

College Readiness Curriculum

Lesson 2

Building a College Readiness Team

Lesson Overview:

Students will continue the College Readiness Curriculum by completing the following steps: 1) identifying potential members of their personal College Readiness Teams 2) choosing and assigning roles to team members

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College Readiness

Lesson 2 – College Readiness Team

Lesson Overview:

During this lesson, you will introduce the idea and explain the value of a College Readiness Team, and guide students in assembling their personal teams.

Time Frame:

1-2 hours

Core Concept:

- Preparing for college is easier and more effective with the support of a team.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson students will:

- Identify adults in their lives who can assist and guide them in the process of preparing for post-secondary schools.
- Explore ways in which each member may be involved in helping them achieve their goals.

Materials Needed:

- [College Readiness Team Slideshow](#)
- Worksheet: College Readiness Team Roster

Supplemental Videos:

- [Building Your Team](#)

Step 1: Activate Background Knowledge

Remind students that the overview slideshow from Lesson 1 briefly introduced the idea of a college preparation support team. Ask: *What kinds of people do you think might be helpful in getting you ready for college?* Note students' responses on the board, to be revisited, revised and added to during or after the lesson.

Explain that in this lesson, students will learn more about the team idea and then assemble their own personal teams. Discuss the value of having a team: preparing for college and beyond can be overwhelming and challenging. It helps to know that you have many people who can help you and cheer for you when you need support. Formalizing that team can help to keep students accountable

and organized. Students' *College Readiness Teams* will consist of a wide variety of people that they can count on for support, ideas, and help along the way.

Step 2: Present the College Readiness Team slideshow

To help students identify potential team members and consider their roles, present and discuss the suggestions in the College Readiness Team slideshow. Invite students to contribute their own ideas and suggestions, too. Be sure to pause after each slide to elicit students' comments and questions. (See suggestions after some slides.)

***NOTE:** You may wish to delete, edit, or add slides as applicable to the needs and circumstances of your students.*

[Slide 1]

Identifying Team Members- Family

Parents, guardians, and/or other family members are most likely the first people to add to your college readiness team. You'll want to keep your family involved and informed in almost every aspect of your post-secondary search, application, and decision process. They may also play a critical role in financing all or part of your education.

Don't forget about older siblings or cousins, too! If you have a family member who has navigated the college application process recently, they may be able to provide helpful insight and tips that worked for them.

Pause to Ask: Do you know people in your personal life who are familiar with the college application process? Jot down their names. As we continue the slideshow, continue to write down names of people who come to mind for your team.

[Slide 2]

Identifying Team Members- Guidance Counselor

Include your school guidance counselor on your team. If you are not already familiar with your guidance counselor, ask to set up a meeting as soon as possible. Your counselor can help you with every aspect of college readiness, from enrolling in appropriate courses while in high school to finding and applying to the right post-secondary schools for you.

Pause to Ask: Does everyone know who their guidance counselor is? If some students are unsure, help them to find out.

[Slide 3]

Identifying Team Members- Teachers

It is a good idea to cultivate relationships with favorite teachers, especially those who teach subjects you wish to continue studying in post-secondary school. Your teachers are a great source of ideas and assistance for improving your grades and developing your strengths as a candidate for post-secondary school.

If your college application process requires letters of recommendation, you will probably want at least one letter from a teacher.

[Slide 4]

Identifying Team Members- Coaches and Advisors

If you are involved in sports, clubs or other extracurricular activities, the adults who lead these programs can be good sources of guidance as you prepare for post-secondary school. This is especially true if you plan to continue the activity in college. Coaches and advisors can also help you excel and move into leadership roles in activities that you are passionate about and advise you on finding scholarships related to your activities and interests.

Consider coaches and advisors for letters of recommendation if required. They may actually know you better than many teachers, and they may be perfect for writing personal and unique letters that truly help you to stand out in a crowd.

[Slide 5]

Identifying Team Members- Bosses and Supervisors

If you volunteer or have a paying job, your boss or supervisor may have advice about colleges and programs to consider and ways to strengthen your application – particularly if the work you do relates to the career or field of study you plan to pursue.

If you have a positive relationship with your boss or supervisor, this person may also be a great candidate for writing you a letter of recommendation.

Pause for a Role Play (10–15 minutes): Some students may be uncertain how to ask a coach, boss, etc. for college advice. As time permits, invite the class to brainstorm questions to ask and polite ways to ask them. Write the questions on the board. Then have students pair up and take turns asking and answering a few questions.

[Slide 6]

Identifying Team Members- Friends and Peers

Do you know people near your age who have already gone through the process of applying to post-secondary school? Do you know someone who is already attending a school or pursuing a course of study that interests you? These people can be very helpful as you search for and apply to post-secondary schools. They might have helpful hints about the process or may be able to give you deeper insight about a particular school, program, or area of study that interests you.

[Slide 7]

Identifying Team Members- Professional College Admissions Consultant?

Are you considering hiring a professional counselor or independent education consultant (IEC) to guide you through the college admissions process? Here are some questions to ask:

- ✓ Do I need an IEC? *Consider that by the end of this lesson you will have created your own College Readiness Team. This team may be capable of doing everything that a professional consultant can do... And more!*
- ✓ Can my family afford an IEC? *Costs can range from \$1000 to hundreds of thousands of dollars. If you are interested in hiring an IEC, you will want to discuss your options and costs with your parent or guardian.*
- ✓ Are the IECs that I am considering legitimate? *There may be some IECs that do a great job and could be considered “worth the money” for those who hire them. On the other hand, some students have found other IECs to just be scams, or at best, a waste of money. Be sure to do your background research on any IEC you might hire. Ask for recommendations from friends who have successfully used IECs.*

Pause to Ask: Does anyone know someone who has used an IEC? What did they have to say about the experience?

[Slide 8]

Potential Roles for Your College Readiness Team

There will be many ways for the people on your team to help and support you. Depending upon your timeline and process, you may need assistance with all or some of the following:

- **School Search** – Team members who know you well and others who are familiar with particular schools.

- **Building your Resume** – Many team members may be able to help you look for ways to shape your experience and improve your grades so that you are a strong college applicant.
- **Preparing for Admissions Exams** – Some members (such as a school counselor) may be best at helping you with logistics like registration while others (such as teachers) may help you identify areas to study and still others (such as friends with similar aspirations) may be part of a study group.
- **Completing Your Application** – Your school guidance counselor can help navigate the process. Parents may also be helpful.
- **Letters of Recommendation** – Choose one or more people (non-family members) who know you well – teachers, job supervisors, coaches, etc.
- **Reviewing Admissions Essays** – Choose someone with trusted writing skills.
- **Applying for Financial Aid and Scholarships** – Parents and the same team members who help with college applications may be helpful in this role.
- **Making a Final Decision** – You may want to get input from several team members. Parents and other influential family members should definitely be included.
- **Specific Goals** – In Lesson 1 you set several College Readiness SMART Goals. One or more team members may be perfect for helping you to achieve these goals.

Step 3: Students Draft their College Readiness Teams

(30 minutes)

Distribute Worksheet 1 and ask students to complete first drafts of the College Readiness Team Roster, in class or as homework. Then set aside a few minutes to meet with each student about the roster. Use the following prompts to guide discussion:

- Are there important people missing from your College Readiness Team?
- How can each potential team member best fit into your College Readiness Team?
- *Discuss and clarify anything else that students are confused or concerned about.*

Step 4: Students Finalize their Rosters

Explain that students' next step (outside of class) is to contact the people on their rosters and invite them to become team members. Point out that students should take some time to explain what the College Readiness Team is all about and why the student wants each individual on the team. Encourage students to outline expectations for each team member and discuss ways that he or she can help. Remind students to thank each person who agrees to participate!

As necessary, meet with students who are having difficulty finding willing team members. Guide them to identify possible alternative members.

Finally, remind students to stay in touch with their College Readiness Teams. Point out that students should let team members know when deadlines are approaching and help is needed. Encourage students, to update their teams on their goals and accomplishments, too. Team members will want to cheer students on and celebrate with them!

Resources

Share the following additional resources for students who are considering hiring a professional counselor/IEC:

- [*12 Questions to Ask Before Hiring an Independent Educational Consultant.*](#)
- [Independent Education Consultants Association](#)
- [Private College Admissions Consultants: Does Your Child Need One?](#)
- [Should we hire a private college counselor?](#)
- [Dirty Secrets of College Coaches](#)