Your Future Ahead:

Advising Program Tool Kit

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Advising Program Tool Kit

Mentoring/Advising Framework

> ***"What is counseling? Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals."***
>
> American Counseling Association, 2008

The Importance of Counseling

Secondary students (grades 6-12) experience a wide range of emotions as they strive to establish a unique identity through which they filter social and emotional issues. Psychologist Erik Erikson terms this phase, which spans from age 12-19, as "Fidelity: Identity vs. Role Confusion". Beginning at age 12, children become concerned with how they appear to others. As they transition from childhood to adulthood, children also examine their values and compare them to those of others. Erikson also believes that a sense of competence motivates children's behavior and actions. During this critical stage of development, students need guidance from caring adults. We must make it a priority to advise students in the various areas of their life by helping them weigh their decisions and carefully consider their options.

Focus on the Essentials

According to Maslow's *Hierarchy of Human Needs,* a person needs to have a sense of safety and belonging in order to be successful and reach his full potential. If basic needs aren't being met, academics, work, planning for the future, and self-actualization are at the bottom of the priority list. This is especially true if a student does not have a caring adult with whom to connect. Students in middle school and high school especially can "feel insignificant, unknown or even lost" (Schanfield, 2010) which can greatly affect the student's ability to experience successes. Mentoring and advising programs can be very positive, very powerful ways to help address the needs of these students. When students enter the school building they must be met with a positive learning environment intentionally designed by the administrators, teachers, staff, and school community. The student advising program can be the model program that helps to create this atmosphere. A good advising program can unite students, staff, parents, the community, businesses, and higher education to make the most of a student's educational experience.

In addition to academic guidance, secondary students need opportunities to identify and explore personal and social goals for adulthood. As students transition from elementary school to middle school, and middle school to high school, they will be faced with increasingly complex issues and decisions. How they approach these issues and what decisions they make can have lasting impact on their academic, social, emotional and physical development. As schools have become extremely busy places, it is not only the responsibility of the guidance counselor to help guide students through these stages, but also the responsibility of each teacher and each caring adult with whom the child comes into contact.

Current research on advising /mentoring programs has shown a well-developed, comprehensive program can also serve to reduce dropout rates, raise graduation rates and help pave the way for students to seek post-secondary pursuits after high school (Schanfield, 2010; Hodges, 2010).

The Background of the Development of the Advising Toolkit

Our goal in Kentucky is to see that every child is proficient and prepared for success. National research shows education reform is moving towards smaller learning communities, more student-centered school experiences, more personalized programs with support services and increased intellectual rigor. The establishment of advising and mentoring programs in secondary schools is essential to Kentucky's mission of increasing student success. Research shows if schools create safe, supportive, and respectful learning environments that personalize young people's learning experiences, we can help them achieve more academic success. "The primary goal of [advisory programs] is to provide students with early awareness of the benefits of continuing their education" beyond high school, whether that be a two year or four year college or university experience or career certification (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). By having a caring adult as a mentor/advisor, students feel more connected to their school, and as a result tend to have a better educational experience. This advising relationship can result in reduced retention rates, decreased truancy and behavioral issues, increased test scores and graduation rates, as well as improved interpersonal relationships and workforce readiness.

Purposes of an Advising/Mentoring Program

For an advising program to be successful, goals and outcomes need to be established. The advisory program can help students discover more about themselves, gain self-confidence, engage in their education and set goals for their future. A strong advising program should provide students the tools they need both academically and personally for success and encourage active participation in their school and community. It can also help them avoid obstacles that could prevent them from reaching their goals.

The U.S. Department of Education (2007) suggests advising/mentoring programs should provide a range of services. A comprehensive program could include academic enrichment, information sharing, mentoring activities and social enrichment. Advising/mentoring programs need to begin at an early age with students, so programs should begin by middle school at the latest to have the most effect, especially with students of low socio-economic status and minority students (Malone, 2009 Fall).

Model Design of an Effective Advising/Mentor Program

Where are you on the road to developing an advising/mentoring program for your students? Where do you start?

The most effective advising and mentoring programs are well designed and strive to best meet the needs of the students they serve. In doing so, the most effective programs will address the needs of students in three comprehensive domains:

- Academic Development
- Career Development
- Personal/Social Development

It is necessary to provide guidance to students around each of these three areas in a consistent, professional manner. Current research has proven that whole-school advising and mentoring programs can be the most effective models for schools. School guidance counselors should be available and familiar to students and should develop a relationship with students to the best of their ability. Any caring adult in the school environment can help guide students as they think through some difficult decisions and weigh choices they need to make regarding these three domains.

Some individuals might consider an advising program different from a mentoring program. With the right training, mentors can advise students on career pathways, college application processes, aspects of social and emotional development, etc. A school-wide mentor advising program does not need to be one-on-one, but rather could pair each caring adult with a small group of students, creating a much more do-able task for middle and high schools. Mentoring times could include both structured activities (a college speaker, a lesson on completing a FAFSA form, an anti-bullying lesson) and independent activities (a getting to know you activity, time to share information about one another, an opportunity to participate in a mutually appreciated activity such as chess or learning about jazz music). An advising/mentoring program utilizing the national standards can formulate needed scaffolding for elementary, middle, and high schools in relation to awareness, exploration, and preparation for college and careers.

The American School Counselor's Association (ASCA) has provided national standards for the three domains to help guide school counseling programs. These standards are what the ASCA believes to be the essential elements of a quality school counseling program. This framework is an excellent model to use for designing the school advising/mentoring component of the comprehensive counseling program as well.

Positive Outcomes of an Advising/Mentoring Program

The following are samples of expected outcomes and goals for an effective student advising program:

- Helps students feel accepted and valued as individuals
- Promotes greater self-esteem
- Increases personal responsibility in personal/social and academic, and career areas
- Develops better communication and inter-personal skills
- Results in greater overall satisfaction with the school experience
- Improves retention rates for schools
- Improves attendance for schools
- Results in better informed and trained faculty in regard to the students educational program
- Increases graduation rates resulting in reduced dropout rates
- Encourages students to attempt more rigorous coursework
- Increases parental involvement and support from family
- Increases communication between school and home
- Increases faculty ownership of student success
- Increases interaction with business and community
- Increases knowledge of graduation requirements for specific postsecondary goals
- Increases knowledge of college admissions, financial aid, and career opportunities
- Increases number of students attending postsecondary education/training
- Prepares students better for entering the competitive workforce in the global market

Advisor/Mentor Program Guidance

Kentucky students can certainly benefit from advising and mentoring programs, but a quality program in and of itself takes careful planning and time to develop and implement. Recent research suggests that poorly planned, or short-term, advising and mentoring can actually do more harm than good to our students, resulting in a more negative impact.

The Planning Team

It is highly suggested a school designate a team of people to work on designing the advising and mentoring program. This team of people could include: classroom teachers, counselors, Family Resource/Youth Service Center staff, Community Education staff, administrators, parents and students. This collaboration creates ownership and investment in the program. It also ensures the program is not dependent on the leadership of one person or a small group of persons. The involvement of many stakeholders ensures the program will continue regardless of staff changes.

Once established, the team that is charged with designing the advising and mentoring program should review sound research and guidance documents such as those listed below. Program development should be methodical, and once the program is designed, it should be implemented with fidelity, adhering to the best practices of the research. This does not mean that a program should not ever undergo revision, but that those revisions should be very purposeful and should be made with the best interest of the students in mind.

- Resources for Establishing a Program
- Day One in the Life of a Program Coordinator

The planning team should represent the school, students, parents and community. Since the advising/mentoring program is built around three separate domains (academic, career, and personal/social), it is important to involve membership from the community to focus on the areas of career development and personal/social growth. Initially, the planning team can have input into the design of the advisory program including those topics to be discussed in each grade level. Once the advisory program is implemented, the Advisory Council can meet periodically to discuss how well the program is functioning. If adjustments need to be made to better meet the needs of students, the Advisory Council can suggest changes to the program.

Questions to be considered should include the following:

- How will the members of the planning team be chosen?
- How long will members of the planning team serve?
- Will there be opportunities to add members to the planning team?
- Does the planning team represent all stakeholder groups?
- How often will the planning team meet?

The first step the planning team should take as it considers the actual content of the advising/mentoring program is to determine what the students in the school need. This can be achieved in many ways- an online or even a paper version survey given to teachers and students, student advisory groups and/or student government groups, etc. Once the needs are determined, the next step is to have the planning team prioritize those needs. Finally, the planning team would need to assess what resources already exist in the school setting and then determine what outside resources may be necessary to address them.

A review of school data is valuable in determining topics for the advisory program. Keep in mind that the advisory program should be organized around three domains: academic, personal/social, and career. Although there is abundant school data available on academic matters, there are also data on matters such as student discipline (behavior), attendance, retention and a category often referred to as opportunity gaps. Opportunity gaps are academic offerings such as honors classes or Advanced

Placement courses where enrollment is limited. Students not permitted the "opportunity" to participate/enroll in these classes are denied the opportunity to succeed in challenging learning opportunities.

The chart below contains examples of various data to be used in determining topics for the advisory program. An examination of these data can also be helpful in determining goals for school improvement.

Test Scores	**Enrollment**	**Graduation Rate**
• Norm Referenced • Criterion Referenced	• Honors/AP Classes • College Path • Special Education	• By Gender • By Ethnicity • By SES
Attendance	**Discipline**	**GPA/Class Rank**
• Absences • Tardies • By Grade Level	• By Classroom • Types of Problems • Gender	• By Gender • By Ethnicity • By SES
Retention Rates	**Special Education**	**Dropout Rate**
• By Subject Area • By Grade Level • By Gender • Ethnicity	• By Gender • By Ethnicity • By SES	• Grade Levels • Gender, Ethnicity, etc. • Reasons Why

Once data has been disaggregated and analyzed to determine topics and directions for the advisory program, it may be helpful to make connections to the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP). A chart with examples is provided below.

Disaggregated Data	Relationship to CSIP	Planning Team Outcomes
Discipline referrals are coming primarily from three classrooms	CSIP Goal: The school will implement measures to ensure a safe learning environment	Professional Development on effective classroom management will be provided to the three classrooms
Only 10% of African-American students are enrolled in Advanced Placement courses, while African American students comprise 35% of the school population	CSIP Goal: The school will provide an equitable learning environment where all students have access to high-level learning opportunities	Provide academic information to all students to strongly encourage enrolment in Advance Placement courses. Provide additional academic supports to any student wanting to enrol in Advanced Placement courses
Attendance rate has decreased steadily over the last three years.	CSIP Goal: Increase attendance rate to 96%	School counselors will implement a program to increase attendance. Technology will be purchased to immediately inform parents when absences occur.

Staffing

Staffing is an important issue that the team will need to take into consideration. Any caring adult in the school setting, as well as screened (background check) and trained community volunteers can easily and effectively serve as mentors and advisors. A school policy will need to be crafted and approved in order to utilize classified and volunteer staffing, but research confirms that this is a very effective route to increase the number of caring adults who have a vested interest in the well-being of students.

It will be necessary to talk to any and all stakeholders about the purpose of the advising/mentoring program and explain how these programs can help the school more effectively address the needs of the students and help them achieve greater personal and academic success. The planning team will want to examine all aspects of the program in pre-planning stages and share their plan for the program with stakeholders for input. People generally take a greater role in programs they have been able to provide input to, especially if they feel that their ideas and concerns were addressed.

There are some programs in the state that have helped schools and districts establish advising and mentoring programs, sometimes with the full school, or at least with the most identified students. Consider college coaches (upper-class college students) AmeriCorps, KY Scholars Program, E-mentoring such as with GEAR-UP and EKU, etc.

The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) employs regional outreach counselors that live and work in 13 regions across the state. Outreach counselors are available, at no charge, to provide interactive workshops on a variety of college-planning, student financial aid, college admissions and financial literacy topics. Presentations are aligned with KDE's Core Content for Assessment of Practical Living/Vocational Studies. Visit the *Counselors, Community Partners and College Access Providers* section of www.kheaa.com for contact information and presentation descriptions.

In the design and implementation of a successful mentoring/advisory program, there are questions to be answered and issues to be discussed. The list below contains some programmatic questions included in prior sections. It is important to include input from as many stakeholders as possible to encourage ownership of the advisory program. In addition to the issues contained in various sections of this document, each school is unique and will have its own needs to address.

Advisory Program Components	Decisions/Issues to be Discussed
Advisor/Student Ratio	
Who will be advisors? How will they be chosen?	
Which students will be placed with advisors? Should students be allowed to choose? Do advisors keep students for one year, or as long as they are in the school?	
Will advisors be evaluated? What happens if advisors are not effective? Will students have a "voice" in determining how effective their advisors are?	
How often will advising occur? How long? When will advising occur? Where will advising occur? Will classified staff be advisors or just certified?	
Professional Development Needs: Curriculum/ Topics; Mentoring/Counseling Skills; Working with Parents; Expectations/Outcomes; Referrals	

Tips for Implementing a Mentoring/ Advising Program

- Start advising time with a smile and enthusiasm.
- Allow group time to discuss problems or concerns.
- Always have a purpose.
- Keep expectations realistic.
- Focus on why we are here.
- Get to know students as individuals.
- Allow students to know each other.
- Talk individually with students whenever possible.
- Learn and use names of students as you talk with them.
- Provide time for students to get to know each other.
- Be firm but understanding.
- Show genuine interest and students will respond!
- Follow a planned agenda or activities.
- Advising group is never a "Study Hall."
- Keep an open mind toward the program and be flexible with your students.
- Don't be slack on discipline just because it is advising time.
- Insist that all students follow school rules and any rules which the group has made.
- Know where to go for answers. You will not have all the answers. Refer! Refer! Refer!
- Avoid sarcasm. Be sensitive in choosing your words.
- Develop a feeling of togetherness and group cohesiveness.
- Remember, it takes time to make the program successful.
- Evaluate regularly.
- Practice 10-minute rules (i.e. late arrivals nor early leavers)

The planning team may also want to take the following information into account as it plans the program, and as it communicates with all stakeholders regarding the program.

Seven Reasons Why Teachers Resist Advisory Programs

1. Parents do not understand the concept and many may oppose it.
2. Many administrators are not really concerned about it.
3. Most teachers have had little formal preparation for service as an advisor.
4. Teachers do not understand the goals of the endeavor.
5. Advisory takes time – time that many teachers believe could be invested more effectively in preparing to teach their subject(s).
6. Some teachers do not want to engage in a program that requires personal sharing.
7. When it is implemented incorrectly and with little staff development and leadership, students do not provide positive feedback. (Van Hoose, 1991, pp.2-3).

The Tool for Advising Students for Success

The Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

A student ILP is an online college and career planning tool to help students plan his or her coursework and activities as they prepare for post-secondary education and develop his or her career. The ILP is designed to help students work together to develop an education plan that meets the needs of each student and ensures that they can achieve their goals.

Schools that embed the ILP into the advising system established within the school will see students meeting their goals, teachers building relationships with students and schools meeting the needs of all students.

The ILP provides students with many resources that will improve the educational and developmental needs of students. It also provides information to school administrators and teachers that will help them meet the needs of their students.

What can students do with his or her ILP?

They can:

- Save Career Matchmaker Results
- Keep notes on the careers and schools that interest them
- Develop an education plan based on their career interests
- Track all career preparation and planning activities
- Record career and life goals
- Connect with industry professionals in their individual area of interest
- List the organizations, activities, and hobbies in which they participate
- Document work and volunteer experiences, as well as awards and recognitions they have received
- Store related documents, such as scanned artwork, letters of reference, essays, and presentations
- Share their ILP with college admissions staff, organizations offering scholarships, and potential employers
- Create a personalized, professional-looking resume

What can schools do with the ILP?

They can:

- View student ILP data to monitor their career and education planning progress
- Export data collected from student ILPs
- Generate aggregate reports on data elements collected in the ILP
- Input customized course lists that students can use to create their high school education plans
- Customize the ILP and Assessment Options to meet the needs of students
- Communicate directly with students using the internal messaging system
- Monitor student's ILP to track which students are meeting the objective and identify opportunities for intervention
- Engage parents in their students' college and career planning activities

ILP Reports

Bright Ideas

☑ Use data from careers of interest to invite guests to career days

☑ Use data from schools of interest to invite to college fairs

☑ Use ILP data for grant proposals

The School ILP Administration tool includes an extensive real-time reporting package to analyze all data elements in the ILP.

Schools can view data on students' career and education exploration and development, including the careers and schools students have saved to their ILP, career cluster selections, advisement activities, goals and plans, and activities and experiences. From each aggregate report, schools can drill down to the individual student data for a selected report.

ILP Statistics & Usage Reports

- **ILP Totals**- as statistical summary of the ILPs for students at your school, broken down by grade and gender.
- **Date Last Changed**- track how often students are logging into their ILPs.
- **Annual ILP Review Statistics-** a summary of how many students have and have not completed their Annual ILP review with their advisor.
- **Parent/Guardian ILP Review Statistics**- monitor how many parents or guardians have reviewed their child's ILP.

Bright Ideas

☑ Use Career Cluster Interests report to target the interests of students entering your school

☑ Group students in homeroom or advisory groups by their hobbies and interests

☑ Use Course Forecaster to plan courses one or two years out to ensure all students get the course they need to meet their goals

Career & Education Exploration

- **Careers of Interest-** Aggregate Data (AD) on the careers students have saved to their ILPs. Schools can view detailed reports for each school and for each student.
- **Schools of Interest-** AD on the post-secondary schools students have saved to their ILPs. Schools can drill down to view detailed reports for each school and for each student.
- **Matchmaker Suggested Careers**- this report lists the careers that were included in Career Matchmaker's Top Ten Career Suggestions.
- **Matchmaker Recommended Clusters** – this report lists the top two Kentucky Career Clusters recommended by Career Matchmaker based on students' interests.

Goals and Plans

- **Career Cluster Interests-** AD on the Kentucky Career Clusters in which students are interested. Schools can drill down to individual student data, including their comments about the clusters they have selected.
- **Post-Secondary Goals-** view the post-secondary goals that students have set for themselves, including their top three career interests, top three colleges, and level of education desired.
- **Career Planning Activities: View by Activity** – activity by activity data on the career planning activities that student have completed, including job shadowing programs, career or college fair attendance, organization membership, etc.
- **Career Planning Activities: View by student-** track individual student participation in career planning activities.

Activities, Experiences & Awards

- **Organizations & Activities: view by Activity-** AD, based on the students' participation in organizations and activities
- **Organizations & Activities: View by Student-** view individual student participation in extracurricular organizations and activities
- **Hobbies & Interests: View by Activity-** AD on the formal and independent activities based on student participation
- **Hobbies & Interests: View by Student-** detailed data on the informal or independent activities that students enjoy
- **Community Service** - a summary of the community service activities, including the number of activities and number of hours of service
- **Work Experience-** a summary of the work experiences that students have undertaken
- **Awards & Recognitions-** view detailed information on the awards, certificates and recognitions that students have received

Education Plan

- **Course Forecasting**- generate course demand projections, using the data from students' 4- year education plan

Learning Services

- **Learning Services: View by Type of Service -** view AD on the learning services in which students are enrolled, included gifted and talented programs, Extended School Services and private instructional opportunities.
- **Learning Services: View by Student**- track individual student participation in learning service programs.

The ILP and Kentucky's College and Career Readiness Plan

The Kentucky Board of Education has adopted an ambitious agenda designed to improve educational outcomes for high school graduation. State policy has evolved to set goals for increase expectations, provide incentives and increased flexibility for changing the structure of schools to improve instruction, and to introduce new supports for schools engaged in this work. In response to state policy and local leadership initiatives, school systems are moving to improve educational programs and services across the Commonwealth of Kentucky to support every student as he or she progresses in their education.

Kentucky's Secondary Agenda outlines college and career readiness goals for students. The goals reflect that by 2014, every Kentucky student will persist to high school graduation and transition to success in learning, work and citizenship supported by high quality, real world learning, a culture of high expectations, and a plan of intentional focus.

The ILP supports every aspect of Kentucky's College and Career Readiness Plan. Kentucky's student centered approach to school improvement ensures that:

- **Students** are actively engaged in a challenging curriculum based on the Individual Learning Plan and one that stretches his or her learning;
- **Educators** collaborate in professional learning communities that increase capacity to provide high quality, engaging learning experiences for every student;
- **Curriculum, instruction and assessment** are comprehensive, coherent, standards-based and include both traditional and non-traditional learning opportunities;
- **School culture** is one of excellence , with high expectations, and provides individualized supports so that every student experiences success; and
- **Leadership** organizes resources in response to student needs.

Schools that are ready to transition students into success can begin by meeting the following criteria around the ILP and advising systems:

- Every student has an ILP tailored to his or her specific educational needs and wants.
- Elective choices are tied to personal and career interests as reflected in the ILP.
- Every student is engaged in a comprehensive advising and guidance process aimed at addressing his or her individual learning needs.
- Every student and their family are active participants in exploring and planning learning experiences on at least an annual basis.
- Students are encouraged to revise their individual learning plan as their interests and aptitudes mature and develop, and extracurricular and work experiences progress.
- As part of their IP, students will be encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities at the school
- In addition to his or her family, every student has at least one adult in the building who knows them, knows their learning plan and will advocate on their behalf.
- Students have the opportunity to participate in supportive and responsive advising and guidance processes to help them identify personal strengths and support the development of interpersonal skills.
- The ILP is used as a tool to assist in transitioning to the next level of learning.
- All students have access to expanded learning opportunities as related to his or her ILP.
- The ILP implementation plan is foundational to the advising and guidance process
- Counselors, teachers, administrators and families collaborate to meet the advising and guidance needs of every student.

- Students meet regularly with at least one adult in the building to address their social, academic, and career exploration needs.
- Establish advisory groups allowing for small group interaction between teacher and students.
- Advisory teachers are able to quickly identify struggling students and work to ensure prompt intervention services for those students

Counselors and advisory teachers should collaborate to ensure all aspects of the ILP are regularly addressed, reviewed, and revised for every student.

Scheduling for Flexibility

Sample Schedules

Many schools are working hard to incorporate time for advising/mentoring and into their daily, if not weekly, schedule. Many schools are working this time in with the Intervention and Enhancement times as well. The most important thing to take into consideration is how to incorporate this time as flexibly as possible, so as not to make students chose between advising/mentoring times and classes they also want to take. Consider these sample schedules below for ideas.

Sample Schedule- School A		
High School	**Period**	**Middle School**
8:15- 9:14	**1st**	8:15 to 9:14
9:18 to 10:13	**2nd**	9:18 to 10:13
10:17 to 11:12	**3rd**	10:17 to 11:12
11:16 to 11:41 (HS Lunch A) 11:45 to 12:44 (HS Class A) 12:19 to 12:44 (HS Lunch B) 11:16 to 12:15 (HS Class B)	**4th**	11:16 to 11:50 (Class) 11:50 to 12:15 (MS Lunch) 12:15 to 12:44 (Class Resumes) 12:15 to 12:44
12:48-1:18	**5th**	12:48 to 1:30
1:22 to 2:18	**6th**	1:34 to 2:18
2:22 to 3:20	**7th**	2:22 to 3:20

High School A is a 7th to 12th grade school, thus including middle and high school. For this school, Interventions/Enhancements and Mentoring/Advising occur during the students 5th Block of the day. The schedule for the week rotates so that students have Intervention or Enhancement classes on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and they have Mentoring/Advising on Fridays. The class block is a credit- a pass/fail system rather than a number or letter grade. This same intervention/enrichment rotation and the grading system can be utilized in any of the sample schedules below as well.

Sample Schedule- School B	
7:50	**First Bell**
7:55- 8:20	**Team Time**
8:25-9:20	**1st**
9:25-10:15	**2nd**
10:20-11:10	**3rd**
11:15-12:40	**4th and Lunch**
12:45-1:35	**5th**
1:40-2:30	**6th**
2:35-3:25	**7th**

High School B is a traditional 9th to 12th grade school. They have built time into the morning of their schedule for Mentoring/Advising as well as for any “homeroom” type of activities that might need to occur.

Sample Schedule- School C	
8:30-9:28	**1st**
9:33-10:31	**2nd**
10:36-11:34	**3rd**
11:39-1:39	**4th** (Class- 60 min, Lunch 30 min, MAT 30 min)
1:44-2:42	**5th**
2:47-3:45	**6th**

High School C is a traditional 9th to 12th grade school. They have built time into their lunch periods to do what they call MAT (Mentoring and Advising Time) so that students have an hour for class and thirty minutes each for lunch and MAT activities. The school schedule outlines more specifically when classes have lunch, class time and MAT time.

Sample Schedule- School D	
8:20-9:20	**1st**
9:25-10:25	**2nd**
10:30-11:30	**3rd**
11:35-1:05	**4th** (Class and Lunch)
1:10-2:10	**5th**
2:15-3:40	**6th** (Class and AT)

High School D, also a traditional 9th to 12th grade school, has incorporated their advisory time into the last class of the day. They have added extra minutes to complete AT, or Advisory Time, with the students.

Additional Resources

National Standards

- ASCA (American School Counselors Association) National Standards
- Cross-walking tool

Middle School

- Middle School Rationale by H. Jurgen Combs
- A Successful Middle School Environment

Advising/Mentoring

- Tools and Resources that Work: Instruments to Facilitate the Mentoring Partnership
- Mentoring Resources
- Resource Center: Mentoring Training Tools
- How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program
- College Board: Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling

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Street Address (if important)	400 E. College Street, Georgetown, KY 40324
Phone Number	Admissions Office: 1-800-788-9985 or 502 863-8009
Paragraph Description	Georgetown College is a small residential, co-educational liberal arts college distinguished by a combination of respected, rigorous undergraduate and graduate programs, an array of opportunities for involvement and leadership, a commitment to Christian values and its distinctive heritage. This provides an environment for intellectual, spiritual and social growth. Through a broad undergraduate program, the curriculum offers a foundation for shaping informed thought and seeks persons committed to supporting its mission and to realizing their full potential in this community of learners. Degrees and Majors offered: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Music Education, Master of Arts; 41 undergraduate majors; graduate education programs. Campus visits and overnights are available with a week's notice preferred. Students need to apply by February 1 of their senior year of high school.

Organization Name	**Junior Achievement of Kentuckiana, Inc.**
Web Address	www.jaky.org
Contact Person	Maria Baumgartner, Vice President of Education
Contact Person email	mbaumgartner@jaky.org
Phone Number	(502) 561-5437
Paragraph Description	Junior Achievement's programs teach work readiness, financial literacy and entrepreneurship concepts that support Kentucky's learning goals. JA Real Jobs, Real World was created to enhance the high school Career Cruising and ILP process. The program is supplied free of charge to schools and is taught by a real-world volunteer mentor who helps young people to learn about "hot jobs" in their own region. For more information on JA's elementary, middle and high school programs, visit the website.

Organization Name	**Kentucky Community & Technical College System**
Web Address	http://www.kctcs.edu
Contact Person	Dr. Michael Krause
Contact Person email	michael.krause@kctcs.edu
Phone Number	859-2565-3100
Paragraph Description	The 16 colleges of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) offer 68 campus locations across Kentucky. From Ashland to Paducah, from Covington to Bowling Green, and online, KCTCS colleges provide accessible education and workforce training to Kentucky and beyond. Forget giant loans! With our ***Go2Transfer*** program, we offer a low-cost option for achieving a four-year degree. Spend two years at home with us—then go on to the four-year college of your choice. For students who need a job now, our ***Go2Work*** program offers 600 occupational options with certificates and degrees that can be completed in two years or less! Whichever path is right for you, higher education in Kentucky begins at KCTCS. **Go further, Go faster, Go You!**

Organization Name	**Kentucky Council on Economic Education**
Web Address	www.econ.org
Contact Person	Susan Sandage
Contact Person email	susan@econ.org
Phone Number	502-267-3570 or 1-800-I-DO-ECON
Paragraph Description	The Kentucky Council on Economic Education website includes lessons, simulations, and programs that can be used to teach economics, personal finance, and entrepreneurship. Through our Centers for Economic Education, we also offer professional development opportunities. The E-learning Center also includes a free pre/post test portal.

Organization Name	**Council on Postsecondary Education**
Web Address	http://www.cpe.ky.gov
Contact Person	Sue Cain
Contact Person email	Sue.Cain@ky.gov
Phone Number	502-573-1555
Paragraph Description	The Council is the statewide coordinating agency for the public postsecondary institutions in Kentucky. The Council's primary responsibility is to ensure a well-coordinated and efficient postsecondary and adult education system. Among the Councils responsibilities are: • To develop and implement a strategic agenda for the postsecondary and adult education system that includes measures of educational attainment, effectiveness, and efficiency. • To produce and submits a biennial budget request for adequate public funding of postsecondary education. • To monitor and approve tuition rates and admission criteria at public postsecondary institutions. • To define and approve all academic programs at public institutions. • To ensure the coordination and connectivity of technology among public institutions. • To collect and distribute comprehensive data about postsecondary education performance.

Organization Name	**Murray State University Upward Bound**
Web Address	www.murraystate.edu/upwardbound
Contact Person	Jennifer Caldwell
Contact Person email	jennifer.caldwell@murraystate.edu
Street Address (if important)	
Phone Number	1-800-877-5662
Paragraph Description	Upward Bound is a federally funded grant program from the U.S. Department of Education. Upward Bound works with high school students from area schools to succeed in high school and to obtain a college degree. Students must meet application requirements. For more information please see our website.

Organization Name	**Student Support Center**
Web Address	http://franklin.kyschools.us/bms/ssc/default.aspx
Contact Person	Betty Lawson
Contact Person email	Betty.Lawson@franklin.kyschools.us
Street Address (if important)	Bondurant Drive Frankfort, KY. 40601
Phone Number	502-875-8440
Paragraph Description	The mission of the center is to remove all barriers that stand in the way of student success and achievement.

Academic Advising Toolkit:
Academic Activity Pages

One of the most common complaints with advising/mentoring programs has been the need for a standardized curriculum. The following section of the Advising Toolkit offers you a curriculum framework of activity pages that can be used with your program. The activity pages were developed at KDE by a cross agency group of experts from the field that included school counselors, health and wellness coordinators, certified teachers, postsecondary representatives and members of the business community.

The activities are developed around the same three domains of the American School Counselor's Association's standards: Academic, Career and Personal/Social. The activity pages give step by step guidance (often right down to the actual scripting) for advisors to use with their students. Some of the activities required computer access, but many do not. In some cases where technology is required, one computer with an LCD projector would suffice for allowing students' appropriate access as all students could view the site at one time. In other cases, printing an article from the website rather than requiring all students to view the article online would also suffice.

Activity #	Title	Topic
A-1	College Night	College Awareness, AP, Dual Credit
A-2	Education Beyond High School	ILP, KEES, KHEAA
A-3	Excuses NOT to Go to College	College Awareness, Financial Concerns
A-4	High School vs. College	College Awareness,
A-5	Academic Goal Setting	Goal Setting, SMART goals,
A-6	Academic Study Skills	College Awareness, Learning Styles, Study Skills

Activity A-1: College Night

☒ **Academic** ☐ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Many schools host college nights for parents and students to become familiar with local colleges and their expectations. This is helpful in informing both parents and students on the possibilities available for postsecondary education and training.

Procedure/Guidelines:

1. Consider hosting one or more college nights to educate students AND parents in areas such as the benefits of AP or dual credit, benefits of attending college, ways to pay for college, choices of avenues for achieving postsecondary education.
2. Include in the meeting:
    a. Invite seniors taking AP or dual credit to discuss pros and cons for taking advanced courses
    b. Invite former students who are now attending college to discuss challenges and barriers, shed light on college life, answer questions, etc.
    c. Invite college recruiters to discuss with students what is needed for acceptance into the college of their choice
    d. Invite your regional KHEAA outreach counselor to discuss planning and financing for college. (See *KHEAA Outreach Presentation Guide* for counselor contact information and workshop options and descriptions.)
        i. Refer students and parents to KHEAA's *Getting In*, *Affording Higher Education* and *The College Circuit* publications, available from your regional counselor or at www.kheaa.com.
        ii. Encourage families to create a ZIPAccess account at www.kheaa.com and request a free *College Cost and Planning Report* from KHEAA. This personalized report allows students to compare up to six colleges nationwide and to receive an individual estimate of the student financial aid that they may expect to receive at each institution.
3. You may improve attendance and reach more parents and students by:
    a. Offering these meetings more than once, at different times or on different nights
    b. Giving door prizes and offering refreshments
    c. Recording the meeting and put it on the web for parents and students who couldn't make it to the meeting

Resources:

- www.kheaa.com

Activity A-2: Education Beyond High School

☒ **Academic** ☐ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Data shows that most available jobs require education beyond a high school diploma. Therefore, it is extremely important to get students thinking about postsecondary education early in their high school careers or earlier. Students can use the tools within their ILP to help choose career interests. There are also many other resources available to help students decide the path they want to take. It is important for students to understand their options when choosing their postsecondary pathways.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

Have students match their career interests identified in their ILP with a postsecondary pathway by:

1. Exploring colleges that offer a program to support the student's career interest (found in the ILP by first clicking on a career and then clicking on "education" in the blue banner on the left of the page). Once schools are selected students can review academic requirements and student life options. Students may also want to review the college for their credit transfer options for Dual Credit, Advance Placement and Dual Enrollment.

2. Researching scholarships related to the student's area of interest by clicking on the blue "schools" button at the top of the ILP homepage, next click on "financial aid". From the next window students can search for scholarships by name, or complete the financial aid selector to identify scholarship opportunities for which they qualify.

3. Helping students select the academic programs that best suit them as individuals by clicking on the blue "schools" button at the top of the screen, then click on "school selector" where students will answer a series of questions to see a list of colleges that match their expectations.

4. Increase students' knowledge of college costs, KEES awards and methods for obtaining financial aid by having students create a KHEAA account at KHEAA.com. Invite your regional KHEAA outreach counselor to discuss early planning and financing for college, including assistance with their ILPs. (See *KHEAA Outreach Presentation Guide* for counselor contact information workshop options and descriptions.)

Resources:

- www.kheaa.com

Activity A-3: Excuses NOT to Go to College

☒ **Academic** ☐ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Many students, especially those students who will be the first in their families to attend college (often called "first-generation students"), will have many excuses why they should not pursue a college education. While these arguments may be legitimate, students are often intimidated by the idea of going to college when they are actually very capable, or are just uninformed.

Procedure/Guidelines:

1. College Board has a list of 7 excuses not to go to college. You may find this list at http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/starting-points/141.html.

2. Have students list their reasons for not attending college. Discuss those reasons in small groups.

3. Show students College Board's list and discuss the solutions that College Board gives for those excuses.

4. Students and parents can review the *No Excuses* article in the *Planning for College* section of www.kheaa.com to learn about resources from the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA).

5. Help students brainstorm ideas to overcome their reasons for not pursuing college.

Resources:

- www.kheaa.com

Activity A-4: High School vs. College

☒ **Academic** ☐ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Many high school students do not understand how education can be different after high school. On the other hand, others may resist pursuing education after high school because they don't know what to expect. Understanding how the system of higher education works is just as important as having the academic preparation for college.

Procedure/Guidelines:

Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) has developed a guide (scroll down to Academic Skills- It's the first doc) to help students better understand the differences between high school and college. This will guide students in making decisions about pursuing education after high school, and help them understand skills they need to work on while still in high school.

The guide discusses differences in:

- Personal Autonomy
- College Classes
- College Teachers
- Studying and Test-taking
- Grades and Grading and Credits
- College Advisers

Advisors should lead students through this guide (either provide each student a printed copy, or bring up the link and show it to the whole group of students). Read through and discuss the material with students, providing your own examples from your own life if possible as you progress through the material.

Activity A-5: Academic Goal Setting

☒ **Academic** ☐ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Setting goals is something that many of us take for granted. However, students need to learn to set goals for themselves in all areas of their lives. Setting goals in the academic arena is especially important and sometimes difficult for students to realize.

Procedure/Guidelines:

Below are some suggestions and resources to assist students with goal-setting:

- Talk about the difference between short-term and long-term goals (with examples)
- Discuss SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely)
- Have students start with small academic goals (e.g., getting a B average on the next two quizzes in history) and actually write two short term goals for themselves. Have them consider the next six months to a year and write one long term goal.

Resources:

- http://www.ehow.com/list_6376112_goal_setting-activities-students.html
- http://gotocollege.ky.gov/website/goto/home
- www.kheaa.com

Activity A-6: Academic Study Skills

☒ **Academic** ☐ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Many students do not exhibit true study skills, regardless of grades and test scores. These are skills that can sometimes be deemed unnecessary for some students in high school, but will be vital to success in education after high school.

Procedure/Guidelines:

Discuss some differences between high school and college, along with skills that may help ease that transition and aid students in being more successful in college. Although there are more, below is a list of study skills that all students should be familiar.

1. Learning styles
    a. 3 basic types of learning styles: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.
    b. There is a learning styles inventory in the ILP that students should complete.
    c. Research the learning style inventories to determine which is best for your students.
    d. It is important to remember that some students may have different learning styles for different subjects.

2. Note-taking skills and strategies
    a. http://www.testtakingtips.com/note/index.htm
    b. http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/college-success/955.html
    c. Cornell Notes: http://coe.jmu.edu/LearningToolbox/cornellnotes.html

3. Other study skills resources
    a. http://www.how-to-study.com/
    b. http://www.cse.buffalo.edu/~rapaport/howtostudy.html
    c. http://www.studygs.net/cooplearn.htm

Career Advising Toolkit

Career Activity Pages

Activity #	Title	Topic
C-1	What am I Worth?	Career Exploration, ILP, Goal Setting
C-2	An Evening with Business and Industry	College Awareness, Career Exploration, Interviewing Skills, ILP
C-3	Come Tweet with Me	Communication,
C-4	Career Changes	Career Exploration, ILP, Goal Setting
C-5	Connecting Careers with NEW TECH DEVICES	Communication, Technology
C-6	Word Jumble "EUMRSE"	Resumes, Communication, Career Exploration, ILP
C-7	From Classroom to Community	ILP, Career Exploration, Goal Setting,
C-8	"You" Tube	Positive Attitudes, ILP
C-9	I am TEAM I	Team Building, Collaboration, Communication
C-10	I am TEAM II	Leadership, Communication, Collaboration
C-11	I am TEAM III	Teambuilding, Collaboration
C-12	I am TEAM IV	Teambuilding, Collaboration, Communication, Decision Making

Activity C-1: What am I worth?

☐ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Schools generally cover aspects of a job that a student may be interested in. There is another step however that will make those discussions more relevant and garner greater student interest. This is achieved by asking students what income they would like to have 4 years after high school.

Procedure/Guidelines:

1. Students will need to complete the "Career Matchmaker" assessment in their ILP. This is found by clicking on Career Cruising in the blue banner at the top left of the screen. Next click on Career Matchmaker to get started. Students will receive a list of 10 suggested careers after answering the first 39 questions. (There are a total of 114 questions and it is recommended that all questions are answered to get the most accurate results). Before beginning post the following headings on a board in the classroom: "job" "earnings", "outlook", "education"
    a. Using the 10 recommended careers in each student's ILP have them click on the one career that is most appealing to them.
    b. From the blue banner at the left of the screen have them click on "Earnings". This page will show them potential salaries in KY as well as any state in the country. It will also provide a projection for the market for this position in 2018.
    c. Ask each student to share what they have found and record under the appropriate heading on the board.

2. For each student, ask if the earnings would meet the needs/wants they project they will want to earn 4 years after high school. Record a "yes" or "no" by each career.

3. Review all of the "no" listings and discuss how education could improve their projected salary. Read the "Earnings" section that indicates that achieving a college degree will increase potential earnings. Next have students "related careers" in the blue banner to research other jobs that utilize the same skills/knowledge as their original choice. Allow time for exploration (15 minutes) and then ask if they have found another position that appeals to them.

4. Finally, have students return to the ILP main page (purple button at the top of the screen) and click on "Goals and Plans", then "Career Planning Activities" and record today's activity by clicking on the "Career Planning Activity" area and selecting "ILP Activities" from the drop down box.

Activity C-2: An Evening with Business and Industry

☐ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Schools have traditionally held college fairs, but often ignore the aspect of career that might help students look more clearly at college. In conjunction with a college fair, or as a stand-alone event, consider hosting "An Evening with Business and Industry".

Procedure/Guidelines:

1. Invite members of your business community to attend. They could participate in many of the following ways:
    a. Set up a booth to represent and/or introduce their business/industry. Business members can greet students; discuss their business and what types of jobs/career are employed in their business. They could also discuss what education is required to work for their company.
    b. Discuss available jobs/career paths that the company will have open in the near future

2. Consider holding a Mock Interview Panel utilizing some of the business and industry professionals you have invited. Students can gain valuable experience with actual job interview scenarios.

3. Consider hosting a few career presentations, or even panel speakers, where students interested in a certain career cluster go to a certain location where business/industry professionals will discuss the career fields, the employability outlook, salaries and academic requirements. Students could also ask the professionals questions about the career field.

4. Consider allowing students to complete their resume through their ILP and then print these out to take to career and industry professionals for feedback. The professionals could suggest ways to improve the student resumes.

Activity C-3: Come Tweet with Me

☒ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Communication with students can be a challenge because they tend to tune out what is not of immediate interest to them. Important information and opportunities do not always make it home to parents, who really would like to have access to the information. Consider having your Counseling Department, your Administrators, even your school department chairs Tweet important information to parents and students.

- Twitter and other Social Media outlets. Schools could also consider having a Facebook page in addition to, or instead of, Tweeting.

Procedure Guidelines:

There are many events and pieces of information that would be of real use to parents, and that students may pay more attention to if it were presented in a format that is more accessible to them. Consider "Tweeting" about the following:

- Upcoming Assessment dates (ACT, PSAT, KCCT, etc)
- ACT registration deadlines
- School Events (Career Day, Parent-Teacher Conferences, School Pictures)
- Financial Aid deadlines
- Information about College/Career Fairs being held in the community
- Parent/Guardian volunteer opportunities at the school
- Information about available scholarships and deadlines for applying

Activity C-4: Career Changers

☐ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

In the area of career planning, some occupations may be referred to as traditional or non-traditional. Increasing the students' understanding of these differences may impact their choice of a career pathway.

Procedure Guidelines:

1. Have students brainstorm examples of traditional and non-traditional careers. Chart student responses.

2. Provide students with the following definition:
   - Non-traditional careers are those where more than 75% of the workforce is of the opposite gender". http://www.quintcareers.com/non-traditional_careers.html
   - Refer to charts from brainstorming session. Discuss and highlight examples that fit the definition. (e.g., male nurse, female construction worker).

3. Pair or group students (2-4 per group) to complete ILP research on identifying traditional and non-traditional careers in the 14 career clusters:
   a. Log onto the ILP and click on the purple 'Careers" button at the top of the screen. Next, click on "Kentucky Career Clusters". Assign one cluster to each pair /group to select 5 careers and label them as "traditional' or "non-traditional". (For examples of female and male non-traditional careers, visit the link above).
   b. Have students share their lists and debrief with whole group.

4. Repeat the above process with 3 suggested careers in each student's ILP.

5. Finally, have students record this experience in their ILPs. Click on "Goals and Plans" in the blue banner on the left of the screen. Next click on "Career Planning Activities. From the drop down box, select "ILP Activities", enter the school name and class, date and briefly describe what you learned from this activity about traditional and non-traditional careers/jobs.

Activity C-5: Connecting Careers with NEW TECH DEVICES

☐ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Today's students are very familiar with and adept at using social networking technology. In order to capitalize on this natural interest consider using these technologies to engage students in achieving their personal and career goals.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

1. Have students brainstorm about new technology devices they know and list for all to see. Ask and place check marks beside: technologies/tools they personally own, and use on a daily basis?

2. Provide and showcase various types of devices (e.g., iPad, netbooks, tablets, eReaders, Nook, Kindle, Sony, smartphones (including iPhone, Androids, Blackberry) that you can access. Consider asking students, a colleague or local vendors to provide those that you do not have.

3. Teacher will demonstrate how they use various networking applications (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Flicker, mySpace, LinkIn, Bebo, and Ning). Consider inviting various staff/upper classmen, or community members to demonstrate how they use these applications for professional networking in their career fields.

4. Provide printed copies of each student's career suggestions from their ILP. In small groups, ask students to list ways these applications/devices can be used for networking, collaboration, and communication skills and at least three new ways that these applications/devices could be used in their suggested career paths/fields.

5. As a follow-up activity, assign students to create a PowerPoint/podcast demonstrating the impact that applications/devices have on career development and planning. This could be completed as an individual assignment or by grouping students in similar career fields.

Activity C-6: Word Jumble "EUMRSE"

☐ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Students will experience various types of applications and related forms in their career lifetime. Often, they are intimidated by these forms because they are unfamiliar with them. Students need to understand the purpose behind "advertising" themselves for a job by putting a spotlight on their best skills using an application or a resume. IN this activity, students will learn how to write a cover letter and professional resume related to a career field of their choice.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

Have students discuss the importance of various employment documents that verify accurate personal information. Show examples of various types of documents including: application (education, employment, medical information included), cover letter, resume, letters of recommendation and any other documents that may be pertinent to a specific career field.

1. The teacher needs to clarify the purpose for writing a cover letter and developing a resume. (Refer to the purple "Employment" button at the top of the ILP screen).
2. Review "Letter Writing" section within the "Employment" section of the ILP. Students will use resume builder in the ILP and draft a cover letter that is appropriate for an employer in their choice of career field.
3. Students should be placed in homogeneous career groups to review documents and determine if their letter and resume would result in a job interview.
4. As a follow-up lesson, speakers could be invited in to have students ask what types of questions/information potential employers would want to know.
5. As a follow-up lesson, have students develop at least ten interview questions and conduct mock interviews.
6. Students need to record the above activities in their ILP under "Goals and Plans" and "Career Planning Activities". These documents are meant to be an ongoing process in their prospective career fields.

Activity C-7: From Classroom to Community

☐ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

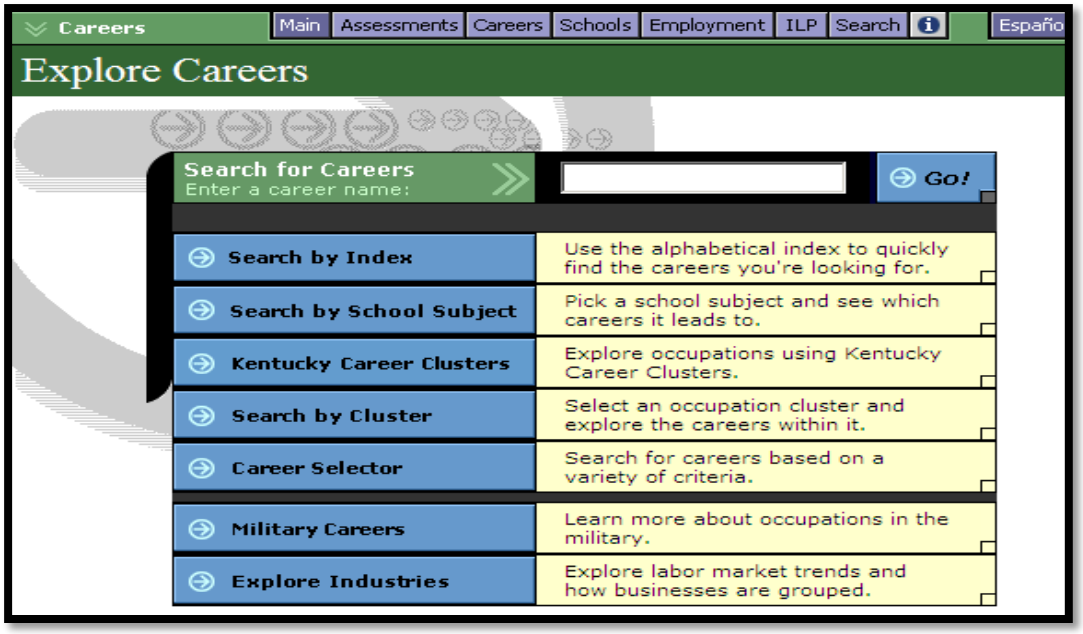
Real-life, hands on experiences in the workplace is the key to ensuring that students have realistic expectations for what the world of work will be like. In order for these experiences to have true relevance it is best to connect them with the student's career plans that are aligned with their skills and interests as identified in the ILP.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

1. Print each student's suggested careers in their ILP. Have them select one career they are interested in and list the skills/abilities they feel they would be a good match for that career.
2. Pair students to share their lists and solicit feedback from a peer. Are there other characteristics the student possesses that the peer thinks should be added to the list? Are there other careers this student would be suited to?
3. As a large group activity, ask each student to share something they learned from their partner and one question they have about the career in which they are interested.
4. As a follow-up assignment have students conduct research in their ILP to answer the following questions about the career (sheet attached).
    a. Brief summary (3-5 sentences) of the career
    b. Brief summary of the training or education required for the career
    c. Potential earnings for entry level positions in this career.
    d. An answer to the question they shared (# 3 above).
5. Review each student's responses to determine if this is a career they would like to pursue further. If yes, reach out to the community to locate a professional mentor that the student could job shadow. If no, begin the search again by having student research a related career from the list of suggestion in their ILP.
6. Finally, have students record this experience as a career planning activity in their ILP by clicking on "Goals and Plans" in the blue banner on the left side of the screen.

Resources: Explore Careers Activity Sheet (see next page)

Name: _____ **Career:** _____



1. Brief summary (3-5 sentences) of the career.

2. Brief summary of the training or education required for the career.

3. Potential earnings for entry level positions in this career.

4. Answer the question the group shared during the classroom discussion.

Activity C-8: "YOU" Tube

☐ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Students will compare positive and negative real life experiences. They will brainstorm/discuss what a positive attitude looks like. Students will create a project to demonstrate what a positive attitude looks like.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

Divide students into same gender groups. Instruct them to close their eyes and ask them to raise their hands is someone has ever been mean to them. Next, have them open their eyes to see that the majority, if not all students, have raised hands.

1. Have students close their eyes again and ask them to raise their hands if they have been mean to someone else. Again, have them open their eyes to see raised hands.

2. In large group discuss the impact of either being mean or being treated meanly can have on school performance and success in a job/career. Ask students to brainstorm words that describe the results of this treatment. Define and discuss each word (suggested words: mistrust, competitiveness, disengagement, indifference...)

3. Allow students to self-select a small group (3-5) to create a project that illustrates one or more of the words above and how it could negatively impact job performance. Choices include (but are not limited to) cartoon, You-Tube video, role playing script, poster, article for a magazine.

4. Using the same medium, have students create a project that illustrates strategies/approaches/ideas for a positive job outcome (i.e., solve a problem, develop a new idea or product)

5. Have students upload any documents, video, pictures they have created to the "My documents" section of their ILP.

Activity C-9: I am TEAM (Lesson One)

☐ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Students will understand the traits and characteristics of a successful team and will develop the skills necessary to work collaboratively - at all levels - to accomplish a common goal. In the process they will learn to value the contributions of team members with diverse backgrounds, skill sets, knowledge, perspectives and interests.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- The teacher will divide the group into two "teams" (if the group is large enough, otherwise one team would suffice). The teacher will need to have 12-16 balloons already inflated for this activity.

- Have the teams stand in a circle. The object of the game is to keep the balloons in their circle in the air by hitting them (volleying them) up into the air. If a balloon touches the ground, the team has lost. The team who can stay in the game the longest, wins the game.

- In the beginning the teacher will give two students in each group a balloon and when the teacher says to begin, those students with balloons will begin volleying them into the air. The teacher then adds a balloon to each group every 15-20 seconds until both teams have at least 6 to 8 balloons going at one time.

- On the first try, the team may not organize well. If no student steps to the front as a "leader" the team may very well struggle. The teacher should not coach them through the first round. A team may very well have more than one leader step up and try to direct the game, in which case there may still be a great deal of pandemonium. Again, the teacher should not coach the teams, but allow them to "play" the game under their own direction.

- After one round, the teacher should sit the students down and discuss the process each team went through to try to obtain their objective. What strategies were used to attempt to "win" the game? What strategies were missing that might have helped? This is a good time to discuss if a team had a natural leader step up, or if too many leaders stepped up. Discuss the importance of leadership to the succeeding or failing with a mission.

Activity C-10: I am TEAM (Lesson Two)

☐ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Students will understand the traits and characteristics of a successful team and will develop the skills necessary to work collaboratively - at all levels - to accomplish a common goal. In the process they will learn to value the contributions of team members with diverse backgrounds, skill sets, knowledge, perspectives and interests.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- Building on yesterday's discussion, the teacher will initiate a discussion of the students' ideas of a "good"/ effective leader by asking the students to name 2-3 people (could be in their school, in their district, in the state, in the US or a national leader. The leader could be alive or dead.)
- Ask the students to quickly explain who they chose as a good leader in terms of who they were and what they did. Ask the group as a whole what elements, or qualities, these leaders possess. Make a list of these quality traits with the students.
- Now, break the students up into two groups. Give one group the article "Five Qualities Good Leaders Express" by Lisa Dewey (see Resources section below) and "Seven Qualities of a Good Leader" by Barbara White (see Resources section below).
- Ask the students to quickly scan their articles and chart the characteristics these articles indicate that good leaders need. Have someone from each group share their charted list of leadership characteristics.
- If time permits, the teacher could consider asking the students what they feel the difference is between a good leader, and a hero. (i.e. a hero rescues people, whereas a leader helps people learn to rescue themselves; a hero receives the glory for the work, whereas a good leader would share the glory with the team)

Resources:

- Seven Qualities of a Good Leader, by Barbara White

Activity C-11: I am TEAM (Lesson Three)

☐ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Students will understand the traits and characteristics of a successful team and will develop the skills necessary to work collaboratively to accomplish a common goal. In the process, they will learn to value the contributions of team members with diverse backgrounds, skill sets, knowledge, perspectives and interests.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- The teacher will initiate a discussion on what elements are necessary in an effective team and how those elements were either present or absent from the group balloon activity.
- The teacher should ask the students to consider how the following elements are important to team success (note the teacher may need to provide a brief explanation of these items):
  - -Goal Setting
  - -Team members- defined role
  - -Responsibility/Trust
  - -Compromise
  - -Leadership/project Management
  - -Communication
  - -Adaptability
  - -Performance assessment
  - -Team members equally contributing (participating)
- The teacher can now ask the students to evaluate what they could have done differently in the balloon activity if they had taken time to organize their team. If time permits, allow students to re-do the balloon activity, allowing them time to organize their team. Compare the results to the first time the students participated in this activity.
- Advisor should initiate a discussion of how teams operate in the workforce and:
  - What roles do teams play in your school
  - What roles do teams play in your clubs organizations?
  - What roles do teams play in your community?
  - Which team roles are not necessary?
  - How do animals work in teams?
  - What strengths did you bring to your team?
  - What strengths do you possess that weren't tapped?
  - What makes an effective leader?
  - What are the likely pitfalls to a team project?

Activity C-12: I am TEAM (Lesson Four)

☐ **Academic** ☒ **Career** ☐ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Students will understand the traits and characteristics of a successful team and will develop the skills necessary to work collaboratively - at all levels - to accomplish a common goal. In the process they will learn to value the contributions of team members with diverse backgrounds, skill sets, knowledge, perspectives and interests.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- The teacher will want to discuss with students the importance of making good decisions and the process they can use for considering the options they have in order to make the best decision.

- The Decision Making Lesson Plan (see Resource Section below) has a handout that all students will receive called "Decision Mountain." Provide a copy for all students.

- The Decision Making Lesson Plan (see Resource Section below) has five "stories" that involve situations where students need to make decisions. The teacher should pick 2-3 stories that will work best with their students (consider that Story #5 involves a "Walkman." This story can be updated to say MP3 player, IPad or cell phone).

- Divide the students into smaller groups and have them complete the "Decision Mountain" paper based on the story they are assigned. They should work collaboratively in their groups to complete the task.

- Once each group is finished, ask one student from each group to share the story, and the process they went through to choose the best decision.

Note: The lesson plan used for this lesson indicates that it is for 4th -6th grade. It can be used for both middle and high by choosing (or tweaking) the stories appropriately.

Resources:

- Lesson Plan: http://www.uen.org/Lessonplan/preview.cgi?LPid=4641

Personal/Social Advising Toolkit
Personal/Social Activity Pages

Activity #	Title	Topic
PS-1	Techniques for Building Solid Parent-School Relationships	Communication, Relationships, Communication
PS-2	8 Easy Ways to Make New Friends and Meet People	Relationships, Volunteering
PS-3	Cyber Bullying	Bullying, Technology, Cyber bullying, cyber ethics
PS-4	No Bullies Allowed	Bullying, Self-esteem, Relationships
PS-5	Respect Yourself- Body, Mind and Soul	Self-esteem, Self-concept, Bullying, Relationships
PS-6	Senior Talks	Transitions, Role Models,
PS-7	Appropriate and Inappropriate Touch	Boundaries, Safety,
PS-8	Understanding Stereotypes	Stereotypes, Harassment, Bullying,
PS-9	Healthy Me- Physical Activity for a Healthy Life	Health and Wellness;
PS-10	College- How Much Does it Cost?	Personal Finances, College, Economics
PS-11	Financial Resourcefulness	College, Personal Finances, Economics
PS-12	8 Easy Ways to Make New Friends and Meet People	Relationships, Volunteering,
PS-13	Expressing Feelings	Self-expression, Feelings,
PS-14	How to Manage Your Stress	Health and Wellness, Stress, Mental and Emotional Health

Activity PS-1: Techniques for Building Solid Parent-School Relationships

☐ **Academic** ☐ **Career** ☒ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Using a variety of communication methods throughout the year can keep parents connected to the middle school classroom. These techniques can help build and sustain strong relationships with parents.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

1. Make Open House a special event - Free food is always a winner! Parents are also encouraged to join the PTO and other organizations to establish and build a positive parent and school relationship. Post/display important phone numbers with extension, e-mail address, homework hotline number, and the school's Web site along with school rules, regulations, and expectations.
2. Contact parents with good news regularly - Make commendation calls or emails. So much time is devoted to students who are not doing well, that students who perform well do not receive adequate praise.
3. Plan a Writing Night - a fun way to share curriculum and give parents a peek into the classrooms. Choose an evening (after work for parents) for your event. An hour or even 45 minutes will probably be plenty of time to have some fun with this.
4. Send invitations - (for parents and students) via newsletter, special send-homes, emails or web site. Provide snacks, everyone loves to eat.
5. Set discussion ideas – use different types of writing the students work on throughout the year: narrative, expository, descriptive, and persuasive, etc.
6. Explain how you do writing conferencing - offer suggestions on how parents can encourage their child to write.
7. Have an interactive activity for parents and students to complete together - for example, have the parent and the student analyzes the strengths and weaknesses in a piece of writing and how would they correct it, taking questions.
8. Utilize technology whenever possible - Parents and teachers both are extremely busy, so use technology to stay in touch (emails, web page, homework hotline, and parent portal that allows them to access student grades via a computer). Of course, not all parents have access to technology, so provide the same information in different written formats.
9. Establish an Open Door Policy - sixth grade parents are sometimes hesitant to volunteer in their child's classrooms, because middle school is much different than elementary school. In order to stay in touch with parents, look for other ways to get them to stop by. For example, they are welcome to come in and observe teaching. Another technique to use is the Top Reader's Party. Every nine weeks award top readers with a pizza party or cupcake party and extend an invitation to parents, acknowledging that they have helped with their child's reading success.
10. Parent Conferences - be as flexible as possible since some parents can only meet in the mornings or after school. Usually all of the student's teachers meet with the guardian/parent(s) during a conference. This can be intimidating for some parents, so begin the conference by thanking and welcoming the parents. Always start a conference by saying something positive about the student. Every child has strengths that are worthy of being recognized. Then proceed with the conference giving each teacher and parent an opportunity to voice concerns. Attempt to keep conferences on a positive note by reflecting on the statement, "It is not what you say, it is how you say it." I am a parent, and I know how I want to be treated.

Excerpt taken from: http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3748289

Activity PS-2: 8 Easy Ways to Make New Friends and Meet People

☐ Academic ☐ Career ☒ Personal/Social

Overview:

Whether attending a new school or joining a new team or club, meeting people and making friends can be awkward and challenging. Students will benefit from guided discussions that include the following suggestions. Consider role-playing to decrease anxiety and add levity.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

1. Listen and Ask Question: By being a good listener, you let others know that you value what they have to say and, by extension, or who they are. Try making eye contact while they're speaking, then asking a question or two about what they're saying.
2. Give a Compliment: Everyone loves an ego boost. When giving a compliment, be honest and genuine. Even if you're complimenting something very small—like the color of the person's shoes—it's likely to be appreciated. You might even receive a compliment in return!
3. Detach Yourself from Technology – Temporarily: You're less likely to notice who's interested in you if you're constantly checking your email, voicemail and text messages. Being online or on the phone also sends the message to others that you're unavailable. Put away your cell phone from time to time and take a look around. Who seems funny or interesting? Which people in the room have you never talked to? Who pays attention to your ideas?
4. Join a Club or Team: Investigate the clubs and activities at your school or place of worship. Check out the course listings at your local community center, YMCA or parks and recreation department.
5. Volunteer: Volunteer in your school, community or church. Many teens clean up parks, tutor younger students or help at food pantries, animal shelters or hospitals. Nonprofit organizations always need volunteers as well: Find out if Habitat for Humanity, the Sierra Club, the Red Cross and other nonprofit groups have chapters near where you live. Chances are, you'll find other teens—and nice people of all ages—volunteering their time.
6. Get a Job: Getting a part-time job at a place where other teens work is another way to meet people and work toward common goals. Even if those goals involve folding sweaters or cleaning toilets, you'll have something to complain about -- and bond over -- with others.
7. Form a Study Group: Does your math teacher give super-hard exams? Is your history teacher always giving pop quizzes? Round up a few others from your class to study together each week. Ask your teacher if you could pass around a sign-up sheet or make an announcement about the group after class.
8. When your group gets together, share notes and chat about class. Find out what your classmates like about the teacher and what they can't stand. Make flash cards together or quiz one another. Bring snacks and share what's going on in your life. You'll have new friends before you know it.
9. Laugh: Letting others know that you think they're funny makes them feel good and shows them you're interested in what they think. It also shows you have a good sense of humor, which is one of the top things teens look for in a person, whether it's a best friend or a boyfriend or girlfriend.

From Jessica Stevenson, former About.com Guide
http://teenadvice.about.com/od/datingrelationships/tp/making-new-friends.htm

Activity PS-3: Cyber Bullying

☐ Academic ☐ Career ☒ Personal/Social

Overview:

Bullying has taken a new turn in our 21st Century world. Cyber-bullying consists of the use of technology to harass others. It can include intimidating or malicious messages sent by email, text, or by harassing others on social media websites. Although cyber-bullying is not a physical form of bullying, it can be equally damaging, if not more damaging, to the victim because the audience can be much larger than a group of people in a school setting. The anonymity of not being face to face with the victim also contributes to the process, as they don't see the damage they are doing.

Procedure / Guidelines:

1. Discuss the concepts of cyber bullying and cyber ethics.
2. Discuss what students (and parents) can do and what they should not do when they feel someone is being bullied.

Students:

- Should not respond or reply to intimidating messages
- Should talk with an adult (their parent, a teacher, etc.) if they feel they have been a victim of cyber bullying
- Should notify school officials
- Should record harassing or intimidating messages or images as proof
- Should contact the police if the cyber-bullying includes threats of violence, extortion or a hate crime

This page was based on ideas from the Stop Bullying Now website. For more resources, visit the website at: http://www.stopbullying.gov/kids/. The site includes web videos, games and puzzles, and other student-friendly resources for helping students understand and take a stand against bullying.

Resources:

- http://us.norton.com/library/familyresource/article.jsp?aid=pr_cyberethics
- http://www.cybercitizenship.org/ethics/whitepaper.html

Activity PS-4: No Bullies Allowed

☐ Academic ☐ Career ☒ Personal/Social

Overview:

Bullying can ruin more than just a day at school. Students who are continually harassed can become depressed and develop low self-esteem. In extreme cases, some have even committed suicide. Many people dismiss the bullying problem, citing that there have always been school bullies. These days however, the Internet and cell phones have taken bullying to a new level. Bullies sometimes harass their victims online or by sending them intimidating text messages. There are things that parents, teachers, and students can do to address the bullying epidemic.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

1. Discuss how to spot a bully with students and parents. Not all students will tell their parents or teachers that they are being bullied, so it is important for others to be able to recognize the signs of bullying so that they can intervene. Students who are being bullied may often:
   a. Avoid going to school, riding the bus, or walking to and from school;
   b. Show signs of depression, anxiety and low self-esteem
   c. Appear with bruises, torn clothing or damaged personal belongings
   d. Appear withdrawn, depressed or angry
2. Discuss what students (and parents) can do and what they should not do when they feel someone is being bullied:
   a. Encourage students (and parents) to talk with teachers or counselors at school to report bullying
   b. Do not worsen the situation by allowing your own emotions to get in the way. This may frighten or confuse the person being bullied.
   c. Do not encourage the student to "stand up for themselves." Violence against violence rarely solves anything. Above all, do not criticize the person being bullied.
   d. Show empathy to a person who is being bullied. They often feel isolated and alone. Knowing that there is someone who cares about them can be a big help.
   e. Report incidents of bullying to school officials.

   This page was based on ideas from the **Stop Bullying Now** website. For more resources, visit the website at http://www.stopbullying.gov/kids/ The site includes web videos, games and puzzles, and other student-friendly resources for helping students understand and take a stand against bullying.

Activity PS-5: Respect Yourself- Body, Mind and Soul

☐ **Academic** ☐ **Career** ☒ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Students are often quick to complain that they are not being shown the respect they feel they deserve- but do they understand the basic concept of respect? Do they treat others with respect? Initiate a group conversation with students on respect. Use the guide below to assist with that discussion.

Procedure/Guidelines:

1. Discuss the concept of respect with students. What does it mean? How do we show (or not show) respect to others? Ask students if they have ever personally been disrespected (might want to use a show of hands so that students do not take a side track on to talking about when they were wronged) and how that made them feel.
2. Explore why being disrespected is such an issue for some. What long term effects can it have on a person, or a group of people?
3. Explain to students that we are made up of a Body (health related issues, our physical body and skin), a Mind (culture- language, nationality, race) and a Soul (our beliefs- customs, religion, ethics). It is important to respect the aspects of other people just as we would want to be respected.
4. Ask the students what ways we can respect one another's Bodies. Do the same with ideas for respecting the Mind and the Soul of one another.
5. Brainstorm a list of practical ways that students can show respect to everyone in the school environment (i.e. awareness of different cultural holidays, video announcements about different cultural customs, a Cultural Fair where various groups of students can do presentations, share foods, share customs, provide awareness of differences).
6. Make a plan of action for one or more of the students' ideas. Involve the students in the planning.

Activity PS-6: Senior Talks

☒ **Academic** ☐ **Career** ☒ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Younger students (especially eighth and ninth graders) often struggle with the transition into high school. Many schools host orientation or information nights for parents and students, hosted by teachers and administrators. This format is not always the most effective format for students. Consider hosting "Senior Talks" where junior and senior students share from their own experience in order to help younger students find their way through the academic and social setting of the high school.

Procedure/Guidelines:

1. Consider hosting an event several times in the early part of the school year where upper-class students have an opportunity to meet with, share and answer questions that younger students would have.

2. Talks could be organized around specific areas of school life, such as:
    a. Athletics
    b. Clubs and Organizations
    c. Leadership
    d. Academic Survival

Activity PS-7: Appropriate and Inappropriate Touch

☐ Academic ☐ Career ☒ Personal/Social

Overview:

Schools are committed to the safety and well-being of all students. Students are often unsure of themselves in many situations in their lives and are often afraid to take the initiative in situations where they feel they might look silly or foolish. Students need the necessary information to be able to determine when a situation is harmless and what to do when a situation seems uncomfortable. In order to do this, students need is to understand appropriate/ inappropriate physical contacts and learn strategies to keep them safe from harm. Students have the right to personal space that is not invaded by others.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

1. Lead a discussion with students about identifying body language that signals whether closeness and touching are welcome; when it is unclear permission must be sought; you have the right to seek help if you feel threatened in any way; and be aware that some students have physical disabilities in which any kind of touch could cause pain and discomfort. You have the right to say no to any unwanted touch or contact. Touch is appropriate if:
    a. it is welcomed and permission is given (i.e. handshake)
    b. Is an expression of genuine care and sympathy
    c. Causes no discomfort to the recipient
    d. Is offered openly in the presence of others (especially in the case of an embrace).
2. Lead a discussion explain that a touch is inappropriate if it:
    a. Can be perceived as a threat
    b. Can be perceived as physical harm
    c. Causes embarrassment to the other person
    d. Can readily be misinterpreted in any way
    e. Does not allow the other person to disengage easily (an arm around the shoulder is quite different from an arm around the waist or a frontal embrace)
3. With adult supervision, two or more students can role play demonstrating personal space and appropriate/ inappropriate physical contact.
4. List ways to appropriately approach others. Then identify ways to respond to someone who is invading your personal space.

Note: There are other topics this activity may lead to. Other topics may include: abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, rape/date rape, sexual harassment, etc. You may consider conducting this lesson with like-gender classes by perhaps trading students with another advisor so that one of you has the males and one the females.

Activity PS-8: Understanding Stereotypes

☐ Academic ☐ Career ☒ Personal/Social

Overview:

Students face a lot of pressure, including pressures from stereotypes and the expectations (positive or negative) that those stereotypes can impose. Begin by discussing the assumptions that can lead to stereotypes and the unfair judgments about individuals and groups that stereotypes can ultimately cause.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

1. Discuss with students how people often use labels or categories to describe others and how these labels can be based on such characteristics such as clothing, looks, the way a person talks, or the groups to which a person may belong. Explain that categorizing things or people is a human inclination, however people often make assumptions about groups of people they don't even know.
2. Ask the class to brainstorm categories that are used at school to group students. Categories could include labels such as "jocks" or "brains." Write each category the students generate on the board, or on a sheet of poster paper. Finally, have students narrow their list to five major categories.
3. Write these five major categories on five separate pieces of flip chart paper (or on five different sections of the board) and post these around the room. Give the students 10 minutes to travel to each sheet and write down adjectives (or other describing words) that related to the category heading. Remind students that they only need to add new words to a chart- if the word is already there, they do not need to repeat it.
4. When they are finished, ask students to take a moment to look at the words they have generated under each group heading. Use the following questions to lead a discussion:
    a. Do assumptions apply to everyone in a group?
    b. Do most people hold the same assumption about a group? Why or why not?
    c. Do assumptions tell us anything definite about a categorized individual?
    d. How do assumptions affect your behavior toward others?
5. Ask students to help define the word "stereotype." Explain that when we make assumptions about an entire group of people, those assumptions are referred to as stereotypes. When assumptions and stereotypes influence our attitudes, making a fair judgment about something or someone is difficult. This is called bias".
6. Take another look at the adjectives recorded and hold a class discussion around the following questions: Do these adjectives describe stereotypes? How can they be unfair or hurtful? (Lesson plan is taken from http://www.discoveryeducation.com/teachers/free-lesson-plans/understanding-stereotypes.cfm)

Activity PS-9: Healthy Me- Physical Activity for a Healthy Life

☐ **Academic** ☐ **Career** ☒ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Regular participation in physical activity is important for achieving and maintaining all elements of health. It not only improves your physical health but social, mental and emotional health as well. To focus on overall wellness is to strive to balance all parts of health. Improving your physical health through adequate physical activity is a great place to impact each component of health. It's especially important if you're trying to lose weight or to maintain a healthy weight.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

1. Invite students who may be interested in participating in a health maintenance/weight maintenance group.
2. The Advisor has a number of options to facilitate student success:
    a) Invite a speaker to share strategies for maintaining a healthy weight.
    b) Request that the school council make recommendations/ set policy to implement opportunities within the school day for physical activity.
    c) Connect students or group with a mentoring/role modeling program for assistance in developing an individual wellness plan through a partnership with the local public health department or other community agency.
    d) Collaborate with the school nurse or other school staff to provide faculty support to a student support group by perhaps walking or exercising after school.

Resources:

- http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/children.html
- http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/physical_activity/index.html
- www.presidentschallenge.org

Activity PS-10: College- How Much Does it Cost?

☐ Academic ☐ Career ☒ Personal/Social

Overview:

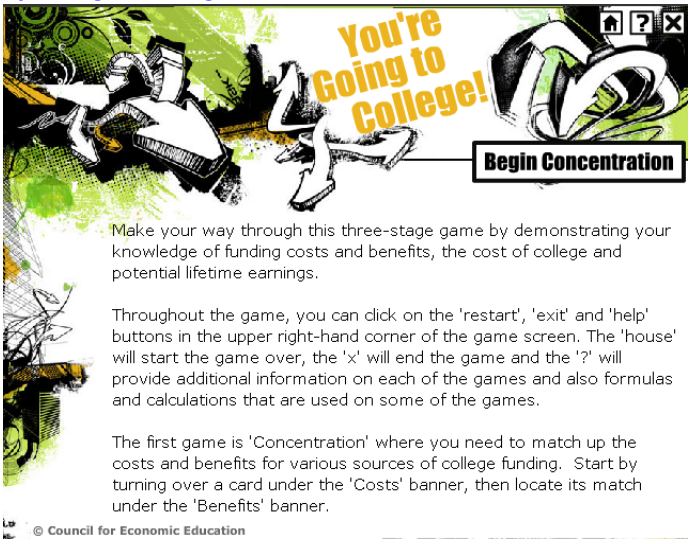
Students rarely understand the financial side of going to college. This lesson is designed to help them begin thinking about the money they might need to plan on for college. This lesson relies on a specific resource, EconEdLink, which is the leading source of online economic and personal finance lessons and other resources for educators, students and afterschool providers.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

1. Go to EconEdLink and find the "You're Going to College Interactive Activity" lesson. Students will go through a series of online game-like activities that will expose them to the basic financial considerations of college attendance. The first game is "Concentration." Students will need to click on the "Begin Concentration" button on the screen.

Resources:

- EconEdLink
- *The Real Cost of Going to College* section contains information about billable and non-



billable costs. Get a breakdown of fees from individual Kentucky colleges by linking to the Kentucky College Cost Information page and using the *College Cost and Award Package Comparison* form.

- Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority:

Activity PS-11: Financial Resource-fullness

☐ **Academic** ☐ **Career** ☒ **Personal/Social**

Overview:

Students rarely understand the financial side of going to college. This lesson is designed to help them begin thinking about how they can find resources to help them pay for college.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

1. Visit www.gotocollege.ky.gov. Check out *The Real Cost of Going to College* section to learn about billable and non-billable costs
   - Get a breakdown of fees from individual Kentucky colleges by linking to the *Kentucky College Cost Information* page
   - Use the *College Cost and Award Package Comparison* form to find the school that is the best financial fit
2. The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) employs regional outreach counselors that live and work in 13 regions across the state. Outreach counselors are available, at no charge, to provide interactive workshops on a variety of college-planning, student financial aid, college admissions and financial literacy topics. Presentations are aligned with KDE's Core Content for Assessment of Practical Living/Vocational Studies. Visit the *Counselors, Community Partners and College Access Providers* section of www.kheaa.com for contact information and additional presentation descriptions.
   a. The Your Map to College session encourages middle school students to study hard, get good grades, and set their sights on education after high school. Students learn the benefits of getting a higher education, what they can do to prepare for their futures, and how to earn scholarship funds to help pay for college or technical school. Topics covered include:
      i. Becoming familiar with KHEAA
      ii. Learning how hobbies and interests can turn into future careers
      iii. Checking out www.kheaa.com, a single point of information for students, parents, counselors and others
      iv. Comparing median earnings based on educational level
      v. Viewing Kentucky occupations by salary
      vi. Learning other benefits of higher education
      vii. Calculating the grade point average (GPA)
      viii. Understanding the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) program and its use
      ix. Becoming aware ACT exams
   b. The *How to Handle Your Future* presentation for high school freshmen and sophomores introduces students to free college planning materials and services. Participants will learn the benefits of getting a higher education and be introduced to state and federal financial aid programs and terms. In additional to topics covered in the middle school session, topics covered include:
      i. Accessing free college planning information and student financial aid resources
      ii. Understanding need-based and merit-based financial aid

iii. Learning the types of financial aid available, including grants, scholarships, work-study and loans
iv. Exploring the sources of financial aid, including federal and state government, military, KHEAA, school-based and private aid
v. Researching federal and state financial aid programs including the College Access Program (CAP) Grant and the Kentucky Tuition Grant (KTG) Program
vi. Using KEES to pay for college or technical training
vii. Visiting online sites for additional information
viii. Creating a free personalized account at kheaa.com

c. KHEAA's *Paying for College 101* workshop provides high school students with the detailed information they need to apply for student financial aid. Students will learn about the financial aid process, discovering when and how to apply for state and federal funds. Options for filling the gap if traditional financial aid does not meet their need will be discussed, and common application mistakes, financial aid blunders, and other information will be covered. Topics covered include:
   i. Choosing the college that best fits the individual student
   ii. Learning the formula that determines financial need
   iii. Breaking down the school's cost of attendance
   iv. Understanding the Expected Family Contribution (EFC)
   v. Completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
   vi. Reviewing student loan choices

Resources:

- www.gotocollege.ky.gov
- www.kheaa.com

Activity PS-12: 8 Easy Ways to Make New Friends and Meet People

☐ Academic ☐ Career ☒ Personal/Social

Overview:

Whether you're attending a new school or looking for a date, meeting people and making friends can be awkward and challenging. However, it doesn't have to be so hard. Try a few of these simple tips, and you'll be on your way in no time.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

Share the following with students. Discuss each idea.

1. **Listen and Ask Questions**

Other people like to know they're being heard and that their ideas are appreciated. By being a good listener, you let others know that you value what they have to say and, by extension, who they are. You can let others know you're paying attention by making eye contact while they're speaking, then asking a question or two about what they're saying. If the conversation goes well, ask the person for his or her phone number or email, then make plans to hang out.

2. **Give a Compliment**

Everyone loves an ego boost. Noticing something you like about someone and sharing it with him or her is a great way to forge a connection and start a conversation.
When giving a compliment, be honest and genuine. Even if you're complimenting something very small—like the color of the person's shoes—it's likely to be appreciated. You might even receive a compliment in return!

3. **Detach Yourself from Technology -- Temporarily**

You're less likely to notice who's interested in you if you're constantly checking your email, voicemail and text messages. Being online or on the phone also sends the message to others that you're unavailable. Put away your cell phone from time to time and take a look around. Who seems funny or interesting? Which people in the room have you never talked to? Who pays attention to your ideas? Make a mental note and spend a little time getting to know these people face-to-face.

4. **Join a Club or Team**

Having an interest in common with another person gives both of you something to talk about. No matter if that interest is reading, rugby or rock 'n' roll, pursuing it with other people is fun and gives you a sense of meaning and belonging. Clubs, teams and other groups also work toward common goals, which is inspiring, teaches you how to solve problems and helps you bond with others. Investigate the clubs and activities at your school or place of worship. Check out the course listings at your local community center, YMCA or parks and recreation department. Form a band or a book club, or start an interest group online. You'll have a circle of friends before you know it.

5. **Volunteer**

A strong desire to help others is attractive to most people, whether they're looking for a friend or a date. It's also extremely appealing to colleges and scholarship programs. Channeling this desire

into a volunteer project is a great way to meet others, build community and work toward common goals. You can volunteer in your school, community or church. Many teens clean up parks, tutor younger students or help at food pantries, animal shelters or hospitals. Nonprofit organizations always need volunteers as well: Find out if Habitat for Humanity, the Sierra Club, the Red Cross and other nonprofit groups have chapters near where you live. Chances are, you'll find other teens—and nice people of all ages—volunteering their time.

6. **Get a Job**

Getting a part-time job at a place where other teens work is another way to meet people and work toward common goals. Even if those goals involve folding sweaters or cleaning toilets, you'll have something to complain about -- and bond over -- with others.

7. **Form a Study Group**

Does your math teacher give super-hard exams? Is your history teacher always giving pop quizzes? Round up a few others from your class to study together each week. Ask your teacher if you could pass around a sign-up sheet or make an announcement about the group after class.
When your group gets together, share notes and chat about class. Find out what your classmates like about the teacher and what they can't stand. Make flash cards together or quiz one another. Bring snacks and share what's going on in your life. You'll have new friends before you know it.

8. **Laugh**

Letting others know that you think they're funny makes them feel good and shows them you're interested in what they think. It also shows you have a good sense of humor, which is one of the top things teens look for in a person, whether it's a best friend or a boyfriend or girlfriend.

From Jessica Stevenson, former About.com Guide
http://teenadvice.about.com/od/datingrelationships/tp/making-new-friends.htm

Activity PS-13: Expressing Feelings

☐ Academic ☐ Career ☒ Personal/Social

Overview:

Some students lack the skills to properly identify and express their feelings. Students who lack in these skills often have little self-awareness, and can feel alone and helpless. These students often have few coping resources. Often, we attempt to fix the problem by offering quick-fix solutions, or try to solve it for them. These responses make it worse, and does not help the student learn how to express themselves and solve their own problems.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

These are steps to help students to solve their own problems by identifying and expressing their feelings

1. Help students identify common feelings that they experience. Ask what these feelings look like on a person's face, or feel like when a person is experiencing them. Make a list of these feelings on the board, or on poster paper.
2. Help validate the feelings. In other words, help students think of a situation or circumstance under which each feeling might be very valid to have (for example, when might it be very understandable for someone to be angry?) In these circumstances, would a person have an intense or mild version of the feeling?
3. Discuss certain actions that people who are having each feeling may exhibit. Discuss what actions are logical and which are unacceptable (over reaction, illegal, etc.). This is a great time to discuss the fact that they need to "own" their feelings and that they are responsible for their actions, no matter what circumstances may have lead to the feeling.
4. Brainstorm ways to cope with each feeling that would be constructive and not cause more harm than good.
5. Stress to the students that communication is the key to expressing feelings and working through the problem, finding a solution.

When talking to students, listen closely to what is being said and the feeling behind the content. Paraphrase what you hear back to check for accuracy. Avoid the impulse to rush to solve the problem! The most important part here is the feeling to be verbally expressed. The student will not be ready to talk about solutions until that happens.

Activity PS-14: How to Manage Stress

☐ Academic ☐ Career ☒ Personal/Social

Overview:

Stress is not always a bad thing. Some levels of good stress help people meet deadlines, complete difficult tasks, or perform in a sport or other performance activity. Students often experience high levels of stress that can interfere with academic performance, and among other aspects of their lives. Too much stress can keep students from completing any tasks at all. This lesson helps to identify the causes of stress and what can be done to reduce it.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

Your school counselor, FRYSC Coordinator, or other interested teachers may have other ideas to add to this lesson plan.

1. Ask students how they would define stress. Write their ideas on the board, or on a sheet of poster paper.
2. Discuss with students the difference between good and bad stress. See if they can think of examples for each type of stress.
3. Emphasize to students that stress can cause powerful feelings, as well as biological changes in the body. Ask them how they feel when they are stressed. List any ideas they share. (Students responses most likely would have included "fight or flight" theory of stress. If not, introduce it as an example.)
4. Organize group discussion:
    a. Ask students to identify what makes them feel stressed. List on chart.
    b. Discuss how this makes them feel and what it may look like. List on chart.
    c. Discuss techniques for dealing with stress and reducing it. List on chart.
5. Discuss with students when too much stress might require them to seek help and who they contact if they need help.

Note: If you have access to the internet and a computer, consider going to the "Learn to be Healthy" website at www.learntobehealthy.org/teens. At this site, a teenage moderator explains stress and stressors. There are also resources here for students to use, including a Health Log and a journal. There are also a series of small videos on various topics for students.

Transition Toolkit

The Transition section of the Advising Toolkit has been created to aid educators as they prepare students as they transition from **elementary to middle school** and **from middle school to high school**. The Transition part of the Toolkit includes unique transition activities for each of these two groups.

The Transition activities have also been divided into three sections: 1) the spring **BEFORE** the transition year, 2) the **BEGINNING** of the transition year, and finally 3) transition activities **THROUGHOUT** the transition year.

For each of the three time periods, there are two sections: 1) transition activities for students, and 2) transition activities for parents.

Included in this section is a Transition Resource list for educators and well as a Transition Resource list for parents.

Transition Activities from Elementary to Middle School
BEFORE 6th Grade
Student Transition Activities
Student and Family Transition Activities
Parent Transition Activities
START of 6th Grade
Student Transition Activities
Student and Family Transition Activities
DURING the 6th Grade Year
Student Transition Activities
Student and Family Transition Activities

Transition Activities from Middle School to High School
BEFORE High School
Student Transition Activities
Student and Family Transition Activities
Parent Transition Activities
START of School Year
Student Transition Activities
Parent Transition Activities
DURING the School Year
Student Transition Activities
Student and Family Transition Activities

TRANSITIONING INTO MIDDLE SCHOOL

Spring & Summer BEFORE 6TH Grade

For Students

For Students & Families

For Parents

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENTS

Write-On: Pen Pals with Middle Schoolers

Audience: 5th Graders
When: 5th Grade (Spring)

Overview:

Providing upcoming middle grades students an opportunity to participate in a pen-pal program with current middle grades students will help connect new students to the middle level environment and answer some of their questions about the transition. Also, it will help to teach and review letter writing for all involved.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- Assign each upcoming middle grades student to a student who is completing their transition year. Have students correspond 2-4 times during the last few months of the school year. Letters should address the questions and concerns of the younger student through the eyes of the older student
- The first letter should come from the current middle grades student with basic information about the school, and with questions designed to build a relationship with the younger student. For example:
    - Do you play an instrument or a sport?
    - What is your favorite subject?
    - Do you have a pet?
    - Who is your favorite performer or athlete?
- The younger student would respond to the first letter and have an opportunity to ask questions and express concerns
- Future letters could include advice for and secrets to success in the middle grades
- If possible, host a get-together for those students who wish to meet their pen-pal in person. Organize ice-breaker activities and provide refreshments. Secure parent permission from all students attending the get-together.

Things to Consider:

If possible, use first names only in correspondence between students.
Always read correspondence (for appropriateness of content and language) before it is sent to another student.

Resources:

- Kentucky Writing Handbook
- Dear Fifth Grader
- Lesson Planning Ice Breakers

Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

Audience: 5th Graders
When: 5th Grade (Spring)

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- For students who will be using the ILP for the first time as middle level students teachers/counselors can introduce the tool and allow students to explore certain components. The following directions are provided by Career Cruising:
- Thank you for your interest in Career Cruising access for your elementary students. As you may be aware, we have a partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). Students in grades 6-12 are using Career Cruising to develop their Individual Learning Plans (ILP's).
- We have also created a simplified version of Career Cruising that Kentucky elementary educators may use with students who wish to begin exploring careers prior to 6th grade. With this simplified version, students may complete the 'Matchmaker' career interest inventory, and may also search and explore additional careers.
- Because the ILP does not begin until grade 6, students in elementary schools will not be able to save any of their results into an ILP, but they may use the basics of the program to begin their exploration process.
- You have been provided access to use Career Cruising at your elementary school as a complimentary service.
- **To log into Career Cruising, please go to the following webpage, and enter the following URL: www.careercruising.com**
    - **Username:** Kentucky
    - **Password:** elementary
- **Press the yellow button to start Career Cruising.**
- We hope you enjoy using the program!

Things to Consider:

- Have students choose a career that they are interested in and conduct research on the Career Cruising ILP site (directions in resources section).
- Students could then dress as a person in their selected career and share information with other students.

Resources

- **www.careercruising.com**
- **Exploring Careers through the ILP**

Getting to Know You

Audience: 5th Graders
When: 5th Grade (Spring)

Overview:

An important part of the transition process is arranging visits to the new setting, whether a new school or simply a different part of the building.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- Prior to the visit middle level school counselors and/ administrators should schedule meetings with students to discuss what the visit will entail. It is recommended that visits be conducted with each class rather than a large meeting of all classes together. If possible, visit on more than one occasion to develop a relationship with students prior to the beginning of the school year
- At least 1 week prior to the meeting ask elementary grade teachers to have students write questions they may have about middle school on index cards. Questions should be sent to middle level staff who will be conducting the meeting. This will aid them in preparing a meeting that is geared toward the needs/concerns of a specific group of students
- A day or so prior to the visit distribute a middle level vocabulary word search. Review the word search and facilitate discussions about the meaning and relevance of each word
- Provide students with a map of the school and while on tour have them highlight areas they visit

Things to Consider:

- Provide students with a scavenger hunt of people and places that can be found in a middle level school. Have them mark off each item as they find it.
- This visit should be provided to all students who will be entering the middle level. This is not a time to exclude students due to behavioral issues. These students are perhaps in greatest need of this experience.

Resources:

- Scavenger Hunt
- Word Search Puzzle

Meeting them on their terms

Audience: 5th Graders
When: 5th Grade (Spring)

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- The transition process should be taking place for the full school year prior to the move to the middle school. Middle school administrators/counselors/teachers/students should plan regularly scheduled visits to feeder elementary schools. Consider visiting at least once each term of the school year. These visits provide opportunities for students to ask pertinent questions and to become familiar with some people they will be encountering at the middle school.
- Prior to visiting, students should be surveyed to determine the issues that most concern them (sample survey in resources section). The results of the survey should be used to plan agendas for future visits thereby providing the information that is most relevant to the students.
- Rising middle school students could also write specific questions to be shared with middle school visitors in advance. These questions as well as the answers should be used to develop an "FAQ" for future visitors.

Things to Consider:

It is recommended that visits be conducted with class size groups rather than whole grades. This leads to more informal conversations and allows students to more freely express any concerns they may have.

Resources:

- **Identifying Student and Parent Concerns**

Lock-in

Audience: Incoming 6th Graders
When: SUMMER before 6th Grade

Overview:

Bringing students together in a social setting prior to the start of the school year is one way to smooth their transition into the middle grades. Holding a "lock-in" during the summer provides students with an opportunity to make new friends and establish a sense of community before the school year begins.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- The students can stay until midnight or spend all night at the school during the lock-in. Possible activities include:
  - icebreaker/team building activities
  - a disc jockey to lead group dances
  - karaoke singing contest
  - foosball, ping pong, air hockey, WII games, guitar hero
  - paper airplane competition
  - scrapbooking
  - relay races in which teams are comprised of students from each feeder elementary school
  - volleyball
  - clinics conducted by upper classmen, including:
    - high school cheerleaders
    - pom-pom girls
    - club leaders
    - members of athletic teams
- Community organizations donate food and gift certificates, t-shirts, and school supplies
- Make a video of the event that can be shared with next year's incoming class during an orientation to middle school

Things to Consider:

Students could cast votes to select a team name (from suggestions approved by the principal) for each team, or the class as a whole. This will help to create a unique identity for this group of students. Votes could be placed by donating pennies to a cause or charity. The name with the greatest number of pennies will decide the name.

Resources:

- Lock-In Permission Slip
- Lesson Planning Icebreakers

Transition Camp

Audience: Incoming 6th Graders
When: SUMMER before 6th Grade

Overview:

Transition camps provide an opportunity for students to acclimate to a new school environment. Camps aid in meeting the social and emotional as well as academic needs of upcoming middle grades students by offering experiences that create a sense of belonging before the school year begins.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- Choose a theme for the camp (e.g., Put Your Best Foot Forward, Yes I Can, Bridge to Success, Success in the Middle)
- Ask teachers to recommend current middle grades students to serve as camp guides
- Meet with student guides and their parents to discuss responsibilities and secure written parent permission
- Meet with camp guides to develop agenda and select activities
- Visit feeder elementary schools to explain the camp and hand-out permission slips or when upcoming students visit the school, discuss the camp and hand-out permission slips
- Use a survey at the end of the camp for gathering students' feedback to use in planning for future camps
- Include sessions for students that will assist them in making a smooth transition to the middle grades and achieving academic success:
  - Study skills
  - Getting organized
  - What to expect in the middle grades
  - Bullying prevention
  - Getting to know the school staff
  - Tour of the building
  - Locker relays
  - What's an ILP?
  - Dealing with peer pressure

Things to Consider:

- Solicit donations of school supplies to be given to students in need.
- Ask the FRYSC director to help with the Transition Camp.
- Investigate ways to provide transportation for students (e.g., public transit, donations from civic groups).
- Place puzzle pieces at different locations in the school. As the students tour the school, have them collect the puzzle pieces fitting them together to form a shape that aligns with theme for the camp.

Resources:

- **Summer Camp Games**
- **Sample Camp Schedule**
- **Summer Camp Flyer**
- **Mini -Camp Leaders Permission**
- **Camper Survey**

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENTS & FAMILIES

Pep Rally

Audience: 5th Graders & Families
When: 5th Grade (Spring)

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- Invite rising students/families from feeder middle schools to a pep rally to be held during out of school time (evening or weekend).
- Arrange for middle school groups (band, chorus, clubs, teams etc.) to perform and/or set-up information tables for students/families to visit.
- Counselors and administrators could staff one table where several computers provide access to the ILP website. Use this time to facilitate exploration of the tool and discuss postsecondary/career goals.
- Provide forms where students can take notes about the clubs, teams, etc. they are interested in (What should I join?).
- Encourage new students to get to know each other as well as getting to know upper classman and staff at the pep rally by completing a "Who did I meet" scavenger hunt.
- Finally, if time permits have students vote on a mascot and short cheer that can represent this class during their time in middle school. Perhaps provide a short list of options for mascots and "class name" that students can vote on. At the end of the pep rally have upper class cheerleaders guide them through a short cheer.

Things to Consider:

- Though there will be rising 6th graders who already have extensive experience as a member of a team or club, for some this will be a new venture.
- Instruct older students who sit at information tables to ask about a student's prior experience. It may be necessary to provide some background information and go over the expectations for participation in each club or team. Consider providing a short hand-out that students can take with them.

Resources:

- **What Should I Join?**
- **Who Did I Meet?**

School Expo

Audience: 5th Graders & Families
When: 5th Grade (Spring)

Overview:

In the middle grades, students often have more opportunities to become part of school teams, clubs, and other types of student organizations than they had in the elementary grades. Participating in these types of school groups can help make a student feel more connected to the school. Use a school expo as a means for sharing information about school groups and extracurricular activities and for beginning to connect upcoming students to the middle grades.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- Arrange for school groups (e.g., band, chorus, cheerleaders, dance team, chess team) to perform. Display student art work and class projects from other enrichment/exploratory classes
- Have clubs, teams, and organizations set-up information tables for students/families to visit. At the tables have older students present to answer questions and talk with the younger students. Ask each group to prepare a brochure or fact sheet for handing out at their table
- Ask a counselor and/or teachers to staff a table where several computers provide access to the Career Cruising website. Use this time to facilitate exploration of the ILP
- Distribute forms on which students can take notes about the clubs, teams or organizations in which they are interested
- Encourage new students to get to know each other, as well as getting to know older students and staff, by completing a "Who did I meet" scavenger hunt form
- Have students prepare an ongoing slide show or video for playing during the expo that shows students engaged in various activities both during and after school
- Create invitations for this event and send to feeder schools for upcoming students to take home to their parents/families

Things to Consider:

- This event could be combined with a visit for upcoming students to the middle level school or it could be held after school.
- Though many upcoming middle grades students may already have experience as a member of a team, club or other type of organization, for some this will be a new venture.
- Instruct older students who sit at information tables to ask about a student's prior experience. It may be necessary to provide some background information and go over the expectations for participation in the club, organization, or team.
- Check to see if local businesses will post the date and time of this event on their marquees.

Jump Start

Audience: Incoming 6th Graders & Families
When: SUMMER before 6th Grade

Overview:

Invite upcoming middle grades students and their families to attend an informational meeting regarding their transition to the middle level. Separate parents and students for the first part of the meeting and then bring them back together for the concluding activities.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

Possible topics for the first part of the meeting:

Students	Parents/Families
What will I need? Supplies Attitude Books Lockers Agenda books	*Support and involvement in school* SBDM PTO/PTA Volunteering Two-way communication Completing forms Turn in medical forms
Where will I go? Discuss schedule Tour of the building Team organization Arrival and dismissal time Lunch	*Communication* Website IC Newsletter Homework hotline ILP E-mail
What can I do? Attendance Appropriate dress/dress code Behavior expectations	*The Middle Grades* The middle school concept Schedule Grading Team organization

Resources:

- Sample Jump Start Invitation
- Sample Jump Start Letter
- Jump Start Checklist

At the conclusion of the sessions, reconvene parents and students together. If time, have students and parents walk through a mini-schedule together. Conclude the Jump Start program by playing Jeopardy based on the information shared during the informational meetings. Divide the group by last names (i.e., A-M and N-Z) or by teams.

Things to Consider:

- If possible, schedule two date options, perhaps a Saturday morning and an evening, to better accommodate family schedules.
- Secure staff members or volunteers to assist with translation for non-English speaking families, if applicable.
- Solicit donations from community vendors to provide refreshments and prizes for the Jeopardy game.
- Invite the director of transportation to be present to answer questions about bus schedules and routes.

Success Journeys

Audience: Incoming 6th Graders & Families
When: SUMMER before 6th Grade

Overview:

An effective transition strategy for schools to consider and implement is conducting home visits. This strategy can have a very positive impact on student success and parent engagement as it helps bridge the gap between home and school and helps facilitate parent and teacher relationships. These visits can provide the teacher with much needed insights that can enhance the child's in-school education. Home visits provide an opportunity to develop a level of trust and rapport between home and school.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- Contact other districts that have implemented home visits either as a voluntary option (Trigg County) or as a requirement for all teachers (Mason County) to discuss implementation and monitoring of home visits
- Choose for the visits students at-risk of failure or not performing at grade level, or students who are academically capable but have other family or personal issues that present a barrier to academic success
- Provide administrative guidance and support for teachers that may be reluctant to go on home visits at first
- Facilitate a professional development opportunity for teachers who are new to the home visit process
- Review with teachers recommended practices for home visits by viewing a home visit *"How to"* video
- Provide a checklist of best practices that teachers can use to insure that the home visit is a positive experience for all involved
- Distribute a log that teachers can use to log visits conducted and record anecdotal notes
- Meet with teachers as a group after the visits to share experiences

Things to Consider:

- Teachers should select students with whom they would like to develop a closer relationship in order to assist them in reaching their full potential.
- Assign teachers a partner to work with in conducting the visits.
- Ask the FRYSC coordinator to be involved with the visits.

Resources:

- **Success Journey Letter**
- **Harvard Parent Teacher Home Visit Project**
- **Trigg County Home Visit Article**
- **Home Visit "How To" Video**

Summer Picnic

Audience: Incoming 6th Graders & Families
When: SUMMER before 6th Grade

Overview:

Casual gatherings, such as a summer picnic, are a great way to foster a sense of community for new families before the school year begins.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- Publicize the picnic through a variety of methods:
  - Mail letters announcing the picnic to the students that will be entering the middle grades for the first time when school begins
  - Announce in local newspaper and/or on local cable channel and radio stations
  - Send announcement to local churches to include in their bulletins
- Offer incentives for attendance (e.g., gas cards, gift certificates, school supplies, tickets for school sponsored events)
- Ask the superintendent and/or other community leaders to be guest chefs that grill hamburgers, hot dogs, and/or chicken breasts for attendees
- Have informational tables (e.g., transportation director to answer bus schedule questions, teachers to hand out supply list, counselor with forms needed to be completed) set up for parents and guardians to visit
- Organize fun activities (e.g., face painting, relay races, arts and crafts, videos) for upcoming students and their younger siblings that might attend. Ask high school service clubs to help with the activities
- Provide opportunities for interaction among families by placing tent cards on tables with "conversation starters". At planned intervals ask families to read the card and discuss the topic at their tables

Things to Consider:

- Ask local civic clubs to help with the cost and serving of food.
- Check with the FRYSC director for help with contacting families and making arrangements for the picnic.
- Work with ELL and/or migrant programs to insure that those populations are notified and have transportation.
- Ask the school cafeteria manager to help plan the menu and to help with the preparation of the food.
- Be sensitive to cultural differences in diet, etiquette and dining practice. Offer food selections that accommodate cultural and medical diet restrictions of the populations you serve.
- Either hold the picnic inside or if outside, have an alternative plan in case the weather is not cooperative.

Resources:

- World's 50 Best Foods
- Conversation Starters

What can I do about school bullying?

Audience: Incoming 6th Graders & Families
When: SUMMER before 6th Grade

Overview:

During the transition from childhood to adolescence, middle school students often place more importance on friendships and belonging to a group. They are more aware of how other kids act and look. Some kids may seem to be searching for a reason to tease or torment another student. Parents need to understand what to look for and how they can help their child deal with potential bullying at school.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- Begin by having parents complete the US Department of Education Bullying Quiz. Review answers and include the following parenting strategies recommended by the National School Safety Center in Fighting the Bully Battle:
  - Talk often with your child and listen carefully
  - Ask about your child's school day, activities and friends
  - Ask if your child feels safe and comfortable at school
  - Talk about what bullying means
  - Encourage your child to tell you when bullying happens at school
  - Teach that bullying is unacceptable and can be dangerous
  - Stop bullying when it happens at home
  - Be clear about your expectations and consistently discipline when hurtful teasing and bullying occurs among siblings and peers
  - Help your child understand the meaning and positive roles of friendship
  - Help your child choose positive and respectful friends
  - Teach that people can be different in many ways
  - Teach and practice basic manners
  - Help your child find and develop his/her personal talents
  - Help your child choose positive and respectful friends
  - Help your child choose TV, music and video programs that promote respect, kindness and understanding
  - Talk with your child about their school experiences and peers
- Share Bullying in Middle Schools Prevention and Intervention with parents either prior to or as a follow-up to the meeting
- Consider implementing ideas in the Stop Bullying Now Activities Guide

Resources:

- **Bullying Quiz**
- **Bullying in Middle Schools Prevention and Intervention**
- **Stop Bullying Now Activities Guide**
- **KY Attorney General Urges Parents to Keep Their Kids Safe**
- **Fighting the Bully Battle**

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

PARENTS

Understanding my child's growing intellect

Audience: Parents of incoming 6th Graders
When: SUMMER before 6th Grade

Overview:

In order to aid parents in supporting their children's academic growth, share and explain the implications of the intellectual development characteristics of young adolescents listed below.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

Share "Tips for Parents" and discuss strategies parents can use to best support their child's learning:

- Wide range of individual intellectual development
- Transition from concrete to abstract thinking
- Intense curiosity, wide-ranging intellectual pursuits
- Active learners
- Prefer peer interaction during learning
- Respond greatly to opportunities for participation in real life situations
- Preoccupied with self
- Strong need for approval and easily discouraged
- Developing understanding of personal abilities
- Inquisitive about adults, challenging their authority and always observing them
- May be disinterested in academic subjects but are intellectually curious about the world and themselves
- Developing capacity to understand higher levels of humor

Things to Consider:

- Different students have different levels of intellect. As facilitator please keep in mind that each child will develop at their own pace.
- Check local agencies for summer or extracurricular enrichment activities that build upon each child's specific abilities and interests.
- All children are capable of learning at high levels. Be aware of middle school students' growing sense of gender roles and gender bias concerning subject preference or perceived ability level.

Resources:

- **Characteristics of Young Adolescents**
- **Tips for Parents**

Physical Development

Audience: Parents of incoming 6th Graders
When: SUMMER before middle school

Overview:

Children entering middle school display a wide array of developmental stages. Physical development at this age is particularly varied. Each child is developing at his/her own pace however there are some general characteristics that all children will exhibit during early adolescence.

Procedure/Guidelines:

The following characteristics and suggestions for families can be used in speaking with parents and assisting them in understanding their children's needs.

Most young people aged nine to 12 will:

- Have an emerging sense of self as a young adult
- Feel conscious of their physical development and how they choose to express it
- Understand jokes with adult content
- Feel concerns about being normal
- Feel anxious about puberty, when it will happen, how it will occur, how to be prepared, etc.
- Feel shy about asking questions of caregivers, and may act like they already know all the answers
- Value privacy highly
- Help young people understand that, while they are maturing physically, they still have lots of emotional and cognitive growth ahead.

Things to Consider:

- This subject matter may make some parents uncomfortable for various reasons (upbringing, religious beliefs, etc.) however, it is important that they have a basic understanding of the changes which may affect the child's academic and emotional progress.
- Check with local agencies about physical activities within your community.
- YMCAs or YWCAs, 4-H/Youth Development, local parks & recreation departments and summer enrichment programs may want to provide informational materials for families.
- The American Girl Doll company publishes a great series of books for adolescent girls that may help more shy girls gain answers to questions they would otherwise be unwilling to ask.

Resources:

- Tips for Parents
- Characteristics of Young Adolescents

Parent Academy: Social /Emotional Development

Audience: Parents of incoming 6th Graders
When: SUMMER before 6th Grade

Overview:

The transition to middle grades occurs at the same time when students are making the transition from childhood to adolescence. This sometimes tumultuous period of transition can negatively impact academic achievement, performance motivation, and self-perception.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

They are:

- experiencing profound physical maturation and change
- beginning to think of themselves as individuals with an identity that extends beyond their families
- exerting independence and focusing primarily on relationships with peers
- experiencing challenges at home as both parents and children struggle with changing roles

What can parents do?

Parents should be encouraged to remain steadfast in their involvement in their child's education, even though they may be met with resistance from their child. The following strategies provide clear direction for parents *(full article "Health & Young Adolescents" in Resources section).*

- Respect Their Privacy, But Don't Close Them Off
- Be Patient with Their Mood Swings
- Set Limits, But Give Them Some Choices
- Understand Their Need to Be Involved
- Respect Their Developing Intellect
- Show Them Why Nutrition Matters
- Let Them Know You Care

Things to Consider:

- It may be beneficial to include your school's guidance counselor or local social services or health department in this event.
- Contact your local cooperative extension office for nutritional guidance.

Resources:

- Health and Young Adolescents

Parent Academy: Sexuality

Audience: Parents of incoming 6th Graders
When: SUMMER before middle school

Overview:

Children entering middle school display a wide array of developmental stages. Physical and sexual development at this age is particularly varied. Each child is developing at his/her own pace however there are some general characteristics that all children will exhibit during early adolescence. The following characteristics and suggestions for families can be used in speaking with parents and assisting them in understanding their children's needs (full article in resources section).

Procedure/ Guidelines:

Most young people aged nine to 12 will:

- Have an emerging sense of self as a young adult
- Feel conscious of their sexuality and how they choose to express it
- Understand jokes with sexual content
- Feel concerns about being normal
- Feel anxious about puberty, when it will happen, how it will occur, how to be prepared, etc.
- Feel shy about asking questions of caregivers, especially regarding sexuality, and may act like they already know all the answers
- Value privacy highly

To help nine- to 12-year-old youth develop a healthy sexuality, families should:

- Help young people understand puberty and the changes they are going through and that these changes, including menstruation and nocturnal emissions (ejaculation), are normal.
- Respect young people's privacy while encouraging open communication.
- Convey that growth and maturation rates differ from person to person.
- Help young people understand that, while they are maturing physically, they still have lots of emotional and cognitive growth ahead and that sexual intercourse is not healthy, appropriate, or wise at this time in their lives.
- Acknowledge that abstinence is normal and healthy, that sexual development is healthy and natural, and that, as they grow older, there will be many ways to express sexuality that do not include sexual intercourse.
- Discuss the important relationship between sexual and emotional feelings.
- Be open to conversations about contraception and condoms and respond honestly and accurately when young people ask about them.

Things to Consider:

- The local health department can be a good source for workshops, speakers and materials.
- This subject matter may make some parents uncomfortable for various reasons (upbringing, religious beliefs, etc.) however, it is important that they have a basic understanding of the child's new awareness of their own sexuality and how this may affect academic and emotional progress.

Resources:

- Growth and Development, Ages 9 to 12

Parent Academy: Cyber Bullying and Cyber Safety

Audience: Parents of Incoming 6th Graders
When: SUMMER before 6th Grade

Overview:

During the transition from childhood to adolescence, middle school students often place more importance on friendships and belonging to a group. They are more aware of how other kids act and look. Some kids may seem to be searching for a reason to tease or torment another student.

Warning Signs: (KDE Dropout Prevention Resource Guide, link provided in resource section)

- Social withdrawal
- Excessive feelings of rejection
- Being a victim of violence
- Feeling of being picked on and persecuted
- Low interest in school and poor academic performance
- Expression of violence in writings and drawings
- Uncontrollable anger
- Patterns of impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating, and bullying behaviors
- History of discipline problems.
- Prejudicial attitudes
- Drug and alcohol use
- Affiliation with gangs
- Inappropriate access to, possession of, and use of firearms
- Serious threats of violence

Share prevention/intervention strategies:

- Shared responsibility among child, school, home, and community
- Support students in being responsible for their actions. Students need to be actively involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating violence prevention/intervention programs.
- Teaching positive and socially acceptable skills, such as anger management and problem solving skills.
- Encouraging families to keep firearms out of the reach of children.

Things to Consider:

- Share a list of contacts within and outside of the school for students who are experiencing thoughts of self-harm.
- Invite a local child psychologist or psychiatrist to speak about youth and social media.
- Invite local law enforcement to discuss illegal drug use and abuse among youth and teens.

Resources:

- Bullying in Middle Schools Prevention and intervention
- Stop Bullying Now Activities Guide
- KY Attorney General urges parents to keep their kids safe

Connecting to Content

Audience: Parents of incoming 6th Graders
When: SUMMER before 6th Grade

Overview:

Engaging parents with the curriculum their children will be following is an important step to insuring academic success. Sessions offered should include content specifics: what your child will be learning in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and elective courses

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- Sessions should be presented by content teachers and include:
  - basic content specific vocabulary
  - syllabus for the academic year
  - course expectations
  - an abbreviated demonstration lesson
- This is a time to share contact information, homework hotlines or virtual homework listings.
- Discuss teacher specific grading practices, for example share your policy for late work or extra credit options
- Share a rubric and explain its use. Display samples of proficient student work with scoring guides so that parents understand what is expected of their student
- Provide parents with supply lists and any information regarding large or long-term projects, assignments and activities
- Discuss strategies parents can use to best assist their children with homework or projects
- Share options for parents to visit or volunteer in the school

Things to Consider:

- It may be helpful to create a simple explanation of Common Core and how parents might find more information if interested in the subject.
- If supply lists are going to be presented, have a Family Resource Coordinator on hand to be able to direct families who may be in financial need to free or reduced prices for school supplies.
- Have a copy of the school's student handbook on hand for review by parents.
- Display a sample progress report or report card for parents to look at.

Resources:

- **Overview of Kentucky Curriculum/Content Areas**
- **Help with Homework**

TRANSITIONING INTO MIDDLE SCHOOL

Start of 6th Grade

For Students

For Students & Families

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENTS

Welcome Letter

Audience: 6th Graders
When: 6th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

Students entering the middle grades are typically anxious and worried about the upcoming school year. Unless they have older brothers and/or sisters, they are not familiar with the teachers. A friendly, welcoming letter, brochure, or postcard from a student's homeroom teacher can do much to reduce some of their anxiety.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

A letter or postcard from the homeroom teacher could be produced with the computer and addressed using the computer. Thus, a teacher would only need to sign these. A one or two word greeting written by the teacher would make the letter, brochure, or postcard a bit more personal.
Information that might be included in the letter or brochure:

- A welcoming, friendly first paragraph
- A note about starting times and arrival at school for the first day
- Information about what to bring for the first day of school including amount of lunch money needed
- Names and contact information of teachers in the team
- Notes about what to expect the first day and first week in terms of schedule, homework, and events
- Important dates: open house date, end of grading periods, report card dates, vacation and last day of school dates
- The web address of the school web page and link for the team's section

Things to Consider:

- Be sure to use parent friendly language and avoid acronyms.
- Consider sending one letter from the teaching team. By developing the letter together the teachers can share the work of producing and preparing the mailing. This is also an opportunity to further solidify the teaching team and to begin building team identity with students.
- Individual teachers may want to consider sending a postcard.
- Check with the Family Resource Youth Service Center to see if they will assist with this mailing.
- One alternative to the welcome letter might be a welcome brochure developed by the teacher or interdisciplinary team.

Resources:

- Sample Welcome Brochure

Welcome to School Rally

Audience: 6th Graders
When: 6th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

Hold a rally for students entering the middle grades as a means of welcoming them to the school, introducing staff, reviewing school rules, and setting the expectations for the year. This is a more fun, positive way to share this type of information.

- If possible, hold the rally in the gym and decorate it with posters and banners made by older students.
- Play music with pertinent messages (e.g., *Celebrate, We are Family*, appropriate Monte Selby songs) as students enter the area.
- Have the principal greet students and introduce school staff (e.g., receptionists, bookkeepers, secretaries, counselors, cafeteria staff, custodians, school nurse) with a brief description of each person's job.
- Invite high school cheerleaders and/or dance team to the rally to help "pump up" the crowd.
- Invite the superintendent to deliver a brief pep talk.
- Either have a set cheer or one written by the students that students have learned and practiced in homeroom or teams. Have a friendly competition between homerooms or teams to see who can cheer the loudest.
- Overview the school rules by setting behavior expectations for the school year. Focus this part of the rally on the behaviors you expect to see. Have teachers hold follow up discussions in their classrooms to reinforce the expectations, review the school rules in more detail, and address student questions.
- If there is a dress code, have older students present a fashion show showing entering students how to dress appropriately.
- Invite the local cable station to film the rally for running later so that families and the community could view the event.

Things to Consider:

- Older students could develop and perform skits regarding some of the school rules. The younger students will pay more attention to the older students performing and be more likely to remember rules presented this way.
- Prior to the rally teachers may want to alert students to the signal for getting quiet for school programs (e.g., raised hand, whistle, principal stepping to the microphone) and if needed, practice the procedure with students.

Resources:

- **Monte Selby Songs**- Songs written by a middle school educator about middle school and education.

Principal's Roundtable

Audience: 6th Graders
When: 6th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

Who knows better than the entering students what is needed for them to have a successful transition?

Procedures/ Guidelines:

Select students that are representative of the student population to meet with the principal for the purpose of discussing their transition to the middle grades. The following questions could be addressed:

- Were you nervous and worried about entering the middle grades? Why or why not?
- Do you feel that the information you received and the activities that you were involved with prior to entering the middle grades prepared you for this year? Why or why not?
- What else is needed to be done to better prepare you for entering the middle grades, both academically and socially?
- Which activities or practices have helped you the most with your transition to the middle grades?
- Which activities or practices have helped you the least with your transition to the middle grades?
- The Principal's Roundtable can be used for other purposes throughout the school year and can be expanded to include students from other grade levels. Other purposes for the roundtable might include:
    - To receive student input and feedback on a new policy, procedure or practice
    - A ready means of checking on school climate from the student's perspective
    - An avenue for addressing student issues and concerns
    - The development of a student leadership team

Things to Consider:

- Be sure that the group reflects a true mix of students so that all perspectives are voiced in the meeting.
- This meeting could be made more special by providing students with a snack or by planning it around lunch time.
- A similar meeting with parents/families would provide more complete information to use in planning the transition program for next year and give them an outlet for discussing issues and concerns.

Resources:

- Kid-to Kid: Guiding Our Students

First Impressions Are Important

Audience: 6th Graders
When: 6th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

First impressions are important and at a school the first impression can set the tone for the whole school year. It is important that students starting at a new school feel welcomed and wanted. Various efforts can be made to help students feel welcomed as they enter the school and individual classrooms.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- Post a welcoming message on the school marquee.
- Put smiley - face decals on doors that students use to enter the school building.
- Hang a welcome banner in the hallway that students will see as they enter the building.
- Place a bouquet of balloons that includes a smiley face in the hallway by the door.
- Post positive messages and banners throughout the hallways.
- Provide each student new to the school with a pencil that says "Welcome to No Name Middle School" or "Have a great year at No Name Middle School."
- For the first couple of days of school, have teachers and support staff greet students and provide directions as they enter the building.
- In classrooms, post letters written by students from the past year that share tips for having a successful year. These letters should not include teacher names.

Things to Consider:

- The PTA/PTO could be a possible source of funding for signs and banners.
- A local business might provide or cover the costs of the balloon bouquet.

Resources:

- Seeing Your School as Others See It
- Creating a Safe and Welcoming School

Building Team Identity

Audience: 6th Graders
When: 6th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

Young adolescents need to feel that they belong. Having a team organization helps make a larger school more personal and helps students adjust to the larger number of different teachers they may experience during the school day. Teams need to establish their identity with students at the beginning of the year and continue to build on a sense of community as the year progresses.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

Teams can build this sense of community by:

- Having a name, mascot, team colors, logo, and other identifications for the team
- Decorating around team rooms and halls using the name and logo on posters and banners
- Designing team tee-shirts that a local business might sponsor
- Using team letterhead to send a welcome letter to students prior to the start of the school year
- Having a team list of supplies needed by each student instead of individual teacher lists
- Adopting a team set of classroom rules
- Developing a team calendar to share with students and families
- Making badges or purchasing stickers that say "I am a_____" for students (Insert the team name in the blank.)
- Developing team chants or cheers
- Creating a team web page
- Elementary to middle/beginning/parent and student

Things to Consider:

- Teams for students entering the middle grades may consist of only 2 or 3 teachers instead of the more typical 4 or 5 in an effort to help students with the transition to a different teacher for each different class.
  The team name could stay the same each year but the chant, cheer, logo, and/or tee-shirt could change each year and students could be involved in their development.

Resources:

- Teaming

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENTS & FAMILIES

Open House

Audience: 6th Graders & Families
When: 6th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

An open house is a time for parents and families of students to meet the teachers, sample the school schedule, and get a feel for student expectations held by the school staff. A welcoming, positive tone should permeate the event as it is a celebration of the beginning of another school year.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

The program for an open house might include:

- Conducting a mini daily schedule (Lunchtime could be scheduled for each grade level with parents going to the cafeteria during this time for refreshments and to socialize.)
- Handing out class syllabi
- Providing a brief orientation session on the ILP
- The PTA/PTO sharing membership information
- A booth for signing up as a school volunteer
- Distributing brochures or flyers describing the extracurricular activities offered by the school and with contact information for each activity
- Refreshments and socializing time
- Older students as building guides
- The Family Youth Service Resource Center may be able to help arrange these services, which, if provided, could enable more parents and families to attend.
- Translators: Solicit volunteers from local organizations to serve as translators.
- Transportation: Work with local programs (migrant education, Chamber of Commerce, bus companies, cab companies, church's with buses) to arrange for transportations for families that do not have cars.
- Childcare: High school clubs and organizations could be accessed to provide childcare for younger siblings during the academies.

Things to Consider:

- Encourage students to invite at least one adult. If parents are unable to attend suggest students invite other adults in their lives.
- Ask the PTA/PTO to provide refreshments.
- Have a welcoming banner or bulletin board located where attendees will see it as they enter the school.
- Have name tags for all school staff present as parents will not know their names.
- Prepare a flyer announcing the open house and hand out to adults bringing students on the first day of school.

Resources:

- High Notes, Hayrides, and Hot Dogs: Making Open House a Hit!

Principal's Roundtables for Parents

Audience: 6th Graders & Families
When: 6th Grade (Start & Throughout the Year)

Overview:

Providing a way for parents and families to communicate openly and honestly with school administrators can do much to build a real sense of community. Establishing a principal's or school roundtable for parents of students entering the middle grades could be a mechanism for this type of communication and a way to also secure input from the parent/family perspective regarding the effectiveness of current transition programs.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- Try to have a group of parents that are representative of the student population so that all perspectives are being heard in these meetings.
- Publicize the roundtable at Open House and have a sign-up sheet available for those interested in participating at that event
- Send out an e-mail form the principal explaining the purpose of the roundtable and providing a tentative meeting schedule with the focus of each meeting identified
- At the first meeting of the year the focus of the discussion might be the transition into the middle grades. Have the needs of students been met? Have the needs of parents/families been met? This could be an ongoing topic that is addressed at each meeting, checking to be sure that the transition into the middle grades is still going smoothly
- Different staff members (e.g., media specialist, counselor, exploratory teachers) could be invited to attend a meeting to discuss their programs

Things to Consider:

- This meeting could be made more inviting by providing a snack or by planning it around lunch time.
- This group could provide input for planning the next year's transition program since they are going through their year of transition.

Resources:

- Identify Student and Parent Concerns
- Conversation Starters
- Month-by-Month Schedule

Surviving and Thriving in the Middle Grades

Audience: 6th Graders & Families
When: 6th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

The parents and families of students entering the middle grades often do not know exactly what a middle level program is and do not fully understand the developmental characteristics of early adolescence (the stage of life their child is entering).

Procedures/ Guidelines:

Many parents and families need information on helping their young adolescent survive and thrive in the middle grades. Providing them with a survival guide written for parents and caregivers of young adolescents can be of benefit to them.

- Provide each family of students entering the middle grades with a copy of **Parent Guide for *Surviving and Thriving the Middle Grades***.
- Put your school name, address, phone number, and logo on the front cover.
- Distribute copies at an open house or other school function. When advertising the event indicate that attendees will be given a free copy of the guide.
- Refer back to sections of the guide during meetings or school events with parents/ families to remind them of the helpful information that you provided.
- Make the guide available on the school website.

Resources:

- **Parent Guide Surviving and Thriving the Middle Grades**

Binding It All Together

Audience: 6th Graders & Families
When: 6th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

Parents and students receive a plethora of papers and handbooks in the opening days of school. A few days later, the papers scatter and the handbooks are tossed in a drawer because parents are unsure about the usefulness of the information and often lack a filing or storage system for such items.

- Provide three ring binders for parents to help them organize important information they receive during their child's high school years. The following could be included in the binder:
- Pre-printed, pre-made dividers (e.g., student schedule, school handbook, newsletters, report cards, transcripts, acknowledgements and certificates of achievement, and other important information)
- A map of the school building with teachers' names
- Pre-printed front cover with the school name, important contact phone numbers and the school web address as well as the mailing address
- A section on the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) with a place for the parent's password and log in name as well as the student's password and log in information

Things to Consider:

- Distribution of the binders could be combined with a Parent Welcome Night, an ice cream social or a Back to School event.
- Ask the PTA/PTO or a local business to help with the cost of the binders and ask a student organization or club to help put them together.

Beginning of the Year Luncheon

Audience: 6th Graders & Families
When: 6th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

During the first or second week of school, set a date for a special luncheon honoring the students entering the school for their first year. Invite parents and families to join their child for lunch.

- Arrange the date for this event with the cafeteria staff prior to the start of the school year.
- Advertise the event on school marquee, the local newspaper and local radio station.
- Have students create a special invitation for their parents and families.
- Establish a theme for the luncheon that is derived from the school's vision or mission statement or that addresses success (e.g., Together We Make a Difference, Success for All).
- Send the superintendent and school board members invitations.
- Have older students make decorations for the cafeteria tables and posters and banners for hanging in the cafeteria.
- Ask the PTA/PTO assisted by older students to decorate the cafeteria.
- Ask students attending, or upper class students helping as hosts to dress up the day of the luncheon.
- Identify student hosts to meet parents and families at the front door and assist them to the lunchroom.
- Invite parents and caregivers to join students for their after- lunch class.
- Inform the local press of this event and invite them to take pictures and to write an article. If they cannot attend, prepare and submit a news article with pictures to them.

Things to Consider:

- Work with the Family Resource Center to arrange for covering cost for parents who are unable to pay for lunch.
- Ask local businesses to post the event on their marquee/signs and perhaps contribute door prizes.
- Have background music playing softly during the luncheon to add to the atmosphere.
- Work with the Family Resource Youth Service Center to arrange for babysitting, if needed.
- Adjust the lunch schedule for the day so that the younger students eat first on this day and have extra time.
- Consider having a bag or box lunch for older students that could be taken outside or eaten in classrooms.

Resources:

- Take Your Family to School Week
- Ideas for Strengthening School Community

Electronically Speaking

Audience: 6th Graders & Families
When: 6th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

On the school web page create a special area or link for the parents and families of students entering the middle grades. This way they can easily and quickly access the information that will be the most helpful and relevant to them as they become acquainted with the school.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

Possible information or links to include:

- Welcoming letter from principal
- A blog for the parents and families of incoming students
- List of characteristics of young adolescents
- A virtual tour of the building
- Survival guide for parents and families of students entering the middle grades
- Class syllabi
- Links for most relevant information that is already on your school web site (e.g., staff names, school calendar, dress code, start of school and end of day times)
- Links for other websites with helpful information for parents of young adolescents
- Most frequently asked questions with answers
- Explanation of the middle school concept with links to dictionaries, an encyclopedia, Kentucky Virtual Library, thesaurus, science fair projects, world fact book, etc.

Things to Consider:

- Parents and families of incoming students could be surveyed to determine what type of information they would find helpful.
- Ask the PTA/PTO, counselor, or Family Resource Youth Service Center director to help set up and monitor the blog.

Resources:

- **Benton Middle School web page** Parent and student sections
- **National Middle School Association**
- **National Parent Teacher Association**
- **Characteristics of Young Adolescents**
- **Forum Vision-** KY's Vision for Middle Grades Education
- **Electronic Toolbox-** Electronic toolbox for students

TRANSITIONING INTO MIDDLE SCHOOL

During 6th Grade

For Students

For Students & Families

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENTS

Lights! Camera! Action!

Audience: 6th Graders
When: 6th Grade (During of Year)

Overview:

Select or solicit volunteers from this year's transitioning students to produce a video to be shared with the next group of transitioning students. The video should be about the school and the transition into the middle grades. Students would know what questions or concerns the next group of entering students might have and what they would be most interested in hearing about and seeing. This could point out concerns or issues that students are still dealing with in terms of their own transition.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- Decide whether the video will be created through an after school club or during a school exploratory class or club
- Solicit a staff member, parent or community member (e.g., college or university staff, local cable television staff, district technology coordinator) who has video experience and would be willing to assist
- Allow students to help determine the content of the video. It might include:
  - Shot of the entrance to the school and the name sign
  - Principal giving opening/welcoming remarks
  - Interviews with school staff and students
  - Clips of classrooms, both academic and exploratory/enrichment classes
  - Shots of extracurricular activities (e.g., ballgames, music concerts, academic competition)
  - Shots of the lunchroom, gym, offices, media center, and any special outside areas
  - Clips of students using lockers, loading and unloading buses, and during class change
- Use the video when meeting with the next group of students to enter the middle grades, at summer transition camps, with parents, and at open houses
- Check with the local cable television station to see if they might air this video

Things to Consider:

- Be sure that the group provides a true mix of students so that all perspectives are addressed.
- The production of this video could be a project within a career education class.
- The video could be posted to the school web site.
- If the equipment or adult expertise does not exist for a video, have students create a PowerPoint that would address the same points as the video and that could be used in the same way.

Resources:

- Videomaker.com

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENTS & FAMILIES

Transition Blogs

Audience: 6th Graders & Families
When: 6th Grade (During the Year)

Overview:

Often the most meaningful advice regarding transitions comes from parents and students themselves. One way of providing a means for sharing ideas, concerns and thoughts regarding the transition into the middle grades is to create a blog for both parents and students.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

The link for the blog could be provided on the school webpage or the team's webpage.

For the student blog:

- Arrange access and time for older students to serve as moderators of the student blog. They could draft responses or contact staff to respond. All responses should be approved by staff before posted
- A pencil could be provided to each incoming student with the electronic address printed on it
- Stickers that say "I Blogged" could be given by homeroom or advisor/advisee teachers to students who post to the blog
- A bulletin board or poster announcing the student blog could be created in the front hall of the school

For the parent/family blog:

- Members of the school parent organization could be involved in creating and maintaining the parent/family blog
- A postcard or letter could be sent or mailed home announcing the blogs and providing the electronic addresses
- A brochure about the school including information about the blogs could be created and copies placed in doctor and dentist offices and local businesses (e.g., restaurants, home supplies, discount stores, groceries) prior to the start of school
- Cards with the electronic address for the parent/family blog and possibly an explanation of the blog could be printed and placed by the school sign-in and sign-out book in the office

Things to Consider:

- Ask the FRYSC and/or counselor to help with monitoring the blogs.
- The district or school technology coordinator could be a resource for creating and maintaining the blog.
- The electronic address for the blogs should be included in the student handbook along with an explanation of what the blog is and its purpose.

Resources:

- Blogging Basics

Transition Planning Committee

Audience: 6th Graders & Families
When: 6th Grade (During the Year)

Overview:

A committee should be established at the beginning of the school year to plan for the next year's transition program. This committee should include parents and students from this year's transitioning class who represent the various student populations within the school. The committee could also include teachers and/or other school staff.
The planning committee would be responsible for developing the transition plan for the next entering group of students.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

This committee could:

- Meet with the teachers of this year's transitioning students to get input on what worked and what needs to be changed for the upcoming students
- Use an electronic and/or written survey to gather input from parents and families regarding the effectiveness of the transition program
- Meet with the teachers of the upcoming group of students or send them a written questionnaire as a means of assessing the needs of the upcoming students
- Have student members interview other transitioning students to get their thoughts regarding the transition program they experienced
- Check the websites of other schools to see if information can be found regarding the type of transition activities offered
- Encourage members of the committee to review the materials and activities in the *Transition Toolkit.* Utilize the transition program planner and transition program rubric to guide the work.
- Meet with the Site-Based Decision-Making Council to get their input and to share preliminary plans

Things to Consider:

- Be sure the parents and students on the committee represent the various populations within the school.
- In establishing meeting times for committee meetings consider the schedules of the parent members of the committee.
- A timeline for the development of the transition plan should be one of the first tasks completed by the committee so that it can guide their work.

Resources:

- **Transition Program Planner**
- **Transition Program Rubric**

TRANSITIONING INTO HIGH SCHOOL

Spring & Summer BEFORE 9TH Grade

For Students

For Students & Families

For Parents

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENTS

Welcome Aboard

Audience: 8th Graders
When: 8th Grade Year (Spring)

Overview:

Expanded social experiences in high school represent a new opportunity for students, especially those who may have experienced exclusion in middle school. Students in high school have the potential to establish new social networks that did not exist in their middle schools. Providing multiple opportunities for rising freshmen to interact with high school students is one way to assist new students in establishing social supports and relationships.

Procedures/Guidelines:

Consider scheduling the following opportunities:

- Invite middle level students to attend designated high school sporting events, plays or concerts and reserve seats for them
- Schedule a speaker/program that would be of interest to both middle level students as well as current high school students and invite the upcoming students to attend
- Assigning long-term projects for pairs or small groups from both schools
- Assign a project that pairs small groups of eighth graders with high school student groups
- Organize joint extra-curricular opportunities for middle level and high school student such as club projects or service learning opportunities.
- Create cross grade school "teams" to play virtual games such as chess, hang-man or scrabble
- Host a high school dance and invite upcoming freshmen as special guests.

Things to Consider:

Experiences that bring middle school and high school students together need careful planning and monitoring to produce optimum benefit for both groups.
These experiences can be facilitated by school staff, parent volunteers or education majors from a local college

Resources:

Transition from Middle to High

Let me tell you what it takes

Audience: Incoming 9th Graders
When: 8th Grade & Summer before 9th Grade

Overview:

Developing and sustaining a mentor program for students entering the high school can create a sense of belonging for new students even before they begin attending. A culture of support and acceptance can set the stage for not only the beginning of the transition but throughout the high school years.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

- Recruit current upper classmen to serve as mentors to current middle grades students who will be attending the high school the next year.
- The compatibility of mentor and mentee is a factor that should be taken into consideration when arranging pairs. Mentors and mentees may benefit from having similar backgrounds, interests and life experiences:
    - Match students with similar extra-curricular interests: sports, drama, music, 4-H etc.
    - Match mentees who are struggling academically with mentors who have success in particular content areas.
- Any one or a combination of the following models is possible:
    - E- mentoring programs that are conducted through email or on a blog.
    - Tutoring programs in which older students provide extra academic help to struggling students to better prepare them for the rigors of high school
    - Big Brother/Big Sister formats in which older students provide guidance for concerns new students may have regarding fitting in at the high school.

Things to Consider:

- It is important to establish the goals for the mentoring program and provide training to mentors prior to beginning. Training should include guidelines for topics to be discussed.
- Mentors should meet regularly with a staff sponsor and receive on-going guidance.
- Any correspondence between mentors and mentees should be reviewed prior to being sent to ensure appropriateness of content.

Resources:

- **How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program**
- **EKU and GEAR UP E-Mentoring**
- **Standards of Conduct for Mentors**

The Summer Slide

Audience: Incoming 9th Graders
When: Summer before 9th Grade

Overview:

During a government web cast (2009), Secretary of Education Arne Duncan described summer learning loss as "devastating." This is what researchers have often referred to as the "summer slide." Researchers conclude that two-thirds of the 9th grade reading achievement gap can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities during the elementary school years, with nearly one-third of the gap present when children begin school (Alexander, Entwistle & Olsen, 2007). To avoid the "Summer Slide" consider assigning reading selections to transitioning freshmen.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

The following recommendations are a compilation of research on what some high schools are doing:

- Make arrangements for the school library or local public library (preferably on a book mobile) to assure that multiple copies of recommended readings are available to students of low-income and other disadvantaged families.
- Send a letter (snail mail or email) to all transitioning freshman students explaining the summer reading program and any related assignments.
- Connect the reading assignment to class work that will be covered in content areas in the fall.
- Coordinate with the local library to establish a teen reading club aligned with the school's summer reading list. Library facilitators can conduct book discussions and related activities.

Things to Consider:

- Ideally the selections would be tied either to students' career and college goals as identified through the ILP or to fall curriculum.
- Related assignments could lead students to make connections between the reading and their education.
- Further connections can be made by arranging for speakers or organizing field trips that extend learning throughout the school year.

Resources:

- **Sample Summer Reading Letter**
- **Lasting Consequences of the Summer Learning Gap**

Welcome Home

When: Summer before 9th Grade
Audience: Incoming 9th Graders

Overview:

Research has shown that students are full of fears for their first day of high school. Middle school students have anxiety about high school wondering how stringent the rules are, how difficult the work is, and how other students will accept them. Help alleviate the fears of students and parents by planning an Open House event or a Preview Night prior to the start of the new school year and remind them that this school is their new home away from home during these very important years.

- Host a back to School Night for the parents and upcoming freshman students. Allow parents and students to walk the halls and find their way through the course schedule in the physical building. Provide opportunities for parents and students to meet teachers. In the common area of the school, clubs, organizations and sports teams could set up information tables to promote their activities. Encourage students and parents to get involved.
- Host small, more informal events on several different days, or a combination of day and evening hours prior to the opening day of school. Having more than one day set aside for events would allow more parents to participate. During this time parents could bring their students in, pick up a copy of the student's schedule and locate all of the classrooms, and find the student's locker and practice the combination. Consider having the cafeteria open for parents and students to purchase snacks providing students an opportunity to become accustomed to lunch lines and procedures.
- Host a family game or reading night, or even a family movie night before school begins and invite incoming freshmen and their families. Often the only time parents see the inside of the high school is for a parent conference or when one of their children gets into trouble. Find ways to invite families into the school so that they understand their value in learning.

Things to Consider:

- Provide space for parent organizations to set up information tables as a way to encourage parents to get involved at the school.
- Consider having upper classroom produce a virtual tour of the high school and post it on your website so that students who cannot attend Open House can view.

Resources:

Freshman Orientation Video
How to Survive High School Orientation

Tell me all about it

Audience: Incoming 9th Graders
When: Summer before 9th Grade

Overview:

Select or solicit volunteers from rising sophomores to produce a video to be shared with the next group of transitioning students. Students would know what questions or concerns the next group of entering students might have and what they would be most interested in hearing about and seeing. This could point out concerns or issues that students are still dealing with in terms of their own transition.

Procedures/Guidelines:

- Decide whether the video will be created through an after school club or during a school exploratory class or club
- Solicit a staff member, parent or community member (e.g., college or university staff, local cable television staff, district technology coordinator) who has video experience and would be willing to assist
- Allow students to help determine the content of the video. It might include:
  - Shot of the entrance to the school and the name sign
  - Principal giving opening/welcoming remarks
  - Interviews with school staff and students
  - Clips of classrooms, both academic and exploratory/enrichment classes
  - Shots of extracurricular activities (e.g., ballgames, music concerts, academic competition)
  - Shots of the lunchroom, gym, offices, media center, and any special outside areas
  - Clips of students using lockers, loading and unloading buses, and during class change
- Use the video when meeting with the next group of students to enter the high school, at summer transition camps, with parents, and at open houses
- Check with the local cable television station to see if they might air this video
- Upload the video to the school's website.

Things to Consider:

- Be sure that the group provides a true mix of students so that all perspectives are addressed.
- The production of this video could be a project within a career education class.
- The video could be posted to the school web site.
- If the equipment or adult expertise does not exist for a video, have students create a PowerPoint that would address the same points as the video and that could be used in the same way.

Resources:

- Videomaker.com

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENTS & FAMILIES

Total Access

Audience: Incoming 9th Graders & Families
When: 8th Grade (Spring)

Overview:

High school websites can be storehouses of information for students and families. Provide web addresses, including passwords if applicable, to families and students who will be transitioning to the high school. This will allow the families the opportunity to become familiar with your site before they rely on it as a main source of information.

Procedures/Guidelines:

Possible items for including on the website:

- **Teacher Pages**- teachers can host their own page on the high school website where they post classroom calendars with project and assignment due dates, homework activities, project descriptions, classroom rules/procedures and contact information. Email links could also be provided
- **Lunch Menu-** students are often used to having lunch menus sent home by the school for parents to reference and/or help plan meals for their students. If the menu is on the website, parents can assist freshman students with lunch planning
- **Club/Sport/Activity Pages**- clubs and sports groups could have their own web page to post practice and game schedules, activity schedules, mission and vision statements, upcoming field trip information, club rules, etc.
- **School Handbook-** Post the school handbook on the website to make it more accessible to parents and students. Handbooks are generally sent home with students at the beginning of the year, but students often misplace them and can no longer refer to them when they have questions
- **Blogs-**include family and student blogs or discussion areas for new students and their families. Ask current parents and students to participate in the blog to respond to questions and concerns voiced by the families of or the upcoming students themselves.

Things to Consider:

- Websites can often be difficult to navigate, however, to ensure that your school website is user friendly, consider self-explanatory menu items to help even novice computer surfers find their way around your site.
- To encourage upcoming students and parents to use the website and become familiar with its contents, consider an online trivia contest where school memorabilia is the grand prize.

Resources:

Greenwood High School
Adair Co. High School
Carroll Co. High School

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

PARENTS

Dive Right In

When: 8th Grade (Spring)
Audience: 8th Grade Parents

Overview:

The PTA/PTO can be a great avenue for schools to use to help get parents involved in the school setting. Research shows that when parents are involved in their child's education, those students generally have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and more consistently completed homework.

Procedures/Guidelines:

Ask the PTA/PTO to host events such as the following for incoming families and students:

- Family Dinner, perhaps a pot luck mixer– with a focus on how parents can best help their students succeed in high school. –Have a panel of parents of current students share their experiences and respond to questions of attendees. Have a panel of older students meet with the incoming students to share tips on how to be a successful student
- Picnic with activities such as corn hole or horse shoe tournaments. The focus would be on building relationships with parents of rising high school students. Parents of students who are graduating could share their success stories and ideas on how to assist incoming high school students to succeed
- Family ice cream social. In addition to enjoying some tasty ice cream, parents can gather information about how they can help their students in their coming years of high school and students
- Family fun night where the focus is on "fun raising" not "fundraising." Food, games and a time to mingle and socialize would be the focus of the event

Things to Consider:

Many factors contribute to a decrease in family involvement in high school. In order to maintain open communication schools must use a variety of settings to encourage parents to stay involved.

Resources:

- **PTO Today**
- **KY PTA**

TRANSITIONING INTO HIGH SCHOOL

9th Grade (Start of Year)

For Students

For Parents

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENTS

Planning your future- using the ILP

Audience: 9th Graders
When: 9th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

Freshmen year is pivotal for college and career planning. Setting aside time for using the ILP should occur often throughout the year. These sessions could be included in core content classrooms or as a component of an elective class.

Procedure/ Guidelines:

Explain to students that the ILP will help them to plan their coursework and activities as they complete their high school education, prepare for post-secondary education and develop career plans. The document, ILP Classroom Activities, provides guidance for these components:

1. Getting Started with Your ILP
2. Saving Your Career Matchmaker Results
3. Careers That Interest Me
4. Schools That Interest Me
5. Career & Life Goals
6. Career Cluster Interests
7. Post-Secondary Goals
8. Career Planning Activities
9. Activities & Interests
10. Community Service and Work Experience
11. Awards & Recognitions
12. High School Education Plan
13. Learning Services
14. Using the Resume Builder

Things to Consider:

- Share the completion standards (link below) with students to ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements for each year of high school.
- Document ways that students use the ILP that are innovative or unique, so that you can incorporate those ideas with future students.

Resources:

- **CareerCruising.com**
- **ILP Classroom Activities**
- **Components of the Student ILP**
- **ILP Completion Standards**

End the Guessing Game

Audience: 9th Graders
When: 9th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

Middle school academics are very different from high school academics. It takes students a while to understand that grades are linked to credits and credits must be earned in order to advance through the grade levels and ultimately graduate. With a bit of preparation, students can have an understanding of the academic expectations and better meet these challenges.

Procedures/Guidelines:

Almost every high school teacher hands out a syllabus and spends the first day of school going over it. By the time students get home that evening, most will admit that the entire day has become one big blur of unclear expectations. Teachers should consider presenting their classroom routines and expectations in a more engaging way.

- Ask teachers to provide a PowerPoint presentation or video that could be e-mailed to parents or posted to teacher web pages. This presentation should address procedures and expectations for the class. Parents and students could view this together at home. The presentation might also include background information about the teacher and a welcoming introduction to the class.
- Place a hidden message in the syllabus and give the first student finding the message a prize.
- Add graphics to the syllabus and print it on colored or decorative paper to make it more interesting and eye-appealing.
- Have students pair up and do a scavenger hunt activity using the syllabus.
- Show a video prepared by students from the previous year. In the video students could provide tips on how to be successful in the class. It could also include a part by the teacher addressing other necessary information.

Things to Consider:

- High school teachers often complain that students are unable to meet reasonable expectations. Truth be known, many students are simply unsure about what the expectations are. Teachers need to be sure to set their expectations clearly and communicate these to students and parents.
- Modeling is a great tool for students and it helps them understand the level of effort and commitment needed on their part to be successful.

Links:

- **Sample Syllabus**

Making Connections

Audience: 9th Graders
When: 9th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

High schools are typically larger, less personal and more departmentalized than middle and elementary schools. As a result, students often feel disconnected and somewhat lost. Recent research of students who dropped out of school without graduating shows that almost half reported doing so because they were bored or disengaged from the high school. It is very easy for ninth graders especially to get lost and to not feel connected to their new school.

Procedures/Guidelines:

- Ask all of the school teams, clubs, and organizations to decorate the cafeteria walls with banners, posters, and other paraphernalia representative of their group and showing what the group does.
- Schedule a time (e.g., at lunch, one hour during the day, early arrival time and homeroom) for representatives of the various school clubs, organizations, teams, and special activities to set up booths and allow freshman students to visit and gather information.
- Identify places for posting meeting announcements for all groups (e.g., hall bulletin board, location on school web site, school announcements).
- Utilize ILP "Hobbies and Interests"data to determine extr-curricular interests of freshman. Look for unrepresented areas to address that would help more students be connected to the school.
- Find out which students are not participating in school organizations and identify a mentor (either school staff or community members) for these students to provide them with a stronger connection to the school.

Things to Consider:

After a first meeting, mentors could meet with their mentees electronically. Having e-mail communications could increase the amount of contact for students with their mentors. However, students may need school time for doing this.

Resources:

- **Easing the Transition to High School**

Planning your future- using the ILP

Audience: 9th Grade
When: 9th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

Freshmen year is pivotal for college and career planning. Setting aside time for using the ILP should occur often throughout the year. These sessions could be included in core content classrooms or as a component of an elective class.

Procedures/Guidelines:

Explain to students that the ILP will help them to plan their coursework and activities as they complete their high school education, prepare for post-secondary education and develop career plans. The document, ILP Classroom Activities, provides guidance for these components:

- Getting Started with Your ILP
- Saving Your Career Matchmaker Results
- Careers That Interest Me
- Schools That Interest Me
- Career & Life Goals
- Career Cluster Interests
- Post-Secondary Goals
- Career Planning Activities
- Activities & Interests
- Community Service and Work Experience
- Awards & Recognitions
- High School Education Plan
- Learning Services
- Using the Resume Builder

Things to Consider:

- Share the completion standards (link below) with students to ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements for each year of high school.
- Document ways that students use the ILP that are innovative or unique, so that you can incorporate those ideas with future students.

Resources:

- **CareerCruising.com**
- **ILP Classroom Activities**
- **Components of the Student ILP**
- **ILP Completion Standards**

Finding My Way

Audience: 9th Graders
When: 9th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

Recent research of students who dropped out of school without graduating shows that almost half reported doing so because they were bored or disengaged from the high school. High schools are typically larger, less personal more departmentalized than middle or elementary schools. As a result, students often feel disconnected and lost in the ensuing shuffle. It is very easy for ninth graders especially to get lost in the shuffle and fail their course work without timely intervention.

Procedures/Guidelines:

- Develop a school wide advisory program for ninth grade students to help them with their high school transition. Assign faculty and staff small groups of students to meet with at least once a week to discuss transition issues and to monitor students' academic progress suggesting appropriate interventions.
- Establish a mentoring program to provide more care and attention for targeted students using school staff, community members, and/or business representatives. Use early dropout prediction data, such as absenteeism, history of failure, discipline referral record, and unstable home environment to create a list of potential dropouts. Mentors would be one person that students could go to if they had a question or concern.
- Administer the learning style inventory in the ILP. If your school has a homeroom or an advising period, consider administering the learning style inventory during this time and share the results with the faculty. Knowing students' predominant learning style could help teachers group students for projects, and determine appropriate interventions when students are having trouble.

Things to Consider:

- Research has shown that the single most important factor for student success is relationships with adults in their academic environment.
- Activities such as this one help to build those relationships and help teachers connect with students

Resources:

- **Better High Schools**

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

PARENTS

When I grow up

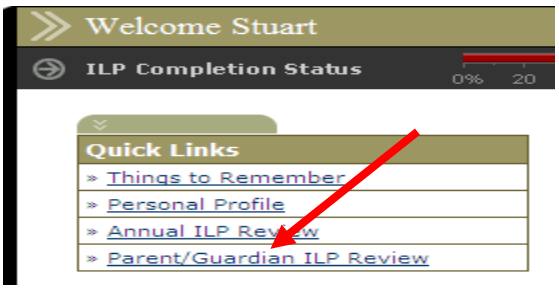
Audience: Parents of 9th Graders
When: 9th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

The above question is often asked of students. The ILP facilitates how they answer this question and provides resources so that they can make informed decisions about their future. Parents are in integral part of that process, so keeping them engaged in the ILP process is of benefit to everyone. Hosting an "ILP Night" or providing information at a related parent meeting will ensure that parents are fully aware of their students' plans and can provide information for important conversations.

Procedures/Guidelines:

- Briefly review the components of the ILP projected on a screen so that all can see. Highlight Career Matchmaker, Assessment Results, Resume Builder, Schools, Financial Aid Selector and the Employment section.
- Provide parents with their usernames and passwords to their students' ILPs.
- Assist parents as they log-on and review their students' ILPs. B
- Be sure to have parents click on Parent/Guardian ILP Review and then answer "Yes, I have reviewed my child's ILP"



- Advertise these events through the newspaper, school website, notes home to parents, etc.
- If possible, solicit donations from area vendors to present parents with gift cards or donated items as a "thank-you" for attending. Include this information in any announcements about the meeting.

Things to Consider:

Share the completion standards (link below) with parent to ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements for each year of high school. Inform parents that ILP completion is a high school graduation requirement as referenced in 704 KAR 3:305 Regulation.

Resources:

- **Access ILP Here**
- **Components of the student ILP**
- **ILP Completion Standards**

Raising the Bar

Audience: Parents of 9th Graders
When: 9th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

The transition from middle grades to high school is often very confusing for incoming freshman. Grades, course selection and credits are either new concepts completely, or take on an entirely new meaning on the high school level. Parents and students are often unaware of the benefits of accelerated learning opportunities.

Procedures/Guidelines:

Help parents and students make the connection from the high school coursework to the resulting college level coursework that student will take once he or she enters college (or dual credit courses in their last two years of high school).

- Host an Accelerated Learning Opportunities Rally and/or a College Fair. During this event, a quick overview of the latest research can be presented to parents and students. Counselors or teachers can share accelerated learning course offerings (AP, Dual Credit, IB, etc.) and students who have taken the courses can share their experiences. Local college staff can attend and be called upon to discussion the colleges' approach to the various accelerated learning opportunities and how the college uses these credits in admission and placement decisions. The colleges could set up informational booths for parents and students to ask questions and learn more about the college opportunities.
- Students currently enrolled in accelerated courses could visit younger students and talk with upcoming middle school students about high school course offerings and the benefits of taking advantage of such opportunities.
- Counselors and teachers can take the opportunity to sit down with students individually and/or with parents and go over EPAS EXPLORE scores. Explaining the benchmark goals and helping plot a course of action to keep students on, or above target, is a great way to help students and parents see the connection between college and career readiness, high school grades, and high school coursework.

Things to Consider:

Students and parents are unaware of the research that shows that what courses a student takes often has direct correlation with that students ACT score and which college and what college courses they will need to take as a result

Resources:

- **ACT: Planning Your Future**

In a Million Words or Less

Audience: Parents of 9th Graders
When: 9th Grade (Start of Year)

Overview:

Teachers often begin the school year with a parent letter in which they introduce themselves and provide an overview of the school year. These parent letters are wonderful sources of information and teachers often agonize over the design and content of the letters for weeks before they actually send them home to parents. This transition activity involves a letter from parents, to the teachers, about the students.

Procedures/Guidelines:

Parents are the experts on their children. They know their children's personalities, quirks, successes and failures. This activity involves a homework assignment for the first week of school- only it is to be completed by the student's parent or guardian, not by the student themselves.

- The actual activity can be worded like this: You know so much more about your own child than I know about them at this moment. As we are going to be on a year-long journey together, and part of my job it so help prepare your child for the future you want them to have. It helps when I know more about your child's likes and dislikes, their personality and tendencies, and their past successes and failures. In a million words or less, tell me all about your child.
- You can alter the title and try, "In five hundred words or less…" if you want to make the task less daunting to parents

Things to Consider:

Research has shown that the single most important factor for student success is relationships with adults in their academic environment. Activities such as this one help to build those relationships and help teachers connect with students.

TRANSITIONING INTO HIGH SCHOOL

9th Grade

(During the Year)

For Students

For Students & Families

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENTS

Looping for Success

Audience: 9th Graders
When: 9th Grade (During the Year)

Overview:

Looping, also known as multi-year placement, is a process by which students remain in "teams" with their peers and their teacher through several years of their school experience. Looping has been a popular technique for elementary and even some middle schools for several years, but this teamed approach is slowly taking in root in high school classes as well.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- Looping allows teachers to focus on student skills levels and student academic growth, and not necessarily on grade-level curricular boundaries. Teachers in looped classrooms have the freedom to accelerate the curriculum as they need to in order to stay on pace with student learning.
- Looping helps alleviate the beginning of the year "drag" where students are trying to become familiar with the expectations and routines of a new teacher and teachers are trying to quickly assess the aptitude of a new set of pupils. Learning can begin on day one of the school year.
- Many professionals will dismiss looping as a scenario not possible in high school. While it is inconceivable that all students can be looped for all classes, it is possible to loop some of the core classes. A student, for instance, can have the same English/Language Arts teacher for several years, or the same Social Studies teacher for several years.

Things to Consider:

Allowing students to build on friendships and relationships with teachers over several years can allow for significant academic and social growth. Students will benefit from the consistent nature of knowing the teacher and knowing the expectations for the course. Teachers can benefit because there is already a relationship in place with the student and the student's parents.

Resources:

- **A Dozen Promising Practices**
- **Looping**

Shadowing through the Dark

Audience: 9th Graders
When: 9th Grade (During the Year)

Overview:

Student to student mentoring is a concept that is rapidly catching on across the United States. Research studies have shown that students with a mentor are 53% less likely to skip school, 37% less likely to skip classes, 33% less likely to hit someone and 59% more likely to improve their grades. High school students are also much more likely to listen to their peers- students their own age who have been through the very experiences they are facing.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- Consider utilizing your National Honor Society students as peer mentors. These students are being trained in leadership skills and should have both the academic skills and the social skills to support freshman students.
- Consider making the program voluntary. No freshman student is going to want to be forced to have a mentor buddy, but some may really want this opportunity and will take advantage of it when presented with the option.
- Have older students assist younger students in becoming familiar with the school building as well as the school environment. This mentorship could begin the week before school officially starts, so that younger students are less fearful of that first day of school.
- Peer mentors will need training on how to be an effective leader to their mentee. Without training, mentors will be unsure of their role and their responsibilities.

Things to Consider:

Peer mentoring can be a wonderful opportunity for freshman students to have a "seasoned" peer walk them through the school building and talk to them about the importance of class work and being involved in extracurricular activities. Well screened peer mentors can be a first line of defense for freshman students who are often unsure and confused about the myriad of choices they face.

Resources:

- **A Dozen Promising Practices**
- **Peer Mentoring Resource Book**
- **Mentoring Directory**
- **Mentor/Mentee Training Materials**

Spreading your Wings

Audience: 9th Graders
When: 9th Grade (During the Year)

Overview:

Providing information about possible volunteering, job shadowing opportunities in the community can help freshman students make a personal connection and feel a sense of belonging. Ideally, these experiences should be aligned with the students' Career Matchmaker results and cluster recommendations in their ILPs.

Procedures/Guidelines:

Walk students through the following process to identify an appropriate experience:

- Have students complete the Career Matchmaker assessment, review the suggested careers, and then select 3 careers that they are interested in researching further.

- Ask students to click on those 3 careers to see how their responses in Career Matchmaker align with the tasks associated with that career.

- Have students work in pairs or small groups to discuss the following questions: (If possible group them by similar careers)
    - What aspects of the job do you like/dislike?
    - What volunteer opportunities might be available to provide experience in exploring this career? (if in the computer lab have students complete the volunteer exploration form).

- As a follow-up exercise students have go to the "Sidewalk to the future" website and create a sidewalk square illustrating their interests, skills and goals. When students have completed their squares ask them to share their square with a partner. Then have students share a key point about their partner's square with the class.

Things to Consider:

- Invite community members to speak about related careers.
- Possibly have students complete applications and conduct mock interviews.
- Guest speakers could provide feedback on applications and interviews.

Resources:

- **Volunteering in Kentucky**
- **Do Something**
- **Sidewalk to the Future**
- **Teenagers Guide to the Real World**
- **Volunteer Exploration Form**

Chalking up Points

Audience: 9th Graders
When: 9th Grade (During the Year)

Overview:

Whether for a graduation requirement, to earn National Honor Society points or simply to be helpful, volunteering brings many benefits to the lives of adolescents. Ideally, the volunteering experience should be aligned with the students' Career Matchmaker results in their ILPs.

Procedures/Guidelines:

- Use the following checklist (adapted from *21 "To Do" Lists for High School* by: Valerie Pierce and Cheryl Rilly) to guide students through the volunteering process:
- Call professional organizations and associations related to your interests to see if they need volunteers or could suggest a volunteer position.
- Click on websites for ideas.
- Check the school bulletin board or check with your counselor to see what service possibilities exist through your school.
- Ask your friends where they plan to volunteer.
- Check the web sites of local newspapers and television stations for lists of volunteer activities and events. Watch for stories on interesting charity events. Call the sponsoring agency and ask if you can volunteer.
- Call the local sports teams to see if they're sponsoring youth events. Ask if you can volunteer.
- Check with your place of worship. Can you teach Sunday school? Babysit? Volunteer at church events? Do they sponsor mission work?
- Turn your interests into volunteer work. If you take extracurricular classes (i.e. dance, music), ask the instructor if they need help.
- Start your own volunteer group for a cause or need that you are passionate about.
- Find out what careers are related to volunteer situations.
- Find out if your volunteer position can turn into a summer job or internship.
- Ask your counselor if your school has a program that gives high school credit for community service hours.
- **DOCUMENT** any volunteer time in your ILP. Ask contacts at the agencies to write letters of reference that you can upload to the My Documents section of your ILP.

Things to Consider:

- Provide time for students to document their volunteering experiences in their ILPs. First click on "Activities and Experiences" and then click on "Community Service".
- Provide links to local community service opportunities on your school webpage. (sample below)

Resources:

Volunteering in Kentucky
Community Service Ideas

TRANSITION TOOLS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENTS & FAMILIES

Student Led Conferences

Audience: 9th Grade Students & Families
When: 9th Grade (During the Year)

Overview:

Student led conferences move the student from passive to an active participant in a 3-way interaction among parent, teacher, and student. Students assume "equal partner" status in discussions concerning their academic progress. One EXTREMELY important characteristic remains constant: The student leads the discussion. In participating in this process, students can improve oral communication skills and gain self-confidence. Teachers who frequently use this model report that the parent and teacher bonds are strengthened. Both teacher and parent are more likely to initiate subsequent contacts throughout the remainder of the school year.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

Consider the following strategies when conducting student led conferences:

- The teacher should create a welcoming atmosphere (e.g. greet at the door with a smile and a hand shake, make eye contact). Set the tone with a positive comment about the student.
- The teacher should arrange to conduct conferences at a designated area, preferably in the classroom with comfortable seating. Provide adult seating so parents are not uncomfortable. Student led conferences should help prevent parents from having childhood memories of school trauma.
- Students should review their ILP with their parents and discuss strengths, interests and goals. Prepare students in advance to highlight the accomplishments they have documented in their ILP. This is also a good time to discuss the student's educational plan.
- Allow the parents the opportunity to ask questions or set up an additional conference time, if the need is felt by either the teacher or the parents.

Things to Consider:

2 Options for conducting student led conference:

1. The teacher personally attends each student/parent conference. This is preferred for the first Student-Led Conference by teachers as well as parents.
2. The teacher schedules 4-5 conferences simultaneously with the teacher moving around the classroom and attending to groups as needed. This is preferred after teachers, students, as well as parents become experienced in the student-Led conference format.

Resources:

Student Led Conferences

Next Steps

Audience: 9th Graders & Families
When: 9th Grade (During the Year)

Overview:

Consider ways to engage parents in the ILP process and assist their children with the next steps for college and career planning. The two main goals of the Parent/Guardian ILP are to allow parents and guardians to view the work completed by their child and to allow parents and guardians to provide feedback to their child's advisor on their child's ILP. The information entered by students for most sections of the ILP is read-only; parents and guardians can view their child's work but cannot change it.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- Include an ongoing feature in your school newsletter on the ILP. For the first issue use "What is the ILP?" This resource includes a brief description of what students can do with the ILP and a summary of features available in the Parent/Guardian ILP. (See Links.)
- Use the hand-outs found in the ILP Parent Toolkit provided by the Kentucky Department of Education (see Links) in orientation meetings and at open houses.
- Post on the school website a link for the video regarding the ILP found in the ILP Parent Toolkit (see Links).
- Schedule a meeting for parents and students together in the computer lab. Have students log on and show their parents what they have done in the ILP. Hand-out parent access cards, and allow time for questions and answers.
- A good time for these meetings is prior to or immediately following another school event (e.g., chorus or band concert, drama presentation, sporting event, orientation) for which parents are already at the school.

Things to Consider:
Share the completion standards for the ILP with parents (link below) to ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements for each year of high school.
Seek upperclassmen or parents of juniors or seniors who might be willing to assist with a parent meeting. Volunteers could also call parents of freshman to ensure they are aware of the ILP.

Resources:

- **For Parents: What is the ILP?**
- **Access Cards for Parents**
- **ILP Parent Toolkit**
- **Completion Standards**

Where's the Money?

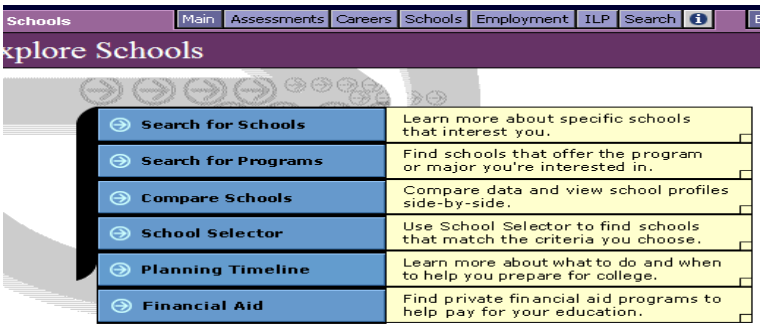
Audience: 9th Graders & Families
When: 9th Grade (During the Year)

Overview:

Finding scholarships can seem like a daunting experience to both students and parents alike. Starting this process helps to allow families to devote sufficient time to preparing their student. The ILP features over 1500 scholarships for students to research. The good news is that the ILP also features a "Financial Selector" component to help narrow the search.

Procedures/ Guidelines:

- First, log onto the ILP the click on the blue "schools" button at the top of the screen, next click on the ""financial aid" button"



- Students will then answer a series of 22 questions related to their interests, talents and affiliations as well as the affiliations of their parents. Once completed they will receive a list of scholarships for which they are uniquely qualified.
- Students can also search for scholarships by program name using an alphabetical index by clicking on "Financial Aid", then "Search for Scholarships

Things to Consider:

- Consider having students write an essay or letter that is required for one of the scholarships on their list.
- This document can be saved to the "My Documents" section on the homepage of the student ILP.
- When the student is a junior or senior they can re-visit the essay to make revisions and submit to the appropriate scholarship sites

Resources:

- **Student and Parent ILP Access**
- **ILP Parent Toolkit**

Advising Toolkit Extras

KDE Contact Information
Community Agencies & Partners Contact Information