IDEAS FOR

COLLEGE & CAREER

READINESS PLANS ™

FACILITATOR GUIDE

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VISTA
SCHOOL RESOURCES

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IDEAS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PLANS™

INTRODUCTION

The *IDEAS for College & Career Readiness Plans™* is a program that not only supports success in high school but also links the foundational skills for students' college and career paths. Students completing middle school and starting high school need validation and understanding of the systemic expectations and future options developed around the topics listed under the *Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling* by the College Board National Office of School Advocacy. IDEAS integrates all these throughout the program sessions.

IDEAS is presented in a workshop format to facilitate comprehension of the needed concepts. The contextual skills and awareness for a successful transition to post high school academic options are embedded throughout. The lessons and extensions in IDEAS also contain English Language Learner Activities through cultural and linguistic frameworks supporting English as a New Language Standards (ENL). Opportunities for social and emotional learning are integrated into every chapter session.

The program includes a Student Journal that serves as a personalized manual for academic action plans and future reference for resumes and college essays. It can be used as a portfolio through high school. A pre- and post-survey allows students to see how far they've come over time in their *IDEAS College and Career Readiness Continuum.* Lessons have language-based activities and extensions that support the development of David Conley's foundational framework including strategies, behaviors, needed skills and exposure to support the college readiness initiatives. This program gives students the opportunity to explore, discuss, collaborate and learn — through best practices and key concepts — in order to forge a successful secondary and postsecondary plan.

Obstacles to Graduation and Attending A Higher Education

Using IDEAS with students will help build their self-agency and transitional skills. Planning, utilizing resources, and trying to be ready for what's to come is imperative for postsecondary academic and career success.

In developing students' college and career readiness, it is important for them to avoid:

Getting Off Track: In terms of college readiness preparedness, a student getting off track is defined as "a student who stops moving forward properly or going in the right direction towards the end goal." Sometimes a challenging class, or otherwise negative experience, can change a students' attitude and drive. Students who have set up external supports will have a better chance of rechanneling their efforts and realizing that challenges will make them stronger along the way.

Summer Melt: This usually happens when high school seniors, who intend to go to college, evaporate or "melt" during the summer months by not enrolling or attending the fall semester of their higher-ed plan. This is usually the time after high school graduation and before college orientation when students begin an alternative track other than the path that takes them into college or a trade school. Some of those students "melt" even when they have processes in place. For example, a student could take on a full-time job that takes priority over college goals. Or, if a student had been on track, he/she may need help filling out financial forms, housing applications, and immunization records. Once again, students who have set-up external supports will have a better chance of resetting their efforts to stay on track and enroll in postsecondary education. It is important to be aware of the summer "melt" rate at your school. There are intervention descriptions available. (Castleman, Page, Snowdon).

IDEAS is intended to instill the expectations of postsecondary enrollment over time. Tapping into peer learning techniques, projects, collaborations and reflections allow students to be self-motivated and build confidence. Student implementing IDEAS will have the foundation for their postsecondary success.
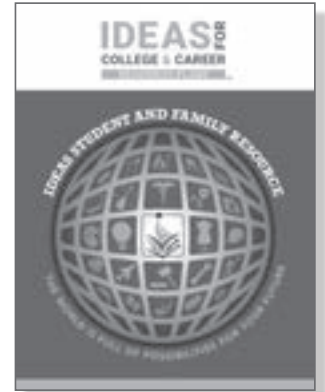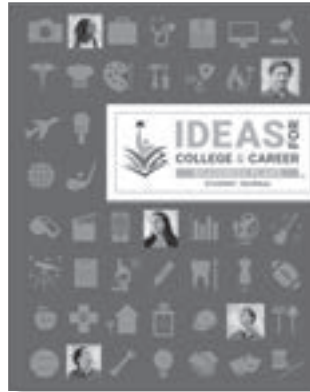
PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Facilitator Pack
(Facilitator Guide plus Student Journal)

Student Journal

Parent Resource
(Optional)

The *IDEAS for College & Career Readiness Plans™* includes a Facilitator Guide, a class-set of Student Journals and an optional parent resource. It's a comprehensive workshop program that not only supports success in high school but also links the foundational skills for students' college and career paths.

The Facilitator Pack

The Facilitator Pack includes the workshop Facilitator Guide, a facilitator's copy of the Student Journal and access to the Visual Aids / PowerPoint presentations / printable posters. Strategies include best practices for comprehension with reciprocal teaching, collaborations and research-based activities.

The Facilitator Guide provides a flow of lessons to each of the chapters / sessions. The effective means to relay concepts in the program are through peer learning discussions, collaborative activities and reflections. The guide includes the necessary student reproducible pages and access to the PowerPoint presentations that serve as visual aids in the classroom — either projected on a white board or printed for display throughout the room. These are downloadable at **https://vistaschoolresources.com/ideasccrp.**

The Student Journal

Each chapter in the Student Journal is titled as part of the very word **IDEAS: I**nspiration, **D**etermination, **E**xpectations, **A**ctions and **S**trategies for studying success. With color pictures, notes pages and entries for their individual action plans and progress, this resource becomes personalized. This leads to the internalization of these necessary concepts and with the collaborative lessons, engages students in their plan. This empowers students with resources and strategies, encouraging them to be active participants in determining their futures. The students' *IDEAS for College & Career Readiness Plans™* journal helps them on the continuum to graduation and postsecondary options. This self study at each stage in a student's personal academic plan helps gauge their progression toward graduation.

The book is written as an informational narrative with prompts, reflections and activities that emphasize practice in social and emotional competencies as presented by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). This resource supports students' self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making and social awareness through discussions and exploration of the topics related to school academic and career options.

Program Add-on: IDEAS Student and Family Resource

This resource serves as a go-to reference and tool to support parents and their students. It will help link their efforts with what is necessary to provide the best opportunity for their future!

Key Program Outcomes for Students

• Exposure to the academic expectations and options at the secondary level
• Empowerment with the process of setting goals and expectations
• Clarification of high school requisites
• Activation of needed processes to prepare for career and college options
• Exercises in social emotional learning
• Practice in English language and academic cultural awareness
• Documentation of achievements in personal student journal
• Correlation with online resources and research skills using technology
• Proceed on personal college and career readiness continuum

Support or Additional Resources

For additional support or other resources, you can contact us through:
• Website: **www.vistaschoolresources.com**
• Email: **info@vistaschoolresources.com**
• Phone: **1.866.380.9820**

COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

Steps to Starting Early: What can we do as teachers, counselors, administrators, and facilitators of the IDEAS program do to build a college-going culture? Research shows that having the information and tools, academic readiness, and access to financial information about postsecondary options, all help make a difference in assuring that students will pursue postsecondary certifications and / or degrees. Lower counselor to student ratio, with sufficient direct student dedicated time, also helps — especially for college advising. All of this is part of a college-going culture and can be led by school counselors and administrators who work as a team with fellow educators for students.

Maintain clear expectations from the school that every student will be prepared for college or a career requiring some form of higher-ed certification or degree. All faculty should understand that this is the expectation for students. Schools with high college attendance rates reported that this makes a difference. "The key is that these schools have high expectations for all students, and those expectations are defined as participation in some form of postsecondary education." (Conley, 105). Implementing the *IDEAS for College and Career Readiness Plans*™ program and having students develop their social capital, or networks of relationships in and out of school, builds awareness of what they need to succeed. They deserve a supportive environment to make appropriate and informed decisions for their most satisfying postsecondary outcome.

Support the College-Going Culture at school with this list to start! While not exhaustive, it does include a variety of ideas from physical and environmental pieces, to accessible information to parent and family supports.

Ideas to Implement a College-Going Culture — Environmental, Informational and Experiential

Environmental:

Create an inviting atmosphere for students to want to explore and expect higher-ed, find a career, and their access to options

- Display physical representations that promote post-secondary options including college posters, and pennants or signs from higher education institutions. (Request posters and / or pennants from admissions departments)
- Create a poster for display, or an ad on the school website with pictures of teachers / administrators and their alma maters
- Use social media to promote activities related to college
- Display IDEAS posters that are available through the *IDEAS for College and Career Readiness Plans*™ program website / PowerPoint presentations
- Have banners or posters displayed in halls and classrooms with inspirational quotes / messages about colleges
- Check out websites from the internet search: "college inspiration posters"
- A poster with links to financial aid and scholarship resources
- Encourage content teachers to post college content in their rooms
- Create a video with teachers or administrators about their college experience
- A meeting area dedicated to college consulting
- Encourage and welcome conversations about college, in addition to IDEAS' times during the day
- A display naming colleges where students have been accepted
- Display scholarship dollars offered overall when the packages are sent in
- Provide Decision Day Announcements - May 1st is usually the deadline to place deposits in postsecondary institutions. Verify and display when or where appropriate if student's want to share where they are attending

Informational:
- Have an available stock of resources that students can access in the college counselor's office or the media center such as: College tests (ACT/SAT) preparation books, books on careers and scholarships, etc.
- Provide internal or external support options for college test preparations
- Use links in the IDEAS program or online repository of interest inventory, career trends
- Include affirmations or quotes about achievement and goals in morning announcements
- Use activities in the IDEAS program to explore colleges, technical schools, and specific path along with information about different schools and their offerings
- Provide lists of scholarship websites
- Here is a list of some scholarship websites to check:
    - **College scholarships www.collegescholarships.com**
    - **College Board https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search**
    - **Fastweb Scholarships www.fastweb.com**
    - **College Greenlight www.collegegreenlight.com - National Scholarship Providers Association**
    - **ScholarshipPoints.com**
    - **Cappex.com**
- Provide registration dates/waiver information for ACT Aspire and PSAT tests (can take as early as 9th grade
- Provide registration dates and waiver information for ACT and SAT tests (important to take more than once (with preparation) for super score ability (best of the sections are combined for cumulative score)
- Provide Dual Credit/Enrollment opportunities
- Provide a Newsletter electronically or in print with information about events and opportunities
- Provide seniors with monthly reminder lists and countdown needs

Experiential
- College visits days — virtual or in person
- College fairs promote attendance and/or arrange transportations when needed
- Check state's counseling website or the **https://www.nacacfairs.org**
- Recent school alumni visits/presentations to share their experiences
- Career Day presentations from community members
- Invite admissions counselors from colleges for interviews or presentations
- Build postsecondary partnerships – for interactive events and Dual Credit/Enrollment opportunities
- Encourage rigorous course schedules for students to be challenged (examples: AP courses, Dual Enrollment, International Baccalaureate, Cambridge AICE)
- Designate a teacher alumni day where they can wear something that showcases where they graduated from (can be anything from a sticker to collegiate apparel)
- Provide *IDEAS Student and Family Resource* - parent guide with references for families to be prepared for postsecondary options. A PowerPoint is available for in-person or online presentations for families
- See College Board website and others for online resources and references
- Encourage family college night participation and information shared about high school success and the college determination and application process
- Institute a FAFSA day where students can create their FSA ID, complete the forms and invite parents
- Support students in their preparation of their application to college essays

References:
https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/college-career-ready.pdf.

Bryan, J., Young, A., Griffin, D. C., & Henry, L. (2015). *Preparing Students for Higher Education: How School Counselors Can Foster College Readiness and Access.* In J. L. DeVitis & P. Sasso (Eds.), Higher education and Society (pp. 149–172). New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Conley, D.T. (2010). *College and Career Ready: Helping all Students Succeed Beyond High School.* John Wiley & Sons

ADDITIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Some of these techniques will support the active learning of the concepts in *IDEAS for College & Career Readiness Plans™*. All though there are various approaches, refer to these when conducting the lessons:

Pauses for Clarification: During the presentation or reading of the resource, pausing to allow the listeners to further process what has been explained is an effective way to promote "active listening." Follow the pause by offering clarification. In the case of students who are English language learners or new to the school, it is recommended to offer students the chance to speak with a partner about what was just presented and allow them to ask questions. Sharing with the whole group as volunteers, or presenting questions for the facilitator to further explain, encourages deeper engagement between students.

Writing Activities: Students will be invited to respond in writing to an anticipation guide or a research prompt. Having students respond to a stated topic or question can be a way to provide additional writing practice when needed.

Large-Group Discussion: Students can discuss a topic or reading in class based on a passage, video, situation analysis, or reflection.

Think-Pair-Share: Have students work individually on an activity or reflect on a passage. Next students can share-and-compare their responses with a partner then write a joint response to share with their peers.

Peer Review: Especially when preparing the research responses, it will be a learning experience for students to see how others think. Have students turn in their (individual) completed assignment to the facilitator and bring a second copy for peer review. With peer feedback, students can correct errors in grammar/content.

Brainstorming: Solicit student input with a topic or prompt. Offer students a minute to record some of their own ideas then display them.

Case Studies: There are some real-life anecdotes that describe challenges and successes that has happened to well known public figures (see page 51). These may help students realize that having a plan for their future helps lead to new experiences that will guide their path. Sharing a teacher's own personal experiences in finding their career may also foster a connection with the students. The expectation is that students make connections between what they are learning in the program, the reality of their future lives, and the potential careers available to them through their actions.

Interactive Presentation: Facilitator will break up the lesson with activities that allow students to work with the material. Students may have to read on their own, analyze pictures, make calculations (their GPA), etc.

Active Review Sessions: The facilitator presents questions and the students may work individually or in groups. Responses can be shared, tallied, and discussed.

Role Playing: In order to fully understand a concept, students can play the role of a leader since acting out will help them better understand the theories being discussed. Scenarios can vary from simple to complex.

Jigsaw Discussion: For this technique, a topic or section of a reading is divided into smaller, interrelated or sequential pieces (e.g., like a puzzle is divided into pieces). Each team member is assigned to read a piece and become an expert on a different topic. After each participant has become an expert on their piece of the puzzle, they teach the other team members about it. Finally, after each person has finished teaching, the puzzle is reassembled, and everyone on the team knows something important about each piece of the puzzle.

Journal: This is an effective method for allowing students to apply concepts to their own life experiences. Reflections embedded in the Student Journals accomplish this. There are extended reproducible activity pages in this Facilitator Guide to help scaffold the written activities for students needing extra support to understand and develop concepts such as the creation of goals.

Inquiry Learning: Students use an investigative process to discover concepts for themselves. After the facilitator identifies an idea or concept for mastery, students are asked to make observations, pose hypotheses, and speculate on conclusions. Then they can share their thoughts and tie the activity back to the main idea / concept. This may apply when researching careers or community service activities.

Experiential Learning: Usually this refers to site visits about a topic being studied. This can be applied in various ways — from virtual college campus visits, to college tours, to career exploration site visits, to guests presenting to the class. The possibilities are limited only by the appropriate options at your school.

RESEARCH BASIS

Throughout this *IDEAS for College & Career Readiness Plans™* program, purposeful activities are presented based on the research by David Conley shared in his book, *College and Career Ready: Helping all Students Succeed Beyond High School.* Conley presents a conceptual model of four parts that include key cognitive strategies, key content knowledge, academic behaviors, and contextual skills and awareness (or college knowledge). The common definition for College and Career Readiness means that a student has reached competency of required content knowledge, course requirements, GPA, tests, and the ability to perform in college courses. Conley's foundational framework that includes strategies, behaviors, and needed skills and awareness are the focus of this program. This foundational skill set is what is usually designated for schools to provide as part of the college readiness initiatives.

This *IDEAS for College & Career Readiness Plans™* curriculum provides the needed resources to address the development of academic behaviors or key-learning skills, as well as the contextual skills and awareness for their success in high school and their transition to their postsecondary education.

The key-learning skills and techniques expanded upon in the workshop include:

• Self Awareness and Personal Trait Recognition
• Persistence and Follow Through
• Planning and Setting Short- and Long-Term Goals
• Strategies for Study Skills and Time Management
• Collaboration and Learning with Others
• Responsibility and Ownership of Learning
• Proficiency in Technology and Research

The contextual skills and awareness for a successful transition to post high school academics included in the workshop are:

• Postsecondary Options and Choices
• College Requirements
• Finance Planning: Aid and Scholarships
• Career Paths
• Communication with Mentors / Instructors
• Advocating for Self / Resourcefulness

In today's global, knowledge-based economy, a college education is the gateway to social mobility and better lifelong opportunities. The vast majority of Americas' high school students (86%) expect to attend college, but many lack the support and guidance they need to prepare for enrollment and success in college (Hussar and Bailey). Helping students understand the necessity of a college education is intrinsic throughout the program and Student Journal.

Part of the underlying aim from using the student pages as a springboard for discussion lies in the research/work of purposeful talk/discussion in a classroom. In *Comprehension Through Conversation*, author Maria Nichols emphasizes fostering the development of conversation that leads to bonding and building community, and it's important for comprehension and building respect among peers. A sense of community in the classroom also is important for the well-being of students and their "belief in being successful learners" (Nichols, 20). There are deeper implications that can be paved for a class that is developing as a learning community.

Sessions are most impactful when delivered over time. The turn-key lessons for facilitators:

• Expose students to the academic expectations and options they have at the secondary level

• Empower students with the knowledge to achieve their goals and expectations, through the lens of the *IDEAS for College and Career Readiness Plans™*

• Clarify students understanding of what to expect in high school

• Activate needed processes to prepare for college and career options

• Practice social and emotional learning strategies

• Recognize their strengths, challenges, goals, and resources available to them

• Document their achievements in their Student Journal for future reference when applying to college

During the program, and in their ongoing experiences, students proceed on their personal college preparedness continuum. This continuum was specifically designed for this program to support students in their self-awareness and responsibility for their learning and preparation for college (see complete continuum in Appendix A).

Key cognitive strategies are found in the text and in the extension activities especially those involving research and writing. In his book, David Conley clarifies that one aspect of the four-part conceptual model for college readiness are key cognitive strategies. These are the "habits of mind" or purposeful behaviors that students must be able to replicate over time and in various situations so they "learn when and where to employ them" (Conley, 33). They tend to be embedded in first level college courses across multiple disciplines. Key cognitive strategies include problem formulation, research, interpretation, communication, precision, and accuracy (Conley, 34). These can be done in writing assignments, oral presentations, and other student activities included in the workshop extensions.

The purposeful activities and forging of meanings through student discussions throughout the *IDEAS for College and Career Readiness Plans™* program exposes students to key cognitive strategies that build good "habits of mind" towards their academic and personal futures.

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