

Landscape Analysis of Tools and Resources for Postsecondary Planning and Financial Aid Form Completion



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Prepared by
Noelle Banuelos, PhD
Jas Sohal, M.A.



Dr. Noelle Banuelos is an experienced educational researcher/program evaluator working in conjunction with ERC, a renowned organization providing evaluation, data management and grant-writing services across California. Both Dr. Banuelos and the ERC team have over 20 years of experience in working with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) in support of various programs and meeting district evaluation needs.

This work was completed in partial fulfillment of the project, *Got a Plan for That? Removing Barriers to College and Career Success" through LAUSD and Community Partnership*. The research presented in this report embodies the work of the ERC team as well as support and advisement from the UNITE-LA team, staff members of LAUSD's Division of Instruction (DOI), and an advisory group consisting of community-based organization partners, district staff, parents, and students.

Introduction

The current landscape review is one component of a collaborative project involving UNITE-LA and LAUSD, "Got a Plan for That? Removing Barriers to College and Career Success" through LAUSD and Community Partnership. The project seeks to answer two overarching questions:

- How might we ensure that all LAUSD seniors complete a financial aid application prior to graduation, or complete an opt-out form?
- How might we ensure that all LAUSD seniors complete a meaningful plan for post-graduation that results in better-informed student decision-making around postsecondary education, and increased postsecondary matriculation?

ERC conducted the following landscape review with the purpose of providing LAUSD and the Advisory Group with information on tools and systems used internally and across the region that support students with their postsecondary efforts. The information will also highlight effective practices and strategies which may be utilized by the district.

In addition to the questions posed above, ERC was also guided by specific strategies identified in LAUSD's A-G Implementation Plan (2021):

- Strategy 1.9: Increase the number of students with a postsecondary plan for enrollment, employment, or enlistment.
- Strategy 3.3: Increase the completion of FAFSA/CADAA and college applications
- Strategy 3.4: Create student-facing resources and tools that support the understanding of postsecondary choices and provide guidance on college planning and extracurricular activities.

The information provided in this review can be used to support the district in implementing the above strategies and meet the overall goals of the A-G Implementation Plan.

This review is presented in four sections:

- I. Financial Aid Form Completion (FAFSA/CADAA) (pp. 2-10)
- II. Postsecondary Plans (pp. 10-20)
- III. LAUSD Internal Tools and Resources (pp. 21-30)
- IV. Recommendations and Considerations (pp. 31-32)

I. Financial Aid Form Completion (FAFSA/CADAA)

ERC conducted a review of current practices across the country targeted toward financial aid form completion. The information provided in this review supports the implementation of Strategy 3.3 "Increase the completion of FAFSA/CADAA and college applications" identified in LAUSD's A-G Implementation Plan (2021).

Since 2017, there has been a growing movement to make FAFSA completion (or opt-out) a mandatory requirement for high school graduation. This is largely due in response to decreasing completion rates across high school students and decreasing rates for post-secondary enrollment. The National College Attainment Network (NCAN) asserts that having a "universal" FAFSA completion policy, making financial aid form completion a high school graduation

requirement along with providing student support, can lead to gains in post-secondary enrollment.

The research has long supported the potential outcomes to FAFSA completion. In 2011, Novak and McKinney found that among students who enroll in college, FAFSA completers experienced greater persistence into their second year. In a 2020 report on mandatory FAFSA completion, Granville (2020) posed that the research supports the potential for mandates to correct disparities in form completion by socio-economic status (SES). For example, completion rates have increased in Louisiana, particularly among students from lower SES backgrounds. Further, FAFSA completion has been associated with increased college enrollment among low-income students. One 2019 study found that students in the lowest 40% poverty range, who completed the FAFSA, had a college-going rate 1.65 times above the rate of their non-FAFSA-completing peers (DeBaun, 2019, as cited in Granville, 2020).

Currently, undocumented students are not eligible for federal aid. Reported in 2021 by the National Conference of State Legislatures, only seven states (Colorado, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas and Washington) allowed undocumented students to receive state-funded financial aid.¹ Illinois offers an Alternative Application through the RISE Act, offer undocumented students access to the Monetary Award Program (MAP) grants, the state's largest need-based grant program for low-income college students. In recent years, there has been an emergence of research that acknowledges and supports the benefits of financial aid for undocumented students.

In 2018, Ngo and Astudillo studied the impact of California Dream Act financial aid on cohorts of undocumented Hispanic students from across several years, beginning as early as 2011 in order to track enrollment outcomes. One of the most significant findings from this study was that this aid "raised the overall attempt and completion outcomes of Hispanic undocumented students to the level of their U.S. citizen peers who received aid" (p.10). The researchers also found that the "promise" of financial aid through the CA Dream Act appeared to have positive motivating effects on high school seniors to raise GPAs. Additional positive study outcomes included changes in enrollment behavior and college achievement (Ngo & Astudillo, 2018).

Table 1 displays the current list of states who have, or are on their way, toward adopting a universal FAFSA policy and making FAFSA completion a mandatory graduation requirement. Several of these states also currently have some type of opt-out form or waiver available for students and families.

Table 1. States with Mandatory FAFSA Completion and Opt-out Forms

| State | Effective Year | Mandatory Graduation Requirement? | Opt-out form? |
|-----------|----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Louisiana | 2017-18 | Yes | Yes |
| Illinois* | 2020-21 | Yes | Yes |
| Texas** | 2021-22 | Yes | Yes |
| Alabama | 2021-22 | Yes | Yes |

¹ <https://www.ncsl.org/research/education/undocumented-student-tuition-overview.aspx>

| State | Effective Year | Mandatory Graduation Requirement? | Opt-out form? |
|--|--------------------|--|--|
| Colorado | 2021-22 | Instead of a statewide requirement, the state government offers grants to LEAs who adopt a requirement to assist student in FAFSA completion. The bill cites support for partnerships between LEAs, higher education institutions, and CBOs that all play a role in the FAFSA process. | Not found |
| Maryland | 2022-23 | Does not require FAFSA completion but obligates LEAs to encourage and assist seniors in completing and submitting the FAFSA. | Not found |
| California | 2022-23* | Yes | In progress |
| CA Districts – Val Verde USD Perris Union HSD | 2017-18 2018-19 | Yes | Yes, for VVUSD School-specific for PUHSD |
| New Hampshire | 2023-24 | Yes | Not currently |

*Illinois law requires districts with high schools to provide rigorous school support to students and families before students can be exempted.

**In Texas, a school counselor may waive requirement “for good cause, as determined by counselor.” The state also concurrently passed performance-based policy offering financial incentives to schools for FAFSA completion.

Opt-Out Forms/Waivers

All of the current opt-out forms, including those from California’s Val Verde school district, all request similar information: names of school, student, parents; contact information; and appropriate signatures. Variations occur in the additional information provided with each form, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Variations in Key Information Provided in Financial Aid Opt-Out Forms/Waivers

| Key information | Louisiana | Illinois | Texas | Alabama | Val Verde | CSAC Draft Form* |
|--|-----------|----------|-------|---------|-----------|---------------------|
| Explanation of purpose of form and/or mandatory requirement | Yes | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes |
| FAQs about FAFSA completion and benefits | | Yes | | Yes | | Yes |
| Link for information on alternative forms, eligibility (e.g., CADAA or IL Alternative Application) | | Yes | | | | Yes |
| Information on eligibility to apply at later date | | | Yes | | | Yes |
| Available in English and Spanish | unknown | Yes | Yes | unknown | Yes | Yes |
| Space for additional authorization (e.g., from counselor) | | | Yes | | | Yes |

The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) is currently drafting a FAFSA/CADAA opt-out form for Local Education Agencies (LEA) in California. As shown in Table 2 above, this form contains all of the key information, in addition to the required identification and signatures. LEAs may adopt the CSAC form for use but is not required. LEAs may choose to create a form that best meets their needs and contains any additional information deemed relevant.

As of April 2022, LAUSD did not have a FAFSA/CADAA opt-out form but is working toward having a form for the Class of 2023. The form currently in use is to opt-out for release of student directory information (and GPA, as applicable) for various city and county organizations, military recruitment organizations, higher education institutions, National Student Clearinghouse, or the California Student Aid Commission. This form requires annual submission to remain in effect.

Table 3, on the following page, presents a matrix of some notable and effective financial aid form practices currently implemented across the country, along with some key activities and potential implications or highlights specific to LAUSD. Common features across all of the larger scale practices include heavy emphasis on social media, support for schoolwide implementation, and intensive parent outreach, education, and support with all aspects of form completion. Incentives were also a prominent feature, both for individual students as well as at the school level.

A review of LAUSD's FAFSA/CADAA tools is included in the section on LAUSD's Internal Tools and Processes, pp. 21-30

Table 3. FAFSA Completion Effective Practices

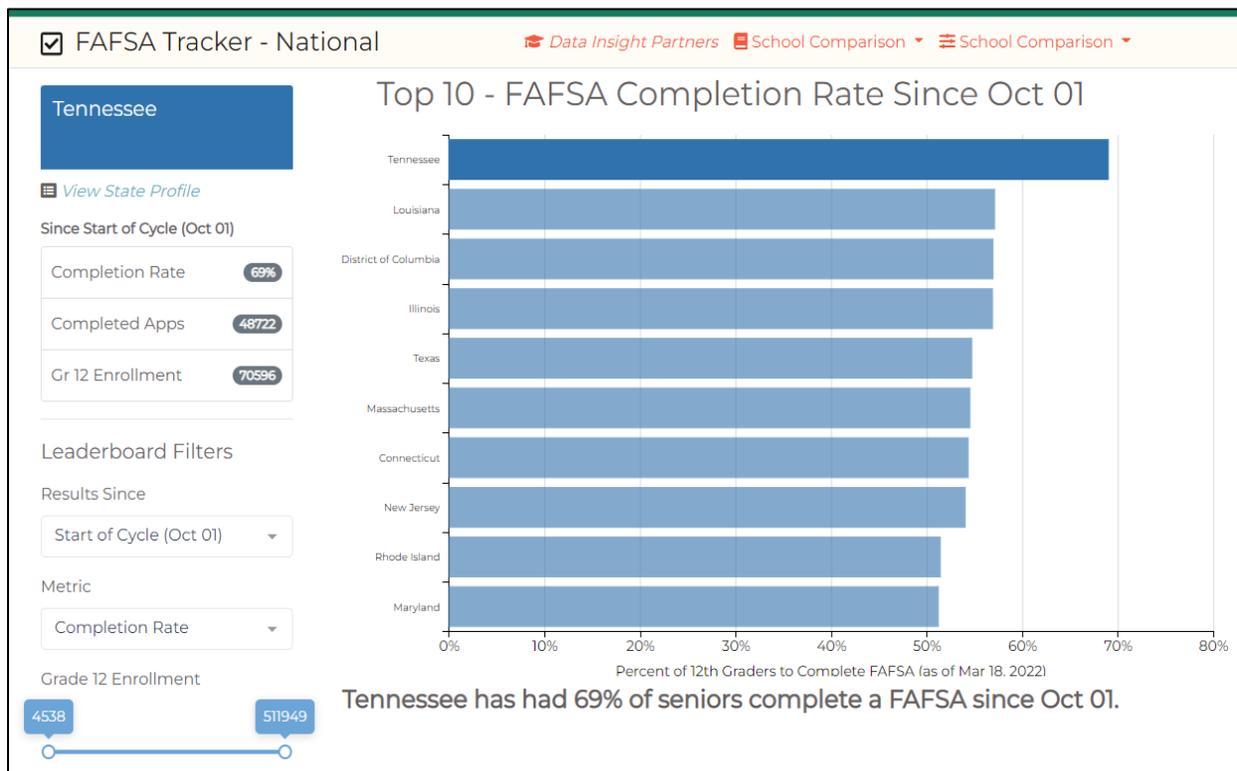
| Location | Overview and Key Features | Example Activities/Strategies | Implications for LAUSD |
|------------------|---|--|--|
| Tennessee | <p>In 2020, over 70% of high school seniors completed their FAFSA application in Tennessee. The <i>Tennessee FAFSA Frenzy Initiative</i> is the state's campaign to help students complete their FAFSA application. As part of this program, there are resources provided to schools, students, and parents to aid in FAFSA completion. School resources include providing a toolkit which outlines how to prepare for FAFSA events, how to recruit volunteers, best practices for social media use (including sample Instagram posts), and parent outreach tips (including sample letters). https://www.collegefortn.org/tn-fafsa-frenzy/</p> <p>Additional Support: *In 2018, the Tennessee College Access and Success Network (TCASN) provided support training to educators and college access experts on all aspect of college affordability including helping student whose family history may not be accurately reflected in the FAFSA questions. *Tennessee's student aid agency, the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation, employed area outreach specialists who worked in every county across the state providing students and families with financial aid workshops, information on grants, scholarships, loans, and FAFSA technical assistance. They provided technical support through a call center to help students and families who had questions while filling out the form.</p> | <p>*(Knoxville, TN): FAFSA workshops held weekly until deadline. Parents recruited to attend events on "financial fitness, home loans, and FAFSA assistance." Recruitment through postcards, automated phone calls, social media posts, and flyers which were sent home. *(Chattanooga, TN): Day allotted for seniors to start/complete their FAFSA forms during their Civics class. Incentives for students included candy and FAFSA stickers. *(Camden, TN): Sent letters to parents detailing dates where they could come to FAFSA night(s) and receive assistance. Followed up via phone calls with parents who did not come to these events and offered other times for them to come in and receive assistance. *(Memphis, TN): Set a week aside in September for students to create usernames, passwords, and save keys and begin applications. During the first week of October, students were required to complete applications. Parents were also offered assistance to complete the parental section.</p> | <p>*Tennessee does not have a mandatory FAFSA completion and relies heavily on incentives and active parent outreach and support. *Time allotted during instructional day *Specific training for staff</p> |
| Louisiana | <p>In 2021, Louisiana ranked #1 in completed FAFSA applications with over 70% of its high school graduating body having completed their application. In a large part this is because they have made completing the FAFSA a requirement to graduate high school; for those who already know they won't receive financial aid due to parental income, there is a separate form to be completed. The FAFSA Now Pilot program was launched in the 2020-21 school year after a task force comprised of various partners (Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance, Louisiana Department of Education, Louisiana Board of Regents, and postsecondary schools) came together to determine how to</p> | <p>*Offers line-by-line FAFSA assistance through events: schools used announcements, virtual reminders, phone calls, and social media to remind students to complete their FAFSA. Also, provided times they could connect with someone for assistance. *Efforts at building trust with parents; found that some parents are hesitant to provide financial information. *Widespread dissemination of information via social media.</p> | <p>*Heavy use of social media to reach students *Strong parent outreach and support *Individual support</p> |

| Location | Overview and Key Features | Example Activities/Strategies | Implications for LAUSD |
|---|---|--|--|
| | <p>best support students in completing their FAFSA applications. Through multiple methods, students are encouraged to complete their FAFSA by February 1st.</p> | | |
| <p>Riverside County (CA)</p> | <p>Riverside County's "Race to Submit" challenge is aimed at increasing their rate of completed FAFSA applications. This works by challenging high schools to compete amongst one another to see which has the highest rate of completed FAFSA applications. As of February 3, 2022, the top three schools are: Rancho Verde HS (95%), Western Center Academy (93%), and Riverside STEM Academy (89%). Several districts (e.g., Desert Sands, Jurupa, Lake Elsinore) included funding for FAFSA/CADAA completion efforts in LCAP Plans.</p> | <p>*College Kickoff Month: A month is dedicated to promoting postsecondary goals, bringing in guest speakers, interactive activities such as "FAFSA Fiestas" and parent nights. Students who complete their FAFSA are given extra tickets to the graduation ceremony.</p> | <p>*Motivation through competition and incentives</p> |
| <p>Val Verde Unified School District (CA)</p> | <p>Val Verde was the first school in CA to require graduating seniors to complete either the FAFSA or DREAM Act application. Efforts made by VVUSD include: phone banking (calling student households of those who haven't submitted a FAFSA/DREAM application), each district member has a distinct role (teachers promote college going culture and help students gather documentation, counselors assist with filling out applications and verify, site administrators schedule events and workshops, and other staff can help set up appointments and supervise the library where students are completing their applications). There are also events held to incentivize students to complete their applications.</p> | <p>*Citrus HS held a "FAFSA Friday" where students who completed applications were invited to an extended lunch and could enjoy food such as nachos. *Other schools had a "Ca\$hella" after school event, a playoff of Coachella, for students who completed their applications.</p> | <p>*Documented roles/responsibilities of staff toward goal of completion *Motivation through incentives specifically tied to student interests, such as food and music</p> |
| <p>Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC)</p> | <p>*ISAC, who supported the Illinois DOE with FAFSA completion, offers a "Rock the FAFSA" Toolkit with resources and materials for schools to implement. They also offer direct assistance to schools for setting up the "Rock the FAFSA" effort as well as provide training to school staff. ISAC has staff available to also work within schools to offer services called "ISACorps." *Through ISAC there is also the Financial Aid Application Completion Initiative: through this free service to districts and schools, ISAC is able to share data with local school districts on a weekly basis to identify students who have not filed a FAFSA or the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid). This information is used by district counselors (or ISACorps, with permission from schools) to help reach students who might otherwise not complete an application. https://www.isac.org/pd/fafsa-mandate.html</p> | <p>*ISAC recognizes high schools for excellence in supporting students through the financial aid process. Four levels of recognition are defined and used to determine the awards. Examples include an award banner to display at the school along with awards for graduating class.</p> | <p>*Specific training offered to staff *School implementation assistance to meet law of providing "rigorous support" to students</p> |

| Location | Overview and Key Features | Example Activities/Strategies | Implications for LAUSD |
|---|---|---|--|
| John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) | JBAY's Foster Youth FAFSA Challenge: JBAY, in partnership with the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO), launched the California Foster Youth FAFSA Challenge. Through their efforts, they established a set of promising practices for success to promote FAFSA/CADAA completion for foster youth. Major strategies included sharing data from WebGrants, leveraging resources through collaboration, engaging district and community partners, providing technical assistance and training, and providing "high-touch" assistance through the process. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Appoint FAFSA or peer ambassadors for outreach and support to students. *Create systems for sharing data. *Provide assistance during school hours. | *Strategies targeting foster youth may also be used for other underrepresented subgroups. |
| WebGrants 4 Students (CSAC) | The WebGrants 4 Students (WG4S) portal is to provide students with the resources, information, and tools needed to assist with the college financial aid process. WG4S allows students to manage their Cal Grant and/or Chafee accounts online by letting them view updates, make school changes, make address changes, and post leave of absence requests. This does not replace school or FAFSA accounts. A WGS account must be set up before schools can disburse the first payment. https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/information-about-new-webgrants-4-students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *New "Student Landing Page" allows students to easily check their application status or award amount, make demographic changes, see if they have "to-do" items, and easily perform common tasks *Currently updating CADAA site with clearly defined sections for the student and parent, on-screen help for completing the grant application. | *Introduced during student's senior year. Earlier exposure may provide students with information and support prior to considering opt-out. |
| FAFSA Mobile App | Originally launched in 2018, the myStudentAid mobile app and a mobile-responsive <i>form</i> have students and parents to submit over 5 million FAFSA forms via mobile devices. FAFSA applicants may save and switch between the mobile FAFSA form and fafsa.gov. Most of the functionality between the mobile and website form is the same. As with previous cycle years, corrections can only be made on fafsa.gov. For the 2022–23 school year, the Federal Student Aid virtual assistant has been added to the myStudentAid mobile app to answer applicants' questions. The app includes additional features from StudentAid.gov such as the student lifecycle dashboard, notification center, and account settings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *The <i>Settings</i> functionality to make any changes to the FSA ID account and personal information without leaving the app. *The <i>Dashboard</i> to get a high-level view of any existing loan and grant data and checklists for what to do in each phase of their aid journey. *<i>My Aid</i> for a detailed view of any aid received so far, including principle, balance, and interest for loan information. The My Aid feature is powered by the National Student Loan Data System. | *May be able to incorporate link into new CARE app. |

Figure 1 shows the top 10 states regarding FAFSA completion rates from October 1, 2021, to March 18, 2022. Note that Tennessee and Louisiana are in the top two positions. As described in Table 3, Tennessee does not have mandatory FAFSA completion as a graduation requirement and relies heavily on incentives and active parent outreach and support. Louisiana does have this requirement and held the top place in 2021 for FAFSA completion. Illinois also implements this graduation requirement but also requires rigorous support to students and families prior to exempting them from form completion. Overall, these rates are indicative of the effectiveness of strategies used by these states.

Figure 1. Top 10 States in FAFSA Completion as of March 18, 2022

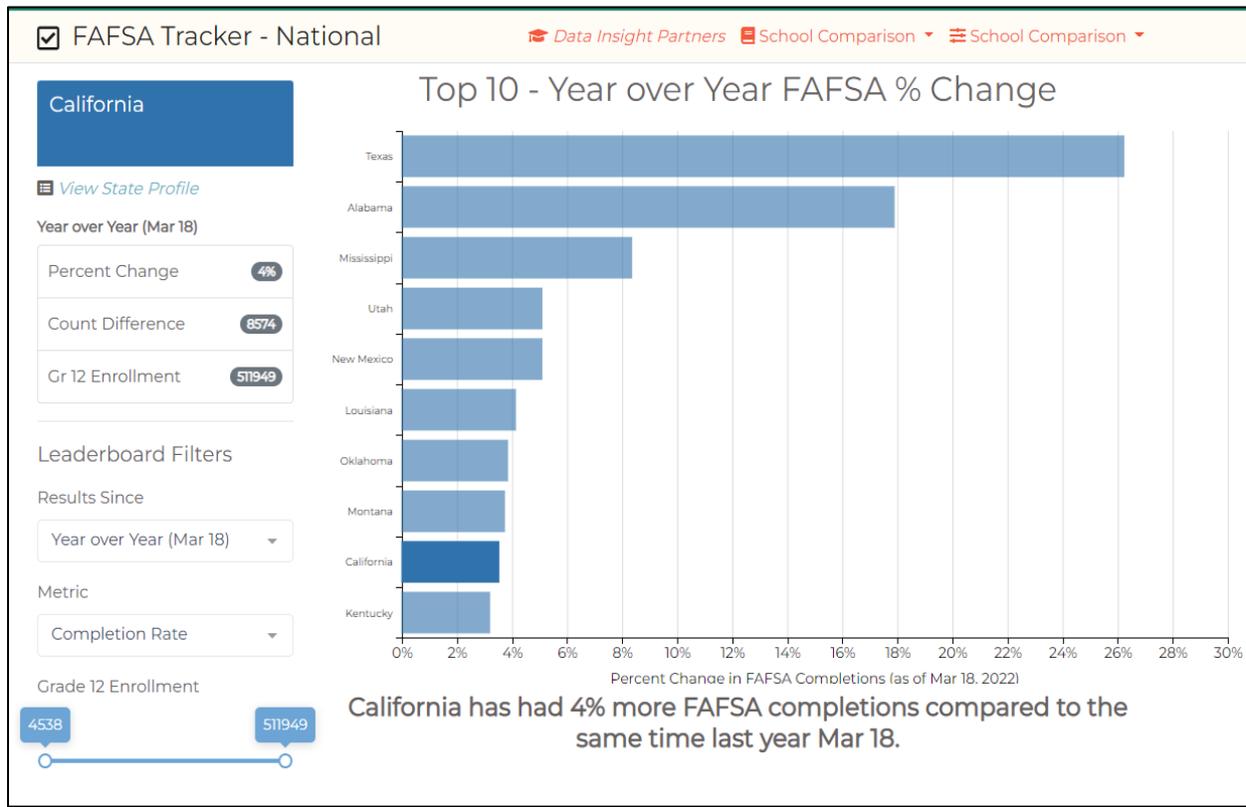


Source:

https://national.fafsatracker.com/leaderboard?filterPeriod=Start%20of&filterMetric=comp_rate_change&filterGrade12Enrollment=4538,511949&

Figure 2, on the following page, shows change in FAFSA completion rates from the previous year, as of March 18, 2022. As shown, Texas has shown the greatest increase so far at 26%, followed by Alabama at 18% gain. These two states implemented FAFSA completion as a mandatory requirement for the 2021-22 school year, along with opt-out forms. Texas also concurrently passed policies offering financial incentives to schools for FAFSA completion. It is highly likely that the substantial increases are attributed to the recent changes and strategies put into place.

Figure 2. Top 10 States in FAFSA Completion Increases as of March 18, 2022



Source:
https://national.fafsatracker.com/leaderboard?filterPeriod=Year%20ove&filterMetric=comp_rate_change&filterGrade12Enrollment=4538,511949&

II. Postsecondary Plans

Two strategies proposed in the district's A-G Implementation Plan (1.9 and 3.3) relate to supporting students in meaningful postsecondary planning that leads to achievable outcomes. This support includes creating student-facing resources and tools, updating strategies, and utilizing more effective practices in providing guidance, engaging students and families, and promoting consistent implementation in schools and across the district. This section presents a review of various postsecondary plans and related strategies in place around the state and country.

One challenge in reviewing and comparing postsecondary or graduation plans was found in the use of the word "plan." In some cases, it was used to represent a report, guide, or document. In other cases, it was used to describe a larger, more comprehensive system or set of processes. Within some of these larger systems, a report or guide was incorporated. The following review of these plans is broken out into two parts – the first reviews just the reports or guides used as a postsecondary plan and the second presents the larger, more comprehensive systems.

Postsecondary Plans as Reports/Guides

As described above, some school districts (or states) have developed reports, documents, and/or templates as a plan for students in working toward graduation and post-secondary goals. For the most part, these plans list graduation requirements, college entry requirements and information (e.g., a-g, SAT scores), and GPAs, both current and required. Plans used by LAUSD, Chicago Public Schools, Long Beach USD have a set format and are individualized per student with auto-populated information drawn from surveys, district systems (e.g., LAUSD's MiSiS), or external systems used by districts (e.g., Naviance). In Michigan, the plan format is determined by each school and may or may not have auto-populated features. In Oregon, individualized profiles are created which may contain various student information. The format and contents are also determined at the school level. Table 4 presents information on various postsecondary reports and guides, including those currently used in LAUSD. These reports will also be discussed in the section "LAUSD Internal Tools and Resources" beginning on p. 19.

Table 4. Postsecondary Reports and Guides

| Source | Overview | Key Features | Limitations |
|--|---|--|---|
| LAUSD: *Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) *Individual Culmination Plan (ICP) | Every secondary student has an IGP, reviewed with the parent or guardian and counselor and revised as necessary, at least annually. | *Populated with data from internal MiSiS system *Contains list and grades for all courses taken and in progress *Much of same information as in CCRG (see below) | *IGP format has not been updated since 2016 *Having two different forms can limit transfer of information from MS to HS *Does not have reader-friendly interface |
| LAUSD: College and Career Readiness Guide (CCRG) | CCRG is personalized for each student, allowing them to track their completion of required courses and performance on standardized tests and college entrance exams. | *Much information on CSU/UC eligibility *Recent updates to include career goals/planning | *About twelve pages long *Lengthy general descriptions *Students not using Naviance may have blank spots in report. *Little emphasis on career, CTE, or 2-Year schools |
| Chicago Public Schools: LPS Progress Report | Personalized guide, with graduation requirements, test scores, specific/matching college options, careers, next steps. Aligned to CPS Learn.Plan.Succeed program. About four pages in length. | *Page for career opportunities based on career assessments - salary by educational goal, job types, and local schools that offer related degrees/certificates | *Few definitions of terms |
| Long Beach USD: College-Career Readiness Guide | Personalized guide, with graduation requirements, test scores, college options, careers, next steps. About eight pages in length. | *Career opportunities based on career assessments - salary by education, job types, and local schools that offer related degrees/certificates *CTE/Work-based learning indicators | *Limited information on 2-Year, vocational, or private institutions |

| Source | Overview | Key Features | Limitations |
|--|--|---|--|
| Michigan: Educational Development Plan (EDP) | Required for all students. Students in 7 th grade should be provided opportunity to develop an EDP and review it in 8 th grade. EDPs must be started no later than 8 th grade and updated annually throughout HS. | *No specific form or format is required. Schools may design EDPs that best meet their local needs. *State provides guidance for essential elements for inclusion. | *Can result in inconsistencies across districts/schools. |
| Oregon: Education Profile and Plan | The student is responsible, with guidance, to develop and manage their personal plan and profile. The school is responsible for providing a process and guidance to students. Should begin no later than 7 th grade and continue through 12 th grade, with regular reviews and updates. | *May be locally designed. Provides sample template *State required components provided along with suggestions for additions- section to list various interests, goal, and accomplishments for various areas (e.g., "personal interest and goals," "student leadership," "employment, etc.). - Students can note and track their postsecondary applications, funding opportunities, and employment applications. | *Can result in inconsistencies across districts/schools. *Unclear how profile is monitored to ensure it is complete and/or current. |
| Oregon: Personalized Students Graduation Plan | This document is for seniors needing credits to meet Oregon Diploma 2021 requirements. Should involve students, families, teachers, case managers, counselors, social workers, administrators, and/or others, as appropriate. *Plan appears to be for students at risk for graduation or postsecondary success. Each school/district may support seniors in their own way; this plan/resource is provided as guidance for those seeking additional tools and support. | *Plan is accompanied by a resource document with suggested guidance for how Comprehensive School Counseling Programs may address seniors' social-emotional learning, academic development, and career & college readiness by providing a continuum of services/supports matched to individual need. | *This may be adopted as supplemental plan for students identified as at risk for not graduating or possibly even subpopulations of students in need. |

| Source | Overview | Key Features | Limitations |
|--|---|--|--|
| Oklahoma Individual Career Academic Plan (ICAP) | The personalized ICAP document guides individuals through coursework and activities for achieving personal career goals. The 3 main areas of focus: career awareness (which begins in K-5 grades), exploration (6 th -8 th grades), and preparation (9 th -12 th grades). | *Benefits of an ICAP include reduced disciplinary problems, improved student engagement with their academics, and postsecondary students are more prepared (more likely to have gained college credits). *Template or sample of document not available online – may be locally designed | *Can result in inconsistencies across districts/schools. *Emphasis on career; may not include (or at least emphasize) college planning. |

Postsecondary Plans as Processes/Systems

Other states have developed more comprehensive graduation and postsecondary plans that include processes or systems and have a variety of names such as Education and Career Action Plans and Individual Career Academic Plans. These plans often come with toolkits for implementation at the district or school level that include strategies, resources, and sometimes best practices.

In addition to guidance on implementation, some of these plans offer activities or resources for districts and schools to assess their readiness for implementation and measure their implementation and its effectiveness. Wisconsin’s Department of Public Instruction, for example, evaluates implementation across the state (including analyses of performance data, survey, and case study) and publishes evaluation reports and briefs.²

Some plans also offer rubrics or planning templates for implementation. For example, Ohio’s Department of Education has a planning form that lists persons responsible, timelines, and considerations for the various action steps. Similarly, Colorado’s plan incorporates a readiness tool, designed to assess readiness to implement or refine the process at the sites. Other plans, for example in Arizona, also include site-assessment forms and rubrics to assess the effectiveness of school implementation.

Of the plans reviewed that fall into this category, there did not appear to be a template for individualized student reporting, as described in the previous section. However, in at least two state plans (Oregon and Arizona), there were descriptions of how to compile individual student portfolios, which would include a variety of documents such as surveys and transcripts.

Table 6, on the following page, provides an overview of the more comprehensive postsecondary plans and resources, along key features, highlights, and implications for LAUSD.

² See example of Wisconsin DPI’s Academic and Career Planning 2020-21 Evaluation Report Executive Summary.
https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/acp/pdf/2021_11_ACP_Year_6_Eval_Rpt_Exec_Summary_Final.pdf

Table 5. Postsecondary Plans – Comprehensive

| Source and Type | Overview and Key Features | Key Resources/Tools and Activities | Highlights | Implications for LAUSD |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <p>California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI)</p> | <p>Designed to provide a seamless transition for students from K-12 to higher education opportunities. Offers counselors and teachers with reporting tools which identify students in need of extra support. In partnership with CaliforniaColleges.edu, the types of support offered to students include monitoring “A-G” progress, learning about different college majors, determining CSU/UC eligibility based on their academic performance. In addition, students can directly start their community college, CSU, UC, and FAFSA/CADAA application on the website, and it will monitor the progress of their applications.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Online college and career planning platform is free for California 6-12th graders, parents, and educators. *Parents can also learn about colleges and financial aid. *CCGI has virtual training available for educators and counselors. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *From 10/1/21-1/28/22: -103,964 Community College applications launched -121,753 CSU applications launched -25,046 UC applications launched -9,349 FAFSA/CADAA applications launched *<u>Examples</u> of school districts currently using CCGI: Fresno USD, Elk Grove USD, Riverside County, and San Bernardino City USD *Partnering with 116 school districts to serve more than 775,000 6th-12th grade students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Available for free *May not be able to link individualized information to upload into district reports |
| <p>Oklahoma Individual Career Academic Plan (ICAP)</p> | <p>ICAP is a multi-year process that intentionally guides students and families in the exploration of career, academic and postsecondary opportunities. With the support of adults, students develop the awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and skills to create their own meaningful and powerful pathways to be career and college ready.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Career development continuum which includes family and community *Roles and responsibilities designated for principal, counselor, teacher, parents, and community. *Promotes Advisory study groups with commitments for participation *Offers an ICAP Template for preparing and planning district implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *K-5 involved in career awareness that includes exposure to multiple careers through career days, field trips and focused activities. *Emphasis on family involvement and setting expectations for postsecondary goal setting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Emphasis is on career, not college enrollment |

| Source and Type | Overview and Key Features | Key Resources/Tools and Activities | Highlights | Implications for LAUSD |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Chicago Public Schools Learn.Plan.Succeed</p> | <p>*Multi-year approach (grades 6-12) to ensure that all students and parents are prepared after HS. *Enacted graduation requirement: All students “must <u>demonstrate evidence</u> of a postsecondary plan prior to graduating high school.” *Students are educated in six postsecondary pathways: college, employment, military, gap year programs, job training programs, and apprenticeships. *District focused on organizational coherence internally and have built relationships with local colleges to extend student support *District emphasis on training all school counselors specifically on college access</p> | <p>*<u>Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)</u>: begin in 6th grade. Connected to scope/sequence with specific activities by grader level. ILPs can be viewed in Naviance and mailed to parents. *<u>LPS Progress Reports</u>: detail student progress toward goals, meeting graduation requirements, test scores, etc. Every 10th-11th grader takes it in Nov. and April. 12th graders take it in November. *Curriculum for grades 6-12 *LPS Website *Postsecondary Equity & Empathy Professional Learning System (PEEPLS): professional learning system for counselors, staff and leadership with advisement responsibilities *School Quality Rating system with HS performance metrics (recently added college metrics) *Evidence Process Map</p> | <p>*Pathways for students interested in Gap Year *Internal professional learning system for counselors, admin, and staff *Smooth transition from MS to HS by having it all under same umbrella *Postsecondary Navigators, Postsecondary Coaches in addition to College/Career Specialists *Metrics for checking postsecondary plans, completion indicators</p> | <p>*ILP covers all grades 6-12 (as opposed to separate ICP/IGP). A single plan ensures continuity of information and transfer from MS to HS. *Specific non-college pathways provide more viable options for HS students to have meaningful plans. *Implementing an internal PD system accessed at will, ensures advising staff kept up to date as well as having access to knowledge on subpopulations and other data (CADAA, etc.)</p> |
| <p>Arizona Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP)</p> | <p>From Arizona DOE – ECAP put into effect in 2008, mandating that all Arizona students in grades 9–12 create portfolios that include current coursework, career aspirations, and further learning opportunities, to be completed prior to graduation. *Four attributes of an ECAP are academic, career, postsecondary, and extracurricular. Students should identify a career goal based upon their interests, passions, skills, and values. Then, students begin planning</p> | <p>*Framework for grades 6-12 with goals and activities *My Future AZ: students create an account, can take career assessments, create profiles with resume information, and explore colleges. *Student Portfolio (electronic/hard copy): student's current plan of coursework, career aspirations, and extended learning opportunities to develop</p> | <p>*Includes template worksheet for middle school students *ECAP Site Implementation Assessment Tool *Does not appear to have programs or strategies for Financial Aid completion – other sites have info and tracking abilities, such as FAFSA Challenge Education Forward</p> | <p>*Site assessment tools can build school-level capacity for monitoring its own implementation and effectiveness (may also promote buy-in if assessment begins with school). *Toolkit emphasizes building in</p> |

| Source and Type | Overview and Key Features | Key Resources/Tools and Activities | Highlights | Implications for LAUSD |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| | high school courses and exploring postsecondary options that align to their identified career goal. The toolkit provides information and artifacts that should be included in a student's ECAP portfolio for each attribute. | individual academic, career goal and postsecondary plans *ECAP Toolkit available for schools/districts with best practices, resources, and exemplar districts *AzCIS (Arizona Career Information System) available online to all Arizona residents, a free resource tool for students. | College Success Arizona | assessment and accountability at all levels. |
| Colorado's Individual Career & Academic Plan (ICAP) Toolkit | Begins in 9 th grade as an annual process (schools/districts can voluntarily choose to begin in 6 th grade); ICAPs for each student must include career and college interest surveys, written postsecondary and workforce goals, intermediate benchmarks and data reflecting progress toward those goals, scores on assessments, experiences in service learning and/or work environments, activities that establish connections between school-based instruction and the world of work, an intentional sequence of courses that reflect progress toward the postsecondary goal, academic progress, college application(s), a resume or alternative work-based applications, and an understanding of the financial impact of life after high school, including an education. | *ICAP portfolio (electronic/hard copy) which may include: *Toolkit guides implementation at school level, readiness, self-assessment strategies, quality indicators – also includes rubrics and templates *Uses Naviance to hold ICAP information | *ICAP Facilitators work with school and district teams *Have ICAP Quality Indicators at both the high school and middle school levels *Strategies for developing implementation teams | *A Readiness Tool can be implemented similar to a needs assessment before scaled implementation or at the beginning stages to determine which sites are “ready” for implementation and which may need additional support to get started. |
| Wisconsin DPI Academic and Career Planning Guide (ACP) | Academic and Career Planning (ACP) is a collaboratively developed, student-driven process where students cultivate their own informed decisions for postsecondary success. Four main parts for developing an | *ACP refers to both a process that helps students engage in academic and career development activities and an e-portfolio product created and maintained for the student's | *Provides evaluation toolkit for schools/districts that include guidance, evaluation plan, and question banks for surveys and focus groups. | *Strong emphasis on evaluation – internal and external – which promotes |

| Source and Type | Overview and Key Features | Key Resources/Tools and Activities | Highlights | Implications for LAUSD |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| | <p>ACP: 1) "Know": self-awareness of interests and strengths, understanding resources (financial and otherwise), and understanding academic courses/skill preparation, 2) "Explore": career exploration during MS/HS, looking at labor market needs, and comparing different postsecondary options, 3) "Plan": career planning – MS and HS plan, 4) "Go": career management – executing the plan and updating it as needed.</p> | <p>academic, career, and personal advancement. * Madison Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) annually evaluates the ACP process and implementation – a critical component for identifying necessary PD and ACP district support for ACP.**</p> | <p>https://dpi.wi.gov/acp/quality *Plan outlines several connections to special education, CTE, PBIS, Work-Based Learning, Dual Credit</p> | <p>achievement of outcomes.</p> |
| <p>Rhode Island Individual Learning Plan Adoption Toolkit</p> | <p>Assembled by Rhode Island's Department of Education and contains resources and materials to support district implementation of an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) system. ILPs must cover academic, career, and social areas. Key components include secondary coursework, postsecondary and career planning, career exploration, self-awareness, and applied learning skill development. By the 2020-21 school year, all middle and high schools were expected to have adopted an ILP system from the state-vetted menu of vendors or developed their own ILP system and curriculum model that meets the state's requirements. Approved vendors used by Rhode Island: Naviance, Richer Picture, XAP Choices360, and Xello.</p> | <p>*In 6th grade, students develop an ILP plan. They start creating two academic SMART plans (one short term and one long term), identifying beneficial strategies to assist with academic success, completing a career awareness assessment, completing an interest inventory, and identifying current activities or interests. *During first year of HS, students create a 4-year academic plan, review graduation requirements, explore postsecondary options, create two SMART goals, explore career pathways related to their interests, and begin to develop their resume. *By senior year students create a postsecondary transition plan, research job predictions for their career of interest, and update their resume.</p> | <p>*Scope and sequence and curriculum implementation model provided for grades 6-12 *Planning tools for district in setting up ILP *Offers professional learning groups (PLG) to support districts in implementation of ILP programs. The PLG offers the forum for school teams to come together to customize, design implement and evaluate their ILP process.</p> | <p>*Learning groups with ongoing meetings throughout the school year and composed of both district and school members might increase support and promote improved implementation of postsecondary efforts.</p> |

Texas has a 60x30 state goal in place, however there was little information found on how it is implemented across the districts nor was there a toolkit available. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board formulated this goal in 2015 and it has four main subgoals: 1) at least 60% of Texans aged 25-34 will have a certificate or degree, 2) at least 550,000 students will complete certificate associate/bachelor's/master's degree from Texas school by 2030, 3) all graduates will have completed program with identified marketable skills, and 4) undergraduate student debt will not exceed 60% of first-year wages for Texas graduates. The Strategic Plan stated that the development of successful strategies will require collaboration across multiple stakeholders and require public and private partnerships. State progress on this goal, assessed through a host of performance metrics, was published in a 2020-21 report.³

Oregon, in 2016, also passed the Post-graduate Scholars Program as a safety net for high school students who have earned a high school diploma, earned below a 2.5 GPA (and thus are not eligible for Oregon Promise), and are ineligible for the PELL Grant (or the grant does not cover one year of college tuition and fees). The original law had a sunset clause to end in 2021. However, the Post-graduate Scholars Program is still available for schools who want to maintain their existing program and for schools that choose to create a program. The law no longer has a sunset. It is not known if any schools or districts in Oregon are continuing this program. Nevertheless, it has positive implications for students who fall into these or similar categories.

Additional Sources for Postsecondary Support

The following additional sources presented in Table 6 do not provide toolkits or comprehensive guides for postsecondary planning. Rather, they provide support to schools, students, and families through information, links to internal and external resources, and research.

Table 6. Additional Sources for Postsecondary Support for Los Angeles and California

| Source | Overview | Highlights |
|--|--|---|
| California College Pathways (CCP) | <p>California College Pathways (CCP) is a statewide initiative led by John Burton Advocates for Youth that is helping foster youth across the state achieve their higher education goals and move on to fulfilling careers. The resources provided are designed to help foster youth scholars and their adult supporters to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Understand how to plan for college and the steps necessary to be a successful student -Access all available financial aid -Find campus support programs for foster youth -Arm themselves with the information needed to move the goals of CCP forward | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *CCP offers Foster Youth Campus Support Program: A Leadership Guide - designed for colleges and universities interested in creating or expanding a campus support program for foster youth. *Various research reports and briefs with effective practices, strategies and recommendations *Search engines for colleges with support for foster youth and other support options *All links and information specific to foster youth first but also offers more general resources *Downloadable college guide and financial aid guide (English/Spanish) |

³ Available at: <https://reportcenter.highered.texas.gov/reports/data/60x30tx-progress-report-july-2021/>



| Source | Overview | Highlights |
|--|---|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Links to foster youth services and liaison at county education offices *Tips for college matriculation and navigating college support |
| Partnership for Los Angeles Schools | <p>The partnership is one of the largest, in-district public school transformation organizations, managing 19 LAUSD schools, and serving approximately 13,200 students. Their goal is for LAUSD's highest need schools to increase graduation rates from a 4-year college to 40% by 2039. They aim to do so by providing school leaders with the skills and coaching to help them "develop and implement strong visions and systems with their faculty and staff," taking on leadership roles in instruction, engaging families, and collaborating with community partners.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Since 2008, the network graduation rate has more than doubled from a baseline of 36% (in 2008) to 86% in 2021. *Four-year college acceptance rate for students at 5 high schools in Watts, South LA, and Boyle Heights communities grew from 32% in 2015 to 46% in 2021. |
| Los Angeles College Promise (LACP) | <p>LACP serves first-time, full-time college students with a comprehensive strategy designed to support students to complete a higher education degree and/or a workforce certificate. Students are helped to "start right" on their way to "ending right" with a degree, university transfer or workforce certificate in a timely, efficient manner.</p> | <p>Free enrollment to students who enroll in an LACCD college full-time and pursue an associate degree or certificate. Free academic and career mentoring to support student success. Choice of attending any of LACCD's nine colleges across Los Angeles County. Provides support and guidance to students from the time of application to ensure they stay on track and earn a degree, certificate, or transfer to a four-year university or college.</p> |
| UCLA Collaborative | <p>A multi-year collaborative effort between LAUSD, College Board, and UCLA to increase the graduation and college admittance rates of African American students in LAUSD and provide strategic support to principals, teachers, and counselors at selected high schools across the District to close achievement disparities that exist between African American (AA) students and other student subgroups.</p> | <p>Areas of support include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Ongoing training for teachers to infuse pre-AP and AP strategies across the curriculum. Addressing linguistic challenges of AA/standard English learners through CLRP. Expanded access to a full range of educational resources for AA students. *Expose students to various colleges and careers through college fairs and field trips to local postsecondary institutions, ongoing parent workshops on A-G requirements and college application processes, and train school personnel. *Implement mentoring programs and school-wide Restorative Practices and related systems to ensure an inviting school culture while improving teacher-student relationships. Routinely recognize and celebrate the successes of AA students. *In 2020, AP enrollment increased by 19%, AP exams taken increased by 27% and passing scores increased by 37% by African American students in four years (reported in 2020). Further, students on track for A-G requirements increased by 11%. |

| Source | Overview | Highlights |
|--|---|---|
| National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) | The NSC has a host of services for high schools and colleges to track and report on outcomes such as the <i>StudentTracker</i> that can follow HS graduates' transition to college by querying our participating institutions' postsecondary enrollment and degree records and can measure the college success of participants in outreach programs, such as Gear Up. Specific datafiles and reports can be requested for each school or district. An account is required for access. | <p>*Clearinghouse Academy: free live in-person sessions and webinars presented year-round by thought leaders, subject matter experts, and practitioners from across our secondary and postsecondary services areas. Extensive training and user resources are available for all Clearinghouse services, and users of all levels of experience.</p> <p>*Free research reports: Research Center publishes reports on student pathways, student outcomes, and enrollment trends throughout the year. http://nscresearchcenter.org.</p> |
| National College Attainment Network (NCAN) | In 2021, NCAN made available "4 for the Fall: A Blueprint for Supporting the High School Class of 2021". This report presents four research-based, data-driven strategies for districts and school leaders in helping to get and keep students on meaningful postsecondary pathways. The four strategies include utilizing survey data, analyzing NSC data, increasing access to financial aid, and examining activities around fall milestones. | <p>*For each strategy, the report provides underlying rationale and numerous examples, guiding questions to be asked at district and school levels, and several links to corresponding resources.</p> <p>*The report may be accessed here: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ncan.org/resource/resmgr/k12-resources/ncan_4_for_the_fall.pdf</p> |
| NCAN's K-12 College and Career Readiness Calendar | NCAN has created a 15-month calendar for tracking major college and career readiness activities. The calendar also features resources for conducting these activities. There is a hard copy version of the calendar and an online version which is updated quarterly to refresh resources on topics such as professional development, financial aid, and postsecondary advising. This calendar focuses predominately on work done at the high school level with acknowledgment to necessary connections at the elementary and middle school levels. | <p>*The calendars provide categories with activities, descriptions, and recommended steps for practitioners. Resources are attached as appropriate for each activity.</p> <p>*Contains sections for "Summer Planning" and "Summer Wrap Up"</p> <p>Hard copy calendar: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ncan.org/resource/resmgr/k12-resources/ncan_k12_calendar.pdf</p> <p>Online calendar: https://www.ncan.org/page/K12calendar</p> |



III. LAUSD Internal Tools and Resources

LAUSD currently has several tools, resources, and processes intended to support college and career readiness and post-graduation across schools and students in the district. Many of the tools and resources are developed internally while others are from external sources but endorsed or promoted for use by the district. The following section highlights the more commonly used tools and resources, along with information on content and intended use, for both FAFSA/CADAA completion and postsecondary planning. In addition, there are questions posed, advantages and limitations (based on ERC review and Advisory Group feedback, where applicable), and notes (or implications) for consideration.

FAFSA/CADAA Completion

LAUSD internal resources available for FAFSA/CADAA completion consists mostly as links to external sources (e.g., Federal Student Aid website) and links to internal resources and downloadable materials (e.g., Financial Aid Toolkit, FAFSA/Dream Act poster).

In some cases, the internal resources are outdated (e.g., Financial Aid Toolkit and Financial Aid Cheat Sheet are for 2017-18) and are found on various district website locations. Information and resources available online also varied at the high school level. Some schools have a variety of current information available, and others have information that also requires updating.

The three notable LAUSD resources are the FAFSA/Dream ACT poster, the F.A.S.T Guide, and *10 Things to Know about the California Dream Act* flyer. The sections below provide an overview of each.

| FAFSA/Dream ACT poster | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Purpose | To announce FAFSA/CADAA application window for completion |
| Components | Provides dates for application submission; links for LA Cash for College and California Student Aid. |
| Where does it live? | Available for download at: https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/14586 |
| Who can access? | Anyone who can access site and download poster |
| Advantages | Visually appealing; can be posted throughout school and classrooms |
| Limitations | Links are challenging to use when on a poster. This also does not provide a link or list a resource for "how to complete" information. |
| Questions | Is this provided to schools automatically or something they seek out on their own? |
| Additional notes | Consider incorporating a QR code that also includes where to go for help on completing FAFSA/CADAA. |

**CADAA Poster/Flyer
Things to Know**

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Purpose | To provide information on the California Dream Act , CADAA application, and process |
| Components | Provides qualifications, how to apply, deadlines |
| Where does it live? | https://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/domain/252/whats%20new-naviance%20roll%20out/Senior%20Packet/California%20Dream%20Act-10%20Things%20to%20Know.pdf |
| Who can access? | Anyone with the link |
| Advantages | May be posted throughout school and classrooms; Available in English and Spanish |
| Limitations | Links may not be in best or most easily accessible LAUSD website locations. Should be available everywhere FAFSA information is accessible/posted. Poster is very long. Language is very technical and may be difficult to understand for lower reading levels. The document is outdated (for example, BOG waiver is now known as "California College Promise Grant." Not sure if document is current. |
| Questions | Is this provided to schools automatically or something they seek out on their own? |
| Additional notes | Consider a one-page poster with language more accessible to reading levels (e.g., 8 th grade level as recommended by US Dept of Health and Human Services). |

**F.A.S.T Guide:
Financial Aid Success
Toolkit 2021-22**

Toolkit with resources to support FAFSA/CADAA completion for LAUSD schools

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Purpose | F.A.S.T. supports efforts to help students and families complete their financial aid applications. Includes a guide for schools with engagement strategies to support financial aid completion with multiple resources to use with students and families. |
| Components | *General talking points as well as points for staff, students, and families *Countdown of activities for schools *FAQs for Stakeholders supporting FAFSA/CADAA *Resource bank of engagement activities and materials for schools to use, including videos and podcasts *Mini scripts/message templates in English and Spanish for schools to use |
| Where does it live? | Accessible through site: https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/14856 |
| Who can access? | Anyone with link; Also distributed through additional sources (e.g., Schoology). |
| Advantages | Comprehensive toolkit; Information about CADAA and undocumented students; Links for resources for many subgroups and topics; FAQs; Templates in multiple formats for schools to use (including QR codes) |
| Limitations | Additional information for non-traditional students needed and emphasized (e.g., foster youth and students with special needs/IEPs). |
| Questions | To what extent is this used across the district? How are schools/counselors made aware of this tool? Is there any type of guidance/training that accompanies this toolkit? |
| Additional notes | Might benefit from some of the additional features seen in other toolkits, such as checklists for implementation, suggested roles/responsibilities specific to school staff, and ways to evaluate use. Consider adding in additional resources and information for non-traditional students (e.g., Cal Grant Access Award for Foster Youth and financial aid eligibility for students with IEPs). |



Additional financial aid information and support for counselors, educators, students, and families may be available through the following external sources:

- **CSS Profiles (College Board):** <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>
The CSS Profile is an online application used by colleges and scholarship programs to award institutional aid (for federal aid, students must complete the FAFSA). The CSS Profile is free for domestic undergraduate students whose family income is up to \$100,000.
- **CSAC FAFSA/CADAA Dashboards:** <https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/csac-data-dashboards>. These dashboards include information on:
 - Total Applications including crosstabs by student education level, segment, age, gender, income, EFC, and parental education level.
 - Total Applications by County including crosstabs by county, student education level, and segment.
 - Total Applications by High School Disaggregation variables include gender, income, Expected Family Contribution (EFC), and parental education level.
 - Total Applications by College Disaggregation variables include student education level, age, gender, income, Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and parental education level.
- **Race to Submit Dashboard:** <https://webutil.csac.ca.gov/Dashboard/>
This dashboard shows annual counts and percentage of graduating seniors who have submitted a FAFSA/CADAA.
- **Cash for College:** <https://www.cash4college.csac.ca.gov/>
Students and families can attend FREE Cash for College workshops across California for help completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or California Dream Act (CADAA) and Chafee Grant for Foster Youth applications. Their mission is to help low-income and first generation college-goers complete the application process so they can access financial aid for education and career/technical training beyond high school.
- **EVERFI** – <https://everfi.com/courses/k-12/college-career-readiness/>
Offers lessons for students in grades 9-12 to identify goals related to their future and realize the necessary steps to take in order to achieve them. Prepares students for a variety of postsecondary options and the workforce, offering them various pathways, regardless of cultural or economic background. Provides soft skill development, financial guidance, and transferable skills to help students plan and achieve personal goals, for success now and in the future.
 - EVERFI partners with sponsors nationwide to offer free interactive, online lessons to K-12 schools .
 - Counselors/Teachers can assign lessons to students, offered in different ways (CTE, advisory, enrichment)
- **FAFSA4Caster** - The *FAFSA4caster* was a tool for families not yet ready to submit a FAFSA form, such as high school juniors and sophomores. As of Sept. 27, 2020, the *FAFSA4caster* was no longer available.



Postsecondary Resources

The following sections present an overview of several district tools and resources. The first two (Individualized Graduation Plans and College Career Readiness Guide) were previously introduced in Table 4, as postsecondary plans in the form of reports or guides. The tables below offer a more comprehensive view of these two tools along with a variety of others used by the district.

| | |
|--|---|
| Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) | For students from grades 6-12 |
| Purpose | Designed to document and monitor student and parent/guardian involvement in student course selections, postsecondary plans and educational career goals. Every secondary student will develop an IGP with the parent/guardian and counselor and revise as necessary, or at least annually. IGPs are completed during the first semester of each school year for all students. A copy of the IGP will be given to the student and parent/guardian and the original will be maintained as part of the student's counseling records. |
| Components | Courses taken/in progress per grade level; Grades; Graduation/A-G Requirements; UC/CSU Eligibility; Test scores (e.g., AP, SAT) |
| Where does it live? | The information and form are retrieved through MiSiS |
| Who can access? | May be accessed by school counselor and shared with students and families |
| Advantages | Combines the function of a school transcript with corresponding information on meeting LAUSD, UC and CSU requirements. Counseling notes captured. |
| Limitations | Not reader friendly; resembles a transcript with side notes Only available for review through counselor; does not contain information related to postsecondary planning or goals including career interests |
| Questions? | How might this report be better coordinated (or consolidated with) LAUSD's College and Career Guide? What does this report have that the CCRG does not to justify having two separate reports? |
| Additional Notes | The goal is to consolidate so includes all grades 6-12 in the same document. |
| College and Career Readiness Guide (CCRG) | 12-page guide, individualized to each student. Available to students in grades 9-12. |
| Purpose | Individualized report that allows students to track their completion of required courses and performance on standardized tests and college entrance exams. |
| Components | HS Grad Requirements; A-G status; GPA definitions; Progress on Tests and Courses; CSU/UC Eligibility; CC/ Independent College Eligibility; Action Steps (academic, extracurricular, financial aid); NEW Naviance-connected Career information (disposition, interest, talents, action steps) |
| Where does it live? | *Available through MiSiS. *It is updated daily as information in MiSiS is added. |
| Who can access? | Counselors can access guides and email them to students and parents/guardians. These guides may also be printed in batches or individually. |
| Advantages | Comprehensive, updated daily; Available in Spanish; Will include career information from Naviance |

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Limitations | New Naviance component for careers – only effective if student inputs information into Naviance |
| Questions? | Is there a resource guide or information available online for students or parents to receive guidance in understanding guide? What training or support do counselors receive in how to interpret/share the information in the guide? |
| Additional Notes | LBUSD's guide contains career information based on survey "career choice" that includes types of jobs in that career, potential earnings by education level, what schools to consider for that career area, what degrees and certificates are available in that area. Also includes documented work-based learning experiences and next steps. |

Senior College Journal Class of 2022 Students in grade 12; 70 pages

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Purpose | This workbook was created for seniors in response to questions about finding the right college, how to apply, and paying for college. |
| Components | Game plans/to-do lists/timelines; Pre-college/graduation requirements; College application process; Financial aid process (FAFSA and other sources); What to do after applications; Committing to college |
| Where does it live? | *Printable online version https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/15153 *Mailed to school sites |
| Who can access? | Anyone with link; Hard copies accessible at school sites |
| Advantages | *Mailed to school sites *Presents CCRG and where students can get it (counselor) *Information on self-care *Summer Melt section |
| Limitations | Very lengthy; Major emphasis on 4-year institutions; Does not allow for online notes, writing in, or completing lists/spaces. If students do not have access to a printed copy, most activities cannot be completed. Grades/GPAS/scores do not self-populate. Students would have to look them up and write them in; Much of this information would benefit from presentation or guided review; Summer Melt section at end and checklist seems limited in scope |
| Questions | How are copies distributed at school sites? Are they distributed and reviewed with students or left for students to pick up and do on their own? Is it available in Spanish? Can portions be auto populated? Are they made available to partner CBOs doing college planning at sites? |
| Additional notes | Consider having online option that students can type in or have portions auto populated. There is a separate journal for Juniors (11 th graders). |

College Book for Juniors Class of 2023 Students in grade 11; 64 pages

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Purpose | Handbook to share information on how to make the junior year count – for academics, extracurriculars, and postsecondary preparation. |
| Components | *Game plans/to-do lists/timelines *Pre-college/graduation requirements (including EAP, PSAT, SAT information) *Finding best fit information; personality assessments *Understanding college systems and financial aid *Sneak peek into senior year |



| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Where does it live? | *Printable online version https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/15153 *Mailed to school sites |
| Who can access? | Anyone with link; Hard copies available at school sites |
| Advantages | *Mailed to school sites; Establishes clear connections to Naviance *Prompts to students in thinking about desired college experiences and self-exploration/reflection for their best "fit" |
| Limitations | Very lengthy; Substantial amount of information which may be too much at once; Does not allow for online notes, writing in, or completing lists/spaces. If students do not have access to a printed copy, most activities cannot be completed. Much of this information would benefit from presentation or guided review. |
| Questions | How are copies distributed at school sites? Are they distributed and reviewed with students or left for students to pick up and do on their own? Is it available in Spanish? Can portions be auto populated? Are they made available to partner CBOs doing college planning at sites? |
| Additional notes | Consider making the journal available to 9 th -10 th graders in addition to 11 th graders. Added break points in between sections may allow for counselors or related staff to review portions over time with students in counseling sessions, workshops, or other career center activities. |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Preventing Summer Melt Toolkit | Supports the prevention of Summer Melt with links to financial aid and admissions offices for all campuses in the LACCD, CSU, and UC systems |
| Purpose | Information, strategies and practices for counselors, educators, and relevant staff to identify students at risk for summer melt and to communicate with students and families as an intervention. |
| Components | Strategies and Steps for Identifying Students; Contacts for LD College Counseling Coordinators; Strategies for communication and outreach; Printable resources for students and counselors |
| Where does it live? | https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/15221 |
| Who can access? | Anyone with link |
| Advantages | Step-by-step instructions for how to retrieve, set up, and review data from Naviance's Student Exit Survey for use in identifying students at risk for summer melt; Presents common student scenarios with potential responses for counselors; Sample scripts and templates for communication. |
| Limitations | Only discernable limitation is the lack of visibility or promotion of its use on district website locations. |
| Questions? | Besides location on the district website, is this toolkit automatically sent to schools and counselors? Do counselors receive any type of PD related to this toolkit at the district level? Do the LD College Counseling Coordinators provide direct guidance on this toolkit? |
| Additional Notes | https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/15267 has information/strategies for schools to "combat" summer melt. Toolkit is also available on this site. Counselor toolkit link is not accessible to public – may be for internal use only This toolkit should be advertised more and have greater accessibility on other, more visited LAUSD sites |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| A-G Informational Brochure | The ABC's of the A-G Course Sequence |
| Purpose | To provide information on the A-G course sequence and requirements. |
| Components | Description of A-G curriculum and purpose; Course and grade requirements; Credit recovery opportunities; Graduation requirements |
| Where does it live? | Accessible through link: https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/15313 |
| Who can access? | Anyone with link |
| Advantages | Available in Spanish; includes credit recovery opportunities (for students who may not be on track) |
| Limitations | Unclear who is the intended audience or its intended use. |
| Questions | Is the brochure meant to supplement other materials? Who is the intended audience? |
| Additional notes | Consider including: FAFSA/CADAA completion as part of graduation requirements; Information on potential benefits or role of A-G for 2-year colleges |

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| Common App | A free program to assist individuals applying to college (first-time or transfer). Common App allows students to apply for over 900 diverse private colleges and universities world-wide. |
| Purpose | To connect students with everything they need to apply for college, research financial aid and scholarships, and get advice from counselors, advisors, and mentors. |
| Components | Online portal that collects all application information, essays, transcripts, letters, financial aid information, fee waivers, and assessment scores. |
| Where does it live? | Available through: https://www.commonapp.org/ Resources available on https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/15298 |
| Who can access? | Anyone with link |
| Advantages | Works with Naviance; Has a "Recommender Solutions Center" which supports counselors, teachers, etc., seeking answers in a variety of areas; Has a step-by-step video for students on how to use it. |
| Limitations | Some resource links on LAUSD website are not accessible. Link to Common App site is not on the website. |
| Questions | To what extent is use of the Common App promoted to students or schools? Are students aware of how it connects to Naviance? |
| Additional notes | The Common App appears to be used across many districts. It is integrated with Naviance, but students may "opt-out" of the integration and use the Common App on its own. |

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| Naviance | Beginning the 2017-2018 school year, high schools were given access to the Naviance online curriculum. Naviance is usable for grades 6-12. |
| Purpose | Naviance prepares students to be college and career-ready through self-discovery, college preparation, career exploration, and academic planning. |
| Components | Naviance contains a wide range of components at each grade level. There is a LAUSD-recommended scope and sequence that lists Naviance tasks for spring and fall per grade and bonus curricular activities for students. For high school students, every aspect of the college research, application and enrollment process is available, including the Senior Exit Survey. |
| Where does it live? | It has its own platform – need site license and log in |
| Who can access? | Anyone with a registered log in |



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| Advantages | *LAUSD provides training support for Naviance in secondary schools and district wide. There is a scope and sequence to guide implementation. *Naviance uses Parchment, therefore, schools don't have to pay a separate fee to send transcripts electronically. Schools can download all student transcripts into MiSiS and then upload the batch to Naviance, which will do all the matching of transcripts to student accounts. If the school is using Naviance and the student marks which college/university they are going to, it will automatically send final transcript to that institution. |
| Limitations | Not all schools use it consistently. Also, not all students use consistently or use all of its features. |
| Questions | How might school and student use be increased and tracked to maximize effectiveness and reach? |
| Additional Notes | According to https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/14856 , 75% of schools are using Naviance. |

Middle School Resources

At the district level, LAUSD provides college and career information targeted toward middle school students on multiple websites. Table 7 presents the most relevant sites and links currently accessible.

Table 7. LAUSD Websites and Descriptions of Middle School College and Career Planning Resources.

| Website | Overview |
|---|--|
| https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/15179 | Contains links to general college information (e.g., checklist at studentaid.gov). Naviance information for middle schoolers is also available on this website; however, the drive toward supporting college and career readiness overall appears aimed predominantly at the high school level. |
| https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/10370#spn-content | This page provides resources for advisories around the topics of student goal setting and preparation for college, career, and real-world success for grades 6-12. Also contains links to <i>California Career Zone</i> and corresponding timelines for grades 6, 7, and 8. |
| https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/15217 | This site has a link to download <i>Middle School College Awareness Experiences</i> , lessons and practices that may be utilized in grades 6-8. These were developed in 2015 and may still be applicable. Appears to be intended for counselors and/or educators. |
| https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/14590 | This site has a link to download <i>Middle School College Awareness Experiences</i> . This version was developed in 2017, with different lessons and activities. |

Currently, there are a few published guides and resource links for middle school college planning which present lessons, strategies, tips, resources, checklists, and overall guidance for college and career planning at the middle school level. Presented here are the most notable:

- College Board's Middle School Counselor's Guide: A general overview of the kinds of curriculum, activities, and communications they should be including in college planning with middle school students.
https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/advocacy/nosca/11b-4382_MS_Counselor_Guide_WEB_120213.pdf
- National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) Step by Step: College Awareness and Planning. Contains a 5-session curriculum for counselors.
https://www.nacacnet.org/globalassets/documents/advocacy-and-ethics/initiatives/steps/sbs_middleschool.pdf
- Federal Student Aid Middle School College Prep Checklists. One available for students and one for parents.
<https://studentaid.gov/resources/prepare-for-college/checklists/middle-school>

Student Surveys

The use of survey data is a recommended, research-based approach for supporting high school students through their postsecondary planning as well as supporting schools and districts in their development and implementation of effective strategies. Survey data can provide insight and understanding of students' postsecondary aspirations, intentions, and needs (NCAN, 2021). These data can be used at district and school levels, and by administrators, counselors, and educators to meet the needs of students. A national survey of Naviance student users found that 57% wished their schools did more to discover their interests and strengths, while the same wish was reported for 60% of 6th-11th graders (Naviance, 2021).

LAUSD administers three surveys during the school year that include questions on student experiences, perceptions, and outcomes related to graduation and postsecondary planning. The data from these surveys are used to inform the district and individual schools. The three surveys with related questions/items are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. LAUSD Student Surveys of Student Experience, Perceptions, and Outcomes Related to Graduation and Postsecondary Planning.

| Survey Name | Brief description | Question/Item focus areas | What is done with the data and analyzed results? |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|
| Senior Exit Survey | Administered to 12 th graders in Spring through Naviance. 10 questions include short answer, scaled, checklist, and drop-down response. (Based on 2019 version) | College application status; financial aid award status and coverage; areas of potential worry (e.g., paying expenses, doing well); areas need help with (e.g., college portal, signing up for freshman orientation) | Results are used to create Board Informative Reports each year highlighting results. |

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| Student Experience Survey (Student Version) | Administered annually to all schools. Results provide schools with important feedback from teachers, staff, students, and parents. "Future Orientation" section lists 13 questions specifically to high school students. | Importance of school; Knowledge of A-G requirements; perceptions of adult support and information shared | *Data and results made publicly available on LAUSD Website *Data also reported on the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) Scorecard, the California School Dashboard (local indicators), and Unified Enrollment Site. Includes participation rates as well as school-level aggregated results. |
| College and Career Readiness Survey | Administered annually to students in grades 9-12. There are about 70+ scaled and checklist questions. Supports LAUSD Board Resolution on <i>Creating Pathways to Lifelong Success for Our Students</i> by informing district practices and services that support students as they plan for and transition to college. | HS college-related activities, counseling, career, college culture, financial aid, decision-making factors for application and choice; concerns about enrollment | *Results are used to create Board Informative Reports each year highlighting results. *LAUSD is currently working on creating a results dashboard. Used by Division of Instruction for A-G work and grant writing. |

Texting/Messaging Applications

Within the past 10 years, research on the use of text messaging to encourage individuals to improve or change behavior has grown. Studies on using text messaging to support students in following through on meeting objectives and achieving goals have also emerged in the literature. Research findings have shown that strategies to support students and families with financial aid form completion can lead to positive increases in college enrollment and persistence (Castleman et al., 2017). For example, in 2015, researchers studied the effects of a text messaging program on FAFSA renewal among community college students. They found that students who participated in the program showed increased persistence rates than non-texting students (Castleman & Page, 2015).

In 2018, researchers followed 1,131 community college students who engaged in text messaging services regarding the financial aid process and compared them to their non-engaged peers (n=15,037). The text program engaged students through alerting or nudging students regarding deadlines and providing links to resources. The results indicated that students who engaged in the text messaging platform, on average, received \$122 dollars more in financial aid per semester than their counterparts, after controlling for a variety of demographic or college factors such as race/ethnicity, gender, student status (first-time and continuing student), family income, units earned, and total GPA (Rios-Aguilar, 2018).

College Advisement & Reminders Exchange (CARE) APP. LAUSD is currently developing a student-centered application (app) that would communicate and provide outreach services rapidly on any device. The app assists counselors and advisors through the principle of proactive advising by anticipating needs (at the student, student group, grade, and school level) and making connections to appropriate resources. The app will provide announcements, information, timely tips, and reminders to empower students to take appropriate actions toward success. Further, the app can share individualized data on A-G course completion and progress



towards District-identified college readiness benchmarks. Counselor, educator, and parent features enable additional student support, progress tracking, and individualized messaging to promote student graduation and meaningful postsecondary planning.

IV. Recommendations and Considerations

The following list presents recommendations for LAUSD based on the landscape review and considerations toward implementation of effective postsecondary planning.

Evaluation & Measurement of Outcomes

- Build in capacity for evaluation of implementation at school and district levels. At the school level, might include self-assessment rubrics, and checklists. Self-assessment information could be collected and synthesized across the district to determine level of implementation of strategies, resources, and/or tools.
 - Consult with research/evaluation specialists (either internal or external consultants) to develop key performance metrics for evaluation and methods for streamlined data collection.
- Maximize evaluation of implementation by incorporating questions about use of tools/strategies into pre-existing student surveys.
- Collaborate with school administrators and counselors to develop processes for monitoring progress on postsecondary planning and tracking financial aid completion that could be implemented at each school. Collaboration will have a positive impact on buy-in and implementation at the school level.
- Conduct a sweep of all district sites that have college/career/financial aid information to remove all dead links, outdated forms and tools, and information that is no longer relevant, accurate, or available (e.g., links to the FAFSA4Caster). This will decrease the overabundance of old information on district websites, especially for students and families that may do searches on their own for additional support, information, or guidance.
- Work with schools and provide guidance for updating the college/career portions of their respective websites to achieve similar objectives.

Maximizing Use of Data

- Establish internal data-sharing of the Senior Exit Survey and College and Career Readiness Survey with other district divisions (e.g., Division of Instruction) to inform postsecondary planning, strategy and tool development, and use of tools/resources. This information may also be used to provide insight into which tools/resources are being used at what school sites.
- Consider contracting with external evaluators/data analysts to take on the extensive workload of survey data analysis and reporting at district and school levels to maximize sharing and use of data and results. Contractors may also offer workshops to school-level administrators, counselors, and educators to promote shared understanding and ways to effectively use data and results.
- Share disaggregated school-level results with counselors, administrators, and other college-advising staff to inform, modify, and promote implementation of tools, resources, and strategies at the school level.
- Since much of the survey data is directly relevant to understanding student experiences, challenges, and college/career progress (albeit self-reported), consider offering

incentives at the school level to increase response. For example, schools with greatest response may earn a pizza party or field trip.

Career Support and Information

- Over 70% of Naviance student surveyed reported that career options were “very important” in searching for colleges (74%) and decision-making (73%) (Naviance, 2021). Administer a career interest survey annually for students beginning in 9th grade (or middle school, if possible). Work with schools to choose a platform or method for administration that would ensure high response rates. Consider alternative version/format of Naviance survey for schools that have low use of the platform.
- Incorporate results of top 2-3 interests into students' individual College and Career Readiness Guides (and IGP). Match current career information to each (e.g., expected salaries, educational requirements, schools offering programs). See LBUSD's College and Career Guide for example.

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