



## Financial Health Index & Equity Indicators Dashboard Use Case

A Board of Regents Member of a 4-Year Regional Public University in the Midwest Looks to Improve Support for Increasingly Racially Diverse Students

**MAPS**  
charting the shifting landscape  
of the future of higher education

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## **How Well is Your College or University Performing Financially and Addressing Student Equity?**

In the wake of student demographic changes and their accompanying and increasing needs, higher education leaders will need to take a data-backed approach to decisions affecting students, especially historically underserved students. The MAPS Project gives higher education leaders actionable insights and tools to navigate challenges, empowering them to create a more equitable future for historically marginalized students.

The Financial Health Indicators Index is the first system-wide data tool that allows governing boards, presidents, and senior leadership teams to evaluate how their institution's financial health directly impacts student experience and outcomes from an equity lens. Higher education leaders will be able to use the index to compare their institutions to others to gain additional layers of insight. Governing boards will also be able to get a fuller picture of health in the context of peer institutions and may get more insights by also working with university leadership.

The Equity Indicators contextualize racial and socioeconomic data to help leaders find ways to better serve historically marginalized students. Together, they provide a current state picture to support post secondary stakeholders in recognizing opportunities to better serve historically marginalized students.

## **Use Cases for the Financial Health Indicators Index and Equity Indicators**

The goal of the use cases is to show higher education leaders how to use the Financial Health Indicators Index and Equity Indicators to gain insights into how their institution is performing in both areas.

These use cases provide fictional examples of higher education leaders, such as college presidents and governing board members, using the tools to gain insights into their institutions' financial performance with an equity lens.



## Use Case: A Board of Regents Member of a 4-Year Regional Public University in the Midwest Looks to Improve Support for Increasingly Racially Diverse Students

### THE CHALLENGE

James serves on the governing board of a Midwestern, 4-year regional public university that is located in a rural environment and that enrolls a majority of white students. The governing board members have been curious about how to better support historically marginalized students, but are having difficulty understanding how that should translate into specific programs or services, and how it should be funded. He also recognizes that the governing board could use an outside perspective, as the members are all white.

### KEY FINDINGS: MAPS FINANCIAL HEALTH INDICATORS INDEX (FHII)

- **University Overview:**
  - Full Time Enrollment Undergrad/Grad: 5,000/500
  - Undergrad Pell Recipients: 32% are Pell recipients
  - Graduate Rate: 51%
  - Retention Rate: 76%
- **FHII percentile:** James sees his university falls in the **55th percentile of public, 4-year or above higher education institutions.**
- **Comparing schools:** James compares his university to other 4-year public colleges and universities in his state and sees that his university ranks in the middle.
- **Examining student spending:** He examines numbers related to student spending, a strong indicator of the overall FHII score. While comparing student spending data to the data of five other schools in the state, he notices that his university ranks in the middle of the pack when it comes to student services as a percentage of total expenses. However, compared to the five other schools, his university spent the least amount of money on:
  - Scholarships and fellowships expenses as a percentage of total expenses, and
  - Discounts and allowances applied toward fees and tuition per student.

### KEY FINDINGS: MAPS EQUITY INDICATORS

For greater context, he looks at the MAPS Equity Indicators that contextualize racial and socioeconomic data.

- **Majority Race of Instructors:** 88% White
- **Demographic Information:**
  - Race of Undergraduate Students:
    - White: 85%



- Hispanic: 4%
- Black: 5%
- Asian: 1%
- Additional Races: 5%
- Graduation Rates for Specific Groups Compared to the Institution's Overall Graduation Rate:
  - White: 55%
  - Hispanic: 40%
  - Black: 30%
  - Asian: 75%
  - Additional Races: 35%

He sees that his university was enrolling and graduating white students at well above the state and national levels. However, the enrollment and completion rates were much lower than state and national levels for Black and Hispanic students.

## INSIGHTS

After reviewing the data and seeing that Black and Hispanic students are graduating at much lower rates than their white counterparts, James wonders how the university can better support students who come from different racial and socio-economic backgrounds. He plans to reach out to other institutional leaders to suggest a co-design approach to gather ideas from the ground up about the best plan forward.

He also is going to suggest that the university create programs to enroll more Black and Latinx students. He knows this should be on his university's radar, as well, because the Black population has been recently increasing in the areas surrounding the institution.

## SOLUTIONS

James explores [MAPS Resources](#) to find examples and information about how colleges and universities can better support students of diverse racial backgrounds through programs and student services.