

Obtaining Parent Data

Conversation Guide for Key Campus Allies

Instructions

Use this discussion guide to assist you as you speak with other campus leaders about obtaining access to parent data for engagement and fundraising purposes. We have included key partners in this work including, but not limited to: student affairs, financial aid, university or college counsel, and CIO.

Talking Points for Why We Want to Engage Parents in Advancement

- The advancement team has been and continues to be focused on engaging our alumni in supporting the institution, but even with that focus we continually need to look to diversify our fundraising sources.
- Higher education institutions are increasingly turning to a new market to diversify their revenue sources—parents.
- Parents are a logical constituency to look to as we expand our fundraising streams for a number of reasons:
 - The current generation of parents is particularly invested in their student’s welfare.
 - Bringing parents into a donor role allows them to get answers to questions, while also keeping them financially invested in the organization.
 - Parents are interested in supporting programs that directly benefit their student while they are on campus.
 - Past giving to private and secondary schools and other charities can set expectations about support. Many parents expect to hear a request for support early in their student’s education.
 - High net worth of parents and their instant affinity when their child is accepted into the college or university of their choice shortens the time from first gift to ultimate major gift we typically follow with alumni donors. We can raise more from current parents if we start early in the freshman year.
 - Research shows that parent giving has the potential to inspire young alumni giving, something that we need to focus on as our students matriculate and then become alumni.
- To do this work, we need support from key allies across campus—first to obtain the parent data we need to make meaningful connections with parents, and second to engage them after we secure financial support.

Critical Questions for the General Counsel

- I understand that advancement is legally allowed to access parent name, demographic, and contact information. Does advancement currently have the ability to gain access to this information? If not, what measures need to be implemented so that fundraisers can gain access to parent information?
- How can we educate colleagues in student affairs, admissions, and financial aid about which personal parent information is and should be accessible to advancement?
- What other legal issues should we be aware of as we move forward with parent fundraising?

Conversation Guide for Key Campus Allies (cont.)

Critical Questions for Chief Information Officer

- How many different information systems exist on campus?
- Which systems house parent information?
- Who do we need to contact to gain access to the parent information we as an institution collect?

Critical Questions for Student Affairs

- What type of parent information is being collected within admissions and student affairs?
- Could advancement gain access to that information? If not, what are your concerns?
- Do you collect additional information after a student formally accepts admittance? What parent information is collected at that time?
- Could both student affairs and advancement benefit from asking for additional contact and demographic information from parents?
- What are the communication touchpoints for parents after admittance and acceptance?
- What does your parent communication plan look like across the student's four years of college?
- What needs do you have in student affairs that we might be able to interest parent volunteer and donors to support?
- Who else should we contact about our desire to collect parent data?

Critical Questions for Financial Aid

- What types of parent information is being collected on the FASFA form?
- Could advancement gain access to this information?
- Could advancement at the very least gain access to the full-pay parent list as well as a list of parents whose student is receiving financial aid?