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## 2018 Noel Levitz\_How to Recruit First Generation Students

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# What You Need to Know When Recruiting First Generation Students

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# Recruiting First Generation Students

## What We'll Cover Today

- First Generation in the Higher Ed Landscape
- First Generation Students Through the Admissions Funnel
- How and When First Generation Students Enter Your Pools
- What Content is Top of Mind
- Parent Engagement

# Sources of Information

## NCES, WICHE, and RNL

### NCES –

- Redford, J. & Mulvaney Hoyer, K. (2017) *First-generation and continuing education college students: A comparison of high school and postsecondary experiences*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- *Digest of Education Statistics From ACS data*. 2015. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

### WICHE –

- Bransberger, P. & Michelau, D. (2016). *Knocking at the college door: Projections of high school graduates, 9<sup>th</sup> edition*. Boulder, Co.: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

### RNL –

- *RNL client consolidated data for fall 2017*. Cedar Rapids, IA: Ruffalo Noel Levitz.
- *E-Expectations trend report, 2017*. Cedar Rapids, IA: Ruffalo Noel Levitz.
- *Perceptions and communication preferences of high school students, 2017*. Cedar Rapids, IA: Ruffalo Noel Levitz.
- *National freshmen motivation to complete college report, 2018*. Cedar Rapids, IA: Ruffalo Noel Levitz.

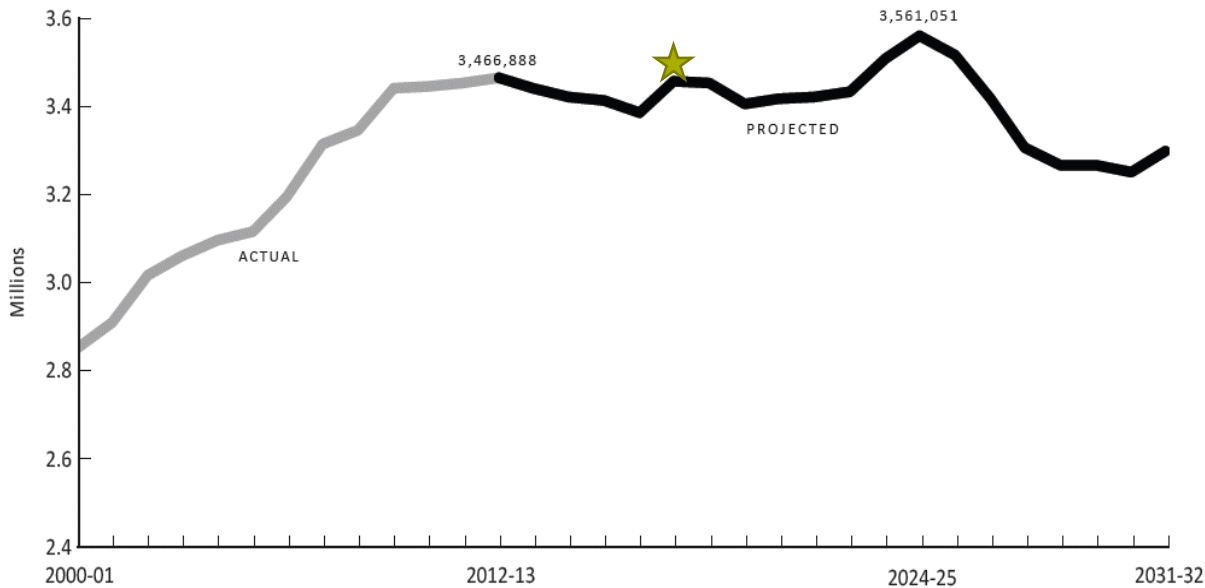


# 1

## First Generation in the Higher Ed Landscape

# Projections of High School Graduates

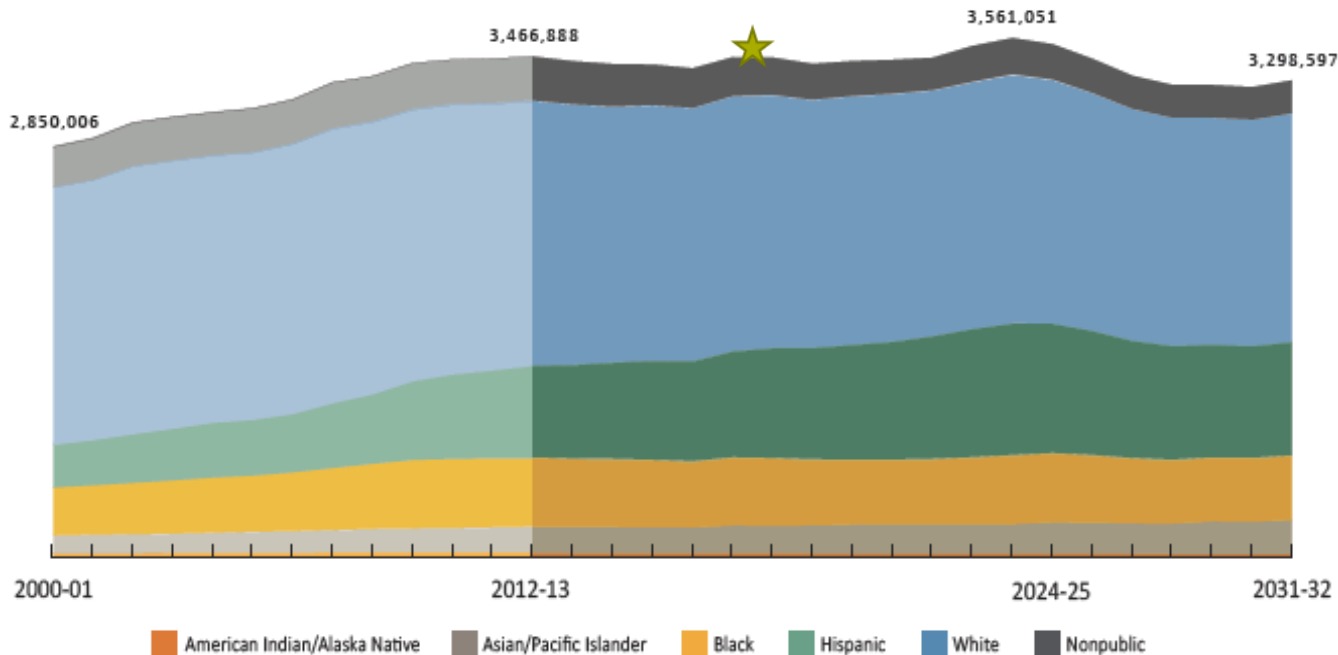
## The Great Period of Change



- 2020-2025 growth driven by underrepresented populations
- 2026-2031 decline driven by flattening of underrepresented populations and decrease in white students

# Student Demographic Change

## Student Population Becoming More Diverse

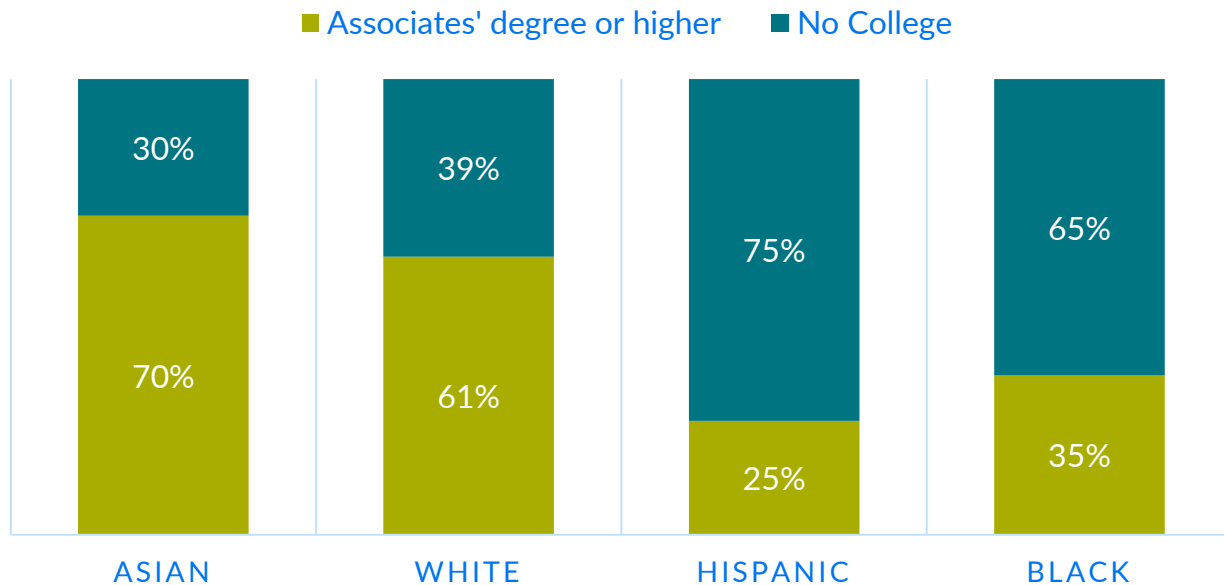


- Declines in white student pop from 2013 to 2025 = 114,000.
- Increase in Hispanic student pop from 2013-2025 = 278,000.

# Student Demographic Changes

Shift from Continuing Generation to First Generation

## PARENT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR CHILDREN AGE 5-17, UNITED STATES, 2015





A group of people in a meeting, overlaid with a blue tint. The image shows several individuals sitting around a table, engaged in a discussion. One person in the foreground is gesturing with their hand. The background is slightly blurred, showing a whiteboard and other people. The overall tone is professional and collaborative.

# 2

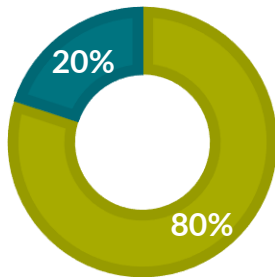
## First Generation Through the Admissions Funnel

# RNL Consolidated Data

## Data Subset Shows Some Key Callouts

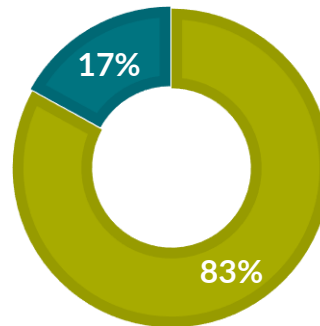
### SHARE OF APPLICANTS

■ Continuing Gen ■ First Gen



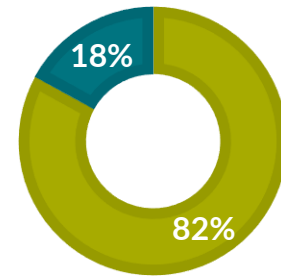
### SHARE OF ADMITS

■ Continuing Gen ■ First Gen



### SHARE OF ENROLLED

■ Continuing Gen ■ First Gen



# RNL Consolidated Data

## Data Subset Shows Some Key Callouts

	App Completion Rate	Admit Rate	Yield	Melt
First Gen	73%	82%	22%	7.24%
Continuing Gen	83%	86%	21%	6.05%

- Opportunity to increase **app completion** and lower post-deposit **melt** while preserving admit and yield rates.



**3**

**How and When First Gen  
Students Enter Your Pool**

# When First Gen Students Enter

## First Gen Students More Likely to Enter Late

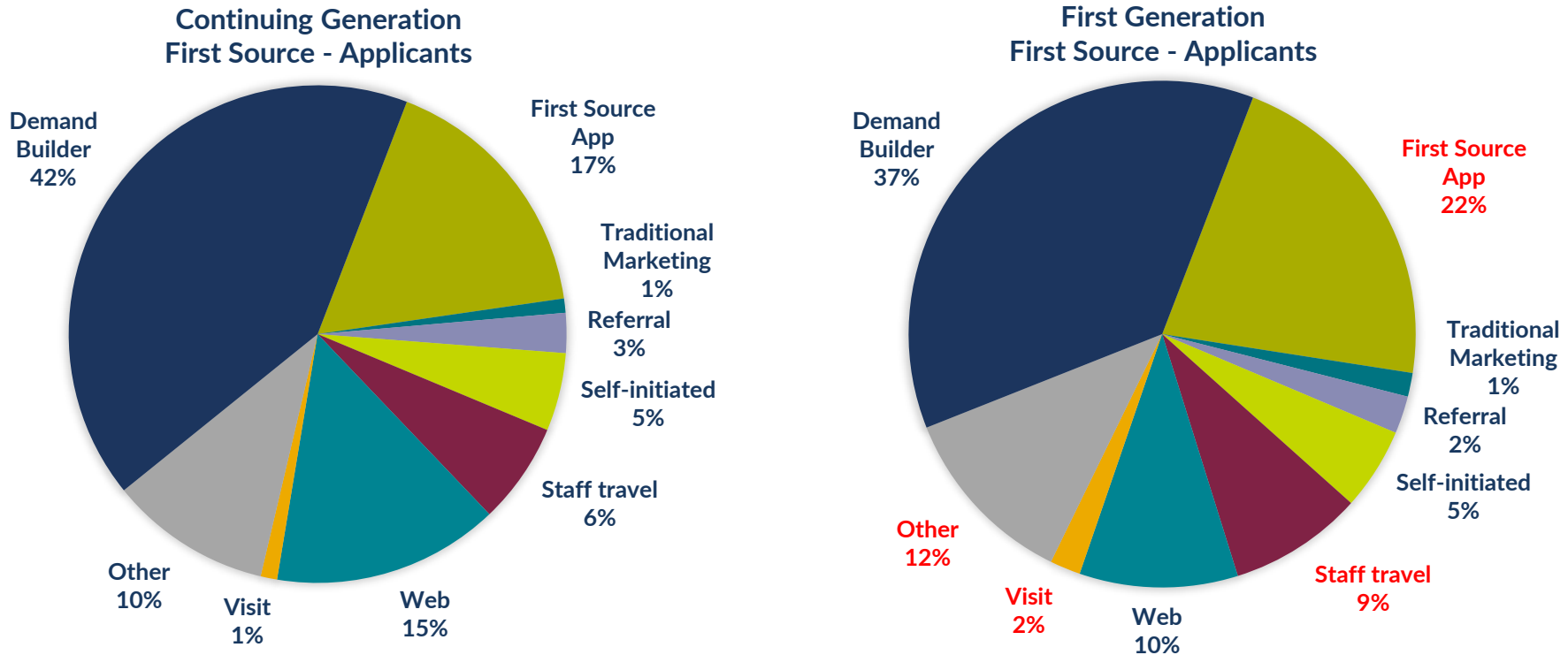
First generation students are...

- **38% more** likely to start college search after junior year
- **50% more** likely to apply to colleges they've heard of for the first time during their senior year
- **Less likely** to have visited but **more likely** to have an interest in visiting

...than continuing generation students.

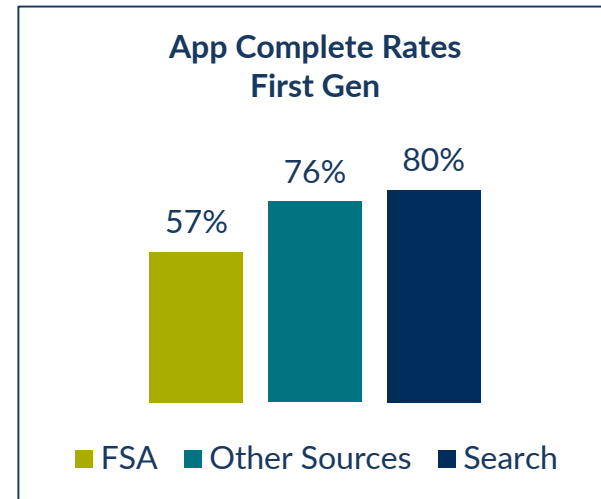
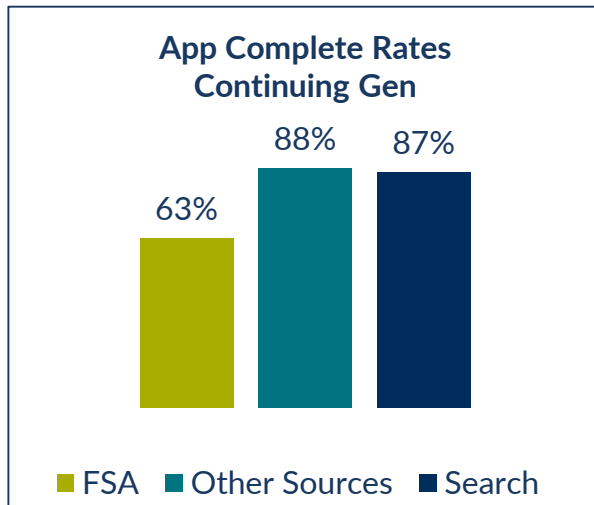
# How First Gen Students Enter

## Source Type Correlates with Timing



# Effect on Your Enrollment Bottom Line

The Difference in Timing Has Consequences



# Key Takeaways

## Account for Timing in Your Recruitment Strategy

- First generation students' late entry makes recruiting and processing a difficult balancing act. **Be relevant while moving to the next step.**
- They are less likely to have visited but still have an interest in visiting. **Personal invitations to campus should be tied to WHY they should visit.**
- Late entry compacts your engagement opportunity. Consider an outreach strategy that reaches these students early. **Leverage modeling to identify search opportunities.**



A group of people in a meeting, overlaid with a blue filter. The image shows several individuals sitting around a table, engaged in a discussion. One person in the foreground is gesturing with their hand. The background is slightly blurred, showing a whiteboard and other office equipment.

# 4

## What Content is Most Relevant

# First Generation Engagement

Guided and personal engagement is key

First generation students are...

- **33% more** likely to prefer a phone call
- **10% more** likely to click on a Facebook ad
- **10% more** likely to view a Snap Chat story about a school
- **10% more** likely to research schools by clicking links on email from schools
- **25% less** likely to research schools on the internet after hearing from a school

...than continuing generation students.

# Interests are Diverse

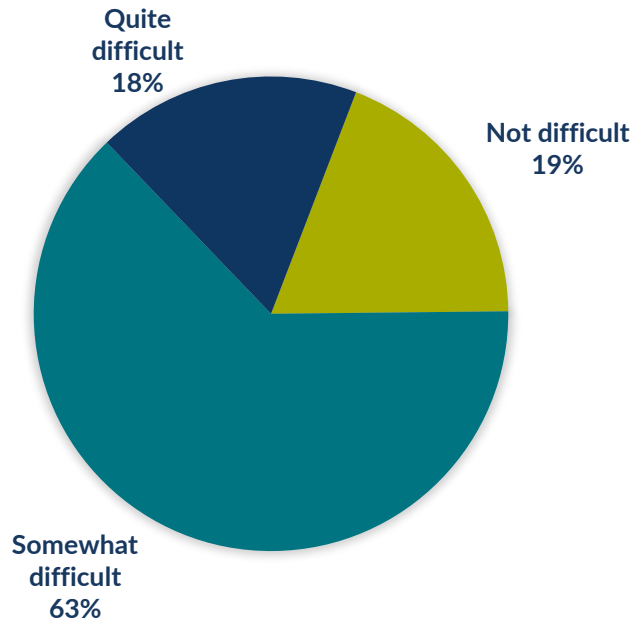
But cost and value – specific value – are most important

What topic is most interesting on college social media sites?	Continuing	First Gen
What social life is like on campus	68%	66%
How I'll pay for college	64%	76%
What it will be like to be in classes	66%	66%
What it's like to live in the dorms	63%	60%
What qualifications I need to have to be accepted	61%	71%
What I need to do to apply	60%	69%
What my path to finding a career will be	56%	61%
What events I can attend	53%	50%
What internships might be a part of my academic program	49%	56%
What the other students are like as people	48%	45%
How I will interact with my fellow students	44%	46%
How I will interact with faculty	36%	37%

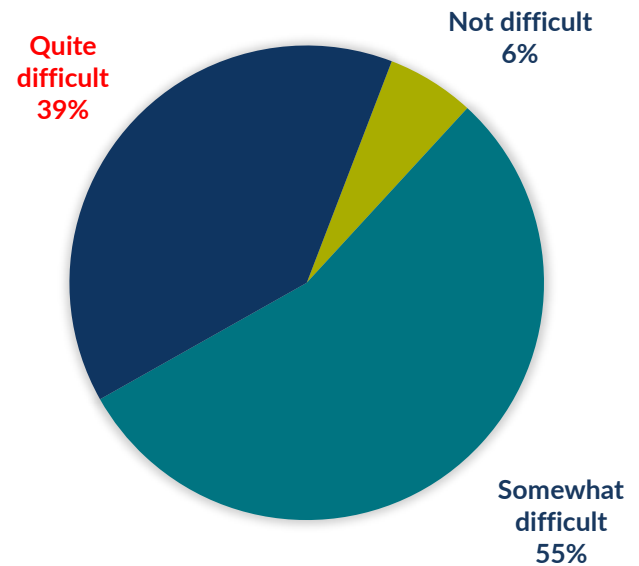
# Financial Concerns

## Finances Prevalent Throughout the Funnel

Continuing Generation  
Fall 2017 Applicants  
Perceived Financing Difficulty



First Generation  
Fall 2017 Applicants  
Perceived Financing Difficulty



# But Finances Aren't All

## Learn from Those Already on Campus



Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying.

Cont Gen **79%**

First Gen **82%**



I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome.

Cont Gen **24%**

First Gen **39%**



I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.

Cont Gen **48%**

First Gen **55%**



I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills.

Cont Gen **47%**

First Gen **60%**

# Key Takeaways

## Balance of One-to-One Engagement and Next Steps

- Engagement preferences suggest a desire to both rely on the school for information but to also seek personal contact. **Curate, encourage exploration, and connect.**
- Finances are a big focus throughout the funnel and into enrollment. **It should be a theme of your engagement.**
- Personal improvement and the pathway to that improvement is top of mind. **Resonate with their ambition. Help overcome their real and perceived barriers. Make it unique to each student.**

A group of people in a meeting, overlaid with a blue filter. The image shows several individuals sitting around a table, engaged in a discussion. One person in the foreground is gesturing with their hand. The background is slightly blurred, showing a whiteboard and other people. The overall tone is professional and collaborative.

# 5

## How to Engage Parents

# First Generation Parents

## Educate, Empower, and Give Opportunity

First generation parents are...

- **27% less** likely to be highly involved
- **62% more** likely to indicate finances will be very difficult
- **Almost twice less likely** to be able to estimate the cost of college
- **Over two times more** likely to earn a household income of less than \$50,000

...than continuing generation students.



# How Parents Engage

Gaps at top of funnel continue through funnel



Looked at college websites

Cont Gen **74%**

First Gen **63%**



Talked with family and friends about specific school options

Cont Gen **62%**

First Gen **57%**



Read brochures and letters that came on the mail

Cont Gen **65%**

First Gen **59%**



Attended campus visit programs

Cont Gen **51%**

First Gen **33%**



Read emails I forwarded to them or showed them from a school

Cont Gen **49%**

First Gen **39%**



Read emails they received directly from a school

Cont Gen **48%**

First Gen **33%**

# How Parents Engage

Gaps at top of funnel continue through funnel



Talked directly with an admissions counselor

Cont Gen **25%**

First Gen **19%**



Called specific schools to get more information

Cont Gen **16%**

First Gen **11%**



Requested information from specific schools through their websites

Cont Gen **28%**

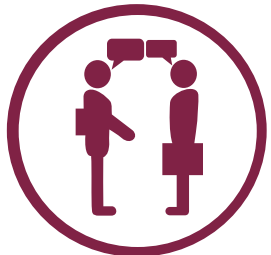
First Gen **19%**



Looked at social media assets for college websites

Cont Gen **18%**

First Gen **16%**



Talked directly with a financial aid representative

Cont Gen **20%**

First Gen **15%**



Looked at college or university rankings

Cont Gen **48%**

First Gen **39%**

# Key Takeaways

## Parent Engagement is a Challenge Worth Conquering

- Parents engagement is lagging in email. **Capture parent contact early and engage via multiple channels.**
- Very low engagement on campus visit. **Explain to parents the benefit of visiting and what to expect on the visit. Have a parent visit program that can be shared.**
- Finances are a concern. **Address this from the start and connect with student-specific information and next steps.**

A group of people in a meeting, overlaid with a blue tint. The image shows several individuals sitting around a table, engaged in discussion. A large white number '6' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# 6

## Final Thoughts

# Major Themes

## What Did We Learn

- First Generation Students Often Enter Pool Late
- Seize Opportunities to Identify and Engage Early
- Students Prefer Curated Content that Allows Discovery to their Unique Interests and Needs
- Students Crave Personalized Content on Pathway to Improvement
- Parent Engagement Should be Multichannel and Invite Engagement Opportunities Specific to their Child

## LET'S TALK ABOUT STRATEGIES FOR ENROLLING FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

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# Thank you!

**Matt Krov + Raquel Bermejo**

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**NOEL LEVITZ**

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