



January 31, 2018

Legislative Reference Library  
Attn: Acquisitions Dept.  
645 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1050

RE: College Possible Legislative Report

To Whom it May Concern,

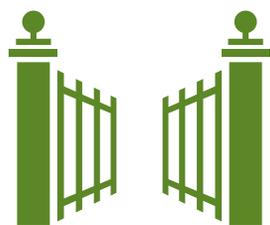
Enclosed please find College Possible's report for the State of Minnesota . An electronic copy has also been emailed to [reports@lrl.leg.mn](mailto:reports@lrl.leg.mn) per contract requirements.

Please advise with any questions or if you need anything else. Thank you!

Sincerely,



Sara Dziuk  
Executive Director, College Possible Minnesota



**COLLEGE  
POSSIBLE™**

# 2017-18 IMPACT REPORT

## + COLLEGE POSSIBLE AND THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

College Possible is a nonprofit making college admission and success possible for low-income students through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support. In 2014, College Possible Minnesota received a \$750,000 appropriation from the State of Minnesota to add 150 high school juniors to its program and support them through college graduation. In 2017, College Possible received additional funding of \$500,000 over two years to support further expansion of its services. This report describes College Possible's impact as a result of your support.

## + COMMUNITY NEED

Of the 17 million students enrolled in baccalaureate institutions in 2015, **only 21% were from low-income backgrounds**, compared to 73% of the highest-income students<sup>1</sup>. Studies have shown that a four-year college degree is the surest path out of poverty. College graduates are 24% more likely to be employed and their lifetime earnings are approximately \$1 million greater<sup>2</sup>.

## + PROVEN RESULTS

College Possible has demonstrated success in closing the opportunity gap for low-income students: **99% of our students earn admission to college**, and they go on to graduate at the same rate as students from all income levels nationwide. Overall our students are **4 times more likely to earn a college degree than their low-income peers**. When a student joins our program we make an 8-year commitment to serve them through college graduation.

## + ECONOMIC BENEFITS

By 2020, **74% of jobs in Minnesota will require postsecondary education**<sup>3</sup>, and the only growing populations are those who have been least likely to earn degrees: low-income students and students of color.

## + RIGOROUS EVALUATION

A recent Harvard evaluation confirmed that College Possible significantly improves low-income students' chances of enrolling in college. The evaluation showed that **College Possible more than doubles a student's chances of enrolling in college and has a significant positive impact on four-year college enrollment rates**. A social return on investment analysis found an investment in a College Possible student yields a **333% return to society**<sup>4</sup>.

## + ABILITY TO SCALE

We've grown more than 250-fold since our founding in 2000, replicating our program across the country while maintaining the same strong results. Our program is highly scalable because it's cost-effective: **College Possible is just 1/6th the cost of similar government-funded programs**.

Sources:

1. Postsecondary Education Opportunity, 2015
2. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016
3. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2013
4. Social Return on Investment; Peter Heegaard, 2011

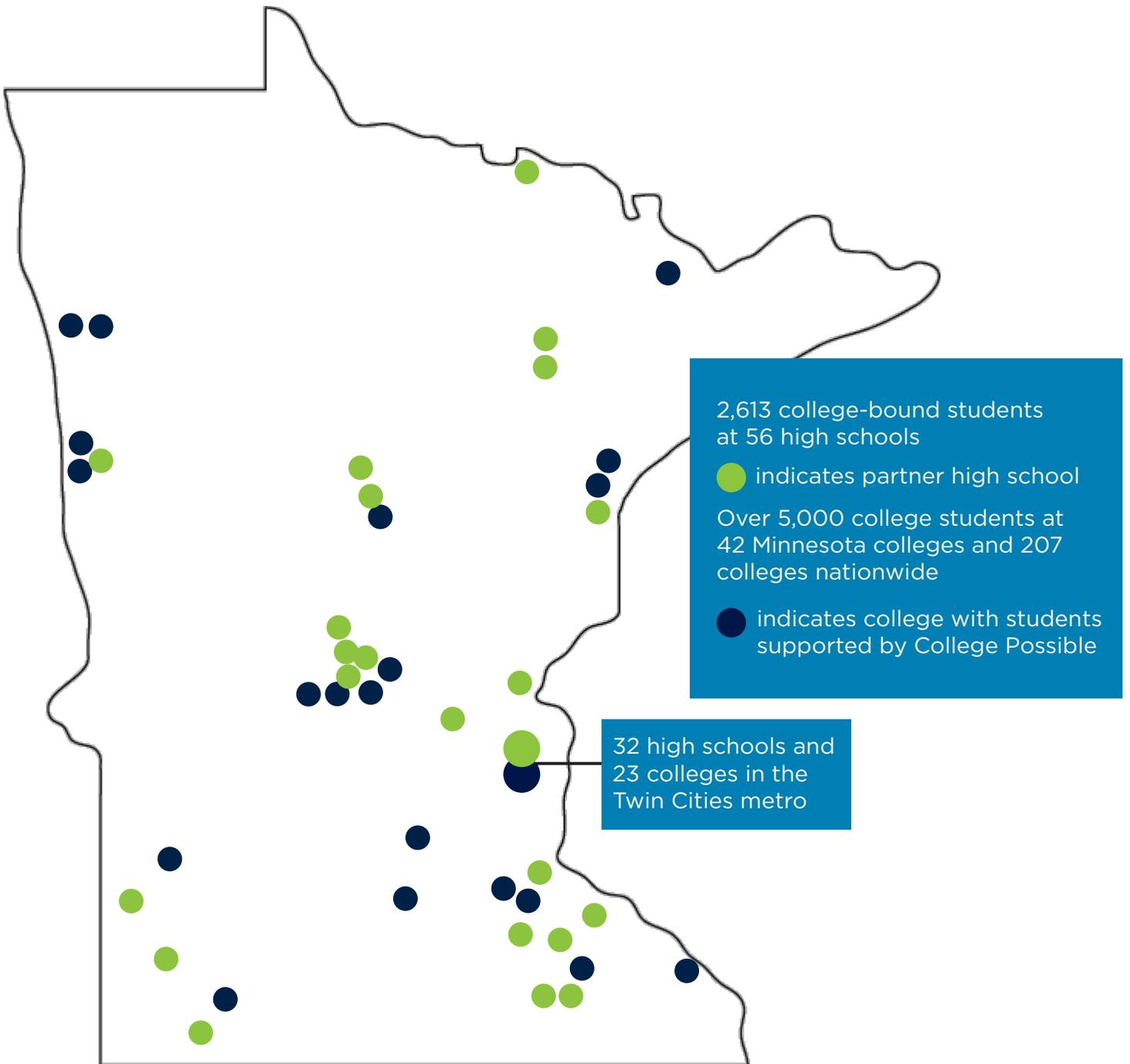
## STATEWIDE IMPACT IN 2017-2018

- + **89** College Possible high school and college coaches
- + **129** additional high school students served over 2016-17
- + **8,372** high school and college students in our core programming
- + **56** partner high schools
- + **20,904** hours of community service performed by students
- + **30+** organizations benefiting from students' service



College Possible honored 2017 college graduates during an event called SOAR! The evening was an opportunity for graduates to gather with their families and receive recognition for their hard work.

## STATEWIDE IMPACT IN 2017-2018



# MINNESOTA HIGH SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

## **Campus-Based High School Partners**

Bloomington Kennedy High School  
Burnsville High School  
Central Senior High School  
Champlin Park High School  
Community of Peace Academy  
Como Park Senior High School  
Columbia Heights High School  
Coon Rapids High School  
Edina High School  
Edison High School  
Harding Senior High School  
Highland Park Senior High School  
Humboldt High School  
Johnson Senior High School  
North Community High School  
North St. Paul High School  
Park Center Senior High School  
Patrick Henry High School  
Richfield High School  
Roosevelt High School  
Roseville Area High School  
Robbinsdale Armstrong High School  
Robbinsdale Cooper High School  
St. Louis Park High School  
Ubah Medical Academy  
Washington Technology Magnet School

## **Tech-Connected High School Partners**

Apollo High School  
Becker High School  
Blooming Prairie High School  
Bloomington Jefferson High School  
Cambridge-Isanti High School  
Cannon Falls High School  
Century High School  
Chaska High School  
Cristo Rey Jesuit High School  
Eveleth-Gilbert Senior High School  
Fridley High School  
International Falls High School  
John Marshall High School  
LEAP High School  
Moorhead High School  
Mountain Iron-Buhl High School  
Murray County Central High School

Orono High School  
Owatonna Senior High School  
Park High School  
Pequot Lakes High School  
Pine River-Backus High School  
Red Wing High School  
Rocori High School  
Russell-Tyler-Ruthton High School  
Sartell High School  
Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists  
Technical Senior High School  
Tower View Alternative High School  
Triton High School  
Worthington High School

## **Campus-Based College Partners**

Augsburg College  
College of Saint Benedict & Saint John's University  
Saint Cloud State University  
St. Catherine University  
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities

## **Tech-Connected Colleges**

Anoka Technical College  
Anoka-Ramsey Community College  
Aveda Institute  
Bethel University  
Carleton College  
Central Lakes College-Brainerd  
Century Community and Technical College  
Concordia College at Moorhead  
Concordia University-Saint Paul  
Dakota County Technical College  
Gustavus Adolphus College  
Hamline University  
Hennepin Technical College  
Herzing University-Minneapolis  
Inver Hills Community College  
Lake Superior College  
Macalester College  
Metropolitan State University  
Minneapolis Community and Technical College  
Minnesota State University Mankato

Minnesota State University Moorhead  
Minnesota West Community and Technical College  
Normandale Community College  
North Hennepin Community College  
Northland Community and Technical College  
Regency Beauty Institute-Burnsville  
Saint Cloud Technical and Community College  
Saint Mary's University of Minnesota  
Saint Paul College  
Southwest Minnesota State University  
St. Olaf College  
The College of Saint Scholastica  
University of Minnesota-Rochester  
University of Northwestern  
University of St Thomas  
Vermilion Community College

**Fiscal Year 2017 – College Possible  
Final Report Requirements  
Project Period: July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017**

*Using the guidance provided below, report the outcomes of your fiscal year 2017 appropriation of \$250,000. The fiscal year runs from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.*

**I. Participant Data**

**A. Number of Participants:**

Projected number of participants: 7750

Actual recipients of service: 7787

**B. Total number of participants by grade level: Varies – see below**

Cohort	African American	Native American	Hispanic	Asian	Other Race/Ethnicity	Immigrant	First-generation college students	Low-income students
High school Juniors	265	54	161	434	411	861	1193	1325
High School Seniors	305	11	135	357	356	757	1048	1164
1 <sup>st</sup> year postsecondary	288	4	137	365	172	628	869	966
2 <sup>nd</sup> year postsecondary	256	7	103	318	168	554	767	852
3 <sup>rd</sup> year postsecondary	185	2	83	323	176	500	692	769
4 <sup>th</sup> year postsecondary	214	3	75	277	181	488	675	750
5 <sup>th</sup> (+) year postsecondary	534	14	155	483	775	1275	1765	1961
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2047</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>2557</b>	<b>2239</b>	<b>5062</b>	<b>7008</b>	<b>7787</b>

**(The total number under B should equal the recipients of service under A)**

**C. Total number of college completers (this includes a certificate, associate’s degree, or bachelor’s degree):**

366

Please see the chart below for more details about our most recent college graduates:

**Degrees Earned From MN HS Grads In 2016-17**

DEGREE TYPE	TOTAL	DEGREE TYPE	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	6 Years	7 Years	8 Years	9 Years	10 + Years	TOTAL
Certificate	18	Certificate	2	1	2	3	1	3	2		2	2	18
Associate	37	Associate		3	5	11	4	3	6	4		1	37
Bachelor	311	Bachelor			7	157	79	29	15	8	10	6	311
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>366</b>

**D. Total hours of community service by high school and college students: 17,500**

**E. Please list the community organizations who benefitted from student service hours, and their location.**

Name of Community Organization	Location
The Food Group (fka Emergency Foodshelf Network)	8501 54th Ave. N, New Hope, MN 55428
26 partner high schools and various communities/organizations*	Greater Twin Cities

*\*All high school students participate in Spring Service Days, during which they work in their high school cohorts to identify, plan and implement a service project that benefits their high school and/or the local community. Cohort service projects this year included teacher appreciation meals; kindness notes to faculty; school clean up and painting projects; organizing school libraries; tree planting and gardening on school grounds. Community projects this year included packing food for Feed My Starving Children; highway cleanup; Lake Phalen cleanup; park cleanup; and coloring for the community. College students also participate in volunteer “college panels” at their former high schools to help younger peers envision what college will be like.\**

## II. Methodology

- A. Please describe the methodology used to make funding decisions based on *geographic location in MN* (appropriation language requires that “to the extent possible it be proportionately allocated between students from greater Minnesota and students in the seven-county metropolitan area”). *(For the purposes of this question, please identify student’s geographic area by Congressional District).*

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 3,033,634 of the 5,519,952 Minnesotans live within the seven-county metropolitan area (approximately 55%). For the allocation of the appropriation, we identified growth within our high school and college programming in both greater Minnesota and the metropolitan area that closely mirrored this distribution:

- Of the 600 students funded by the FY17 appropriation, 243 (40%) attended school in greater Minnesota during the 2016-17 academic year

We were also intentional in the selection of this cohort to ensure it included our different program models and different institution types:

- 306 of the students funded by the FY17 appropriation were college students
  - 80 students attended a Community or Technical College (100 % public non-profit)
  - 226 students attended Bachelor’s granting institutions (44% public non-profit, 56% private non-profit)
- 294 of the students funded by the FY17 appropriation were high school students
  - 154 of the high school students participated in our Tech-Connected programming (greater MN)
  - 140 participated in the Campus Based model (metropolitan area)

This cohort represents our growth of the Tech-Connected High School program, expansion within a Campus Based partner high school, and growth within our College Program. This growth was supported in part by the \$250,000 FY17 appropriation. The following is a list of high schools and colleges that the students funded by this appropriation attended:

- + Apollo High School
- + Becker Senior High School
- + Blooming Prairie High School
- + Cambridge-Isanti High School
- + Cannon Falls High School
- + Century High School(Rochester)
- + Eveleth-Gilbert High School
- + International Falls High School
- + Moorhead High School
- + Mountain Iron Buhl High School
- + Murray County Central High School
- + Owatonna High School
- + Pequot Lakes High School
- + Pine-River Backus High School
- + Proctor High School
- + Red Wing High School
- + Rocori High School
- + RTR High School
- + Sartell High School
- + Technical High School
- + Tower View High School
- + Triton High School
- + Worthington High School
- + Park Center Senior High
- + Anoka-Ramsey Community College
- + Anoka Technical College
- + Century Community and Technical College
- + Dunwoody College of Technology
- + Lake Superior College
- + Normandale Community College
- + Inver Hills Community College
- + Hennepin Technical College
- + Saint Paul College
- + Vermilion Community College
- + Carleton College
- + Concordia College at Moorhead
- + Gustavus Adolphus College
- + Hamline University

- + Macalester College
- + Metropolitan State University
- + St. Olaf College
- + Saint Mary's University of Minnesota
- + Southwest Minnesota State
- + University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
- + University of Minnesota - Rochester

**B. Provide the numbers of participants from each congressional district of the state.**

<b>Congressional District</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
<b>One</b>	70
<b>Two</b>	50
<b>Three</b>	166
<b>Four</b>	162
<b>Five</b>	18
<b>Six</b>	52
<b>Seven</b>	31
<b>Eight</b>	42

**C. Describe the *plan of delivery* for the “intensive curriculum of student coaching and support for both high school and college level students.” Describe topics covered, mode of delivery, number of sessions held with students and related issues. Describe barriers and opportunities encountered and lessons learned.**

***PROGRAM DELIVERY***

College Possible programming begins during students’ junior year in high school and continues all the way through their college graduation. We recruit students during the spring of their sophomore year of high school to begin the program the following fall. Eligible students are low-income, as determined by county’s median household income or free and reduced lunch eligibility, have a GPA of at least 2.0, are not supported by other college prep programs, and are interested in attending four-year colleges\*. We market our program to all low-income sophomores in our partner high schools, and hold informational sessions for all interested students where we clearly outline requirements for selection and participation. We also work with the school administration and counselors to identify students who may be a good fit for the program and assist with the student selection process. Interested students complete a College Possible application and interview, which helps them feel “buy in” to the program and understand they are committing to College Possible until they graduate from college.

*\*College Possible markets and designs our program with a four-year degree in mind, because we know that four-year institutions have higher persistence and graduation rates (graduation rates can be twice as high), as well as the highest return on investment for low-income students. However, we recognize that many factors influence a student's decision to attend a certain type of college, and support them no matter where they enroll. Approximately 30% of all College Possible students attend Community and Technical Colleges. Our students' reasons for choosing Community and Technical Colleges vary widely. Many students choose a two-year school because they may not have a four-year option; do not have to pay anything out of pocket if they complete the FAFSA; and/or because of the general short-term financial feasibility (lower tuition, ability to live at home, ability to take a lower credit load that costs less and/or allows time for an off-campus job or family responsibilities). See "Barriers and Opportunities" section for more information on our developing programming for students attending Community and Technical Colleges.*

### **Campus Based High School Program**

In our traditional program, students are placed in cohorts of 30-40 at their respective high schools, and led by a College Possible AmeriCorps coach who is based at the school. They participate in two-hour after school sessions, twice each week, during the entirety of their junior and senior years.

Coaches are recent college graduates; many are people of color and/or first-generation college students, making them especially relatable for the students we serve who share the same background. These idealistic, motivated leaders receive intensive, ongoing training and a structured curriculum. Coaches act as student mentors, resources and advocates, building a culture of high expectations in which students learn to thrive.

#### *Junior Year Topics:*

- **College awareness:** introduce the benefits of college and the process for admission.
- **Academic support:** individual and group support in math, science, writing and reading comprehension.
- **Financial planning:** introduction to financial literacy utilizing an evidence-based curriculum.
- **Test preparation:** intensive ACT/SAT preparation in collaboration with the Princeton Review to ensure student scores reflect true aptitude and improve academic preparation for college. College Possible students have raised their ACT scores from the bottom 17<sup>th</sup> percentile to the 37<sup>th</sup> percentile of test takers, putting college admission within reach. In 2016-17, College Possible students in our Campus Based program increased their scores by 27%, a record increase for our students and the highest of College Possible students across the country.

*Senior Year Topics:*

- **College selection/college fit:** individual support to develop a list of target colleges and determine best match.
- **College application:** support to prepare college applications, write essays and secure reference letters.
- **Financial aid consulting:** intensive individual support in securing financial aid and scholarships.
- **Financial planning:** students receive targeted curriculum on budgeting, credit and debt, college costs, savings, loans, interpreting award letters, and securing federal grants and work-study positions.
- **College transition and summer-bridge:** programming to help students matriculate to college after high school graduation including; financial, academic and social-cultural transition to post-secondary education.

### **Technology Connected High School Program**

In our Tech-Connected Program, students from high schools across the state are placed in portfolios of 60-70 and led by a coach based in our St. Paul office. The Tech-Connected High School Program is supported primarily by partnerships with these high schools and we are able to leverage community and school support for student participation, starting with the application process and continuing through a student's experience. Eligible students (the eligibility requirements are similar to our Campus Based Program, but require a 2.5 minimum GPA) are identified by the counseling staff and administration of our partner schools and then recruited by College Possible coaches in the start of their junior year. Interested students complete an on-line application with the support of staff at their school.

The tech-connected high school coaching model consists of an unbundled version of our campus-based high school curriculum. Coaches use a combination of e-newsletters, individual monthly conferences, and online group workshops to connect with students and deliver the curriculum. This year, there was a significant emphasis on exploring college options and setting goals, navigating college costs through scholarships and saving income, and drafting well-written essays and applications. The content covered is very similar to that of their campus-based peers, but altered slightly due to the delivery format and regional context.

*Junior Year Topics:*

- **College Awareness:** this is even more important for our tech-connected students who live throughout greater Minnesota as there is often less exposure and accessibility to wide variety of college options that exist.

- **Academic support:** because tech-connected students participate in more individual meetings with their coach than students in our traditional program, they are able to dive even deeper into their academics and ensure they are selecting the right courses and staying on top of their assignments.
- **Financial planning:** As coaches are often communicating individually with students, they are able to hold very specific conversations about a student's financial situation and encourage them to connect with their family to make a plan for paying for college
- **Test preparation:** similar to the campus based program, tech-connected students use the Princeton Review curriculum to prepare for college entrance exams. However, as they do not have as much time working directly with a coach as campus based students, our tech-connected program utilized Princeton Review's online portal, giving students consistent access to testing strategies, sample problems, and even timed practice tests.

*Senior Year Topics* are similar to our Campus Based Program, as both include more individual support for students.

### **College Program**

After graduating from high school, students are supported by an AmeriCorps college coach, who helps them transition to college, persist, and earn their degrees. Through both in-person and technology-based consulting, these coaches provide support to students centered on the following curriculum topics:

- **Succeeding in college academics:** connecting with students early in their first year of college to discuss study skills, use of office hours and campus tutoring services and managing college academic work loads.
- **Financing a college education:** working with students to pursue all viable financial resources, find work-study positions, manage account balances, renew the FAFSA (93% of College Possible students renew), and renew or find new scholarships.
- **Building campus connections:** helping students develop on-campus networks by organizing study groups or Facebook groups to create structured, supportive environments.
- **Transferring or re-enrolling:** coaches work with all students, regardless of enrollment status, checking in frequently to provide support, encouragement and guidance to students as they work toward a degree. Together with the student, coaches assess the likelihood and timeframe of anticipated re-enrollment and have defined touch points to ensure students receive the support they need to re-enroll when the time is right for them

- **Career preparation:** support preparing for post-graduation work by covering topics such as securing internships and working with the campus career services office, share job and networking opportunities.

### ***BARRIERS & OPPORTUNITIES***

#### HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM CHALLENGES & LEARNINGS:

As with every year, one of the challenges we encounter is student/family mobility, meaning there are program participants who have moved to schools where we do not have partnerships and where we cannot offer the same level of programming. We continue to work with those students to the best of our ability, and when appropriate connect them to resources within their new school to help them be successful and remain on the path to college. As our Tech-Connected High School Program has grown, we have been able to shift some students who transfer away from our campus based high schools into the Tech-Connected portfolio, as long as they remain in the state. In order to fully utilize our resources, we make an effort to fill spots that are left vacant by students who transfer out of our partner schools early in their junior year. This requires coaches to recruit new students at the start of their junior year. This has been a challenge for us as coaches are often only a month into their term of service and are still learning their role and establishing relationships with the students who are already in their cohort. Ensuring that all coaches have the information necessary to recruit the best-fit students while balancing their other responsibilities can be challenging to manage and is something we are actively looking to improve. In the 2017-18 school year, we plan to hold more robust trainings for coaches around fall recruitment of students and provide more hands-on support from our leadership team as new coaches adjust to their role. All of this said, we still retain an average 95% of students from their junior to senior year and filled 97% of our available spots in the 2016-17 school year.

The recruitment of students to enter the next class of College Possible is always challenging and in particular, we have found it difficult to establish the perfect gender balance for incoming classes. Ideally we would recruit cohorts of students that were 50% male and 50% female. This past year, gender breakdown of newly recruited students was closer to 40% male and 60% female. We have found that women have been more willing to self-select into our program and have been more consistent in their follow-up and completion of the application. We have also found that it is more common for males who complete our application to be GPA ineligible (cumulative, unweighted GPA below a 2.0). In order to recruit more males and create a better gender balance in our program, we have worked closely with the staff at each of schools to help identify more males that are eligible. We have worked with Principals, Counselors, Athletics Directors and Coaches, after school program leaders, among others to connect with male students and make sure they have a full understanding of our program. At some schools, we hold specific information sessions just

for men so that they did not feel that this program is only meant for women. We connected with our current male students to reach out to male underclassman and encourage them to apply. While these efforts did have some success, we will continue to work proactively in partnership with school staff to ensure that we are being thoughtful about our recruitment of males.

As a voluntary program for students, maintaining high student engagement throughout the year demands our ongoing attention as well. In particular, attendance for practice ACTs has been slightly lower than attendance rates in years past. In prior years, when the official ACT took place on Saturdays, we were able to communicate to students why taking practice tests on Saturdays helped prepare them for the official ACT. As schools shift to hosting the official ACT during the school day, it is harder to make the case to students why showing up at school early on a Saturday morning is necessary. Many students also work jobs on the weekend both to save for college and to help support their families. With the rising cost of college, this is something we encourage them to do, even though it can be challenging for them to get the time off to take the practice test. While our average practice test attendance of 88.5% was lower than our goal of 90%, the junior cohort has seen really strong results, averaging a 27% score increase from their baseline examination. We hope to combat this dip in attendance by being more proactive in our outreach to students' families to ensure they are aware that students need to attend the practice tests. We also implemented transportation plans for students, which required them to identify exactly how they would get the Saturday tests and what their back-up plan would be if transportation fell through. In addition, we purchased bus tokens that can be used on public transit to help students get past the cost of transportation. Next year we are looking to utilize the Princeton Review's online portal so that students can make-up practice tests at a time and place that is more convenient for them.

#### COLLEGE PROGRAM CHALLENGES & LEARNINGS:

We are experiencing ongoing challenges forming data-sharing agreements with various colleges and universities, many of which have unique data systems, if not also unique legal and policy frameworks around the use and sharing of data. This limits our capacity to do effective multi-institution evaluation in a timely manner, and often limits our coaches' ability to connect with students who are struggling. One area in particular that this effects is our ability to track which of our college students are enrolled in developmental courses. As these courses do not provide students with college credit and can often take up a lot of a student's time and financial aid, we know that tracking which students are in developmental courses and supporting them in passing through those courses as soon as possible is extremely important. Unfortunately, as we are not able to receive this information directly from institutions, we rely on students self-reporting, which has been a big challenge, as students often do not like to disclose this information. Our goal remains to work out data-sharing agreements with each partner campus that enable coaches to access student records such as: course registration, financial aid renewal, transcripts, academic progress alerts, degree progress audits, etc. As we learn to identify

trends in student persistence and retention, we hope to incorporate predictive analytics to help coaches identify students who need support before their challenges become barriers to college persistence. We are organizing ongoing partnership meetings with colleges, and working with community partners to determine which types of data sharing agreements might be most effective. We would welcome any advice or assistance on this front!

The 2015-16 academic year was the first time we isolated services to our Community and Technical College students, and is a practice that we continued in the 2016-17 academic year with even more intention. We are learning volumes about the barriers and challenges students face at these institutions and how we can best support them in their journey, beginning when they are still in high school. Here are some of our developing program improvements:

- Preparation while in High School: Among the most important things we have learned is that there are varying understandings and perceptions among high school students of what it means to be a student at a Community or Technical College, and many students receive mixed messages about how they can best prepare to be successful in this academic setting. Students often believe that these institutions will be less rigorous and will require less time and attention. Students also believe that because these institutions are less expensive and they will not need focus on budgeting or managing their finances while in school. Both of these misperceptions can lead a student to enter these institutions without taking the necessary steps to set them up for success. We worked hard this year to train all of our High School Coaches on the how to prepare their students who were entering a Community and Technical College in the fall. Our College Program Manager led a series of trainings for the High School Coaches to familiarize them with the experiences of current college students on these campuses as well as give more details about which support services are available at different campuses.
- Remedial Coursework: To prevent students from having to take remedial coursework at Community and Technical Colleges, we are bolstering our prep resources for the Accuplacer (which determines student placement). Our high school coaches receive training from an Academic Advisor at Century College on the Accuplacer, and we have created an online Accuplacer prep course for all high school seniors who intend to enroll at an institution that requires this placement test. In 2016-17, we attempted to collect Accuplacer scores and transcripts directly from institutions to track student progress and evaluate our test preparation, however this proved to be a big challenge. Institutions were unable to share this information with us due to student data privacy. We will continue to look for ways to collect this information directly from students and to develop memorandums of understanding with institutions that specifically give us access to this level of data. Any support in securing this information would be greatly appreciated!

- Transfer Pathways: We have created a curriculum addendum focused on helping high school students who are undecided whether to attend a bachelor granting or a Community and Technical College, and talk with students to make sure they have a plan for graduation and possibly transferring to a four-year school, if it's a good fit for them. Our National team is also developing curriculum for college students focused on transfer pathways and degree completion. In the past, we have touched broadly on transfer pathways with our college students, but now we are creating specific processes for college students and coaches to navigate the transfer process. This process can be challenging both for coaches and students as they navigate between multiple institutional requirements.

To counteract these challenges, we have pursued intentional partnerships with Community and Technical Colleges in a different way from years past. We have long been aware of the success rate gaps between bachelor-granting and associates-granting institutions with regard to students from low-income families, and we have recently been able to dedicate more planning resources to improving transfer and degree-completion pathways for our students who begin their postsecondary journeys at Community and Technical colleges. Throughout the year, we had meetings with institutions in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, and are excited to be placing on-campus college coaches at some Community and Technical Colleges. We also worked closely with the Dougherty Family College, a new Community College associated with St. Thomas University, to form a strong partnership and ensure that College Possible students are benefitting from this new opportunity for further intrusive advising and support.

**D. Describe *how this appropriation has allowed expansion of the program in Minnesota, including, but not limited to the number of coaches hired, the number of coaching sessions provided to students, the expansion within existing partner high schools, the expansion of high school partnerships, the number of additional high school and college students served.***

The \$250,000 appropriation received in FY2016 enabled College Possible to pilot Tech-Connected programming to greater Minnesota high school students, and the FY2017 appropriation allowed us to expand this programming. We now have 5 Tech-Connected High School Coaches serving 321 students in 29 partner high schools throughout the state. Tech-Connected students received a total of 2,729 hours of coaching sessions via a variety of technology mediums including phone calls, Skype conversations, Google Hangouts, and virtual workshops. In addition to formal coaching sessions, Tech-Connected coaches also had 3,370 touch points with students throughout last year, including e-newsletters, text message conversations, emails, interactions via social media and shorter phone calls.

The College Program added 3 additional coaches to support the growing number of enrolled college students. Each of these coaches supported a group of 120-150 college students and provided a total of 771 campaign coaching sessions (these are in-

depth conversations about specific topics of high emphasis). In addition, these three coaches had 2,913 successful two-way communications (outside of formal campaign coaching sessions) with students through a variety of technology mediums including phone calls, Skype conversations, Google Hangouts, social media, and texting. In addition to the growth in the Tech-Connected program and College Program (which were funded fully by the State Appropriation), we also expanded our Campus Based High School Program and College Program. We grew the number of students being served at 4 of our Campus Based high schools and added a brand new high school partner. Each student within the Campus Based High School Program receives 160 hours of direct programming through two-hour after school sessions twice a week. While the appropriation did not fully fund all of the growth of our Campus Based High School growth, it freed up resources that allowed for our continued expansion.

### III. Program Outcomes

A. Number of students in College Possible who graduated from high school 1,156

B. Number of students *funded by this appropriation* who successfully enrolled in postsecondary institutions and a breakdown of programs **TOTAL number all programs = 394\***

*\*This number includes all of the enrolled college students and the high school seniors who enrolled into college this fall.*

Demographics/Type of Institution/Program	Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Location	Public	Private Not-for-profit	Private For-Profit (Career)
Bachelor's degree/4-year students	American Indian/Alaska Native=0 Asian=120 Black/African American=64 Hispanic/Latino=27 Multiracial=9 Other=23 Unspecified=32 White=12	Male=97 Female=189 Other=1	District 1=37 District 2=37 District 3=35 District 4=111 District 5=29 District 6=11 District 7=21 District 8=6	144	143	0

Associate's degree/2-year students	American Indian/Alaska Native=1 Asian=31 Black/African American=22 Hispanic/Latino=13 Multiracial=1 Other=9 Unspecified=25 White=5	Male=30 Female=76 Other=1	District 1=6 District 2=1 District 3=36 District 4=49 District 5=0 District 6=5 District 7=1 District 8=9	106	1	0
Certificate/1 year or less	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>0</b>

**C. BACHELOR'S degree programs – persistence. Please indicate the number of students in each cohort who persisted from year-to-year and the percentage that represents of the original number of students enrolled in that cohort.**

	<b>Public #/%</b>	<b>Private Not-for-profit #/%</b>	<b>Private For-Profit (Career) #/%</b>
<b># enrolled</b> (all classes, F16)	100/226 (44%)	126/226 (56%)	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> year to 2<sup>nd</sup> year</b> (Class 16, reenroll F17)	38/44 (86%)	51/53 (96%)	
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> year to 3<sup>rd</sup> year</b> (Class 15, reenroll F17)	1/1 (100%)	34/34 (100%)	
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> year to 4<sup>th</sup> year</b> (Class 14, reenroll F17)	14/15 (93%)	19/20 (95%)	
<b>4<sup>th</sup> year to 5<sup>th</sup> year</b> (Class 13, reenroll F17)	16/21 (76%)	1/7 (14%)	
<b># graduates</b>	16/100 (16%)	7/126 (6%)	
<b>TOTAL/%</b>	88/100 (88%)	115/126 (91%)	

**D. ASSOCIATE’S degree programs – persistence. Please indicate the number of students in each cohort who persisted from year-to-year and the percentage that represents of the original number of students enrolled in that cohort.**

	<b>Public #/%</b>	<b>Private Not-for-profit #/%</b>	<b>Private For- Profit (Career) #/%</b>
<b># enrolled</b> (all classes, F16)	80/80 (100%)		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> year to 2<sup>nd</sup> year</b> (Class 16, enroll F17)	24/33 (73%)		
<b># graduates</b>	1/80 (1%)		
<b>TOTAL/%</b>	54/80 (68%)		

**E. CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS – persistence. Please indicate the number of students who persisted to completion of their program and the percentage that represents of the original number of students enrolled.**

	<b>Public #/%</b>	<b>Private Not-for-profit #/%</b>	<b>Private For-Profit (Career) #/%</b>
<b># enrolled</b>	N/A*		
<b># graduates</b>			
<b>TOTAL/%</b>			

*\*None of the students funded by this apparition were enrolled in certificate programs.*

Although we will not be able to confirm the exact persistence rate of the appropriation cohort until November, we do have our overall persistence rates from the previous academic year (2015-16), which can shed some light on College Possible’s impact on low-income students’ in their pursuit of a college degree. The tables below are aggregated from all College Possible Minnesota students who were enrolled in fall 2015 (at a 4-year Public or Private not for profit, or 2-year Public), and reenrolled in Fall 2016:

This table is for MN high school grads, the number enrolled in Fall 2015 at a PUBLIC or PRIVATE (not for profit) 4-year college, and the number enrolled again in Fall 2016

	Enrolled Fall 2015		Enrolled (or Graduated)* Fall 2016		Persisted (or Graduated)*	
	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private (not for profit)</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private (not for profit)</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private (not for profit)</i>
All 4-Year Enrolled Students	1237	764	928	550	79%	84%
Just Class 2015	335	246	277	227	83%	92%
Just Class 2014	261	140	230	122	88%	87%
Just Class 2013	216	159	197	150	91%	94%
Just Class 2012	177	132	163	120	92%	91%
Graduated in 2015-2016	149	145	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL Students</b>	<b>1237</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>79%**</b>	<b>84%**</b>

\*When calculating persistence numbers, we also take into account the students who graduated and therefore would not need to re-enroll the following year and do not count them against the persistence numbers.

\*\*It is also important to note that the persistence rate for all students is not equal to the average persistence among the students in classes 2012-2015. This is because we are still supporting students who graduated high school earlier than 2012, and the persistence of those students is included in our total numbers.

This table is for MN high school grads, the number enrolled in Fall 2015 at a PUBLIC 2-year college and the number enrolled again in Fall 2016

	Enrolled Fall 2015	Enrolled Fall 2016	Persistence
All 2-Year Enrolled Students	749	487	65%
Just Class 2015	156	111	71%
Graduated in 2015-2016	48	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL Students</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>65%</b>

- F. Number of students *who enrolled in developmental courses* at the postsecondary level: 37\*. Of this number, how many persisted in their programs? N/A\*\*

*\*This number represents the students who self-reported participating in developmental coursework and we know this is only a small fraction of the students we support who enrolled in developmental coursework last year. Students are not required to share academic information with us to receive programming and we have found that many students are unsure if they are in developmental courses or are not willing to share that information with their coach. The vast majority of the 37 students who did share this information attend institutions where we have on-campus coaches. This likely influenced their comfort level in disclosing this information to their coach as they often have more touch points and can create an in-person relationship. As mentioned in the challenges section, this is clearly an area of growth and an emphasis for us moving forward. In an ideal world, we would like to have access to all students' transcripts so we can provide targeted support and guidance to each student. We are fully aware of the research around developmental courses and low levels of persistence among these students and would like to be a part of the solution!*

*\*\*We do not yet have persistence data for students as they have not yet enrolled for fall 2017 classes*

#### IV. PROJECT PRODUCTS AND SUPPORT

- A. Did the students in your project participate in other college access programs? (A college access program would be a structured series of services designed to enhance academic and social development in high school students to better prepare them for postsecondary success.) If yes, identify those programs.

College Possible targets students who do not participate in other college access programs. In some of our partner high schools we do work with students who are also involved in AVID. While AVID is also a program dedicated to supporting students on their pathway to college, our programs have different focuses and we have found that we complement each other well. AVID takes place during the school day and is more focused on establishing a classroom environment and study skills that will help students succeed in their current studies and that will translate well to college coursework. They are not able to provide the intensive test preparation nor the direct support with college and financial aid applications. In each

school that we do serve students who also participate in AVID, we are sure to connect directly with the AVID teachers in that building to prevent duplication of work and establish the ways in which we can collaborate to support students.

**B. Were there any unanticipated results for the 2016-17 project, either positive or negative?**

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

The end of a student's senior year in high school is a very critical time. There are many steps that students still need to take to ensure that their institutions are ready to receive them, including accepting financial aid, attending orientation, and registering for classes. In order to support students through these processes as well as provide them with curriculum focused on the skills they will need right away in college, we host a series of events that we call Summer Bridge. These events are held at each of our Campus Based partner high schools to allow easy access for students. In past years, Summer Bridge was held throughout the month of June after students graduated from high school. As these events occurred during the summer, when students were no longer regularly attending school and often had other priorities, attendance to Summer Bridge was always a challenge. In order to combat this, we made the shift this year to hosting Summer Bridge during the final weeks of school. This resulted in the highest attendance for Summer Bridge that we have ever seen. 715 students (69% of our Campus Based senior class) participated in Summer Bridge, which was 104 more students than the previous year and a 21% increase in attendance from just three years ago. This shift also allowed coaches to have much more time over the month of June to connect with their students on an individual basis and ensure that they had taken all the necessary steps to enroll in college for the fall semester.

Our campus visit attendance among our high school juniors was particularly strong this past year. It is very important that students have the opportunity to visit college campuses and learn about the opportunities that different schools provide. Many low-income and first-generation college students do not set foot on a college campus until after they graduate high school, which can make them feel unprepared and out of place when they arrive. We strive to give our students multiple chances to explore college campuses and envision themselves as college students. This is particularly important for juniors in high school as it is an exploratory time in their academic career and perfect time to begin to learn about the many college options. This year we offered 32 different campus visits and 727 of our juniors attend at least one visit, with many attending multiple.

## COLLEGE PROGRAM

FAFSA renewal for our college students was a challenge for us this year and our results were not as high as the year prior. The driving factor for this dip in results was the sudden and unexpected suspension of the Data Retrieval Tool (DRT). The DRT allowed students to link their FAFSA directly to the IRS's database and automatically update the required financial information. By having access to this tool, students did not need to locate tax and other financial documents from previous years (which proved to be a barrier for many students) and guaranteed that the information was accurate allowing them to skip the often-tedious process of verification. Without this tool, many students found completing the FAFSA to be much more challenging than previous years and resulted in this process dragging on for a longer period of time. We are continuing to support college students throughout the summer to ensure they have the guidance they need to complete this step before classes begin. We are also working with the Financial Aid Offices at many institutions to ensure that our students get the information and guidance they need to have their finances in order when they begin the next academic semester.

- C. Increasing college access and the potential for success for underrepresented groups requires that students be academically, socially, and psychologically prepared. College enrollment and success is dependent on many factors. Research has documented that academic preparation is a key component for postsecondary success.**
- a. Identify the main academic support factor from your project that ensures participants in grades 11 and 12 are meeting college-ready standards or college-ready high school graduation requirements.**

College Possible utilizes a systematic, results-based approach to moving cohorts of low-income students along the pipeline to college graduation. To track students' progress towards this ultimate goal, we use incremental metrics correlated to college admission, matriculation and persistence. The main academic support factor in moving high school students along this path is increasing their ACT scores, which are a critical component of the college admissions process and an indicator of college readiness. We target concepts covered on the ACT not just so students can increase their test scores, but rather because of the correlation between these scores and success in college, and because these test scores are a quantifiable way to measure progress in this area.

To help students increase their ACT scores, College Possible's core high school programming includes intensive individual and group support in subjects including math, science, writing and reading comprehension. Coaches spend about 100 hours of session time covering academic content such as Math and English, delivering curriculum on

exponents, algebraic equations and geometry formulas in math; and sentence structure and critical reading in English. Coaches work with students in groups and individually, and collaborate with teachers and families as needed to monitor students' academic progress in school to help them stay on the path to college readiness.

Students with GPAs below a 2.5 receive individual support in developing an academic action plan to set them on a path to post-secondary success. Each cohort of students is led by a trained coach who has recently graduated from college and is keenly aware of the level of proficiency needed to succeed in college academics. Coaches participate in 28 hours of training from Princeton Review's master trainer as well as participate in a series of trainings throughout the year led by current and former educators. In addition to external trainings, coaches are placed in lesson planning groups with their peers to discuss common challenges in the classroom and share best practices for supporting their students academically. Coaches work with school staff and administration to ensure that each student is on track in their school coursework as well as in College Possible sessions, fostering a culture of achievement and high expectations in which students excel. Coaches also hold formal, individual meetings with each student near the end of every semester to touch on their academic progress and goals and to discuss what steps students should take to remain on track academically.

College Possible high school students also markedly improve their academic proficiency as measured by increased ACT scores from the beginning of the program to the official exam between their junior and senior years. Since our founding, College Possible students have achieved an average annual ACT score increase of 23%, from a "baseline" score of about 15 to an official score of about 18.5. Scores of 18 are typically the threshold for admission by many bachelor-granting institutions. The English section of the ACT - a key indicator of academic readiness for college - is historically the section on which our students achieve the greatest score increases. From the baseline test to the official administration of the exam, College Possible students typically increase their average English scores by more than 30%. In addition, virtually all students who attend session on a consistent basis maintain or improve their GPAs, indicating positive alignment of College Possible's services with students' in-school coursework.

While we do not believe that standardized testing is the best or only indicator of students' academic potential, the score increases do reflect increased academic proficiency and place them on a trajectory for college success by dramatically improving their chances of admission, as well as indicating increased preparedness for college level courses. We build on this foundation during students' senior year of high school by integrating academic preparation services with admissions and financial aid consulting, providing students with practical content that they can apply

once in college. We continue to incorporate more academic content into our senior curriculum, helping our students build on their junior year academic work and complementing in-school curriculum. In addition to academic content review, we spend significant time with students on a variety of writing assignments to increase their skills in the different types of writing that will be required in college. We also work with students on reading skills, covering everything from source documents to pieces of fiction to professional communications. In an effort to mirror a college classroom, many coaches hold group discussions on current events and topics relevant to the college experience which prepares students for the critical thinking and participation necessary to succeed in their college courses.

**D. Along with academic preparation, students must be socially and psychologically prepared for postsecondary enrollment.**

**a. Identify the main psychosocial support factor from your project that ensures postsecondary participants from your program are engaged in the postsecondary environment.**

College Possible programming is supported by a growing body of evidence that non-cognitive skill development is critical to high-need student success. Research shows that student engagement and academic outcomes can be increased by improving students' non-cognitive behaviors, attitudes and strategies. College Possible's model employs research-proven strategies to build non-cognitive skills and set students up for success in college. The main support factor is the use of AmeriCorps coaches to deliver intensive near-peer mentoring services to small cohorts of students in peer groups with other college-focused students. Coaches, who are close in age to their students and often come from similar backgrounds and experiences, build a culture of trust and high expectations in which students excel – enabling us to achieve unprecedented results.

College Possible also increases non-cognitive skills as measured through developmental assets such as achievement motivation and school engagement. We incorporate the Search Institute's research-informed "Conversation Starters" into high school sessions to foster social-emotional skill building. This is well-received by students and helps to foster further bonding within cohorts as students learn more about each other in addition to developing non-cognitive skills. This positive impact on group cohesion correlates with strong cohort results.

Throughout a student’s senior year, we incorporate a series of “College Life Seminars” to begin discussions about the post-secondary environment and the skills, mindsets, and resources needed to be successful within that environment. These sessions include a variety of formats ranging from large and small groups discussions, individual reflection to research, examination of videos and articles, and coach-led presentations. The topics and objectives of these sessions include:

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Primary Objectives</b>
College Life Seminar - Stress Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine personal responses to stress</li> <li>• Reflect on different strategies to manage stress</li> <li>• Discuss how managing stress can contribute to success in college and beyond</li> </ul>
College Life Seminar - Time Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a weekly schedule</li> <li>• Analyze current study skills and identify opportunities for improvement</li> <li>• Identify resources and strategies</li> </ul>
College Life Seminar - Balancing Family & School Demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss how school demands and family dynamics might shift in college</li> <li>• Prepare to talk with family</li> <li>• Identify support resources on campus</li> </ul>
College Life Seminar - Housing, Campus Life & Getting Involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss campus life and what to expect when living on and off campus</li> <li>• Identify different forms of involvement</li> <li>• Explore potential activities and/or clubs to get involved with</li> </ul>
College Life Seminar - Budgeting & Money Management in College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore different personal budgeting resources</li> <li>• Discuss basics of Federal Work-Study and financial aid refunds</li> <li>• Examine the unique perspectives and strengths that low-income students bring to a college campus</li> </ul>
College Life Seminar - Using Your Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice asking for support in an email</li> <li>• Discuss the role of a College Coach and expectations for the college years</li> <li>• Write introductory letter to next year’s Coach</li> </ul>
College Life Seminar - Choosing a Major (or not!)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on strengths, interests and personality</li> <li>• Discuss the connection between major and career path</li> <li>• Review resources available to assist students</li> </ul>

College Life Seminar - Imposter Syndrome, Culture Shock & Reverse Culture Shock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss differences between current and college environments</li> <li>• Identify strategies and resources to assist in the transition process</li> </ul>
College Life Seminar - Early Warning Signs & Help-Seeking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the concept of help-seeking behavior and identify personal help-seeking tendencies</li> <li>• Discuss early warning signs of academic, financial and social/emotional distress and the benefits of asking for help</li> <li>• Identify campus resource</li> </ul>

**E. If project information and outcomes were disseminated, please identify those efforts and materials.**

Over the past two years, we have performed an internal evaluation of our Tech-Connected High School Program. As this is a new and innovative program model for supporting students through the state of Minnesota, we are dedicated to measuring our success and making improvements as we gain more experience. See attached evaluation.

This evaluation has not yet been disseminated to outside audiences as we are waiting to confirm the enrollment of our first class of tech-connected seniors.

We recently received an Investing in Innovation grant from the federal government to help us evaluate and improve our impact on our students’ social emotional learning. This past year was the first of a five-year evaluation being conducted by a third party evaluation firm, ICF. Although we are just at the start of this evaluation, ICF has generated an interim report to summarize the information captured in the first stage of evaluations. While this evaluation is not specific to the appropriation cohort (in-fact it is being carried out at all 6 of our sites across the nation), it will have a huge impact on our programming and continue to influence how we approach supporting students in their social emotional growth. The attached report is an interim report looking at the first of two cohorts who will be involved in the study. This report only includes information from coach and student focus groups, but the full evaluation will also include an impact report that looks at assessment data of both College Possible students and matched comparison students over time.

**F. Attach a copy of any publication, or provide the electronic link to any publication that resulted from grant support.**

College Possible and one of our students were in the New York Times education section on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Our organization was highlighted as one of several that is growing its college access programming for rural students. Autumn, a student from Backus who is served by our Tech-Connected High School Program was also profiled as part of the story. Read the story [here](#) and the student profiles [here](#).

Thank you for providing information on your programming. **A payment of \$250,000 in 2018 will be given upon receipt of 1) this project outcomes report and 2) an invoice detailing services to be performed in the 2018 fiscal year.**