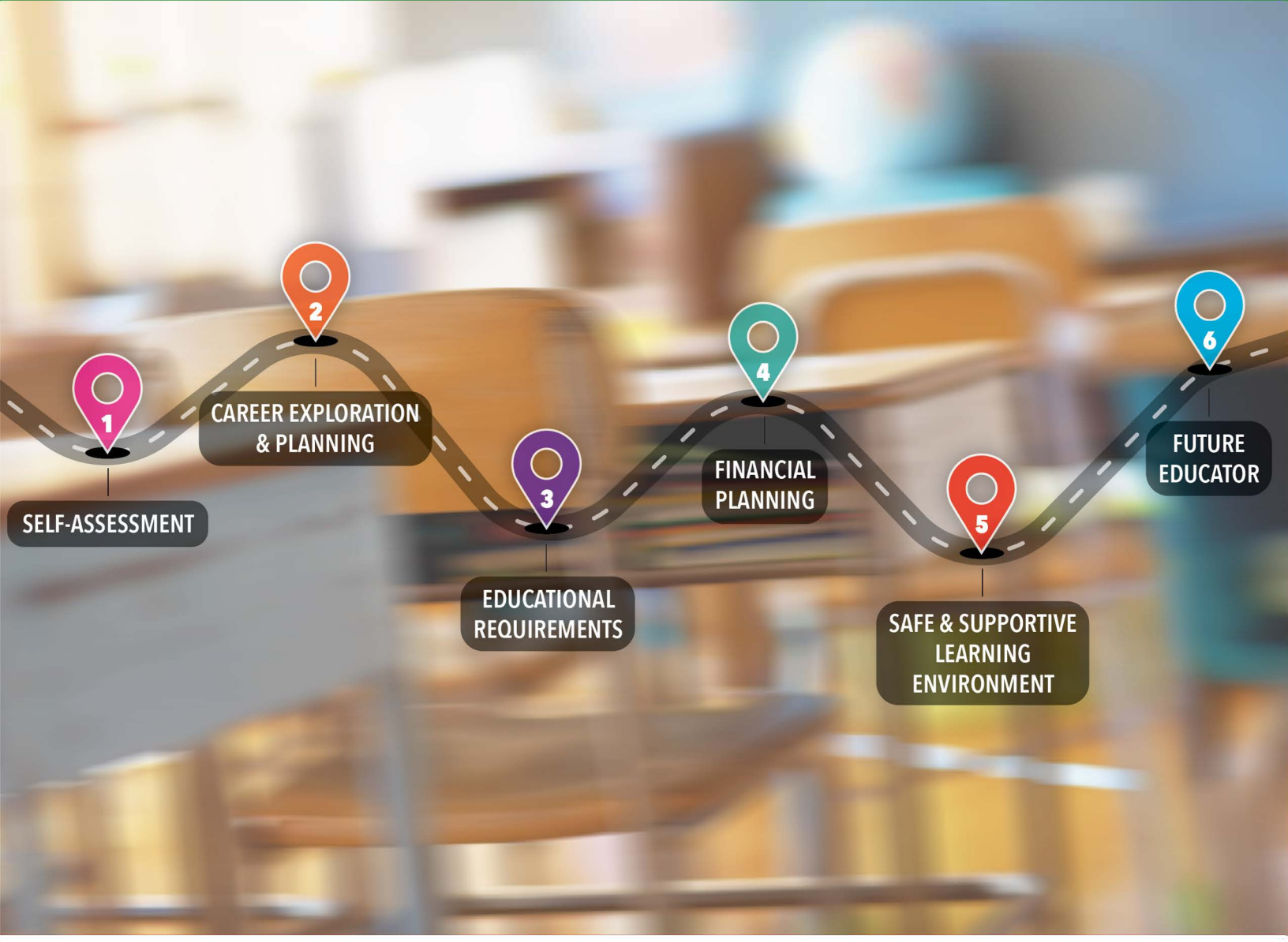




COLORADO SCHOOL COUNSELOR TOOLBOX

# Tools and Resources to Promote the Education Profession

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## Introduction

### Overview

The *Colorado School Counselor Toolbox: Tools and Resources to Promote the Education Profession* is a comprehensive resource designed to help school counselors provide career advising support to students who possess the skills for and/or interest in a career in education. The toolbox outlines five steps for counselors to support students and promote the education profession, provides links to various tools and resources for each step, and suggests discussion questions for use when advising students.

### Background

The [Region 12 Comprehensive Center](#) (R12CC) and the [Colorado Department of Education](#) (CDE) developed the toolbox in collaboration with school counselors and educators in the state's Northwest region and the [Northwest Board of Cooperative Educational Services \(BOCES\)](#). This toolbox serves as a recruitment strategy for promoting the education profession to students who may be interested but unsure where to start. Incorporating input from Colorado educators, the toolbox aims to assist counselors in promoting the education profession to middle and high school students across the state and serve as a roadmap to aid students in navigating their entrance into the teaching profession.

### How to Use This Toolbox

The School Counselor Toolbox begins with an introduction to the tool, providing its background and purpose. The toolbox includes a roadmap of six steps for counselors to follow when advising students about considering a career in education. Certain areas within the toolbox will require the creation of an account for students. Counselors should connect with IT professionals in their district to understand student privacy requirements and district policies around the use of outside tools. The infographic on page 2 outlines each of the steps and allows counselors to navigate to the list of resources for each step.

# COLORADO SCHOOL COUNSELOR TOOLBOX

Tools and Resources to Promote the Education Profession

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

Career assessment helps students evaluate their skills, interests, and values to identify career paths that match their strengths and goals. School counselors can use this information to identify students who may have the skills and interests for a career in education.

1

## CAREER EXPLORATION & PLANNING

Students need opportunities to explore different career paths to determine what careers may align to their interests, skills, and future goals.

2

## EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for teachers are different depending on the grade level and subject a student would like to teach. School counselors can build students' awareness of all available pathways and requirements into the education profession.

3

## FINANCIAL PLANNING

College can be expensive, and school counselors need to help make college accessible to students by sharing financial planning resources, such as scholarships, grants, and tuition assistance programs.

4

## SAFE & SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Educators create classrooms that are safe spaces for students to learn and grow, regardless of their background and culture.

5

## FUTURE EDUCATOR

The final goal is for school counselors to guide students who may excel in the education profession.

6



## Step 1: Self-Assessment

### Resources

In the first step, school counselors will have students complete one or more career self-assessments to determine their interests, likes, and dislikes. Included in this toolbox is a list of career assessment options for students. While most of these resources are free, some may involve associated costs. Based on the results of these assessments, school counselors may identify students who show an interest in and possess the skills necessary for a career in education. These students may be excellent candidates with whom to share more about the education profession using other resources from this toolbox. Below are some examples of student self-assessments:

- **Colorado Career Advising:** This site is designed for career seekers, students, and advisors. The Colorado Career Advising (CCA) Tool features a quick survey to identify strengths and motivators, laying the foundation for a personalized career action plan. Students are required to create an account after the survey. School counselors can use the site with students seeking careers in education in a variety of formats, including classroom lessons, small groups, or individual sessions.
- **Holland Code Career Quiz:** This free career quiz uses the respected [Holland Code](#) system to show which jobs suit students' interests, talents, and aptitudes. Scores for six major job areas are provided to guide students' career planning. School counselors can assist students in accessing the career quiz by creating a login credential to save their results and continue career exploration independently.
- **O\*NET Career Exploration Tools:** The O\*NET® website was designed as a set of self-directed career exploration/assessment tools to help workers consider and plan career options, preparation, and transitions more effectively. School counselors can assist students in accessing the O\*NET Interest Profiler through various versions, web-based or paper and pencil. The profiler uses the Holland interest structure. The site allows students to self-administer and self-interpret their results.
- **MAPP Career Assessment:** The Motivational Appraisal Personal Potential (MAPP) career assessment is for students, graduates, and working adults. It provides a wealth of information to help you find the right career that matches your unique assessment profile. School counselors can work with students to take the free career assessment by creating a login credential to save their results and access additional career resources.

### Questions for Students in This Phase of the Journey

- After taking the career assessments, what do you notice is important to you in a career?
- How do your career assessments connect to your classes and/or extracurricular activities?
- Is there anything you would like to adjust to better align your activities to what is important to you?
- Based on your career assessments, how do your self-selected career choices align or not align with your career options?

Source. American School Counselor Association, n.d.

## Step 2: Career Exploration and Planning

### Resources

For students who have skills or interests aligned to education, school counselors can use the following resources to help students examine opportunities within the education profession. The resources include information on different career paths within the education sector (e.g., teacher, administrator, counselor, education consultant, curriculum developer, etc.) and provide descriptions of job responsibilities, required qualifications, and potential salary ranges. Counselors can use these tools to inform education career-planning conversations with students. These sessions can be individualized, provided in small groups, or delivered through classroom lessons with online access available to explore the resources. Students would create accounts on the platforms provided, which allows students to access additional education career materials and revisit them later.

- **TEACH Colorado:** An online dashboard that provides information for students to explore the teaching profession, explore career opportunities in education, learn about licensure requirements, and learn how to apply to teaching programs.
- **My Colorado Journey:** This website allows students to explore career paths in education, from paraprofessional to district and school leadership roles. It provides salary information, estimated job openings in Colorado, and information on what education, training, and experience are required.
- **Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP):** ICAP is a multi-year process in Colorado that intentionally guides students and families in exploring career, academic, and postsecondary opportunities. The website includes links to a vast array of post-secondary and career information that can be accessed by students and the schoolwide community through individualized sessions by a classroom teacher or school counselor, individually, in a small group, or in classroom lessons.

### Questions for Students in This Phase of the Journey

- Based on your exploration of different career options, describe your ideas about future careers in education.
- What are you currently doing that is helping you prepare for your life after high school? Socially? Academically? Career related?
- What are you not doing that might help you prepare for life after high school?
- I'd like you to set a specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely (SMART) goal related to your academics that is specific and challenging but attainable. Given your career interests and postsecondary plans, what academic goal would make sense for you?

Source. American School Counselor Association, n.d.

## Step 3: Educational Requirements

### Resources

School counselors can discuss and review the educational requirements with students. The resources may be used in many ways when working with students to enter education. For example, counselors may facilitate a classroom learning session on the educational requirements for entering the education profession for the various roles (e.g., teacher, school nurse, and social worker).

- **[Colorado Teacher Endorsement Requirements](#), Colorado Department of Education:** This website outlines the educational requirements for each type of teacher endorsement in Colorado. The Colorado Teacher Endorsement Requirements would be an ideal place to begin.
- **[Special Services License Requirements](#), Colorado Department of Education:** This website outlines the educational requirements for special services or related services professionals such as school counselors, nurses, school social workers, and speech-language pathologists.
- **[Educator Pathway Candidate Guide](#), Colorado Department of Education and Colorado Department of Higher Education:** A guide for students that outlines the origins of the educator career pathway and the courses, describes the Teacher Recruitment Education and Preparation (TREP) program, and shares where students can find additional supports.
- **[Educator Pathway District and Advisor Guide](#), Colorado Department of Education and Colorado Department of Higher Education:** A guide on the educator pathway, the courses students will take, advising notes on the pathway courses, information on the TREP program, guidance on student qualities to consider for TREP, and how to support students.
- **Why Should You Choose TREP (see Appendix A):** This resource outlines the benefits and requirements of the TREP program for students and families. TREP creates the opportunity for qualified students in an educator career pathway to concurrently enroll in postsecondary courses and earn college credit at no tuition cost to students. Counselors can provide this resource to a student if one expresses an interest in education or possesses the necessary skills according to the results of the student’s self-assessment.
- **Pathways to Becoming an Educator (see Appendix B):** This resource provides students with information on how to become an educator through multiple pathways such as substitute teaching, becoming a paraprofessional, TREP/ASCENT, or a traditional four-year preparation program. This resource is intended for counselors to distribute to students to promote the profession.

### Questions for Students in This Phase of the Journey

- Imagine your life five years after you graduate from high school. What challenges do you want to solve? How does this relate to a career?
- As you consider your future, what types of options after high school have you already explored (e.g., two-year college, four-year college, certificates, trades, internships)?
- What concerns or questions came up for you as you explored?
- How long are you willing to go to college or receive other training to achieve your career goals?
- What does success mean to you when it comes to a career?

Source. American School Counselor Association, n.d.

## Step 4: Financial Planning and Support Services

### Resources

This section in the toolbox can assist school counselors in supporting students to identify funding opportunities to pursue their educational and career goals and lessen the financial burden. These resources can easily be utilized by school counselors in individual, small group, or classroom lessons. For example, a counselor or educator could create a lesson activity where students search for and identify two financial resources that they may be eligible for to support their education and career goals.

- **[Financial Opportunities for Aspiring and In-service Educators](#), Colorado Department of Education:** This webpage provides financial opportunities such as stipends and scholarships available to educators. It includes information on eligibility, available funding, and links to learn more about how to apply.
- **[Teacher Loan Forgiveness \(TLF\) Program](#):** If a teacher teaches full-time for five complete and consecutive academic years in a low-income school or educational service agency and meets other qualifications, they may be eligible for forgiveness.
- **[Financial Aid & Scholarships](#):** This Teach Colorado website provides scholarships and financial assistance to meet students' needs and help them learn about financial aid.
- **[Federal Student Aid](#):** This website is the direct link to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students need to complete the FAFSA form to apply for federal student aid such as federal grants, work-study funds, and loans. Completing and submitting the FAFSA form is free, and it gives students access to federal student aid—the largest source of aid—to help you pay for college or career/trade school.

### Questions for Students in This Phase of the Journey

- What are the full costs associated with attending the college of your choice? Besides tuition and housing, ask about meal plans, transportation costs, campus or course fees, and books and supplies needed for classes.
- What financial aid options does the college of your choice provide? Are there any scholarships? Are they need-based or merit-based? Or both?
- What is the average amount of debt a student at the college of your choice graduates with?
- Are there employment opportunities, either through work-study programs or otherwise, available on campus? How does one apply to these positions?

Source. American School Counselor Association, n.d.



## Step 5: Creating a Safe and Supportive Learning Environment

### Resources

Step 5 provides schools with resources to make students aware of their potential impact on their community through the education profession. Educators support students from all over the world with unique backgrounds and perspectives. Understanding students' backgrounds, cultures, and needs is essential for effective instruction and a welcoming learning environment. School counselors can share the toolbox resources with students interested in serving their communities. These resources highlight how a career in education can provide students with opportunities to connect to their community and make it a welcoming place for all.

- **[That Safe Space—Rachel's Educator Pathway Story](#)**: In this video, Rachel shares how being a teacher can positively influence a child's life and start a domino effect that crosses generations.
- **[Become an Educator, Create Connections—Tegan's Story](#)**: In this video, students will be able to join Tegan on her mission to become an educator and create connections.
- **[Become an Educator, Share the Joyful Moments](#)**: Peter shares in this video a memory of his classroom coming together in a shared dance, highlighting the impact an educator can have on creating a cohesive and supportive community.

### Questions for Students in This Phase of the Journey

- Ask students how their background and identities will impact their work in a classroom.
- How will you work to create a caring, safe, welcoming classroom culture?
- What aspects of your own identity are you most conscious of on a daily basis?
  - How will this impact the classroom environment you create?
- Play sample videos or show a tweet or an Instagram post that is discussing education and/teachers and ask students to reflect on it. Challenge them to focus their responses on the concepts and ideas expressed rather than the person behind the remarks.
- Use an active-listening strategy: After playing a soundbite from the news or a media outlet, ask a student to paraphrase what they have just heard. Ask another student to respond to that version statement, and to offer their own interpretation. Continue in this manner, getting students to focus on terminology, tone, and argument.

Source. American School Counselor Association, n.d.

## Step 6: Future Educator

This final section in the toolbox is for you, the school counselor. Reflect on your experience providing guidance and counseling for students who are, or might be, interested in a career in education. What did you learn from the experience that may inform how you engage with students who demonstrate skills, dispositions, and interests suited to the education profession? What supports do you have, and what supports do you need to better encourage and counsel future educators?

### Lifelong Learning in Education

To promote lifelong learning, educators receive a pay increase as they earn additional degrees. Becoming an educator extends beyond obtaining a bachelor's degree and a license. Educators need to take continuing education courses based on their area of licensure and complete professional learning sessions.

Consider partnering with teachers to promote teaching as a viable career option. Collaborate with fellow counselors to create robust opportunities for students to consider this career field, including job shadowing and mentorship with a teacher. Or even have students follow a school counselor or social worker. Counselors are at the front lines when supporting students in their career choices. Having the resources to provide students with positive guidance as they seriously consider a career in education is essential to the future of our profession and our future students.

## Reference

American School Counseling Association. (n.d.). *Career conversation: High school*.

<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/abecfedd-566d-4bea-874c-5a57681518ee/Career-Conversations-High-School.pdf>

## Appendix A. T-REP Flyer



TREP RESOURCES

# WHY SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TREP?

The **Teacher Recruitment Education and Preparation (TREP)** program helps students interested in a career in education pay for 2 years of college tuition at **no cost**.

## BENEFITS OF TREP PROGRAM AND BEING AN EDUCATOR



### HANDS-ON LEARNING & SUPPORTS

Develop skills and receive coaching while working with students. The teaching profession provides ongoing mentoring and coaching support.



### FINANCIAL BREAKS

Earn up to 2 years of college tuition at no cost. TREP helps you become a teacher more quickly, and reduces how much you pay for college, saving you money.



### COMMUNITY IMPACT

Have a positive impact in your community by helping students in your community be successful.



### TEACH YOUR PASSIONS

Engage students in the things you are passionate about. Are you interested in nature, coding, acting - TEACH IT!

## REQUIREMENTS

- Complete at least one course in the Education Pathway by the end of your 12th-grade year.
- Complete an Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP).
- Receive a nomination by a district administrator and be awarded a TREP slot.
- Apply and be accepted to a postsecondary program at a qualified Colorado institution of higher education.
- Enter the TREP program immediately after your fourth year of high school.
- Maintain at least a 2.0 GPA in your postsecondary coursework and remain enrolled both years of the TREP program.

## Appendix B. Pathways Flyer



**VIDEO OF EDUCATOR  
STORIES**

# PATHWAYS TO BECOMING AN EDUCATOR

## TRADITIONAL PREPARATION PROGRAM



- Attend an accredited undergraduate institution to learn skills and knowledge needed for teaching.
- Earn a bachelor's degree.
- Offers the most direct route to becoming an educator.

## PARAPROFESSIONAL



- Earn a salary while providing instructional support and one-on-one services to students working alongside a classroom teacher.
- Have high school diploma or equivalent and demonstrate subject knowledge by having an associate's degree, completing 48 hours of study at a higher education institution, or passing a formal assessment (e.g., ACT Work Keys).

## TREP/ASCENT



- Concurrently enroll in postsecondary courses while in high school.
- Earn college credit for at no cost to you (2 years for TREP or 1 year for ASCENT).

## SUBSTITUTE TEACHING



- Have a high school diploma or equivalent, background check, and experience working with students.
- Earn \$100-\$200 a day helping students succeed and make a difference in your community.

The contents of this document were developed by the Region 12 Comprehensive Center under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal government.



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