The College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy

Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling

Equity • Leadership • Transformation

CollegeBoard
Advocacy & Policy Center

The Need for College Readiness Counseling

In today's global, knowledge-based economy, a college education is the gateway to social mobility and better lifelong opportunities. The vast majority of America's high school students (86 percent) expect to attend college, but many lack the support and guidance they need to prepare for enrollment and success in college. (U.S. Department of Education, NCES 2010-170). Furthermore, college-going rates differ disproportionately by family income, parent education level and other demographic characteristics.

Too few students are graduating from high school ready for college. This education deficit is an urgent concern for the future of the nation as a whole and for our most underserved communities.

The Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling

The Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling chart a comprehensive, systemic approach for school counselors' use to inspire all students to, and prepare them for, college success and opportunity — especially students from underrepresented populations. The eight components build aspirations and social capital, offer enriching activities, foster rigorous academic preparation, encourage early college planning, and guide students and families through the college admission and financial aid processes. By implementing these eight components, school counselors provide information, tools and perspective to parents, students, schools and their communities that build college and career readiness for all students.

"School counselors must be leaders and advocates for equity in implementing college and career readiness for all students. 'Owning the turf' is fundamental to their professional efficacy and commitment to the students they serve."

— Patricia Martin
Assistant Vice President, the College Board

The College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy

Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling

The Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling provide a systemic approach for school counselors to implement, across grades K–12 — elementary through high school and beyond, to ensure equity both in process and results.

1. College Aspirations

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.

2. Academic Planning for College and Career Readiness

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

3. Enrichment and Extracurricular Engagement

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.

4. College and Career Exploration and Selection Processes

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.

5. College and Career Assessments

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

6. College Affordability Planning

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.

7. College and Career Admission Processes

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

8. Transition from High School Graduation to College Enrollment

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

The Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling should be applied in elementary, middle and high schools.

Component	Elementary	Middle	High
College Aspirations	•	•	•
Academic Planning for College and Career Readiness	•	•	•
Enrichment and Extracurricular Engagement	•	•	•
College and Career Exploration and Selection Processes	•	•	•
College and Career Assessments	•	•	•
College Affordability Planning	•	•	•
College and Career Admission Processes			•
Transition from High School to College Enrollment			•

The Transformative Process, Using the Eight Components

To implement each component successfully, school counselors must: use strategies and interventions that take into account the context of the diverse populations in the school and community; encourage multilevel interventions involving students, parents, schools and community; and use data effectively.

- **Context:** Strategies and interventions for each component should be customized to the setting, community and demographics of the school.
- **Cultural Competence:** The components should be applied in ways that are culturally sensitive, with knowledge of how programs, policies and practices impact the perspectives and experiences of diverse student groups.
- **Multilevel Interventions:** College counseling programs and services should be applied at the student, school, family and community levels.
- **Data:** Use data to identify inequities, develop measurable goals, inform practice and demonstrate accountability within the eight components.

"I ask every American to commit to at least one year or more of higher education or career training. … every American will need to get more than a high school diploma. And dropping out of high school is no longer an option. It's not just quitting on yourself, it's quitting on your country."

— President Barack Obama,
State of the Union, Feb. 24, 2009

School Counselor Leadership

School counselors are uniquely positioned as the school professionals best able to guide all students toward college readiness. School counselors interact with teachers, administrators, students and their families each day, marshaling forces from across the school, district and community. School counselors are leaders and advocates who can profoundly influence students' academic achievement, aspirations, decisions and future plans. They are school-based professionals who connect students to resources and information about preparing for and applying to college.

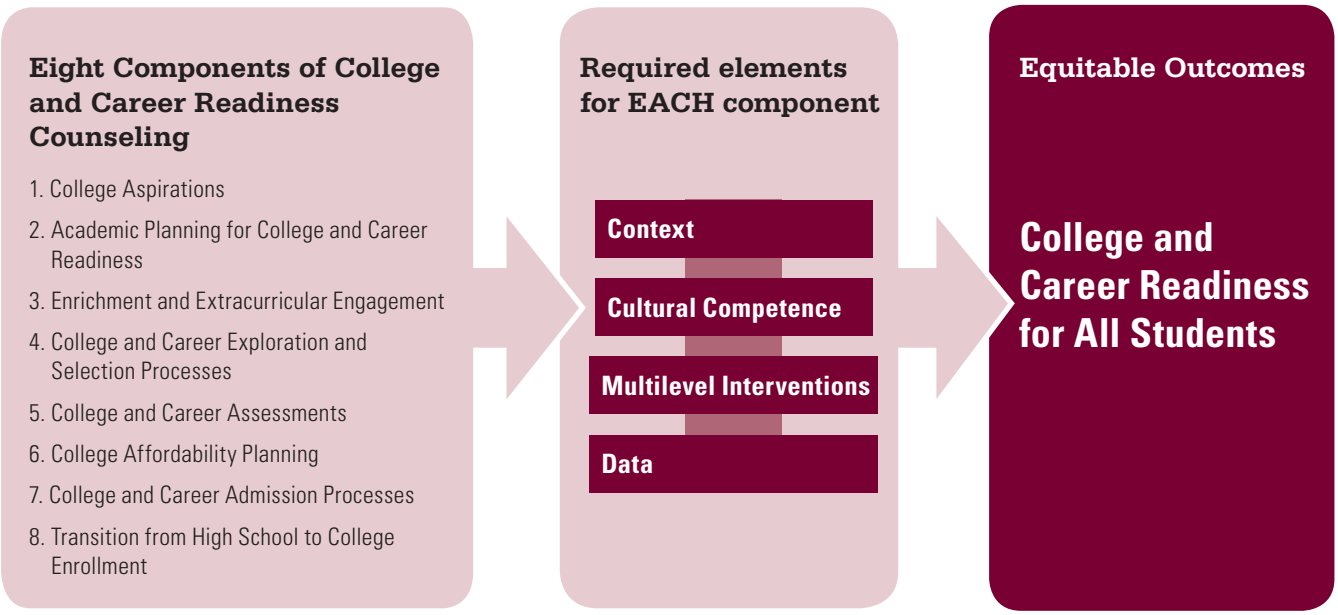
Equitable Outcomes for All Students

School counselors can be strong advocates for their students, using their skills to drive positive change in schools and conveying the expectation that all students, regardless of their backgrounds and economic status, can succeed in college. The Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling should be applied through the lens of equity. To be most effective, school counselors must use data to identify gaps and inequities in achievement, preparation and access, and measure progress toward equitable student outcomes.

The eight components are transformative when they are applied to all students and purposefully focused to change the school culture. When implementing each of the components, services can be directed to ensure that each student receives the support they need to be college ready and career ready.

School counselor practice is transformative when the eight components are delivered with equity, informed by data, applied systemically across grades K–12, and are culturally sensitive at all levels of intervention. This practice represents inclusion by design, with the goal of equitable outcomes for all students in college and career readiness.

Transformative Delivery of the Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling



A Call to Action: Own the Turf

Now is the time for school counselors to become leaders and advocates for equity in education for all students. Taking ownership for the Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling is leadership in action.

Local, state and federal leaders have sounded the call for raising student achievement across the continuum. Assessments and monitoring systems have been put in place to ensure that schools are moving in this direction, while educators are being held accountable for showing academic progress for all students.

If school counselors truly believe in the worth of all children and see themselves as advocates for all students, they must step away from being "maintainers of the status quo" and become "dream-makers and pathfinders" for all students navigating their way through K–12 schools today. They must have the courage to stand up for students who may be unable to stand up for themselves in systems that have produced disparate academic results and thus, few to no postsecondary options for many students in the past.

Implementation of the Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling with equity and fidelity and across grade levels will allow K–12 school counselors to own a critical piece of education reform.

It is time to "own the turf." If not you, who? Who in the school is responsible for helping students nurture their dreams for bright futures and for helping them create successful pathways to those dreams? Never before in the history of our nation have we had a greater need to prepare every student for the greatest range of opportunities after leaving high school. All of our students need school counselors to champion their cause. Each one of them is entitled to a rigorous education that prepares them to successfully attain their college and career goals.

Patricia Martin

Patricia Martin
Assistant Vice President
National Office for School Counselor Advocacy
The College Board

The College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA)

The College Board's National Office for School Counselor Advocacy 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 readiness for all students. For more information, visit www.collegeboard.com/nosca.

NOSCA Vision: Every student engages in an educational experience that results in exiting high school with the educational preparation and social capital necessary for college success and full participation in a democratic and global society.

NOSCA Mission: Endorse and institutionalize systemic school counseling practice that advocates for equitable educational access and rigorous academic preparation, achievement and attainment necessary for college and career readiness for all students.

College Board Advocacy & Policy Center

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. For more information, visit advocacy.collegeboard.org.

The College Board

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board is composed of more than 5,700 schools, colleges, universities and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves seven million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,800 colleges through major programs and services in college readiness, college admission, guidance, assessment, financial aid and enrollment. Among its widely recognized programs are the SAT®, the PSAT/NMSQT®, the Advanced Placement Program® (AP®), SpringBoard® and ACCUPLACER®. The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities and concerns.
For further information, visit www.collegeboard.com.

© 2010 The College Board. College Board, ACCUPLACER, Advanced Placement Program, AP, SAT, SpringBoard and the acorn logo are registered trademarks of the College Board. PSAT/NMSQT is a registered trademark of the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation. All other products and services may be trademarks of their respective owners. Visit the College Board on the Web: www.collegeboard.com.

ADVOCACY

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.

advocacy.collegeboard.org

CollegeBoard
Advocacy & Policy Center

100343487

10b-2217