



# **Pennsylvania's Master Plan for Higher Education**

Building the Roadmap for Reaching Pennsylvania's Postsecondary  
Attainment Goal

**Pennsylvania Association of Councils of Trustees**  
2022 Spring Conference

Tanya I. Garcia, Ph.D.  
Deputy Secretary and Commissioner  
for Postsecondary and Higher Education

March 25, 2022

## Acknowledgment

**The Pennsylvania Department of Education is grateful to the Lumina Foundation for supporting the update to Pennsylvania's Master Plan for Higher Education**

*This work was made possible through the support of Lumina Fund for Policy Acceleration, a sponsored project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors*

# Objectives

- Understand Pennsylvania's equity gaps
- Introduce belonging as critical to postsecondary attainment
- Understand the urgency and complexity of measuring the value of postsecondary credentials
- Understand why we need to make college more affordable for all Pennsylvanians

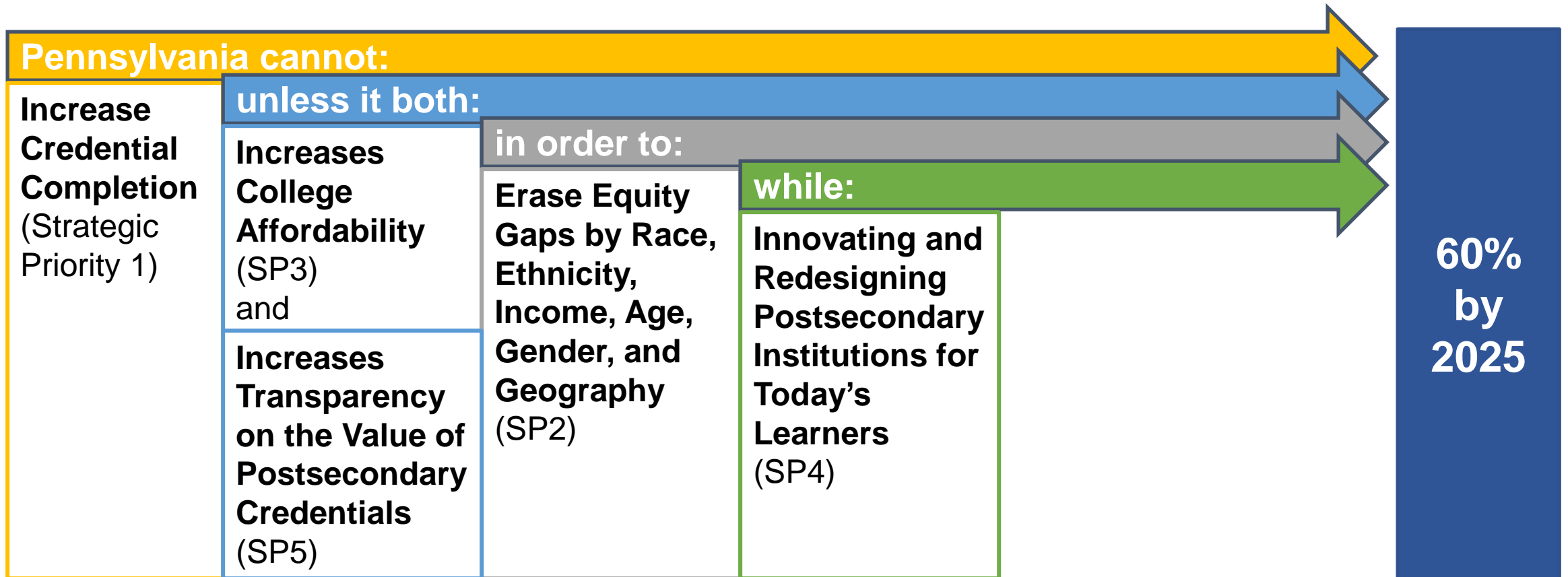
# ▶ Pennsylvania's Postsecondary Attainment Goal

## Goal:

60 percent of the population ages 25-64 will hold a **postsecondary degree or industry recognized credential** by 2025, with a particular focus on **closing attainment gaps** for historically underrepresented populations.

Current  
Rate  
**50.7%**

# Reaching Pennsylvania's Postsecondary Attainment Goal



Note: The Master Plan for Higher Education Table of Contents, which includes these five strategic priorities, was approved by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education Council of Higher Education on January 13, 2021.

# Pennsylvania's Equity Gaps

Enrollment

**77%**  
Asian

**46%**  
White

**50%**  
Native American

**35%**  
Black/African-American

**34%**  
Hispanic/Latinx

18-24 year-olds enrolled in postsecondary (2019)

Attainment

**65%**  
Asian

**47%**  
White

**37%**  
Native American

**30%**  
Black/African-American

**24%**  
Hispanic/Latinx

25–64-year-olds with a postsecondary credential of value (2019)

**Not all Pennsylvanians are on a path to economic self-sufficiency and intergenerational wealth creation**

## Pennsylvania's Equity Gaps

**1,068,137**

Pennsylvanians ages 25-64 with some college, no credential

**22%**

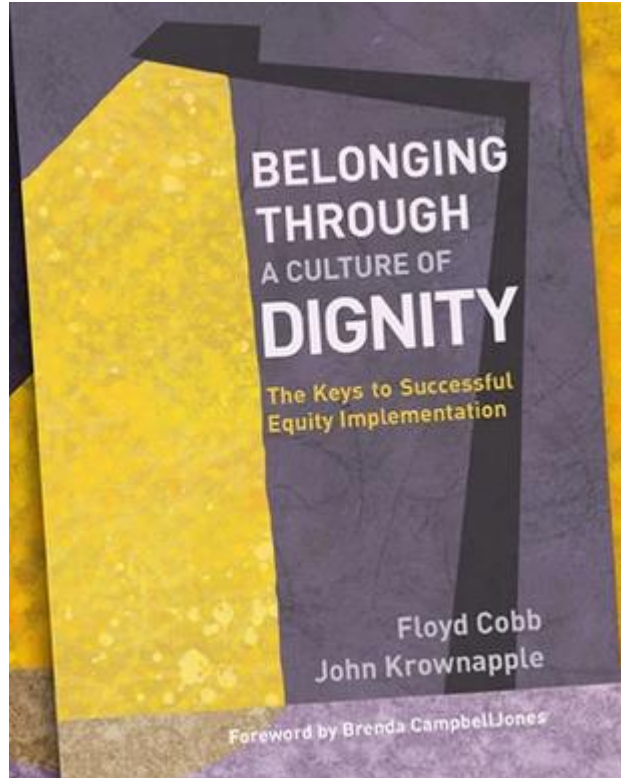
Pennsylvanians ages 25-64 enrolled in postsecondary



# Why Belonging is Essential to Postsecondary Attainment



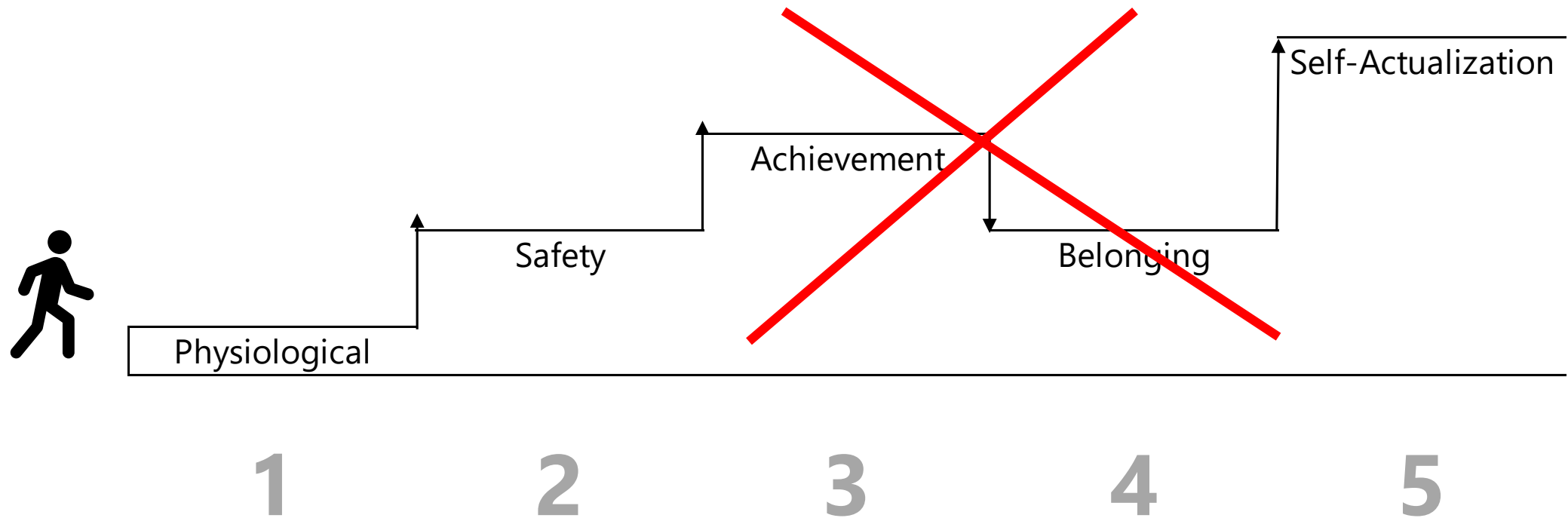
# What is Belonging?



**Belonging**  
Experiencing appreciation,  
validation, acceptance, and  
fair treatment within  
an environment

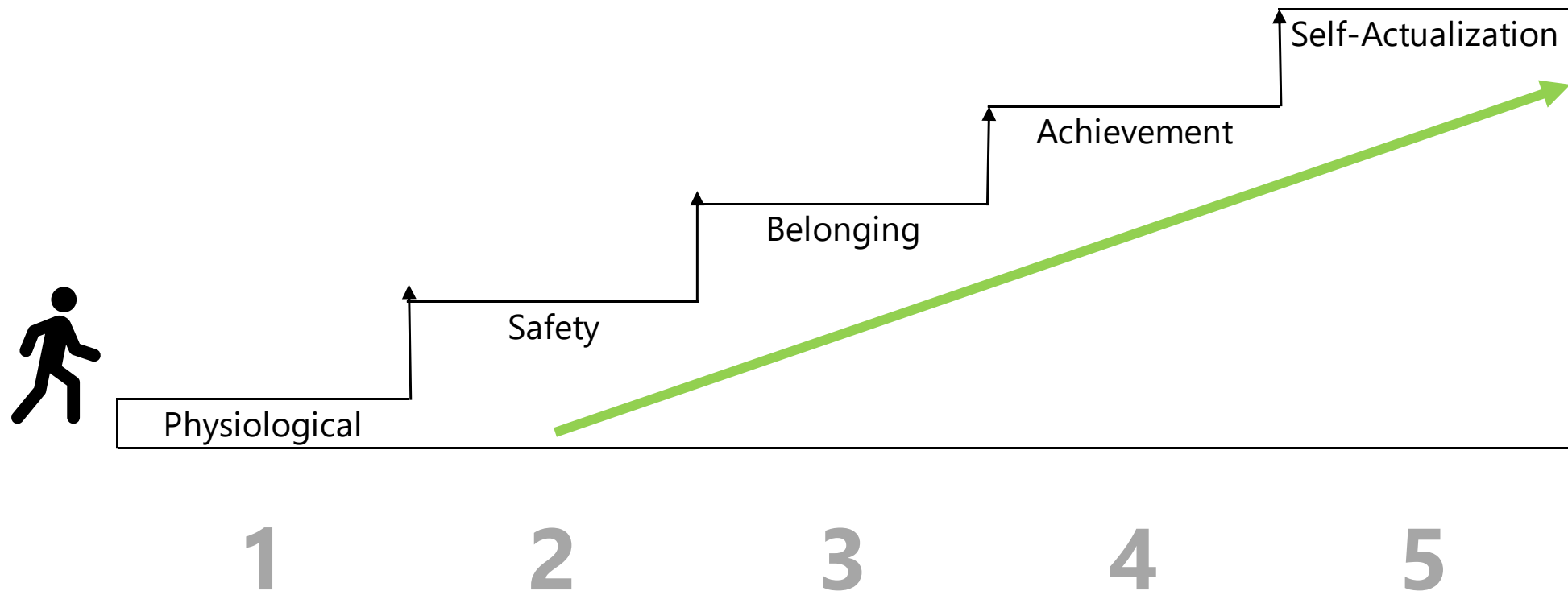
Source: Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple. 2019. *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation*.

# Status Quo: Sacrificing Belonging for Access



Source: Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple. 2019. *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation*

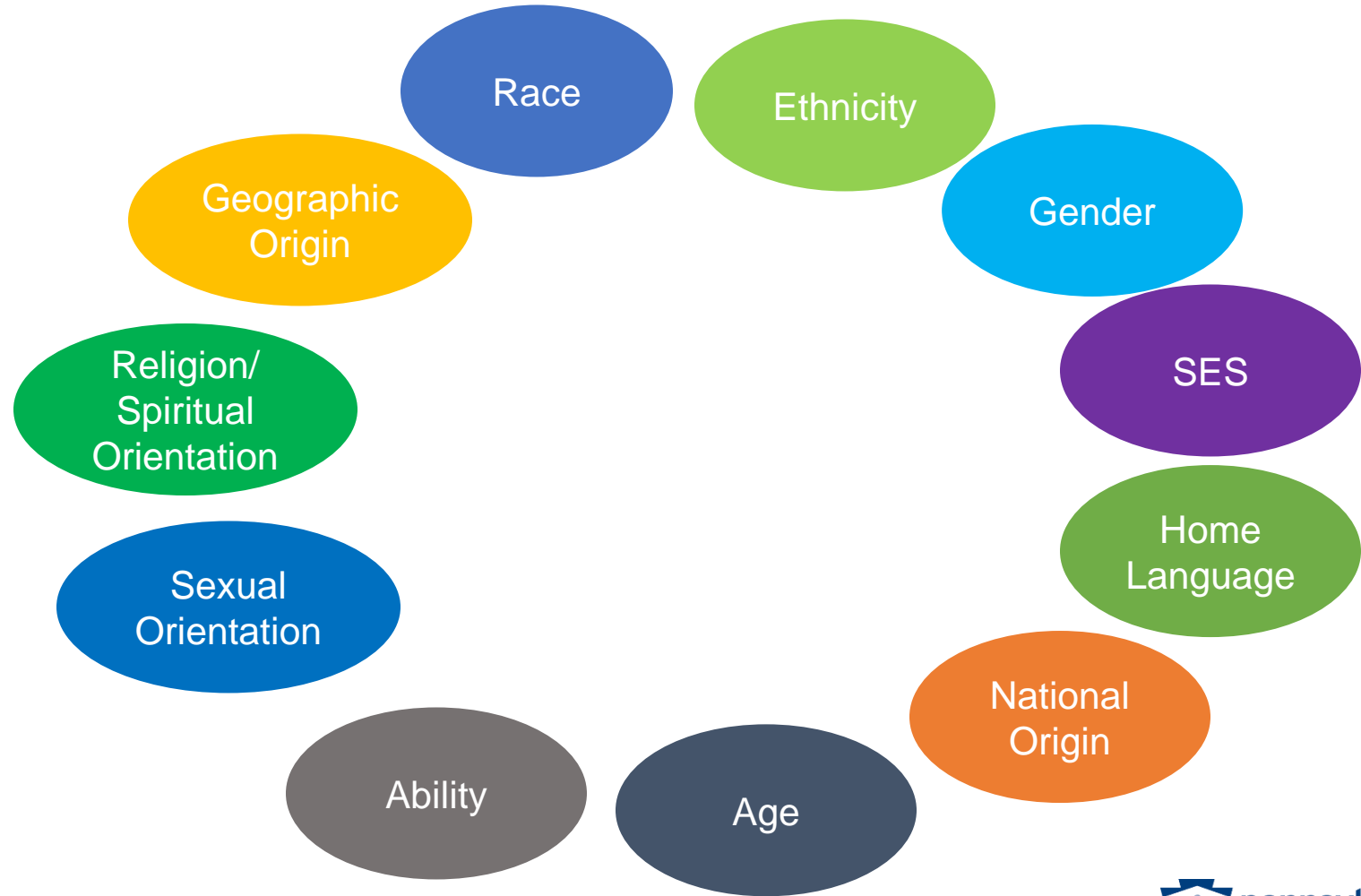
# Disrupting the Status Quo: Putting Belonging Where It Belongs



Source: Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple. 2019. *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation*

# Acknowledging All Our Social Identities

Which of these aspects of your social identity would you be willing to give up?



# Why We Need to Measure Postsecondary Value

## Importance of Publicly-Available Data on Quality

**93%**  
**very or  
somewhat  
important**

“How important is it for colleges and universities to provide publicly-available data on key indicators of quality, such as graduation rates or graduates’ employment rates?”

Source: *Varying Degrees 2021*. New America.

# The US Economy Has Become Extremely Complex

**840**

# of occupations  
(2010)

**2,260**

# of programs  
of study (2010)

**4,720**

# of colleges &  
universities (2014)

**20.2 million**

# of postsecondary  
learners (2014)

**967,734**

# of unique  
credentials in US  
(2020)



**15,383**

# of unique  
credentials in PA  
(2020)



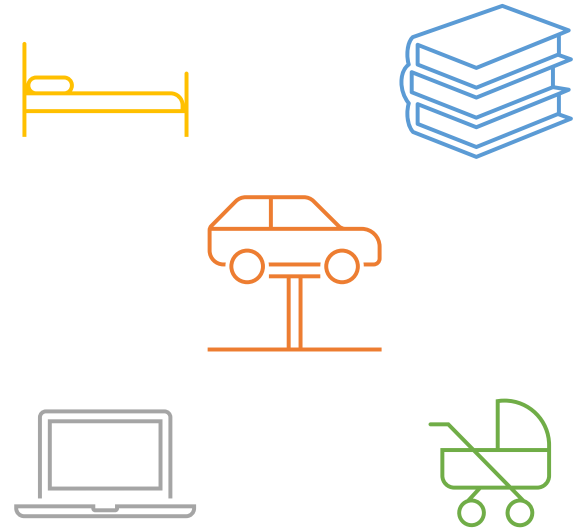
# Why We Need to Increase College Affordability



# What Makes Up Cost of Attendance?

An estimate of:

- tuition and fees
- room and board (or living expenses)
- books
- supplies
- transportation
- loan fees, and
- **miscellaneous expenses** such as reasonable costs for a **personal computer**, allowance for **childcare** or other dependent care, costs related to a **disability**, and reasonable costs for eligible **study-abroad** programs



# Mismatch: These Are Today's Postsecondary Learners

**Adult Learners:**

**37%**

of today's students are older than 25.

**Part-Time Students:**

**40%**

of students are part-time.

**First-Generation Students:**

**34%**

of undergraduates are the first in their families to attend college.

**Veterans:**

More than

**340,000**

post-9/11 veterans have used G.I. Bill benefits to complete their degrees.

**Low-Income Students:**

**31%**

are at or below the federal poverty level.

**Independent Students:**

**49%**

of students are financially independent.

**Working Students:**

**64%**

of students work while in college.

**Student Parents:**

**24%**

of students are raising children while studying.

**Students of Color:**

African-American student enrollment grew

**72%**

between 1996 and 2020, while Hispanic enrollment grew by

**240%**

# Working through College Is Impossible in 21st Century

Pennsylvania 2016

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY DIAGNOSIS

## WHAT PERCENT OF FAMILY INCOME would be needed to attend college full time?

	Percent of Income 2008	Percent of Income 2013	Ranking*
<b>Public Two-Year</b> (23 percent of enrollment)**	18	19	36
<b>Public Four-Year Nondoctoral</b> (22 percent of enrollment)	29	37	47
<b>Public Research</b> (17 percent of enrollment)	36	47	50
<b>Private Four-Year Nondoctoral</b> (29 percent of enrollment)	43	47	30
<b>Private Research</b> (8 percent of enrollment)	50	51	16

\* This measure ranked states 1-50. The lower the ranking on this measure, the better a state performed on overall college affordability.

\*\* Enrollment may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**NOTE:** The "net price" reported in the following tables for each sector of higher education includes tuition, mandatory fees, room/board and books minus all financial aid (federal, state and institutional).

## Four-Year Student Debt in Pennsylvania, 2019-20

Pennsylvania's college graduates have the third highest student loan debt, after New Hampshire and Delaware

**64%**

College graduates  
with student debt

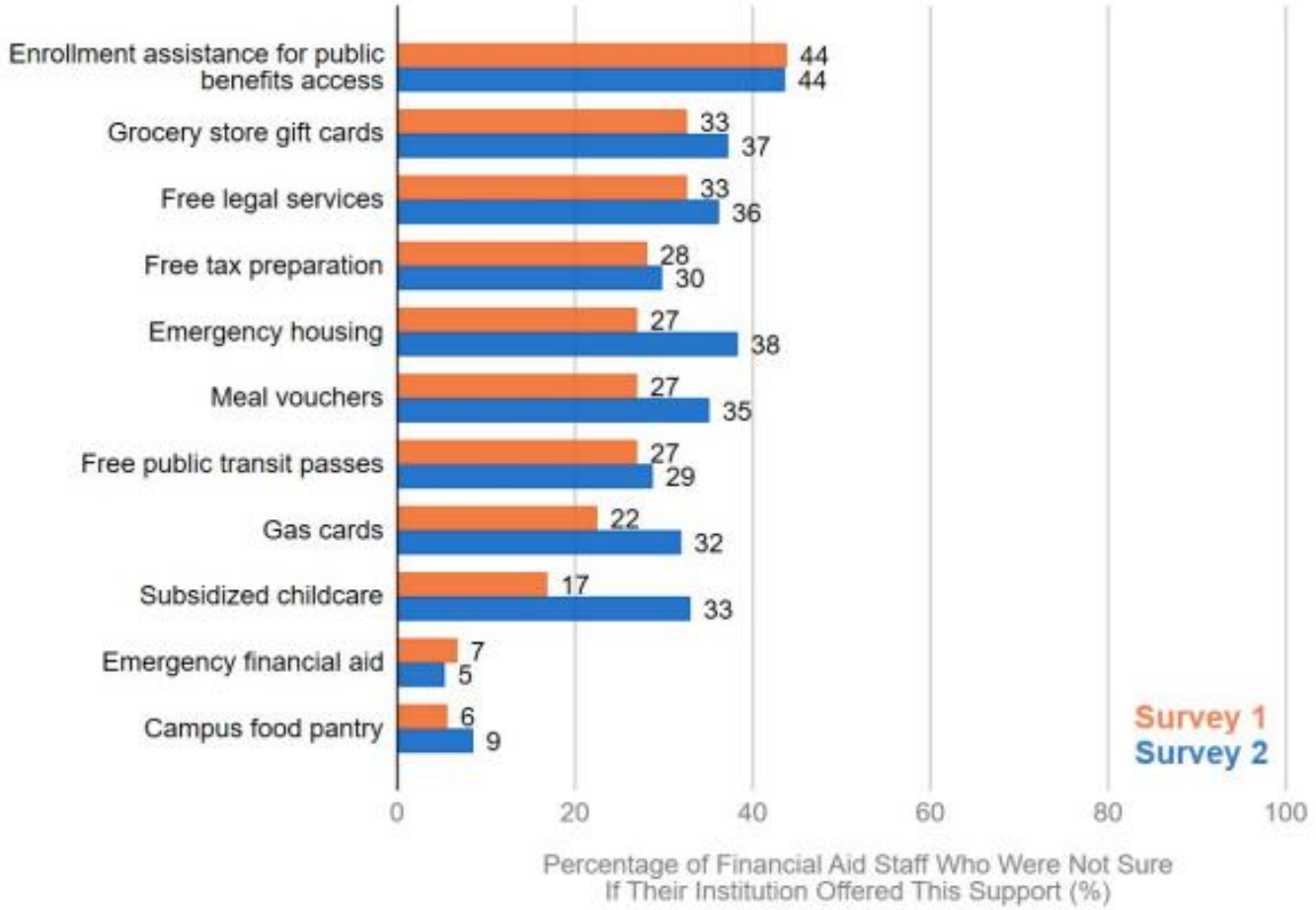
**\$39,375**

Average student  
debt load

# Increasing Awareness of Non-Tuition Supports is Needed

We need to increase financial aid officers' awareness of the full range of non-tuition supports because of their role in making college more affordable

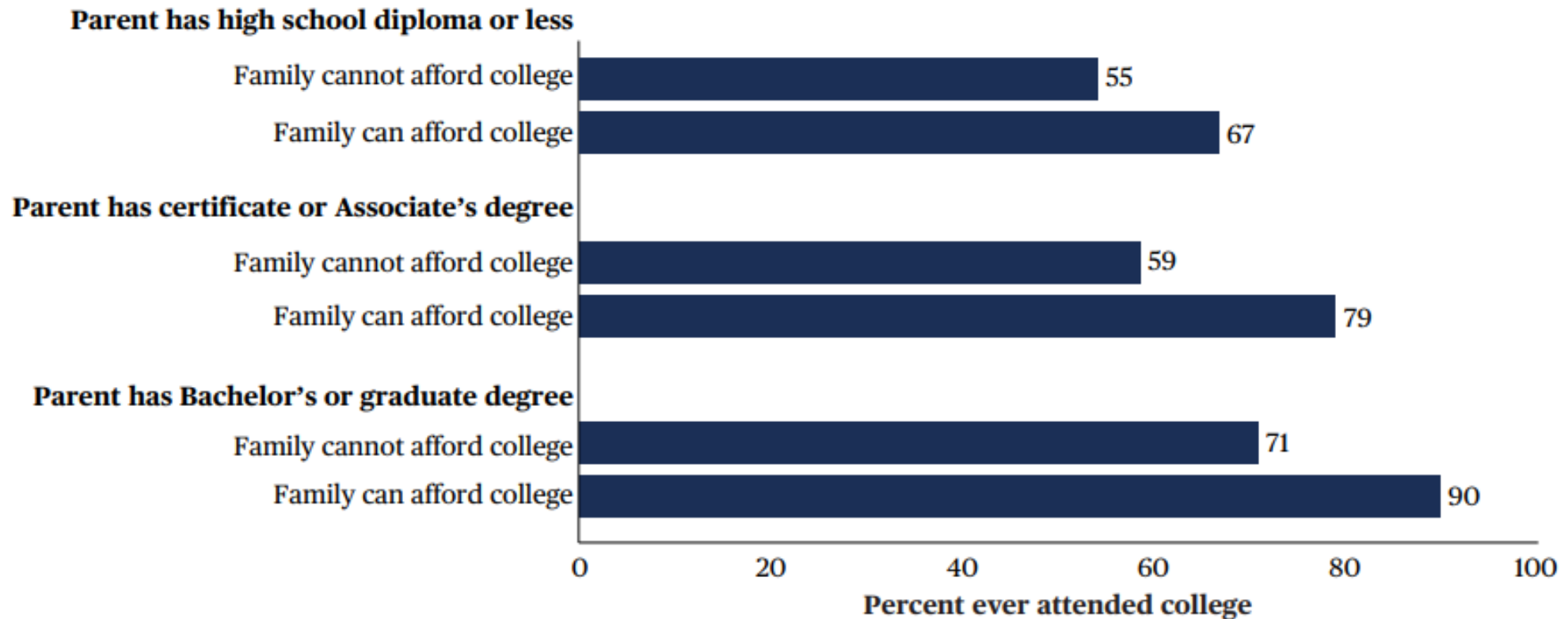
Financial Aid Staffs' Uncertainty Regarding Availability of Non-Tuition Supports



Source: Conroy, E.V., Magnelia, S., Dahl, S., & Goldrick-Rab, S. (2021). The real price of college: Estimating and supporting students' financial needs. The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice. [https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/RPC\\_FinalReport\\_10.19.2021.pdf](https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/RPC_FinalReport_10.19.2021.pdf)

# Public Perceptions of College Affordability

**FIGURE 2. College attendance rates by 2016 for the high school class of 2013, by their views of college affordability and highest level of parent education in 2012**



## Recommendations

- Develop a greater understanding of the challenges facing today's students
- Become more comfortable connecting college and career data
- Keep innovating!

▶ Thank you

**Questions?**