

THE COHERENCE TEST

Student Profile Pathways

Case #67 The Student

A live exploration of evidence, interpretation and fit



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REGIONAL INSTITUTE
South & Central Asia 2026

Meet a student

Before counselling.
Before admissions.
Before profiles.

Inside the envelope are three pieces of information about the same student.

That’s all you get.



What did you make of the student?

You have 5 minutes.

NOTICE

What do you actually see?
Write only what your three cards give you.

INTERPRET

What pattern might connect them?
“This student might be...”

QUESTION

What is still missing?
What would you want to know before making a judgement?

Separate what you KNOW from what you THINK you know.

This student might be...

Complete the sentence — and keep the word “might.”

“This student might be...”

ONE REASON

Which card supports your interpretation?

ONE QUESTION

What would you explore further?

ONE UNKNOWN

What do you still not know?

The first lesson

**An application is not the student.
It is evidence about the student.**

READ

What does the evidence support?

RECOGNISE

What remains unknown?

Student 01 — evidence card inventory

01 · READER A book was often his companion on the way to school.	02 · SCIENCE & MATH Subject recommendations reflect strength in Math and Science.	03 · WHAT I CARE ABOUT Wants to build something meaningful, learn, and make a positive impact; exact path still evolving.
04 · PUZZLES & QUIZZES Enjoyed puzzles and problems that made him think.	05 · NOT THE TOPPER Studied seriously, but was not always the top-ranked student.	06 · QUIET Classmates remembered him as quiet, reserved and studious.
07 · SCHOOL TRANSITION Moved to another school for junior and senior school years.	08 · INTEREST Academic interests leaned strongly toward science.	09 · TECHNOLOGY ACCESS Grew up with relatively limited access to technology.
10 · THE MARKS Known to compete hard for marks.	11 · CURIOSITY Curious about how things worked.	12 · OBSERVATION More comfortable observing and learning than seeking attention.

ONE PIECE OF EVIDENCE ≠ THE WHOLE STUDENT

The counsellor's room

Before an application is read,
a student has already been living the journey.



The counsellor's job is not to manufacture a profile.
It is to understand the process of becoming.

The counsellor keeps asking...

QUESTION 1

What keeps pulling this student back?

QUESTION 3

How has it evolved?

QUESTION 5

What does the student choose when nobody is asking?

QUESTION 2

Where do we see evidence of it?

QUESTION 4

What experiences changed the student?

QUESTION 6

Does the intended pathway emerge from the journey?

From counselling to coherence

KNOW

Context
Development
Choices

EVIDENCE

Actions
Reflections
Patterns

TRANSLATE

Make the pattern visible,
credible and understandable.

“I know this student” is not evidence. Show us how you know.

The Admission Room

COUNSELLOR

MAKE THE CASE

Journey · Evidence · Alignment · Context

UNIVERSITY READER

STRESS-TEST THE STORY

Clear? Coherent? Credible? What's missing?

Not “sell” vs “reject.”
Evidence vs interpretation.

One student. Two lenses.

COUNSELLOR

Often knows more than the application shows.

Development · Context · Conversations

UNIVERSITY READER

Often must decide from what the application shows.

Distinguish evidence from inference.

Same student. Different access to evidence.

Counsellor brief: build the case

**You are not here to sell the student.
You are here to establish the evidence.**

01 · JOURNEY

What have you observed over time?
What changed? What persisted?

02 · EVIDENCE

Where do actions support interests and choices?

03 · ALIGNMENT

Why does the intended pathway make sense?

04 · CONTEXT

What might a reader misunderstand without context?

RULE: “I know this student” is not evidence. Show us how you know.

University / AO brief: stress-test the story

CLEAR?

What can you confidently say from the evidence?

COHERENT?

Do the pieces actually connect?

CREDIBLE?

Is there evidence behind the claims?

MISSING?

What would you still need to know?

Don't simply say "no." Tell us what would help you say "I understand."

The committee: you are no longer the audience

SUPPORT

“I agree because...”

CHALLENGE

“I’m not convinced because...”

ASK

“What evidence do we have for...?”

We are testing the strength of the interpretation — not the value of the person.

What survives the translation?



STUDENT
REALITY



What might be lost?

COUNSELLOR
INTERPRETATION



What might be lost?

APPLICATION



What might be lost?

AO
INTERPRETATION



What might be lost?

NEXT
ENVIRONMENT

The coherence test lives in the gaps.

What can we do differently?

ADMISSIONS OFFICERS

One thing you wish counsellors spent more time on...

COUNSELLORS

One thing counselor expects from university that would add value to the process...

What can we do differently so that the student doesn't get lost between the rooms?

If we understand the journey... where can it continue?



Not simply: WHICH COLLEGE?

Which environment allows this student to keep becoming?

ENVIRONMENT FIT

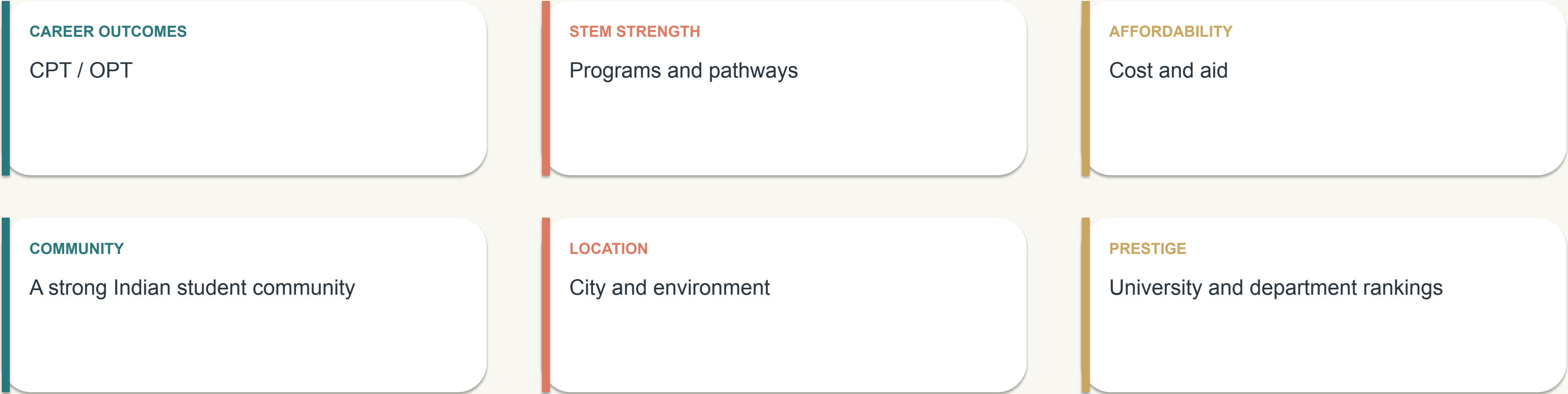
ACADEMIC FIT

COMMUNITY

OPPORTUNITY

BEYOND COLLEGE

What motivates students to consider U.S. universities?



Consider the undergraduate experience separately from the graduate experience.

What about prestige?

**A ranking is one lens.
It is not the whole decision.**

Fit is not a consolation prize. It is part of responsible guidance.

THE QUESTION

How realistic is a narrow list of highly selective institutions for this student?

THE OPPORTUNITY

Where are the hidden gems — places that fit the learner, not just the label?

<https://www.bestcolleges.com/blog/college-acceptance-rates/>

Home > Blog

Will You Make the Cut? College Acceptance Rates for 60 Popular Schools

Compare college acceptance rates for 60 popular schools, learn what admission rates mean, and discover ways to strengthen your application.



Written by **Evan Castillo** Edited by **Amarilis Yera**

Updated on August 24, 2026

Where are the hidden gems?

Acceptance Rates for 60 Popular Colleges

Search...

60 rows

School ↑↓	Location ↑↓	Acceptance Rate ↑↓
Arizona State University (public)	Tempe, Arizona (Main Campus)	90%
Auburn University (public)	Auburn, Alabama	46%
Baylor University (private)	Waco, Texas	51%
Boston College (private)	Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts	16%
Boston University (private)	Boston, Massachusetts	11%
Brown University (private)	Providence, Rhode Island	5%
Clemson University (public)	Clemson, South Carolina	38%
Columbia University (private)	New York, New York	4%
Cornell University (private)	Ithaca, New York	9%
Drexel University (private)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	79%

Acceptance Rates for 60 Popular Colleges

Search...

60 rows

School ↑↓	Location ↑↓	Acceptance Rate ↑↓
Duke University (private)	Durham, North Carolina	6%
Emory University (private)	Atlanta, Georgia	11%
Fairfield University (private)	Fairfield, Connecticut	33%
Florida State University (public)	Tallahassee, Florida	24%
Fordham University (private)	Bronx, New York	59%
Georgetown University (private)	Washington, D.C.	13%
Grand Canyon University (private)	Phoenix, Arizona	79%
Harvard University (private)	Cambridge, Massachusetts	4%
High Point University (private)	High Point, North Carolina	75%
Hillsdale College (private)	Hillsdale, Michigan	21%



How does this work?

Effort vs. Results?

Accuracy?





Membership ▾

Professional Development ▾

Conference

Research ▾

Join/Renew

Sign In

Career Readiness ▾

Career Development ▾

Talent Acquisition ▾

Job Market ▾

Public Policy & Legal ▾

Home / Job Market / Graduate Outcomes / First-Destination / First Destinations for the College Class of 2024

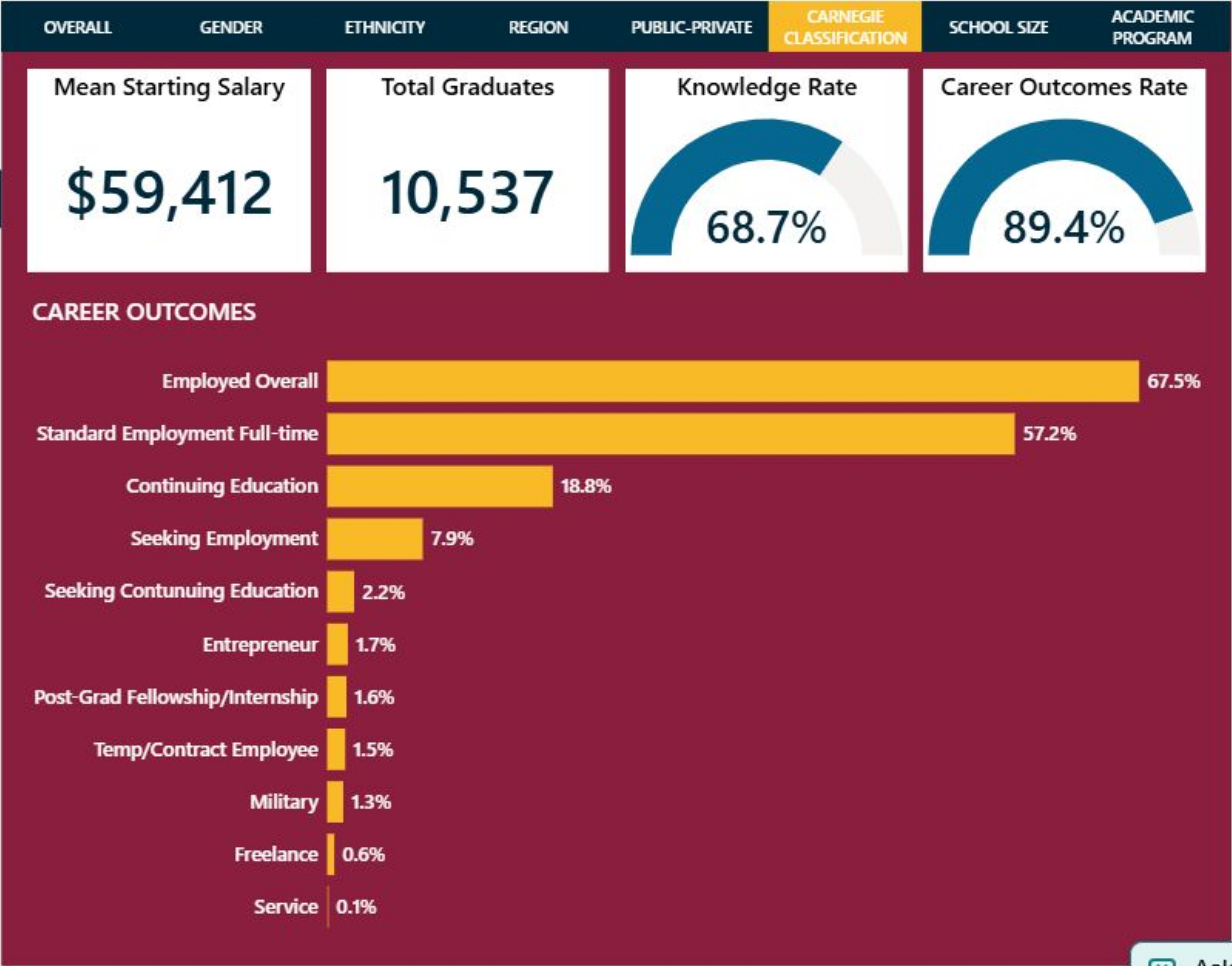
First destinations for the college class of 2024

FIRST DESTINATIONS DASHBOARD

Class of 2024

CLASSIFICATION

BACCALAUREATE A&S
BACCALAUREATE DIVERSE
M1: MASTERS-LARGE
M2: MASTERS-MEDIUM
M3: MASTERS-SMALL
R1: DOCTORAL-VERY HIGH
R2: DOCTORAL-HIGH
R3: DOCTORAL/PROFESSIONAL
SPECIAL FOCUS
TOTAL CLASS



Ask NACE

A Different Student

Draw any three. Look for a pattern — but don't rush to complete the story.

01

READER

Books sometimes had to be put in “timeout” for meals

02

SCIENCE & SOCIAL STUDIES

Strong grades in all subjects, but enjoyed these most.

03

WHAT I CARE ABOUT

I want to learn as much as I can to figure out how I can make the world a better place. I have a lot of ideas but still looking for a way to start.

04

SPORTS & MUSIC

She enjoyed both the competition as well as the camaraderie with teammates. Liked to express creativity in music through orchestra.

05

NOT THE TOPPER of the TEAM or ENSEMBLE

She practiced hard, but he was not always the top-ranked athlete or musician on the team or in the group.

06

LEADER

Was selected as a team captain and showed leadership in other school organizations.

07

OUTDOOR ENTHUSIAST

Enjoyed spending lots of time outdoors with camping, hiking, biking and being at the lake.

08

CAREER INTEREST

I was leaning towards education, and specifically language education.! However, I wasn't planning to teach in the US, but rather to teach English abroad.

09

INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE

She grew up exposed to languages and travel and continued to pursue those.

10

STUDIOUS

Enjoyed learning, good study habits, positive school experience.

11

CURIOSITY

I was really curious about languages, and how people learned/understood the world

12

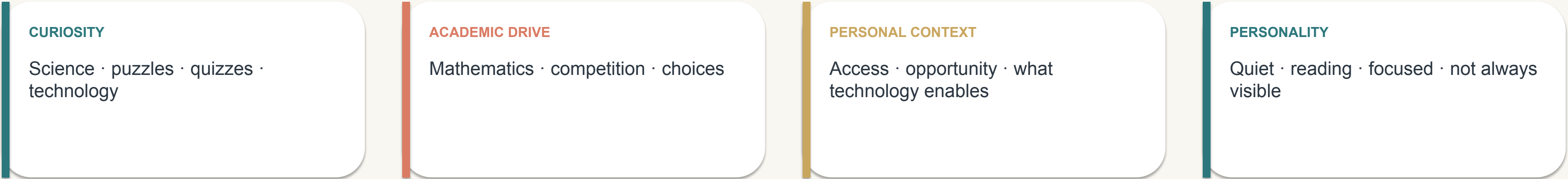
COLLEGE INTERESTS

Looked at colleges of different sizes and types in several different states.

A life is always larger than the evidence we see.

Selected details in the activity were inspired by publicly documented experiences from Sundar Pichai’s early life.

This is not a reconstruction of his application, and it is not an endorsement of the exercise.



Did the evidence change — or did the lens change?

The questions both sides can carry

KNOW

What is directly evidenced?
What is context?
What has the student actually done?

INFER

What pattern am I seeing?
What assumption am I making?
Could another reader read it differently?

ASK

What evidence is missing?
What context would legitimately matter?
What does the student need to articulate?

Coherence is not certainty. It is responsible interpretation.

Search by name or keyword...



Spanish



All Programs



Cristina

Raquel

Rachel *Raquel* Schaefer

Dean

Rachel *Raquel* Schaefer is the dean of *El Lago del Bosque* (second half). *Raquel* has been on staff since 2013, and prior to that was an *El Lago del Bosque* villager for nine years. *Raquel* graduated from Concordia College with a degree in World Language Education and recently completed her masters degree in education from Clemson University. Outside of *El Lago del Bosque*, *Raquel* works as a middle school Spanish immersion teacher in Anchorage, Alaska.



I'm looking for...



Home



Network



Jobs



Messaging



Notificati



Rachel Schaefer  She/Her · 1st

Spanish Immersion Teacher

Anchorage, Alaska, United States · [Contact info](#)



Anchorage School District



Concordia College

Global Indian
A hero's journey

Sundar Pichai
Journey from Chennai to
Google's CEO Chair



Behind the Cards

A life is always larger than the evidence we see.

Inspired by publicly documented experiences from the life of Sundar Pichai.

A reflection on curiosity, context, opportunity and the stories we construct from evidence.

Coherence is not certainty. It is responsible interpretation.

THE COHERENCE TEST

The right next step is not simply the place that accepts the student.



It is the place where the student's journey
can continue to unfold.