



Toolkit

COLLEGE ACCESS STANDARDS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS



INTRODUCTION

In 2011, the Arizona College Access Network (AzCAN) convened a Student Standards Task Force (Task Force) to define college and career readiness for Arizona students. Over the course of nearly two years and through a highly engaging and iterative process that included the review of literature, best practices and expert feedback, the Task Force -- composed of practitioners and experts in secondary education, higher education, community-based organizations, and workforce development -- developed the College Access Standards for Student Success.

The seven AzCAN Standards support the overarching goal of helping all Arizona students succeed in life -- from completing high school and postsecondary education to finding success in meaningful careers. Each AzCAN Standard includes a set of knowledge and behavior competencies that enable students to be college and career ready when they graduate from high school. The AzCAN Standards also align with the National College Attainment Network (NCAN) Common Measures. Developed in 2012, the NCAN Common Measures articulate for the college access and success field a set of common outcomes to track student progress toward postsecondary enrollment and completion.

Taken together, the AzCAN Standards and the NCAN Common Measures provide a consistent language about what students need to become college and career ready and how to track their progress. The AzCAN Standards present a framework of knowledge and skills that college access and success practitioners need to support to help students meet long-term success pursue meaningful careers while the NCAN Common Measures help track student progress.

INTRODUCTION (Cont.)

The College Access Standards for Student Success

AzCAN's College Access and Success Standards outline the factors critical to students' postsecondary success and provide a guide for professionals along the PreK-16 continuum to prepare all students to be college and career-ready. These Standards are intended to be used by college access programs and school educators to improve the effectiveness of programs and services.

Standard 1:

Students build awareness and aspirations about postsecondary options, including college and careers.

Standard 2:

Students recognize the roles of social, emotional and cultural factors that affect their postsecondary planning and transition.

Standard 3:

Students build a rigorous academic foundation and develop academic behaviors essential to preparing for postsecondary pathways.

Standard 4:

Students develop a comprehensive support system that contributes to their academic success.

Standard 5:

Students acquire the college knowledge and skills necessary to successfully transition into postsecondary education pathways.

Standard 6:

Students understand the fundamentals of financial literacy and financial planning for postsecondary education.

Standard 7:

Students enroll, persist and successfully complete a postsecondary education program of study.



INTRODUCTION (Cont.)

Putting the Standards and the Common Measures into Action

This toolkit outlines a three-step Assessment Process to help college access and success practitioners apply the AzCAN Standards and the NCAN Common Measure to their own activities, programs and organizations. The Assessment Process helps college access and success practitioners take stock of what supports students success and what additional improvements may be necessary to enhance this success.

The Assessment Process is designed to help participants:

EXAMINE CURRENT PRACTICES:

What services and supports do we provide? How do these services and supports help students achieve success?

DEFINE QUALITY:

What does "excellence" look like in our programs? How can we continue to build the quality of our programming to increase student success?

REFLECT ON IMPACT:

What impact are we having on our students and how can we measure that impact? How can we continue to strengthen our programs and activities, and build organizational capacity to increase student success?

INTRODUCTION (Cont.)

The three-step Assessment Process takes two to four hours to complete, including planning time and depending on the length and depth of discussion and action planning



STEP 1:
Assessment (30 minutes)



STEP 2:
Discussion (90 to 120 minutes)



STEP 3:
Action Planning (30 to 60 minutes)

Following the Introduction is a Facilitator Guide for the individual(s) leading the Assessment Process. Within the Facilitator Guide are the three-step Assessment Process materials. The At a Glance Standards Activities and Measures section includes an "At a Glance" reference table with the AzCAN Standards and competencies, sample services or activities and NCAN Common Measures or other metrics.

College Access Standards for Student Success



STEP 1:

Assessment



This step should take
approximately 30 minutes to
complete

Assessment Instructions

Please note: You Should have received a link to the online assessment or a paper version along with instructions from your facilitator.

To complete the assessment:

- Review resources, specifically the "At a Glance" table, in advance of, and as a reference when completing the assessment.
- Set aside 20-30 minutes and complete the assessment. Please answer honestly.
- If completing online: follow the online instructions.
- If using a paper version: submit the assessment to your facilitator.

College Access Standards for Student Success



STEP 2:

Discussion



This step should take approximately 60 to 120 minutes depending on the depth of discussion.



Discussion Guide

Now that you have completed and compiled the results of the assessment the following Discussion Guide will help you reflect on the results and plan your next steps.

Teams are encouraged to treat the Discussion Guide as a menu of questions in three areas: (1) **students**, (2) **program quality** and (3) **organizational capacity**. Choose the questions of the greatest importance and interest for your team.



Teams will have the opportunity to explore the *What*, *So What* and *Now What* of their work:

- **What:** Teams discuss their individual assessment results and compare the data/evidence they used to make their assessments.
- **So What:** Teams use the compiled assessment results to identify and think about the strengths and gaps in their programs - for example identifying ways to refine and expand their work.
- **Now What:** Teams identify next steps. The goal at the end of the discussion is a strong action plan with clear methods for measuring results.



Discussion Guide

What:

- Where did opinions among respondents align and where did they differ?
- Where is there a variety of different responses? Why do we think that is?
- Which AzCAN Standards did team members identify as primary or secondary areas of focus and which were not? Why do we think that is?

So What: Students

- Focusing more deeply on our students: What do we know about the assets and the needs of our students? How do we know? (Look for evidence and data sources, both anecdotal and systematic)
- Which students are we not reaching that we should and why? How do we know? (Look for evidence and data source, anecdotal and systematic)
- Considering our students -- those benefiting from our services and those we may want to reach -- and the AzCAN Standards that we are focused on (answers in Section 2 of the assessment). Of those Standards, which do we think are meeting our students need well? Which ones might we need to focus on or improve?
- Which AzCAN Standards are we not programming toward that our students need?

So What: Program Quality

- In section 3 of the assessment, which AzCAN Standards do most of us agree that we are programming toward well? Where do we think we need to improve?
- For each identified "target" AzCAN Standard:
 - What do we know about the quality of our services and activities associated with this Standard?
 - How are we measuring quality? (Look for evidence and data sources both anecdotal and systematic) Which NCAN Common Measures Apply?
 - Referring to your assessment results, which Quality Indicators are lowest, which ones are highest, and why? On which Quality Indicators do staff members differ in their opinions of quality? Why is this, and what can we do to alleviate this difference?
 - What would we need to focus on to improve the quality of our services to help students meet this AzCAN standard?
- Taking into consideration what we discussed and know about our students, our programmatic and organizational priorities, and the results of this assessment, which AzCAN Standard(s) should we target? Why?
- In what ways might we want to expand our programming, for example to new students or with a more comprehensive set of services?
- What AzCAN Standards, if any, are we not programming to currently that we would like to explore? Why?



Discussion Guide

So What: Organizational Capacity

- What organizational capacities do we need to focus on if we are going to continue to increase the quality of our programming and improve student outcomes? Why?
- Given our current assets and resources, what can we do to improve current programs?
- What organizational policies or practices might we need to fine-tune? Which ones are missing that we need to address? How do we know?
- How can we connect with external partners and resources to provide more comprehensive services, supports and activities for our students or provide the services or resources that are outside of our organizational scope or ability? What potential partners exist and what would this sort of relationship require of us?

Consensus on Final Assessment

In the same discussion or a subsequent time, review compiled results and agree to final responses for each AzCAN Standard. These can be the group average or a score reached through discussion. The facilitator will submit the final assessment to AzCAN.

Now What: Action Planning

Following the discussion, the facilitator or note-taker should summarize the discussion notes, highlighting the key issues/desired changes that arose. Use these key issues to complete the *Now What Action Planning Worksheet* to identify and prioritize specific actions. Keep a copy of this *Worksheet* to review progress over time.

College Access Standards for Student Success



STEP 3:

Action Planning



This step should take approximately 30 to 60 minutes depending on the depth of discussions in Step 2.



Action Planning

This *Now What Action Planning Worksheet* provides space for documenting actions that result from the team discussion. After the note taker or facilitator has shared summary notes from the discussion, reconvene the assessment team to prioritize specific actions that can address the key issues/desired changes that emerged from the discussion.

Teams should use this worksheet to:

1. Identify specific actions to address the agreed upon changes,
2. Establish priorities, and identify who is responsible for specific actions, and
3. Create timelines for next steps.

There can be multiple types of actions, including:

- Modification of existing programming, including curriculum, design, and activities
- Development of new programming
- Identification of technical assistance needs
- Evaluation activities
- Planning and research of best practices and curriculum
- Outreach and building new partnerships or changes in partnerships
- Identification or modification of continuous improvement processes
- Professional development opportunities for staff

Worksheet

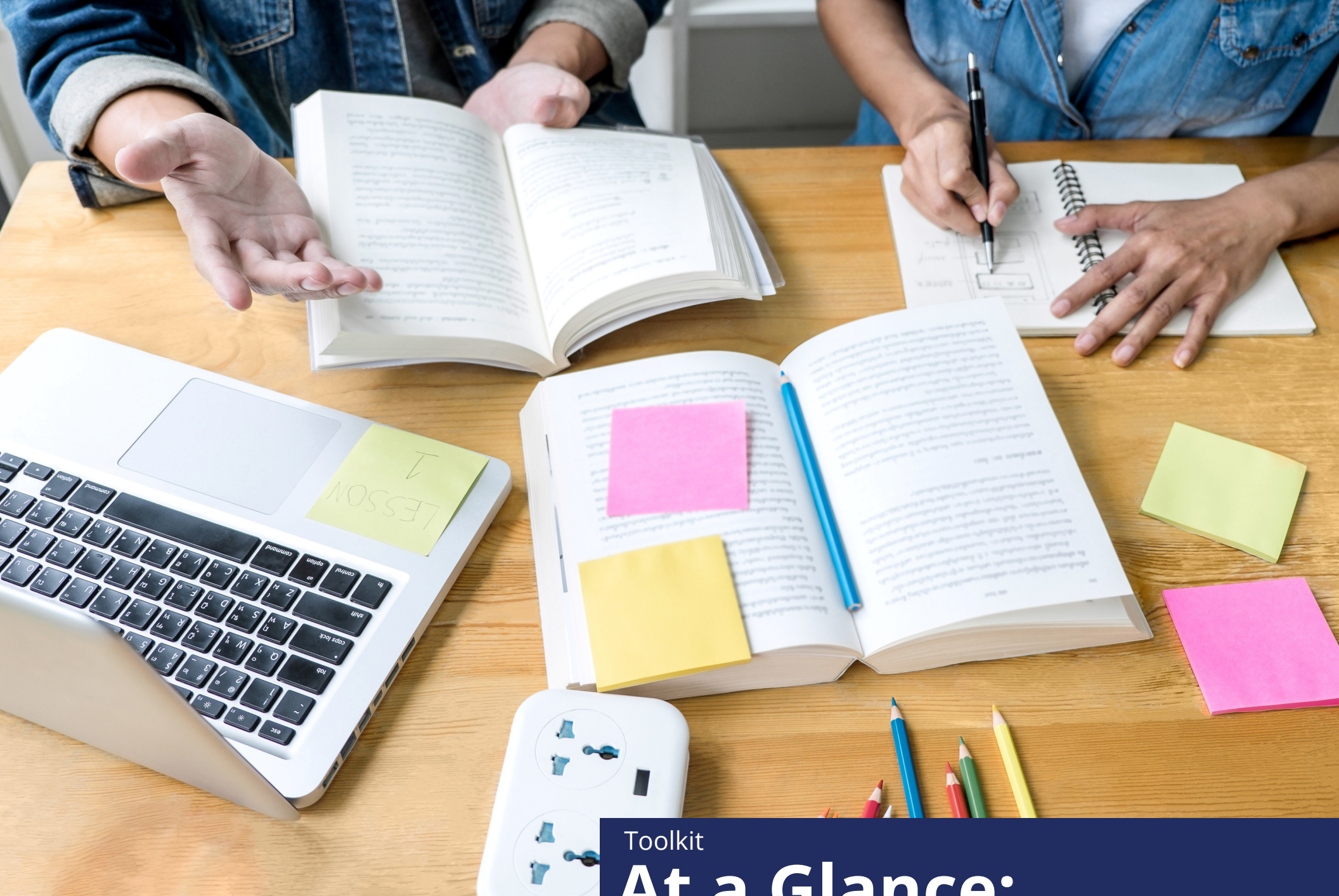
Based on discussion of key issues, describe the actions you will prioritize. List higher priority actions at the top and lower priority actions below. Map out responsibilities, timing and next steps.

Action	Timeframe Start-End	Team Member(s) Responsible	Immediate Next Steps

Worksheet (cont.)

Based on discussion of key issues, describe the actions you will prioritize. List higher priority actions at the top and lower priority actions below. Map out responsibilities, timing and next steps.

Action	Timeframe Start-End	Team Member(s) Responsible	Immediate Next Steps



Toolkit

At a Glance: Standards, Activities, and Measures



At a Glance:

Standards, Activities, and Measures

AzCAN Standard and Competencies		Sample Services or Activities	NCAN Essential Indicators for Common Measures and Other Metrics
Standard 1: Students build awareness and aspirations about postsecondary options, including college and careers.	<p>Students gain a deeper understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1 The different types of postsecondary education pathways, and the career opportunities associated with each pathway.1.2 The relationship between educational achievement and social, economic, and social benefits.1.3 The relationship between educational achievement and social, economic, and social benefits.1.4 The value of lifelong learning as essential to life goals. <p>Students can acquire this understanding through these behaviors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.5 Exploring subjects of interest and related postsecondary and career options.1.6 Identifying careers of interest.1.7 Engaging in conversations with college students, professionals, and other adults who can offer insight on potential college and career pathways.1.8 Participating in college visits, career days, and related activities that expose them to college life and postsecondary options.1.9 Establishing personal, career, and complementary postsecondary educational goals.	<p>Postsecondary and career plan advising</p> <p>Exposure to professionals working in careers of interest</p> <p>College visits</p> <p>Connection to college students studying careers of interest</p> <p>Access to work-based learning opportunities</p> <p>Guest speakers from various careers in elementary grades, including students' parents</p> <p>Field trips to local businesses</p>	<p>NCAN Common Measures:</p> <p>Percent of students visiting a college campus applied to</p> <p>Other Metrics:</p> <p>Percent of students with an Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP)</p> <p>Percent of students understanding their own strengths and challenges and expressing belief in their ability to achieve postsecondary goals</p> <p>Percent of students who have identified one or more career interests</p> <p>Percent of students who have identified one or more postsecondary interested (e.g. type of college they want to attend particular programs they want to apply to)</p> <p>Percent of students who have completed an informational interview with a professional in a field of the student's interest</p> <p>Percent of students who have visited a college campus within the past year (any college)</p> <p>Percent of students participating in work-based learning experiencing (e.g. internships and job shadowing)</p>



At a Glance:

Standards, Activities, and Measures

AzCAN Standard and Competencies		Sample Services or Activities	NCAN Essential Indicators for Common Measures and Other Metrics
Standard 2: Students Recognize the roles of social, emotional and cultural factors that affect their postsecondary planning and transition.	<p>Students gain a deeper understanding of:</p> <p>2.1 How having personal responsibility and resilience can strengthen college-going aspirations, behaviors, and beliefs.</p> <p>2.2 How race/ethnicity, gender, income, and or/or family background can impact values, attitudes, and beliefs.</p> <p>2.3 Strategies for addressing personal challenges and leveraging personal strengths to overcome any potential barriers (e.g. stereotypes, financial hardship) to success.</p> <p>Students can acquire this understanding through these behaviors:</p> <p>2.4 Making postsecondary choices that are rooted in their own aspirations and values.</p> <p>2.5 Persevering toward postsecondary goals in the face of any potential barriers.</p>	<p>Mentoring that including explicit conversation about cultural barriers to postsecondary education and professional job markets</p> <p>Mentoring during college from peers or near-peers who students can relate to</p> <p>Connection to current college students who share personal experiences</p> <p>Activities that foster a sense of pride in students' cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds</p> <p>Guest speakers who represent the backgrounds of your students</p> <p>Workshops that address handling outside pressure (e.g. peer pressure, parental pressure, societal pressure)</p>	<p>Other Metrics:</p> <p>Percent of students with increased performance on grit assessments</p> <p>Percent of students exhibiting self-advocacy skills</p> <p>Percent of students engaging in self-reflection activities</p> <p>Percent of students who receive mentoring and/or coaching</p> <p>Percent of students who indicate increased knowledge after attending workshops on self-reflection, resilience or managing peer pressure</p>



At a Glance:

Standards, Activities, and Measures

AzCAN Standard and Competencies		Sample Services or Activities	NCAN Essential Indicators for Common Measures and Other Metrics
Standard 3: Students build a rigorous academic foundation and develop academic behaviors essential to preparing for postsecondary pathways.	<p>Students gain a deeper understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">3.1 The relationship between educational achievement and academic behaviors in high school and success in college and career.3.2 Opportunities within and outside of school for academic enrichment.3.3 Learning strategies (e.g. self-regulated learning, goal setting) and cognitive strategies (e.g. problem formulation, research interpretation, communication, precision and accuracy.) <p>Students can acquire this understanding through these behaviors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">3.4 Building life skills (e.g. time management, personal organization)3.5 Establishing challenging academic goals.3.6 Completing a rigorous college preparatory academic program (e.g. AP, IB, honors, dual enrollment).3.7 Monitoring course selection, credit accumulation, course grades, and GPA to ensure on-track progress toward graduation.3.8 Engaging in academic supports as needed.3.9 Participating in extra-curricular and leadership activities that help build life skills.	<p>Extracurricular activities that build leadership skills</p> <p>Partnerships with teachers to provide additional classroom support</p> <p>One-on-one academic advising (e.g. around course selection, grades)</p> <p>Extra- or co-curricular activities that provide academic enrichment or support (e.g. tutoring, group homework help)</p> <p>Workshops that teach students organizational and study skills</p> <p>Dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or other advanced coursework</p>	<p>NCAN Common Measures:</p> <p>Percentage of students on track to/completing core subject areas/rigorous college-prep curriculum as defined by the state</p> <p>Percent of students taking the SAT and/or ACT</p> <p>Percent of students enrolled in AP and/or dual enrollment courses</p> <p>Percent of on-time high school graduates</p> <p>Other Metrics:</p> <p>Percent of students who indicate increased knowledge after attending workshops on time management, study skills and other related topics</p> <p>Percent of students involved in one or more extracurricular activity</p> <p>Percent of students with an ECAP defining remaining course requirements and credits needed for high school graduation</p> <p>Percent of students graduating from high school within four or five years</p> <p>Percent of students entering postsecondary institutions without requiring remediation</p>



At a Glance:

Standards, Activities, and Measures

AzCAN Standard and Competencies		Sample Services or Activities	NCAN Essential Indicators for Common Measures and Other Metrics
Standard 4: Students develop a comprehensive support system that contributes to their academic success.	Students gain a deeper understanding of: 4.1 The benefits of leveraging parent and family resources as well as school and social supports to enhance academic success. 4.2 The attitudinal and behavioral characteristics of college-going peers.	Family engagement in programming Opportunity for students to create formal or informal peer networks Mentoring with diverse student groups	Other Metrics: Percent of students who indicate having peers with postsecondary goals Percent of students indicating that they have had at least one conversation about their future with family or friends within the past month Percent of students receiving coaching and/or mentoring Percent of students indicating they have a caring adult they can turn to when they have a question or concern about their future
	Students can acquire this understanding through these behaviors: 4.3 Engaging in conversations and interactions with family members and peers about college goals. 4.4 Establishing strong connections with caring adults, inside and/or outside of school, who are supportive of postsecondary aspirations and can assist with the postsecondary college planning process and transition. 4.5 Establishing strong connections with like-minded peers interested in postsecondary attainment.	Connection to networks in the community (e.g. church groups, social service organizations) Youth development and youth leadership modules Mentoring from early grades through college and career Developing relationships with young professionals to aid in transition from college to professional job setting Connection to advisors/mentors once students are in postsecondary institutions Connection to alumni associations and professional networks for continued communication post-graduation	



At a Glance:

Standards, Activities, and Measures

AzCAN Standard and Competencies		Sample Services or Activities	NCAN Essential Indicators for Common Measures and Other Metrics
Standard 5: Students acquire the college knowledge and skills necessary to successfully transition into postsecondary education pathways.	<p>Students gain a deeper understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">5.1 The college-going process, including college assessment tests, admissions processes, potential majors/course of study options, and admission requirements.5.2 The difference between high school and postsecondary options with regard to academic expectations and student life.5.3 Where to find resources within the college environment and how to access individuals for support. <p>Students can acquire this understanding through these behaviors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">5.4 Participating in test preparation activities for SAT, ACT, and/or other assessments.5.5 Completing college assessment tests.5.6 Exploring, identifying, applying to, and selecting postsecondary options that match academic, career, and personal goals.5.7 Accessing guidance and supports, as needed, to successfully navigate the college application, admission, and enrollment processes.	<p>Helping in identifying potential colleges that offer a good fit and level of selectivity</p> <p>Obtaining recommendation letters from teachers, mentors, coaches and other adults</p> <p>Assistance in writing an application essay</p> <p>Connection to resources for application and admission fees, including available waivers</p> <p>Test preparation</p> <p>Help in compiling necessary college application materials</p> <p>Connection to resources at postsecondary institutions</p> <p>Career and academic advising during college</p>	<p>NCAN Common Measures:</p> <p>Percent of students taking the SAT and/or ACT</p> <p>Percent of students completing college admission applications by school type</p> <p>Other Metrics:</p> <p>Percent of students identifying three or more postsecondary options to pursue</p> <p>Percent of students indicating that college advising services have been helpful for planning their future</p> <p>Percent of students who demonstrate an understanding of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-college major/course of study options-course requirements to fulfill selected major or program of study-different offices/departments that can offer support at postsecondary institutions <p>Percent of students who get recommendation letters from teachers, mentors, coaches or other adults</p>



At a Glance:

Standards, Activities, and Measures

AzCAN Standard and Competencies		Sample Services or Activities	NCAN Essential Indicators for Common Measures and Other Metrics
Standard 6: Students understand the fundamentals of financial literacy and financial planning for postsecondary education.	<p>Students gain a deeper understanding of:</p> <p>6.1 The components of financial literacy for financing postsecondary education.</p> <p>6.2 The various financial aid and scholarship options for financing postsecondary education.</p> <p>Students can acquire this understanding through these behaviors:</p> <p>6.3 Evaluating postsecondary options based on cost and value.</p> <p>6.4 Exploring a variety of financial aid options and supports.</p> <p>6.5 Applying for financial aid.</p> <p>6.6 Making informed postsecondary decisions that include a plan for funding.</p>	<p>Aid in completing the FAFSA</p> <p>One-on-one financial advising with students and/or families</p> <p>Financial literacy workshops for students and families</p> <p>Assisting scholarship searches</p> <p>Encouraging family enrollment in match-savings accounts</p> <p>Providing salary information for career options</p> <p>Reminders and strategies for paying back loans and post-graduation</p> <p>Providing tools (e.g. spreadsheets) for helping students and families plan and manage college finances</p>	<p>NCAN Common Measures:</p> <p>Percent of students who complete and submit a FAFSA form</p> <p>Percent of students awarded financial aid</p> <p>Percent of students that complete supplementary scholarship applications</p> <p>Other Metrics:</p> <p>Percent of students indicating a greater understanding of college financing after receiving counseling</p> <p>Percent of students receiving funding for application and admission fees, including receiving any waivers available</p> <p>Percent of students who have completed a budget for their first year out of high school</p> <p>Percent of students indicating they know how to finance their postsecondary education</p>



At a Glance:

Standards, Activities, and Measures

AzCAN Standard and Competencies		Sample Services or Activities	NCAN Essential Indicators for Common Measures and Other Metrics
Standard 7: Students enroll, persist, and successfully complete a postsecondary education program of study.	Students gain a deeper understanding of: 7.1 The enrollment components and requirements for a selected postsecondary institution, including for summer melt/transition programs. 7.2 How to strike a balance between school, work, and social responsibilities 7.3 The relationship between educational achievement in college and career success.	Connecting to academic advising or non-academic supports in college Summer bridge programs Mentoring that continues from elementary grades through high school into college Early alert systems Internships or assistance in securing internships Job shadowing and industry tours Career exploration with elementary and middle-school students Career advising at postsecondary level	NCAN Common Measures: Percent of students who enroll in a postsecondary institution within six months of high school graduation Student enrollment by institution type and status (full time vs. part time) Percent of students participating in summer melt/transition programs Percent of students placed into remedial courses (English/Math) Percent of students participating in college orientation programs Percent of students persisting through school from year to year (year to year student persistence) Percent of students persisting from one term to the next (term to term student persistence) Percent of students who complete and submit a renewal FAFSA form Percent of students who transfer from a two-year to a four-year program, with or without an Associate Degree Other Metrics: Percent of students participating in one or more extracurricular activities on campus Percent of students indicating they feel at home or fit in at their postsecondary schools Percent of students participating on work-based learning experiences (e.g. internships and job shadowing) Percent of students scheduling one or more job interviews during their last semester in college Percent of students completing a postsecondary program
	Students can acquire this understanding through these behaviors: 7.5 Enrolling in a selected postsecondary institution. 7.6 Participating in summer melt/transition programs, as needed and available. 7.7 Monitoring course selection, credit accumulation, course grades, and GPA to ensure on-track progress toward graduation. 7.8 Seeking help from instructors and individuals providing academic support, as needed. 7.9 Exploring career opportunities (e.g. through internships, job fairs, informational interviews) and/or graduate school options during school and following graduation.		



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