



Parent engagement increases student retention

Data from 9 universities and 12,374 students shows student retention is higher with parent engagement in CampusESP.

CASE STUDY

Executive Summary:

This exploratory study looks at 12,374 first-time, first-year students that enrolled at nine universities in the Fall of 2022 and returned for the following Fall 2023 term.

For the purpose of this study, "parent engagement" refers to parents or family members that received regular alerts from CampusESP about student records, such as new holds placed on their student's accounts or unmet financial aid requirements. The early alerts provided easy visibility into student data, as well as guidance on how parents could best support their students.

At each of these institutions, if a parent received updates from CampusESP on student progress, the student was more likely to remain enrolled.

8.3%

On average, student retention was 8.3% higher for students of parents receiving alerts from CampusESP.

Student retention is higher when parents receive updates on student progress

Across all nine institutions, the data showed that students with engaged parents experienced retention levels between 1.1% and 21.4% higher than average. The average gain was 8.3%. These results were observed across both public and private institutions, as well as schools ranging in size from 2,773 FTE to 38,927 FTE.

	Auburn University FTE 25,379	Drexel University FTE 14,021	Duquesne University FTE 5,095	Kennesaw State University FTE 38,927	La Salle University FTE 2,773	Morgan State University FTE 7,609	Texas State University FTE 33,834	The University of Alabama at Birmingham FTE 13,032	University of West Georgia FTE 8,666
Institutional retention rate	93.1%	89.5%	86.5%	78.7%	71.0%	71.0%	77.0%	81.9%*	76.0%
Retention rate with parent engagement	95.3%	93.5%	89.3%	85.5%	84.0%	72.1%	98.4%	83.9%	97.2%
Retention gains	+2.2%	+4.0%	+2.8%	+6.8%	+13.0%	+1.1%	+21.4%	+2.0%	+21.2%

* Preliminary institutional rate

Retention gains from parent engagement are highest for Black and Hispanic students

Data collected by Auburn University (Southern large public) and Duquesne University (Northeastern mid-size private) showed that parent engagement had an even larger impact on retention for Black or African American students and Hispanic students than for White students.

In previous studies, data has indicated that Black families and Hispanic families are more engaged and involved with their student's college experience, which may account for the larger impact of families on student retention.



A private institution in Pittsburgh, PA with an FTE of 5,095



A public institution in Auburn, AL with an FTE of 25,379

	Institutional retention rate	Retention rate with parent engagement	Retention gains	Institutional retention rate	Retention rate with parent engagement	Retention gains
White	86.8%	90.3%	+3.5%	93.8%	95.9%	+2.1%
Black or African-American	82.8%	87.5%	+4.7%	90.9%	97.2%	+6.3%
Hispanic	89.4%	95.2%	+5.8%	88.5%	95.5%	+7.0%



Parent engagement boosts retention for first-generation and Pell Grant eligible students

The data from Auburn University and Duquesne University indicated that first-generation and Pell Grant eligible students experienced even larger retention gains than average when their parents were notified about student progress and how to get involved.

Although the average retention gains for students at Auburn and Duquesne were 2.2% and 2.8% respectively, first-generation and Pell Grant eligible students achieved retention gains between 3.3% and 6.7% when their parents were engaged.



A private institution in Pittsburgh, PA with an FTE of 5,095



A public institution in Auburn, AL with an FTE of 25,379

	Institutional retention rate	Retention rate with parent engagement	Retention gains	Institutional retention rate	Retention rate with parent engagement	Retention gains
All students	86.5%	89.3%	+2.8%	93.1%	95.3%	+2.2%
First-generation	86.1%	89.4%	+3.3%	86.1%	90.0%	+3.9%
Pell eligible	81.8%	88.5%	+6.7%	88.6%	92.2%	+3.6%

Methodology:

In order for parents to receive updates on student progress, they were required to create an account in a branded CampusESP Parent Portal, initiate an electronic FERPA waiver, and receive FERPA authorization from their student. Once the student granted FERPA permissions, parents then received email alerts about new holds, bills, financial aid requirements, grade assignments and more – depending on the data shared by the student and provided by the institution.

Student retention rates were calculated for students with parents receiving progress updates and compared to the institution’s overall retention rate in order to determine the average retention gains. Data related to race, ethnicity, institutional retention rates, and parent engagement were provided by the nine institutions participating in this study.

About CampusESP

CampusESP is an all-in-one family engagement platform that helps institutions turn family involvement into student success. Modernizing FERPA processes with digital permission waivers, CampusESP provides easy visibility into student progress and nudges parents when it’s time to step in and help their students succeed.

CampusESP helps more than 360 colleges and universities engage more than 9 million parents.

