

iGrant 828: College and Career Readiness Training for School Counselors

What is the SREB Go Alliance Academy Training?

Today's workplace requires most Americans to have some form of education beyond high school. The Southern Education Regional Board (SREB) has emphasized the critical need to strengthen students' readiness to succeed after high school and, in recent years, has intensified efforts to support member states in improving students' preparation to be successful in entry-level college courses.

The SREB Go Alliance Academy training modules can improve effectiveness in preparing all students for postsecondary education — especially those from low-income families who would be the first in their family to attend. For this grant school counselors and/or staff who work in college and career access can choose one of the two modules are being offered:

- For High School: College, Career and Academic Planning
- For Middle School: College and Career Advising for Middle Grades

The Go Alliance Academy college and career counseling training program offers the most comprehensive program of courses, designed by experts in the field, on the topics school counselors want and need most. The module is delivered using the latest, state-of-the-art platform for an engaging and interactive user experience. The Go Alliance program was updated in 2016 to provide even richer, more interactive, and relevant training easily accessed to fit the busiest schedules.

Counselor Training

SREB's Go Alliance Academy College and Career Counseling Initiative works to increase the knowledge and skills of counselors who advise students on their postsecondary aspirations and to prepare students for life after high school. In our state middle and high school students are required to complete the High School and Beyond Plan to graduate from high school and in order to complete this requirement, we know that students need highly qualified career and college readiness guidance.

Not Just for Counselors

In addition to high school and middle school counselors or career counselors, principals, teachers who serve as advisors, graduation coaches, and other staff who work with college access information and programs can access these grant funds.

Flexible Delivery Option

The modules are designed for online delivery, with a clock hour option. The content has been customized with specific information about postsecondary options for Washington state, including state-specific careers, graduation requirements, college planning tools and resources, and scholarships. The Go Alliance Academy instructor-led modules incorporate a community learning approach, which has proven effective for delivering online professional development to educators. Participate in the online courses function as a cohort with structured online discussions with colleagues.

Each module includes

- goals for learning
- online readings
- practical, job-relevant activities
- interactive discussion forum with guided questions
- professional development webinars
- short videos of counselors demonstrating effective practices
- a culminating project to demonstrate what counselors have learned
- resources counselors can incorporate into their work immediately
- pre- and post-assessment to gauge what counselors have learned

Cost, Funding, Invoicing, and iGrant Budget

School Districts will be invoiced by WA College Access Network (WCAN) <https://www.wcan.org/career-and-college-readiness> /College Success Foundation for each person attending. The cost for each person for one module is approximately \$160. Additional funds in this grant of \$40 per person is available for collaboration and professional development opportunities.

Overall, this competitive grant will fund 50 high school counselors and 25 middle school counselors statewide to take one module. Schools apply as a district grant. One or more schools from a school district can participate.

Application Due Date is November 9, 2017.

The Module for High School: College, Career and Academic Planning

This module, developed for practicing professional school counselors, pre-service school counselors, and college access professionals, includes four sessions that focus on engaging students in early career awareness and development; supporting students in career and postsecondary planning; using data to address equity and to guide academic and career planning; and

the importance of postsecondary choices and finding the right postsecondary fit. Participants build knowledge and skills in each of these areas, and they are expected to engage in constructive discussions in a learning community with their colleagues during each session.

The term “college” is used throughout this course to refer to any postsecondary education or training at a Pell-eligible educational institution beyond the high school level, including those that offer apprenticeship programs, certificates, and associate and/or bachelor degree programs.

Session 1: Engaging Students in Career Awareness and Planning shows the connections between course planning, postsecondary planning, and career planning, and how to communicate these relationships to students. This session also teaches strategies counselors can use to engage students in academics by showing how secondary courses relate to a students’ future career interests.

Session 2: Using Data to Address Equity teaches strategies to intervene for students who are in danger of being left out of the school’s college-going mission; help students and parents understand the impact of secondary academic achievement on postsecondary opportunities; and collaborate with school counselors, advisors or classroom teachers to support career exploration.

Session 3: Using Data to Guide Academic Planning enables counselors to use data to assist students in academic planning; align students’ course selection to career interests; and assist students in understanding and pursuing non-traditional course options, such as dual enrollment, AP courses, honors courses, or virtual courses.

Session 4: College/Postsecondary Choice trains counselors to help students and parents find the right fit among many postsecondary options in academics, size, cost, location, school culture or atmosphere, diversity, and match to students’ career interests. Counselors will also learn about useful tools and resources for college planning and how to assist students and parents in understanding college terminology.

The Module for Middle School: College and Career Advising in the Middle Grades

This module, developed for practicing professional school counselors, pre-service school counselors, and college access professionals, includes six sessions that address the skills and knowledge required to help middle grade students prepare for college and careers.

This module, developed for practicing professional school counselors, pre-service school counselors, and college access professionals, includes six sessions that address the skills and knowledge required to help middle grade students prepare for college and careers. Participants build knowledge and skills in several areas, including how to create a college-going culture; the value and affordability of postsecondary education; career exploration; how to use data to support student success; academic planning; transitions from elementary to middle school and from middle to high school; and how to help students to develop academic mindsets and skills for college and career success. Participants will engage in constructive discussions in a learning community with their colleagues during each session, and complete practical, hands-on activities throughout the course.

Session 1: Developing a college-going culture in middle school- Session one focuses on the importance of developing a college-going culture in middle school as well as how to identify and address barriers within the school that impact students' ability to reach their education and career goals. Participants learn effective strategies to establish a college-going culture in their school, how to help students and faculty to understand all postsecondary options, and how different higher education degrees/credentials lead to different career paths. Participants also learn how to dispel cultural, social, and gender stereotypes associated with college and careers.

Session 2: Helping middle-grades students and families understand the value and affordability of postsecondary education- Middle school is a crucial stage at which students and their parents must begin to make variety of complex choices that range from pursuing a challenging academic curriculum to developing an understanding of college financing. Studies have shown that almost all parents hope that their children will be able to attend college, but many parents do not have the necessary information to help their children make the important early choices that will help them prepare to fulfill their college dreams. This session equips participants with tools and strategies to communicate the value and affordability of a postsecondary education as well as the steps that are necessary to take now in order to plan for college.

Participants learn how to provide practical, developmentally-appropriate information to students and families about the costs of higher education; the types of aid that are available; what "postsecondary" means; the pros and cons of different types of postsecondary options; and an overview of the college planning and admissions process.

Session 3: Engaging middle-grades students in self-exploration of career interests and skills- In this session, participants learn how to research employment area forecasts, explore state-adopted career clusters, and explore tools and strategies to help students understand the connections between career aspirations and academic planning. This session also

shows how stereotypes can influence students' future aspirations, and the steps counselors can take to dispel those myths.

Session 4: Using data to address equity and create early warning systems- This session addresses the importance of exploring school data from multiple perspectives. First, it explores the use of data to uncover issues related to equity. It also explores the importance of using disaggregated school-level and individual student data to identify early warning signs for at-risk students. Participants plan interventions to support students who are struggling to be college and career ready as they progress through middle and high school.

Session Five: Engaging middle-grades students and families in academic planning and transitions- Transition activities, career assessments, and academic planning are important elements in student motivation, engagement and learning. This session helps participants understand factors that influence how students make decisions about whether or not they will go on to college. In addition, participants learn how to support students in their transitions from elementary to middle and from middle to high school; how to help students and families to understand the link between success in academic courses in middle school and access to postsecondary preparation options in high school; and how to help students and families understand why taking the right courses in high school and getting good grades prepares them for success in college and careers.

Session Six: Helping students develop mindsets and skills for academic and career success- Research suggests that racial/ethnic and gender differences in school performance can be reduced by focusing on students' attitudes and behaviors. It's important for students to learn self-regulation skills in middle school, as they are foundational to success in high school, college, and careers. This session will expose participants to strategies for helping adolescents develop a growth mindset and how academic mindsets, social skills, and career-readiness skills lead to success in college and careers.

Other Modules in the SREB Go Alliance Academy for future reference include:

- Building a College-Going Culture for All Students
- Financial Aid and College Applications
- College and Career Counseling for Special-Population Students
- College and Career Advising in the Elementary Grades
- Maximizing School Counselor Impact on Student Success: A Module for School Leaders
- College and Career Advising for Educators: A Model for Teacher Advisors

Overview of Modules <https://www.sreb.org/overview-modules>

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