

## Ramp-Up News

November 2017

### For You:

Many students will need to seek letters of recommendation from your colleagues for their college applications. According to The College Board, postsecondary institutions value these letters because they serve the following functions:

- Bring to light things about students that grades and test scores may not
- Provide personal opinions about a student's character
- Demonstrate who is willing to speak on behalf of a student

Students at your school would benefit from knowing a little about the need, intent, and processes for asking for and receiving letters of recommendation. I encourage you to share a tip sheet, found on The College Board's Big Future website (<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/your-high-school-record/how-to-get-a-great-letter-of-recommendation?excmid=SM046-ST-BF-tw>) with all of your students soon. I think your colleagues will also be grateful!

### For Staff:

When we talk about *college for all*, we do mean **all**, including students with intellectual disabilities. Think College is a national organization that is committed to "developing, expanding, and improving inclusive higher education options for people with intellectual disability." This organization offers a wealth of information that teachers may find useful, including a 26-minute video that highlights a few programs in various U.S. colleges that embrace students with intellectual disabilities. The video, called *Rethinking College* can be found on this webpage (<https://thinkcollege.net/resources/rethinking-college>). Might your staff benefit from learning more about some of the college options that are being created for students with intellectual disabilities? If you are interested in showing this video in a learning meeting, there is a helpful viewing guide with discussion questions that can also be accessed on this site ([https://thinkcollege.net/sites/default/files/files/resources/reThinking%20College\\_viewersguide.pdf](https://thinkcollege.net/sites/default/files/files/resources/reThinking%20College_viewersguide.pdf)).

## **For Families:**

*Demonstrated interest* is a term associated with the college search process that students and their families may want to know about and understand. The term refers to points of contact that a prospective student makes with a college that indicates interest in attending the school. A recent article ([tinyurl.com/y7dh7pxa](https://tinyurl.com/y7dh7pxa)) suggests that students may want to pay attention to demonstrated interest and use it as an additional lever in their favor. The author writes, “While it’s never the top factor under consideration, these colleges are using ‘demonstrated interest’ as a means to differentiate between students who are casting a wide net and students who actually plan to enroll. Selective colleges aim to limit the number of students they admit. In order to do that, they need to be able to accurately project enrollment numbers.” As a result, demonstrated interest can give serious students an edge. The article provides examples of what to do as well as what NOT to do to demonstrate interest. Consider sharing this article with families so that they can provide guidance to their children that can help position them for acceptance at their schools of interest.