



**Virtual**

**PLAN IT  
FLORIDA**

**Addendum**

*Helping Students Plan for  
College and Career*

**FLORIDA**  
COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK

# Table of Contents

<a href="#">Dear College Access Champion</a>	2
<a href="#">Introduction</a>	3
<a href="#">About Plan It Florida</a>	4
<a href="#">What Can Students Do After High School?</a>	5
<a href="#">What Do Students Need to be Successful?</a>	6
<a href="#">College &amp; Career Preparation Tracks</a>	7
<a href="#">How to Host a Virtual Event</a>	8
<a href="#">College &amp; Career Preparation Activities</a>	9
<a href="#">Acknowledgments</a>	25

# Dear College Access Champion,

## On behalf of the Florida College Access Network (FCAN),

thank you for committing to helping students explore colleges and careers virtually during this time. With COVID-19 adversely affecting millions of students' ability to receive in-person support in college and career exploration, FCAN is highlighting best practices for conducting these activities virtually.

The [Plan It Florida toolkit](#) shares activities to help students to start thinking about life after high school and preparing their course of action. This addendum includes activities that have been adapted to be conducted virtually to support students at a time when they may not be able to receive face-to-face support.

**Please share your successful strategies with us!** Much of what makes this toolkit helpful are the many ideas shared with us from schools like yours around the state. Your story will help fellow coordinators host impactful programs at their schools. We may even feature your achievements throughout the campaign on our blog or social media!

Contact FCAN's Programs Coordinator, LaVerne Handfield, at (813) 974-8712 or at [LHandfield@floridacollegeaccess.org](mailto:LHandfield@floridacollegeaccess.org) with questions and suggestions.

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# How to Host a Virtual Event

The following is adapted from Handshake's [How to Host a Virtual Event](#).

## 1. Determine the type of event you want to host.

Q&A Panel Discussion/"Office Hours"	Presentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connect students with professionals and admissions representatives directly to have their questions answered.</li> <li>- Reach out to local employers and area college and university admissions representatives to speak at your event.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inform students of different careers, pathways, and the steps to complete their college applications.</li> <li>- Consider who can provide the most insight to your students (e.g. parents, local employers, college and university admissions representatives).</li> <li>- Schedule them virtually present to students.</li> <li>- Encourage students to prepare questions on things they would like to know from the presenters. This can also increase participation.</li> </ul>

2. **Determine what platform to use to host your event.** Various platforms, such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom, can allow many attendees in one place with the capabilities of screen sharing, video conferencing, and chat/instant messaging. [See more Zoom alternatives](#).

3. **Plan how you will promote your virtual event to your students.** What communication channels are your school and district using to reach students and families? What social media platforms are these students on? What do you need to reach students and families that are hard to get a hold of?

### **Social media**

Use visually appealing designs to capture your audience and targeted messages for each audience group. Parents tend to use Facebook more and students tend to use Instagram and Snapchat.

### **Remind**

Send quick and simple text messages and updates on a mass scale.

### **Robocalls**

If your district communications department has the ability, record a voicemail message with the details of your event to be sent out to parents on a designated day and/or time.

### **Newsletter**

Include information in the school's newsletter. (Tip: partner with your school's PTA to also disperse the message to parents not on any school communication channels.)

### **Newspaper/radio**

This is a great way to gain community support for your virtual event. Invite the community to share opportunities for students to virtually explore careers or perform volunteer activities or internships.

**Leverage partners.** You may have some students who are hard to reach through your traditional communications channels. Leverage your partner organizations who already have relationships with students and their families to provide support. In most communities, Take Stock in Children, Big Brothers Big Sisters, faith-based organizations and others can provide direction and support.

# College and Career Preparation Activities

There are many ways schools and community partners can help students explore their college and career options. Here are some activities you can share virtually to spark your students' interests. Descriptions of each activity can be found on the following pages.

Activity	Page	Grade	EXPOSE	EXPLORE	EXPERIMENT	EXECUTE
<a href="#">Virtual College Fair</a>	5	6-12	✓	✓		
<a href="#">Virtual College Tour</a>	5	6-12	✓	✓		
<a href="#">Lunch &amp; Learn</a>	7	6-12	✓	✓		
<a href="#">"A Day in the Life"</a>	7	K-12	✓	✓		
<a href="#">Career Research Project</a>	9	4-12	✓	✓		
<a href="#">MyCareerShines</a>	11	6-12	✓	✓	✓	✓
<a href="#">Themed Career Fair</a>	11	K-12	✓			
<a href="#">Virtual Internship</a>	12	10-12	✓	✓	✓	
<a href="#">Apply Yourself Florida</a>	12	12				✓
<a href="#">Financial Aid Night</a>	13	12	✓			✓
<a href="#">Florida College Decision Day</a>	13	12				✓

## Virtual College Fair

**Appropriate for Grades:** 6-12 | **Cost:** None

**Categories:**

EXPOSE

EXPLORE

### What Do You Need?

- Computer/tablet/smartphone with internet access
- [College Visit Profile](#) (optional)

### Activity Description:

College fairs are a great resource for students to explore different colleges and universities and get updates about admissions information. Organizations such as the [National Association for College Admissions Counselors](#) (NACAC) [hosts several college fairs](#) annually and is now [hosting the fairs virtually](#).

Have students complete the [College Visit Profile](#) (on the next page) as they attend information sessions to compile information about each college to build their college list.

## Virtual College Tour

**Appropriate for Grades:** 6-12 | **Cost:** None

**Categories:**

EXPOSE

EXPLORE

### What Do You Need?

- Computer with internet connection
- [College Visit Profile](#) (optional)

### Activity Description:

A virtual college tour can be a good alternative to physically visiting college and university campuses and is especially useful for lower grades.

FloridaShines has multiple [free virtual college tours](#) of Florida institutions that students can experience either with a regular computer.

[Getschooled.com](#) offers free Snapchat college tours led by students.

# College Visit Profile

	SCHOOL 1		SCHOOL 2		SCHOOL 3	
School name						
School website						
School type (2-year, 4-year, career/technical, etc.; public, private)						
School setting (city, suburb, rural)						
Student body size						
Location (in-state, out-of-state)						
Distance from home						
Degree types offered						
Majors I'm interested in	1. 2. 3.		1. 2. 3.		1. 2. 3.	
Admissions contact	Name: Phone: Email:		Name: Phone: Email:		Name: Phone: Email:	
Admissions requirements	ACT/SAT: GPA:		ACT/SAT: GPA:		ACT/SAT: GPA:	
On-campus housing	Available	Not available	Available	Not available	Available	Not available
Deposit amount						
Deposit due date						
Estimated Cost of Attendance						
Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)	School code: Deadline:		School code: Deadline:		School code: Deadline:	
Available financial aid (grants, work-study, loans)						
Available scholarships (institutional and private)	Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:	
	Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:	
	Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:	

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS						
	Available	Not available	Available	Not available	Available	Not available
Career center	.	.	.	.	.	.
Computer labs	.	.	.	.	.	.
Free tutoring	.	.	.	.	.	.
Math center	.	.	.	.	.	.
On-campus health center	.	.	.	.	.	.
Summer orientation	.	.	.	.	.	.
Writing center	.	.	.	.	.	.
Other:	.	.	.	.	.	.
Other:	.	.	.	.	.	.
Other:	.	.	.	.	.	.

## Lunch & Learn

**Appropriate for Grades:** 6-12 | **Cost:** Low

**Categories:**

EXPOSE

EXPLORE

### What Do You Need?

- Platform to host virtual event

### Activity Description:

Lunch & Learn can be used as a time to meet with students to discuss different topics during a “lunch hour,” such as college essay writing, completing college applications, completing the FAFSA, etc.

Determine what virtual platform you will use to meet students. If you will have a guest speaker, make sure they have ample time to prepare what they will be discussing with students. Interactive discussions work best to hold the students’ attention so encourage speakers to involve the students in the discussion. Ask students to come prepared with any questions they may have around the topic or for the speaker. Let students know what they will need to bring, if anything, to the Lunch & Learn. If your Lunch & Learn will include an activity, like completing worksheets, share those materials before the event and store them in a place that is easily accessible for students once the event has begun (like Google Drive, Box or OneDrive).

## “A Day in the Life of a \_\_\_\_\_”

**Appropriate for Grades:** K-12 | **Cost:** Low

**Categories:**

EXPOSE

EXPLORE

### What Do You Need?

- Partnerships with local employers

### Activity Description:

Ask local employers to record videos where they talk about their job, their main responsibilities, and take students on a tour of their workplace. If you know who you are reaching out to ahead of time, gather questions from students that they want to ask the professional about their job or workplace, or see some sample informational questions (next page).



## Sample Informational Interview Questions

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Appropriate questions for K-5:

- What is your favorite part of your job?
- What is the least favorite part of your job?
- Have you ever made a mistake in your job?
- What is the easiest part of your job?
- What is the hardest part of your job?
- Do you use any special tools on your job?
- Did you need special training for your job?
- How did you figure out what career you wanted?
- What was your favorite subject in school?
- What school subject helps you the most in your job?
- What career did you think about when you were young?
- What do you like to do in your free time?
- How did you choose your career?

Appropriate questions for 6-12:

- What are your main responsibilities as a...?
- What is a typical day (or week) like for you?
- What do you like most about your work?
- What kinds of decisions do you make?
- What kinds of problems do you deal with?
- What are some big projects you're working on now or that you've finished up in the last few months?
- How did you become interested in this field?
- How did you begin your career? What were some of your early roles in the field?
- How do most people get into this field? What are some common entry-level jobs?
- What skills, abilities, and personal attributes are essential to success in your job/this field?
- What kind of education, training, or background does your job require?
- Where did you go to get that education or training?
- What are some common career paths in this field?
- What steps would you recommend I take to prepare to enter this field?
- If you could do it all over again, would you choose the same path for yourself? If not, what would you change?
- What do you wish you'd known when you were starting out in this career/role?
- What advice would you give someone who is considering this type of job or field?

## Career Research Project: “How do I become a...?”

Appropriate for Grades: 4-12 | Cost: Low

Categories:

EXPOSE

EXPLORE

### What Do You Need?

- Virtual platform to meet
- Computer access for research

### Activity Description:

This activity can help students plan ahead by thinking about what steps they will need to take for certain careers. For instance, if a student wants to be a nurse, they can research what types of programs exist, what they should study in high school, etc.

- 1) Students will identify the educational requirements for their careers of interest, including possible majors, and map the timelines for obtaining the educational credentials needed.
- 2) Students will research the rewards that a particular career offers and average salaries to balance the cost of higher education.
- 3) **High school students** can research the cost of higher education (cost of attendance) on college websites and be introduced to ways of funding their education (potential grants through FAFSA, scholarships, savings, loans).

Students can make a PowerPoint presentation showing what they learned about their chosen career and present what they learned during a Lunch & Learn. See [Sample Career Research questions](#) (next page) that students can use to guide their research.

## Sample Career Research Questions

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- Name of the career.
- What kinds of things does someone in this career do on a daily basis?
- What are their responsibilities?
- Where do they work?
- How much does someone earn in this profession? Talk about the **range** of salaries that you find while doing your research.
- What determines how much someone working in this field will make? (Skills, certifications, years of experience, etc.)
- What kinds of education or training do you need to work in this field? Be specific: degree/credential type (associate's degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctorate, certificate, license, etc.)
- Where can you go to get this training or education? (College, university, technical school, apprenticeship, etc.)
- How much does the education or training cost?
- What are the pre-requisites to work in this field? What qualifications do you need before you can become a \_\_\_\_?
- What are some of the benefits of working in this field? What are some positive things you get out of being a \_\_\_\_?
- What are some of the negatives of working in this field? Is the job dangerous? Do you have to work a lot of hours? Do you work away from family? Do you have to travel a lot? (Talk about some of the things that might make the career difficult.)
- What are some similar careers to the one you researched?
- What types of employers hire people in this field? (e.g. businesses, government, nonprofits). Share an example of an employer. Where are they located?

## MyCareerShines

**Appropriate for Grades:** 6-12 | **Cost:** Low

**Categories:** EXPOSE EXPLORE EXPERIMENT EXECUTE

### What Do You Need?

- Computer access

### Activity Description:

MyCareerShines (<https://mycareershines.kuder.com/>) offers a career interest inventory available to all Florida students. Students can complete career inventories, explore career fields, and view profiles of colleges they might be interested in applying to. By completing these career inventories, students will receive guidance on potential careers or college majors that may interest them. They can also access their student records to determine if they are on the right track for college admission.

Students can take their results from MyCareerShines and use them to decide what subject/interest areas they might want to experiment with through school clubs, afterschool activities (e.g. TSA, Robotics) or volunteering. Keep in mind that students will likely need assistance and guidance in interpreting their results.

## Themed Career Fair

**Appropriate for Grades:** K-12 | **Cost:** Low

**Categories:** EXPOSE EXPLORE

### What Do You Need?

- Computer access
- Partnerships with local employers

### Activity Description:

Career fairs expose students to various types of careers in their local community. Host a themed career fair based on specific aspects of careers or career fields, depending on the grade level. For example, host a fair for elementary school students that involve people who wear uniforms (surgeons, nurses, police, etc.), or careers with animals. For high school students, host fairs for specific [career clusters](#) with local employers, like those that work in IT, that can include game design, cybersecurity, and a UX designer. Need inspiration? Check out [Inspire Sheboygan County's](#) virtual career exploration.

## Virtual Internship

Appropriate for Grades: 6-12 | Cost: Low

Categories:

EXPLORE

EXPERIMENT

### What Do You Need?

- Computer access for students
- Partnerships with local employers and organizations

### Activity Description:

Internships give students the opportunity to get hands-on experience in a particular field. Virtual internships make this opportunity more accessible to students who don't have transportation to travel to a physical location to gain this experience. Find out if local employers and organizations with already established internships have pivoted to virtual and make students aware of these opportunities. Work with local employers and organizations to make sure students have all the resources they need and what the employers need from the schools. If there aren't already internships, work with local employers to [host a virtual internship](#). Employers might also find [this resource](#) from the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce helpful.

## Apply Yourself Florida

Appropriate for Grades: 12 | Cost: Low

Category:

EXECUTE

### What Do You Need?

- Buy-in from school administration and teachers
- Platform to [host virtual event](#)

### Activity Description:

Apply Yourself Florida is part of the American College Application Campaign (ACAC), a national effort to help more low-income and first-generation students apply to college. Schools participating in Apply Yourself Florida provide their students time during the school day to complete their applications.

There are a variety of ways to [host a virtual Apply Yourself Florida event](#):

- Q&A Panel Discussion
- College Admissions "Office Hours"
- Virtual Application Completion Drive
- "On-site" admissions
- How-to Training

Click here to download  
FCAN's Apply Yourself  
Florida toolkit for more  
ideas for your event!

## Financial Aid Night

Appropriate for Grades: 11-12 | Cost: Low

Category: **EXECUTE**

### What Do You Need?

- Platform to [host virtual event](#)
- Financial aid representatives from local colleges/universities

### Activity Description:

Navigating the financial aid process can be daunting for students and parents. Hosting a financial aid night where families can hear from representatives of local colleges can help them prepare for the steps ahead.

Virtual financial aid nights can take different forms:

- Presentation by an expert followed by a question and answer session
- FAFSA labs/workshops where parents and students can work on their financial aid application with the help of volunteers (e.g. financial aid representatives)
- Hybrid including both features

If you host a Financial Aid Night before the FAFSA opens, or if you do not have time to go through the entire form, you can still take time to walk attendees through creating their FSA ID. This will make it easier for them to start the FAFSA completion process later. The Florida Department of Education Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA)'s Speakers Bureau can connect your school with a financial aid expert for your Financial Aid Night. Contact Pete Hernandez at [pedro.hernandez@fldoe.org](mailto:pedro.hernandez@fldoe.org) for more information. You can also use [walkthrough videos](#) to take students and families step-by-step through the FAFSA.

[Click here to download FCAN's Florida FAFSA Challenge toolkit for ideas on driving FAFSA completion at your school](#)

## Florida College Decision Day

Appropriate for Grades: 12 | Cost: Low-Med

Category: **EXECUTE**

### What Do You Need?

- Platform to host virtual event
- Buy-in from school administration and teachers
- Incentives for students (optional)

### Activity Description:

Hosting your Florida College Decision Day event virtually can allow you to incorporate the community in your celebration. Start a social media campaign (e.g. TikTok challenge) and invite students to submit their creative decision announcements to be shared on the school's and/or district's social media pages. Meet with your planning committee to plan when you will hold your event, how you will collect students' submissions, and any other activities to recognize and celebrate students' plans for life after high school. [See this previous counselor affinity call on digital decision day for more virtual celebration ideas.](#)

[Click here to download FCAN's Florida College Decision Day toolkit for more ideas for your event!](#)

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Florida College Access Network (FCAN) leads the collaborative movement to ensure that every Floridian achieves an education beyond high school and a rewarding career. We envision a Florida working together where education is the pathway to economic mobility for all.

