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Engaging, Recruiting Back, and Supporting Stopout Students

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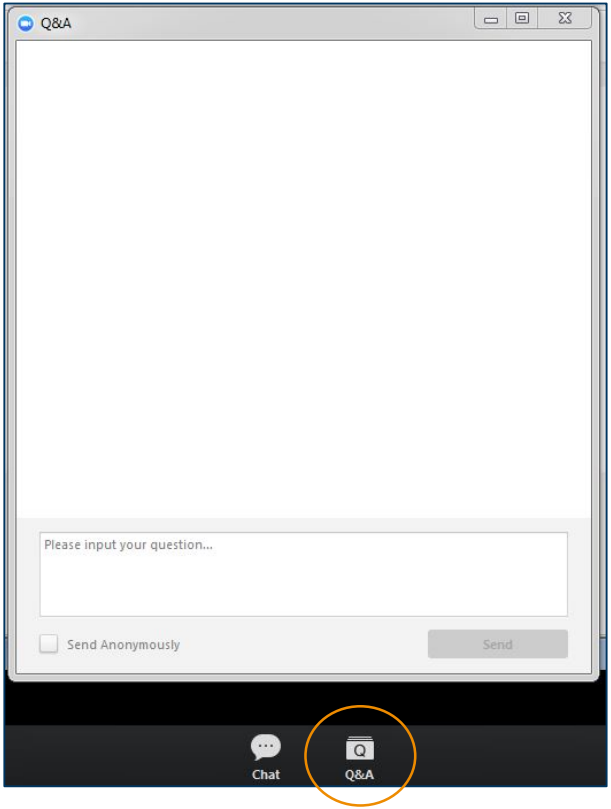

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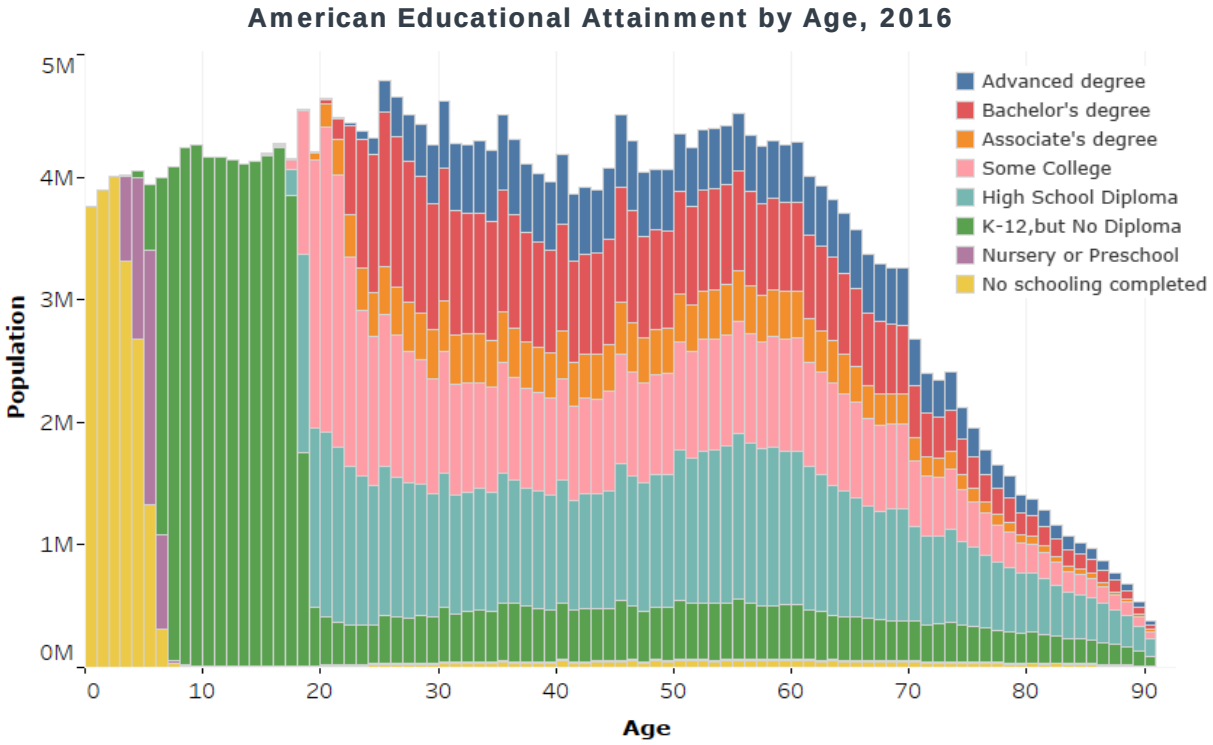
Are Americans Getting a Return on Education?



Source: Overflow Solutions analysis of US Census data
http://overflow.solutions/interactive-visualizations/how-do-americans-differ-by-age-16/

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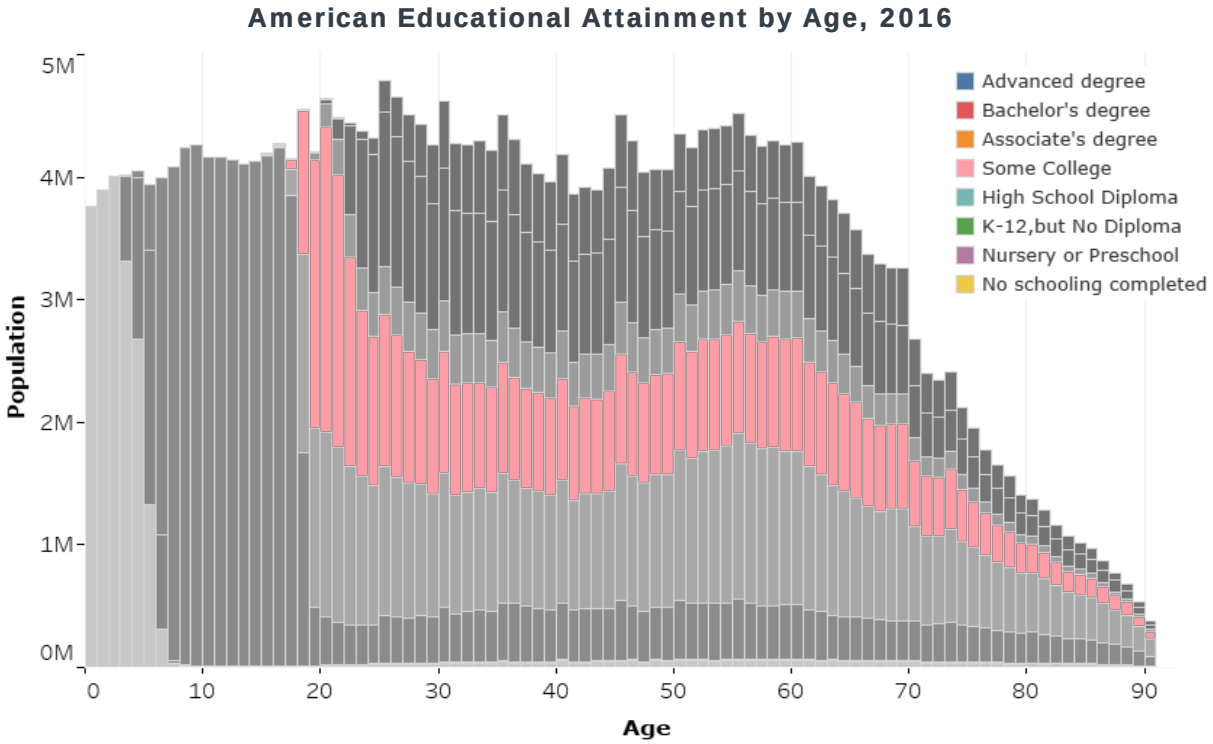
Far Too Many "Former Customers"

20% of Americans Tried College, but Did Not Get a Return on Education



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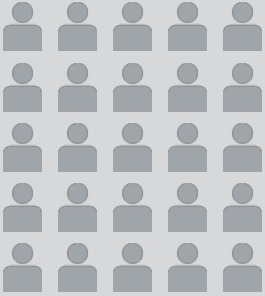
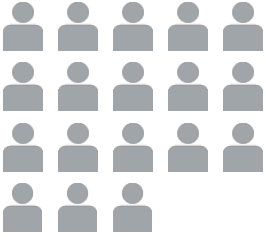
Of 100 Students Who Enroll in College

43 **Graduated within six years**



57 **Didn't graduate within six years**

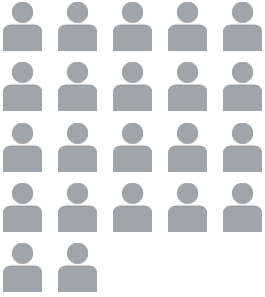
24 **Still enrolled after 6 years**



33 **Dropped out of college**

Consequences:

- Debt
- Damaged credit if loans aren't paid
- Lower wages
- Locked out of higher ed if indebted to college



Just **38%** of Black students graduated

Just **45%** of Hispanic students graduated

Fewer than **25%** of students required to take dev ed courses graduated

Sources: https://www.creditdonkey.com/college-dropout-statistics.html

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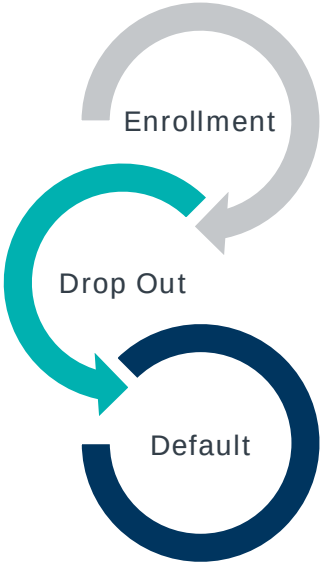
Perpetuating the Cycle of Poverty

College Can Be a Risky Gamble for Those Who Don't Complete



1 in 5
Americans have some college but no degree

$9,300
Average student debt at the time of departure (public four-year)[1]

17%
Loan default rate for college dropouts

Expensive Consequences of Defaulting

- Federal funds withheld
- Damage to credit report
- Garnished wages
- Inability to receive future aid
- Transcripts blocked
- Loan "acceleration"

1) Private four-year: $10,900
Public four-year: $9,300
For-profit: $7,500
Public two-year: $5,700

Source: Overflow Solutions analysis of US Census data http://overflow.solutions/interactive-visualizations/how-do-americans-differ-by-age-16/ U.S. Department of Education, 2013, "Federal Student Loan Debt Burden of Noncompleters"; Nguyen M, "Degreeless in Debt: What Happens to Borrowers Who Drop Out" American Institutes for Research (2012); EAB interviews and analysis.

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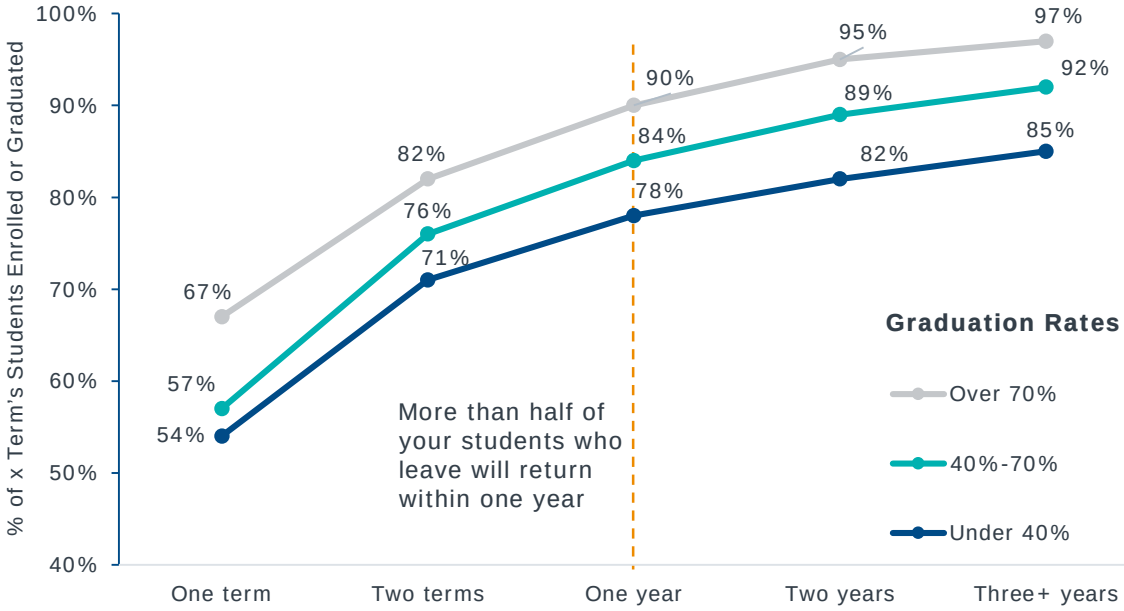
How Many Of Your Students Are Accounted For?

Student Stopouts Are Most Likely to Return Within a Year of Departure

Percent of Any Given Term's Enrolled Students Who Continue

Enrollment or graduation tracked across three years



1) students who graduated at the end of the term or ever re-enrolled in a future term
2) n 151: 24 <40,% GR, 93 40-70% GR, 34 >70% GR

Source: EAB interviews and analysis

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Definition of Student Stopout

For Today's Presentation….

- **Disenrolled for 1+ year**
- **Has not already enrolled elsewhere**
- **In good standing (academic holds, conduct, etc.)**

How Would You Know?

Program: Student Tracker

Tracks students' enrollment in all types of post-secondary education.

Cost: $0-$.10 per student

National Student Clearinghouse®

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Source: National Student Clearinghouse

Not All Student Stopouts Are The Same

New Student

Probable Fail Point: finances academic rigor, adjustment issues

Financial Impact: relatively low debt amount; little change in employment

Reengagement strategy: explain improved service and majors with high ROI

Advising approach: concierge service to provide direction and support before advisor hand-off

Final Year

Probable Fail Point: life event, emergency, or draw to employment

Financial Impact: high debt, struggles to find work related to newfound skills

Reengagement strategy: Could be as simple as a phone call explaining path to graduation

Advising approach: concierge service to provide direction and support through graduation

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1 **Finding Your Student Stopouts**

2 Incenting Your Former Students' Return

3 Serving Reenrolled Stopouts

4 Putting The Pieces Together

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Internally Recruit Students Looking to Leave

Suggest Related Program to Students Before They Stop Out

Invite Students to New Program Before Stopping Out

Categorize each major based on student movement

Identify most common major transfer destinations of “donor majors”

Send recruitment letter from sister program in the month acceptance results released

5% Retention goal for recruitment letters

Letters Highlight New Program Acceptance

Program RE Letter (Structure)

- Congratulate student for “acceptance” into new program
- Explain why the student would be a good fit for the program
- Highlight different degree and certificate options
- Invite student to an open house to learn more about the new program
- Provide student with advisor contact information

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Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Strategies For Finding Those Who Left

Advantages		Disadvantages
• Engaging • Can be saved	 **Hard-mailing**	• Costly • Addresses change
• Low-cost • May include read-receipt	 **Social Media**	• Response rates are low • Time-consuming to identify individuals
• Low-cost • Expected communication method from college	 **Email**	• Email addresses change • May get lost in Spam
• Personal contact • Ability to provide detail	 **Cold-calling**	• People often don't answer their phones • Many times phone numbers change
• No additional staff resources • Can discontinue if ineffective	 **External Vendor**	• Expensive • Privacy concerns

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What We Know Works

Opening Lines of Communication May Be the Key to Re-enrollment

Update Contact Info

During reenrollment efforts, get personal contact information

Invite to Return

Ask when they'd like outreach and normalize enrollment breaks

Test Communication

Believe that responsibility for their success is their own, not the institution's

Source: A Major Step, 2018 Public Agenda; : Bergman, M. J., Rose, K. J., & Shuck, M. J. (2015). Adult degree programs: Factors impacting student persistence. In J. K. Holtz, S. B. Springer, & C. J. Boden-McGill (Eds.), *Building sustainable futures for adult learners* (pp. 27-50). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

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Preparing a Plan for Graduation

Florida State University Begins Discussions With Graduation in Mind

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Prepare for Outreach

Review advising report, Navigate notes, transcript to inform conversation

Discuss What Happened

Call can be a resource discussion, simple or an in-depth academic discussion

Plan Path to Graduation

Student may not be able to physically return. Enroll in their location or online

Initial Outreach Term	Total Outreach List	Active Engagement/ Enrollment	Degrees Awarded
Spring 2017	182	84	67
Fall 2017	143	48	87
Spring 2018	83	31	29
Summer 2018	336	171	266
Fall 2018	214	91	89
Spring 2019	225	83	90
Summer 2019	406	277	30
Fall 2019	237	96	17
	1826	881	675

"Everybody knows they can make a difference. **It's a game of inches.** Every student matters."

Joe O'Shea
Assistant Provost, Student Success

Source: EAB Interviews and analysis

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The Usual Suspects Are to Blame

The Usual Suspects Are to Blame, but Which Affect Your Students

Parking issues

Lack of finances

Mental health

Athletes who go professional

Academic under preparedness

Caring for dependents

Working full-time

Internal sanctions

Transportation

Physical health

Incarceration

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Reach Out and Reengage

Several Successful Models to Incent Students Who Left 2+ Years Ago

Targeted Reenrollment Campaign Components

College or University	*Student Qualifications*	*Financial Incentive*	*Annual Institutional Costs*	*ROI*
Wayne State University	• GPA of 2.0 or better • Completed FAFSA	*Up to $1,500 in across three terms*	**$0K** Annual budget allocation	**$500K+** net revenue earned in one year after debt buyout
Pueblo Community College	• 30+ credits • Owe college <$1,000	*One-time debt forgiveness up to $1,000*	**$79K** Spent in student debt repayments	**$300K+** net revenue earned in 2018-19 after debt repayments
Bossier Parish Community College	• Within 20 credits of graduation • Reenroll full-time	*Tuition waiver for one free course*	**$30K** Annual costs of reenrollment campaign	**$500K+** Net revenue after waivers and outreach

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Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Tackling Transportation

Offering Free Transportation Through Community Partnership

Collaboration Removes Obstacles

Challenge

Transportation barriers caused stopouts across a large rural service area

1 Collaborate

Administrators partnered with bus service to create a pass paid as an enrollment fee

2 Negotiate

Proposal failed to earn majority support from student government, a necessary step

3 Communicate

Supporters saw the close margin an opportunity to educate and inform students and conducted a campaign

Outcome

Proposal passed with **62% in favor** of the new enrollment fee

Student fee of **$9.95 paid by all students** for unlimited bus access

MERCED COLLEGE

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Low-Cost, Simple Changes Have Outsized Effect

Basics Incentives Every College Needs

Low-Cost Incentives

No (re)application fee

Eliminate financial barriers and create time-sensitive action

Simplified (re)application

Streamline application and processing to eliminate barriers

Priority registration

Demonstrate commitment to graduate returning students

Free Parking

Incents off-peak enrollment which is when most returning students enroll

Graduation Plan

Reveal course path to graduation in original or new major

Returning Stopouts Need a Graduation Plan That:

- Is personalized
- Shows fastest path to graduation
- Includes potential sources of credit for prior learning
- Highlights stepping stone or industry-recognized credentials
- Has been vetted through faculty for any substitutions/waivers
- Includes course availability

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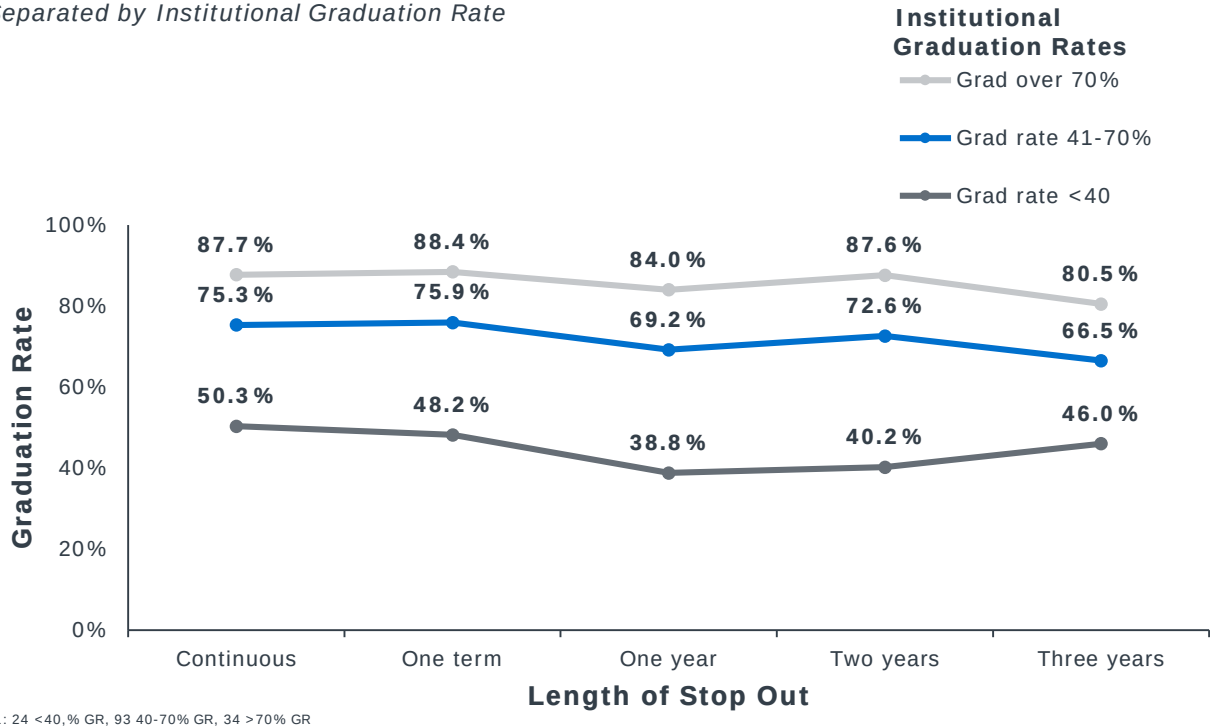
Stopouts Are More Likely to Graduate Than Not

Surprisingly High Graduation Rates for Stopouts

Probability of Graduation Based on Lapse in Enrollment

Separated by Institutional Graduation Rate



1) N 151: 24 <40,% GR, 93 40-70% GR, 34 >70% GR

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York Technical College's Re-Connect Program

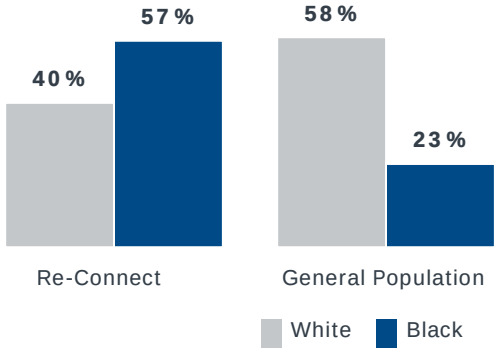
Filling Critical Workforce Needs And Graduating Stopouts

York Technical College

- One year of funding to finish existing or new program
- 50+ Credit and continuing education programs
- 250 Students enrolled via Re-connect in Fall 2019

Student Demographics, Fall 2019

Re-Connect Versus General Student Population



How does Navigate help?

Tag Students → **Academic Planner** → **Targeted Communication** → **Coordinated Care**

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Incentivize Reenrollee Success

Revised Transcript Offers a One-Time Refresh Opportunity

Sample Fresh Start Transcript

Student: J. Smith

Course	Grade
MAT 1470	D
PSY 2205	B+
ENG 1101	C+
HIS 2218	F
*Recalculated GPA**	2.80

* The Fresh Start Policy has been applied for academic work taken at Sinclair prior to Fall 2014

- D/F/W grades are not calculated into GPA
- All courses remain on the transcript
- Transferability of credits is unchanged
- Recalculated GPA includes grades above D

> "In my cumulative GPA I had two semesters from back in 1995. I would have had to pay to retake these courses that wouldn't apply to my program and I can't afford that.
>
> *Community College Student*

Student Qualifications:

- Stopped out for 3+ years
- Reenrolled in a degree program
- Completed at least 6 credits upon reenrollment
- Met with an advisor to discuss the details like effects on SAP and fin aid

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Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Returning Students Likely to Enroll Online

Online Offerings and Resources are Critical for Stopout Support

NOVA
Northern Virginia Community College

Student Life

Cocurricular activities

- Common reader
- Blogs
- Meet-ups in the area
- Virtual student union
- Live-streaming college speakers

Instruction

Curricular Offerings

- Most programs are available
- Various term lengths
- Consistent course shells with ID support
- Training and support for faculty
- LMS technical support

Advising

Virtual Guidance

- Academic advising
- Career counselors
- Counselors for students with disabilities
- Transfer advising
- Veteran services

Support

Campus Services Online

- Tutoring
- Library services
- Test proctors
- Student success coaches
- Financial aid

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University of Kentucky Project Graduate

Institution Profile

- Lexington, KY
- 23,700 Students
- 65% Six-year graduation rate
- Project Graduate Launched 2015
- 13,000 former students qualify
- .5 FTE staff working Project Graduate

Outreach

- FastPeopleSearch.com provides them postal addresses for free
- Promotes the Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS)
- Details time to degree in a personal call with expert advisor

Returning Student Support

- Concierge service provided by Associate Registrar with handoff to advisor
- Online course offerings

Outcomes

- **178 students** unaware they had ALREADY met the degree requirements for BLS (92 found)
- **353 degrees** awarded to date

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY®

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Pueblo Community College's Return to Earn

Returning Stopout Lifecycle in Return to Earn

Outreach
Program Director contacts stopped out near graduates

Advising
Student goes to advising center for guidance

Ongoing Support
Program offers continued support through graduation

Readmission
Program serves as one-stop shop (i.e. fin aid, enrollment, holds, etc.)

One Time Scholarship
Program participants receive grant **after** successful completion

Pueblo Community College

Institution Profile

- Pueblo, CO
- 6,200 Students
- 19.4% Six-year graduation rate
- Return to Earn Launched 2016
- 1 FTE staff working Return to Earn

320
Reenrolled Stopouts

4 yrs
Ave stop out length

34
Ave age of participants

207
Graduates to date

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Does It Make Sense to Outsource?

ReUp Recruits and Serves Stopouts Using Predictive Analytics and Coaching

ReUp EDUCATION

- Launched in 2015
  - 10,000 students reenrolled
  - 1,000 graduates
  - $35 million in tuition recouped
  - 40+ community college and university partners
- Services are paid as a proportion of returning students' tuition.

It takes **40 touches** to re-enroll students

1

Proprietary technology finds former students and let's them know their home college wants them back.

2

Success coaches work with prospective re-enrollees to discuss goals, motivations, and potential barriers to plan for success.

3

Coach works in concert with college resources to help students re-matriculate and complete necessary onboarding steps.

4

Students reenroll and the relationship continues with coaches nudging and engaging throughout students' enrollment.

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Adapting Our Institutions
To Our Students

"We have to look at the systems we put in place to support a changing demographic of students….

We may not have considered these students college ready, but **how do we adapt our institution to make them college successful**?"

-Dawn Medley
Associate Vice-President of Enrollment Management

Wayne State University

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