



Elementary School Counselor's Guide

NOSCA's Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling



NOSCA: National Office for School Counselor Advocacy



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 an elementary school counselor, you are laying the foundation for the work of counselors in middle and high 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*. Washington, DC: 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, in many elementary schools, third grade marks the beginning of student participation in state academic tests. Research clearly shows that attaining proficiency in reading by third grade is an indicator of future academic success. The key to equity is making sure all students reach grade-appropriate benchmarks. School counselors can advance equity by participating on leadership teams and using data to identify students who are not proficient in reading. They also can give the parents and families of those students concrete strategies for supporting their children as they develop reading skills. This family outreach, combined with skill development sessions and other targeted assistance, can help more students meet academic standards and close gaps between student groups.

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. In elementary school, it is important that school counselors adjust the implementation of interventions — one approach for grades K–2, another for grades 3–5 — so they are developmentally appropriate.

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 16 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 gain early and solid foundations as learners are more likely to attain the academic and social rewards that indicate school success. They also are more likely to believe that college is a realistic goal and to succeed. School communities that intentionally raise the aspirations of all students are preparing their students to graduate college and career ready.

WHAT TO MEASURE

Active and productive engagement in school is one indicator of students' aspirations. To assess if your students have successfully transitioned into formal education, see if they are attending school regularly, arriving on time, behaving appropriately and performing well academically.

Relevant data

- Attendance
- Discipline
- Promotion

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 attendance rates for African American students compare to those of white students?
- How do the discipline rates for male students compare to those of female students?
- How do the promotion rates for low-income students 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)

- Connect students who have high tardiness, absences and discipline referrals to potential mentors, including more successful peers, high school students, and at least one adult in the school and/or community, to increase their connectedness to school through meaningful relationships.
- Help students learn how to successfully begin their kindergarten experience by building knowledge and skills to master their new learning and social environment. For example, help students learn school ground rules in the classroom and in other parts of the school community.
- Provide third- to fifth-grade students with opportunities to actively build a classroom community of learners to ensure they grow into productive members of the school community. Focus on how to share, collaborate and make appropriate behavior choices.
- Create early awareness that connects academic performance (e.g., doing homework), coming to school on time, and habits as a learner (e.g., being helpful, having a positive attitude, listening and communicating) to getting better grades and attaining grade-level promotion.

School

- Collaborate with teachers and administrators to create a safe environment that fosters the skills young children need to be successful. Such an environment honors student diversity, builds on students' strengths and promotes readiness to learn for all children.
- Develop an early warning system for students having academic and/or behavioral difficulty to ensure early interventions. Triggers can include tardiness, having incomplete or missing assignments, having difficulty following directions, and/or not actively engaging in classroom work.
- Advocate to have the students most in need placed with the strongest teachers in each grade level.

District

- Collaborate with community pre-K programs or academically based day care programs to help students make a smooth transition into kindergarten.

- Collaborate with middle school counselors to plan for summer academic enrichment that includes skill building and transition activities for both parents and students. Through this collaboration, identify students in need of extra personal support.
- Collaborate with other elementary school counselors to develop a network for sharing ideas and resources as well as collaborating on districtwide programs and initiatives.

Parents and Families

- Create school and community events for parents and families in which they learn how to help their children develop positive engagement in school and build high aspirations (see all student interventions above). Hold the events at a variety of times and locations (community or recreation centers, places of worship, civic centers, or malls) to accommodate a range of schedules. Use materials written in parents' and families' native languages.
- Help parents and families learn how to locate resources (e.g., assistance with academic and behavioral issues such as absenteeism) and to navigate the school system so they can be advocates for their children.
- Conduct parent and family assessments to learn about families' views of the challenges and barriers confronting their children both in and out of school.

Community

- Collaborate with community members to introduce students to the world around them and connect their likes and interests to their community. This access is critical for students with limited exposure.
- Invite representatives from local college and career and technical schools, historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs), tribal colleges and universities (TCUs), and Asian American Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions (AANAPISIs) to meet with students, especially fifth-graders, and families. These meetings should focus on the early awareness and exposure necessary for upcoming goal setting and academic planning.

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

Students who acquire a solid academic foundation are more prepared to engage in rigorous and challenging course work as they progress through middle and high school. School communities that intentionally focus on grade-level proficiency in math and reading help increase the likelihood that students will graduate college and career ready.

WHAT TO MEASURE

Assess your students' academic progress by examining their progress toward grade-level benchmarks and proficiency in key subject areas.

Relevant data

- Reading on grade level in grade 3
- Proficiency in state tests for English, math and science

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 third-grade reading levels for English language learners compare to those of students who speak English as their first language?
- How do the math proficiency rates for Latino students compare to those of white students?
- How do the English proficiency rates for African American 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)

- Provide opportunities to build literacy, numeracy and writing skills when presenting college and career awareness information, especially for English language learners. Use library days that include read-aloud activities and vocabulary lists as well as writing activities that include sentence stems and paragraph ideas.
- Use college and career content to develop activities and assignments that promote good learning habits with targeted opportunities for students who are most in need and least engaged in school. Focus on planning and checking work for accuracy, asking for feedback, listening to directions, completing tasks on time, and asking clarifying questions.
- For grades 3–5, help students identify their learning styles; focus on students who struggle to use their learning style as an asset.
- Help students explore their areas of interest and link their strengths to academic subjects. Make connections that broaden students' understanding of their potential to learn and achieve. Focus on problem solving, patience, persistence, resiliency, imagination and creativity.
- Help fifth-grade students begin to plan a program of study for middle school, paying special attention to English, math, science and magnet programs.

School

- Collaborate with teachers to broaden social and cultural knowledge by building learning communities that are focused on connectedness to school, civic responsibility, national issues and global mindedness. Use new vocabulary words, literacy and numeracy skills to promote proficiency.
- Collaborate with teachers and administrators to develop early warning programs and safety nets for students experiencing academic difficulty. Work across grades and subject areas to identify trends in student difficulties and/or strengths with a goal of helping more students meet grade-level benchmarks on state tests. This work is especially important for third-graders.

- Participate on school leadership teams and use data to inform recommendations for improving student learning, outcomes and expectations. Review procedures related to how students are selected for programs, including gifted and talented and other special academic programs.

District

- Collaborate with kindergarten teachers and area pre-K programs to identify which students participated and what content was covered. Use this information to determine the skills that students may or may not possess when they start kindergarten.
- Collaborate with middle school counselors to create information sessions that advise parents about academic opportunities for their children as they make the transition to middle school. Identify students who will need extra academic support.

Parents and Families

- Teach parents and families how to support their children academically, help them engage in school, chart their knowledge and skill development, and encourage social interactions that lay the foundation for college and career readiness (see all student interventions above).
- Help parents and families learn how to create a positive and productive learning environment at home, including translating school expectations to fit their family structure and cultural expectations.
- Give parents and families academic planning information for middle school to assist in both short- and long-range academic planning for their children.

Community

- Team with community-based organizations to provide leadership and mentoring opportunities aimed at promoting strong academic development and early college and career awareness, especially in reading and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math).
- Invite community champions to the school, and ask them to promote academic excellence and early college and career awareness in ways that are relevant to the lives of diverse student populations.

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

Engagement in enrichment and extracurricular activities can enhance students' academic performance. Early awareness and exposure to a wide range of enrichment and extracurricular activities form a foundation upon which students can build their future aspirations and interests.

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 activities

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 special education students' participation rates in enrichment activities compare to those of students who do not need special education?
- How do participation rates in extracurricular activities of African American students compare to those of Native American students?
- How does female students' rate of holding leadership positions in enrichment activities compare to that of male 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)

- Teach students how to explore and identify their likes, dislikes, hobbies and interests, and how their interests connect to their future course work and careers. Use developmentally appropriate college and career readiness words and themes.
- Use academic challenges, team matches and group games to teach students fair and friendly competition, rules of engagement, and how to manage wins and losses.
- Help students develop and demonstrate positive leadership and good character through roles as classroom monitors, line leaders and classroom ambassadors.
- Help students develop and build portfolios, including certificates, awards and work samples that highlight enrichment and extracurricular participation and success.

School

- Develop practices that recognize and reward student participation and/or performance in enrichment and extracurricular activities.
- Audit school and community enrichment and extracurricular activities to ensure all students have an opportunity to participate and have the potential to hold leadership positions.
- Collaborate with teachers to integrate enrichment and extracurricular engagement into the academic curriculum. Make connections to class projects and assignments.
- Collaborate with teachers to set up classroom career corners that provide students with hands-on experiences carrying out job responsibilities and roles that connect to the National Career Clusters Framework. Focus on the careers identified in your state's key economic sectors.

District

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

- Partner with other elementary school counselors to create districtwide college and career readiness initiatives, such as a college and career awareness month.
- Collaborate with middle and high school counselors to develop lists of district-approved resources, materials and individuals/organizations that provide enrichment and extracurricular support, services and assistance.

Parents and Families

- Create outreach efforts to teach parents and families about their role in supporting their children's participation in enrichment and extracurricular activities (see all student interventions above).
- Help parents and families learn how to develop academic and activity calendars and use portfolios to highlight student accomplishments.
- Help parents and families learn how to use students' interest inventory and survey results as tools to guide choices for enrichment and extracurricular engagement.
- Assist parents and families in locating free and low-cost academic, enrichment and extracurricular programs that provide opportunities for students to receive praise, encouragement and guidance.
- Invite parents to participate in and support school-sponsored enrichment and extracurricular activities, such as field trips to museums, colleges/career/technical schools, competitions, plays and concerts.

Community

- Partner with neighborhood libraries and community centers to host enrichment and extracurricular engagement themed programs that offer information, resources and activities related to a variety of interests.
- Invite community members and organizations to assist in developing and delivering comprehensive parent education and support programs that provide strategies for active parental involvement. Use venues such as community forums and town hall meetings.

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 who engage in early and ongoing college and career exploration opportunities are more likely to participate in the preparation and planning necessary for future goal setting.

WHAT TO MEASURE

To assess students' entrance into the college and career process, look at participation in introductory exploration and selection experiences and engagements.

Relevant data

- Participation in college and career exploration 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 do low-income students' participation rates in college and career exploration programs compare to those of their more affluent peers?
- How do participation rates in college and career exploration programs for fifth-grade male students compare to those of fifth-grade female students?
- How do participation rates in college and career exploration programs of Asian students compare to those of white 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)

- Introduce students to the value of work by using career mapping to identify, understand and appreciate the various jobs and careers within their own families.
- Conduct classroom activities that give students opportunities to share and explain information about chores and jobs they like to do, their hobbies, and their favorite reading material and games.
- Help students identify their current attributes, talents and interests and compare them to those they will need for future postsecondary acceptance and success. For example, have them brainstorm and list college and career ready attributes about themselves and their classmates.

School

- Develop opportunities for academic and non-academic school staff members to share information and stories about their college/career/technical school experiences. Use the presentations to introduce students to a broad range of career fields, such as food and nutrition, information technology, finance, legal, school security, transportation, and support services.
- Collaborate with teachers to help students demonstrate their knowledge of college and career through visual arts. For example, teachers can assign projects for all students to draw pictures, write poems or essays, and/or recite their ideas about their future college and career aspirations.
- Encourage teachers to incorporate college and career information into their curriculum through assignments that include reading, writing, speaking and presenting activities. Focus on vocabulary words, definitions, hands-on examples and online activities about traditional and nontraditional careers.

District

- Join with neighboring school counselors, school staff and community members to generate comprehensive listservs of alumni who are willing to give back to their school by sharing their time, talents and resources with students.

- Collaborate with other elementary school counselors to invite local employers to represent a wide range of businesses and organizations in districtwide fairs that allow all students, parents and families to explore various careers.
- Collaborate with elementary school counselors to create a coherent and continuous K–5 college and career readiness program that aligns to middle and high school initiatives so students' planning is coherent and continuous.

Parents and Families

- Create outreach efforts to ensure that parents and families are aware of their roles in early awareness in college and career exploration (see all student interventions above).
- Help parents and families lay the foundation for early academic and workforce readiness skills by creating consistent routines that reinforce character and skill-building, such as getting-ready patterns (e.g., homework schedules, consistent meal and bed times, and preparation of academic materials).
- Encourage parents to participate in their Parent Teacher Association (PTA), as well as to adopt leadership roles that fit with their abilities, talents and interests. These roles may include class parent, field trip chaperone, parent reading pal, class photographer and playground supervisor.
- Encourage parents to cultivate their children's interests by paying close attention to their activities during nonschool time and talking with their children about how their interests are related to school success and career opportunities.

Community

- Develop collaborations with community-based organizations to design and provide parent-student team volunteer opportunities based on the students' interests, talents and abilities.
- 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 outlets.

5

College and Career Assessments

THE GOAL

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

WHY IT MATTERS

Introducing students to developmentally appropriate interest inventories and assessments can spark curiosity about strengths and talents, build self-awareness, and lay a foundation for the ongoing exploration necessary for building aspirations and goal setting. Students' early planning can grow into habits that are critical for success in college and career readiness.

WHAT TO MEASURE

To assess students' early use of college and career assessments, look at participation in introductory exploration and selection experiences and engagements.

Relevant data

- Participation in career/interest assessments

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 Native American students' participation rates in career/interest assessments compare to those of white students?
- How do low-income students' participation rates in career/interest assessments compare to those of their more advantaged peers?
- How do English language learners' participation rates in career/interest assessments compare to those of non-English language learners?

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)

- Introduce students to questionnaires, surveys and inventories in ways that build curiosity to discover personal talents and abilities, identify likes and interests, and support ongoing self-knowledge and exploration. Help students connect their academic skills to their interests. This work is especially important for students who have a limited view of their future possibilities.
- Provide opportunities for students to link their results from questionnaires, surveys and inventories to real-world careers. For example, connect students interested in particular career clusters to classroom visitors, field trips and technology-based experiences related to their interests.
- Help older students (fifth-graders) use results from their questionnaires, surveys and inventories to begin planning middle school courses and magnet programs, academies and/or special districtwide initiatives in middle school.

School

- Identify and work to eliminate any policies, practices, procedures or structural school barriers that may limit participation in interest inventories (on paper and online) in the school.
- Help teachers integrate career survey information and results into their curriculum to create early awareness about the links between school subjects and students' likes, interests, talents and dreams.
- Collaborate with teachers and administrators to develop a positive culture and climate around assessments — one that reduces test anxiety, encourages good studying and test-taking skills, and lays a foundation for continued college and career assessments. Pay special attention to students who seem hesitant about assessments as tools to help them.
- Collaborate with teachers to assist fifth-grade students as they begin to use career/interest survey/assessment/questionnaire information in planning their middle school program of study.

District

- Collaborate with middle school counselors to share information about career/interest assessments to assist in shaping interventions for students as they transition to middle school.
- Collaborate with other elementary school counselors across the district to plan districtwide career activities that reflect students' interests and support district goals for college and career readiness.
- Collaborate with high school counselors to create programs in which high school students mentor elementary school students most in need of additional support and direction.

Parents and Families

- Create outreach efforts to ensure that parents and families know how to assist their children in developing a positive perspective on assessments as tools for gathering information and learning about themselves (see all student interventions above).
- Help parents and families learn how to create a positive home environment that helps students plan for assessments while reducing test anxiety, encouraging positive engagement and highlighting students' strengths.
- Provide parents and families of fourth- and fifth-grade students with information about potential college and career assessments/inventories that are available in middle school. Include information about the appropriate use of results to inform academic planning in productive ways.

Community

- Collaborate with local libraries, recreation centers and/or civic centers that have online capabilities to provide students, parents and families with access to questionnaires, surveys and inventories so they can share exploration experiences outside of school.
- Encourage community leaders, businesses and college/career/technical schools to explain the value and importance of assessments when they interact with students and families.
- Create partnerships with a variety of members of the community to expose students to a variety of job sites to broaden their understanding and knowledge of careers.

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

Understanding basic finance and how to use and manage money are essential skills that build a foundation for financial literacy. Students who apply their knowledge of everyday financial decisions and engage in meaningful activities related to finance are equipped to increase and expand their financial literacy and financial aid knowledge in future years.

WHAT TO MEASURE

To assess students' early introduction to financial literacy and financial planning, look at participation in early awareness financial literacy and financial aid initiatives.

Relevant data

- Participation in early awareness financial literacy and financial aid initiatives

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 of Latino students and their families in early awareness financial literacy initiatives compare to those of Asian students and their families?
- How do participation rates in early awareness financial literacy initiatives of African American students and their families compare to those of white students and their families?
- How do participation rates in early awareness financial aid initiatives of low-income students and their families compare to those of their more affluent peers and their families?

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)

- Teach students financial literacy through letter and pictorial depictions of terms such as bank, budget, career, credit card, debt, financial aid, grants, income, loans, scholarships and work-study.
- Expand students' communication skills by teaching them how to discuss financial circumstances and situations, such as how to make purchases and returns and how to interact with salespersons.
- Teach students about entrepreneurship by highlighting successful student-led businesses. Focus on how to create budgets, earn salaries and pay employees.
- Teach students about the importance of saving accounts and savings plans through timelines and storyboards to help them understand the importance of money management.
- Provide students with information about college/ career/technical school scholarships and grants that are awarded to elementary school students. Cover application criteria and parental responsibilities.

School

- Teach students about financial independence and the rewards of money management through activities that teach students how to receive, share, distribute and save mock monetary funds.
- Disseminate age-appropriate 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.
- Encourage teachers to incorporate financial literacy into their existing classroom lessons to support the school's college and career affordability planning agenda.

District

- Collaborate with other elementary school counselors to review and analyze trends in districtwide high school Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion data. Use these data to support your school and district's financial literacy and financial aid awareness agenda.
- Share information about age- and grade-appropriate federal-, state-, district- and school-based scholarships and grants with middle school counselors. Collaborate on methods of dissemination and collection of scholarship and grant applications.

Parents and Families

- Work with parents so they understand their role in helping their children develop early awareness of financial literacy and financial aid processes for future college and career readiness options (see all student interventions above).
- Ensure that parents and families understand that their financial circumstances may not prevent their students from applying for and/or receiving most financial aid.
- Teach parents and families how to research and apply for age-appropriate academic, merit and extracurricular engagement scholarships and grants from various funders (e.g., federal and state programs, postsecondary institutions, and private foundations and organizations).
- Teach parents about educational planning, savings, investments and debt. Help parents and families understand the difference between favorable and unfavorable debt as they plan for their children's postsecondary education. For example, host financial literacy and financial aid awareness sessions that introduce parents and families to net price calculators.

Community

- Develop financial literacy activities with local before- and after-school programs so students and families have additional opportunities to learn about financial literacy and financial aid.
- Partner with community-based businesses and financial institutions to develop scholarship and stipend opportunities for students and/or support financial literacy initiatives.

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 ReadinessStep™, PSAT/NMSQT®, EXPLORE and PLAN		●	●
Performance on ReadinessStep, 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
 - ED Pubs (U.S. Department of Education) — <http://www.edpubs.gov>
 - Maryland Career Development Network — <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org>
 - 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 — <http://nosca.collegeboard.org>
 - NOSCA's Own the Turf College and Career Readiness Counseling Toolkit — <http://nosca.collegeboard.org>
 - Partnership for 21st Century Skills — <http://www.p21.org>
 - School Counselor's Strategic Planning Tool — <http://nosca.collegeboard.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.

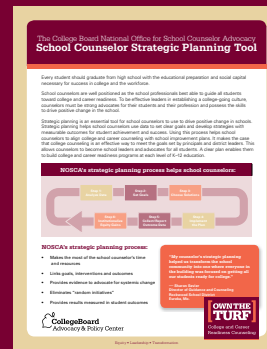
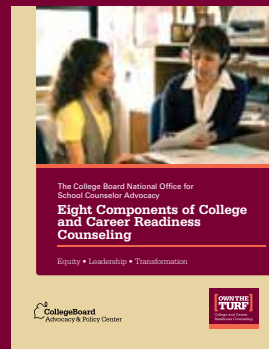
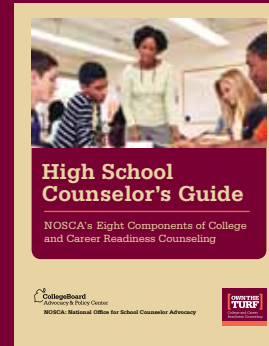
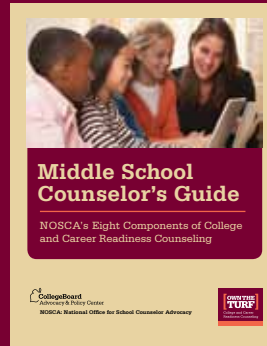
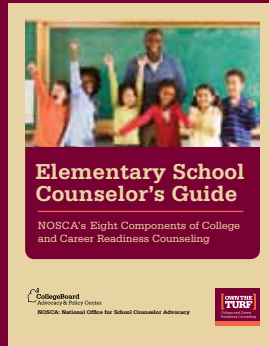
For further information, visit www.collegeboard.org.

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.

www.collegeboard.org ■ advocacy.collegeboard.org ■ <http://nosca.collegeboard.org>



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