

## Postsecondary Bridging & Support

The work to integrate supportive approaches to postsecondary bridging for opportunity youth is ongoing and will require lots of discussion and experimentation. Below are examples of best practices you can start implementing at your program and opportunities to engage with others to support the young people you serve.

Use this list to reflect on what is in place already in your program and plan when and how you'll start applying new strategies. Decide with your team if your program should implement the strategy yourselves or if this is an opportunity to partner with another local organization or college. Take this time to document strengths that exist currently and areas where you need extra support or resources. This is meant to be a starting place and we are excited for your journey to strengthen support for opportunity youth to complete their postsecondary goals!

Core Component	How is this implemented <u>currently</u> ?	What can we <u>adjust</u> or <u>strengthen</u> ?	What <u>resources</u> or <u>community partners</u> do we need?
<b>LEAD WITH A SUPPORTIVE APPROACH</b>			
<p><b>Building supportive and trusting relationships are prioritized.</b></p> <p>Staff incorporate questions and time to build relationships with students as they enter the program and throughout their duration of support.</p>			
<p><b>Support is student-led.</b></p> <p>Students determine their education pathway and the timeline that <b>best fits their identified education and career goals.</b></p>			
<p><b>Provide support without judgment.</b></p>			

Whole-heartedly know and believe that students are the experts in their own lived experiences and decisions.			
<b>Celebrate wins.</b>  Incorporate celebration in programming and in check-in spaces.			

	<b>How is this implemented <u>currently</u>?</b>	<b>What can we <u>adjust</u> or <u>strengthen</u>?</b>	<b>What <u>resources</u> or <u>community partners</u> do we need?</b>
--	--	--	---

<b>REVISIT CAREER &amp; PROGRAM EXPLORATION OFTEN</b>			
---	--	--	--

<b>Inform students of all postsecondary options.</b>  Students should learn about short-term certificates, apprenticeships, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, and beyond.			
--	--	--	--

<b>Students are knowledgeable about their chosen pathway.</b>  Students are well informed about job responsibilities, education or training requirements, and local wage and demand projections.			
--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--

<p><b>Build connections to career pathways.</b></p> <p>Students are encouraged or have the opportunity to attend information sessions, conduct job shadowing, apply for internships, conduct informational interviews, attend career events, or seek mentorship.</p>			
--	--	--	--

	<p><b>How is this implemented <u>currently</u>?</b></p>	<p><b>What can we <u>adjust</u> or <u>strengthen</u>?</b></p>	<p><b>What <u>resources</u> or <u>community partners</u> do we need?</b></p>
--	---	---	--

**PERSONALIZE STEPS TO POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT**

<p><b>Develop an individualized timeline.</b></p> <p>Timelines should be flexible and take into consideration student needs, barriers, and goals. Students are aware of all deadlines and have the opportunity to shift their plan if needed.</p>			
---	--	--	--

<p><b>Break down each step.</b></p> <p>Support students in making sense of all steps involved in the enrollment process by breaking down each step and creating time to answer questions.</p>			
---	--	--	--

	<p><b>How is this implemented <u>currently</u>?</b></p>	<p><b>What can we <u>adjust</u> or <u>strengthen</u>?</b></p>	<p><b>What <u>resources</u> or <u>community partners</u> do</b></p>
--	---	---	---

			<b>we need?</b>
<b>FINANCIAL AID SUPPORT</b>			
<p><b>Prioritize time and support for the entire financial aid process.</b></p> <p>There are a lot of steps outside of applying for financial aid to ensure students will receive aid including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Filling out FAFSA or WASFA</li> <li>● Completing financial aid documents or forms</li> <li>● Accepting or declining awards</li> <li>● Budgeting for other life expenses</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Individualize the financial aid process.</b></p> <p>Learn about students' individual identity, circumstances, and experiences in order to support them in identifying their funding eligibility.</p>			
<p>Share and <b>be knowledgeable of all resources to pay for postsecondary.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explain grants, loans, work-study</li> <li>● Workforce and Career Training Funding</li> <li>● Scholarships</li> <li>● Federal Aid and State Aid</li> <li>● Funding for undocumented students</li> </ul>			
<p>Stay up to date on changes to funding eligibility</p>			

and documentation requirements, <b>especially for undocumented students.</b>			
--	--	--	--

	<b>How is this implemented <u>currently</u>?</b>	<b>What can we <u>adjust</u> or <u>strengthen</u>?</b>	<b>What <u>resources</u> or <u>community partners</u> do we need?</b>
--	--	--	---

<b>POSTSECONDARY RETENTION &amp; CONTINUED SUPPORT</b>			
--	--	--	--

<p><b>Students have access to support while in postsecondary.</b></p> <p>Students are able to reach out to staff or are introduced to a resource that provides consistent communication and intentional support, especially toward the beginning of their program.</p>			
--	--	--	--

<p><b>Support during academic disruption.</b></p> <p>Students have support if they need to take a break from their program and <b>remain actively connected</b> with a supportive person until they are ready to re-enroll.</p>			
---	--	--	--

<p><b>Students are connected to on-campus and community resources.</b></p> <p>Students and staff have established connections with student services to support students as challenges arise.</p>			
--	--	--	--

<p>Students and staff are well-connected to resources in the community and on-campus to address needs.</p>			
<p><b>Opportunity to build self-advocacy skills.</b></p> <p>Students are taught academic success strategies and have the opportunity to develop self-advocacy skills.</p>			