

EMA +

FALL 2021

# THE Yield



**NOW IS THE TIME:**

REFLECT  
RECONNECT  
REBUILD  
REFRESH  
RECOMMIT  
REBOOT  
REINVENT

**RENEW**

“  
IT IS NOT ENOUGH  
TO SAY THAT IT  
IS EVERYONE'S JOB.

**There has to be  
someone holding  
people accountable  
to do the work.**



**NIKKI TURPIN**

Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
Chapel Hill-Chauncy Hall (Waltham, MA)

See page 32 for full article.

# THE Yield

The Yield is a publication  
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# What's Inside

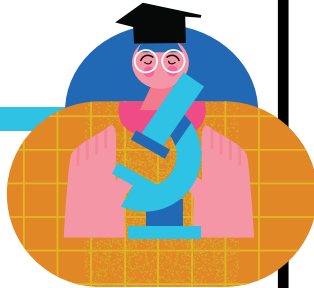
## Features

# 08

FEATURE 01

### Radically Relevant Education

Portal Schools in Los Angeles has disrupted the status quo to find creative solutions for reducing barriers to student success in their education and life goals and developing a student-centered educational experience.



# 11

FEATURE 02

### Innovating for Post-COVID Admissions

It's during times of disruption that we find our greatest growth. By leaning into a community of like-minded leaders, we can strengthen our enrollment processes to help meet the needs of the families we serve. What were some of the top innovations to emerge from the past year and how can we adopt these practices into our processes?



# 16

FEATURE 03

### Increase Access to Admission

How do we close century-old gaps in access to independent schools and create a space of equity and inclusion? The first step is to streamline the often overwhelming application process and put resources in place to support families, particularly those from a segment of the population that is underrepresented in independent schools.



## DEPARTMENTS

# 04

### LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On reflecting, renewal, and reconnecting.

# 05

### INFLUENCERS + INNOVATORS

The Hockaday School; Canadian International School of Phnom Penh; Carolina Friends School

# 18

### DATA TRENDS

Tuition Discounting Report for PK-12

# 20

### RESEARCH BRIEF

Understanding Application Trends

# 22

### OUTSIDE THE BOX

Dynamic Learning, Resilient Thinkers @ Baylor Research



### A RIBBON CUTTING

We are proud to unveil the newly redesigned issue of *The Yield*. Thanks to your valuable input, we were able to reinvent and completely modernize the magazine.

# 24

### ADMISSION JOURNEY BEST PRACTICES

Marketing, Events, Yield, and Retention Strategies

# 29

### BREAK-THROUGHS

Civic Engagement; Cultivating Authentic Connections; & Predicting the Future

# 32

### DID YOU KNOW?

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion: Next Step Forward

# 34

### INTERNATIONAL

Pioneers School Brings Global Education to Palestine

ECIS + EMA Partnership



# 36

### DATA TRENDS

International Student Survey Data

# Dear colleagues,

Have you found the last year exhausting? If so, you're not alone. I can't recall a time when I have been so mentally and physically drained as in 2020. Most of that tiredness was fed by a sense of constant uncertainty, making each subsequent day more wearing. As the pandemic raged during 2020 and well into 2021, many of us were house-bound and dealing with new types of isolation—or conversely, overcrowded family spaces not designed for living *and* working. In our schools, enrollment leaders were swapping finely honed, in-person processes for new digital modes of connection with students and families to meet the demands of the strange year.

Some found [rainbow linings inside the pandemic](#),<sup>1</sup> while others missed their in-person, tried-and-true processes. Whatever our experiences were during the last year of admission and enrollment planning, one thing is clear: COVID-19 has altered everything in our world and left a community of hardworking professionals very tired. Yet, the pandemic has also given us a chance to **reflect** deeply about our purpose—individually and collectively.

Scientists say it takes at least three weeks to break old habits, but the pandemic demanded that we move quickly to flip our processes—in most cases, without much, if any, planning. No one wanted to “close” their admission year without in-person **revisit** days, and many were unhappy to make big changes to admission processes; yet, we all adapted our systems to meet the challenges, and we learned a great deal. We lived through more than one admission cycle with new ways of conducting admission work, and now it is time to take stock of the [lessons learned](#).<sup>2</sup>

What will you keep from this year of dramatic change? What might you **return** to from your pre-COVID days? **Reflexively**, it makes sense to accept that some blend of previous processes will meld into new ways of conducting business to create the [Next Normal](#)<sup>3</sup> for our community. Now, it's time to challenge fundamental assumptions and re-engineer existing systems that don't work well in this new digital age. At EMA, this means we are **rethinking** how to offer online tools and services to serve young people and their families best. It's also time to advocate strongly for the role of independent education within the wider K-12 community. As the last year has demonstrated, our schools led well through the chaos and provided many families a more positive experience than they could get from their local “free options.”

As you **recommit** to the work of admission and enrollment management, please also remember to commit to your own personal **renewal** in the coming year. This next admission season may feel more manageable with the lessening of COVID-19's impact, but truth be told, we continue to travel deeper into a new enrollment world. Our leadership work **requires** new thinking around issues of fairness, bias, and justice in our processes. These issues have no easy answers, but I am sure, just like last spring, our community will come together, learn from one another, and build collective **resolve** to change for the better.

This newly **redesigned** issue of *The Yield* is tied to the broader themes of **reflection**, **refreshment**, and **rebooting**. The themes of this magazine and our upcoming annual conference have been developed for THIS MOMENT to speak to your needs and to help with your personal **renewal** plan.

In closing, you may have noticed that this letter includes a number of words in BOLD. They all begin with “re”—as does this year's annual conference theme of **recharge**, **reunite**, **recommit**. I was interested in the etymology of the prefix “re” and learned that the Latin origins suggest a “return to” or, more specifically, “back to, again,” yet in modern usage, this prefix suggests a refresh as opposed to a return to a previous state. Additionally, the use of this prefix also means “in regard to,” and that definition truly speaks to these times as we look for FRESH ways to **reNEW** our thinking. In a few weeks, the work of a new admission season gets underway, and our annual conference, which feels more like a professional “family” **reunion**, will bring many together in Seattle and online. It is my great hope that the joy of our reunion in Seattle—and virtually—will provide new energy, offer comfort, and build a collective desire to work together for a positive and successful future for independent school enrollment.

I hope you enjoy our **redesign**. Wishing you all good things as we embark upon a year of **reconnection**!

*Heather Hoerle*

**Heather Hoerle, Executive Director and CEO**  
The Enrollment Management Association



### Rainbow Linings: The Pandemic and Admissions

[learn.enrollment.org/blog/rainbow-linings-the-pandemic-and-admissions](#)

### Once in Our Lifetime: Lessons From This Pandemic Year

[learn.enrollment.org/covid-19-resources/once-in-our-lifetime-lessons-from-this-pandemic-year](#)

### The Next Normal: How K-12 Independent Schools Can Survive and Thrive in a New Landscape

[learn.enrollment.org/magazines](#)

# ENROLLMENT Influencers + Innovators

**Highlighting enrollment professionals who are leading the way through their practices, career pathways, and achievements.**

TRANSITION FROM HIGHER ED

## Filling In the Blanks *at The Hockaday School*

**Regardless of the type of school a person is seeking, there's one thing every applicant craves: connection.**

That's what Tiffany Nelson learned when she made the transition from higher education admissions to becoming the Director of Admission and Enrollment Management at The Hockaday School in Dallas, Texas.

"In higher education, you're dealing with teenagers who are transitioning from high school into college, or adults who are pursuing advanced level degrees. For independent schools, you're often working with parents who are exploring the best options for their child," Nelson said. "While these are very different audiences, one thing remains the same: everyone wants to find the perfect fit—and they're hoping your institution is the one. They're looking for you to fill in the blanks."

To successfully steward a family through the admissions process, Nelson believes in strong customer service, personalized guidance, and tailored communications. "People want to feel like the institution they want wants them back," said Nelson, whose



*"PEOPLE WANT TO FEEL  
LIKE THE INSTITUTION THEY  
WANT WANTS THEM BACK."*

—TIFFANY NELSON, DIRECTOR OF ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

previous roles include Director of Admissions at Spelman College and Director of Admissions and Enrollment Management at Emory University Rollins School of Public Health.

Nelson, who started at Hockaday in the summer of 2020 while COVID raged as a disruptive force, said she sees the challenges of the past year resulting in K-12 admissions innovations, and expansive thinking, more broadly speaking.

"In the past, admission departments felt we had to get people on campus in order to interact and engage with our schools," Nelson said. "But COVID showed us it doesn't have to necessarily be that way. We can still create meaningful connections with families and individuals virtually—and in some cases, we're able to make our processes more expansive and inclusive because we're providing more opportunities for interaction."

Nelson believes successfully navigating these changes will require cross-departmental collaboration and a willingness to try new things. "Admissions cannot be a singular job," she said. "We need to look within our teams and across campus for strength, and push forward together." +

*"ADMISSIONS CANNOT BE A SINGULAR JOB. WE NEED TO LOOK WITHIN OUR TEAMS AND ACROSS CAMPUS FOR STRENGTH, AND PUSH FORWARD TOGETHER."*

—TIFFANY NELSON, DIRECTOR OF ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT, THE HOCKADAY SCHOOL



**TIFFANY NELSON** obtained her bachelor's degree in Psychology from Spelman College in 2000 and in 2003 received a master's degree in Higher Education Administration from the University of Michigan. Tiffany has worked at several institutions, and in May 2015, she returned to Spelman College as the Director of Admission, where she led initiatives resulting in year over year growth in applications and enrollment. After an amazing five years at Spelman, Tiffany became the Director of Admission and Enrollment Management at The Hockaday School, in Dallas.



IN THEIR WORDS

## Reflections on an International Career Path

*Canadian International School of Phnom Penh*

BY BRITTANY HANEY, CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF PHNOM PENH

While my professional life has always been dedicated to education, I must admit that I stumbled upon the opportunity to build a career in independent schools. In my final year of graduate school in Shanghai, I decided to stay in the city long-term. During my job search, and to my surprise, I discovered a posting at a well-known international school in the city.

I didn't know anything about independent schools, but I knew that I wanted to be a part of a community with a mission to educate students and develop global citizens in a culturally-diverse environment. After an initial four-hour round trip commute to the school and four interviews, I became an international/independent school professional.

My career path has aligned with my life passion of connecting people to opportunities that allow them to thrive. From designing study abroad programs in the past to leading advancement efforts at my current school, working in education allows me to live out my passion.

Self-reflection, adventure, and being a lifelong student have helped me navigate my career growth. Sometimes I review past decisions and experiences as personal case studies and ask myself a series of questions regarding the outcome. I'm eager to learn and adapt easily to change, so new opportunities excite me. I'm also not afraid to search for opportunities to grow outside of my organization if needed.

My process for planning and achieving career growth begins with creating attainable goals and relying on the team of experts around me to be my mentors. Knowing that I depend on them for help also empowers them as leaders and helps them grow. In addition to my team, I'm also inspired by other Black professionals succeeding and doing what they love.

Moving overseas was an easy decision because traveling feeds my soul. During my time in Asia, I've had the privilege of connecting with extraordinary people. What has surprised me most about my transition from the US to life overseas is the science of relationship building in multinational spaces. Intercultural communication skills and self-awareness are key for creating meaningful connections that respect the cultures and social boundaries of others. Mastering these skills has helped propel me both professionally and personally, and I consider them the "superpowers" for anyone considering a career as an international advancement professional. +



A North Carolina native, **BRITTANY HANEY** serves as the head of institutional advancement for the Canadian International School of Phnom Penh. She has worked in education for 11 years and began a career in independent schools in 2016. She has lived in Asia for nine years and considers herself to be a traveler by nature.



Carolina Friends School students enjoying some outdoor time together on campus.

#### ANTI-BIAS AT WORK

## Partnerships Lead to Powerful Outcomes at Carolina Friends School (CFS)

BY DAVID TAIBL, EMA DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Founded on the principle of intentional integration, Carolina Friends School has been a leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion in The Triangle area of North Carolina since the 1960s. Director of Enrollment Nancy Hayes and Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Naa Adorn believe that their roles at Carolina Friends School (CFS) are integrally connected. Together, their work not only upholds the school's mission but also upholds a commitment to equity to ensure that all community stakeholders get what they need to feel supported and succeed.

Naa has been working to operationalize DEI and reflects that as a DEI practitioner, "it's important to work closely with the admission team to strategize ways to execute better organizational processes that are more inclusive. An example of an outcome of this co-departmental partnership has been the robust implementation of Adjusted Tuition, a need-based financial assistance program designed by the CFS Trustees to shift focus away from the stigma associated with the term 'financial aid.'"

She continues, "At CFS, we focus on how we wish to attract people and find ways to check ourselves and better understand our biases in supporting stronger relationships. DEI at CFS is not a series of boxes we seek to check in order to become an equitable place. As employees and stakeholders, we make time for introspection to examine our identities, and we actively seek to develop policies and practices that engage our collective values at the school."

CFS initiated a school climate program called Peaceful Schools in 2009, a program that works to promote positive and peaceful learning environments in all schools (public and private) as well as regional community organizations. Recent momentum in reimagining education has led schools and organizations to ask questions such as: "How do we practice effective restorative discipline?" and "How do we assess students without grades?" Because these practices are at the heart of and are an integral part of a CFS education, there have been incredible opportunities for CFS to share, inspire, and serve as an example within their local community. +



**NANCY HAYES** is Director of Enrollment and **NAA ADORN** is Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Carolina Friends School (Durham, NC), a preK-12 co-ed day school inspired by Quaker values, committed to excellence in all they do. Every day, they empower their students to question the world around them, discover their passions, think deeply, and use their voices in service of the greater good.

## EMA'S ANTI-BIAS & REFRAMING DIVERSITY COURSES

CFS participated in EMA's Anti-Bias Symposium with Dr. Derrick Gay and in the Reducing Bias in the Enrollment Process course taught by Dr. Nathan Kuncel. Following participation in these programs, the admissions department began conversations with head teachers about focusing on the work of equity within the admissions process. Nancy shares, "By explaining why we require what we do and what we're seeking in applicants and families, we were able to demonstrate how our focus on the work of equity in admission practices represents our school's values. These conversations have really served as a testament to reinforce to teachers why they do what they do!" Both the anti-bias and reframing diversity programs have also served as a launchpad for strategic planning. "Our work with both Dr. Kuncel and Dr. Gay has provided a more clear roadmap to make our strategic planning process a success. By involving all stakeholders in the process, the practices and beliefs of our founding—to be a beacon for equity and inclusion in our region—have been reinforced."

**Interested in experiencing an EMA symposium? Visit: [enrollment.org/winter-symposiums](https://enrollment.org/winter-symposiums)**