

THRIVE

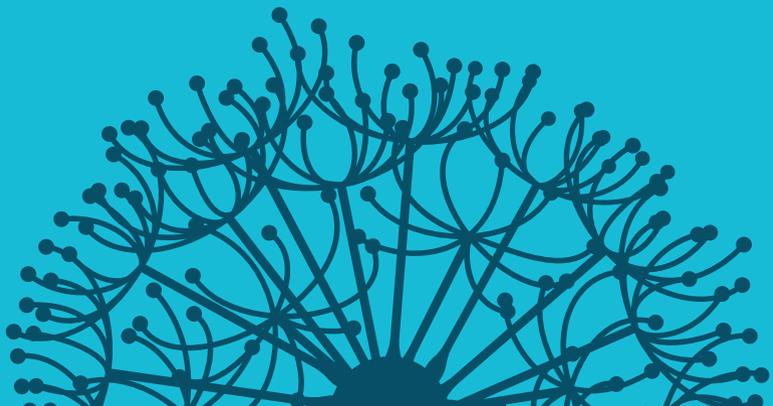
FIELD GUIDE FOR CREATING A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE



The Forsyth Promise

educate | equip | engage | cradle to career





The Forsyth Promise is a proud member of the Lumina Foundation's Community Partnership for Attainment and appreciates the Foundation's support in helping our community increase the number of local residents with postsecondary credentials. For more information about the Lumina Foundation and their Goal 2025 initiative, visit luminafoundation.org/goal_2025.

HOW TO USE THIS FIELD GUIDE



This field guide offers some examples of easy, low-cost ways to reinforce the importance of education after high school and spark young people's exploration of options for their future.

EVALUATE

It also provides a checklist for assessing how well your organization, whether it is a school, business, congregation, nonprofit, or neighborhood association, is supporting and encouraging a college-going culture.



SPARK YOUR THINKING

This toolkit is intended to spark your thinking too! What roles can you as an individual and your organization play in making our community a place that expresses the value of education and lifelong learning?



WWW.FORSYTHPROMISE.ORG



A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

“College-going culture refers to the environment, attitudes, and practices in schools and communities that encourage students and their families to obtain the information, tools, and perspective to enhance access to and success in post-secondary education.”

University of California, College Tools for Schools



WHAT YOU BELIEVE



WHAT YOU SAY



WHAT YOU DO

All of us have a role to play in communicating the expectation that all young people can prepare for and successfully pursue education after high school. These efforts should start early in children's lives and span throughout their journey to adulthood. Why is this important? Because studies show that post-secondary education is linked to greater lifetime earnings, better health outcomes, and more engaged community members, just to name a few of the positive impacts (How College Shapes Lives: Understanding the Issues, October 2013). Individuals, families, and communities all reap the benefits of a more educated and equipped society.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

What Parents/Guardians Can Do:

1	GUIDE
---	-------

Instill the idea that education does not end with high school and why it is important.

2	ASPIRE
---	--------

Emphasize “when you go to college” rather than “if you go to college.”

3	COMMUNICATE
---	-------------

Talk with your children about different careers (you can start as early as preschool!). Ask them questions that encourage them to dream about their future.

4	PARTICIPATE
---	-------------

Take your child to events or open houses on local college campuses.

5	SAVE
---	------

Create a college savings fund to which you and your child can contribute or join programs with savings funds. Recent studies suggest that a child with a college savings account is seven times more likely to pursue higher education!

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

What Schools Can Do:

1	DISCUSS
---	---------

Have leaders initiate a discussion with staff and faculty around the following questions:
Do you believe all students can, if they choose, go on to higher education?
In what ways is our school preparing them for studies beyond high school?

2	INSPIRE
---	---------

Hang college banners or signs throughout the school.

3	VISUALIZE
---	-----------

Put up a U.S. map that shows where staff and faculty went to college.

4	SET AN EXAMPLE
---	----------------

Have teachers display their diplomas and/or pictures of them in college in their classroom.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

What Local Businesses Can Do:

1	ENGAGE
---	--------

Offer internships and apprenticeships to high school students to promote exposure to potential careers and what is required to reach their goals.

2	SUPPORT
---	---------

Implement policies that encourage or incentivize employees' contributions to college savings accounts.

3	INFORM
---	--------

Provide a resource area on-site with up-to-date information for parents about the college application process, financial aid, etc. Partner with local student support organizations to provide information sessions on-site for parents during the lunch hour.

4	ENCOURAGE
---	-----------

Encourage your employees to pursue higher education and/or complete their degrees. Not only will this increase the skills of your workforce, it will set a standard for the next generation.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

What Faith Communities Can Do:

1	EDUCATE
---	---------

Provide a resource area with up-to-date information about pursuing education after high school (college-related publications, ACT/SAT materials, financial aid materials, college catalogs, etc.).

2	ORGANIZE
---	----------

Organize visits to local college campuses for your youth.

3	PARTNER
---	---------

Partner with local organizations to host parent workshops about college preparation, financial planning, and how to best prepare for education beyond high school.

SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

What Community Members Can Do:

1 | SHARE

Share your own experiences about pursuing higher education with local youth.

2 | MENTOR

Serve as a mentor for a young person who will be a first generation college student.

3 | ASK

Engage young people in conversations about what their dreams are for their future. For example, ask the teenager who is your grocery store cashier what s/he is planning to do in the future.

4 | GATHER

Help fundraise for local scholarships to support students for whom finances may be a barrier.

5 | PARTNER

Reach out to local schools and ask how you can help them prepare their students to be college- and career-ready.

A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

For more examples of how you and/or your organization can help promote a college-going culture in our community, check out these additional resources online:

1

CREATING A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE GUIDE

(CollegeEd)

3

IMPROVING COLLEGE-GOING TOOLKIT

(American Association of School Administrators)

2

COLLEGE-GOING TOOLKIT:

Information and Resources for Faith-Based Communities to Assist Members in Pursuing their College Dreams (15K Degree Initiative)

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

IS YOUR ORGANIZATION
**SUPPORTING AND ENCOURAGING
A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE?**

Evaluate your organization (ie. school, business, congregation, nonprofit, or neighborhood association) for each principle below to assess how well it is supporting and encouraging a college-going culture in our community.

1

Our organization hasn't started work in this area.

2

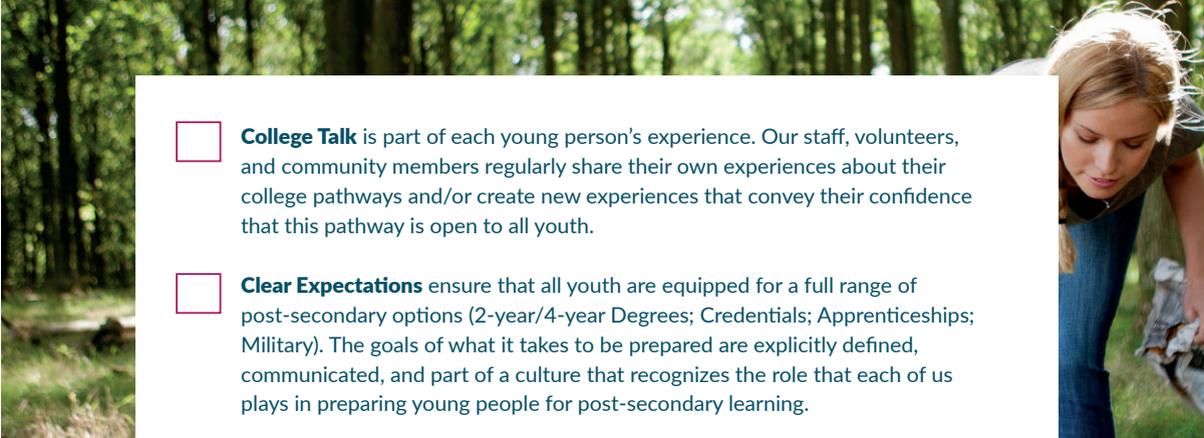
Plans are in place to implement this in our organization.

3

This is in place, and we have evidence that it occurs.

4

This is our routine. It works, and we model it for others.

- 
- College Talk** is part of each young person's experience. Our staff, volunteers, and community members regularly share their own experiences about their college pathways and/or create new experiences that convey their confidence that this pathway is open to all youth.
 - Clear Expectations** ensure that all youth are equipped for a full range of post-secondary options (2-year/4-year Degrees; Credentials; Apprenticeships; Military). The goals of what it takes to be prepared are explicitly defined, communicated, and part of a culture that recognizes the role that each of us plays in preparing young people for post-secondary learning.
 - Information & Resources** are regularly updated and readily available for youth and their families in centralized places such as lobbies, breakrooms, main office, library, and/or resource areas. This includes information about PSAT, SAT, ACT, and SAT II testing dates, and Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). We find ways to help students have the opportunity to take the tests regardless of cost.
 - Comprehensive Counseling** for the college pathway is available for every young person. Our organization has staff members and/or volunteers who are informed and have access to college training OR we have a partnership with local college advocacy organizations/schools that provides this kind of support. We help ensure young people's decisions about coursework and career options are made with all post-secondary opportunities in mind.
 - Family Involvement** is active and regular. We provide opportunities for families (including our staff's) to gain knowledge about the college process and become aware that all young people can be college bound. Our organization partners with local support programs to sponsor workshops to help parents and students learn about college preparation and financial planning.
 - College Partnerships** are strong. Our organization has active links with local colleges/universities, and we facilitate college-related activities, such as field trips to college campuses and fairs, academic enrichment programs, and raising awareness of and aspirations toward college.
 - Consistent messaging** that reflects a belief that all children are "college material" begins early and occurs seamlessly through elementary, middle, and high school. Our organization shares this message with young people and their families as they move through their educational journey.

For more information or assistance with implementing these principles, please contact The Forsyth Promise at forsythpromise@gmail.com or 336-721-9375.



BE THE PROMISE

*You and Your Organization
Can Help Create a College-Going
Culture in Forsyth County*



PROMISE

The Forsyth Promise is a community partnership working to ensure that every child in Forsyth County receives the best education possible and is fully equipped to thrive throughout life.



WHAT YOU BELIEVE



WHAT YOU SAY



WHAT YOU DO



MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

WWW.FORSYTHPROMISE.ORG



ADDRESS

301 N. Main Street
Suite 1700
Winston-Salem, NC
27101

ONLINE

Website
www.forsythpromise.org
Email
forsythpromise@gmail.com

ABOUT US

The Forsyth Promise is a community partnership working to ensure that every child in Forsyth County receives the best education possible and is fully equipped to thrive throughout life.

This field guide was developed by members of The Forsyth Promise Post-Secondary Completion Collaborative Action Network. Members of this network use data to identify best practices and align resources to help residents in Forsyth County prepare for and complete a meaningful post-secondary opportunity that leads to a sustainable living-wage career. If you are interested in learning more about the Post-Secondary Completion Collaborative Action Network or would like to get involved in helping create a college-going culture in our community, please email forsythpromise@gmail.com or call 336-721-9375.