



The *Swail Letter on Higher Education* is published bimonthly throughout the year with the exception of July and August. This edition was prepared by Watson Scott Swail, Katie Linder, Maly Fung, and Elise Pas.

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For What it's Worth...

In this issue of The Swail Letter on Higher Education, we focus on the growth of postsecondary education in the United States, from both an institutional and enrollment perspective.

The massification of higher education in the US is an amazing story. Starting with the first enrollment of 9 students at Harvard College in 1636 to over 20 million students nationwide, the US has developed what is arguably recognized as the "best" higher education system in the world. The US has a greater number of international students (see our May 2010 Swail Letter report) than any other nation, representing the global appetite for US-type education.

As we continue on the path of a global higher education arms race, the US postsecondary population, and the number of institutions, continues to rise. The policy support of several US Presidents, including Bush, Clinton, Bush, and Obama, has helped push the higher education envelope. As well, there currently exists an atmospheric understanding that higher education matters to the welfare of society as well as the individual. The unfortunate flipside suggests that those who do not go to college will not persevere, let alone succeed, in America. This, of course, is not completely true.

Still, we clearly understand that higher education opens doors to a greater potential for career success for those who have access to the postsecondary sector. As our data essay illustrates, the issue in American education is still about equal and equitable opportunity, especially by race/ethnic groupings. More Black, Hispanic, and Native American students are attending college and universities across the country each year, but the gap in access and success rates between these groups is still disturbing.

Alas, higher education, and higher education opportunity, is a work in progress. While we have massified higher education via both public and private sectors, we now must deal with both equal access and quality of higher education. We have the quantity, but the question of quality is lurking in the shadows of the ivory pillars of postsecondary education.

Watson Scott Swail, Ed.D.
President & CEO, Educational Policy Institute

THIS ISSUE

Higher Education Institutions and Enrollment P2

Since the 17th century, higher education in the United States has grown exponentially. In this issue of The Swail Letter on Higher Education, we look at the trends in growth of both institutions and enrollment as they have occurred over the years.

UPCOMING EPI EVENTS

RETENTION 2011

Join us June 12-14, 2011 in San Diego, California for the International Conference on Student Success. Visit our website for more information.

EPI BOOK CLUB

EPI Book club is a series of interactive online presentations of recently published books with the authors that focus on a variety of educational topics. Visit our website to register.

May 3, 2011 - 2:00pm EST,
Higher Education? How colleges are wasting our money and failing our kids - and what we can do about it?
with Andrew Hacker & Claudia Dreifus.

June 7, 2011 - 1:00pm EST,
Stretching the School Dollar
with Frederick M. Hess.

The Educational Policy Institute's
Retention
2011

International Conference on Student Success
June 12-14, 2011, San Diego, CA



JUNE 12-14, 2011 - SAN DIEGO, CA

The Educational Policy Institute cordially invites you to attend RETENTION 2011, our sixth annual conference dedicated to exploring contemporary issues related to student success. Hosted at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina in San Diego, CA on June 12-14, 2011, this year's conference looks like it could be our biggest in years, based on the number of proposals for presentations received. We will have the most breakout sessions ever, with 65 concurrent sessions, plus our plenary sessions. The event will bring together teachers, administrators, researchers and policymakers from around the world who are dedicated to promoting student success.

THERE WILL BE TWO PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

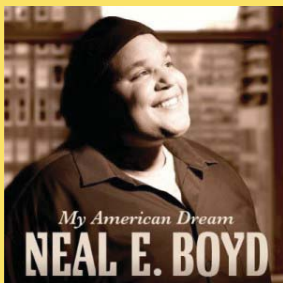
Workshop 1: An Introduction to Student Retention
June 12, 9:00 am - 12:00 noon; Dr. Watson Scott Swail,
Educational Policy Institute

This session will outline a retention framework and discuss issues related to defining retention on campus, data usage, student tracking systems, campus buy-in, and proven practices.

Workshop 2: Building a Roadmap for Meeting Institutional Regional Goals
June 12, 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm; Jay Goff & Harvest Collier, Missouri University
of Science & Technology

This session provides an opportunity for institutional leaders to discuss how coordination between offices in data collection can be useful in analyzing institution-specific retention issues.

F E A T U R E D S P E A K E R S



Neal E. Boyd, 2008 winner of America's Got Talent

The unlikelyst of superstars, singer Neal E. Boyd won the hearts and votes of millions of fans when he appeared as a contestant on the wildly popular NBC show "America's Got Talent." Now, with the release of his highly anticipated debut CD "My American Dream" on Decca (June 23rd), Neal is determined to make sure that his story and his music inspires others to succeed.

Neal Boyd credits his postsecondary success to many of the educators and mentors who believed in him and made a difference in his life.

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Higher Education Institutions and Enrollment

Four Centuries of Change

The state of higher education is arguably one of the most prominent issues facing America today. From inside Capitol Hill to newspaper pages, television screens, social networking sites, and living rooms around the country, the condition of education, educational policy, and reform are continually

several hundred colleges had been established and over 60,000 students were enrolled. A few years later, in 1862, President Lincoln signed the First Morrill Act, which granted each state 30,000 acres of land to each member of Congress “in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial

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William and Mary followed, also for the training of clergymen, but by 1700, enrollment in higher education totaled only 150 students.

As life in America continued into the 18th century, an influx of immigrants and expansion across the American landscape slowly began shifts in thinking about formal education. By the beginning of the American Revolution, nine colonial colleges, modeled on European educational forms, had been established, 1,000 students enrolled, and 200 degrees conferred (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). During the early 19th century, the nation grew two-fold, manufacturing and the workforce multiplied, and separation between church and state gave way to hundreds of new colleges across the country. The Supreme Court’s decision in *Dartmouth vs. Woodward* in 1819 prevented states from interfering with privately run schools and further increased a nationwide incentive to establish public colleges, and by 1860,

college (Snyder & Dillow, 2010), as well as every other adult returning to school for an advanced education. For over a century, growth in postsecondary institutions has been both continuous and exponential, where the number of colleges nearly doubled between 1870 and 1900, again after 1960, and again since 2000. The number of institutions briefly declined between 1890 and 1910, likely due to the establishment of formal college associations that helped institutions set university standards and created more competition among postsecondary institutions, during the middle of the Great Depression, and towards the end of World War II; but numbers quickly rose within a few years after each decline as attention to higher education returned.

While it is well documented that most institutions of higher education have historically been private, inconsistent census surveys and data reporting was fairly unreliable before the