

# First Star

## 2021 GRADUATING CLASS REPORT



### FIRST STAR'S USE OF DATA ANALYTICS

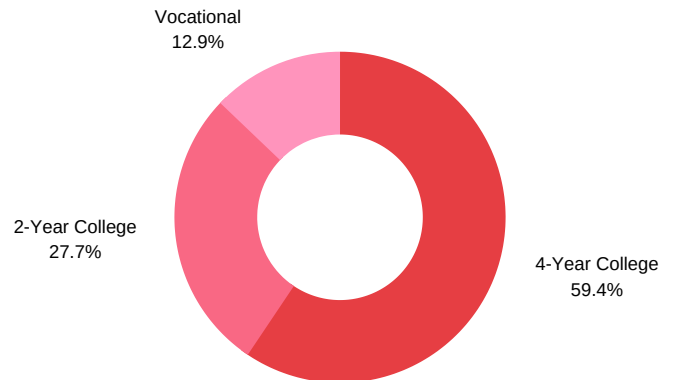
First Star recognizes the need to approach our Academies and our growth through a data lens. Data analytics allows us to gain information to better support the Academies and understand how the changing environment is impacting our scholars. First Star actively tracks senior data throughout the academic school year to ensure that all graduating scholars are supported and on track for high school graduation and enrollment into higher education.

### 2021 FIRST STAR SENIOR DATA

*Data captured in June of 2021 showed that 86% of First Star seniors graduated from high school in the spring.*

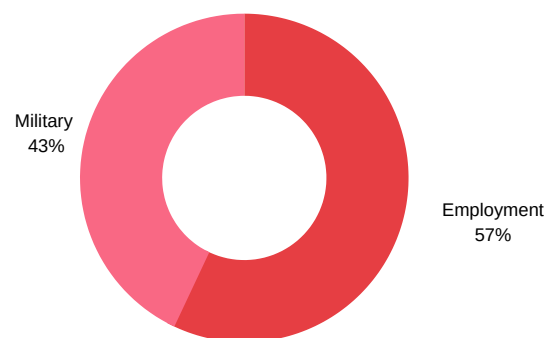
### 2021 SENIOR DATA POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

Of the First Star scholars who graduated in June of 2021, 93% enrolled in higher education. First Star defines higher education as four-year and two-year colleges, in addition to vocational schools. This is in comparison to just 10% for foster youth nation wide.



### 2021 SENIOR DATA NON POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

Of the First Star scholars who graduated in June of 2021, 7% did not enroll in higher education. First Star takes a whole scholar approach, supporting youth and exploring options beyond two and four-year colleges. Our data includes scholars enlisting in the Military and pursuing employment.



### Remote Covid Year 2020-2021

# 86%

First Star scholars graduated from high school in June 2021 compared to **50% of foster youth nationwide**

# 80%

First Star scholars are pursuing higher education compared to **10% of foster youth nationwide**

# 48%

First Star scholars are pursuing higher education by enrolling in four year colleges

Sources:

National Foster Youth Institute, Higher Education for Foster Youth, <https://nfyi.org/issues/higher-education/>

Affordable Colleges, From Foster Care to College, <https://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/college-resource-center/foster-care-to-college/>

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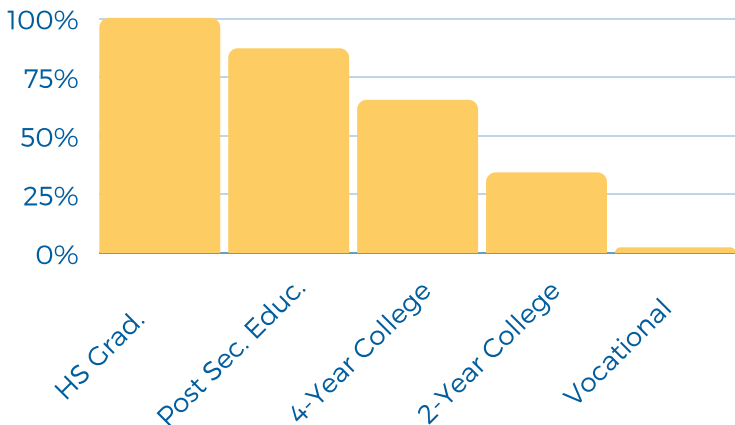
## 2020 GRADUATING CLASS REPORT



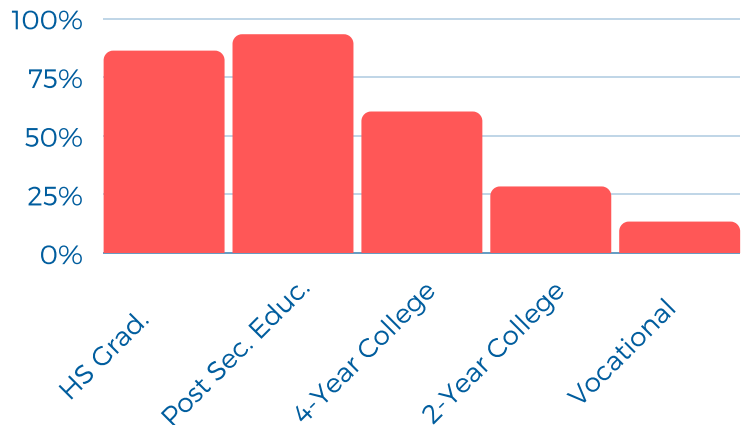
### 2020 & 2021 COMPARISON DATA

First Star compares scholar graduation data annually to measure progress and identify areas of growth to focus on during the following school year.

#### 2019-2020



#### 2020-2021



### KEY DATA POINTS

- 6% increase in four-year college enrollment
- 11% increase in vocational school enrollment
- 14% decrease in high school graduation rate

### MAJOR TAKEAWAYS

- Increase in the number of First Star scholars who are pursuing four-year colleges
- First Star continues to take a whole scholar approach, supporting youth and exploring options other than two and four-year colleges
- The impact of COVID-19 led to an increase in the number of scholars who struggled academically to meet graduation requirements and are now pursuing GED programs, Military and employment options instead of higher education

### IMPACT OF COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic and move to distance learning is exacerbating strained school engagement and learning disparities for students in foster care. We know that students in care are suffering due to the absence of suitable learning environments, lack of support from adults to navigate online learning, trauma, social isolation, and family stressors contribute to the burdens students are carrying. Student engagement and the real mental health challenges faced this past year have put a strain on each academy director and their perceptions of success for their program. Data from the Wall Street Journal shows that graduation rates for teens have declined this year due to factors like difficulty focusing, trouble with at-home learning, and inability to process information. Additionally, teens are struggling with mental health. According to an April survey from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 18-to-24-year-olds responded with the highest levels of anxiety and depression of any age, with 62.9% reporting symptoms of one or both conditions.

Sources:

[Wall Street Journal, Graduation Rate Expected to Stall This Year at Some High Schools, by Allison Pohle](#),  
[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Anxiety and Depression - Household Pulse Survey](#)

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## 2020 GRADUATING CLASS REPORT



### OVERALL FIRST STAR SCHOLAR GRADUATION DATA

First Star reviews senior data annually to identify trends and determine focus areas for the upcoming academic year.

<u>Year</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>5 Yr. Avg.</u>
Total	100%	100%
Completed the FAFSA	92%	*
High School Graduates	86%	97%
Enrolled in Post Sec. Educ.	93%	92%
4 -Year College	60%	60%
2-Year College	28%	36%
Vocational	13%	*
Non-Post Sec. Educ.	7%	8%
Military	33%	*
Employment	67%	*
Non-High School Graduates	14%	3%
Military	0%	*
Employment	14%	*
GED	86%	*

First Star started collecting data for Non-Post Secondary Education / Non-High School Graduates in 2018 and FAFSA in 2020. Therefore, data is not included in the five year average. Additionally, the \* signifies that First Star started collecting these metrics over the past 3 years, and therefore does not have a five year average for these metrics.

### FOCUS AREAS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-2022

- **Learning Loss** - Addressing loss experienced by our scholars as a result of COVID-19 and ensuring they are on track to graduate from high school and have the opportunity to pursue higher education.
- **Engagement & Adhesion** - Ensuring scholars remain engaged and feel supported through the First Star network that includes their First Star Academy, the STEAM Academy, Scholar Advisory Committee, and Alumni Program.
- **Mental Health** - Approaching case management through a therapeutic lens that takes into account the unique backgrounds of each of our scholars and the cohorts they are a part of.
- **Social Justice** - Supporting scholars in using their voices to speak out against racism and disparities faced by our scholars.