

National Study Finds Students from Underserved Populations are Less Inclined to Seek Education after High School than Their Peers

The latest data from low-income, first-generation and BIPOC high school students reveal concerns about preparedness, ability to meet their basic needs and academic costs are impacting their future plans. Recent findings from [ECMC Group's Question The Quo Education Pulse survey](#), conducted in October 2022, show that less than half of students from traditionally underserved populations believe education after high school is necessary and only 8% feel fully prepared to make the decision of what to do after high school.

According to the survey, most students from underserved backgrounds would like their high school to provide guidance on questions about finances (62%), support for their mental and physical health (48%), identifying postsecondary education options (46%), and managing future debt (37%) or handling unexpected costs (37%). They also feel pressure – often self-directed – to pursue a four-year degree, but more than half (53%) are open to a path other than four-year college, and nearly 60% believe they can be successful without a four-year degree. In addition, they are keenly focused on identifying a future career pathway; 86% of students surveyed think about their future path at least weekly (52% think about it every day) and 59% have a career path in mind, but few are receiving the guidance they need to make an informed decision.

ECMC Group, a nonprofit focused on helping students succeed, has conducted six Question The Quo Education Pulse surveys, spanning from February 2020 to October 2022. The surveys are part of the [Question The Quo](#) campaign – a grassroots effort to empower learners to explore their many postsecondary education options and to follow the path that's right for them. To learn more and see the trends ECMC Group uncovered over the past three years, [click here](#).