

“Engaging Parents in the College Choice Process”

Effective Parent Communication Strategies
IACAC Conference 2014 – Session B12

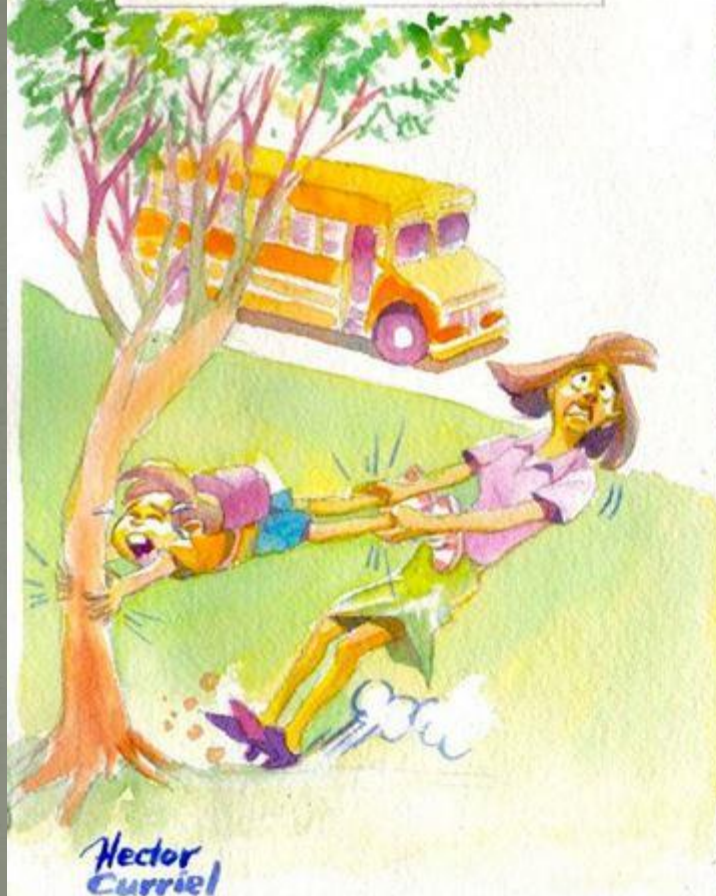
"DO YOU THINK COLLEGE HAS A "STUDENT OF THE MONTH" AWARD?"



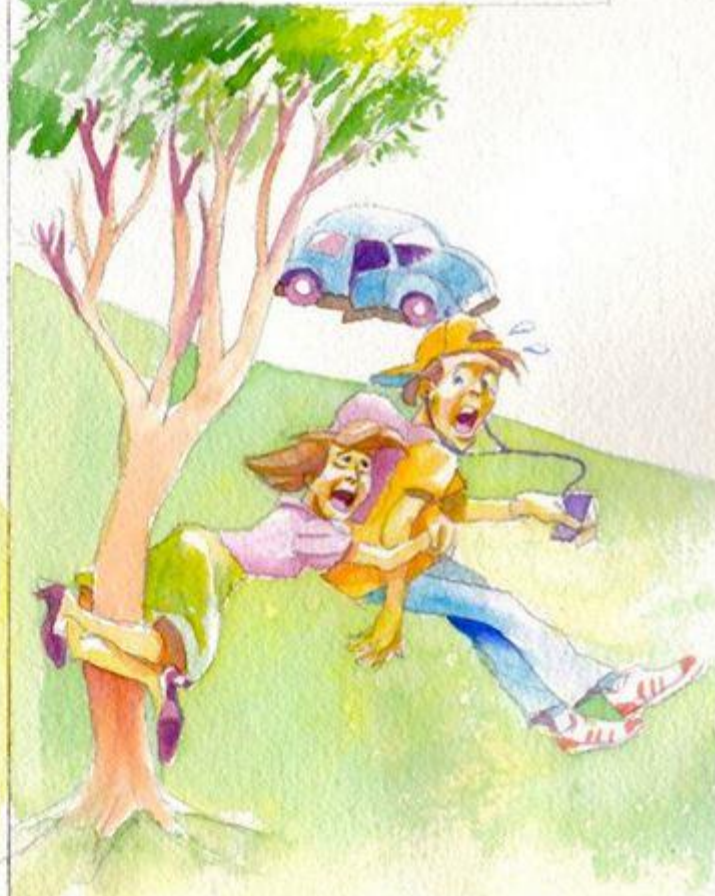
 College Parents
of America

Join us @CPof America or CollegeParents.org

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL



FIRST DAY OF COLLEGE



Join us for more insights, tips & humor on college life at www.CollegeParents.org

HELICOPTER PARENT

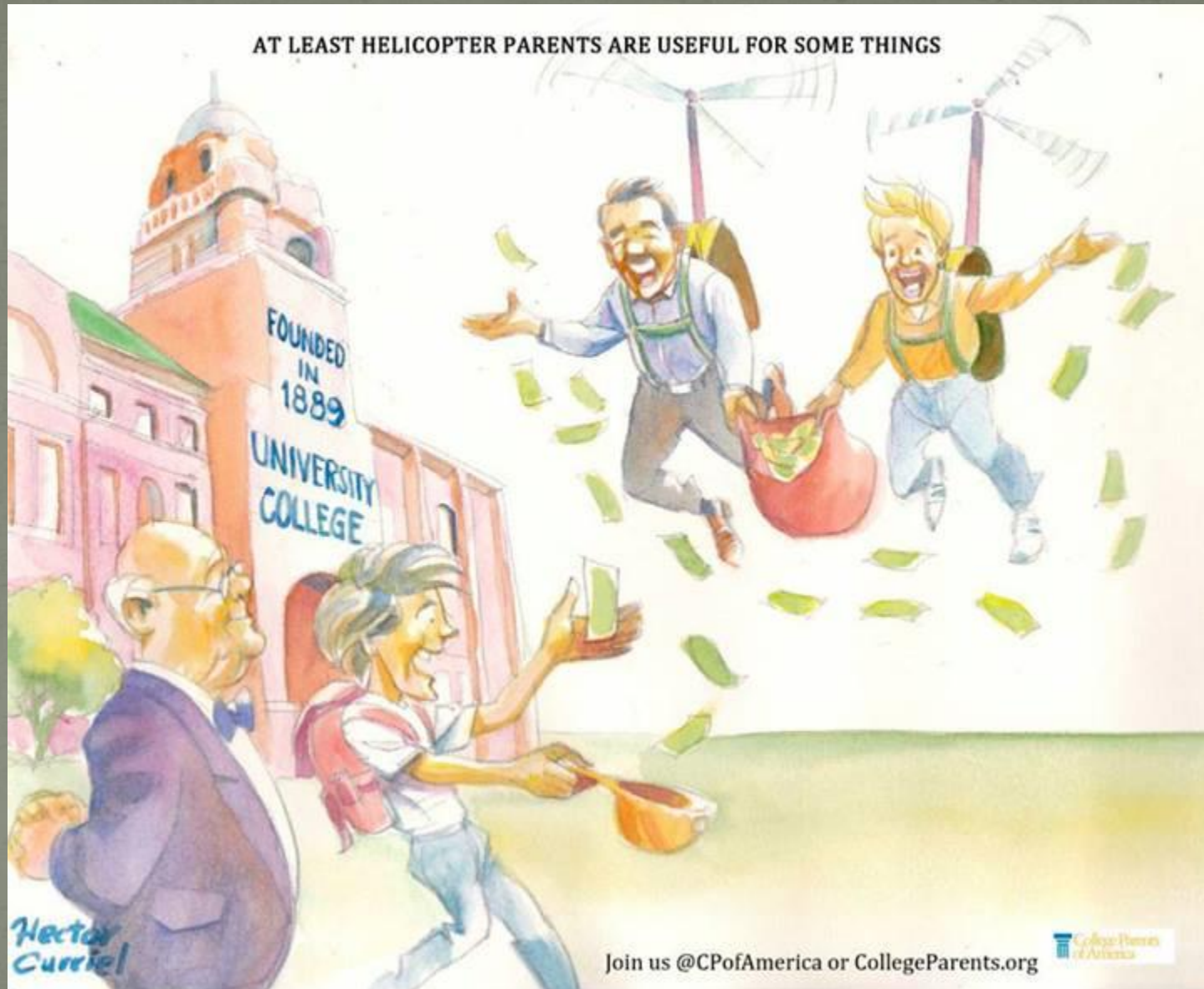
is a term for a person who pays extremely close attention

to his or her child or children, particularly at educational institutions. They are so named because, like a helicopter, they hover closely, rarely out of reach — whether their children need them or not.



Helicopter Parents

AT LEAST HELICOPTER PARENTS ARE USEFUL FOR SOME THINGS



Join us @CPofAmerica or CollegeParents.org

College Parents
of America



Synopsis of Research

- Many educational partners and consultants are researching parent communication and are building tools to assist colleges in utilizing parent communications in the recruitment efforts.
- The following is a synopsis of the research conducted by these organizations.



Synopsis of Research

- Parents play a major role in influencing the colleges and universities that their students have in their choice set.
 - Universe of colleges
 - Consideration set
 - Choice set
 - Selection
- They have a reduced role in making the final decision as to the exact school that their student attends.

Synopsis of Research

- Parent involvement is reported more important earlier on in the recruitment process.
- This produces inherent problems in identifying them and building communication channels as they are most likely to provide their email addresses during the application phase.

Synopsis of Research

- As students academic ability goes up, so does parental involvement in the college search.
- As parents level of education decreases, their focus on value and job outcomes rises.
- As parents income decreases, their focus on job outcomes rises and their knowledge of financing college costs decrease.

Synopsis of Research

- Students and parents report that they are most engaged in the search process together in the South, Midwest, and Northeast, while they indicate the least collaboration in the West.
- Parents are significantly more involved when English is the only language spoken in the household.
 - How can we further engage parents in bilingual households?

Parent and Student Collaboration

Families are doing the research **together** and making a decision **together** (reported twice as often as students who search individually)...

HOWEVER

...parents and students are looking for different things.

Parent and Student Collaboration

- In general, it was found that PARENTS sought the following:
 - **Detailed** information on majors
 - Financial Aid
 - Student Life – Housing & Safety
 - Deadline updates

Benchmarking Expectations

- Parents and students agreed that they often dropped schools from their choice sets if they couldn't find the information on their website.
 - Does your site cover the information that parents and students are looking for?
 - Is it easily accessible? Is it available in a mobile format?
 - Do you have a recruitment page or site dedicated to parents?

Benchmarking Expectations

- Parents slightly prefer postal mail (specifically viewbooks) over email and prefer to be contacted by phone as the least of these three. Parents rated social media on average far below print, email, and phone calls.
- Colleges tended to utilize print mail and phone calls slightly more than parents preferred and email slightly less than parents preferred.

Benchmarking Expectations

- Various demographics have differing expectations
 - African American parents prefer Web site information more than any other demographic of parents.
 - Hispanic parents prefer phone calls more than any other demographic of parents. Do you have Spanish speaking callers?

Benchmarking Expectations

Fall Parent Emails	Total	Delivered	Delivery Rate	Total Open Rate	3 Day Open	7 Day Open
1 Have Student Apply Early	1431	1307	91.3%	52.7%	45.8%	50.6%
2 Parent Visit	703	665	94.6%	44.2%	40.8%	42.7%
3 Parent No Visit	690	579	83.9%	34.0%	30.7%	32.0%
Averaged Totals (Fall)			89.9%	43.7%	39.1%	41.7%
Spring Parent Emails						
1 Financial Aid Admits	3939	3686	93.6%	53.1%	47.6%	51.9%
2 April 1 Chicago	1801	1694	94.1%	39.6%	36.4%	39.0%
3 April 1 Non Chicago	1390	1316	94.7%	41.5%	39.4%	41.5%
Averaged Totals (Spring)			94.1%	44.7%	41.1%	44.1%
Difference Spring to Fall			4.2%	1.1%	2.0%	2.4%
Triple the # of parent emails in the Spring						

Schools tend to collect parent email addresses at the application phase, so more area available in the Spring. Parents utilize (open) and respond to email both more frequently and more quickly in the Spring.

Parent Persuasion

Parents review information and persuade their students to look at or consider some colleges. Give them easy access to concise information to have these conversations and through the active and passive communication channels that they prefer.

Parent Persuasion

Students who provide their parents email addresses when they inquire are 45% more likely to apply and persist through to deposit.

The Effect on Students

- Better choices and decisions will be made
- Enforcement to be decisive
- Faster communication from students
- Well educated questions from prospective students
- Efficient students

Communicating Value – Private Institutions

According to Longmire and Co, 74% of students and parents report that they would reconsider a college that they believe was “too expensive” if they could demonstrate a greater value

Students and Parents of all types have different “value needs” which are often times not broadly consistent

- Use every channel possible
- Use every variety of “value” possible

Parent Communication at Bradley

- Parent emails (opened 15-20% more frequently than students emails)
- Parent letters – Fall FA, Parent to Parent, President to Parent Admit Letter
- Parent session at Experience Days
- FA Appointments
- Parents at Info Sessions/Yield Events

Parent Communication at Bradley

Freshman Students

[Discover](#)

[Academics](#)

[Cost & Affordability](#)

[Request Information](#)

[Experience](#)

[Visit](#)

[Apply](#)

[Accept your Admission Offer](#)

[Parents & Family](#)

[Our Stories](#)

Office of Undergraduate Admissions

Visitor's Center

(800) 447-6460

(309) 677-1000

admissions@bradley.edu



[Home](#) » [Future Students](#) » [Freshman Students](#) » [Parents & Family Information](#)

Parents & Family Information

Parents and family members can play an important role in helping students select a college and in their success. The information here will help you guide your student through the Bradley experience.

About Bradley

Bradley is a private, independent university in Peoria, Illinois, offering 5,700 students a world-class education linking academic excellence, experiential learning and leadership development with an entrepreneurial spirit in more than 100 academic programs.

- [Bradley at a Glance](#)
- [FAQ's](#)
- [Recognition & Guidebooks](#)
- [Virtual Tour](#)
- [Catalog](#)

Academics

The quality of the education your student receives is our highest priority. Learn about Bradley University's academic programs at these links:

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Majors and Programs of Study](#)
- [Study Abroad](#)

Parent Communication at Bradley

Applying and Enrolling at Bradley

Here are a few links to help you and your student navigate the admissions process.

- [Timeline for Applying](#)

	Priority Advantage	Standard Admissions	Extended Admissions
App Date	Before Nov 30	Dec 1 - Jan 31	Feb 1 & after
Notification	Within four weeks	By February 15	Rolling admission as space is available
Online App Fee	Waived	Waived	Waived
Scholarships	Priority Scholarship Consideration	Priority Scholarship Consideration	Scholarships as available

- [Freshman Orientation](#)
- [Enrollment Checklist](#)

Financial Information

Pursuing higher education is a significant investment. Bradley is committed to offering support to help your family manage the financial assistance process.

- [Apply for Financial Assistance](#)
- [Billing Procedures](#)
- [Cost Calculator – Early Estimator](#)
- [Housing & Meal Plans](#)
- [Insurance](#)
- [Online Payment](#)
- [Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students \(PLUS Loans\)](#)
- [Pay Enrollment Fee](#)
- [Payment Options](#)
- [Room and Board Rates](#)
- [Scholarships](#)
- [Tuition & Fees](#)

Parent Communication at Bradley

Health and Safety

Bradley University offers extensive services and resources for your student to stay safe and healthy.

- Food Services
- Health Center
- Health Forms
- Markin Recreation Center
- Public Safety and University Police

Parents Getting Involved

Whether you live, there are opportunities for your family to get involved in the Bradley University experience. We hope to see you on campus often including your first visit with Admissions through Family Weekends, athletic events, plays and concerts to Graduation.

- Welcome Week
- Bradley Parent Association
- Family Weekends

Support for Your Student

Bradley University is committed to the success of your student and provides resources in all areas of academic and student life.

- Academic Support
- Career Services
- Computing Services
- Multicultural Services
- Disability Services
- Housing & Residential Life
- Learning Assistance
- Parking
- Registrar
- Student Activities

Bradley University Parents' Board Survey

Goals:

Effective communication methods

Critical topics to cover

Accuracy and believability of communication

Timing of communication

Missing information

Information most critical to decision

Websites utilized and content desired (parent site, videos)

Information for their next children

Value of parent to parent communication

Interest in recruitment

29/60 responses

14 questions

Surveygizmo

What we learned...

- Communicating outcomes is critical (return on investment).
- Parents desire their own “space” (programs, web, print).
- Parents want to hear from other parents (verbal and written).
- Parents want to share their experience in person.



Parent Feedback Matters

- Parent website developed and live
- Parent to Parent letter to admitted families
- Renewed focus on alumni/legacy recognition

Parent Feedback Matters

- Separate parent sessions
- Financial Assistance video on website
- Expanded marketing initiatives in strategic markets

Parent Communication at Xavier

- Phone and email campaigns
 - Admissions
 - Alumni
 - Faculty
- General parent website
- Welcome Receptions for incoming students
- Office of Student Success and Retention

Road to Xavier website



the Road to Xavier



Congratulations on your student's acceptance to Xavier!

Now comes the next big question: where will they enroll? Obviously we hope it's with us, but we also understand you need more information to support your child make a big decision like this. So we created The Road to Xavier - a convenient online destination where you can learn all there is to know about us, and the kind of impact we can have on your student's future.

Step one's easy - go to "Create Your Account" and enter the username we provided in your child's acceptance letter, enter your email address, enter your student's birthdate, and pick a password.

Parents Login

Returning users sign in here

Username

Password

Login

Create Your account

Forget your password?

Copyright 2014 Xavier University

3800 Victory Parkway • Cincinnati, Ohio 45207 • 513-745-3000

Road to Xavier-main page

Welcome!



**View your student's
tuition & fee summary**



[Why Xavier?](#)



[Academics](#)



[Study Abroad](#)



[Jesuit Identity](#)



[Life in Cincinnati](#)



[Local Resources](#)

Your Admission Counselor



Sarah Barchick

barchicks@xavier.edu
513-745-4275

Have a question for Sarah?

Submit

Xavier Resources

At Xavier, you and your child are going to have the resources necessary to succeed. Visit some of the offices to learn more about the services they offer.

- [Office of Retention and Parent Outreach](#)
- [Career Development Office](#)
- [Learning Assistance Center](#)
- [Writing Center](#)
- [Mathematics Tutoring Lab](#)
- [Language Resource Center](#)

Why Xavier?

Xavier's Jesuit tradition of academic excellence inspires students not only to think critically and communicate effectively, but also to foster a love of learning and a commitment to service. Follow the links below to find out more about what we call The Xavier Advantage.


- [Study Abroad](#)
- [Honors Program](#)
- [Core Curriculum](#)
- [Cincinnati](#)
- [Career Preparation](#)

R2X-Money Matters tab

The Xavier Office of Financial Aid has received your FAFSA filing notification and updated your financial aid package below.

Campus Resident Scenario

 [Print Friendly Version](#)

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TUITION , ROOM, BOARD, AND FEES :  **\$44,710.00**

Xavier Awards


Trustee Scholarship  \$15,000.00

Xavier Housing Grant  \$1,500.00

Financial Aid

Fdrl Pell Grant  \$2,500.00

Fdrl Subsidized Stafford Loan  \$4,000.00

Federal Workstudy Eligibility 

Total Financial Aid Package **\$23,000.00**



Your Remaining Balance* **\$21,710.00**



Calculate Your Payment Options

How much can you pay 'out of pocket' annually?

Amount can range from 0 to exact amount of remaining balance.

[SHOW OPTIONS](#)

[Learn more about financing options](#)  | [Email this scenario to Xavier Financial Aid](#) 

-  Investment of a Lifetime
-  Financial Aid Process
-  Grants, Scholarships and Loans
-  Financial Aid Glossary

Consult XAVIER



Email your Financial Aid scenario with questions to Xavier.

Celeste Goodloe
513-745-2016
[Email me »](#)

THE
XAVIER COMMITMENT
[FIND OUT MORE](#)

 **FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE
COMPARISON WORKSHEET**

R2X-Parent Road to Xavier tab



Your Next Steps

▶ Review the Housing Agreement

▼ Learn More About Wellness Services

Status: Active

✓ Mark Complete

The goal of Wellness Services is to provide you with resources that will help you to enjoy a healthy and safe educational experience.

Review the Wellness Services page to learn about what services they offer.

▶ View the Wellness Services Page Now



Coming Up

▶ Update Parent Contact Information

▶ Learn More About Xavier



Complete

▶ Send In Your Deposit To Join The Class of 2018

▶ File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

▶ Learn More About Xavier's Jesuit Identity



Student Resources



Important Dates



Jesuit Identity

Instructions

'Your Road to Xavier' is your personalized to-do list, from the time Kristyn is admitted until classes start. Complete the items on the left to continue your journey toward joining the Xavier family.

» [View Full Instructions](#)



Student Progress

Kristyn's Next Step:

Submit Your Medical History

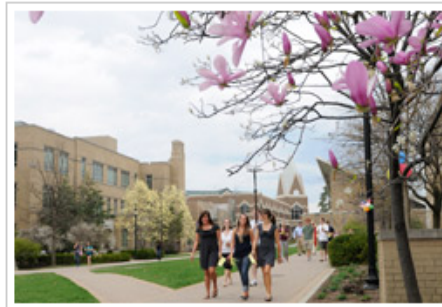
R2X-Visit Xavier tab

[HOME](#)[MONEY MATTERS](#)[PARENT ROAD TO XAVIER](#)[VISIT XAVIER](#)

Xavier Preview Day - exclusively for admitted students!

Sunday, March 23 & Sunday, April 6

As an admitted student, we invite you and your parents to join us at Xavier Preview Day on Sunday, March 23 or Sunday, April 6. The day is designed to help you get a feel for what it would be like to be a student on our campus. You will have the chance to meet and interact with faculty members in your area of interest. You will spend the day experiencing life as a Xavier student and have the chance to meet current Xavier students and other future Muskies classmates.



[» View the Agenda](#)

Your child can register for this event via the student Road to Xavier site.



Destination X - geared toward multicultural students!



Sunday, March 23 & Sunday, April 6

You are invited to attend Destination X - an overnight experience for multicultural students on the campus of Xavier University. Destination X is a great opportunity for you to mingle with the University's multicultural community, and get a first-hand look at Xavier's social scene. You and your parents will receive valuable information on your next steps for becoming a Musketeer during Xavier Preview Day and then attend Destination X that evening. We hope you are able to join us.



Regional Receptions



Come meet your Xavier Admission Counselor and other students from your area who have been admitted to Xavier. Learn more about making your housing choice, registering for classes and how to finalize your Xavier decision.

Your child can register for this event via the student Road to Xavier site.



Musketeer Chats

We know your year is keeping you busy and you are constantly on the move so we thought we would bring the Xavier community to you through online Musketeer Chats! These chats are for you as an admitted student and your parents to get real

Xavier Parent Survey

At this point in the college selection process, do you feel that your student will submit a deposit to attend Xavier?

PULLDOWN OPTIONS: Yes, Maybe

If you answered yes, we're excited that your student will be joining us as a member of the Xavier family! You can [submit your student's deposit online here.](#)

If you answered yes, what type of information **FREEFORM** would be helpful in taking the next steps toward enrollment, if any?

If you answered maybe, what information would you like as a parent to help support your student in this decision?

PULLDOWN OPTIONS:
Financial aid information
Call from admission counselor
Information about student's major
Campus visit options

Additional information you are seeking

FREEFORM

If you would like to hear from us, please let us know the best way to reach you (please enter a phone number or e-mail address).

Xavier Parent Survey

- Admission staff expected to follow up with survey responders within 24 hours
- Allows customized feedback; develops stronger relationships
- Engages families where they are in the process
- We also send a student version of the survey

Questions for both sides of the desk

- What kind of involvement do we really want from parents during the college choice process?
- Recognizing the influence they exert, how can we more completely determine and meet the needs and expectations of parents?
- How should we communicate with prospective parents now? (Is it truly communication or just promotion?)
- How will that (or should that) change in the future?

(Questions from STAMATS “Parents TALK” presentation, 2011)

Questions for colleges to consider

- What kind of involvement do we expect from parents post-enrollment?
- How can we actively involve parents in recruiting and fundraising?

(Questions from STAMATS “Parents TALK” presentation, 2011)

Discussion Questions

- What challenges are you facing with regard to parent communication? C and HS
- What methods do you currently have in place that allow you to communicate with parents effectively? c
- How can Admissions offices better serve parents throughout the college choice process? HS

Discussion Questions

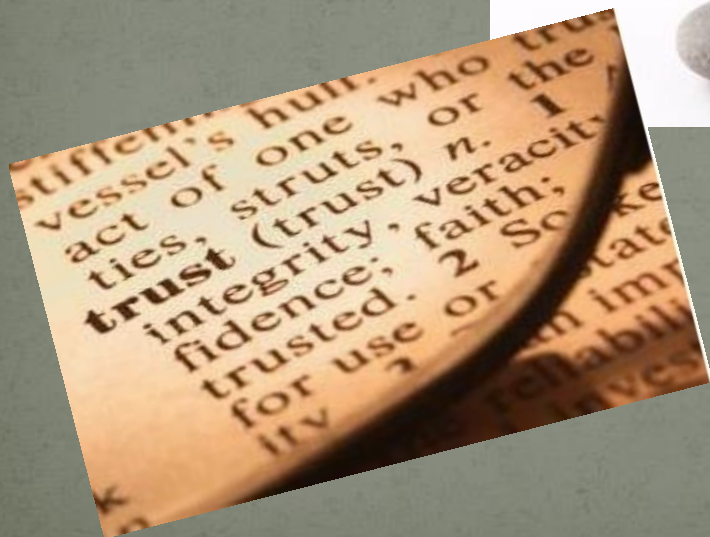
- Is the research presented consistent with what parents are saying to you and actually doing? C and HS
- What do you see as your role in preparing parents/families for the college search? C and HS
- How do you feel that admissions offices can most effectively communicate with the families you serve? HS

“Outside the box” Parent Involvement

- Parent only information sessions
- Friend requests from Parents
- Parent to Parent Mentoring Programs
- Parent Board Involvement

Closing Statements

- Goals: Engagement and Support
- TRUST
- If you ask for parent feedback, listen and take action



PRESENTED BY:

JUSTIN BALL

Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management

Bradley University

309-677-1000

jaball@fsmail.bradley.edu

LINDSEY CHENEY

Associate Director of Admissions

Bradley University

309-677-3849

lcheney@fsmail.bradley.edu

JULIE NELSON

Regional Recruitment Director

Xavier University

866-652-5357

nelsonj4@xavier.edu