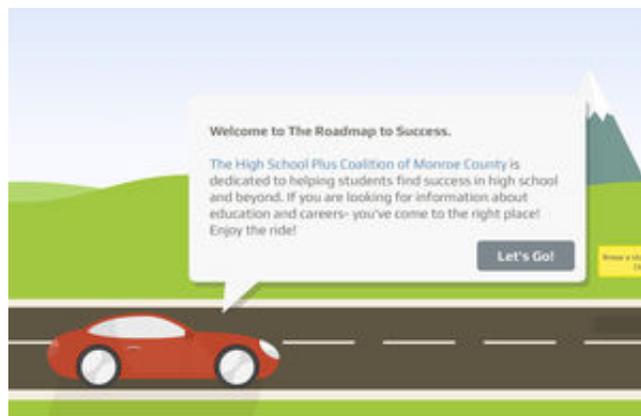


## New website designed to help teens plan future



Screen grab from the Roadmap to Success website.

Posted: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 12:00 am

By Lauren Slavin 812-331-4376 | [lslavin@heraldt.com](mailto:lslavin@heraldt.com) | [2 comments](#)

When it comes to preparing for life after graduation, education leaders in Monroe County worry that some students are as lost as a new driver without a GPS.

The Monroe County High School Plus Coalition unveiled a new online tool Tuesday that it hopes will guide students through the daunting task of planning for their futures: the Roadmap to Success.

The coalition, which is made up of Monroe County and Richland-Bean Blossom community school corporation administrators, social service and local government leaders, and representatives from Ivy Tech and Indiana University, determined over several years that local high school drop-out rates were higher than expected because many students did not have the resources needed to complete school with a plan for future work opportunities or post-secondary education.

The Roadmap to Success, managed by the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce and United Way of Monroe County, is an interactive website that aims to guide users to reliable resources for information regarding graduation readiness, the college application

process, home life problems and more.

“Having a purposeful plan will make a huge difference,” said Barry Lessow, executive director of United Way. “Together, we have this little journey we can start taking.”

Students, teachers, education administrators and nonprofit leaders took the Roadmap for a test drive Tuesday at Ivy Tech Community College’s Bloomington campus. The site, [monroe.roadmaptosuccess.org](http://monroe.roadmaptosuccess.org), follows the route of a little red car, which stops at various checkpoints to ask a user about their current situation and career trajectory to better understand their needs, whether that’s attending a two- or four-year college, joining the military or going directly into the workforce.

“We just want students to have a plan,” Hughes said. “Just to know, hey, if I want a good job, what are my options?”

After answering two to three questions, the user is provided with links to relevant websites on a national, state and local level. Students who need direction to prepare for college-entrance exams such as the SAT or ACT, for example, are referred to the exam websites, as well as to tutoring services through the Monroe County Public Library.

The coalition also hopes that local businesses and community members will continue to submit new resource links to include in the Roadmap that promote their volunteer opportunities and other student resources.

“It’s a fluid and hopefully growing database,” said Macy Hughes, director for workforce initiatives for the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce.

Some selections prompt additional informational text to appear on screen, asking if a student has an adult or mentor to write a college recommendation letter, or encouraging parents of students who plan to take a gap year to create a saving plan with their child.

There is also “Discover” section of the website, where all available resources are organized based on topic, such as dropout prevention, high school diploma requirements and career and technical education.

And the site is not just a resource for students who are thinking about graduation. The Roadmap also provides resources for getting involved in the community through volunteering and service work, as well as more information on finding help with bullying, substance abuse and mental health issues.

“We want to make it as accessible, relevant and digestible as possible,” Hughes said. “The entire purpose is to have a plan.”

- [Print comments](#)

**eEdition**  
Your news, unfolded.

**CLICK HERE**  
to see today's  
newspaper pages

**JOIN HTO** Begin your online subscription or  
activate complimentary access.