College & Career
Big Decisions, New Directions

Georgia School Counselor
The Official Publication of the Georgia School Counselors Association
Spring 2013
Help your students take the next step: 
PSAT/NMSQT® to SAT®

If your students have already taken the PSAT/NMSQT®, they’ll be familiar with the structure and format of the SAT®. That gives your students an added boost of confidence.

We offer a comprehensive collection of resources just for counselors, so you can help students take that next critical step from PSAT/NMSQT to SAT.

For more information, go to sat.org/ASCA2013.

Share This Popular Webinar with Your Colleagues

PSAT/NMSQT TO SAT:  
Taking the Next Step and Why It Matters

Hear tips and techniques that work when encouraging your students to take the SAT, following their PSAT/NMSQT experience. Counselors and College Board experts share ideas and strategies.

This archived webinar is accessible anytime, anywhere, for your convenience.

Visit sat.org/ASCA2013 to listen to the webinar now.
President’s Message

College & Career Readiness: Counselors as Change Agents
BY TORRI JACKSON

Depending on Data
BY BOB BARDWELL

What’s on Your Device?
BY RUSSELL A. SABELLA, PH.D., AND ANDREA BURSTON, MA

10 Tips for Career Day Success
BY JAMIE McHALE

College for All
BY KRIS HARVEY

Show Them the Money
BY SHELBY T. WYATT, ED.D

Don’t Fear the FAFSA
BY SUSAN McCrackin

Supporting Student Athletes: Understanding NCAA Eligibility
BY KATY O’GRADY
The cost of attending college continues to skyrocket, and far too many students are graduating with debt that can cripple them financially for decades.

As it becomes more difficult and confusing for consumers to negotiate the multitude of for-profit websites and other programs offering conflicting information about financial aid, the National College Finance Center (NCFC) is a free, first-stop, unbiased resource to help educate students, prospective students, graduates and families all across the country about their options for financing a college education and repaying student loans.

The NCFC is powered by the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC). The New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) is conducting a national public service announcement campaign to help those in need procure unbiased college financing information via the NCFC.
THE ESSENTIAL PIECE

OF THE PUZZLE

BY BARBARA STRICKLAND

Have you ever tried putting a puzzle together, only to get to the end and discover that a piece is missing? You eagerly work on assembling the puzzle, constantly examining the picture of your anticipated outcome. Piece by piece you work, only to realize that something is missing: one piece of the puzzle. And that piece makes a huge difference because without it, the puzzle is incomplete. That essential, missing piece changes not only the picture, but also the anticipated outcome. You search and search; if you find the piece, you feel joy and a sense of accomplishment. And if the piece does not turn up, then frustration and a sense of disappointment set in.

The extraordinary thing about a puzzle is that nothing can fill that void except the piece that is made to go there. No matter how much we try to force another piece into that void, if it was not made to fit, it will not fit. So, the puzzle either remains incomplete, or you search until you find the missing piece. As we come to the close of another school year, I hope GSCA has helped you find many essential pieces to your own puzzle for student success.

GSCA and ASCA are dedicated to providing you with resources and networking that will enhance your growth as a professional school counselor. GSCA continues to work very hard to advance the school counseling profession, support Georgia’s school counselors, and promote comprehensive counseling programs.

GSCA continues to work very hard to advance the school counseling profession, support Georgia’s school counselors, and promote comprehensive counseling programs.

It is hard to believe that the end of another school year will soon be upon us. Summer brings a great opportunity to reflect on the ups and downs, the smiles and the tears, the triumphs and the challenges of the year. It also is an opportunity to reflect on what you accomplished and brainstorm about possibilities for the future. I close by thanking each of you for everything you do every day for your students, the lives you touch, and the futures you have helped mold. You make a difference! You are the essential piece!

Contact Barbara Strickland, GSCA president, at tbstrickland@windstream.net.
Pacific College offers your students an exciting future
• Degrees ranging from associate’s in massage to master’s and doctorate in acupuncture
• An education that enables students to open their own practice
• An opportunity for a meaningful career
• A holistic medical career in one to four years

You can help show these students that there is more than one path to a career in medicine. Acupuncture, massage, and holistic nursing are becoming increasingly popular and rewarding careers.

I am interested in medicine.
I eat organically.
I am health conscious.
I “went green” before it was a trend.

I am a healer at heart.

Ask for Our Counselor Representative to Request a Packet
(877) 226-2049
media@pacificcollege.edu
PacificCollege.edu/Counselors
Two questions: What is the data-driven, student-focused counseling program’s dream come true? What would be the one thing that proves to an entire district and state how beneficial school counselors are to students and schools?

One answer: Playing a vital role in the accountability process for schools and districts!

In January, school counselors across Georgia received an e-mail to inform them that Georgia’s College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) indicators were finalized. Honestly, I find it exhilarating and exciting to know that the impact of school counselors on student achievement will be recognized with more importance than ever before as an indicator of schools’ performance ratings. The charge of every school counselor is to continue to serve students by providing comprehensive school counseling programs with a greater emphasis on college and career readiness. It is up to Georgia professional school counselors to act as college and career readiness change agents to ensure that our students meet CCRPI’s standards of excellence while positively influencing the culture of our schools.

Since being granted a waiver from No Child Left Behind in March 2012, school counselors at all levels have been actively seeking information about the final CCRPI indicators. To ensure that school counseling plans are masterfully devised to enhance student achievement, the groundwork must be laid at the most basic level. Elementary school faculty and administrators are looking to their counselors to lead the career awareness initiatives necessary to fulfill the requirements of CCRPI’s Post-Elementary School Readiness. These counselors, or change agents, are delivering developmentally informative career awareness lessons that showcase Georgia’s career clusters. They are helping students to complete career portfolios, implementing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs, and even planning and hosting career and college fairs at the elementary level. Counselors throughout the state are preparing students to leave elementary school with a basic knowledge of careers and an awareness of how to research these careers, as well as others, even more deeply.

Middle school change agents are working with students to complete career interest inventories and related assessments. The counselors are instructing students to prepare for their upcoming high school academic plans and are encouraging the exploration of college and career paths by having students complete Individual Graduation Plans (IGPs) before they leave middle school. Middle school college and career awareness is taken to the next level by enrolling students into career exploratory courses, advising students to take more rigorous coursework for which they could potentially earn high school credit, and hosting school-wide career and college expos.

As evidenced above, elementary and middle school counselors will lead their schools and noticeably shift the culture of the school toward college and career awareness. The implementation of CCRPI indicator initiatives has allowed for the language of college and career awareness to be spoken throughout elementary and middle schools, thus having a positive impact on secondary awareness. Thanks to elementary and middle school counselors who are true change agents, students are more prepared for high school tasks and for beginning the process of post-high school career and college planning. Secondary change agents are working with students to enhance their postsecondary readiness by advising students toward Career, Technical, Agriculture, and Education (CTAE) pathway completion, enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) and dual enrollment opportunities, and implementing effective Teachers-as-Advisors programs. Students’ career development successes on this level are clearly a result of proper planning and implementation by change agents—school counselors—at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

A comprehensive developmental school counseling plan with an emphasis on college and career planning will allow any Georgia school counselor to become a change agent within his or her school while successfully meeting the career awareness criteria of CCRPI. When a seven-year-old can explain a career within Georgia’s seventeen career clusters, that student has been influenced by a Georgia school counseling change agent. When a 13-year-old can explain his or her Individual Graduation Plan, that student has been influenced by a Georgia school counseling change agent. When a 17-year-old has credit for dual enrollment or AP courses, that student has been influenced by a Georgia school counseling change agent. To put a school on the path to college and career readiness and change the culture of a school to reflect college and career readiness, look no further than the nearest Georgia professional school counselor.

Torri Jackson is the GSCA Secondary Worksetting VP and lead counselor at Bradwell Institute. Contact her at tjackson@liberty.k12.ga.us.
In 2012, an estimated 2.9 million students graduated from high school, and about half of them will pursue an undergraduate degree, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education. Behind these students are thousands of school counselors who help them reach the American dream of attending college. But did these school counselors use the data available to them to facilitate these transitions, or did it just happen by chance?

College admission data is perhaps one of the most prolific types of data available in our secondary schools today. So if school counselors have been gathering this data for years, other than filling out a report for the state or the school board, does the data do anything to influence the school counseling program’s delivery services and school curriculum?

Although school counselors face issues of time availability, role definition, and adequate training, the bottom line is that students and families still need access to college information and assistance. This is certainly the case for families of first generation college-going students, who accounted for roughly 20% of the entering freshman class in fall 2011. The key to ensuring college-going success for all students is using available data to improve delivery services and provide necessary program interventions, not just those programs we think students and families need.

Data related to college can be collected and organized in many ways. One option involves a traditional database such as Microsoft Access, which is easy to set up. You can import basic demographic data (name, school counselor, etc.) from the school’s student management database. Once a student requests a transcript, enter the information for that student into the database. Such a record can be set up as a shared file that school counselors and clerical staff can then view, analyze, and use to create reports.

Once students receive their admission decisions, they self-report this information to the school counseling staff, who then add the information to the database. As part of the annual senior check-out right before graduation, seniors must have the signature of the school counseling department secretary, who verifies that all of the needed data was provided.

A second option for schools is a commercial program such as Connectedu, or Naviance. Such programs offer more than just a way to organize data. They often include career and college search options, application checklists, scholarship listings, and resume builders, to name just a few enhancements. Some of these programs are free while others charge a user fee. Your choice to use a standard database or a commercial program makes no difference in regard to collecting data. The most important thing is that you are collecting it in an efficient manner to use later.

Once you’ve gathered your data, you can analyze and convert it into several reports. A placement report gives both school counselors and future students an idea of what GPA, class rank, and test scores were necessary to gain admission to a particular college. This is particularly useful when students might be trying to reach for a highly visible school; data from previous students may help them see the likelihood of admission. One caution to keep in mind when working with placement data is that the profile of accepted students at a particular institution may drastically change from year to year, especially if that institution has had a significant increase in applicants. Therefore, only reference placement data for the past one or two years to reflect the most recent admission decision history.

MINING THE DETAILS
Another report you can produce from the data is a scattergram. This report displays students’ GPAs and combined critical reading and math SAT scores...
MONEY FOR COLLEGE.

TRAINING IN OVER 200 CAREERS.

THIS IS WHERE YOUR STUDENTS CAN FIND THE RIGHT FIT.

The National Guard is part-time, so naturally, it can fit into your students’ lives, no matter where they are headed after high school. But how can they learn where they fit in the Guard? That’s what the Right Fit is for. Students go to the site, enter their skills and interests, and find what part-time Guard careers are good matches. The site also has important information about benefits that can pay for college.

See it for yourself. Then show your students. It’s at NATIONALGUARD.com/RightFit.
on an XY graph and shows whether that student was accepted, denied, or placed on the wait list. You can easily produce a scattergram in Microsoft Excel with the data from Access, or it can be automatically generated by commercial programs such as Naviance.

Not only does data collection help future students learn about their chances of admission, it also provides the school counseling staff an opportunity to make programmatic changes. In my school, the data revealed a large number of students seeking a community college option. The school counseling staff worked with the two local community colleges to come to the high school to conduct a “Decision Day,” where students who have completed their application and requested a transcript are accepted on the spot. This is done in early December at a time when students applying to four-year colleges have yet to apply. Decision Day gives these students a feeling of importance in having a confirmed decision far sooner than many of their peers. Students accepted through this format also get to take their placement test and pick courses much earlier than other first-year students.

Our school counselors also sponsor a field trip each April to both of the local community colleges. For many students, if we did not organize this trip during the school day, their first visit to the community college would be when they go for their placement test. Far too many students have a negative image of community college, and this visit can help change some of those perceptions.

Our recent data also indicated that, more than half of each graduating class matriculates to a public school (two- or four-year college), which is consistent with previous graduating classes. School counselors discussed this phenomenon and concluded that cost and financial aid concerns were the major factors affecting where students apply and ultimately attend. Some of the most academically talented students had been accepted into a private four-year school, yet chose to attend a public one. As a result of this data, we’ve improved our financial aid awareness programs beyond the typical senior financial aid night. We have also worked very hard with the federal government to keep track of FAFSA completion rates, since completing the FAFSA is highly correlated with students actually attending the college.

Collecting data does require some caution. In my school, one concern is that the data is self-reported, meaning that a student reports the admission decisions to the school counseling staff. Although in most cases they are accepted and are proud of this fact and are willing to report it, some students may not report the correct admission decision. Most college admission offices will not share this data with high schools, thus some of the data may be erroneous.

A second limitation in my school is the limited sample size and limited number of and variety of colleges to which seniors typically apply. Use caution any time a sample has fewer than 10 students to protect the identity of the students.

In the future, our school counseling staff would like to provide additional programming for those students and families in which the student is the first to attend college. When compared with the control group (non-first-generation students), data collected over a few years from first-generation college-going students will yield important information about the trends and college-going behaviors of first-generation students in this community. We can then use the data to implement specific interventions for this target group. This will be particularly helpful if first-generation students do not choose to pursue a postsecondary education or may not apply to more academically challenging institutions. These two trends are typically of concern for school counselors from communities with high incidences of first-generation college-going students.

For school counselors, data can be a very powerful tool to improve student performance, eliminate the achievement gap, provide quality programming, or improve college-going rates and college application services. However, if school counselors fail to gather the data or, worse yet, fail to analyze it and reflect on how it can improve services, then it becomes a wasted resource.

Any school counseling department, regardless of size, can easily gather college-related data, analyze it, share it, and use it to improve programs and services. Collecting data is possible without having to purchase expensive software or commercial programs, although such programs can be beneficial to both students and parents going through the college application process. You can generate reports for various subgroups (race, special education, etc.) to look at activity level during the application process or application success rate after the cycle is over. All of this information, when disaggregated and analyzed, will be most useful and will help guide future school counseling programs and interventions.

Data collection gives the staff an opportunity to improve services to students and parents. The opportunity to study the data has certainly improved programs in my school and can do so in yours, as well. As a result of our collecting, analyzing, and reporting data and reviewing our college-related programming, our students will no doubt have better post-secondary options.

Bob Bardwell is a school counselor at Monson High School in Monson, MA, and is a former secondary level vice president on ASCA’s Governing Board. He can be reached at bardwellr@monsonschools.com.
Understanding a child’s anxiety is an important step to successful treatment. The MASC 2™ uncovers important details about emotional, physical, cognitive and behavioral symptoms of anxiety that broadband measures and screening tools often miss.

Untreated anxiety can impede social development and educational success, or lead to other impairments. The intervention suggestions, authored by Dr. John March, can be integrated into a treatment plan for monitoring and guiding the youth’s progress.
School Counselors, like many educators, are finding an abundance of available apps (short for applications) for their mobile devices (phones and tablets). Although perhaps not designed specifically for school counselors, many apps have been adapted to assist with a variety of guidance and counseling activities. From information lookup, to data management, to digital story-telling, school counselors are adding their tablets and phones to their counseling tool boxes. Here is a starter list of some of our favorites.

### USE WITH YOUR STUDENTS

**Scribble Press (free):** This is a story-creating app that students really enjoy. It offers a variety of pre-made stories to choose from in which students can fill in the blanks with their own information, pictures, and drawings. Or, a blank version lets students create the story themselves. This app can be used as a “getting to know you” activity in both individual and group settings, especially for school counselors that have school sets of iPads.

*iTunes* *Android*

**Puppet Pals (free; with option of paid version):** Another story creation app, this lets students take pictures of themselves from the iPad camera and then “roll and insert themselves” into a story.

*iTunes* *Android*

**Teacher’s Pick ($ .99):** gives you the ability to randomly and uniquely choose students without having to rely on memory, cups of craft sticks, or flash cards. Just add your class names and the students in each class.

*iTunes* *Android*

**iReward lite (free; with option of paid version):** If you’ve ever used a sticker chart to keep track of student behaviors and offered a reward once they earned a certain number of stars, you’ll love this app. You can take a student’s picture and then easily keep track of his or her stars. The iReward app is also great to use in groups because it can be synched across several devices.

*iTunes* *Android*

### TIME MANAGEMENT AND OFFICE TOOLS

**Stopwatch and Timer (free):** Great for classroom activities and more.

*iTunes* *Android*

**Dropbox (free):** If you already have a Dropbox account, this app will give you another way to access your files. For those of you not familiar with Dropbox, it’s free online storage for pictures, files, and documents that allows you to share with others and synch across multiple devices.

*iTunes* *Android*

**CloudOn (free):** This app allows you to open, edit, create, and save Microsoft office documents. CloudOn also synchs with your Dropbox account so you can easily access your files on your iPad or Android tablet.

*iTunes* *Android*

**Google Drive (free):** Similar to Dropbox, you can store all your files in one place, so you can access them from anywhere and share them with others.

*iTunes* *Android*

**Voicethread (free):** Add your voice recordings to images, text or drawings. You can also share your recordings and post to via social media.

*iTunes*
### TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Dragon Dictation (free):</strong></th>
<th><strong>OverDrive Media Console (free):</strong> Download eBooks and audiobooks from your library directly to your device!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need a break from typing on the smaller (and sometimes difficult) iPad keyboard? Just speak and this app will convert your voice into written text. Some counselors have found this app helpful for recording notes and reminders for themselves using. With Dragon, you can easily also edit, save, and e-mail those notes.</td>
<td><strong>iTunes</strong> <strong>Android</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CamScanner HD (free):</strong></th>
<th><strong>PTSD Coach (free):</strong> This app provides users with education about PTSD, information about professional care, a self-assessment for PTSD, opportunities to find support, and tools that can help users manage the stresses of daily life with PTSD. Tools range from relaxation skills and positive self-talk to anger management and other common self-help strategies.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use your phone camera as a scanner. Teachers and students can register and log in CamScanner with .edu e-mail address for upgrading CamScanner to the full version freely.</td>
<td><strong>iTunes</strong> <strong>Android</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Pulse News (free):</strong></th>
<th><strong>Urban Dictionary (free):</strong> Keep up with what the kids are talking about.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read all your favorite news feeds, tweets and blogs in one spot.</td>
<td><strong>iTunes</strong> <strong>Android</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Book Crawler ($1.99):</strong></th>
<th><strong>You Can Handle Them All ($1.99):</strong> Based on the best-selling book by the same title, this app assists in handling children’s inappropriate behaviors. You Can Handle Them All is a quick-action resource for managing 124 student behaviors at school and at home.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep inventory of your school counselor books by simply scanning the book’s bar code. Categorize, sort, and even keep track of books you’ve loaned out through this app!</td>
<td><strong>iTunes</strong> <strong>Android</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Goodreads (free):</strong></th>
<th><strong>Sesame Street for Military Families (free):</strong> This fantastic app will allow you to access engaging videos, articles, storybooks, parent guides, and more to help you support your preschool and school-aged children as they encounter transitions common to military families. Content (in both English and Spanish) deals with topics such as separation/deployment, homecoming, self-expression, injuries, and grief.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read thousands of book reviews by your friends and other Goodreads members, keep a virtual bookshelf of what you’ve read, and build your to-read list as you discover great books on the app.</td>
<td><strong>iTunes</strong> <strong>Android</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **First Aid (free):** From the Red Cross, this is a handy app to have when in doubt about how to handle medical situations. This app provides videos, descriptions, and signs to look for during an emergency. | **iTunes** **Android** |

| **Breathe2Relax (free):** This app is a portable stress management tool that you can use to help students relax and calm down. | **iTunes** **Android** |

| **You Can Handle Them All (free):** RSS feed for military families. Contains links to the latest news and resources. More information about how to handle military stress from military experts. | **iTunes** **Android** |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>COLLEGE PLANNING</strong></th>
<th><strong>NextStepU (free):</strong> This app, a digital version of NextStepU print magazine, provides information, videos and guides about planning for college.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>College FAFSA Finder (free):</strong> College and financial aid reference.</td>
<td><strong>iTunes</strong> <strong>Android</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more apps and info on using the iPad, check out the school counselor iPad wiki and the ASCA Scene.

Russell A. Sabella is a professor of counseling in the Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Technology, Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers, Florida. Learn more about Russ’s online resources. Contact him at rsabella@fgcu.edu.

Andrea J. Burston is the school counselor at JY Joyner Magnet Elementary School in Raleigh, NC. She loves to incorporate the use of technology into her school counseling program. She is the author of the JYJ Counselor Blog; contact her at jyjcounselor@gmail.com.
10 TIPS FOR CAREER DAY SUCCESS

Elementary school career days can take myriad directions and sizes. Regardless of the day’s scope or how involved it is, these 10 tips will help lead to a stellar day.

By Jamie McHale

All school counselors want to provide their students with an amazing education about the world of work. But, let’s face it; we can’t always have helicopters landing in our school yard. This actually happened at one of my career days, but they can’t all be that exciting. The point is, even doing a small career day can change the course of a child’s life, and that is what it’s all about. Success is all in how you prepare and plan. If you are feeling a little lost, follow these 10 steps for a successful elementary school career day.

1. **Start preparing early.** Each spring, I look at the master calendar for the following school year and figure out what days are available for career day. Mid-January tends to work well—it avoids testing, holidays, and high-stress times. Before committing to a date, ask all teachers whose schedules will be affected if the date works for them. A little bit of consideration goes a long way.

   Begin actively searching for presenters in September or October. This gives you enough time to scope out some really interesting professionals and find a back-up if a scheduled presenter falls through. It also gives potential presenters enough time to request time off and prepare what they are going to discuss and show the students.

2. **Limit the age group.** Although I teach career exploration to all grade levels, I limit career day to fourth- and fifth-grade students. It’s a great age, because they have begun to think about pursuing careers based on their strengths, have a greater understanding of the content shared by the presenters, and often ask insightful questions.

3. **Cover all career areas.** It’s important to cover all six of the career clusters. Having kids see only professions from the business path or the helping path is limiting, so why not present an occupation from each path? This can also reach more students or may spark interest in an area a child had not previously considered.

4. **Think outside the box.** The reality of life is that many students decide to take a path that doesn’t include attending a four-year university. Not every student grows up to be a teacher, lawyer, or a doctor, yet many career fairs are littered with individuals in these occupations. Kids, even young ones, need to know their post-secondary options include college, technical schools, and training programs.

   At last year’s career day, we included a presenter who did concrete stamping after laying sidewalks and driveways. I was worried as to whether the kids would be interested, but they loved it. It’s an out-of-the-ordinary job, and it requires employees to have scientific knowledge and artistic ability, which the students ate up.

   I have had dog trainers, invisible fence installers, a farrier, real estate agents, artists, musicians, and other careers that don’t require a four-year degree. It’s critical for kids to explore and be exposed to a variety of occupations, and the students are always most interested in unique occupations.

   Try to drive home the fact that every career plays a vital role in our lives, and attempt to do away with the stereotype that glamorous, high-paying jobs are the most important.

5. **Know your audience.** When choosing presenters, consider your audience. What interests them, and how can you pull in kids who aren’t interested in that profession? It’s not possible to please everyone with every presenter, but if I can excite a child about a career, I’ve done my job.

   Choose presenters based on at least one of the following:

   - Is there a large group that would be interested in this profession?
   - Would the indifferent student be interested?
   - Would you be interested in watching this presenter?

   At my school, we have a number of young ladies very interested in fashion and the latest trends, but I have yet to meet a young man who is a budding fashionista. If I went with a clothing designer, it could severely limit the interest. I ended up finding a student’s father who owned a business that designed uniforms for area sports teams. It drew in the fashionistas, the artists, the business-minded kids, and the

   **CONTINUED ON PAGE 16**
Tracking the Real Road to College Success for Your Students

Gain the insight you need to prepare your students for any variety of pathways in higher education.

StudentTracker℠ is the nation’s most powerful tool for benchmarking how students enroll, persist, and graduate college and improving the way you prepare future students for higher education.

GET THE ANSWERS YOU NEED

• Total alumni with college degrees by class year
• Percent enrolled in the fall after graduation
• Out-of-state vs. in-state enrollments
• Get the full picture from high school to college
• Compare trends by gender, race, ethnicity, etc.
• Most popular colleges where students enroll

Get Actionable Results

To find out how you can use StudentTracker to learn the college success of your former high school students, contact us at stservices@studentclearinghouse.org or visit www.studentclearinghouse.org/highschools.

And...ask us how you can eliminate transcript delivery costs with our secure Electronic Transcript Exchange℠.

©2013 National Student Clearinghouse. All rights reserved.
I encourage presenters
to get the kids involved, 
because that is how they 
truly learn and experience 
that profession.

Sports fans. Those students who didn’t 
fall into any of these categories were 
still impressed because they knew the 
presenter’s son.

Be specific with presenters.
Instead of just asking presenters 
to tell kids about their job, be spe-
cific. Ask them to explain how and 
why they chose their profession, what 
schooling or training was necessary 
for their job, and any academic skills 
they use in their job (such public 
speaking, writing, math, etc.). It takes 
the broad topic and narrows it down 
for them. They’ll know exactly what 
you want, and it avoids those deer-
in-the-headlights moments after they 
have given a brief description of their 
job and don’t know what to talk about 
next.

Kids also like to be involved as 
much as possible. During past career 
days, our students have been able to 
pet dogs, look at babies and broken 
bones on a mini ultrasound machine, 
sing along to songs, dance, and wear 
various pieces of uniforms. I encour-
age presenters to get the kids in-
volved, because that is how they truly 
learn and experience that profession.

Make the schedule foolproof for 
teachers and staff. My fourth- and 
fifth-grade colleagues have started to 
look forward to career day, because 
I take care of everything. We have 
always had six presentations but eight 
classes, so two teachers are “off” each 
year. I rotate who is relieved of their 
class, divvy their classes up into the 
remaining six classes, and provide 
them with a list telling them where 
each child goes. Involved staff mem-
bers receive a schedule of events at 
least two weeks ahead of time that 
covers who is presenting in each room 
(presenters stay in one classroom), 
the time of each presentation, and 
which teacher will be in the teacher’s 
room should career day conflict with 
specials (music, art, or PE).

The teachers know what to expect, 
and they get to stay in their classroom 
while groups of kids rotate through 
their rooms to see the featured pre-
senter. I even go so far as to give pre-
senters a two-minute warning prior to 
the kids needing to rotate to the next 
classroom so the teachers don’t have 
to worry about watching the clock. 
Chaos is not fun on days like this, so 
avoid it at all costs.
8 Don’t overwhelm the kids. I could probably talk about what I do for at least an hour, and that would be just scratching the surface. However, no one, specifically fourth- and fifth-graders, wants to sit through an endless discourse about my occupation. My first career day included six different presentations at 20 minutes each. At about the 15-minute mark most kids were starting to get that glazed-over look. Now I limit the presentations to 15 minutes, and it has helped everyone. More kids stay interested, and it aids in avoiding the possibility of presenters running out of things to say after they’ve covered the highlights of their profession.

9 Expect and prepare for the worst. There is nothing worse than having someone call the day before or the day of career day to tell you he or she can’t present. I have learned to always prepare for a career day catastrophe. Two days before the event last year, I still only had half of the presenters I needed. I called my mom and my husband, and although they couldn’t present, they both had colleagues who could. I then went through old e-mails and found a presenter who’d been recommended by a parent a few years earlier and got my final commitment.

Colleagues also can come through in a bind with spouses, relatives, or friends who might be able to help out. There are many people who would drop everything in an instant for this opportunity. You just have to knock on the right doors.

10 Reflect and get ready for next year. At the conclusion of each career day, I walk back to my office, plop down in my chair, and exclaim, “Holy cow!” (OK, not “cow,” but you get the idea.) After I’ve decompressed a bit, I reflect on what was awesome and what wasn’t quite so awesome about that year’s career day. I talk to the students and teachers about what the day looked like from their perspective. I make notes and print off e-mails to put in my career day file for next year. And then I let it go.

I don’t dwell on the kid who asked the police officer if she had ever used her taser on anyone. Or the student who turned to her friend and loudly exclaimed about a guitar-playing presenter, “He’s hot!” It’s all over with until the fall when I start planning once again.

Career day can feel like a huge task, but it can be straightforward and fun and is one of my favorite times of the school year. The stress is always worth the joy of seeing both students and staff excited about the presentations—and learning about careers they may otherwise never have considered.

Jamie McHale is a school counselor in Rockwood, MO, and can be reached at mchalejamie@rockwood.k12.mo.us.

---

Not just another shop class

I came to Keene State thinking about engineering. But the SPDI program gave me an opportunity to work with 3D programs and computer controlled machines. I gave it a try and by the first class I was hooked. I got completely involved in my first two projects. The internships really make a difference and the opportunities are endless. It’s nuts.

–Henry Bendel, sophomore SPDI major

Check out our innovative programs at www.keene.edu/wisdom

---

Keene STATE COLLEGE

Wisdom to make a difference.

229 Main Street | Keene, New Hampshire 03435 | 800-KSC-1909 | www.keene.edu/wisdom
We've all seen them: the kids who would experience great success in college but have never even considered applying. Perhaps their parents aren't college educated and have convinced their children a college degree isn't necessary. Perhaps financial issues are involved and they don't think there's any way they could afford it so they don't even consider it. Or perhaps their self-esteem is low and they think they’d fail at college.

Helping these students realize that yes, they can attend college should be a school-wide effort, one the school counselor is uniquely positioned to lead. One of the best ways to accomplish this is by creating a college-going culture in your school.

The term “college-going culture” is ubiquitous in today’s school environment literature. What isn’t as common is a definition of exactly what this term means, why it’s important, and how schools can achieve it. Without this information, schools struggling to get students to perform at grade level are unlikely to discover how raising expectations can actually help, not hurt, their students’ performance.

School counselors can help transform their schools’ cultures in ways that will significantly improve student’s lives. How does a college-going culture help schools meet their goals? Simple. By emphasizing the many lifelong benefits of a college degree, schools can shift students’ focus from the short term to the long term. In doing so, schools help students see the value of their performance in middle and high school and why it’s in their best interest to do well and work hard.

Students who believe a college degree will increase their standard of living in life and see the connection between doing well in school and getting into college are much more likely to care about their performance on state and national tests. They’re also more likely to improve their attendance and grade-point averages. A college-bound student sees the value of staying in school, and is more interested in a more rigorous curriculum.

ASSESS YOUR CULTURE

To get an accurate picture of its existing culture, a school should evaluate itself both quantitatively and qualitatively.

A quantitative measurement of a school’s college-going culture should include an analysis of its performance in the following areas:

- College application rate
- College acceptance rate
- Percentage of students who take the SAT or ACT
- Average SAT or ACT score
- Number of students who take the PSAT/NMSQT or PLAN
- Number of college-level or AP classes offered
- Number of students who take AP classes
- Number of school improvement goals related to college
A qualitative assessment of a school’s college-going culture should involve surveying key stakeholders about their attitudes toward college. Topics covered should include:

- **Students**: plans to attend college, type of college they plan to attend, ways they are preparing for college academically, plans for financing college
- **Parents**: Whether or not they attended and/or graduated from college, their interest in encouraging their children to obtain a college degree, their knowledge of the preparation and application requirements
- **Faculty**: their beliefs that all students have the potential to earn a postsecondary degree, their agreement with the need for a college-going culture at school, their knowledge level about college admission requirements, their willingness to incorporate college advocacy messages into their classroom lessons

**TAKE A STAND**

Once you’ve determined your school’s existing college culture, you can help improve the culture using a five-step process.

First, a school should establish specific, measurable, and time-sensitive goals. In other words, it’s not enough to say, “Increase the number of students who take the SAT.” A more specific goal would be, “By the end of the 2013-2014 school year, increase the number of students who take the SAT by 25 percent.” The latter is a much more specific objective because it includes a deadline and is quantifiable.

Second, schools must establish procedures for tracking and measuring their progress toward goals. This step includes deciding who will be responsible for maintaining and updating this data. Many schools don’t realize until they attempt to measure their existing college culture that they have poor systems in place for measuring many key metrics. For example, it’s not uncommon for schools to have no way of knowing how many of their students apply to or get accepted to colleges and to not know who at the school is responsible for collecting this data.

One way to obtain this type of information from students is to simply ask them for it. Schools should con-
Many schools don’t realize until they attempt to measure their existing college culture that they have poor systems in place for measuring many key metrics.

- Starting or increasing the number of AP classes offered
- Establishing the curriculum required for admission to local four-year colleges as the curriculum required for high school graduation
- Offering free SAT and/or ACT prep classes
- Providing the PSAT free to all 10th-grade students
- Providing professional development in college counseling

Integrating college topics into the curriculum. For example, students in pre-algebra could be given the following ratio/proportion problem: “If two-thirds of the students at U of I are in the School of Engineering and U of I has 35,000 students, how many students are engineering majors?” English language arts students could be asked to write a college admission essay.

Implementing a college-awareness and planning curriculum such as the College Board’s CollegeEd program, which is a classroom-based curriculum for students in grades 7-12 that is aligned with ASCA’s National Standards for Student Competencies.

Partnering with national, federally funded programs promoting college readiness for low-income and first-generation college students. Two such programs are TRIO and Gain Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEARUP). Both programs serve students in grades 7-12.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
A college-preparation program for underperforming students in grades 4-12 www.avid.org

TRIO and GEAR UP
National, federally funded programs promoting college readiness for low-income and first-generation college students, grades 7-12. TRIO: http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html
GEAR UP: http://www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html

The College Board’s CollegeEd Program
A classroom-based college-awareness and planning curriculum for students in grades 7-12 www.collegeboard.com/collegeed

ACT
Provides a wealth of information and databases online for college searches, financial aid calculators and more. www.act.org/path/secondary/college.html
Implementing a college-preparation program such as Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). An elective for underperforming students, AVID promotes rigorous coursework and provides tutoring for students in grades 4-12.

The fourth step in creating a college-going culture is measuring the school’s progress and continually revising and improving its strategies. Using the methods outlined in earlier steps, schools should, on a regular basis (annually, at a minimum) monitor their progress toward their goals. A thorough review of a school’s progress should include answering the following questions:

- Which goals has the school met?
- Which goals has it not met?
- Which strategies and/or tactics were most effective in helping the school meet its goals? Why?
- Which strategies and/or tactics were least effective? Why?

After the school has answered these critical questions, it can begin to set new goals and establish more effective strategies for the following school year.

The fifth and final step is to communicate the school’s results. Unfortunately, many schools overlook this critical step. If a school previously communicated its college-going goals to faculty, students, and parents, those key stakeholders will be expecting to hear from the school on the status of these goals. Schools shouldn’t disappoint them by failing to keep them updated or, worse, send the message that the school no longer considers having a college-going culture a high priority. Instead, the school should take every opportunity to report on its progress, even if it didn’t meet all goals. An honest and open report is more likely to result in a more successful year next year.

Creating a college-going culture in a school is not easy, but its rewards are worth the effort. Schools having difficulty meeting goals such as improving standardized test scores and decreasing drop-out rates have found that creating a college-going culture can help. Many schools are also finding that creating a college-going culture can help reduce the achievement gap between rich and poor students. School counselors can, and should, play a key role in establishing such a culture. As advocates for students, they are often in the best position to serve as a change agent in school.

Kris Harvey was the executive director of the Blossom Project, a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing the number of first-generation college students, and associate director for the College Board. This article is a summary of the free College Board publication “CollegeEd® Creating a College-Going Culture.”

---

American School®
Offering the Best Value in Accredited High School Education

If you’re wondering how to help your students recover credits economically, consider the American School. With our low tuition and high academic quality, we offer the best value you can find in an accredited, distance education credit recovery program.

You can enroll your students any time of the year, and they can study when and where they want at their own pace. You’ll like our wide variety of subjects, which fit the needs of hundreds of counselors around the country.

Our curriculum consists of more than 70 different top-notch distance education courses including some offered online.

Having accreditation by the North Central Association-Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA-CASI/AdvancED) and having recognition as a private high school by the Illinois State Board of Education, assures that students are receiving courses of the highest academic quality.

Our caring instructors specialize in distance education and independent study students, enriching their education with personalized comments on exams.

Best yet, our low tuition includes top-notch textbooks, and there are no hidden or extra fees.

We look forward to seeing you at the ASCA Conference June 30 through July 2, 2013 in Philadelphia.

For more information, visit our website: www.americanschool.org
or call 1-708-418-2850

American School®
Offering the Best Value in Accredited High School Education
Why does college cost so much?” asked Anthony, a rising senior. He sat in my office inquiring about the steps to begin searching for the perfect college. His task became even more cumbersome as he wondered how he would pay for college. How can you, as a school counselor, help students like Anthony find the money needed to pay for college? The answers to five fundamental questions will aid you in helping students find and apply for the financial aid they need.

- What is financial aid?
- Which students should learn about financial aid?
- How should you explain financial aid to stakeholders?
- When/how/where should students begin the process?
- Why should you assume the role of informing students about financial aid?

**What is financial aid?** Financial aid is assistance given to students and parents to help pay for college or vocational training. Although its generic terminology encompasses many forms, there are two basic types of financial aid: gifted and self-help. Gifted aid comes in the form of grants and scholarships. This type of financial aid does not have to be paid back but may have stipulations regarding qualifying and maintaining eligibility. Self-help comes in the form of loans and work study. Students may take loans from banks, educational institutions, and credit unions.

**Which students should learn about financial aid?** Learning about financial aid isn’t just for high school seniors. College is an expensive commodity, and you can help students from elementary school on by explaining about the expenses of college during their career/college preparation lessons or during parent information sessions. This proactive approach for students will explain the importance of earning good grades, being civically involved, and participating in extracurricular activities that could qualify them for scholarships. Educating parents early about financial aid is critically important because it will inform them about the realistic expenses associated with earning a degree or certificate and encourage them to set up a college savings plan early in their child’s educational life.

**How should you explain financial aid to stakeholders?** It’s important to collaborate and form relationships with all stakeholders, including students, parents, faculty, administrators, and community representatives, to educate them about the expenses of college/vocational training and the need for financial resources, as well as to tap into any resources they have. Begin your collaboration with local colleges and universities and include the people who work in the financial aid office so you have a financial aid expert who can provide answers to questions and assistance in completing financial aid forms.

Develop a financial aid awareness workshop for students and parents, and find a financial aid expert to lead the workshop. This gives students and parents a venue to ask questions, express fears regarding confidential information, and receive instructions on how to begin the process. This will also provide a platform for the financial aid expert to explain the college award letter, which students, parents, and even school counselors often misunderstand. Hold the workshop at school during hours convenient for all stakeholders. Provide resource materials for completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), applying for student loans, securing institutional funds, and searching for scholarships.

**When/where/how should students begin the financial aid process?** The financial aid process should begin as early as elementary school. When developing your college and career days,
include an age-appropriate explanation of how to pay for college. Share a comparison chart of average costs for attaining a college degree or vocational certificate from a public vs. private school, four-year vs. two-year school, and degree vs. certificate.

Seventh grade is an appropriate time to begin more detailed conversations about financial aid. All high school seniors should also complete the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. This will produce a Student Aid Report (SAR), which will determine the amount of federal, state, and some institutional financial awards. (See “Don’t Fear the FAFSA, page 25.) Seniors and parents should apply for a PIN during the early part of the school year, and you should make sure they realize deadlines are a crucial part of the financial aid process. Students may begin completing the FAFSA on January 1 of their senior year. March 1 is a standard priority date for submitting the SAR to colleges/vocational institutions. Be aware that some scholarships require students to complete and submit a SAR to the awarding agency even if the student is ineligible for federal or state financial assistance.

Why should you assume the role of informing stakeholders about financial aid? As a school counselor, it’s your job to help all students achieve and ensure that every student has access to an equitable education. This access involves being cognizant of avenues to secure post-secondary education while avoiding the financial roadblocks that would prevent it. The more you know about financial aid, the more you can help your students achieve the post-secondary education they need and want.

THE CHICAGO WAY

According to “From High School to the Future: Potholes on the Road to College,” a report from the University of Chicago’s Consortium, “while the rising costs of four-year colleges have made it increasingly difficult to deliver on the dream of a college education for all low-income students, the research also suggests that high schools and universities can take concrete steps to improve college enrollment and match more students to the right colleges.” For this reason, the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) system created the Department of Col-
School Counselors Say Great Things About Salisbury University

“There is a focus on student success at Salisbury. I also see an emphasis on experiential learning and real-world applications.”

Leslie Kent • Fairfax County, VA

“SU has unique offerings like conflict resolution and respiratory therapy, in addition to a strong education program. SU’s also a great size.”

Jennifer Nuechterlein • Flemington, NJ

“Salisbury provides a warm, caring atmosphere in a beautiful setting – with strong academics.”

Bettina G. Heiman • Wilmington, DE

Salisbury University consistently ranks among the nation’s best for quality and value in such publications as The Princeton Review and U.S. News & World Report. To learn more, visit www.salisbury.edu/admissions or call 410-543-6161.

Application Deadlines
- Early Action: December 1
- Regular Admission: January 15

Salisbury University
www.salisbury.edu

A Maryland University of National Distinction
DON’T FEAR THE FAFSA

BY SUSAN McCrackin

AFSA...five letters that change lives for millions of students each year across the United States. Government grants make up 74 percent of the $185 billion financial aid pool, so it’s no surprise that the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a source of stress for students and their families.

It doesn’t have to be that way. The College Board offers eight steps to help educators help students work through FAFSA.

1 GATHER DOCUMENTS FIRST
Here’s a list of documents students should have in hand before they begin to fill out FAFSA. Also steer students to get a U.S. Department of Education personal identification number (PIN). Access the PIN application

2 THINK ABOUT TAXES
Parents’ taxes are an important component of the FAFSA process. Getting taxes done by February 1 may be unrealistic, so the previous year’s taxes and this year’s paystubs can help create estimates. After February 3, the IRS Data Retrieval Tool becomes available, allowing students and parents to access the IRS tax return information needed to complete the FAFSA and transfer the data directly into their FAFSA from the IRS website. Plus, remind families that they can complete taxes without actually filing. So if they owe money, they don’t have to immediately cut a check to Uncle Sam.

3 FIND QUIET TIME
Although many of us work with FAFSA every year, families don’t have that familiarity. Encourage them to break down this large application into smaller pieces.

4 STAY STUDENT FOCUSED
Parents often forget that the student always provides information. Parents are required to provide their information if the student is a dependent.

When parents see a question that refers to “I,” remember that “I” is the student. “You” is also the student. When questions address parents, the questions refer to “your parents.” That is where parental information goes.

5 AVOID PARENT TRAPS
When you see “parents,” FAFSA is referring to the student’s biological or adoptive parents. When the parents are married, then the student and both parents complete the FAFSA.

If the parents are not together, things can get confusing. View details about parent information on FAFSA.

6 KEEP TRACK OF DEADLINES
Every college has a different set of deadlines based on priority, merit, early decisions etc. BigFuture by the College Board helps families sort through these deadlines with detailed college profiles and a free, customized action plan. And just as a students should raise their hands with a question in class, encourage them to call a college with specific questions.

7 CSS/FINANCIAL AID PROFILE*
FAFSA opens the doors to federal aid. But almost $50 billion in non-federal aid is also available from colleges, states, and private institutions. Some colleges and programs use the College Board’s CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE to help award these monies.

CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE is an online application that collects information used by almost 400 colleges and scholarship programs to award financial aid outside sources from the federal government. Families must complete the application and the College Board sends it to the colleges and scholarship programs they have chosen.

Here’s a list of colleges that use CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE and the online application. One CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE report costs $25. Additional reports are $16 each. Fee waivers are available for low-income families.

8 A HELPING HAND
To provide support, a free FAFSA webinar from the College Board walks students, section by section, through an actual FAFSA application. Families can access the free webinar any time, and the link also provides several other resources for parents. 

Susan McCrackin is senior director of Financial Aid Methodology at the College Board, www.collegeboard.org
Winning a sports scholarship is a dream of many high school athletes. But the truth is that the percentage of high school players who go on to be National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) student-athletes in popular sports is very low—from about 3% for men’s and women’s basketball to about 10% for men’s ice hockey.

For those students who wish to pursue Division I college play in spite of these numbers, the NCAA has very specific eligibility requirements regarding course selection throughout high school and minimum GPA. To help student athletes begin and complete preparation for NCAA eligibility, school counselors can arm themselves with the facts about NCAA rules and take advantage of NCAA’s extensive online resources for students, families, and educators.

Download the NCAA presentation for high school counselors, which details the eligibility process and the role of the high school.

Access the Eligibility Center, NCAA’s portal site for comprehensive information.

For students entering college in August 2016, NCAA’s initial-eligibility standards are changing. These students will need to meet new academic rules in order to receive athletics aid (scholarship), practice, or compete for a Division I college or university during their first year.

Students fall into one of three categories:

1. **Full Qualifier:** A college-bound student-athlete who may receive athletics aid (scholarship), practice and compete in the first year of enrollment at the Division I college or university.

2. **Academic Redshirt:** A college-bound student-athlete who may receive athletics aid (scholarship), practice, and compete in the first year of enrollment.

3. **Nonqualifier:** A college-bound student-athlete who cannot receive athletics aid (scholarship), cannot practice, and cannot compete in the first year of enrollment.

Here is an overview of the new requirements for qualification. View comprehensive details.

**Full Qualifier must:**
1. Complete 16 core courses, 10 of which must be completed before the seventh semester (senior year) of high school. Seven of the 10 core courses must be English, math or science.
2. Have a minimum core-course GPA of 2.300.
3. Meet the competition sliding scale requirement of GPA and ACT/SAT score (this is a new scale with increased GPA/test score requirements).
4. Graduate from high school.

**Academic Redshirt must:**
1. Complete 16 core courses (same distribution as in the past).
2. Have a minimum core-course GPA of 2.000.
3. Meet the academic redshirt sliding scale requirement of GPA and ACT/SAT score.
4. Graduate from high school.

**Nonqualifier** is a college-bound student-athlete who fails to meet the standards for a qualifier or for an academic redshirt.

Katy O’Grady is a freelance writer from Fairfax, VA, whose son has participated in high school soccer and track. She is also the editor of the ASCA state newsletters; contact her at katy@docreative.com.