Basic 12 for High School — Workshop 9: 
*What will the college admissions process look like?*

**Description:**
The formal admission process begins in the junior year of high school. It is critical for freshmen and sophomores (or younger) students to understand the steps in the college admissions process, especially the college entrance examination requirements. The workshop introduces the step-by-step admissions process and encourages students to register for the PSAT.

**Outcome:**
Students will understand the general steps of college admissions and have taken the initial steps to register for or prepare for the PSAT.

**Learning Targets:**
- Stepwise progression of college admission process
- What pre-requisites are required for advanced high school courses?
- Where and when college placement exams should be taken and how to register

**Workshop Length:** 60 minutes

**Alternative Lesson with Fewer Technology Requirements:**
- ECMC Foundation, Realizing the College Dream
  - Mock College Admissions
  - [http://www.ecmcfoundation.org/details/realizing.html](http://www.ecmcfoundation.org/details/realizing.html)

**Assessments/Evaluations:**
The number of students who can list and describe the general college admissions steps.

**Materials or Resources Needed:**
- NACAC Guide to the College Admission Process
- Count Down to College, Tips for Parents with High School Teens
  - (NACAC and TERI)
  - [http://inpathways.net/tips%20for%20parents.pdf](http://inpathways.net/tips%20for%20parents.pdf)
Workshop 9 Agenda
What will the college admissions process look like?

Introduction: .............................................................................................................. 10 minutes
Share with students that there is a progression of steps to take to be ready for college. On a chart or the board, ask students to list what steps they think they need to take to gain admissions to a college of their choice. Acknowledge that students are already taking many of those steps by participating in the workshops.

Note: If students have not completed the middle school workshop, Basic 12 for Middle School – Workshop 9: How Do You Choose a College?, use that workshop information in conjunction with this workshop.

Whole Group Student Engagement: ................................................................. 20 minutes
As a whole group, organize the student responses to the question, “what steps do you need to take to gain admission to college?” Be sure to note that taking rigorous courses beginning in middle school, getting good grades, participating in extracurricular activities, exploring their interests and having some ideas of careers and college majors are all important beginning steps toward a successful college admissions process. Here we are going to look at the specific steps you will need to take in high school:

- **Explore the types of colleges you might want to attend.** You can use your sign-on with the College Board to record colleges you might consider.
- **Make a college to-do list and get that record keeping system in place.** Be sure you know the timelines for all college and financial aid events.
- **Investigate all financial aid programs including scholarships, grants, loans and savings.** The WashBoard.org is an excellent place to start researching scholarships.
- **Prepare for and take college entrance exams.** Students may take the PSAT as early as ninth grade and depending on their school district may have the cost deferred.
- **Complete the FAFSA.** Second only to the college exams is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application. The FAFSA application enables you to be considered for a number of federal student loan programs. It also triggers most other forms of aid at the state level, at the college or university and for many scholarship programs.
- **Visit college campuses.** Make sure that students know that while the printed brochures are wonderful, nothing replaces seeing the college campus. Encourage students to visit local campuses as a way of learning about the college atmosphere.
• Apply to colleges.
• Make your final choice.

**Individual Student Engagement:** ........................................... 30 – 40 minutes
Give students time to record their next steps in their journals/portfolios.

**Closing:** ................................................................................. 5 minutes
Discuss with students the basic guidelines for being a successful college applicant:

**Pay Attention to Timelines**
Assessment of Workshop 9:
*What will the college admissions process look like?*

**Purpose(s):**
- To determine if students understand the basic steps of the college admissions process
- To check on which students have registered for college tests such as the PSAT

**Format:** Student worksheet

**Facilitator Directions:**
- Run off copies of the worksheet (assessment) for each student. Another option is to put the questions into a power point or use on a document camera to discuss the questions.

- Make sure students know that they are not “graded” on the worksheet nor are there absolute right or wrong answers. The purpose of the worksheet is to help them reflect and to determine what they understand. Share that you will use the information to plan future information and workshops.

- Give students time as part of the *Individual Student Engagement* to complete the worksheet.

- Discuss the answers in the *Closing*.

- Have students turn in the worksheet at the end of class. Review student responses and use this information to determine whether the group is on track or whether you need to add more information at this point.

- Return the worksheet to students at the beginning of the next class to be kept in their portfolios.
Student Directions: Spend a few minutes reflecting on what you heard in the workshop today. Consider what you need to do to become accepted and succeed in the colleges that match your interests and dreams.

In your own words, create a plan of action for applying to the colleges of your choice.

Meeting Challenge – My Plan for Applying to College

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.
Follow-Up Lessons for Workshop 9

What will the admissions process look like?

Mock College Admissions
- ECMC Foundation, Realizing the College Dream
  Mock College Admissions
  http://www.ecmcfoundation.org/details/realizing.html
- Lesson Goals:
  o To develop a more in-depth understanding of college-entrance requirements
  o To identify what steps students must complete to be eligible for a four-year college
  o To recognize students’ own potential to attend a four-year college or university
- Lesson Description:
  The workshop provides a hands-on exploration and interactive practice session around applying for college. There is an optional writing assignment that helps students begin to think about the college essay required by most colleges.

Terms of the Admissions Process
- Sparking the Future Lesson Plans – OSPI
  What Job Do You Want? An Investment in the Future, Grades: 11 – 12, Lesson: 1
  Second half: Terms for Admissions process
- Lesson Goals:
  o Help students learn about the value of postsecondary education for their future.
  o Introduce postsecondary terminology to help students begin the application process.
- Lesson Description:
  The lesson is a great review for why college is important. It is even more important as an introduction of the terminology involved in college admissions.
WHAT KIND OF JOB DO I WANT? AN INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE

GRADES: 11-12

LEARNING GOALS:

- Students will describe the benefits of a postsecondary education for their career goals.
- Students will define key college admission terms.

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS:

- **Essential Academic Learning Requirements Grades 9/10 Grade Level Expectations**: This lesson is aligned with Communication 1.1.1 and 1.2.1 and Writing 1.1.1. Students will listen strategically and respond appropriately to presented information and will begin a short vocabulary and writing exercise.
- **Common Core State Standards Grades 11-12**: This lesson is aligned with English Language Arts Speaking and Listening 1c and 2 and Writing 4. Students will respond to questions about college admissions issues, integrating multiple sources of information to do so. They will also begin a short writing and vocabulary exercise.
- **American School Counselor Association National Standards**: This lesson is aligned with ASCA Academic B2.7 and C1.5 and Personal & Social B1.9. Students will identify postsecondary options consistent with their interests and understand how school success is consistent with their goals. They will identify short- and long-term goals.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- An Investment in the Future Handout *(included in this lesson plan)*
- Postsecondary Definitions *(included in this lesson plan)*

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:
1. **Discuss students’ postsecondary goals.** Ask students to join a small group based on what they think they might do after graduation: four-year college, two-year college, technical certificate or apprenticeship, military, or job with no postsecondary education. While they are in their small groups, ask them to share their plans for life after graduation. Most students should have definite ideas, but some may not know. Ask for a volunteer from each group to share their plans with the whole class. Discuss what students think it will take them to achieve their plans. Discuss how they will get the postsecondary education they will need for their career goals. *(5-10 minutes)*

2. **Review reasons to attend college.** After the small group discussions, ask for a show of hands: how many students think their career goals will require some type of education or training after high school? Explain that nearly every career requires some type of postsecondary education. Distribute the *An Investment in the Future Handout* and review the information on the first page. Are these reasons compelling to students? *(5-10 minutes)*

3. **Review postsecondary definitions.** Students will soon begin the college application process (if they haven’t already) and so it’s essential that they understand the terminology of postsecondary admissions. Distribute the *Postsecondary Definitions* and ask students to complete their handouts using the definitions. *(15-20 minutes)*

**STUDENT PRODUCTS:**

- *An Investment in the Future.* Students should complete the handout.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Your school might wish to hold a College Night for students and their families, where they could hear from school guidance counselors, graduates of your high school, or admissions officers from local colleges. In addition, you may wish to share the following resources to help students and their families learn more about preparing for, applying to, attending, and paying for college.

- **College Board:** [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)
  College search, career/major search, exam prep and registration, financial aid info
- **Common App:** [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)
  College application used by more than 400 private colleges and universities
- **The WashBoard:** [www.thewashboard.org](http://www.thewashboard.org)
  Scholarship match service for prospective college students
- **FAFSA:** [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)
  Free Application for Federal Student Aid (required after January 1 of senior year)
An Investment in the Future

WHAT WILL YOU DO AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?
HOW WILL YOU START THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

Name _____________________________

A recent poll showed that most high school students want to go to college. Why is that?

TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

☐ Fifty years ago, you could do without college: most jobs in the U.S. required only a high school education or less.
☐ But today, very few jobs accept people without education or training after high school.
☐ In the future, college will be even more important: nearly all of the fastest growing occupations require postsecondary education.

TO EARN A GOOD LIVING

☐ A person with a college degree has higher earning potential than someone with only a high school diploma.
☐ Someone with a college degree is also much less likely to be unemployed.

MAKING YOUR MOVE

So, how do you get started? You’ll need to follow these steps during junior and senior years.

☐ Research postsecondary institutions that offer your program of interest.
☐ Visit to narrow down a list of colleges you’d like to attend. Make sure that at least one is a financial and academic “safety,” meaning that you can afford to attend and are likely to be admitted.
☐ Take the needed entrance exams (such as the SAT, ACT, ACCUPLACER, or ASVAB).
☐ Apply for financial aid by completing a FAFSA (www.fafsa.ed.gov) after January 1 of senior year in high school. If required, complete a CSS PROFILE (https://profileonline.collegeboard.com) by the deadline during your senior year.

☐ Apply for scholarships to supplement your financial aid. Check The WashBoard (www.thewashboard.org) to find scholarship opportunities.

☐ Complete all application forms required by your colleges, either on paper or online.

☐ Once you’ve been admitted, work with a counselor to plan your course of study.
LEARN THE TERMS

To make the most of junior and senior years, it pays to know the terms colleges use. Refer to the Postsecondary Definitions handout to answer the questions below:

Explain the differences between AA, AS, and AAS degrees.

What is the purpose of the ACCUPLACER test?

What is a direct transfer degree?

What term describes the practice of admitting all students who apply?

Explain how an unsubsidized loan differs from a subsidized loan.

In order for a transcript to be considered “official”, what must occur?

What document serves as a guide for admission, degrees, services, and course selections?

What individual components are added together to determine the cost of attendance?

When you receive your financial aid package, what will be included?
POSTSECONDARY DEFINITIONS

Accreditation: Recognition of a college or university by an outside agency indicating that the institution has been judged to meet established standards of quality.

ACT: College entrance exam that tests proficiency in English, Math, Science, Reading, and Writing. The ACT is usually taken during junior year or fall of senior year.

ACCUPLACER: Placement exam used by many community colleges as part of the entrance process.

AP (Advanced Placement): Advanced courses taken in high school using a national curriculum. AP courses end with a nationally-administered exam that is scored from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Students with high scores (typically 4 or 5) on AP exams may be awarded college credit by their college.

Associate Degree: A college degree that is typically earned in two years and typically requires a minimum of 90 credits. There are two types: Associate in Arts (AA) or Associate in Sciences (AS). They are often referred to as the “Transfer Degree” as they allow students to complete a program of study similar to the first two years of a four-year college.

Associate in Applied Sciences (AAS): College degree awarded upon completion of a technical program. Generally not all of the 90 credits will transfer to a four-year college.

Bachelor Degree (Baccalaureate): College degree granted after completing a course of study normally requiring four or five years. A student may earn a BA (Bachelor of Arts) or BS (Bachelor of Science) Degree.

College: Institution that only offers associate and bachelor degrees or a subdivision of a university that offers both bachelor and advanced degrees.

College Catalog: Book or online listing published by a postsecondary institution describing requirements for admission, degrees, services, and course offerings.

Common App (Common Application): An online college application form that is used by more than 400 private colleges and universities.

Community College: Two-year postsecondary institution offering instruction adapted in content, level, and schedule to meet the needs of the community in which it is located. Offerings include transfer and occupational curriculum. Most community colleges use “Open Admission,” though most require a placement test before admission.

Cost of Attendance: Total amount needed for tuition, books and supplies, room and board (meals), transportation, and personal expenses at a postsecondary institution.

Degree: Titles given to college graduates upon completion of the program. Two-year degree (Associate), four-year degree (Bachelor), as well as advanced degrees (Master or Doctoral).

Direct Transfer: A type of associate degree given in Washington State that enables students to transfer to a state university with all or most of the basic requirements completed.

EFC (Expected Family Contribution): The number resulting from financial information provided in the FAFSA application. The EFC typically indicates the minimum the student’s family will be expected to pay, based on financial need.
FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): Online application form used to determine a college student’s eligibility for financial aid.

Financial Aid Package: Amount and type of financial aid awards, along with any conditions attached to the award.

Gift Aid: Scholarships and grants that do not require repayment.

Liberal Arts: Course of study intended to expose a student to a broad sampling of academic studies. Reasoning, writing, and speaking skills are stressed.

Lower Division Student: Freshman or sophomore in college (usually defined as being under a certain number of credits).

Major: Subject area in which a student specializes.

Open Admission: Policy of admitting all applicants regardless of high school grades or admission test scores.

Private College/Independent University: A college that is not supported by public tax dollars.

Profile (CSS Profile): Online application form used by some private colleges to determine financial aid eligibility. It is typically used in addition to the FAFSA.

Registrar: Person who maintains the academic records. Your high school and each college has a registrar’s office.

SAR (Student Aid Report): Personalized report from the FAFSA regarding financial aid status.

SAT: College entrance exam that tests proficiency in math, critical reading, and writing.

Self-Help Aid: Financial aid that includes work and loans needing to be repaid.

Subsidized Loans: Loans that have interest paid by the government while the student is attending college. Repayment is deferred until after graduation.

Transcript: Chronological listing of all subjects taken and grades received (in either high school or college). High school transcripts are required to be submitted as part of the college admission process. Colleges only accept transcripts that are official. To be official, a transcript must bear the high school seal and be in a sealed envelope, or be submitted by the high school through a secure electronic portal.

Tuition: Amount of money charged by an institution for its instructional services.

Undergraduate Student: College student who has not yet received a bachelor degree.

University: Postsecondary institution composed of one or more bachelor programs together with graduate and professional programs.

Unsubsidized Loans: Loans that are obtained by a student or parents that are not subsidized by the federal government. Interest is charged from the time the loan is disbursed.

Upper Division Courses: Courses designed for the junior and senior years of college.

View Book: Short colorful booklets (printed or online) that colleges distribute to highlight their programs, services, and activities.