NWEA’s Upgraded College Explorer Helps Every Student Map a Pathway to College

New college major category and cost analysis features empower college and career planning as early as fifth grade

Portland, OR., Feb. 10, 2020 — With more than 7,000 colleges and universities in the United States to choose from and college admissions more competitive than ever, it can be challenging for students to find a college that will be a good fit both academically and financially.

NWEA, a not-for-profit education assessment company, has made that process easier with the launch of the updated College Explorer, a free interactive tool that provides educators, students, and parents with insights into which colleges and universities students are already on track to enter, and the academic growth goals they need in order to reach, at the very least, the median ACT® or SAT® score at those colleges and universities.

Updated with new features, College Explorer links MAP® Growth™ scores for students in grades 5-9 to colleges and universities based on the median ACT and SAT scores of students who were admitted and enrolled in those institutions. The tool provides the most up-to-date profiles of more than 7,000 institutions of higher learning from the U.S. Department of Education’s College Scorecard and the College Board including: admissions rates, academic profiles, and average advertised and actual cost to families at various income levels. Students can search for colleges by multiple filters, including RIT, SAT or ACT scores, school name, location, degree focus, and population focus (such as HBCU or religious affiliation.) In addition, the upgraded College Explorer now allows students to browse majors and the median SAT score for those who have indicated that they plan to major in that field of study, as well as median starting salaries for graduates pursuing those careers after college. Students can also view the top majors pursued at each institution.

“Charting a path to college is something that we at NWEA are able to directly influence. No one else has the longitudinal growth database and expertise that we do that makes the College Explorer possible,” said Chris Minnich, CEO of NWEA. “Every child should have the option to pursue a college degree if they want to. We built this tool to not only help students find the college that is right for them, but also to help them understand that no matter where you’re from or your income level, there are still many pathways to college.”
“Growing up, there was limited information available to me on the different career path options that aligned with my interests, and this was an obstacle to attending college for me,” said Gregory King, Ph.D., Research Scientist, Center for School and Student Progress, and lead developer of the tool. “College Explorer empowers students with information that helps remove many of the roadblocks to college that they can face – from knowing how they will need to grow academically to succeed, to locating schools that match up with their interests.”

College Explorer is available online for free at nwea.org/collegeexplorer.

About NWEA
NWEA® is a mission-driven, not-for-profit organization that supports students and educators worldwide by creating assessment solutions that precisely measure growth and proficiency—and provide insights to help tailor instruction. Educators in more than 10,000 schools, districts, and education agencies in 141 countries rely on our flagship interim assessment, MAP® Growth™; our progress monitoring and skills mastery tool, MAP® Skills™; our reading fluency and comprehension assessment, MAP® Reading Fluency™; and our new assessment solution that combines growth and proficiency measurement. Visit NWEA.org to find out how NWEA can partner with you to help all kids learn.

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