2020 Guidebook

COLLEGE APPLICATION & EXPLORATION WEEK

cfwv.com

COLLEGE FOUNDATION OF WEST VIRGINIA

Table of Contents

Table of contents 2
Letter from Elizabeth Manuel, Senior Director for Student Services 3
How to use this guidebook • Activities • CFWV Champion of College Access and Success 4
Post-event survey 5
About CFWV • About College Application & Exploration Week • Requirements for participation 6
What we mean by "college..." • West Virginia's Climb 7
Site coordinator checklist 8
College-going culture assessments 10
Senior questionnaire 19
Student questionnaire 20
Engaging school and community support 21
An overview for teachers, staff, and community supporters 23
Letter templates 24
Activity ideas, event ideas, and best practices 28
10 ways to use Admissions 101 31
Admissions 101: Q&A sheet 33
Admissions 101: Story cube 36
College quick facts 38
Activity templates/answer keys 41
Sample press release 59
Media outreach guide 60
Social media outreach 61
CFWV social media channels • West Virginia public college/university handles 62
#WhyIChose template 63
#WhyIChose sample 64
Application resources 65
I applied...now what? 66
College application checklist 67
Contact 70

Letter from Elizabeth Manuel, Senior Director for Student Services

College Application and Exploration Week Coordinators,

On behalf of the College Foundation of West Virginia (CFWV), thank you for registering to host College Application and Exploration Week at your school. This year, **more than 300 schools registered** to participate. The celebration will take place in West Virginia from November 2 through November 6, but celebrations all across the country will be happening throughout the fall months. We do realize that some schools may be out of session during the week for Election Day. If necessary, feel free to extend the celebration at your site to the following week. For our tracking purposes, we ask that all schools conclude College Application and Exploration Week activities by **Friday, November 20**, and **submit the mandatory post-event survey as soon as possible following that day**.

The goal of this initiative is to provide an opportunity for all West Virginia students to explore and prepare for postsecondary opportunities. When we say the word "college," we mean any form of high-quality education or training after high school. This includes trade and professional certificate programs, career and technical programs, two- and four-year degree programs, formalized apprenticeship programs, and military service.

It is our firm belief that every West Virginian should pursue a college pathway. Less than one-third of West Virginians currently hold an associate degree or higher, yet 60 percent of working-aged West Virginians will need one of these credentials in order to meet future workforce demands. For this reason, we are proud to host a statewide celebration that encourages students to research and discover the postsecondary pathway that is right for them.

Please find enclosed materials to help you host your College Application and Exploration Week events. Parts of your kit may also be included in additional boxes and may arrive on different days. You should receive

- ✓ College Application and Exploration Week guidebook
- ✓ Maps of West Virginia's colleges and universities
- ✓ College is Possible posters
- ✓ #CollegeBoundWV social scroll banners
- ✓ Txt 4 Success posters
- ✓ Admissions and College 101 condensed guides (to be shipped separately to high school and adult education coordinators only)

Please note that while we would love to be able to send each school a variety of giveaway items and handouts, budgetary limitations and COVID-19 have impacted our ability to do so. Many additional resources, such as guided curricula and financial aid handouts, can be found online at CFWV.com.

Thank you again for your dedication to helping our students pursue and succeed in postsecondary education!

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Manuel
Senior Director of Student Services

How to use this guidebook

This guidebook includes information and activities for students of all ages. We have color-coded the guidebook so that site coordinators can identify which activities are applicable to them. Here are the colors and what each means:

- elementary school
- middle school
- high school
- adult education center

You will see these colors at the top right of each page. Of course, we suggest activities based on grade level, but if you see an activity you think would work for the grade levels you work with, feel free to adapt it (if necessary) and use it!

We also want to give a shout-out to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission for providing us with ideas and resources to revamp our College Application and Exploration Week materials.

Activities

You will find some new and updated activities throughout the guidebook. Many of the pages provided in the guidebook are answer keys to the activities themselves. For blank copies of the activities, visit cfwv.com/college-application-and-exploration-week.

NEW THIS YEAR! CFWV Champion of College Access and Success

High schools that participate in this year's College Application and Exploration Week celebration can strive to become a **CFWV Champion of College Access and Success**! High schools that complete all the required steps will be recognized in the Fall of 2021.

To be recognized, high schools must do the following:

1. Participate in College Application and Exploration Week.
2. Complete the post-event survey immediately afterward.
3. Participate in CFWV's two other postsecondary pathway events (the statewide FAFSA Completion Campaign and College Decision Day).
4. Complete all post-event surveys.
5. Meet the statewide FAFSA completion goal **OR** improve your school's FAFSA completion rate by **10** percentage points compared to the previous year.

Post-event survey

NOTE: The required post-event survey can be accessed at surveymonkey.com/r/CAEW20 following College Application and Exploration Week. The survey below serves just to give site coordinators an idea of what data to collect to be able to complete the online survey.

Information collected and questions

1. Coordinator name/email address/phone number
2. School or organization name
3. Did you host College Application and Exploration Week activities this year?
4. How many students, **by grade level**, participated in some way during College Application and Exploration Week or received college-related messaging or information? (Numbers are recorded for each grade level, from pre-school to adult learners.)
5. How many parents attended or participated in college-related events and activities during your College Application and Exploration Week efforts?
6. Did your site serve students who are of college-going age (12th graders or adult learners)?
7. How many **INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS** at your site submitted at least one postsecondary application during College Application and Exploration Week? (Numbers are broken up into 12th grade students and adult learners.)
8. How many **TOTAL APPLICATIONS** were submitted at your site during College Application and Exploration Week? (Numbers are broken up into 12th grade students and adult learners.)
9. How many **INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS** in your senior class submitted postsecondary applications during this academic year? (Numbers are broken into number of applications submitted per student.)
10. Does your organization plan to host a College Application and Exploration Week site again next year?
11. Any final comments/suggestions?

About the College Foundation of West Virginia

The College Foundation of West Virginia (CFWV) provides FREE resources to help students and families pursue – and succeed in – education and training beyond high school. CFWV coordinates dozens of college awareness and readiness efforts, including a series of statewide college pathway events that schools can adopt to strengthen a culture of college-readiness within their school buildings and communities. These pathway events include the annual College Application and Exploration Week, the statewide FAFSA Completion Campaign, and College Decision Day. CFWV is coordinated by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission working in partnership with the West Virginia Community and Technical College System and the West Virginia Department of Education.

About College Application and Exploration Week

CFWV will coordinate West Virginia's ninth annual College Application and Exploration Week from November 2 - 6, 2020! Throughout the week, schools and community organizations across the state will host events to assist students with the college application and exploration process.

College Application and Exploration Week focuses on two goals:

1. providing an opportunity for all West Virginia seniors to complete college applications and prepare for postsecondary education, and
2. assisting all students in exploring and preparing for postsecondary opportunities.

While the events are geared toward first-generation college students and students who may not otherwise apply to college, we encourage participating organizations to use College Application and Exploration Week as an opportunity to build a visible culture of college-readiness throughout your community.

Requirements for participation

To be recognized as an official CFWV College Application and Exploration Week site, schools must register at www.cfwvconnect.com/college-application-and-exploration-week by November 2.

Participating schools must do the following:

1. Participate in College Application and Exploration Week.
2. Complete the post-event survey immediately afterward.

High schools that wish to be recognized as a CFWV Champion of College Access and Success must also do the following:

3. Participate in CFWV's two other postsecondary pathway events (the statewide FAFSA Completion Campaign and College Decision Day).
4. Complete all post-event surveys.
5. Meet the statewide FAFSA completion goal **OR** improve your school's FAFSA completion rate by **10** percentage points compared to the previous year.

What we mean by "college"...

College is important – there's no doubt about it. At least 60 percent of all new jobs require a college education, and West Virginia needs tens of thousands more college graduates to build our economy. But what does that mean for our students?

Most workforce developers and education leaders use the word "college" to include any type of postsecondary education or education and training beyond high school. That means students have many options when it comes to attending college... and one of the goals of College Application and Exploration Week is to help students understand this. Some form of college should be the ultimate path for all West Virginia students.

On average, four-year college graduates earn more than double the salary of individuals who stopped their education after high school. And students who complete some form of postsecondary education are far less likely to be unemployed than those with just a high school diploma.

West Virginia's colleges and universities offer a wide variety of education options to fit the unique needs of all of our state's students. Options include:

- a two-year degree
- a four-year degree
- a skillset certificate
- a career or technical program
- an apprenticeship
- military service

West Virginia's Climb

Less than one-third of West Virginians currently hold an associate degree or higher, yet 60 percent of working-aged West Virginians will need a certificate or degree in order to meet future workforce demands. Only slightly more than half of West Virginia's high school class of 2017 enrolled in college the following fall[1].

CFWV is proud to support West Virginia's attainment goal to equip 60% of West Virginians with a certificate or degree by 2030. To find out more about this initiative, visit wvclimb.com.

WEST VIRGINIA'S Climb

1 West Virginia's Climb, wvclimb.com

Site coordinator checklist

Your College Application and Exploration Week event can be as big as your imagination will allow... but it's also okay to start small and build on your program each year. The goal is to inspire your students to continue their education and to take action steps to achieve their dreams. Get creative in planning your events and get the school and community involved to support a college-going culture in your school building!

OCTOBER

Status	Due Date	Track(s)	Task
❍	October	🟢 🟣 🔴	Reserve computer lab time to allow your students to research postsecondary programs, explore CFWV.com, and submit college applications during (if CAEW). Virtual: Tune into CFWV's YouTube Channel. Create a FREE CFWV account.
❍	October	🔵 🟢 🟣 🔴	Review the Site Coordinator Guidebook and contact CFWV staff with any initial questions. You can also download VIRTUAL materials on the Education and Outreach tab at CFWV.com. Contact: (304) 558-0655 or cfwv@wvhepc.edu
❍	October	🔵 🟢 🟣 🔴	Recruit your core implementation team and meet with them to determine which activities you plan to undertake. Determine, if needed, which lessons can be edited to meet your virtual needs.
❍	October	🔵 🟢 🟣 🔴	Distribute the "Overview for Teachers, Staff, Volunteers, and Community Members" page. Encourage them to brainstorm ideas to include college-planning activities throughout the school and community. Decorate your VIRTUAL alum doors.
❍	October	🔵 🟢 🟣 🔴	Recruit any additional volunteers from your school and community to help make this event special. Consider involving the PTA/O, 4-H groups, girl/boy scouts troops, faith-based leaders, etc. Adult basic education center coordinators might consider involving employers and WorkforceWV representatives.
❍	October	🟣 🔴	Distribute the "Checklist" and "Senior Questionnaire" handouts to students. Encourage students to locate their cfwv.com user name and password, or create an account if they do not have one. Set a deadline for students to return the question-naire before the event. See CFWV's YouTube Channel for account creation help.
❍	October	🔵 🟢 🟣 🔴	Make photocopies of any materials you plan to use during College Application and Exploration Week. If creating bulletin boards or door decorations (in person or virtually) is part of your plan, begin putting together these materials.
❍	October	🔵 🟢 🟣 🔴	Create a detailed schedule of any planned activities and distribute it to teachers and school staff. Send an all-call reminder home to students, parents, and teachers. Middle school coordinators can provide CFWV's English, Social Studies, and STEM curricula available on the Education and Outreach tab to teachers.

Status	Due Date	Track(s)	Task
OCTOBER			
❍	October	● ●	Work with your school counseling staff to determine which senior students have not yet applied to college, so that you can target them during College Application and Exploration Week.
❍	October	● ●	Send parent information packets home with students. Begin creating a social media campaign that will highlight and tell your CAEW story. Begin working on your Virtual College Dream Boards to display on virtual platforms.
NOVEMBER			
❍	November 2-6	● ● ● ●	If appropriate, include college facts or other college-focused announcements during your morning announcements or social media platforms. Decorate the school, include college-themed activities in class – etc.! Utilize your virtual platforms to celebrate the week.
❍	November 2-6	● ● ● ●	If allowable, take photos of your students participating in these activities. If you have media releases on file, send your local newspaper photos of students participating in the activities, along with an announcement (see news release template in this guide).
AFTER COLLEGE APPLICATION AND EXPLORATION WEEK			
❍	November 20	● ● ● ●	Complete the **required** post-event survey, available online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CAEW2020
❍	November 20	● ● ● ●	Send thank you notes to volunteers or others who supported your event. Consider sending handwritten notes from students!

Planning notes...

College-Going Culture Assessment - Elementary School

Score each statement:

We are already doing this: 3
We could do this easily or with a little effort: 2
This would require a major change or a lot of time: 1

Visibility

_____ College pennants and posters are visible in classrooms, halls, and common areas.

_____ Messaging relaying the importance of planning for high school, postsecondary education, and a career is visible throughout the school or through communications channels (school announcements, websites, etc.)

_____ The school is displaying information regarding West Virginia's free college- and career-planning resources, such as the College Foundation of West Virginia (CFWV), the SMART529 Savings Plan, and services offered by community groups.

_____ Teachers include visual cues to encourage discussions about their college experience with their students. Examples include posting information about their alma mater or hanging copies of their college degree.

_____ College and career success stories are prevalent throughout the school.

Inclusiveness

_____ To your ***educators, administrators, and staff members***, "college" means any education and training after high school, including certificate programs, career and technical programs, apprenticeships, two-year degree programs, four-year degree programs, or military training.

_____ To your ***students and parents***, "college" means any education and training after high school, including certificate programs, career and technical programs, apprenticeships, two-year degree programs, four-year degree programs, or military training.

_____ Educators, administrators, and staff encourage and counsel all students about postsecondary opportunities and the importance of pursuing education and training beyond high school.

Adapted from resources provided by the Washington State University Tri-Cities GEAR UP program, the Prichard Committee Center for Parent Leadership, and the College Board.

Academics

_____ Academics are recognized as the number one priority in your school and academic achievement is considered a universal point of pride.

_____ All students are encouraged to challenge themselves academically and to associate hard work and exploration (rather than innate talent) with achievement.

_____ All students are expected to pursue some form of postsecondary education and that expectation is conveyed clearly with support from school personnel.

_____ Teachers generally believe that all students can achieve in higher academic level classes when the appropriate strategies and support structures are put in place.

_____ Career and college exploration activities are integrated into regular coursework. For example, students research and write about career options during English class or compute the cost of attending college in math class.

_____ Student work is highly visible in the school and there are opportunities to showcase a wide variety of learning experiences.

Family and Community Support

_____ Information about early college planning and the variety of college pathways is woven into at least two family events per year.

_____ Your school is a welcoming environment where family members are encouraged to visit and discuss their child's education.

_____ Community leaders are invited to share their college and career experiences with students or to mentor students.

_____ Recent alumni return to your school to share their college experiences and advice.

_____ Community organizations and businesses post information about college or encouraging students to pursue postsecondary opportunities.

Adapted from resources provided by the Washington State University Tri-Cities GEAR UP program, the Prichard Committee Center for Parent Leadership, and the College Board.

P-20 Collaboration

_____ College and university staff members visit the school at least once per year (or your students visit a college or university).

_____ Middle school faculty and counselors collaborate with counselors and teachers at your school to prepare students for the next level of their education.

_____ Middle school or high school students meet with your students to provide near-peer mentoring at least a few times a year.

Tally your score: _____

22-36 = Beginner **37-52 = Intermediate** **53-66 = Advanced**

Questions to consider:

In what areas are you doing well?

Which areas need the most improvement?

What can you, as an individual, do to make improvements in your school?

Who else can you recruit to help make improvements?

Adapted from resources provided by the Washington State University Tri-Cities GEAR UP program, the Prichard Committee Center for Parent Leadership, and the College Board.

College-Going Culture Assessment - Middle School

Score each statement:

We are already doing this: 3
We could do this easily or with a little effort: 2
This would require a major change or a lot of time: 1

Visibility

_____ College pennants and posters are visible in classrooms, halls, and common areas.

_____ Messaging relaying the importance of planning for high school, postsecondary education, and a career is visible throughout the school or through communications channels (school announcements, websites, etc.)

_____ The school is displaying information regarding West Virginia's free college- and career-planning resources, such as the College Foundation of West Virginia (CFWV), the SMART529 Savings Plan, and services offered by community groups.

_____ Teachers include visual cues to encourage discussions about their college experience with their students. Examples include posting information about their alma mater or hanging copies of their college degree.

_____ College and career success stories are prevalent throughout the school.

Inclusiveness

_____ To your ***educators, administrators, and staff members***, "college" means any education and training after high school, including certificate programs, career and technical programs, apprenticeships, two-year degree programs, four-year degree programs, or military training.

_____ To your ***students and parents***, "college" means any education and training after high school, including certificate programs, career and technical programs, apprenticeships, two-year degree programs, four-year degree programs, or military training.

_____ Educators, administrators, and staff encourage and counsel all students about postsecondary opportunities and the importance of pursuing education and training beyond high school.

Adapted from resources provided by the Washington State University Tri-Cities GEAR UP program, the Prichard Committee Center for Parent Leadership, and the College Board.

Academics

_____ Academics are recognized as the number one priority in your school and academic achievement is considered a universal point of pride.

_____ All students are encouraged to challenge themselves academically and take rigorous course work. All students are counseled on the importance of taking rigorous classes in high school to prepare for postsecondary education.

_____ All students are expected to pursue some form of postsecondary education and that expectation is conveyed clearly with support from school personnel.

_____ Teachers believe that all students can achieve in higher academic level classes when the appropriate strategies and support structures are put in place.

_____ Career and college exploration activities are integrated into regular coursework. For example, students research and write about career options during English class or compute the cost of attending college in math class.

_____ Student work is highly visible in the school and there are opportunities to showcase a wide variety of learning experiences.

Family and Community Support

_____ Family planning events aimed at helping students and families plan for high school, college, and a career occur at least twice per year, outside of regular school hours.

_____ Your school is a welcoming environment where family members are encouraged to visit and discuss their child's education.

_____ Community leaders are invited to share their college and career experiences with students or to mentor students.

_____ Recent alumni return to your school to share their college experiences and advice.

_____ Community organizations and businesses post information about college or encouraging students to pursue postsecondary opportunities.

Adapted from resources provided by the Washington State University Tri-Cities GEAR UP program, the Prichard Committee Center for Parent Leadership, and the College Board.

P-20 Collaboration

_____ College and university staff members visit the school at least a few times a year.

_____ College and university faculty collaborate with teachers at your school.

_____ Counselors at your school have a close working relationship with their counterparts at area high schools.

Tally your score: _____

22-36 = Beginner **37-52 = Intermediate** **53-66 = Advanced**

Questions to consider:

In what areas are you doing well?

Which areas need the most improvement?

What can you, as an individual, do to make improvements in your school?

Who else can you recruit to help make improvements?

Adapted from resources provided by the Washington State University Tri-Cities GEAR UP program, the Prichard Committee Center for Parent Leadership, and the College Board.

College-Going Culture Assessment - High School

Score each statement:

We are already doing this: 3
We could do this easily or with a little effort: 2
This would require a major change or a lot of time: 1

Visibility

_____ College pennants, banners, and posters are visible in most classrooms, halls, and common areas.

_____ Messaging relaying the importance of pursuing postsecondary education is visible throughout the school or through communications channels (school announcements, websites, etc.)

_____ Teachers include visual cues to encourage discussions about their college experience with their students. Examples include posting information about their alma mater or hanging copies of their college degree.

_____ Important college enrollment and financial aid deadlines are posted in classrooms and other locations throughout the school.

_____ College messaging is integrated into events, including sports events or arts performances.

_____ College success stories are prevalent throughout the school.

Strategy and Evaluation

_____ All school staff members are informed of key outcome measures, including your school's college-going rate and FAFSA completion rates.

_____ Your school sets goals or benchmarks for improving college-readiness and reports regularly on progress.

_____ Your school engages all stakeholders in creating a college-going culture or improving college-readiness.

_____ Your school has created and is implementing an action plan for improving college-readiness.

_____ Your school sponsors or provides professional development on the topics of college-readiness and success.

Adapted from resources provided by the Washington State University Tri-Cities GEAR UP program, the Prichard Committee Center for Parent Leadership, and the College Board.

Inclusiveness

_____ To your ***educators, administrators, and staff members***, "college" means any education and training after high school, including certificate programs, career and technical programs, apprenticeships, two-year degree programs, four-year degree programs, or military training.

_____ To your ***students and parents***, "college" means any education and training after high school, including certificate programs, career and technical programs, apprenticeships, two-year degree programs, four-year degree programs, or military training.

_____ Educators, administrators, and staff members extend information about postsecondary opportunities to all students.

_____ Educators, administrators, and staff members encourage and counsel all students about postsecondary opportunities and the importance of pursuing education and training beyond high school.

Academics

_____ Academics are recognized as the number one priority in your school and academic achievement is considered a universal point of pride.

_____ All students are encouraged to challenge themselves academically and take rigorous course work.

_____ All students are expected to pursue some form of postsecondary education and that expectation is conveyed clearly with support from school personnel.

_____ Teachers believe that all students can achieve in higher academic level classes when the appropriate strategies and support structures are put in place.

_____ College-readiness activities are integrated into regular coursework. For example, students learn to write scholarship application essays during English class or compute the cost of attendance in math class.

_____ Student work is highly visible in the school and there are opportunities to showcase a wide variety of learning experiences.

Adapted from resources provided by the Washington State University Tri-Cities GEAR UP program, the Prichard Committee Center for Parent Leadership, and the College Board.

Family and Community Support

_____ Family college planning events occur at least twice per year, outside of regular school hours.

_____ Your school is a welcoming environment where family members are encouraged to visit and discuss their child's education.

_____ Community leaders are invited to share their college and career experiences with students or to mentor students.

_____ Recent alumni return to your school to share their college experiences and advice.

_____ Community organizations and businesses post information about college or encouraging students to pursue postsecondary opportunities.

P-20 Collaboration

_____ College and university staff members visit the school on a regular basis.

_____ College and university faculty collaborate regularly with teachers at your school.

_____ Counselors at your school have a close working relationship with admissions and financial aid representatives at colleges and universities.

_____ Counselors at your school have a close working relationship with state-level college-readiness professionals, such as CFWV and state-level financial aid representatives.

_____ Colleges and universities organize or help coordinate on-campus activities for your students.

Tally your score: _____

30-50 = Beginner **51-70 = Intermediate** **71-90 = Advanced**

Questions to Consider:

In what areas are you doing well?

Which areas need the most improvement?

What can you, as an individual, do to make improvements in your school?

Who else can you recruit to help make improvements?

Adapted from resources provided by the Washington State University Tri-Cities GEAR UP program, the Prichard Committee Center for Parent Leadership, and the College Board.

Senior Questionnaire

FULL NAME (PRINTED): _____

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

❍ **Attend a college or university**

Which college? _____ Have you applied? ❍ yes ❍ no

What is your intended major and/or minor? _____

Have you taken the ACT or SAT? ❍ yes ❍ no

Is your score high enough for admission? ❍ yes ❍ no ❍ I don't know

❍ **Complete a skillset certificate or career and technical training program**

Where will you complete your program? _____

❍ **Enlist in the military**

Which branch? _____ Are you working with a recruiter? ❍ yes ❍ no

❍ **Become an apprentice**

Please describe your apprenticeship: _____

❍ **Go directly to the workforce**

Do you have a job lined up? What will you do? _____

❍ Other (Please explain): _____

❍ Not sure or don't know

HOW CAN WE HELP?

We want to make sure you succeed in the future. What questions do you have about preparing for your next step? Can the counseling office or school staff help you in any way?

_____

_____

_____

Student Questionnaire

FULL NAME (PRINTED): _____

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR AFTER YOU COMPLETE THIS PROGRAM?

❍ **Attend a college or university**

Which college? _____ Have you applied? ❍ yes ❍ no

What is your intended major and/or minor? _____

Have you taken the ACT or SAT? ❍ yes ❍ no

Is your score high enough for admission? ❍ yes ❍ no ❍ I don't know

❍ **Complete a skillset certificate or career and technical training program**

Where will you complete your program? _____

❍ **Enlist in the military**

Which branch? _____ Are you working with a recruiter? ❍ yes ❍ no

❍ **Become an apprentice**

Please describe your apprenticeship: _____

❍ **Go directly to the workforce**

Do you have a job lined up? What will you do? _____

❍ Other (Please explain): _____

❍ Not sure or don't know

HOW CAN WE HELP?

We want to make sure you succeed in the future. What questions do you have about preparing for your next step? Can our faculty or staff help you in any way?

_____

_____

_____

Engaging school and community support

Engaging the community in the planning and implementation process will create excitement about the event. Additionally, the community plays an important role in creating and sustaining a college-going culture.

IDEAS FOR ENGAGING ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

- Ask older students to visit the classrooms of younger students to share a college fact.
- Invite students to serve as "guest announcers" during morning or evening announcements. Have them read a college- or career-related fact over the intercom.
- In the weeks leading up to the event, encourage students to draw, paint, or create college- or career-themed artwork that you can use to decorate classroom doors or hallway walls during the event.
- Invite student clubs and teams to help promote the event. You might host a contest between clubs or classes to see who can design the best college-planning bulletin board, or ask your school's cheerleading or spirit squad to create college-themed posters and banners.

IDEAS FOR ENGAGING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

- Recruit students to help. Identify student leaders from each grade who would love to bring their own ideas to the table. Select student helpers from each grade and educate them about this initiative. Ask them to share implementation ideas and post and distribute materials.
- Recruit seniors to mentor freshmen, sophomores, and/or juniors on preparing for postsecondary education. Senior mentors can meet with assigned freshmen, sophomores, or juniors during the week or recruit them to assist during the week.
- Ask students to promote the event through their Facebook or Twitter accounts.

TEACHERS

- Share your planning calendar with them and ask for their help in brainstorming ways to make this event something the whole school embraces.
- Ask teachers to incorporate college-planning and exploration activities into their classes leading up to College Application and Exploration Week. Examples of ways to include college-exploration activities within class time are included throughout this manual.
- Encourage English, Social Studies, and STEM teachers to consider using lessons from the CFWV English and Social Studies curricula (available for download on the education and outreach tab of cfwv.com) during the week.
- Encourage teachers to decorate their classrooms and doors with college pennants, posters, and information. Use the "Ask me about college" activity included in this kit.
- With the principal's permission, ask teachers to wear their favorite college gear during College Application and Exploration Week. You may want to designate a particular day of the week as "College Colors Day," and encourage the whole school to get involved.

SCHOOL STAFF AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL

- Encourage your school staff, including custodians, cooks, administrative assistants, and bus drivers to wear college gear.
- Ask staff members to post signs and information about College Application and Exploration Week on their doors, desks, or throughout their work areas.
- Encourage staff members to talk to students about the event, and to ask students questions. For example, a cafeteria worker could ask each student who passes through the lunch line what college he or she might want to attend when they get older.

VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

- Invite parents or community leaders to visit classrooms and talk about their college experience and their careers.
- Recruit parents to help decorate the school.
- Invite local businesses to hang up the "Ask me about my college" signs in their storefronts.
- Brainstorm ways other groups can get involved or integrate college messaging or planning into their activities with students. Groups to consider include:
    - the PTA/O and the School Improvement Council
    - Retired educators
    - Community service, senior citizen, or church groups
    - College and university representatives and faculty
    - Business, community, and political leaders
    - Youth programs (e.g. YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, 4-H, Girl and Boy Scouts)
    - School alumni

Note: Depending on your district's policy, you may need to conduct a background check for individuals volunteering at the school.

IDEAS FOR ENGAGING ADULT STUDENTS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

- **College students.** If you are partnering with a local college, recruit current college students to help implement your event. Identify student groups who would love to bring their own ideas to the table and educate them about this effort. Ask them to share implementation ideas and attend your event to offer advice or guidance.
- **College faculty and/or admissions representatives.** Faculty members from local colleges can be one of your greatest allies in motivating students to pursue higher education. It's not only their job; it's their passion. They can offer insights about their academic programs and provide information on what it takes to succeed in college.
- **Financial aid experts.** West Virginia's colleges and universities and the state-level financial aid office employ dozens of financial aid experts. Because paying for college is often a major concern for adult students, it may be helpful to pair your application event with a financial aid workshop. For a list of experts to contact, visit the education and outreach tab of CFWV.com.
- **Community and business leaders.** Invite local business leaders or employers to speak to your class about their workforce needs. You can also encourage local businesses to participate in the "Ask me about college..." activity included in this kit.

An Overview for Teachers, Staff, and Community Supporters

November 2-6 is West Virginia's statewide College Application and Exploration Week! To ensure that our event is a success, we need your help in promoting and coordinating this event – and making sure our initiative is exciting and fun for West Virginia's students!

WHAT IS COLLEGE APPLICATION AND EXPLORATION WEEK?

College Application and Exploration Week is an event coordinated by the College Foundation of West Virginia (CFWV) and the American Council on Education. Schools and community organizations across West Virginia will celebrate during the week of November 2-6, 2020!

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF COLLEGE APPLICATION AND EXPLORATION WEEK?

Our goal is to help all students learn more about college opportunities and to complete the steps necessary to pursuing higher education.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING COLLEGE APPLICATION AND EXPLORATION WEEK?

Think of this week as a spirit week, during which we all work together to build excitement and awareness surrounding the college exploration process. We will provide information about college to students, but the event can become truly spectacular if we integrate fun activities into our school and community environments. For example, we can decorate our doors and classrooms in college themes, post signs and pennants in our community, decorate storefronts, have college trivia contests – let's get creative!

HOW CAN I HELP?

You can help by assisting students in applying, contributing to the "spirit" of the week by wearing your favorite college gear during the week, or –perhaps most importantly – reaching out to students to encourage them to apply to college. Seek out those students in your neighborhood who might traditionally be underserved or overlooked when it comes to college planning, or those adults in your life who might be interested in a returning to the classroom. Use this as an opportunity to talk to them about their options for college!

You can also support the effort online by sharing your college experience using the hashtag #WhyIChose. Inspire others by sharing why you chose the school or program you completed, or what you love about your alma mater! Be sure to mention @CFWV so that your message can be shared statewide.

Letter Templates

Note: These documents are available as editable Word Documents at www.cfwvconnect.com/college-application-and-exploration-week.

SAMPLELETTERTOELEMENTARY/MIDDLESCHOOLFAMILIES

Dear <insert school name> family,

Our school is participating in the College Foundation of West Virginia's (CFWV's) annual "College Application and Exploration Week." College Application and Exploration Week will be held at schools across the state from November 2-6. During the week, we will focus on helping students learn about the importance of planning for college and about the many college options available to them.

When we use the word "college," we mean any education program beyond high school including certificate programs, career and technical programs, two-year degree programs, four-year degree programs, apprenticeships, and military service. This initiative is so important because to keep up with future workforce demands, 60 percent of working-aged West Virginians will need a certificate or degree. But in 2016, only 31 percent of West Virginians aged 25-64 held at least an associate degree.

We hope the activities happening in the school will help you start conversations at home. Students whose parents talk to them about college and careers are more likely to pursue higher education and to succeed. You don't have to know all the answers about financial aid or applying – just knowing you support them and believe in them can make a world of difference.

If you'd like more information about college planning, I'd encourage you to visit the state's free college and career-planning website, www.cfwv.com. You may also want to check out West Virginia's college savings plan website at www.smart529.com. Research has shown that even saving a little bit for college can have a big impact on whether or not a student ultimately enrolls. Knowing that he or she has a savings plan, even a small one, can help your student start to imagine college as part of his or her future!

If you have any questions please call Name, Title, at (000) 000-0000. Thank you in advance for your support of this exciting initiative to encourage West Virginia's students to make college a part of their future.

Sincerely,

School Counselor/Principal/Site Coordinator

SAMPLE LETTER TO HIGH SCHOOL FAMILIES

Dear Students and Families,

Our school is participating in the College Foundation of West Virginia's (CFWV's) annual "College Application and Exploration Week." College Application and Exploration Week will be held at schools across the state from November 2-6. We have set a goal that each student in our senior class apply to ***at least*** one higher education or advanced training program this fall. Ideally, each student will apply to four or five colleges or programs.

When we use the word "college," we mean any education program beyond high school including certificate programs, career and technical programs, two-year degree programs, four-year degree programs, apprenticeships, and military service. This initiative is so important because to keep up with future workforce demands, 60 percent of working-aged West Virginians will need a certificate or degree. But in 2016, only 31 percent of West Virginians aged 25-64 held at least an associate degree.

In order to apply to college during College Application and Exploration Week, students will need to complete the **College Application Checklist** we have attached to this letter. We are encouraging all senior students who have not yet applied to college to complete the College Application Checklist prior to the week, as it has all the information students will need to complete an online application. We expect that students and their families will need to work together in gathering the information listed in the checklist.

We'd also like your student to complete the **Senior Questionnaire** (also attached) and return it to his or her homeroom teacher no later than <insert deadline.> This will help our counseling staff provide guidance and assistance to your student.

Families are welcome to visit the school to assist their student during the application process. In addition, if you are interested in volunteering during the event, please let me know. Volunteers can greet and sign in students, assist students with the completion of online college applications, or distribute information about financial aid opportunities.

If you have any questions please call Name, Title, at (000) 000-0000. Thank you in advance for your support of this exciting initiative to encourage West Virginia's students to make college a part of their future.

Sincerely,

School Counselor/Principal/Site Coordinator

SAMPLE LETTER TO ADULT STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Dear students and families,

Our class is participating in the College Foundation of West Virginia's (CFWV's) annual "College Application and Exploration Week." College Application and Exploration Week will be held at schools across the state from November 2-6. We have set a goal that each student in our class apply to ***at least*** one college program this fall.

When we use the word "college," we mean any education program beyond high school including certificate programs, career and technical programs, two-year degree programs, four-year degree programs, apprenticeships, and military service. This initiative is so important because to keep up with future workforce demands, 60 percent of working-aged West Virginians will need a certificate or degree. But in 2016, only 31 percent of West Virginians aged 25-64 held at least an associate degree.

In order to apply to college during College Application and Exploration Week, you will need to complete the **College Application Checklist** we have attached to this letter. We are encouraging all students who have not yet applied to college to complete the College Application Checklist prior to the week, as it has all the information you will need to complete an online application. We expect that students and their families will need to work together in gathering the information listed in the checklist.

We'd also like you to complete the **Student Questionnaire** (also attached) and return it no later than <insert deadline.> This will help our staff provide you with guidance and assistance.

Families, friends and spouses are welcome to visit the school to assist their student during the application process. In addition, if you are interested in volunteering during the event, please let me know. Volunteers can greet and sign in students, assist students with the completion of online college applications, or distribute information about financial aid opportunities.

If you have any questions please call Name, Title, at (000) 000-0000. Thank you in advance for your support of this exciting initiative to encourage West Virginia's students to make college a part of their future.

Sincerely,

Teacher/coordinator

SAMPLELETTERREQUESTINGVOLUNTEERSORDONATIONS

Dear Name,

Name of Your Organization is pleased to announce its participation in the statewide College Application and Exploration Week event. The College Foundation of West Virginia (CFWV) has designated November 2-6 as College Application and Exploration Week in West Virginia! The goal of College Application and Exploration Week is to assist all students in exploring postsecondary opportunities.

We will be hosting insert activities on Date(s) and would welcome insert request (assistance, donations, etc). With your help, students can connect to resources that will help them prepare for college. Our students would appreciate and benefit from your support as they take a big step toward going to college.

If you are able to assist us in making College Application and Exploration Week a success, please contact Name, Contact Info at Name of Your Organization or School.

Thank you!

Your Name Your Title

Activity ideas, event ideas, and best practices

We encourage schools to have fun with this event and make it their own. To get your creative juices flowing, here are a few ideas we've collected from around the state and the country.

GET THE WORD OUT

Use daily PA announcements to generate awareness of activities at your school. If your school has a morning news program, coordinate with the producers to feature a countdown or a fun fact each morning leading up to the event. Coordinate interviews with students who plan to attend/participate in the event. Student newspapers are also a great place to highlight the event. Encourage student writers to feature stories.

Example PA or Radio Announcement:

College is an important part of any student's future. That's why our school is excited to join other schools from all over West Virginia to celebrate "College Application and Exploration Week!" Throughout the week, we will be working to learn more about college and think about careers and jobs. On <insert day>, we hope everyone will join in the fun by wearing the colors of your favorite college or university!

To keep up with future workforce demands, 60 percent of working-aged West Virginians will need a certificate or degree. But in 2016, only 31 percent of West Virginians aged 25-64 held at least an associate degree. And college graduates are more likely to enjoy stable employment, even when the economy is in a downturn. All that adds up to one simple fact - the more you learn, the more you'll earn. That's why our school /organization is participating in West Virginia's College Application and Exploration Week.

College Application and Exploration Week is happening November 2-6 – and it's your opportunity to learn more about your options for education and training beyond high school. You can explore certificate programs, two-year degree programs, and four-year degree programs. Seniors, College Application and Exploration Week is a great opportunity to take control of your future and apply! We'll host tons of great activities to help you explore college, and participants can win great prizes. For more information...

Our organization will host a free college application and planning workshop to help students explore college programs throughout West Virginia – regardless of which college or university you want to attend. You can also visit West Virginia's free college-planning website at www.cfwv.com to learn more about education program and apply. For more information...

HOST GUEST SPEAKERS

Invite parents, family members, or community leaders to visit the school to talk about college and careers. **High schools** can invite admissions staff from local colleges and universities to provide general information related to their campus, including the majors offered, admission requirements, the application process, and cost of attendance.

DRESS THE PART

Host a "College Colors Day" during the week. Encourage students to wear the colors of their favorite college or university.

High schools might encourage a different dress theme for each day, including "dress for success" (wear what you would to a job interview), "work it out" (wear gear for the career you're considering pursuing), and "College Colors Day" (wear your favorite college or university gear!)

DECORATE THE SCHOOL or VIRTUAL PLATFORMS

Create a "College Wall." Encourage students to write the name of the college they want to attend, or a college they want to learn more about. If available, enlist the support of art teachers, as they may be helpful in developing additional materials to decorate. Invite school clubs and sports teams to participate. **High schools** can encourage seniors to write the names of the colleges to which they have applied on banners or strips of construction paper to hang in a main hallway. Highlight college names when acceptances are received. Create College Application DREAM Walls on your VIRTUAL platforms. The possibilities are endless.

ORGANIZE CONTESTS TO GIVE AWAY COLLEGE GEAR

Use the activity sheets in this kit to create student contests. Ask colleges and universities to donate promotional items (banners, hats, t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc.) for giveaways. Post student work in the halls, and have impartial judges pick winners. Award students some of the items included in your kit, or ask local businesses to contribute additional prizes. Ideas for contests include the following:

- Award prizes for the most creative outfit on College Colors Day.
- Award a prize to the club, team, or class that designs the coolest college or career wall, sign, banner, etc.
- Choose daily prize winners among students who participate in the College Bingo or Scavenger Hunt activities outlined in this kit.

COMMUNICATE

Send the "overview" document in this kit to all school staff and volunteers. Send the sample student/family letter home to parents. **Elementary schools**, be sure to send home the SMART529 college-savings plan brochures included in your kit! Include pictures and stories about College Application and Exploration Week activities in the school newsletter. Utilize your social media platforms to communicate your College Application and Exploration Week story.

COLLEGE TAILGATING

Ask your youth football, soccer, and other sports leagues to announce college facts during their games that week. Decorate the gym or the stadium with college signs. Work with athletic directors at local colleges to see if their athletes will visit your school to talk about college! Host a ZOOM tailgate or GO LIVE on your FACEBOOK pages to highlight all of the great aspects of your favorite campuses!

HOST A "FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS" COMMUNITY COLLEGE EVENT

High schools can set up a table display with information about college and financial aid at the football stadium during a home football game. Give free concession stand vouchers or tickets for door prize drawings to students and family members that stop by and participate in five minutes of college-planning counseling. You can even solicit scholarship money from local businesses and give away a chance to win a college scholarship! Additionally, use the **College Quick Facts Guide** in this kit to announce college facts during the game.

HOST A PARENT AND FAMILY NIGHT

Sponsor a parent and family night and have parents, family members, and community members who have completed

college participate in a panel to talk about their college choices, why they made them, and what they are currently doing. Invite parents and families to come with questions or discussion ideas. If you can't do this in person, host a LIVE on facebook or broadcast a LIVE ZOOM.

CONDUCT "TRIAL RUNS" IN CLASSES

Complete a sample application with students. Teachers can go over the correct grammar and language to use on a college application. Stress the importance of using appropriate e-mail addresses. It should sound professional and provide a good impression of the student. If necessary, have students create an e-mail address specifically for their college communications. There are practice college applications available on the application section of cfwv.com.

Encourage students to research a college major that they think they might be interested in pursuing. Have them identify which colleges offer the major, what type of jobs/careers are typically held by people obtaining a degree in that major, what type of courses are required to obtain a degree in that major, etc. and then have them present this information to their classmates.

Encourage English teachers to incorporate writing college and scholarship essays into their curriculum.

NEED MORE IDEAS?

Be sure to check out the College Application and Exploration Week website and CFWV's College App Week Ideas board on Pinterest for additional ideas for activities throughout the week. Also, weekly tip sheets will be delivered to registered participants' emails every week leading up to the celebration, so be sure to monitor your inbox!

College App Week Ideas

10 Ways to Use Admissions 101

CFWV's "Admissions 101" guide is a valuable resource for helping students explore higher education opportunities and submit applications for admissions. Here are 10 ways to incorporate the guide into your work with students and/or parents!

ADMISSIONS 101 COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE DRILL

Teachers will divide the class into teams. Teams should have an even number. Each team will select a captain to lead drills. The goal is to prepare each team for a question and answer competition using the Admissions 101 guide. Allow prep time for each team during class. Provide team captains with the Q and A sheet (included in this kit) and the Admissions 101 guide. During the drill, teams will take turns answering questions. Each team member will be given the Admissions 101 guide and must be given an opportunity to participate. The team that answers the questions first, and correctly, whether from memory or by locating it in the guide, wins that round. The other team members must sit down during that round. The last team to have a student standing is declared the winning team. *Related resources: Q & A sheet.*

ADMISSIONS KNOWLEDGE VIDEO CHALLENGE

Students research, compose and star in their very own video. By simply using a phone or flip camera, student teams are challenged to create an Admissions 101 video using content only provided in the guide. Bring in a college representative, a parent or an educator and allow them to be interviewed or even give them a role to play in the project. Copies may be distributed or aired on the school's news channels.

ADMISSIONS ROAD MAP

Using the West Virginia colleges and universities map found in the Admissions 101 guide, have students identify and locate the two-year, four-year, and independent non-profit schools in West Virginia. Divide the students into three groups and challenge each group to identify key admissions factors for the type of institutions that their group is assigned. For example, group one may be assigned four-year public schools. Team members will locate each four-year school on the map and identify the admissions process for that school (e.g. required application fee, minimum ACT score, etc.). Students should also research the type of degree programs and career preparation programs offered at the schools. Once groups have completed their research, they will then display their findings in visible location for other students to view. This could also be a competition that allows students to display their work in hallways. Faculty or peers would serve as project judges.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS STORY CUBE

Students use the guide to create their own story cube by mapping out a path to postsecondary education. The activity is designed to assist students in English/Literature class in prewriting and identifying key elements of choice, and early postsecondary preparation. As students research information about the admissions process, they become familiar with college entrance requirements, West Virginia colleges and universities, understanding terminology and the term "college." *Related resources: Story cube template.*

COLLEGE BOWL: TEACHER EDITION

This activity flips the traditional college bowl competition around. Teachers are challenged by students in a series of questions assessing their knowledge of college admissions. A panel of teachers that have yet to read the Admissions 101 guide are invited

to participate. Students generate college questions and ask panelists a series of questions based on the Admissions 101 guide.

COLLEGE NEWSCAST: ACCORDING TO ADMISSIONS 101...

Use Admissions 101 as a guide to get the word out about college. Use PA announcements, school news programs, the school newspaper or social media sites to feature facts covered in the guide. This is a great way to allow students to discover information and play an active role in sharing what they've learned.

COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE JEOPARDY

Use a game of classroom Jeopardy! to test students on college knowledge. Similar to the game show, students (or teams) earn points for correct responses and lose points for incorrect responses. Jeopardy questions are based on content in the Admissions 101 guide. This activity may also be delivered by using power point slides or using responder sets. *Related resources: Jeopardy! Game Sheet*

DEVELOP A "SHORT LIST" CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENT

Ask students to read pages four through eight of the Admissions 101 guide as homework. Make copies of the College Fit worksheet within Admissions 101. In class, have students develop a "short list" of six to seven colleges or post-high school programs that interest them. Have students conduct research on the colleges or programs, completing worksheets for each college option. Ask students to evaluate their options based on the information they've found and to decide on two to four schools to which they might apply. *Related resources: College Fit Worksheet*

LEARN THE LINGO PROJECT

Students create awareness displays in the hallway, classroom or on bulletin boards using the know the lingo admissions terms found in the Admissions 101 guide. Add a picture, create a logo or even add a school motto, but allow students to use their imagination in their design to get the word out about college terms.

COLLEGE MATCH MAKERS

The Admissions 101 guide addresses the importance of students finding the college or program that's right for them. The guide outlines the factors that students should consider when making a college selection. Divide your class up into teams of eight and assign each team a different college or university. Tell the teams to develop a persuasive presentation to convince their classmates to attend their college or university. They should address each of the areas outlined as factors to consider in choosing a college. They should also address at least two of the factors listed as items not to consider and explain why these factors do not represent their college. Ex 1: "Not many students from our high school attend Example University, but don't rule this school out just because your friends may not go there. The University hosts mixers each Thursday night to help students make new friends – and there are more than 200 clubs active on campus." Ex. 2: "The listed tuition at Example University is much higher than at other colleges – but they also offer much more financial aid, making the actual cost equal to or lower than other options."

Admissions 101: Q&A Sheet

THE BASICS:

Q: What is a public college or university?
A: Two-year or four-year colleges or universities that are regulated and funded in part by the State.

Q: What is an independent non-profit college or university?
A: Non-profit organizations that do not receive direct funds from the State.

Q: What is a for-profit college or university?
A: A business that provides higher education as its service.

Q: What is a certificate or licensing program?
A: Certificate and licensing programs are specialized plans of study that are usually intended for students planning to pursue a trade. Most of these programs can be completed in a matter of months.

Q: What is an associate degree?
A: Associate degrees are typically awarded to students who complete a two-year period of study at a college.

Q: What is a bachelor's degree?
A: Bachelor's degrees (or baccalaureate degrees) are typically awarded to students who complete a four-year period of study at a college or university.

Q: What is postsecondary education?
A: Education and training beyond high school.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS:

Q: If you apply to a four-year college, the institution will probably require you to take a college entrance exam to help determine whether or not you are ready for college-level work. The most common entrance exams are?
A: ACT and SAT

Q: This exam comes in four parts or sections: English, mathematics, reading, and science. Scores range from 0 to 36.
A: ACT

Q: This exam requires you to register to take the test and pay a testing fee.
A: Both ACT and SAT

Q: Preparing to take the ACT and SAT is important. There are plenty of guides and online tutoring to help you study. The state of West Virginia offers FREE online test prep courses at what website?
A: CFWV.com

Q: True or False? Most students do better the second time they take the ACT.
A: True

Q: True or False? Students should wait until their senior year to take a college entrance exam because they will have completed most of their classes by then.
A: False - students should take a college entrance exam in their junior year to allow time in order to meet some competitive admissions and/or scholarship application deadlines. Taking the test in 11th grade also allows students time to retake the test to try for a better score.

Q: What is the minimum score required on the ACT for admission to WV's two-year public colleges?
A: ACT scores are not required for two-year public colleges.

KNOW THE LINGO:

Q: What is a credit hour?
A: Units of value given to classes; often based on the number of hours a student is expected to attend class each week. Some classes may be worth more credit hours than others. Students who take a certain number of hours are considered to be "full-time" students, while those who take fewer hours are considered "part-time."

Q: What is considered full-time status for a college student?
A: Twelve credit hours is typically the minimum required for full-time status for undergraduate students in West Virginia.

Q: How many hours per semester must a student complete in order to graduate "on time" (completing a four-year degree in four years or a two-year degree in two years)?
A: At least 15 credit hours per semester.

Q: What is financial aid?
A: Money provided to a student to help pay for college. A financial aid package is the combination of grants, scholarships, loans and work-study stipends or funds a student receives to help offset the cost of attending college.

Q: This is the term for a subject or discipline in which a student chooses to specialize. Many colleges ask a student to choose this on the college's application.
A: Major

Q: What does the term "orientation" mean?
A: An event hosted by a college to help new students understand the enrollment and college-going process. Students often learn how to register for classes, how to pay tuition fees and how to take care of other important details during their time in college.

Q: Why is "accreditation" important?
A: It is important to go to a college that has been accredited, meaning that a reputable outside organization has verified that the college meets a minimum level of quality.

APPLYING:

Q: True or False? There is one application deadline for all colleges and universities in West Virginia.
A: False - application deadlines vary from school to school and even program to program. For example, the general admissions deadline at a college might be April 1, but the deadline to apply for its nursing program might be February 1.

Q: List at least one additional item – other than your application – that the admissions office at a college will or is likely to request.
A: An official transcript, ACT/SAT scores, a résumé or list of accomplishments and activities, an essay, and a letter of recommendation are all acceptable answers.

Q: What should a student do if he or she can't afford to pay a college application fee or ACT or SAT registration fees?
A: Talk to the school counselor or a college admissions counselor about receiving a "fee waiver."

THE RIGHT FIT:

Q: List three factors students should consider when deciding on a college or program.
A: Programs and majors offered; academic quality and opportunities; cost and availability of financial aid (net price); success rates; environment and campus life; and location are all acceptable answers.

Q: List two factors students should probably ignore when deciding on a college or program.
A: Their friends' decisions; school sports records; sticker price; fancy residential facilities; and nerves/normal jitters are all acceptable answers.

Q: To how many schools do experts recommend students apply?
A: Between four and six - at least one "stretch" school, two "fit" schools, and one "safety" school.

Q: What are some common reasons a school might be considered a stretch?
A: The school is highly competitive and admits very few of the total students who apply; the school intimidates (but still interests) the student for some reason; the student's test scores and GPA are on the low end or just below the average range for students attending this school.

Q: What is the most common reason a student might consider a school a "safety" school?
A: The school has an "open admissions" policy, meaning that any student who meets the basic criteria outlined by the admissions office will be accepted.

Q: True or False? You have to have an appointment to visit a college campus.
A: False - most colleges and universities are public spaces and students should feel free to stop by and walk around. However, it is always a good idea to meet with an admissions officer to set up an official tour!

ADMISSIONS 101:
STORY CUBE

INSTRUCTIONS:

Write two to three sentences on each of the following topics within each section of the blank cube (previous page). After students have completed this brainstorming activity, they should write essays outlining their personal goals.

What's in a name? Students will identify in their own terms what the word "college" means to them. How would they define a "good education" or a positive college experience?

Students should write three to four action steps they should take next to continue preparing for education after high school and/or their intended careers.

Students will identify a college or university they are considering attending and list one or more reasons for their interest in this school.

Students should list two to three things that motivate them to pursue higher education, training or a career.

Students will identify a career choice and/or college major and list one or more reasons for making this choice. Students should note how their career goals align with their college options.

Students should describe the admissions process at the college or university they are considering.

ADMISSIONS 101:
STORY CUBE TEMPLATE

College Quick Facts for Elementary/Middle Schools

Use this list of facts to provide mini-lessons to increase students' and parents' college knowledge. Include a quick fact during morning or evening announcements, or announce them during sporting and family events!

DID YOU KNOW...?

- Going to college in West Virginia is a bargain! It is more affordable to go to college in West Virginia than almost any other state. And almost all West Virginia students get help paying for college through scholarships and grants, known as financial aid.
- By the time you transition to high school, most jobs in West Virginia will require a college degree. There are lots of degrees to choose from. Some students go to school for one or two years. Some go for four or more years. When you think about career and job options, you should also try to learn about the type of education you will need.
- Students who complete a four-year college degree earn, on average, a million dollars more over their lifetime than students who stop their education after high school. When you learn more, you earn more!
- College graduates are more likely to have steady jobs. That means they are less likely to be laid off when times are tough.
- One West Virginia college was named after a very famous United States Supreme Court Justice. Marshall University is named after Chief Justice John Marshall.
- Students at West Virginia University get to class by taking a small train called the "P.R.T."
- Lots of colleges in West Virginia have mascots that are symbols of West Virginia's outdoorsy spirit and beautiful mountain landscape. For example, the mascot at WVU is a mountaineer. Glenville State College's mascot is the Pioneer, and West Liberty's mascot is the Hilltopper.
- Concord University's nickname is "Campus Beautiful," because the buildings and gardens on campus are so pretty.
- Bluefield State College is also called "Big Blue."
- West Virginia University is located in Morgantown. But the school also has two partner campuses. One is called WVU Tech and it is located in Beckley. The other is called Potomac State College, and it is located in Keyser in the state's Eastern Panhandle.
- College campuses can sometimes look like small cities. Some of them have fitness centers, restaurants, coffee shops, swimming pools, convenience stores, and even bowling alleys and movie theaters! For example, Fairmont State University has a building called the Falcon Center. It is named after the school's mascot, the falcon, and has places for students to study, work out, eat out, and relax.
- Shepherd University offers the best of both worlds – small town comfort with big city attractions nearby. Shepherd University is located in Shepherdstown, WV, a small town with just a couple of streets. But it is also only an hour and a half away from the nation's capital, Washington, D.C.!
- Not every college student has to go to college for four years. Many students can earn certificates or degrees in just one to two years by attending a community or technical college. West Virginia has ten community and technical colleges and each of these colleges has several campuses in different towns throughout the state. The closest community and technical colleges to our school are...

College Quick Facts for High School Students and Adult Students

Use this list of facts to provide mini-lessons to increase students' and community members' college knowledge. Work with a local media outlet to coordinate a regular "fun fact" feature, or announce these tidbits during sporting and other campus or community events!

Note: All facts are valid for students who plan to attend college in the 2021-2022 academic year; however, financial aid information and economic statistics are subject to change annually.

FINANCIAL AID AND COLLEGE COSTS FACTS:

West Virginia's public colleges and universities offer some of the lowest tuition rates in the country! West Virginia's colleges and universities offer a great education at a bargain! The average cost of tuition for one year at West Virginia's public four-year colleges is approximately $7,793. The average cost of tuition for one year at the state's public two-year colleges is about $4,221!

West Virginia provides more financial aid dollars per student than almost any other state in the nation. Most West Virginia students receive financial aid to help pay for education and training beyond high school!

Students of any age or income-level who plan to pursue a certificate program, two-year college degree program, or four-year college degree program should complete the FAFSA – or Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The FAFSA is free to submit, and it's a requirement for not only federal financial aid, but also for many state financial aid programs! Students planning to attend college next year should look for the FAFSA online after October 1.

West Virginia offers several grant and scholarship programs, including the **PROMISE Scholarship Program**, *the* **West Virginia Invests Grant**, the **West Virginia Higher Education Grant**, the **West Virginia Engineering, Science**, and **Technology Program**, the **Underwood-Smith Teacher Scholarship Program**, and the **Higher Education Adult Part-time Student (HEAPS) Program**! The HEAPS program can be used to help pay for many certificate programs!

CAREER OUTLOOK AND ECONOMIC FACTS:

To keep up with future workforce demands, 60 percent of working-aged West Virginians will need a certificate or degree. But in 2016, only 31 percent of West Virginians aged 25-64 held at least an associate degree. Earning your college degree opens up opportunities - because our state needs more college graduates to fill high-paying jobs!

Students who complete a bachelor's degree program earn, on average, a million dollars more over their lifetime than students who stop their education after high school. When you learn more, you earn more!

During the recession, unemployment rates for college-educated workers stayed low relative to unemployment rates among those with a high school diploma or less.

College-educated adults are more likely to receive health and pension benefits and to be satisfied with their jobs, and a college education leads to healthier lifestyles -- all reducing health care costs for families and society.

On average, the benefits of a four-year college degree are equivalent to an investment that returns 15.2 percent annually -- more than double the average return on stock market investments since 1950.

COLLEGE PLANNING AND EXPLORATION:

West Virginia's students and parents can get free help planning, applying, and paying for college by visiting the College Foundation of West Virginia's free college- and career-planning website available at CFWV.com. That's CFWV.com.

Students can practice for the ACT and SAT for FREE at CFWV.com, the state's free college- and career-planning website. That's CFWV.com.

Students can apply directly to all of West Virginia's public two-year and four-year colleges and universities through CFWV.com. CFWV.com is West Virginia's free college- and career-planning website!

COLLEGE BINGO

Note: A blank copy of this activity is available for printing online at the College Application & Exploration Week website.

Complete your BINGO card by locating teachers, school staff members, or others that experienced the following college scenarios or can answer "yes" to the following questions. Be sure to get the individual to sign in the space, and you can only use each person for one space!

B	I	N	G	O
TOOK AN ONLINE COURSE WHILE IN COLLEGE	MAJORED IN HISTORY	LIVED ON CAMPUS WITH A ROOMMATE	IS CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN A COLLEGE COURSE OR PROGRAM	ATTENDED A PUBLIC COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY
JOINED A CLUB OR PARTICIPATED IN AN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY IN COLLEGE	ATTENDED AN IN-STATE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY	GRADUATED WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN 4 YEARS OR LESS	HAD A MINOR	TOOK A PSYCHOLOGY CLASS
TOOK BOTH THE ACT AND SAT	ATTENDED A PRIVATE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY	FREE SPACE	RECEIVED A SCHOLARSHIP	STARTED COLLEGE AS AN UNDECIDED, UNDECLARED, OR GENERAL STUDIES MAJOR
HAD A DOUBLE MAJOR	COMPLETED AN INTERNSHIP FOR COLLEGE CREDIT	PLAYED A SPORT IN COLLEGE	APPLIED TO 4 OR MORE COLLEGES	MAJORED IN ENGLISH
ATTENDED AN OUT-OF-STATE COLLEGE	HAD A STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, OR MATH) MAJOR	GRADUATED FROM COLLEGE WITH HONORS	COMPLETED A MASTER'S DEGREE OR HIGHER	WORKED A PART-TIME JOB WHILE IN COLLEGE

COLLEGE LOGO MATCH: ANSWER KEY

Note: A blank copy of this activity is available for printing online at the College Application & Exploration Week website.

West Virginia has more than 30 college and universities. Can you match the mascots and logos below to the public college or university they represent?

COLLEGE VOCABULARY WORDS

Note: A blank copy of this activity is available for printing online at the College Application & Exploration Week website.

Get ready for college by learning the words and phrases people use to talk about college. Look up the meaning of the following words. Then use them in a sentence.

Campus

Professor

Major

Elective

Financial Aid

Bachelor's Degree

Associate Degree

PICTURE YOURSELF IN COLLEGE

Note: A blank copy of this activity is available for printing online at the College Application & Exploration Week website.

Can you picture yourself in college? What does the college look like? What do you look like and what are you doing? What sort of career are you working toward?

Draw a picture in the bubble below to show your dreams for college.

COLLEGE CROSSWORD ANSWER KEY

Note: A blank copy of this activity is available for printing online at the College Application & Exploration Week website.

Use the clues to ill in the blanks!

ACROSS:

4. Assists college students with building their degree plan and class schedule

6. An additional subject area that students choose to focus on in college, often to provide secondary skills related to their major

7. Classes that allow students to explore their unique interests. They are not required courses but still count toward a student's degree.

8. A college student who has not yet earned an associate or bachelor's degree

DOWN:

1. The process of "officially" becoming a student at a particular college. Often includes completing forms, paying fees, and registering for classes.

2. The college office that oversees student applications and determines who will be admitted.

3. A way of dividing the college school year into two main parts, usually fall and spring

5. Refers to the cost of the education provided by a college.

MY FIRST COLLEGE APPLICATION

Note: This activity is available for printing online at the College Application & Exploration Week website.

Your Name: _____

College You Are Applying To: _____

College Major: _____

Electives You Want To Take: _____

Why do you want to study your major?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Why did you select the electives you did?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What do you want to be when you grow up?

_____

_____

_____

ESSAY PROMPTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS:

Print the My College Dream sheets available online on the College Application & Exploration Week website to give to students to write a short essay about their college dream. Hang these in the halls or around your classroom. You can also pair this with the "picture yourself" activity, and hang the essays and drawings side-by-side.

Encourage students to think about:

- The college they want to attend... is it big, small or somewhere in between? Is it far away or close to home? Why do they want to go?
- The things they might do in college... Will they play sports or be part of school clubs? Will they study abroad? Will they live on campus or off?
- The career they want... why do they think they will like it? What does someone in that career do? What do they need to know and be able to do to be good at their job?

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OLDER STUDENTS:

Ask students to write short stories/works based on the following writing prompts:

- Interview someone who went to college and write a news story about their experience. Ask them about the things they remember most about their time in college. Ask what advice they have to help students prepare for and succeed in college.
- Research a two-year college program and write an advertisement or brochure about this opportunity.
- Write a tweet (*280* characters maximum) about why you think college is important. Find a photo or link to go with your post.
- Write an instruction manual to guide younger students (5th and 6th graders) through the process of beginning to explore college options.
- You're a super hero and your mission is to make sure students in your hometown attend and succeed in college. Write and/or draw a comic strip about how you help your classmates overcome an obstacle standing in the way of their college dreams. Be sure you...
    - Believe in your mission. Think about the reasons why college is a good path for your classmates and your friends and why you're fighting to help them succeed.
    - Understand your "enemy." Think about the things that might get in the way of students who want to go to college and achieve their dreams.
- Write a letter to your future self, talking about which college you want to go to when you get older. Why does this college interest you? What do you want to study?

CFWV English, Social Studies and STEM Curricula

West Virginia educators have created curriculum guides to integrate college planning activities into English, Social Studies, and STEM classes. The guides feature lesson plans for grades seven through 12. These lessons are perfect for use in the classroom during College Application and Exploration Week! Download the guides by visiting the education and outreach tab of cfwv.com.

10TH GRADE: IS THIS CAREER PATH FOR ME? HOW ABOUT FOR YOU?

LESSON PLAN

roup.

l group setting.

tained research projects to answer
lve a problem; narrow or broaden
rces on the subject, demonstrating

in a range of collaborative discussions
partners on grade 10 topics, texts and
own clearly and persuasively.

er Planning, then navigate to Explore
e to present findings on a specific career.
s this job all about?"
than six according to cluster. Teacher
, for each group. Students will share
rganizer in order to persuade students
sharing session and questions group
n.
presented has created or strengthened
e deterred them.

11TH GRADE: BLOGGING IN 17TH CENTURY SALEM, MASS.

LESSON PLAN

LESSON NAME:	Blogging in 17th Century Salem, Mass.
GRADE LEVEL(S):	11th
GOAL/OBJECTIVE(S):	• Using the career cluster identified for their assigned character, students will research that particular career cluster on CFWV.com and select (3) suitable careers that their character might hold in 17th Century Salem (1692). • Using a free blog website (KidBlog.com), students will identify these (3) chosen careers for their character and defend WHY they believe their character would be the best to fulfill each role in the town (based upon what they know about their character). • Students will thoughtfully respond to peer blogs, either accepting or refuting their claim for a certain career, provide explanation as to why or why not (based upon that character's role in the play), and possibly suggest an alternate career path.
STANDARDS:	**WV ELA CCSS:** **ELA.11.R.C1.1:** cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. **ELA.11.R.C1.4:** cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the informational text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. **ELA.11.R.C3.3:** integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem. **ELA.11.W.C9.1:** write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. **ELA.11.W.C10.1:** produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. **ELA.11.W.C10.3:** use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information. **ELA.11.W.C11.1:** conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

ADMISSIONS 101: JEOPARDY! GAME BOARD

Types of Degrees	Know the Lingo	What to Consider	Timeline
100	100	100	100
200	200	200	200
300	300	300	300
400	400	400	400

ADMISSIONS 101: JEOPARDY! CLUES

Types of Degrees	Know the Lingo	What to Consider	Timeline
This is traditionally a two-year degree program requiring students to earn approximately 60 hours of college credit.	This refers to any form of education or training beyond high school.	This topic, which considers a school's graduation rate, ***should*** be evaluated when choosing colleges to apply to.	This is the year of high school when students should begin narrowing down their college options.
Also called a "graduate degree," this degree is earned after graduating from a bachelor's degree program.	This office oversees applications to the college, determines whether or not students are admitted, and facilitates transfers.	This topic, which considers a school's cost **without** financial aid, ***should NOT*** be a priority when evaluating colleges.	In the junior year of high school, students should study for and take one of these two college entrance exams.
This is traditionally a four-year degree program requiring students to earn approximately 120 hours of college credit.	This term refers to charges applied to a student's account for living on campus or eating in the dining halls.	This topic, which considers a school's challenge level for students, ***should*** be evaluated when choosing a college.	Seniors should submit their college applications by this annual holiday.
This is a general term that refers to the highest academic degree available in any particular field of study.	This is the process a student must complete after s/he has been accepted in order to be an "official" student.	This topic, which considers a school's on-campus housing for students, ***should NOT*** be a priority when evaluating colleges.	This financial aid application should be completed by seniors as soon after October 1 as possible.

ADMISSIONS 101: JEOPARDY! ANSWERS

Types of Degrees	Know the Lingo	What to Consider	Timeline
Associate degree	College/postsecondary education	Success rate	Junior year
Master's degree	Admissions office	Sticker price	ACT or SAT
Bachelor's degree	Room and board	Academics	Halloween
Terminal degree	Enrollment	Residence halls	Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

BROCHURE DESIGN CONTEST

Have students design a brochure for their favorite college – or a brochure that demonstrates how and why college is possible in the State of West Virginia. Students can craft their brochures by hand or by using computer software. Display the brochures in the hallway and have faculty, staff members, and students vote for their favorite ones. Offer a prize to the winner!

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS:

Note: This activity is available for printing online at the College Application & Exploration Week website.

Design an eye-catching, informative brochure for your favorite West Virginia college (or a brochure discussing why and how college is possible in West Virginia). Get creative and design your brochure either by hand or on the computer. Don't forget to include the following information:

College/University Brochures:

- ☐ the university/college name and at least one image to represent the school (for example, a logo, a picture of campus, etc.)
- ☐ the school colors/mascot
- ☐ the school location
- ☐ the enrollment of the school (how many students attend?)
- ☐ admissions requirements (GPA, SAT/ACT scores, etc.)
- ☐ tuition (include both in-state and out-of-state)
- ☐ degrees offered (certificates, associate degrees, etc.)
- ☐ majors (many colleges and universities offer a large number of majors, so listing just a few is acceptable)
- ☐ extracurricular activities offered
- ☐ academic supports offered (tutoring, writing labs, etc.)
- ☐ housing information (are freshmen required to live on campus?)
- ☐ sports
- ☐ a link to the school website for more information

College is Possible Brochures:

- ☐ Each brochure should focus on the affordability, worth, and necessity of a college education in West Virginia.
- ☐ The affordability component might consider the average cost of tuition at West Virginia's public colleges in comparison to how much state- and federal-level financial aid is available.
- ☐ The worth component might consider the various ways in which a college education helps graduates with life after college, including how their lifestyles tend to differ from those of high school graduates. You might also consider the definition of "college" for this component.
- ☐ The necessity component might consider the statistics regarding how many West Virginians will need to have a college education within the next few years. You might also discuss the make-up of the workforce following the "Great Recession" and how college graduates fared versus high school graduates.

FINANCIAL AID 101 SCAVENGER HUNT

Have students go online to CFWV.com to view the Financial Aid 101 guide. Students should then work to complete the below worksheet. The student who first accurately completes the worksheet wins!

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS:

Note: This activity is available for printing online at the College Application & Exploration Week website.

It's an information race! Go to cfwv.com/request-resources. Click Financial Aid Brochures and open up the Financial Aid 101 full guide. Then, accurately complete the worksheet below as fast as you can. (Follow your instructor's directions on how to announce you're done.) If you get done first and get all the answers correct, you'll win!

ANSWER KEY

1. What is the yearly date that the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) becomes available to students? October 1 p. 6
2. What is the average cost of tuition and fees for one year at West Virginia's public two-year colleges for the 2021-2022 school year? $4,221 p. 8
3. What are the two tests that students can take to establish eligibility for the PROMISE Scholarship? ACT/SAT p. 10
4. What is the maximum award amount for the Federal Pell Grant for the 2020-2021 school year? $6,345 p. 11 (the 2021-2022 award amount will be released by the USDOE by 2/1/21)
5. What is the type of financial aid that doesn't need to be repaid AND is usually given based on financial need? Grants p. 4
6. What is the average cost of tuition and fees for one year at West Virginia's public four-year colleges for the 2021-2022 school year? $7,793 p. 8
7. What is the website students visit to file the FAFSA? FAFSA.gov p. 5
8. What is the form of financial aid that must be paid back with interest? Loans p. 4
9. What is the maximum award amount for the West Virginia Higher Education Grant for 2021-2022? $2,900 p. 11
10. BONUS! Tie-breaker question: How many times should the average bachelor's degree graduate have filed the FAFSA once they graduate from college? 4 times (senior year of high school, freshman, sophomore, and junior years of college)

COLLEGE TRIVIA

Have students find the answers to the following questions. All answers are for public two- and four-year colleges/universities in West Virginia.

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS:

Note: This activity is available for printing online at the College Application & Exploration Week website.

Find the answers to the below questions by researching the questions online. All answers are for public two- and four-year colleges/universities in West Virginia.

ANSWER KEY

1. Which two-year college community and technical college has campuses in Parkersburg and Ripley? West Virginia University Parkersburg
2. Which two-year community and technical college is located in Wheeling? West Virginia Northern Community College
3. Which college or university is named after a former United States Supreme Court Justice? Marshall University
4. Which college or university is nicknamed "The Campus Beautiful"? Concord University
5. Which two-year college community and technical college is located in Fairmont? Pierpont Community & Technical College
6. Which college or university is nicknamed "Big Blue"? Bluefield State College
7. Which college or university's mascot is the Hilltopper? West Liberty University
8. Which two-year community and technical college has campuses in Montgomery and South Charleston? BridgeValley Community & Technical College
9. Which historically black college or university is located in Institute, WV? West Virginia State University
10. Which college or university has the "Falcon Center," a fitness complex, study space, and food court all in one? Fairmont State University
11. Which college or university is located just 65 miles from Washington, D.C.? Shepherd University
12. Which college or university is also called "Tech"? West Virginia University Institute of Technology
13. Which two-year community and technical college has its main campus in Logan? Southern WV Community & Technical College
14. Which college or university's mascot is the Pioneers? Glenville State College
15. Which two-year college community and technical college is named after a river? New River Community & Technical College
16. At which college or university do students get to class by taking the PRT? West Virginia University
17. Which two-year college community and technical college goes by the initials MCTC? Mountwest Community & Technical College

ARTS AND CRAFTS ACTIVITIES

My College Collage

Materials Needed:

- Scissors
- Tape or Glue
- Magazines, photos, or computer printouts
- Optional: Computers

Instructions:
Ask students to create a collage, either on paper or in a computer program, to represent their dreams and plans for college and a career. Make sure the following ideas are represented in the collage:

- Colleges or universities they are considering
- Careers they are considering
- A challenge they think they will face
- A person or people that can help or support them
- Something that inspires them to succeed
- An outcome or reward they expect to achieve as a result of completing their goal.

Letter Writing Campaign

Have students write or email college admissions representatives to request information about their college or university and/or specific degree programs. In the letter, ask for pennants, posters, or other display materials to hang in your classroom or around the school. Once students receive responses, have them present the information to their classmates. Use pennants, posters, and other visual pieces to create college bulletin boards or "college corners" around the school.

Media Blitz

Ask students to create commercials, news stories, and other promotional and/or informative pieces about going to college or specific college opportunities. Then launch a media campaign in your school and community. Students might...

- Write "radio ads" about college or specific colleges or programs. Read these over the school intercom, or work with a local radio station to get them on the air.
- Create "TV ads." Show these in class or on local cable channels.
- Design posters or brochures and distribute them in school and in the community.
- Create a website or online advertisement.
- Launch a social media campaign.

"HELLO, MY NAME IS..." COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITY

It's important to make the impact of our colleges and universities visible in our communities, and to help students connect with college graduates who can help guide them along the way.

The purpose of this activity is to identify staff members by their institutions of higher education and engage students in dialogue with staff members.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Make copies and distribute the "Hi, My Name Is" signs that are available for download at cfwvconnect.com/college-application-and-exploration-week to all faculty and staff and ask them to complete and post them outside their classrooms or near their work spaces.

2. Email teachers and staff and ask them to provide an interesting fact about their college experience. Examples might include the following:
   - Serving as the college mascot.
   - Working for the college newspaper or TV station.
   - Attending more than one college.
   - Attending a college that is far away.
   - Working part-time while in college.
   - Playing sports in college.
   - Earning a degree in something other than teaching.
   - Taking longer than four years to complete college. Taking fewer than four years...

3. Use the answers to their questions to create "scavenger hunt" questions.

4. Each morning, announce a scavenger hunt question. For example: Which teacher attended college farthest away?

5. Encourage the students to look at the signs and talk to teachers and staff throughout the day about their college experience.

6. Collect students' answers at the beginning of the last period of class each day. Turn in all answers to the office.

7. From those students who provided correct answers, draw a winner.

8. During evening announcements, provide the answer and announce the winning student. Give the winner a prize.

ROADS TO SUCCESS CURRICULUM

The College Foundation of West Virginia and its partners have created several curriculum guides to help students better prepare for college and a career.

One such curriculum, "Roads to Success," offers lesson plans for students grades 7-12.

You can download the Roads to Success kit by visiting cfwv.com. Click the Resources button, then Curricula. From there, click on the "Roads to Success" link on the page.

Curricula

Guided Curricula

CFWV Connect features a guided curriculum – accessible via the links below – that is designed to help teachers, counselors, mentors, and community volunteers integrate college- and career-planning activities into their day-to-day work with students and families. Resources related to these lesson plans are available on each page in the panel to the right.

- Getting Started
- Learn about Yourself
- High School Planning
- College Planning
- Financial Aid Planning

Additionally, two other curriculum guides have been aligned with the tools and resources available on CFWV.com "Roads to Success" and the West Virginia "LINKS" systems have both been adapted to incorporate the resources available through CFWV.

Our School is Hosting a "College Colors Day!"

Note: This activity is available for printing online at the College Application & Exploration Week website.

In celebration of West Virginia's statewide "College Application and Exploration Week," our school is hosting a "College Colors Day!"

Students are encouraged to wear the colors of their favorite college or university, or to wear their favorite college gear. Students must abide by the school's dress code and avoid wearing inappropriate or revealing clothing.

Our "College Colors Day" will be held:

To learn more about college options, visit the state's free college-planning website, www.cfwv.com!

Sample press release

Note: This document is available as an editable Word Document at www.cfwvconnect.com/application-and-exploration-week.

You can also adapt this release to send it after the event as a follow-up story. If you have pictures from your school's College Application and Exploration Week event, it is a good idea to provide them to the newspaper along with the release. Just be sure you have the permission of anyone who is pictured!

For Immediate Release: <date>

Contact:
<Name, Title>
<Organization>
<Phone>
<Email address>

NEWS RELEASE

<School> to celebrate statewide "College Application and Exploration Week"

<CITY>, W.Va. – Name of School/Organization has signed on to participate in West Virginia's statewide "College Application and Exploration Week" to be held November 2-6. During the week, the school will host activities to help students learn about and apply to postsecondary education programs, including certificate programs, workforce training and apprenticeship programs, two-year degree programs, four-year degree programs and military service.

During the week, <insert other activities that are occurring, such as door decorating contests, parent workshops, or college colors days.>

College Application and Exploration is organized by the College Foundation of West Virginia (CFWV), an initiative coordinated by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission to help students go to college and succeed. Students and families can learn more about colleges and careers and submit college applications by visiting West Virginia's free college-planning website, www.cfwv.com.

- ### -

Related social media hashtags: #WhyIChose #IApplied #CollegeBoundWV
Related Twitter feeds: @CFWV

Media Outreach Guide

Inviting local reporters to your College Application and Exploration Week events is a great way to recognize the successes of your students and increase awareness of your school's work to promote a college-going culture. Here are some tips for working with the media.

Send a news release: Use the news release template in this kit to develop a news story about your school's activities. Send the news release to local media outlets seven to ten days in advance of your event. If your local newspaper or outlet publishes once a week, send the release ten days in advance. If they publish or air stories daily, a week is sufficient.

If you, or someone on staff at your school, have a relationship with a media outlet or a specific reporter, have that person reach out when sending the release. Also try contacting reporters who have covered stories about your school in the past.

When you send the release, make sure you note in the body of your email that media representatives are invited and encouraged to attend! It is also a good idea to copy and paste the release into the body of your email, instead of sending it as an attachment. This will help you avoid spam filters and allow the reporter to scan your news story quickly without having to download and open an attachment.

Follow up: A day or so after you've sent your news release, call the media outlet to confirm that they received it and ask if they have any questions. You can ask them if they think they will be able to send someone to cover the event, but avoid pushing for a firm commitment. News rooms are often short staffed, so be understanding of their time constraints.

Designate a media point-of-contact: Ask a staff member or volunteer to keep an eye out for any reporters who come to your event. The point-of-contact should greet the reporter, provide him or her with a copy of your news release, offer to arrange interviews and direct reporters to key activities.

Prepare your staff and students: Consider in advance staff members, students and family members who might represent your school well in a media interview. Ask their permission to refer reporters to them. Make sure they understand key information about College Application and Exploration Week, including its purpose and that it is part of a statewide campaign. You may also want to provide them with information about why education and training beyond high school is important and the number of students who are participating.

Send a "thank you:" After your event, send a thank you note to reporters who provided media coverage. This will help your school maintain a good relationship with media outlets.

Share your success: Send information about (and links to) any media coverage to **Heather McChesney** at heather.mcchesney@wvhepc.edu. We'd love to share your successes on our CFWV websites and social media channels!

Social Media Outreach - GO VIRTUAL!

Social media is an excellent way to recognize your students and share your school's work with the community. You can also use social media to engage students and families and build excitement for your event. Here are a few tips for maximizing your social media efforts:

Tag it! Just like an in-person conversation, it's hard to participate if you can't follow what's happening. Hashtags and mentions make it possible to find and follow posts from a wide variety of sources and link together the conversation. For College Application and Exploration Week, the following hashtags can be used:

- **#WhyIChose:** Students and college graduates across the country are using this hashtag to share why they chose to apply to a particular school or program or why they love their alma mater.
- **#IApplied:** Students who are submitting college applications are using this hashtag to announce that they've applied. This is a great way for students to announce *where* they've applied, too!
- **#CollegeBoundWV:** This hashtag can be used universally to express that WV students of all ages are college bound! **Be sure to have students use the #CollegeBoundWV social scrolls included in your toolkit!**
- **@CFWV:** Students can mention CFWV on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook to share their stories with us. We'll retweet the best ones!

Encourage students, parents and staff to share: Here are a few ideas to get folks talking online:

- Ask students to post pictures wearing their college gear or showing off College Application and Exploration Week decor.
- Encourage parents to brag a little about their student's successes and future plans and to mention @CFWV.
- Encourage staff members to use the #WhyIChose hashtag to share why they chose their alma mater or what they loved about their college experience.
- During the week, remind students and staff to share their photos and status updates surrounding your school's activities using the hashtags above.
- Use the social media hashtag flyers in this kit to post photos or videos of your students with a message about College Application and Exploration Week.

CFWV Social Media Channels

- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/collegefoundationofwv
- **Twitter:** www.twitter.com/cfwv
- **Instagram**: www.instagram.comcollegefoundationofwv
- **YouTube**: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeXDnTYiObMXuJJhXtQ-Acg

West Virginia Public Four-Year Institution Handles

Bluefield State College
@BlfdStateColl

Concord University
@CampusBeautiful

Fairmont State University
@FairmontState

Glenville State College
@gopioneers

Marshall University
@MarshallU

WVU Potomac State College
@PotomacState

Shepherd University
@ShepherdU

West Liberty University
@WestLibertyU

WV School of Osteopathic Medicine
@WVSOM

West Virginia State University
@WVStateU

West Virginia University
@WestVirginiaU

West Virginia Tech
@WVU_Tech

West Virginia Public Two-Year Institution Handles

Blue Ridge Community & Technical College
@BlueRidgeCTC

BridgeValley Community & Technical College
@BridgeValleyWV

Eastern West Virginia Community & Technical College
@EasternWVedu

Mountwest Community & Technical College
@MountwestCTC

New River Community & Technical College
@NewRiverCTC

Pierpont Community & Technical College
@PierpontCTC

Southern West Virginia Community & Technical College
@SWVCTC

West Virginia Northern Community College
@WVNCC

West Virginia University – Parkersburg
@WVUParkersburg

#WhyIChose

cfwv.com
COLLEGE FOUNDATION OF WEST VIRGINIA

@CFWV /COLLEGEFOUNDATIONOFWV @COLLEGEFOUNDATIONOFWV

#WhyIChose

Concord University...
because "The Campus
Beautiful" just felt like
home!

EXAMPLE

cfwv.com
COLLEGE FOUNDATION OF WEST VIRGINIA

@CFWV /COLLEGEFOUNDATIONOFWV @COLLEGEFOUNDATIONOFWV

Application resources

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Before your event, you will need to prepare students as much as possible. To ensure that you have it all covered, here is a list of helpful student reminders.

- Direct students interested in applying to complete the **College Application Checklist**. A copy can be found at the end of this section.
- Work with college admissions offices to learn about criteria for eligibility for application fee waivers. Usually those students who are eligible for fee waivers on college entrance exams are also eligible for college application fee waivers.
- Familiarize yourself and your volunteers with the college application section of cfwv.com.

  To find the application section of cfwv.com, go to:

  CFWV.com home page >> College Planning (top navigation bar) >> Applications
- Familiarize yourself and your volunteers with the college exploration section of cfwv.com. Remember, the goal of College Application and Exploration Week is to help students find the program to meet their needs and to promote college – not just the college or university with which you may be partnering.

APPLICATION FEES AND FEE WAIVERS

Students may be required to pay an application fee for some college applications or they may qualify for a fee waiver to cover the cost of application fees. For further information on fee waivers, speak directly with colleges' admissions offices.

Fee Waiver: West Virginia's colleges and universities often offer fee waivers for low-income students, especially if students took the SAT or ACT and received a fee waiver. To learn more, visit collegeboard.com and act.org. Students who are part of college access programs such as GEAR UP or Upward Bound are eligible for at least one fee waiver.

Payment by Check: Once the student has submitted his or her online application, he or she can typically send a check in the mail to that school. Be sure to remind the student to send a copy of his or her confirmation page with payment.

Payment by Credit Card: Some schools require that students pay online with a credit card. We encourage students who are paying online to wait to complete this step at home if possible. Students who are using cfwv.com to apply can complete their application up to the point of payment, then save the application to their portfolio to finish it later.

I Applied...Now What?

OK, so you've applied to college and that's great, but what happens now?

Applying is one of the first steps on your path to attending to college. Keep in mind that it may take a couple of months for the college or university to get back to you. Once you've submitted your application, make sure that you've turned in everything you need in order for the college to consider you as a potential student. Have you:

- ❍ Submitted your application fee (if the college charges a fee)?
- ❍ Submitted any required transcripts to the college?
- ❍ Submitted your letters of recommendation (if required by the college)?
- ❍ Submitted your essay (if required by the college)?

Even after you're accepted to a college, there's still a lot of work to do to make your final decision and get ready. You'll want to consider what financial aid is available to you at the colleges you're considering, and you'll want to decide if you want to live on campus or commute. Of course, once you decide on a college, you'll need to register as a new student and enroll in classes.

GET REMINDERS BY TEXT!

To help keep you on track, CFWV offers free text messages to remind you to complete key college tasks, like registering for orientation, applying for financial aid, and purchasing text books. To sign up for these alerts, visit www.cfwv.com and click on the badge on the homepage.

FREE FINANCIAL AID HELP:

Sometime after October 1, you'll need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). If possible, you should complete the FAFSA before March 1, because that's the deadline for many state-level scholarship programs.

You can get in-person, confidential assistance completing the FAFSA by attending a financial aid workshop. For a calendar of these events, visit cfwv.com and click on the Community Calendar link under the Upcoming Events heading.

Explore the "cash for college" resources available on cfwv.com to learn about all of the state and federal financial aid opportunities available to you. Visit college and university web sites to see what sort of financial aid and scholarship programs are offered at the school you plan to attend. Complete and submit applications for as many scholarships, grants, and other financial aid awards as you can find!

College Application Checklist

Completing the College Application Checklist will ensure that you have all of the information you need to complete your college applications.

Student Information

Write your cfwv.com user name and password on the line above.

Full Name (First, Middle, Last)

Permanent Address (where all mail will be sent) City, State, Zip

Phone Number | Mobile Phone Number

Email Address

Social Security Number | Drivers License Number & Date Issued

Date of Birth | Place of Birth (City, State, Country)

Parent/Guardian Information (ONLY IF the student is a dependent)

First Parent/Guardian Full Name (First, Middle, Last)

Street Address, City, State, Zip

Telephone Number | Mobile Phone Number

E-mail Address

Please indicate the highest education level completed by Parent/Guardian:

❍ Unknown ❍ Elementary/Middle School (K-8) ❍ High School/GED

❍ 2-Year College ❍ 4-Year College ❍ Graduate School

Second **Parent/Guardian Information (ONLY IF the student is a dependent)**

First Parent/Guardian Full Name (First, Middle, Last)

Street Address, City, State, Zip

Telephone Number Mobile Phone Number

E-mail Address

Please indicate the highest education level completed by Parent/Guardian:

❍ Unknown ❍ Elementary/Middle School (K-8) ❍ High School/GED

❍ 2-Year College ❍ 4-Year College ❍ Graduate School

High School Information (if applicable)

Name of High School from which you graduated Phone Number

Mailing Address, City, State, Zip

Date you entered high school Graduation Date

G.E.D./TASC Information (if applicable)

Test Date Score

Previous College or University Credit Information (if applicable)

College Name

City, State

Dates of Attendance

College Name

City, State

Dates of Attendance

College Name

City, State

Dates of Attendance

List any college-credit courses or hours you have completed and where

SAT Test Date (month/year) Math Score Verbal Score

ACT Test Date (month/year) Composite Score

Contact

If you have questions about this toolkit or West Virginia's College Application and Exploration Week effort, please contact the following:

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West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
(304) 558-0655
heather.mcchesney@wvhepc.edu