

CollegeKeys Compact™ - Inventory for School Districts and Schools **Sample Goals Statement**

While West Side High School has a number of programs and initiatives in place to prepare and encourage students to attend college, our review of the CollegeKeys Compact™ inventory reveals that our current efforts could be more accessible to our low-income students. In an effort to increase college going among these students, our existing programs and initiatives will be adjusted to reflect the students we serve at West (45% are eligible for free and reduced meals) and new efforts will be formed with the assistance of staff, teachers, and our community at large.

At West, hurdles for low-income student preparation for college are multi-faceted. Of the efforts we currently have implemented, largely college preparatory curricular standards and PSAT/NMSQT testing, we plan to use these as the foundation for the college-going culture we want in our school. We believe the college-going culture needs to begin in middle school, through academic preparation for high school. GEAR-UP operates in a number of our feeder middle schools, and these low-income students are well prepared for college preparatory academics. We have planned a workshop for our staff and teachers where we will discuss how West can encourage college going in our classrooms by setting higher academic expectations and providing individualized support for students who need extra assistance in their pursuit of college. Currently we are evaluating our local partnerships with TRIO programs to adequately understand what services students are receiving through programs like Upward Bound. We plan to expand partnerships with the local college as well, with a primary objective of making college less abstract for low-income students by developing on-site visits.

At this time, we are developing additional strategies to target our low-income students by providing financial aid and college application materials that will reach their families. We will also alert them that their children will be prepared for college upon graduation. Our goal is to have each of our teachers serve as a resource on college access and encourage them to share printed information on college access at all parent-teacher conferences. We are also developing panel discussion groups featuring alumni students who have gone on to college. We are planning on making this a staple of the 9th and 10th grade experience.

For a number of years, we have been tracking West Side High alums and their post graduation and college-going experiences. To discern which students were low-income, we ask where they went to middle school as well as whether they were eligible for free and reduced meals. This feedback has been helpful in determining our goals for developing a college-going culture.