

****Students, please make your own copy of this document so that you can use it to input your responses and save your work.****

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EXIT TICKET

Introduction

Thinking about your future might seem a little strange or even scary right now. That makes sense! This activity will help you take next steps to better prepare for your path after high school and, in turn, will hopefully help you face some of your fears and inspire hope about your vision for the future. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your college/career, guidance, or advocate counselor if you are experiencing any type of hardship or discomfort and/or need additional support in your future planning.

This activity is designed to **help you make a college choice that is a strong match** for you. You've done tremendous work to get here, and it is important that you're thoughtful about your choice about the next step in your education. This activity will guide you through key steps in your college decision making process, to **ensure that you're choosing a college where you are set up to succeed and earn your degree.**

Making a choice about where to attend college is a big decision. It can be complicated and emotional, so please take your time in completing this activity; there's no need to rush! In fact, the activity is designed to take place over multiple sessions:

- In Session 1, you'll learn about graduation rate, affordability, and student success supports as key factors to consider in making a strong match college choice. Also, you'll get to use this knowledge as a "peer coach" helping a sample student make their college decision.
- In Session 2, you will apply the same learning and skills to your own decision-making process, and you'll come out of the activity with a detailed note catcher you can use in conversation with your family and your counselor to finalize your college choice.

We wish you the best of luck as you prepare to take this next step and please know: You got this!

Making a Strong Match College Decision

Student Activity Packet



Mini-Lesson: What Makes a Strong Match College Choice?

The college and financial aid application processes are long and challenging, and you've done tremendous work this year to get to this point. You should feel proud of all you've accomplished!

Making a decision about where you plan to attend college marks the end of this part of the process, and the beginning of the next exciting phase of your educational journey, as you take steps to enroll in your college of choice and transition from high school into higher education.

Before we jump in, let's pause for a moment to think back to the previous activity: [Building Your Postsecondary List](#). When you were choosing potential colleges to apply to in this activity, **what factors (name at least three) were impacting your decision to potentially apply to these schools?**

1.
2.
3.

There are probably many factors that were impacting your decision to apply to these potential schools. Once you actually apply to your choice of postsecondary programs and receive those acceptances in the future, it will be time to focus your decision-making on *choosing the college where you are most likely to be successful*. This is what we mean when we say that you're **making a strong match college choice**. Specifically, a **strong match college** is one **where you are likely to graduate and earn your degree**.

There are many factors you will consider in making your decision, but there are just three key factors involved in making a strong match college choice: *college graduation rate, affordability, and student success supports*. These three factors go a long way in predicting the likelihood of your earning a degree at a particular college. Watch [this short video](#) about the three factors that matter most in making a **strong match college choice** in order to learn more.

Use the space below to reflect on what you learned about the three key factors involved in making a strong match college choice → *college graduation rates, affordability, and student success supports*.

Which one of the three factors in strong match decision-making were you already considering? Explain.	
Which one of the three factors weren't you thinking about before? Explain.	

Making a Strong Match College Decision

Student Activity Packet



Session 1 Activity

You're the counselor!

Imagine you are a peer coach supporting other students with their college decision-making process.

Your classmate Eliza needs help! Here's what you know about Eliza:

- Eliza has been accepted to four different colleges: Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania, St. Lawrence University and SUNY-Geneseo in upstate New York, and Baruch College in Manhattan.
- Eliza has shared pictures of her acceptance letters and of each of the financial aid award letters she's received with you.
- Eliza is Latinx and has shared with you that she's first in her family to go to college. She's also told you that she's eligible for New York State's Opportunity Programs -- also known as HEOP, EOP, SEEK and CD -- which support postsecondary success through a pre-college summer bridge program, intensive advising and additional funding. **If you need a refresher on the New York State Opportunity Programs, check out **slides 21-30** from this [Building a Postsecondary List](#) activity!**
- Eliza has shared that she and her family have discussed the possibility of her attending a college that is up to 5-6 hours away from home.

Follow the instructions below in order to help Eliza make her college decision!

Making a Strong Match College Decision

Student Activity Packet



Part 1: What's the graduation rate at each of Eliza's college choices?

You've learned about the importance of assessing a college's **graduation rate** in making your college choice. *Help Eliza assess her choices by collecting information about the graduation rates at each of the four colleges she's considering.*

STEPS TO COMPLETE PART 1

- ☐ Watch [this short video](#) that will show you how to use the [Citywide College Match Tool](#) in order to compare the graduation rates at different colleges.
- ☐ Use the [Citywide College Match Tool](#) to identify the graduation rate at each of Eliza's college choices. ***Make sure to find the overall graduation rate *and* the graduation rate for Latinx students.***
- ☐ Input the information you've found into the [College Decision Note Catcher](#).
- ☐ Complete the Reflection in the section below.
- ☐ Watch the [short video](#) in the Review section below to check the accuracy of the information you've gathered to support Eliza's decision.

Reflection

Which one of Eliza's colleges would you recommend she choose based on what you know about their graduation rates? Write 2-3 sentences to explain your thinking below.

Review

Eliza's making an important decision, so before you move onto the next part of this activity, watch this [short video](#) to double check that you've gathered accurate information on graduation rates for each of Eliza's colleges.

Making a Strong Match College Decision

Student Activity Packet



Part 2: How affordable are Eliza's choices?

You've learned that students who choose colleges where they're receiving the funding they need are far more likely to earn their college degree. College affordability makes all the difference for college success! *Help Eliza assess how much she'd need to pay to attend each of her college choices, by analyzing each of the four financial aid award letters she's received.*

STEPS TO COMPLETE PART 2

- ☐ Review cost of attendance and financial aid award letters for each of the colleges Eliza is considering.
 - ☐ **Gettysburg** [cost of attendance](#) and [financial aid award](#)
 - ☐ **SUNY-Geneseo** [financial aid award](#) (cost of attendance is in award letter)
 - ☐ **St. Lawrence University** [financial aid award](#) (cost of attendance is in award letter)
 - ☐ **CUNY-Baruch** [financial aid award](#) (cost of attendance is in award letter)
- ☐ Use the [College Board's Compare Aid Calculator](#) or [UAspire's](#) tool to figure out how much Eliza will need to pay to attend each of the four colleges. If you need help or a refresher on financial aid award letter comparison, you can go do this [Making Affordable Postsecondary Choices](#) activity and then come on back here!
- ☐ Input the information you've found into the [College Decision Note Catcher](#).
- ☐ Complete the Reflection in the section below.
- ☐ Watch the [short video](#) in the Review section below to check the accuracy of the information you've gathered to support Eliza's decision.

Reflection

Which one of Eliza's colleges would you recommend she choose based on what you know about how much she will need to pay to attend each? Write 2-3 sentences to explain your thinking below.

Review

Eliza's making an important decision, so before you move onto the next part of this activity, [watch this short video](#) to double check that you've accurately calculated how much she'll need to pay to attend each of the four colleges.

Making a Strong Match College Decision

Student Activity Packet



Part 3: Where will Eliza get the most support?

You've learned that students who choose colleges where they're receiving targeted student success supports are far more likely to earn their college degree. The summer bridge and intensive advising supports that students receive through the New York State Opportunity Programs, like HEOP, EOP, SEEK, CD, or through other special programs at CUNY, like ASAP, ACE, CLIP and START are great examples of targeted student success supports.

Help Eliza to ensure that student success supports are a part of her decision making process, by identifying which of her college choices have offered her admission through one of the NYS Opportunity Programs or one of CUNY's special programs.

STEPS TO COMPLETE PART 3

- ☐ You can confirm that Eliza has been accepted through a NYS Opportunity Program *if you see a funding line in the financial aid award letter that is labeled HEOP, EOP, SEEK or CD*. Take another look at each of the financial aid award letters to see if the offers include HEOP, EOP, SEEK or CD funding.
 - ☐ Gettysburg [financial aid award](#)
 - ☐ SUNY-Geneseo [financial aid award](#)
 - ☐ St. Lawrence University [financial aid award](#)
 - ☐ CUNY-Baruch [financial aid award](#)
- ☐ Input the information you've found about whether Eliza can enroll in a NYS Opportunity Program at each of the colleges in the [College Decision Note Catcher](#).
- ☐ Complete the Reflection in the section below.
- ☐ Watch the short video in the Review section below to check the accuracy of the information you've gathered to support Eliza's decision.

Reflection

Which one of Eliza's colleges would you recommend she choose based on what you know about where she'll be able to enroll through a student support program? Write 2-3 sentences to explain your thinking below.

Review

Eliza's making an important decision, so before you move onto the next part of this activity, [watch this short video](#) to double check that you've accurately identified the colleges where she's been offered admission through a support program.

Making a Strong Match College Decision

Student Activity Packet



Part 4: Putting it all together!

Great work! You've been a huge help to Eliza so far and are learning lots about the key information you'll need for making your own college decision in the process. Now let's put it all together!

Review all of the information you've gathered in the Note Catcher below -- about *graduation rate*, *affordability*, and *student success supports* for each of the colleges -- to help Eliza make a strong match decision. Which college would you recommend that Eliza choose? Explain your thinking below.

COLLEGE DECISION NOTE CATCHER

Record your work for this first day's activity using the College Decision Note Catcher. The links at the top and bottom of each column will take you back to the instructions that guide you through each part of this activity.

	PART 1: Grad Rate		PART 2: Affordability	PART 3: Student Success
	What is the graduation rate at each of these colleges?		How much will Eliza need to pay to attend this college?	Will Eliza be able to enroll through a support program at this college?
	All students	Latinx students		
Gettysburg College Fin Aid Award				
SUNY-Geneseo Fin Aid Award				
St. Lawrence University Fin Aid Award				
CUNY-Baruch College Fin Aid Award				
	Nice work! Return here to complete Part 1 of this activity.		Nice work! Return here to complete Part 2 of this activity.	Nice work! Return here to complete Part 3 of this activity..

Making a Strong Match College Decision

Student Activity Packet



Session 2 Activity

Making Your College Decision

Welcome back! In Session 2, you'll apply all that you learned through your experience as a peer coach for Eliza in order to help make a strong match college decision for yourself.

Here's what you need in order to complete this activity:

- Acceptance letters (electronic or paper copy) from each of the colleges where you've been admitted
- Financial Aid award letters (electronic or paper copy) you've received from colleges to date

The instructions below will walk you through the same steps that you helped Eliza to take in making her college choice. Now we'll focus on yours!

Part 5: What's the graduation rate at your college choices?

You've learned about the importance of assessing a college's **graduation rate** in making your college choice. *Assess her choices by collecting information about the graduation rates at each of the four colleges you're considering, including graduation rate specific to your demographic group.*

STEPS TO COMPLETE PART 5

- ☐ Watch [this short video](#) that will show you how to use the [Citywide College Match Tool](#) in order to compare the graduation rates at different colleges.
- ☐ Use the [Citywide College Match Tool](#) to identify the graduation rate at each of Eliza's college choices***Make sure to find the overall graduation rate *and* the graduation rate for the demographic group you identify with.***
- ☐ Input the information you've found into [Your College Decision Note Catcher](#).
- ☐ Complete the Reflection in the section below.

Reflection

Which one of your colleges would you choose based on what you know about their graduation rates? Write 2-3 sentences to explain your thinking below.

Part 6: How affordable are your choices?

You've learned that students who choose colleges where they're receiving the funding they need are far more likely to earn their college degree. College affordability makes all the difference for college success!

Analyze your financial aid award letters to assess how much you'd need to pay to attend each of your college choices.

STEPS TO COMPLETE PART 6

- ☐ Review the financial aid award letters you have received. Go to the college's website for the itemized cost of attendance if it's not included in the award letter.
- ☐ Use the [College Board's Compare Aid Calculator](#) to figure out how much Eliza will need to pay to attend each of the four colleges. If you need help or a refresher on financial aid award letter comparison, you can go do this [Analyzing Financial Aid](#) activity and then come on back here!
- ☐ Input the information you've found into [Your College Decision Note Catcher](#).
- ☐ Complete the Reflection in the section below.
- ☐ Watch the short video in the Review section below to check the accuracy of the information you've gathered to support Eliza's decision.

Reflection

Which one of your colleges would you choose based on what you know about how much you will need to pay to attend? Write 2-3 sentences to explain your thinking below.

Making a Strong Match College Decision

Student Activity Packet



Part 7: Where will you get the most support?

You've learned that students who choose colleges where they're receiving targeted student success supports are far more likely to earn their college degree. The summer bridge and intensive advising supports that students receive through the New York State Opportunity Programs like HEOP, EOP, SEEK, CD or through other special programs at CUNY like [ACE](#), [ASAP](#), [START](#), or [CLIP](#) are great examples of targeted student success supports.

Make sure student success supports are a part of your decision making process, by identifying which of your college choices have offered you admission through one of the NYS Opportunity Programs or one of CUNY's special student success programs.

STEPS TO COMPLETE PART 7

- ☐ You can confirm that you've been accepted through a NYS Opportunity Program *if you see a funding line in the financial aid award letter that is labeled HEOP, EOP, SEEK or CD*. Take another look at each of your financial aid award letters to see if the offers include HEOP, EOP, SEEK or CD funding.
- ☐ You may also be able to enroll through one of CUNY's other student success programs: [ACE](#), [ASAP](#), [START](#), or [CLIP](#). Comb back through your emails to check for messages about any of these programs, or follow the links below to assess your eligibility and next steps:
 - ☐ ACE eligibility and steps to join for [Lehman](#) and [John Jay](#)
 - ☐ [ASAP eligibility](#) and [steps to join](#)
 - ☐ [START eligibility and steps to join](#)
 - ☐ [CLIP eligibility and steps to join](#)
- ☐ Use [Your College Decision Note Catcher](#) to record which colleges are offering you enrollment through a NYS Opportunity Program. You should also note the CUNY colleges where you are eligible to enroll through ASAP, ACE, START or CLIP and your next steps.
- ☐ Complete the Reflection in the section below.

Reflection

Which college would you choose if you were only considering where you'll be able to enroll through a student support program? Write 2-3 sentences to explain your thinking below.

Making a Strong Match College Decision

Student Activity Packet



Part 8: Putting It All Together!

Great work! You've thought through each of the key elements of making a strong match college choice: graduation rate, affordability, and student success supports. Now let's put it all together!

Review all of the information you've gathered in Your College Decision Note Catcher below. Which college are you thinking is the right choice for you? Explain your thinking below.

YOUR COLLEGE DECISION NOTE CATCHER

Record your work for this Session 2 activity using the College Decision Note Catcher. The links at the top and bottom of each column will take you back to the instructions that guide you through each part of this activity.

	<u>PART 5: Grad Rate</u>		<u>PART 6: Affordability</u>	<u>PART 7: Student Success</u>
	<i>What is the graduation rate at each of these colleges?</i>		<i>How much will you need to pay to attend this college?</i>	<i>Will you be able to enroll through a support program at this college?</i>
	<i>All students</i>	<i>Specific to your demographic</i>		
[COLLEGE 1]				
[COLLEGE 2]				
[COLLEGE 3]				
[COLLEGE 4]				
[COLLEGE 5]				
[COLLEGE 6]				
[COLLEGE 7]				
[COLLEGE 8]				
	Nice work! Return here to complete Part 5 of this activity.		Nice work! Return here to complete Part 6 of this activity.	Nice work! Return here to complete Part 7 of this activity..

Making a Strong Match College Decision

Student Activity Packet



EXIT TICKET

Great Job! Set up a conference to talk through college choice with your counselor/the school staff member supporting you with postsecondary planning before you submit a commitment. Bring [Your College Decision Note Catcher](#) to that conversation, and consider sharing it with your counselor ahead of time.

Schedule your conference now & record the date, time, & format (phone, google meet...) below.

DATE: _____ TIME: _____ FORMAT: _____
