

**KIDS 2 COLLEGE**  
THE SALLIE MAE FUND



# **Kids2College College Visit Planning Guide**

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# About This Guide

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A part of the *Kids2College: Fast Forward to My Future!* curriculum, this guide is created to help plan the culminating college visit. Designed for use by the coordinator, this guide provides materials needed for both the coordinator and teacher in preparing for the trip.



Taking middle-grades students to institutions of postsecondary education helps students make the connection between the careers they aspire towards and the role of a postsecondary degree.<sup>1</sup> Schools that routinely take middle-grades students to local institutions have found that the visit helps students envision a different future for themselves.<sup>2</sup> Spending time on a college campus and learning about the academic and extracurricular activities available helps middle-grades students imagine what it would be like if they were in college and demystifies misconceptions. Students leave the campus energized and hopeful for their new future as a college student. The college visit will place into context the economic and personal value of obtaining a postsecondary education.

This guide contains everything you need to plan a successful college visit, including:

- tips for preparing for the visit
- a planning checklist for coordinators (found on page 4)
- a planning checklist for teachers (found on page 7)
- on-site activity ideas
- supplemental activities for use in the classroom
- samples and templates of relevant documents

**Good luck planning your college visit!**

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<sup>1</sup> Casey Family Programs. (2006). *It's My Life: Postsecondary Education and Training*. Seattle, WA.

<sup>2</sup> Daniels, A. & Garraway, C. (2007). *More Than a College Tour: Engaging Students, Changing Attitudes*. Presented at the NCEP Capacity Building Workshop. Atlanta, GA.

# For the Coordinator

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## Planning the Visit

For the culminating event of the Kids2College curriculum, you will plan a college visit to your postsecondary education partner. This guide will help you plan a successful college visit for your students that will serve as a meaningful ending to the course.

### Determining a Date

Coordinate with your postsecondary education partner to select a date and time that will be convenient for both partners. Some things to keep in mind when planning your visit:

- Plan your visit with the help of your college/university partner. He or she will help you schedule your day and make connections with the right people for events you have planned for the visit.
- Aim to have your visit last about four hours.
- You should confirm the date and time of your visit with your college/university partner 6–8 weeks in advance.
- Visit when classes are in session. Check the school calendar and make sure that you are not planning to visit during vacations, reading days, an exam period, or days that the admissions office is closed.

### Planning Your Visit

- With your college/university partner, discuss what your vision is for the event. Determine what your priorities are for the visit and what you would like students to get out of it. Make a list of places you would like the students to see, people you would like them to interact with, and activities you would like them to do on your visit.
- Create a schedule that incorporates all the elements that you would like to include in your visit. Look at the “Sample College Visit Agenda” on page 10 for a sample schedule.
- See if you can have lunch or a snack in the student dining hall. Many schools allow visitors to eat in the dining hall, and this will give your students a feel for what college life is really like. Explore with your postsecondary education partner if this is possible. You may also consider asking if they can contribute in-kind support.
- Determine what activities you would like to do with the students. See the “Ideas for Your Visit” sheet on page 6 for a variety of activities to include in your college visit.



## Coordinator's College Visit Planning Checklist

### Six to eight weeks prior to the event

- Select a date and time for the event.
- Discuss an agenda for your visit with your college/university partner.
- Request multiple copies of prospective student materials from the college or university to share with students.
- Reach out to professors, college students, financial aid administrators, and others whom you would like to participate in and present at your visit.
- Recruit parents and other volunteers to serve as chaperones. You will need approximately one for every 15 students. (See page 11 for a sample chaperone letter.)
- Determine whether or not you will serve lunch or snacks during the visit.
- Schedule transportation to and from the college/university.
- Provide copies of permission forms to the teacher for students to take home.

### Three to five weeks prior to the event

- Confirm the agenda with your college/university partner.
- Secure locations and rooms.
- Follow-up with invited guests to discuss and finalize their role in the visit.
- Discuss AV needs with speakers (DVD player, TV or projection screen, microphone, etc).
- Confirm chaperones and send out chaperone letter (see sample on page 11). Discuss your school or district sibling policy with chaperones.
- Discuss a plan for student security and safety for the trip with the college/university and teachers.
- If you are serving lunch or snacks, determine the location and menu. Make sure to accommodate for any allergies or special needs.

## Coordinator's College Visit Planning Checklist (continued)

### One to two weeks before the event

- Finalize your agenda. Go over specific talking points and activities with guest speakers. Provide a copy of the agenda to the teacher so that he or she may share it with students. (See page 10 for a sample agenda.)
- Order and confirm AV equipment.
- Collect permission forms.

### Day Before the Event

- Confirm transportation.
- Send your college/university partner and all other participants a copy of the finalized agenda.
- Confirm your lunch or snack order. Purchase snacks if you are supplying them.
- Locate a camera to take pictures of the campus and students. Make sure that you have batteries and film or enough room on your memory card.
- Verify that there is a first-aid kit at the event location; if not, locate one to bring with you.

### Pre-event

*Once you arrive at your partner institution, complete the following tasks. You can also have your contact at the location complete them for you:*

- Double check that your audiovisual equipment is working
- Be sure that there is enough seating for all students and guests.

### After the Event

*As soon as possible after the event, complete the following tasks:*

- Send thank-you cards to your college/university partner, other university members who helped with the visit, and chaperones. Encourage students to write thank you notes as well.



## Ideas for Your College Visit

- Do a campus tour. At different stops on the tour, have someone from that branch of the university talk about the location and the services provided there. For example, when visiting a classroom, have a professor talk about the academic life of college students.
- Have students sit in on a class.
- Have a professor prepare a special lecture in his or her subject for the students to understand what a college class is like.
- Place students into groups based on a major related to their chosen career in their *My Path to Success* handbook. Have professors in these subject areas prepare and deliver a special lecture for the students in that subject.
- Have college students show your students around the residence halls.
- Visit the dining hall and have a meal there.
- Visit the career center. Have a career center staff member show students what types of jobs college graduates have and how the college or university will help them find one.
- Attend a campus cultural event, such as a play, concert, or art exhibit.
- Attend a meeting of a student group of interest to your students. For example, if many of your students are Latino, arrange to meet the leadership of the Latino group on campus.
- Go to the student sports center and watch a sports team practice.

### Included Supplemental Activities

- Campus Scavenger Hunt
- Career Discussion with College Students

# For the Teacher

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## Teacher's College Visit Planning Checklist

### Six to Eight Weeks prior to the event

- Once the date and time have been confirmed, send home a district approved permission slip to parents.

### Three to Five Weeks Prior to the Event

- Collect permission slips from parents.

### One to Two Weeks Before the Event

- Complete Lesson Six: Career Day.
- Prepare students for the visit. A list of things to go over with students is included in this packet.
- Look over the college or university viewbook, course catalog, admissions application, and college website with students. Information on other colleges or universities can also be included (optional).
- Play the College Knowledge game on page 12 with students (*optional*).
- Discuss your expectations for student behavior during the event, as well as what they should and should not bring with them.

### Day Before the Event

- Remind students about the visit and what they need to bring. If food is not being provided, remind students to bring a snack.

### After the Event

- If possible, have a class discussion about the visit.

## Preparing Students for the Visit

*This information and the College Visit Questions Worksheet are included in Lesson Six; however, we have repeated them here for your reference.*

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**Teacher Instructions:** Before visiting the college or university, prepare students for their trip by discussing where they will be going, the agenda for the day, and expectations for behavior. Properly preparing students for the campus visit will enhance their learning experience. If you have time, you can also play the College Knowledge game included in the supplemental activities section.

Share the planned agenda with students and ask students to brainstorm questions that they may have for the different people they will meet. Have students write five questions on page 50 of their *My Path to Success* handbook that they would like to ask. Select some students to share their questions with the class. Before the lesson ends, go over the following instructions with students:

- The campus will be very busy with students and professors going to class. Stay with the group and do not wander.
- When you meet someone who teaches college students, address them using the title of “Professor” or “Doctor” unless they tell you otherwise.
- Dress appropriately (instructors should provide students with specific guidelines of what to wear and what not to wear). Wear comfortable shoes and dress for the weather.
- Leave iPods, video games, and other entertainment at home.
- Bring your list of questions from page 49 in your handbook, a pen, and plenty of questions!

Be sure to address the issue of meals and/or food. If you will not be supplying food for students, remind them to bring snacks. If you are providing meals or snacks for the students, make sure that they understand that.

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# College Visit Questions



In the space provided below, write five questions to ask on campus when you visit your local college or university.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Sample Documents

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## Sample Schedule

### State University Welcomes East Middle School

Tuesday, March 3

9:30 am	<b>Arrive on Campus</b>	Parking Lot
9:30 – 9:45 am	<b>Welcome to College!</b> Presentation by the Admissions Office and University Students	Visitor's Center
10:00 – 10:45 am	<b>Campus Tour</b> Residence Hall Financial Aid Office Library Quad Student Union Career Center	
11:00 – 11:30 am	<b>Small Group/Lectures</b> Anna Morales, Ph.D., Biology Charles Johnson, Ph.D., English Adam Marquez, MBA, Finance Gabriella Ellis, MS, Computer Engineering	Lecture Room 1 Lecture Room 2 Lecture Room 3 Lecture Room 4
11:30 am – 12:10 pm	<b>Meet the Executive Board of the Student Government</b>	Student Union
12:15 – 12:50 pm	<b>Lunch and Closing</b>	Dining Hall
12:50 – 1:00 pm	<b>Return to Bus</b>	Parking Lot

# Chaperone Letter Template

Dear Chaperone:

Thank you for volunteering to accompany the students to State University! We hope that you enjoy your visit. As a chaperone, your primary concern is assisting the teacher and university staff with direct supervision of the students. Below are some guidelines for you and your group.

- You are a role model for the students. Your positive attitude and enthusiasm will greatly enhance the students' experiences at State University. Encourage students to listen to instructions, ask questions and be open to new experiences.
- Assist the teacher in providing direct supervision for students at all times including during lunch/snack breaks and on the bus.
- Be prepared to walk a lot while on the campus.
- Come properly dressed for the weather and to be outside.
- Assist school and college/university staff throughout the day.

Thank you for your enthusiasm. If you need more information, please contact me at 555-1135 or schedule a time to meet with me at the school. I hope that you will enjoy this field trip.

Sincerely,

Sallie Smith



**Resource:** For a customizable version of this letter in Microsoft Word, see \_\_\_\_\_.

# Supplemental Activities

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## College Knowledge Game

### Summary

Prior to the college visit, students will test their college knowledge. This game show-style activity is designed to make students more aware of the terms associated with postsecondary education institutions

### Rationale

To make students more comfortable with the terms associated with attending a postsecondary education institution.

### Materials

- A transparency of the College Knowledge Quiz — Student Edition or paper copies of the quiz cut up (see *instructions below*).
- Overhead projector (if using transparencies)

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**Teacher Instructions:** Divide students into teams of five. Read each question to the students, along with the answer choices. Teams will have 15 seconds to choose the best answer and write their answer choice down on a piece of paper. In turn, each team will display their answer to the class. The team with the most correct answers wins the game.

While reading the questions aloud is beneficial for some students, others will need to read the question to fully understand it. You may address this in one of two ways. The first is to make photocopies of the questions (see student version on page 15). In order to distribute each question individually, cut the page along the lines to separate each question. Hand out a hard copy of the question to each team as you read it. If you prefer to the overhead projector, make a transparency of the questions, again using the student version on page 15. Cover questions with a piece of paper and reveal them one at a time as you ask the class.

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Adapted from the Evergreen State College GEAR UP Project

## College Knowledge Quiz – Teacher Edition

Correct answers are in bold.

- 1. When you arrive on campus, you will see undergraduates going to class. What is an undergraduate?**
  - A. A college student who has graduated but is still attending class
  - B. A college student who has not yet earned a college degree**
  - C. College professors
  - D. People visiting the campus.

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- 2. Most of the undergraduates you see on campus are studying for a degree that you can get in four or five years from a college or university. What is the name of that degree?**
  - A. Associate Degree
  - B. License
  - C. Bachelor's Degree**
  - D. Certificate

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- 3. Which one of the following is NOT the name of a degree?**
  - A. Associate Degree
  - B. Bachelor's Degree
  - C. Master's Degree
  - D. License Degree**

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- 4. While studying for their degree, undergraduates focus upon a specific subject. This is called a \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - A. Major**
  - B. License
  - C. Selection
  - D. Resume

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- 5. Many (but not all) college professors have earned PhDs. What does PhD stand for?**
  - A. A degree that stands for Doctor of Philosophy**
  - B. A degree that stands for Doctor of Physics
  - C. A degree that stands for Doctor of Physiology
  - D. A degree that stands for Doctor of Phun!

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- 6. What is the proper way to address a college professor?**
  - A. Mr. or Mrs.
  - B. Principal
  - C. Dr. or Professor**
  - D. Officer

(continued)

## College Knowledge Quiz – Teacher Edition (continued)

7. You will probably see a residence hall when you go to campus. What's a residence hall?

- A. A building where classes are held
  - B. A building where college students live**
  - C. A building where college professors live
  - D. A hallway that has pictures of everyone in the college/university.
- 

8. We will talk about financial aid when we are on campus. Which of the following is NOT a form of financial aid?

- A. Transcript**
  - B. Scholarship
  - C. Grant
  - D. Loan
- 

9. To go to a four-year university, you need to take a college admissions exam. Name one of the official college entrance exams.

- A. CAT/UEE
  - B. GPA/GNP
  - C. SAT/ACT**
  - D. PSAT/PLAN
- 

10. Why do people go to college?

- A. To further their education.
- B. To earn more money
- C. To reach a career goal
- D. All of the above**

# College Knowledge Quiz – Student Edition

- 1. When you arrive on campus, you will see undergraduates going to class. What is an undergraduate?**
  - A. A college student who has graduated but is still attending class
  - B. A college student who has not yet earned a college degree
  - C. College professors
  - D. People visiting the campus.

---
- 2. Most of the undergraduates you see on campus are studying for a degree that you can get in four or five years from a college or university. What is the name of that degree?**
  - A. Associate Degree
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  - C. Bachelor's Degree
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- 3. Which one of the following is NOT the name of a degree?**
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- 4. While studying for their degree, undergraduates focus upon a specific subject. This is called a \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - A. Major
  - B. License
  - C. Selection
  - D. Resume

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- 5. Many (but not all) college professors have earned PhDs. What does PhD stand for?**
  - A. A degree that stands for Doctor of Philosophy
  - B. A degree that stands for Doctor of Physics
  - C. A degree that stands for Doctor of Physiology
  - D. A degree that stands for Doctor of Phun!

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- 6. What is the proper way to address a college professor?**
  - A. Mr. or Mrs.
  - B. Principal
  - C. Dr. or Professor
  - D. Officer



(continued)

## College Knowledge Quiz – Student Edition (continued)

7. You will probably see a residence hall when you go to campus. What's a residence hall?

- A. A building where classes are held
  - B. A building where college students live
  - C. A building where college professors live
  - D. A hallway that has pictures of everyone in the college/university.
- 

8. We will talk about financial aid when we are on campus. Which of the following is NOT a form of financial aid?

- A. Transcript
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- D. Loan



9. To go to a four-year university, you need to take a college entrance exam. Which pair of tests are the official college entrance exams?

- A. CAT/UEE
  - B. GPA/GNP
  - C. SAT/ACT
  - D. PSAT/PLAN
- 

10. Why do people go to college?

- A. To further their education.
- B. To earn more money
- C. To reach a career goal
- D. All of the above

# Supplemental Activity: Campus Scavenger Hunt

## Summary

During the college visit, students will collect various items related to postsecondary education.

## Rationale

To raise students' awareness of which offices provide which services on a college campus.  
To provide a way for students to learn more about college life.

## Materials

- Copies of the scavenger hunt checklist (see *Before the Lesson Checklist*)

## Before the Lesson Checklist

- Speak with your college/university partner to plan the tour to determine which offices and buildings students will be visiting during their campus tour.
- With their assistance, identify items located at each of these locations that the students could collect for free. You should also include trivia questions that students can learn from the tour guide. Some examples of trivia questions include finding information that is publicly posted (for example, if there is a plaque posted next to a statue, asking the students to record who the statue is of and why they were honored in such a way), or certain facts or campus legends that tour guides plan on sharing as part of their tour (for example, "Legend has it that if you step on that emblem during finals week, you will fail all of your exams."). Be sure to coordinate the trivia items with your college/university partner so that all of the questions get addressed during the tour.
- Create a Scavenger Hunt Checklist with all of these items listed on it. Bring enough copies for all participants in the campus tour, including students, chaperones, and campus tour guides. Send a copy to your college/university partner so that they can share it with tour guides ahead of time. A sample list is included on page 18.



**Tip:** Try and include fun trivia items in your scavenger hunt, like campus legends or student traditions. These fun facts will help students see that going to college is about more than just academics — it's also about community, tradition, and personal growth.

Before students begin their campus tour, provide each of them with a copy of the Scavenger Hunt Checklist. Explain that they must collect the items and information on the list throughout their visit. You may divide students into teams to work together and collect the information, or have students work individually.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Scavenger Hunt Checklist (sample)

Welcome to Ball State University! Can you find all of the following items?

### Items to collect:

- an admissions application
- a campus brochure
- a financial aid pamphlet
- a copy of the Ball State Daily News
- a pen with that has Ball State or the Ball State logo on it
- A signature from a Resident Advisor (RA) \_\_\_\_\_

### Ball State Trivia:

What is the name of Ball State's president? \_\_\_\_\_

The fountain by Bracken Library has a statue in it. What do students call this statue?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What Ball State alumnus and television celebrity is the journalism building named after?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Rumor has it the library was built to look like \_\_\_\_\_.

How many majors are offered at Ball State? \_\_\_\_\_

The trail leading from the Robert Bell building to the Cooper Science building is known as the  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Describe one other new piece of information you learned about college.  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Supplemental Activity: Career Discussion with College Students

## Summary

Students will have the opportunity to meet with college students who are currently pursuing a major that is related to your students chosen careers

## Rationale

To provide students an opportunity to hear first-hand information about the college experience. To spend time with a positive role model who is pursuing the same goals the student may have.

## Materials

- About the Middle School Visit letter (sent to participating college students prior to the college visit; page 20)

## Before the Lesson Checklist

- With help from your college/university partner, identify students with majors that your students are interested in who are able to participate during the scheduled time. It is recommended that you search out students who work in the admissions office or give campus tours as they are knowledgeable about being a college/university representative.
- Send participating college students the information sheet on page 20 so they are aware of the context of the visit. If you are not able to send it to the college students ahead of time, go over the information with them before the activity.

For this activity, place students into groups based upon their careers and the potential college major they would need to pursue that career. The number of groups you have and how large the groups are will depend upon the variety of careers in your class and how many college students the university can identify to participate in the activity.

Allow time for the college students to share their story and for students to ask questions. College students should use the questions outlined in the “About the Middle School Visit” letter (page 20) to guide the discussion.

## About the East Middle School College Visit

Thank you for participating in the East Middle School visit to State University. This visit is the culmination of a six-lesson curriculum on college and career awareness that the students have participated in over the past several weeks. As a part of this course, each student chose a career for themselves and researched how to academically prepare for that career and what someone in that career does as a part of their job.

As a part of the students' visit to your campus, they will spend time talking to you about what you are doing to prepare for your career. You will be assigned a group of students whose careers fit with your major. Your students will be interested in learning about your educational path — the types of courses you take, projects you are working on, and your goals for the future. For this event, we ask that you spend a few minutes sharing your educational experiences with students before beginning a conversation with them about the research they have found.

As you prepare your remarks, consider the following questions. Please use them as a guideline and incorporate some of them into your presentation. Be creative, and bear in mind that a format where you read the question and then answer is not effective.

- Is there anything about your high school years that you would change if you could?
- Is there some advice you would like to share with students so they will not make the same mistakes?
- What did you do in middle school and high school to prepare for college?
- What other things you are doing to prepare for your career?
- What is college REALLY like?
- How did you decide that this was the college you wanted to attend? Who helped you?
- How much fun is college?
- Do they take attendance in the classroom?
- What is your major and what types of courses are you taking?
- Who chooses the courses? What are they like?
- What is a typical day like?
- Do you receive financial aid? *(Optional)*

After you have shared your experience, begin a dialogue with the students. While they will have questions for you, it is important to ask them questions as well. Some suggested questions include:

- Which career did you choose to study? Why?
- How can you prepare for college and your career now? When you get to high school?
- What do like/not like so far about you campus visit?
- Can you imagine yourself in college? Why/why not?
- Ask if they have any questions for you.

If you have any questions before the visit please contact me at 555-1135 or [sallie@eastms.org](mailto:sallie@eastms.org). Thank you again for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

Sallie Smith



**Resource:** For a customizable version of this letter in Microsoft Word, see