

Path to College Event Planning Handbook

Middle School Edition



Presented by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission,

College Access and Success Division

Welcome to Path to College Events!

Dear Path to College Event Coordinators,

On behalf of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), thank you for hosting Tennessee Path to College Events at your school. You play a critical role in helping your students build their college and career aspirations, and providing them with the knowledge and tools to turn their dreams into reality.

We know that in middle school, there are unique opportunities for students to interact with age appropriate content about college, career, and financial aid. This year, we are excited to share with you new, updated resources for our entire suite of Path to College events: College Application and Exploration Week, TN FAFSA Frenzy, College and Career Planning, and College Signing Day.

This guide should be a starting point for inspiration and activities that you can bring to life throughout the year. In addition to implementation, we also encourage you to involve your local community through volunteer engagement and outreach to the media as a way to foster a college-going culture in and outside of your school.

Please contact Suzette Telli, suzette.telli@tn.gov or 615.741.3055, or Kevin Edwards, kevin.edwards@tn.gov or 615.741.1318 if you have any questions or concerns about planning and implementing these events at your school. We will keep you updated regarding any changes or additional information you may find useful.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in these important events. Your participation will encourage Tennessee students and their families to make college a part of their future.

Sincerely,



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A Special Note to School Counselors

Dear Path to College Event Coordinators,

On behalf of the Tennessee Department of Education, thank you for your dedication to fostering a college-going culture in your school and for your participation in the Tennessee Higher Education Commission's Path to College Events. Path to College events are an exceptional resource for students and families and align with our vision and intention that we will set all students on a path to success after high school graduation.

The Department of Education's Best for All strategic plan has three pillars: Academics, Educators, and Whole Child. If we are successful, then Tennessee will increase the number of students who, two years after high-school graduation, are meeting key attainment milestones that we know help build successful in life, including:

- Persistence in a postsecondary education;
- Earning a postsecondary degree or certificate;
- Working in a job that provides a high quality of life for themselves and their families, and/or;
- Enrolling in the military.

The leadership and mentoring that school counselors provide to students, families and their colleagues is indispensable for supporting academic success and student well-being. As we confront extraordinary challenges this school year, ensuring students can continue developing and pursuing postsecondary pathways is more important than ever. Thank you for supporting the Path to College events and for all you do to positively impact the lives of students.

With gratitude for your work and commitment to students,

Dr. Jean Luna
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Tennessee Counselor Standards and Path to College

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
SCHOOL COUNSELING MODEL & STANDARDS POLICY	5.103

Academic Standards

Standards guiding school counseling programs to implement strategies and activities to support and maximize each student's ability to learn.

Academic Standards	CAW	FAFSA Frenzy	CPN	CSD
Attitudes:				
AA1. Improve academic self-concept				✓
AA2. Display positive attitude toward work and learning				
AA3. Develop high expectations for achievement	✓	✓	✓	✓
AA4. Apply self-motivation and self-direction to learning	✓	✓	✓	
AA5. Model a sense of belonging in the school environment				✓
AA6. Build aspirations for postsecondary education and training	✓	✓	✓	✓
Knowledge:				
AK1. Specify high school graduation requirements, including pathway of study				
AK2. Describe the benefits of education for career, life management, and personal and professional satisfaction	✓		✓	
AK3. Articulate belief that postsecondary education and life-long learning are necessary for long-term career success	✓		✓	
Skills:				
AS1. Use test-taking, time management, organizational, and study skills to improve academic achievement				
AS2. Work independently	✓	✓		
AS3. Develop and practice effective technology skills	✓	✓		
AS4. Utilize resources to overcome barriers to learning	✓	✓	✓	
AS5. Exhibit creativity				
AS6. Set, evaluate progress toward, and achieve long and short term goals	✓	✓	✓	✓
AS7. Demonstrate critical thinking and decision making skills to make informed decisions	✓	✓	✓	
Experiences:				
AE1. Experience academic growth and success				✓
AE2. Engage and persevere in challenging coursework				
AE3. Create a secondary educational plan that includes transition to postsecondary education and the workforce	✓		✓	
AE4. Participate in enrichment or extracurricular activities				

For an explanation of how hosting a Path to College event helps meet the indicated standards, please see notes in the last page of this document

Tennessee Counselor Standards and Path to College

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
SCHOOL COUNSELING MODEL & STANDARDS POLICY	5.103

Social and Emotional Development Standards

Standards guiding school counseling programs to help students manage emotions and learn and apply interpersonal skills.

Social and Emotional Standards	CAW	FAFSA Frenzy	CPN	CSD
Attitudes:				
SA1. Develop positive attitudes toward self as a unique and worthy person				✓
SA2. Develop positive attitudes toward others as unique and worthy people				✓
SA3. Respect diversity in culture, perspectives, values, and experiences				
SA4. Recognize each person is a part of a diverse local and global community				
Knowledge:				
SK1. Develop and articulate personal values, attitudes, and beliefs				
SK2. Compare and contrast healthy and unhealthy behaviors				
SK3. Distinguish appropriate behaviors for a variety of settings and situations				
Skills:				
SS1. Make ethical decisions and practice social responsibility				
SS2. Advocate for self in multiple settings using assertiveness skills	✓	✓		
SS3. Demonstrate empathy toward others				
SS4. Effectively collaborate with others, cooperate with diverse perspectives, and communicate effectively in a variety of situations	✓	✓		
SS5. Exercise personal safety skills, including refusal skills				
SS6. Assume responsibility for choices and consequences				
SS7. Positively manage behavior and choices by applying self-discipline and self-control				
SS8. Persevere through challenges to achieve goals	✓	✓		✓
SS9. Select and utilize appropriate coping skills in the face of a specific challenge	✓	✓		
SS10. Appropriately utilize social media to enhance learning, develop positive relationships, communicate, and engage in age appropriate entertainment	✓			✓
Experiences:				
SE1. Participate in service projects, service learning, and/or philanthropic activities				
SE2. Work effectively in diverse groups by developing and employing leadership and teamwork skills				
SE3. Explore cultural, ethnic, philosophical, or demographical differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment				
SE4. Create and sustain positive, supportive, and appropriate relationships with peers and adults that support success	✓	✓	✓	✓

For an explanation of how hosting a Path to College event helps meet the indicated standards, please see notes in the last page of this document

Tennessee Counselor Standards and Path to College

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
SCHOOL COUNSELING MODEL & STANDARDS POLICY	5.103

College and Career Readiness Standards

Standards guiding school counseling programs to help students understand the connection between school and work as well as plan for and make a successful transition to postsecondary education, training, or the workforce.

College and Career Readiness Standards	CAW	FAFSA Frenzy	CPN	CSD
Attitudes:				
CA1. Develop and articulate postsecondary education and career aspirations	✓	✓	✓	✓
CA2. Articulate that career development occurs across the lifespan				
CA3. Reflect on progress toward goals, display a growth mindset, and accept feedback to improve knowledge, skills, and abilities in order to meet goals				✓
Knowledge:				
CK1. Research and appraise characteristics of a variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations	✓		✓	
CK2. Articulate how personal abilities, skills, interests, and motivations influence values, choices, and plans				
CK3. Articulate the importance of responsibility, dependability, punctuality, integrity, and effort in the workplace				
CK4. Research and summarize the education and training needed to achieve specified career goals	✓		✓	
CK5. Examine and utilize resources for college affordability planning		✓	✓	
CK6. Research, select, and participate in postsecondary admissions and scholarship applications processes	✓	✓	✓	
Skills:				
CS1. Develop skills to locate, evaluate and interpret career information	✓		✓	
CS2. Balance school, home, and community activities effectively				
CS3. Utilize internal and external resources to manage transitions and adapt to changing situations/responsibilities				
CS4. Communicate effectively using oral, written, and listening communications skills	✓	✓	✓	
CS5. Set clear, ambitious, and obtainable postsecondary goals	✓	✓	✓	✓
Experiences:				
CE1. Participate in career and postsecondary institution exploration activities	✓			
CE2. Assess and modify educational plan to support changes in educational and career goals				
CE3. Pursue and develop competency in areas of career interest				
CE4. Participate in college and career assessments	✓			
CE5. Complete the FAFSA		✓		
CE6. Submit at least one postsecondary education, training, or workplace application; participate in TNPromise program, if applicable	✓			

For an explanation of how hosting a Path to College event helps meet the indicated standards, please see notes in the last page of this document

Tennessee Counselor Standards and Path to College

Standard	Notes
AA1	College Signing Day provides the school community with an opportunity to celebrate students' academic achievement and postsecondary plans.
AA3 & AA6	Research from Oreopoulos and Ford (2016) suggests that assisting students with applications and the financial aid process could help build postsecondary interest and awareness. <i>Oreopoulos, P., & Ford, R. (2016). Keeping college options open: A field experiment to help all high school seniors throughout the college application process. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.</i>
AA4	By attending Path to College Events, students demonstrate initiative and self-motivation.
AA5	Celebrating students and their various postsecondary plans can help develop a culture of success and college-going.
AK2 & AK3	During College Application Week and College Planning Night, students can participate in activities that help them consider their personal and career goals and explore educational paths to achieving those goals.
AS2	Completing the FAFSA and college applications will require working independently in addition to receiving support from staff and volunteers.
AS3	Most students complete the FAFSA and college applications electronically. Doing so requires that students demonstrate basic technology skills.
AS4	Notoriously challenging to complete, the FAFSA can be a barrier to accessing postsecondary education. Likewise, completing college applications and supplying the necessary supplemental documents can pose a challenge. By participating in events and planning for college, students will be connected with resources to successfully overcome these barriers.
AS6	All events mark students' completion of milestones on the path to achieving postsecondary goals.
AS7	Planning for college and completing the FAFSA and college applications will require critical thinking skills.
AE1	College Signing Day is a celebration of academic success.
AE3	During College Application Week and College Planning Night, students can plan for completing secondary school and their postsecondary goals.
SA1 & SA2	College Signing Day allows students to celebrate the success and their success of their peers.
SS2	Choosing to participate in the FAFSA Frenzy and/or College Application Week demonstrates students' ability to advocate for themselves and seek out resources when they need assistance.
SS4	Filing the FAFSA and completing college applications will require students to collaborate with their parents or guardians. Students will also need to effectively communicate relevant information to staff and volunteers to receive assistance applying and filing.
SS8 & SS9	Many students fear that the college application process is going to be challenging and complicated. By attending a Path to College event students take steps towards overcoming that challenge and can practice coping skills in the face of frustrations. College Signing Day is a celebration of their success and perseverance.
SS10	College Application Week and College Signing Day both have social media campaigns and hashtags that students can participate in to practice using social media positively.
SE4	At Path to College events, students will be able to seek support and develop relationships with volunteers and staff and will also be able to collaborate with other students and their family.
CA1	Participating in Path to College Events helps students plan for and see postsecondary education as a realistic option.
CA3	College Signing Day gives students an opportunity to reflect on their postsecondary goals and celebrate their success.
CK1 & CK4	Activities during College Application Week and College Planning Night can be designed to allow students across all grade levels to do research on career options and required education.
CK5	The FAFSA is a resource for college affordability planning. During College Planning Night, students and parents should work on planning to pay for postsecondary education.
CK6	The main purpose of these events is to help students research and apply for postsecondary education.
CS1	During College Application Week and College Planning Night, students and families have the opportunity to research career options.
CS4	During Path to College Events, students will be required to communicate effectively with parents/guardians and volunteers/staff.
CS5	Participating in Path to College Events demonstrates that students have set goals for postsecondary education and are taking necessary steps towards achieving those goals.
CE1&CE4	During College Application Week, students of all grade-levels can participate in activities to explore career and postsecondary options, including college and career assessments.
CE5	By the end of the TN FAFSA Frenzy event, students should have filed a FAFSA or be very close to completion.
CE6	By the end of College Application Week, seniors should have submitted at least one postsecondary application.

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How to Use this Guide

This guide is broken into five sections: An Introduction to College Access, Implementing Path to College Events, Volunteer Engagement and Path to College, Media Outreach and Social Media, and Path to College and Virtual Learning.

Throughout these sections, particularly in the “Implementing Path to College Events” section, you will see two recurring icons:



This icon indicates an **Implementation Idea**. These are broad ideas that you can use at your school, for example: Host a College Application Workshop (page 13).



This icon indicates that a download is available. These can be worksheets or diagrams that you can use to make an Implementation Idea come to life. For example, this icon will appear next to a sample College Application Worksheet.

With this Guide, educators can supplement their lessons, units, and assemblies to enhance their school’s college-going culture. Hopefully you received our mailed resources, complete with posters and stickers. Path to College annually updates resources and materials in order to support schools’ college-going cultures. We hope that you can use the materials to supplement what you are already doing in your schools to support all students throughout their Path to College.

Path to College Materials

Sponsored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and funded with United States Department of Education GEARUP TN funding, we are excited to share posters and stickers with every school that registers for Path to College. Registration is open April-August each year so that we can make certain your school is receiving the materials they need to host the Path to College events.

If your school registered to receive Path to College materials, you should receive a box of materials that are designed to be shared with students in hallways and on bulletin boards, as well as given to students to use themselves. For example, handing out a sticker with “I’m College Bound” can mean a great deal to a student who might never have thought of her or himself as capable. Likewise, posters about college earnings should be placed near or around the School Counseling offices, so that students can access the information on their own.

We encourage your school to find ways to incorporate these posters in the daily work of inspiring and engaging your students. We know that your schools are always trying to innovate and enhance the student experience and we hope that a few free posters and stickers might help in some small way.



In Tennessee, colleges are closer than students think. Place this map in the main office or near your counseling offices, so that students can begin to see all the opportunities close by. The map does not include every satellite location, so have your students research programs and schools closest to them.



Place the Career Clusters posters in a highly visible location. Communicate to students that all careers lead to different options for yourself and for your family. Research with students all the career pathways and explain what salaries, wages, and income they might need in order to live the life of their dreams. Adulting101 is also a great resource to simulate costs of living and expenses, and can be found at CollegeforTN.org.



Stickers are a way that you can personalize #TNCollegeAPPWeek or your Career Week with students. Write the students' college goal on the sticker and place on the map or take a photo of every student to send to parents and celebrate their goals.

Path to College Materials

What is the Best College Fit for Me?

Deciding which college to attend can be a challenge — there are so many factors to consider! Start by thinking about what is most important to you in a college and doing your research on colleges you are interested in attending. Here are some things to consider:

Type of School Two-year, four-year, or technical college Public or private University/research institution or liberal arts college All-male, all-female, or coed Religious or secular	Student Life On and off-campus activities Athletics Greek Life Student organizations Safety Student body diversity	Location Urban or rural Size of nearest city Distance from home Geographic setting and weather
Affordability Cost of Attendance COA (tuition, fees, transportation, housing) Scholarships Campus employment opportunities	Admission Requirements Minimum GPA Average test scores Required high school courses Likelihood of being accepted	Housing Residence halls On/off campus housing Meal plan Parking for residents and for commuters
Academics Programs and majors offered Student faculty ratio Accreditation	Size Physical enrollment Average class size Physical size of campus	What other criteria are important to you?

THEC & TSAC

Choosing a college and career pathway must be a great fit for your students. Help your students define the different characteristics of the three types of colleges in Tennessee: TCATs, Community Colleges, and Universities. What would be the best place for your students? Large class sizes and a sprawling campus, or a smaller place where every professor would know your name within the first week of school?

In this chaotic environment, students want to know why college is still the best pathway to a great job. Show students the income that students will earn if they are more educated and prepared for the real world. Math teachers and social studies teachers can connect students to the reasons why college is the best path to a great job, while also showing students that rising costs of living and a changing economy need more highly skilled workers. Use the poster to answer questions and dispel myths about the returns on the investment in college. Share the students' questions and poster file with parents in your next newsletter home.

The Path to College Leads to...

Job Opportunities
By 2025, 55% of jobs in Tennessee will require a postsecondary credential.

A Higher Income
Studies show that Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential earn more income over time.

Average Full-Time Income of Tennessee Students 5 Years After Graduation

Education Level	Average Annual Income
HS Diploma	\$20,000
Certificate or Technical	\$25,000
Associate	\$30,000
Bachelor's	\$45,000
Master's	\$60,000
Doctorate	\$80,000
Post-Professional	\$100,000

Adapted using data from PIRLS: Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2001. Research Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Much More There are countless other benefits of postsecondary education:

- Experiencing something new
- Building a network of peers and faculty
- Making yourself proud
- Accomplishing a goal
- Finding a meaningful career
- Meeting new people
- Exploring different career opportunities
- Learning new things
- Setting an example for others

THEC & TSAC

..... SECTION 1

An Introduction to College Access

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Included in this section:

- » College-Going Culture Overview
- » Definitions of College-Going Culture
- » What the Research Says About College Access Activities
- » College-Going Culture Assessment

College-Going Culture Overview

Path to College Events are designed to help build a college-going culture in your school and community. It is our hope that the resources and implementation ideas provided in this handbook will assist you in planning and hosting your events. However, creating a college-going culture requires more than just the efforts of the school counselor. It requires the commitment and involvement of the entire school community.

This section will provide you with an overview and a definition of a college-going culture. Additionally, it includes a snapshot of the college access landscape in Tennessee and an overview of current research that supports the importance of building a college-going culture in your school community. We suggest sharing this research with your principal and/or taking time to present this research during your next school-wide staff meeting. A **College-Going Culture PowerPoint** is available to download from CollegeforTN.org and can easily be adapted for such a presentation. In addition, we have provided a “college-going culture assessment” that can be used to foster a discussion around the culture in your school.

We recommend developing a “college-going culture advisory committee” made up of teachers, administrators, students, and/or community members. This working group should meet regularly, discuss ideas for how your school can foster a college-going culture among students, and guide the implementation of those ideas. We hope that the resources contained in this tool kit will help you implement Path to College events and foster a college-going culture in your middle school.

Definition of College-Going Culture

It is easy to talk about the concept of a college-going culture in the abstract, but what does it actually look like in a school? How can schools enhance their college-going culture? When building your school's College-Going Culture, reflect on the role of the 6 R's in your classrooms and also in your communications and outreach to the community.

- **Rigor**- Academically prepare all students for postsecondary education through rigorous curriculum and academic support.
- **Reach Higher**- Create school and community environments characterized by expectations, policies, and initiatives that support all students' pursuit of postsecondary education.
- **Relevance**- Connect career aspirations and skills to students' attainment goals.
- **Relationships**- Foster connections that strengthens students' postsecondary success.
- **Raise Awareness**- Promote early awareness of the steps necessary to prepare, apply, pay for, and succeed in postsecondary education.
- **Reinforce Action**- Assist students in completing critical steps of the college-going process.

What Research Says About College Access Work

Rigor

Academic preparation is the most effective means of increasing student postsecondary readiness, matriculation, and completion.

Bedsworth, W., Colby, S., & Doctor, J. (2006). Reclaiming the American Dream. Boston, MA: Bridgespan Group

A rigorous high school curriculum has greater impact on postsecondary degree completion than any other pre-college indicator of academic preparation, regardless of socioeconomic status or race.

Adelman, C. (1999). Answers in the tool box: Academic intensity, attendance patterns, and bachelor's degree attainment. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Reach Higher

Academic preparation and aspirations are not enough if schools do not have organizational norms and structures in place to effectively guide students through the postsecondary-going process.

Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., Coca, V., Meller, E., Roddie, K., Gilliam, J., & Patton, D. (2008). From High School to the Future: Potholes on the Road to College. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

A school culture where the entire faculty ensure all students are prepared, support students in completing college applications, and push students to go to college is the single most consistent predictor of postsecondary enrollment.

Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., Coca, V., Meller, E., Roddie, K., Gilliam, J., & Patton, D. (2008). From High School to the Future: Potholes on the Road to College. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Relevance

Creating strong links between career goals and degree requirements is key to postsecondary success. In fact, students making this connection are six times more likely to attain a degree.

Bedsworth, W., Colby, S., & Doctor, J. (2006). Reclaiming the American Dream. Boston, MA: Bridgespan Group.

College Access Research Continued

Relationships

Student relationships – both one-on-one and larger peer networks – have a significant impact on student decision-making, including decisions related to postsecondary planning.

Bouffard, S., & Savitz-Romer, M. (2012). Ready, Willing, and Able: A Developmental Approach to College Access and Success. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

Research has determined that students who are surrounded by peers who are going to college are four times more likely to enroll than youth with no friends going to college.

Choy, S., Hom, L., Nunez, A., & Chen, X. (2000). Transition to College: What Helps At-Risk Students and Students Whose Parents Did Not Attend College.

In A. Cabrera, S. La Nasa, A. Cabrera, & S. La Nasa (Eds.), Understanding the College Choice of Disadvantaged Students (pp. 45 - 63). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Raise Awareness

Many students report discussions about postsecondary options begin during their junior and senior years of high school (TDOE, 2017). By this time, students have already made choices that may limit their postsecondary options. Schools that effectively counsel students into postsecondary take proactive steps to ensure students are thinking about their postsecondary and career options as early as possible.

Tennessee Department of Education. (2017). Seamless Pathways: Bridging Tennessee's Gap Between High School and Postsecondary. Nashville: TDOE.

One study demonstrates that 88% of students share their parents' beliefs regarding acceptable careers and the appropriate preparation needed for those professions. Valuing and enhancing the role families play in the college-going process is a key strategy.

Otto, L. (2000). Youth Perspectives on Parental Career Influence. Journal of Career Development, 27(2), 111.

To best leverage the influence parents have on students' decision-making, Bouffard and Savitz-Romer suggest practitioners engage families in college planning events, implement services that allow active collaboration between students and their families, and commit to ongoing, accessible communication with families.

Bouffard, S., & Savitz-Romer, M. (2012). Ready, Willing, and Able: A Developmental Approach to College Access and Success. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

College Access Research Continued

Reinforce Action

It is key that adolescents become active agents in their own postsecondary futures.

Bouffard, S., & Savitz-Romer, M. (2012). Ready, Willing, and Able: A Developmental Approach to College Access and Success. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

Focus groups conducted as a part of Tennessee's current GEAR UP grant determined that students and families understand the intrinsic value of a degree but lack the knowledge and resources to turn postsecondary aspiration into reality.

One research study has shown that helping students select institutions, apply for admission, and complete a financial aid application increased college enrollment by 5.2%.

Oreopoulos, P., & Ford, R. (2016). Keeping college options open: A field experiment to help all high school seniors throughout the college application process. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

A separate study indicated that students who receive information and assistance in completing the FAFSA are 8.1 percentage points more likely to enroll in college.

Bettinger, E., Long, B., Oreopoulos, P., & Sanbonmatsu, L. (2012). The role of application assistance and information in college decisions: Results from the H&R Block FAFSA experiment. Quarterly Journal of Economics, 127(3), 1205 - 1242.

College-Going Culture Assessment



How does your school match up? How can you enhance your college-going culture within your school?

For each statement, write a score (1-3) for your school using the following scale:

Strongly Agree= 3

Agree= 2

Not Yet= 1

Rigor- increase the academic performance and preparation

- _____ All students are expected to pursue some form of postsecondary education and that expectation is conveyed clearly with support from school personnel.
- _____ All students have been directly taught what their TN Ready scores and ACT scores communicate about their college readiness.
- _____ Teachers generally believe that all students can achieve in higher academic level classes when the appropriate strategies and support structures are put into place.

Reach Higher- Enhance a College-Going Culture

- _____ Teachers, support staff, and leadership all communicate to students the same expectation that all students can and should go to college (TCAT, Community College, or University.)
- _____ Students are aware of the steps required to apply, enroll, and pay for college.
- _____ Teachers routinely teach engaging lessons with a college and career focus and seek to inspire students to pursue college.

Relevance- Students connect career goals with educational requirements

- _____ Teachers connect potential careers with standards and connect educational pathways to future careers.
- _____ Career fairs, guest speakers, and field trips expand students' understanding of meaningful careers and the educational pathways to get there.
- _____ Career and college exploration activities are integrated into regular coursework. For example, students research and write

Relationships- Foster meaningful relationships

- _____ Families are included at our school in the way that we talk about students' future pathways.
- _____ Students feel supported by faculty, as demonstrated by students having more than one trusted adult in the school building.
- _____ Engaging all families in order to build positive student relationships is important.



College Going Culture Assessment-Continued

Raise Awareness- Increase families' awareness about college and career

- _____ Our school hosts family college planning events aimed at helping students and families plan for high school, college, and a career.
- _____ Our school is a welcoming environment where family members are encouraged to visit and discuss their child's education.
- _____ Community leaders are invited to share their college and career experiences with students or to mentor students.

Reinforce Action- Increase graduation rates and college-enrollment

- _____ To your **students and parents**, the term "college" means any education and training after high school, including certificate programs, career and technical programs, apprenticeships, two- year degree programs, four-year degree programs, or military training.
- _____ Teachers include visual cues in their classrooms to encourage discussions about their college experience with their students. Examples include posting information about their alma mater or hanging copies of their college degree.
- _____ Educators, administrators, and staff encourage and counsel all students about postsecondary opportunities and the importance of pursuing education and training beyond high school.
- _____ College pennants and posters are visible in classrooms, halls, and common areas.
- _____ Academics are recognized as the number one priority in your school and academic achievement is considered a universal point of pride.
- _____ All students are encouraged to challenge themselves academically and take rigorous course work. All students are counseled on the importance of taking rigorous classes to prepare for postsecondary education.
- _____ Student work is highly visible in school and there are opportunities to showcase a wide variety of learning experiences.

Score Total

1 - 8 = Room for Growth

9 - 14 = Emerging College-Going Culture

15 - 18 = College and Career Ready School!

College Going Culture Assessment-Reflection

Discussion Questions:

In what areas is your school community excelling?

In what areas could you improve?

What can you, as an individual, do to enhance your school's college-going culture?



..... S E C T I O N 2

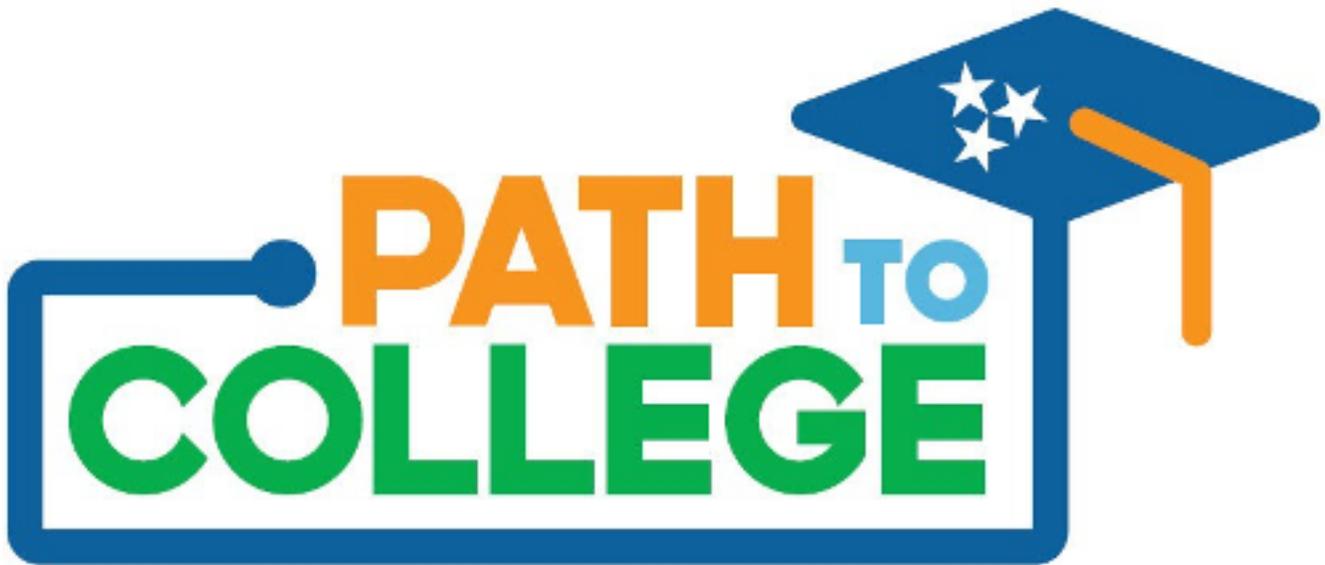
Implementing Path to College Events

.....

Included in this section:

- » College Application and Exploration Week
- » TN FAFSA Frenzy
- » College Planning Night
- » College Signing Day

Fall Semester



COLLEGE APP AND EXPLORATION WEEK



All About College Application and Exploration Week

You may have heard that College Application and Exploration Week is an event that encourages high school seniors to apply to college. While high school seniors are applying to college, middle school students across Tennessee can use this week to explore colleges and careers. The involvement of all your students in College Application and Exploration Week will add to the college-going culture in your community.

College Application and Exploration Week can be one of the most exciting and inspiring weeks of the school year, and the possibilities for great implementation are nearly endless! With proper planning, event promotion, and creative thinking, your College Application and Exploration Week will inspire all students to prepare for life after high school.

As you begin to plan College Application and Exploration Week, tailor the events to the needs of your school. From the timing of events to the location, work with your school's administrators and teachers to plan an event that works best for your school and students.

So no matter what format your College Application and Exploration Week takes, the following pages will give you ideas and resources that can be tailored to the needs of your school and can help you plan and host a successful College Application and Exploration Week.

The Path to College Online Yearbook



Creative displays of school and college spirit are a part of what makes College Application and Exploration Week so much fun! For a full range of photos that feature College Application and Exploration Week door decorations, activities, and more, please visit the GEAR UP TN Flickr page and click on our "College Application and Exploration Week" album at <https://tinyurl.com/yb3zdbgr>.



College Spirit Week



Focus your College Application and Exploration Week on college with a College Spirit Week in support of local seniors who are applying for college. Each day of the week can have a college theme and you can encourage your students to dress for the day. An example schedule of days is included below.

College Spirit Week Themes

Monday:

Bright Futures Day

Our futures are so bright we need shades! Wear your favorite pair of sunglasses to celebrate your bright future.

Tuesday:

Interview Day

It's important to know how to dress for success. Wear an outfit that you might wear for a job or college scholarship interview.

Wednesday:

Support Our Seniors!

Wear gear from your local high school to support the seniors applying to college! You can wear a t-shirt from the high school or high school colors.

Thursday:

College Colors Day

College will be here before you know it! Wear your favorite college's t-shirt or dress in the colors of your favorite school!

Friday:

School Spirit Day

The work you are doing in middle school is building a foundation for your success in high school and beyond. Let's celebrate our school and your hard work so far this year! Dress in our school colors and gear—the wackier and tackier the better!

Start Your Day with College and Career: Morning Announcements



Use morning announcements to share information about upcoming college events and provide students with information about College Application and Exploration Week. Morning announcements can be fun—you can share college fun facts or even start a college trivia competition between homerooms or advisory groups. The first homeroom/advisory to email the correct trivia answer to the counselor wins! Prizes don't need to be expensive—they could be as simple as allowing the winning group to have a jeans or college t-shirt day! Use the following announcements as inspiration for your event.

.....

Sample Morning Announcements

Monday:

I hope that everyone is excited for the start of College Application and Exploration Week! This week, we will be celebrating with a variety of events [name a few]. However, I think I am looking forward to our college trivia competition the most! Every morning this week, I will be sharing a college trivia question. The first homeroom/advisory to email [counselor] at [counselor's email] will win [insert prize such as jeans day, college t-shirt day, or pizza party!]. So, here's your first question:

Even though college seems like it is a long way away, it is important to begin thinking about what type of college would be right for you. There are so many different types of colleges to choose from! You will find large and small schools, public and private colleges, technical, 2 year and 4 year degrees, colleges that are close to home and far away! There are so many options to choose from! **How many public community colleges (2 year) are in the state of TN?**

Answer: 13

Tuesday:

Most colleges and universities have mascots—They lead students in cheers during ball games, are featured on college t-shirts and hats, and are a symbol of school spirit! Mascots are often related to a school or town's history.

Today's question is about mascots and has two parts: **What is the name of the mascot for UT Chattanooga and what type of animal is he?**

Answer: Scrappy the Mockingbird

Sample Morning Announcements Continued

Wednesday:

Colleges and universities are an important part of the history and fabric of Tennessee. In fact by the 1850's, Nashville had earned its nickname "the Athens of the South" because of how many colleges and universities were located in the city. Today's question has to do with the history of higher education in the state.

What was the first college in TN, what year was it founded, and where is it located? You'll need to provide an answer for all three parts of this question to win!

Answer: **Tusculum College, 1794, Greeneville, TN**

Thursday:

Countless celebrities have attended and graduated from college. Adam Sandler earned a Master's in Fine Arts from New York University. Carrie Underwood received a Bachelor's in English from Northeastern State University. John Legend attended the University of Pennsylvania and studied English with an emphasis in African American Literature.

Now for today's question. Oprah Winfrey earned a full scholarship and graduated with a Bachelors degree in Speech Communications and Performing Arts in 1973. **From what Tennessee school did she graduate from?**

Answer: **Tennessee State University**

Friday:

Many college and university campuses have rich histories and interesting stories behind the naming of their buildings. One private Tennessee university has such a history. Before being converted into a school, the grounds of this university featured an art gallery, gazebos, a bowling alley, a bear house, and a zoo. As such, statues of animals (deer, dogs, and lions) are featured around the campus and one dorm is named "bear house" after the house of bears that previously sat where it stands. **Which university is this?**

Answer: **Belmont University**



Mock College Application



The goal of this activity is to help middle school students begin to consider what is involved in a college application and begin to plan for their time in high school. It is designed to be short and completed during an advisory/enrichment period.

Distribute the provided “Mock College Application” and allow students time to complete it. After they have completed it, here are some points to discuss with students as you debrief the application activity.

- In high school, you should have a professional email address for college applications as well as job applications. You might think your email is cute/funny, but a future employer won't!
- Review how to calculate a GPA with students. Ask students why GPA is so important in the college application process.
- Ask students to explain what a college major is. Ask students why it is important for them to start thinking about what they might want to do or study.
- Explain that most college applications will ask questions about extracurricular activities. In addition, scholarships are awarded for both academics and involvement. Ask students to share what types of extracurricular activities are available at your feeder high school(s). Make sure to fill in the list with any extracurriculars they don't mention. Explain to students that they should begin to consider how they might want to become involved in high school.

TIP: You can also work with your English teachers to have students write mock college application essays in their English classes.



Name: _____
Email: _____
Phone Number: _____
Address: _____
GPA: _____
Intended Major: _____

Please list any academic honors, awards, and membership activities (for example, honor societies) that you received or participated in while in high school.

Please list your hobbies, outside interests, extracurricular activities, and/or work experience.

Please list your non-school sponsored volunteer or service activities.

Why are you interested in attending college? Why are you interested in studying the major you selected?

Getting the Whole School Involved



College Application and Exploration Week is more fun when the entire school pulls together to participate. Encourage all teachers and staff to **wear college gear** on designated days and to share information about their own college experience in a classroom warmup or lesson plan.

For the creatively inclined, encourage **college decoration with a door competition!** Offer a small prize to the teacher whose door decor takes the cake and invite community members or local college admissions representatives to act as judges. Students can join the decorating as well by decorating their lockers or designating a bulletin board for student decorations.

Bulletin boards are also a great way to promote a college-going culture on the walls of your school. Don't forget to use the posters and materials mailed to you in your Path to College box! There are countless great ideas for college-themed bulletin boards. Some include:

- Use a US map, the Tennessee College Map provided in your Path to College resource mailing, and teachers' photos to show where they attended college
- Posting celebrity photos and listing where they attended college
- Displaying teachers' college graduation photos
- Listing the steps students should be taking in middle school to be successful in high school and college

Below are just a few examples of door decorations from previous College Application and Exploration Weeks. Visit our online yearbook at <https://tinyurl.com/yb3zdbgr> for more ideas and remember to share your winning decorations on social media, tagging #TNCollegeAppWeek.



College Fight Songs



During College Application and Exploration Week, play college fight songs during morning announcements or during class changes. Consider creating a competition! Students can guess which school the fight song is from or what teacher attended that school. Students or homerooms who guess each fight song or teacher correctly all 5 days, get a prize at the end of the week (such as a jeans day or a pizza party).

There are many playlists on music channels including Spotify that are compilations of fight songs. Before engaging in this activity, be mindful of music or video sites like YouTube that may be blocked at your school and always preview the content of a song before playing it.

Some sites will include fun facts about the history of a school's fight song. Sports news site Bleacher Report ranked their Top 50 fight songs and put links to each song they chose, with the University of Michigan coming in first.

WISH THAT I WAS ON OL' ROCKY TOP
DOWN IN THE TENNESSEE HILLS
AIN'T NO SMOGGY SMOKE
ON ROCKY TOP
AIN'T NO TELEPHONE BILLS
ONCE I HAD A GIRL ON ROCKY TOP
HALF BEAR, OTHER HALF CAT
WILD AS A MINK, BUT SWEET
AS SODA POP
I STILL DREAM ABOUT THAT
ROCKY TOP, YOU'LL ALWAYS BE
HOME SWEET HOME TO ME
GOOD OL' ROCKY TOP
ROCKY TOP, TENNESSEE
ROCKY TOP, TENNESSEE

Human Bingo



Play human bingo by creating your own board or using the board provided below. To play, students will need to obtain signatures from school staff who meet the criteria listed on the board to get BINGO. For example, for the square that says, “attended college outside the state of TN,” students will need to find a school staff member to sign that square. Consider offering a prize for all of the students who get BINGO by the end of the day. Ask local colleges if they can donate small prizes like pencils or stickers, or give each winner a piece of candy.

Human Bingo Card



Instructions: Throughout the day, ask your teachers and school staff about their college experiences. Have the teacher/staff member sign one bingo box that applies to them. Each teacher/staff member can only sign your sheet once! To win, obtain signatures for 5 squares in a row (vertically, horizontally, or diagonally).

B	I	N	G	O
Attended college outside the state of TN	Majored in English	Attended UT Knoxville, Chattanooga or Martin	Attended a private college/ university	Always knew that he/she wanted to be a teacher
Received a scholarship to attend college	Completed an internship for college credit	Lived on campus during college	Worked a part-time job while they were in school	Played a sport (intramural or on the school team) while in college
Completed AP, IB or Dual Enrollment classes while in high school	Applied to at least 5 colleges	FREE	Participated in an extracurricular activity in college (clubs, fraternities, etc.)	Can sing his/her college’s fight song
Had a double major	Had a minor	Lived off campus during college	Went to college in their hometown	Graduated with a Bachelors degree in 4 years or less
Changed their major in college	Completed a Masters degree or higher	Studied a foreign language in college	Still wears a t-shirt from his/ her college	Attended a public college/university

Who Am I Activity



Path to College: Who am I?

The most important step in defining your path to college is to start with yourself. What activities and unique parts of your identity make you a remarkable individual?

Mind Maps

Complete a mind map with your first name in the center. Check out Owen's student example:



In the space provided, ask yourself the following questions and how they relate to the center of the map, you!

1. What makes you different?
2. How do others perceive you?
3. What activities bring you to life?
4. In what activities do you spend the most time, effort, and energy?
5. Where do you feel the most safe and supported?
6. How do you share your gifts and talents with others in your community?

Name:

Visit a College



When possible, offer field trips to tour colleges. Allow students the opportunity to see many different types of schools—TCAT, Community College, University. If you are able to take a field trip, make sure to prepare both your students and the university tour guides in advance.

Preparing both your students and your hosts will ensure a smooth campus visit and will help you to develop a partnership with the college/university you are visiting. Before your visit, review the college visit preparation checklist on the following page and provide your students with an opportunity to research the college they are visiting and create a list of questions. If field trips aren't possible, help students take "virtual" tours. Check college websites to see if they have video tours posted or consider using ecampustours.com.

College Visit Prep Worksheet



Dear Student,

I hope that you are looking forward to our college visit to [Name of College] on [Date,Time]. It is important that you are as prepared as possible for our visit, that you research the college in advance, and think of some questions that you can ask your tour guide. Visit the college's website, and find the answers to the following questions before our visit.

1. How many students attend the college? _____
2. Is this school public or private? (circle one) Public Private
3. How much is the tuition? _____
4. What type of school is this college? TCAT 2-Year 4- Year
5. What type of degrees does this college offer (circle all that apply)
Technical Certificate Associate Bachelor's Master's +
6. Name one major at this college that interests you. _____
7. At this college, can you live on campus? Yes No
8. What is the name of the college's mascot? _____

After researching the college, take a few minutes to write 3 questions that you could ask your tour guide during the visit.

Question 1:

Question 2:

Question 3:



College Visit Planning Checklist

1-2 Months in Advance

- Contact the college/university to request a campus visit. Schedule the date and time of the visit.
- Arrange for transportation for students to/from the visit.
- Draft any necessary permission slip forms and obtain required signatures from parents. Make sure to collect an emergency contact number for each student.
- Coordinate with the college visit office to determine how to divide your students up into smaller groups. The smaller the groups, the better experience your students will have!
- Divide your students into groups and determine the number of chaperones needed per group.
- Recruit volunteers (teachers and/or parents) to serve as chaperones during the college tour.
- Clearly define and review expectations with chaperones.
- Discuss lunch arrangements with the college/university. Will your students be able to eat lunch on campus? Will the college/university pay for the students' lunches or will you need to arrange payment with the dining hall?

1 Week in Advance

- Create nametags for all students. Make sure the nametags include the student's name, the name of your school, and the phone number of a chaperone.
- Prepare students for the visit. Allow students the opportunity to research the college they will be visiting and write questions for their tour guides. Adapt the worksheet on the previous page.
- Prepare the campus visit office and tour guides to make sure students will be able to see relevant places on campus. You might want to make sure they will see the library, the financial aid office, a dorm room, the cafeteria, and/or the student services office.
- Send home a reminder to parents including what the students will need to bring, the details of the campus visit, and an emergency contact number.
- Notify the tour coordinator of any students or chaperones who will need special accommodations so they may plan walking routes accordingly.

College Visit Day

- Follow all school procedures around checking students in and taking attendance at every stop.
- Consider bringing a portable speaker to play a playlist of college fight songs for the bus ride.
- Encourage students to ask questions about what they see on the campus.
- Be engaged in the college tour and presentation. Point out to students things that you see. For example: See a row of huge cereal dispensers in the cafeteria? Ask your student tour guide what they eat for breakfast and watch students' reactions.
- Take pictures that you can display at school and share with other teachers and parents and families.

After Your Visit

- Write thank you notes to anyone you worked with on the campus to arrange the visit.
- Continue the conversation with students about college. What did they like? What else did they wish they'd seen? What do they still want to know more about?

Bringing College to Your School



Alumni

Invite high school seniors or current college students who are alumni of your school to speak to your students about their college choice and application process and allow your students time to ask questions.

Alumni could visit with students more informally during an alumni breakfast or luncheon, or alumni could serve on a panel during an all school assembly. The possibilities for using alumni are endless!

College Representatives

Representatives from your local TCATs, community colleges, universities, and/or military recruiters can be used in a variety of ways during College Application and Exploration Week to promote a college going culture in your school. Invite representatives to set up a table during your lunch period(s) and allow students time to talk with the representatives.

If you have multiple representatives who are interested in visiting your school, you could also host a mini college fair. The fair could be during lunch or after school, if you would like to invite parents to participate. This could also be a great opportunity for parents to meet with TCATs and community colleges to discuss using the TN Reconnect grant, a last dollar scholarship for adults to attend a community college tuition-free.

Regardless of how you plan to use your college representatives, you want to make sure that your students engage with them. One strategy, borrowed from Karns Middle School, is to give each representative 5 raffle tickets. When a student asks particularly insightful questions and engages with the representative, he/she can write the student's name on the ticket. At the end of the fair, collect all the tickets and draw a few for prizes!

Ticket Instructions for College Representatives

Karns Middle School places tickets in individual bags for each representative and attaches the following message:

These tickets are for you to give to any student who asks a great question or who interviews you well.

When you give students a ticket, please have them print their name on the back and then have them RETURN it to you. We will collect them and have a drawing for some cool prizes at the end of the Career Fair!



College Brochure Contest



Host a school-wide college brochure contest. Students should research and create a brochure for their favorite college. Students can write, draw, and decorate the brochures by hand or they can be created on the computer. Display the brochures from the students who participate and solicit help from other staff members to serve as impartial judges. Offer a prize for the winner of the contest!

College Brochure Guidelines

Your college brochure should be both eye-catching and informative! Learn more about your college at www.CollegeforTN.org. Be sure to get creative with decoration, but don't forget to include key information about the college you chose, such as:

- a. The university/college name and at least ONE image to represent the school (for example- logo, photo of the campus, etc.)
- b. The school colors and the school mascot
- c. The location of the school
- d. The enrollment of the school (how many students attend?)
- e. Any admissions requirements (GPA, SAT/ACT scores)
- f. Tuition (include both in-state and out-of-state)
- g. Degrees offered (Technical Certificates, Associates Degrees, Bachelor's Degrees?)
- h. Majors (You may choose to list the schools majors but often there are too many to fit on a brochure. In this case, it is acceptable to describe the types of majors offered and include information about where a full list of majors can be found on the school's website).
- i. Extracurricular activities offered
- j. Academic supports offered (for example: tutoring or writing labs)
- k. Housing information (are freshmen required to live on campus?)
- l. Sports (what sports does the school offer?)
- m. A link to the school website for more information
- n. Graduation and retention rate

College Scavenger Hunt



There are many ways to bring college and career information to your students with scavenger hunts. Some ideas include:

- Asking students to find teachers who attended certain colleges
- Placing images of college mascots throughout the school and asking students to try to spot them throughout the day
- Designing a college website scavenger hunt. An example from Joyce Hollins at Summit High School is provided below.

Scavenger Hunt



Name of TN College/University: _____

Location: What is the name of the city the college is located? _____
and which region of the state is the college located? Circle one:

East Middle West

1. Size: What is the enrollment of the college/university (how many students attend)?

2. Is the institution Public or Private? _____
3. What types of Degrees are offered at this College/University? Check all that apply:
 - Certificate/Degree Program
 - Associates
 - Bacheors
 - Master's
 - Doctorate (PhD, EdS, EdD)
4. List 5 college majors/programs of study that are offered at this College/University.
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____
5. What is the cost of Tuition? _____
6. Does the school have athletic teams you might enjoy watching?

7. Are their intramural sports you might want to play while attending that school?
Which ones? _____

8. List some of the campus organizations/activities for students at this college/
university: _____
9. What is the school's mascot? _____
10. What is this institution known for? What is an interesting fact? OR Why should a
student choose to attend this institution? _____

Fall Semester



Financial Literacy During TN FAFSA Frenzy Season

High school seniors will begin submitting the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) on October 1st. This form will allow students to access critical financial aid resources from both the state of Tennessee and the Federal government, including the Tennessee Promise scholarship and the Pell Grant.

During the TN FAFSA Frenzy season, THEC encourages middle schools to promote financial literacy and the importance of saving for college.

In this section, you will find resources that include information about the TNStars 529 college savings plan, online and classroom-based activities from our partners at the Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission and an overview of our new Career and Financial Literacy game-based simulation: *Adulting 101*.



Collaborate with Your Math Department

TN FAFSA Frenzy is a great time to talk to the math teachers in your building about what they're already doing to bring financial literacy into their curriculum, and how you can help bolster their efforts with more college and career support.

A quick review of the mathematics standards for the state of Tennessee shows that middle school is a crucial time to bring in real-world problem solving along with equations.

In grade 6, the Tennessee Department of Education gives the following example for standard 6.EE.C.9: For example, Susan is putting money in her savings account by depositing a set amount each week (\$50). Represent her savings account balance with respect to the number of weekly deposits ($s = 50w$, illustrating the relationship between balance amount s and number of weeks w).

Talk to your math team to see where there are opportunities to use the language of college, financial aid, and career in problem solving.

College Savings with TNStars 529 Plan

This infographic and the downloadable flier on the following page can be posted on your school's website, displayed on a bulletin board, or printed and handed out to parents at an event. Encourage parents to visit www.tnstars.com to learn more about saving for college.

How does TNStars® work to help you save for college?

TNStars® is a low-cost way to save and invest for your child's college expenses. As one of the top performing college savings plans in the country, TNStars® offers quality investment options to suit your needs. And, it's easy to get started.

With TNStars®, your money isn't sitting idle - it's working for you.



Accounts can be opened online



with as little as \$25



in just 10 minutes



and earnings grow tax-free

Earnings are accumulated tax-deferred and may be withdrawn tax-free when used for qualified higher education expenses of the beneficiary.

How your TNStars® account could *grow*



If the Bryants contribute **\$50 a month,**

assuming an average **6% annual return,** their TNStars® account would



be worth nearly **\$20,000** in 18 years.

Hypothetical rate of return. Used for illustrative purposes only.

When your child is ready for college, funds

can be used at a number of schools including:

- ◆ Four-year Universities
- ◆ Private Colleges
- ◆ Community Colleges
- ◆ Technical Schools
- ◆ Out-of-State Schools

Funds can also be used

for college expenses

including:

- ◆ Books
- ◆ Computers
- ◆ Room and board
- ◆ Equipment and supplies



Online:
TNStars.com

Past performance is no guarantee of future results. The hypothetical example assumes a \$50 monthly contribution for 18 years at a return rate of 6% compounded annually (rounded up). It does not reflect actual performance of any specific investment and does not consider any fees, withdrawals, tax penalties or varying market conditions - all of which will impact the performance and value of your account. Before making a decision to invest, please visit TNStars.com to learn more.



Because dreams can come true.

Start saving now and choose a plan that grows with your child.

Even when the dreams are big and the future seems far away, a little planning today goes a long way tomorrow. You can start planning now with the **TNStars® College Savings 529 Program** and help your child become what they dream to be. The sooner you start saving for their future, the more time your money has to grow. It's easy to open a TNStars® account. You can do it online in minutes and start saving today.

**Visit [TNStars.com](https://www.tnstars.com)
to get started today.**



TNStars®
COLLEGE SAVINGS
529 PROGRAM

To learn about TNStars®, investment objectives, risks, costs and to read the official statement, go to [TNStars.com](https://www.tnstars.com).



Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission



Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission

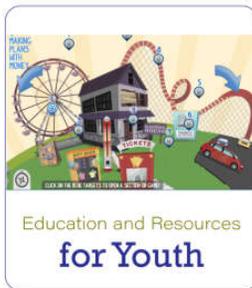
The Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission (TNFLC) strives to equip Tennesseans to make sound financial decisions in regard to planning, saving, and investing.



The TNFLC provides financial education for the whole family at no cost to the user. You can access our online educational resources at TNFLC.org.

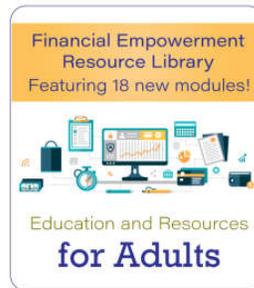
For Youth

Vault - Understanding Money is an online education platform designed for students grades 4-6. Through *Vault*, students learn about basic money management like the difference between needs and wants, and how money is used in daily life.



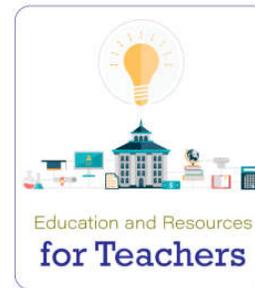
For Adults

The Financial Empowerment Resource Library leads Tennesseans through 18 unique, interactive modules covering topics like credit scores, budgeting, and retirement. Each module contains practical tips for everyday life.



For Teachers

TNFLC offers trainings to integrate financial literacy in the classroom. K-8 educators can attend through school in-service and free Saturday summits. Attendees will receive all necessary supplies and may be eligible for professional development credit.



Contact Us
TN.FLC@tn.gov



@TNTreasury
@TNTreasuryDept

Visit Our Website
TNFLC.org

David H. Lillard, Jr.
State Treasurer



Vault Preview



One of the great, free resources available from the Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission is Vault, an online course powered by EverFi. Below you'll find an overview of the online course. On the following page, you will find instructions on how to create a teacher account and sign up for the course.

EVERFI

Vault Understanding Money

Vault - Understanding Money empowers students to be smart financial decision makers while they are early in their cognitive development. By leveraging performance-based games, *Vault* immerses students in real-life financial scenarios that focus on skill building and responsible decision making.

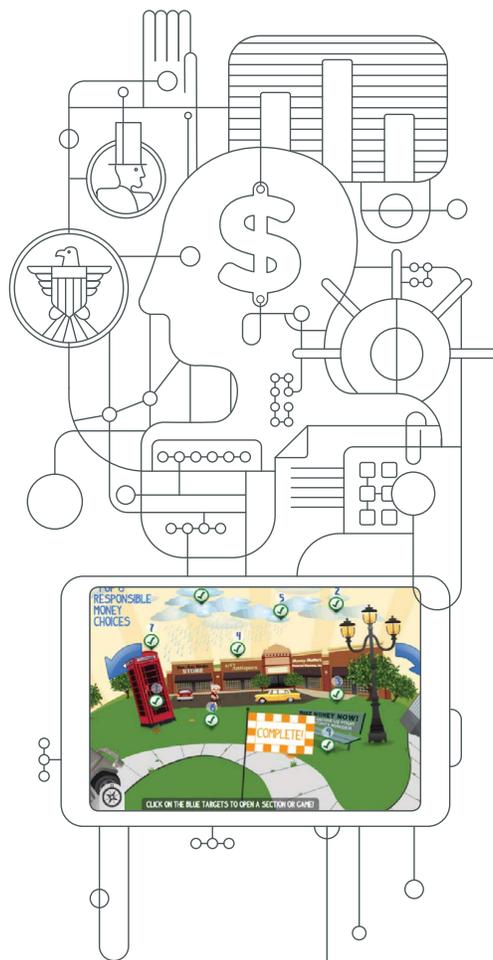
Covering everything from goal setting to making a budget, *Vault* delivers critical financial concepts in an engaging and fun way. *Vault* can be integrated into unit plans and used during class time, as a capstone project, or in a flipped classroom.

Course Highlights

- Real-time student score reports on your teacher dashboard
- Supplemental lesson plans
- Detailed standards alignment guide with your state-specific standards
- Answer Keys for all assessments
- Engaging discussion guides

Course Topics

- Responsible Money Choices
- Income and Careers
- Planning & Money Management
- Credit & Borrowing
- Insurance & Safety Management
- Savings & Investing



Recommended Grade Level: 4-6

Total Lessons: 6 (20-30 minutes each)

Total Time: 2-3 hours

Subject Fit: Math, Social Studies, Technology

Standards Alignment: Jump\$tart Standards, U.S. State Financial Literacy Standards

Vault Sign Up Instructions with EverFi



Vault is free for schools to use, but there is a brief registration process that you will need to complete in order to get started. The course is sponsored by the Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission but for technical support, you should contact EverFi directly.

Course Flow



Lesson 1
Pre-Survey



Lesson 2
Prediction/ Pre-Assessment



Lesson 3
Learning Activities & Animation



Lesson 4
Conclusion/Post-Assessment



Lesson 5
Post-Survey

Learning Activity Highlights

What's the Difference Between Needs and Wants? -

Whether it's food, rent, or internet, every household has many different expenses they must cover. How do you figure out which are the most important? In this activity, students explore the difference between needs and wants, and learn the importance of opportunity cost.

Borrowing and Credit - When you look at the price tag for a house or car, you may wonder: how will I ever earn enough cash to pay for that? The answer is, most people don't usually pay for these items in cash, but use credit instead. In this module, students learn how and when credit is used, and when it might be a smart financial decision.

Good and Bad Money Decisions - Some decisions are easier to make than others. When it comes to money, how do you evaluate which decision is a good one? In this activity, students look at real-life budgetary decisions, and explore what the consequences might be.

For more information about bringing this program to your school or district, visit everfi.com/k-12

YOUR HOUSEHOLD BUDGET
Click each type of expense and drag it under "Needs" or "Wants."

TOILET REPAIR GAS BILL CABLE BILL ELECTRIC BILL

Needs Wants

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Financial Fitness for Life Curriculum Example



By attending a free professional development session with the Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission, you will receive the Financial Fitness for Life Curriculum, including student workbooks with lessons and activities like the examples on the following pages. Registrations for fall 2018 summits will open in August. If you have any questions about the training summits or the Commission, please call 615-532-5892 or email TN.FLC@tn.gov.

EXERCISE 7.2

THEME B | Lesson 7: Managing Cash

NAME: _____ CLASS PERIOD: _____

Living Within Their Means

Read one of the case studies on this or the following pages and decide whether the person kept his or her income and expenses in balance. (Note: All incomes are after income taxes have been paid.) Then answer questions 1-4 at the end of the exercise, and report your answers to the class. After each group gives a report, answer questions 5-9.

Case Study A

Lauren earns \$51,300 a year as a teacher in a booming suburban school district. She has the following monthly expenses:

Contribution to retirement plan	\$240
Rent/home mortgage	780
Utilities	340
Phone/cable/Internet	180
Food/groceries	300
Car payment	660
Insurance (car/rental/home)	188
Transportation, incl. gas	168
Charity	92
Clothes	66
Loan payments	540
Entertainment	240
Services (cleaning, hair dresser)	180
Other	166

Did Lauren spend more or less than she earned? _____

By how much? _____

Case Study B

Brian earns \$42,000 a year by operating his small business. He has the following monthly expenses:

Contribution to retirement plan	\$222
Rent/home mortgage	870
Utilities	288
Phone/cable/Internet	210
Food/groceries	290
Car payment	438
Insurance (car/rental/home)	178
Transportation, incl. gas	105
Charity	107
Clothes	138
Loan payments	368
Entertainment	180
Services (cleaning, hair dresser)	150
Other	222

Did Brian spend more or less than he earned? _____

By how much? _____

Financial Fitness for Life Continued

THEME 3 | Lesson 7: Managing Cash

EXERCISE

7.2

Respond to the following questions about the person whose case study your group analyzed:

1. The person's car needs a new timing belt at a cost of \$840. What changes would you make in his or her spending plan?

2. What are some of the trade-offs the person will face as a result of the choices you made above?

3. What was the person's monthly income?

4. Make some suggestions for how the person whose case study you read could budget his or her income and expenses more wisely.

Exchange information with other teams in your class to answer these questions:

5. Who had the most money left at the end of the month?

6. Who overspent the spending plan?

7. Which workers had between \$100 and \$200 left at the end of the month?

8. How much income did Marcus have left over at the end of the month?

9. If Lauren chooses to take a trip this month that costs \$600, what are some trade-offs she'll have to consider?

College Comic Strip

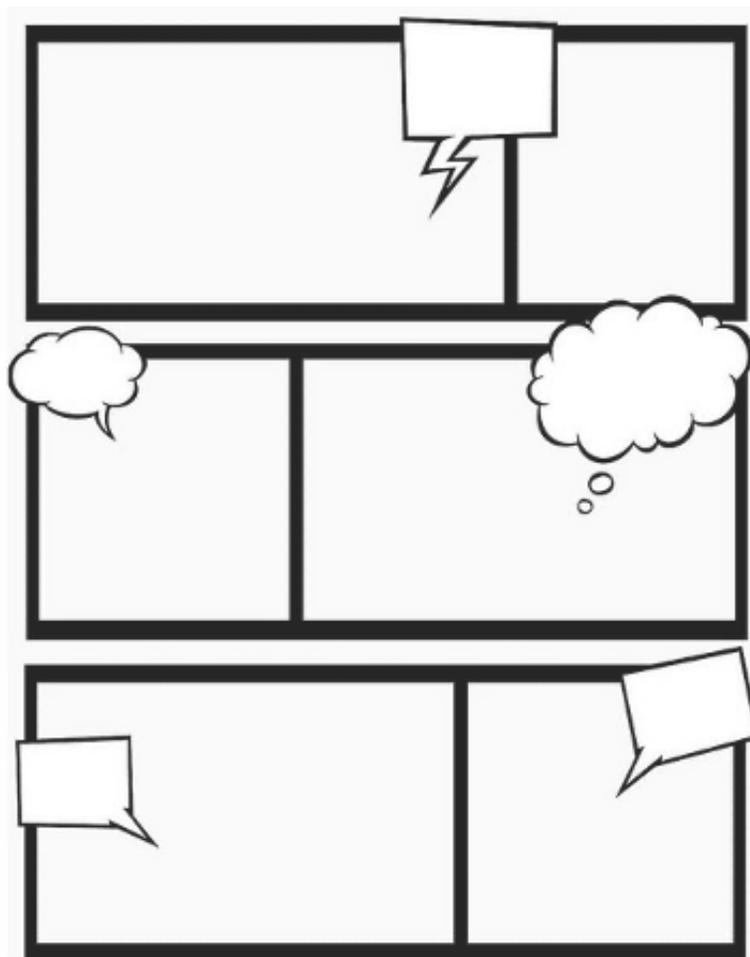


Path to College Activity _____ Student Name _____

When you have a **goal**, it helps to share that dream and vision with someone whom you trust. In **the comic book strip**, create a conversation between yourself and a trusted friend, parent, counselor about who you are now and who you may want to become in the future. Be creative with your illustrations and think about how you might clearly communicate the career pathway, college aspirations, or future life you might lead.

Suggested Phrases to get started:

- "Hey, can I talk to you a minute about some important things I have had on my mind?"
- "I don't know exactly what I want to be when I grow up, but I do know that I want to be successful. Here's my plan..."
- "I trust you. Can you help me get started on some college and career plans?"
- "Can I get your advice? I have been thinking a lot about my future and want some support."



Adulting 101 Career Simulation Game



Have you ever wished that you could give your students a taste of what the world of adulthood is like? Are you looking for a way to bring budgeting and real-world decision making to life for middle school students?

Take financial literacy and career exploration off the workbook page and into action with our career simulation game: Adulting 101.

Based on best practices and game simulations designed by Texas GEAR UP and West Virginia GEAR UP, Adulting 101 is designed to help students make budgeting decisions, understand the connection between higher education and career advancement, and experience the consequences and rewards of “adulting.”

In the game, each student receives a card that includes their career, their level of education (high school, TCAT, associate degree, bachelor’s degree, or advanced degree), their monthly paycheck, family size, and family scenario.

With this information, students will become members of the thriving metropolis of Volunteer Station, a fictional Tennessee town, and will need to purchase housing, transportation, utilities, food and home goods, and insurance. Students beware: bumps in the road like a doctor’s visit or an unexpected expense may pop up from the mysterious “green reaper” whose randomly distributed cards introduce an element of chaos into even the most balanced budget!



Adulting 101 Just for Tennessee

There are lots of career and life simulation games out there, so what makes Adulting 101 the right game for your middle school?

Adulting 101 was developed by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission’s College Access and Success team with our state’s context and needs in mind.

The town of Volunteer Station, its salaries, and its expenses are based on real prices (we chose Chattanooga as our city inspiration). Salary and career information was taken from CollegeforTN.org.

Tennessee’s new adult learner scholarship, Tennessee Reconnect, also appears in Adulting 101. Students whose randomly distributed career card has a Reconnect logo in the top right corner can visit the Reconnect station to advance their career by “reconnecting” and earning a certificate, diploma or associate degree.



Adulging 101 Download Instructions

As with all Path to College materials, Adulging 101 is available for download on CollegeforTN.org.

When you click on the link for Adulging 101, you will download a zip file of all of the pieces you need to play the game at your school. The zip file will include:

- Organizer Instructions
- Volunteer Instructions (how your volunteers will man the various game stations)
- Printing instructions
- Pre-sized banner files for each game station including Tennessee Treasures Real Estate, Get Going Gasoline, and more. These files can be put on a flash drive and brought to a local printing shop with no customization needed.
- Student materials including career scenarios and ledgers. These are pre-sized for easy printing at your school or local print shop.

If you have any questions about implementing the game at your school, please contact Suzette. Telli@tn.gov or Kevin.Edwards@tn.gov.



 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D1 Location: Near Downtown 2 BR/2 BA 1085 sq. ft. \$339,900 \$2,160</p> <p>Offers great access to local boutiques, restaurants, coffeehouses, galleries, salons and day spas. Fitness Center, Club House, Laundry Facility, Pool, Pets Welcome.</p>	 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D5 Location: Near Downtown 2 BR/1 BA 800 sq. ft. \$54,900 \$422</p> <p>Handyman special! Great investment opportunity for someone willing to put in the work. 6 ft. Chain Link Fenced Yard, Convenient to Downtown</p>
 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D2 Location: Near Downtown 1 BR/1 BA 750 sq. ft. \$199,500 \$1,330</p> <p>A stone's throw from all the restaurants, concert venues, and all the Entertainment District has to offer. This ground floor condo has a private entrance on it's own private patio.</p>	 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D6 Location: Near Downtown 3 BR/2 BA 1509 sq. ft. \$309,900 \$1,975</p> <p>Beautifully restored home in historic downtown neighborhood 10 ft. Ceilings. Lush landscaping!</p>
 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D3 Location: Near Downtown (Rental) 1 BR/1.5 BA 900 sq. ft. \$1,400/Month</p> <p>Within walking distance of downtown amenities. Hardwood floors, granite counters, new construction. This one won't last!</p>	 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D7 Location: Near Downtown 2 BR/1 BA 1600 sq. ft. \$259,900 \$1,774</p> <p>Historic downtown neighborhood! Newly renovated kitchen and bath.</p>
 <p>Area 1 Listing #: D4 Location: Near Downtown (Rental) 2 BR/1 BA 1034 sq. ft. \$1,500/Month</p> <p>Find your place! Enjoy an open floor plan with exposed brick, hardwood floors, and an updated kitchen and bathroom.</p>	 <p>Area 2 Listing #: C1 Location: Within City Limits (Rental) 3 BR/2 BA 1430 sq. ft. \$1,475/Month</p> <p>Centrally located with access to schools, shopping, and entertainment. Fitness Center, Boogie Court, Business Center, Pet Friendly, Club House, High Speed Internet, Playground, Pool</p>



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JUST IN CASE INSURANCE

Share Financial Aid Resources with Parents



It is never too early to share information with parents about financial aid. Here are some suggestions for effective ways to communicate that information:

Host a Middle School College and Financial Aid Night: Invite parents to your school for an evening event and review the College Planning Night PowerPoint with them. Consider inviting a TSAC outreach coordinator to present the financial aid and scholarship information with you. Make sure to promote your event through every channel possible (social media, flyers, phone calls to parents, etc.) using the resources we provided in the promotion section of this handbook.

Webinars: Create a webinar for parents with introductory financial information, terminology, or promote existing webinars (such as the Financial Aid webinars on www.TNFAFSAFrenzy.gov) in your school communications.

Share Opportunities for Adults: Whenever you discuss college planning with parents and families, be sure to mention the Tennessee Reconnect scholarship, which allows adults to complete an associate degree, certificate or diploma tuition-free. See page 40 for a sample flier.

.....



To the right is a sample slide from THEC/TSAC's College Planning Night available for download at www.collegefortn.org.

Types of Degrees

- **Diploma and Certificate:** take less than a year to two years to complete and focus on a specific skill or career. These programs are offered at Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (example: TCAT Crossville, TCAT Covington)
- **Associate's Degree:** two-year degrees offered at community colleges (example: Cleveland State Community College, Jackson State Community College)
- **Bachelor's Degree:** four-year degrees offered at public and private four-year colleges and universities (example: University of Tennessee, Middle Tennessee State University, University of Memphis, Vanderbilt University)

THEC  TSAC

College Road Map Activity

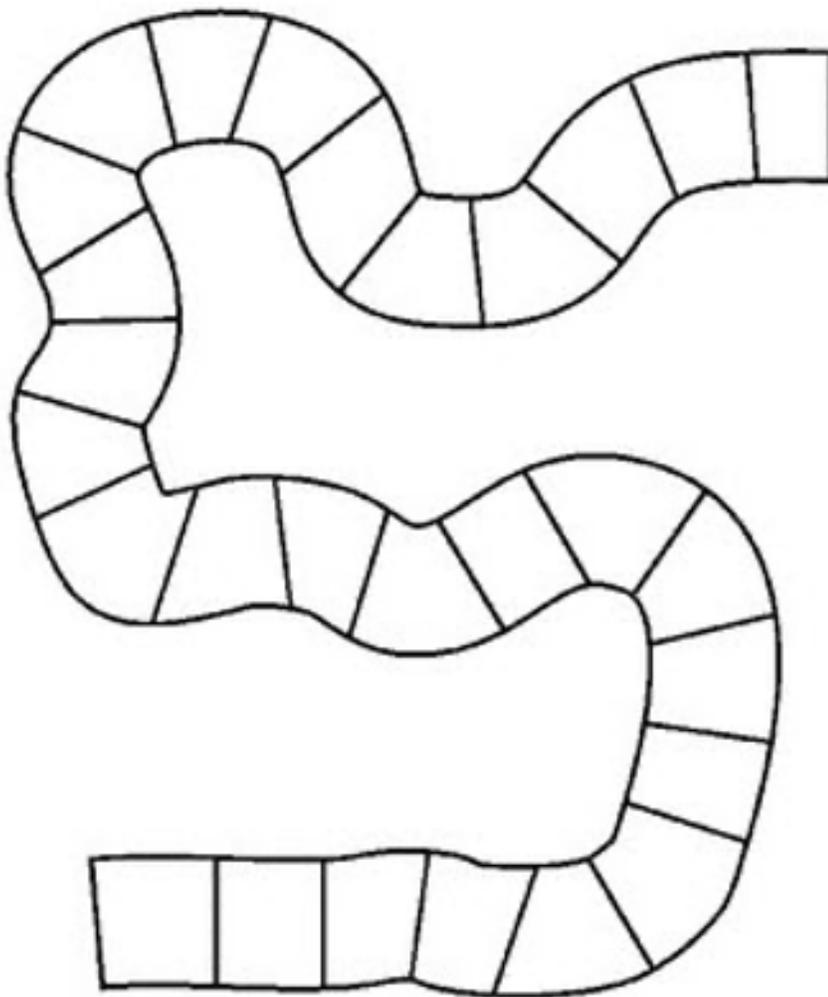


Directions: Develop a ROAD MAP to your future dreams using financial aid, scholarships, colleges, and jobs to help get you there.

Using the College Aid Resources provided by the U.S. Department of Education, develop a timeline for the next 5 - 10 years of your college and career pathway.

Key events on your timeline:

- High School Experiences (CTE Classes, EPSO course, Prom, Jobs, Sports, Awards, Graduation)
- Summer Experience (1st Job, College Visits, Travel, Camps, Internships)
- Financial Milestones (Savings account started, Awarded Scholarship, FAFSA Completed)
- College Admission Requirements (ACT, application, recommendations)
- College Credential Awarded (Associate, Diploma, Certificate or Bachelor's)
- Career Pathways
- FUN Stuff (Car, relationship, house, vacation, moving, etc.)





TENNESSEE
Reconnect

Tennessee Reconnect is a scholarship for adults to earn an associate degree or technical certificate, tuition-free.

Four easy steps to Reconnect:

- 1. Complete** Complete the **application** at **TNReconnect.gov**.
Complete the scholarship application and review your results from the Tennessee Reconnect Success Plan.
- 2. Apply** Apply to your local **community college or eligible Tennessee Reconnect institution**.
- 3. File** File the **FAFSA** at **FAFSA.ed.gov**.
Contact your local community college or Tennessee Reconnect Community if you need assistance with the FAFSA.
- 4. Enroll** Enroll in a degree or certificate program at least part-time and launch **your future**.

To be eligible for the Tennessee Reconnect scholarship, you must:

- Not already have an associate or bachelor's degree.
- Have been a Tennessee resident for at least one year.
- Be determined as an independent student on the FAFSA.

Visit TNReconnect.gov for all eligibility requirements.



Requirements of Tennessee Promise

November 2

Apply to Tennessee Promise at www.TNPromise.gov

February 1

Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.gov

In the Spring

Partnering organizations will host mandatory meetings for students.

In the Spring

Apply to and register for classes at a community or technical college
(Your partnering organization may recommend applying by February 15)

July 1

Complete 8 hours of community service. Partnering organizations will provide guidelines and verify service hours.

Summer

If selected for FAFSA verification, provide the necessary documentation to your institution.

What is Tennessee Promise?



Tennessee Promise offers up to two and a half years of tuition-free community or technical college to Tennessee high school graduates. The program provides eligible students a last-dollar scholarship, which covers tuition and mandatory fees not covered by the Pell grant, TELS, and TSAA. Students will also be assigned a mentor who will provide guidance and assistance as the student enters higher education. Students must participate with a partnering organization to access Tennessee Promise dollars.

Who is eligible for Tennessee Promise?

To be eligible to receive a Tennessee Promise Scholarship, a student must:

- Be a Tennessee resident
- Graduate from an eligible Tennessee high school, complete a Tennessee home school program, or, prior to reaching 19 years of age, obtain a GED or HiSET diploma
- Complete the Tennessee Promise application at www.TNPromise.gov by November 2
- Apply to and enroll full-time in a community college, college of applied technology, or eligible program the fall after graduation from high school
- Meet all deadlines and requirements before enrolling

What are the service requirements?

Community service is an important component of Tennessee Promise. A student participating in the program must perform a minimum of eight hours of community service prior to each semester. The deadline for the fall semester is July 1, spring semester is December 1, and summer semester is May 1. Partnering organizations must approve community service activities in advance.

Any service performed by a student which benefits the community may be counted, except:

- Community service performed prior to high school graduation
- Work resulting in payment or remuneration of any kind
- Work directly benefiting family members.

How are funds distributed?

Students will never directly receive cash from Tennessee Promise. Once Pell, TELS, and TSAA have been applied, scholarship funds covering the remaining costs of tuition and mandatory fees will be sent directly to institutions for students who have met all eligibility requirements.

Teach FAFSA Vocabulary



While your middle school students might not be ready to file a FAFSA, TN FAFSA Frenzy is an excellent time to teach students about the basics of financial aid. One great way to do this is to introduce students to financial aid vocabulary words. you could create a financial aid vocabulary word wall or use your morning meeting during a week in October to introduce a FAFSA word of the day, using the list below.

.....

FAFSA- the free application for federal student aid. A free form that students can fill out to find out how much money for college they can receive from the federal government.

Scholarship- financial aid support that a student receives that DOES NOT need to be paid back.

Loan- financial aid that a student borrows that needs to be paid back after college.

Grant- like a scholarship, financial aid support that DOES NOT need to be paid back.

Work-study- an on-campus job where students earn money to help pay for college.

Financial Aid- money that helps you pay for college.

Tennessee Promise- a state scholarship that provides free college tuition and fees to students who are earning an associate degree (2 year) or a certificate or diploma at a TCAT.

Bursar- the person who manages student accounts at a college.

Need-based- financial aid that is awarded based on the amount of money the person needs based on their income.

Merit-based- financial aid that is awarded based on a student's grades or ACT/SAT scores.

Award- the full "package" of the different kinds of financial aid a college offers a student.

Deadline- the date by which you must complete a task to qualify for financial aid.

Borrow- money that you use now to pay for tuition and fees, but that you need to pay back.

Accept- when you agree to take the financial aid offered by a college, you accept that financial aid. You don't have to take all of the financial aid a college offers, only take what you need especially when it comes to borrowing money with loans.

Decline- when you tell a college you do not want part or all of their financial aid award, you decline that financial aid.

Federal Financial Aid- financial aid that comes from the United States government.

State Financial Aid- financial aid that comes from the Tennessee state government.

Balance- the amount of money you owe to a college. If you have a bill for \$10,000 and accept a \$6,000 scholarship, the balance of what you owe is \$4,000.

Interest- a percent of a loan that you pay the bank or company as a fee for borrowing the money. Most student loans range from 4-7% interest.

Fee- additional costs a college charges to pay for things like student activities.

Tuition- the price you pay for attending classes in college.

Verification- a process after filing the FAFSA where students may need to provide additional information about their income to make sure that they receive the right amount of financial aid.

Finding Your Path Activity



Finding a Path to College requires a great deal of research and planning. By developing a path to college early, families can avoid stressful and challenging problems in the future. Finding your career pathway first can help families remain focused during the journey.

Use this worksheet to begin a family discussion around pursuing meaningful careers.

Using the examples provided, investigate three different career pathways and the colleges and scholarships that might help you on your path to college.

CAREER PATHWAY	COLLEGE CREDENTIAL REQUIRED	COLLEGE PATHWAY HOW LONG DOES THE PROGRAM TAKE?	TN SCHOLARSHIPS I CAN USE TO HELP PAY FOR COLLEGE
Welder	Welding Certificate	Tennessee College of Applied Technology-Jackson, Full-Time 12 months	Wilder-Naifeh Scholarship
Respiratory Therapist	Associate degree	Walters State Community College, Full-Time, 3 years/65 credit hours	TN Promise TN HOPE Scholarship

Spring Semester



About College and Career Planning

What is Path to College's College and Career Planning event?

At the high school level, this event is known as College Planning Night. It is an event designed to engage parents in the college-going process while preparing high school juniors and their parents for the application process the following year.

In middle school, we hope that you will implement College and Career Planning in the way that most makes sense for your students. This could take the form of a career fair with local professionals, an information session about local colleges, or something entirely different. As with TN FAFSA Frenzy events, you can also use this time to introduce adult programs like the Tennessee Reconnect scholarship for parents and families who may be interested in returning to school themselves.

A majority of the resources that you will see in this section relate to hosting a career fair. We know that in all grades, discussions of college and career options should go hand-in-hand. While high school juniors may focus primarily on college and the college-going process, middle schools should feel the freedom to use this time to explore both college and career during this event.

Expectations of Host Sites

The event should be what works best for your individual school. This event is a great time to engage parents, but you can also host College and Career Planning activities during the school day and send information home to families in the form of fliers and brochures.

When should you host College and Career Planning events?

College and career activities occur throughout the year. When we consider the school calendar and the other Path to College Events your school will be hosting, we encourage you to schedule these College and Career Planning activities during the Spring semester or third quarter of the year.

Host a Career Fair: Karns Middle School



Hosting a career fair is an excellent way to encourage students to begin to think about their futures as well as to get the community involved in your school. Planning a career fair can seem like a big undertaking—but the benefits for students are immeasurable. On the following pages, we've provided a career fair planning timeline and checklist that we developed with Karns Middle School to assist you with planning your event.

College and Career Fair Planning: Timeline and Checklist

6 Months Before Your Event:

-Convene a career fair planning team to assist with planning your event. This team could include counselors, teachers, administration, parents, and/or community members. Consider also including students in some of your planning meetings. They will be able to give you great insights on careers their classmates are interested in and could help you to promote and build excitement about the event.

-As early in the school year as possible, provide an interest inventory to your students. This will allow you to try to recruit the jobs/careers that are of interest to many of your students, increasing the relevancy of the Career Fair to the intended audience.

-Schedule a time, date, and location for your event. You will need a large space—many schools use their gym, cafeteria, or auditorium.

-Finalize the format and structure for your event and make sure you have access to all of the necessary materials. Make sure to consider the following questions:

- How will students participate in the event? Will they be able to come during the school day? When? Will students be able to attend the career fair that day during a certain class period? Will all grade-levels participate?
- How will career representatives set up in your space? Will they each have their own table or will they need to share? Will you provide chairs for your representatives?
- Who is invited to your event? Are you only inviting students or will you also invite parents to attend the fair?

3-6 Months Before Your Event

-With your planning team, brainstorm a list of the careers you would like to see represented at your fair and determine what companies or organizations in your community might be able to represent that career.

-Reach out to the individuals and/or companies you have identified to solicit their participation in the career fair. As you receive positive responses, it is helpful to keep track of the representative's name, company/career, and contact information. You will need this to follow up before the event. Some recruitment ideas include:

- Reaching out to parents. They frequently enjoy participating at the school their student attends.
 - Allowing students to participate in meetings and directly recruit.
- 46 • Use your social networks and those of your planning team to find contact persons in the careers on your list.

- Addressing community business groups about the importance of the Career Fair.

-Consider offering an incentive for career representatives to participate. Karns Middle School hosts their career fair in the morning and offers lunch afterwards for all participants.

1 Month Before Your Event

-Contact all confirmed participants with the event details. Make sure to collect any information from participants about their space needs. Specifically, ask if they will need to be in close proximity to an outlet or if they require a certain amount of space for any exhibits they are bringing. Clearly outline to participants what you will be providing and what they will be responsible for. Encourage them to make their booth as interactive as possible. For example, firefighters may bring their suits to try on, beauticians may offer a few makeovers, newscasters may bring their cameras or microphones, etc.

-Begin promoting your event to both students and parents (if included in the event). Solicit the help of the students on your planning team to promote the event with social media. Include information about the event in morning announcements. Encourage teachers to discuss careers in their classrooms.

-Allow students the opportunity to complete career inventories on www.CollegeforTN.org so that they can target representatives from those careers during the career fair.

-Consider ways to increase student engagement during the fair. At Karns Middle School, representatives were given raffle tickets. When students asked particularly thoughtful questions about their career, they wrote the students name on the ticket. At the end of the day, tickets were drawn for students to receive donated prizes.

-Create a layout for your space. Using the list of confirmed presenters and the information you gathered about their space needs, begin to assign career representatives to tables/locations.

-Create a student interview form. Students should interview at least one of the participants about their job or career. In order to create some accountability, teachers can grade these interviews (for completion only).

-Make sure students are asked to talk to higher education representatives (high school or college representatives). One important aspect of the Career Fair is to connect careers with education. This aspect can be added to the student interview form.

-Invite the media to attend the fair. Local papers and/or television representatives enjoy reporting on community and school events.

Week of the Event

-Follow up with your career representatives and remind them of any last minute details.

-Review event logistics with all school staff. This is especially important if students will be rotating through the fair during class periods.

-Create a list or brochure of all career representatives that have confirmed their attendance for the fair. Distribute the brochure to students in advance.

-Prepare students for the event. Encourage teachers to discuss the fair with their students during their advisory/enrichment periods. Students can plan which booths they would like to visit and can also brainstorm a list of questions for the representatives.

-Finalize your space layout and print several copies. You may choose to display the layout at the event so both representatives and students can find their assigned tables.

-Assign members from your planning team and volunteers from your school community with tasks for the day of the event. It will be important to have volunteers assigned to the following tasks:

- Traffic Direction- Make sure you have several volunteers outside the school to show career representatives where they can park and direct them to the location of the career fair.
- Check In Table- Set up a check in table for career representatives to sign in (which may be your school policy) and to tell representatives the location of their booth
- Student Helpers- Assign students from your planning team to help on the day of the event. Students can be extremely helpful with showing representatives to their tables and/or with helping representatives unload any supplies.
- Staff Helpers- On the day of the event, it will be impossible for you to help everyone and answer all of their questions. At Karns Middle School, staff helpers were given a balloon to carry around that allowed you to easily spot them in the crowded auditorium and representatives were told to seek out these staff members if they had questions.
- Water and/or Snack Distributer- If your event will be over the course of many hours, it is a nice gesture to your representatives to provide them with water and/or a snack half way through. Solicit the help of students and/or staff to distribute these.

Day of the Event

-Double check your space layout and print extra copies. Make sure your helpers and your check in table volunteers have copies of the layouts to be able to direct representatives. Consider posting a large copy of the layout for all to see.

-Ensure that your tables and chairs are set up correctly.

-Print signs for your tables. Include the representative's name and company/career and place the sign on their assigned table.

-Meet with your volunteers before the event starts to make sure they are comfortable with their role for the day.

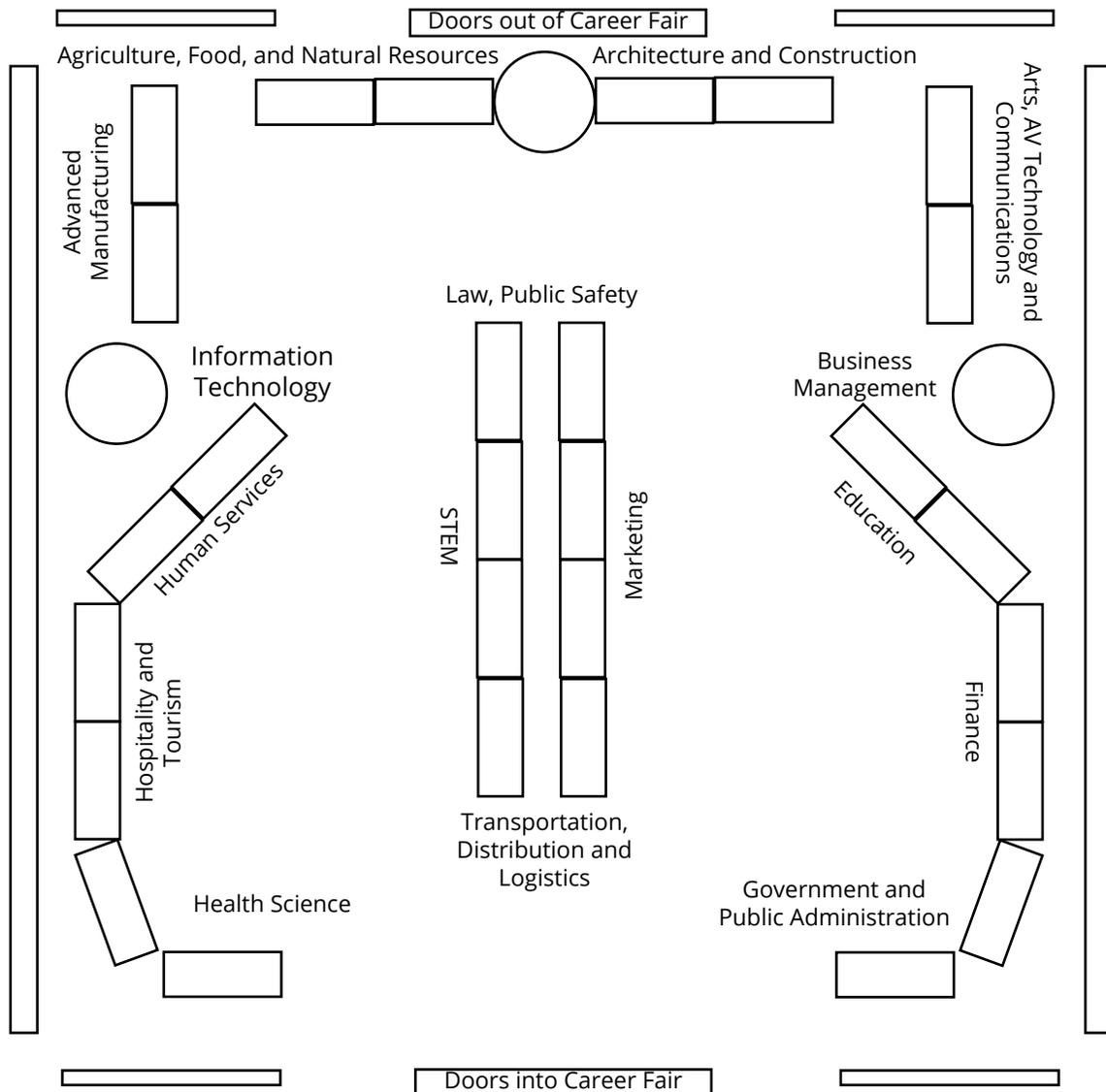
-Set up your check in table—make sure that your representative sign in system is ready to go!

-Add important "day of" information to the morning announcements.

After the Event:

- Thank your volunteers and participants. Consider sending handwritten notes from students or thank you emails.
- Meet with your career fair planning team to debrief the event. Discuss what went well and what could be improved for next year's fair. Consider distributing a survey to representatives to get their feedback about the experience.
- Send evaluation forms to students and to teachers. Their feedback is essential to next year's planning!

Sample College and Career Fair Layout



Career Fair Interview Questions



You've planned a great college and career fair experience, but in order to ensure your event is successful, students need to be prepared to engage in thoughtful conversations with your volunteers! Below is a list of questions adapted from Vermont Student Assistance Corporation and VT State GEAR UP that will help get conversations going amongst your students and the professionals at your fair.

1. Would you please describe a typical day at your job? What tasks do you normally do every day or every week?
2. Do you work with a team or is most of your work done by yourself?
3. What do you like best about your career? What do you like the least?
4. What are some of the decisions you have to make at work?
5. What are some of the benefits at your job? Does it offer health insurance, vacation time, or retirement savings?
6. How do you balance your work with other things in your life, like spending time with friends and family or hobbies?
7. What kind of training or education is needed to work in your job?
8. What kind of personal qualities should someone have to do well and be happy in your job?
9. If I am interested in a job like yours, what should I do while I'm in middle school to get ready?

Volunteer Recruitment

From local businesses to higher education campuses, there are so many people who would be great representatives at your Career Fair.

Local businesses are a great source of volunteers. Representatives from military branches, law enforcement, even the local zoo can round out your career fair volunteers.

For a sample volunteer recruitment letter, please turn to page 64 in Section 3.



Careers on Wheels



Careers on Wheels is a variation of a career fair, but it is designed to be hosted in your school's parking lot and feature all the careers that are "on wheels!"

Invite representatives from mobile careers to bring their trucks to your school and allow students to tour the trucks and talk with the representatives about their careers. Most of the planning steps will be the same as planning for a career fair, so use and adapt those resources for your planning. Here are some ideas of who to invite:

- Firefighters
- EMTs / Ambulances
- Police Officers
- SWAT Team
- Animal Control
- Food Truck or Ice Cream Truck
- Media with mobile broadcasting or weather vans
- Mobile Health Clinics or Dentists
- Mobile Boutiques
- 18 Wheelers
- Race Car Drivers and Pit Crew
- Cable and Telephone Companies
- Pest Control
- Geek Squad
- Construction (bulldozers, forklifts)
- Pest Control
- Landscaping
- Home Repair (flooring installation, HVAC-R, plumbing)

Careers On Wheels

Stick shifts and safety belts. Steering wheels and four tires on the road. These are some of the things that drive various kinds of careers in our community and around the globe. Careers On Wheels provides a venue for Collin County middle school students to see some of these vehicles up close and personal.

To register, visit <http://cowday2009.eventbrite.com> or complete and submit the form attached.

Global EDGE Tech Prep Consortium of Collin College

2200 W. University Drive
McKinney, Texas 75071
Phone: 972.548.6723
Fax: 972.548.6726
E-mail: globaledge@ccccd.edu
www.ccccd.edu/globaledge

Global EDGE Tech Prep Consortium
Third annual
Careers on Wheels Day

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Friday, May 15

at
Collin College Preston Ridge Campus
9700 Wade Blvd. in Frisco

COLLIN COLLEGE GLOBAL EDGE

Many states and school districts host Careers on Wheels Days and resources online abound. Here is a brochure from Collin College in Texas.





The Path to College Leads to...



Job Opportunities

By 2025, 55% of jobs in Tennessee will require a college certificate or degree.

A Higher Income

Career _____
Degree: _____
\$ _____ /year

ACTIVITY: Identify 5 interesting career paths and note the degree required and the annual salary.

There are countless other benefits of attending college, including:

Making yourself proud	Accomplishing a goal	Setting an example for others	Meeting new people
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Host a College and Career Luncheon

Hosting a career luncheon allows your students to learn more about careers that interest them in a much more informal environment. To organize a career luncheon, begin by surveying your students to understand their career areas of interest. From there, begin reaching out to professionals in your community that work in those career fields and invite them to participate in your careers luncheon. On the day of the luncheon, match students (or groups of students) with a professional in their field of interest for lunch.

You can choose to host this luncheon in your school cafeteria or off-site. Some schools have chosen to make such lunches more formal, have them catered off-site, and encouraged their students to wear “interview clothes” to give the lunch a more professional atmosphere.

When planning such a lunch, do what works best for your school, but always make sure that your students are prepared. Allow them time to research the career they are matched with and write a list of questions for the professional that will be joining them.

Some communities have created large, annual career luncheon events. Below is a photo from Tedesco Building Services employees at the 23rd Annual UCS Career Focus Luncheon in Michigan. This event brings sixth graders together with local employers to introduce area students to a variety of career options.



College and Career Lunchtime Learning

During lunch once a week or bi-weekly, host a “college corner” where students can eat with you and ask questions about college. Consider having themes for your “college corner.” For example- applications, scholarships, choosing a major, being successful in college, etc.

There are many ways to make your college lunch a fun and sought after activity in the cafeteria. Consider offering college swag to students who participate or having a themed treat for different colleges. Bring a box of University of Tennessee-Knoxville “big orange” popsicles or MTSU “true blue” blueberry muffins.



Spring Semester



About College Signing Day

What is Tennessee's College Signing Day?

College Signing Day in Tennessee began as an event to celebrate seniors going to college and an opportunity to encourage a college-going culture among all students, with college meaning any formal education that is continued after graduating from high school.

Focused on celebrating ALL students who are continuing their education after high school, Tennessee's statewide College Signing Day event takes its cue from the tradition of college athletics, where high school athletes get national attention as they sign letters of intent to attend a particular institution. In a similar way, College Signing Day is intended to publicly commend seniors who commit to attend college. Seniors will have the chance to publicly proclaim their plans which will promote a college-going culture in your school community.

Middle schools are encouraged to partner with local high schools to celebrate their college-bound seniors and further instill college aspirations among younger students. However, there are also many ways to implement College Signing Day at your school separate from high school participation.

What Does College Signing Day Look Like at a Middle School?

The event should be what works best for each individual school. For some schools, it could involve a visit to the feeder high school to watch the high school's assembly. You could also host high school seniors who previously attended your middle school to parade through the halls in their caps and gowns. If your event is only incorporating middle school students, you can host a college pep rally or celebratory lunch with college-themed activities.

When is College Signing Day?

Across the country, many schools are planning events on or around May 1 to celebrate college decisions. We encourage schools in Tennessee to plan your College Signing Day for one day in late April or early May. The exact date will depend on your particular school schedule.

What is the Purpose of College Signing Day?

The purpose of College Signing Day is to grow excitement around going to college and model the college-going culture for younger students. Every student should have the opportunity to be publicly celebrated for going to college. The event can also be an inspiring opportunity for younger students. By applauding students who are going to college and gaining knowledge of where students are attending college, younger students will increase their own educational aspirations. Through adding participation of and partnership with higher education institutions, the event can also be a way to grow the relationship between local colleges, your school, and your students who will be attending those institutions.

Event Ideas with High Schools



College Walk

When possible, partner with feeder high schools to allow the seniors to walk the halls of your middle school on the way to their College Signing Day ceremony. Play music or have the band lead the way. Allow middle school students to line the halls, make signs, and cheer for their classmates.

Congratulate Seniors

Assign each advisory period a group of seniors from a feeder high school to celebrate. Allow students to write letters of congratulation and encouragement to the graduating seniors celebrating their postsecondary plans. Students can decorate their cards or make signs to send to their adopted seniors.

Senior Breakfast or Lunch

Invite your former students back to your middle school for breakfast or lunch to celebrate their graduation from high school and allow your current middle school students to participate. You can choose to arrange the seating by college and allow middle school students interested in a college to sit with high school seniors who plan to attend that college. Coordinate with the schedules of the feeder high schools when picking a date for your event. You may choose to host this event on the same day as the high school's college signing day ceremony.

Alumni Panel

As a part of your event, host a panel of graduating seniors who previously attended your middle school. Prepare students ahead of time and discuss that they'll be hearing from graduating seniors who are heading to college in the fall. Brainstorm questions together about high school and college and model appropriate question and answer behavior.



Middle School Signing Ceremonies



Imitate high school signing events by allowing 8th grade students to sign a pledge to dedicate themselves to their studies, graduate from high school, and pursue a postsecondary credential. A sample pledge is provided on the next page. The signing ceremony could happen at a pep rally or could be a more formal event coinciding with middle school graduation. Design an event that works best for your school!

Signing Ceremony Planning Checklist

- Set up a College Signing Day committee or team at your school to discuss the timeline and event. Your team might include school counselors, teachers, administrators, students, parents/guardians, college admissions/financial aid/outreach staff, and other community members or organizations.
- Evaluate current resources and budget. Once your budget is set, you will be able to better determine the type of event and what organizations and volunteers could provide or donate.
- Determine the type of event(s) and schedule for your College Signing Day based on resources and budget.
- Confirm College Signing Day location and time.
- Schedule time to meet with the 8th grade class to celebrate their achievements and share with them the purpose of their College Signing Day event and making a pledge to prepare for college.
- Contact higher education institutions, local businesses, and local non-profits or community organizations for donations and/or sponsorships for college t-shirts or other swag.
- Distribute resources to faculty and staff at your school and request that they promote the event by decorating their classroom and/or door with related information.
- Finalize arrangements for a pep rally and/or assembly, if applicable. Remind teachers, counselors, and administrators of the day's schedule and planned activities.
- Communicate with 8th graders regarding the logistics of your event. You may want to do a practice run with your students leading up to the event or right before the event.
- Utilize your schools call-out or texting system to remind students and parents of your event.
- Confirm any additional personnel needed. Coordinate set up and clean up needs with custodial staff.
- Create a fun playlist or ask the school's pep band to play during the event.
- Purchase decorations and supplies for the event (i.e., balloons, streamers, pep rally appropriate noise makers).
- Ensure your event supplies are ready the day before College Signing Day.



Class of 2025

Name

Today, I look ahead to my high school career. I will work hard to do my best in all of my classes and understand that the work I do in my high school courses will help me prepare for college and my career.

I pledge to be a role model to younger students and to develop myself and my interests through academics, activities, and community service.

In 2025, I will graduate ready for college and ready to succeed as a proud alum of _____ Middle School.



Design Your College Pennant



A college pennant project can be a fun way to work with your art teacher and your language arts teachers to spread college-going enthusiasm. We've created two worksheets that can be used in tandem to ensure students are creating a fun design while also building their college aspirations. Ask students to use the brainstorming document first, then move on to designing their pennant.

Brainstorm Your Pennant



A popular way to show pride in your college is through a pennant. Pennants are flags in the shape of a triangle. They're often made of felt or soft, but stiff fabric. Colleges make pennants that represent their school by using the school's colors, including the school's name, and decorating the pennant with a motto or a mascot.

Imagine yourself in the year 2025...you're about to be a high school graduate! What are your plans? What are you most proud of from your high school career? Use these answers to inspire the design for your pennant!

Student First and Last Name: _____

Please Fill In Your Chosen Program: _____

Name of College You Will Attend: _____

OR

TCAT or Technical School You Will Attend: _____

OR

Military Service in Which You Will Enlist: _____

What accomplishment in high school are you most proud of?

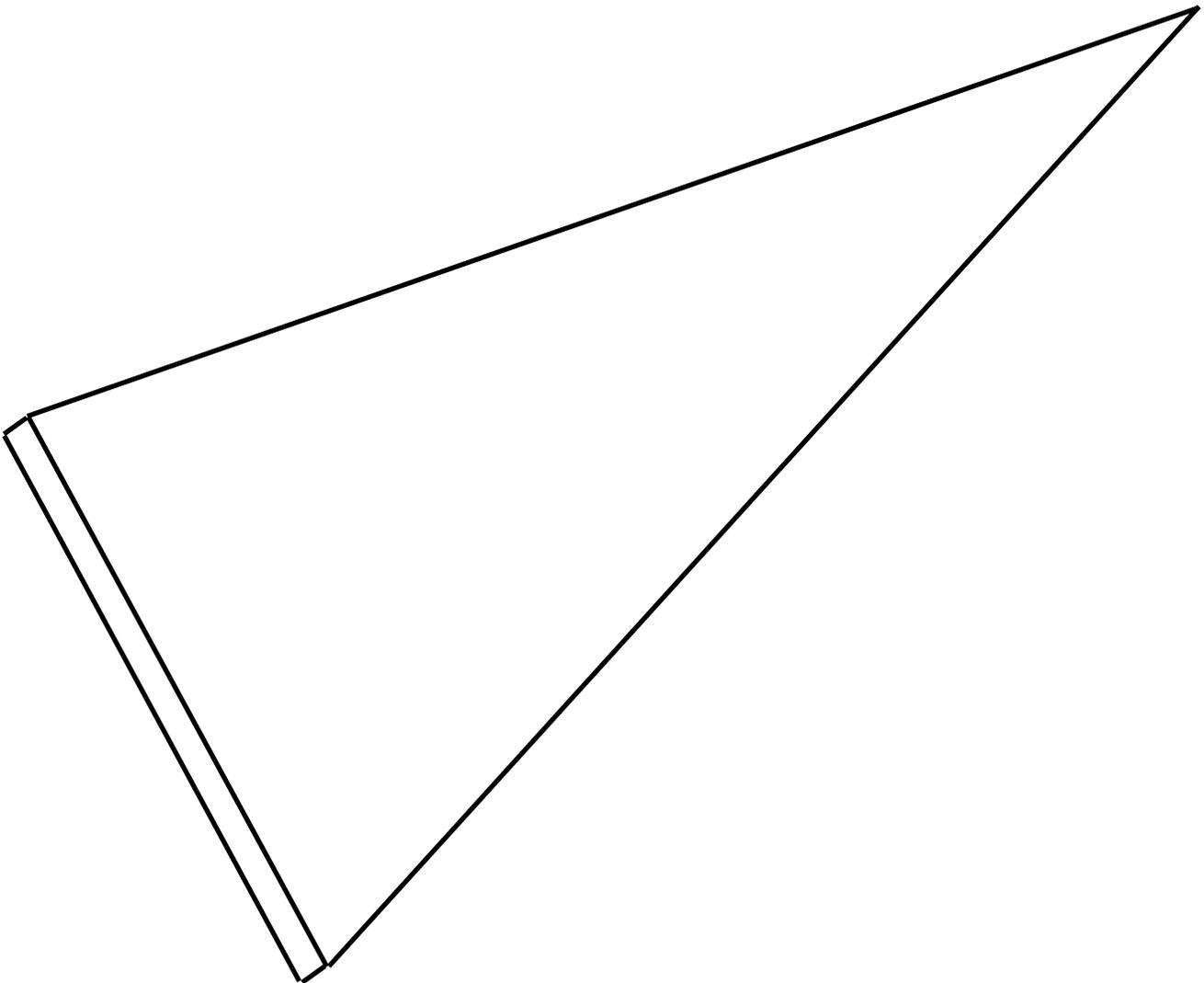
What career will you pursue?

Design Your Pennant



Show your college and career spirit by designing a pennant (a small, triangular banner) to celebrate your future choices. Your pennant should include the following details:

- 1) Your name
- 2) Your college, military branch, or career training program's name (for example: Columbia State Community College, Middle Tennessee State University, United States Air Force)
- 3) Symbols representing activities or classes in which you'd like to enroll (for example: a football, a beaker if you're interested in chemistry, a newspaper for writing for the student newspaper).



..... S E C T I O N 3

Volunteer Engagement and Path to College

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Included in this section:

- » An Introduction to Volunteer Engagement
- » Volunteer 101: Recruit Them
- » Sample Volunteer Recruitment Email or Letter
- » Event Descriptions
- » Higher Education Contacts
- » Volunteer 101: Train Them
- » Volunteer 101: Thank Them

An Introduction to Volunteer Engagement

Why should I consider recruiting volunteers for my Path to College events?

Volunteers can provide several benefits to your Path to College events. On a practical note, volunteers help you accomplish more on a day with many moving pieces. Volunteers can ensure that students sign in to your event, that students and families are directed to the correct locations, and more.

In addition to manpower, volunteer involvement provides your students and families with a sense of community support that is a key ingredient to a thriving college-going culture. When students see a volunteer from a local business or higher education institution who is taking time from their day to help with a Path to College event, it sends a message that the community cares about student success.

When it comes to sustainability and the college access work that you do, volunteers can open the door to strong partnerships in your local community. Volunteers who spend time in your school will spread the word about the great work you're doing, which can lead to anything from donations for a school barbecue, to a job shadowing partnership or a mentoring program. You will have the opportunity to steward great relationships with your community through volunteers.

Volunteers sound great, but I don't know where to start. What can I do to ensure I have volunteers and that they leave my event wanting to get more involved with my school?

In the following pages, we will detail the three keys to a great volunteer experience:

- Recruit Them
- Train Them
- Thank Them

Volunteer 101: Recruit Them



Where can I find volunteers?

Potential volunteers are all around you, if you know where to look. Here are just a few examples of groups and organizations to contact for volunteers:

- School alumni
- Students' families, PTA, School Improvement Council
- Retired educators
- Senior, or church groups
- Community college and university representatives and faculty
- Business, community, and political leaders
- Youth programs (e.g., YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, 4H, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts)
- College access organizations in your school or community

How can I advertise the opportunity to volunteer?

Start with your network in your community. Who do you know at your local businesses, places of worship, and nonprofit organizations who may want to get involved? Reach out to your contacts and see if they are willing to send out an email or post a message in their bulletin or break room on your behalf.

What should I write in order to explain the opportunity and what volunteers will be doing when they come to our school?

On the following pages, you will see a sample volunteer email or letter that includes blank spaces for customization. We have included sample event descriptions and topics covered, which you can use to personalize your own letter based on your event and needs.

Sample Volunteer Recruitment Email or Letter



<School logo>

<School address>

Dear <name of organization>,

<Name of your middle school> is hosting a <event name> Path to College event on <date>. Path to College events help students and families learn more about future careers and college opportunities. This event will <event description, see next page>.

We will be hosting our event on <date> and would welcome representatives from <name of organization> to visit our school during this exciting and important time. Volunteers can <sample volunteer activities>. Our students will look to you for help and support as they take a big step in the direction of going to college.

If you or any of your colleagues at <name of organization> are interested in volunteering in any capacity, please contact <name, contact info at name of your middle school>.

Thank you,

<Your name>

<Your title>

Event Descriptions



Event Name: College Application and Exploration Week

Event Description: ...provide students and families the opportunity to explore college and career paths. At our school, we define college as a form of training beyond high school that affords a student the opportunity to earn a living wage and develop into a thriving member of our community.

Event Name: TN FAFSA Frenzy

Event Description: ...provide students and parents with accurate information about financial literacy, saving for college, and how education and training can open up new career paths. In high school, these students will fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) in order to remain eligible for scholarship and grant programs like Tennessee Promise. In middle school, TN FAFSA Frenzy events help students gain awareness of earning, saving, spending, and how these concepts work with career choices and education.

Event Name: Career Fair (College and Career Planning)

Event Description: ...provide students and families with the opportunity to explore a variety of careers. Our middle school students are beginning to set goals for the careers and college experiences that they would like to pursue, and we want to encourage students to learn about the different fields and roles that exist in our community.

*Additional information you may want to incorporate: Each presenter will be provided a table where you can display your career, business, or organization. If possible, please bring prizes, pamphlets, or brochures for students and come prepared to share about your education, what you love about your role, and what kinds of skills you use at your career.

Event Name: College Signing Day

Event Description: ...provide middle school students with the opportunity to celebrate college-bound seniors at our feeder high school. By recognizing these older students, our younger students will continue to develop college and career aspirations. At our school, we define college as any form of training beyond high school that affords a student the opportunity to earn a living wage and develop into a thriving member of our community.



Volunteer Recruitment: Higher Education Contacts



Contact Information for Tennessee's Public Universities

Austin Peay State University
Clarksville, TN
www.apsu.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@apsu.edu
(931) 221-7661

Tennessee State University
Nashville, TN
www.tnstate.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@tnstate.edu
(615) 963-5101

University of Tennessee-Knoxville
Knoxville, TN
www.utk.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@utk.edu
(865) 974-1111

East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, TN
www.etsu.edu
Admissions Office:
go2etsu@etsu.edu.
(423) 439-4213

Tennessee Tech University
Cookeville, TN
www.tntech.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@tntech.edu
(931) 372.3888

University of Tennessee-Chattanooga
Chattanooga, TN
www.utc.edu
Admissions Office:
utcmocs@utc.edu
(423) 425-4662

Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, TN
www.mtsu.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@mtsu.edu
(615) 898-2233

University of Memphis
Memphis, TN
www.memphis.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@memphis.edu
(901) 678-2111

University of Tennessee-Martin
Martin, TN
www.utm.edu
Admissions Office:
admitme@utm.edu
(731) 881-7020

Contact Information for Tennessee's Community Colleges

Chattanooga State Community College
Chattanooga, TN
www.chattanoogastate.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@chattanoogastate.edu
(423) 697-4400

Dyersburg State Community College
Dyersburg, TN
www.dscc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@dscc.edu
(731) 286-3200

Nashville State Community College
Nashville, TN
www.nsccl.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@nsccl.edu
(615) 353-3333

Cleveland State Community College
Cleveland, TN
www.clevelandstatecc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@clevelandstatecc.edu
(423) 472-7141

Jackson State Community College
Jackson, TN
www.jscc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@jscc.edu
(731) 424-3520

Northeast State Community College
Blountville, TN
www.northeaststate.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@northeaststate.edu
(423) 323-3191

Columbia State Community College
Columbia, TN
www.columbiastate.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@columbiastate.edu
(931) 540-2790

Motlow State Community College
Tullahoma, TN
www.mscc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@mscc.edu
(931) 393-1500

Pellissippi State Community College
Knoxville, TN
www.pstcc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@pstcc.edu
(865) 694-6400



Volunteer Recruitment: Higher Education Contacts

Contact Information for Tennessee's Community Colleges-Continued

Roane State Community College
Harriman, TN
www.roanestate.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@roanestate.edu
(865) 354-3000

Volunteer State Community College
Gallatin, TN
www.volstate.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@volstate.edu
(615) 230-3688

Southwest Tenn. Community College
Memphis, TN
www.southwest.tn.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@southwest.tn.edu
(901) 333-7822

Walters State Community College
Morristown, TN
www.ws.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@ws.edu
(423) 585-2600

Contact Information for Tennessee's Colleges of Applied Technology

TCAT - Athens
www.tcatathens.edu
admissions@tcatathens.edu
(423) 744-2814

TCAT - Dickson
www.tcatdickson.edu
admissions@tcatdickson.edu
(615) 441-6220

TCAT - Jacksboro
www.tcatjacksboro.edu
admissions@tcatjacksboro.edu
(423) 566-9629

TCAT - Chattanooga
www.chattanooga.state.edu/tcat
admissions@chattanooga.state.edu
(423) 697-4433

TCAT - Elizabethton
www.tcatelizabethton.edu
admissions@tcatelizabethton.edu
(423) 543-0070

TCAT - Jackson
www.tcatjackson.edu
admissions@tcatjackson.edu
(731) 424-0691

TCAT - Covington
www.tcatcovington.edu
admissions@tcatcovington.edu
(901) 475-2526

TCAT - Harriman
www.tcatharriman.edu
admissions@tcatharriman.edu
(865) 882-6703

TCAT - Knoxville
www.tcatknoxville.edu
admissions@tcatknoxville.edu
(865) 546-5567

TCAT - Crossville
www.tcatcrossville.edu
admissions@tcatcrossville.edu
(931) 484-7502

TCAT - Hartsville
www.tcathartsville.edu
admissions@tcathartsville.edu
(615) 374-2147

TCAT - Livingston
www.tcatlivingston.edu
admissions@tcatlivingston.edu
(931) 823-5525

TCAT - Crump
www.tcatcrump.edu
admissions@tcatcrump.edu
(731) 632-3393

TCAT - Hohenwald
www.tcathohenwald.edu
admissions@tcathohenwald.edu
(931) 796-5351 x122

TCAT - McKenzie
www.tcatmckenzie.edu
admissions@tcatmckenzie.edu
(731) 352-5364

TCAT - McMinnville
www.tcatmcminnville.edu
admissions@tcatmcminnville.edu
(931) 473-5587



Volunteer Recruitment: Higher Education Contacts

Contact Information for Tennessee's Colleges of Applied Technology- Continued

TCAT - Memphis
www.tcatmemphis.edu
admissions@tcatmemphis.edu
(901) 543-6169

TCAT - Newbern
www.tcatnewbern.edu
admissions@tcatnewbern.edu
(731) 627-2511

TCAT - Ripley
www.tcatripley.edu
admissions@tcatripley.edu
(731) 635-3368

TCAT - Morristown
www.tcatmorristown.edu
admissions@tcatmorristown.edu
(423) 586-5771

TCAT - Oneida
www.tcatoneida.edu
admissionsl@tcatoneida.edu
(423) 663-4900

TCAT - Shelbyville
www.tcatshelbyville.edu
admissions@tcatshelbyville.edu
(931) 685-5013 x100

TCAT - Murfreesboro
www.tcatmurfreesboro.edu
admissions@tcatmurfreesboro.edu
(615) 898-8010 x132

TCAT - Paris
www.tcatparis.edu
admissions@tcatparis.edu
(731) 644-7365 x151

TCAT - Whiteville
www.tcatwhiteville.edu
admissions@tcatwhiteville.edu
(731) 254-8521

TCAT - Nashville
www.tcatnashville.edu
admissions@tcatnashville.edu
(615) 425-5500

TCAT - Pulaski
www.tcatpulaski.edu
admissions@tcatpulaski.edu
(931) 424-4014

Volunteer 101: Train Them



Volunteer training can take on a number of different forms based on your event, your team, and your time. If the words “volunteer training” sound intimidating, think again and think outside the box!

In-Person

Meeting with volunteers in person is a great way to develop relationships with the individuals who are giving their time and energy to college access work in the community. You can host an in-person training at your school and include a tour of the facilities to familiarize your volunteers with your location. This option is great if you have volunteers from a wide variety of organizations, but can be difficult for volunteers to attend due to commitments outside of work hours.

If many of your volunteers are from the same organization, consider hosting a training during their lunch break or before or after a group meeting. While you won't be able to provide a tour of the school, you will likely have better attendance.

Webinar

Webinars are great for busy schedules! You can host the webinar live at a time that works well for you and record the webinar so that you can share the recording with those who aren't able to make it. Free webinar software that has worked well for Path to College participants includes Zoom, OpenMeetings, and MeetingBurner.

Information Sheet

Creating an information sheet from this guide can be a great way to organize your thoughts and make a plan of how you want to use volunteers. This sheet can be emailed out ahead of the event and also printed for volunteers to reference on the day of the event.

Why You Need Volunteer Training

Adapted from
www.thebalance.com

Among the things that make volunteers happy is a good orientation to your organization and basic training.

Just getting the volunteer in the door is not enough. Just like any employee, a volunteer needs to feel welcomed, informed and trained for whatever might happen.

Orientation is just like it sounds. Volunteers want to know the context in which they will be doing their work.

What a General Orientation Should Cover

Share your school's mission and history.

Describe Path to College events and your college access work.

Include parking and logistical information.

Describe any policies your school has around signing in and signing out, social media, etc.

Volunteer 101: Thank Them



Never underestimate the power of a thank you. Saying thank you with a short, but meaningful note shows your volunteers that you appreciate the work they did to support your students and parents. It can also help you build stronger relationships with members of the community. Happy volunteers who feel valued will be more likely to sign up for future opportunities and may become some of your best advocates in sharing the great work that's happening at your school.

Here is a sample thank you note that you can personalize as you like. Try to send thank you notes (emails or letters) within 48 hours of your event.

[School Logo/Name]
[School Address]



[Date]

Dear **Contact's Name or Institution**,

On behalf of **Name of Middle School** I would like to personally thank you for volunteering your time at our **<event name>** event. This event would not have been a success without partners like you.

Include a short summary of what happened at the event. (i.e. 40 parents and students attended and were able to attend and receive information about creating a 529 college savings plan). Our students are one step closer to actualizing their dreams of attending college!

Once again **Name of Middle School** thanks you for your efforts and contribution of time at our event! We hope to see you soon.

Insert a link to any press coverage or photographs from the event.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Your Title
Contact Information

..... S E C T I O N 4

Media Outreach and Social Media

.....

Included in this section:

- » Steps for Reaching out to the Media
- » Sample Press Release
- » Sample Media Advisory
- » Photograph Submission/Sample Media Release
- » Social Media 101
- » Google Alerts

Media Outreach and College Access



Reaching out to local media is a wonderful way to increase community awareness of and involvement in college access work. Path to College events are a positive reflection of work happening in your community and inviting the media will shine a spotlight on the work you're doing through the program.

Steps for Reaching out to the Media

1. Write a press release or media advisory: Write a brief press release or media advisory for your event or news. **Typically, a press release is used for a news story where there isn't a specific event for the media to attend (but many people also use press releases for events).**

In each press release or media advisory, be sure to include contact information, including a name, telephone number, and email address, for your designated media contact. In the body of the press release, make sure you cover the basic: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

A media advisory should be used for a specific event, such as a kickoff. The media advisory will highlight the date, time, and location of the event, as well as providing some background information.

2. Distribute the press release: When you are ready to announce your news event, send out the press release or advisory to the local media approximately **two weeks prior to the event.**

If you email a copy of the press release or advisory, include the text in the body of your email rather than as an attachment. This will help your email avoid spam filters. If you can, send the email from an address linked to a person's name (rather than a general organizational mailbox). An email from `firstname.lastname@tn.gov` is more likely to be read than an email from `CollegeforTN@tn.gov`.

Tip: If you or someone at your school has a relationship with the media or a specific reporter, have that person reach out and/or follow up. Also try reaching out to reporters who have covered your school(s) previously.

3. Follow up once you send the advisory: Once you have sent the press release or advisory, follow up by phone to make sure the newsroom received the advisory. Prepare to be brief on the phone- newsrooms and reporters are usually busy and being prepared when you speak to them will help you keep their attention.
4. Designate a media point of contact: Choose someone to be the point person for any members of the media who may want more information about the news release or event.
5. The day of your news release or event: Ensure that your media point of contact is prepared to answer basic questions about your event. Make sure parking is available for any media and that your school's front office is aware that media may be arriving.
6. Send a thank you: Saying thanks will help to maintain a good relationship with your local media outlets.

Sample Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, please contact:

Name

Phone

E-mail Address

Include a city/state and the date of the release.

Your headline should reflect the content and be in capital letters or in bold.

SCHOOL NAME HOSTS EVENT NAME

CITY, TN (DATE) - In an effort to promote college awareness and access, **Name of Your Middle School** will participate in **Event Name**, a statewide initiative sponsored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and CollegeforTN.org, on **Date**.

The goal of **Event Name** is to **Insert event goal**. **Insert one to two sentences to describe your event**. This is the **Insert Number** time it has been held at **Name of Your Middle School**.

Name of Your Middle School, is expecting more than **Insert Number** students to participate with the help of **Insert Number** volunteers from **Insert names of School Faculty/Administration/College/ Community Resources** that will help.

“Quote about your event. The event is a unique opportunity to create a college going culture in **Name of Your County/City/or District**,” said **Principal**.

For more information about the **Name of Your Middle School Event Name**, please contact **Your Name and Contact Information**.

Event Name is a statewide event organized by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and sponsored by CollegeforTN.org, Tennessee’s college and career planning web portal. The goal of **Event Name** is **Event Goal**.

###

At the end of each press release, it is a good idea to include “boilerplate language” or a standard description of your school and school district.

- The body of the release should address the who, what, where, when, why, and how of the event. Try to include at least one quote from someone who plays a leadership role (for example, your principal).
- The release should total between 4 and 7 paragraphs.

This mark lets readers know that this is the end of the press release.



Sample Media Advisory



Include notice that the document is a media advisory, the title of the event, and the date of the event.

MEDIA ADVISORY FOR:
Name of Your Middle School Event Name
Date of event

For more information contact:
Name, phone number, email address

Always include main point of contact.

Give a brief summary in the title of the media advisory.

Name of Your High School/District Name Event Description

In an effort to promote college awareness and access, **Name of Your Middle School** will participate in **Event Name**, a statewide initiative sponsored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and CollegeforTN.org, on **Date**.

The goal of **Event Name** is to provide all Tennessee students the opportunity to explore college and career opportunities with the support of their school. **Insert one to two sentences to describe your event.** This is the **Insert Number** time it has been held at **Name of Your Middle School**.

Include just 1-3 sentences to give context to your event.

[Include details about your specific event, especially activities that can be filmed or photographed. "Students will be visiting employer booths at the career fair to talk with local professionals."

WHO: For example: 75 8th Graders
WHAT: Event Description
WHERE: Location
WHEN: Date

Using bullet points or a list, include the Who, What, Where, and When of the event.

Event Name is a statewide event organized by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and sponsored by CollegeforTN.org, Tennessee's college and career planning web portal. The goal of **Event Name** is **Event Goal**.

At the end of each media advisory, include "boilerplate language" or a standard description of your school and school district.

This mark lets readers know that this is the end of the media advisory.

Photograph Submission



Not every event needs its own press release or media advisory. If you are having a smaller workshop or having a representative from a college or a business come to your school, you may want to skip the press release and instead submit a photograph to your local paper after the event. The following information has been adapted from www.pixalo.com.

“Editors receive many photos every day and very few ever get published. You can save them and yourself some time by following these simple tips.

...Send high quality .jpgs of around 2mb at 300dpi. Don't send more than 2-3 images in 1 e-mail attachment. And remember to include keywords, etc. in the file info. In the body of the e-mail put a very brief description of the subject of the photos. Be very judgmental of your own work and only send the best images with different views, i.e. scene setting shot, close up, human interaction.

...The speed of turnaround here is paramount. Newspapers go to print at a certain time and it doesn't matter how good your photos are, if they are too late they will not get used.”

A note on photos and students: please verify with your school and school district what kind of parental authorization you need in order to photograph students and release those photographs on social media or in the media. If you have any doubts about whether a student and family has signed a release, err on the side of caution and do not submit that photograph.

Sample Media Release



I hereby give irrevocable permission for photographs and/or videos of my child, _____, to be used by his/her school or the Tennessee Higher Education Commission/Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation now and in the future.

I further authorize his/her school or the Tennessee Higher Education Commission or Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation to use my child's likeness, name, and personal information (limited to age, school and city of residence) in publications and reproductions (including the program's official website) as well as for editorial, trade, and advertising purposes. I understand that I will not receive any fee, now or in the future, for the use of my child's likeness.

Parent/guardian signature and date

Printed parent name



Social Media 101

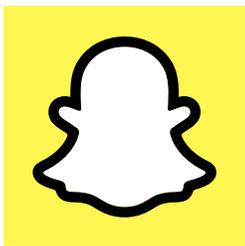


Social media is a fun, exciting way to share great news (and great photos) from your Path to College events. There are many platforms to choose from, each of which has a different format for sharing information and can help you reach a different audience. For example, if you're sharing a photo that you're hoping your students will connect with, Snapchat or Instagram are great places to start. Sending a short message? Try Twitter.

If you're new to Path to College, and new to social media, we recommend you pick one social media platform (for example, Facebook) and concentrate on posting all of your news and photos on that page.

Below you'll find an overview of popular social media platforms and their pros and cons. Most importantly: verify your school's rules about social media and students before you start any social media pages or campaigns.

Instagram: Instagram is a social media platform that focuses on photo sharing. Users upload a photo to their account and write captions that incorporate hashtags (#) which allow for others to search and find their photos. **Pros:** Instagram is very visual and has a younger user base, so you're more likely to connect with students. **Cons:** You cannot post a message without a photo, so this is not best for a quick announcement.



Snapchat: Of the "big four" social media platforms, Snapchat is the newest and also has the youngest audience. Users share disappearing photos either amongst their friends or to a "story". **Pros:** Students use Snapchat, with many logging in throughout the day. **Cons:** While they use the app, most users only utilize the person to person picture sharing and don't explore images from brands or pages. Students would often rather send one another "snaps" than seek out content.

Facebook: Facebook has the largest user base of these four platforms, in part because it has been around the longest. Users can share posts that are just texts, or text plus pictures, emojis, even emotional reactions. **Pros:** Facebook can be more "user friendly" for adults. Setting up a page and connecting with others is any easy process. **Cons:** Fewer students are on Facebook, so you're more likely to connect with their parents than students directly.



Twitter: Twitter keeps messages short and sweet with a 280 character limit. Users can share photos or just text and it is often used to chronicle events as they happen. **Pros:** Just as Instagram hashtags are searchable, using a hashtag (#) allows your tweet to join a conversation and show up when others search. For example, #TNCollegeAppWeek has great pictures from previous events. **Cons:** Again, fewer students use Twitter as opposed to individuals over 18.

Social Media Reach

Social media is a fun tool that can help you engage your audience in a way that traditional media (print, TV, and radio) cannot. If you are interested in trying to analyze the “reach” or impact of your social media work, these examples can help you understand what free analytics exist on Twitter and Facebook.

Understanding a Tweet’s Social Media Reach (Twitter)



In this example, the content is **“We have received a \$24.5M grant to expand GEAR UP! “TN has become a national model for college access and success.” shar.es/1VEjNh**
The tweet received **54 likes**.
The tweet received **25 retweets**.

For advanced analytics, you can click on this icon below your tweet:  A window will appear showing you the number of impressions (number of people who saw your tweet) and engagements (number of people who interacted with your tweet, i.e. clicked a link, liked it or retweeted it).

Understanding a Facebook Post’s Social Media Reach



In this example, the content is **“Tis the season for pumpkin spice, cozy sweaters...and applying for TN Promise! Apply today at www.tnpromise.gov**
The post received **1 like**.
The post received **3 shares**.

In this window, you can see additional information such as the number of people reached and the number of times someone clicked on your post.

Creating Google Alerts

If you send out a press release or media advisory, you'll want to know when something about your event gets published. Google alerts are an easy and convenient way to ensure you see when your school is featured in the news. These directions have been adapted from the Google Help Forum.

Create an Alert

1. Sign in to your Google account.
2. Type in the website **<https://www.google.com/alerts>**.
3. In the box at the top, enter the words you would like Google to alert you of when news appears. We suggest you use quotation marks for your search terms, i.e. **"TN FAFSA Frenzy."**
4. Click **Show Options** to update the following: how often you'd like to be notified, the types of sites you'll see, how many results you want, and which other Google accounts should receive the alert.
5. Click **Create Alert**. You will now get emails whenever Google finds matching search results.

We suggest that you create multiple alerts to ensure you're capturing as many mentions of your school's college access work as possible.

- "Karns Middle School"
- "KMS"
- "KMS Career Fair"

..... S E C T I O N 5

Path to College and Virtual Learning

.....

Included in this section:

- » Virtual and Socially Distant Implementation
- » College Application and Exploration Week
- » TN FAFSA Frenzy
- » College Planning Night
- » College Signing Day
- » Useful Links and Documents

Virtual and Socially Distant Implementation

Many school leaders, students, educators, and families are wondering what school and college will look like during the COVID-19 pandemic. Path to College resources are great ways to engage your students both in person and virtually. There is no substitute for personal relationships and connections, but virtual advising is something most of you have already been doing for years!

At [THEC-TSAC](#), we are committed to supplementing your efforts with great, student-tested ideas around enhancing a college and career culture within your schools. These resources are not all of the resources to help you implement great instruction and advising with your students in 2020, but these digital and virtual ideas can help you begin to provide some stability and consolation to your students and families in these uncertain times.

We know this is a difficult time for your school and your students. In recognition of the “let’s make it happen” spirit of college advisors and counselors everywhere, [THEC/TSAC](#) has put together resources gathered from GEAR UP TN, Advise TN, and other schools who are making plans to advise every student, no matter the circumstances.

College Application and Exploration Week

College Application and Exploration Week in the 2020-2021 academic school year is set to begin on September 21 and conclude Friday September 25, 2020. We encourage schools to find some time during the fall semester or quarter to help all PK-12 students and families begin thinking about the connection between college enrollment and a great future job and career.

Our concern when our schools are virtual is that students won't bother to apply to college, or remember the steps for completing an application. Using virtual advising strategies, students can learn that August-October is the best time to apply to several colleges. Reminder, college is any training beyond high school graduation, so that includes our Colleges of Applied Technology, Community Colleges, and Universities.

Here are some best practices and ideas for #TNCollegeAPPWeek:

1. Build excitement for your school community around the connection between college and a great job.
 - a. Celebrate #TNCollegeAPPWeek events with a [newsletter](#) so parents and the larger community know what is happening.
 - b. Leverage social media to schedule posts each day that mirror the daily college announcements, trivia questions, or highlight the school faculty.
 - c. Snail mail or deliver Path to College stickers to the students who have successfully sent an application, completed an online survey, or completed a milestone. Use the Tennessee Department of Education's [College and Career Milestones](#) to help your 5-12th graders.
 - d. Promote your schools via print, radio, or other media. Local papers are always looking for a great education story. Make sure that they have your positive stories to share.
2. College-Fact or Fiction? Many of our students and families see the sticker price of a college and immediately are discouraged. Dispel myths from truth by making it a game.
 - a. Send out a survey to students and parents online. Encourage parents and students to answer the questions and be entered to win a Wal-Mart gift card, or other incentive.
 - ii. "Is community college tuition-free in Tennessee?" TRUE!
 - iii. "Standardized test scores and grade point averages are the only basis upon which the merit of a student is judged when making admission decisions." FALSE!
 - b. Create free online quiz games with [Kahoot!](#), [PollAnywhere](#), and [Google Forms](#).
3. [Virtual Advising](#) is a great way to approximate in-person counseling and advising for students. Think tele-health appointments during the lockdowns, or video conference calls with your coworkers.
 - a. Find the right tool for your schools and community. Many families, students, and teachers enjoy using [SignalVine](#), [Possip](#) and [Remind](#).

College Application and Exploration Week- Continued

- b. Persistent outreach will help, even though our students might not immediately respond or confirm that they are receiving our Remind nudges, or [SignalVine](#) texts. Open-ended texts or messages will more likely yield a response from students.
 - i. “Hi [first_name], it’s Marje. We’re about a month into the school year so I wanted to check in and see how you’re doing. Anything I can help with?”
 - ii. “Hi, it’s Deanne. Lots of students get grants that help them finish their degree and graduate to a rewarding career. Can I help you apply to [name of college] this year?”
 - iii. Hi [first_name], I want you to have lots of choices for college and career! I notice that you haven’t completed the TN Promise application yet. Is there anything I can help with?”
 - iv. “Happy #TNCollegeAPPWeek, [first name]! Are you still interested in [college name]? Let me know how I can help you apply.”
- c. Personalize [messages](#) and outreach. Make sure to use your name when messaging with students.
- d. Establish a generic email for students so that that all counseling staff can access for example: Counseling@yourhighschool.edu
 - i. You can create a shared email address with your district admin, or create a free Gmail account and share the password/account details with your counseling and advising teammates.
- e. Develop a FAQ on your school counseling website, based on the students’ biggest obstacles to applying for colleges.
 - i. Update the FAQ to reflect your students’ top college interests.
 - ii. Find the human, or college admissions officer who knows your school and would be best at helping your students and list their names and contact information on the school website’s counseling pages.
- f. Modify your school’s answering machine in order to forward calls about high school transcripts, college applications, or other senior tasks. Create a virtual voicemail box using MS Outlook, or create a new inbox with your phone systems so that the entire school counseling staff can access these resources.
- g. Use mail merge with family and student emails to highlight students’ personal interests, first name, and upcoming deadlines.
 - i. For example, if you have an excel spreadsheet with students’ interests in careers and colleges, nudge the students with a personalized message, hyperlink to that future college website, and link them to a YouTube video with an exciting future career the students have shared with you.

College Application and Exploration Week- Continued

- ii. If you haven't [polled](#) your students' college and career interests, create an online poll to send out to your students and/or families. When you know your students' interests, then you can monitor their specific milestones during the summer months to mitigate summer melt.
- h. Use video conference calls with college admissions officers, community alumni, and local leaders to allow students to see a member of the local community who believes college is the best path to a great job.
 - i. Video conference call with the admissions representatives to provide a virtual tour of the college campus and even attend a college class.
 - ii. Video conference call with a local employer to identify the different kinds of jobs and the training required to complete these jobs (assembly manager, restaurant manager, high school principal).
 - iii. Reach out to your TSAC Outreach Coordinators to help schedule a training or virtual Q&A with your students.
 - iv. Many colleges have virtual tours available.
 1. [Strive Virtual College Fairs](#)
 2. [CampusTours](#)
 3. [YouVisit](#)
 4. Historically Black Colleges and Universities [Virtual College Tours](#)
 5. [YouUniversity](#)
- i. Host webinars for your parents, since schools most likely will be discouraging in-person assemblies for most of the fall semester.
 - i. Use the Path to College slide deck to help parents navigate the application and financial aid process.
 - ii. Present your PowerPoint slides and share with YouTube or email.

TN FAFSA Frenzy

Tennessee continues to lead the nation in completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms. However, in a virtual landscape we have seen fewer students complete and re-submit each school year. How can we support our educators and families who need real-time help with the FAFSA?

Here are some best practices:

1. Encourage students and parents to begin the process of talking about paying for college. Counselors should provide context and a calming influence over students and parents in a webinar or phone call-out to make certain that parents know they can reach out via email or phone during working hours.
 - a. Request your high school students complete a financial aid planning worksheet, like the FAFSA [college financial aid planner](#) document.
 - b. Send weekly reminders to high school seniors about upcoming deadlines. Remember, if your high school seniors have signed up for TN Promise, they will begin receiving reminders from TN Achieves and Ayers Foundation.
2. Investigate the college “return on investment” by teaching students key success metrics for colleges, using the [Federal College Scorecard](#).
 - a. Graduation Rate- How many students earn a degree or credential? (Graduation rates on the Federal College Scorecard measure students who graduated in 8 years for 4-year degrees, 4 years for 2-year degrees, 18 months for 9-month certificates.)
 - b. Salaries- after completing your degree, diploma, or certificate show the average amount of money graduates earn one year after graduation. These numbers are self-reported by the institutions to the Federal Government.
 - c. Retention rates- How many students return for another semester at that same school?
 - d. Assign students to research the nearest colleges and institutions in order to explore why and how these data metrics might impact their choice or future success.
3. Advise students to create options and alternative paths to the same career or job in the future by using [TNTransferPathway.org](#).
 - a. Select one of the high-demand career fields on TNTransferPathway.org
 - b. Investigate the locations where you can get started (community colleges).
 - c. Have students email you three possible pathways to pursuing certain careers of the teacher or students’ selections.
 - d. Communicate with parents about the students’ understanding of multiple pathways to success, using the students’ results.
4. Host a Virtual FAFSA Night.

TN FAFSA Frenzy- Continued

- a. Host a Virtual FAFSA night using Zoom, where teachers and counselors can monitor the chat box while providing students a place to ask questions and hear from you.
 - i. Have students complete a registration form, asking students to answer simple questions about their FSA ID, tax documents, or 2019 tax forms, or other questions.
 - ii. Reply to students with specific registration details for the password-protected Zoom call.
- b. Facebook Live affords parents/ students a place to watch a professional complete the FAFSA and to ask questions.
 - i. Remember that parents will be anxious about sharing financial information over the internet or phone, so understand that parents will need some clear instruction on what items are needed to complete the FAFSA.
 - ii. Encourage several advisors and counselors to join at the same time, so you can connect with students who might be having particular challenges.
- c. Schedule good, old-fashioned phone calls with students and families!
 - i. Remember the telephone? Find an online appointment calendar ([Doodle poll](#), Google Calendar, Calendly) and schedule a time for students to have your undivided attention.
 - ii. Connect within the week to make sure that your students have completed the FAFSA and know how to update their college preferences via e*GRandS.
- d. Research financial aid officers' contact numbers and email addresses.
 - i. If most of your students are enrolling at Jackson State Community College, then find those students and set up a virtual Financial Aid Zoom or Skype call.
 - ii. Allow students to see the advisors through the video conferencing call and then reconnect these students who have further questions.
- e. Paying for College requires a lot of planning. Including your sophomore and junior parents in your senior newsletter could help parents get a head start.

College Planning Night

College Planning Night is a time for rising seniors and underclassmen to ask questions and hear about the numerous pathways and options beyond high school graduation. Typically, a Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) Outreach Coordinator comes to high schools in the spring semester to deliver a PowerPoint presentation and be present to students and parents afterwards. In a virtual landscape, TSAC Outreach Coordinators may not be able to make it out for your evening, or Back to School nights. However, these TSAC Outreach Coordinators still want to host virtual webinars and events. Stay tuned for upcoming webinars and recorded trainings, via @TNPromise and @TNHigherEd.

Here are some great ways to help parents and students begin thinking about college before senior year:

1. Mail your sophomores and juniors a physical postcard with important information, hyperlinks, and contact details.
 - a. Create a student-friendly newsletter with [Canva](#), [Adobe Spark](#), or MS Publisher.
 - b. Print out and mail double-sided postcards to students.
 - c. Ask Chamber of Commerce, local churches, or community organizations to help cover the costs of sending out materials to the entire sophomore and junior class.
 - d. Measure your impact. Did students read the materials? Include a survey, link, trivia question, or raffle item to encourage students to read the information and respond.
2. Online Survey form!
 - a. Ask parents and students their hopes and dreams for planning for college, i.e. "Where do you see your son/daughter in 5 years?" "Which colleges might you want to know more about?"
 - b. Using survey results and students' permissions, sign up students to receive admissions information from the colleges themselves.
3. Virtual nudges about college scholarships can help students see that there is no such thing as a free lunch!
 - a. [Raise.me](#) shows students that even the grades you earn in high school are an investment in your future.
 - b. [CollegeGreenlight](#)- First in the family to attend college? Find resources and community support at this online resource page.
 - c. [QuestBridge](#) Scholarship Program-Free college? Yes, please. Only the most competitive applicants qualify for these public and private elite 4-year institutions. What have you got to lose?
4. Don't forget the value of community colleges and technical colleges.

College Planning Night- Continued

- a. Remember that every time you say the word college, our students and families imagine a dormitory, manicured lawns, and elitist cultures.
- b. Remind families that barbers, diesel mechanics, and electrical line workers all must go to college in order to get licensed and receive proper training.
- c. Show students the unique, accelerated programs through Tennessee's community colleges and technical colleges.
- d. CollegeBoard-RoadTrip Nation has incredible 50 minute long videos about [careers](#) that do not require 4 year degrees.

College Signing Day

Virtual College Signing Day Ideas

1. Use the hashtag #TNCollegeSigningDay. Use #TNCollegeSigningDay when posting on social media to recognize your students' post-high school plans. Also, consider tagging the college, military branch, or university to which your students are committing.
2. Create a highlight video of your seniors. Create a video highlighting your students using the [Virtual College Signing Day Video](#) PowerPoint template. The template, which includes music and instructions on how to create a video, is available here.
3. Host a school-wide social media spirit week. Ask students to post selfies each day. Make the last day College Signing Day and encourage seniors to post a photo of themselves holding a sign or wearing gear that declares their plans after high school.
4. Host a virtual Signing Day on Zoom or Google Meet. Email the [College Signing Day certificate](#) to students and invite students and their families to join a virtual call to announce their plans just as they would during a more traditional College Signing Day.
5. Ask students to post video revealing their college plans. Ask students to post videos opening their college acceptance emails and/or envelopes. You can also have students send you their videos so that you or your school can make a video montage and post on social media.
6. Partner with radio and television. Partner with local radio stations to highlight students and their future commitments. Inquire with your local TV News stations about airing photos, videos, and school counselor interviews.
7. Engage your alumni. Post photos on social media of alums in college gear or throwback photos from their days on campus. Describe your fondest college memories in social media posts, showing school spirit, and reminding new students that making the commitment to higher education is worth it. Invite students to share their plans and officially congratulate all students who commit to attend by reposting their photos, too.

College Signing Day- Continued

Socially Distant College Signing Day Ideas

1. Send students a graduation box. Mail or deliver graduation tassels, caps, and gowns to each student's home address and ask that they record and share the "unboxing" of their graduation materials via social media.
2. Give students yard signs declaring their postsecondary intentions. Use yard signs to celebrate graduates in the front lawns of their homes and apartment complexes.
3. Bring [College Signing Day certificates](#) to your students' homes. Principals can take College Signing Day certificates to students' homes and (from an appropriate distance) record students as they show their certificate. These clips could then be compiled to create a video that the school can share with the larger community and via social media.
4. Window, door, or lawn decorations. Encourage students to declare their intentions and hang them so they're visible to the community. Set a deadline for doing this. Tell your community so they can search for students' plans on their daily neighborhood walk.
5. Schedule a car parade. Decorate cars with college gear and drive through your community to show off your students' plans.

Postsecondary Transition Toolkit

The Tennessee Department of Education's Division of College, Career & Technical Education, have developed a robust and helpful toolkit to help high schools specifically keep track of measurable outcomes and best practices for all students.

The purpose of the Postsecondary Transition Toolkit is to assist districts and schools in planning, executing, and monitoring key actions and metrics to ensure students stay on track for postsecondary success during this extraordinary time.

For more information about the [toolkit](#), please contact the Director, Jerre Maynor, at Jerre.Maynor@tn.gov



Useful Links or Documents

Advising/Counseling Resources

- [ACT Resources for Students, Teachers, Schools and Workers Impacted by COVID-19](#)
 - [ACT Testing Updates](#)
 - Press Release: [ACT to Offer Students Summer ACT Test Date Options and ACT Test Online at Home](#)
 - [Free ACT Resources](#) - This two-page document includes test prep resources, fee waiver instructions, and more.
- [Free Practice for the SAT Provided by College Board](#)
- [Tennessee Electronic Transcript Exchange](#)
 - [Student Clearinghouse Guidance PDF](#)
- [Milestones for College & Career Readiness](#)
- Student & Family Communications - Sample Text-based “Nudging” Platforms
 - [Signal Vine](#)
 - [Remind](#)
 - [Possip](#)
 - [SendHub](#)
 - » [THEC Path to College Resources](#)
 - » [THEC/TSAC Virtual Financial Aid Resources](#)

Guides from other organizations

- [American School Counselor Association Planning for Distance Counseling Document](#)
- [National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships \(NACEP\) Coronavirus Resources & Guidance](#)
- [NCAN Virtual Advising Recommendations](#)

Student College & Career Planning Resources

- [Tennessee Student Success Course](#)
 - [College 101 Resources](#)
 - [Getting In and Paying for College](#)
 - [Gearing Up for College](#)
 - [College Skills and Success](#)



Useful Links or Documents- Continued

- CollegeforTN.org
 - [College Planning](#)
 - [Career Planning](#)
- Free Career Aptitude Assessments:
 - [Kuder Navigator \(Grades 6-12\) – Tennessee College and Career Planning System](#)
 - [College Board Career Finder and BigFuture](#)
 - [Princeton Review Career Quiz](#)
 - [ASVAB](#)
- [NEXT Guide: A Guide for Tennessee Seniors](#)
- Scholarships
 - [Scholarship Search and Application Tips](#)
 - [Sites to kick-off scholarship Search](#)

Career Interest Inventories from Sophomore Next Guide

- Holland Code-Interests Inventory
 - <https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip>
- Personality Inventory
 - <https://www.collegefortn.org/open/welcome>
- Road Trip Nation My Road Map
 - <https://roadtripnation.com/roadmap>
- Color Personality Profile
 - <https://profile.keirsey.com/#/b2c/assessment/start>
- YouScience
 - <https://www.youscience.com/thec/>