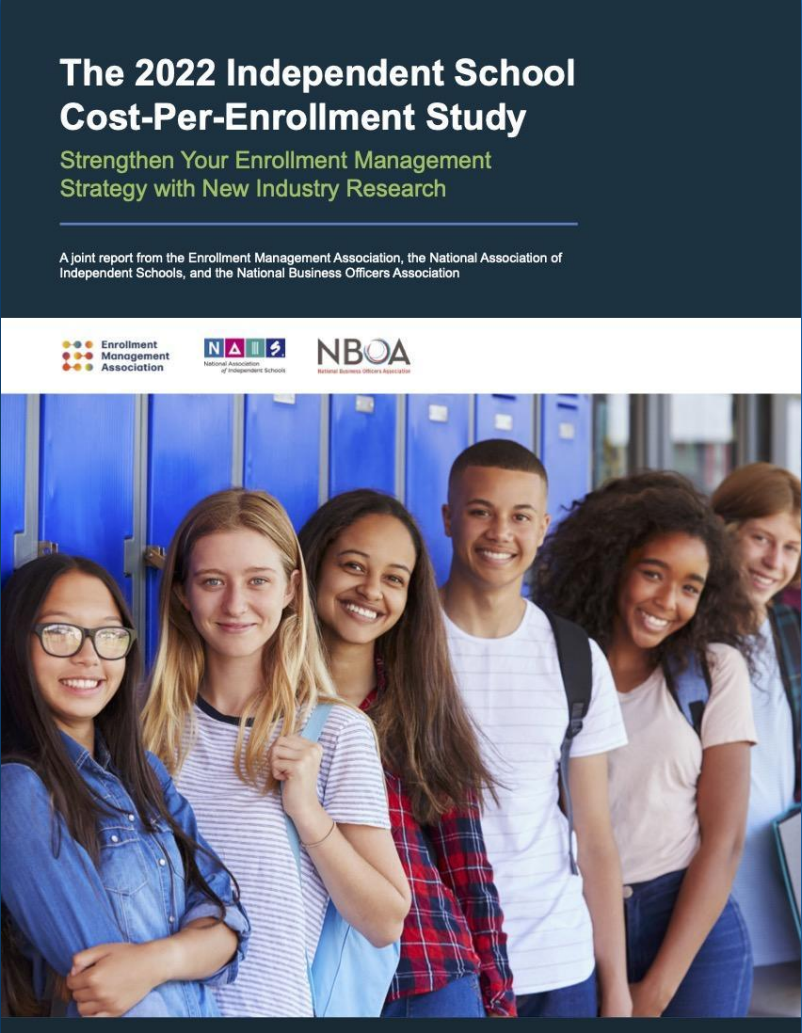
Setting Tuition

As the most senior enrollment leader, what is your level of involvement in setting tuition at school?



Percentage of participants selecting "Play a key role"

Adequately Fueling the Resource Engine



every
\$1

spent on enrollment
management

yields
\$7

in return*

*EMA-NAIS-NBOA's 2022 Independent School Cost-Per-Enrollment Study

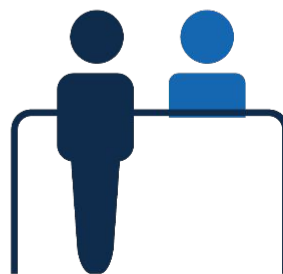
Role of Enrollment Management Teams

Families Value Engagement with Enrollment Professionals



52%

Identified conversations with enrollment staff as a top resource for learning about schools



58%

Indicated an interview with enrollment staff as “very” or “extremely” influential to further consider a school



87%

Reported enrollment staff responding to questions in a timely manner was helpful in completing the application

2025 EMA
Member
Exclusive
Report



An Independent School Education: Family Perceptions of Value and Affordability

 Enrollment
Management
Association

Survey Respondents

1,000+

Parents/caregivers whose students applied to independent schools for fall 2024 from 43 states and territories in the United States, seven Canadian provinces, and 40 countries

Survey Respondents

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

UNITED STATES

New England CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT **26%**

West AK, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY **22%**

East NJ and NY **17%**

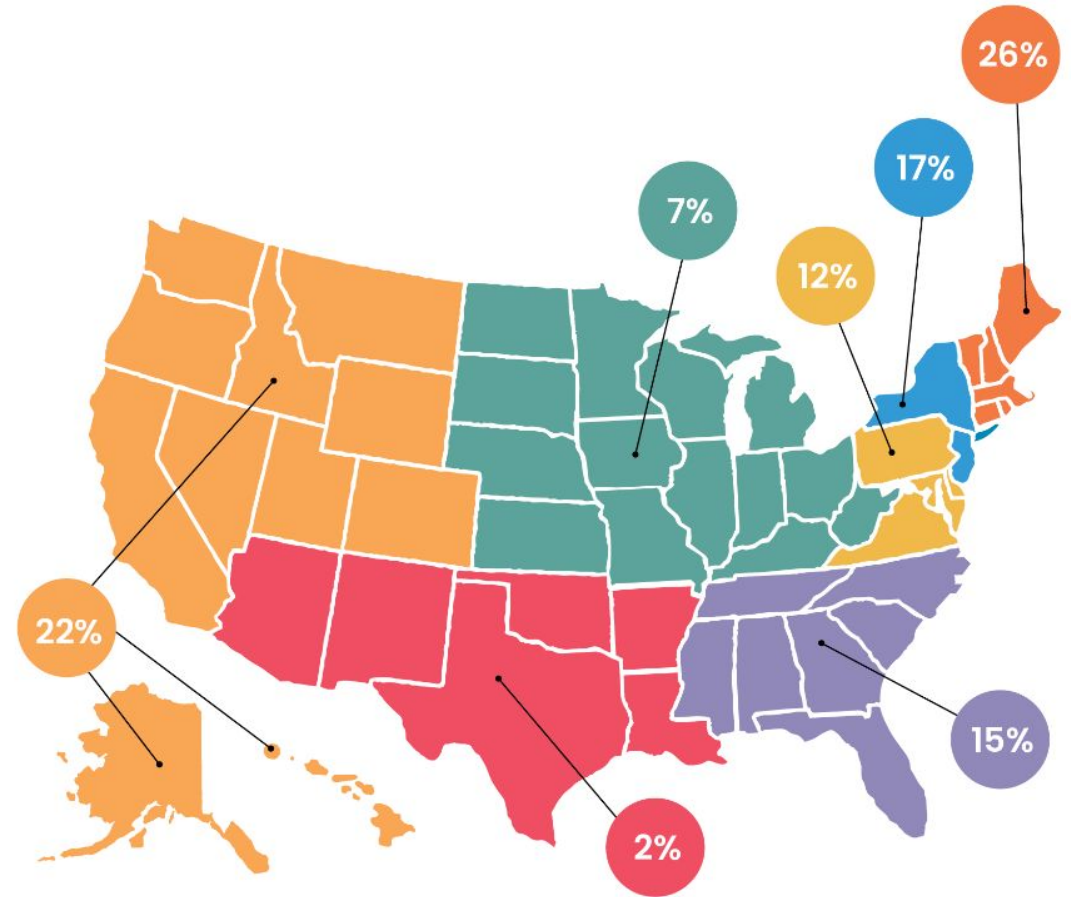
Southeast AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, SC, TN **15%**

Mid Atlantic DC, DE, MD, PA, VA **12%**

Midwest IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI, WV **7%**

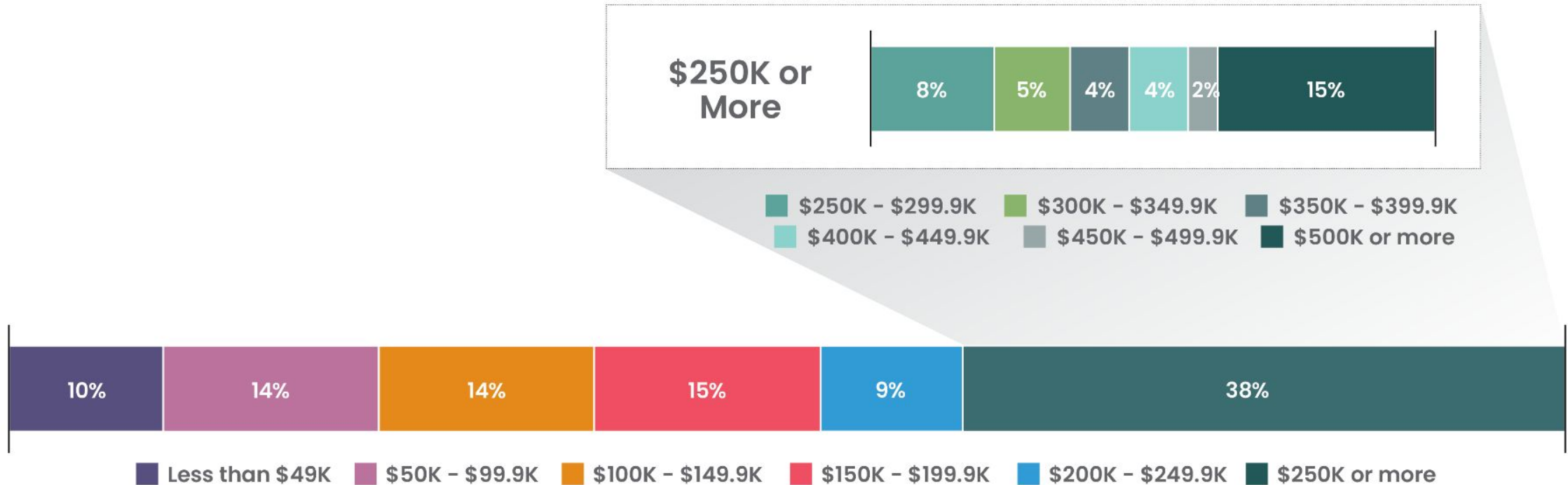
Southwest AR, AZ, LA, NM, OK, TX **2%**

U.S. Territories American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands **<1%**



Survey Respondents

ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME (IN USD)



Families Desire Savings Without Sacrifice



Behavioral Economics



Behavioral Economics

[bi-'hā-vyā-rəl ,e-kə-'nä-miks]

Combining economic theory and psychology to explore why people make irrational decisions.

 Investopedia



“Behavioral economics is grounded in empirical observations of human behavior, which have demonstrated that

people do not always make what neoclassical economists consider the “rational” or “optimal” decision, even if they have the information and the tools available to do so....[T]he field of behavioral economics considers people as human beings who are subject to emotion and impulsivity, and who are influenced by their environments and circumstances.”

Mission
& DATA

Price Signaling

Consumers frequently assume a straightforward relationship exists between a product's price and its quality, believing that higher prices signal superior quality.



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The Analytics of the Pricing of Higher Education and Other Services in Which the Customers Are Inputs

[Michael Rothschild](#) and [Lawrence J. White](#)



PDF



PDF PLUS



Abstract



Abstract

Many services provide outputs that depend partially on the customers as inputs; the presence of other customers often contributes to the output experienced by each purchaser. Higher education is the premier example; others are legion. We provide a simple model that addresses the questions of competitive pricing and allocative efficiency for these types of services. Prices that charge customers for what they get on net (output minus input) from the firm both are competitive and support efficient allocations; these prices internalize the apparent external effects of customers on each other. Few examples of such prices exist in the real world.

Price Signaling



PNAS

Proceedings of the
National Academy of Sciences
of the United States of America

Marketing actions can modulate neural representations of experienced pleasantness

Hilke Plassmann*, John O'Doherty*, Baba Shiv[†], and Antonio Rangel**

*Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences, California Institute of Technology, MC 228-77, Pasadena, CA 91125; and [†]Stanford Graduate School of Business, Stanford University, 518 Memorial Way, Littlefield L383, Stanford, CA 94305

Edited by Leslie G. Ungerleider, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD, and approved December 3, 2007 (received for review July 24, 2007)

Despite the importance and pervasiveness of marketing, almost nothing is known about the neural mechanisms through which it affects decisions made by individuals. We propose that marketing actions, such as changes in the price of a product, can affect neural representations of experienced pleasantness. We tested this hypothesis by scanning human subjects using functional MRI while they tasted wines that, contrary to reality, they believed to be different and sold at different prices. Our results show that increasing the price of a wine increases subjective reports of flavor pleasantness as well as blood-oxygen-level-dependent activity in medial orbitofrontal cortex, an area that is widely thought to encode for experienced pleasantness during experiential tasks. The paper provides evidence for the ability of marketing actions to modulate neural correlates of experienced pleasantness and for the mechanisms through which the effect operates.

orbitofrontal cortex | modulation by marketing actions |
neuroeconomics | taste

A basic assumption in economics is that the experienced pleasantness (EP) from consuming a good depends only on its intrinsic properties and on the state of the individual (1). Thus, the pleasure derived from consuming a soda should depend only on the molecular composition of the drink and the level of thirst of the individual. In opposition to this view, a sizable number of marketing actions attempt to influence EP by changing properties of commodities, such as prices, that are unrelated to their intrinsic qualities or to the consumer's state. This type of influence is valuable for companies, because EP serves as a learning signal that is used by the brain to guide future choices. For example, when facing the choice between previously experienced restaurants, one would tend to avoid locales where previously meals were unsavory. Contrary to the basic assumptions of economics, several studies have provided behavioral evidence that marketing actions can successfully affect EP by manipulating nonintrinsic attributes of goods. For example, knowledge of a beer's ingredients and brand can affect reported taste quality (2, 3), and the reported enjoyment of a film is influenced by expectations about its quality (4). Even more intriguingly, changing the price at which an energy drink is purchased can influence the ability to solve puzzles (5).

Despite the importance and pervasiveness of various marketing actions, very little is known about the neural mechanisms through which they affect decisions made by individuals. An exception is a previous study demonstrating that knowledge of the brand of a culturally familiar drink, such as Coke, increases activation in the hippocampus, parahippocampus, midbrain, dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, and thalamus (6). The authors of the previous study interpreted such activity as evidence for retrieval of brand information during the consumption experience.

Here, we propose a mechanism through which marketing actions can affect decision making. We hypothesized that changes in the price of a product can influence neural computations associated with EP. This hypothesis is based on previous findings showing that affective expectations influence appraisals made about hedonic

experiences and, through this, the actual quality of experiences (2, 7, 8). Consider, for example, the experience of an individual sampling a wine for which he or she has information about its retail price. Because perceptions of quality are known to be positively correlated with price (9), the individual is likely to believe that a more expensive wine will probably taste better. Our hypothesis goes beyond this by stipulating that higher taste expectations would lead to higher activity in the medial orbitofrontal cortex (mOFC), an area of the brain that is widely thought to encode for actual experienced pleasantness (6, 10–16). The results described below are consistent with this hypothesis. We found that the reported price of wines markedly affected reported EP and, more importantly, also modulated the blood-oxygen-level-dependent (BOLD) signal in mOFC.

To investigate the impact of price on the neural computations associated with EP, we scanned human subjects ($n = 20$) using fMRI while they sampled different wines and an affectively neutral control solution, which consisted of the main ionic components of human saliva (17). We chose wine as a stimulus, because it is relatively easy to administer inside the scanner using computerized pumps, it induces a pleasurable flavor sensation in most subjects, and it varies widely in quality and retail price. Subjects were told they were sampling five different Cabernet Sauvignons, that the purpose of the experiment was to study the effect of degustation time on perceived flavors, and that the different wines would be identified by their retail prices (see Fig. 1A). Unbeknown to the subjects, the critical manipulation was that there were only three different wines, and two of them (wines 1 and 2) were administered twice, one identified at a high price and one at a low price. For example, wine 2 was presented half of the time at \$90, its retail price, and half of the time at \$10. Thus, the task consisted of six trial types: \$5 wine (wine 1), \$10 wine (wine 2), \$35 wine (wine 3), \$45 wine (wine 1), \$90 wine (wine 2), and neutral solution. The wines were administered in random order, simultaneously with the appearance of the price cue. Subjects were asked to focus on the flavor of the wine during the degustation period and entered taste pleasantness or taste intensity ratings in every other trial (Fig. 1B).

Results

Modulation of Reported Pleasantness and Taste Intensity by Price. We measured the impact of price information on EP by comparing the mean reported liking rating for wines 1 and 2 when administered at a high vs. a low price. We found significant differences for both wines ($P < 0.001$, Fig. 1C). In addition, reported pleasantness was correlated with wine prices ($r = 0.59$, $P < 0.000$). We could not find a similar behavioral effect for intensity ratings (Fig. 1D). To explore further the role of prices on

Author contributions: H.P., J.O., B.S., and A.R. designed research; H.P. performed research; H.P. analyzed data; and H.P., J.O., B.S., and A.R. wrote the paper.

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

This article is a PNAS Direct Submission.

[†]To whom correspondence should be addressed. E-mail: rangel@hss.caltech.edu.

This article contains supporting information online at www.pnas.org/cgi/content/full/0706929105DC1.

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Price Elasticity



A measurement of the change in the demand for a product as a result of a change in its price.

 Investopedia



Insights About Price Elasticity

In order to better understand price elasticity:

First, we asked parents to identify three school characteristics as “top considerations you factored in your school search.”

Insights About Price Elasticity

In order to better understand price elasticity:

First, we asked parents to identify three school characteristics as “top considerations you factored in your school search.”

Then, we asked survey respondents if they would “consider a school that provided a lesser-quality offering in these characteristics in order to significantly reduce your educational expenses.”

Insights About Price Elasticity

In order to better understand price elasticity:

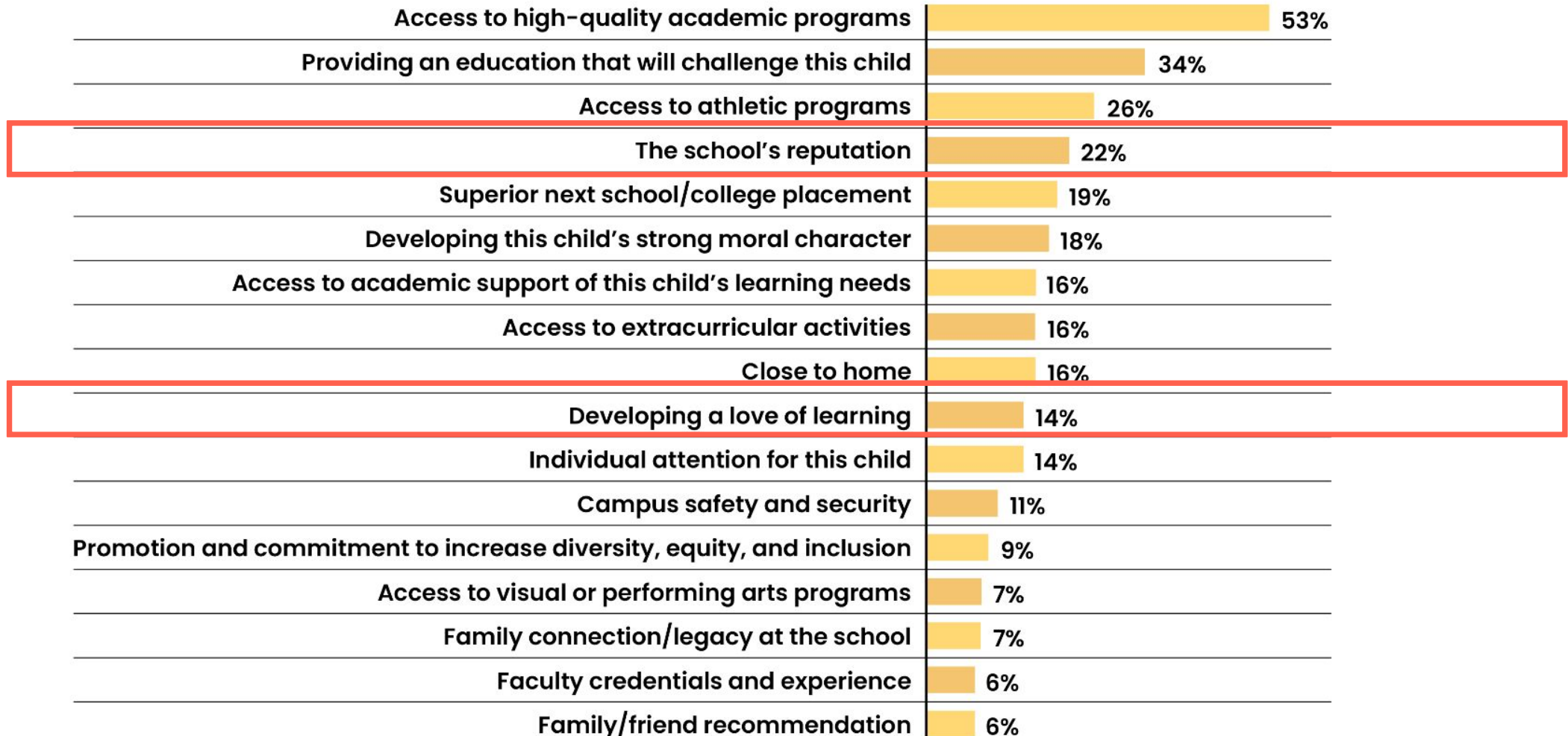
First, we asked parents to identify three school characteristics as “top considerations you factored in your school search.”

Then, we asked survey respondents if they would “consider a school that provided a lesser-quality offering in these characteristics in order to significantly reduce your educational expenses.”

If yes, we then asked them how much the cost reduction would need to be for them to “seriously consider this lesser-quality option.”

Respondents Were Asked to Select Up to Three Top Factors Considered During the Independent School Search

TOP CONSIDERATIONS



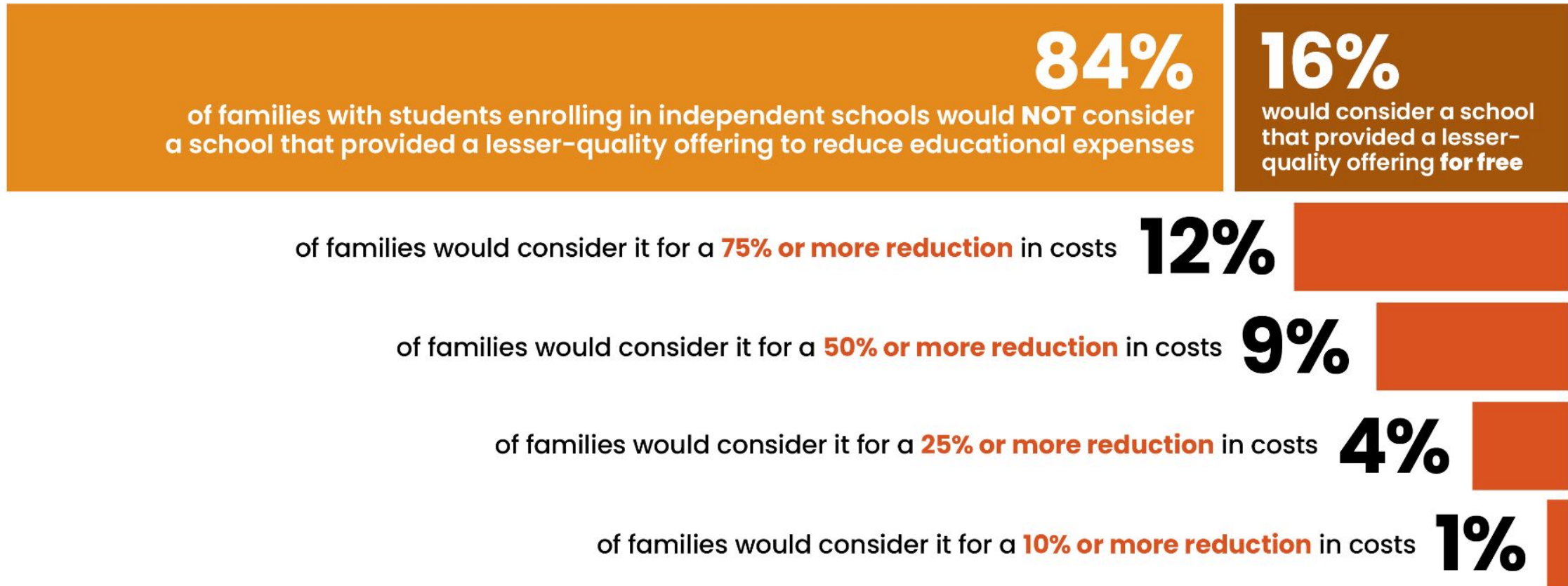


61%

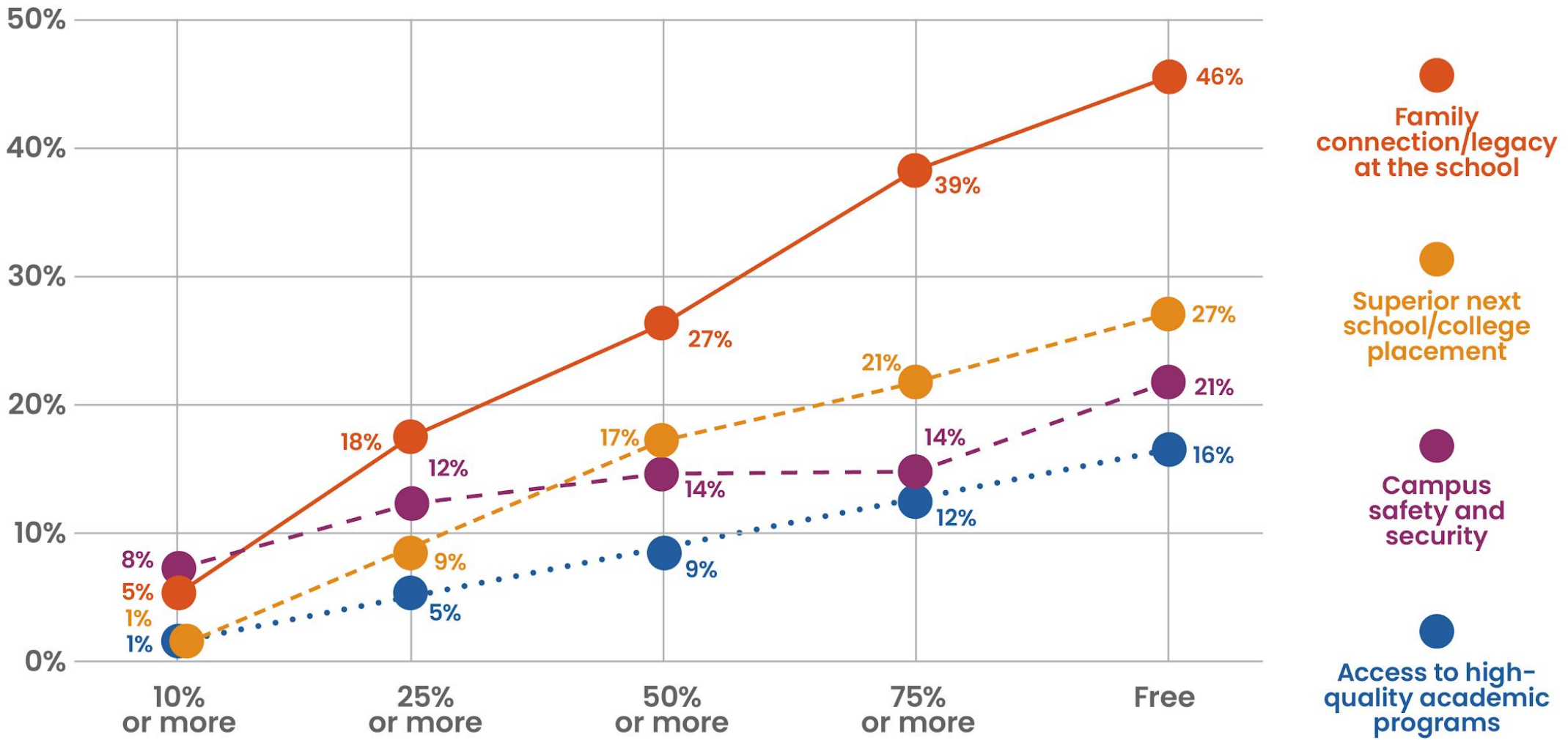
of all families surveyed would not consider a school that provided a “**lesser-quality offering**” in any of their top factors in order to significantly reduce educational expenses

A Closer Look at How Parents View “Access to High-Quality Academic Programs”

“Access to high-quality academic programs” was the **most frequently selected characteristic** (selected as top three characteristic by more than half of families)



Percentage of Families Who Would Consider Lesser-Quality Options for Cost Savings



Implications for Tuition Resets and Modulating Tuition Increases...



“The fertility rate in the U.S. dropped to an all-time low in 2024 with fewer than 1.6 children being born per woman...”

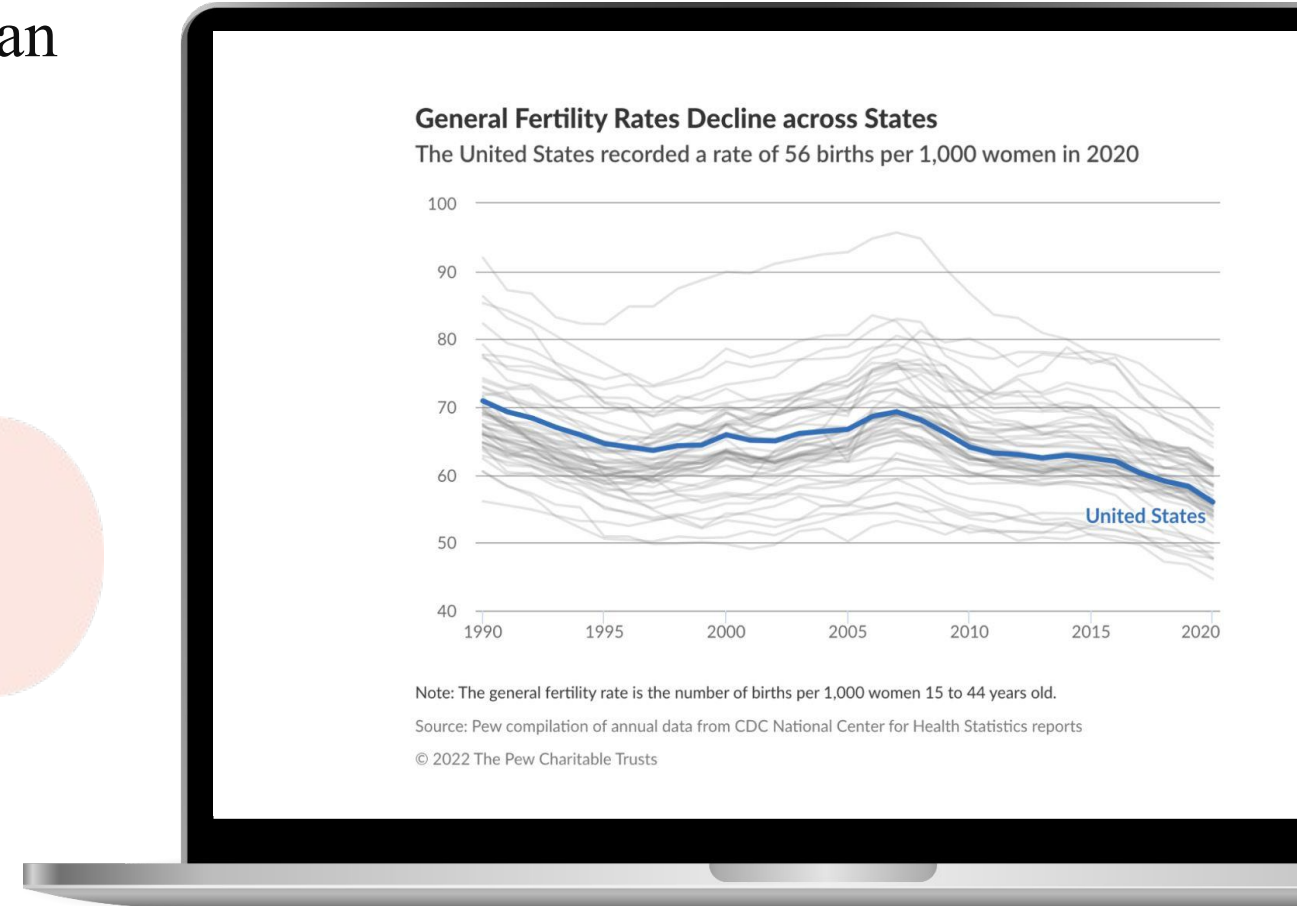
— CBS News, July 24, 2025

“World fertility rates in 'unprecedented decline', UN says”

— BBC, June 10, 2025

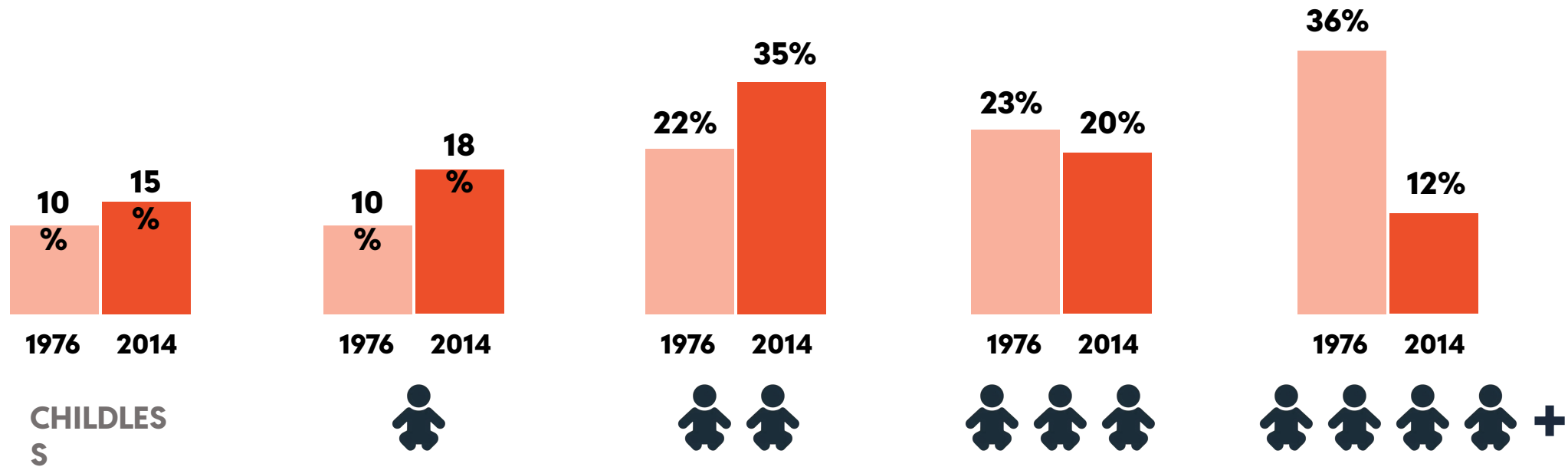
Total fertility rates have declined in every world region since 1950

— Pew Research Center, August 15, 2025



The Rise of the Two-Child Family, and the Decline of the Four-Child Family

Share of Women Ages 40 to 44, by Children Ever Born



Note: A new working paper suggests that Current Population Survey estimates of childlessness may have been somewhat too large until 2012, when the Census Bureau implemented new editing rules.

Source: The Pew Charitable Trusts

The Mythological Perfect School



The Mythological Perfect School

Parents were shown six sets of a fictional pair of schools and asked to select the most appealing one of the two. We tested variations within eight school features:



Cost



Academic Program



Instructional Focus



Social-Emotional Focus



College Outcome



Reputation



Athletics Program



Arts Program

EXAMPLE: Trade-Off Exercise (conjoint design)



School A

- Consistently high quality with advanced coursework opportunities across all disciplines
- School prioritizes traditional academic achievement and success, as well as social-emotional learning
- Traditional, mostly whole-classroom, lecture-based
- Limited teams or sports offerings, focused on competition
- Visual and performing arts offerings with significant investment
- About half of the graduating class is accepted at their first- or second-choice college/university, including highly-selective colleges or universities
- The school is well regarded based on word of mouth
- High cost that would require me/my family to reduce discretionary spending significantly

School B

- Standard course offerings with limited opportunities for advanced coursework
- Emphasis on holistic wellness, social-emotional learning, as well as academic achievement and success
- Experiential, project-based learning
- Strong athletic teams, with focus on college recruitment
- Significant performing arts offerings
- Most graduates are accepted at their first- or second-choice college/university, including highly selective colleges or universities
- The school is well regarded based on word of mouth
- Moderate cost that would stretch our family budget

**Repeated:
6 Pairs**

The Mythological Perfect School



Most graduates are accepted at their first- or second-choice college/university, including highly selective colleges or universities



Low cost that our family could easily afford



Consistently competitive athletic teams with many opportunities for college recruitment



Visual and performing arts are highly valued, with significant investment in arts-related facilities



Consistently high-quality academics, with advanced coursework opportunities across all disciplines



School prioritizes a balance of holistic wellness and social-emotional learning, as well as traditional measures of achievement and success

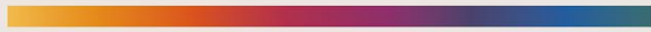


Highly individualized, experiential, project-based instruction

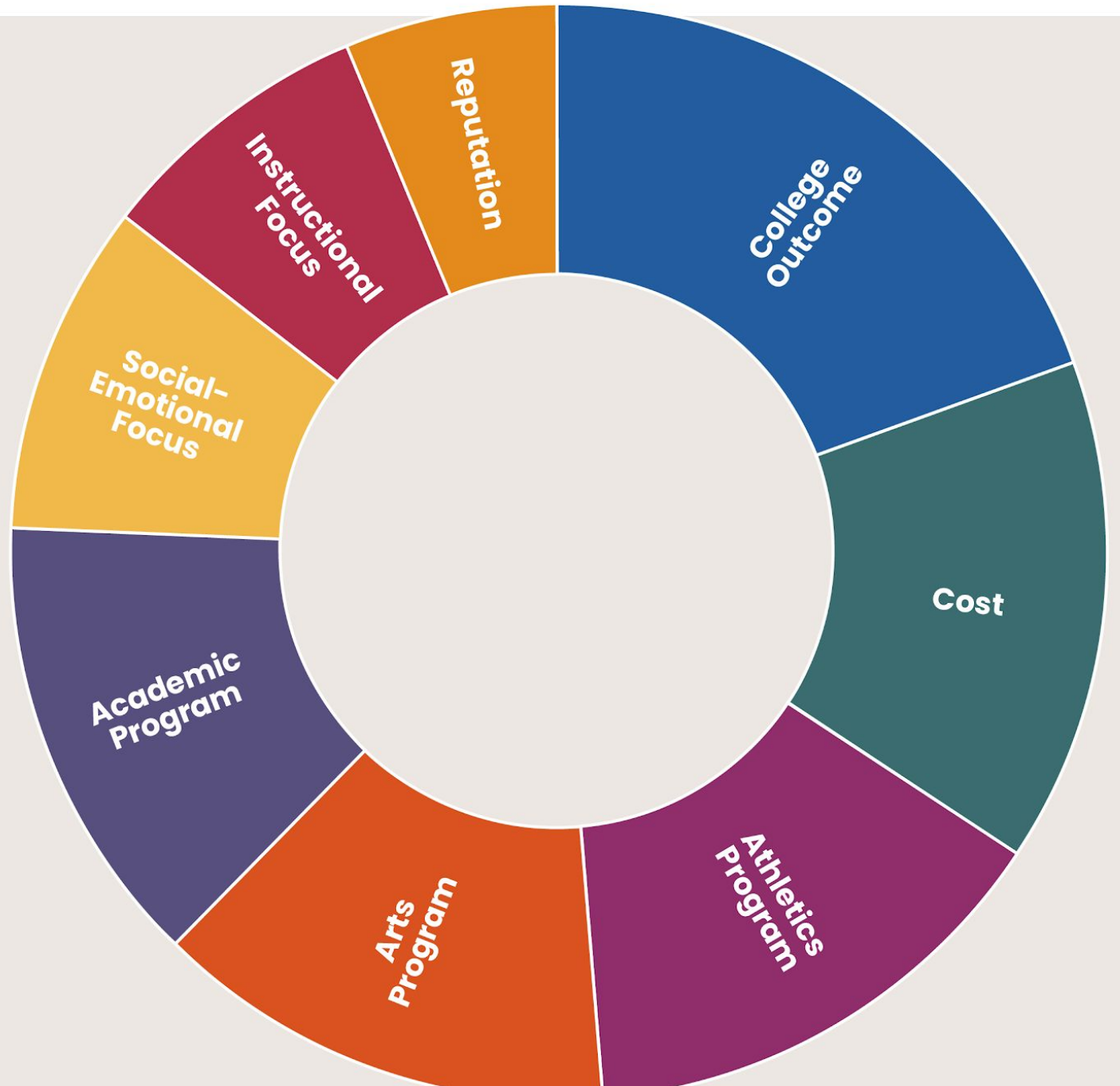


The school is well regarded based on word of mouth

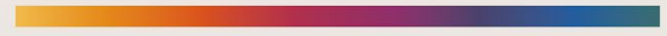
Digging Deeper into the Eight School Decision Factors



FEATURE	PROPORTIONAL IMPACT ON SCHOOL DECISION
College Outcome	19%
Cost	15%
Athletics Program	15%
Arts Program	14%
Academic Program	13%
Social-Emotional Focus	10%
Instructional Focus	8%
Reputation	6%
Total	100%



Digging Deeper into the Eight School Decision Factors

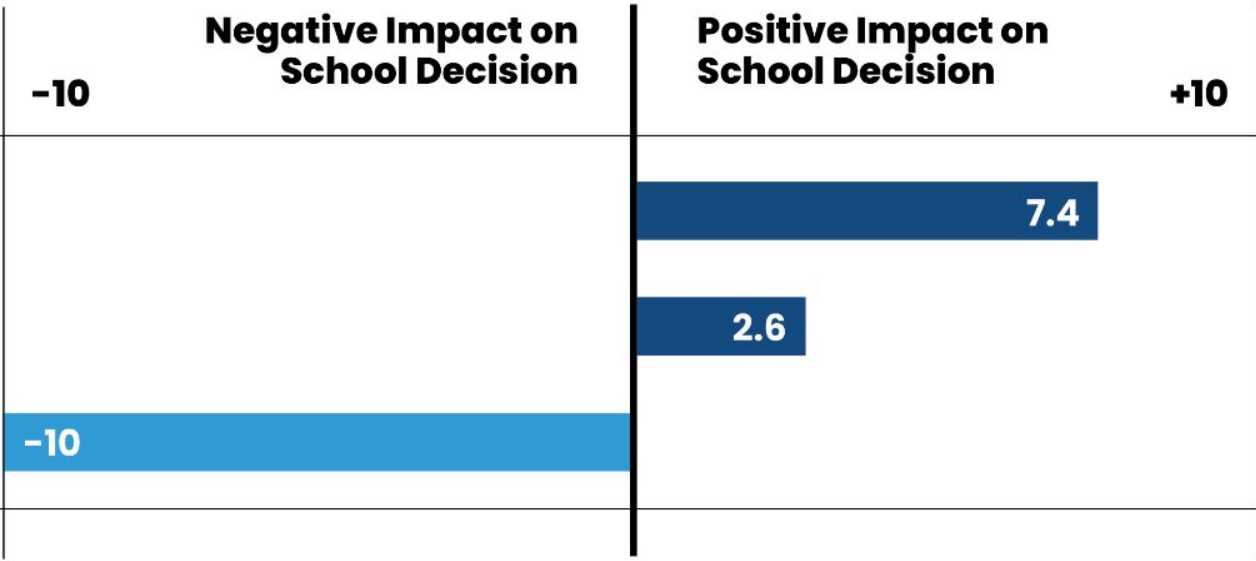


Prioritizes wellness and social-emotional learning (SEL) over traditional success measures

Varied advanced course opportunities by department

TOP FACTOR

College Outcome



Most grads accepted at a top choice college (including highly selective)

About half of grads accepted at a top choice college (including highly selective)

Few grads are accepted at a top choice college (including highly selective)

“Tuition Sticker Prices Increasing By 4% Or More At Many Elite Colleges”

— Forbes, April 1, 2025

“For millions across the globe, pursuing higher education is now a financial burden with consequences for entire economies”

— World Economic Forum, August 18, 2025

“About 5.8 million federal student loan borrowers – roughly 31% – were 90 days or more past due on their payments as of April 2025...”

— The Guardian, July 28, 2025



PRIVATE NON-PROFIT 4-YEAR COLLEGES

AT RISK OF CLOSING OR MERGING

442 OF 1,700

SOURCE: THE HECHINGER REPORT/HURON CONSULTING GROUP

 CBS
MORNINGS

WHAT'S BEHIND DECLINING COLLEGE ENROLLMENT?

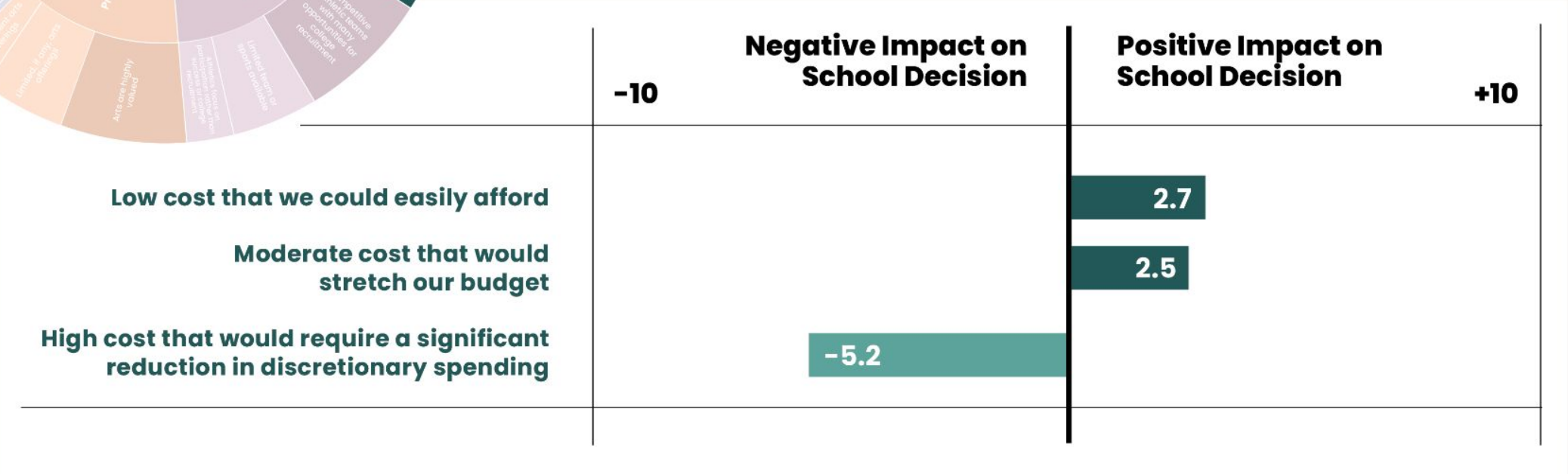
Why are more colleges at risk of closing and how could it impact students?

College enrollment has been declining over the past decade and many institutions are struggling financially. At least 16 colleges and campuses announced their closures in 2025. CBS Morning News, April 28, 2026.

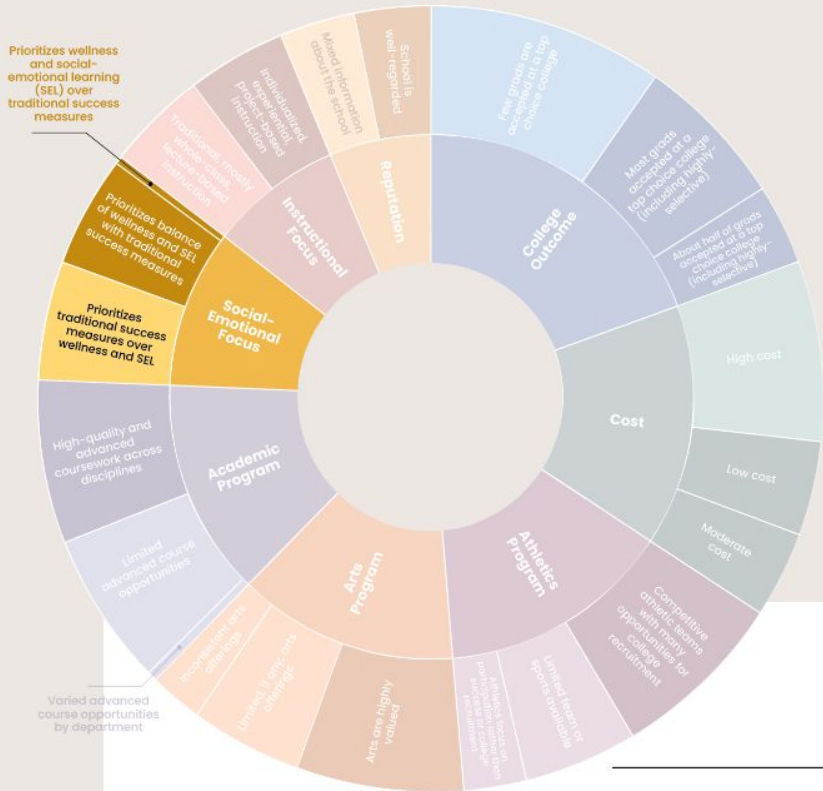


2ND FACTOR

Cost



Social-Emotional Focus



	-10	Negative Impact on School Decision	Positive Impact on School Decision	+10
Prioritizes balance of wellness and SEL with traditional success measures			2.3	
Prioritizes traditional success measures over wellness and SEL			0.1	
Prioritizes wellness and social-emotional learning (SEL) over traditional success measures		-2.4		

Key Takeaways

**What People Say They Want
May (or May Not) Reflect
Their Underlying Preferences
and Drive Their Actions**

Many Families Are Getting Help... Not Just From Schools

What Families Are Willing to Pay and Actually Pay

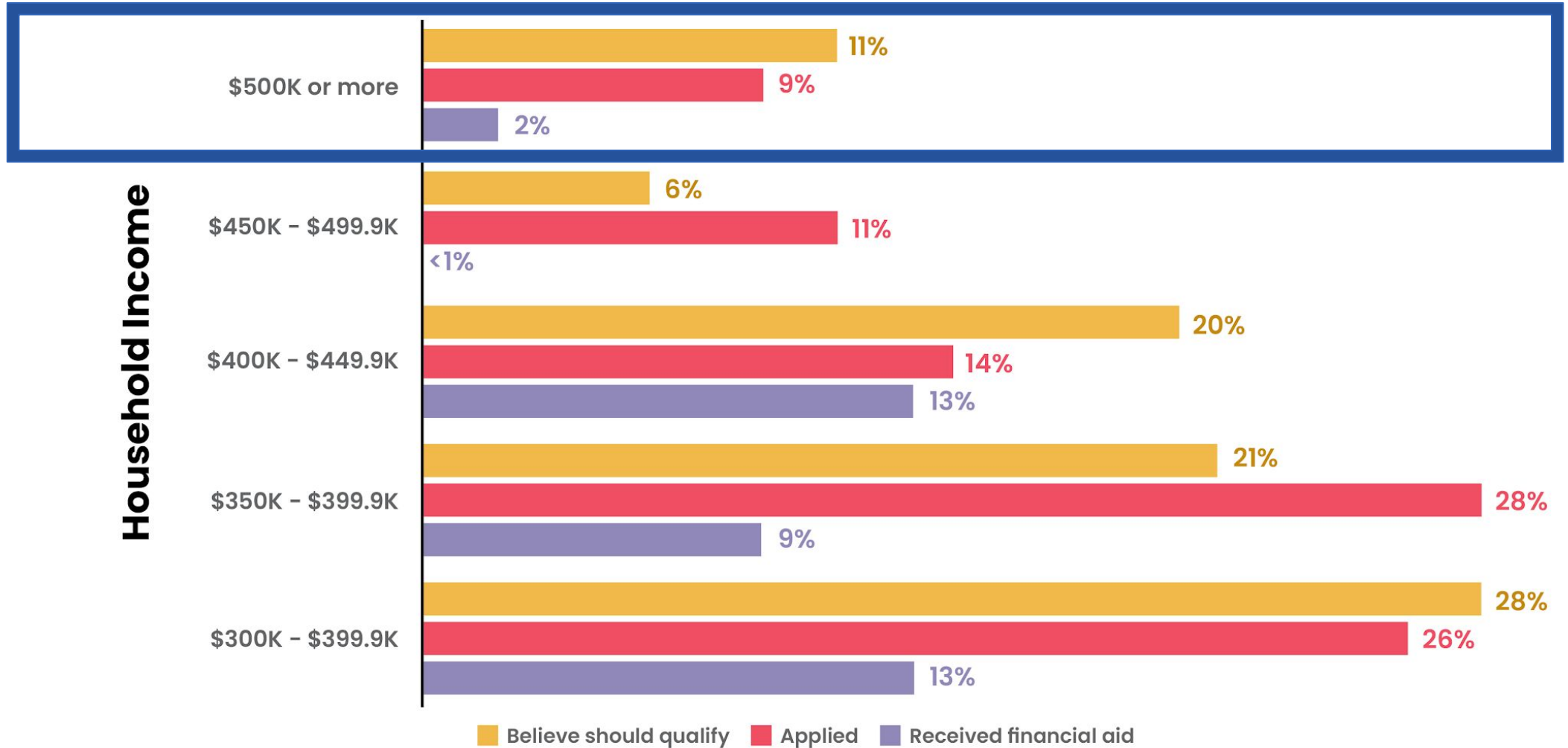


It's more than just tuition and fees.

~90%

Parents report that tuition and fees are approximately 90% of their total educational expenses

Need-Based Financial Support for Highest Household Income Levels



Students Who Applied to Independent School but Ultimately Enrolled in Traditional Public School...

38%

**Expected to have
no educational
expenses**

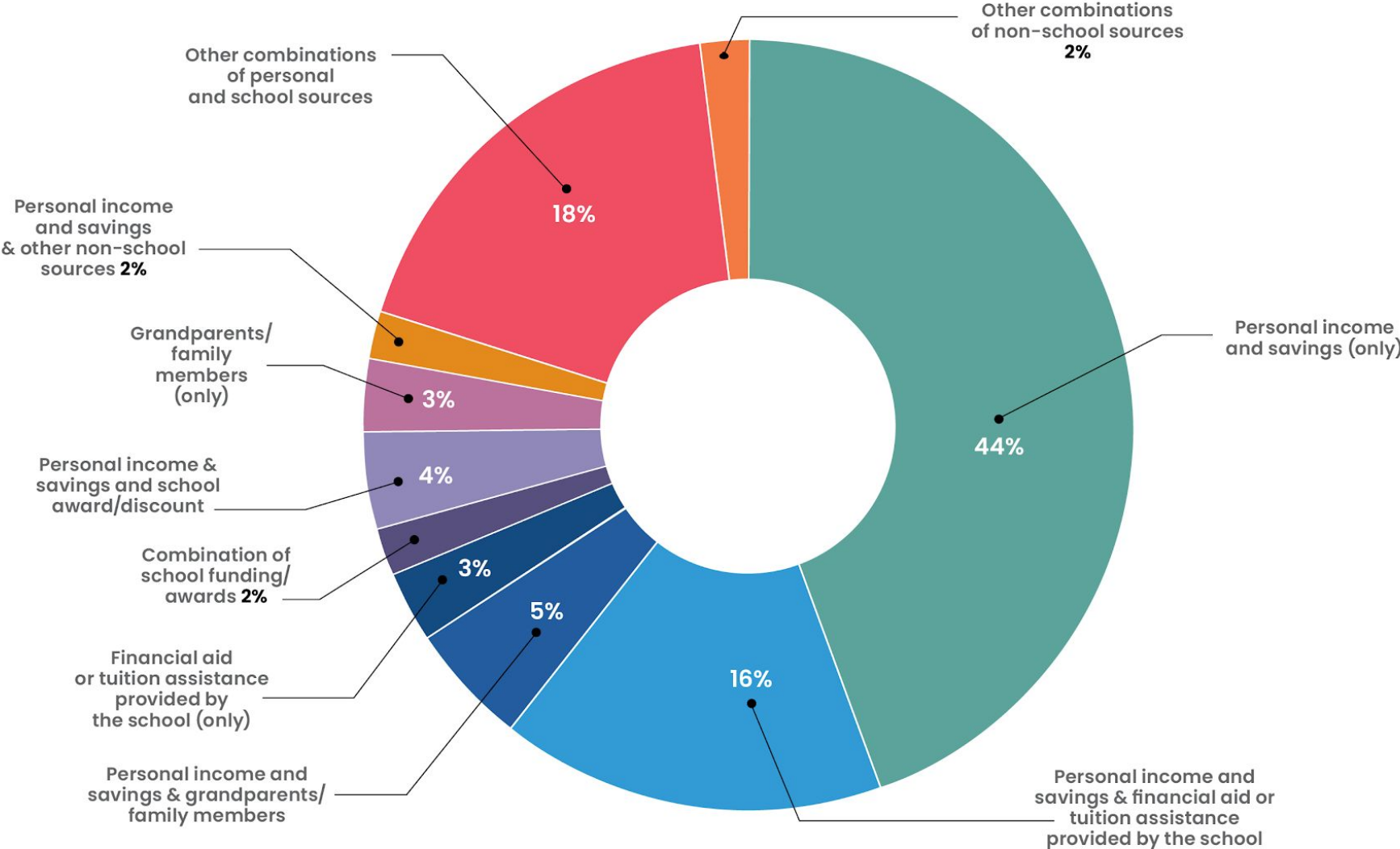
39%

**Expected to have up
to \$5,000 in total
educational
expenses**

23%

**Expected to pay
more than \$5,000 in
total educational
expenses**

Funding Sources and Combinations



Funding Support Beyond School

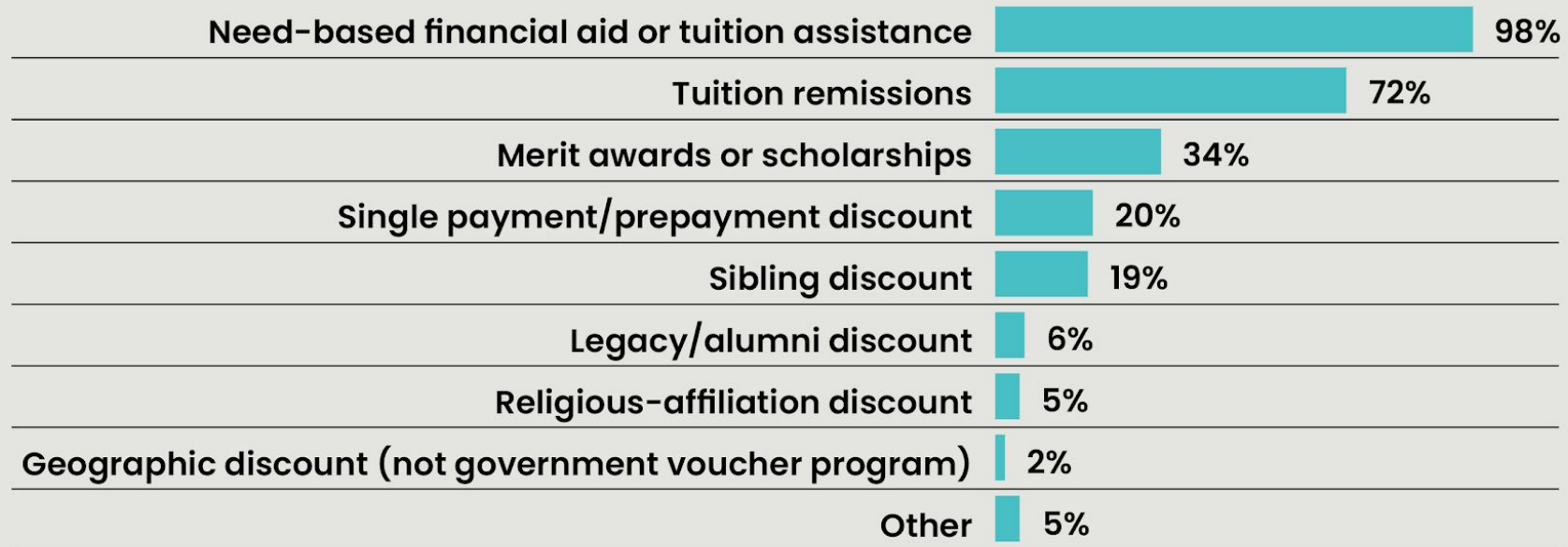


	Families not receiving any support from the school	Families receiving support from school (need-based financial aid, scholarships, etc.)
Grandparents or other family members	14%	18%
Scholarships or merit awards not provided by the school	3%	13%
Personal loans	2%	9%

Theme

A Deeper Dive Into Discounts

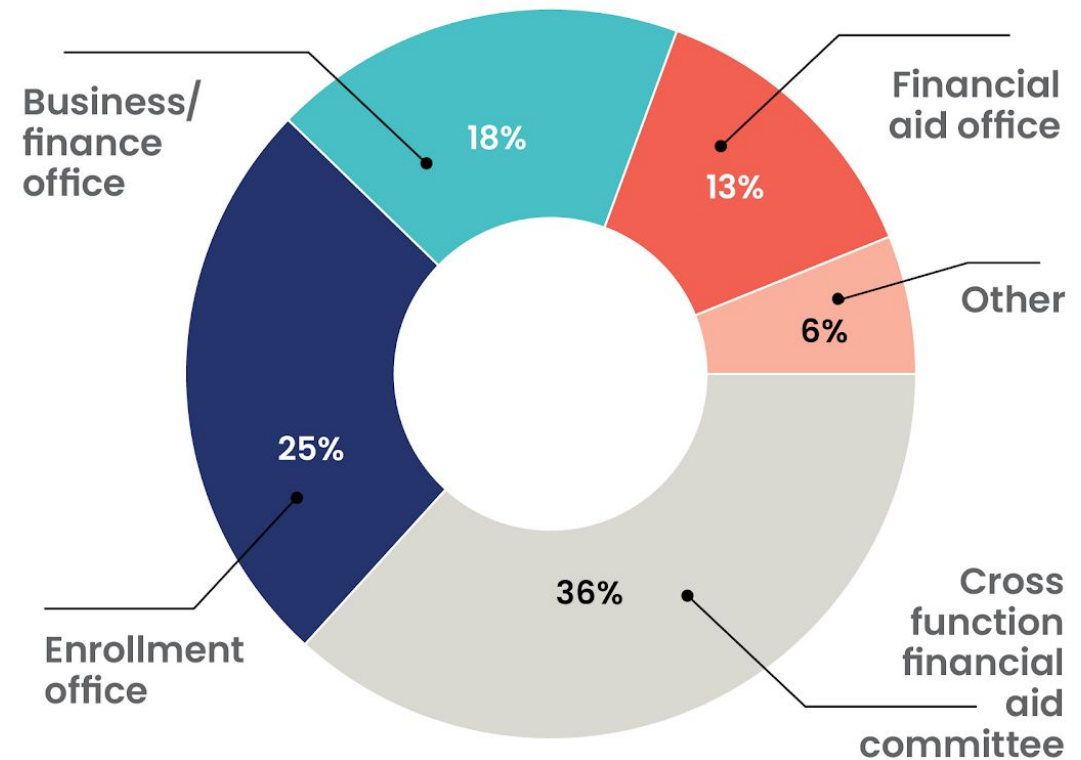
Types of Assistance and Discounts



Financial Aid

Which office makes the final decision regarding financial aid awards?

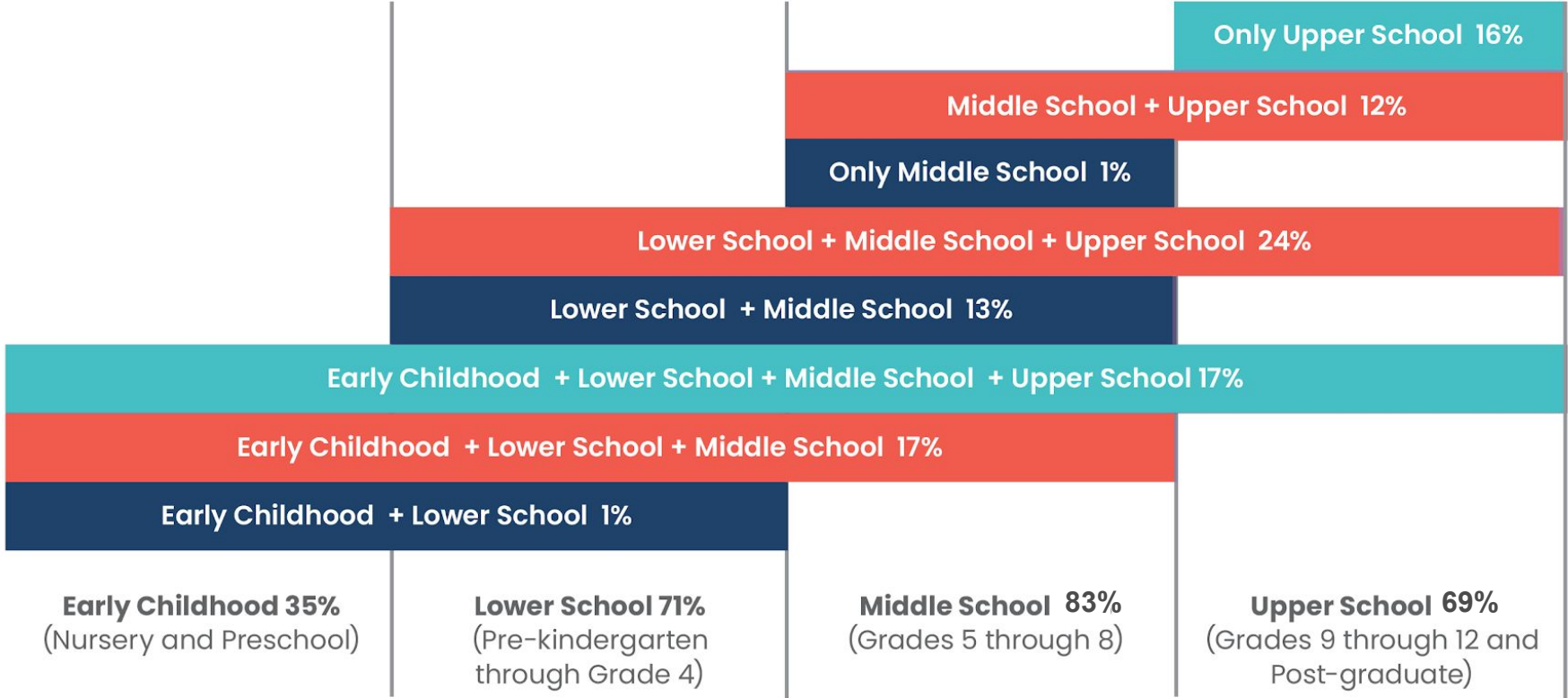
84%
of responding
schools have
a financial aid
committee



Strategic Takeaways from the 2026 State of the Independent School Enrollment Industry Report

Responding Schools

ACADEMIC DIVISIONS



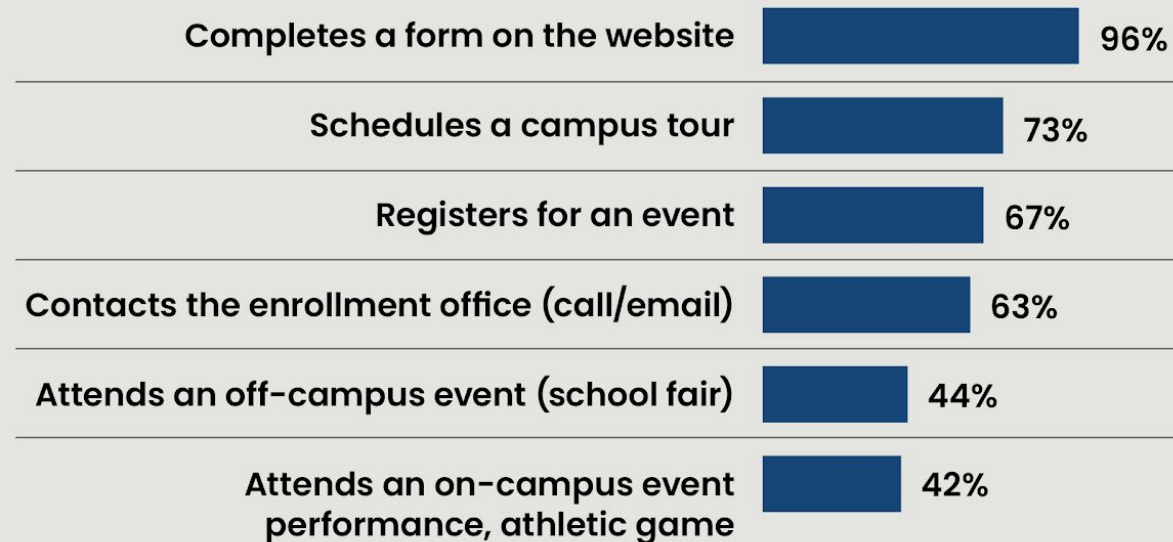
Optimizing Mission-Aligned Enrollment & Net Tuition Revenue

Theme

Data-Informed Strategic Enrollment Management

93%
of participating
schools track
inquiries

What counts as an inquiry?



Theme

Optimizing Mission-Aligned Enrollment & Net Tuition Revenue

How would you best characterize your school's applicant pool and waitlist for the 2025-2026 academic year?

	No Waitlist (36%)	Small Waitlist (53%)	Extensive Waitlist (12%)
Many more qualified applications than available spots (20%)	2%	8%	10%
More qualified applications than available spots (33%)	4%	27%	2%
Accepted all qualified applicants (48%)	30%	18%	0%

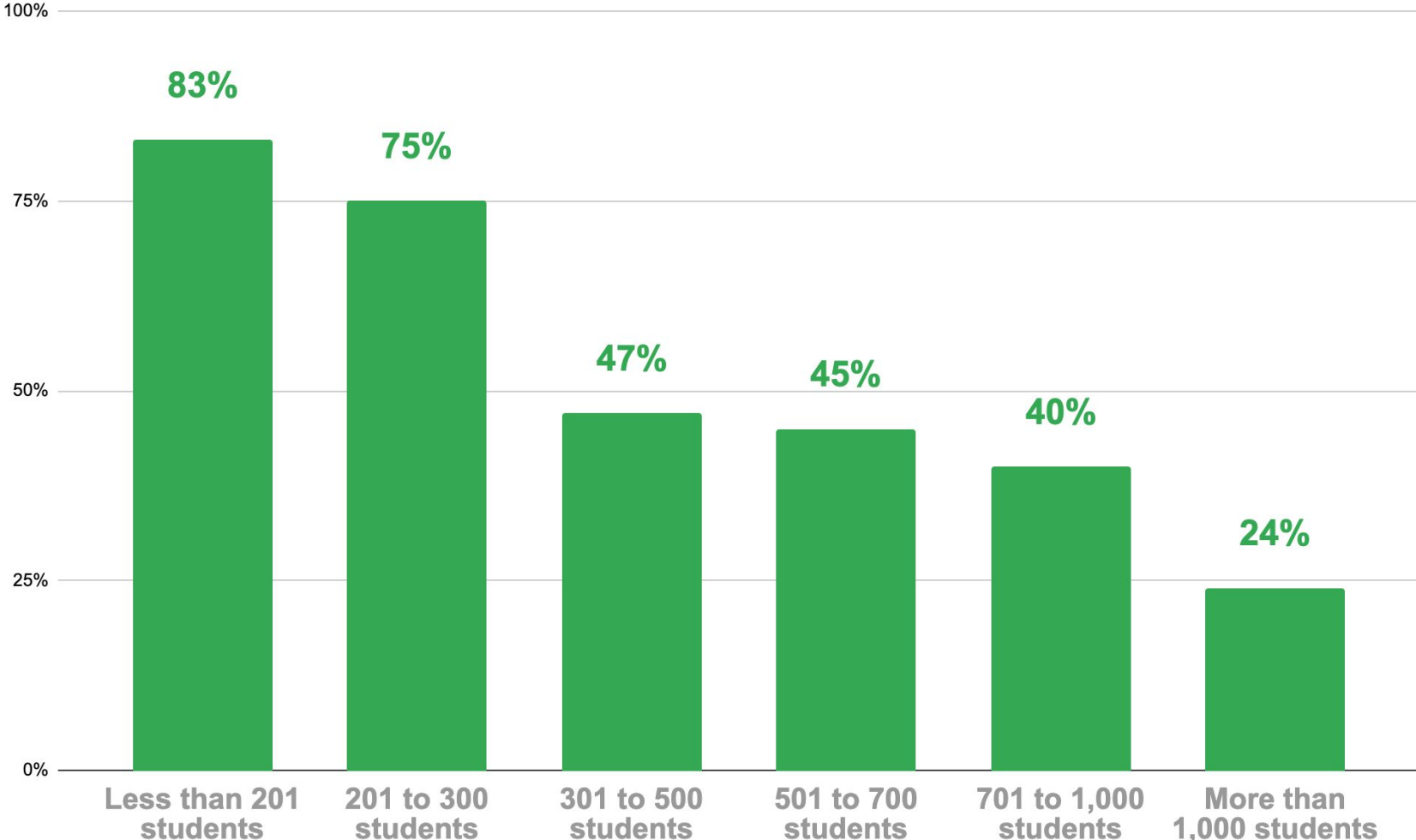
52%

**are seeking
to increase their
enrollment**

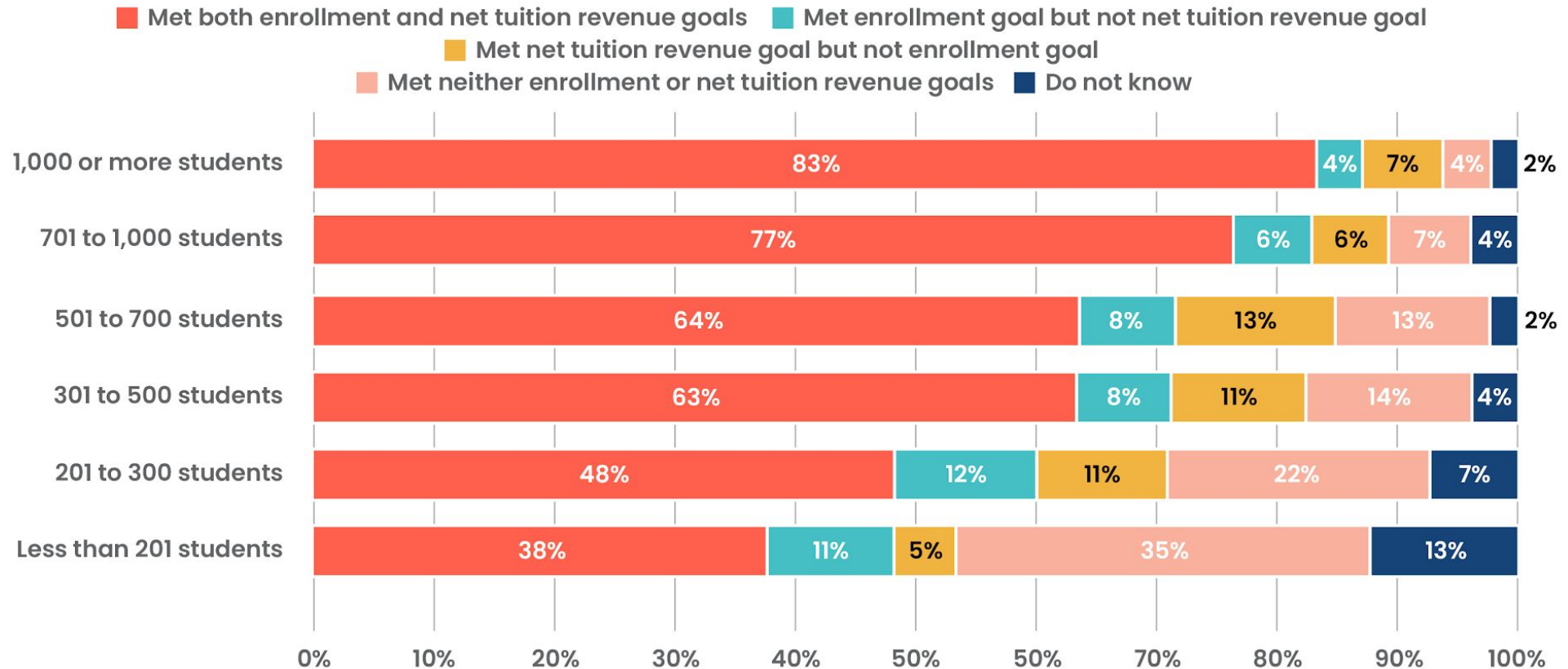
46%

**are seeking
to maintain their
current
enrollment**

Seeking to Increase Enrollment



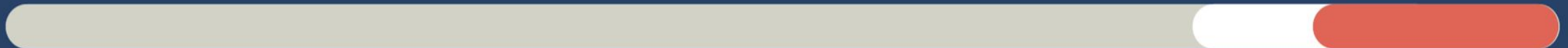
2024 - 2025 Goals Met By Enrollment Size



63%

of Responding Schools

expected to be below their maximum enrollment
for the 2025–2026 academic year



Tracking Melt

59%

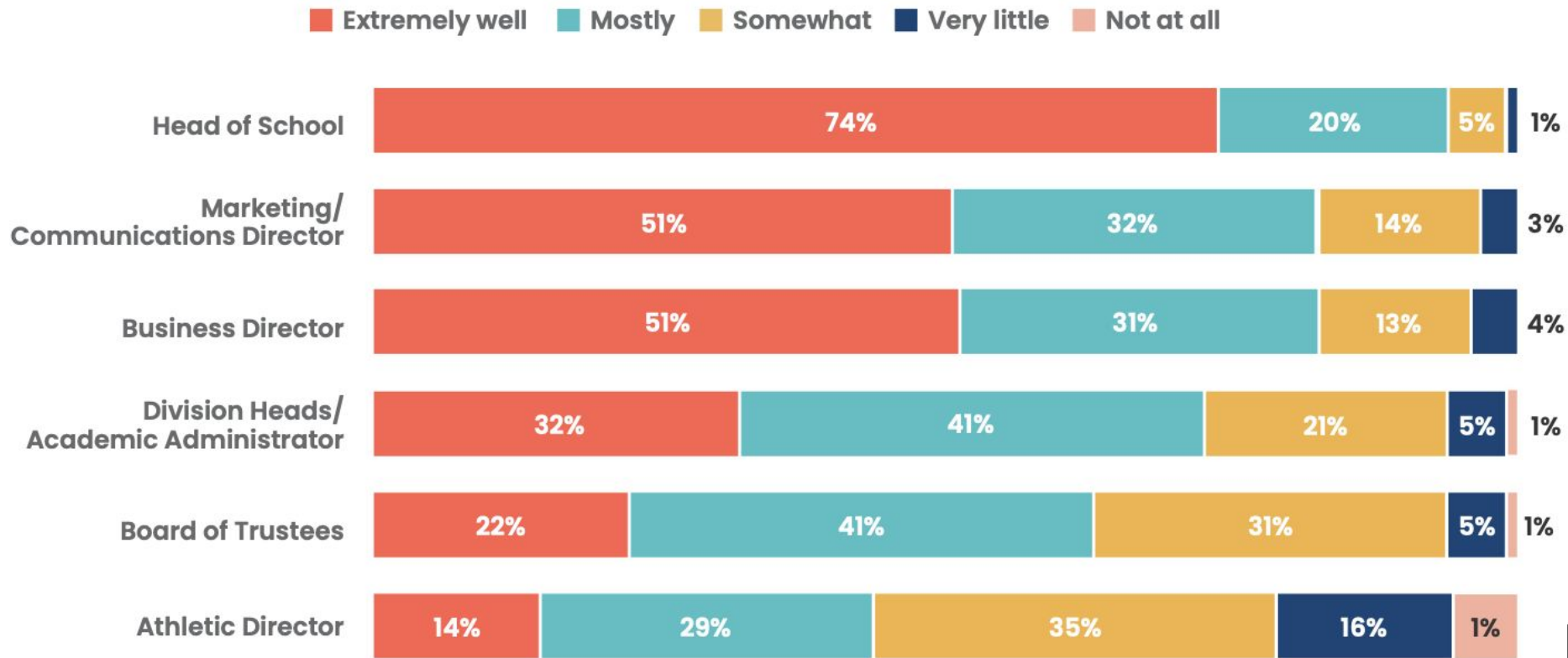
**of responding schools
reported losing
between 1 and
5 students after
enrollment**

12%

**of responding
schools lost more
than 10 students
after enrollment**

Filling the Funnel: Marketing and Outreach

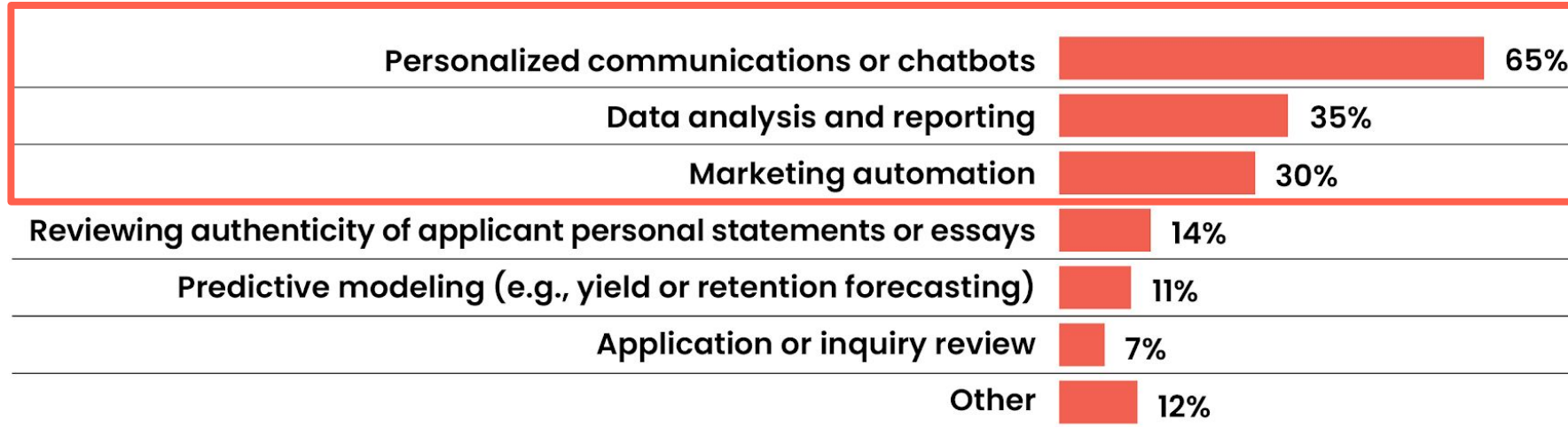
Perceived Understanding of Enrollment Strategy by Role



The Emergence, Infusion, and Risks of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence Tools

If using, in which of the following areas has your office used AI tools?



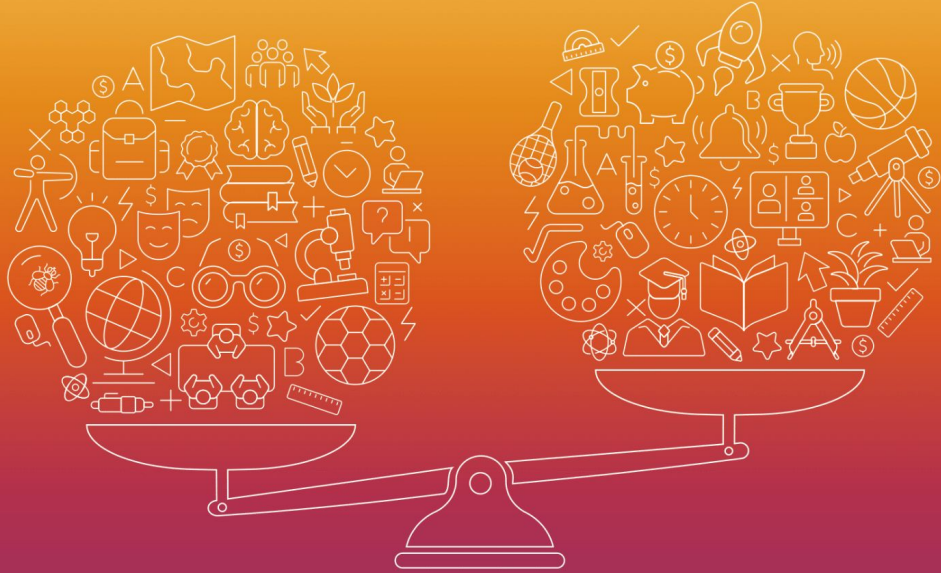
Change
from 2023

AI in enrollment management	65%	not asked
Use of data to drive decision-making	62%	↑
Predictive modeling and forecasting	62%	↑
Strategic leadership	59%	↓
Marketing	46%	no change
Admission/enrollment office technology	38%	↑
Finance/budgeting	32%	no change
Communications	30%	↓
Personal management	29%	↓
Student assessment/testing	26%	no change
Relationship with Head of School and Board	25%	↓
Diversity, equity and inclusion	24%	↓
International student recruitment	15%	no change
Nondiscrimination and demographic representation	12%	not asked

In what areas are you most interested in learning and developing your skills?

Resources

2025 EMA Member
Exclusive Report



An Independent School Education: Family Perceptions of Value and Affordability

 Enrollment
Management
Association

E3ⁿ | eb + EMA



Enrollment Spectrum Podcast

Perceived Value and Affordability Mini-Series



S4:E9

Behavioral Economics and Tuition: Signals That Shape Perceived Value

Special Report
Family Perceptions
of Value and
Affordability



Manoj Thomas

Sabanci Professor of Marketing & Management & Associate Dean of New York Initiatives
Cornell SC Johnson College of Business



S4:E8

Paying for Independent School: Insights from the 2023 NAIS Financial Aid Parent Survey

Special Report
Family Perceptions
of Value and
Affordability



Mark Mitchell

Vice President, Access & Affordability
NAIS



Amada Torres

Vice President for Studies, Insights, and Research
NAIS



S4:E7

A Deep Dive Into EMA's 2025 Special Report

Special Report
Family Perceptions
of Value and
Affordability



Ari Betof

Co-Founder and Partner
Mission & Data



Sarah Enterline Roch

Institutional Research Consultant
Mission & Data



S4:E6

How to Leverage EMA Reports for Strategic Decision-Making

Special Report
Family Perceptions
of Value and
Affordability



Carolyn Gorowski
Dean of Admission
Lake Forest Academy (IL)



Laurel Baker Tew
Assistant Head of School for Enrollment
Viewpoint School (CA)



Victoria Muradi
Director of Strategic Initiatives
Durham Academy (NC)

+ more episodes coming this month!

Member-Exclusive Salary Prediction Tool



2026 State of the Independent School Enrollment Industry Report

Senior Enrollment Leader Salary Prediction Tool & Compensation Benchmarking

Salary Band Prediction Tool

Use the drop-down menus on the right to select among the seven variables that are significant predictors of salary range for enrollment professionals. The result below will recalculate to provide the predicted salary given the constraints selected.

Likely Salary Range Based on the Selections to the Right:

\$125,000 up to \$149,000

Question: "As the most senior enrollment professional, which of the following most closely describes your base salary in USD exclusive of performance bonuses and any benefits such as health insurance, housing, etc."

Are you part of the Senior Leadership Team?: Yes

In which setting is your school located?: Suburban

Is your school in the Southeast, Southwest, or Midwest of the US?: No

What was your school's opening day enrollment?: 501 - 700 students

How many people work in the Enrollment Office? 5
If office headcount exceeds 10, please select 10.

How many grade levels are taught in your school? 7
If number of grade levels exceeds 15, please select 15.

Member-Exclusive Data Dashboard

2026 State of the Independent School Enrollment Industry Report

Based on these filters, the dashboard shows data from:

Individuals
707

Filter Survey Responses by School Characteristics:

School Size	School Divisions
Residential Type	School Region
School Setting	Coed/Single Sex

Filter options with less than 10 records have been hidden to protect anonymity. Surveys are included in other filters.

How many people work full time in the enrollment office?

Number of People	Percentage
0	1%
1	20%
1.5	+0%
2	21%
3	17%
3.5	+0%
4	13%
5	9%
6	5%
7	5%
8	2%
9	1%
10	1%
11	1%
12	1%
14	+0%
15	+0%
16	+0%
18	+0%
20	+0%

How many people work part-time in the enrollment office?

Number of People	Percentage
0	65%
0.5	+0%
1	24%
2	7%
3	2%
4	1%
5	1%
12	+0%
14	+0%
25	+0%
38	+0%

How many people work seasonally in the enrollment office?

Number of People	Percentage
0	88%
0.2	+0%
1	7%
2	3%
3	1%
4	1%
5	+0%
8	+0%
9	+0%
15	+0%
16	+0%

2026 State of the Independent School Enrollment Industry Report dashboard created for The E3n by
Enhancing mission-driven, data informed leadership and governance of organizations that make the world a better place.

The enrollment conference you know and
love has a new name.

Enroll 26

2026 Annual Conference | San Diego, California
September 22–26, 2026

Registration Opens Mid-May

