

Preparing Students in Foster Care for Postsecondary Success

January 19, 2022



Welcome!



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Florida College Access Network

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Questions & Conversation

- Submit your questions in the box
- Share on social media

Twitter: @FLCollegeAccess
#FCAN
#TalentStrongFL

This webinar is being recorded; all materials will be available within a week of recording



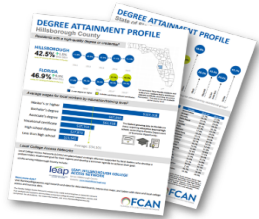
Our mission:

We lead the collaborative movement to ensure every Floridian achieves an education beyond high school and a rewarding career.

Our vision:

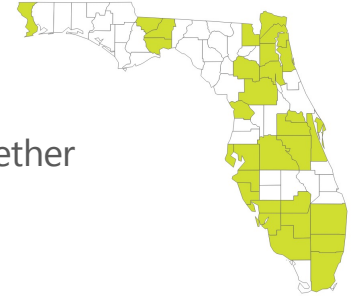
A Florida working together, where education is the pathway to economic mobility for all.

FCAN's Work



Research and Data FCAN publishes research and data on evidence-based practices and policy opportunities to strengthen Florida's talent pool.

Local college access networks (LCANs) LCANs support 82% of the state's population. These organizations are made up of community leaders who come together to create solutions and partnerships to support local talent development.



Statewide Initiatives FCAN coordinates 4 College Ready Florida initiatives that provides schools and community organizations resources to help students continue their education after high school.

7 Conditions for Success

Opportunity for everyone: To build a talent-strong economy, all Floridians need access to a postsecondary education and the supports to complete it.

Clear information and guidance: Students and families need exposure and counseling early and often to make informed decisions about their futures.

Affordable: Postsecondary education needs to be within everyone's financial reach, regardless of household income or life circumstances.

Multiple pathways to success: Floridians benefit from multiple learning opportunities for academic achievement and career advancement.

Lifelong learning: No degree or credential is "one and done;" Floridians need to prepare for career changes through continuous learning.

Effective use of data: Transparent access to data on education and economic outcomes, especially for Florida's diverse populations, helps achieve our goals.

Community collaboration: When community partners work together toward a shared vision, they remove barriers, build a robust workforce, and improve the quality of life for their regions.

Poll:



Today's Presenters



Brett McNaught
CEO
Educate Tomorrow



Dr. Steve J. Rios
Senior Director
Positive Pathways Program



Wendy Joseph
College Coach
Educate Tomorrow



Dr. Amy Rubinson
Researcher and Care
Coordination Manager
Educate Tomorrow

Today's Presenters



Brandy Starks-Gordon
Student/Changemaker Peer Mentor



Janessa Collins
Natural Helper
Educate Tomorrow

Setting the Stage



Brett McNaught, CEO



**EDUCATE
TOMORROW**

Perspective of a College Student with Experience in Foster Care



Brandy Starks-Gordon
Graduate Student /
Changemaker Peer Mentor

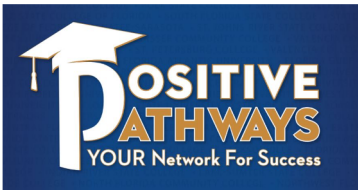


- My story - Specific examples of how high school and college coaches / advisors helped you
- Transition to post-secondary education
- Importance of being an active listener
- Help students to be comfortable coming to you
- Develop an active line of contact / communication
- Help them figure out their interests and strengths
- Help them understand the requirements related to the schools they are interested
- Make sure they understand the importance of “back up schools,” especially local colleges and universities
- Encourage students to participate in groups / clubs
- Other advice

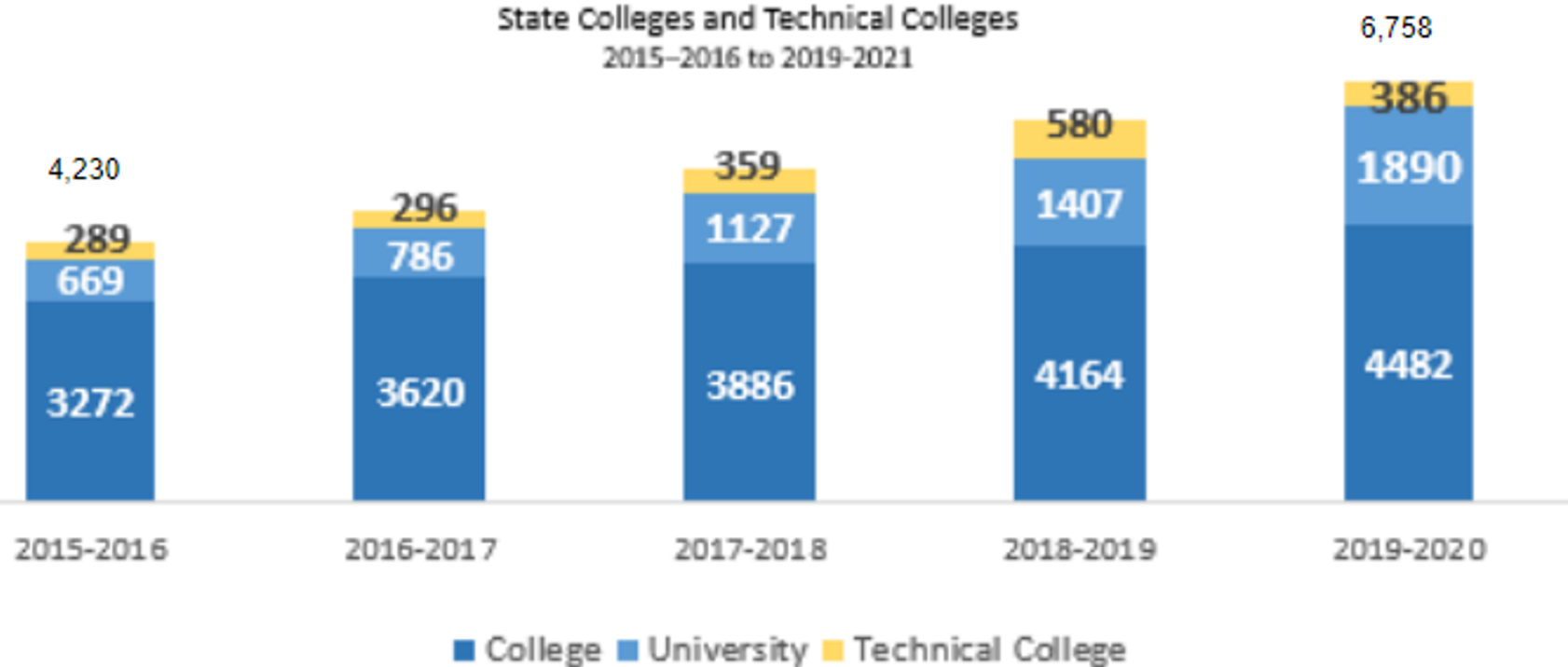
Post-18 Programs for Students from Foster Care



1. Extended Foster Care (EFC)
2. Postsecondary Education Support Services (PESS)
3. DCF Tuition and Fee Exemption
4. Homeless exemption
5. Positive Pathways

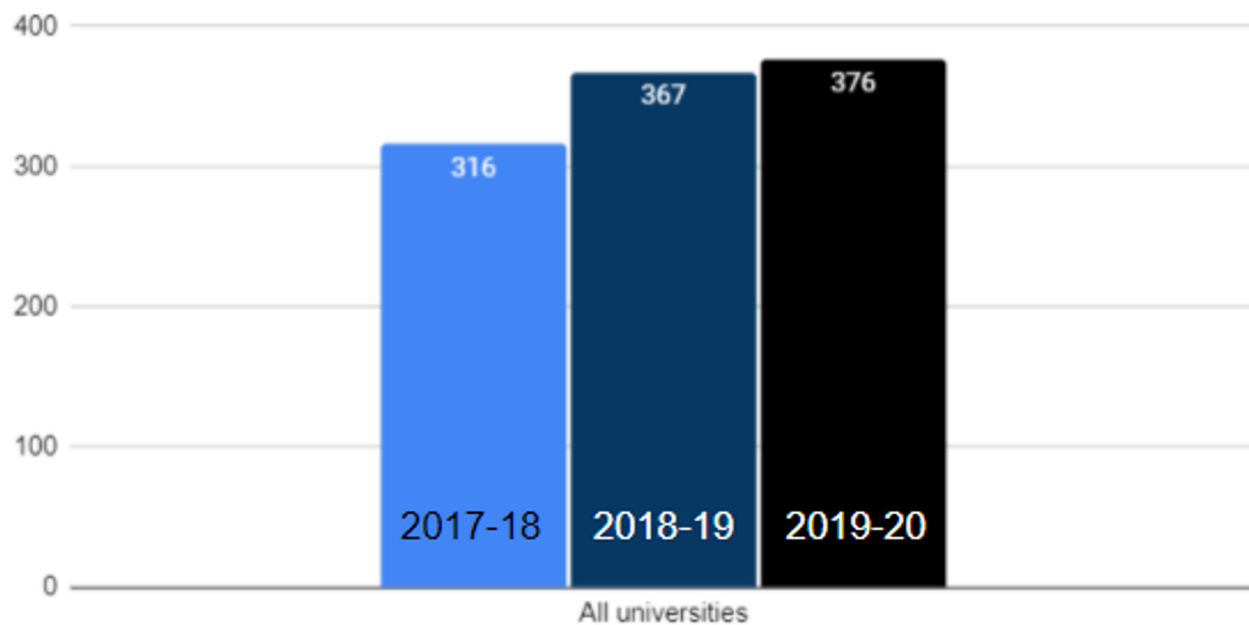


Students using the Florida Department of Children and Families
Tuition and Fee Exemption at State Universities and
State Colleges and Technical Colleges
2015-2016 to 2019-2021



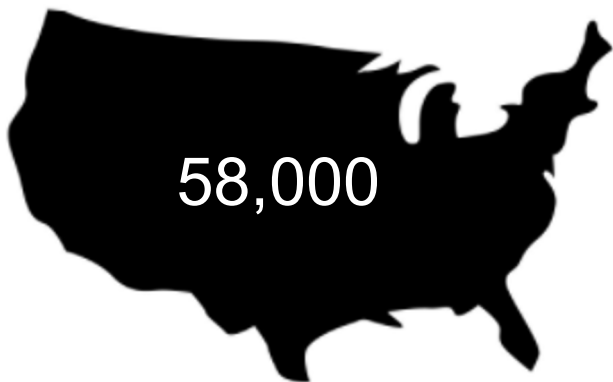
Source: Florida Department of Education

SUS Students Using Homeless Waiver
2017-'18 to 2019-'20

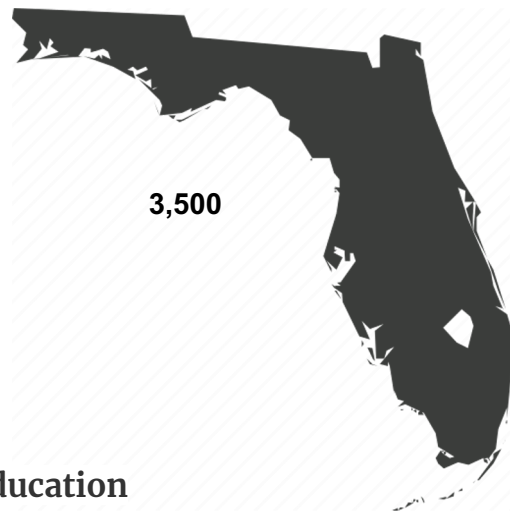


Source: SUS BOG, 2021

Homeless Students in Florida Colleges



USA



U.S. Department of Education

2018-2019 school year
91,068 public school students experienced homelessness over the course of the year.
6,717 students were unsheltered
7,606 were in shelters
11,004 were in hotels / motels, and
65,741 were doubled up

Extended Foster Care (EFC)

- Young adults can remain in foster until age 21 (age 22, if they have a documented disability) while finishing school or gaining work skills
- **Requirements for Participation:**
 - Turned 18 years old in licensed foster care, AND
 - Enrolled in high school/ completing G.E.D./post-secondary education, OR
 - Working at least 80 hours/month, OR
 - Participating in a job skills program



Postsecondary Education Services and Support (PESS)

- Statewide program for students who meet requirements
- one major requirement is that students attend a Florida Bright Futures institution
- Eligible youth may receive monthly stipend of \$1,256
- Education Training Voucher (ETV) program funds for students not attended a Florida Bright Futures institution
- 18 while in the legal custody of DCF (Spent at least six months, total, in licensed out-of-home care before turning 18)
- OR
- At least 18 and you were adopted after the age of 16 from foster care
- OR
- placed with a court-approved dependency guardian **after spending at least 6 months** in licensed care within the 12 months immediately preceding such your placement or adoption.
- Program available UP TO age 23

Click Here for More Information

[Independent Living - Florida Department of Children and Families \(myflfamilies.com\)](http://myflfamilies.com)

Homeless Exemption

The 2021 Florida Statutes (1009.25)

Exempt from the payment of tuition and fees, including lab fees, at.

1. school district that provides workforce education programs
2. Florida College System institution
3. Public state university:

Definition:

- Student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence

or

- whose primary nighttime residence is a public

or

- private shelter designed to provide temporary residence, a public or private transitional living program, or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.



The Tuition Waiver: The Basis of Our Work

- The State of Florida provides tuition and fee exemptions, to eligible students, through age 28.
- Authorized at state public universities, public colleges, and technical colleges.
- Fee exemptions may be available to a student who:
 - o is or was in the custody of the Department of Children and Families when he or she reached age 18;
 - o was adopted from the Department of Children and Families after May 5, 1997;
 - o is or was at the time of reaching age 18 in the custody of a relative under s. 39.5085, F.S.;
 - o is or was at the time of reaching age 18 in the custody of a non-relative under s. 39.5085, F.S.; or,
 - o was placed in a guardianship by the court after spending at least six months in the custody of the department after reaching 16 years of age.

Educational Campus Coaching Positions

In 2014 the state passed legislation, (F.S. 409.1452):

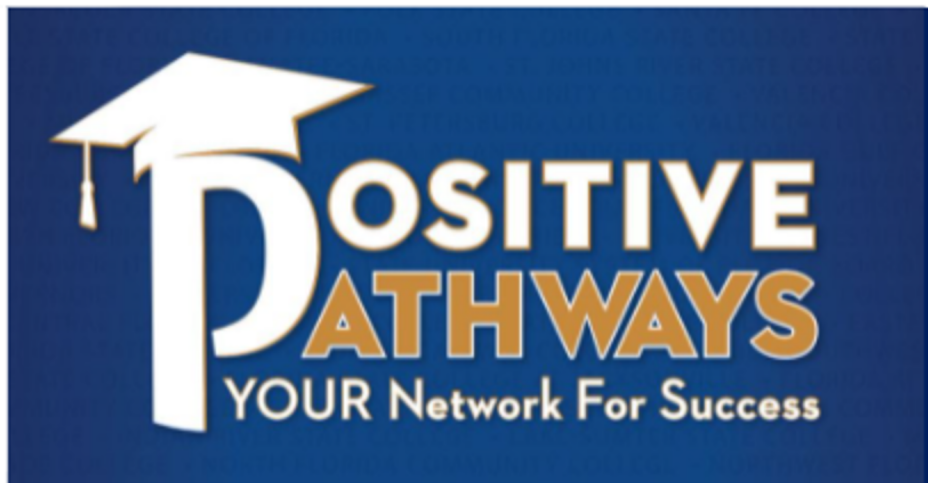
The State University System of Florida and the Florida College System shall provide postsecondary educational campus coaching positions that will be integrated Florida College System institutions' and university institutions general support services structure to provide current and former foster care children and young adults with dedicated, on campus support.

- This legislation resulted in on campus foster care liaisons or coaches being appointed.
- All 28 colleges and all 12 universities have a designated person
- 7 colleges and universities have a dedicated staff person



Highlights

- Created in 2016 and funded by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), in response to a Florida law requiring collaboration between DCF and the Florida Department of Education
- Dramatic increase in number of students from foster care using tuition and fee exemption
- Unique state-level program aimed at increasing post-secondary educational success among college students who lived in foster care in Florida
- Administered by Educate Tomorrow, a statewide non-profit organization
- Maintains and expands a network of members
- Began as Florida Reach, a volunteer statewide network



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT
OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
MYFLFAMILIES.COM



Educate Tomorrow at FAU

The Educate Tomorrow at FAU Program is a student support program designed to support FAU students who receive the DCF or homeless tuition waiver. We provide students with wrap around support services from admission to graduation, with a goal of creating a strong foundation of support, academic coaching and advising, and access to services on and off campus in order to increase academic progress and graduation rates. For more information click [here](#).



Tracyann Burton
Assistant Director
Educate Tomorrow at FAU Program
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Dr. Althea K. Blake
Program Coordinator
Blake.Althea@spcollege.edu

The mission of the **Road to Independence, Success, and Excellence** program, better known as **RISE**, is to increase the graduation rate of students using the Florida Department of Children and Families Tuition and Fee Exemption and students using the Homeless Fee Exemption, as well as to enhance their overall academic experience.

The RISE program is housed at the St. Petersburg/Gibbs Campus but serves all 11 SPC locations.



Fostering Panther Pride

Florida International University's Fostering Panther Pride (FPP) program offers tailored academic and support services to students identified as formerly in foster care or homeless.

Launched in 2013, the primary goal of FPP is to assist former foster care youth and homeless students in their transition to FIU, their retention and graduation, and their pursuit of securing employment or graduate studies upon receiving their bachelor's degree.



Anna Ramos
Program Director, *Fostering Panther Pride*,



The Unconquered Scholars Program

The Unconquered Scholars Program provides an array of support services promoting overall success to youth who experienced foster care, homelessness, relative care, or ward of the State status. Many Scholars have faced profound hardships during childhood that may increase their risk of leaving academia without a degree. In fact, research indicates former foster youth are far less likely to earn a degree than their non-foster care peers. Florida State University is committed to meeting the unique needs of Unconquered students so they experience the long-term professional and personal benefits associated with educational attainment. For more information click [here](#).



Caitlin Cates
Program Coordinator
Unconquered Scholars
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cmcates@fsu.edu

Florida Public Universities with Focused and Consistent Support For Students Using Tuition and Fee Exemption



FLORIDA STATE
UNIVERSITY



Colleges with Consistent and Focused Programs / Initiatives



**DAYTONA
STATE COLLEGE**



Miami Dade
College

**BROWARDSM
COLLEGE**

FSCJ

Florida State College
at Jacksonville

**FLORIDA
SOUTHWESTERNTM
STATE COLLEGE**

**TALLAHASSEE
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**





Positive Pathways Regional Points of Contact



DCF Regions



Region / Circuit	Contact	Contact	Contact
Suncoast Region Circuits 6, 12, 13, 20	Althea K. Blake, EdD. Founder, Higher Agency (813) 580-7874 altheakblake@gmail.com	Jamie Bennett, LMSW, ACC Co-founder, Cetera, Inc. (269) 271-1608 jamie@jlbtraining.com	
Southeast Region Circuits 15, 17, 19	Circuit 15 Sabrina Scott Director of Independent Living Vita Nova (561) 689.0035 sscott@vitanovainc.org	Circuit 15 Joe Murray Assistant Dean Student Advising Services Florida Atlantic University MurrayJ@fau.edu	Circuit 17 Tricia Cepeda Educational Coordinator FLITE Center (Broward) (954) 625-5401 Tricia@flitecenter.org
Southern Region Circuits 11, 16	Varzi Jean-Baptiste Program Director and Care Coordinator Educate Tomorrow (786) 223-7541 Varzi@educatetomorrow.org		

www.PositivePathwaysFlorida.org



HOME

2021 CONFERENCE

ABOUT US

SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAMS & LIAISONS

POSITIVE PATHWAYS PODCAST

THE PATH NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING EVENTS

RESOURCES

WELCOME TO POSITIVE PATHWAYS

Informed, empathetic and professional support for students from foster care, adoptive homes, and homeless settings.



Monthly Network Call

First Wednesday of Each Month | 1:30 – 2:30 PM

Monthly New Member Orientation | 2:30 – 3:00 PM

How to Find Foster Care Liaisons Anywhere in the State

www.PositivePathwaysFlorida.org

State College Liaisons and Coaches

PROGRAMS & LIAISONS

State College Liaisons

Type something in the input field to search the table for first names, last names or emails:

The following is the list of State College Liaisons

Firstname	Lastname	University	City	position	Email	Phone
Anelle	Moss	Broward College (Central)	Davie	Coordinator, Student Success	amos3@broward.edu	954-201-4859
Roslyn	Bailey-Oddman	Broward College	Davie	Coordinator, Student Success	rbailey2@broward.edu	954-201-8407
Melanie	Gnaizda-Gilson	Broward College (North)	Coconut Creek	Coordinator, Student Success	mgaizda@broward.edu	954-201-2310
Melissa	Cauley	Chipola College	Marianna	Director of Student Services	cauleym@chipola.edu	850-526-2761 Ext. 2451



RESULTS of SURVEY OF FLORIDA STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Spring 2022 Positive Pathways Webinar
February 2, 2022

Dr. Steve J. Rios, Senior Director
Positive Pathways Program

Register at www.PositivePathwaysFlorida.org

UPCOMING EVENTS



Perspectives from a College Coach



Wendy Joseph
College Coach
Educate Tomorrow at
Miami Dade College



- **DCF tuition exemption** is the gateway to post-secondary opportunities for youth in foster care
 - Understand who is eligible
 - Become familiar with what programs are covered and where (public colleges and universities, technical schools)
- **Key Collaborations**
 - Connecting with your local Community Based Care agency is essential to understand the benefits and resources available for students in foster care
 - McKinney-Vento district liaisons can help you understand benefits and resources
 - Create a community of support around each student
- **Early Identification** of eligible students
 - Educate Tomorrow's TCE (The College Experience) summer gateway program
 - Pre-college Advisement with foster youth and McKinney-Vento students
- **Single Point of Contact**
 - College coaches establish relationships with institutional departments (financial aid, admissions, advisement) and community partners
 - Assess needs and refer to key departments like Access Services, Single Stop
 - FAFSA and scholarship support
 - Mentoring, coaching, leadership development (Changemakers, YVAC)
 - Non-academic support from community partners (housing, emergency shelter placement)

Knowing Your Students and Accessing College Readiness Support



Dr. Amy Rubinson
Research and Care
Coordinator Manager
Educate Tomorrow

Student-Specific Considerations

- What happens if someone is 18 and still in high school?
- 50% of 18-24 year olds who are experiencing homelessness have been in foster care in Miami-Dade County
- Student strengths

Government Resources

- Guardian ad Litem: <https://guardianadlitem.org>
- PESS: <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/independent-living/postsecondary-education-services.shtml>
- McKinney Vento: <https://nche.ed.gov/resources/>
- Annual IEP review
- Local Children's Trust
- TRiO Programs

Private Resources

- Emergency funds (AOK <https://aokscholars.org>, nsoro <https://nsoro.foundation>, local foundations)
- Community Resources (local libraries and Museums)
- Housing options for college students in Florida: Southern Scholarship Foundation, FUP/HUD Vouchers, local community residences (Casa Valentina)

Community-Specific Resources

- Community gatherings during holidays (Thanksgiving celebration, monthly birthday parties)
- Pre-college programs (FSU-CARE, Summerbridge programs, The College Experience)

Perspective of Former Foster Youth / Current Youth Advocate



Janessa Collins
Natural Helper
Educate Tomorrow

- My story - Specific examples of how high school and college coaches / advisors helped
- Challenges of students in care and in regular classes
- Youth insights
- Importance of IEPs / Lack of use
- College tours / The College Experience
- Help youth understand who to contact about vital information about college
- Encourage students to participate in groups / clubs
- Other advice



Questions?

Upcoming webinar:

Where Do Students Go? How Do You Know? Options for Data-Starved Districts

Date and Time: Thursday, January 27, 2022, 2 -3 p.m. EST

Learn More:

For upcoming webinars, policy briefs, and promising practices, subscribe at:

FloridaCollegeAccess.org/subscribe

