

The Healthy Enrollment Assessment

01 LEADERSHIP | Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Unhealthy: School leaders are in perpetual firefighting mode, spending significant time sorting out conflicts, managing dissatisfied families, and responding to crises rather than focusing on school growth.

Healthy: Leaders have the time and headspace to be proactive and strategic — focusing on long-term planning, faculty development, and innovation.

02 FINANCES | Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Unhealthy: Schools struggling with finances compete on price but aspire to compete on value. Budget shortfalls may launch a downward spiral of cutting programs and positions. The focus is on delivering the essentials and paying faculty and staff the minimum required to keep them onboard.

Healthy: Schools with healthy enrollment have set tuition at a price point that reflects their value. They have a level of financial stability that allows them to invest in opportunities — facilities, programs, faculty and staff, and student support services. There is a shared mindset that quality matters, recognizing that the cheapest option doesn't make it the best option.

03 PROGRAMMING | Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Unhealthy: Unhealthy enrollment often results in limited and lagging programming. Schools may struggle to maintain a strong array of electives, extracurriculars, and AP/honors-level academic tracks, weakening their ability to differentiate in a competitive landscape.

Healthy: Schools with healthy enrollment tend to have robust and effective programming. They have faculty and staff who love what they do, and their enthusiasm encourages students to pursue their interests. Students have access to engaging academic courses and enrichment opportunities.

04 CULTURE | Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Unhealthy: When schools prioritize filling seats over finding Right-fit Families™, the impact on school culture is profound. Mismatched expectations between parents, students, and staff can lead to division, frustration, and dissatisfaction. Faculty and staff can feel burdened, looking for hope, rather than energized and optimistic.

Healthy: Healthy enrollment fosters a school community and culture aligned with shared core values. Families are engaged and supportive, students are proud of their school, and faculty feel valued and empowered.

05 DEVELOPMENT | Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Unhealthy: For schools with unhealthy enrollment, fundraising becomes a lifeline to cover budget shortfalls. Campaigns feel desperate rather than visionary, and donor engagement is often transactional rather than relational. It's hard for donors to get excited about covering lease payments or payroll.

Healthy: Schools with healthy enrollment and financial stability see donors as Vision Partners. They invite benefactors to participate in expanding facilities, enhancing academic programs, and providing life-changing tuition assistance. They invest in a particular vision of the future that will make a difference.

06 RECRUITMENT | Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Unhealthy: When enrollment is a numbers game, schools often prioritize admission decisions based on ability to pay rather than alignment with mission and values. This approach can lead to long-term challenges, including culture misalignment and high attrition rates.

Healthy: When schools craft clear messaging and refine their admissions process, even incorporating tools like a Right-Fit Family™ Rubric, they create a consistent flow of families who want the school for what it does, not what they want the school to do. The admissions team is empowered to say a kind "no" now to avoid a prolonged, painful "no" weeks, months, or even years later.

07 RETENTION | Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Unhealthy: Schools with unhealthy enrollment often experience high turnover. The good ones leave, and the bad ones stay.

Healthy: Healthy enrollment leads to higher retention and stronger family engagement. Word-of-mouth is positive, consistent, and contagious. In the interest of maintaining healthy enrollment, school leaders are not squeamish about asking misaligned families to find a better fit at another school.

08 MISSIONAL IMPACT | Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Unhealthy: Enrollment health ultimately shapes a school's ability to pursue its mission and vision. Schools with unhealthy enrollment often struggle to maintain consistent and expanding impact as they are consumed with the tyranny of the urgent.

Healthy: Schools with healthy enrollment have the capacity to think beyond short-term needs. They develop leaders, serve their communities, and shape students who graduate with a deep sense of purpose, ready to make a difference in the world.

THE AIM: HEALTHY AND FULL

To be clear, "full" and "healthy" are not mutually exclusive. The aim is healthy enrollment on the way to full enrollment.

So, where does your school stand today on the spectrum of enrollment health? What opportunities do you have to pursue greater alignment?

Interested in exploring ways to level up your commitments to Healthy Enrollment™, contact Tassel to learn more.



Tassel
MARKETING LEADERSHIP
FOR HEALTHY ENROLLMENT