



Nashville Public Education FOUNDATION

What we do: This Project

-  Advocating for Change
-  Promoting Excellence & Innovation
-  Supporting MNPS ●
-  Convening Stakeholders

What We Did:

Anchored in personal stories of MNPS graduates and their families, Nashville Goes to College supplements traditional college application resources with information on building and preparing a path to college starting as early as 5th grade.

Nashville Goes To College

What it is:

Recognizing the challenges in navigating college applications and financial aid, and in response to a call from the community and school district to explore and address Metro Nashville Public School (MNPS) graduates' college attendance rates, the Nashville Public Education Foundation (NPEF) created the Nashville Goes to College website powered by First Horizon Foundation.

Nashville Goes to College is an online tool designed to demystify the college process and assist and inspire families to create and pursue a vision for post-secondary life—whether that be a traditional four-year college, a two-year associate's degree, or technical school.

The website organizes resources for students and families as they move through the college-going journey, from considering college, to applying to college, to going to college. The website features videos filled with advice from former MNPS graduates representing diverse college experiences and contains checklists, webinars, FAQs, and other resources to determine which pathway is the best fit, how to apply, how to enroll in courses, and much more.

The Nashville Goes to College site is translated into Spanish. This feature was added in response to Nashville's continually growing Spanishspeaking population and the need for these students and families to have accessible information on postsecondary attainment.

The website was reviewed by partner organizations that work in the college-going space to ensure the information shared is aligned to the city's supports and resources. Nashville Goes to College was also informed by NPEF's Bridge to Completion report, which analyzes MNPS graduates' college-going data to identify barriers to college completion and make recommendations for improvement.



Nashville Goes To College

The Impact:

The story-telling features and narrative of Nashville Goes to College help students visualize their own postsecondary dreams, and see that success is possible—especially for students who are the first in their families to attend college. The Nashville Goes to College online tool is visited and shared by students, families, college counselors, and educators as a helpful one-stop-shop for all stages of the college-going process.



Nashville Goes to College is helping students dream bigger and achieve more as it relates to postsecondary attainment by:



Featuring MNPS students



Providing resources for every step of the way



Starting the process as early as middle school



This resource has helped spark new conversations with school counselors on how to best reach and support students, and has contributed to the collaboration between organizations to provide students and families with a variety of tools and information from a variety of sources, thus increasing the effectiveness and accessibility of postsecondary resources in Nashville.



Why it Matters:

While there have been gains in college-going rates in the recent past, research by NPEF and other organizations suggests that the conditions that allow students to develop a college-going identity and the conditions that nurture and support those aspirations are not uniformly present across all schools in MNPS. This is especially true at schools serving high percentages of low-income students and students of color.

While there is no single policy or practice that will ensure all students will choose to pursue a postsecondary degree, creating web of policies and practices will help students develop their postsecondary aspirations, prepare them academically to succeed, and support them through the process. Nashville Goes to College supports students by helping them and their families develop a college-going identity early on and by igniting a support network rooted in a true community effort – including the student, their family, teachers, school counselors, fellow students, and non-profit partners.

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