The Counselor’s Role in Creating a College-Going Culture
Mobilizing People and Resources for Change

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Putting the Mission and Vision Into Action
Examining Your Impact as a Leader
Counselors as Leaders and Change Agents

• What can counselors do to ensure that every student who finishes high school is ready for college?
Pipeline Steps Reduce Student Income Gap

1. Creating aspiration about college and understanding the door it opens
2. Taking the appropriate curriculum and staying on track
3. Preparing for and taking college entrance exams
4. Applying to college

**Question**: What does college preparation and College attendance look like at your school?
What is a Culture?
Creating a School-Wide College-Going Culture

- Changes school structure and culture for all (not just for selected individuals)
- Involves long-term, systemic change
- Has broader implications
- Requires full “buy in” and additional resources
College-Going Culture: The Goal

• ALL Students:

Are prepared for a full range of post-secondary options through structural, motivational and experiential college preparatory opportunities
Most Importantly, it’s a Team Effort!

Counselors, teachers, administrators, and parents are partners in preparing students for college.
Creating a College-Going Culture

- Research tells us that having college plans by tenth grade increases the likelihood of attending by 21%
- Academic preparation for college is more important than socioeconomic status in college enrollment.

How can counselors translate student aspiration into college attendance?
# Nine Principles of College Culture

Table 1. Nine critical principles of a college culture.

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<th>College Talk Clear, ongoing communication among students, teachers, administrators, and families about what it takes to get to college.</th>
<th>Clear Expectations Explicit, clearly-defined goals, communicated in ways that make them part of the culture of the school.</th>
<th>Information &amp; Resources Comprehensive, up-to-date college information and resources, easily accessible by all students, families, and school personnel.</th>
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<td>Comprehensive Counseling Model View of counseling that makes all student interactions with counseling staff opportunities for college counseling.</td>
<td>Testing &amp; Curriculum Information about and access to “gate keeping” tests (PSAT, SAT, ACT) and courses (college prep courses, AP, etc.) for all students.</td>
<td>Faculty Involvement Informed, active participation from school faculty in the creation and maintenance of a college-going culture.</td>
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<td>Family Involvement Meaningful engagement on the part of family members in the process of building a college-going culture.</td>
<td>College Partnerships Active links in a variety of forms between the school and local colleges and universities.</td>
<td>Articulation Ongoing coordination between counselors and teachers among all schools in a feeder group.</td>
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Nine Critical Principles for a College-Going Culture

College Talk

• Clear, ongoing communication among students, teachers, administrators, and families about what it takes to get to college
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College Talk Indicators

• Newsletters, newspapers, posters
• “Your Educational Journey” campus-wide
• College Club for small learning groups
• Essay contest – college application questions
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Clear Expectations

- Explicit, clearly defined goals, communicated in ways that make them part of the school culture
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Clear Expectations Indicators:

- School mission statement
- Four-year plans for all students
- Frequent communication with students about their college options
- Ongoing opportunities to discuss college preparation
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Information and Resources

• Comprehensive, up-to-date college information and resources, easily accessible by all students, families and school personnel
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Information and Resources Indicators:

- College-related periodicals
- PSAT/SAT/ACT materials
- Financial Aid materials
- College choice guide
- Internet access
- College & Career planning
- Computer/web-based programs
- Test prep materials
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Comprehensive Counseling Model

• View of counseling that makes all student interactions with counseling staff, opportunities for college counseling
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Comprehensive Counseling Model Indicators

• All high school counselors attend state college conferences

• Counselors at all grade levels participate in ongoing collaboration

• Counselors distribute college/career information to all students, faculty and staff
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Testing and Curriculum

- Information about and access to “gateway” tests (PSAT, PLAN, SAT, ACT) and courses (AP and college prep) for all students
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Testing and Curriculum Indicators

• PSAT given on school day to all 10th graders with fee waived

• School-supported practice admission tests, preparation programs offered to all students

• Master schedules changed to make more college-prep classes available

• Organizational skills taught to all students

• Khan Academy – classroom use
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Faculty Involvement

• Informed, active participation from school faculty in the creation and maintenance of a college-going culture
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Faculty Involvement Indicators:
• Classrooms feature decorations and “college corner”
• Teachers initiate College Talk during class time
• Mathematics teachers work with PSAT-takers
• Teachers understand their role in college prep
• Teachers visit counseling office
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Family Involvement

• Meaningful engagement on the part of family members in the process of building a college-going culture
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Family Involvement Indicators:

• College fairs for students and parents

• Evening/weekend parent workshops to learn about college preparation, financial planning

• Support for parents’ belief that their children are “college material”
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College Partnerships

• Active links in a variety of forms between the school and local colleges and universities
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College Partnerships Indicators:
• Visits to local colleges for students at all grade levels
• College dress days, door decoration, guest speakers
• Tutoring programs
• Pen-pal program with college students
• College outreach staff presence on campus
• Panel of alumni speaking about college life
• Presentations by professors from local colleges
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Articulation

- Ongoing coordination between counselors and teachers among all schools in a feeder group
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Articulation Indicators:

- Students hear a consistent message at all grade levels
- Middle schools connect with students as young as fifth grade
- Students see themselves as college material as early as kindergarten
- High school and middle school counselors are pooling resources and making connections
Keep in Mind – For Your Action Plan

- All nine principles are interrelated; build on all nine
- Middle schools connect with students as young as fifth grade
- Students see themselves as college material as early as kindergarten
- High school and middle school counselors are pooling resources and making connections
Critical Question

What are the areas we want to focus on to expand our college going culture?

• What needs improvement?
• Who is being “left out” of the college process?
• How will we change our services and school culture?
Critical Question

What will you do next week?

• How will you sustain momentum in your effort to build upon or improve your college-going culture once you return to your school?
Examining College Prep (a model)

- Educated community/high expectations
- First Read: Through parent/student surveys = stress!
- All about end result/inherent in school name
- National merit/SAT Averages
- College matriculation
- What to do?
Redefine School Culture: Counselor Role

- **Motto:** Mens Conscia Recti
- **It’s all about the fit**
- **The 4-year journey**
- **Advising Committee**
- **Therapeutic approach**
Appropriate Role for Parents

- Educate early and often
- If you win them over, then you have access to kids, parents let go
- Teach them to empower their child, work with us not against us
- Convince them that you are an authority on the process, know and support their child, and understand their concerns
Senior Parent Nights

• How to deal with rejection … student and parent
• Parent role: champion not critic
• College selectivity pyramid
• Manager – consultant
• Excitement – fear
• Messages from seniors and reverse
Senior Workshops

- Love your safety/love your reach
- College visits to school/interview
- How/where to check decisions
- Moral/ethical behavior in process
- Take care of parents/communicate
Junior Parent Workshops

• Face time/mixed messages in community
• Agenda: car analogy/admissions process/dispel myths
• Benefits: address potential behavior thru anecdotes/describe “advocacy”/bonded
Trusted (and helpful) Voices

- Home from College Night
- College symposium
- Bay Area Case Studies
- Faculty Workshop
Sophomore Parent Workshop

- Necessary from advising night
- SAT/Rigor in program
- You are not behind
- School-wide advising system
Junior Workshops

- Range of colleges
- Spring break/college visits…set example
- College essay workshop
College Counseling Survey

- How did we do?
- Won’t please everyone
- Results matter…but process matters more
- Prospective parent tours/BOT