Nurturing a College-Going Culture that Ignites Engagement, Involvement, and Buy-In

Monday, February 24, 2020
9:15 am – 12 noon
EXCEL. Enhance Skills. Promote Continual Improvement.

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About This Session

When you walk through the doors of your middle and high schools, do you immediately get the sense that you have entered a school that is deliberately developing and sustaining a college-going culture?

Beyond college banners and bulletin boards, is there a clear sign that the students, teachers, counselors, and administrators are collectively embracing and executing the mission that supports college and career readiness for all students?

In this workshop, as an individual or a team, to participate in a highly interactive working-group style session, where we plan to dissect and reconstruct the college-going culture of a school community.

We will review, discuss, and analyze the research-based non-negotiables deemed essential for ensuring that all students experience a school environment that inspires, nurtures, and supports their college and career readiness goals and aspirations.
Our Goals

• Define a shared understanding of a college-going culture within the GEAR UP community.

• Establish a framework for understanding how to affect culture.

• Assess our progress towards common GEAR UP strategies.

• Complete an action-planning process for the academic school year and summer programs
Our GEAR UP Goals

• Provide comprehensive mentoring, outreach, and support services;

• Provide information regarding financial aid for postsecondary education for participating students;

• Encourage student enrollment in rigorous or challenging curricula and coursework, in order to reduce the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level; and

• Improve the number of participating students who obtain a secondary school diploma and complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education

Source: https://www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/applicant.html
A student who is ready for college and career can qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses leading to baccalaureate or certificate, or career pathway oriented training programs without the need for remedial or developmental coursework.

Source: Educational Policy Improvement Center. (2012). A complete definition of college and career readiness. Eugene, OR: Conley, D.
What is a college-going culture?
College-Going Culture refers to the environment, attitudes, and practices in schools and communities that encourage students and families to obtain the information, tools, and perspective to enhance access to and success in postsecondary education.

Source: Center for Educational Partnerships (University of California, Berkeley)
When a school establishes a college-going culture, it sends frequent messages and information about college-going through the efforts of many staff and at many times, so that college-going information is in the drinking water, so to speak.

– Patricia McDonough

Why does a college-going culture matter?
Culture can impact: student aspirations, motivation, healthy peer networks, engagement, belonging, and of course, learning.
1. Visual Message
2. Physical Presence
3. Verbal Message
4. Students' Notes
5. What Students Think
6. What Students Say & Do
Why is a college-going culture so tough to nurture?
Exercise A: Self-Assessment

We’ll take 5-10 minutes to complete the self-assessment.

Review each of the activities and on a scale of 1-4, rate how well you are addressing the activity.

- 4: I do this well and as a matter of routine
- 3: I am doing this, but I can improve
- 2: I have plans to do this
- 1: I haven’t started this

### Activity | Self-Assessment Score
--- | ---
1. I know what the GEAR UP acronym stands for and the GEAR UP mission and vision statements. |  
2. I am familiar with the data and metrics that my GEAR UP program uses to measure the success of our program. |  
3. I work collaboratively with team members and community partners to advance the GEAR UP agenda. |  
4. I attend in-person and online training opportunities to enhance my college and career readiness expertise. |  
5. I am aware of college and career readiness campaigns aimed at inspiring and empowering students and families. |  
6. I utilize technology resources to access free online tools and college readiness platforms from trusted sources. |  
7. I am familiar with the key events, opportunities, and deadlines implemented by my GEAR UP program. |  
8. I ensure that GEAR UP and college readiness are addressed regularly at group, team, staff, faculty, and department meetings. |  
9. I celebrate the progress towards our GEAR UP program goals and student achievements. |  

**Self-Assessment - Total Score =**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MILESTONES</th>
<th>ENTRANCE</th>
<th>GEAR UP</th>
<th>C &amp; C Readiness</th>
<th>WILD CARD</th>
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Context Matters

• There are critical external factors that interact with school culture
• Every context is remarkably dynamic and often stubborn
• Each context has unique opportunities and challenges that permeate school culture
Your Students Are Active Contributors

- Every student brings unique traits that interact with school culture
- These traits were developed over a long period of time
- These traits are not immovable, but require intentionality to influence

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Beliefs, Mindset, &amp; Attitudes About Learning</th>
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<td>Goals &amp; Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>Self-Regulation &amp; Perseverance</td>
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Not everything that a school contributes to culture is visible
Why is College-Going Culture an Important Focus of GEAR UP?

• The resources GEAR UP brings can be deployed to strengthen your culture.

• The GEAR UP strategy thrives when it is aligned to your school-wide culture, not operating in isolation.

• While the GEAR UP funds are temporary, culture is lasting.
So, what have we learned from GEAR UP?
The NCCEP College-Going Culture Framework

Family, Community & Systems Context

School Strategies

- **EXPECT**
  - What We Work Towards

- **SIGNAL**
  - What We Say and Show

- **IMMERSE**
  - What Experiences We Create

- **GUIDE**
  - What Support We Provide

Student Traits

Source: National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP), 2018
Student Traits:

The Developmental Process for College Access & Success

• Developmental stages matters and should **inform** how adults approach their work with youth.

• Young people can and should be **active** in the college process.

• College going is an **interconnected process** that is shaped by and in turn shapes young people’s social, emotional and cognitive development, as well as their social contexts, including families, peers, schools, and communities.

Exercise B: Program-Assessment

We’ll take 5-10 minutes for each of the four categories to complete the appropriate portion of the self-assessment.

Review each of the activities and on a scale of 1-4, rate how well your school is addressing the activity.

4: We do this well and as a matter of routine
3: We are doing this, but we can improve
2: We have plans to do this
1: We haven't started this
Expect: What We Work Towards

Vision & Mission Statements
Definition of “college”
Metrics & Annual goals
Continual Improvement Process
Professional Development, Continuing Education, Training Experiences
Alignment between Schools
Collaborative Partnerships
Systemic and Systematic Interventions
We want to hear from you!
Signal: What We Say We Show

Communicate Regularly

Slogans/Tag-lines

Materials

Students = Decorating & Refreshing

Events, Opportunities, and Key Deadlines

High Visibility Campaigns

Progress

Showcase School Alumni Success

School-based Events, Community Events, Convenings

Social Media Engagement
We want to hear from you!
Immerse: What Experiences We Create

- Resource Center
- Technology Resources
- Faculty & Staff Meetings
- Student Engagement Experiences
- College Visits
- Career Industry Tours, Excursions & Trips
- School Alumni
- College & Career Fairs
- College & Career Assessments
- Students as Leaders & Advisors
We want to hear from you!
Guide: What Support We Provide

- CCR Advisement, Counseling & Mentorship
- Guides, Planning Tools, & Grade-level Calendars
- Classroom Instruction Assignments
- Advisory Seminars/Courses
- Academically Rigorous Courses
- Academic & Social Supports
- Remediation & Credit Recovery
- Transition & Summer Bridge Programs
- ACT/SAT, Honors, IB, & Advanced Placement
- College Admission & Scholarship Workshops
We want to hear from you!
It’s time for Action Planning!

Directions:

Using your lowest quadrant score you identified in the last poll, connect with a colleague(s) or team member(s) to start your Action Planning.

Feel free to work in teams by GEAR UP program, role/title, or select the area you have the most need!

Let’s get started!
The NCCEP College-Going Culture Framework

- **School Strategies**
  - **EXPECT**
    - What We Work Towards
  - **SIGNAL**
    - What We Say and Show
  - **IMMERSE**
    - What Experiences We Create
  - **GUIDE**
    - What Support We Provide

**Family, Community & Systems Context**

**Student Traits**

*Source: National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP), 2018*
Exercise C: Lightweight Action Planning

With your colleagues, review your self and program assessments and identify the four activities that you consider to be a high priority for the academic year.

Rank order them in terms of importance.

Working as a team, begin to complete the action planning document:

- Define broad goals
- Identify your audiences
- Assess your capacity
- Define activities/action steps
- Agree on milestones and timeline

Please plan to share out with the full group! We look forward to you sharing your ideas, insight and inspiration!
We want to hear from you!
What were the big ideas you heard?

Anything inspire you?

What new opportunities did you identify?

What did you learn that could help improve your efforts?
Questions and Answers
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