Mission-driven and data-informed.

Now more than ever, enrollment management leaders are being asked to deliver on multiple fronts. Responsibilities include—but are not limited to—meeting enrollment and tuition revenue targets; advancing strategic initiatives; adapting ever-evolving DEI and pandemic challenges; and remaining the authentic and yet well-polished window into the school for prospective families. There is more pressure to deliver insights as well as results. Using a mission-driven, data-informed lens can help enrollment leaders navigate these challenging times.

EMA, in partnership with Mission & Data, is providing its members a resource to help inform conversations and strategic decisions with your board and leadership team, and within your enrollment management office. Insights will be drawn from ongoing flash surveys and EMA data about the arc of the 2022-2023 admission cycle.

Our goal is to make accessing the data you need quick and easy. Ready-to-use slides and an interactive dashboard (which enables you to filter the data relevant to your school) are available in the EMA Member Community. Start using this data now to help your school move to insight and action.

34% of schools report having a formal retention committee and 61% of schools have specific retention plans for key student groups.

80% of schools are planning to offer virtual interviews beyond the current admission cycle.

INSIGHT

Although only 34% of schools are using formal retention committees, this figure reverses the decline from 30% to 25% in the 2016 and 2019 EMA State of the Industry Reports.

ACTION

Whether you’re meeting enrollment targets and exceeding your revenue goal, or you still have work to do, a focus on retention will pay dividends. Your retention committee should include your DEI team as well as school life office and academics. Get proactive with your efforts by carving out time for your teachers to reach out to families at your next faculty meeting!

*Source: EMA’s 2020 Ride to Independent Schools Report, based on a survey of nearly 3,000 families, revealed that 65% of families reported they were willing to change schools before their child graduated.
Although industry-wide data is a useful starting place, context matters and tools like interactive dashboards allow for deeper analysis. It is scary for most professionals to admit they don’t understand the data in front of them. Build in pockets of time to work with key stakeholders to improve data literacy. Commit 15–20 minutes of a staff meeting each month to walk through the newest EMA resource highlighting a particularly useful graph or dashboard section. Show the group how segmentation can provide deeper insight. The same can be done at a leadership team or board meeting with the goal of normalizing asking questions and sensemaking.

A LOOK BACK...
Only 69% of rural schools reported either meeting or exceeding their 2021–2022 budgeted net tuition revenue, compared to 83% of schools overall.

INSIGHT
Although industry-wide data is a useful starting place, context matters and tools like interactive dashboards allow for deeper analysis.

ACTION
It is scary for most professionals to admit they don’t understand the data in front of them. Build in pockets of time to work with key stakeholders to improve data literacy. Commit 15–20 minutes of a staff meeting each month to walk through the newest EMA resource highlighting a particularly useful graph or dashboard section. Show the group how segmentation can provide deeper insight. The same can be done at a leadership team or board meeting with the goal of normalizing asking questions and sensemaking.

A LOOK FORWARD...
56% of schools report planning to increase enrollment for 2022–2023 while 41% are seeking to maintain enrollment and 3% are intentionally decreasing enrollment.

INSIGHT
More is not always better. Schools have size bands where they enroll mission-aligned applicants, best serve students, and optimize the efficiency of institutional resources.

ACTION
Leadership teams and boards of trustees should work in partnership to determine what is optimal enrollment for a specific school at a particular point in time. Just because a figure is a historic enrollment target doesn’t necessarily make it the right goal for the future. Especially in the context of volatile enrollment during the COVID-19 pandemic, now is a good time to evaluate your school’s targets for enrollment and key performance indicators (KPIs) like net tuition revenue and discount rate by division. Schools should be mindful of the interconnected nature of KPIs in the enrollment process.

Move Data to Insights + Action...
HELP US HELP YOU
In order for our data to be useful, we need you to participate. The EMA Flash Surveys are designed to be brief and easy to complete. Your responses are crucial to providing valuable resources back to all our members. Watch the Member Minute video (Surveys in the Member Community) to learn more: learn.enrollment.org/member-minute

CONTEXT MATTERS
Use dashboards to dig deeper into the data most relevant to your school.

USE THE RESOURCES
Leverage ready-to-use presentation slides with your board and leadership team, and within your enrollment management office. We’ve made it easy to pair them with school-specific data and reports!

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USING A MISSION-DRIVEN, DATA-INFORMED LENS CAN HELP ENROLLMENT LEADERS NAVIGATE THESE CHALLENGING TIMES.

To learn more, visit our Member Community: community.enrollment.org