



Helping Students Understand the Gap

Presenters

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In the beginning.....

- Students aren't necessarily thinking of where to find the funds
 - **Some mistakenly think higher ed is not attainable**
- First experiences with Financial Aid
 - **Ready PA High School Activities**
 - **HS & Post Secondary Financial Aid Nights**
 - **FAFSA Programs**
 - **College Fairs / Visits**
 - **..... if they attend**



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Decisions and Costs

Figure 2

Factors In Deciding a Specific College

Very Important Important



Cost is at the top of the decision process

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BASE: All Qualified Respondents (n=1011)

How important was/is each of the following to you when considering a college or university to attend?

Tools to help find the
resources, *let's review*



Students and families need help in
understanding costs and how to find affordable
options for '**The Gap**' early in the process

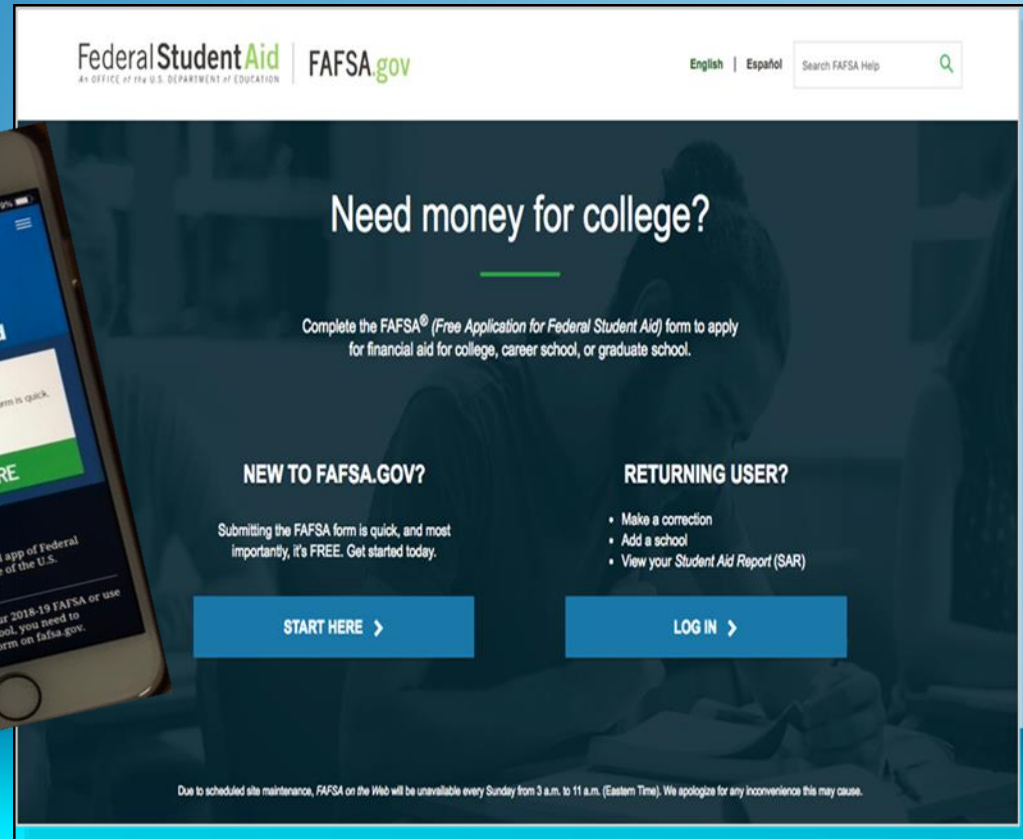
Gap Shock is avoided when you share more about
funding solutions



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1st Step: FAFSA

- Encourage **ALL** students to complete and understand FAFSA
- Federal Grants
- State Grants
- Scholarships
- Federal Loans
- Deadlines!
 - Do they know?



Scholarships!

How are you telling students to search or find them?

HS
Guidance
Offices

Communities

Your Institution

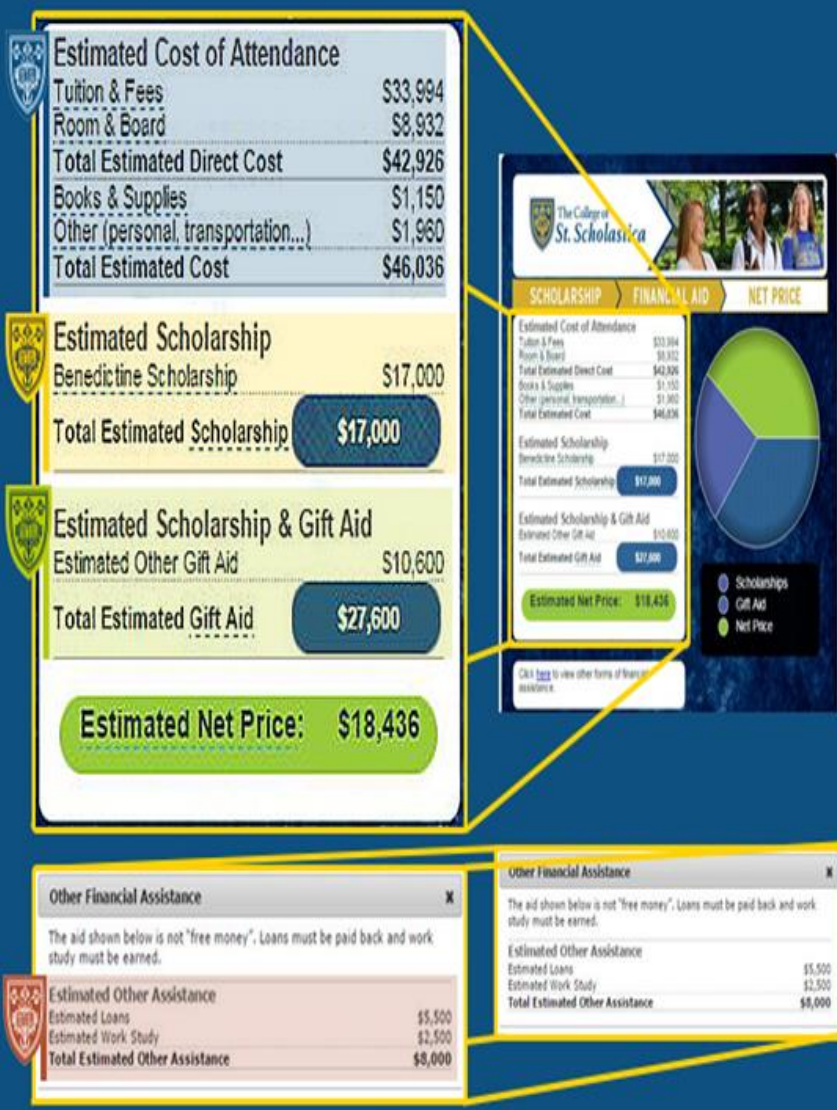
Google Topics

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Net Price Calculators

- Are they visible
- Are students alerted of how to use them
- Include this tool with Acceptance Letters
- Are Internal discounts built in
- Are solutions offered for your institutional costs



Estimated Cost of Attendance

Tuition & Fees	\$33,994
Room & Board	\$8,932
Total Estimated Direct Cost	\$42,926
Books & Supplies	\$1,150
Other (personal, transportation...)	\$1,960
Total Estimated Cost	\$46,036

Estimated Scholarship

Benedictine Scholarship	\$17,000
Total Estimated Scholarship	\$17,000

Estimated Scholarship & Gift Aid

Estimated Other Gift Aid	\$10,600
Total Estimated Gift Aid	\$27,600

Estimated Net Price: \$18,436

Other Financial Assistance

The aid shown below is not "free money". Loans must be paid back and work study must be earned.

Estimated Other Assistance	
Estimated Loans	\$5,500
Estimated Work Study	\$2,500
Total Estimated Other Assistance	\$8,000

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Net Price Breakdown:

- Scholarships
- Gift Aid
- Net Price

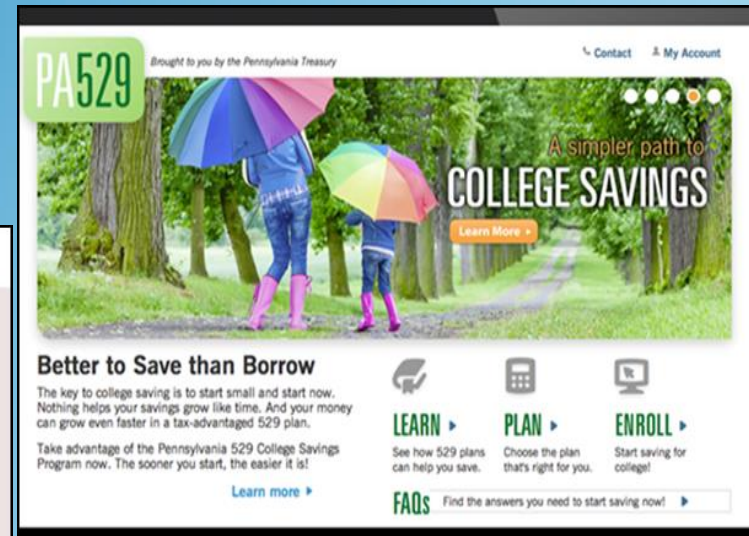
529 College Savings Plans

- It's never too late to save
- Opportunities to help subsequent year costs
- Are you offering this solution?

U-Promise savings add up



The screenshot shows the U-Promise website. The header includes the U-Promise logo, navigation links (Learn, Earn, Invest), a search bar, and links for Shop, Info, Log In, and Join. The main banner features a young boy with glasses and a bow tie, with the text 'Invest in College Savings Plans to make your money work harder'. Below this, there are links for 'U-Promise GoalSaver Account' and '529 college savings plans'. A 'Join for Free' section includes input fields for First name, Last name, and Email, and a 'Become a Member' button. The footer has three columns: 'Earn Cash Back for College from 850+ Online Partners', 'Hit Your College Savings Goals Faster', and 'Open a U-Promise GoalSaver Account'.



The screenshot shows the PA 529 website. The header includes the PA 529 logo, the text 'Brought to you by the Pennsylvania Treasury', and links for Contact and My Account. The main banner features a family walking on a path with umbrellas, with the text 'A simpler path to COLLEGE SAVINGS' and a 'Learn More' button. Below this, there is a section titled 'Better to Save than Borrow' with the text 'The key to college saving is to start small and start now. Nothing helps your savings grow like time. And your money can grow even faster in a tax-advantaged 529 plan.' This is followed by three columns: 'LEARN' (See how 529 plans can help you save), 'PLAN' (Choose the plan that's right for you), and 'ENROLL' (Start saving for college!). A 'FAQs' section is also present with the text 'Find the answers you need to start saving now!'.

Payment Plans

Payment Plan Benefits



Easy online enrollment



Flexible payment options



No interest

- Most schools have payment plan options
- Small balances covered
- Less debt
- Can they find it – how do they know?
- Not everyone can afford it

Participation in the Installment Payment Plan

Enrollment in the Installment Payment Plan should be completed immediately upon receipt of the University invoice. The current outstanding balance will be divided into three equal installments for the Summer Semester and five equal installments for the Fall and Spring Semesters, with the first payment due August 15th for the Fall semester. Access to the plan can be made via Wilkes' secure Web site located under the Student Services tab/My Account. . Students must enroll each semester

Participation in the Employer Tuition Deferment Plan

Deferred payments for employer reimbursement and third party payer arrangements will be permitted, provided the student has made application and received approval for this plan at least two weeks before the first day of the semester. Applications for Deferred Employer Tuition Deferment are available on the Wilkes Web site. Graduating seniors are not eligible for the deferred payment option.

Enrollment in a Third Party Sponsored Tuition Coverage Plan

If the student is expecting to receive financial support from ROTC, Veterans Rehabilitation, The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, or other third party sponsored tuition plan, which is not already listed on the invoice, deduct the approved amount from the "Calculated Total Due." Please indicate the source and the anticipated amount of coverage on a copy of the invoice when remitting payment for the adjusted balance.



Work Study

- How is it portrayed on your Award Letter?
- Most students think it's an 'award'
 - **Don't understand: Out of pocket expenses until earned**
- Increases Gap confusion if not explained!



Federal Loans

- Federal Loans
 - Helps meet the gaps when FAFSA is completed
 - Included on Award Letters
 - Undergraduates/Graduates are eligible
 - Parent options are available
 - Do your families understand that 'fees' are deducted
 - Causes small balances due

Usually balances still exist ...



Alternative Education Loans

- Helpful gap funding
- Can offer better or competitive rates
- Often have benefits to lower rates and fees
- **Lender Lists** – help your families find equitable solutions
 - **Increases comfort levels using trusted resources**
 - **Easy to use**
- Using Google – Creates more confusion



**Admissions
confusion**

**Enrollment
Fears**

**Student/Family
Communication**

**Unclear
Award
Letters**

Obstacles

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Ideas to use the TOOLS

- Be clear, concise, offer multiple solutions – address Gap upfront, not in the End. One size doesn't fit All.

1

Evaluate Aid communication / steps

2

Involve enrollment, admissions, faculty

3

Include all options available for balances

4

Upfront work reduces Back End tasks



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- First Campus cost exposure
 - **Is it causing or relieving family stress**
- Are overall /annual costs understandable
- Did you package PLUS loans
- Is work study noted as “earned” money
- Are you including comprehensive correspondence about how to cover balances
- Timelines for applying for Aid; Deadlines?



AWARD LETTERS

The Best Way to reduce Gap Confusion

College Financing Plan -Shopping Sheet

- New Format, Voluntary Use / DOE

STUDENT INFORMATION

Student name/identifier; date issued
(right side)

Individual student's cost of attendance

The sum of each grant sub-category appears here;
campus-based FSEOG and TEACH Grants would
appear here under "Grants from Your School"

NET COST AFTER GRANTS

Aid awarded by school but earned through work

School recommended Federal loan amounts;
state and institutional loans appear below
in the customized information box

Other funds that can be used to meet net costs
includes family contribution – FAFSA-calculated
or institutional methodology

Space for institution to send custom message

University of the United States (UUS)
Student Name, Identifier

MM/DD/YYYY

Download

Costs in the 2019-20 year

Estimated Cost of Attendance

Tuition and fees	\$ X,XXX
Housing and meals	X,XXX
Books and supplies	X,XXX
Transportation	X,XXX
Other education costs	X,XXX

\$X,XXX / yr

Grants and scholarships to pay for college

Total Grants and Scholarships (Not Aid; no repayment needed)

Grants and scholarships from your school	\$ X,XXX
Federal Pell Grant	X,XXX
Grants from your state	X,XXX
Other scholarships you can use	X,XXX

\$X,XXX / yr

What will you pay for college

Net Costs

(Cost of attendance minus total grants and scholarships)

\$X,XXX / yr

Options to pay net costs

Work options

Work-Study (Federal, state, or institutional) \$ X,XXX

Loan Options*

Federal Perkins Loan	\$ X,XXX
Federal Direct Subsidized Loan	X,XXX
Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan	X,XXX

*Recommended amounts shown here. You may be eligible for a different amount. Contact your financial aid office.

Other options

Family Contribution

(As calculated by the institution using information reported on the FAFSA or to your institution.)

\$X,XXX / yr

- Payment plan offered by the institution
- Parent or Graduate PLUS Loans
- American Opportunity Tax Credit*
- Military and/or National Service benefits
- Non-Federal private education loan

*Parents or students may qualify to receive up to \$2,500 by claiming the American Opportunity Tax Credit on their tax return during the following calendar year.

Customized information from UUS

INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE METRICS

(All data supplied by the Department)

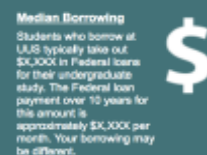
Student Right-to-Know graduation rate
compared to the rates of similar
institutions (Source: IPEDS)



Most recent repayment rate compared to
the national average (Source: NSLDS)



Median debt for undergraduate borrowers
entering repayment (Source: NSLDS)



Loan repayment calculator

Repaying your loans
To learn about loan repayment choices and work out your Federal Loan monthly payment, go to:
<http://studentaid.ed.gov/repay-loans/understandloans>

School contact details for more information
and next steps

For more information and next steps:
University of the United States (UUS)
Financial Aid Office
123 Main Street
Anytown, ST 12345
Telephone: (123) 456-7890
E-mail: financialaid@uus.edu

Questions? ShoppingSheet@ed.gov



Communication

- Start early to address balances
- Each stage of enrollment can discuss costs.
 - **Deposited:** look for scholarships and grants; timelines
 - **Orientation:** introduce all funding options, where to find them
 - **Bills:** Provide ways to cover costs and deadlines



Financial Aid

- > Apply for Aid ▼
- > Scholarships & Grants ▼
- > Loans & Financing Options ▼
- > Student Employment ▼
- > Veterans Information
- > Forms
- > Publications
- > Costs
- > Private Outside Awards
- > Helpful Resources
- > Tuition Exchange
- > Contact Us and Staff
- > Bursar's Office
- > View My Status/Third Party Access

- Educate Admissions on financing options for upfront conversations
- Increase options for Financial Aid discussions
 - Admit Day; Orientation; Information Tables; Move In Day; anytime on campus
- Do Faculty and Dept. Chairs understand Financial Aid and Options?
- Encourage Campus Departments to be positive, and realistic, in affordability discussions to avoid empty promises



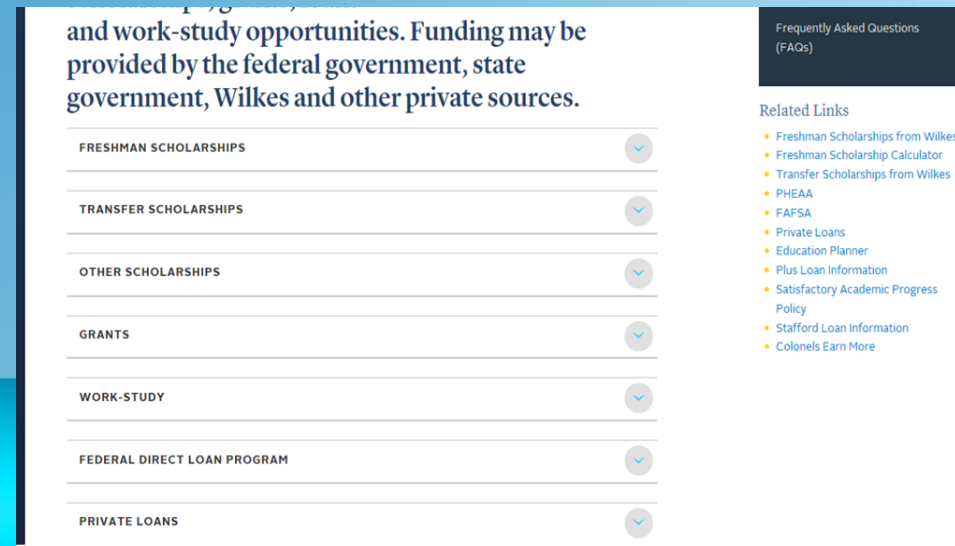
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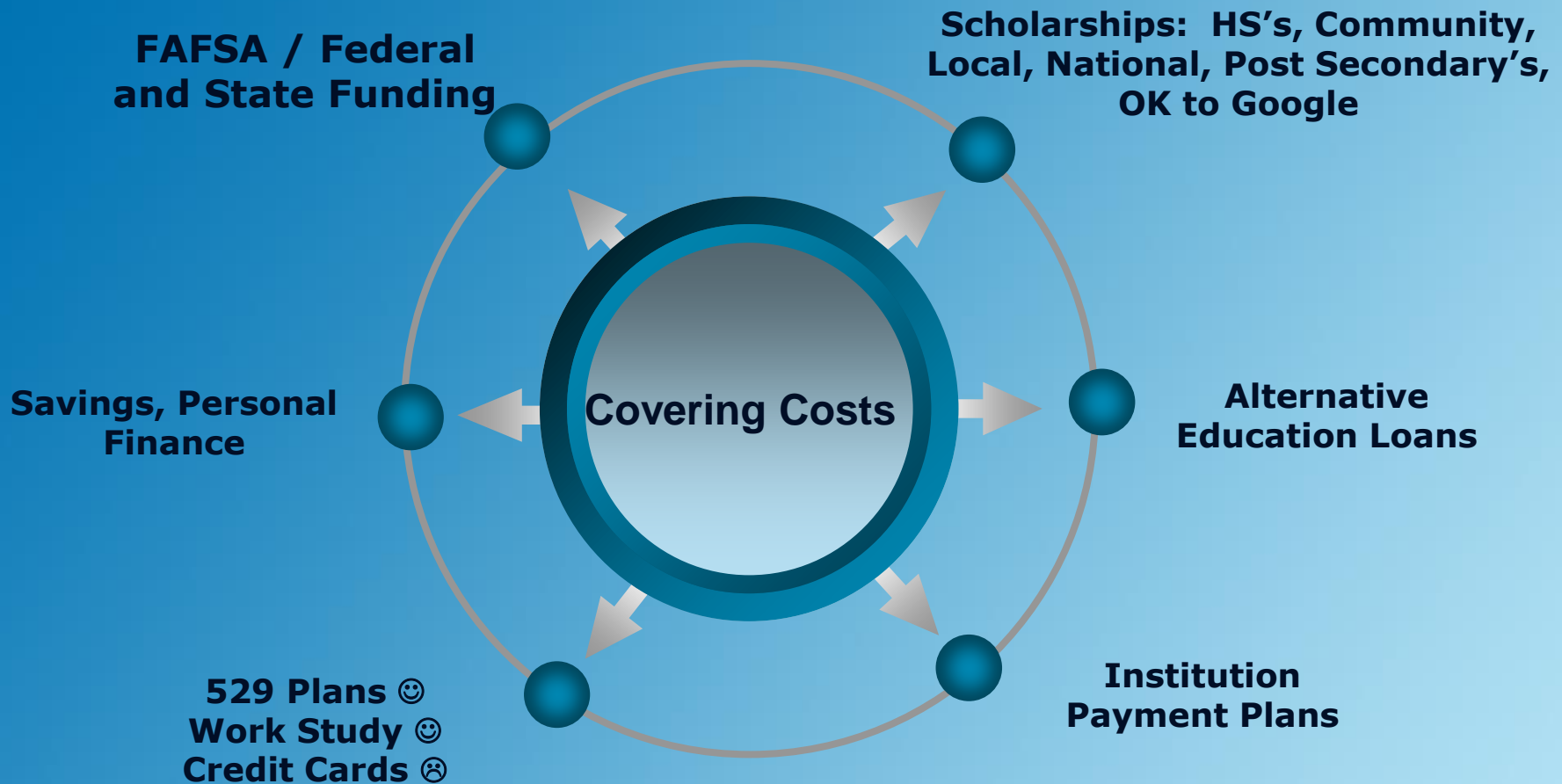
Involve other Campus Departments



Options available for balances

- Families want guidance from a trusted source
 - **Are they aware of appeals for circumstances?**
- Include comprehensive information to avoid doubts and where to find it
 - **Handouts**
 - **Websites**
 - **Discussions**
 - **Tours**
 - **Newsletters**





Mix and Match – families don't always remember they can choose combinations to cover balances



- Allow parents and students to find funding solutions in one place
 - **No jumping from site to site for topics**
 - **Links on your websites to the solutions**
 - FAFSA; Scholarships; Loans; Payment Plans....
 - **Offer Financial Literacy programs**
 - Net Price Calculators – found in one click or three
 - Campus clubs; NSLDS info; RA Assignments
- KISS – Keep it Simple Silly
 - **Help Headline Readers; Avoid Frustration; clear Award Letters**
- Help Families be comfortable with their choices
 - Families need direction to avoid the unknown
 - n



Comprehensive Suggestions

4

More vs Less

Doing More:

- More receivables
- Less calls (hopefully)
- Less withdrawals
- Less Tracking
- Less financial changes
- Increases Retention
- Creates a Can Do attitude
- Creates better customer service
- Track trends to address the need
- Better Financial Literacy

Doing Less:

- Enrollment Fear
- Affordability Confusion
- Students don't research
- Families using random sources, affecting defaults
- Admission promises
- Award Letter confusion
- More account adjustments
- More balances due
- Collection Fees
- Families choosing a school that offers more help

**Upfront Work, Reduces
Back End Tasks**



Your comments and info

- How do you avoid Gap Shock on campus
- Best practices
- Issues / Concerns
- What's working, not working





THANK YOU !

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