

College and Career Planning in the Middle Grades

CAP TRAINING INCLUDES:

- **20 Professional Development hours in a 6 week, on-line course for school counselors as well as administrators and teachers.**
- **Four content sessions - each session takes four-to-six hours to complete.**
- **Arizona-specific course content, including Arizona graduation requirements, AzCIS Jr, the ECAP process, postsecondary institutions, college planning tools, and resources.**

Session One:

Developing a Culture For Postsecondary Planning in Middle Schools

In this session, participants will research effective strategies for creating a culture of postsecondary engagement in the middle grades and develop a plan to implement those strategies. Participants will also develop strategies to influence faculty, students and families to recognize how career pathways lead to postsecondary credentials and open other pathways. Participants will learn how to implement AzCIS Jr. and begin the ECAP process starting in middle grades.

Session Two:

Engaging Middle Grade Students in Self-Awareness and Career Exploration

In this session, participants will learn how to utilize assessments and other strategies to help students develop self-awareness of strengths, interests, skills, abilities or preferences. Participants will explore resources that promote self-awareness and career exploration based on students' individual interests and goals. Participants will learn to assist students and their families in effective academic planning that aligns course selections with career interests, and to recognize the potential of multiple pathways.

Session Three:

Helping Students Develop Mindsets and Behaviors For Academic and Career Success

Research suggests that non-cognitive factors contribute to students' academic performance, and that racial/ethnic and gender differences in school performance can be reduced by focusing on students' attitudes and behaviors. This session will expose participants to methods for assisting students in setting ambitious goals and monitoring their progress toward goals. Participants will also investigate the theory of growth mindsets, and students' development of behaviors, skills and character traits that promote postsecondary success, including transferable skills such as time management, study skills, and resilience.

Session Four:

Engaging Middle Grade Students and Families in Educational Planning

In this session, participants will research practical, developmentally appropriate ways to communicate knowledge about postsecondary planning to students and families. Participants will also plan transition activities to help students and families understand how early planning and academic achievement in middle school impacts access to opportunities in high school and beyond. Additionally, participants will develop strategies to communicate the importance of performing well academically and of choosing appropriate courses and extracurricular activities.

"The CAP course gives administrators and teachers the opportunity to collaborate about the college culture they have developed on their campus. Through collaboration we can grow and learn from each other building awareness on our own campus." - Heather Wacker College and Career Readiness Coach, Cottonwood—Oak Creek School District