



THE EDUCATION CONSERVANCY

EC/CU PROJECT BRIEF

Many of our nation's students are facing increasing complexity and confusion as they struggle to decide whether, where, and how to go to college. Some are bombarded with information; others receive too little information; all could certainly benefit from the right information. Amid the growing national campaign to expand college access and improve student success, we believe the high-stakes college consideration process can and must be improved.

To this end, Lumina Foundation for Education has funded a joint project of the Education Conservancy and Consumers Union. Our goal is to improve the experiences of prospective students as they consider and select colleges. Building on the research and insights that have emerged over the last decade, we will conduct new consumer research to understand what students want and what they need to make good decisions – so that more students attend and succeed in college.

The project has several components. Through surveys and interviews, we will engage students in assessing the value of the information they used and explore what could have improved the consideration process. From educators, we will seek perspectives on the most appropriate institutional information to benefit students as they consider higher education options. Finally, we will apply our findings in an assessment of existing information sources. From this work we will create a guide that will be made widely available to students and parents. Additionally, we will share our findings and recommendations with educators and policy makers as we all have an interest in helping students attend and succeed in college.