Education Expectations:
Views on the Value of College and Likelihood to Enroll

June 15, 2022
Enrollment Continues to Decline
College enrollment has fallen by more than 1 million students

Enrollment (millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spring 2020</th>
<th>Spring 2021</th>
<th>Spring 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public two-year</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private nonprofit four-year</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private for-profit four-year</td>
<td>7.55</td>
<td>7.51</td>
<td>7.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public four-year</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Student Clearinghouse, “Spring 2022 Current Term Enrollment Estimates.”
FAFSA filings and renewals are down—especially for Pell-eligible students

FAFSA filings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of 2022, low-income high schools</th>
<th>Class of 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All fillings</td>
<td>-8.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All renewals</td>
<td>-12.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewals for Pell-eligible applicants</td>
<td>-15.60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year-Over-Year Percent Change in 2022-2023 FAFSA Completions through March 31, by Applicant Type
National College Attainment Network
Expectations and Value Perceptions Predict Enrollment
Self-reported likelihood to enroll has rebounded

Likely To Enroll in the Next Five Years

Source: Strada Education Survey 2019-2021. Base: Adults ages 18 to 65 with an associate degree or less and not currently enrolled. Likely to enroll within five years, n=varies from 1,054 to 4,005.
Younger people, Black respondents, and those with some college, no degree were most likely to report they will enroll in education as of fall 2021.

- All respondents: 44%
- Some college: 56%
- Black respondents: 59%
- Age 18-34: 69%

Source: Strada Education Survey 2021. Base: Adults ages 18 to 65 with an associate degree or less and not currently enrolled, n=3,074.
About 1 in 6 who said they were likely to enroll through prior surveys (2016-2020) had enrolled by 2021

Those who said they were likely to enroll

- Enrolled: 84%
- Did not enroll: 16%

Those who said they were not likely to enroll

- Enrolled: 95%
- Did not enroll: 5%

Source: Strada Recontact Survey. Base: Adults ages 18 to 65 with an associate degree or less and not currently enrolled at the time of the first survey, n=2,456.
The perceived benefits of additional education are declining

Source: Strada Education Survey 2020-2021. Base: Adults ages 18 to 65 with an associate degree or less and not currently enrolled. Likely to enroll within 5 years, n=varies from 1,054 to 4,005.
Expectations about the benefits of education influence enrollment

Source: Strada Recontact Survey. Base: Adults ages 18 to 65 with an associate degree or less and not currently enrolled at the time of the first survey, survey years 2019-2021, n=580 for likely to enroll question and n=289 for worth-the-cost question.
Affordability, Flexibility, and Connections to Career Can Boost Enrollment and Improve Outcomes
Perceived challenges to getting more education

- Cost: 57%
- Life Balance: 50%
- Stress & Anxiety: 40%
- Fear of Failure: 39%
- Uncertain Job Market: 32%
- Uncertain Educational Path: 26%

Source: Fall 2021 Strada Education Survey, adults ages 18 to 65 with an associate degree or less, n=3,159.
Factors most likely to increase the probability of enrollment

Percent who said the factor would make them 'extremely' or 'very' likely to enroll

- Flexible Schedule: 56%
- Credit for Prior Learning: 54%
- Financial Aid: 51%
- Work-Based Learning: 41%
- Confidence in Career Advancement: 40%

Source: Strada Recontact Survey Spring 2022. Base: Adults ages 18-65 with an associate degree or less and not currently enrolled, n=1,387.
When students have the support to connect their education to a career, they are more likely to say their education will be worth the cost.

Source: Strada Outcomes Survey Spring 2021
Strada Outcomes Survey Spring 2021, n=3,309. Estimated using logistic regression models with the following independent variables: academics, community, career connection, race, gender, first-generation status, graduation year, student loans.
Work-based learning is associated with higher income, career satisfaction, and value perceptions

Bachelor’s degree recipients

**Annual personal income**

+$13,859

**Career Satisfaction**

+7 percentage points

**Education was worth the cost**

+11 percentage points

**Education helped me to achieve my goals**

+7 percentage points

Source: Strada-Gallup Education Survey (September-November 2021). Base: bachelor’s degree completers, n=1,941. Alumni matched on race/ethnicity, gender, age, and field of study. For analysis of income differences, cost of living by state of residence was also included.
Key Findings

1. Over the past two years, confidence in the value of education has been declining.

2. Young people, Black respondents, and those who have attended some college but have not completed a bachelor’s or associate degree are most likely to say they will enroll within the next five years.

3. Expectations about future enrollment and perceptions about the value of education both predict students’ actual enrollment behavior.

4. Potential students identify functional factors — flexible scheduling, credit for prior learning, financial aid — as the most likely means to increase the probability they would enroll in additional education and training.

5. Connections between education and career — supports that help students bridge the two as well as direct work-based learning experiences — are significantly linked to student and alumni confidence in the value of their education and their post-graduation outcomes.
Learn more at
stradaeducation.org/research
Data Sources

Strada-Gallup Education Survey (2020-2021)
• Nationally representative survey of adults ages 18 to 65, n=23,047.

Strada-Gallup Recontact Survey (Spring 2022)
• Recontact survey for respondents to Strada Education Survey ages 18 to 65, n=4,502.

Strada Outcomes Survey (Spring 2021)
• Nationally representative survey of bachelor’s degree recipients, n=3,309.

Strada-College Pulse Survey (September 2020)
• Nationally representative survey of current college students at four-year institutions, n=3,837.