



experience: **LIAISON** 

SEATTLE | FEBRUARY 15-16, 2023

A panoramic view of the Seattle skyline at dusk, featuring the Space Needle, various skyscrapers, and Mount Rainier in the background. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient.

GEORGE HADDAD

CEO & Founder

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Strategic Enrollment Leadership: Identifying Challenges, Involving Stakeholders, Implementing Solutions A Conversation



Bill Conley and Bob Massa, Principals
Enrollment Intelligence NOW

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Speakers



Bill Conley



Bob Massa

Principals & Co-Founders



Identifying Challenges

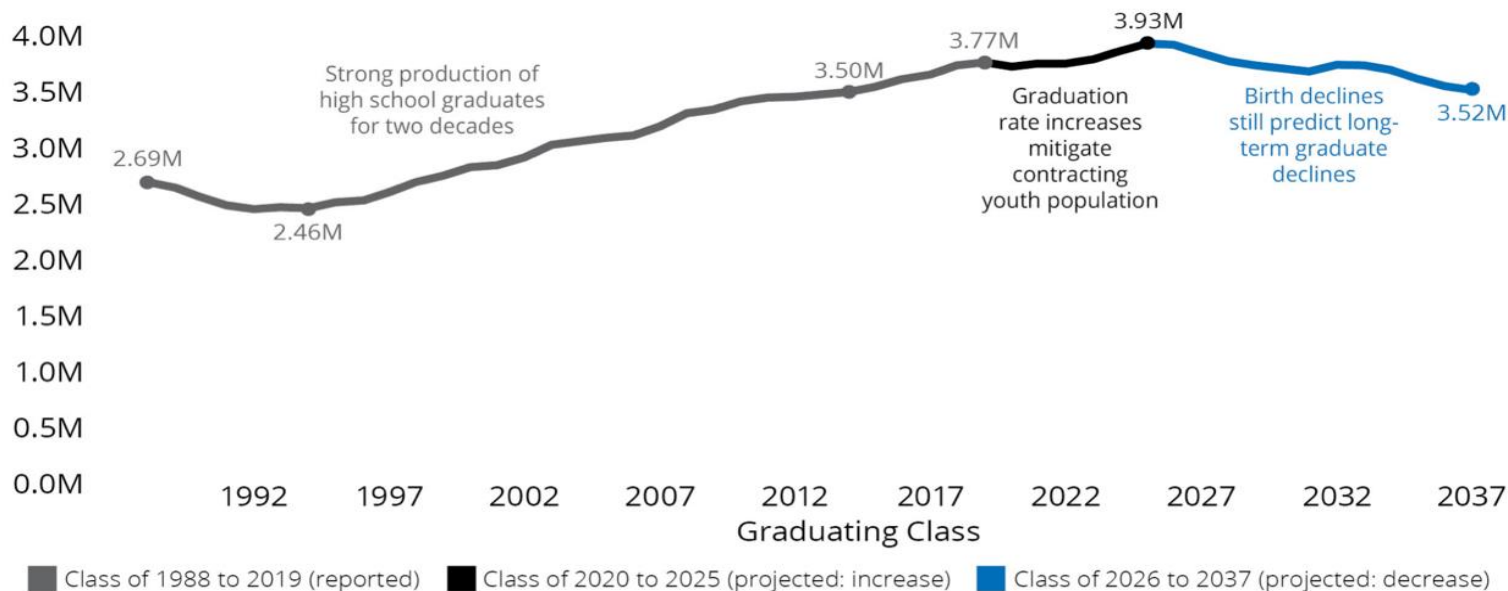


- Demographics
 - High school graduation numbers projected to decline through 2037 and National Student Clearinghouse Research Center's tally on enrollment for the spring of 2022 reveals a persistent trend: college attendance continues to decline.
- Price
 - Between 1991-92 and 2021-22, "average tuition prices more than doubled, increasing to \$10,740 from \$4,160 at public four-year colleges, and to \$38,070 from \$19,360 at private institutions, after adjusting for inflation, according to the College Board. (CNBC, May 2022)
- Value Skepticism
 - The enrollment decline "comes as a growing number of high schoolers and their families begin considering alternatives to higher education – both as a result of tuition expenses and a growing body of data highlighting earnings potential through alternative avenues." (US News & World Report, May 2022)

Identifying Challenges: Demographics

High School Graduation Trends 2020-2037

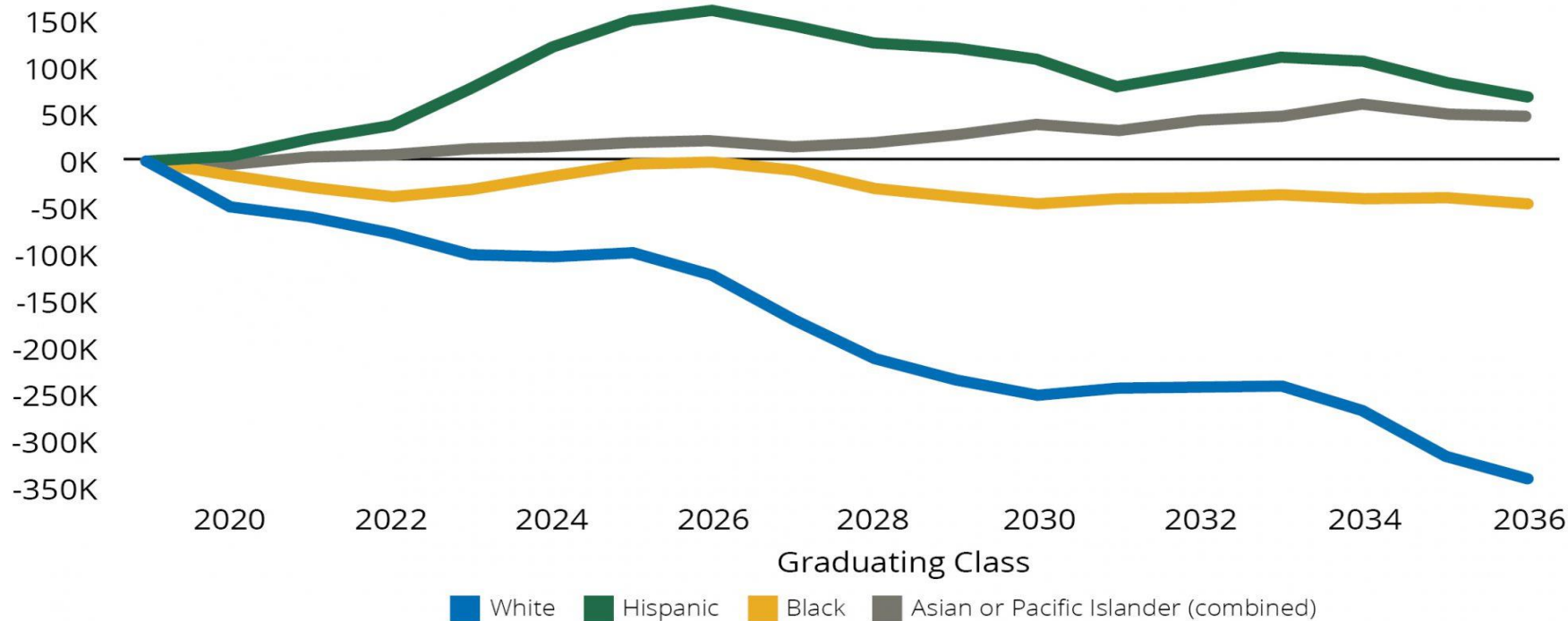
Figure 1. Slowing Growth in Number of U.S. High School Graduates, then Decline (U.S. Total High School Graduates)



Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, *Knocking at the College Door*, 10th edition, 2020. See [Technical Appendix](#) for detailed sources of data through the Class of 2019; WICHE projections, Class of 2020 through 2037. ([View states or regions](#))

Identifying Challenges: Demographics

High School Graduation Trends 2020-2037 by Race

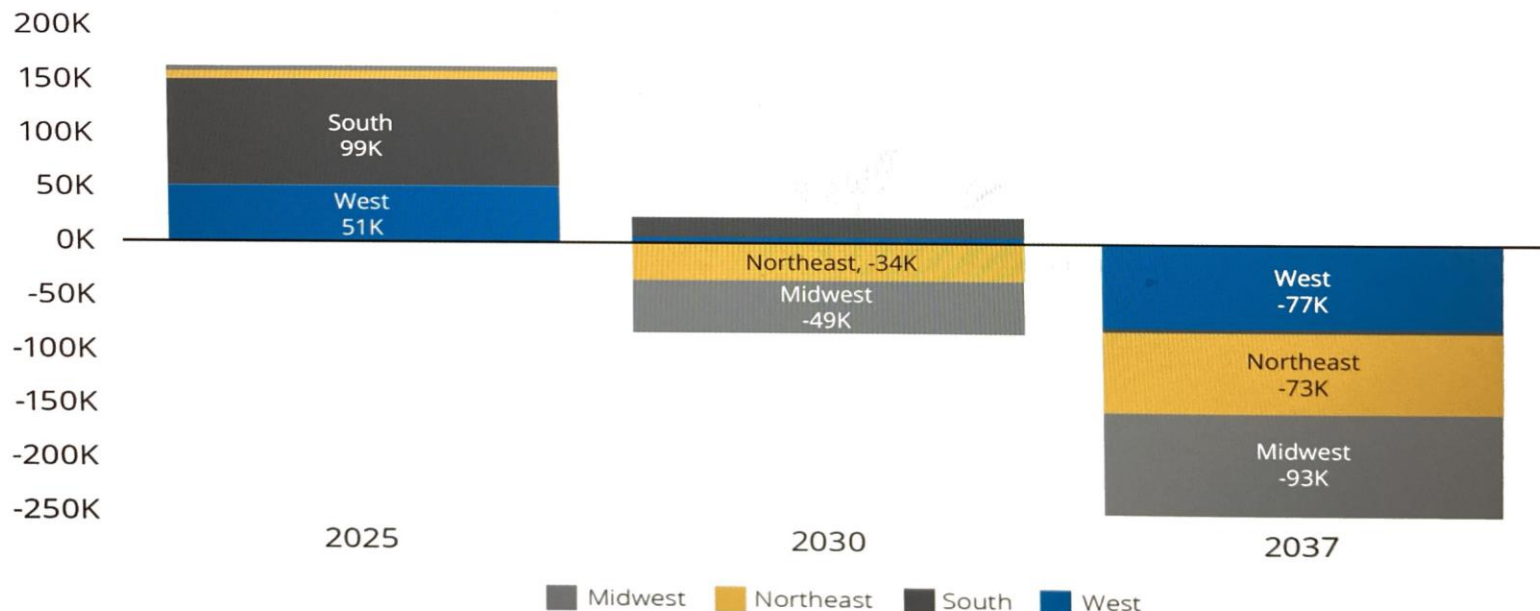


Identifying Challenges: Demographics

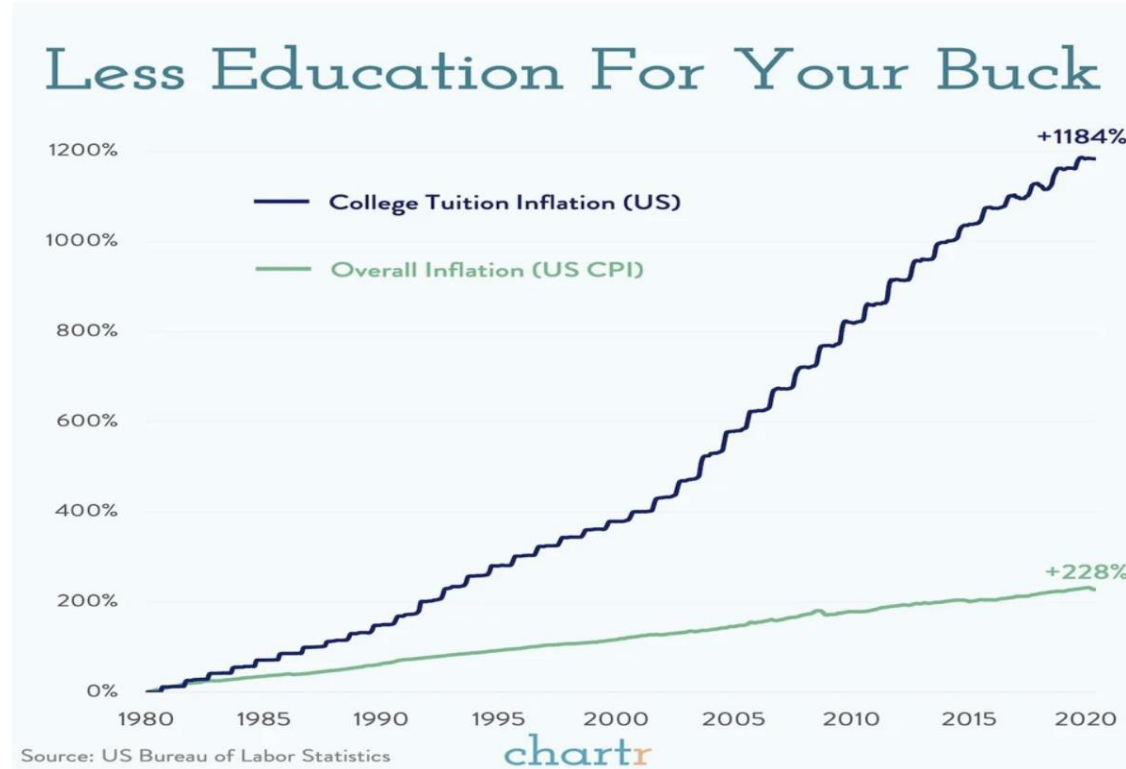
High School Graduation Trends 2020-2037: By Region

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Regional Contribution to National Increase or Decrease vs. 2019



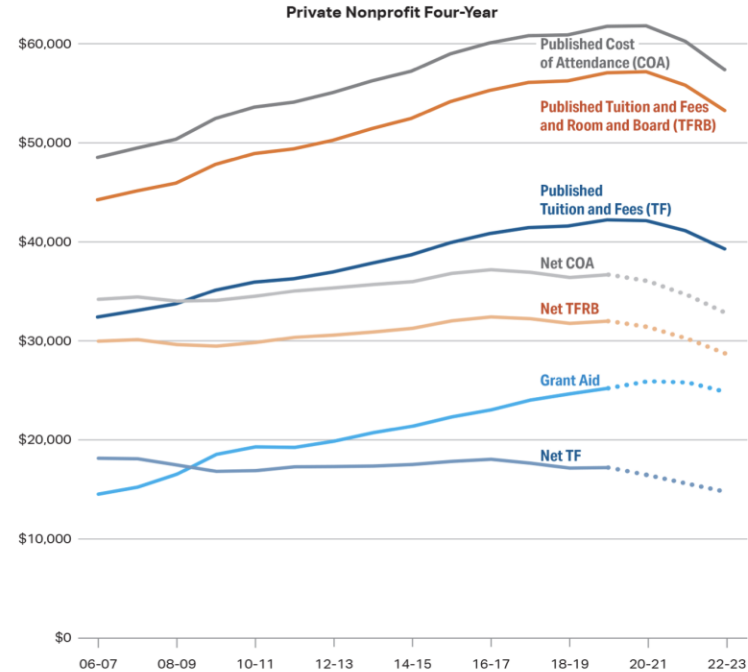
Identifying Challenges: Price



Identifying Challenges: Price

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Average Published and Net Prices in 2022 Dollars, First-Time Full-Time Undergraduate Students at Private Nonprofit Four-Year Institutions, 2006-07 to 2022-23



Identifying Challenges: Value



- **2022: Do you think higher education is fine as it is?**
 - Only 36% of respondents said “Yes”

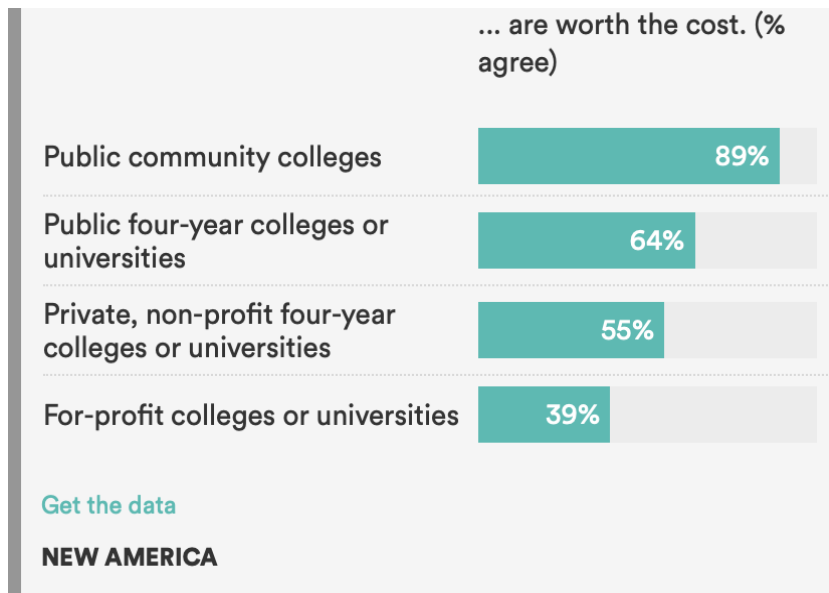
Source: Pew Research Center
- **Percent of Americans who said colleges have a positive influence on how things are going in this country?**
 - 2020: 69%
 - 2021: 58%
 - 2022: 55%

Source: New America (July 2022 survey) as Reported by the Chronicle of Higher Education

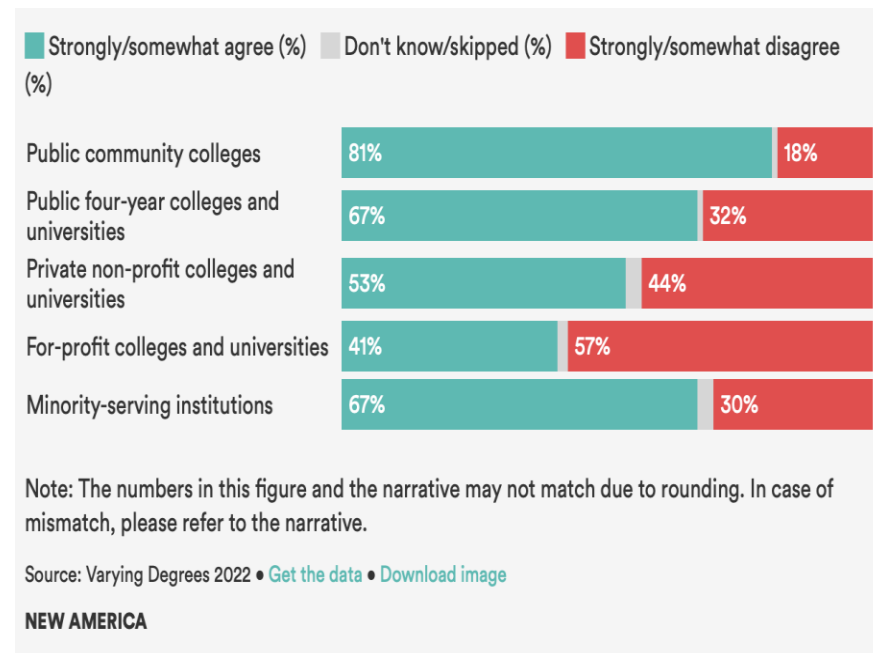
Identifying Challenges: Value



2020: are these colleges worth the cost?



2022: these colleges are worth the cost



Involving Stakeholders: Enrollment Leader as Expert



THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION



Involving Stakeholders



Who are they? — President, Key Administrative Peers (CIO, CFO, CMO), Trustees, University/Governance, faculty, staff, alumni, students, parents, state legislators

What do they need? — Information; contextual understanding; how they can help

What must we do? — Be the expert, but LISTEN with respect; involve key stakeholders in planning; tolerate more uncertainty - lead with innovation and model “informed risk taking;” be visible and available; manage up, down, and across the organization

Involving Stakeholders



Enrollment leaders must:

- Establish themselves as the experts on student recruitment and retention
- Be effective communicators
- Understand the political climate on and off campus
- Collaborate with other senior officers and directors and staff in the Enrollment unit
- Lead across differences – stakeholders will have different views
- Become skillful in diplomacy to manage those differences among stakeholders
- Develop expertise in crisis management
- Be strong advocates for the value of a college education
- Have the ability to work fast to address challenges, particularly after careful deliberations

Implementing Solutions



The Enrollment Leader: Strategic Visionary and Adept Tactician

Questions:

- Can existing resources, redeployed, address the problem?
- Does the problem portend longer-term challenges that require reengineering of priorities?
- How do you weigh investment in new technologies?
- In short, have you created an organization nimble enough to identify and implement solutions in a timely fashion?

Implementing Solutions



Low-Hanging Fruit

- Review all vendor commitments. What is working, what isn't? Why?
- Assess current job descriptions. Are the right people in the right positions Can you redeploy open positions to address new needs?
- Develop strategic partnerships with CFO, CIO, and CMO

Implementing Solutions



Higher-Level Imperatives

- Have frequent strategy meetings with your staff to involve them in developing solutions
- Develop in-house expertise
- Set clear, attainable and measurable goals
- Empower your staff and provide the resources they need to reach those goals
- Teach staff to assess their progress toward the goal by evaluating the success of individual tactics
- Give frequent feedback – positive and “helpfully critical”
- Manage your own energy – you can’t do everything at once

Conversation with participants



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Five Take-Aways



1. Level-set your institution's demographic profile. How vulnerable are you to your region's demographic trends?
2. Know your true competitor set. Can you compete on price and/or value?
3. Be sure your enrollment/admissions team is always on the same page.
4. Keep the cabinet and/or trustees informed, not just when something happens, but before it might happen.
5. Consume data and narratives that help you “skate to where the puck will be.”

Resources



- Dashboards: Interactive state, regional charts and tables.
<https://knocking.wiche.edu/dashboards/>
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
<https://nces.ed.gov/>
- Nathan Grawe:
 - Demographics and the Demand for Higher Education (Johns Hopkins Press, 2018)
 - The Agile College (Johns Hopkins Press, 2021)

Thank You



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