College Persistence during COVID

At the Table
October 14, 2020

What are your students struggling with during distance learning?

- **New normal during COVID-19 and navigating being a successful student**
- **Hard time connecting with professors remotely (method of contact?)**
- **Not all teachers are using the same platform (Blackboard vs. another method, synchronous vs. asynchronous)**
- **Professors have difficulty effectively delivering remote instruction**
- **First time learning virtually this year - difficulty and dislike of virtual learning in general - for students, teachers and staff**
- **Difference in work between high school and college - frequency of checking work**
- **Extra amount of work - professors making up for virtual class time**

- **A lot of of work is busy work, as if they have a sub**
- **Students with special needs especially struggle**
- **Navigating CUNYFirst, financial aid confusion**
- **Time management - spending increased time sitting in front of their computers - motivation and structure**
- **Lack of quiet space with appropriate setup for learning**
- **Communication with financial aid and admissions has been inconsistent or difficult - leads to stress**
- **Lack of accessibility to offices (ex. Verification from state tax office)**
  - **One student had to submit this 5 times, frequent email access issues**
  - **Some schools have a workaround for this**
- **Larger schools - Guidance and help signing for classes has not been as available, classes filled**
- **Pandemic sidelined the educational system**

What are your students struggling with during distance learning?

- **Inconsistency between processes in the same system (ex. Financial aid verification, registration at BMCC) - in the CUNY system, each school has a different method or way to upload documents**
    - **Need clear, streamlined steps for completing processes**
- **Loss of traditional college experience and independence that goes along with it**
- **Issues with getting answers from schools and specific professors**
- **Answers are received slowly and students have trouble dealing with this**
- **Lag across the board, private and public (funding issues, staff turnover)**
- **Tech difficulties**

- **Coaches are struggling too!**
- **Students and coaches are asked to be flexible, but students do not receive the same level of flexibility in courses**
- **Students thinking about quitting school due to challenges**
- **Increased need for patience, flexibility, strategies for dealing with frustration, and modeling for students**
- **Virtual learning will likely continue for some time**
- **Struggle with prioritization vs. staying organized**
- **Feels like students are teaching themselves**
- **Let's share tips with each other for navigating these challenges (ex. Using chat and online communication instead of phone call for more immediate access to school staff)**

COLLEGE GOAL:

Prepare for & Complete College Semester with 2.0+

Complete this worksheet if the young person is enrolled in college.

REQUIRED STEPS (COMPLETE ALL)	COMPLETED?	DATE	PROGRESS NOTES
○ Ensure student has food, transportation, and basic minimum living expenses before stipends/financial aid comes in	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Check in with young person before first day of college semester	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Check in with young person after first day of semester to debrief on experience	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Ensure student has a plan to purchase books	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Check student's financial aid balance after the first week of school to ensure there is nothing owed and no holds; *follow up with Bursar/Financial Aid office if needed*	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Ensure student understands how to use college systems (e.g., Blackboard, CUNYFirst, etc.)	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Ensure student's address is correct in the college system	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Ensure student understands consequences of attendance policies (e.g., after two missed classes a grade drops)	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Walk through all syllabi with student and put assignment due dates in calendar	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Check in with young person before "withdraw" period is over; *If they need to withdraw from any classes, see Advisor and refer to Fair Futures Program Manual and Appendix G17*	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Check in with young person during mid-terms	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Provide emotional support to student; check-in on them weekly	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Check in with young person during finals	○ YES ○ NO		

POTENTIAL STEPS (EXPLORE IF NEEDED/APPLICABLE)	COMPLETED?	DATE	PROGRESS NOTES
○ Attend any orientation	○ YES ○ NO		
○ If student is enrolled in an Opportunity Program, ensure student attends any mandatory summer programs if needed	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Assist student with accessing mental health supports and/or peer group supports to emotionally prepare for college	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Visit college to get familiar with campus	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Apply to ASAP program if in CUNY (and if not already enrolled in Opportunity Program)	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Create study plan	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Connect young person to tutoring	○ YES ○ NO		
○ If student wants to withdraw from classes/drop out completely, discuss pros/cons, financial implications, and meet with advisor	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Check in with college counselor (or ACS Coach/Tutor) as needed	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Connect youth with campus Disability Services office	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Enroll in work-study	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Celebrate finishing with 2.0+	○ YES ○ NO		
○ Other: _____ For additional space, please see reverse side.	○ YES ○ NO		

*ONCE GOAL IS COMPLETED: Proceed to "Re-apply for financial aid, ETV, and scholarships each year" goal on College Goals Roadmap and begin worksheet

---

FairFutures

COLLEGE PERSISTENCE CHECKLIST

BEFORE COLLEGE:

☐ **APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID**
- ☐ Create an FSA ID
- ☐ Fill out the FAFSA
- ☐ Fill out the TAP application
- ☐ Save a copy of the FAFSA Student Aid Report for records

☐ **APPLY FOR COLLEGE**
Best practice: all college applications should be done by Halloween

☐ **APPLY TO SUPPORT PROGRAMS**
- ☐ Apply to the Dorm Project *(if interested and eligible)*
- ☐ Make sure **"YES"** is checked on college applications answer to any questions about interest in ASAP/ACE or Opportunity Programs (HEOP/EOP/SEEK/CD).
- ☐ Fill out supplemental applications for HEOP/EOP/SEEK/CD
- ☐ Check your email regularly for outreach from opportunity programs and respond quickly

☐ **APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS**
- ☐ *If applying to private schools,* fill out College Board CSS
- ☐ Research scholarships as needed and apply (see Appendix G11)

☐ **ACCEPT AN ADMISSIONS OFFER**
- ☐ Contact the school admissions department to see if they are willing to waive the commitment deposit
Most colleges require offers to be accepted by May 1st.
If you need more time, call the admissions department

☐ **GET ORGANIZED**
- ☐ Make a folder for college paperwork *(keep somewhere safe)*
- ☐ Get a copy of a foster care letter on agency letterhead
- ☐ Write down your login and password for any college student account in the folder
  Share passwords with agency educational specialist or case planner to avoid getting locked out of your student account!
- ☐ Plan to check your email regularly *(3-4x per week)*

☐ **VERIFY INDEPENDENT STUDENT STATUS FOR FINANCIAL AID**

☐ **REGISTER FOR CLASSES**

☐ **ATTEND ANY SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAMS OR ORIENTATIONS OFFERED BY THE COLLEGE**

☐ **IF DORMING AWAY:**
- ☐ Pay any housing deposits up front
- ☐ Arrange for room and board pass-through Click here for PDF with more information *(pages 18-26)*
- ☐ Arrange for a dorming away stipend Contact ocbsp@acs.nyc.gov for more information
- ☐ Make sure dorm supplies are purchased before the student moves into the dorm

☐ **APPLY FOR NEW YORKERS FOR CHILDREN BACK TO SCHOOL PACKAGE PROGRAM** *(if currently in care/aged out)*
It is vital every student going to college has a laptop of their own

☐ **ARRANGE FOR DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS (IF NEEDED)**
Contact campus office for students with disabilities

EVERY SEMESTER:

☐ **PURCHASE BOOKS AND ONLINE ACCESS FOR ALL CLASSES BY THE END OF THE FIRST WEEK OF THE SEMESTER!**
Agencies should make emergency funds available for any students who do not have books either due to a funding gap or a delay

☐ **CHECK IN WITH:** Coaches, tutors, counselors, and any other supportive adults regularly, especially during freshman year

AT THE HALFWAY MARK OF THE SEMESTER:

☐ **CHECK IF IT'S NECESSARY TO WITHDRAW FROM ANY CLASSES**

☐ **REGISTER FOR CLASSES FOR NEXT SEMESTER**
Registration for the next semester opens around the middle of the semester.
Students should register for the following semester as soon as possible; definitely before they start studying for finals.

☐ **REVIEW GRADES FROM THE SEMESTER**
Celebrate the positives, and make a plan to improve anything that needs improvement

☐ **SUBMIT ANY NEEDED APPEALS**
- ☐ Grade appeals *(if received "WU" or "F" or was graded unfairly)*
- ☐ Financial aid appeals *(if student lost financial aid)*
- ☐ Dismissal appeals *(if academically dismissed)*

☐ **IF ELIGIBLE FOR ETV:**
- ☐ Send Transcript to ETV
- ☐ Fill out ETV Financial Aid Release Form

☐ **IF DORMING AWAY:**
- ☐ Submit documents to continue dorming away stipend
- ☐ If student is turning 21, email phyllis.brodsky@acs.nyc.gov to transition to Exceptional Payment status
- ☐ Reapply for room and board pass-through

☐ **REAPPLY FOR NYFC BACK TO SCHOOL PACKAGE**
Even students who already have a laptop will receive an Amazon gift card every semester if they reapply.

☐ **IF STUDENT IS INTERESTED IN TRANSFERRING:**
- ☐ Submit transfer applications (see Appendix G18_Transferring Colleges Guide)

☐ **IF STUDENT IS NEARING COMPLETION OF A 2-YEAR DEGREE AND WANTS TO TRANSFER TO A 4-YEAR COLLEGE AFTER:**
- ☐ Submit transfer application (see Appendix G18_Transferring Colleges Guide)

EVERY YEAR:

☐ **FILL OUT ETV APPLICATION**

☐ **REAPPLY FOR FAFSA AND TAP**

☐ **APPLY FOR REPRESENT MAGAZINE AWARDS FOR YOUTH IN CARE COMPETITION**

☐ **APPLY FOR NICK'S SCHOLARS**

COLLEGE GOAL:
Prepare for & Complete College Semester with 2.0+
Complete this worksheet if the young person is enrolled in college.

REQUIRED STEPS (COMPLETE ALL)	COMPLETED?	DA
Ensure student has food, transportation, and basic minimum living expenses before stipends/financial aid comes in	○ YES ○ NO	
Check in with young person before first day of college semester	○ YES ○ NO	
Check in with young person after first day of semester to debrief on experience	○ YES ○ NO	
Ensure student has a plan to purchase books	○ YES ○ NO	
Check student's financial aid balance after the first week of school to ensure there is nothing owed and no holds; follow up with Bursar/Financial Aid office if needed	○ YES ○ NO	
Ensure student understands how to use college systems (e.g., Blackboard, CUNYFirst, etc.)	○ YES ○ NO	
Ensure student's address is correct in the college system	○ YES ○ NO	
Ensure student understands consequences of attendance policies (e.g., after two missed classes a grade drops)	○ YES ○ NO	
Walk through all syllabi with student and put assignment due dates in calendar	○ YES ○ NO	
Check in with young person before "withdraw" period is over; If they need to withdraw from any classes, see Advisor and refer to Fair Futures Program Manual and Appendix G17	○ YES ○ NO	
Check in with young person during mid-terms	○ YES ○ NO	
Provide emotional support to student; check-in on them weekly	○ YES ○ NO	
Check in with young person during finals	○ YES ○ NO	

POTENTIAL STEPS (EXPLORE IF NEEDED/APPLICABLE)	COMPLETED?	DA
Attend any orientation	○ YES ○ NO	
If student is enrolled in an Opportunity Program, ensure student attends any mandatory summer programs if needed	○ YES ○ NO	
Assist student with accessing mental health supports and/or peer group supports to emotionally prepare for college	○ YES ○ NO	
Visit college to get familiar with campus	○ YES ○ NO	
Apply to ASAP program if in CUNY (and if not already enrolled in Opportunity Program)	○ YES ○ NO	
Create study plan	○ YES ○ NO	
Connect young person to tutoring	○ YES ○ NO	
If student wants to withdraw from classes/drop out completely, discuss pros/cons, financial implications, and meet with advisor	○ YES ○ NO	
Check in with college counselor (or ACS Coach/Tutor) as needed	○ YES ○ NO	
Connect youth with campus Disability Services office	○ YES ○ NO	
Enroll in work-study	○ YES ○ NO	
Celebrate finishing with 2.0+	○ YES ○ NO	
Other:	○ YES ○ NO	

For additional space, please see reverse side.

FairFutures>
COLLEGE PERSISTENCE CHECKLIST

BEFORE COLLEGE:

☐ **APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID**
- ☐ Create an FSA ID
- ☐ Fill out the FAFSA
- ☐ Fill out the TAP application
- ☐ Save a copy of the FAFSA Student Aid Report for records

☐ **APPLY FOR COLLEGE**
Best practice: all college applications should be done by Halloween

☐ **APPLY TO SUPPORT PROGRAMS**
- ☐ Apply to the Dorm Project (if interested and eligible)
- ☐ Make sure "YES" is checked on college applications answer to any questions about interest in ASAP/ACE or Opportunity Programs (HEOP/EOP/SEEK/CD).
- ☐ Fill out supplemental applications for HEOP/EOP/SEEK/CD
- ☐ Check your email regularly for outreach from opportunity programs and respond quickly

☐ **APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS**
- ☐ If applying to private schools, fill out College Board CSS (see Appendix G11)
- ☐ Research scholarships as needed and apply

☐ **ACCEPT AN ADMISSIONS OFFER**
- ☐ Contact the school admissions department to see if they are willing to waive the commitment deposit
- Most colleges require offers to be accepted by May 1st.
- *If you need more time, call the admissions department*

☐ **GET ORGANIZED**
- ☐ Make a folder for college paperwork (keep somewhere safe)
- ☐ Get a copy of a foster care letter on agency letterhead
- ☐ Write down your login and password for any college student account in the folder
  - *Share passwords with agency educational specialist or case planner to avoid getting locked out of your student account!*
- ☐ Plan to check your email regularly (3-4x per week)

☐ **VERIFY INDEPENDENT STUDENT STATUS FOR FINANCIAL AID**

☐ **REGISTER FOR CLASSES**

☐ **ATTEND ANY SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAMS OR ORIENTATIONS OFFERED BY THE COLLEGE**

☐ **IF DORMING AWAY:**
- ☐ Pay any housing deposits up front
- ☐ Arrange for room and board pass-through
  - Click here for PDF with more information (pages 18-26)
- ☐ Arrange for a dorming away stipend
  - Contact ocbsp@acs.nyc.gov for more information
- ☐ Make sure dorm supplies are purchased before the student moves into the dorm

☐ **APPLY FOR NEW YORKERS FOR CHILDREN BACK TO SCHOOL PACKAGE PROGRAM** (If currently in care/aged out)
It is vital every student going to college has a laptop of their own

☐ **ARRANGE FOR DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS (IF NEEDED)**
Contact campus office for students with disabilities

EVERY SEMESTER:

☐ **PURCHASE BOOKS AND ONLINE ACCESS FOR ALL CLASSES BY THE END OF THE FIRST WEEK OF THE SEMESTER!**
Agencies should make emergency funds available for any students who do not have books either due to a funding gap or a delay

☐ **CHECK IN WITH:** Coaches, tutors, counselors, and any other supportive adults regularly, especially during freshman year

AT THE HALFWAY MARK OF THE SEMESTER:

☐ **CHECK IF IT'S NECESSARY TO WITHDRAW FROM ANY CLASSES**

☐ **REGISTER FOR CLASSES FOR NEXT SEMESTER**
Registration for the next semester opens around the middle of the semester.
Students should register for the following semester as soon as possible; definitely before they start studying for finals.

☐ **REVIEW GRADES FROM THE SEMESTER**
Celebrate the positives, and make a plan to improve anything that needs improvement

☐ **SUBMIT ANY NEEDED APPEALS**
- ☐ Grade appeals (if received "WU" or "F" or was graded unfairly)
- ☐ Financial aid appeals (if student lost financial aid)
- ☐ Dismissal appeals (if academically dismissed)

☐ **IF ELIGIBLE FOR ETV:**
- ☐ Send Transcript to ETV
- ☐ Fill out ETV Financial Aid Release Form

☐ **IF DORMING AWAY:**
- ☐ Submit documents to continue dorming away stipend
- ☐ If student is turning 21, email phyllis.brodsky@acs.nyc.gov to transition to Exceptional Payment status
- ☐ Reapply for room and board pass-through

☐ **REAPPLY FOR NYFC BACK TO SCHOOL PACKAGE**
Even students who already have a laptop will receive an Amazon gift card every semester if they reapply.

☐ **IF STUDENT IS INTERESTED IN TRANSFERRING:**
- ☐ Submit transfer applications (see Appendix G18, Transferring Colleges Guide)

☐ **IF STUDENT IS NEARING COMPLETION OF A 2-YEAR DEGREE AND WANTS TO TRANSFER TO A 4-YEAR COLLEGE AFTER:**
- ☐ Submit transfer application (see Appendix G18, Transferring Colleges Guide)

EVERY YEAR:
- ☐ FILL OUT ETV APPLICATION
- ☐ REAPPLY FOR FAFSA AND TAP
- ☐ APPLY FOR REPRESENT MAGAZINE AWARDS FOR YOUTH IN CARE COMPETITION
- ☐ APPLY FOR NICK'S SCHOLARS

Important Dates

1. **Grades of I or INC during Spring 2020**
   a. **CUNY Schools: Wednesday, December 20, but check with professor**

What does a grade of I or INC mean? The student needs to finish work for the professor to give a passing grade. If it is not done, the grade becomes an FIN, which is an F.

1. **Appeals for WU grades**
   a. **CUNY Schools: end of Spring 2021, but better to do ASAP**

What happens if a student has a WU? A WU grade is equivalent to an F. The student can

3. **60% of Semester Completed (R2T4 60% Date)**
   a. **CUNY Schools: Wednesday, November 4**

Magic Window: Withdrawing after 60% of the semester is completed (and before the deadline) means that students will not be held responsible for paying back any financial aid.

3. **Last Day to Withdraw from class**
   a. **CUNY Schools: Sunday, December 13**

Remember, Ws do not negatively affect your GPA.

If your student needs:

Technology or Childcare

CUNY Schools
- **Each CUNY school is loaning laptops and wifi hotspots to students for the Fall 2020 semester. The process to request a loan varies from school to school. Some schools' childcare centers are open. https://www.cuny.edu/coronavirus/continuity-for-students/#campus-info**

SUNY Schools
- **Childcare Centers https://system.suny.edu/university-life/child-care/suny-campus-child-care-centers/**

Other Opportunities
- **NYFC Back to School Package and grants for emergency funds https://www.newyorkersforchildren.org/youth-resources/**

If your student needs:

A Book from the School Library

CUNY Schools
- **Student can access ebooks while CUNY libraries are closed**
https://www.cuny.edu/libraries/college-libraries/#ny
https://www.cuny.edu/libraries/continuity-of-library-services/

Other Opportunities
https://openlibrary.org/

If your student needs:

Accommodations for a Learning Disability

CUNY Schools
- **CUNY provides Assistive Technology Services that can be used at home by requesting a Home Activation Key from the Accessibility Office**
  - **Blind & low-vision students**
  - **Students with auditory needs**
  - **Students with dyslexia and learning disabilities**

http://cats.cuny.edu/how-to-guides/

SUNY Schools
- **Designated coordinators:**

https://www.suny.edu/attend/get-started/students-with-disabilities/disability-services-offices/

If your student needs:

Mental Health Services

CUNY Schools
- **CUNY is offering telephone and video counseling services https://www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/student-services/counseling/campus-centers/**

SUNY Schools
- **Remote counseling services and crisis hotline https://www.suny.edu/mental-health/**

Other Opportunities
- **NYC Well https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/**
- **Project Hope https://nyprojecthope.org/**

If your student needs:

Tips on Virtual Learning

- **Use a planner - digital or physical**
- **Set boundaries**
  - **Set aside certain time blocks to work on particular classes**
  - **Signal to people in your home that you are working - wear headphones so no one talks to you, close the door, sit in a certain area**
- **Create workspace**
  - **Get dressed**
  - **Have your coffee or tea if that's what you usually do**
  - **Get out of bed**

If your student needs:

Tips on Virtual Learning

- Participate in class
  - Turn on the video, if possible
  - If there are live classes, use the chat box to make comments and ask questions
  - If there are video lectures, take notes just as you would during an in-person class
  - Close other tabs on your screen so your not tempted to look at YouTube videos

If your student needs:

Tips on Virtual Learning

- **Check school email daily**
  - **Download relevant app**
- **Technical difficulties during remote learning can result in lost work**
- **Always double check to ensure that uploads went through!**
- **Back up ALL assignments, including discussion board posts**
  - **Students can use a cloud service like Google Drive, OneDrive, or Dropbox**
  - **They can also store assignments on computers and flash drives**

If your student needs:

Tips on Virtual Learning

- Monitor and document grades, including course final grades, at least once a month
  - Students can estimate their final grades and be prepared with documentation for their professors if they feel their final grades are incorrect

Tips for the Coach

- **Continue to be a supportive mentor to your students**
  - **Wish them well on tests, celebrate their accomplishments, provide reminders if needed, etc.**
  - **Model strategies to break down tasks into small steps to help students who feel overwhelmed**
- **SELF CARE**

Scenario 1

The student has not heard from their Sociology professor at all. There is a class section on Blackboard, but nothing is posted on it. The student does not know how to reach this professor.

Scenario 2

It is October. The student shares with you that they have not logged into their online courses or completed any work. They are considering withdrawing from all classes.

What should the coach do to best support this student?
- **Next steps you'd encourage the student to take**
- **How you can support them emotionally**
- **Resources the student needs**

Thank you!

Ashia Troiano

ashia@atthetable.nyc

Jaclyn Holzer

jaclyn@atthetable.nyc

At the Table

www.atthetable.nyc