

# Early Awareness Strategy Research

A Compendium of Resources to  
“What Does the Research Say about Early Awareness Strategies for  
College Access and Success?”

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*Building Connections. Advancing Equity. Promoting Success.*

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[www.collegeaccess.org/EarlyAwarenessPolicy](http://www.collegeaccess.org/EarlyAwarenessPolicy)

Access College Foundation. (2006) College Changes Everything. Retrieved October 2015 from: <http://www.accesscollege.org/>

- This website provides an overview of the Access College Foundation. With its various links and pages, it provides a variety of resources that students can use to begin planning for college.
- Access College Foundation's site highlights their goals, alumni, and successes, as well as providing next steps for students in the Norfolk, Virginia region who want to plan for college.

Atlas. (2015). Mapping College Readiness. Retrieved September 2015 from New America: <http://atlas.newamerica.org/mapping-college-readiness>"

- Using an interactive tool, Atlas helps to describe how each state has defined college readiness and college access.
- Made by New America, this tool demonstrates the steps that different states have taken to make their students college ready, and what still needs to be done.

Bangs, R. (2011, April). Place Based College Scholarships: An Analysis Of Merit Aid and University Programs. Retrieved September 2015, from University of Pittsburgh: <http://www.crsp.pitt.edu/Downloads/PghPromise%20Report2011.pdf>

- Bangs et al researched the Pittsburgh Promise to find the effects of place-based merit aid programs on students.
- Universal programs increase college enrollment, public high school enrollment, and population growth, and merit aid has little or no effect on those variables.
- Bangs et al recommend that if cities have the means, they should enact universal programs, and if they already have merit-based scholarships, cities should adopt policies that provide aid to a broader range of students.

Barret, B. (2015, July). New Research on How States can Control Tuition Growth. Retrieved October 2015 from New America. <http://www.edcentral.org/states-control-tuition-growth/>

- This article describes the rise of tuition and costs in state colleges and universities
- Essentially, because of state disinvestment and decentralized tuition-setting authority, universities have the right to set their own costs with little backlash and thus raise costs, and this also reduces aid to low-income students.

Bartik, T. J.; Hershbein, Brad J.; and Lachowska, Marta. (2015, July 23). The effects of the Kalamazoo Promise Scholarship on college enrollment, persistence, and completion. Retrieved September 2015, from Brookings Institute: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2015/07/kalamazoo-college-upjohn-hershbein>

- The Brookings Institute featured this report from the WE Upjohn Institute studying the effects on college enrollment and completion within students who had benefited from the Kalamazoo Promise.

- The Upjohn Institute has a close relationship with Kalamazoo, so its objectivity is potentially threatened, but Bartik did find significant positive effects on postsecondary outcomes. However, The Upjohn Institute studies the Kalamazoo Promise but receives no financial support from the Kalamazoo Promise organization, nor does the Kalamazoo Promise have any oversight or approval role in Upjohn Institute research. (Updated 2017).
- Bartik, et al, writes that there were consistently positive outcomes through a variety of cohorts in their enrollment and persistence.

Baum, S. (2015, July 16). Delivering Early Information About College Financial Aid. Retrieved September 2015, from Urban Institute: [http://www.urban.org/research/publication/delivering-early-information-about-college-financial-aid/view/full\\_report](http://www.urban.org/research/publication/delivering-early-information-about-college-financial-aid/view/full_report)

- Seminal piece discussing the role that social programs can play in delivering information to low-income families about college and financial aid.
- Discusses the landscape of financial aid administrative elements and the various ways people can engage more with the process

Bergman, P. (2015, June.) Parent-Child Information Frictions and Human Capital Investment: Evidence from a Field Experiment. Retrieved September 2015 from Columbia University <http://www.columbia.edu/~psb2101/BergmanSubmission.pdf>

- In this paper, Bergman writes about parents and how relationships with their children affect how the family invests in children and education.
- When viewing parent relationships in the context of interventions and awareness strategies, the relationship between parent and child is crucial for identifying areas of success and weakness in particular interventions.

Berman, J. (2015, September 26). Many Americans underestimate the value of a college degree. Retrieved November 2015, from Market Watch: <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/many-americans-underestimate-the-value-of-a-college-degree-2015-09-22>

- In this article, the authors remind us that when discussing the importance of college, the actual benefits and positive effects are not clearly advertised.
- This article is important for contextualizing early awareness programs and ensuring that they provide information both on the cost of college but also on the benefits and value once the degree is completed.

Bettinger, E. P. (2012, January). The Role of Application Assistance and Information in College Decisions: Results from the H&R Block FAFSA Experiment. Retrieved October 2015, from NBER: [http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic1232998.files/Bettinger\\_et\\_al\\_2012\\_Role\\_of\\_Application\\_Assistance\\_and\\_Info.pdf](http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic1232998.files/Bettinger_et_al_2012_Role_of_Application_Assistance_and_Info.pdf)

- In this experiment conducted by Eric Bettinger, families were randomly selected to receive assistance on their FAFSA applications through their H&R Block tax advisers.

- Bettinger found that delivering this financial aid assistance through the tax system led to generally positive results. FAFSA filers were more likely to find the process informative, simple, and manageable when they had an expert walking them through the steps.
- Overall, the experiment identified a way to minimize barriers for students and families unfamiliar with the college and financial aid application process.

Beverly, S. (2010, January). The Role of Savings and Wealth in Reducing Wilt Between Expectations and College Attendance. Center for Social Development. Retrieved from <http://csd.wustl.edu/publications/documents/rb10-04.pdf>

- In this research brief, Beverly and Elliot discuss the role of college savings accounts in reducing “wilt,” or the drop between enrollment and actual attendance between graduating high school and college.
- Though there are multiple predictors about who will experience wilt, Beverly notes that the lack of a savings account is one of the stronger predictors.
- Also discussed is the need for further research about this relationship.

Bozick, R. (2015, July 27). Using a Merit-Based Scholarship Program to Increase Rates of College Enrollment in an Urban School District. Retrieved September 2015, from Journal of Student Financial Aid: <http://publications.nasfaa.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1552&context=jsfa>

- Focusing on the effects of scholarship programs in Urban districts, this study conducted by Bozick et al utilize a difference-in-difference model to examine actual rates of college enrollment among students who had received the benefits of the Pittsburgh Promise.
- Though the promise generally has led to positive changes within the community, Bozick was unable to find significant results in college enrollment rates. The Promise had little effect on the number of students enrolling in college; however Bozick did find that the types of colleges that students enrolled in did change.
- Four-year universities were more common among Promise-eligible students once it was implemented, and Bozick does attribute that to the scholarship. Bozick concludes the paper with recommendations for future research as well as translating the findings into practice.

Brandman, S. (2009). Getting Set: Planning Guides for Middle School Students. Retrieved August 2015, from Montgomery County Public Schools: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/planningguides/>

- In this comprehensive handbook, resources such as checklists, activities, planning questions, and more are available for students in middle school to begin preparing for college. Prepared by the Montgomery County Public School district, this handbook is free and available for continuous work towards the goal of college.

Burd, S. (2015, July 1). One Struggling City's Bold Effort to Increase its Number of College Graduates. Retrieved August 2015, from New America: <http://www.edcentral.org/newark/>

- This article provides a brief overview of a city-wide and city-managed initiative to change community values by rallying around college completion.
- It discusses scholarships, partnerships, and curriculum development to shift the culture.

Cafazzo, D. (2015, October 27). Pierce County school districts boost College Bound scholarships sign-ups. Retrieved November 15, 2015, from The News Tribune:

<http://www.thenewstribune.com/news/local/education/article41569665.html>

- In this news article, the author describes the increase in sign-ups among eligible students for the College Bound Scholarship, which is an early commitment scholarship sponsored by the Washington Student Achievement Council and state legislature.
- The author provides a brief overview of the program, and notes that the most recent cohort includes more than 33,000 students.

College and Career Clubs. (2015) About the Program. Retrieved December 2015 from

<http://careerandcollegeclubs.org/benefits/>

- This website describes program and resources available from College and Career Clubs, which is a student-driven club model that helps middle school students learn about college and how to attain their college goals.

College Board Media. (2015). Access to Opportunity. Retrieved September 2015 from

<http://professionals.collegeboard.com/guidance/access-to-opportunity>

- Blog listing various types of media outreach that can be done to increase opportunity and access to tests and schools
- Discusses texting campaigns and other media campaigns

Cunningham, A. (2003, February). Investing Early: Intervention Programs in Selected US States.

Retrieved October 2015, from Institute for Higher Education Policy:

<http://equity.psu.edu/eopc/docs/bestprograms.pdf>

- In this report from the Institute for Higher Education Policy, the authors studied a variety of state-sponsored early intervention programs across the US to gain a clearer picture of what these types of programs involved.
- Through examining 17 programs across 12 states, the authors collect a series of preferred approaches to early interventions and discuss the importance of evaluation and data collection.

Deming, D. (2009, September). Into College, Out of Poverty? Policies to Increase the Postsecondary Attainment of the Poor. Retrieved August 2015, from National Bureau of Economic Research:

[http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/ddeming/files/deming\\_dynarski\\_robinhood.pdf?m=1371061084](http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/ddeming/files/deming_dynarski_robinhood.pdf?m=1371061084)

- Through a discussion of experimental and quasi-experimental studies, Deming and Dynarski examine the effects of federal, state, and independently-run scholarship and financial aid programs.

- The authors find that what really matters is program design and implementation.
- Because this paper analyses multiple programs and experiments, the findings come from a broad range of evidence that suggest the most effective and useful programs are simple and broadly-based.

Deruy, E. (2015, July 27). The Debate Over Free Community College. Retrieved September 2015, from The Atlantic: <http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/07/free-community-college-mixed-reviews/399701/>

- Using Tennessee and Oregon as examples, Deruy provides a solid overview of the community college movement.
- Deruy describes the challenges with implementing a free social service, and how it impacts enrollment in four-year universities; however she also discusses the projected improvements in high school graduation rates and enrollment in postsecondary institutions overall.

Duckworth, C. P. (2007). Grit: Perseverance and Passion for Long-Term Goals. Retrieved 2015, from Journal of Personality and Social Psychology: <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~duckwort/images/Grit%20JPSP.pdf>

- In this piece, Angela Duckworth studies “grit” which she defines as “perseverance and passion for long-term goals and plans.”
- Duckworth found that success came from a combination of talent and effort, and grit relies on the effort; students with higher grit fared better than peers without grit.
- Because much of college is sticking to long-term planning and goals, this study demonstrates how cultivating relationships and cultures that value high levels of effort can have a positive effect on students and their overall outcomes for the future.

Dynarski, S. (2015, January 17). Helping the Poor in Education: The Power of a Simple Nudge. Retrieved September 2015, from the New York Times: [www.nytimes.com/2015/01/18/upshot/helping-the-poor-in-higher-education-the-power-of-a-simple-nudge.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/18/upshot/helping-the-poor-in-higher-education-the-power-of-a-simple-nudge.html?_r=0)

- This New York Times article discusses techniques to help low-income students move on the track to college even in small but meaningful ways.
- By bringing in anecdotes and complete studies, the author reinforces the idea that simple encouragements and nudges can bring many children towards the right goal.

ECampus News. (2015, August 31). Senator Alexander promotes college accessibility in Tennessee. Retrieved October 2015 from <http://www.ecampusnews.com/funding/college-tennessee-promise-953/>

- In this breaking news piece, the author discusses the Tennessee promise program offering free community college to students in the state.
- This article also touches on forms and financial aid, and how those forms should be streamlined for easier student access.

Education Commission on the States (2015). 50-State Policy Database. Retrieved August 2015 from <http://statefinancialaidredesign.org/state-financial-aid-database/>

- In this interactive tool, the financial aid programs and educational assistance programs in each state are provided;
- It also provides recommendations on options for redesign and reformation.

Elliot, W. (2008). At-risk Children's College Expectations and Aspirations. Retrieved August 2015 from Center for Social Development <http://csd.wustl.edu/Publications/Documents/WP08-17.pdf>

- This working paper describing how savings accounts substantially increase the drive for students to attend college in low-income families if they have savings accounts
- Discusses impact of rising college costs on enrollment, and how savings accounts can combat some of the stress of high costs.

Engle, J. (2007, January). Postsecondary Access and Success for First-Generation College Students. Retrieved August 2015, from American Academic:

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.296.7903&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

- In this study by Jenifer Engle, characteristics of first-generation college students are examined, along with the challenges that come along with being a first-generation student.
- In her discussion about early interventions like GEAR UP, Engle identifies the need to simplify processes of receiving academic services as well as the challenges associated with living on a limited family salary, and how that relates to planning for and enrolling in college.

Flores, A. (1993). Early Awareness Strategies and Their Measurement: Use of Hierarchical Loglinear Analysis to Assess the Effects of Michigan's Project Awareness on Middle School Students. Retrieved August 2015, from Michigan Higher Education Assistance Authority:

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED370518.pdf>

- In this study from 1993, the researchers assessed the Project Awareness, which was ultimately a precursor to many of the early awareness programs of today. This study still has relevant information pertaining to best methods of providing financial aid to low-income Michigan

Fogg, N. (2015, September). *Evidence-Based Research: The Impact of the College Crusade GEAR UP Program in RI*. Retrieved October 2016, from The New England Journal of Higher Education:

<http://www.nebhe.org/thejournal/evidence-based-research-the-impact-of-the-college-crusade-gear-up-program-in-rhode-island/>

- In this evaluation regarding the Rhode Island GEAR UP, a third-party group discusses the method they used to design their evaluation and follows with a discussion of outcomes from participation.
- Mainly using propensity scoring for comparison group design, this evaluation found that GEAR UP led to large advantages in school performance and attendance.

- The most powerful impact was on college going rates, increasing steadily over time.

Foster, B. (2015, April 09). What's it like to be poor at an Ivy League school? Retrieved December 2015, from Boston Globe: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/magazine/2015/04/09/what-like-poor-ivy-league-school/xPtqI5uzDb6r9AUFER8R00/story.html>

- In this Boston Globe article, the realities of life as a first-generation student on college campuses are told through the eyes of one student in particular.
- Adding dimension to the discussion about what happens once students are actually admitted to colleges with scholarships, this article examines the challenges associated with college life that are often left out of research about college enrollment initiatives.

Goldrick-Rab, S. (2014). Clearing the Path to a Brighter Future: Addressing Barriers to Community College Access and Success. Retrieved 2015, from Association of Community College Trustees: <http://kresge.org/sites/default/files/White-paper-barriers-to-community-college%20access-success.pdf>

- Using evidence from the program A Single Stop, the authors make the case for community college accessibility in this white paper.
- The authors recommend revamping the financial aid system, education and social policy, and improving student services in order to make community college affordable and improve access to continuing education post-associate's.

Gonzalez, G. (2011). Fulfilling the Pittsburgh Promise: Early Progress of Pittsburgh's Postsecondary Scholarship Program. Retrieved October 2015, from RAND Corporation: [http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2011/RAND\\_MG1139.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2011/RAND_MG1139.pdf)

- In this report about the early results of the Pittsburgh Promise, the RAND Corporation utilized socioeconomic and enrollment data as well as focus group information to see the effects of the scholarship on the first cohorts.
- Overall results demonstrated confusion among eligible students about program specifics, and benefits largely reaching students who were academically prepared but financially unprepared; benefits did not reach so largely to other groups.
- The report concludes with recommendations to improve the outcomes of the program.

Grodsky, E. (2006, July 7). Real and Imagined Barriers to College Entry: Perceptions of Cost. Retrieved September 2015, from Elsevier: <http://www.allhallows.org/ourpages/auto/2012/9/7/43578201/Real%20and%20Imagined%20barriers.pdf>

- When discussing barriers to postsecondary attainment, the authors of this report discuss both real and "imagined" barriers, which students perceive to be big challenges. This paper focuses on the barrier of high costs, and how that is perceived among students.
- Accurate tuition estimates are found to be unlikely among "disadvantaged" families, which leads to a large barrier in planning for college.

Harnsich, T. (2009, May). State Early Commitment Programs: A Contract for Success? Retrieved December 2015, from American Association of State Colleges and Universities: <http://www.aascu.org/policy/publications/policymatters/2009/earlycommitment.pdf>

- This policy brief discusses the effects of state-based early commitment programs and observe similarities and differences among different programs
- The authors also include a list of recommendations for programs to find continued success in the future.

Heller, D. (2015, June 06). Pell Grants lifting kids out of poverty and into the middle class. Retrieved August 2015 from Detroit Free Press: <http://www.freep.com/story/opinion/contributors/2015/06/06/cost-college-education/28575407/>

- This article covers the gap in college education between socioeconomic classes,
- And it describes why Pell grants are so important to helping low-income students find success in college and beyond, and explains the need for additional funding sources to cover the costs.

Hiltonsmith, R. (2015, May 5). Pulling Up the Higher Ed Ladder: Myth and Reality of Crisis College Affordability. Retrieved September 2015 from Demos.org: <http://www.demos.org/publication/pulling-higher-ed-ladder-myth-and-reality-crisis-college-affordability>

- Report discussing how lack of state funding to schools is really the main driver of high college costs;
- Because students are now much more responsible for funding their own education through a variety of means, it increases complexity in the affordability crisis.

Hoxby, C. (2012). What High-Achieving Low-Income Students Know About College Options. Retrieved October 2015, from NBER: [http://economics.virginia.edu/sites/economics.virginia.edu/files/ppHoxby\\_Turner.pdf](http://economics.virginia.edu/sites/economics.virginia.edu/files/ppHoxby_Turner.pdf)

- In this paper, the information and knowledge about college among low-income students who are academically prepared is assessed.
- The authors find that opinions and assumptions about college are real barriers or opportunities for making college decisions, and many of these students lack comprehensive information to leave them “better off.”

“I Have a Dream” Foundation. (2015) Retrieved August 2015 from <http://www.ihaveadreamfoundation.org/>

- The “I Have a Dream” Foundation manages a cohort-based tuition assistance program, wherein students in one class or community are provided comprehensive services and tuition assistance once they reach college.
- This website describes the program and includes links to research and reports about their success and work.

IHCE. (2015, December 2). Indiana Commission for Higher Education. Retrieved December 5, 2015, from Indiana 21st Century Scholars: [in.gov/che/files/25th\\_Anniversary\\_Brochure\\_11-18-15\\_Final\\_pages.pdf](http://in.gov/che/files/25th_Anniversary_Brochure_11-18-15_Final_pages.pdf)

- Indiana's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars celebrated 25 years by releasing an anniversary report highlighting their successes in their promise-style program.
- The report includes an overview of the program, data and figures about the success and continued improvements, and alumni highlights of very successful people in the community who benefited from the program.

I Know I Can.org. (2015). Blueprint College: Middle School. Retrieved September 2015 from <http://iknowican.org/>

- In Columbus, Ohio, the "I Know I Can" Program; this is the only access program of its kind in the city.
- Their website includes resources, an overview of the program, and useful information for middle school students to begin thinking about college.

Indiana Commission for Higher Education. (2010). 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars: The Pledge. Retrieved September 2015 from: <http://www.in.gov/21stcenturyscholars/2440.htm>

- This overview of the Indiana 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars program introduces the basic points of Indiana's leading early-awareness strategy.
- It describes the history of the program and the process of becoming a Scholar.

Iriti, J. (2012, September 27). Realizing the Promise: Scholar Retention and Persistence in Post-Secondary Education. Retrieved September 2015, from University of Pittsburgh: [http://pittsburghpromise.org/assets/documents/RealizingPromise\\_FinalReport.pdf](http://pittsburghpromise.org/assets/documents/RealizingPromise_FinalReport.pdf)

- This study focuses on persistence and retention among scholars who benefited from the Pittsburgh Promise through 2011.
- The authors describe the national trends in persistence and retention, mirrored in Pittsburgh, and the efforts the Promise takes to fix those trends.
- Many students are found to succeed in persistence and retention, and the authors conclude with recommendations for interventions and student services to further improve the rates.

Jack, A. (2015, September 12). What the Privileged Poor Can Teach Us. Retrieved November 2015, from the New York Times: [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/13/opinion/sunday/what-the-privileged-poor-can-teach-us.html?smid=fb-share&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/13/opinion/sunday/what-the-privileged-poor-can-teach-us.html?smid=fb-share&_r=0)

- In understanding how many early awareness programs are developed, figuring out the skills needed for success is key. This New York Times article discusses behavioral learning from prep schools, and how it is often more important for low-income students to learn those prior to college.

- This article describes importance of working with professors and developing an “ease of people in authority,” which contextualize the skill development necessary in programs that help low-income students achieve college success.

Jorth, B. (2015). The Kalamazoo Promise. Retrieved August 2015 from:

<https://www.kalamazoopromise.com/>

- The Kalamazoo Promise is one of the Michigan promise zones that provide tuition and fees to every student who graduates from Kalamazoo Public Schools.
- This website answers FAQs and includes resources and paperwork for students interested in being a part of the Promise.
- The FAQ section includes price and funding answers as well as agreements about various partner institutions.

JP, US News. (2013, April 24). Why a \$1 Savings Account Makes a Child More Likely to Attend College.

Retrieved October 2015, from US News: [money.usnews.com/money/blogs/my-money/2013/04/24/why-a-1-savings-account-makes-a-child-more-likely-to-attend-college](http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/my-money/2013/04/24/why-a-1-savings-account-makes-a-child-more-likely-to-attend-college)

- In this article, the author makes the case for college savings accounts. His point is even more crucial than the multitude of advice that abounds; it’s not about the amount in the account, but more that it exists.

Kirney, E. (2015, November 5). Bill to expand Michigan promise zones. Retrieved November 10, 2015,

from The Michigan Daily: <https://www.michigandaily.com/section/news/promise-zones>

- This news report discusses the proposal to expand promise zones in Michigan. There are currently 10 across the state.
- This article explains what promise zones do, and demonstrates why state leaders are interested in expanding them to more cities and communities.

Knapp, A. (n.d.). Oklahoma's Promise. Retrieved January 2016, from

<http://okc.about.com/od/higherlearning/a/Oklahomas-Promise-Scholarship-Program.htm>

- On this website, the basic information about the Oklahoma Promise Scholarship is provided so that potential students can learn more about their options.
- The author provides a brief introduction to what the scholarship covers and what it requires.

Kolodner, M. (2015, June 22). As states cut student aid, dollars still flow to upper-income students

Retrieved September 2015, from PBS Newshour: <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/states-cut-student-aid-dollars-still-flow-upper-income-families/>

- In this education report from PBS, the continuous reduction to financial aid through state education agencies is highlighted.
- By noting that merit aid is different from other kinds of aid, it disproportionately helps upper-income students, so low-income students are consistently missing opportunities for funding.

Long Beach College Promise. (2015). Retrieved October 2015:

<http://www.longbeachcollegepromise.org/students/>

- In California, this promise program helps students attend college and pay for it.
- The website provides a history and background of the program, as well as resources and links to outside information that may prove useful throughout the application process.

Long, K. (2012, February 5). College Bound Scholarship Program could face test as more apply. Retrieved November 5, 2015, from The Seattle Times: <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/college-bound-scholarship-program-could-face-test-as-more-apply/>

- This news article reports the growing number of signups for the College Bound Scholarship in Washington State and discusses potential changes in the future.
- Because more students enroll and apply for the scholarship, the requirements may become more difficult to account for the increase in recipients.

Lorenzo, S. (2016). Beyond College Readiness: Awareness is a First Step. Retrieved February 2016:

[http://www.nasbe.org/wp-content/uploads/Lorenzo\\_College-Awareness-final.pdf](http://www.nasbe.org/wp-content/uploads/Lorenzo_College-Awareness-final.pdf)

- In this policy update from the National State Boards of Education, several important notes about awareness programs are highlighted for states to consider.
- This brief summarizes the awareness efforts of Idaho and Washington states, and recommends that state boards across the nation take steps to make college awareness a standard they all work towards.

Mann, C. (2012). *Making the Dream a Reality*. Retrieved December 2015, from GEAR UP Washington:

[http://www.gearup.wa.gov/sites/default/files/resources/Making\\_the\\_Dream\\_a\\_Reality\\_2012.pdf](http://www.gearup.wa.gov/sites/default/files/resources/Making_the_Dream_a_Reality_2012.pdf)

- In this evaluation for the Washington State GEAR UP, outcomes were analyzed for students who had earned scholarship credit through GEAR UP from 2001 to 2005.
- Compared to peer students without GEAR UP assistance, students in the program were found to have more positive outcomes in terms of enrollment, persistence, completion, and GPA.
- Data are broken down by race, ethnicity, gender, and college decisions in the full report.

McNutt, K. (2015, April). Oklahoma's Promise scholarship program important to state's future, supporters say. Retrieved January 2016, from NewsOK: <http://newsok.com/article/5411387>

- In this news article, the author reports from the state legislature about the future of the Oklahoma Promise.
- As budget discussions continued, this author surveyed supporters for the Oklahoma Promise who believe that the scholarship is good for the future of the state's economy and citizens.

Michigan Votes. (2016). 2015 Senate Bill 539: Expand Promise Zone tax increment financing authorities.

Retrieve February 2016: <http://michiganvotes.org/2015-SB-539>

- This legislative brief introduces the senate bill to expand financing and the justification for expansion.
- It also demonstrates that the bill passed, and counts the votes needed to do so.

Miller-Adams, M. (2010). Can Universal, Place-Based Scholarships Reduce Inequality? Lessons from Kalamazoo, Michigan. Retrieved September 2015, from Upjohn Institute:

<http://research.upjohn.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1016&context=confpapers>

- This early report about the effects of the Kalamazoo Promise discusses the question many ask about reducing inequality.
- The authors find that more targeted approaches would specifically improve the lives of disadvantaged students, but broad programs like this change the culture of an entire community and help large numbers of people.

Miller-Adams, M. (2015). Promise Nation: Transforming Communities Through Place-Based Scholarships. Upjohn Institute.

- In this book prepared by authors from the Upjohn Institute, four place-based scholarships are studied in-depth to evaluate their transformational effects.
- The author describes the breadth of these scholarships and how they transform the entire conversation around college-going from very early ages.

National College Access Network. (2016). Common Measures. Retrieved February 2016, from the blog:

[http://www.collegeaccess.org/Common\\_Measures](http://www.collegeaccess.org/Common_Measures)

- This part of the website introduces the variety of measures used to help evaluate and track success in programs across the nation doing college access work.

NASSP. (2007). Voice From the Middle. Retrieved September 2015, from National Association of Secondary School Principals: <https://www.principals.org/portals/0/content/55625.pdf>

- Asking middle school principals to weigh in on the conversation around college-going, this report provides insight into the challenges with adding college to the middle school curriculum.
- The authors also provide information about

NCCEP. (2015). Retrieved October 2015, from the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships: <http://www.edpartnerships.org/gear-up>

- Though GEAR UP is federally-mandated, it is state-run, which makes finding information about different programs often come from a variety of sources. This site provides a simple overview of GEAR UP nation-wide, and provides excellent context for looking at different early awareness programs.

Nelson, C. (2015, September 14). Salary isn't the only measure. Retrieved September 2015 from Inside Higher Ed: <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2015/09/14/essay-criticizes-obama-administrations->

[new-scorecard-colleges?utm\\_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm\\_campaign=ec84d1f219-DNU20150914&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_1fcbc04421-ec84d1f219-198668701](http://www.insidehighered.com/news-scorecard-colleges?utm_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm_campaign=ec84d1f219-DNU20150914&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1fcbc04421-ec84d1f219-198668701)

- With the introduction of the new college scorecard, Inside Higher Ed summarized the various support and opposition to the redesign.
- This article also discusses idea that finances aren't the only thing that makes up a college experience and the scorecard lacks any insight into what life is really like at that school.

Nelson, L. (2015, May 15). How much has your state cut education funding since 2008? Retrieved August 2015, from VOX: <http://www.vox.com/2015/5/15/8612247/higher-education-state-funding>

- Since the recession in 2008, many states have cut large parts of their budgets. This interactive map from Vox shows each state and how their budgets have particularly reduced education funding, which specifically affects higher education systems.
- Vox also explains here that enrollment falters during recessions, but when the state budgets are cut along with it, it leads to unfortunate gaps.

Nemelka, B. (2014). *Beat the Middle: The Middle School Student's Guide to Academic Success*. Retrieved November 2015.

- In this workbook, the Nemelka brothers provide useful college tips and planning for middle school students and their parents. Important lessons and activities are included to help students develop their purpose and make the right choices to prepare for college.

OK Promise. (2015). Frequently Asked Questions, Oklahoma Promise. Retrieved January 2016, from the Oklahoma Promise: <http://www.okhighered.org/okpromise/seniors-faq.shtml>

- On the Oklahoma Promise website, many of the questions that graduating seniors have are answered in one place.
- This list includes scholarship award information, program requirements, and income eligibility.

Parent Center Hub. (2014, March). Parent Participation in Early Intervention. Retrieved October 2015: <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/parent-participation-ei/>

- This website, while providing a variety of resources and advice to parents about how to make the most of their child's education, also includes an argument for parents to be heavily involved in early interventions.
- Connecting this to many early commitment programs, parent or guardian agreement are required so agencies know that families are working towards the goal of college together.

Pingle, S. (2015, April). Redefining State Financial Aid. Retrieved August 2015 from the Education Commission on the States: <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/18/28/11828.pdf>

- This report includes recommendations to change the policies surrounding financial aid, specifically focusing on student-centered and comprehensive aid

- Because so much of early awareness is focused on low-income communities, the policy changes in this report suggest improvements to working with low-income communities and helping them to make college more affordable

Reeves, R. (2015, July 09). Free College Doesn't Fix Everything. Retrieved October 2015, from Las Vegas Sun: <http://lasvegassun.com/news/2015/jul/19/free-college-doesnt-fix-everything/>

- In this article, the Las Vegas Sun explains that many of the college affordability and college completion issues are a result of more than the rising costs of college.
- By synthesizing the problems associated with college completion among low-income and minority students, this article implicitly reinforces the need for more comprehensive services to increase college attainment, and not just funding.

Resmovtis, J. (2015, September 28). Text Your Way to cheaper college bills. Retrieved November 2015, from Los Angeles Times: <http://www.latimes.com/local/education/la-me-edu-helping-students-pay-for-college-one-text-message-at-a-time-20150927-story.html>

- This article provides insight into a recent program that provides college counseling and financial aid advice through texting.
- This program allows students to ask questions and find scholarships through an avenue many teens are comfortable with, which increases accessibility.

Rogers, JW. (2015, June). President's Advisory Council on Financial Capability for Young Americans. Retrieved September 2015, from Treasury.gov. <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/financial-education/Documents/PACFCYA%20Final%20Report%20June%202015.pdf>

- In this 2015 summer report, the Treasury discusses the need for youth, specifically in underserved populations, to have better financial education and strategies to succeed through the future.
- Mostly providing background to the need for broad scholarship programs, this report reiterates the importance of opportunities for young people and how states, local agencies, and individuals can play a role in creating supportive strategies.

Samuels, A. (2015, August.) The Atlantic. The Town That Decided to Send All Its Kids to College. Retrieved August 2015 from: <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/08/baldwin-michigan-promise/401399/>

- In this overview of the Baldwin Promise, Samuels describes the main points and environmental change that has occurred because of the Promise Zone designation in Baldwin, Michigan.
- Samuels explains the increase in college attendance rates and graduation, and discusses the cultural and attitude shift to making college enrollment a city-wide priority.
- Also discussed is the funding structure and basic program management information to provide a glance into what it's like to manage this kind of program.

South Carolina Can Go to College. (2015). Retrieved October 2015: <http://sccango.org/student-checklist/>

- This website provides a variety of free resources for students, teachers, and families to utilize when planning for college.
- Most importantly, there is a checklist any student can use to have tasks and long-term goals to think about when making schooling decisions.

Spencer Foundation. (2008). Fulfilling the Commitment: Recommendations for Reforming Federal Student Aid. Retrieved September 2015 from College Board Media: <http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/advocacy/homeorg/rethinking-student-aid-fulfilling-commitment-recommendations.pdf>

- In this piece recommending changes to Federal Aid, College Board notes that as enrollment numbers increase and bachelor's degrees become more commonplace, the methods of funding must change along with the culture.

Standing, K. (2008). *Early Outcomes of the GEAR UP Program*. Retrieved December 2015, from US Department of Education: <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/highered/gearup/early-outcomes.pdf>

- In this report prepared by Westat, the early effects of GEAR UP were evaluated nationwide across the initial partners and programs using a quasi-experimental design.
- This evaluation found a variety of positive results, including increased parent knowledge of involvement with their child's education as well as student knowledge of postsecondary opportunities.
- Broken down by demographic group and middle school cohorts, the early effects of the program are noted, along with elements not found to be associated with GEAR UP participation.

Stanton, T. (2009, January). Granholm Announces 10 Promise Zone Designations in Communities Across Michigan. Retrieved November 2015, from Michigan Department of Treasury: [http://www.michigan.gov/treasury/0,1607,7-121-1755\\_1963-213589--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/treasury/0,1607,7-121-1755_1963-213589--,00.html)

- This press release describes the very introduction of Michigan Promise Zones, which helped establish programs such as the Kalamazoo and Baldwin Promise.
- In this press release, the justification for the zones is explained, and the hope for future success is laid out on behalf of the governor and state legislature.

Stratford, M. (2015, September 14). FAFSA Reform. Retrieved October 2015, from Inside Higher Ed: [https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/09/14/obama-administration-unveils-shifts-fafsa?utm\\_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm\\_campaign=ec84d1f219-DNU20150914&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_1fcbc04421-ec84d1f219-198668701](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/09/14/obama-administration-unveils-shifts-fafsa?utm_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm_campaign=ec84d1f219-DNU20150914&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1fcbc04421-ec84d1f219-198668701)

- In this brief from Inside Higher Ed, the author notes changes to FAFSA through the Prior-Prior Year system.

- This piece adds context to the discussion of barriers and information pertaining to families about the financial aid process.

Strayhorn, T. L.-K. (2014). *Results from 2013-2014 cohorts of the IKIC Blueprint: College Middle School Study: Final Report*. Columbus, OH.: Center for iDEAS.

- In this mixed methods study, the I Know I Can college program was evaluated for their middle school cohort.
- This report analyzed parental involvement, parent and student college and career knowledge, financial planning, perceptions of school responsibility, perceptions of curriculum, and postsecondary expectations among participants and their families.
- Findings for postsecondary expectations and college knowledge suggest that participation in IKIC is associated with higher expectations and goals as the program progresses.

Tillary, C. (2015, July 20). The college and career readiness evaluation consortium: baseline data results. Retrieved February 2016:

[http://www.edpartnerships.org/sites/default/files/events/2015/08/CCREC\\_BaselinePresentation072015-final.pdf](http://www.edpartnerships.org/sites/default/files/events/2015/08/CCREC_BaselinePresentation072015-final.pdf)

- In this PowerPoint presentation developed by GEAR UP,

Toutkoushian, R. K. (2013, March). Effect of Twenty-first Century Scholars Program on College Aspirations and Completion. Retrieved November 2015, from

<http://www.aefpweb.org/sites/default/files/webform/Effect%20of%20TFCS%20on%20Student%20Aspirations%20and%20Outcomes%20030113.pdf>

- In this external evaluation about the effects of Indiana's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars, the authors discuss the benefits to students on rates of completion and college-going.
- Even with clearly defined limitations, this report discusses the important policy decision in providing financial assistance to low-income students and how it is helping Indiana students succeed.

U.S. Department of Education, Federal Student Aid, Customer Experience Office, My Future, My Way: First Steps Toward College—A Workbook for Middle and Junior High School Students, Washington, D.C., 2014. Retrieved October 2015 from <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/my-future-my-way.pdf>

- A free resource for students to use, this is a workbook for middle school students to begin planning for college.
- It's available from the Federal Student Aid website for download and digital use.

Virginia Individual Development Accounts. (2014). Retrieved September 2015, from Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development: <http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/index.php/business-va-assistance/startingexpanding-a-business/virginia-individual-development-accounts-vida-business.html>

- This site, managed by the Virginia DHCD, explains individual development accounts – savings accounts that people can use for specific developmental purposes – and how to create one.
- VIDAS focus on low-income families, and many are using them for college funds.

Wallace, A. (2015, May 18). Denver Scholarship Fund has \$6 million- \$8 million economic impact, new study says. Retrieved October 2015, from Denver Post Business:

[http://www.denverpost.com/business/ci\\_28139175/denver-scholarship-fund-has-6m-8m-economic-impact](http://www.denverpost.com/business/ci_28139175/denver-scholarship-fund-has-6m-8m-economic-impact)

- In this news article, a summary of a recent report is provided about the Denver Scholarship Fund, as well as a discussion about the economic benefits to the program.
- While most research focuses on the benefits to students who receive scholarships, this article highlights to business angle in the increase of qualified workers into the labor market.

Washington Student Achievement Council. (2015). College Bound Scholarship. Retrieved September 2015: <http://www.wsac.wa.gov/college-bound>

- The website for the council provides a variety of resources to students in Washington State. One link leads to the College Bound Scholarship, and the page describes the program, which provides financial aid to low-income students.
- College Bound requires an early commitment promise, so the site offers the history and background of the scholarship as well as the information needed to make the decision to commit early.

Wimberly, G. (2005). College Readiness Begins in Middle School. Retrieved August 2015, from ACT. Org: <https://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/CollegeReadiness.pdf>

- In this policy report from the ACT board, research about the importance of middle school curriculum and middle school planning is presented through the lens of the parent/school relationship.
- In order to deliver the correct information and truly prepare students for college, middle school teachers and parents need to work together to get it right.

Wong, G. (2015). Ontario-Montclair Promise Scholars Program adds University of La Verne. Retrieved 2016, from Daily Bulletin Education: <http://www.dailybulletin.com/social-affairs/20150514/ontario-montclair-promise-scholars-program-adds-university-of-la-verne>

- This news brief includes updates to the Ontario-Montclair Scholars program, which means adding a new university to the community.
- This piece includes an overview of the scholarship program, which begins as early as fifth grade, and describes the important community partners working together to help students in the Chafee Joint Union school district complete college.

Woodhouse, K. (2015, May 18). Buying Outsiders. Retrieved October 2015 from Inside Higher Ed. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/05/18/report-criticizes-public-colleges-use-funds-recruit-out-state-students>

- This article describes the current model of state schools heavily recruiting out of state students and offering just enough merit aid to sway them to pay the higher costs of out-of-state tuition.
- Unfortunately, this results in a loss of economic and racial diversity because of the loss of need-based aid.
- Looking at state-based aid policies adds important context to researching early awareness.

Zarate, M. E. (2006). *Perceptions of College Financial Aid Among California Latino Youth*. Retrieved September 2015, from Tomas Rivera Policy Institute: <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED502067.pdf>

- In this policy brief about college perceptions among Latino Youth in California, the authors ask a series of questions pertaining to college costs, financial aid access, and postsecondary aspirations.
- Students were found to have inaccurate estimations of most college costs, and have little to no expectations around the eligibility requirements needed for financial aid.
- The authors conclude that change is required in the delivery of information about college costs and financial aid for Latino students so they can get the most out of their postsecondary educational opportunities.