

College and Career Readiness Benchmarks: Define the qualities and achievements that students need to enroll, persist, and succeed in college, postsecondary training opportunities, and meaningful careers. These benchmarks define student characteristics, choices, and actions, so that students, families, teachers, counselors, and school administrators can make better choices and prioritize actions to help students reach (and surpass) these benchmarks.

Toolkit Name:	Best Practices in Counseling and Postsecondary Planning School Culture: School Barometer Tool
Target Audience:	School Leaders; members of a postsecondary planning inquiry team
Benchmark Domain:	College and Career Access
Purpose:	A tool to assist identifying the strengths and gaps in postsecondary planning work; can guide decisions about areas for strategic development.
How to Use:	The barometer is organized according to the major areas that comprise school culture, and key components of comprehensive supports for postsecondary access and planning. After completing the worksheet, team members should compare their responses and identify areas of shared agreement about further work to be done.
When to Use:	This tool can be completed at any point in the school year, to support a team or individual in setting goals for school development.

Best Practices in Counseling and Postsecondary Planning School Culture: School Barometer Tool¹

Use this tool to begin to identify gaps in your postsecondary planning work and set school-wide goals for development.

I. Background Information: School Structures

1. Who has primary responsibility for college and career counseling?

- Full time college counselor
- Guidance counselor who devotes % of time to college counseling
- Classroom teacher who has reduced load
- Advisory teachers
- Other: _____

2. The school counselor's top three priorities are:

- Scheduling/Programs
- Mandated Counseling
- Meeting with parents
- Supporting the principal
- Supporting students in the postsecondary planning process
- Administrative tasks
- Supporting advisory
- Other: _____

3. In what settings do postsecondary planning topics and tasks get accomplished?

- Regularly scheduled academic classes
- Special workshops
- Advisory
- One-on-one counseling
- After school
- Other: _____

4. Do teachers have a role in the college/career process? (circle one)

- Yes
- No

If yes, please complete the following questions:

4a. With which of the following areas are they supporting students (check all that apply):

- Early awareness of post-secondary options
- Making college lists/Researching colleges
- Completing college applications
- Drafting personal statements
- Visiting colleges
- Registering for SATs/other college- exams
- Preparing for SATs/other college exams
- Assisting with the financial aid process
- Exploring careers

4b. Within what settings do teachers complete this work?

- Academic Class time
- Advisory
- After-school
- Elective
- Other: _____

4b. Have your teachers received training of any kind to accomplish this work effectively? (circle one)

- Yes
- No

II. Background Information: School Data

Complete each row in the table below. For each row, fill in the one (of the three) yellow columns. Fill in either:

- The relevant percentage for your school;
- If you don't know the actual percentage, the document or source where you could get this data; or
- A checkmark if this data is not collected at your school or you don't know where to find it

DATA POINT	% IN MY SCHOOL	DOCUMENT/SYSTEMS TO OBTAIN THIS DATA	I DON'T KNOW
Graduation Rate	%		
Juniors taking the SAT	%		
Seniors taking the SAT	%		
Seniors who apply to college	%		
Seniors who apply to CUNY	%		
Seniors who apply to SUNY	%		
Seniors who apply to private colleges	%		
Seniors who apply to non-degree programs (trade/vocational, military, etc)	%		
Seniors who complete the FAFSA	%		
Seniors who enroll in an associate's degree program the semester after graduating	%		
Seniors who enroll in a bachelor's degree program the semester after graduating	%		
Seniors who enroll in a non-degree program the semester after graduating	%		

III. School Practices: Qualitative Assessment

1	2	3	4
Our school hasn't started work in this area.	Plans are in place to implement this at our school.	This is in place and we have some evidence that it occurs.	This is our routine and it works well.

Please describe your school's current practices within each principle below.

You will use your rating in each section to guide decisions about where to focus action plans and areas for development.

	Rating 1-4	Where is this evident? Examples of what is in place.	NOTES: Training, partnerships or other supports in place in this area. Ideas for further development.
College and Career Exploration		Activities include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> College trips for every student, each year that they are in school, to a variety of types of schools <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding connections between careers and college majors/pathways <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding benefits and pitfalls of vocational/trade pathways <input type="checkbox"/> Completing applications to vocational or trade programs <input type="checkbox"/> Completing applications to gap year or service year programs <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding rights and privileges of military enlistment <input type="checkbox"/> Non-college pathways (e.g. training programs, gap-year programs, etc.) 	

	Rating 1-4	Where is this evident? Examples of what is in place.	NOTES: Training, partnerships or other supports in place in this area. Ideas for further development.
		<input type="checkbox"/> A 9-12 scope and sequence/curriculum that engages students in college and career exploration <input type="checkbox"/> Students are expected to complete a postsecondary plan Estimated % of students who participate: _____ Other evidence/examples:	
School Culture: College and Career Expectations		Activities include the following: <input type="checkbox"/> All staff hold high expectations for all students <input type="checkbox"/> Staff shares their experiences about their college and career pathways and imparts their confidence that this pathway is open to all students. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers meet often with counseling staff to discuss postsecondary planning process	
Family Involvement		Activities include the following: <input type="checkbox"/> 1-1 meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Workshops on the college process <input type="checkbox"/> FAFSA workshops <input type="checkbox"/> Information sent home	

	Rating 1-4	Where is this evident? Examples of what is in place.	NOTES: Training, partnerships or other supports in place in this area. Ideas for further development.
		<input type="checkbox"/> Translated materials and outreach Estimated % of families who participate: _____	
College Partnerships		Activities include the following: <input type="checkbox"/> College Now <input type="checkbox"/> At Home in College <input type="checkbox"/> Enrichment programs <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ What % of students participate in college credit bearing courses? _____ Number of AP or college level classes offered: _____	
Comprehensive Advisement		Activities include the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings at least yearly grades 9-11 and several times in senior year <input type="checkbox"/> Self-awareness Assessments or Reflection <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding workforce trends and connections to postsecondary pathways <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding connections between careers and college majors/pathways	

	Rating 1-4	Where is this evident? Examples of what is in place.	NOTES: Training, partnerships or other supports in place in this area. Ideas for further development.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding expectations of a professional business or learning environment <input type="checkbox"/> Researching colleges and making college/postsecondary planning lists <input type="checkbox"/> Determining H/EOP eligibility <input type="checkbox"/> Writing a competitive college essay <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding financial aid <input type="checkbox"/> Completing financial aid forms <input type="checkbox"/> Completing college application process <p>Estimated %age of students who participate: _____</p> <p>Other evidence/examples:</p>	
Support for testing		<p>Activities include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Registering and preparing for entrance exams (SAT/ACT) <input type="checkbox"/> Distributing fee waivers <input type="checkbox"/> Clear information on PSAT, SAT I/II, ACT, CUNY Assessment given to students <input type="checkbox"/> Assistance registering <input type="checkbox"/> Help with preparation <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion of score reports <p>Estimated %age of students who participate: _____</p>	

	Rating 1-4	Where is this evident? Examples of what is in place.	NOTES: Training, partnerships or other supports in place in this area. Ideas for further development.
Career Connections		Activities include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Job shadowing <input type="checkbox"/> Internships <input type="checkbox"/> Career day <input type="checkbox"/> Field trips to different work sites/ work site tours <input type="checkbox"/> Resume completion <input type="checkbox"/> Mock Interviews <p>Estimated %age of students who participate: _____ Other evidence/examples:</p>	
Transition Support		Activities include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 9th grade summer bridge programs <input type="checkbox"/> Support throughout the summer after 12th grade <input type="checkbox"/> Transition to college/college survival skills <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Literacy & Lifeskills <input type="checkbox"/> Preparing for CUNY Assessment test <p>Estimated %age of students who participate: _____ Other evidence/examples:</p>	
School wide systems and structures		Activities include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A schedule in place for completion of postsecondary activities <input type="checkbox"/> Database or other tracking system in place to monitor student progress towards key deadlines, completion of applications, etc 	

	Rating 1-4	Where is this evident? Examples of what is in place.	NOTES: Training, partnerships or other supports in place in this area. Ideas for further development.
Professional Development		Activities include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lead counselor is active member of professional community of college counselors <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling staff attend yearly training to get updated knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> 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/career. 	

ⁱ Some elements of this school barometer tool have been adapted from: University of California, Berkeley, Center for Educational Partnerships, School/University Partnership Program (2008). *College-Going Culture Rubric: Assessing the College-Going Culture at Your School*. Retrieved from: http://collegetools.berkeley.edu/resources.php?cat_id=16. Their rubric had been adapted from Professor Patricia McDonough’s Nine Elements of College-Going Culture (UCLA).