

NAVIGATING COLLEGE SEARCH FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR'S PERSPECTIVE



SPARK451[®]

INTRODUCTION

COUNSELOR ROLES AND CASELOADS

COUNSELOR ROLES



To gain a better understanding of school counselors, let's look at our respondents':

- **background information**
- **roles**
- **caseloads**

COUNSELOR ROLES



have been in counseling
for over a decade



are school counselors
(who also counsel students
on college choices)

13%

of respondents' sole
responsibility
is college counseling



COUNSELOR CASELOAD

60%

**have more than
250 students
in their caseload**

—
compared with
the American School
Counselor Association's
recommendation
of 250 students

COUNSELOR CASELOAD

36%

**saw an increase
in caseload over
the course of their
career**

—
this includes those
who are just starting
their career

COUNSELOR CASELOAD

50%

**feel their caseload
is on par with
neighboring/peer
schools**

—
25% believe
similar schools/districts
have larger caseloads
25% feel similar
schools/districts
have smaller caseloads

INTERACTION WITH COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

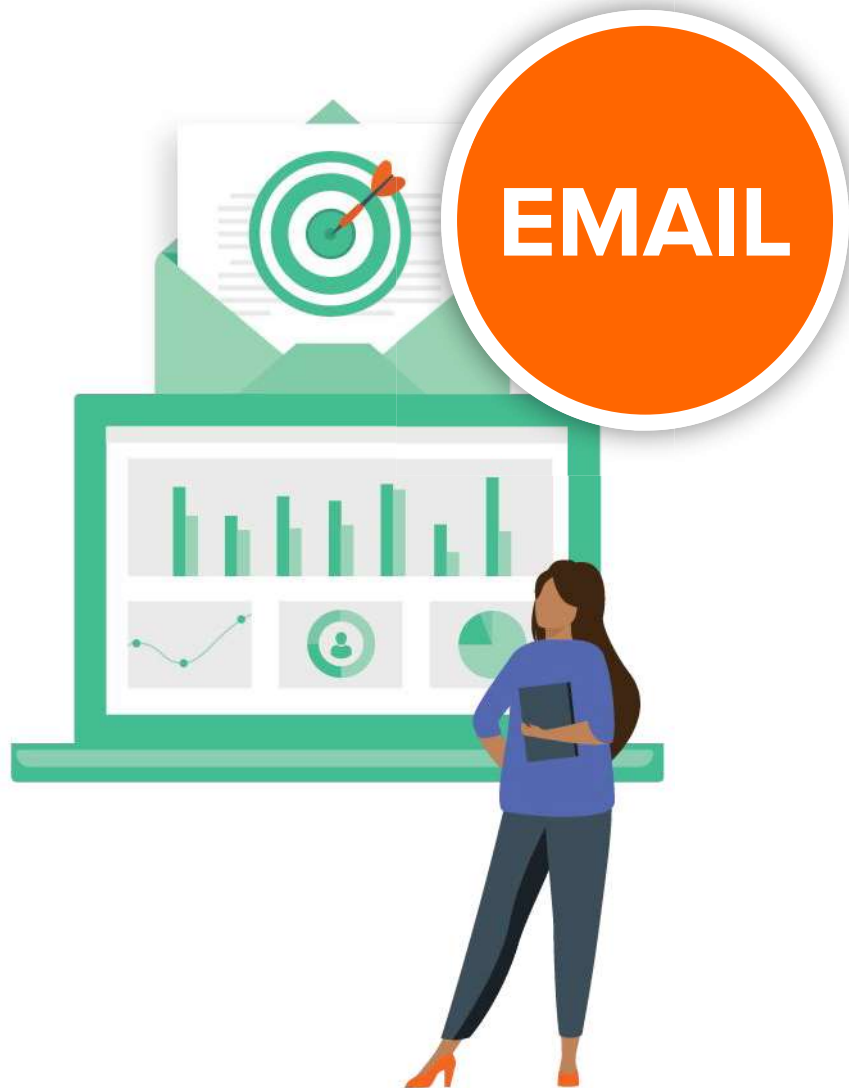
INTERACTION



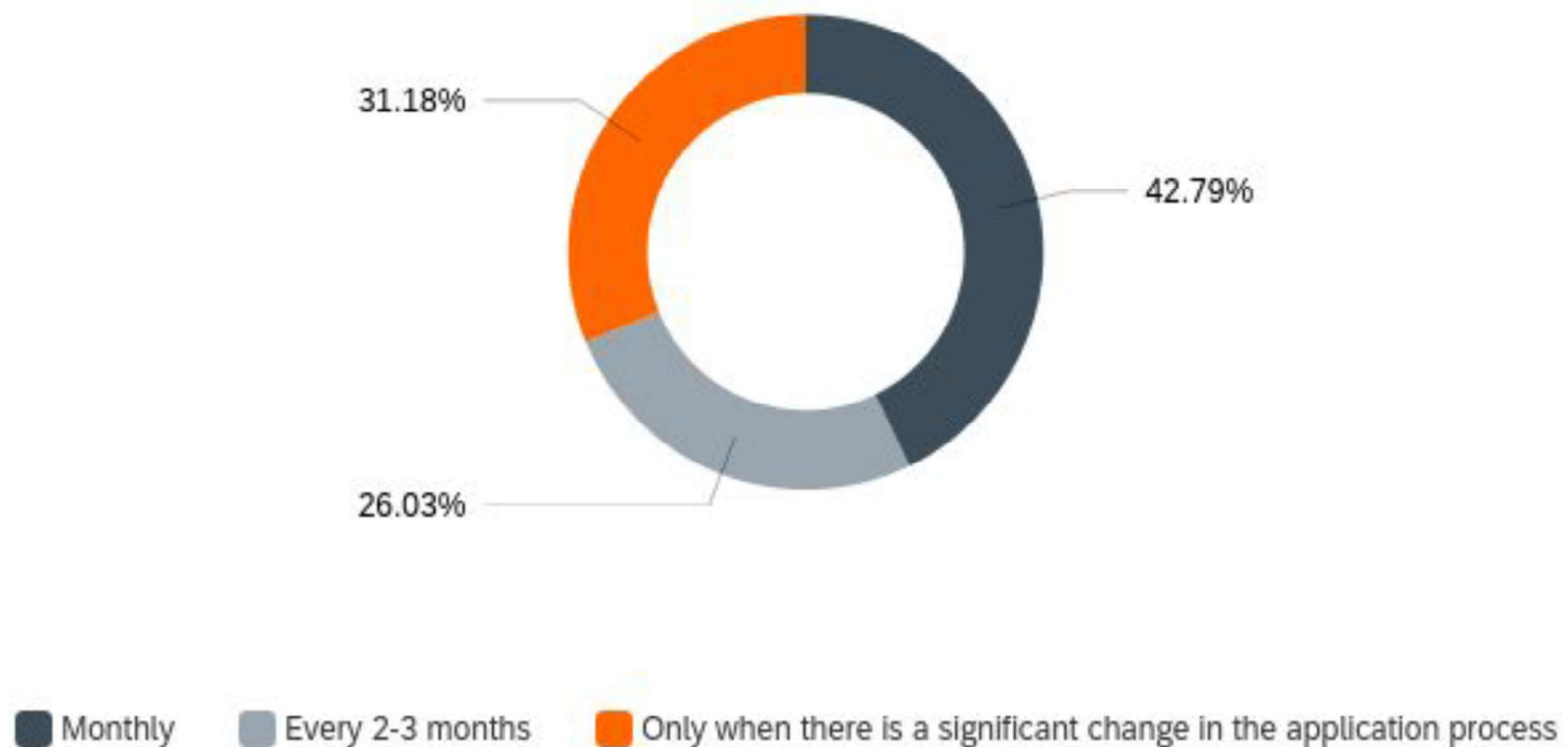
Interacting with school counselors is vital to our roles in higher education. We garnered insight on what some of the counselors had to say about:

- **college and university outreach**
- **high school visits**

COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES



WHEN DO THEY PREFER TO BE CONTACTED?



VISITS: IN PERSON VS. VIRTUAL



**stated they are
hosting both
in-person and virtual
high school visits
this fall**

counselors reported that visit
requests are down 55% this fall



**indicated that virtual
visits are productive**

—
this allows colleges to
schedule visits outside of
traditional school hours and
allows students flexibility



**welcome promotional
materials from
colleges and
universities**

—
this includes banners,
pennants, viewbooks, etc.

INTERACTION WITH COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

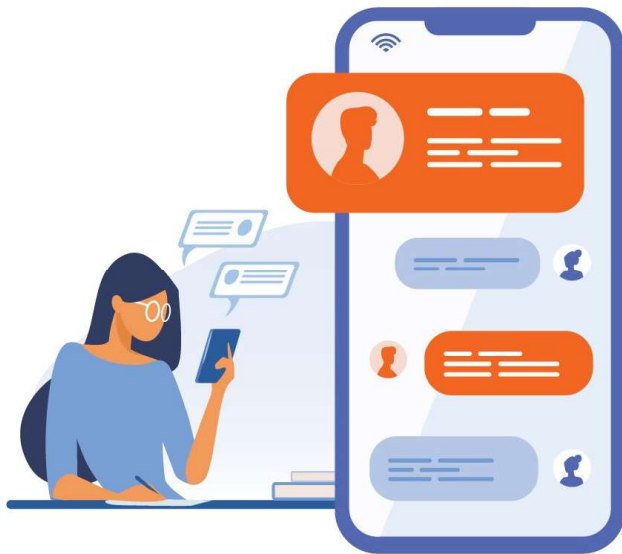
What makes a high school visit productive in your opinion? Is there anything that stands out that you've seen?



1. When reps speak with students about things that interest them
2. When college reps are knowledgeable about their institutions
3. When reps take time to answer questions
4. Engaging and personable representatives

INTERACTION WITH COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

Why are you finding high school visits to not be productive for you and your students?



1. Students are uninterested
2. Students don't have enough time
3. Students don't know what to do
4. Many reps visit during lunch time, which is not ideal for students—back to importance of virtual visits!

🌐 When poll is active, respond at **pollev.com/spark451216**

📱 Text **SPARK451216** to **+1 (747) 444-3548** once to join

When was the last time you visited a high school either in-person or virtually?

Within the last year	1-5 years ago	6-10 years ago	More than 1 years ago
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COVID-19 IMPACT

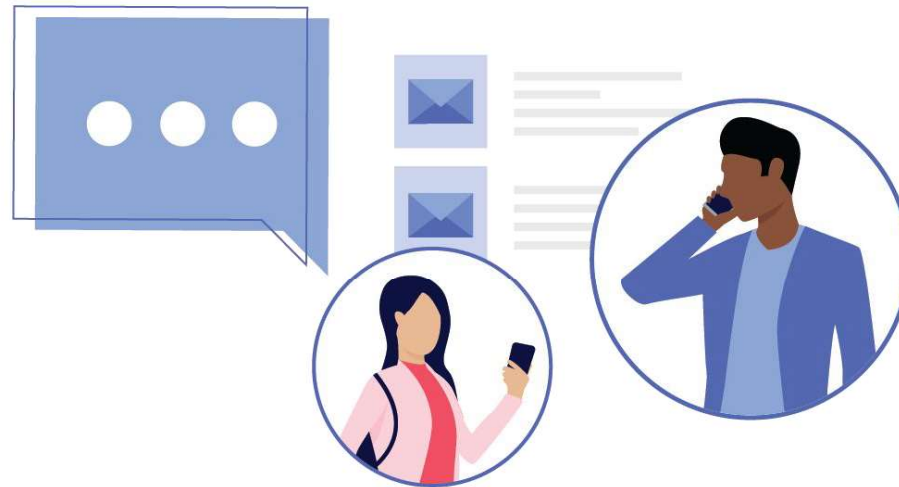
COVID-19 IMPACT



COVID-19 has impacted everyone, but:

- **how did it impact school counselors?**
- **are they are still impacted?**

DISTRICT CHALLENGES



93%

**reported that their
institution is operating
fully in person**
as of September 30, 2021

70%

**feel that their districts
have been very
transparent in their
communication**

80%

**reported that the
COVID-19 pandemic
has created additional
challenges in reaching
students**

COLLEGE SEARCH CHALLENGES



90%

**are satisfied with
communication
they've received
from colleges and
universities**

75%

**feel that COVID-19
had a negative
impact on students'
college searches**

85%

**feel that COVID-19
negatively impacted
students' choice of
college path**

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How has your communication with high school students been impacted over the past two years?

It has been much easier to get in contact with students about their college search/decision.

A

It has been slightly easier to get in contact with students about their college search/decision.

B

It has been a little challenging to get in contact with students about their college search/decision.

C

It has been very challenging to get in contact with students about their college search/decision.

D

There has been no impact on communication.

E



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In one word, how is your staff feeling about this year's recruitment season?



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As of today, how do you feel your 2022 applicant pool is forming?

Well ahead of last year Slightly ahead of last year About equal with last year Slightly behind last year Well behind last year



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FINAL THOUGHTS FROM COUNSELORS

INSIGHTS FROM HIGH SCHOOLS FOR HIGHER-ED



Counselors navigate additional challenges by:

- helping first-generation students
- adapting to the quickly evolving higher-ed landscape,
- providing mental health resources
- and so much more.

What do they want us to know?

HELPING UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

60%

students
do not have a clear
understanding
of how the process
works for them.

**Lack of
interest**

**Option for
students are
unclear**

**Difficulty of
FAFSA**

**Vague
guidance or
lack of
guidance**

**Lack of
Opportunities**

STRENGTHENING COMMUNICATIONS



Given the current environment, communication needs to be given quickly and in a format that is easy to digest

Many students have lost interpersonal and communication skills 1.5 years

Colleges need to be more flexible with students

Colleges need to be looking out for students' mental health

Heavy stress amongst student population

FINAL THOUGHTS

What would they like for college admissions professionals to know about the state of school counseling?



HONESTY

Colleges need to be more honest and knowledgeable about their process

WORKLOAD

Many counselors are carrying a heavy workload and are feeling overwhelmed

CONNECTIONS

Personal connections with the audiences (both parents and students) is crucial

WHAT THEY WISH YOU KNEW ABOUT THE STATE OF SCHOOL COUNSELING

“

I would appreciate college admissions to understand the stress and anxiety that students are experiencing.

There has been a slide downward in grades and attendance across the board.

Students need extensive support getting back on track and admissions patience and understanding is important.

”