



Student retention is higher with parent engagement

Data from 9 universities and 12,374 students shows student retention is highly correlated with parent access to student data.

CASE STUDY

Executive Summary:

This exploratory study looks at 12,374 first-time, first-year students that enrolled at nine universities in the Fall of 2022 and returned for the following Fall 2023 term.

For the purpose of this study, "data access" refers to parents or family members having access to and in some cases receiving alerts about, student records, including new holds, bills, and unmet financial aid requirements, via CampusESP. All parents were required to initiate an electronic FERPA waiver within CampusESP. Once the students granted FERPA authorization, most parents received early alerts and easy visibility into student progress.

Across the board, results showed that students whose parent had data access in CampusESP had higher retention rates than average.

8.3%

On average, student retention was 8.3% higher for students of parents with data access in CampusESP.

Student retention is higher when parents receive updates on student progress

Across all nine institutions, the data showed that students with engaged parents experienced retention levels between 1.1% and 21.4% higher than average. The average gain was 8.3%. These results were observed across both public and private institutions, as well as schools ranging in size from 2,773 FTE to 38,927 FTE.

	<i>Prefers to remain anonymous</i> FTE ~25,000	Drexel University FTE 14,021	Duquesne University FTE 5,095	Kennesaw State University FTE 38,927	La Salle University FTE 2,773	Morgan State University FTE 7,609	Texas State University FTE 33,834	The University of Alabama at Birmingham FTE 13,032	University of West Georgia FTE 8,666
Institutional retention rate	93.1%	89.5%	86.5%	78.7%	71.0%	71.0%	77.0%	81.9%*	76.0%
Retention rate with parent engagement	95.3%	93.5%	89.3%	85.5%	84.0%	72.1%	98.4%	83.9%	97.2%
Retention gains	+2.2%	+4.0%	+2.8%	+6.8%	+13.0%	+1.1%	+21.4%	+2.0%	+21.2%

* Preliminary institutional rate

Retention gains from parent engagement are highest for Black and Hispanic students

Data collected by an anonymous large public institution and Duquesne University (Northeastern mid-size private) showed that retention gains were even higher for Black or African American students and Hispanic students than for White students when a parent was engaged.

In previous studies, data has indicated that Black families and Hispanic families are more engaged and involved with their student's college experience, which may account for the larger impact of families on student retention.



A private institution in Pittsburgh, PA with an FTE of 5,095

A public institution with an FTE of ~25,000 that prefers to remain anonymous

	Institutional retention rate	Retention rate with parent engagement	Retention gains	Institutional retention rate	Retention rate with parent engagement	Retention gains
White	86.8%	90.3%	+3.5%	93.8%	95.9%	+2.1%
Black or African-American	82.8%	87.5%	+4.7%	90.9%	97.2%	+6.3%
Hispanic	89.4%	95.2%	+5.8%	88.5%	95.5%	+7.0%

Parent engagement boosts retention for first-generation and Pell Grant eligible students

The data from an anonymous institution and Duquesne University indicated that first-generation and Pell Grant eligible students whose parents were notified about student progress and how to get involved experienced even larger retention gains than average.

Although the average retention gains for students at [anonymous] and Duquesne were 2.2% and 2.8% respectively, first-generation and Pell Grant eligible students achieved retention gains between 3.3% and 6.7% when their parents were engaged.



A private institution in Pittsburgh, PA with an FTE of 5,095

A public institution with an FTE of ~25,000 that prefers to remain anonymous

	Institutional retention rate	Retention rate with parent engagement	Retention gains		Institutional retention rate	Retention rate with parent engagement	Retention gains
All students	86.5%	89.3%	+2.8%		93.1%	95.3%	+2.2%
First-generation	86.1%	89.4%	+3.3%		86.1%	90.0%	+3.9%
Pell eligible	81.8%	88.5%	+6.7%		88.6%	92.2%	+3.6%

Methodology:

In order for parents to receive updates on student progress, they were required to create an account in a branded CampusESP Parent Portal, initiate an electronic FERPA waiver, and receive FERPA authorization from their student. Once the student granted FERPA permissions, parents then received access to data and in some cases email alerts about new holds, bills, financial aid requirements, grade assignments and more – depending on the data shared by the student and provided by the institution.

Student retention rates were calculated for students with parents receiving progress updates and compared to the institution's overall retention rate in order to determine the average retention gains. Data related to race, ethnicity, institutional retention rates, and parent engagement were provided by the nine institutions participating in this study.

About CampusESP

CampusESP is an all-in-one family engagement platform that helps institutions turn family involvement into student success. Modernizing FERPA processes with digital permission waivers, CampusESP provides easy visibility into student progress and nudges parents when it's time to step in and help their students succeed.

CampusESP helps more than 360 colleges and universities engage more than 9 million parents.

