

## Changes In Student Success Measures After Year One

As shown in other research briefs, schools that participate in Moving the Needle (MTN) typically experience increases in first-time, full-time (FTFT) student retention after the first year.<sup>1</sup> That research, however, was based on secondary analysis of IPEDS data which only allowed for an aggregate view of FTFT retention by institution. Disaggregated data now collected consistently from participating schools on an annual basis allows for more timely analysis and a fuller understanding of MTN's impact on target student populations including transfer (TR) students and those with a variety of demographic differences, life experiences, and educational backgrounds.

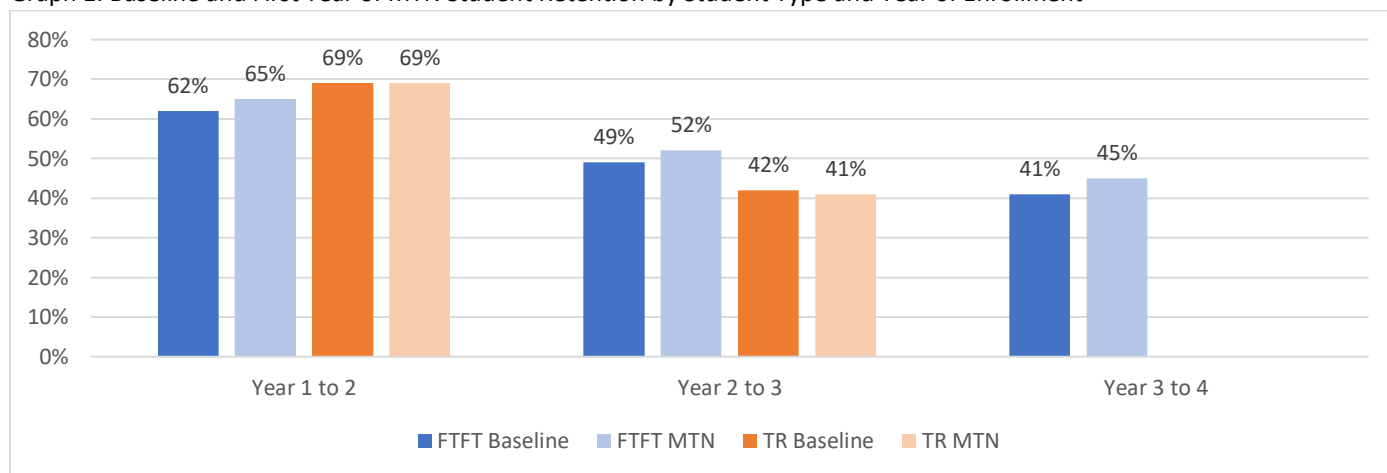
### Data Analysis

Each year MTN schools provide enrollment and graduation data on starting FTFT and TR students for the three previous entering cohorts, which allows for analysis of student success of those enrolled in their first through fourth years at the institution. Aggregating the schools' data and analyzing the retention rates allows patterns to emerge for MTN as a whole and specific student populations. Data for this analysis were compiled from three schools that launched during 2020 that enrolled 3,984 new FTFT and 1,065 new transfer students included in this analysis.

### Results

Graph 1 provides student retention rates<sup>2</sup> for FTFT and TR students from the starting year (baseline) (Fall 2019 to 2020) and after one year of MTN participation (Fall 2020 to 2021). The data indicate a positive change (+3-4%) for FTFT students regardless of their year in school. Transfer students, however, remain relatively unchanged for year 1 and year 2 students<sup>3</sup>.

Graph 1: Baseline and First Year of MTN Student Retention by Student Type and Year of Enrollment



<sup>1</sup> See *Longer Term Impact of Moving the Needle* research brief.

<sup>2</sup> Retention computed as the number of returning students divided by the initial cohort less the number of graduates.

<sup>3</sup> Transfer students are only analyzed for two years because significant graduations impact the measure by the third year.

In addition to understanding overall shifts in retention, it is also possible to isolate specific student populations and review the impacts on them. For some student populations, sizeable changes have occurred over multiple years and for both FTFT and TR students. Table 1 provides a list of data disaggregations<sup>4</sup> with substantial changes between the baseline and year 1 of MTN<sup>5</sup>.

Table 1: FTFT and TR Student Segmentations with Sizeable Changes between the Baseline and First Year of MTN

		First to Second Year	Second to Third Year	Third to Fourth Year
<b>FTFT</b>	Increases	Males (+9%) Black (+14%); Latinx (+7%); Other <sup>6</sup> (+16%); Unreported Race (+10%) Student Athlete (+5%) Resident Student (+5%) HS GPA (2.75-3.75) (+7%)	Non-Resident (+9%); White (+5%); Unreported Race (+5%) HS GPA (less than 2.75) (+5%)	Male (+6%) Latinx (+17%); Black (+6%) Pell Eligible (+7%) HS GPA (2.75-3.75) (+7%); HS GPA (3.75 or higher) (+5%)
	Decreases	Non-Resident (-6%) Undeclared (-13%)	Other <sup>3</sup> (-7%)	HS GPA (less than 2.75) (-9%)
<b>TR</b>	Increases	Male (+8%) Black (+5%); Latinx (+28%); Athletes (+32%) Resident Students (+11%)	Black (+10%); Latinx (+5%) Non-Resident (+8%) Pell Eligible (+11%)	
	Decreases	Female (-7%) Non-Resident (-8%); Unreported Race (-7%)		

## Implications

Although based on only two data points, Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 and Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 retention and so not representing a trend, some interesting patterns emerge across the schools.

- After the first year participating in MTN, there is a 3%-point increase in entering FTFT student retention over the previous year.
- Parallel increases in retention occur for undergraduates who entered as FTFT students and are in their second (sophomore) and third (junior) years during 2020-2021.
- There is no change in retention for students who started as transfer students, whether they matriculated prior to MTN's start in Fall 2019 or after its start in Fall 2020.
- Specific populations that tend to experience larger increases in retention include men, Black/African American students, Latinx students, student athletes, and resident students. For FTFT students, those with strong (but not the strongest) HS GPAs also experienced increases in first-to-second year and third-to-fourth year retention.
- International students have a decline in retention from the first-to-second year for both FTFT and TR but have an increase in second-to-third year rates. Both changes could be linked to COVID-19-related travel restrictions.

<sup>4</sup> Data disaggregations include: Sex, Race/Ethnicity, Residential Status, Student Athletic Participation, Campus Employment, Pell Eligibility, First Generation Status, HS GPA, and Undeclared Major Status.

<sup>5</sup> Sizeable changes identified as greater than or equal to +/-5% with over 50 students in the category.

<sup>6</sup> Other includes racial and ethnic groups that have too few students for meaning statistical analysis and includes Asian, Native American, and Pacific Islander