College-Going Culture

Key Elements that Support and Encourage a College-Going Culture

PEER FORWARD®

School: _____   **Date:** _____

The College-Going Culture (CGC) Assessment helps schools identify the baseline of the CGC at their school. To get the most accurate data, consider administering the assessment as a survey to a random selection of staff and students. Once you have a range of responses, you can aggregate and average the responses to identify areas most primed for growth and action.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
The school hasn't started work in this area.	Plans are in place to implement this at the school.	This is in place, and there is evidence that it occurs.	This is the school's routine, it works, and they even model it for others.

Consider each element below as you determine whether a high school evidences a mature college-going culture. Mature schools will warrant ratings of 3 or 4 for each item below.

_____ **College Talk** is part of each student's experience. The entire school staff and community members share their own experiences about their college pathways and/or create new experiences that impart their belief that this pathway is essential and open to all students. College expectations are made visible throughout the school through signs, banners and other resources. [Signaling]

_____ **Clear Expectations** ensure that all students are prepared for a full range of postsecondary options. The goals of what it takes to be prepared for college and career are explicitly defined, communicated and part of daily school culture. Students, families, teachers, administrators, and staff recognize the role that each plays in preparing students for college. Decisions about coursework and career options are made with all postsecondary opportunities in mind. School leadership conveys and acts on the belief that high school must be a launchpad for college and career success. [Knowledge & Expectations]

_____ **Information & Resources** about postsecondary education are regularly updated and readily available in centralized places such as the media center, lunchroom, career/college center, main office, library, websites, and/or college corners in classrooms. These areas are easily accessible to students, families, faculty, and community members. [Knowledge & Expectations/Support, Structure, & Tools/ Signaling]

_____ **Comprehensive Counseling** for the postsecondary pathway is routinely available for every student, primarily from counselors, and supported by outreach staff, teachers and resource personnel. Each counselor who works with students is well informed about postsecondary planning and has access to college training. All students are expected to set postsecondary goals and to plan their path for achieving them. [Support, Structure, & Tools]

_____ **Testing & Curriculum** development and practices are geared for every student to have college options. All students know about PSAT, SAT, ACT, and SAT II testing dates and have the opportunity to take the tests regardless of cost. Student access to college prep coursework is standard and the school pledges that all students can complete the eligibility requirements for college. Rigorous coursework is available to all students, as are supports for academic success. [Academic Behavior & Rigor]

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_____ **Faculty Involvement** is constant and maintains the college culture at the school. Faculty is up to date on important "college knowledge" and participate in ongoing professional development to allow them to be active in preparing students for college. This also includes integrating college information and the very idea of college into regular classroom activities. [Knowledge & Expectations/Support, Structure, & Tools/Signaling

_____ **Family Involvement** is active and regular. Families are informed partners in the process of supporting students through the college pathway and understand that all students can be college bound. They have opportunities to gain knowledge about the college process and financial aid. The school staff is available to answer questions, help families navigate the college application process, and help make decisions about students' academic futures. [Knowledge & Expectations]

_____ **College Partnerships** are strong, facilitating college-related activities, such as field trips to college campuses and fairs, academic enrichment programs, and raising awareness of and aspirations toward college. [Support, Structure, & Tools]

_____ **Peer Leaders, Role Models, & Mentors** who are positive, relevant and college savvy are available for all students and play an active role in conveying the importance of postsecondary attainment. [Signaling/Support, Structure, & Tools]

_____ **Data-Driven Processes** are in place to identify and support students at-risk for not enrolling in postsecondary opportunities and to activate effective practices**.** College enrollment is an important school metric that is regularly examined by school leadership and staff. Students and/or school staff routinely enter student milestone data into CSNav, and staff uses milestone data to improve postsecondary planning and instruction. [Support, Structure, & Tools]

_____ **Time** is set aside in the schedule for students to learn to plan their postsecondary path and to receive coaching as necessary. College Summit is delivered through a regularly scheduled, credit-bearing school day period or through a regularly scheduled advisory period. [Support, Structure, & Tools]