



DISCOVERY PARTNERS INSTITUTE

PART OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SYSTEM

Outmigration of Illinois College-Bound

Nearly half of Illinois high school seniors who go to four-year colleges choose to attend colleges out of state. A survey of **1,250 high school seniors** by Discovery Partners Institute's Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative (IWERC) highlights key differences between students who chose to stay in-state for college and those who leave for college.

47.6%

of four-year college-goers leave the state

(IBHE, 2023)

Demographic Breakdown

Leavers

Stayers

are more likely to be:

White, from the suburbs or downstate, children of parents with a high educational attainment level, and feel very prepared for college.

Black or Latinx, from the city of Chicago, children of parents with lower educational attainment levels, and feel less prepared for college.

Top Factors in College Selection

1

Cost

Leavers further said Illinois institutions could lower tuition and offer more financial aid.

MAIN INFLUENCE FOR STAYING IN STATE

2

Perceived quality

Leavers cited college quality as a factor in need of improvement in Illinois.

3

Social environment

Leavers rate the social environment of out-of-state institutions more highly.

4

Economic opportunities

Seniors reported job placement of graduates during and after college important.

5

Location

Seniors surveyed said staying close to home (or wishing to be farther from home) was considered.

MAIN INFLUENCES FOR LEAVING STATE

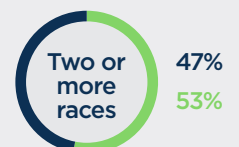
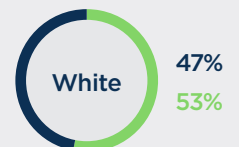
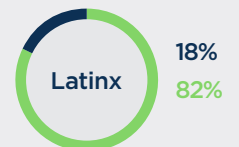
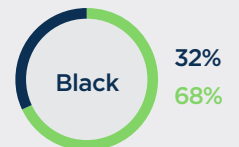
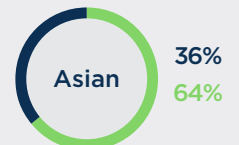
Potential Solutions

Consider **lowering costs** and **improving perceptions**. Low-income students **pay less** and go to schools with a better reputation, while more potential leavers opt for Illinois.

Track peer states: New Jersey's "Garden State Guarantee" lowers costs for students who commit in-state; and Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York bring in more students than they lose.

Our research suggests that leavers can be persuaded to stay in Illinois, with investments in **cost** and **perceived quality**.

Percentage of leavers & stayers, by race/ethnicity



Note: All other numbers for race/ethnicity are too small to report.