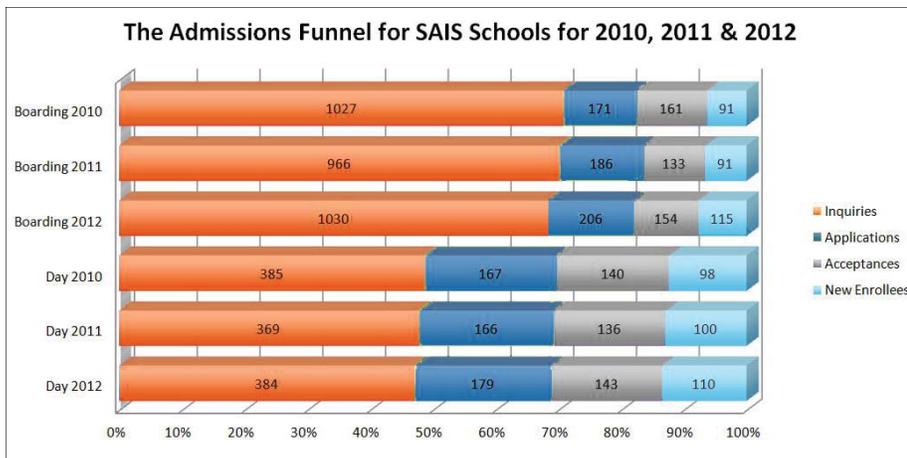


FAST STATS

MARCH 2012
ENROLLMENT

In this **Fast Stats**, we will take a look at the two key sets of enrollment data in any independent school.

The first is often called the **admissions funnel**: the proportion of inquiries to applications, applications to acceptances and acceptances to enrollees. Admissions funnel data is especially useful, not only assessing raw numbers throughout the funnel, but also in comparing a particular school's numbers on any element in the funnel with norms for independent schools. For example, if a school has a relatively normal inquiries total, but applications are well below the average, then a school might want to investigate how it responds to inquiries.

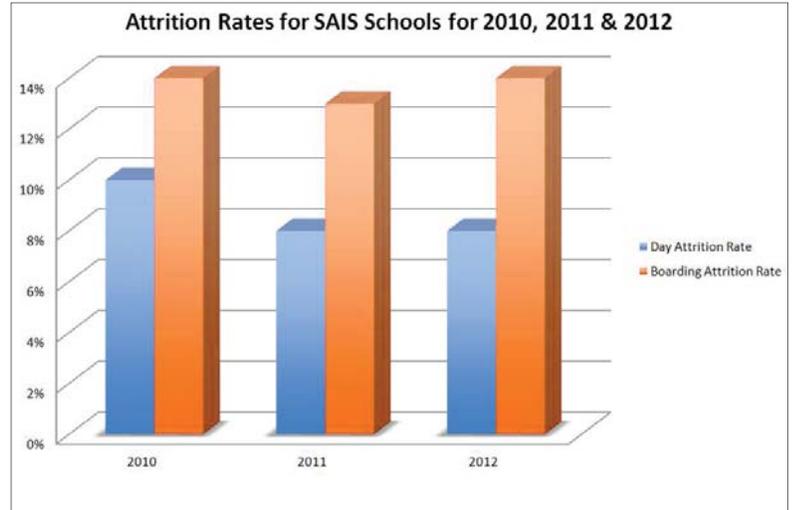


The other key set of data for enrollment analysis is for **attrition**. Attrition is simply the number of students who leave your school (other than by graduation). Of course, a certain amount of attrition is normal in every school. Indeed, some schools have high attrition rates because of their situation. For example, many international schools have attrition rates that are extremely high because of the transient nature of many of the families. Thus, whenever looking at attrition rates, always compare them to your particular demographics.

First let's look at the admissions funnel data. Overall, it's clear that there has been, in both SAIS day and boarding environments, relative stability for the past three years. Al-

though, for 2012 there has been a modest spike from applications through enrollees in both day and boarding schools. One year is not a trend, this is hopeful data.

For attrition rates, again, there is relative stability. The only trend worth noting is that the day school attrition rate decreased two percentage points from 2010 to 2011 and stayed that way for 2012. Perhaps, this is an indication that the economy is stabilizing because fewer families are leaving independent schools...but that is a rather large assumption.



The most critical response a school can make to this data is to run a quick check against its own admissions funnel and attrition data. Although you have to account for your micro-demographics, wild variations from this set of data likely calls for a closer look at admissions, marketing and retention processes and personnel.

The conclusion from this data is there is relative stability in both admissions and retention data for SAIS schools, with a modest spike for 2012.

*An important caveat to note is that it is likely that many schools have stimulated the admissions funnel by increasing financial aid, thus, although comparable numbers are going through the funnel, more of them could be financial aid candidates. The primary implication for independent schools is that although enrollment numbers are comparable, net revenue is down somewhat.



FAST STATS provides SAIS members with fast, readable, and pertinent information based on the quantitative analysis of one important question.

FAST STATS encourages members to submit questions for future issues. If you have questions you would like answered via FAST STATS please send to angela@sais.org.