

ANNUAL RESEARCH SERIES

CHINAICAC **ANNUAL REPORT**

**School Counselor Survey
Class of 2023**

Presented by

**Research, Scholarship and
Learning Committee**



MESSAGE FROM RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP & LEARNING (RSL) COMMITTEE

On behalf of the ChinaCAC Research, Scholarship and Learning (RSL) committee, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your participation in our second annual counselor survey. Your involvement is crucial to our understanding of high school counselors' perspectives on the class of 2023 application and enrollment trends.

Working collaboratively with both high school and higher education sectors has been the top priority for ChinaCAC, and we aim to create a space with transparent data, hoping to positively impact international education practices.

This year, we aimed to gain deeper insights into the trends, counselors' experiences, the role of technology in college counseling, and perceptions regarding standardized testing policies. We are excited to report that we received significantly more responses compared to our first survey, providing a richer and more comprehensive understanding of the current international education landscape in China.

The field of international admissions and enrollment is more complex than ever, with geopolitical challenges, debates over standardized testing policy changes, and the dynamic impact of AI. Sharing perspectives from China provides invaluable insights for international educators globally, ultimately enabling the ecosystem to better understand and serve our students, and positively impacting education practices.

Warmest regards,



Yanjie (Ruby) Cheng, EdD
Chair, Research, Scholarship and Learning Committee

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Executive Summary

The ChinaICAC 2023 Annual School Counselor Report provides a comprehensive analysis of the Class of 2023 application and enrollment trends, insights, and perspectives from high school counselors across China.

The report, now in its second year, shows a significant increase in participation, highlighting a growing interest among Chinese educators in understanding students' study abroad trends. Key findings reveal a strong shift towards public universities, evolving student preferences in chosen fields of study, and the growing influence of new technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) in the college application process.

Highlights of Key Findings:

01 Increased Participation

Survey participation surged from 91 to 111 high schools, with a marked increase in engagement from 3rd-tier cities, highlighting broader regional interest in international education.

02 Shifts in Institution Type and Fields of Study

A significant shift towards public institutions was observed, with 78% of the class of 2023 enrolling in public institutions, up from 53% last year. The report notes a decline in interest for Social Sciences, dropping from 45% to 27%.

03 Usage of Third Party Agents

The use of third-party agents increased significantly from 24% to 40%.

04 Counselor Stress Level

Counselor stress levels have improved, with 50% reporting high or extremely high stress, down from 62% last year. Despite this improvement, stress related to rankings, heavy workload, and feeling underprepared remains prevalent.

05 Emerging Trends: AI

Understanding the integration of AI in the college counseling process is a key focus of this year's report. It reveals that 36% of counselors use AI occasionally, and 16% frequently, in their counseling practices. While AI tools like ChatGPT are increasingly used for applications, counselors stress the need for ethical guidelines and transparency.

The 2nd annual report provides valuable insights for international educators, policymakers, and admissions officers to better support Chinese students pursuing overseas education. By staying informed about these trends, stakeholders can improve recruitment strategies and collaboration efforts to better serve China's growing student population.

Section One: Respondent Demographics



Understanding the demographic profile of survey respondents is crucial for interpreting the insights and trends presented in this report. This section provides an overview of the locations, roles, and types of high schools represented by the high school counselors who participated in our second annual survey.

OVERVIEW

We see a steady increase in survey participants: In the 2023 survey, 111 high schools participated, up from 91 last year, with 32% being public, 57% private, and 11% international schools with non-Chinese students. Additionally, 136 school counselors participated, compared to 121 last year, including 38% director-level counselors, 41% school counselors, and 21% with additional teaching duties. This increased participation highlights the growing interest in understanding international admissions trends and challenges.

2022-2023 Annual Report

121 SCHOOL COUNSELORS

- 36% are director-level counselors
- 39% are school counselors
- 25% are school counselors with other duties such as teaching

91 HIGH SCHOOLS

- 33% are public high schools
- 55% are private high schools
- 12% are international high schools with non-Chinese students

2023-2024 Annual Report

136 SCHOOL COUNSELORS 12%↑

- 38% are director-level counselors
- 41% are school counselors
- 21% are school counselors with other duties such as teaching

111 HIGH SCHOOLS 22%↑

- 32% are public high schools
- 57% are private high schools
- 11% are international high schools with non-Chinese students

Chart 1.1: 2022 and 2023 Annual Survey Participants Comparison

Data Analysis

HIGH SCHOOL

In this section, we delve into the demographic distribution of students across different city tiers for the classes of 2023, 2024, and 2025. By examining the data, we can identify trends and growth patterns in student populations from various city tiers, which in turn helps admissions officers and international institutions develop tailored international recruitment strategies.

1.1 High School Location

In addition to the increased number of participants this year, we observed a significant rise in participation from high schools in 3rd-tier cities, growing from 8% last year to 19% this year. This indicates ChinaICAC has a growing interest and engagement from a broader range of regions.

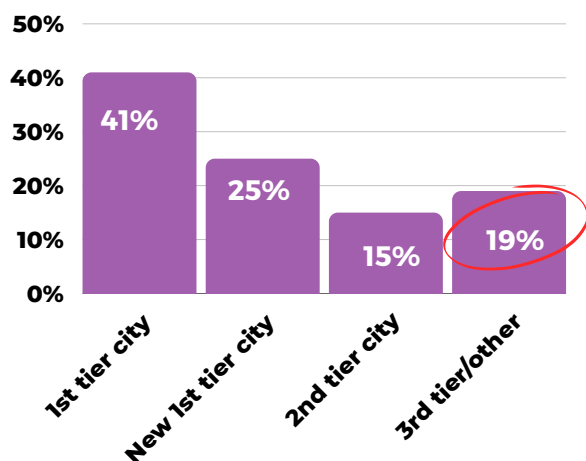


Chart 1.2 High School Location

1.2 High School Enrollment*

Last year, we predicted a steady increase in the number of students applying to overseas institutions. This trend remains true in this year's data. Counselors reported a continued growth in class sizes from the class of 2023 to the class of 2025.

*Students were represented by counselors. No students filled out the actual school counselor survey.

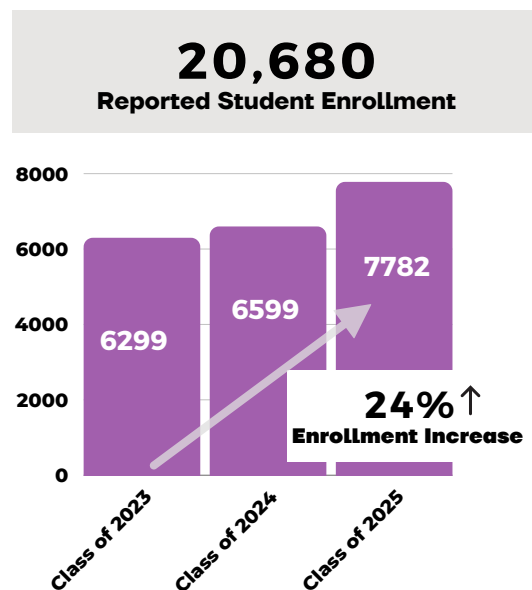


Chart 1.3 Student Enrollment Size

1.3 Number of Students by City Tier

In analyzing the data from the survey, we observed the following distribution of students across different city tiers for the classes of 2023, 2024, and 2025 in chart 1.4.

The data reveals a consistent and steady increase in the number of students across all city tiers, with 1st Tier Cities leading in student numbers. New 1st Tier Cities show the most significant percentage growth, reflecting an increasing interest in overseas applications from these regions. The overall trend indicates a growing engagement and interest in international education among students from various city tiers.

Data Analysis

HIGH SCHOOL

The table below presents the percentage distribution of students across different city tiers for the classes of 2023, 2024, and 2025. The city tiers are categorized into New 1st Tier Cities, 1st Tier Cities, 2nd Tier Cities, and 3rd Tier or Other Cities. The percentages indicate the proportion of students from each city tier relative to the total number of students reported by participating schools in that class year.

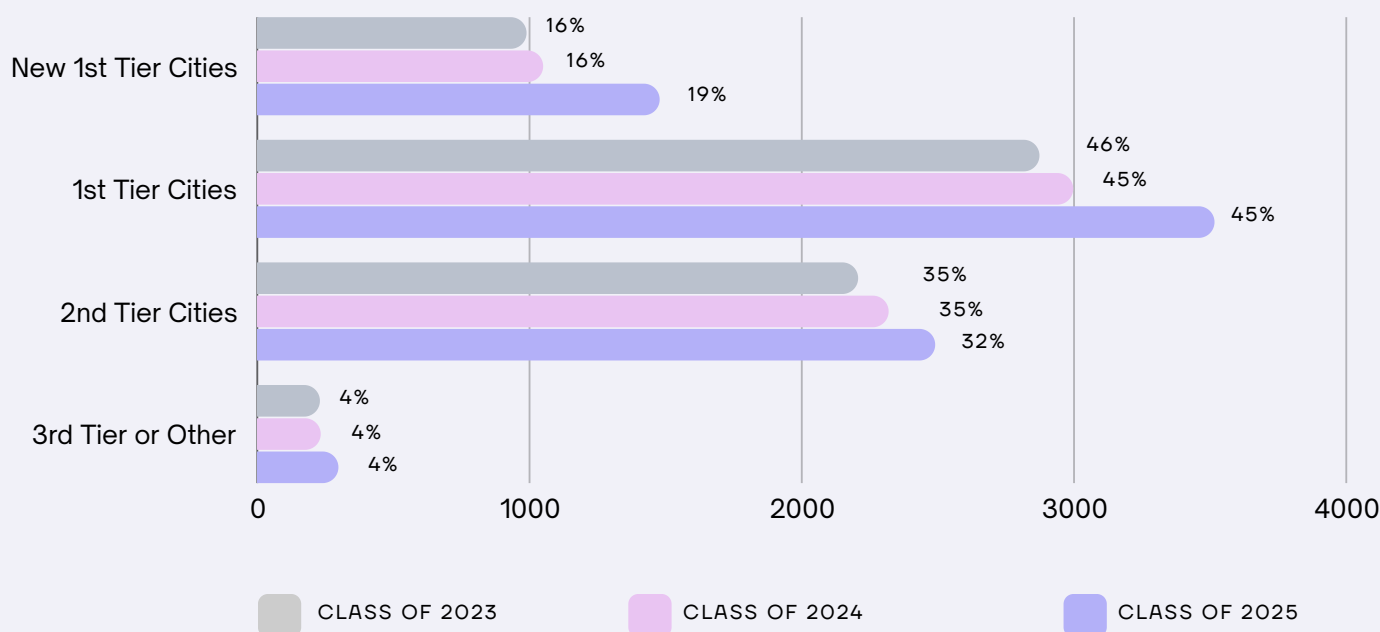


Chart 1.4 Student Enrollment by City Tier

Overall Trends and Implications:

- The data indicates a steady increase in the number of students from various city tiers, with a significant rise in New 1st Tier Cities and 1st Tier Cities.
- The stable percentage of students from 2nd and 3rd Tier Cities reflects ongoing interest of studying abroad in the regions.

Importance of Understanding Student Locations

Understanding the distribution of potential applicants provides crucial market insights for overseas institutions, informing recruitment strategies and outreach efforts. This knowledge helps institutions connect with a diverse pool of students, making their recruitment processes more efficient and effective.

Section Two: Class of 2023 Trends






This section presents the trends of applicant and enrollment data for the Class of 2023, as reported by school counselors. It begins with the demographics of the Class of 2023, including passport types, types of institutions students enrolled at, top three programs of study, countries/regions of destinations, and other related trends. Understanding this data is important to analyze the current landscape of Chinese student enrollment and to share insights on how these trends can impact future educational practices.

Data Analysis

CLASS OF 2023

2.1 Senior Student Passport Type

The surveys asked high schools to report the passport status of their class of 2023 graduates, categorizing them into four groups: primarily Chinese passport holders, all Chinese passport holders, primarily non-Chinese passport holders, and all non-Chinese passport holders.

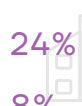
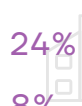
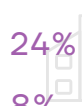
-  **56%** *Primarily Chinese passport holders*
-  **34%** *All Chinese passport holders*
-  **6%** *Mostly non-Chinese passport holders*
- 4%** *All non-Chinese passport holders*

There is a slight decrease in the proportion of schools reporting that all graduating students are non-Chinese passport holders from 5% last year to 4% this year. **The percentage of schools reporting that all their students hold Chinese passports increased significantly from 20% to 34%.**

There is a notable decrease in the percentage of schools indicating that most of their students hold non-Chinese passports, dropping from 13% to 6%.

2.2 Senior Student Application Data

The survey participants indicated the types of institutions where the class of 2023 students enrolled. The breakdown is as follows:

-  **69%** *4-year public institutions*
-  **24%** *4-year private institutions*
-  **8%** *Other*
- 0%** *2-year community colleges*



The enrollment data for the classes of 2022 and 2023 show notable shifts in the preferences for types of institutions.

In 2023, a significantly higher percentage of students enrolled in 4-year public institutions, increasing from 53% to 69%. Conversely, there was a decrease in enrollment at 4-year private institutions, which dropped from 41% in 2022 to 24% in 2023. Enrollment in 2-year community colleges fell to 0% in 2023, down from 3% the previous year, indicating a diminished preference for this type of institution. These changes suggest a growing preference for public institutions and a decline in the attractiveness of private and community colleges among the class of 2023.





Institution Type Shifts

These changes suggest a growing preference for public institutions and a decline in the attractiveness of private and community colleges among the class of 2023.

CLASS OF 2023

2.3 Class of 2023 Top Programs of Study Data

Each school was asked to list the top three fields of study preferred by their class of 2023 students. The survey results revealed a clear preference for specific fields among the class of 2023. It's important to note that for the class of 2023, we used the IIE's Open Door major listing to categorize the fields of study, which differs from the categorization used in the previous year. The top three fields, based on the number of mentions from high schools, are as follows:

<p>→  55%</p> <p>Business and Management</p>	<p>Business and Management emerged as the most popular field of study, with 61 high schools identifying it as a top choice. This indicates a strong interest among students in pursuing careers in business, entrepreneurship, and management roles. This matches the data from last year.</p>
<p>→  32%</p> <p>Math and Computer Science</p>	<p>Mathematics and Computer Science are ranked as the second most popular program of study for the Class of 2023, reflecting the growing interest and demand for skills in these fields</p>
<p>→  31%</p> <p>Physical and Life Sciences</p>	<p>Physical and Life Sciences were close behind Math and Computer Science. This field includes disciplines such as biology, chemistry, and physics, indicating a significant interest in scientific field and healthcare-related careers.</p>
<p>→  Other Fields of Study</p>	<p>While the top three fields dominated the survey results, other fields also garnered notable interest. This year, we noticed a significant decrease in interest for Social Sciences, dropping from 45% last year to 27%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Sciences: 27% • Engineering: 23% • Undeclared: 13%

Data Analysis

CLASS OF 2023

2.4 Application Country/Region

According to the class of 2022 survey, 85% of schools reported that over half of their students applied to colleges in multiple countries. This trend, likely influenced by lingering COVID-19 effects, reflects students seeking more options to mitigate uncertainties around travel restrictions, health safety, and varied pandemic responses.

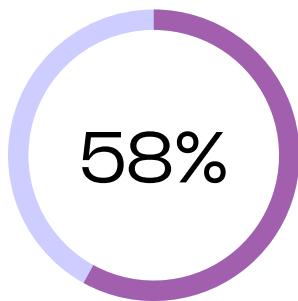


Chart 2.1
Half of Students Applied to Multiple Countries



For the class of 2023, 58% of schools reported that over half of their students applied to colleges in multiple countries, down from 85% the previous year.



For the class of 2023, the survey data reveals a significant decline in this trend. This decrease from 85% to 58% indicates that while applying to multiple countries remains a common practice, there is a notable decrease in the total number compared to class of 2022.



The comparison shows a significant drop in the number of students applying to multiple countries, reflecting a decreased impact coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic period.

Data Analysis

CLASS OF 2023

2.5 Most Popular Country/Region

This data below highlights the United States as the most popular destination for student applications in a second consecutive year, followed by the UK and Australia. Canada, Singapore, and other regions received significantly fewer applications.

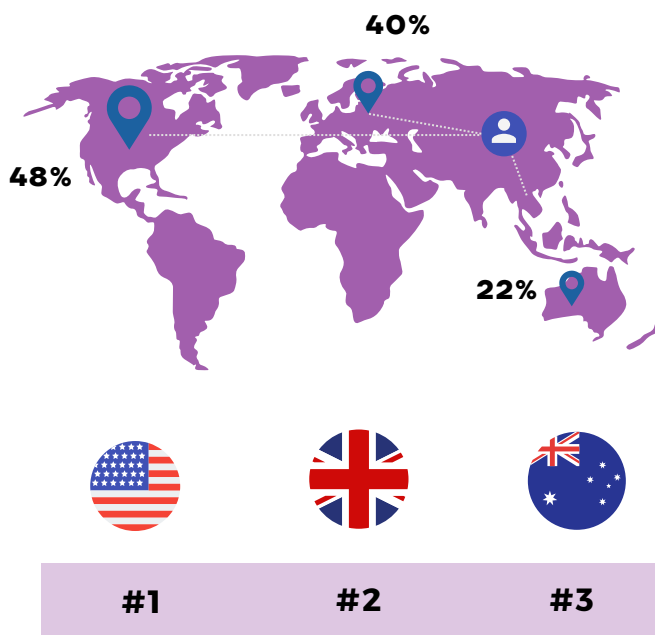


Chart 2.2

Top three popular countries/regions

The top countries/regions for the class of 2023 to apply to and enroll in are the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. These regions received the highest percentages of both applications and enrollments, aligning with last year's results. This consistency highlights the continued preference for these destinations among students seeking higher education opportunities.

2.6 Top Application Destination Combination

The survey data for the class of 2023 also reveals the most popular combinations of countries/regions that students applied to. The breakdown is as follows:

“
The class of 2023 data shows that 17% of students applied to US + UK, compared to 62% applying to both the UK and US from class of 2022 last year.
 ”

Top three popular countries/regions combination

US+UK+Canada	19%
US +UK	17%
UK + HK	10%

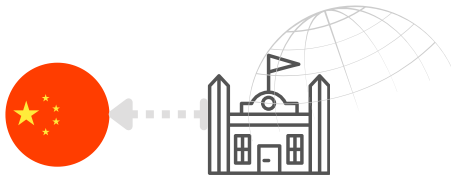
The survey data for the class of 2023 shows that 17% of students applied to US + UK, compared to 62% applying to both the UK and US last year. This aligns with the trend of fewer students applying to multiple countries. As noted, 58% of schools reported over half of their students applied to multiple countries, down from 85% the previous year, reflecting a shift towards fewer international applications.

CLASS OF 2023

2.7 Popularity of Global Campus in China

74%

of the surveyed schools reported that none of their class of 2023 enrolled at a global campus in China



Last year, 71% of counselors reported an increase in inquiries about global campuses in China (such as NYU Shanghai). Specifically, 42% of the interest came from both parents and students, while 19% was primarily from parents.

This year, we surveyed schools on the enrollment of the class of 2023 at those global campuses in China. 74% of schools reported that none of their class of 2023 enrolled at a global campus in China, and 26% reported the number was less than 5%. This indicates a significant drop in interest and enrollment compared to the previous year.

2.8 Agents

This section aimed to understand the prevalence of agent usage among senior high school students during the college application process.

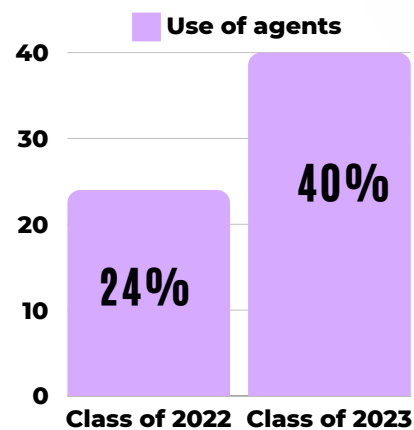


Chart 2.4 Use of agent_Class of 2023

The use of third-party agents for college applications has seen a significant increase from last year,

Last year, 24% of schools indicated that more than half of their class of 2022 seniors used third-party agents for the application process. This year, that number has risen significantly to 40%.

Data Analysis

CLASS OF 2023

Counselors were asked to compare their observations for the class of 2023 to those of the class of 2022, particularly regarding the popularity of universities in different regions. Here are the findings:

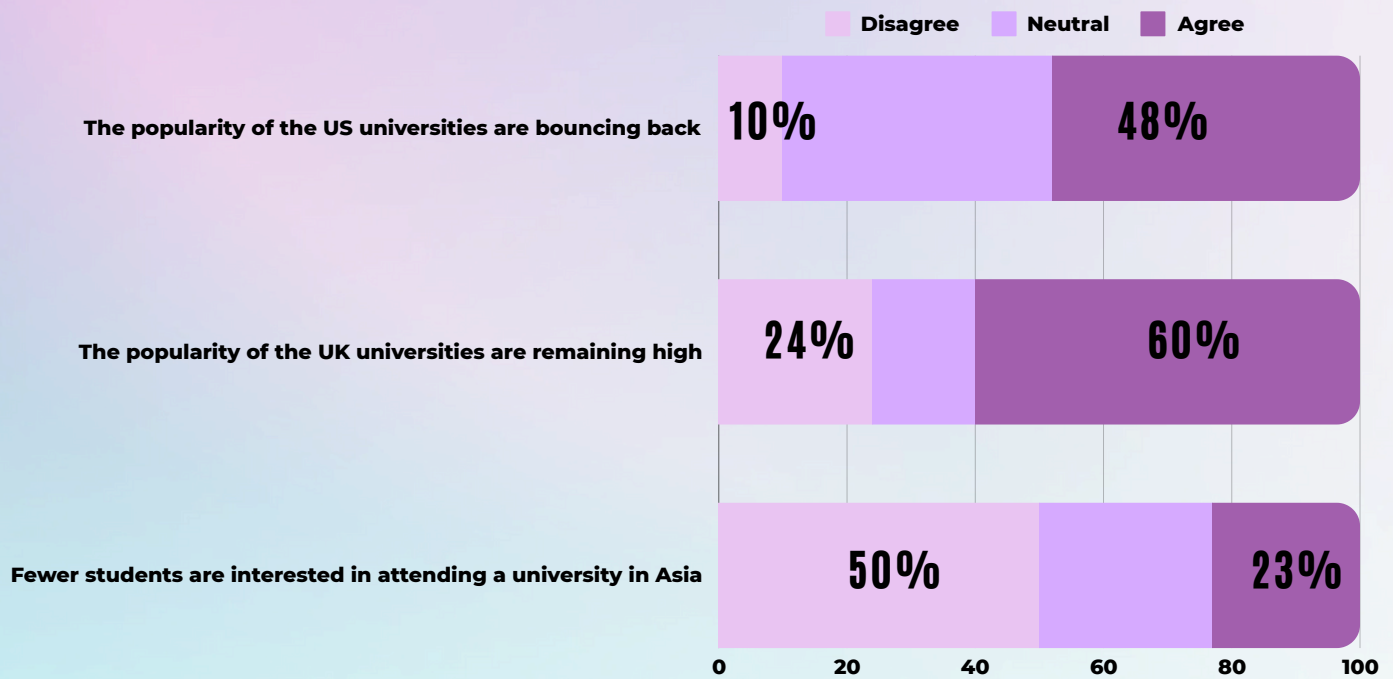


Chart 2.5 Counselors' Perspectives on Region Popularity

- **US Universities:** 48% of counselors agree that the popularity of US universities is bouncing back, while 42% remain neutral, and 10% disagree.
- **UK Universities:** 60% of counselors agree that the popularity of UK universities remains high, with 16% being neutral, and 24% disagreeing.
- **Asian Universities:** 50% of counselors disagree that fewer students are interested in attending universities in Asia, 27% are neutral, and 23% agree.

These responses suggest a perceived resurgence in interest in US universities, a continued strong interest in UK universities, and a divided opinion on the interest in Asian universities, with a significant portion of counselors noting no decline in interest.

Counselors see rebounding popularity for US universities and sustained interest in UK, mixed views on Asia.

Data Analysis

CLASS OF 2023

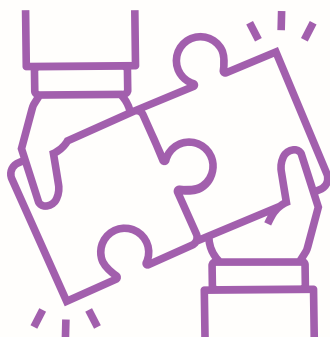
2.9 Top Deciding Factors for Application

For the class of 2023, the most important factors in deciding which college to enroll in are ranking (87%), academic offerings (82%), and location (61%). This mirrors the top three factors for the class of 2022, which were also ranking, academic offerings, and location. Additional factors for the class of 2023 include campus safety (43%), tuition (35%), and career outcomes (15%).

Rankings, academic offerings, and location remain top deciding factors for class of 2023 university enrollment



Chart 2.6 Top Deciding Factors



2.10 Decision Maker

When asked who plays the most important role in deciding where students apply to college, counselors indicated that students themselves are the primary decision-makers (52%), followed by parents (27%), school counselors (21%), agents (5%), and others (4%).

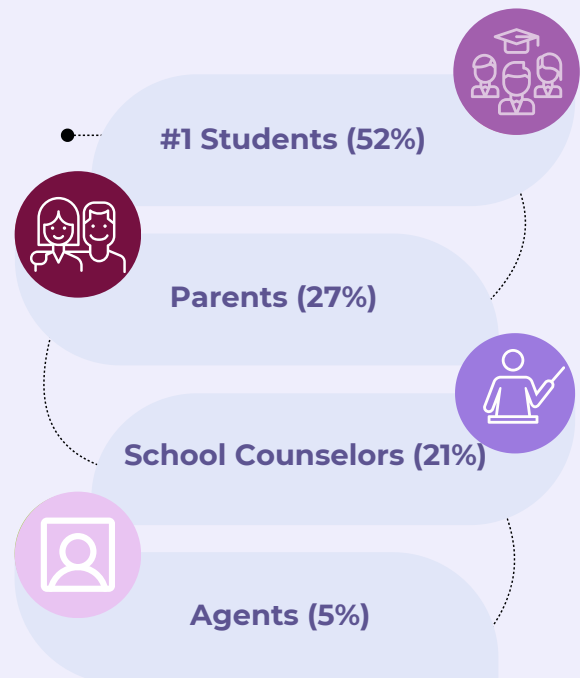
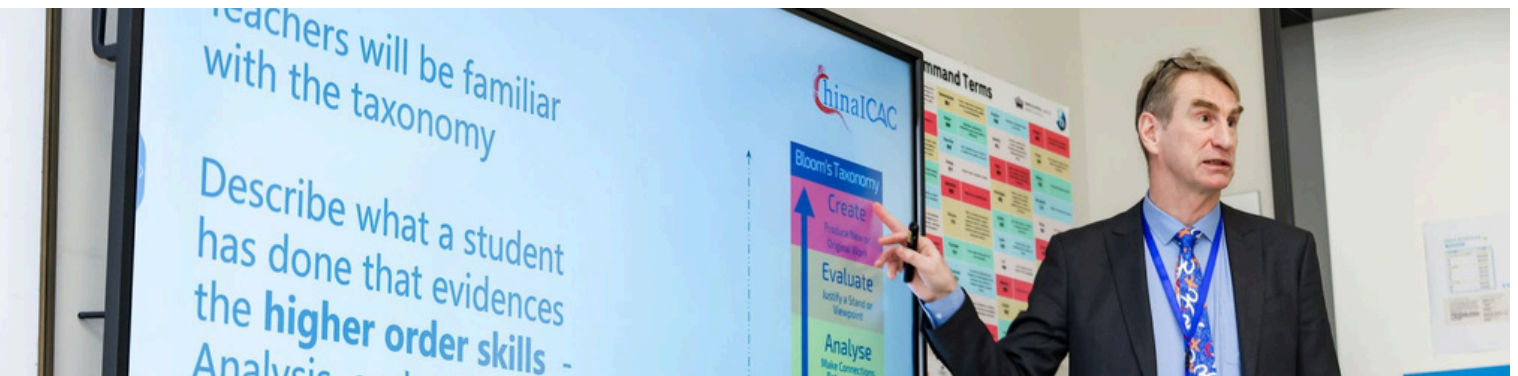


Chart 2.7 Decision Maker

Students Take the Lead in College Application Decisions,

Section Three: School Counselors



This section presents data to understand the needs, stressors, and professional opportunities of school counselors. By analyzing this information, we aim to better support the roles of school counselors, address the challenges they face, and enhance their professional growth. Understanding these aspects is crucial for creating a more effective and supportive environment for both counselors and the students they serve.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

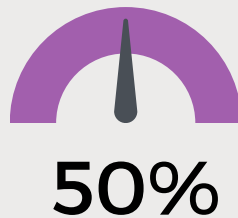
3.1 Understanding the Mental Wellbeing and Supporting School Counselors

According to the 2023 survey, 50% of counselors report experiencing high or extremely high stress levels. This marks a noticeable improvement compared to the previous year, where 62% of counselors reported similar stress levels.

Notably, the impact of COVID-19 disruptions, which was a major stressor for 76% of counselors in 2022, appears to have lessened, as it is no longer a standalone category in this year's data. This shift suggests that while some pandemic-related stressors have diminished, other challenges, such as the pressure of rankings and workload, continue to significantly impact counselors' stress levels.



Counselor stress levels show improvement, but remain high



According to the latest survey, 50% of counselors report experiencing high or extremely high stress levels. This marks a noticeable improvement compared to the previous year, where 62% of counselors reported similar stress levels.

MAIN STRESSORS FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS SHIFT AMIDST EVOLVING CHALLENGES

The survey identifies the primary stressors for guidance counselors as the ranking phenomenon (59%), heavy workload (52%), feeling underprepared to better assist students (30%), admissions policy changes due to COVID-19 (26%), conflicts with colleagues and/or leadership (20%), and other factors (7%).

COUNSELORS MAIN STRESSORS

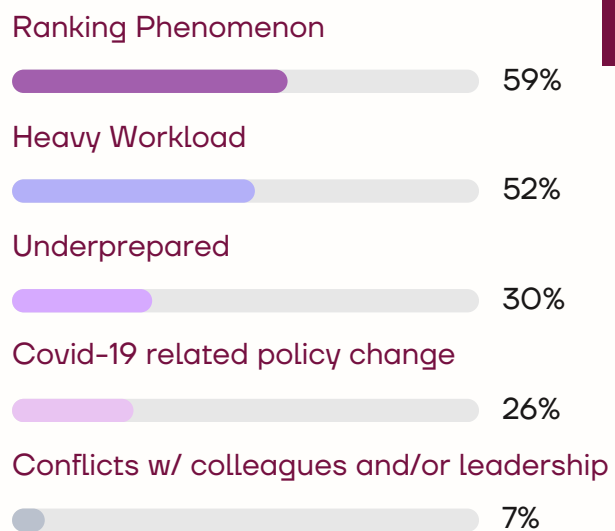


Chart 3.1 Counselors Main Stressors



These results indicate a significant shift towards fewer professional development sessions attended by counselors, compared with last year's survey. The majority (74%) attended only 1-3 sessions this year.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

3.2 Professional Development Opportunities

We surveyed counselors to determine the frequency of their attendance at professional development sessions during the academic year and which conferences their schools support them to attend. The results are as follows:

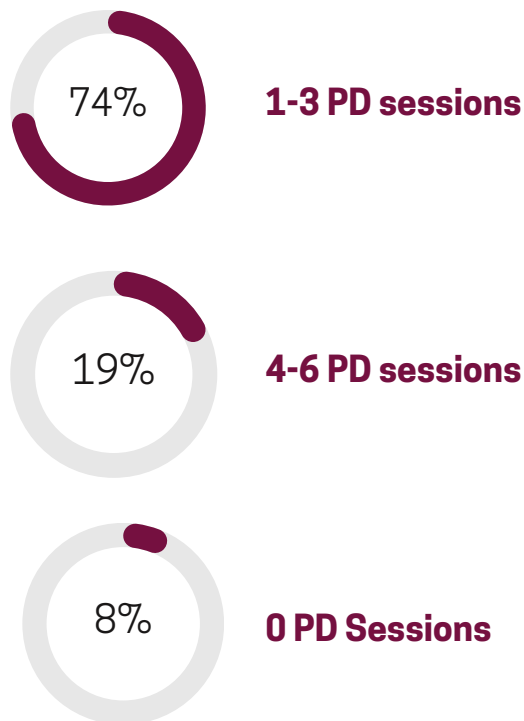


Chart 3.2 Counselor Professional Development



SCHOOL COUNSELOR

3.3 Type of Professional Development Attended

We also inquired about the types of professional development conferences and/or memberships that counselors' schools support them to attend or join.

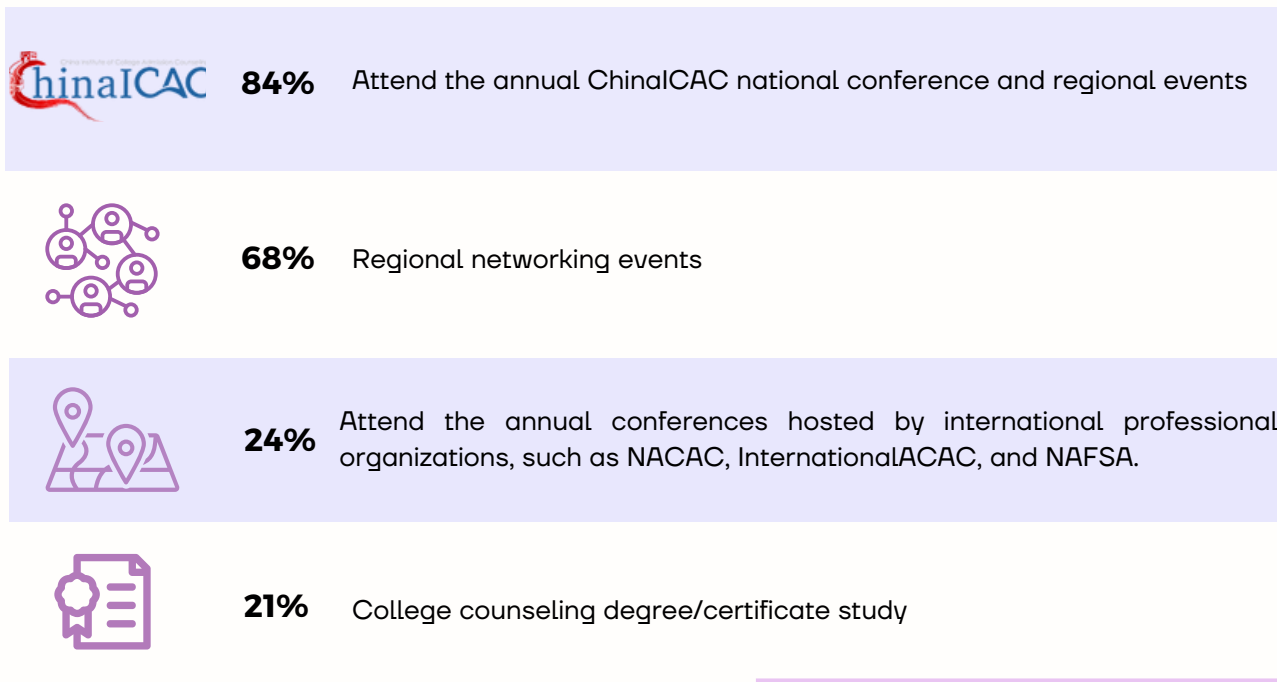


Table 3.3 Counselor Professional Development Types

Increased Attendance at ChinaICAC Conferences among Counselors

This 2023 survey indicated that 84% of counselors attended the annual ChinaICAC national conference and regional events, a significant increase from 63% last year. This rise in attendance highlights a growing engagement in professional development opportunities specific to the ChinaICAC community, indicating a trend towards greater involvement in specialized training and networking within the field of international education.



Section Four: Emerging Trends

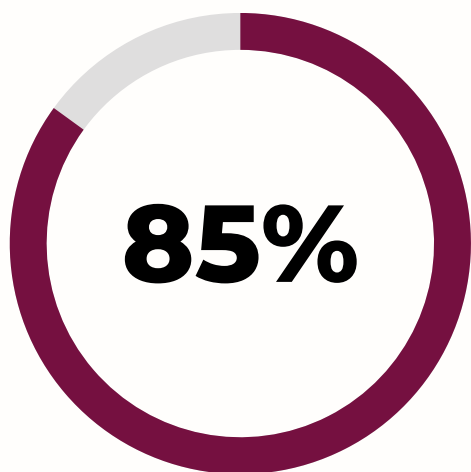


In this section, we explore the emergent topics of testing-optional policy changes and the usage of AI in counseling. These emerging trends are reshaping the landscape of education and counseling, offering new opportunities and challenges. Understanding these trends is important as they have significant implications for how students are assessed and supported, ultimately better serve our students and improve the effectiveness of counseling practices.

TEST OPTIONAL POLICY

4.1 Counselors' Guidance on Test-Optional Submissions

This section presents insights gathered from the survey aimed at understanding how counselors advise students regarding the submission of test scores when applying to test-optional schools.



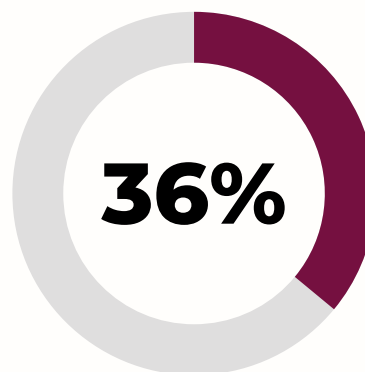
The shift towards test-optional policies was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with many institutions re-evaluating the necessity of standardized tests in admissions. However, Institutions such as Harvard, California Institute of Technology, and Purdue have announced plans to reintroduce standardized testing requirements.

The survey shows that 85% of counselors advised the class of 2023 to only submit test scores when they're required by the universities.

4.1 Counselor Perspective on Test-Optional Modifications

Counselors play a crucial role in navigating these changes, advising students on when it is strategically beneficial to submit test scores.

The survey also asked counselors to indicate if they are concerned about the potential reversal or modification of test-optional admissions policies. 36% indicated that they are concerned, while 43% indicated that they are staying neutral.

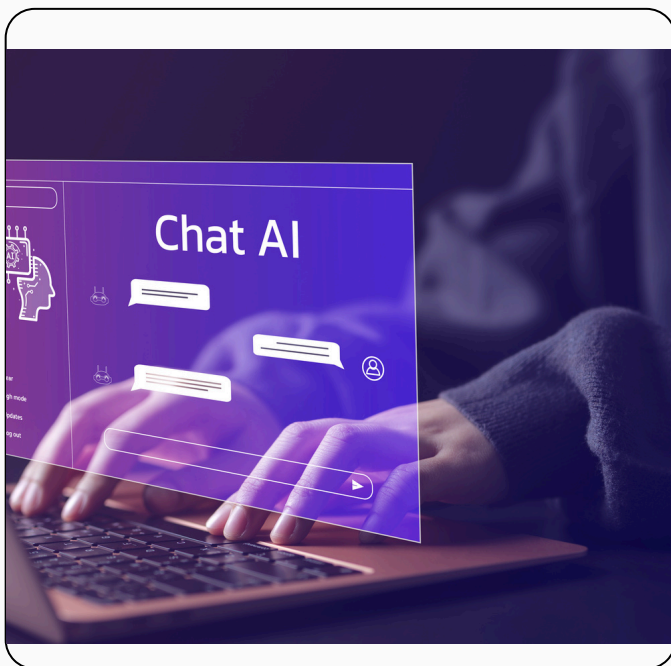


The ongoing debate about test-optional policies highlights the need for clear communication and transparency from colleges about their admissions criteria.

ADMISSIONS AND USAGE OF AI

4.2 Introduction

In the 2023 survey, we asked school counselors to determine their utilization of AI technologies, such as ChatGPT, in their roles as college counselors. We explored the usage of AI technologies to understand how these tools are being integrated into the counseling profession. The global trend towards AI adoption in various fields is on the rise (Smith, 2023). By examining the extent to which counselors use AI, we aim to identify opportunities for leveraging these technologies to improve student guidance and support.



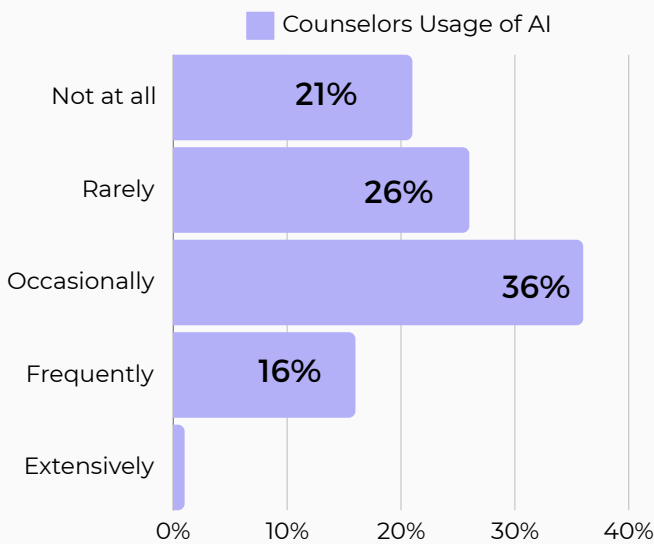
Why this data point?

This data at the high school level interacts with broader trends in higher education. An increasing number of colleges and universities are warming up to AI, particularly in their admissions processes. In 2023, 50% of admissions offices in higher education reported using AI for reviewing applications*.

Smith, J. (2023, February 23). College admissions trends: AI, college essays, and going international. Forbes. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2024/02/23/college-admissions-trends-ai-college-essays-and-going-international/?sh=7d6a16266242>

ADMISSIONS AND USAGE OF AI

4.3 The Usage of AI by Counselors

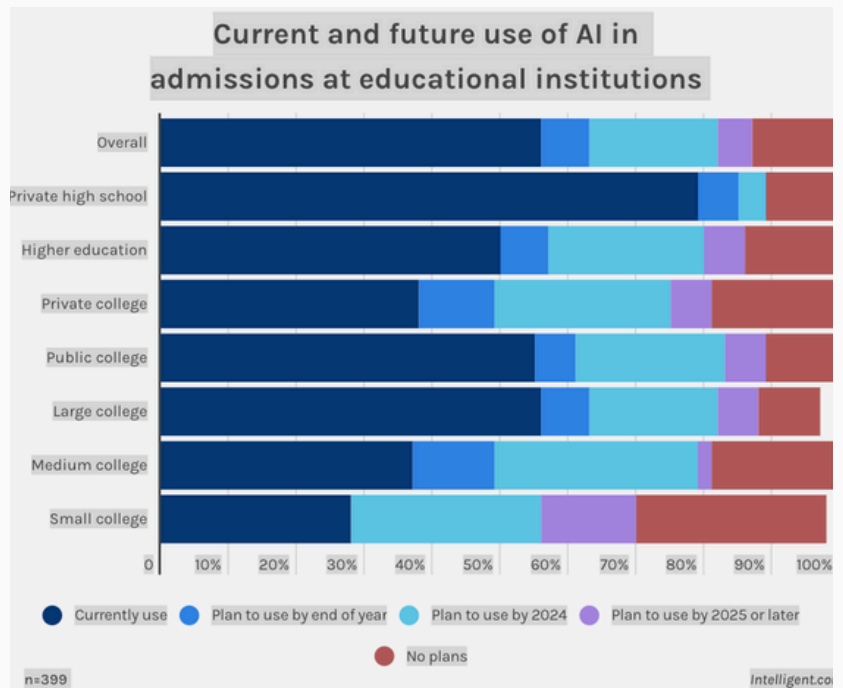
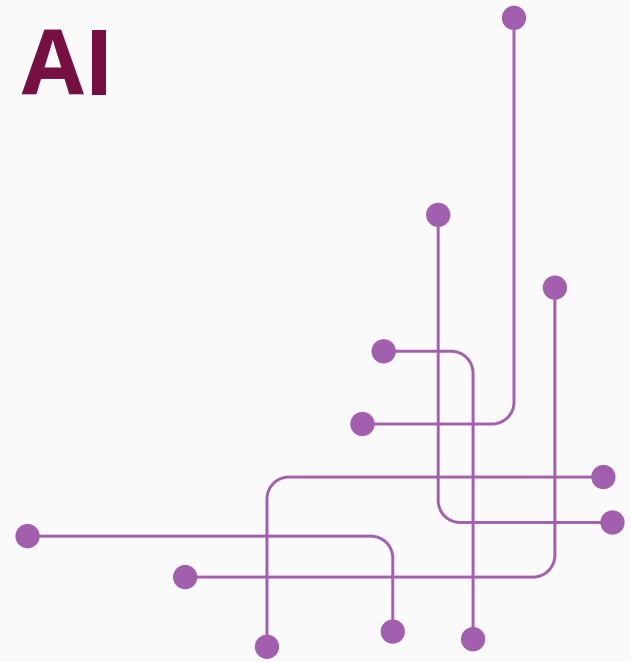


4.1 Counselor Usage of AI

In this survey, we asked counselors' use of AI technologies like ChatGPT. The results revealed that 36% use AI occasionally, 26% rarely, 21% not at all, 16% frequently, and 1% extensively. Understanding AI usage at the high school level is crucial as it aligns with trends in higher education, where 50% of admissions offices currently use AI, and 82% plan to do so by 2024 to increase efficiency and reduce bias.

In 2023, Intelligent.com surveyed 399 education professionals about their use of AI. The survey found that 79% of private high school admissions offices use AI in their admissions process. Additionally, 50% of admissions offices in higher education reported using AI for reviewing applications*.

Intelligent.com. (2023). 8 in 10 colleges will use AI in admissions by 2024. Retrieved from <https://www.intelligent.com/8-in-10-colleges-will-use-ai-in-admissions-by-2024/>

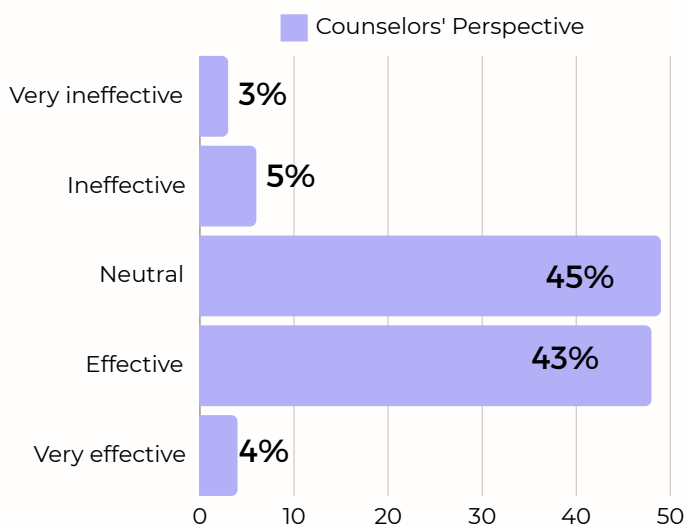


4.2 Usage of AI in Admissions Processes (2023 Survey by Intelligent.com)

ADMISSIONS AND USAGE OF AI

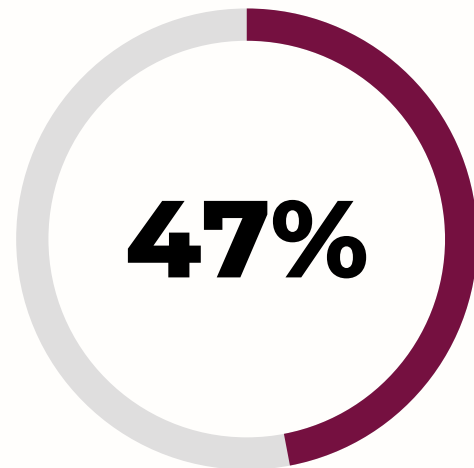
4.4 Counselors' Perspective on AI Effectiveness

We asked counselors to assess the effectiveness of AI tools like ChatGPT in enhancing their productivity and efficiency in college counseling work. The responses were as follows:



4.3 Counselor's Perspective on Effectiveness of AI

The data indicates that nearly half of the counselors view AI tools as neutral in impact, while another 43% find them effective. Only a small percentage find them very effective or ineffective, suggesting a generally positive but cautious outlook on AI's role in college counseling.

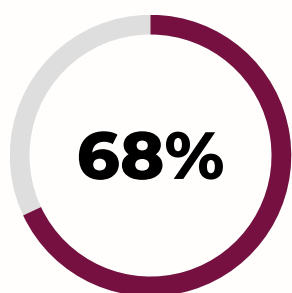


47% of the Surveyed Counselors Find AI Tools Effective in College Counseling

Only a small percentage find AI very ineffective or ineffective, suggesting a generally positive but cautious outlook on AI's role in college counseling.

ADMISSIONS AND USAGE OF AI

4.5 Use of AI Tools by Students for College Applications



68% of counselors shared observing students using AI-based tools to assist with writing personal statements for college applications, with 16% noting frequent use and 52% occasional use. Meanwhile, 27% of counselors haven't observed such use, and 5% are unsure.



4.6 Counselor Perspectives on AI Usage in College Counseling

We also asked counselors to share their perspective on using AI in the college admissions process. The common themes are highlighted below.

Key findings:

Usefulness vs Human Interaction:

43%

43% of the counselors viewed AI tools as useful aids but emphasized that they should not entirely replace human interaction.

Concerns about Reliability

33%

33% of the counselors expressed concerns about the reliability of AI tools while acknowledging their potential.

Ethical Concerns and Fairness Issues

11%

A small not noteworthy percentage of counselors raised ethical concerns and fairness issues regarding AI tools.

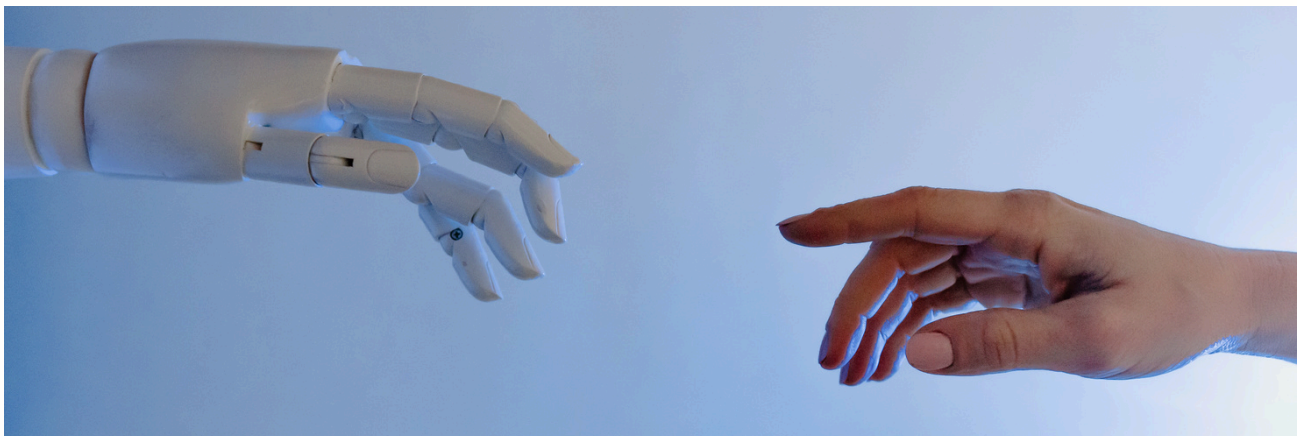
ADMISSIONS AND USAGE OF AI

4.7 AI and the Future

The section explored the usage of AI in China and compared it with data from overseas. Learning about AI usage from different stakeholders in college admissions is crucial due to its controversial role in education, particularly regarding educational equity. It is important to understand trends in college admissions offices adopting AI for their admissions processes. Are colleges using a human-centric approach or integrating AI for application reviews? If AI screening is in place, how can counselors prepare their students to write personal statements that highlight their personalities and traits to be recognized by AI? These are questions counselors and college admissions officers should work together to explore.

Additionally, in the US, the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) 2023 national conference offered sessions on AI, creating space for conversations. In the UK, UCAS published a guide on using AI for students' personal statements. With the development of AI, educators should get ready for the new era.

Transparency from colleges regarding their use of AI versus human-centric approaches can help ensure fairness and uphold the integrity of the application process. Educators must equip students with the knowledge to use AI ethically and effectively, enhancing their application quality while maintaining authenticity.



IMPLICATION & APPLICATION

China continues to be one of the largest international student-sending countries globally. The survey showcases the professional and passionate dedication of our school counselors in China, bringing transparent data forward, closing the informational gap with overseas higher education institutions, and preparing Chinese students to study abroad.

The survey indicates a shift towards public institutions and a reduced interest in private and community colleges, reflecting changing preferences among students and parents. This trend may be partly due to the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as its impact on the economy, which has led to a more strategic approach to college applications, with students becoming more selective and focused on fewer countries. This strategic shift can also be seen in the business world, where careful planning and selective decision-making are crucial, much like in international business dealings.

Though the ranking phenomenon remains the primary stressor that counselors face in their day-to-day work, the survey reveals a noticeable decrease in the proportion of counselors reporting high or extremely high stress levels, dropping from 62% last year to 50% this year. This reduction in stress may be attributed to several factors, including better adaptation to the post-pandemic educational landscape and improved coping mechanisms among counselors.

Additionally, the usage of AI in college counseling is becoming prominent, with varying degrees of adoption. The use of AI tools like ChatGPT for personal statements and other application processes is on the rise, which calls for clear guidelines and ethical considerations. The survey reveals a cautiously optimistic view of AI's potential, stressing the importance of maintaining human interaction and personal authenticity in applications.

In conclusion, the class of 2023 guidance counselor survey findings offer valuable insights into the evolving trends and preferences in Chinese guidance counselor practices and students studying abroad trends. The steady rise in student numbers across all city tiers and the increased engagement from 3rd-tier cities indicate a widening interest in overseas education. The use of AI and third-party agents in the admissions process presents both opportunities and challenges. The survey calls for key stakeholders, including the admissions offices of colleges and universities, to ensure transparency in their admissions criteria and provide clear guidance on the ethical use of AI. By staying informed and responsive to these trends, counselors can understand the general practices in China, and overseas higher education institutions can enhance their recruitment strategies, communication policies, and collaboration to better serve a diverse and growing student population in China.

TOOLKITS

The ChinaICAC 2023 Guidance Counselor Survey has generated important insights into the trends and preferences of senior students during the college application process, as well as the support and resources needed by guidance counselors. Based on the survey results, this section presents a set of toolkits for high school counselors and overseas institution admissions officers to use for the data-informed decision-making process at work.

The toolkit is designed to provide practical recommendations and best practices, taking into account the latest developments in the field of college admissions. With the information contained in this toolkit, high school counselors and overseas institution admissions officers will be equipped to provide the best possible support to their students.

01 **Data Collection Template**

Designed for counselors in mainland China

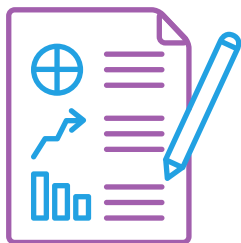
02 **Transparent Communication**

Designed for overseas university/college admissions officers

DATA COLLECTION

TEMPLATE

FOR GUIDANCE COUNSELOR



ChinaICAC plans to make the annual guidance counselor survey a yearly tradition to keep international educators and stakeholders informed on the best ways to support Chinese high school students in their pursuit of studying abroad. This is a key mission for ChinaICAC and we strive to provide guidance counselors with the best tools and knowledge to assist with their work. We recommend that guidance counselors save the template and be ready to provide data in the 2023-2024 academic year.

01. Student Data Tracking

- Students enrollment data
- Senior student application data
 - Types of institution
 - Fields of study
 - Popular country/region
 - Deciding factors
- Parents and agents information tracking

02. Emerging Trends Tracking

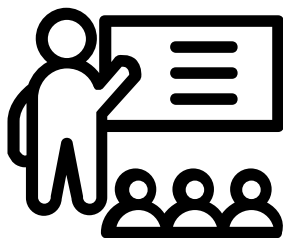
- The usage of AI
- The perspective and practice on test-optional advising
- Other emerging trends

03. Support Tracking

- Mental health wellbeing tracking
- Professional development tracking
- Areas of support and needs tracking

RECRUITMENT TIPS

FROM GUIDANCE COUNSELOR



Based on the survey data and current trends, here are some actionable tips for effectively attracting and engaging Chinese students:

01. Information Transparency on AI

Communicate AI Usage: With the increasing use of AI in admissions processes, it's crucial to be transparent about how AI tools, such as AI personal statement or CV screenings, are used. Ensure students and counselors understand how personal statements are reviewed, including any AI involvement. Highlight the ethical guidelines in place.

02. Communicate Test-Optional Policies

Clearly explain your institution's test-optional policies. Highlight that these policies aim to provide students more support to plan and prepare with the application process.

03. Engage with Diverse Regions

Though the survey reveals that ranking, academic offerings, and location are the top factors influencing students' college choices, different regions or schools may have different needs. Ensure active communication with high school guidance counselors in different regions to tailor your recruitment strategy to find the best-fit students for your institution.

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the guidance counselors who participated in our 2023 annual survey. Your invaluable efforts have helped us gather crucial data that will inform decision-making for international educators and provide transparent insights on how to better assist Chinese high school students in the overseas college application process.

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to contribute to the mission of ChinaICAC

Contact:

Research, Scholarship & Learning Committee

ChinaICAC

<https://www.chinaicac.org/>

RESEARCH@chinaicac.org

@ChinaICAC



Research, Scholarship & Learning Committee
ChinaICAC

2023