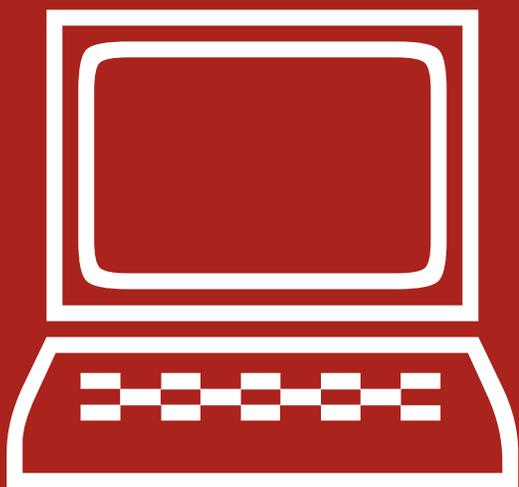


# OREGON GEAR UP TOOLKIT

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## College and Career Center

resources and information for schools and organizations

REACHING HIGHER

RIGOR

**RELEVANCE**

RELATIONSHIPS

**RAISING AWARENESS**

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**7 8 9 10 11 12 13+**

**Parents** Community Teachers



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# RELEVANCE

Link students' career aspirations with their educational goals.

# RAISING AWARENESS

Promote early awareness of college preparation, selection, admissions, financial aid and other critical steps for college entry.



**DOWNLOAD PRINT-AND-USE RESOURCES:** [bit.ly/1WuTTmm](http://bit.ly/1WuTTmm)

Look for the printer icon and green text throughout the toolkit!

· College Donation Request

· Sign-In Sheets

· Event Evaluation

## Table of Contents

<a href="#"><u>What the Research Says</u></a>	3
<a href="#"><u>1. Plan</u></a>	4
<a href="#"><u>2. Design</u></a>	5
<a href="#"><u>3. Implement</u></a>	6
<a href="#"><u>4. Evaluate</u></a>	6
<a href="#"><u>5. Maintain</u></a>	6

## Sources & More Information

The Bridgespan Group, [Reclaiming the American Dream](#)

Innovative Educators Webinar [Developing a Career & College Center](#), Frank Burtnett, Ed.D.

University of Wisconsin—Madison, *Continuing Studies*, [Career Development Process](#)

Laura Davis, Principal, Reedsport Community Charter School

# WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Studies report that understanding the link between education and career aspirations may be the single largest impact on an individual student's likelihood of completing college. In fact, high school graduates who expect they will need a college degree for the career they are interested in are more than *six times* as likely to earn their bachelor's degrees. Students who



understand the relevance of a college education on their career interests are also more likely to be academically prepared for college and career.

In addition, low-income and first-generation college students often lack information and resources about preparing, paying and applying to college.

College and Career Centers **provide dedicated space, resources and assistance for students to research college and careers** and can serve as the coordination point for broader college readiness initiatives.

Schools and organizations can use College and Career Centers to help students and parents explore colleges and careers, prepare and take standardized tests, hear from career professionals or college admissions personnel, and much more.

Whether you are starting from scratch or wanting to improve an existing center, follow this five-step process to create an effective, engaging College and Career Center.

## 5-STEP PROCESS

1. PLAN

2. DESIGN

3. IMPLEMENT

4. EVALUATE

5. GROW



1. PLAN

2. DESIGN

3. IMPLEMENT

4. EVALUATE

5. GROW

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The first step of the planning stage is understanding the Career Development Process, that is, how students make decisions about the types of careers (and by extension, the types of colleges) they are interested in.

First, students need to **assess** their skills, interests, values and personality. Using this information, students can then **explore** appropriate careers via online research, job shadows, or volunteering. Next, students can **set goals** including the level of education that they aspire to and **act** to make those goals a reality.



## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

In the planning process, bring together parents, community groups, counselors, ASPIRE coordinators and other key stakeholders to address the following questions.

- What are the goals and objectives of the center? Who is the audience? What are their needs?
- What stage(s) of the Career Development Process are students in? How can we help them reach the next stage?
- Who else should be involved? Who are potential partners?
- What are the costs to start and operate?
- Who will develop and staff it?





# COLLEGE AND CAREER CENTER

1. PLAN

2. DESIGN

3. IMPLEMENT

4. EVALUATE

5. GROW

## LOCATION & DECORATION

The College & Career Center should be in a highly visible, accessible place for students. Make it visually [appealing and comfortable](#) environment. [Decorate](#) the space with college pennants or t-shirts with our [College Donation Request](#) .

## GATHER SUPPLIES

- Computers, printers and other technology
- Tables, chairs, desks, bookshelves
- General office supplies (paper, pens, etc.)
- Bulletin boards
- [Sign-In Sheets](#)  and clipboards

## GATHER RESOURCES

There are many ways to obtain print resources free of charge—click on the links for examples.

- [Checklists](#), [workbooks](#) and [publications](#)
- [SAT](#), [ACT](#) and other test preparation materials
- Career directories and [guides](#)
- [Financial aid](#) information

In addition, there are many online resources—bookmark these on computers for easy access to explore college and careers.

- [Oregon Goes To College](#)
- [BigFuture](#)
- [KnowHow2Go](#)
- [Unigo](#)
- [Oregon CIS](#)



## DEVELOP PROGRAMMING

Differentiate services and activities by grade level so that they are developmentally appropriate. Determine how to assess programs and services, like using [Event Evaluations](#)  and tracking student usage with [Sign-In Sheets](#) .

Examples of programming include:

- Workshops and [speakers](#)
- [College Application Week](#)
- Games and contests ( e.g. SAT Word of the Day)
- Career and college [field trips](#)
- Standardized test preparation
- College/career [portfolio](#) creation
- [Job shadow](#) and internship placement
- Drop-in hours for students or parents
- Scholarship and financial aid assistance
- [ASPIRE](#) or other mentoring program

## RECRUIT STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

Determine the hours that the center will be open and staffed. Contact parents and organizations that may be willing to volunteer.



1. PLAN

2. DESIGN

3. IMPLEMENT

4. EVALUATE

5. GROW

## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Provide a combination of structured and personalized services such as daily drop-in hours (during lunch or advisory periods so students don't miss class), special activities and workshops and collaborations with academic classes.

Be open during times when parents will be at school (Open Houses, parent-teacher conferences, concerts or sporting events) to share information about college. Contests and giveaways are always good to help get parents in the door.

## STAY CONNECTED

Build a marketing plan that will get the word out and students and parents in. Advertise with hall posters and during school announcements. And of course, offering free food or a small treat will bring students in!

Use Facebook, Twitter, [text messages](#), a blog, or a [website](#) to connect with students outside of regular hours and market the services of the College and Career Center.

1. PLAN

2. DESIGN

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5. GROW

## EVALUATE THE IMPACT

Conduct surveys and assessments of specific events and programs as well as the use of space itself, using the evaluations designed in Step 2.

### Questions to consider:

- Are the original goals being met?
- Are volunteers and staff effective?
- What individual services or activities are the most effective? What is not effective?

## MAINTAIN & GROW

Aim to do a few things well, rather than many things poorly. Sustain and grow activities and services that prove successful and don't be afraid to abandon programs that aren't working.

Add new programs and services based on need and don't hesitate to revisit earlier stages occasionally to tweak the design and delivery.



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**COLLEGE.** It's not a dream, it's a plan.