The Princeton Review Reports Findings of Its 2024 College Administrator Summer Survey

**Administrators Polled on FAFSA Rollout, Admission Test Policies, Fall Enrollments,
Use of AI in Admissions, DEI Programs, and Issues That Matter Most on Their Campuses**

NEW YORK, August 27, 2024 /— According to a recent survey by [The Princeton Review](#)® of 246 college administrators nationwide, the botched rollout of the 2024–25 FAFSA® (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) significantly impacted fall applications to their institutions. Nearly half of the surveyed administrators (46%) gauged the level of that impact as "high" or "very high."

Asked their level of confidence that the release of the 2025–26 FAFSA will be "timely and smooth," 70% of the administrators gauged their confidence in this as "low" or "very low."

The Princeton Review [2024 College Administrator Summer Survey](#), conducted from July 19 to August 6, is the education services company's 5th annual summer survey of administrators.

The survey also asked administrators about their school's fall enrollment forecasts and admission test requirements as well as the importance of college level coursework (AP®, IB®, and dual enrollment) on applicants' transcripts in admission decisions. Questions on trending topics invited administrator's opinions on campus DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) programs and the use of AI (Artificial Intelligence) in college admissions.

A findings summary follows. A full report on the survey is at PrincetonReview.com [here](#). It lists the survey's 12 questions and answer choices, and it reports the percent of administrators selecting the answers by respondents overall, by school type (public/private), and by school region (Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Northeast, South, Southwest, and West).

Findings Summary

· The 2024–25 FAFSA rollout impacted college applications.
Nearly half of administrators (46%) gauged that impact on their institution's applications as "high" or "very high." Nearly one out of three (32%) reported a "moderate" impact while 22% reported a "low" or "very low" impact. Asked about the 2025–26 FAFSA release, only 6% of administrators said they had a "high" or "very high" level of confidence that it will be "timely and smooth." The overwhelming majority (70%) reported "low" or "very low" confidence in this while 24% gauged their confidence level as "moderate."

· The majority of colleges were test optional for fall 2024 but considered applicant scores on the SAT®, ACT®, or IB (International Baccalaureate) exams.
Nearly 9 out of 10 administrators (89%) said their institutions were test optional for fall 2024. Only 4% said their schools required test scores (a 3% increase from the 1% reporting this on the 2023 survey). Only 7% said their institutions were test blind or test free (a 3% decrease from the 10% reporting this in 2023). Asked their institution's admission test policies for fall 2025: 85% said they will be test optional; 5% said they will require scores; 7% said they will be test blind or test free; and 3% said their 2025 policies were not decided.

· Fall 2024 enrollments are generally expected to be on par with (or higher than) those of fall 2023.
Despite the problems emanating from the 2024–25 FAFSA rollout and increasing concerns among applicants and parents about college affordability, three out of four administrators (75%) expect their fall 2024 enrollment will be about the same or higher than that of fall 2023. Within that cohort of 75%, 38% expect it will be about the same and 37% expect it to be higher (21% expect it to be 2 to 4% higher and 16% expect it to be 5% higher or more).

However, one out of four administrators (25%) expect their fall 2024 enrollment will be lower than that of fall 2023. Within that cohort of 25%,14% anticipate it to be 2 to 4% lower while 11% expect it to be 5% lower or more.

· **College level coursework on applicant transcripts matters significantly in admission decisions.**
Asked about AP, IB, and dual enrollment coursework on applicant transcripts, 60% of administrators deemed it "important" or "very important" in admission decisions. (Note: 44% of administrators at private colleges reported this compared with 16% of administrators at public colleges.)

· **The majority of administrators support college DEI programs, policies, and practices.**
Asked about current efforts to block or restrict DEI programs in higher education, 94% of administrators said such programs should be protected and promoted. (Note: by region, the highest percentage of administrators (98%) holding this opinion were those at colleges in the Northeast while the lowest percentage (80%—though still a majority) were those at colleges in the South.) Only 6% of administrators believe DEI programs should be blocked or restricted.

· **The majority of administrators have mixed opinions about the use of AI in college applications and admissions.**
Asked their opinion of the current and potential use of AI-based resources by administrators as well as by students in the college application and admissions process,15% of administrators said they are "excited" about it (a 6% increase over the 9% so indicating on the 2023 survey). Significantly fewer (4%) said they are "concerned" about it (an 11% decrease from the 15% so indicating in 2023). The majority of administrators (78%) selected the answer "both excited and concerned" (an increase of 6% over the 72% that selected this answer in 2023): 3% chose the answer "neither excited or concerned."

· **In the school year ahead, affordability will be the key concern among college students and academics will be the key concern among college administrators.**
The survey asked administrators to rank four topics according to which they expect will matter most among their students and which will matter most among their fellow administrators in the school year ahead. In alphabetical order, the topics were: academics (quality and quantity of course offerings), affordability (cost of attendance and level of financial aid for students), social justice (commitments to diversity and addressing discrimination) and student activism (campus protests related to political, environmental, or economic change). Affordability is the issue administrators ranked as likely to matter most among their school's students followed by #2 academics, #3 social justice, and #4 student activism. Academics is the issue administrators ranked as likely to matter most among their fellow administrators followed by #2 affordability, #3 social justice, and #4 student activism.

Today, The Princeton Review also released its _2025 Best Colleges_ rankings. The rankings annually name the top 25 schools in 50 categories. The rankings are entirely based on the company's surveys of 168,000 students attending the schools in its annual *Best Colleges* guidebook, the 2025 edition of which, *The Best 390 Colleges* (Penguin Random House) went on sale today. The survey asks students to rate their schools on dozens of topics and report on their campus experiences at them. Topics range from academics, financial aid, and campus amenities to school services, campus culture, and community matters. The 50 ranking lists are published in the book and posted on PrincetonReview.com here.

About the Survey
The Princeton Review 2024 College Administrator Summer Survey was conducted from July 19 to August 6. Its 12 questions presented multiple-choice answers. The survey was sent to administrators at 632 institutions including schools the company profiles in its book *The Best 390 Colleges: 2025 Edition* (August 27, 2024) and schools in its *Best Regional Colleges for 2025* website feature. The survey was completed online by 246 administrators (a 39% response rate): 71% (175) were from private colleges and 29% (71) were from public colleges. By region, the distribution was: Mid-Atlantic (15%), Midwest (26%), Northeast (26%), South (15%), Southwest (7%) and West (11%). A report on the survey showing findings by respondents overall, by school type, and by region is here. An infographic depicting selected findings is

here. Releases on The Princeton Review's [2023](#)*,* [2022](#)*,* [2021](#) and [2020](#) College Administrator Summer Surveys are archived in the company's [Media Center](#).

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SOURCE: The Princeton Review
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NOTE TO EDITORS: [Rob Franek](#), Editor-in-Chief, The Princeton Review, and David Soto, Senior Director of Data Operations, are available for interviews.

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