



Dear Educator,

Thank you for taking the time to administer the **ACTE/myOptions® Encourage™ Post-Secondary Planning Survey®**. We've developed this packet as a supplemental tool to enhance the survey experience for your class.

Part 1

An interactive activity (**What is postsecondary education like?**) that helps students reflect on how their future career goals might include education beyond high school. We recommend implementing this activity before survey distribution.

Part 2

Administer the survey (refer to your survey packet for Part 2 materials).

Part 3

A suggested activity after students complete the survey to help them continue reflecting and learning about pathways to and through postsecondary education.

If you have any questions about the contents of this packet or need additional guidance, feel free to reach out to Melissa Caperton (melissa.caperton@encoura.org) or Melanie Goodson (melanieg@encoura.org).

Thank you for all you do to help shape students' futures!

Sincerely,
The Encourage Team

Part 1: What is postsecondary education like?

Purpose/Goal:

- All students see postsecondary education as an option for their future journeys
- Students set goals to increase postsecondary and career readiness

Learning Outcomes:

- Goal setting
- Postsecondary readiness
- Career readiness
- Networking

Materials Needed:

- Writing utensils
- Printouts of the “Postsecondary Dreaming” activity sheet, or the ability to display the sheet so students can create their own graphs.

Suggested Time Allotment: 25-35 minutes

5-10 minutes: Outline the activity.

This activity introduces students to the ACTE/myOptions[®] Encourage[™] Post-Secondary Planning Survey[®]. Students who participate in this voluntary survey receive an invitation (through the email they provide in the survey) to Encourage, a college and career planning mobile and web app. Similar activities are in the app and are periodically emailed to students, giving them tools, resources, and advice to help them take steps toward their future goals.

Question Prompts:

1. What careers interest you the most?
 - a. Do you know what type of postsecondary education you need for that job/career? Do you need a four-year college, a two-year college or an apprenticeship? Do you need an industry certification or license, a postsecondary certificate, or an associate or bachelor’s degree? (If you, as the instructor, know this answer, feel free to tell the students the requirements.)
2. How do you feel when someone asks you about your postsecondary and career plans?
3. What do you think life is like for college students?
4. What do you think life is like in the careers that interest you the most?

15-20 minutes: Invite students to imagine themselves in postsecondary education.

Provide the “Postsecondary Dreaming” activity sheet to students instructing them to use the space in each grid area to answer the corresponding prompt.

5-10 minutes: Students fill in the grid.

After giving students time to draw or write in each space, ask them to share their grids with the people next to them or with the class.

5 minutes: Reflect and set a plan.

1. Review the goals.
2. Ask students to check the boxes next to the goals they want to achieve over the next year.
3. Remind students that these goals are proven to increase their abilities to be college and career ready by the time they graduate high school.



I WILL STUDY...

In this box, write words or draw pictures of what you'd like to learn during your postsecondary education

I WILL LIVE...

In this box, think about your living arrangements. Will you pursue postsecondary education in your home community? Will you move away?

IN MY FREE TIME I WILL...

In this box, write words or draw pictures to discuss: Will you be working? Joining clubs? Finding cool internships?

WHEN I GRADUATE I WILL...

In this box, think about your life after postsecondary education. What will your career be? Where will you live?

GOALS

**Check the boxes of commitments
you can make now.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Focus on earning “A” and “B” grades where possible.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take 4 years of high school: English, Science, Math, Social Studies, and World Language.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take a challenging class (AP, IB, or career and technical education course).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete 25 hours of community service.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hit a 90% school attendance goal.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare for the ACT/SAT.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Participate in work-based learning (job shadow, internship, apprenticeship or health care clinical).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Earn a recognized postsecondary credential (industry certification, postsecondary certificate or associate degree).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research 3-5 career areas of interest.

Fam & Friends

Families and Friends are essential to accomplishing your goals. Here is a fun list of activities you can do with your family to help you reach your goals.

- Tell your friends and family about the activity you did today and what you think postsecondary education could be like for you.
- Think about when you’d like to visit a college campus and go together! College visits are free and often come with some cool experiences and SWAG (stuff we all get!).
- Ask your friends and family how they can help you meet the goals you set on this page.
- Make a list of questions you have about postsecondary education together - then, connect with your school counselor to find the answers.

Part 3: Guest Speaker/Follow-up Engagement

Purpose/Goal:

- Students gain exposure to role models and mentors who have navigated postsecondary education
- Students engage with peers and discover new information to aid in their college and career exploration processes

Learning Outcomes:

- Goal Setting
- College Readiness
- Career Readiness
- Networking

Materials Needed:

- Optional prompt questions, guest speaker expectations, and/or a handout to take notes.

Suggested Time Allotment: 30-45 minutes

1. Invite a guest speaker to talk about postsecondary education and careers.

- Your high school's alumni who are currently in four-year college, two-year college or an apprenticeship
- Community members who work in career and technical or other job fields
- Paraprofessionals who work at your school and just finished their degrees
- Other teachers with interesting career paths
- College partners—professors, academic advisors, or career coaches
- Yourself

2. Allow students time to ask questions.

Provide students with a list of possible questions:

- What does a typical school day/week look like?
- Why did you pick your postsecondary pathway?
- What do you wish you would have known before going to postsecondary education?
- What is your major? Did you change majors? What kinds of classes do/did you take?
- What is the homework like?
- What are tests like?
- What kinds of rules do you have to follow?
- Have you participated in an internship or apprenticeship?
- What is your career like?

3. Reflect on the day.

- What did you learn today?
- How has this helped you think about college and career planning?
- What questions did today spark for you? How do you plan to find the answers?
- How do you feel about postsecondary planning? Are your feelings any different now that you've heard from our guest(s)?

Research Behind The Activities

AASA (2022) National College and Career Readiness Indicators.

<https://www.redefiningready.org/career-ready>

Notes: There are research based and nationally recognized benchmarks students can aim to achieve to be college and career ready.

Swail, W. S., & Perna, L. W. (2002). Pre-college outreach and early intervention programs. *Condition of access: Higher education for lower income students, 15-34.*

Notes: There are 11 essential elements of successful college access programs. This activity implements the following four elements: College awareness, parental/family involvement, role models, and rigorous course taking.