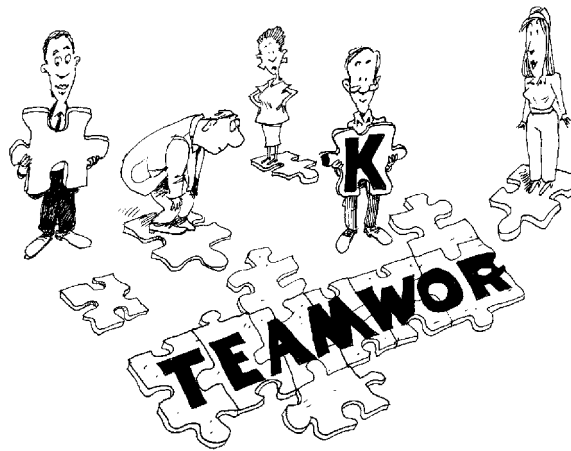


**A**CCCESS, TO  
**C**OLLEGE, THROUGH  
**C**OLLABORATION  
**E**XCELLENCE, AND  
**S**TUDENT  
**S**UCCESS



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## ACCESS®

*As competition grows tougher at the top colleges, the game of getting into these schools has become more and more complex. No matter who you are or how good your grades and test scores are, there is no guarantee that you will be admitted to your desired schools. In order to be confident that you will do your best in the process, you must research your college and program options, finding those that best fit your needs and desires; understand college admissions, recognizing application options such as Early Decision and identifying the goals or philosophies of the admissions officers at your target schools; and then, based on information gained during these first two tasks, launch a sophisticated application and marketing strategy.*

*[How to Get into the Top Colleges]*

The acronym, ACCESS®, stands for **A**ccess to **C**ollege, through **C**ollaboration, **E**xcellence, and **S**tudent **S**uccess. ACCESS® is a parent-student booster club based on Mychal Wynn's college planning series of books. All available data shows that preparation for and admissions into college is a knowledge intensive process—one that many students and families are simply unable or unprepared for. As a booster club, ACCESS® facilitates collaboration between parents, students, and school counselors. Families work together in identifying the most currently available college and career planning resources, maximize the opportunities within their local school community, and collaborate with school counselors to provide students with the best possible college-bound plans.

David Conley, in *College Knowledge: What High School Students Know About College Readiness*, notes:

*The first lesson is that college preparation in the United States is knowledge-intensive, and much of that knowledge is not readily available in one place. Parents with several children who attended college will tell you that, for the first child, they were at the mercy of others for information.*

*The Bridge Project research found that, in general, knowledge of the entire college admissions process is more prevalent among the more privileged. High schools have few systematic means to ensure that all students have this knowledge and even fewer resources to devote to those who are most in need of it.*

Mychal Wynn, in *A High School Plan for Students with College-Bound Dreams*, notes the three primary areas of focus for a college-bound student:

1. Meeting their high school graduation requirements.
2. Becoming a strong candidate for admissions to their first-choice colleges and being prepared to succeed academically once they get there.
3. Meeting their EFC (Expected Family Contribution) for college tuition, room, and board.

The course enrollment and extracurricular opportunities available to students vary widely from school district to school district and from school to school within each district. ACCESS® assists parents and students in better understanding student performance within their state (i.e., high school graduation rates, exit exam pass rates, college readiness, etc.) so that they are fully informed in preparing their college-bound plans (see the tables below that reflect the high school graduation rates and graduation exam pass rates for students in the author’s home state of Georgia).

<b>Graduation Rate by Student Group</b>	<b>Georgia (%)</b>	<b>Nation (%)</b>
<b>All Students</b>	<b>56.3</b>	<b>69.6</b>
<b>By Gender</b>		
Male	<b>51.4</b>	<b>65.2</b>
Female	<b>61.7</b>	<b>72.7</b>
<b>By Race and Ethnicity</b>		
American Indian/Alaska Native	<b>22.6</b>	<b>47.4</b>
Asian/Pacific Islander	<b>75.3</b>	<b>77.0</b>
Hispanic	<b>39.5</b>	<b>55.6</b>
Black (not Hispanic)	<b>45.9</b>	<b>51.6</b>
White (not Hispanic)	<b>63.1</b>	<b>76.2</b>

Source: Diplomas Count: State by State High School Graduation Rates

<b>2007 Georgia High School Graduation Exam Pass Rates</b>				
<b>Group</b>	<b>Math</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>	<b>Science</b>
Asian	96%	94%	88%	87%
White	95%	98%	91%	80%
Hispanic	88%	86%	73%	54%
Black	81%	93%	73%	51%
Female	89%	96%	81%	63%
Male	89%	94%	84%	70%

Source: Georgia Department of Education

The high school ACCESS® club can greatly assist in bridging the college-knowledge gap by engaging students and parents in ongoing college exploration and planning throughout a student's four years of high school as outlined in Mychal Wynn's book, *A High School Plan for Students with College-Bound Dreams*:

- Academics (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, course selection, clubs, and ensuring early intervention for struggling students)
- Extracurricular Activities (e.g., club involvement, leadership development, community service, mentoring, and athletics)
- Personal Qualities (e.g., identifying the many opportunities for developing each student's unique gifts and abilities through school-related, summer, pre-college, and internship programs)
- Intangibles (assisting students in maximizing their unique ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, and cultural gifts and circumstances)

The middle school ACCESS® club assists students and families in developing a seven year middle-through-high school plans, as outlined in Mychal Wynn's book, *A Middle School Plan for Students with College-Bound Dreams*.

The ACCESS® club provides a vehicle of collaboration between students and parents from varying cultural, socioeconomic, and educational backgrounds providing all students with more competitive college-bound plans and increasing the overall high school graduation and college matriculation rate within each school community.

### **College Planning Materials**

- *A High School Plan for Students with College-Bound Dreams*
- *A High School Plan for Students with College-Bound Dreams: Student Workbook*
- *A Middle School Plan for Students with College-Bound Dreams*
- *A Middle School Plan for Students with College-Bound Dreams: Student Workbook*
- *College Planning for High School Students: A Quick Guide*
- *College Planning for Middle School Students: A Quick Guide*
- *Ten Steps to Helping Your Child Succeed in School*

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What does A.C.C.E.S.S. mean?**

The acronym, ACCESS, stands for **A**ccess to **C**ollege, through **C**ollaboration, **E**xcellence, and **S**tudent **S**uccess. ACCESS is a parent-student booster club.

## **What is the mission of A.C.C.E.S.S.?**

The mission of ACCESS is to ensure that all students and families gain full access to postsecondary educational opportunities.

## **Isn't college planning the job of the school's counselor?**

School counselors are oftentimes overwhelmed with the number of students whom they are responsible for providing college and career guidance. Students frequently have very little contact with their counselor until their junior or senior year in high school.

## **How will students and parents benefit from participating in A.C.C.E.S.S.?**

Preparing for, being accepted into, and paying for college is more expensive, more competitive, and requires more information than ever before. ACCESS students and parents will be working together to provide each student with the best opportunity to pursue his or her college-bound dreams.

## **What are student responsibilities in A.C.C.E.S.S.?**

Students should be prepared to be either a mentor (helping other students) or mentee (receiving help from another student); helping to plan college visits; researching college information; creating study groups; and assisting in planning functions and fundraisers.

## **What are parent responsibilities in A.C.C.E.S.S.?**

Parents should be prepared to work with other parents in researching financial aid; scholarships; contacting colleges; planning college trips; researching pre-college programs; and working with teachers and counselors to ensure that students stay on track to becoming competitive candidates for college admission.

## **Does A.C.C.E.S.S. have a curriculum?**

Yes. The college planning series of books by Mychal Wynn.

## **Can anyone join A.C.C.E.S.S.?**

ACCESS is open to all parents and students.