



High School Counselor's Guide

NOSCA's Eight Components of College
and Career Readiness Counseling

 **CollegeBoard**
Advocacy & Policy Center

NOSCA: National Office for School Counselor Advocacy

**[OWN THE
TURF]**
College and Career
Readiness Counseling

NOSCA's Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling

Own the Turf is NOSCA's national advocacy campaign to galvanize and mobilize school counselors to provide every student with the inspiration, planning, academic preparation and social capital to graduate from high school ready for college and careers. NOSCA's Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling are the road map for this work. They outline an effective path toward creating a college-going culture in schools, districts and communities.

This guide to the Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling is part of a series — one each for elementary, middle and high school counselors — that helps school counselors intentionally focus their work on college and career readiness counseling.

The three guides illustrate how school counselors can use the Eight Components to establish a college-going culture across the K–12 pipeline, promote college and career readiness for all students, and close gaps between low-performing or traditionally underrepresented students and their peers.

The College Board's National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) promotes the value of school counselors as leaders in advancing school reform and student achievement. It seeks to endorse and institutionalize school counseling practice that advocates for equitable educational access and rigorous academic preparation necessary for college and career readiness for all students.

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Elementary and middle school counselors focus on components 1–6, while high school counselors address components 1–8.

Your Role in College and Career Readiness Counseling

SCHOOL COUNSELING ACROSS THE K-12 PIPELINE

Imagine a school system in which every student graduates ready for college and career. In this system, all students want to succeed, and they have the tools they need to achieve now and in the future.

Every person in every school community can help students — in elementary, middle and high school — develop the skills and aspirations that are critical to preparing for college and career. As a school counselor, your leadership is central to this work.

Between 2008 and 2018, 63 percent of job openings will require some postsecondary education. But only 42 percent of Americans currently earn an associate degree or higher by the age of 25.¹ What percentage of the students you advise will earn a degree or certification?

Effective school counselors convey the expectation that all students, regardless of their background and economic status, can become college and career ready. The Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling are the road map for leading your school in developing a college-going culture that includes all students.

At first glance, many of the Eight Components may seem familiar, but in fact, they offer a new perspective. The Eight Components are about focusing on critical issues and making sure *all of your decisions and actions* are directly linked to helping *all of your students* prepare for success in college and their chosen careers.

Effective college and career readiness counseling begins in kindergarten and continues through high school. As a high school counselor, you are building on the work of counselors in middle and elementary schools.

For example, if high school students are going to take Advanced Placement® (AP®) Calculus, they must complete Algebra I by eighth grade. Attaining that goal depends on reading proficiently by third grade. There is a clear path, and NOSCA's Eight Components describe it.

School counselors use the Eight Components throughout students' K-12 education:

- Elementary school counselors create early awareness, knowledge and skills that lay the foundation for the academic rigor and social development necessary for college and career readiness. (Components 1-6)
- Middle school counselors create opportunities to explore and deepen college and career knowledge and skills necessary for academic planning and goal setting. (Components 1-6)
- High school counselors create access to college and career pathways that promote full implementation of personal goals that ensure the widest range of future life options. (Components 1-8)

Taken together, the components are the building blocks of college and career readiness counseling. Efforts of school counselors build on each other throughout the K-12 pipeline. The individual components also reinforce one another. They are interconnected, and actions related to one component can lay a foundation for improvements in multiple areas.

1. Carnevale, A.P., Smith, N., and Strohl, J. (June 2010). *Help wanted: projections of jobs and education requirements through 2018*. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce.

EQUITY, DATA AND WORKING SYSTEMWIDE

Being more effective and reaching all students — especially traditionally underserved populations — may require school counselors to work differently. To be successful with the Eight Components, focus your work in these ways:

Be equitable. Equity means giving every student or student group what they need to be successful. For example, many schools hold SAT® test prep before or after school in an effort to make it available to all students. This timing, however, may make test prep inaccessible to students who have jobs, have family responsibilities, or depend on the school bus to get to and from school. To make test prep equitable, school counselors have to identify the students who are not coming to prep sessions, pinpoint the barriers that are keeping them away, and develop strategies that make test prep truly accessible to those students. The key to equity is making sure *all students* can realistically participate.

Use data to inform practice. Data provide the starting point for understanding your school community. Use data to identify which students and student groups are successfully preparing for college and career — and which are not. And use data to identify disparities among student groups so you can more effectively reach the students most in need.

Work systemwide. Lead a systemwide effort to create a college-going culture in every part of your students' lives. Work directly with students individually, in groups, in classrooms and across grades. And reach out to them through schoolwide events, collaborations with others in the school district, and activities that engage families and the community.² This approach gives students layers of support from a variety of adults and peers — and it positions you as a leader in preparing students for college and career.

WHAT TO MEASURE

Relevant data

This guide identifies relevant data elements for each component. These are data elements, such as attendance, promotion and GPA, that are available in most schools. (See page 20 for a list of the data elements for all components for elementary, middle and high school.)

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Data by student groups

In addition to reviewing data for all students, break down the data to assess performance of student groups, paying close attention to traditionally underserved populations.

- Race and ethnicity
- Gender
- Grade
- Income level (students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals)
- Special education students
- English language learners
- Other student groups, as appropriate for your school (e.g., students who are homeless or students with a military family member who is deployed)

Disparities between student groups

When you review data for student groups, look for disparities. For example, are attendance rates different for males and females? Do promotion rates of students from low-income families differ from promotion rates for their more affluent peers? By asking these questions, you will identify gaps among student groups.

WHAT TO DO

Work Systemwide

Implement interventions systemwide — working with students, schools, districts, parents and families, and communities — to reach everyone. Focus your work on the students who need the most help, and then use data to assess the impact of those efforts. In this way, you will create equitable interventions and begin to close the gaps.

2. Content describing how to work systemwide is derived from Lee, V. V., & Goodnough, G. E. (2011). Systemic data-driven school counseling practice and programming for equity. In B. T. Erford (Ed.) *Transforming the school counseling profession* (3rd.). Boston, MA: Pearson Merrill Prentice-Hall.

1

College Aspirations

THE GOAL

Build a college-going culture based on early college awareness by nurturing in students the confidence to aspire to college and the resilience to overcome challenges along the way. Maintain high expectations by providing adequate supports, building social capital and conveying the conviction that all students can succeed in college.

WHY IT MATTERS

Students who believe that college is a realistic goal are more likely to succeed. Thus, raising students' aspirations — sending a message that college is for everyone — is a critical element of building a college-going culture and helping students reach their goals.

WHAT TO MEASURE

Active and productive engagement in school is one indicator of students' aspirations. To assess your students' level of engagement, see if they are attending school, behaving in school and performing well academically.

Relevant data

- Attendance
- Discipline
- Promotion
- GPA
- Dropout

WHAT TO LOOK FOR**Data by student groups**

Break down the data to assess performance of student groups, paying close attention to traditionally underserved populations. (See page 3 for a list of the student groups.)

Disparities between student groups

For example:

- How do the promotion rates of students from low-income backgrounds compare to the promotion rates of their more affluent peers?
- How do discipline rates for African American students compare to discipline rates for white students?
- How do dropout rates for students from low-income backgrounds compare to those of their more advantaged peers?

WHAT TO DO**Work systemwide**

Work systemwide — with students, schools, districts, parents and families, and communities — to reach everyone. Focus your work on the students who need the most help, and then use data to assess the impact of those efforts. In this way, you will create equitable interventions and begin to close the gaps.



WORK SYSTEMWIDE

Students

(Individual, Group, Classroom and Grade)

- Engage students in conversations about academic performance (GPA and promotion or retention) and their habits as learners (attitudes, behaviors, self-management) and how they are connected to meeting career goals.
- Help each student implement a program of study that connects his or her high school experience to college and career goals and that includes strategies to transition to postsecondary settings.
- Help students who have high absentee and discipline rates (and are at risk of dropping out) understand the consequences of their behaviors. Connect each student to a peer network and at least one adult in the school/community who can serve as a mentor.

School

- Collaborate with teachers and administrators to review attendance, discipline, promotion/retention, and GPA policies, and pilot changes across the school to make these policies equitable for all student groups. For example, work with teachers to develop policies that address discipline through student self-monitoring and classroom management.
- Collaborate with teachers and administrators and other school personnel to develop an early warning/identification system for students with chronic absentee, discipline and academic issues; implement programs focused on problem solving, decision making, responsibility/consequences, self-management and improvement strategies.
- Collaborate with teachers to integrate experiential and technology-based college/career information into the curriculum. For example, teachers can incorporate career-cluster-of-the-month initiatives, research and writing, and speaking and presenting work into assignments.

District

- Collaborate with middle or junior high school counselors to develop a transition process that includes summer transition/bridge, parent meetings, school visits and tours, school orientation, and identification of students in need of extra academic and personal support.

- Collaborate with other high school counselors in your district to build networks, share ideas/interventions, challenges and work collectively to reach school and district goals. Collaborate with counselors in neighboring districts if yours is the only high school in the district.

Parents and Families

- Create community events to give parents information about college and career aspirations (see student interventions above) and their role in assisting their children. Hold the events at a variety of times and locations (community or recreation centers, places of worship, civic centers, malls) to accommodate a range of schedules. Use materials written in parents' native languages.
- Help parents and families learn how to locate resources (e.g., absentee, discipline and dropout services) and to navigate the school system so they can be advocates for their students.
- Connect parents and families to leaders in their community who can broaden their understanding of the importance of building aspirations to ensure college and career readiness.

Community

- Use posters, radio, TV, newspapers, flyers, websites and social media to raise awareness of your school's high expectations, including school attendance and appropriate behavior. Encourage community leaders to help spread the word by serving as speakers and mentors.
- Work with local businesses and community organizations to develop jobs, internships, service learning, apprenticeships and volunteer opportunities that expose students to both traditional and nontraditional careers. This effort can broaden and challenge students' perspectives as they plan and prepare for college and careers.
- Visit colleges, and career/technical schools, including historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) and tribal colleges. Invite representatives to come to your school to meet with students and their families.

2 Academic Planning for College and Career Readiness

THE GOAL

Advance students' planning, preparation, participation and performance in a rigorous academic program that connects to their college and career aspirations and goals.

WHY IT MATTERS

An academic plan is a pathway to success. When students understand and successfully implement their plan — what courses they need, in what order, to prepare them for a specific college or career goal — they are more likely to graduate high school college and career ready.

WHAT TO MEASURE

To assess your students' academic readiness, look at their academic performance as well as enrollment and completion rates for key courses.

Relevant data

- Proficiency in state tests for English, math and science
- Students enrolled in and completing Algebra I
- Students enrolled in and completing AP courses
- Students enrolled in and completing courses required for in-state university admission

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Data by student groups

Break down the data to assess performance of student groups, paying close attention to traditionally underserved populations. (See page 3 for a list of the student groups.)

Disparities between student groups

For example:

- How do the English proficiency rates of African American students compare to those of white students?
- How do enrollment and completion rates in AP classes compare for males and females?
- Do low-income students complete courses required for in-state college admission at the same rate as their more advantaged peers?

WHAT TO DO

Work systemwide

Work systemwide — with students, schools, districts, parents and families, and communities — to reach everyone. Focus your work on the students who need the most help, and then use data to assess the impact of those efforts. In this way, you will create equitable interventions and begin to close the gaps.



WORK SYSTEMWIDE

Students

(Individual, Group, Classroom and Grade)

- Help students plan and implement a program of study that meets requirements for acceptance to in-state universities and/or leads to industry and technology licenses and certifications.
- Help students take college/career/technology classes while still in high school by introducing them to dual enrollment, online classes, early college, distance learning and virtual schools.
- Help students understand and make the most of their own learning styles as they develop skills in test taking, research, writing, speaking, debate, presentation, studying, and higher-order thinking (application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, etc.). This will increase their academic performance and proficiency and develop their confidence to take more rigorous courses.

School

- Examine policies and practices that govern entrance into rigorous classes. Work with your school's master scheduler to ensure there are sufficient sections of rigorous courses so all students have opportunities to participate.
- Collaborate with teachers, including those who teach Algebra I, calculus, physics, chemistry, AP, honors, IB and other rigorous courses to develop strategies to help more students succeed (e.g., using technology and experiential learning, tutoring, extra study time and special skills sessions).
- Collaborate with teachers and students to build peer support networks to assist traditionally underserved students, first-generation students, and others who may need extra help with rigorous courses.

District

- Collaborate with middle or junior high school counselors to share information about student programs of study that align to admission standards for in-state universities and career/technical schools.
- Collaborate with other high school counselors in your district to build networks and to share interventions that support rigorous course-taking patterns to reach school and district goals.

Parents and Families

- Create outreach efforts to ensure that parents and families are aware of their role in assisting their children in academic planning. Emphasize that academic planning is critical so students take the courses they need to gain entrance into a state university and/or earn industry/technology certification or licenses (see student interventions above).
- Help parents and families assist their children in developing and implementing academic plans and understanding the consequences of not engaging in the planning process.
- Provide ways parents and families can share their college and career experiences to build students' aspirations and encourage their academic performance.

Community

- Team with community-based organizations to provide mentoring opportunities aimed at promoting participation in college-preparatory courses.
- Promote consistent messages about college and career readiness, emphasizing that all students, including those traditionally underserved, can be college and career ready.

3 Enrichment and Extracurricular Engagement

THE GOAL

Ensure equitable exposure to a wide range of extracurricular and enrichment opportunities that build leadership, nurture talents and interests, and increase engagement with school.

WHY IT MATTERS

Enrichment and extracurricular activities increase students' engagement and academic performance, offer opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, and support creative and innovative interests. Students' college and career admission and scholarship applications are strengthened by these experiences.

WHAT TO MEASURE

Engagement in enrichment and extracurricular activities is measured by participation, including taking on a leadership role.

Relevant data

- Participation in enrichment activities (e.g., academic support, summer bridge programs, TRIO and STEM initiatives)
- Participation in extracurricular activities (e.g., organizations, teams, camps, clubs and scouts)
- Students in leadership positions in enrichment and/or extracurricular programs

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Data by student groups

Break down the data to assess performance of student groups, paying close attention to traditionally underserved populations. (See page 3 for a list of the student groups.)

Disparities between student groups

For example:

- How does participation in enrichment activities of 11th-grade females compare to that of 12th-grade females?
- Do English language learners participate in STEM programs at the same rate as non-English language learners?
- How does the percentage of white students with the leadership positions in extracurricular activities compare to that of African American students?

WHAT TO DO

Work systemwide

Work systemwide — with students, schools, districts, parents and families, and communities — to reach everyone. Focus your work on the students who need the most help, and then use data to assess the impact of those efforts. In this way, you will create equitable interventions and begin to close the gaps.



WORK SYSTEMWIDE

Students

(Individual, Group, Classroom and Grade)

- Help students develop portfolios that include work samples, audition recordings and artwork to enhance their college and career application(s).
- Teach students how to be more competitive for college and career by including enrichment and extracurricular engagement as well as leadership roles into résumés, essays, portfolios, and college and career application forms.
- Advise students on researching college/career/technical schools aligned to their interest inventories and selected majors as well as clubs, teams and interest groups that connect to their talents and abilities.

School

- Develop policies and procedures for distribution of scholarship applications so all students receive materials that match their interests, talents, abilities, activity engagement, and educational and career goals.
- Collaborate with your school leadership team to conduct a school and community audit of enrichment and extracurricular activities. Ensure that all activities provide all students with participation and leadership options.
- Collaborate with administrators and teachers to incorporate support for enrichment and extracurricular engagement into academics. For example, make connections to class projects and assignments and notify students of upcoming events (cultural, historical, political, theatrical, musical, etc.). Emphasize their value in supporting academic skills.

District

- Collaborate with middle school counselors to share information about auditions, tryouts, sign-ups and early enrollment into extracurricular and enrichment activities before students enter high school.

Parents and Families

- Create outreach efforts to ensure that parents and families are aware of their role in supporting their children's participation in enrichment and extracurricular activities (see student interventions above).
- Teach parents and families how to create and use academic and activity calendars as time-management tools for planning and scheduling.
- Invite parents and families/college students/professionals to lead (coach or mentor), support, or sponsor student-enrichment activities.

Community

- Identify community organizations to facilitate on-site school-based enrichment and extracurricular activities and offer additional venues for student meetings, practices and assemblies.
- Collaborate with community organizations to support cultural and ethnic-focused service learning opportunities tied to students' interests, talents and abilities.
- Invite community organizations to implement consistent messaging to students, parents and families to develop and distribute flyers and newsletters (biweekly or monthly) showcasing activities for student and family engagement.

4

College and Career Exploration and Selection Processes

THE GOAL

Provide early and ongoing exposure to experiences and information necessary to make informed decisions when selecting a college or career that connects to academic preparation and future aspirations.

WHY IT MATTERS

Students benefit from developing skills that allow them to reflect on who they are and to relate their academic and other experiences to their career goals. When students can understand the relationship between their current experiences and their aspirations for the future, they are more likely to make sound college and career choices — and they are more likely to succeed.

WHAT TO MEASURE

To assess students' movement through the college and career process, look at exploration, application completion and submission data. Increased rates show evidence toward college and career goals.

Relevant data

- Participation in college and career exploration programs
- College and career/technical school application completion
- College and career/technical school application submission

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Data by student groups

Break down the data to assess performance of student groups, paying close attention to traditionally underserved populations. (See page 3 for a list of the student groups.)

Disparities between student groups

For example:

- How do participation rates in college and career exploration programs for ninth-grade special education students compare to those of 10th-grade special education students?
- Do male English language learners complete applications at the same rate as female English language learners?
- How do the application submission rates for students from low-income backgrounds compare to those of their more advantaged peers?

WHAT TO DO

Work systemwide

Work systemwide — with students, schools, districts, parents and families, and communities — to reach everyone. Focus your work on the students who need the most help, and then use data to assess the impact of those efforts. In this way, you will create equitable interventions and begin to close the gaps.



WORK SYSTEMWIDE

Students

(Individual, Group, Classroom and Grade)

- Help students align their college or career/technical school goals with their program of study and their level of performance in course work and entrance testing. Encourage all students to broaden their social and cultural perspectives by actively considering all of their options, including traditional colleges, HBCUs, HSIs, tribal colleges and career/technical schools.
- Help students access and review applications (paper and online) and prepare all documentation including recommendations, personal essays, work samples that meet higher education writing standards, and portfolio materials (art, music, etc.). Incorporate updated materials periodically.
- Help students sign up to receive mailings, join listservs and social media groups, and retrieve college/career/technical newsletters and other forms of information from institutions of interest.

School

- Promote a college-going culture using consistent messaging about college and career selection. Encourage all students to aim high. Eliminate practices that may perpetuate inequity in students' goals.
- Work with teachers to incorporate elements of college applications, such as writing personal statements, into the educational program. Assist teachers in writing effective recommendations that include students' academic accomplishments and their assets in other areas, such as community leadership, employment skills, and family commitment and responsibility.

District

- Collaborate with other high school counselors in your district. For example, coordinate on-campus visits for students interested in the same college or career/technical school and hold parent meetings to encourage student participation in districtwide career programs in STEM and other areas.
- Collaborate with middle school counselors to align college and career information in middle and high school so students' planning is coherent and continuous.

Parents and Families

- Create outreach efforts to ensure that parents and families are aware of their role in assisting their children in college and career selection (see student interventions above).
- Help parents and families learn how to locate relevant resources and to navigate the system so they can be advocates for their students in the exploration and selection process.
- Help parents and families understand the importance of sharing personal information so their students will have supporting documents for college and career school applications.

Community

- Coordinate college/career visits so all students are able to meet with representatives. Include representatives and alumni that mirror the student population.
- Conduct visits to colleges and career schools that include class audits, overnight stays, admission simulations, information sessions with student support service departments, and application review conferences.
- Collaborate with media organizations to develop, deliver and circulate information to assist parents and students in college and career exploration. Work with media including TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, bloggers and other online publications.

THE GOAL

Promote preparation, participation and performance in college and career assessments by all students.

WHY IT MATTERS

Testing — PSAT/NMSQT®, PLAN, SAT, SAT Subject Tests™ and ACT — and career assessments help students understand where they are strong and where they have room for improvement. When students can understand this information and connect it to their aspirations, they take a critical step toward reaching their goals.

WHAT TO MEASURE

To ensure students' assessment experience is comprehensive, examine data that focus on their participation in the assessment process and their level of performance.

Relevant data

- Participation in career/interest assessments
- Participation in Readiness™, PSAT/NMSQT, EXPLORE and PLAN
- Performance on Readiness™, PSAT/NMSQT, EXPLORE and PLAN
- Participation in SAT, SAT Subject Tests and ACT
- Performance on SAT, SAT Subject Tests and ACT

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Data by student groups

Break down the data to assess performance of student groups, paying close attention to traditionally underserved populations. (See page 3 for a list of the student groups.)

Disparities between student groups

For example:

- How do participation rates in career/interest assessments for ninth-grade English language learners compare to those of other ninth-grade students?
- How do participation rates in PSAT/NMSQT and PLAN for white students compare to those of African American students?
- Do female 12th-graders perform as well as male 12th-graders on SAT and ACT?

WHAT TO DO

Work systemwide

Work systemwide — with students, schools, districts, parents and families, and communities — to reach everyone. Focus your work on the students who need the most help, and then use data to assess the impact of those efforts. In this way, you will create equitable interventions and begin to close the gaps.



WORK SYSTEMWIDE

Students

(Individual, Group, Classroom and Grade)

- Help students know the types, importance and use of college and career assessments, when to take them, and how to apply them to their academic and career planning.
- Help students become test savvy through test prep that includes overcoming test anxiety, types of test questions, how to make an educated guess, types of directions, practice tests, registration, logistics of test day, scoring and fee waivers.
- Help students use test scores and relevant analysis to identify skill gaps and plan strategies for skill development and course selection.

School

- Identify any policies, practices or procedures, or structural barriers that may limit test participation.
- Encourage your school to become an SAT and/or ACT test site or to become an SAT test site for school day testing to provide greater access to all students.
- Help teachers integrate testing information into their classes and use test results and diagnostic information to identify student skill gaps.

District

- Collaborate with middle or junior high school counselors to share information about college and career assessments as well as the connection between taking rigorous courses and test performance.
- Collaborate with other high school counselors in your district to build networks and to share strategies to become a test site.

Parents and Families

- Create outreach efforts to ensure that parents and families are aware of their role in assisting their children in the college and career assessment process (see student interventions above).
- Help parents and families learn how to obtain fee waivers and free materials and to evaluate the pros and cons of test coaching and costs.
- Help parents and families engage in the college and career assessment process so they can assist their children. Emphasize that students' options after high school will be limited if they are not engaged in this process.

Community

- Collaborate with local libraries or any center with online access so students can access career and interest inventories/programs and/or practice tests outside of school.
- Develop networks in the school community to assist students who may need transportation to an SAT or ACT testing site. Build a community fund for students who need additional financial support to take the SAT and/or SAT Subject Tests and/or ACT.
- Collaborate with local transit systems to secure fee waivers or fare reduction on test days for test routes and/or other transit passes.



6 College Affordability Planning

THE GOAL

Provide students and families with comprehensive information about college costs, options for paying for college, and the financial aid and scholarship processes and eligibility requirements, so they are able to plan for and afford a college education.

WHY IT MATTERS

Money is one of the biggest barriers to enrolling in college or career/technical school. Students (and families) who are equipped to make informed financial decisions are more likely to prepare for, enter and complete college or career/technical school. Therefore, securing financial aid for students is an essential part of completing the college and career application, admission and transition process.

WHAT TO MEASURE

Early introduction to financial literacy and financial planning encourages students and families to engage in the timely completion and submission of FAFSA and scholarship applications.

Relevant data

- Participation in early awareness financial literacy and financial aid initiatives
- Participation in financial aid planning processes
- Scholarship application completion
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Data by student groups

Break down the data to assess performance of student groups, paying close attention to traditionally underserved populations. (See page 3 for a list of the student groups.)

Disparities between student groups

For example:

- Do students from low socioeconomic backgrounds participate in financial literacy/financial aid opportunities at the same rates as their more advantaged peers?
- How do scholarship application completion rates for 12th-grade Latino students compare to those of 12th-grade African American students?
- How do FAFSA completion rates for white students compare to those of Asian students?

WHAT TO DO

Work systemwide

Work systemwide — with students, schools, districts, parents and families, and communities — to reach everyone. Focus your work on the students who need the most help, and then use data to assess the impact of those efforts. In this way, you will create equitable interventions and begin to close the gaps.



WORK SYSTEMWIDE

Students

(Individual, Group, Classroom and Grade)

- Ensure students understand financial aid application processes, including application completion and submission procedures, educational debt, adhering to deadlines, understanding Student Aid Reports (SARs) and financial aid award letters, federal borrowing and repayment options tailored for diverse student groups, application signatures, and communicating with financial aid offices.
- Familiarize students with financial aid publications and applications, including FAFSA, state agency applications, scholarship/grant applications, and financial literacy glossaries.
- Ensure that students with special and unusual circumstances (e.g., independent students, students with incarcerated or missing parents, foster care students, and wards of the court) have information about federal, state and institutional financial aid guidelines for application and submission, including supporting documentation and verification information.

School

- Collaborate with teachers schoolwide to include financial literacy and financial aid awareness into lessons about basic finance, wealth, money management, and the financial aid application and submission process.
- Use student FAFSA data to create structures to monitor application completion, make application updates and corrections, and ensure students receive and review aid reports.
- Disseminate free financial literacy and financial aid information, resources and tools in multiple languages from federal and state entities such as the U.S. Department of Education, the Federal Trade Commission, the U.S. Financial Literacy and Education Commission, and the State Higher Education Commission.

District

- Collaborate with other high school counselors to develop and implement districtwide financial aid events at which students can complete FAFSA and other critical forms. Hold districtwide competitions for FAFSA completion to encourage higher college and career/technical school enrollment rates.
- Collaborate with middle school counselors to align financial literacy efforts in middle and high school so students' planning is coherent and continuous. Identify families who are new to the district and who may not have had this planning in middle school.

Parents and Families

- Create outreach efforts to ensure that parents and families are aware of their role in assisting their children in the college affordability process (see student interventions above).
- Ensure that parents and families engage in the financial aid application process knowing that family financial circumstances may not prevent their students from applying for and/or receiving most financial aid.
- Disseminate free federal and state financial literacy and financial aid publications, brochures and website information that can help parents submit supporting financial aid documentation to colleges, universities and career/technical schools.

Community

- Partner with community businesses and financial institutions to develop and provide scholarship and stipend opportunities for students and/or support financial literacy initiatives.
- Encourage community leaders to help spread the word about financial literacy initiatives by serving as speakers and mentors and assisting students with documentation retrieval and translation, application review and submission.
- Use federal and state outreach personnel and toolkits from federal financial literacy and financial aid agencies to enhance school- and community-based initiatives.

7 College and Career Admission Processes

THE GOAL

Ensure that students and families have an early and ongoing understanding of the college and career application and admission processes so they can find the postsecondary options that are the best fit with their aspirations and interests.

WHY IT MATTERS

To successfully navigate the admission process, students must be aware of and follow application guidelines and timelines, and they must supply a range of documentation and verification. The school counselor's support is critical for helping students submit complete application packages so they have the greatest opportunity for acceptance.

WHAT TO MEASURE

Acceptance data are a critical benchmark that students are moving toward their college and career goals.

Relevant data

- Two- and four-year college acceptance
- Career and technical school acceptance
- Early action or early decision acceptance (four-year institutions)

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Data by student groups

Break down the data to assess performance of student groups, paying close attention to traditionally underserved populations. (See page 3 for a list of the student groups.)

Disparities between student groups

For example:

- How do four-year college acceptance rates for African American male students compare to those of Latino male students?
- Are female students accepted to career and technical schools at the same rate as male students?
- How do four-year college early action or early decision rates for Asian female students compare to those of white female students?

WHAT TO DO

Work systemwide

Work systemwide — with students, schools, districts, parents and families, and communities — to reach everyone. Focus your work on the students who need the most help, and then use data to assess the impact of those efforts. In this way, you will create equitable interventions and begin to close the gaps.



WORK SYSTEMWIDE

Students

(Individual, Group, Classroom and Grade)

- Provide students with college application completion checklists, calendars, application procedure forms and application fact sheets, school comparison tools, and portfolios to assist them with application completion and final decision making. Make sure students know timelines for early decision, early action and single-choice early action options.
- Ensure that students are aware of college and career school enrollment options, including programs that fit various lifestyles and personal and family commitments (e.g., dual and part-time enrollment, 2+2 programs and school-to-work opportunities).
- Teach students how to access and complete admission applications, including school-specific applications, the Common Application and the Common Black College Application. Review supporting documents, such as transcripts, standardized test scores, application essays and letters of recommendation. (Special application procedures may apply for National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) candidates and performing arts students.)

School

- Develop schoolwide structures that streamline students' compilation and completion of application materials (e.g., College Application Week).
- Team with administrators to provide professional development for school personnel (coaches, teachers, etc.) on the composition and content of effective letters of recommendation.
- Develop and implement a system for collecting, reviewing and approving admission applications before submission to postsecondary institutions.

District

- Collaborate with other high school counselors to share data on acceptances, rejections and wait lists to identify trends and discrepancies in admission outcomes (for four-year colleges and career/technical schools) and to assess whether acceptances are representative of your district's demographics.
- Collaborate with neighboring high schools to coordinate family seminars at which college admission representatives explain the application process.

Parents and Families

- Create outreach efforts to ensure that parents and families are aware of their role in assisting their children with the application process (see student interventions above).
- Make sure parents and families know their role includes securing fee waivers (if eligible), applying for meals and housing (if applicable), providing signatures, and turning in supporting documentation.
- Provide parents and families with sample admission packets, guidebooks and fact sheets to use as guides when working through the admission process with their students.

Community

- Host a college and career essay writing lab with college students, professors, admission officers, and college and career school representatives as tutors and mentors.
- Collaborate with local institutions to host campus-based application completion days. Obtain assistance from student support services, admission and financial aid officers.
- Collaborate with college/career representatives to coordinate application submission sessions that include application review, fee waiver dissemination and on-the-spot admission decisions.

8 Transition from High School Graduation to College Enrollment

THE GOAL

Connect students to school and community resources to help the students overcome barriers and ensure the successful transition from high school to college.

WHY IT MATTERS

For those going to college and career/technical schools, the summer between high school graduation and postsecondary matriculation can be difficult, and students typically receive little or no support during this time. During this gap between high school and college, students must stay focused on their goals and keep track of tasks that are necessary to complete the enrollment process. Giving students support during this critical time can help them make the transition successfully.

WHAT TO MEASURE

The transition from graduation to matriculation is not often measured, yet documenting final transcripts processed is an indicator that students are engaging the summertime transition process. When available, enrollment data from postsecondary institutions is an indicator of matriculation.

Relevant data

- Final transcripts processed
- Two- and four-year college enrollment
- Career and technical school enrollment

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Data by student groups

Break down the data to assess performance of student groups, paying close attention to traditionally underserved populations. (See page 3 for a list of the student groups.)

Disparities between student groups

For example:

- Do students from low-income backgrounds request to have final transcripts processed at the same rate as their more advantaged peers?
- How do two-year college enrollment rates compare to four-year college enrollment rates (among accepted students)?
- How do career and technical school enrollment rates for female students compare to those of male students (among accepted students)?

WHAT TO DO

Work systemwide

Work systemwide — with students, schools, districts, parents and families, and communities — to reach everyone. Focus your work on the students who need the most help, and then use data to assess the impact of those efforts. In this way, you will create equitable interventions and begin to close the gaps.



WORK SYSTEMWIDE

Students

(Individual, Group, Classroom and Grade)

- Help students understand the importance of task completion during the summer transition. This transition includes logistical issues, such as requesting final transcripts, filling out forms, taking placement tests, arranging transportation to and from college or career/technical schools, and getting information for students with disabilities and students who are homeless.
- Help students understand the personal changes ahead and develop a personal adjustment plan to address difficulties with leaving familiar surroundings and adjusting to changing relationships with peers and family. This is especially important if the student's leaving causes changes in family financial circumstances.
- Help students identify materials and supplies and develop plans that include early financial planning and shopping checklists. The shopping list might include dorm room supplies, such as bedsheets, suitcases, clothing and toiletries; classroom materials, such as computers, calculators, notebooks and pens; and supplies for technical school, such as drafting tools or uniforms.

School

- Develop and implement policies, practices and procedures that support students making the transition from graduation to matriculation, such as a summertime manual that addresses logistical, academic, personal and wellness issues.
- Develop a checklist and/or profile sheet for each college or career/technical school students plan to attend, so all students will be well informed about the forms they will need to submit and the procedures they will need to follow to complete the transition process.
- Inform teachers, administrators, or other school personnel about their role in helping graduated seniors manage the challenges that can occur during the transition from graduation to matriculation, particularly if school counselors are not on duty during the summer.

District

- Collaborate with other high school counselors in your district to develop and implement summer transition programs for students attending the same college or career/technical school to create cohorts and possess so students can support one another at school.
- Collaborate with other high school counselors in your district to develop and implement parent transition meetings. Help parents support one another and their students through sharing rides, coordinating visits and tours, and providing personal support during this transition.

Parents and Families

- Create outreach efforts to ensure that parents and families are aware of their role in assisting their children in making the transition from high school graduation to matriculation (see student interventions above).
- Help parents and families learn how to navigate the postsecondary system, particularly financial aid, housing, meal plans, early financial planning to purchase books and supplies, and transportation to and from college or career/technical school.
- Help parents and families assist their children in adjusting to a new living and learning environment. Help them make a plan that includes guidance for cultural, spiritual, medical and recreational supports that affirm their personal values and beliefs.

Community

- Network with institutions your students plan to attend to help students and their families have points of contact, particularly in admission, financial aid, housing and student services.
- Identify and connect students and families with local merchants that are "freshman friendly" and offer savings on materials needed in the college or career/technical school transition process.

Data Elements for the Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling

The chart below shows key data elements for each of the Eight Components.

| Data Elements, By Component | Elementary School | Middle School | High School |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. College Aspirations | | | |
| Attendance | ● | ● | ● |
| Discipline | ● | ● | ● |
| Promotion | ● | ● | ● |
| GPA | | ● | ● |
| Dropout | | | ● |
| 2. Academic Planning for College and Career Readiness | | | |
| Students reading on grade level in grade 3 | ● | | |
| Proficiency in state tests for English, math and science | ● | ● | ● |
| Students enrolled in and completing Algebra I | | ● | ● |
| Students enrolled in and completing AP courses | | | ● |
| Students enrolled in and completing courses required for in-state university admission | | | ● |
| 3. Enrichment and Extracurricular Engagement | | | |
| Participation in enrichment activities (e.g., academic support, summer bridge programs, TRIO and STEM initiatives) | ● | ● | ● |
| Participation in extracurricular activities (e.g., organizations, teams, camps, clubs and scouts) | ● | ● | ● |
| Students in leadership positions in enrichment and/or extracurricular programs | ● | ● | ● |
| 4. College and Career Exploration and Selection Processes | | | |
| Participation in college and career exploration programs | ● | ● | ● |
| College and career/technical school application completion | | | ● |
| College and career/technical school application submission | | | ● |
| 5. College and Career Assessments | | | |
| Participation in career/interest assessments | ● | ● | ● |
| Participation in Readiness, PSAT/NMSQT, EXPLORE and PLAN | | ● | ● |
| Performance on Readiness, PSAT/NMSQT, EXPLORE and PLAN | | ● | ● |
| Participation in SAT, SAT Subject Tests and ACT | | | ● |
| Performance on SAT, SAT Subject Tests and ACT | | | ● |
| 6. College Affordability Planning | | | |
| Participation in early awareness financial literacy and financial aid initiatives | ● | ● | ● |
| Participation in financial aid planning processes | | ● | ● |
| Scholarship application completion | | | ● |
| FAFSA completion | | | ● |
| 7. College and Career Admission Processes | | | |
| Two- and four-year college acceptance | | | ● |
| Career and technical school acceptance | | | ● |
| Early action or early decision acceptance (four-year institutions) | | | ● |
| 8. Transition from High School Graduation to College Enrollment | | | |
| Final transcripts processed | | | ● |
| Two- and four-year college enrollment | | | ● |
| Career and technical school enrollment | | | ● |

Additional Resources

- College Board — www.collegeboard.org
 - College Counseling Sourcebook — <http://store.collegeboard.com/sto/enter.do>
 - CollegeEd® — <http://ce.collegeboard.org/about-ce/>
 - National Career Development Guidelines — http://associationdatabase.com/aws/NCDA/pt/sp/Home_Page
 - National PTA Standards — www.pta.org/national_standards.asp
 - NOSCA's Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling — www.collegeboard.org/nosca
 - NOSCA's Own the Turf College Readiness Toolkit — www.collegeboard.org/nosca
 - School Counselor's Strategic Planning Tool — www.collegeboard.org/nosca
 - Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) — www.sreb.org
 - YouCanGo!™ — <http://youcango.collegeboard.org>
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About the College Board

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of more than 5,900 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT® and the Advanced Placement Program®. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators and schools.

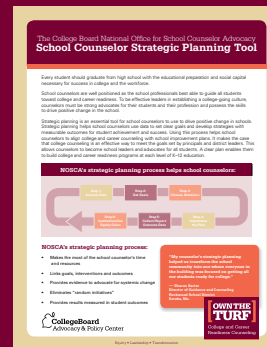
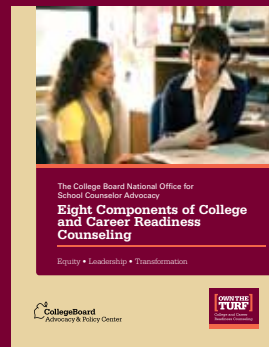
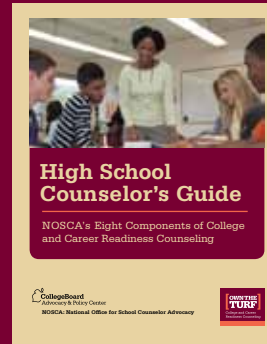
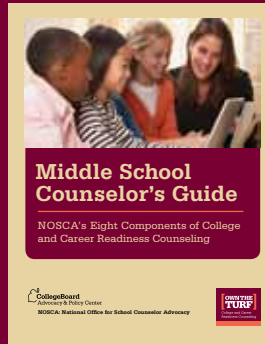
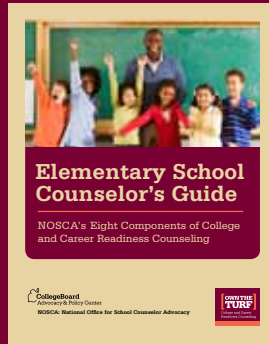
For further information, visit www.collegeboard.org

The College Board Advocacy & Policy Center was established to help transform education in America. Guided by the College Board's principles of excellence and equity in education, we work to ensure that students from all backgrounds have the opportunity to succeed in college and beyond. We make critical connections between policy, research and real-world practice to develop innovative solutions to the most pressing challenges in education today.

NOSCA: The National Office for School Counselor Advocacy

creates a national presence for school counselors by:

- Developing, publishing and nationally disseminating tools and materials that will enhance school counselors' capacity to practice in ways that promote college and career readiness for all students.
- Creating processes and strategies that will help school counselors solidify their position as important players in educational reform, using data to demonstrate accountability measures that promote educational equity.
- Providing research, training and conferences that will help school counselors in attaining the knowledge and skills needed for providing college and career readiness counseling for all students.



Advocacy is central to the work of the College Board. Working with members, policymakers and the education community, we promote programs, policies and practices that increase college access and success for all students. In a world of growing complexity and competing demands, we advocate to ensure that education comes first.

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