

John Burton Advocates for Youth Presents

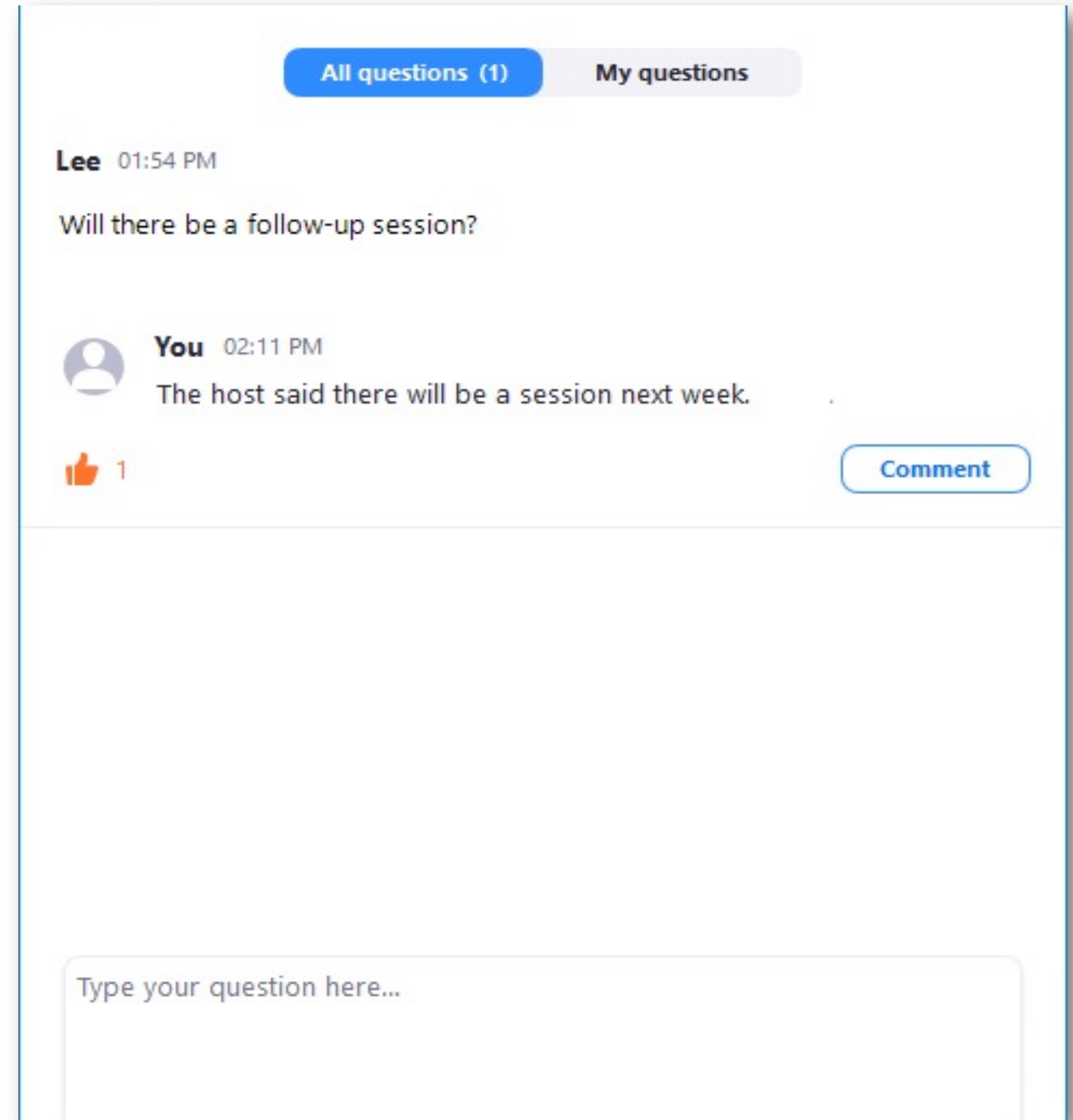
THE OVERLOOKED OBSTACLE: How Satisfactory Academic Progress Policies Impede Student Success and Equity



July 22, 2021

Using Zoom Webinar

- To submit questions, click on the Q&A icon on the control panel. The Q&A window will appear, allowing you to ask questions to the host and panelists.
- You can also access the chat feature, raise your hand, and adjust your audio settings from the control panel.
- The webinar materials and recording will be posted at www.jbay.org following the live presentation.



The screenshot shows a Zoom Q&A interface. At the top, there are two tabs: "All questions (1)" in a blue box and "My questions" in a grey box. Below the tabs, a question is displayed: "Lee 01:54 PM" followed by "Will there be a follow-up session?". Below the question, a response is shown: "You 02:11 PM" followed by "The host said there will be a session next week.". To the left of the response is a thumbs-up icon with the number "1". To the right of the response is a "Comment" button. At the bottom of the window is a text input field with the placeholder text "Type your question here..."

TODAY'S PRESENTERS



Debbie Raucher

Director of Education
John Burton
Advocates for Youth



Amy Lemley

Executive Director
John Burton
Advocates for Youth



Gina Browne

Dean, Educational
Services and Support
California Community
College Chancellor's
Office



Tisha Ortiz

Student
Cal State University,
East Bay



Josh Burns

Student
University of
Wisconsin, La
Crosse



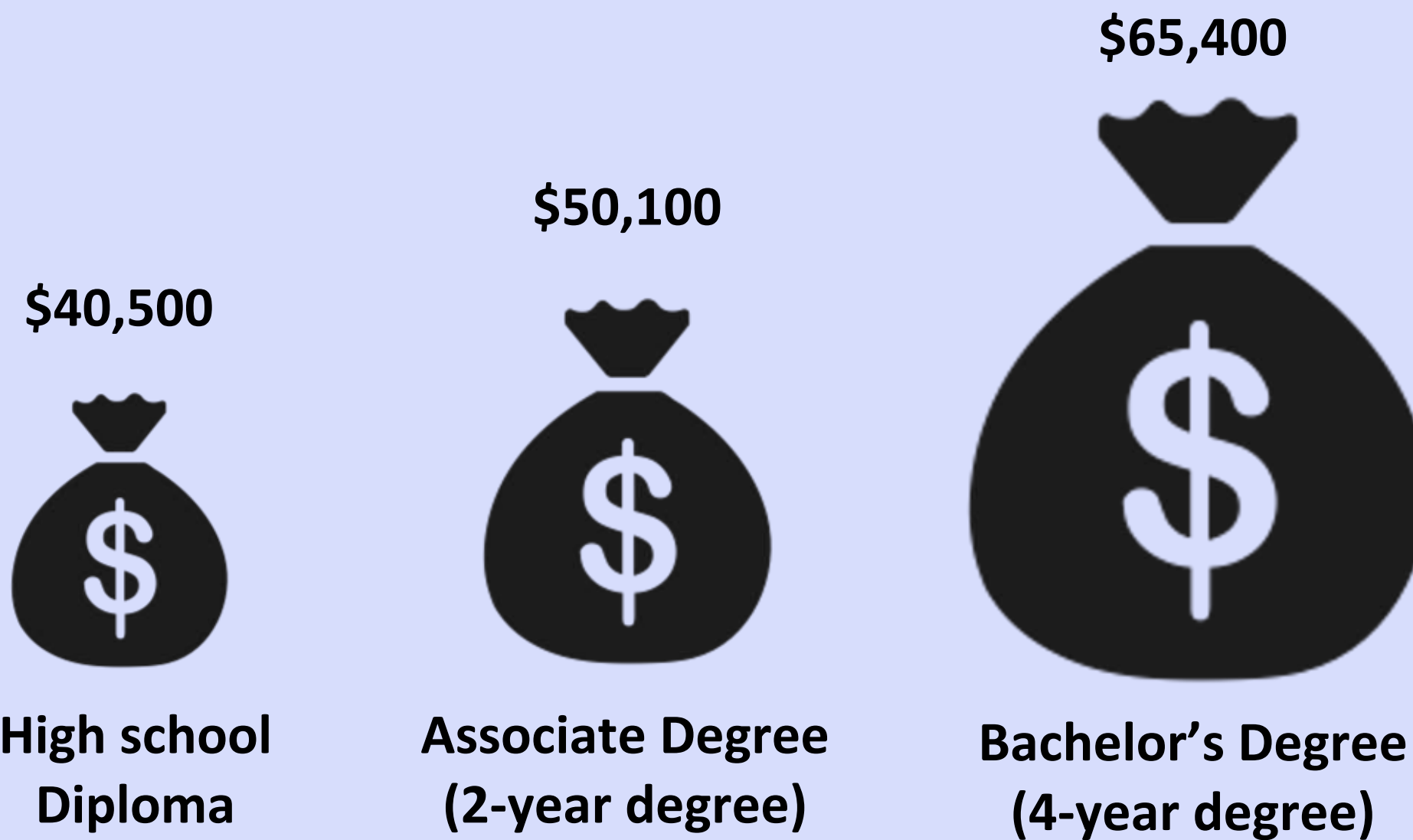
Britney Slates

Financial Aid Guardian
Scholar SST
Sierra College

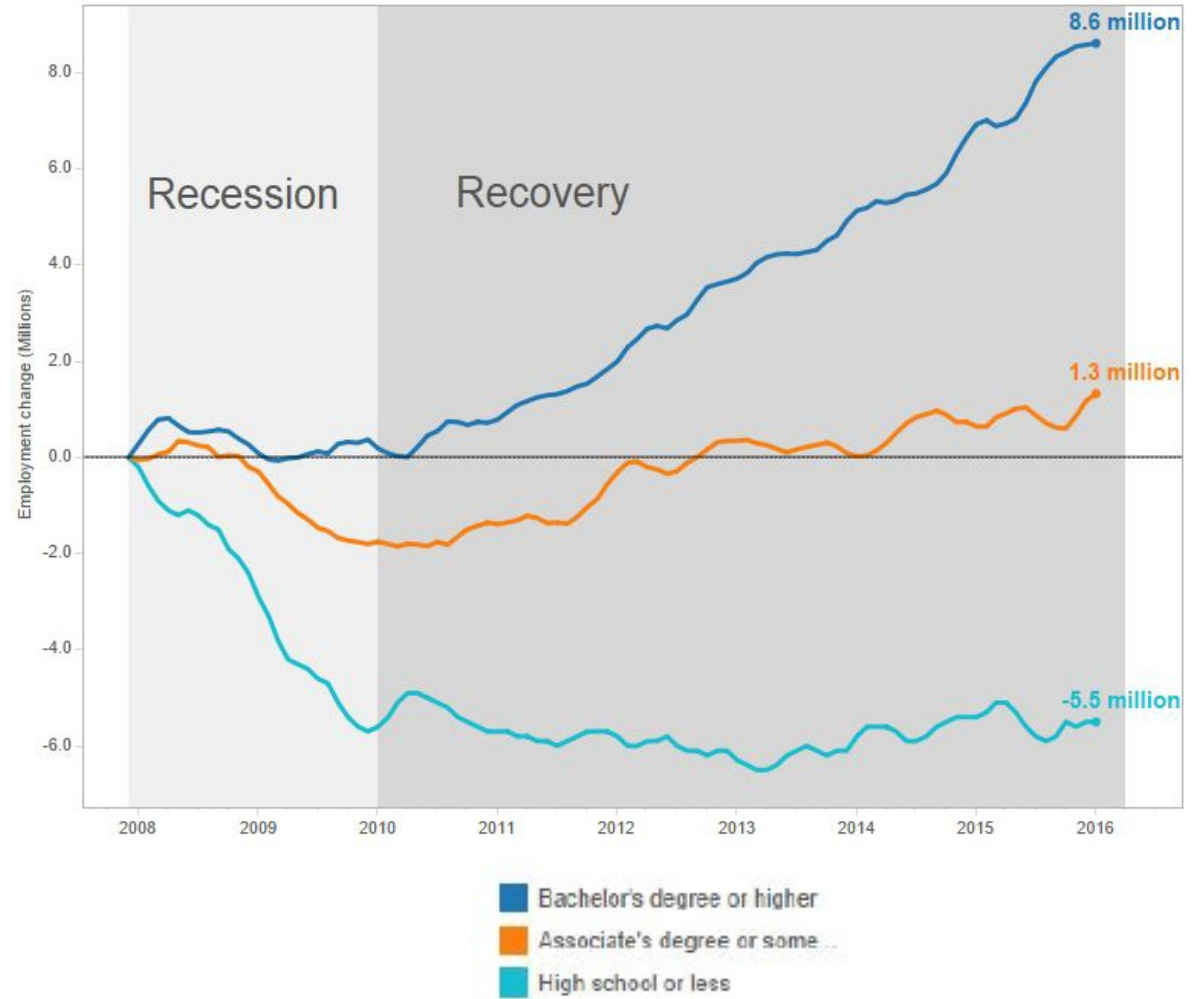
INTRODUCTION

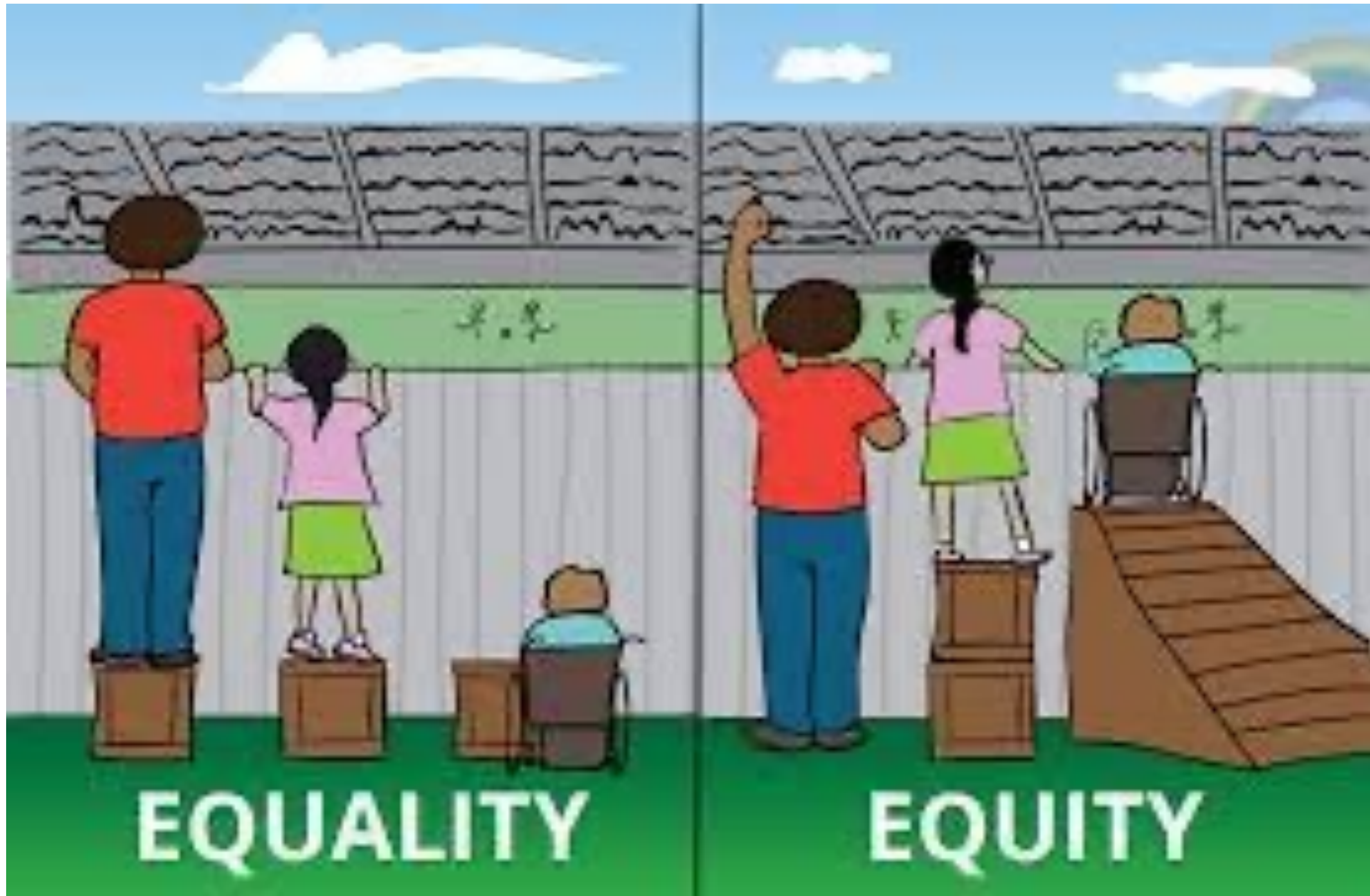
Education Pays

Median Annual Salaries, by Education Level

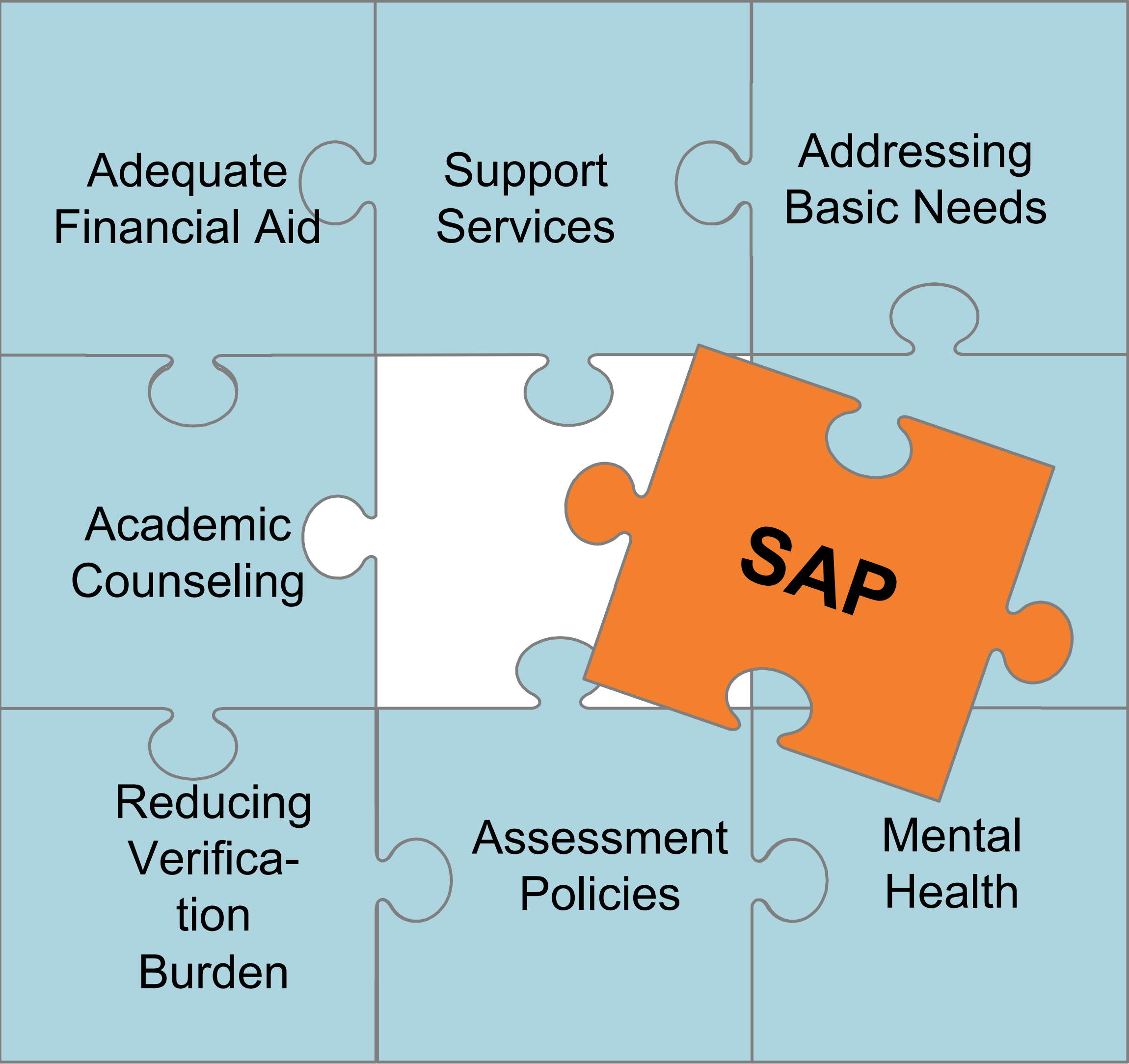


Source: College Board, "Education Pays 2019"

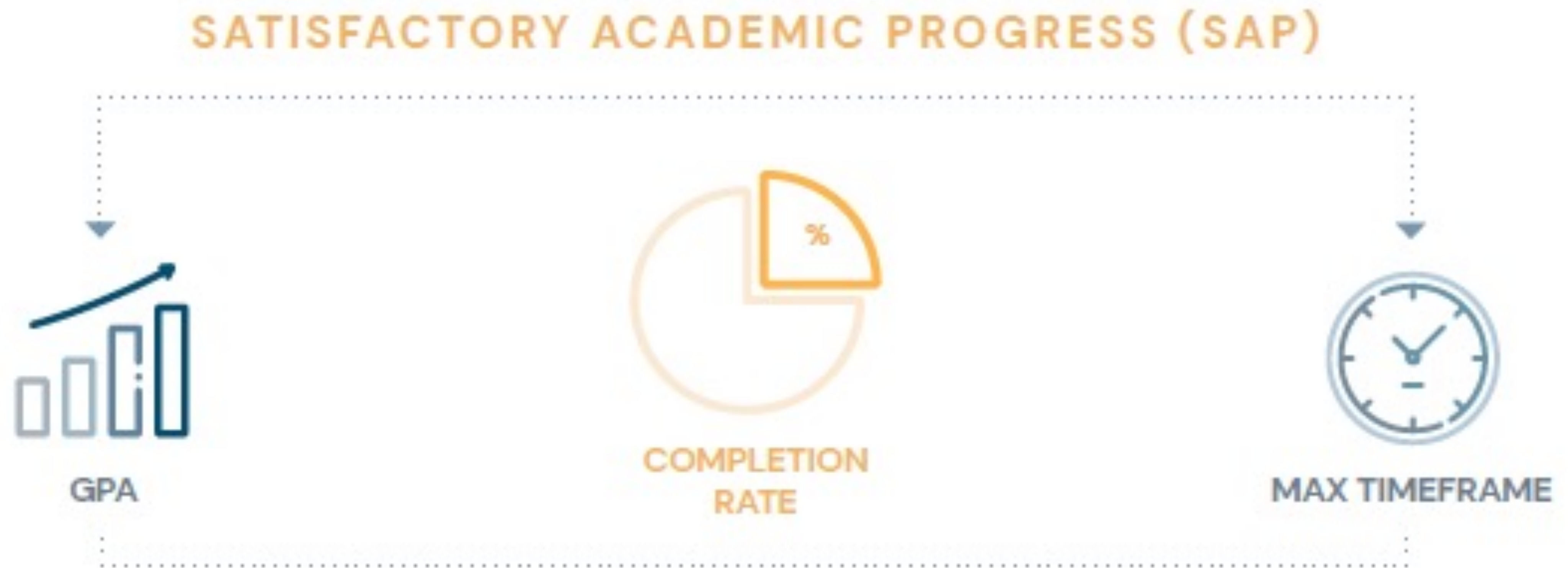




The Student Success Puzzle

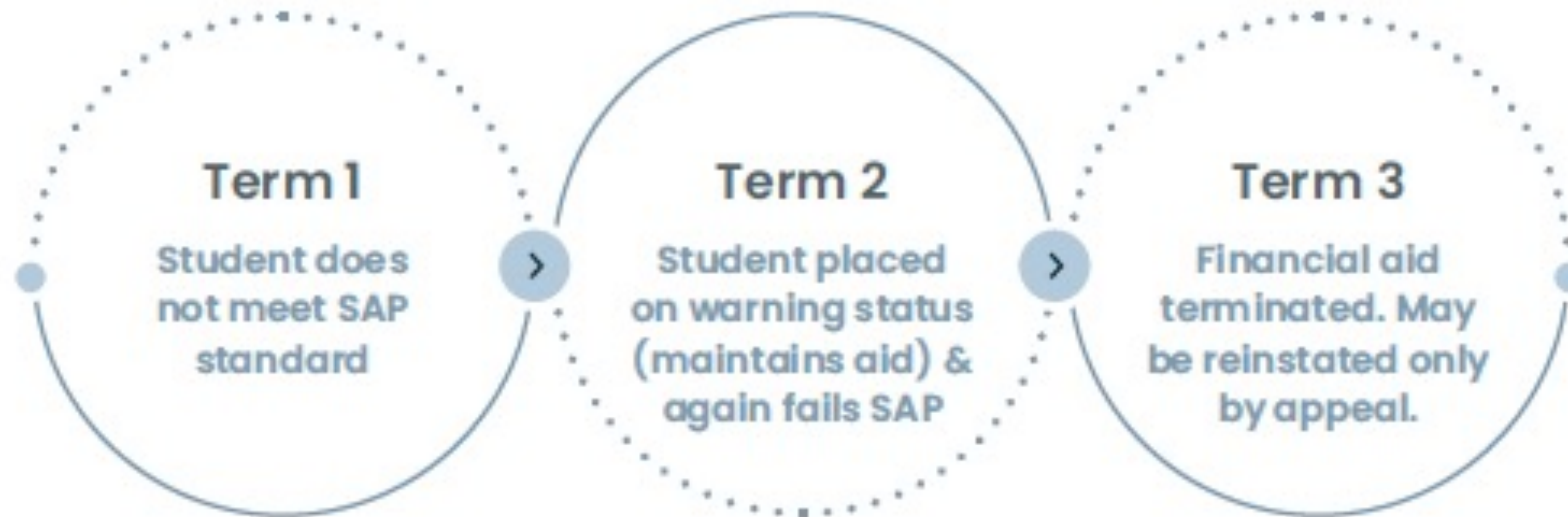


What is Satisfactory Academic Progress?



How Does SAP Impact Financial Aid?

INSTITUTIONS THAT EVALUATE SAP EACH PAYMENT PERIOD



Appeal: “death of a relative, an injury or illness of the student, or special circumstances as determined by the institution”

The History of SAP

1960s

Pell Grant
established

2011

“Program Integrity
Rules”

1983

SAP standards
implemented

Temporary Changes Due to COVID-19

Updated the definition for the basis of a SAP appeal

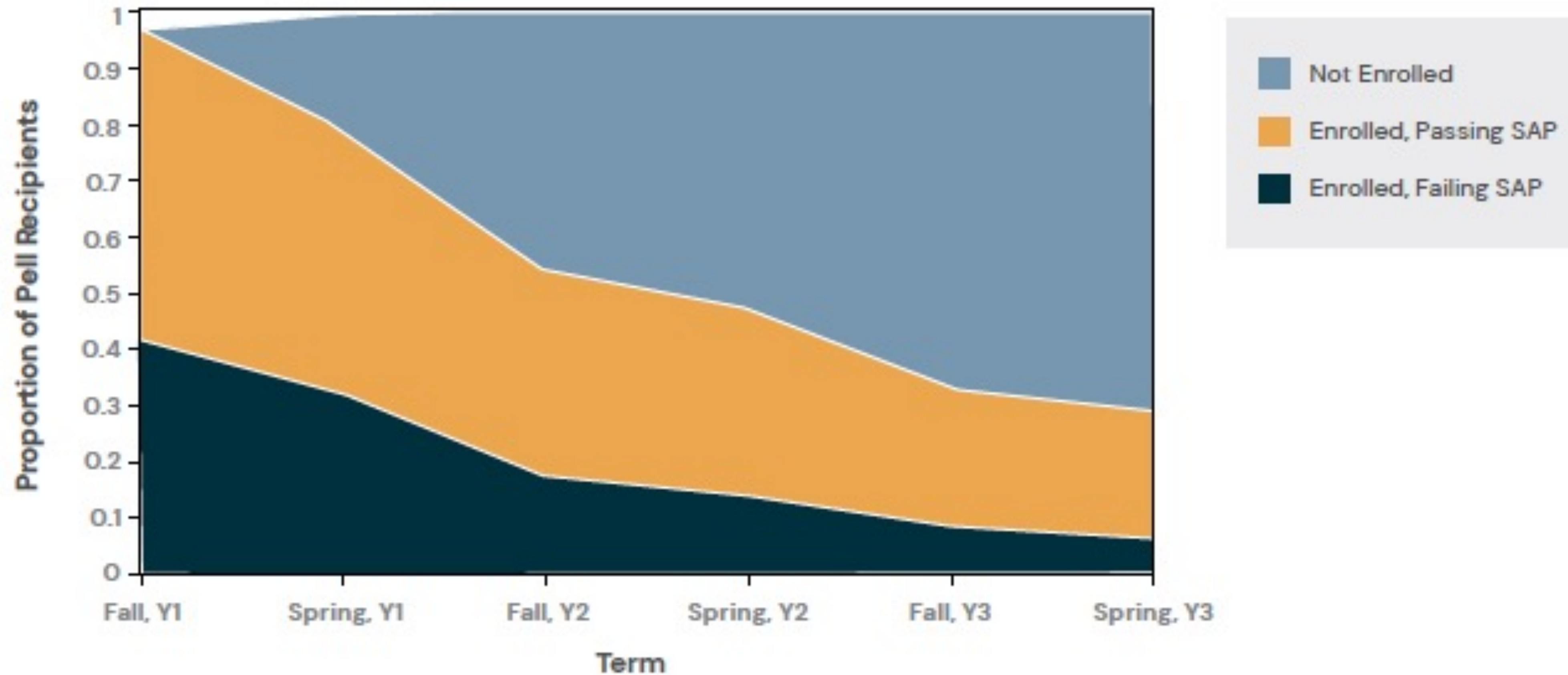
Ability to exclude from the SAP calculation courses that a student did not complete as a result of the public health emergency.

Allows students on SAP disqualification to qualify for emergency aid

IMPACT OF SAP

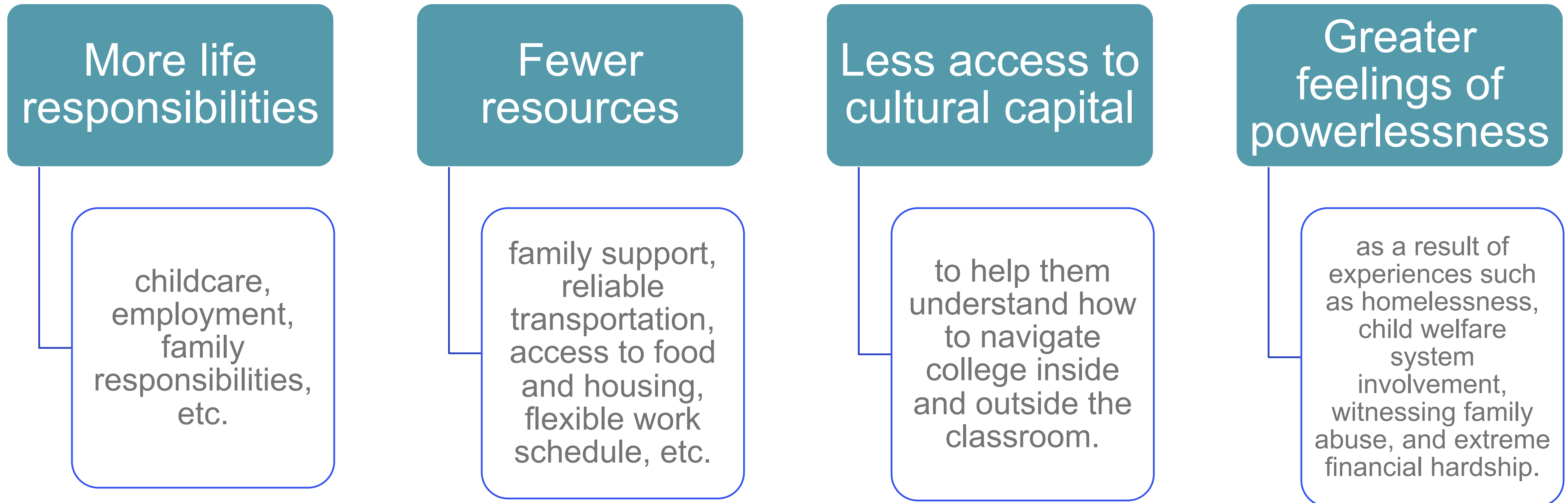
Research Review – Quantitative

Federal Pell Grant Entrants' Enrollment by SAP Status Across Academic Terms

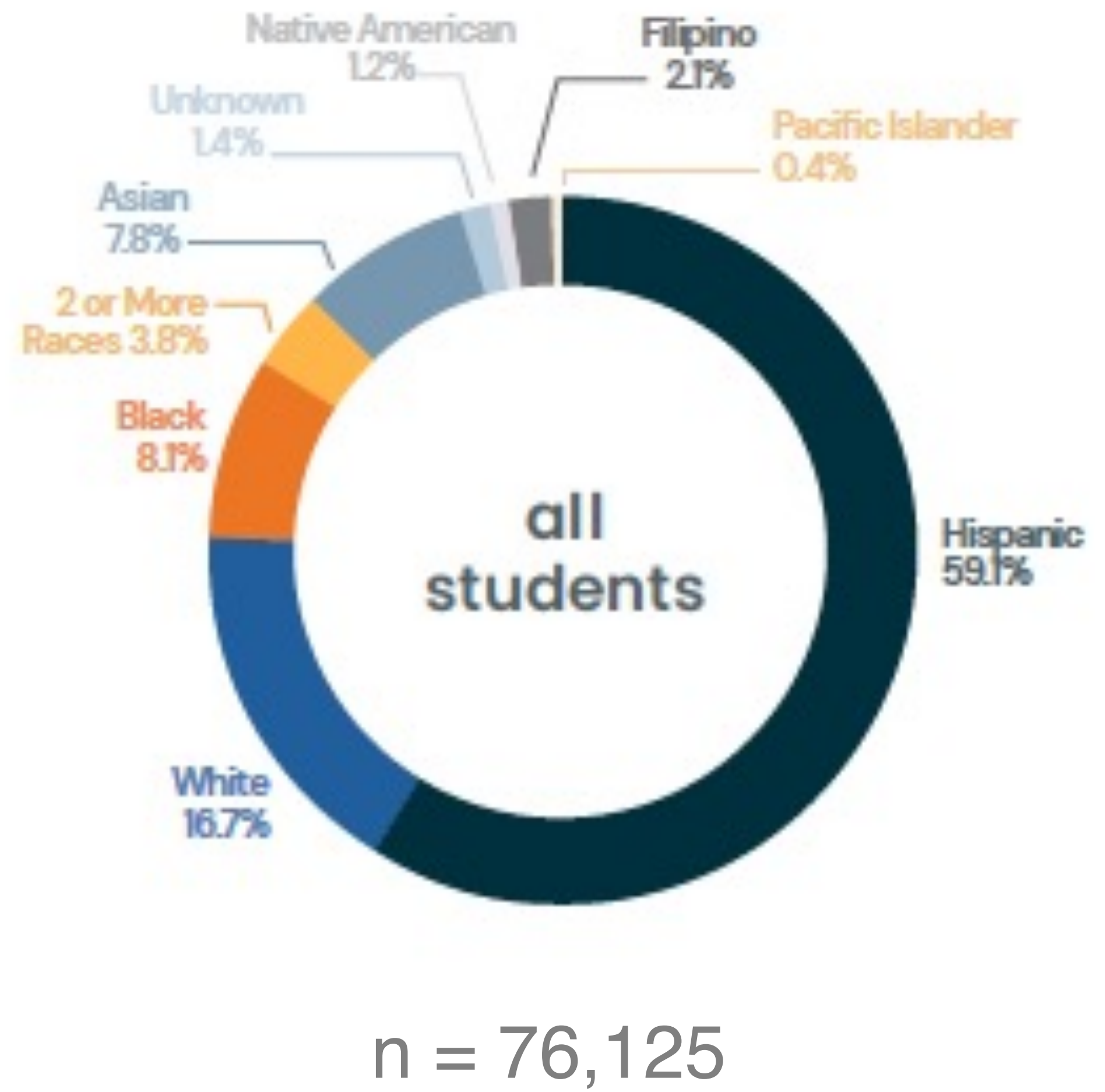
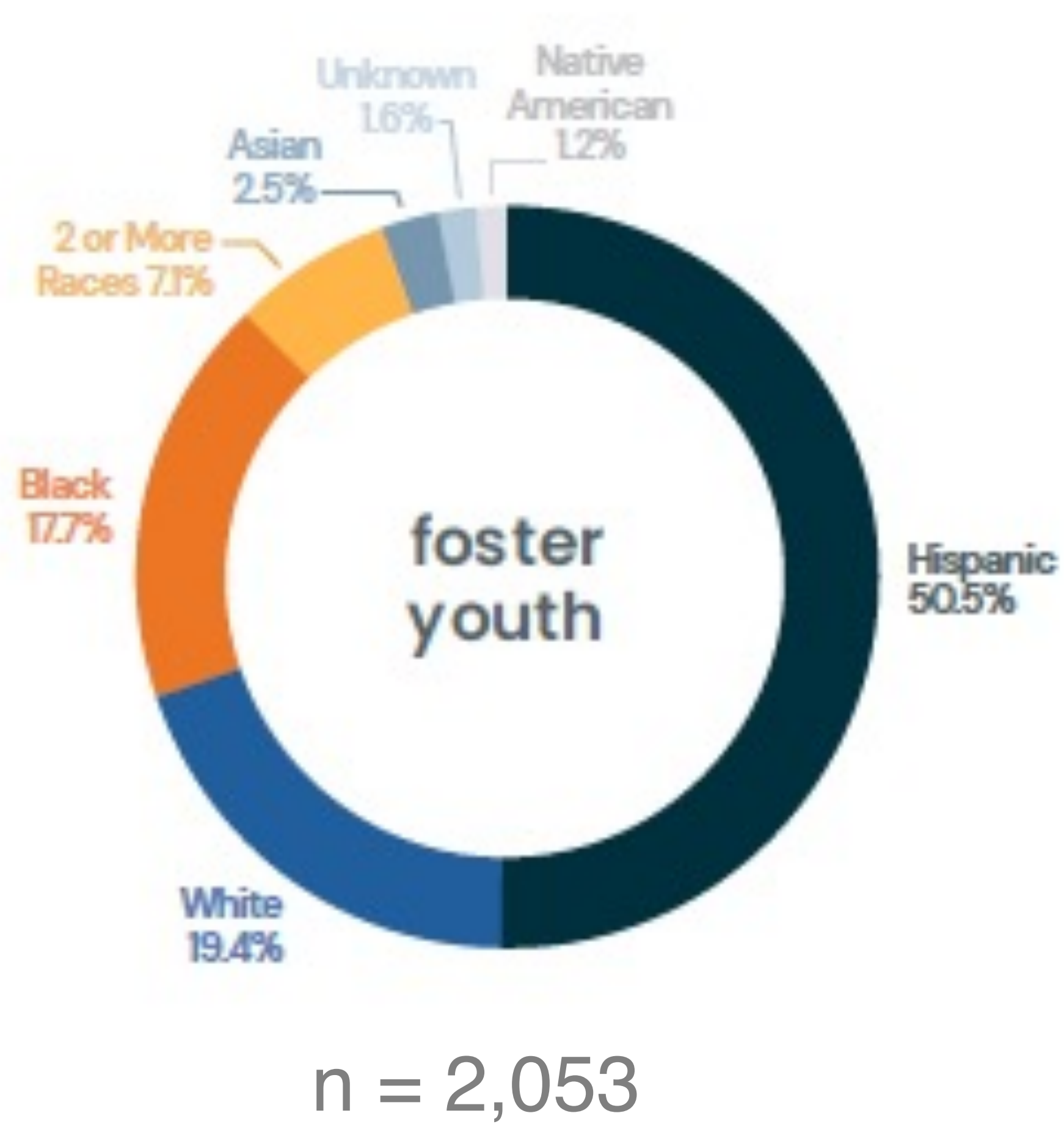


Research Review – Qualitative

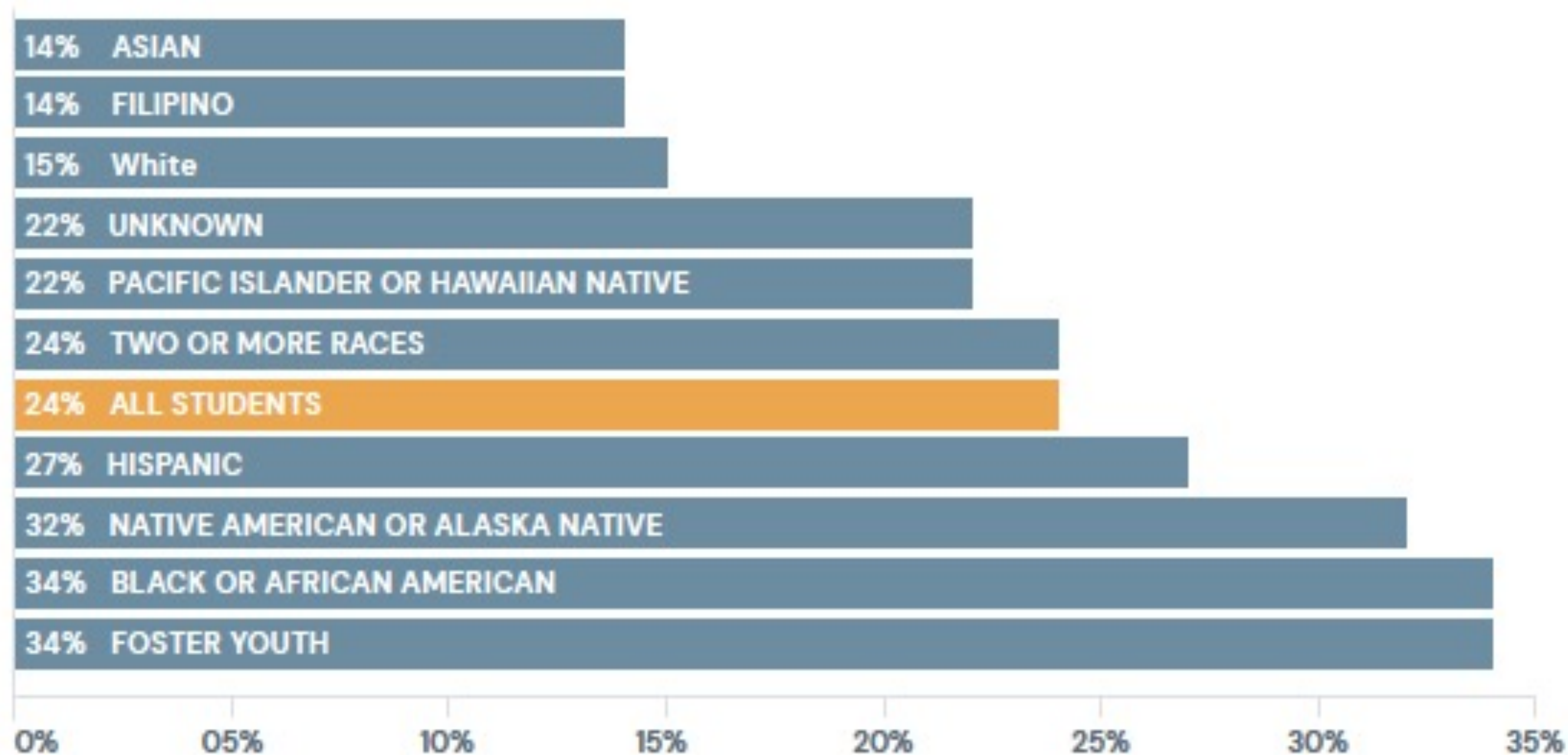
Students not making SAP had:



Analysis of SAP Status and Enrollment Trends at California Community Colleges



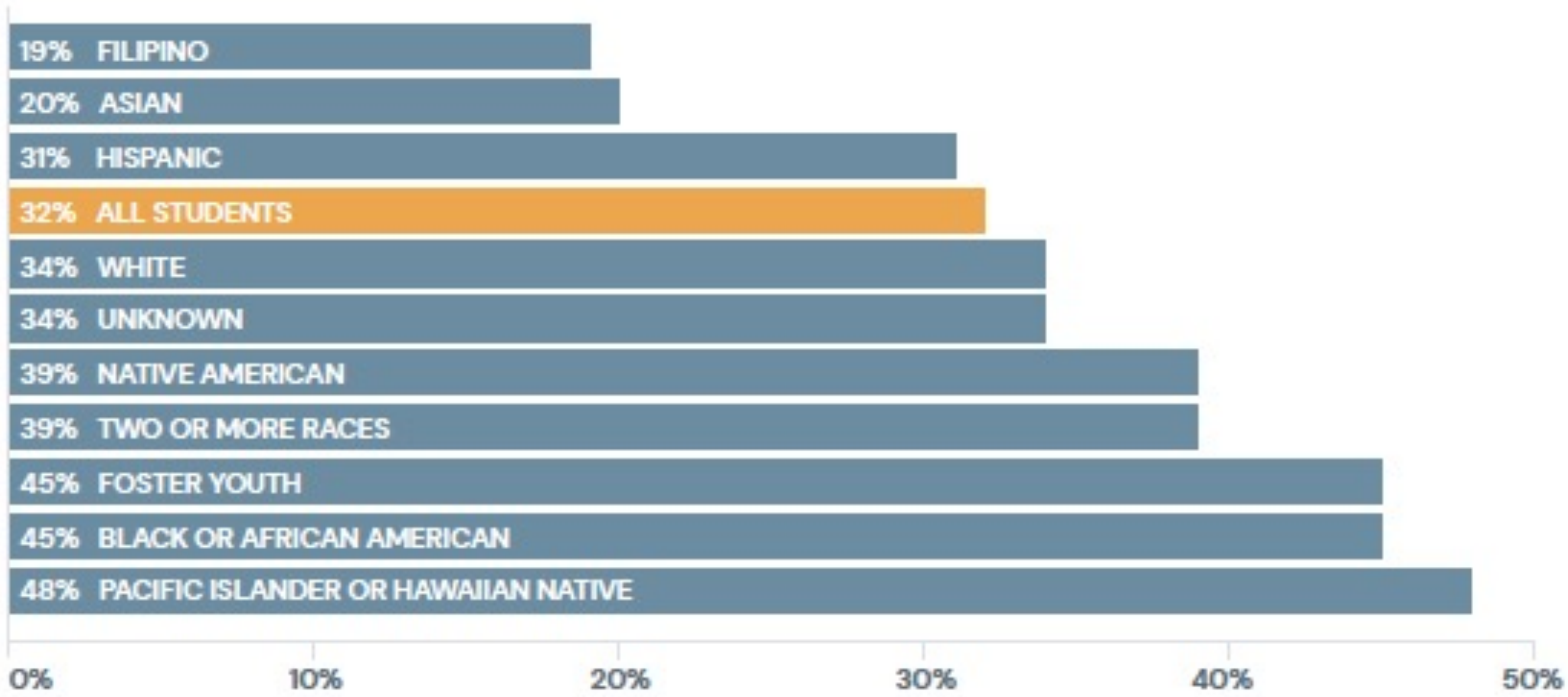
Percent of students who remained enrolled for first two consecutive terms and failed to make SAP in both terms



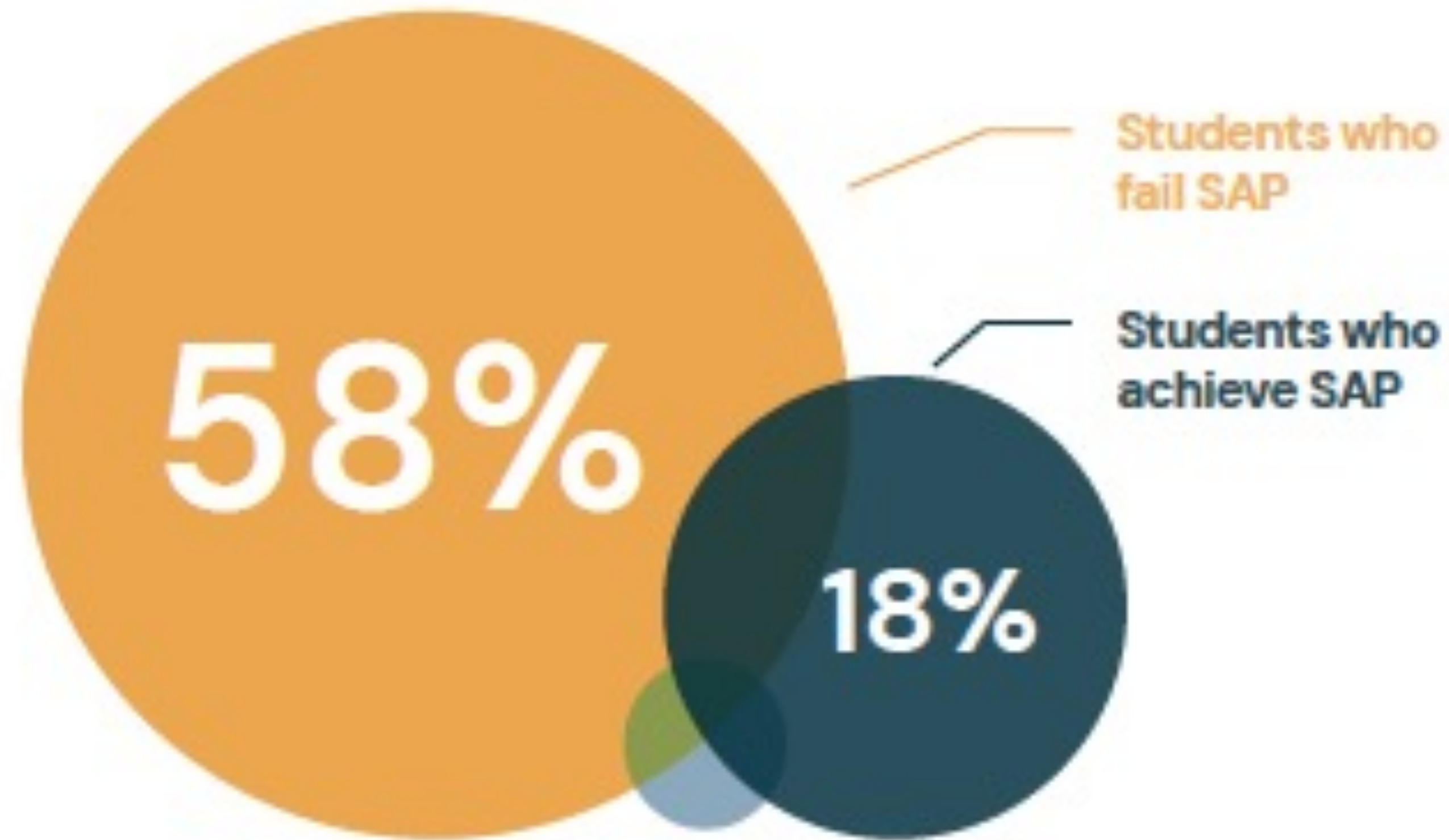
Among foster youth, Black, and Native American Pell Grant recipients, over one-third have been disqualified from financial aid after their first year.



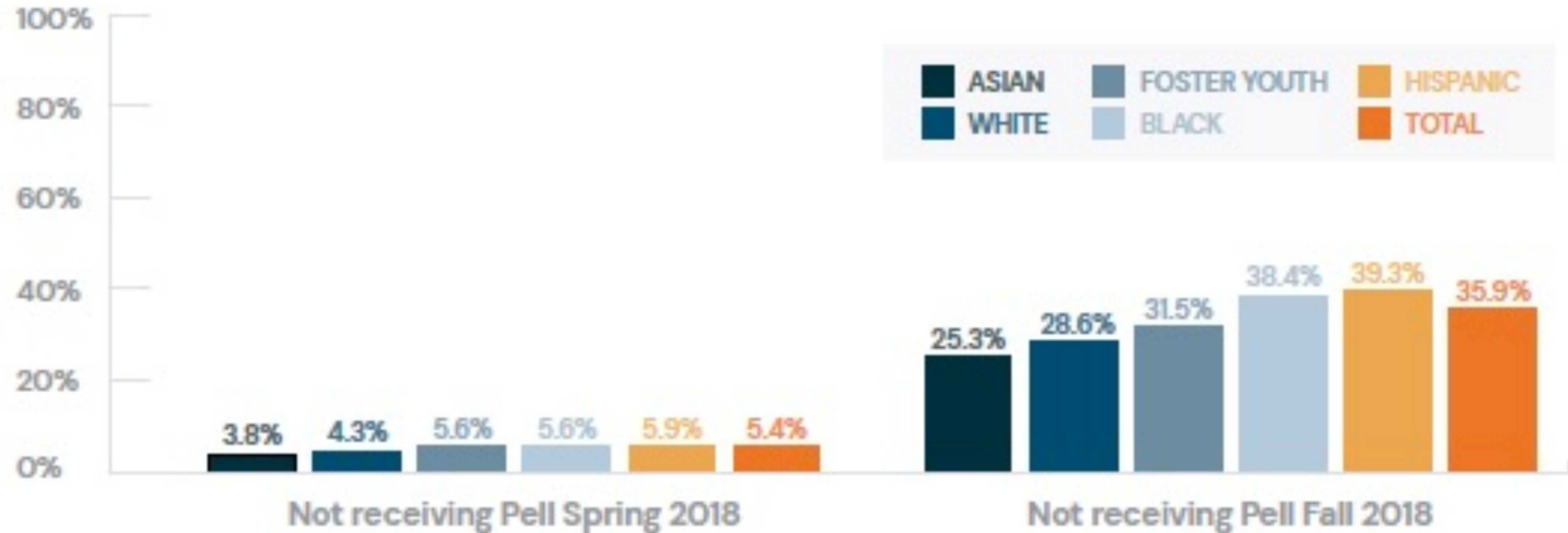
Percent of all students who are no longer enrolled after first year



Percent of students who fail to enroll for a third term



Pell Grant Loss During Second and Third Terms



Percent of students who maintain financial aid in their third term



Combined Impact Of SAP on Enrollment and Pell Grant Receipt

The percentage of students who did not make SAP during their first two consecutive terms and who had either disenrolled or lost their Pell Grant by their second year is **87 percent.**

GINA BROWNE

Dean, Educational
Services and Support

California Community
College Chancellor's
Office



STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Tisha Ortiz



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Addressing SAP at an Institutional-Level



- Individual institutions have flexibility to create student-centered and equity-based SAP policies while remaining in compliance with federal regulations.
- JBAY developed an **Institutional Audit Tool** that can be used to determine if current SAP policies introduce additional barriers to receiving financial aid
- While policies can be an effective tool to spur institutional change, attention must also be paid to **staffing, training, and resources.**

1. Ensure Ample Warning



- Institutions are required to evaluate SAP on an annual basis but can evaluate at the end of each academic term.
- Institutions should evaluate at the frequency that enables students to maintain aid for a full academic year.
- **Early alert systems** and warning periods are critical to ensuring students are informed that they are at risk of losing aid.

2. Implement an Escalating GPA Percentage

UNDERGRADUATE	CUMULATIVE UNITS COMPLETED	REQUIRED MINIMUM CUMULATIVE GPA
FRESHMAN	0-29 CUMULATIVE UNITS	1.5 GPA
SOPHOMORE	30-59 CUMULATIVE UNITS	1.8 GPA
JUNIOR / SENIOR	60+ CUMULATIVE UNITS	2.0 GPA

Note: If a student has a GPA lower than a 2.0 earlier in the program, they will have to attain a GPA higher than a 2.0 in later terms in order to achieve the required cumulative 2.0 by graduation.

3. Implement a Graduated Course Completion Percentage

UNDERGRADUATE	CUMULATIVE UNITS COMPLETED	REQUIRED CUMULATIVE COURSE COMPLETION % (PACE)
FRESHMAN	0-44 CUMULATIVE UNITS	30%
SOPHOMORE	35-89 CUMULATIVE UNITS	50%
JUNIOR / SENIOR	90+ CUMULATIVE UNITS	66%

Note: If a student has a course completion percentage lower than 67 percent earlier in the program, they will have to attain a percentage higher than 67 percent to achieve the required cumulative 67 percent pace of progression by graduation

4. Create Flexibility in the Evaluation of Certain Types of Credits



SUMMARY OF GRADES	
California	
SUBJECT	GRADE
COLLEGE PREPARATION	B+
COLLEGE ACCESS	D
COLLEGE COMPLETION	C
COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY	C
GRADE POINT AVERAGE	2.07
A = EXCELLENT B = GOOD C = AVERAGE D = POOR F = FAIL	

- Exclude remedial coursework from maximum time frame calculations
- Provide students who change majors the option of excluding coursework that does not count towards the new major from the SAP determination.
- When courses are repeated, only include the higher grade in the GPA calculation
- Exclude units from other institutions that do not count the student's educational program.
- Courses and grades earned at prior institutions that are not transferred to the new institution can be excluded from the maximum time frame calculation

5. Provide Intrusive Academic Coaching



- Deliberate **proactive response** to challenges
- Designate advisors to actively mitigate both academic and non-academic challenges before they result in the loss of financial aid.
- Shown to result in higher retention, academic performance, and financial aid receipt for at-risk student populations.
- Initiate coaching in **response to early warning signs**, after critical touch points or with at-risk populations.

6. Create Student-Friendly Appeals Processes and Policies



- Protocols should be **barrier-free** and **student-friendly**.
- Allow electronic, mail and in-person submission
- Do not discourage appeals by providing lists of reasons that will not be considered.
- **Offer assistance** to students to navigate process and collect documentation
- Process within **30 days** and offer a **secondary review**
- Ensure that students with a pending appeal are **not disenrolled** for nonpayment of tuition or fees.

7. Include a Broad Range of Extenuating Circumstances



- Ensures **equity** for students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Allows institutions additional time to provide services
- Do not exclude work conflicts or employment demands, incarceration, or challenges with transportation, living expenses, or childcare.

8. Create Opportunities for Students Who Have Disenrolled and Reentered To Immediately Regain Access To Financial Aid



- Do not require SAP compliance as a precondition to reinstatement of aid.
- Allow for reinstatement of financial aid during first term of reenrollment.
- Offer students with prior appeals who are on financial aid probation to disenroll and reenroll without submitting another appeal.

9. Do Not Impose Requirements Beyond Those Required by Federal Law



DO NOT

- Use both cumulative and individual term measures
- Impose appeal deadlines
- Impose limits on the number of appeals
- Disallow the use of financial aid for repeated courses
- Create strict limits on appeals circumstances

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

JOSH BURNS



CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT:



**BRITNEY SLATES
SIERRA COLLEGE**

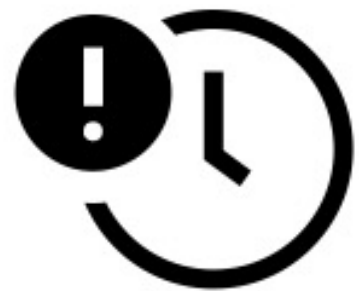
Student Barriers Identified



High numbers of students were failing SAP



High number of petitions to reinstate SAP which caused long wait times (sometimes up to 6 weeks) for petition review



Delays in financial aid awards and disbursements



Inability for students to purchase necessary books and supplies early in the semester

SAP Adjustments

Process analysis of our procedures and policies found that we were more strict than federal regulations or could reduce wait times for students.

1

We had one staff member reviewing all petitions.

Change: Trained all staff to review petitions and use our verification software for decreased processing time.

2

We would terminate a student after just one semester if they had zero completed units

Change: We aligned with federal regulation and now place these students on warning.

Equity Practices in office

Prioritizing most vulnerable students by hiring staff using Equity funds. One staff member dedicated to disparate impacted students in our RISE program and one staff member dedicated to former foster youth.

Further prioritizing most vulnerable students by training special programs techs in financial aid processes.

Hired Functional IT tech in financial aid office to programmatically improve processes.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Federal Policy – Dept of Education



- Extending waivers enacted due to COVID related to SAP.
- Providing guidance to institutions that describes the broad range of circumstances that can be the basis for appeals
- Requiring institutions receiving ARP and CARES funds to report on SAP disqualifications, including differences across student subgroups and the impact on student retention.

Federal Policy – Congress



- Expanding the period during which a student can retain financial aid while not making SAP.
- Allowing for reinstatement of financial aid after a period of disenrollment without precondition
- Modifying maximum time frame standards.
- Requiring institutions to proactively communicate with students about their SAP status.

State Policy



- Modify SAP standards for local financial aid programs that are not subject to federal standards.
- Offer more flexible standards for the Chafee Education and Training Voucher program for foster youth

State Policy



- Leverage state programs to require broadening of institutional SAP policies
- Ensure that financial aid offices and support services are adequately funded and predicate funding on the adoption of specific student-friendly policies and processes.

What's Next?

JBAY will be hosting a community of practice focused on evaluating and updating institutional SAP policies.

Look for a follow-up email with a link to apply.

Includes:

- Facilitated institutional policy audit
- One-on-one technical assistance
- Collaboration and learning with other institutions

Q&A

Please type your questions in the Q&A window or raise your hand to be unmuted.

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THANK YOU

Debbie Raucher
debbie@jbay.org

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