

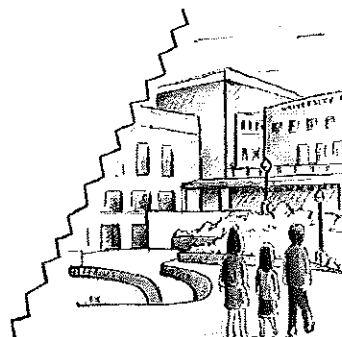
Learning for Life: Everyone Can Go To College

In today's world, everyone needs a good education to make a decent living and to be a good citizen. But beyond the practical reasons for getting a good education, there is also a more basic, human joy in learning for its own sake. We are all born to learn; it's a basic part of human nature. That's why it's so important that we do all we can to make sure our children enjoy school, and feel rewarded and encouraged when they work hard at learning. Children need to know their families care about their education and have high expectations for them.

Talking about college early

In today's high-tech economy, nearly all students will need education or job training beyond high school to get good jobs. That's why it's a good idea to start talking to your child early – from the time they start kindergarten – about preparing to go to college.

A good time to start taking action for preparing for college is when your child starts middle school. Taking advanced math and science classes in middle school can help students have a head start on being ready for college, so be sure to ask your child's teacher about them.



When your student starts high school, ask the high school counselor for information about college admissions right away. The counselor will explain which classes your child should take each high school year to be ready for a four-year college or university.

There are two kinds of colleges

Community and technical colleges take two years or less and prepare students for specific jobs or transfer to a four-year college or university.

Washington's community and technical colleges have an "open door" policy, which means they accept all students, regardless of their past academic performance. If they aren't ready to do college level work, students can take remedial classes that get them ready for it. Community and technical colleges also offer English instruction and job training for adults of all ages.

Four-year colleges and universities prepare students to be professionals such as doctors, lawyers, scientists, or teachers.

Students don't have to be geniuses to go to a four-year college or university; any student who works reasonably hard and gets decent grades can go. But students have to take the right kinds of high school classes—and the right number of high school classes—to prepare.