ACT's Center for Equity in Learning and ACE's American College Application Campaign

# College and Career Awareness Activities for Elementary and Middle School Students



#### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Implementing College and Career Awareness Activities	4
Activity 1 College Vocabulary	6
Activity 2 Career Bingo and Human Bingo	10-14
Activity 3 Match the mascot to the college	15
Activity 4 Dress for your future	16
Activity 5 Starting a College Savings Account	17
Activity 6 Exploring Whyville and Observation Career Activity	18-25
Activity 7 College Colors Day and College Colors Map	26-28
Activity 8 My College and Career Collage	29-31

#### Introduction

ACT's Center for Equity in Learning and ACE's American College Application Campaign (ACAC) are committed to increasing college access and career readiness through the dissemination of ideas, development of practices, and technical assistance for program implementation that creates or enhances a college-going culture. Schools that invest in the creation of this type of educational environment intentionally seek to remove barriers that prevent **all** students from pursuing postsecondary education.

This **College and Career Awareness for Elementary and Middle School Students** augments the **Pre-College and Career Readiness Curriculum for Students and Their Families** (2017, 2018) which was designed for primarily for high school students. Feedback from school counselors led to this development of materials for earlier grades.

The current version includes activities and lessons for pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, elementary and middle school students. The new materials were developed and shared by the College Foundation of West Virginia (CFWV) and GEAR UP Washington State.

Additionally, instructions for introducing students to the highly engaging online platform **Whyville**<sup>©</sup> were provided by Jen Sun, President of Numedeon. **Whyville**<sup>©</sup> is a virtual world designed for children as young as 8 years old which encourages self-directed exploration of ideas, careers, and community challenges.

Included on the bottom of each page is a link to feedback survey. If you use these materials, please let us know your thinking about it.

This material is intended for school counselors and college access professionals who work with students to identify interests and lay the academic foundation for their careers and life.

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#### IMPLEMENTING PRE-COLLEGE AND CAREER AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

There are at least five major goals associated with increasing educational attainment beyond high school as it pertains to career development. These include:

- Sharing information and building awareness
- Providing individualized advising
- Assisting with application completion
- Engaging parents and community
- Making decisions and planning ahead

It is during the Elementary through Middle School years that the first goal - **sharing information and building awareness about higher education and career readiness opportunities** - is essential and easiest done. For many students, the idea of college is not discussed in the home. Providing younger students with an opportunity to build a foundation of awareness about postsecondary education is critical. Building enthusiasm for educational attainment and an individual's lifelong responsibility for career readiness can never start soon enough. These activities promote opportunities for younger students to dream big about their futures as you **share information and build awareness** about higher education and career readiness.

#### TIMELINE FOR DELIVERY

- I. Class time throughout one or more school years could be utilized for these activities.
- II. Activities can be presented over **one or multiple years**.
- III. Your state's College Application or College Application and Career Exploration period in the fall is an excellent time to include younger students in activities that reinforce the work in which juniors and seniors are engaged.

#### **MODIFICATIONS TO THE ACTIVITIES**

School counselors, teachers, and college access professionals are encouraged to adapt any of these ideas to better meet the needs of their students and their interests. These ideas have been shared through conferences, training workshops, publications, and conversations. Seldom is there an idea that cannot be introduced with more complexity for older students and less complexity for younger audiences. Make this work your own and be sure to share with all of your colleagues.

# COLLEGE AND CAREER AWARENESS ACTIVITIES



# **ACTIVITIES**





#### COLLEGE and CAREER AWARENESS ACTIVITY 1 Building a College Vocabulary

Knowledge begins with language. Assisting younger students understand the concepts of "higher education," "college," "university," "community college," "technical school," "public versus private institutions" needs to occur before high school. There are many simple activities that can start the ball rolling and reinforce the concepts throughout elementary and middle school grades.

Younger student activities

**1.** Each classroom teacher needs to complete the following sign to put outside their classroom door.

My Name is	
I graduated from (College or University Name)	
ASK ME ABOUT IT!	

Then, follow up with a question and answer session. You can seed the pot by having questions on note cards for students to ask such as: How far away from home was your school? How did you decide to attend this school? Were you nervous about going to college? Who helped you

apply to college? What did your family think about you going to college? What did you do for fun in college? Did you play sports? And any others you can or are willing to answer.

2. Create a bulletin board with pictures of the various concepts and cards with simple definitions. Review the information with the students over time, and then one day pull the definition away and have the students put them to the correct image. Consider discussing the two levels of education separately during the school year. It is important for students to learn about secondary education prior to being introduced to postsecondary education.

# **Education in the United States**

Secondary Education: 12-14 years

	Primary School Education
	This is the beginning stage of formal learning for
	children between ages 3 and 11 years old. Pre-
	Kindergarten and Kindergarten are the beginning
	steps with grades $1 - 5$ or $1 - 6$ as the elementary
	school steps. Basic education regarding the
	alphabet, learning to read, counting, remembering
	information, and developing good habits are taught.
emiddle	Middle School Education
	This is the middle state of formal learning between
	Primary School and High School Education. Most
COULUUL	often, students in grades 6-8 or 7-9 are in middle
	school. Language, math, and science are introduced
	at more sophisticated levels.
	High School Education
	This is the highest level of secondary education.
HIGH SCHOOL	Students in grades 9-12 or 10-12 are taught more
THE CONOUL	complicated ideas in all subjects as well as moved to
	greater independence as learners.
Postsecondary Educa	

"College" is the most common term used to talk about where you get your education after you finish high school. There are other words used to describe specific types of educational experiences.
Technical school teaches skills used by individuals in certain jobs such as a car mechanic, computer hardware repairman, restaurant chef, heat and air conditioning repairman. Technical schools provide
a hands-on environment that prepares you to work in these types of jobs. Military training is considered technical school training.
Community college provides 2-year degrees in certain areas of study like technical schools. Many community colleges prepare you to transfer to a 4 year college or university for further study.
A university is usually considered different from a college because of the many different levels of education that you can complete.
Postsecondary education is made up of all of these opportunities.

8

Older student activities:

**1.** Each classroom teacher needs to complete the following sign to put outside their classroom door.



Then, follow up with a question and answer session. You can seed the pot by having questions on note cards for students to ask such as: How did you decide what to study in college? What did you learn during middle/high school that helped you in college? Did you have difficulty with any courses? What did you do when you had difficulty in your courses? Where did you live? On campus? At home? Off campus? How did you pay for college? How much did it cost? It is a good idea for an older age group to be encouraged to add their own questions that are randomly drawn out to be answered.

2. Assign students the task of decorating the class door with information about colleges in your state. They can use pictures but they must also include: a map which shows the distance from your town to the school, the cost of attendance, the number of students attending, a list of majors, and the types of degrees that can be earned. You can encourage them to research some of the people who graduated from each institution. Lastly, you can ask students to find pictures that show why they might want to attend college (for ex.: attending or participating in sports, working in science labs, performing in theatre productions, or meeting new people).

9

#### COLLEGE and CAREER AWARENESS ACTIVITY 2 Career Bingo and Human Bingo

Career Bingo reinforces awareness of various jobs and careers that students can pursue. Identifying work that is of interest early on motivates students to stay in school and to prepare for that opportunity. This is a two part activity. The **first part** is to review the common list of jobs. Ask students which jobs they have heard of, and to provide a brief summary of the work involved. Then, ask students to create their own Bingo cards with the names of 24 of the 30 jobs on the list; this increases the likelihood that all cards will be unique. The **second part** is to play Bingo. Students use their own cards and you draw cards out of a bowl. Each job on the list should be in the bowl 5 times – once each with "B," "I," "N," "G," "O" assigned to it.

## COMMON LIST OF JOBS that require some training beyond high school. You should feel free to modify this list based the needs of your state or local community. Ask students what they think is involved in these jobs and supplement their answers with the descriptions provided.

Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers – a person who delivers goods from one location to another **Nurse** – a person trained to care for sick people, esp. in a hospital Chef – a professional cook, esp. in a restaurant or hotel Real Estate Agent - a person who sells or rents out buildings and land **Pediatrician** – a person who treats children and their diseases Computer Games Developer – a person who makes games for the internet, mobile phones, PCs, and other electronic devices. **Photographer** – a person who makes photographs Budget Analyst – a person who assists organizations use their money Teacher – a person who helps others acquire knowledge

Auto Mechanic – a person familiar with cars and can make repairs Landscape Architect – a person familiar with plants, land, geographic location, and specific local, state, and national laws regarding each of these items. Librarian – a person who works professionally in a library and gives access to information and resources. Medical Assistant – a person who works alongside physicans in medical facilities. Preschool Teacher – a person who provides resources for students to explore as well as teach basic ideas such as colors, shape, letter recognition, numbers, basic hygiene, and social skills. **Dentist** – a person who diagnoses and treats problems related to teeth, gums, and the mouth.

**Dental Hygienist** – a person who provides basic dental care tasks, mostly

To provide feedback on the <u>College and Career Awareness Activities for Elementary and</u> 10 <u>Middle School Students</u> please use the following url: http://bit.ly/2tgbS5m focused on keeping teeth and gums cleaned.

**Dietician** – a person who advises others on food and nutritional needs.

**Fashion Designer** – create clothes, accessories, and shoes

Architect – a person who works in the construction industry designing new buildings, restoring old and conserving old buildings, and creating new ways of using existing buildings.

**School Principal** – a person who runs a school and is responsible for schools running smoothly, is safe, and supports learning for students.

School Counselor - a person who works in a school to provide academic, career, college access/affordability/admission, and social-emotional competencies to all students through a school counseling program.

Lawyer - a person who advises, counsels or advocates for others in the context of legal rights and expectations. Policeman/Policewoman –a person who is expected to enforce the law by arresting criminals and detecting and preventing crimes.

**Store Manager** - a person responsible for the day-to-day operations of a store that sells items. All workers in that store report to the store manager.

**Purchasing Agent** – a person who buys products and services for an organizaton to use or resell.

**Logistics Analyst** – a person who coordinates and figures out how to get items and services from one place to another.

**Computer Repairman** – a person who figures out how to repair and maintain your computer.

**Train Conductor**- a person who is responsible for safety and operation of a train but NOT the actual operation of the train.

**Firefighter** – a person who serves as a rescuer trained in firefighting.

**Military Police** – a person who serves as a law enforcement officer for both the military and civilian population.

# CAREER BINGO

B	I	N	ტ	0
		FREE SPACE		

#### College Experiences Human Bingo

The purpose of Human Bingo is to demonstrate the variety of college experiences that adults in the school have and to reinforce that adults in their schools are "ready resources" for college information. This activity takes 1-2 weeks.

Credit for this activity goes to Washington State's GEAR UP Program. They have been a strong supporter and implementer of the American College Application Campaign as well as systemic efforts to increase college attainment.



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#### **HUMAN BINGO**

Find a teacher, administrator, or other adult in your school for whom the following statements about college experiences are true. Ask that person to sign the box that contains their true statement. Up to 5 people may sign your sheet twice. Five in a row wins – horizontal, vertical, or diagonal.

Never thought they would go to college	Went to an state public university	Had a job while in college	Lived in a dorm	Played a varsity sport while in college
Had an internship	Graduated in 4 years	Was the first in their family to go to college	Went to a private college	Took out loans to help pay for college
Studied on a Saturday night while they were in college	Changed their major at least one time	FREE SPACE	Received a scholarship to help pay for college	Went to a party during college
Belonged to a fraternity or sorority	Was a member of the student government association	Studied overseas while in college	Transferred from one college to another	Went more than 500 miles away from home
Lived at home during college	Went to a community college	Was in college for more than 4 years	Belonged to a student group	Did scientific research

# COLLEGE and CAREER AWARENESS ACTIVITY 3 Match the mascot to the college *(customize for your state)*

Did you know that North Carolina has over 200 colleges that include 16 public institutions and 58 community colleges. One fun way to learn about schools is through their mascots. During sports events, these mascots encourage the crowds to cheer. And while all colleges do not have sports, they can still choose a mascot. It can be fun to learn the history of each school mascot. How many North Carolina public university mascots do you know?



#### Winston-Salem State University









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15

#### COLLEGE and CAREER AWARENESS ACTIVITY 4 Dress For Your Future

Younger student activities

 Use Halloween as an opportunity to have younger students come to school dressed as the person/action figure/hero/shero/job they want to have when they grow up. Use this as a "show and tell" where each student has an opportunity to tell who/what their costume represents and why this inspires them.



2. Each student is requested to bring in a picture of someone performing a job that appeals to the student. The picture should be 5-8 inches tall and 3-4 inches in width) and be cut from a magazine, newspaper, or printed off a computer. The students are asked to work together and put figures doing similar work together in a group on a bulletin board. Each grouping should come up with words or phrases that describe the pictures in their group, telling why the work is similar.



#### COLLEGE and CAREER AWARENESS ACTIVITY 5 Starting a College Savings Account

The sooner this lesson is approached, the greater the impact. There are a variety of ways to influence students to save money for college, even as early as elementary school. One of the more visible ways is to ask students to always think about ANY money or talent they have as belonging to one of 3 pots: 1 pot to do something for someone else (tithing, gifts for family or friends, a charity, etc.); 1 pot to do something for themselves (buying a small reward now or saving towards a bigger one); and 1 pot for their future (specifically college). The goal is to have students begin to see that they can influence their independence while doing good for others. So – if a student receives an allowance, it is something concrete they can divide by three (3) and put funds in appropriate jars/envelopes. In the case of students who do not receive a regular allowance, they should divide ANY money they receive (birthdays, holidays, chores, shopping, candy funds, etc.) into 3 jars/envelopes, etc. At the end of one month, they can see exactly how their money for now, for someone else, and for their future is growing or disappearing. A great question to ask students who agree to work on this is: If you put in a pot for now – do you remember what you bought with it? If you put in a pot for doing good for others – how much do you have and how much do you think will make a difference in the lives of others? Finally, if you put money in a pot for the future (college fund), how much do you think you can save in a year? This is an especially important lesson to share with all students and especially students from low-income families. It is important not to set this up as a competition but a personal commitment to understanding how they value money.

For older students, this same activity can be an opportunity for deeper learning. Students can be supported in creating a savings account or contributing to a 529 Plan that officially supports their college savings.



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## COLLEGE and CAREER AWARENESS ACTIVITY 6 Exploring Whyville.com and Observational Career Awareness

Students have access to varying tools for exploring career awareness. It can be as simple as finding and discussing pictures in magazines that reflect the ideals that a young person has about their "grown-up selves" or it can be as rich, engaging, and complex as Whyville.com – a virtual community for students to earn clams and pearls that allow them to navigate health care concerns, environmental tasks, and deepen their understanding of careers.

Career awareness is not dependent on using a computer but **there is no doubt, the ability of all students to be comfortable and nimble in a virtual environment is critical to their future.** Your decision to use Whyville.com as a tool for this work is dependent upon your school, its resources, and your comfort. That being said, there are compelling reasons to explore this resource.

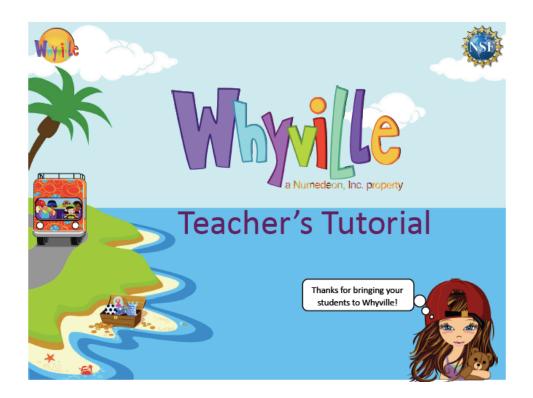
- It has a "safety first" code that is well developed. Students and teachers must earn their Whyville chat license prior to engaging in text messaging in Whyville activities with other participants. There are specific lessons regarding online communication – what can be shared and what cannot be shared on the Whyville site. Phone numbers, addresses, and specific personal information cannot be shared and have a 911 alert step for a student to use as an alert.
- 2. There are an amazing number of community resources in Whyville that have been created in partnership with recognized educational experts such as the National Science Foundation, Center for Disease Control, ACT, and Toyota Educational Foundation. Further it received iParenting Media Awards for three straight years (2006, 2007, 2008) for "Best website for kids, and the best on the web for its safety features" as well as National Parenting Publication Award GOLD AWARD in 2008 for best in its genre for kids.
- 3. It is engaging. There are quests to take on, multiple activities occuring on the screen that earn clams, and a true sense of independence regarding what and when to explore something.

4. Students learn differently than you did. Don't hold them back because you don't know or understand the tool. Have confidence in your role as a learning facilitator and your students will still come to you with requests for guidance in a world they cannot fully see.

For the purposes of this set of activities, the instructions guide you and your students to the ACT Career Club where students are introduced to the 6 major career clusters. Using the "quest" format to inspire students to move around in the Career Club, students are given a job/career description and receive "clams" for identifying the correct cluster and ultimately the correct job title. There are additional "clams" for doing so within a specified amount of time.

#### WHYVILLE.COM

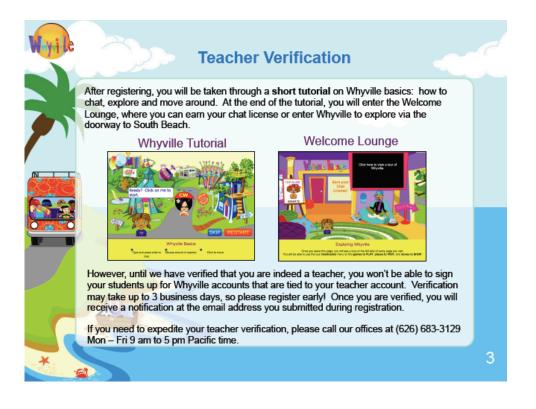
Instructions for entering Whyville.com and utilizing its extensive and wellresearched resources follow. There are specific instructions for both teachers and students to gain permission to participate in the activities. For the purposes of thIS activity, you and your students are directed only to the ACT Career Club.



Wyj)e	Table of Contents	
	Teacher Registration How to register as a teacher in Whyville2	
	Teacher Verification Getting verified as a teacher3	
	Setting Up Your Whyville Class How to create your Whyville class4	
	Resetting a Student Password Taking care of a forgotten password	
H. H.	Chat Permissions	
	How to set up your class' communication settings	
	Questions How to contact Whyville	
		1

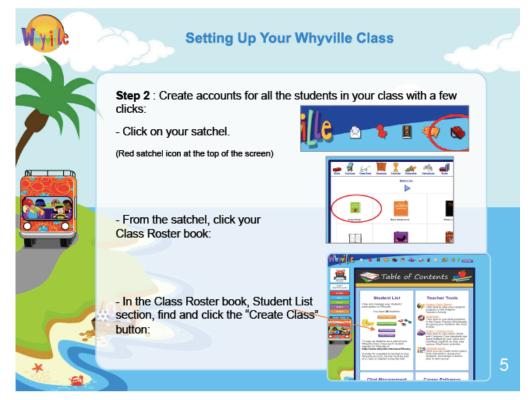
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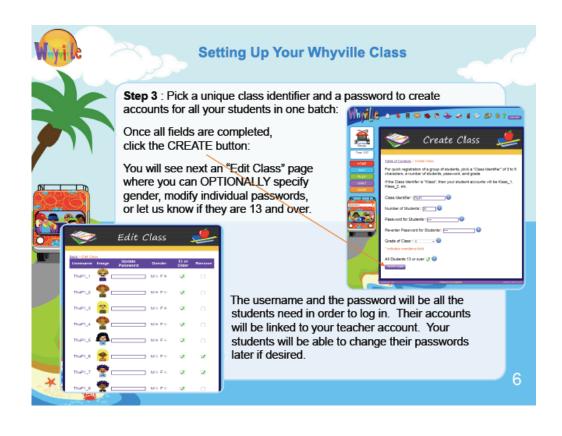
To provide feedback on the College and Career Awareness Activities for Elementary and21Middle School Students please use the following url: http://bit.ly/2tgbS5m21

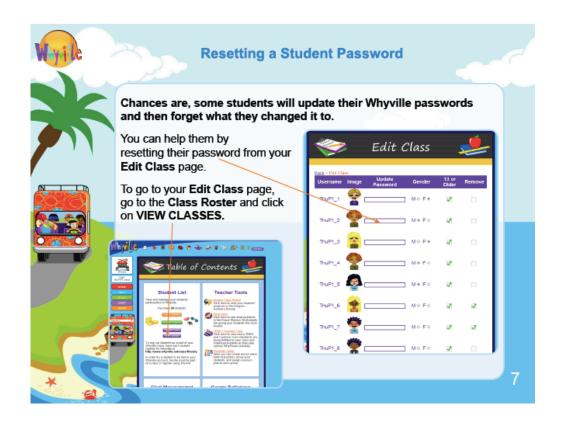


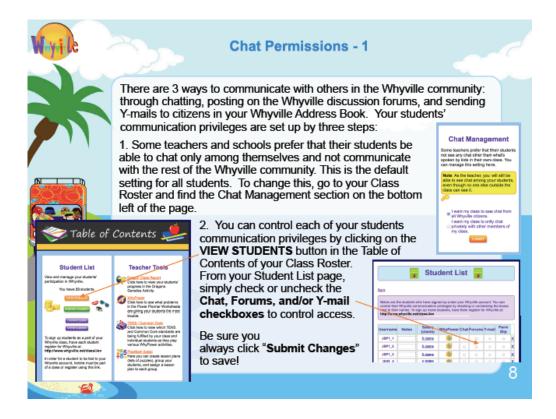


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22







To provide feedback on the <u>College and Career Awareness Activities for Elementary and</u> <u>Middle School Students</u> please use the following url: http://bit.ly/2tgbS5m

24

#### **Chat Permissions - 2**

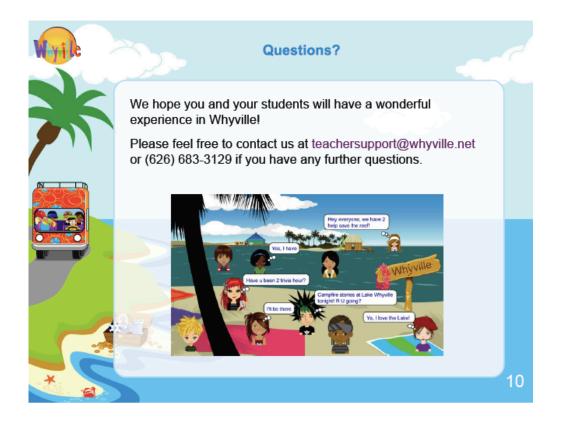
3. Lastly, and importantly, until a student has passed Whyville's Chat License Test, he/she will not be able to communicate freely in Whyville. The Chat License Test helps students learn not to share personal information and how to use Whyville's safety tools.





A link to the Chat License Test is prominently shown on your Welcome Page until you have taken it. Remember that you can go back to this Welcome Page from anywhere in Whyville by clicking the red HOME button.

9



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#### **Observational Career Awareness Activity**

Ask students to write down a list of all of the grownups who help them during a week. They should start with the adults in their household – do the parents work outside the home or in the home? Who else are they in contact with? (Relatives, neighbors, community workers – fire fighters, police, doctors, nurses, bankers, bus drivers, taxi drivers, fast food workers, store cashiers – and school personnel – teachers, lunchroom servers, housekeepers, administrators, school counselors). At the end of the week, ask students to name the different jobs.

This work can lead to discussion and research around such questions as: How do people find these jobs? What education requirements are needed to obtain these jobs? What does this person do daily? Students can create posters or presentations with their answers.

# How Do I Become .....?????

NURSE TEACHER FIREMAN POLICEMAN REAL ESTATE BROKER CONSTRUCTION WORKER AUTOMOTIVE MECHANIC PILOT

## COLLEGE and CAREER AWARENESS ACTIVITY 7 Host A College Colors Day



#### This activity can be used with younger and older students.

In celebration of College Application Week/Month in your state, host a "College Colors Day!" This is a free event and provides a visual reminder of the diversity of colleges.

Students are encouraged to wear the **colors** of their favorite college or university or of an institution of an older sibling, parent, or relative.

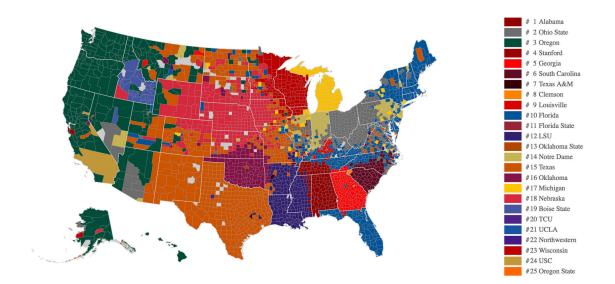
For additional fun, host a contest for the most creative college-themed outfit. Students who participate should plan to wear their outfit all day — so make sure it is comfortable and will not distract from their learning.



#### Create a College Colors Map for Your State

#### For older students

College colors can energize fans and reinforce awareness of the existence of college resources. Consider a research project for middle school students: one team can research the colors of community colleges in your state, a second team can research the colors of public state colleges and universities, and a third team can research the colors of private colleges and universities. Have each team create a state map with the appropriate colors in the the correct geographical locations (sometimes a town has to sponsor multiple sets of team colors – let your students figure out how to .



### COLLEGE and CAREER AWARENESS ACTIVITY 8 My Career and College Dreams Collage

This is one of the easiest activities to implement. Ask your students to create a personal collage of their possible dream jobs/careers. Suggest that they identify the first step (entry level) job for work they find interesting. They should find corresponding photos in magazines, on the computer, or create a drawing for that position. Then, they should look for pictures (or draw one) of someone in the middle of their career in this field. Finally, they should be encouraged to look for images of someone who is a master or at the top of their career. For younger students, it is useful to encourage students to connect specific jobs to "career clusters" while older students can connect career clusters, educational expectations, and salaries.

# ACT CAREER CLUSTERS AND CAREER AREAS (A–Z) ADMINISTRATION & SALES CAREER CLUSTER

#### **Employment-Related Services**

Managers (Human Resources, Training/Education, Employee Benefits, etc.); Recruiter; Interviewer; Job Analyst **Marketing & Sales** 

Agents (Insurance, Real Estate, Travel, etc.); Buyer; Sales/ Manufacturers' Representatives; Retail Salesworker; Telemarketer

#### Management

Executive; Executive Secretary; Purchaser; General Managers (Financial, Office, Property, etc.); Specialty Managers (Retail Store, Hotel/Motel, Food Service, etc.). Other managers are in Career Areas related to their work. For example, see Career Area X.

#### **Regulation & Protection**

Inspectors (Customs, Food/Drug, etc.); Police Officer; Detective; Park Ranger; Security Manager; Guard

### **BUSINESS OPERATIONS CAREER CLUSTER**

### **Communications & Records**

Receptionist; Secretary (including Legal and Medical); Court Reporter; Clerks (Order, Billing, Hotel, etc.)

## **Financial Transactions**

Accountant/Auditor; Cashier; Bank Teller; Budget/Credit Analysts;

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Tax Preparer; Ticket Agent

**Distribution & Dispatching** 

Shipping/Receiving Clerks; Warehouse Supervisor; Mail Carrier; Dispatchers (Flight, Cab, etc.); Air Traffic Controller

## **TECHNICAL CAREER CLUSTER**

### **Transport Operation & Related**

Truck/Bus/Cab Drivers; Locomotive Engineer; Ship Captain; Aircraft Pilot; Sailor; Chauffeur

### Agriculture, Forestry & Related

Farmer; Nursery Manager; Pest Controller; Forester; Logger; Groundskeeper; Animal Caretaker

### **Computer & Information Specialties**

Programmer; Systems Analyst; Information Systems Manager; Computer Repairer; Desktop Publisher; Actuary

### **Construction & Maintenance**

Carpenter; Electrician; Bricklayer; Tile Setter; Painter; Plumber; Roofer; Firefighter; Custodian

#### **Crafts & Related**

Cabinetmaker; Tailor; Chef/Cook; Baker; Butcher; Jeweler; Silversmith; Hand Crafter

### **Manufacturing & Processing**

Tool & Die Maker; Machinist; Welder; Bookbinder; Printing Press Operator; Photo Process Worker; Dry Cleaner

### **Mechanical & Electrical Specialties**

Mechanics/Technicians (Auto, Aircraft, Heating & Air Conditioning, Electronics, Dental Lab, etc.); Repairers (Office Machine, Appliance, TV/VCR, CD Player, etc.)

### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGYCAREER CLUSTER

### **Engineering & Technologies**

Engineers (Aerospace, Agriculture, Nuclear, Civil, Computer, etc.); Technicians (Electronics, Mechanical, Laser, etc.); Surveyor; Drafter; Architect; Technical Illustrator

### Natural Science & Technologies

Physicist; Astronomer; Biologist; Statistician; Soil Conservationist; Food Technologist; Crime Lab Analyst

#### Medical Technologies (Also see Area W)

Pharmacist; Optician; Prosthetist; Technologists (Surgical, Medical Lab, EEG, etc.); Dietitian

#### Medical Diagnosis & Treatment (Also see Area W)

Physician; Psychiatrist; Pathologist; Dentist; Optometrist; Veterinarian; Physical Therapist; Audiologist; Physician's Assistant **Social Science** 

Sociologist; Experimental Psychologist; Political Scientist Economist; Criminologist; Urban Planner

#### **ARTS CAREER CLUSTER**

#### **Applied Arts (Visual)**

Artist; Graphic Artist; Photographer; Illustrator; Floral/Fashion/ Interior Designers; Merchandise Displayer

#### **Creative & Performing Arts**

Writer/Author; Musician; Singer; Dancer; Music Composer; Movie/TV Directors; Fashion Model

#### Applied Arts (Written & Spoken)

Reporter; Columnist; Editor; Advertising Copywriter; Public Relations Specialist; TV Announcer; Librarian; Interpreter

### SOCIAL SERVICE CAREER CLUSTER

### Health Care (Also see Areas Q and R)

Administrator; Nurse; Occupational Therapist; Psychiatric Technician; Dental Hygienist/Assistant; Geriatric Aide

#### Education

Administrator; Teachers & Aides (Preschool, Elementary & Secondary, Special Education, PE, etc.). Other teachers are in Career Areas related to their specialty. For example, Physics Teacher is in Career Area P.

#### **Community Services**

Social Service Director; Social Worker; Lawyer; Paralegal; Home Economist; Career Counselor; Clergy

#### **Personal Services**

Waiter/Waitress; Barber; Cosmetologist; Flight Attendant; Household Worker; Home Health Aide; Travel Guide