

Looking Beyond the Demographic Cliff

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Notes

Not my research.

Data heavy – beware!

COVID-adjacent data.

No SCOTUS analysis.

AGENDA

What?

What else?

Why?

Why Not?

What's Next?

In the United States, how many high school graduates were there in 2019?

A. 3.8 million

C. 3 million

B. 4.1 million

D. 2.6 million

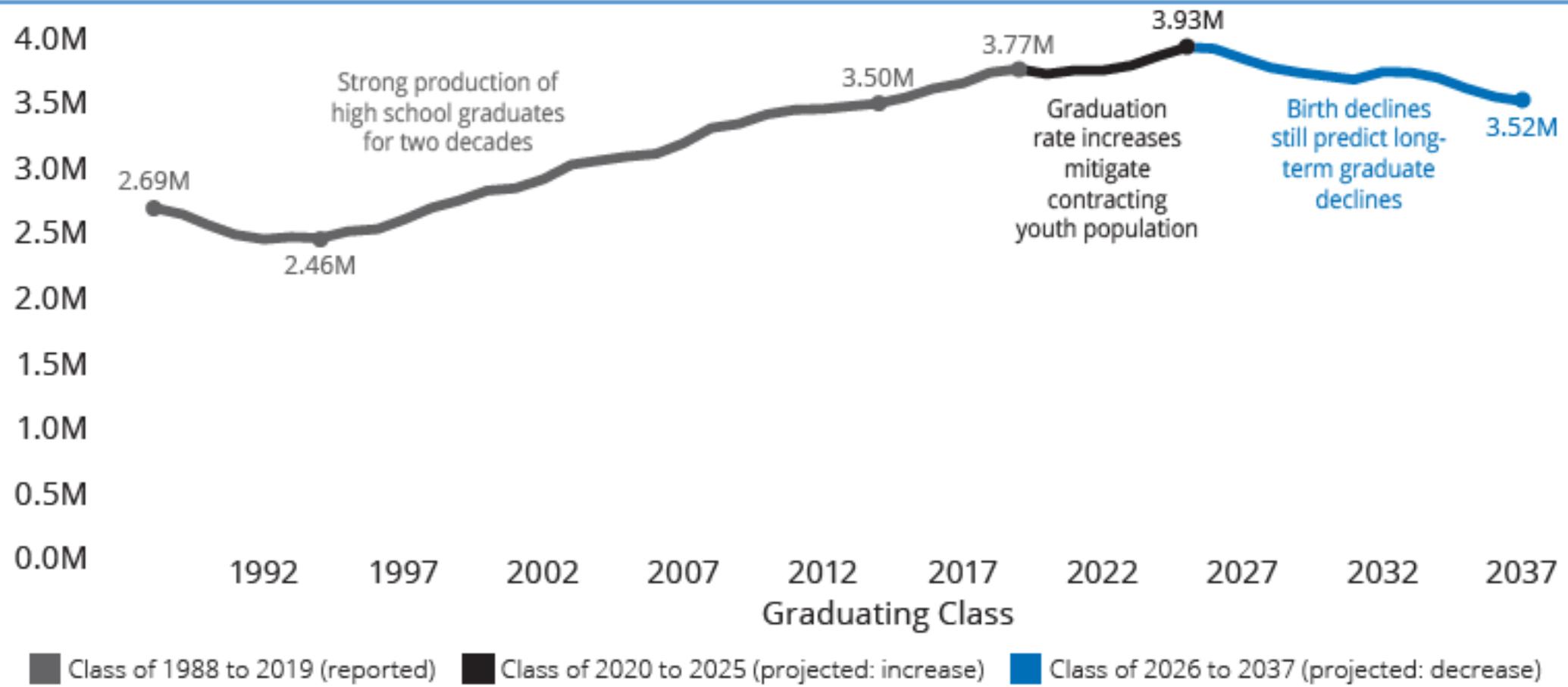
In the United States, how many high school graduates are there projected to be in 2037?

A. 2.8 million

C. 3.5 million

B. 3 million

D. 3.9 million

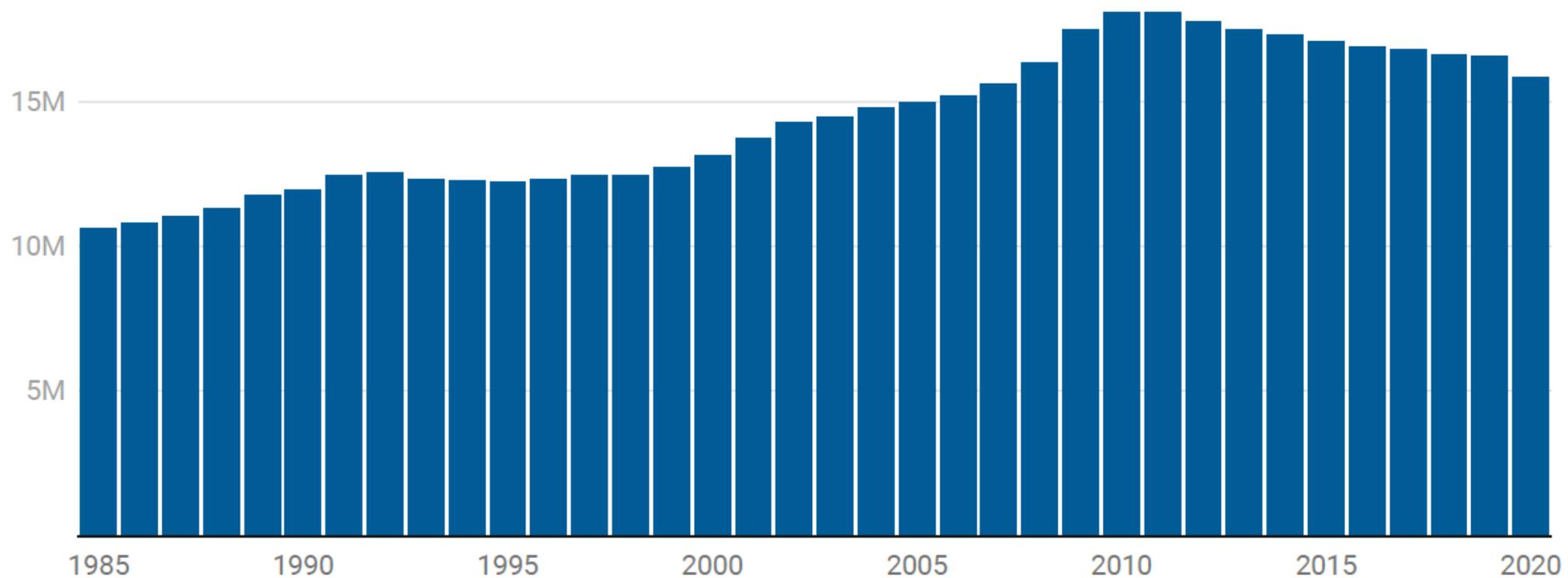


Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, *Knocking at the College Door*, 10th edition, 2020. See [Technical Appendix](#) for detailed sources of data through the Class of 2019; WICHE projections, Class of 2020 through 2037.



A Decline in the Making

Undergraduate enrollment peaked in 2010-11 and began a slide marked by a sharp drop in students in the first full academic year of the pandemic.



Fischer, K. (Aug. 12, 2022). The shrinking of higher ed. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.
<https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-shrinking-of-higher-ed>



Differences in birth rates combined with patterns of immigration and migration continually nudge the country toward greater racial and ethnic diversity while shifting the center of population toward the South and West.

Nathan Grawe

Grawe, N. D. (Jan. 13, 2021). *How to survive the enrollment bust*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/how-to-navigate-the-demographic-cliff>.

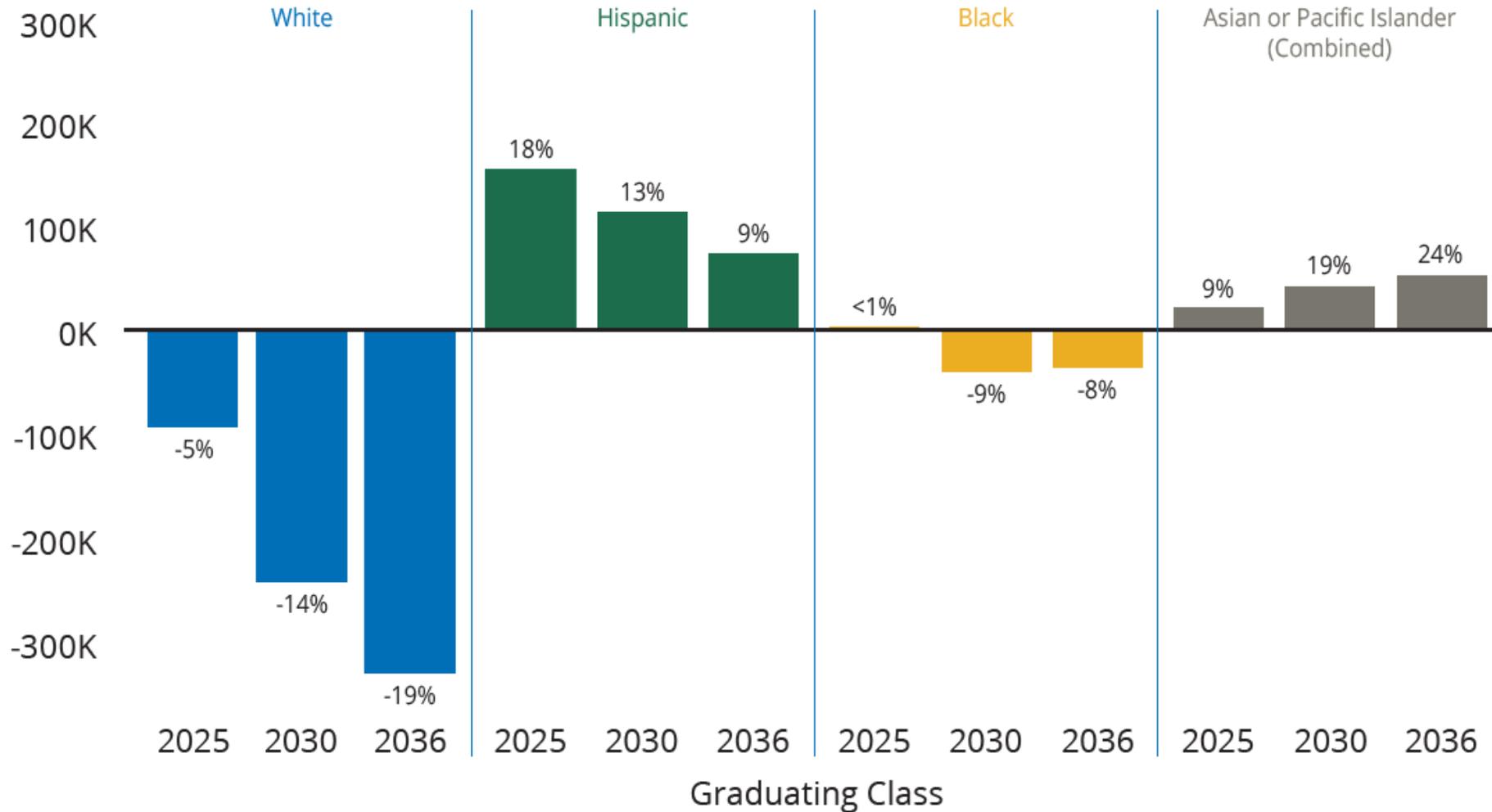
In 2019, 51% of high school graduates in the US were white. What is the projected percentage in 2036?

A. 45%

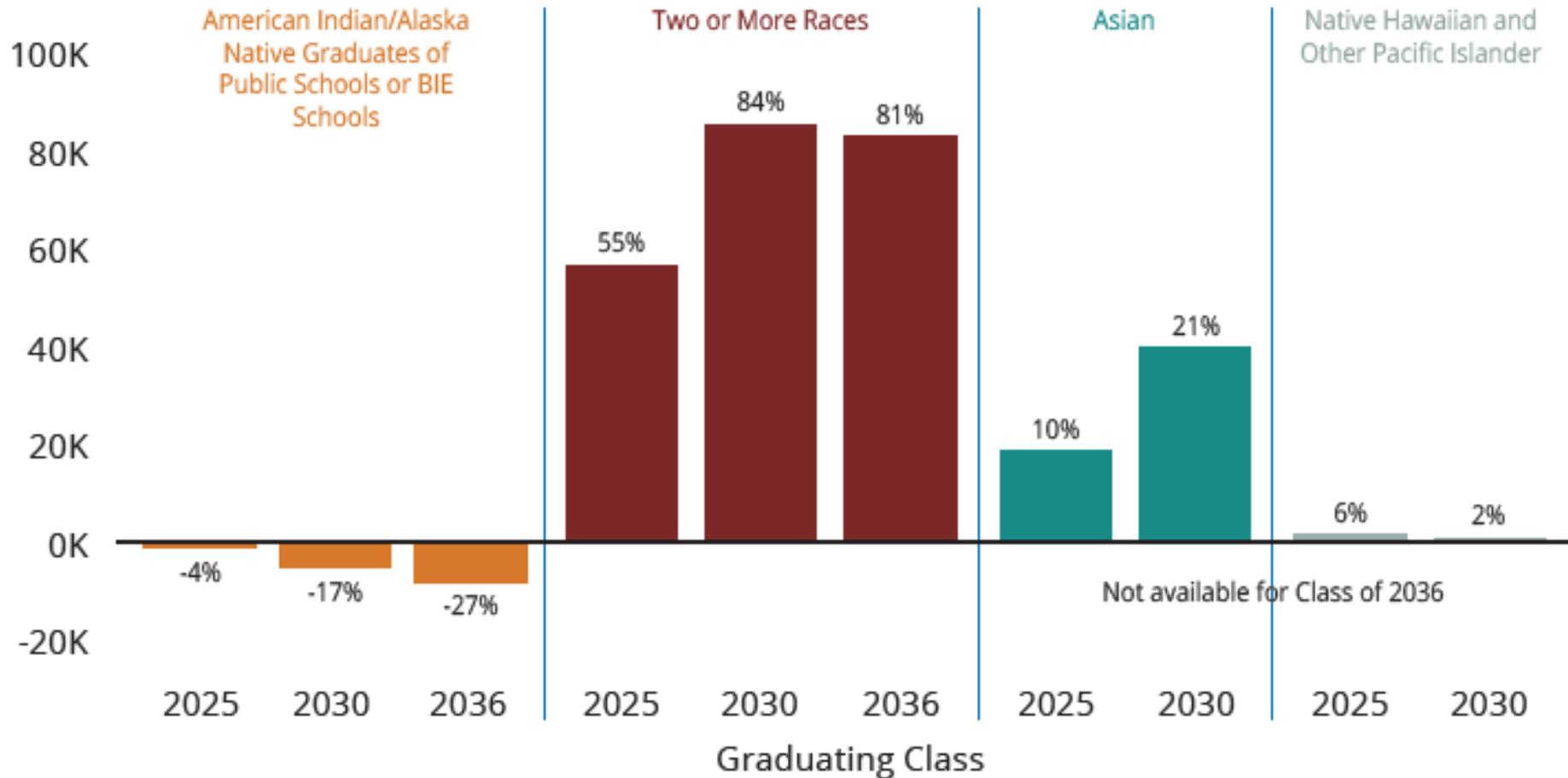
C. 49%

B. 43%

D. 39%



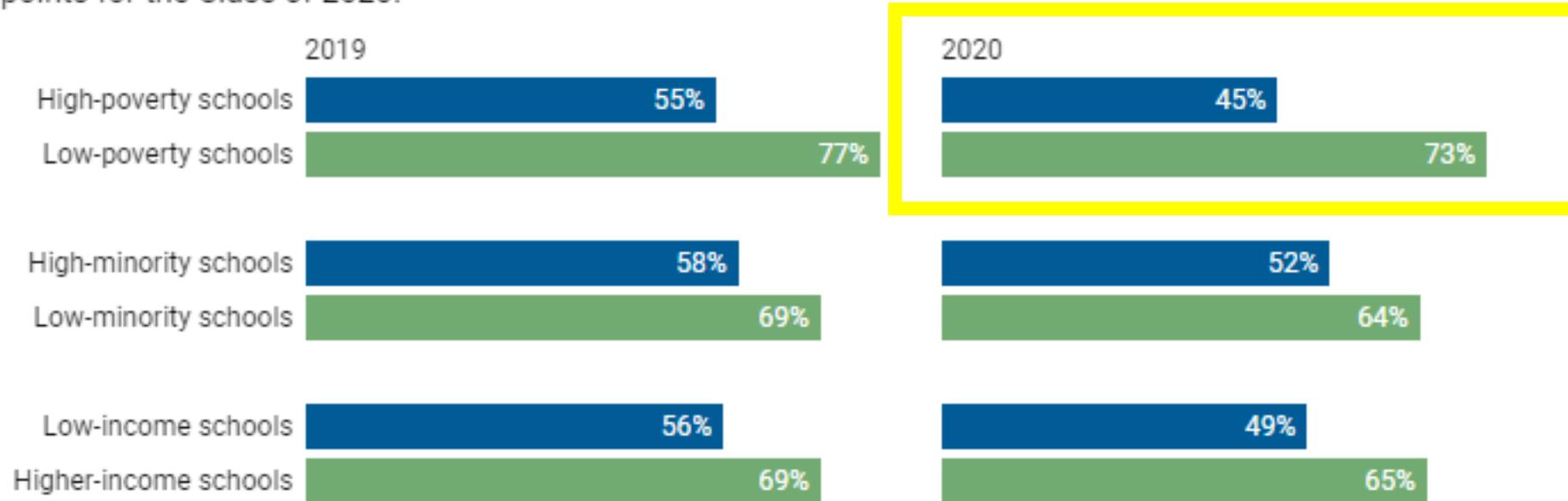
Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, *Knocking at the College Door*, 10th edition, 2020. WICHE projections and analysis.
 Notes: Showing White non-Hispanic, Hispanic of any race, Black non-Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander (combined) non-Hispanic. Figure 5b shows additional race categories.



Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, *Knocking at the College Door*, 10th edition, 2020. WICHE projections and analysis.
 Notes: Showing American Indian/Alaska Native non-Hispanic from Public Schools and Bureau of Indian Education Schools (combined), Asian and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander non-Hispanic separately (through Class of 2030), and Two or More Races non-Hispanic (projected through Class of 2030, then estimated through Class of 2036).

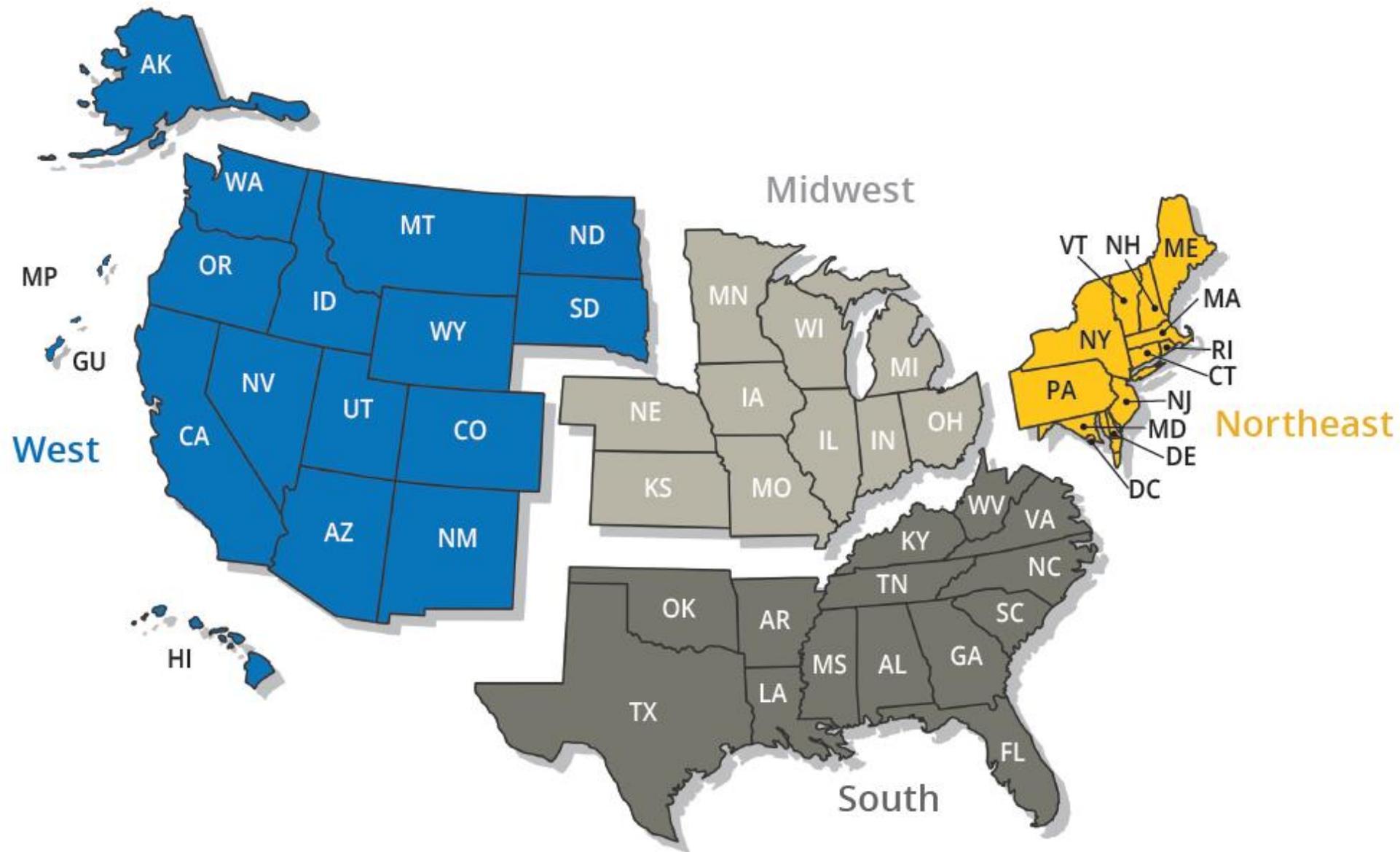
Growing Inequity

The gap between the share of students who enrolled in college right after graduating from high-poverty high schools and the share who did so right after graduating from low-poverty high schools grew to 28 percentage points for the Class of 2020.



Note: High-poverty schools: 75% of the student population is eligible for free/reduced lunch. Low-poverty schools: Less than 25% of students are eligible for free/reduced lunch. Low-income schools: At least 50% of students are eligible for free/reduced lunch. Minority schools: At least 40% of the students are Black or Hispanic.

Source: [National Student Research Clearinghouse Center](#) • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)



Ten states produce 56% of
U.S. high school graduates.
Which is #1?

A. New York

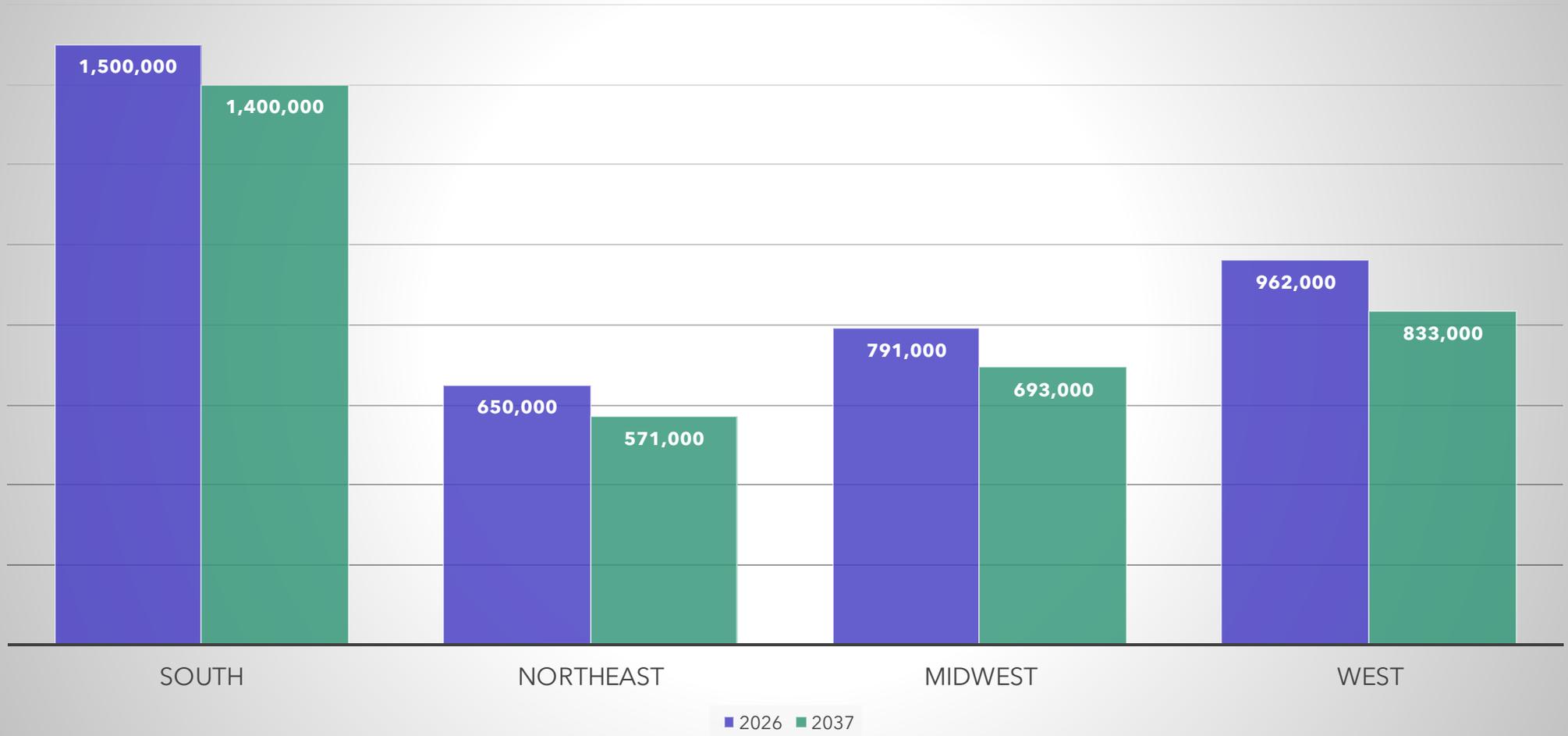
C. Texas

B. California

D. Florida



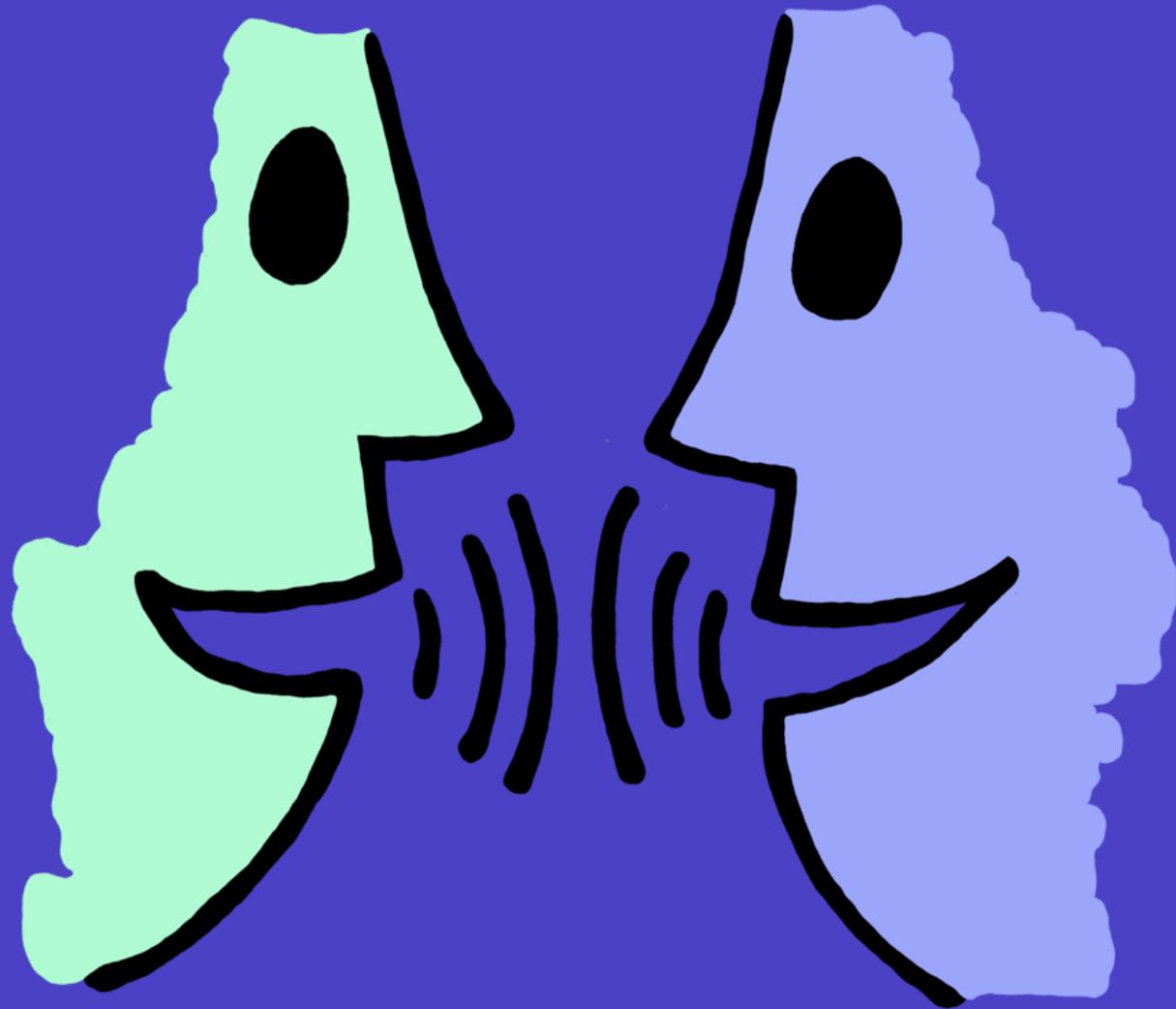
HS Graduates







Grow enrollment
International students
Status quo recruitment
Tuition increases



What's Next?

High School Graduation Changes

400,000 less annually by 2037

Racial diversification, driven by Hispanic and multiracial graduates

Regional variation, the Southern region to have the least impact

Confounding Factors (a few)

Inflation

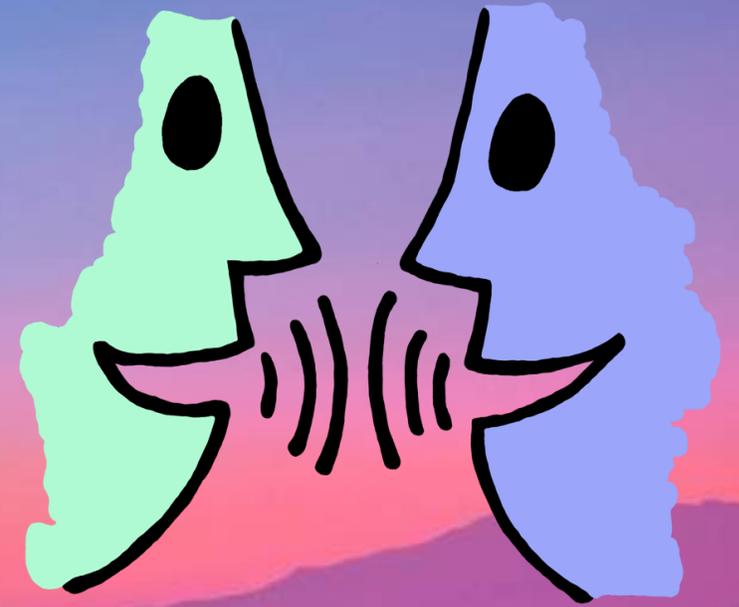
Microcredentials

Retention

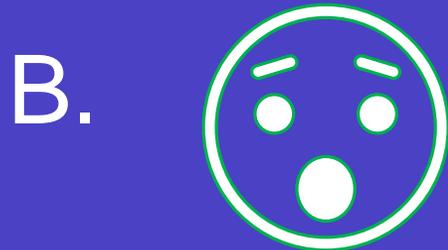
Skepticism

Childcare

Visas



How are you feeling?





Innovative and flexible

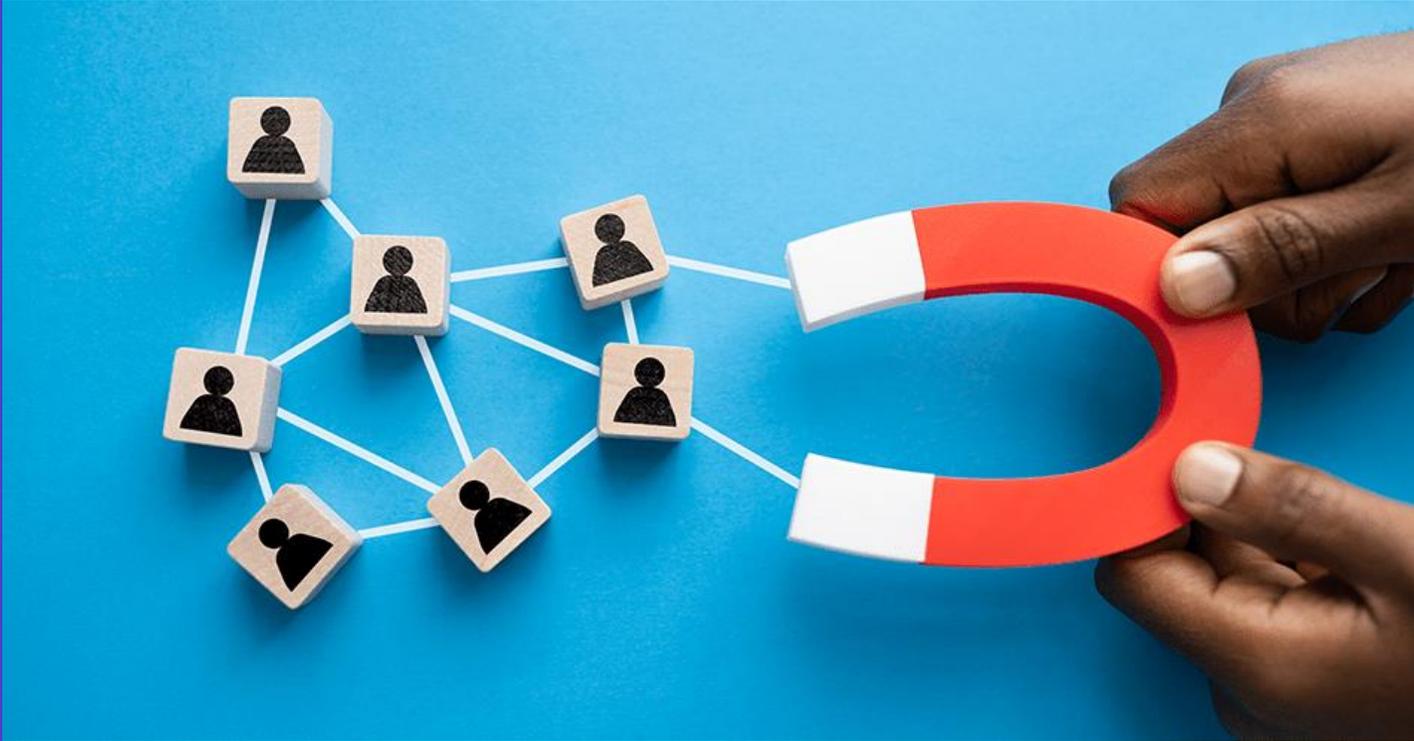


Accessible



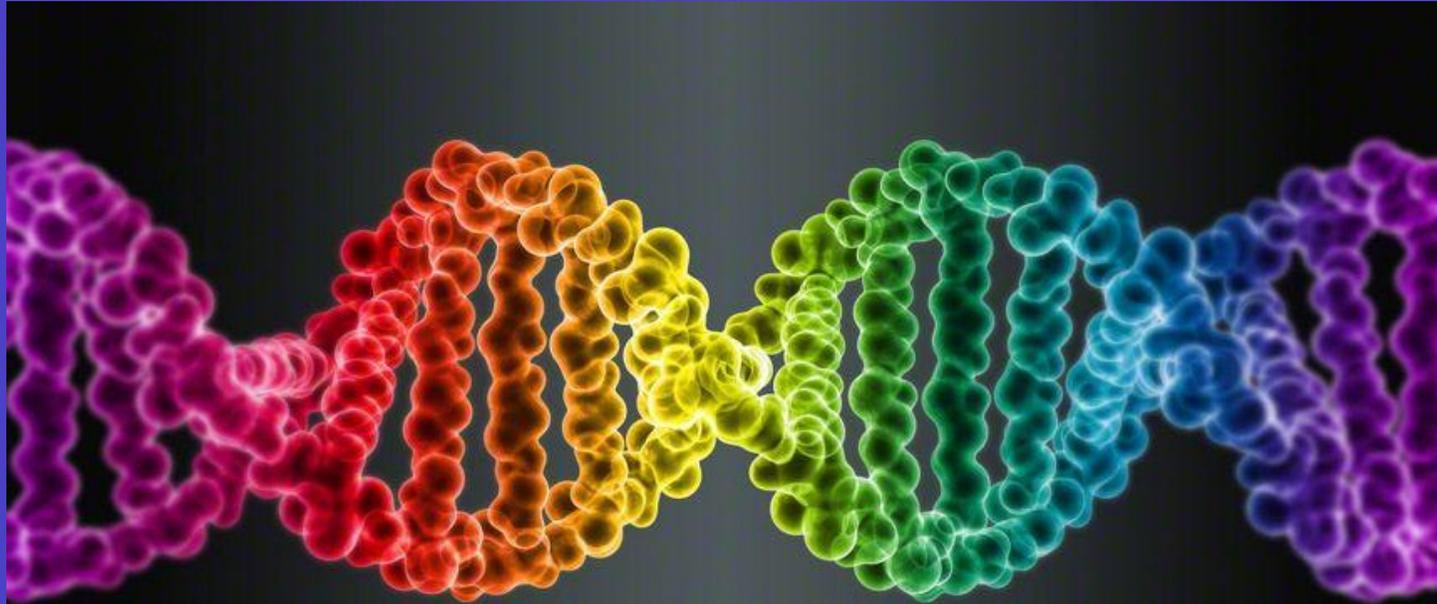


Define and refine value



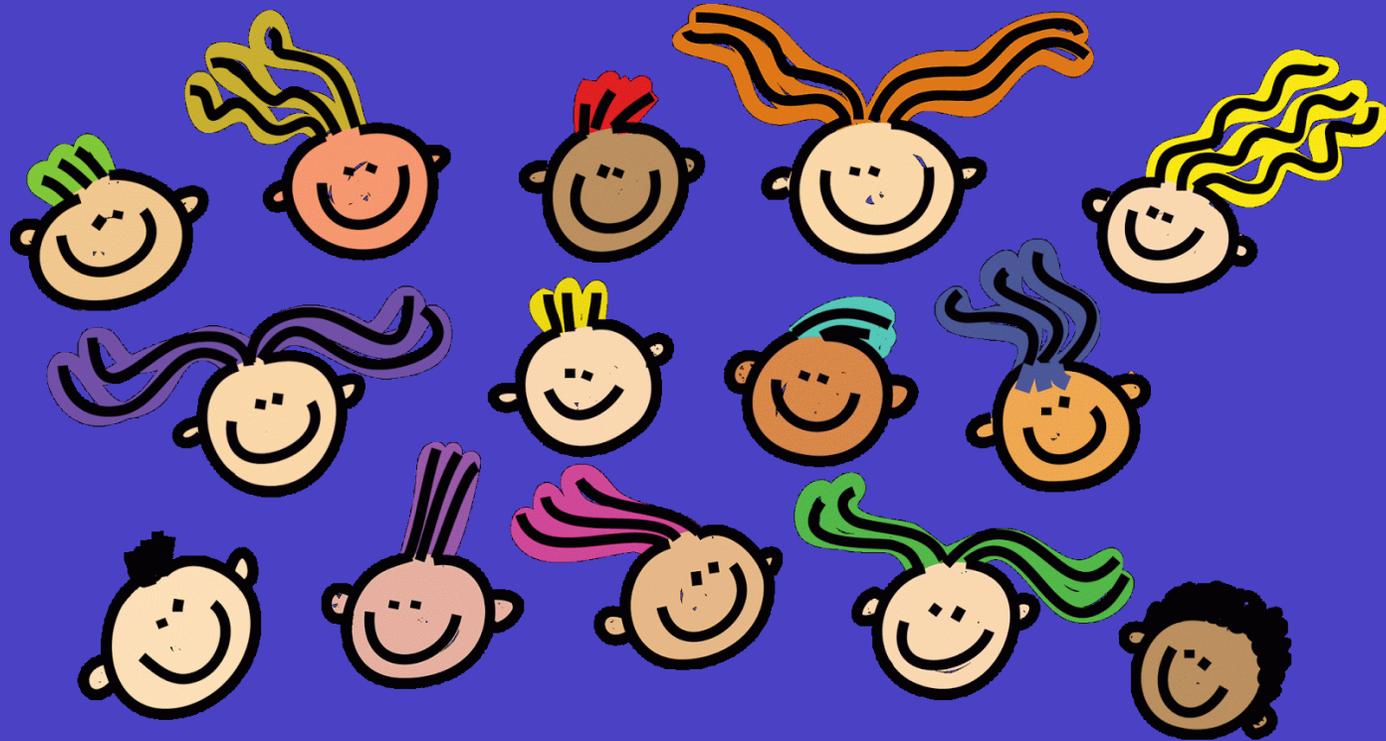
Retention and reentry





Personalized marketing





Outreach to new groups



Transfer programs



Virtual vs. experiential offerings



Innovative and flexible
Accessible
Define and refine value
Retention and reentry
Personalized marketing
Outreach to new groups
Transfer programs
Virtual vs. experiential offerings

If you're in Vermont, you will naturally think about this differently than if you're in Florida or Arizona. If your campus is 85% white, you need to ask yourself how students in the future will consider you relevant. If your curriculum hasn't changed in 40 years, it may be time to modernize it. If you've relied on international students – especially from China- to contribute substantially to the bottom line, it might be wise to consider other options. And if you haven't thought about this at all, well, there is no time like the present.





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