

# Enrollment Management

*Not Just for Your  
Admission Office*

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SSATB

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[www.admission.org](http://www.admission.org)



# About SSATB

- Nonprofit membership association founded in 1957
- Mission-driven services to aid in student recruitment, selection, and retention
  - Assessment
  - Research, trends, reports
  - Data dashboards
  - Standard application
  - Student prospecting
  - Professional content and training
- 1033 members: U.S., Canada, and worldwide



# About Me

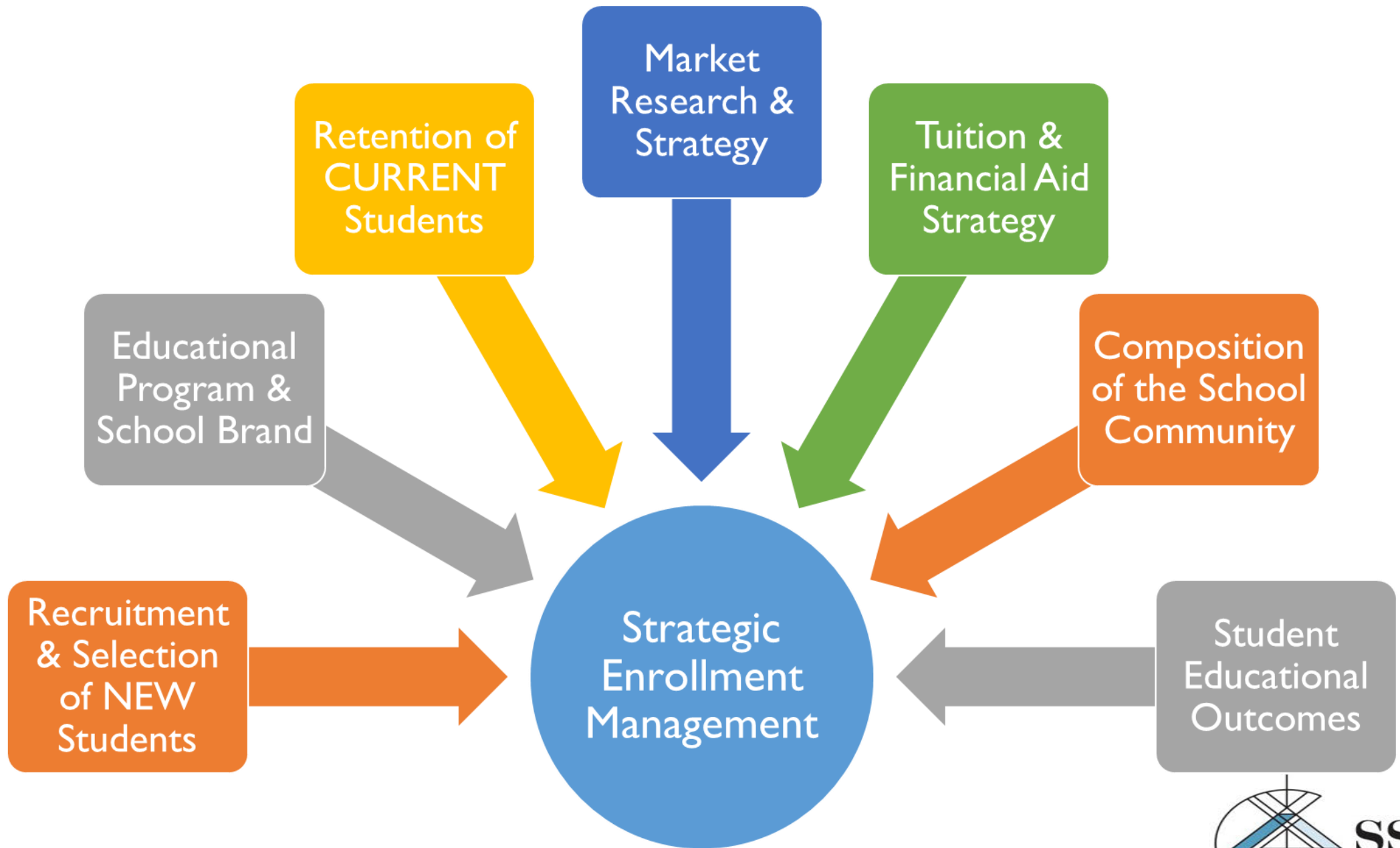
- Senior Director of Outreach for SSATB
- Live in British Columbia, Canada
- Worked as an admission director in independent day and boarding schools in the U.S.
- Worked at The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS)
- Admission / Marketing consultant for Canadian schools
- Spend a lot of time meeting with individual schools and groups of schools – in the U.S., Canada, and worldwide – to strategize about enrollment management issues and to discuss industry trends



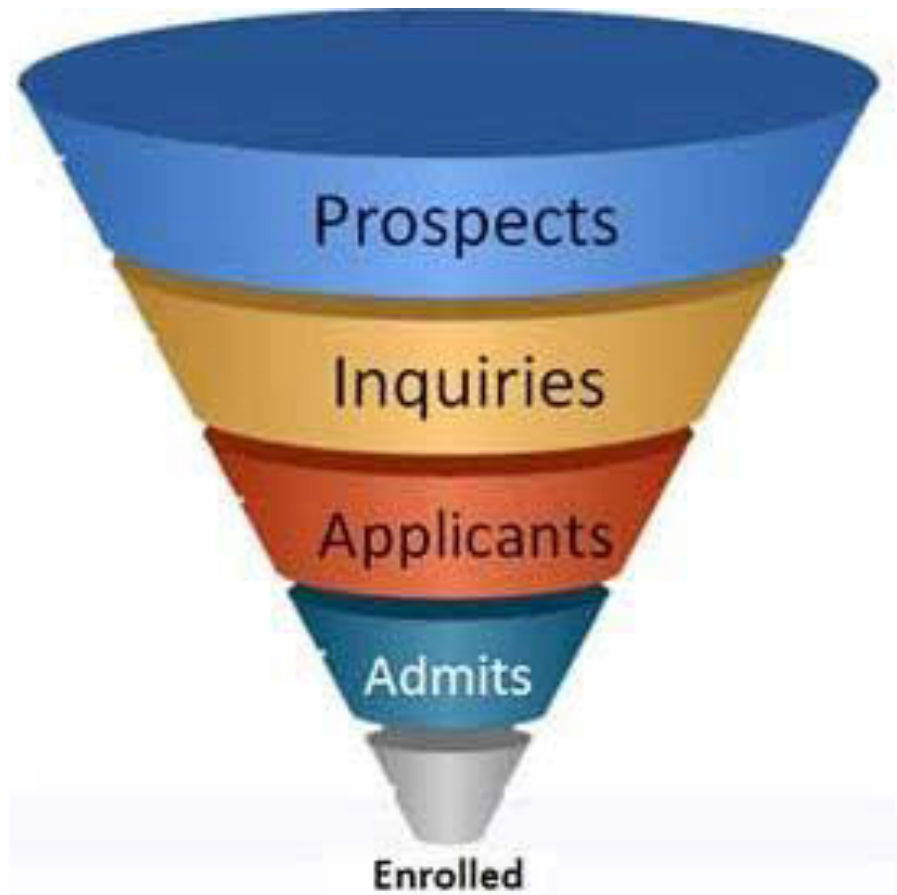
# Defining the Terms

- **Admission** is the process whereby students are recruited for and admitted to your school.
- **Enrollment management** a integrated research based process that guides the annual recruitment, enrolment and retention of mission-appropriate students in sufficient quantity to ensure current and future <financial> sustainability.





# Enrollment starts with the funnel.



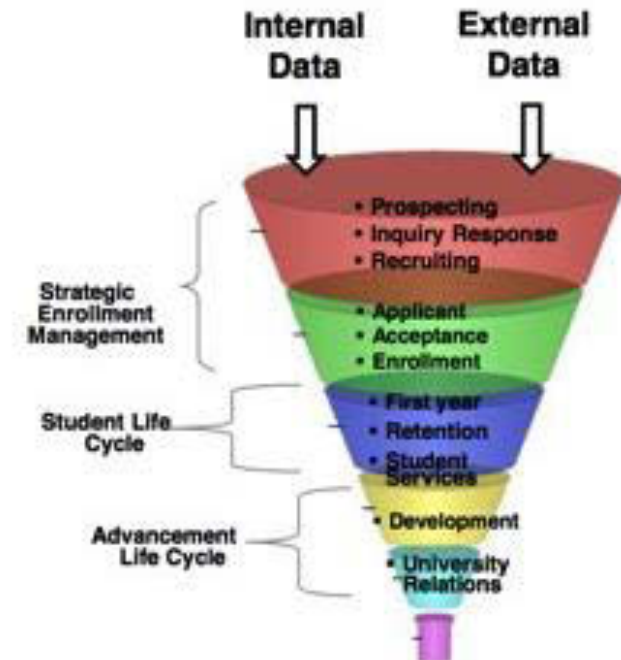
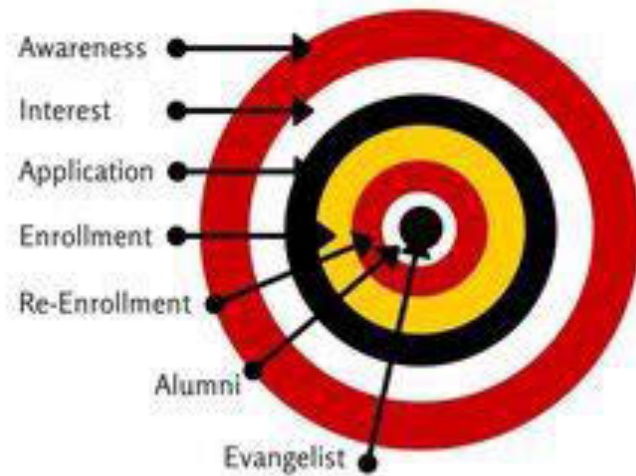
“The original admission funnel was first introduced in the 1970s as a way of looking at the recruitment and admission process on a more systemic level ... it presents a static view of customers (or prospects) as they “fall out” of interest in a product/service.”

Admissions Lab



# Today, the funnel comes in all shapes and sizes.

## The Enrollment Rings



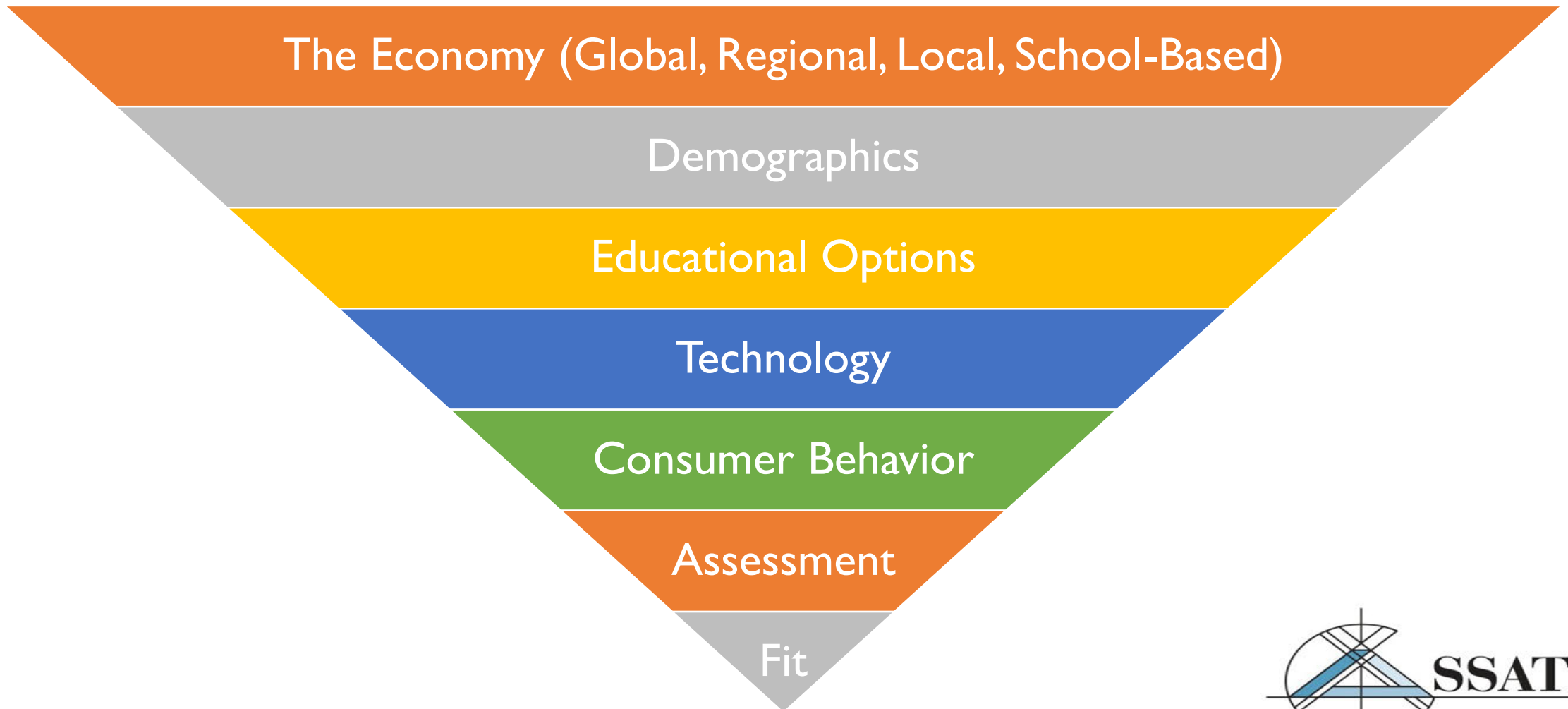
# Yet the Purpose of the Funnel is the Same

- Provide predictive modeling in terms of yield and retention
- Track progress from one year to the next and over time
- Measure your school against peer institutions (assuming common data definitions)
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Window into reality of enrollment situation (e.g. how selective are you?)





# Forces Shaping Your Admission Funnel



# Forces Shaping Your Admission Funnel

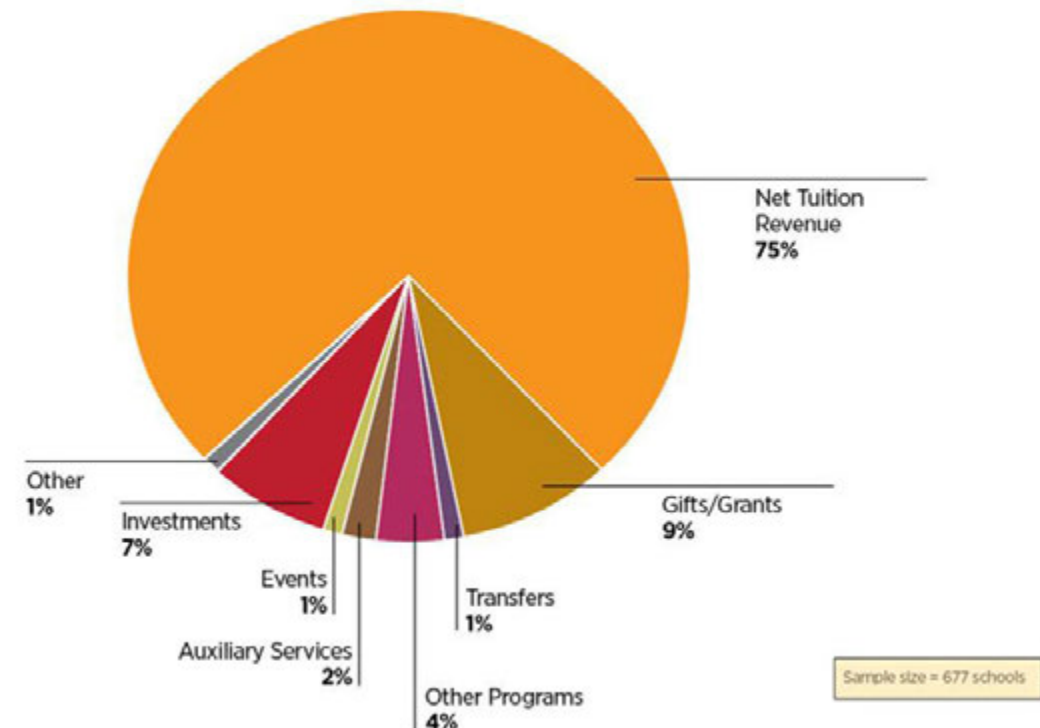


The Economy (Global, Regional, Local, School-Based)

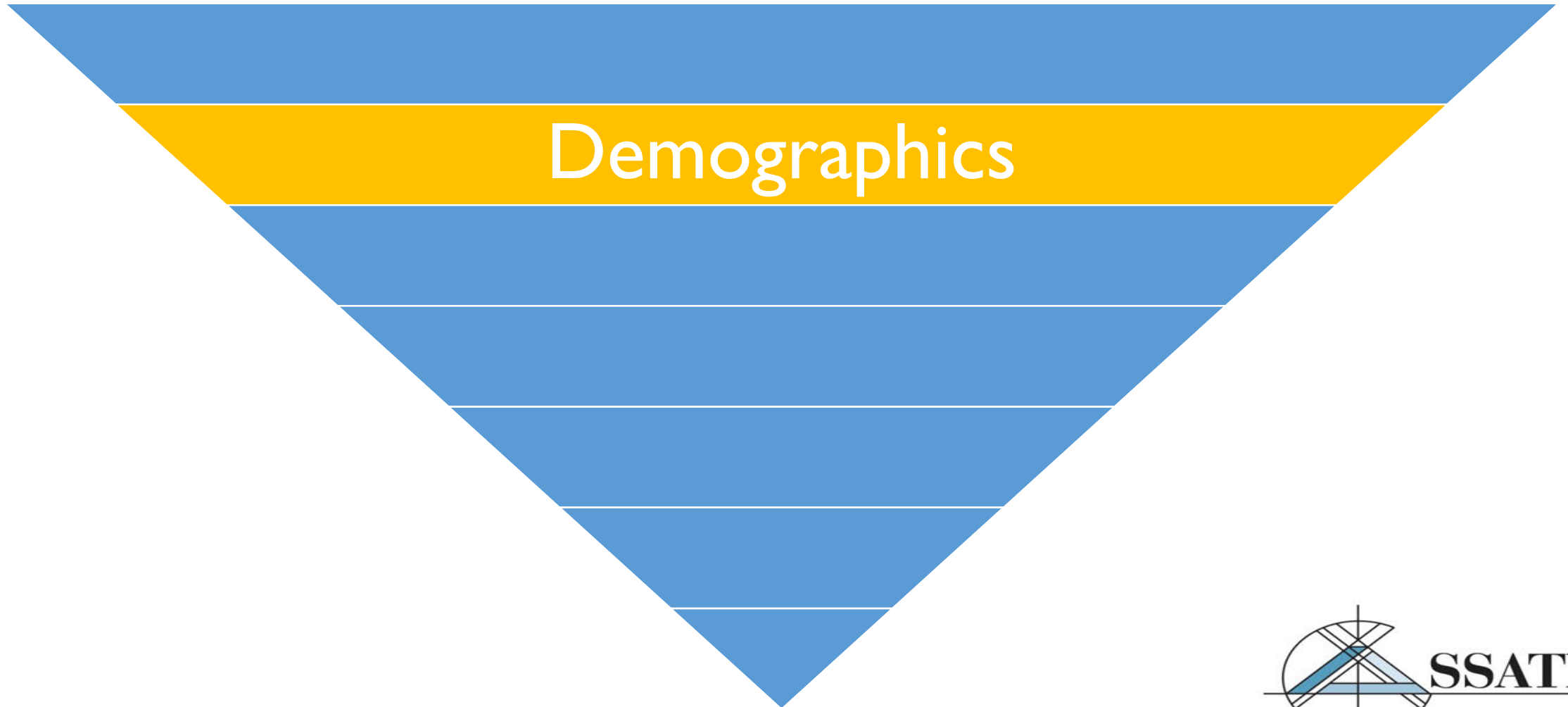
# Economic Examples

- The health of the global job market
- The health of the local job market
- The cost of your tuition and your school's dependence on tuition revenue
- A family's ability to pay vs. their willingness to pay

NAIS Schools Tuition Dependence  
Distribution of Income at Independent Schools, 2012–2013



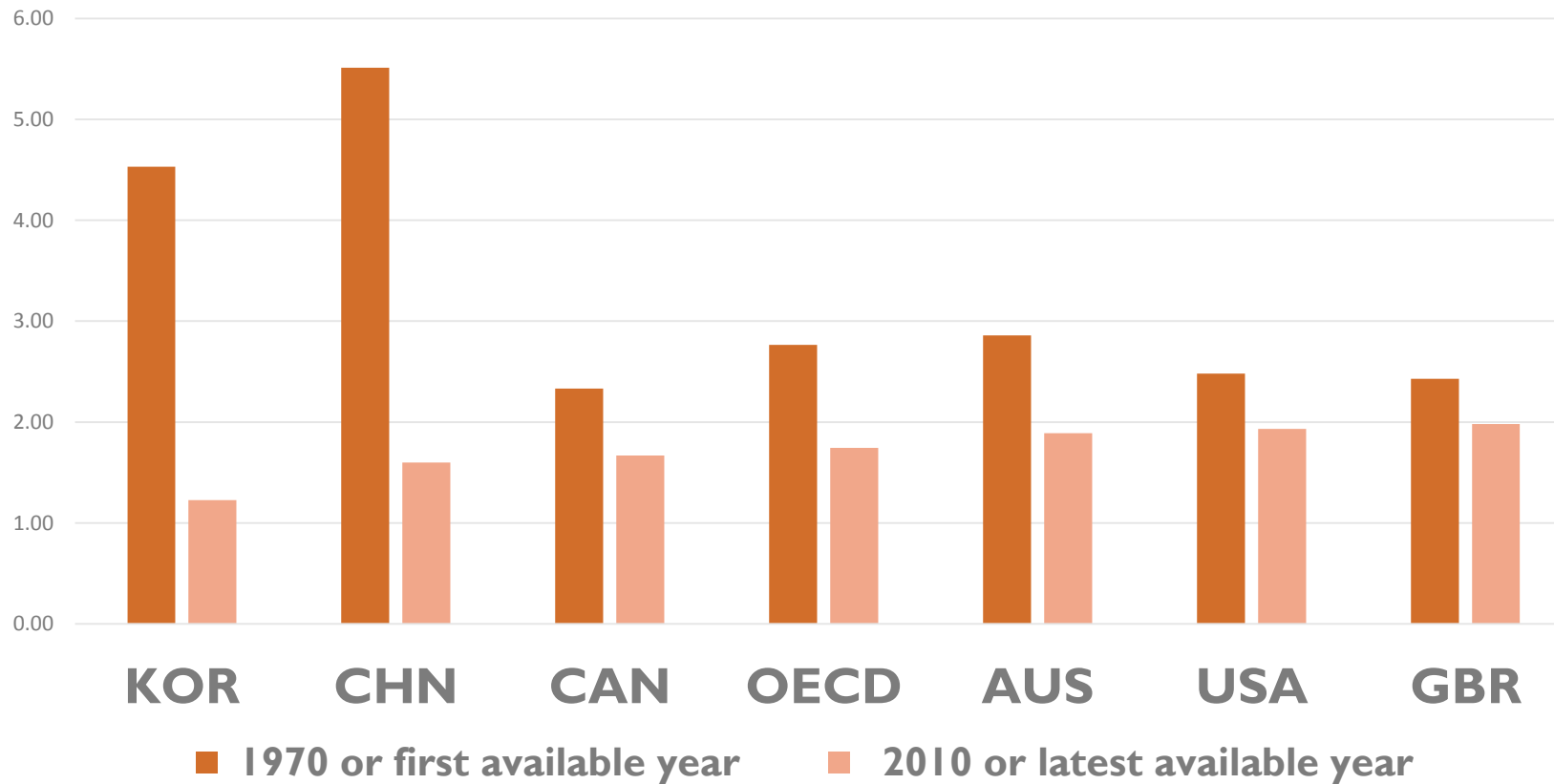
# Forces Shaping Your Admission Funnel



# Changing Demographics

“If they  
aren’t born,  
they can’t  
come to  
school.”  
Chad Tew

**Total Fertility Rates**  
**Number of Children Born to Women ages 15-49**



*Source: OECD  
Factbook 2013:  
Economic,  
Environmental  
and Social  
Statistics*

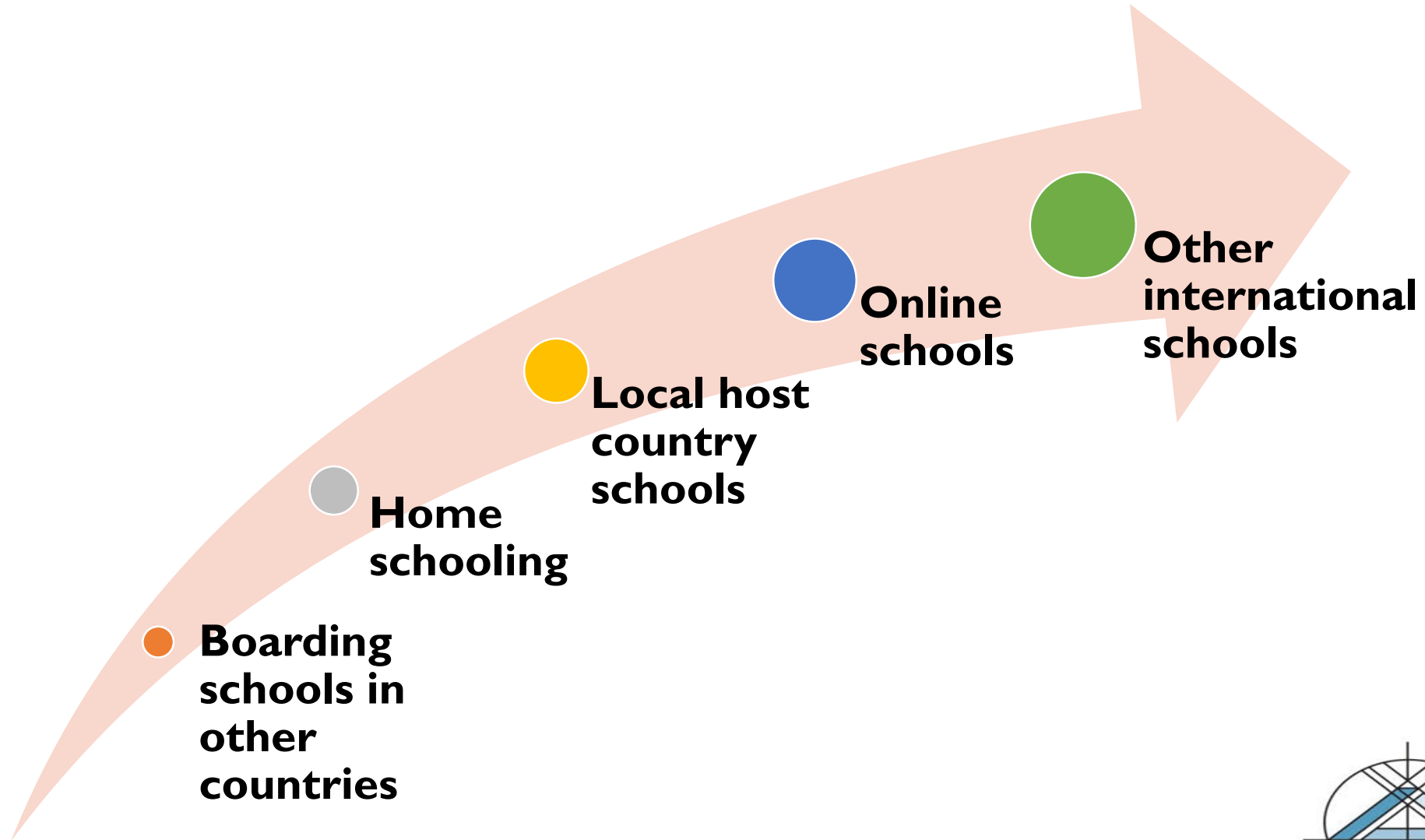


# Forces Shaping Your Admission Funnel

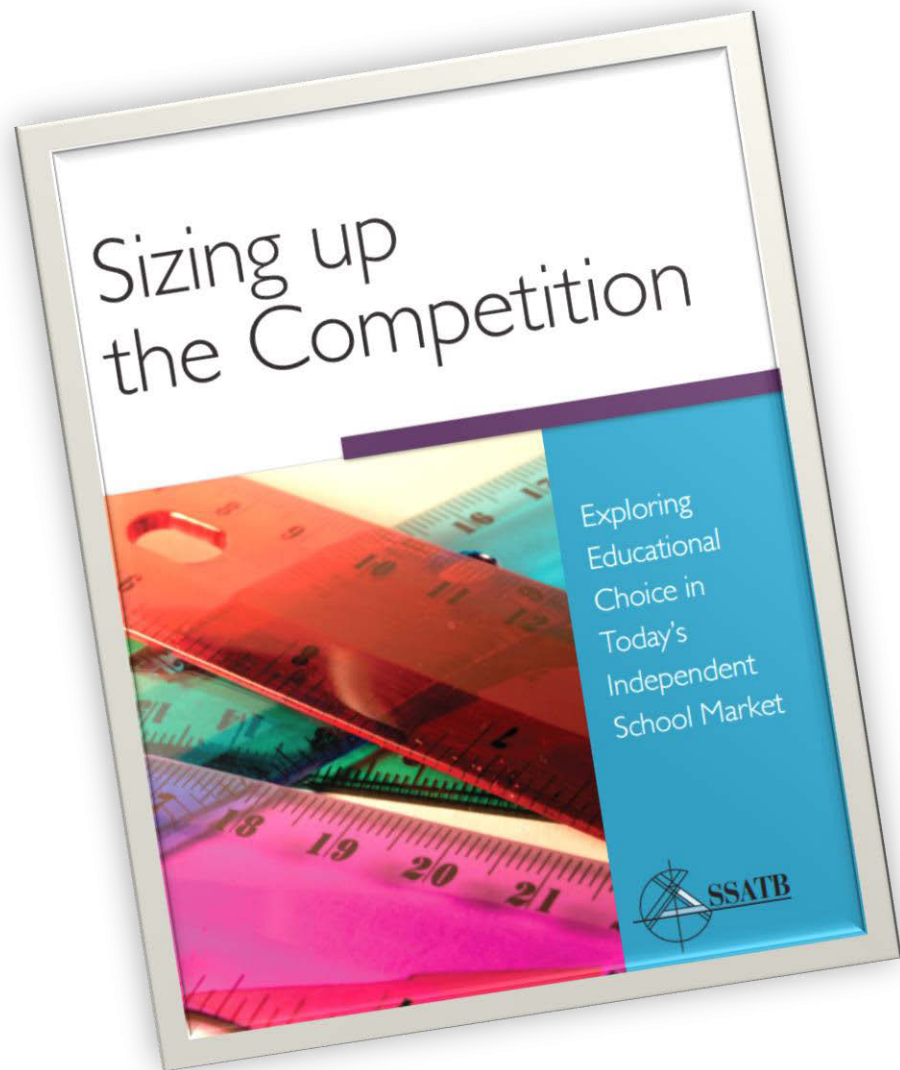


**Educational Options**

# Educational Options for International Families



# Sizing Up the Competition



- Academically rigorous schools
- Deeper learning schools
- Personalized learning schools
- Online schools

Published July 2015





# What Did We Learn?

- Free or significantly less expensive
- Launched in the past 10 years
- On a fast growth curve (and going global)
- Already appealing to families who have traditionally selected independent schools
- Have a clearly defined educational philosophy and model
- Can readily and persuasively articulate their value proposition
- Big \$ investors
- Truly 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools in terms of teaching and learning



# Charter Operator BASIS Opening Private School in China

By [Sean Cavanagh](#) on August 7, 2015 10:01 AM | [1 Comment](#)



22

 Tweet

International schools will not be immune to the competition faced by independent schools in the U.S.

## UPDATED

BASIS, a **charter school network** that has garnered widespread attention for its **demanding math- and science-focused curriculum**, is planning an ambitious expansion—in China, through the opening of a new private school.

Beginning this fall, the school will open its doors to students in Shenzhen, a burgeoning commercial hub located in the Guangdong province, in the southeastern part of the country.



# A Growth Industry

- 8,218 international schools
- 4.36 million students
- \$39 Billion in fee income (USD)
- 7 countries with 200+ international schools
  - China: 556
  - UAE: 553

Source:  
ISC Research

# International Schools

## *Selectivity in Relation to Full Pay Applicants*

- 15% Receive more full pay applications than available spots. Manage an extensive wait list.
- 30% Receive more full pay applications than available spots. Manage a small wait list.
- 29% Accept all qualified full pay applicants. Reach net tuition revenue goals by start of school year.
- 10% Reach net tuition revenue goals several weeks into school year.
- 9% Did not reach net tuition revenue goals last year.
- 6% Do not know if net tuition revenue goals met.

Source: SSATB's 2015 International School Admission Industry Report



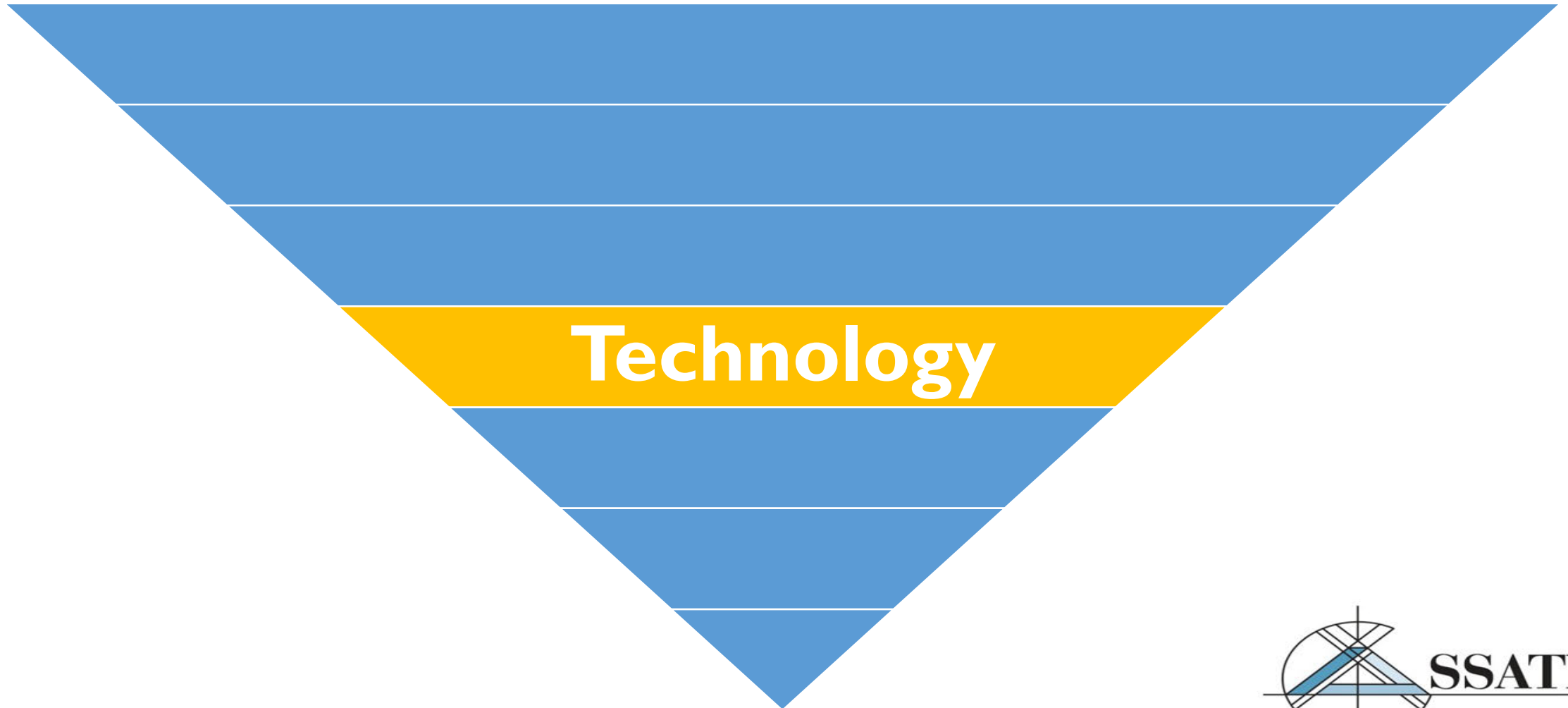
# Independent Schools Selectivity & Demand

SSATB 2015 State of the Industry Survey

We received many more applications than available spots and managed an extensive waiting list of students in most grades	11%
We received more applications than available spots and managed a small waiting list of students in several grades	32%
We generally accepted all qualified students and reached our enrollment goals by the start of the year	27%
We did not reach our enrollment goals until several weeks into the school year	7%
We did not reach our enrollment goals last year	22%
I do not know	1%



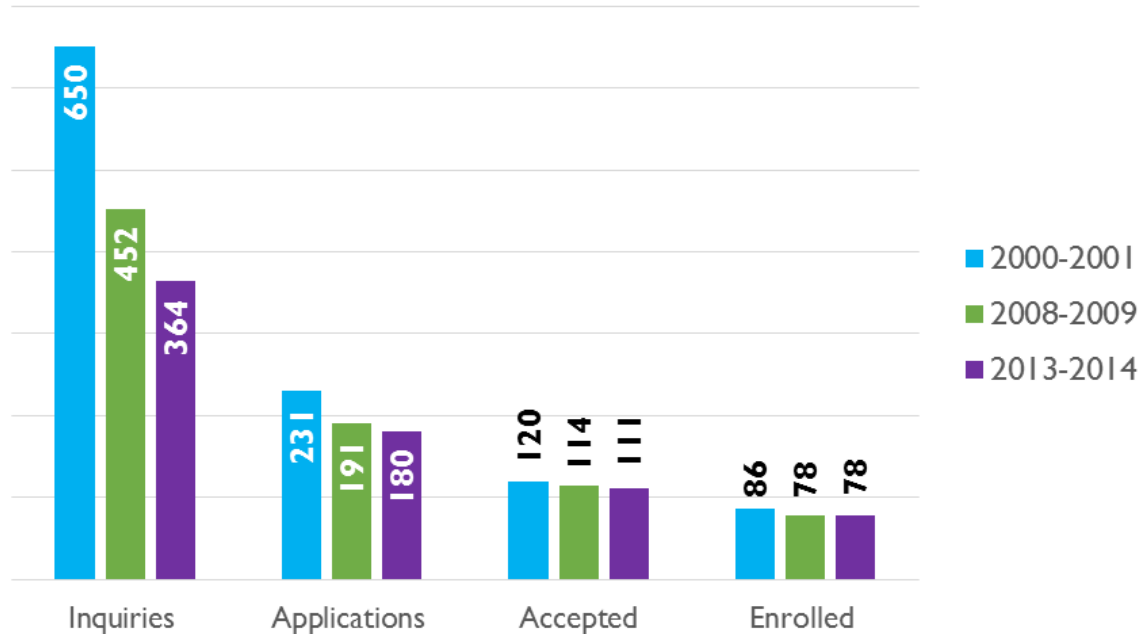
# Forces Shaping Your Admission Funnel



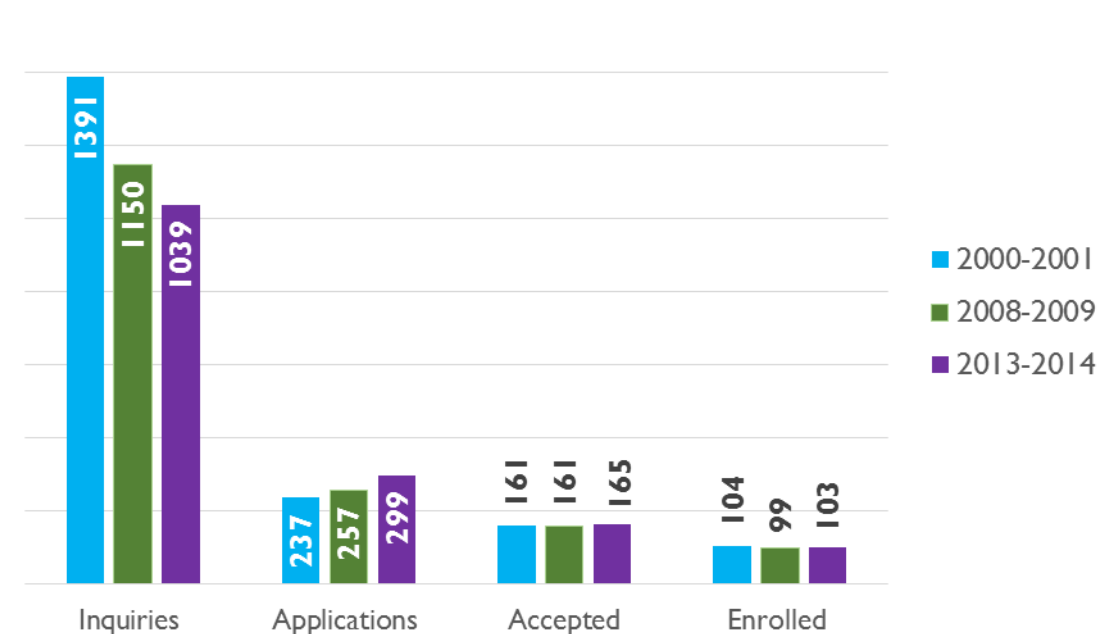


# Technology is Great, but Where Have All My Inquiries Gone?

Domestic Day Funnel Median



Domestic Boarding Funnel Median



Source: NAIS DASL

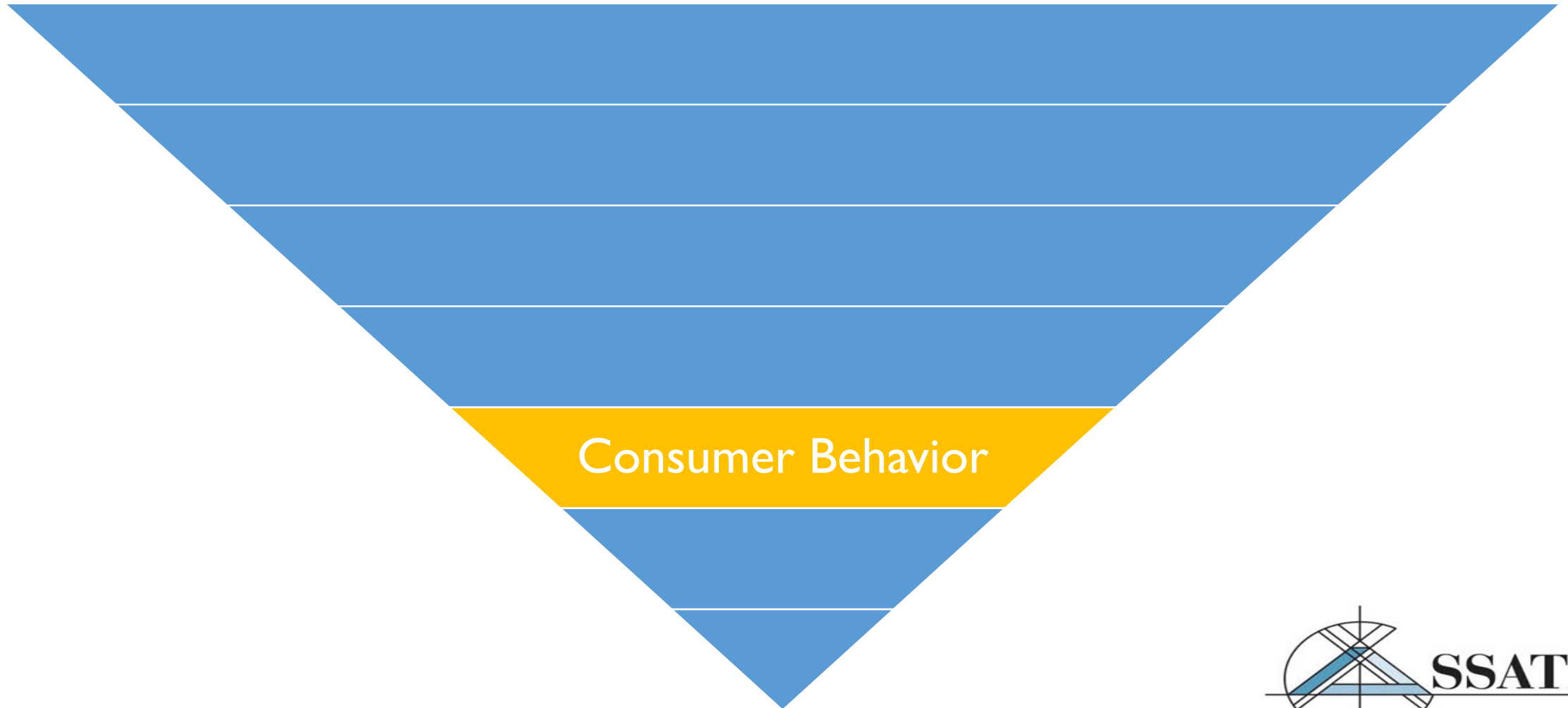


# Tech Paradox: They Meet You Online, They Discover You in Person





# Forces Shaping Your Admission Funnel



## Multiple Entry Points & Decision Channels

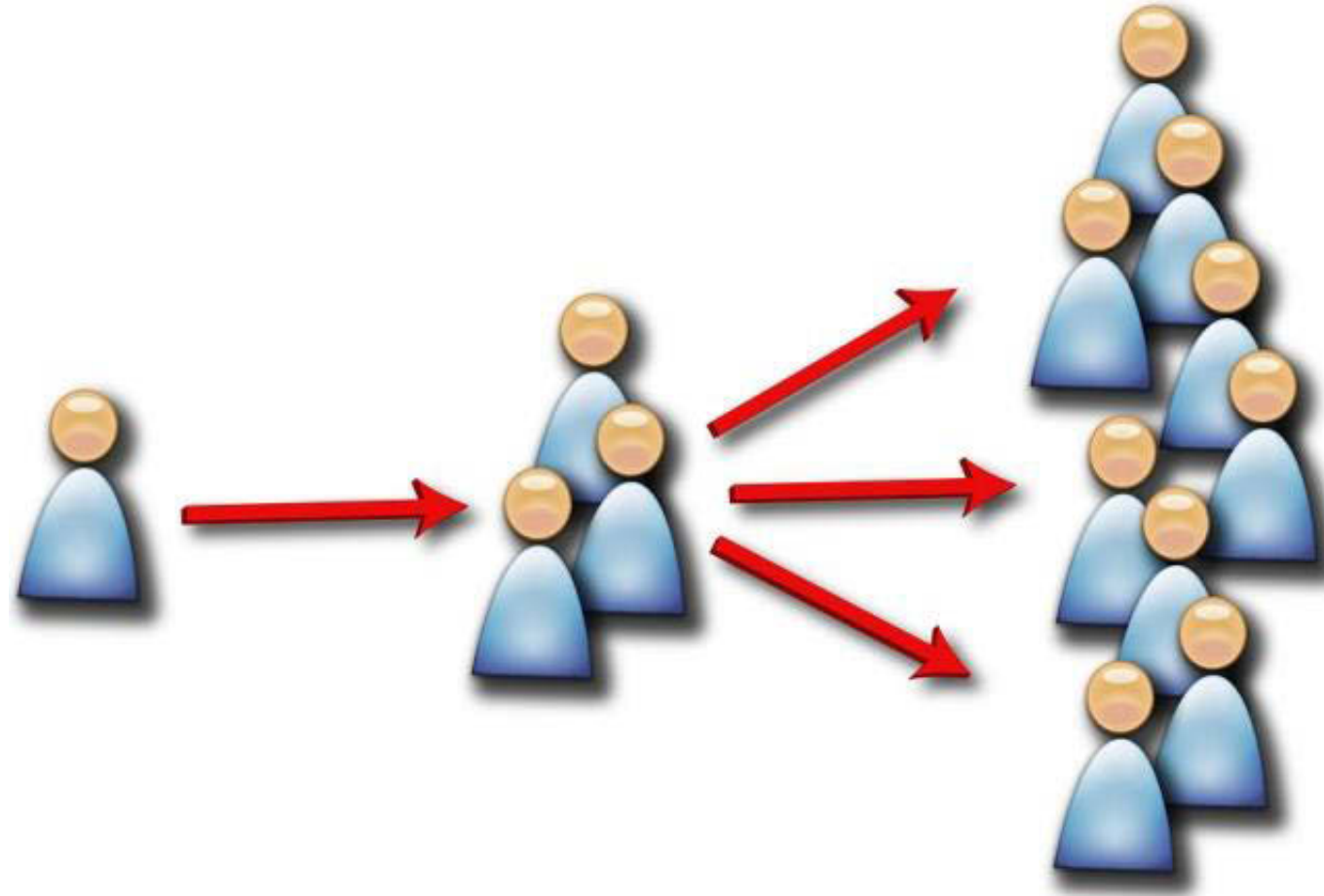


# **It's Like Buying a New Car Every Year: Every interaction with parents reinforces (or not!) their purchase**

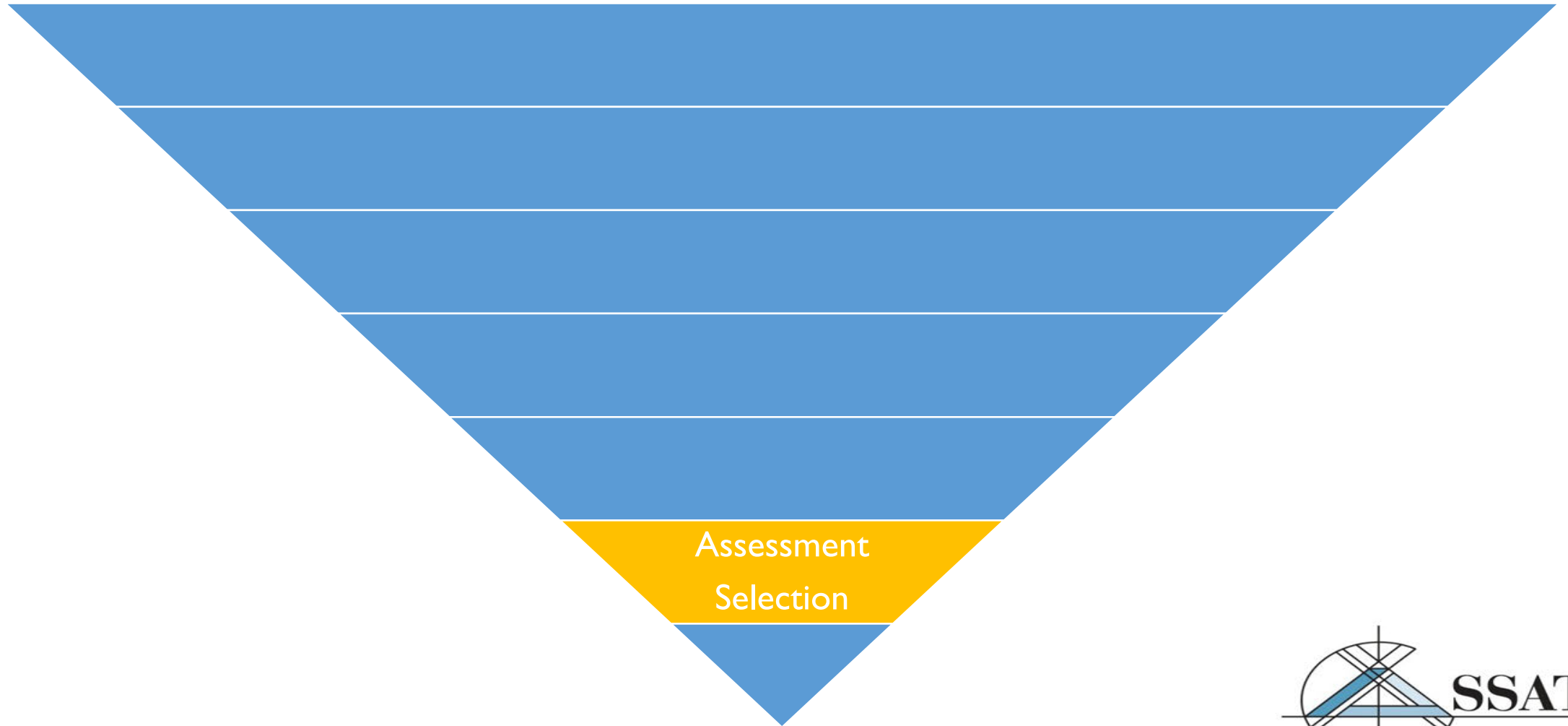
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Disciplinary meetings
- Grades/teacher comments
- Athletic competitions
- Annual fund ask
- Making tuition payments



# WOM Marketing through Brand Advocates: Your Currently Enrolled Families



# Forces Shaping Your Admission Funnel



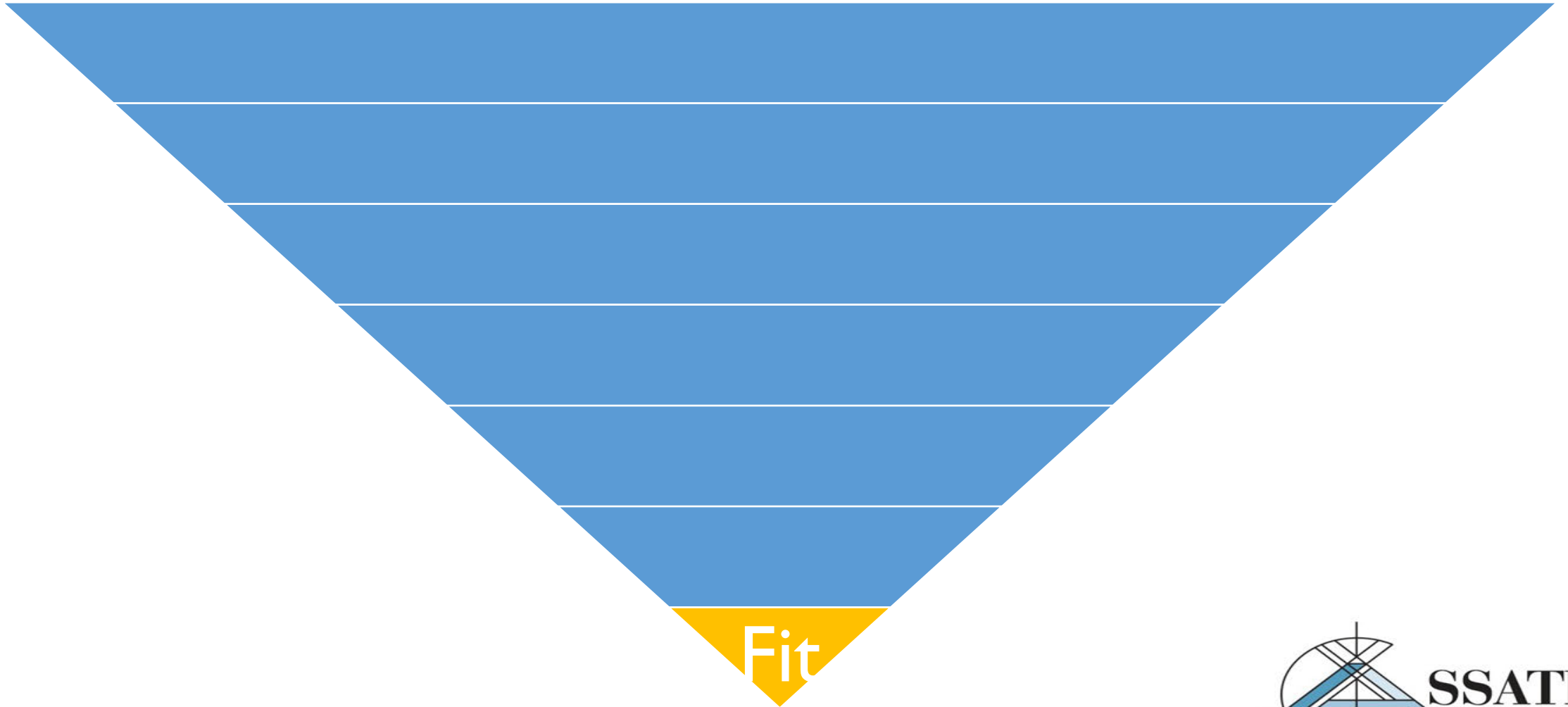
# Assessment and Selection Challenges for International Schools

- Determining the student's level of English language proficiency
- Understanding the different grading systems of students' current schools
- Differentiating the relative strength of the academic programs of students' current schools
- Determining potential grade placement within your school
- Assessing the student's behavior/character
- Acquiring teacher recommendations/references
- Acquiring school records

**Source: *2015 International School Admission Industry (SSATB)***



# Forces Shaping Your Admission Funnel



# **Fit: Do you know why families are choosing your school (or not)?**

- Have an environment that is conducive to learning
- Feel that their child will be comfortable at the school
- The curriculum at the school
- The quality of the teaching staff
- Offer teaching that is designed to develop character
- The school's record of achievement
- Foster strong teacher-student communication

Source: *The Ride to Independent Schools* (SSATB)





# Top Challenges Cited by International School Admission Directors


1. Competition from other international schools in the area
2. Marketing the school effectively
3. Pressure from head/board to meet enrollment numbers
4. Economic decline in the area
5. Enrolling a diverse student body
6. Enrolment limits on the number of students with learning style differences
7. Enrolment limits on the number of ESOL students
8. Declining number of eligible students in the area

Source: *2015 International School Admission Industry (SSATB)*



# **4 Enrollment Indicators of Successful Schools**

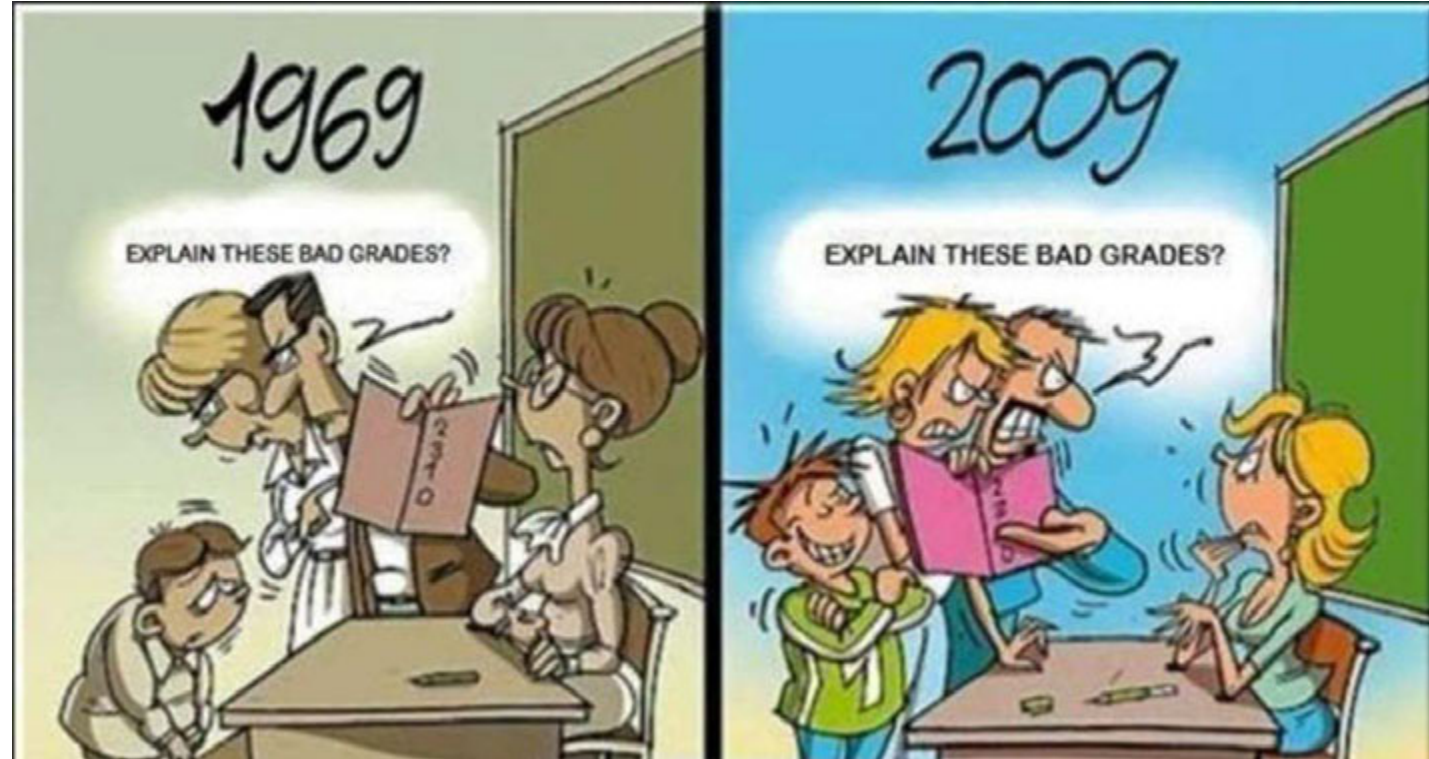




**1**

**Successful schools  
understand and  
serve a new and  
different  
customer.**

# Loyalty to the Child—Not the Institution



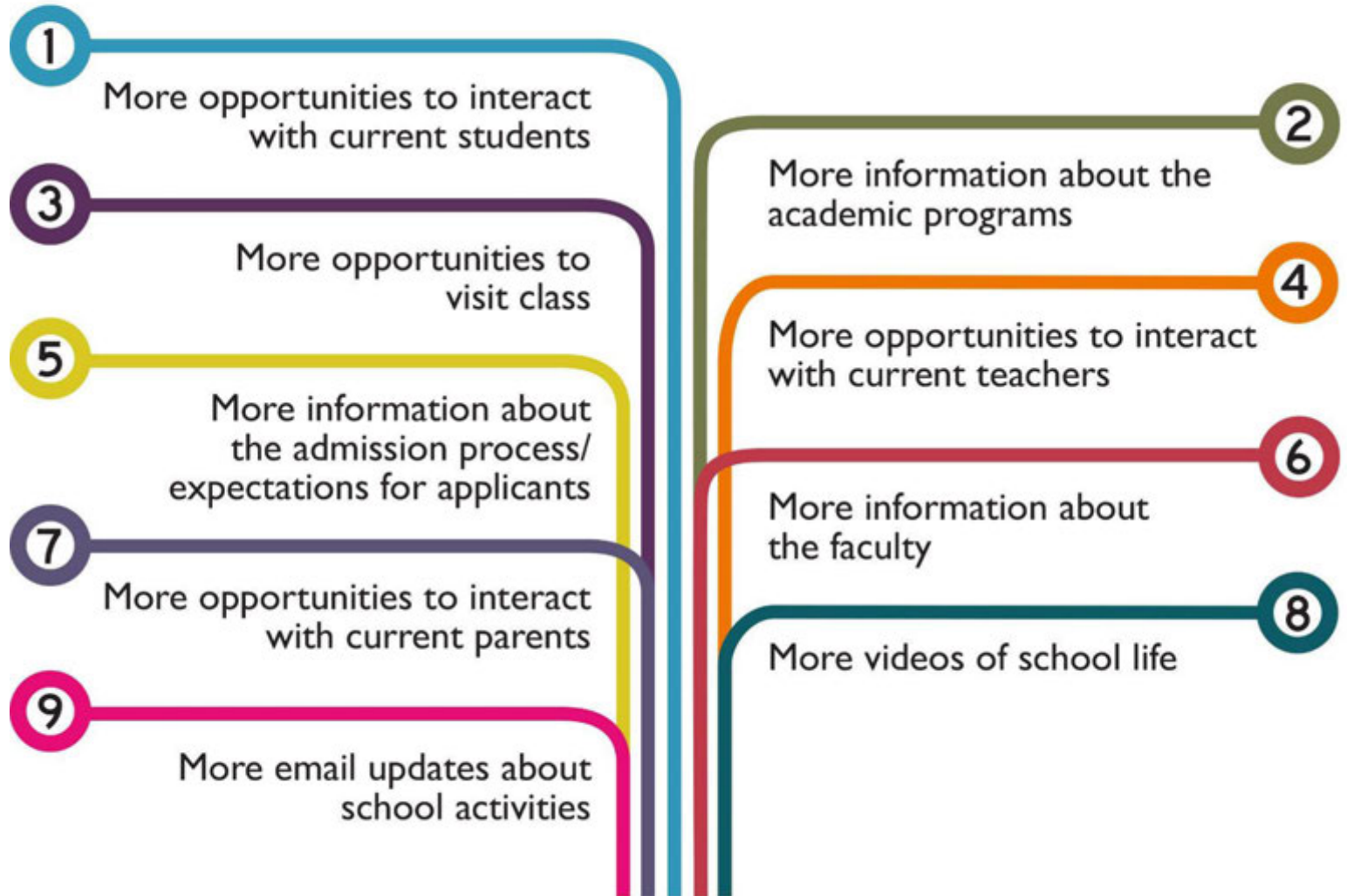
# Meet the NEOs – New Economic Order Families





## The Most Sought after Resources by Prospective Families

**WANTED:  
AUTHENTIC  
FIRST-HAND  
EXPERIENCE**



Source: *The Ride to Independent Schools* (SSATB)

# Don't Underestimate the Power of Tour Guides

Tour Guides' Influence:

✓ 89%

Tour Guide Fall Out:

✓ 30% of visiting students didn't apply to the school b/c of tour guide



As a small  
example of  
effective practice,  
when it comes to  
tour guides, do  
you ....

- Calculate win-loss ratio for individual tour guides?
- Train tour guides?
- Solicit feedback/evaluations?
- Allow families to make requests?
- Match tour guides to family interests?





**2**

**Successful schools  
deliver value to  
families.**

# Primary Reasons for Considering Private School

*How important are each of the following factors in deciding to apply to private school for this child? Check all that apply.*



*Percentages indicate the total respondents that selected the factor as "Extremely Important" or "Very Important."*

**Source: *The Ride to Independent Schools* (SSATB)**



# Are We Making the Big Program Shifts?

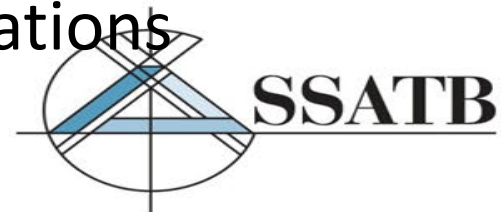
Source: MacArthur Foundation, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning

## YESTERDAY

- Knowing
- Teacher-centered
- The Individual
- Consumption of Info
- Schools
- Single Sourcing
- Testing

## TOMORROW

- Doing
- Student-centered
- The Team
- Construction of Meaning
- Networks (online peers & experts)
- Crowd Sourcing
- High-Value Demonstrations





**3**

**Successful schools  
utilize deep  
student data to  
connect with  
their brand  
promise.**

# Traditional Admission Data

- Grades/transcripts
- Teacher recommendations
- Personal recommendations
- Admission test scores
- Audition/portfolio
- Student application essays
- Interview with candidates
- Interview with parents
- Elementary level observation



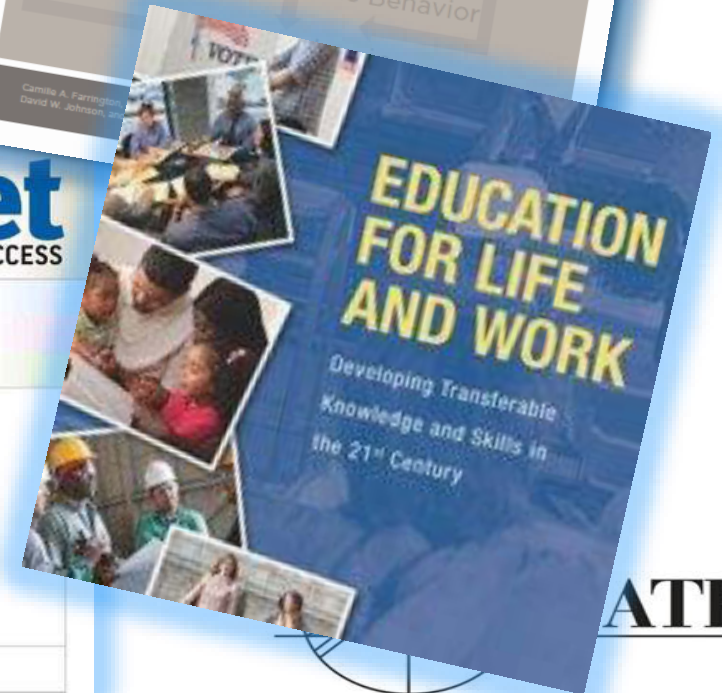
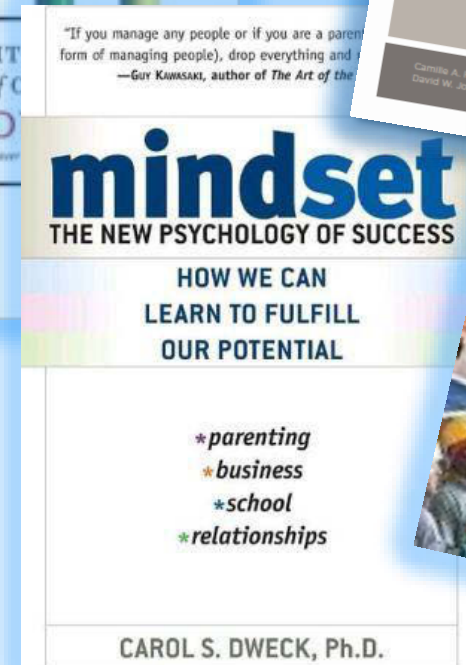
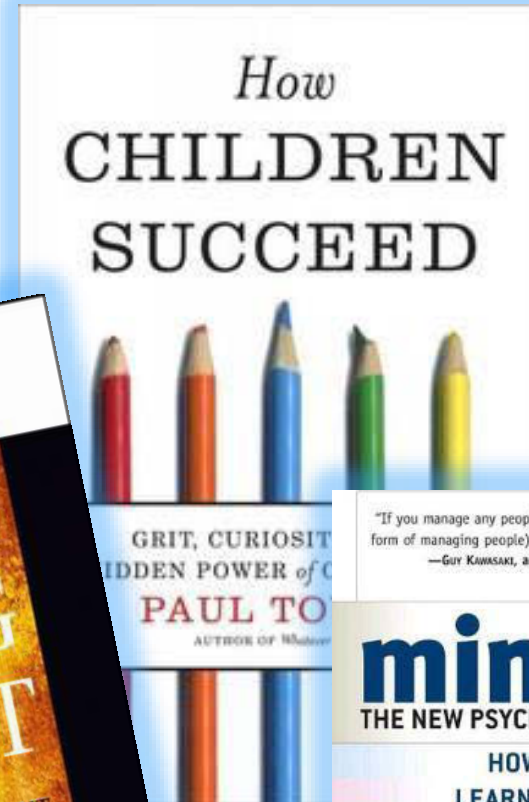
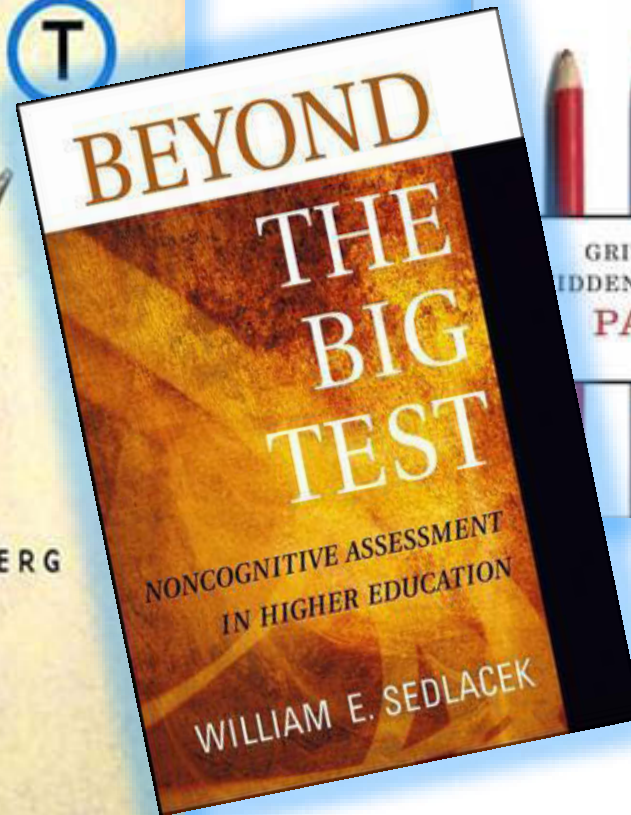
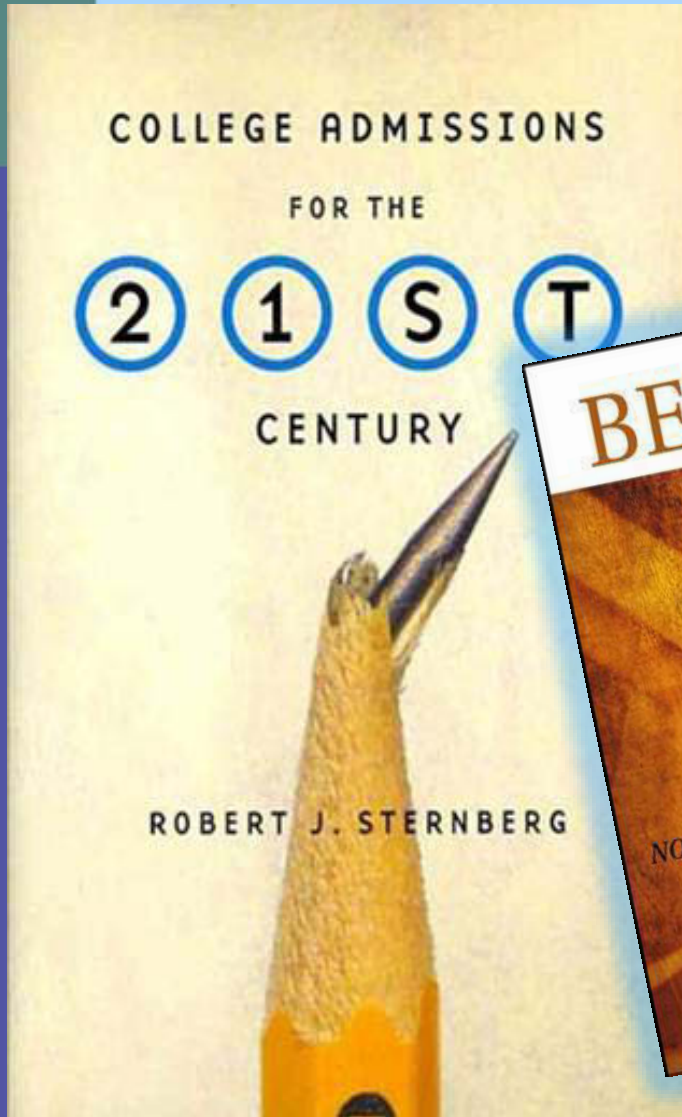
# Tilton's Sample Profile

Grade	Academic Profile Requirements	Standard Measures	Social Characteristics
9	Minimum: Academic credits in the following areas – English, History, Math, Science ( <i>pref. Bio. or Earth Science</i> )	SSAT SLEP* TOEFL*	Optimistic, Willing, Engaged, Hard-working, Capable and Kind
10	Minimum: 1 credit in the following areas – English, History, Math ( <i>pref. Alg. I</i> ), Science ( <i>pref. Bio. or Earth Science and Chem.</i> ) <i>Also: Preferably an art and FL credit</i>	SSAT SLEP* TOEFL*	Willing, Engaged, Capable and Kind
11	Minimum: 1 credit in the following areas – English, History, Math ( <i>pref. Alg. I and Geo.</i> ), Science ( <i>pref. Bio. or Earth Science</i> ), 1 credit in Spanish or French	SAT ACT SLEP* TOEFL*	Willing, Engaged, Hard-working, Capable and Kind
12	Minimum: 1 credit in the following areas – English, History, Math ( <i>pref. Alg. I, Geo. And Alg. II</i> ), Science ( <i>pref. Bio. or Earth Science</i> ), 2 credits in Spanish or French	SAT ACT SLEP* TOEFL*	Readiness/ Commitment, Willing, Engaged, Hard-working, Capable and Kind
PG	<b>English</b> 4 credits <b>Mathematics</b> 3 credits [ <i>must include the study of Algebra I &amp; II and Geometry, or the equivalent in an Integrated Mathematics program</i> ] <b>History</b> 3 credits [ <i>A two-year sequence in U.S. History* is required,</i> <b>Science</b> 2 credit( lab science) <b>Fine Arts</b> 1 credit ( <i>Studio Arts or Performing Arts</i> ) * A student may complete the needed credits above in 1/1 areas – if more are required summer school would be necessary	SAT ACT SLEP* TOEFL*	Committed to PG experience, Willing, Engaged, Hard-working, Capable and Kind

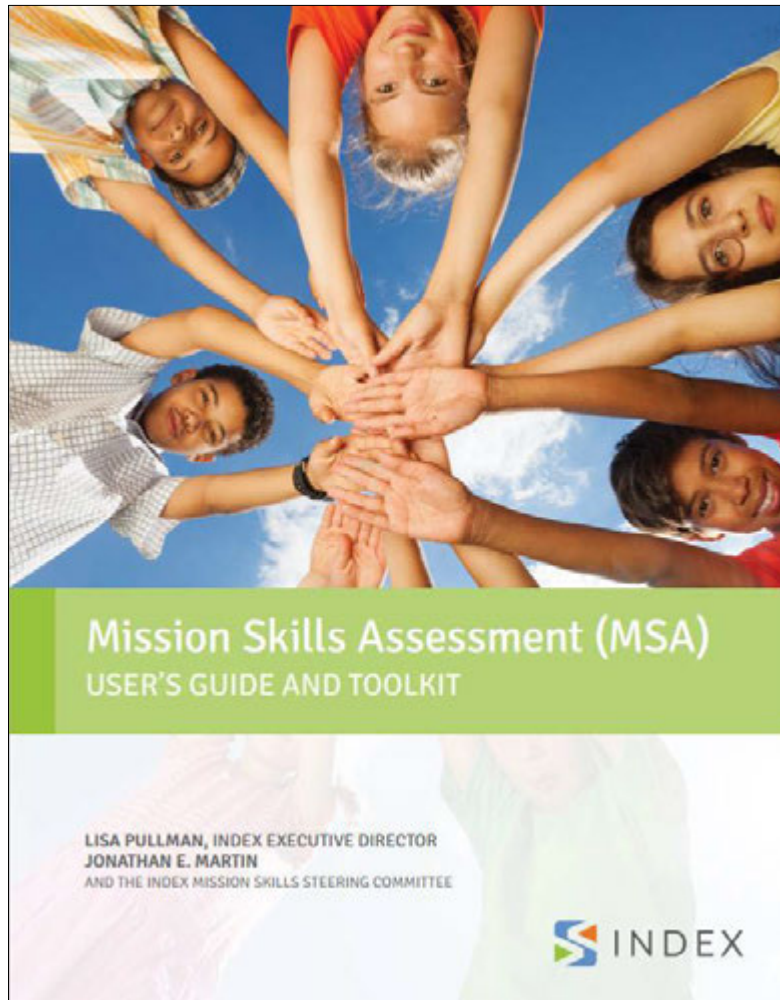




# Cognitive + Character



# “Non-Cognitive” Assessments





- 100





**4**

**Successful schools  
employ and  
empower a new  
breed of admission  
professional.**



# Thank You!

**Aimee Gruber**  
**agruber@ssatb.org**



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