

RESOURCE 18 *(for counselors and college access providers)*

COUNSELOR AND COLLEGE ACCESS PROVIDER ACTIVITIES TO CREATE A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

Counselors and college access providers have the unique opportunity to focus exclusively on increasing students' college access. The resources and activities in this book are designed to help counselors and college access providers support students as they explore and discover their identity and career interests and later take more specific steps to prepare for college. Also check out <http://www.doublethenumbersdc.org>, a new Web site filled with grade-by-grade checklists, tips and resources to help students know what they need to do to get to college.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN GRADES 9 AND 10 — EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

Students in 9th and 10th grades have the greatest advantages in preparing for college. At these grades, they can think and act long term and make decisions that positively affect their postsecondary options.

To prepare for college, most 9th and 10th graders need to take time to discover more about themselves — their interests, strengths, preferences and career options. Students with clear career interests are more likely to work hard to be in good academic standing because they can connect getting good grades and meeting educational requirements to their desired careers.

Ninth and 10th graders need to take the following steps to prepare for college. They must:

- Plan the courses they need to take to graduate;
- Get good grades;
- Enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) classes;
- Visit college campuses and become more educated about colleges in general;
- Engage in community service;
- Participate in extracurricular activities; and
- Begin to take the PSAT.

Short-Term Activities To Promote a College-Going Culture

1. Help students learn about careers they may be interested in, using Web sites such as <http://www.actstudent.org/wwm/index.html> and <https://www.nycareerzone.org/framegrabber.jsp;jsessionid=0001hx8wevMn5nXEazos9yGuBz5:-1?http://www.bls.gov/k12/index.htm>.
2. Engage students in a conversation about college with the following:
 - Play a fun game of College Jeopardy. Create your own categories and questions to inspire students to commit to college. (*Resource 19*)
 - Invite upperclassmen and recent alumni to share what they did and wished they had done in these grades to prepare for the upper grades and college. Use these lessons to help students create a list of success tips for these years.
 - Rank universities based on their interests so students will see which is best suited for them. See <http://www.collegeproowler.com/find/by-ranking.aspx> and <http://www.library.uiuc.edu/edx/rankgen.htm>.
 - Review steps to prepare for college and help students create their own plans. See http://www.teri.org/pdf/loan-center/Get_Ready_For_College_english.pdf.
3. Have students take an online personality assessment to discover more about themselves at <http://www.personalitytype.com/quiz.asp>.
4. Assist students in completing their Individual Graduation Portfolio (IGP).

5. Implement a college readiness curriculum during College Awareness Month and advisory periods. For an example, see <http://students.berkeley.edu/outreach/9-20-06-RTCD.pdf>.

Year-Long Activities To Promote a College-Going Culture

1. Have students leave a legacy for the next class by creating their own simple guide to success and college preparation.
2. Conduct virtual college tours of great colleges that students may not know about or are linked to their career interests. See <http://www.campustours.com/>.
3. Organize local college visits for students. Provide guidelines to help students and families organize their own visits locally and in other parts of the country. Contact the admissions offices at metro DC-area colleges. (*Resource 15*)
4. Encourage students to take the PSAT and ACT. For more information, see <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/about.html> and http://www.kaplank12.com/College/ACT/Kaplan-Programs/Classroom-Programs/CO_psat-act-prep.html.
5. Use technology and media to create youth-friendly college information for youths by youths.

Resources

- Grade-by-grade checklists, tips and resources to help students know what they need to do to get to college: <http://www.doublethenumbersdc.org>.
- HI/SCIP program (contact DCPS)
- Ten most common excuses for not going to college: [http://collegetools.berkeley.edu/documents/cat_1-12/College_Excuses_\(1_file\).doc](http://collegetools.berkeley.edu/documents/cat_1-12/College_Excuses_(1_file).doc)
- Sample student poster: http://students.berkeley.edu/outreach/Documents/ucb_fwd_poster_B.pdf

See Special Section on Financial Aid (on page 32) for additional resources.

GRADES 11 AND 12 — PLANNING AND TAKING ACTION

Postsecondary education planning is more urgent for students in grades 11 and 12. Students who have been doing early planning now begin to hunker down and become even more intentional in their college preparation. They:

- Complete their IGP (DCPS students only);
- Meet with a school counselor to ensure they are taking the right courses;
- Enroll in college classes through the High School/College Internship Program (HI/SCIP) or other early college program;
- Work hard to maintain good grades in school;
- Prepare for and take the ACT or SAT;
- Visit colleges and narrow their choices;
- Apply to colleges;
- Apply for financial aid;
- Complete community service hours;
- Seek leadership opportunities in extracurricular activities;
- Meet with their DC-CAP advisers or a college access provider;
- Apply to be a POSSE scholar and research/apply for other scholarships;
- Attend college preparation workshops; and
- Get their parent/caregiver/mentor to support their college dream.

Those who have not done any preparatory activities have a lot of catching up to do and would benefit from doing many of the 9th and 10th grade activities. They need to be more intentional about their preparation.

Short-Term Activities To Promote a College-Going Culture

1. Ensure students attend the College Fair on Tuesday, September 29, 2009. (*Resources 7 and 8*)
2. Assist students in completing their IGP (DCPS students only).
3. For those who have done no college preparation, do appropriate activities from grades 9 and 10.
4. Help students learn about possible careers at <http://www.actstudent.org/wwm/index.html>, <https://www.nycareerzone.org/framegrabber.jsp;jsessionid=0001hx8wevMn5nXEazos9yGuBz5:-1?http://www.bls.gov/k12/index.htm>, and http://www.onetcenter.org/dl_tools/IP_zips/IP-Instr-deskv.pdf. (Note: This interest profiler is long.)
5. Help students plan, using the college readiness timeline and activities for 9th–12th graders. See <http://www.newvisions.org/collegebound/Timelines.asp>.
6. Help students prepare for college entrance exams such as the SAT and ACT. Visit http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/prep_one/prep_one.html and www.actstudents.org for test preparation resources.
7. Help students and families understand the financial aid and college application process by creating a customized workshop for them. Contact the Office of Higher Education Financial Services (<http://osse.dc.gov>) and the Get Financially Fit for College Program at Reach for Success (<http://www.reach4success.org>) for more information on financial aid workshops.
8. Invite and train students to become college-prep peer mentors so they can recruit and support others in this process. For more on developing peer mentors, see College Summit’s Peer Leader program: <http://www.collegesummit.org/students-alumni/students/college-summit-in-your-school/peer-leadership-2/>.
9. Promote visual “college talk” in your school by creating a college bulletin board.

Year-Long Activities To Promote a College-Going Culture

1. To better understand how to support students in their college quest, adapt and ask your target students to fill out My College-Preparation Assessment Plan. Based on the data you gather from these completed plans, join other college access providers to develop a plan to further prepare students for college. You can use and adapt these tools with individual classes or small groups. (*Resource 17*)
2. Create a passport-type set of college-prep milestones students need to complete. Upon completion of each milestone, they can get the passport “stamped” by you or a designee. Celebrate milestones and find ways to make these accomplishments public. Encourage students to create small groups to support each other through this process.
3. Create a college-bound bulletin board with information about college prep and the application process.
4. Encourage students to create a college-prep page for their school on MySpace and Facebook.
5. With the support of the principal and appropriate staff, work with students to create a college-bound Web site, video, poster or public service announcement. Share these with your school and the Double the Numbers Coalition. Double the Numbers may create an event to promote these products.

Resources

- Grade-by-grade checklists, tips and resources to help students know what they need to do to get to college: <http://www.doublethenumbersdc.org>.
- Resources for first-time college students: <http://www.offtocollege.com/take-one.html>
- Excellent guide to choosing a college: http://nsse.iub.edu/pdf/2006_pocket_guide.pdf
- College planning Web site: <http://www.mycollegeoptions.org/Content/ForStudents/CollegeTips/CollegeTipsHome.aspx>
- List of pointers for choosing between two schools: <http://www.fastweb.com/fastweb/resources/articles/index/110646>
- Twenty questions to ask your counselor: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/starting-points/114.html>
- Recommendations for counselors and college access providers in creating a college-going culture: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/chepa/pdf/CHEC-List.pdf>
- DC College Savings Plan and other ways to save for college: <http://www.dccollegesavings.com/>
- Information on DC financial aid programs: www.osse.dc.gov/seo/cwp/view_a.1225.q.536504.seoNav.31193..asp
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid: <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>
- Ways to pay for college: <http://www.ed.gov/students/college/aid/edpicks.jhtml?src=ln>
- Financing college: <http://www.collegeanswer.com/financing/content/index.jsp>
- Borrowing responsibly: http://www.collegeanswer.com/financing/content/f_resp.jsp
- Myths about your ability to pay for college: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB118349484752657007.html?mod=djemWMP>

See Special Section on Financial Aid (on page 32) for additional resources.

Research

- The relevance of the new media in reaching first-generation and low-income teens: http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/CAM_NewMedia.pdf
- An online inventory of college access curricula: <http://www.nasfaa.org/publications/2007/npathways071107.html>
- Student aid facts and figures: <http://www.nasfaa.org/Redesign/FastFactsFigures20070618.htm>
- Calculating financial aid for independent students: <http://www.nasfaa.org/Subhomes/ResearchHome/FixingtheFormulaFinalReport.Pdf>
- Strategies for increasing college access: http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/StrategiesforSuccess_CaseStudies.pdf