



# OPERATION PREPARATION COMING MARCH 2012

COMMUNITY SUPPORT + PREPARED STUDENTS = COLLEGE/CAREER SUCCESS



## what?

**A community-based, student advising week focused on college/career readiness.** Operation Preparation is a powerful opportunity for schools, students, parents and communities to collaborate in effective advising for Kentucky middle and high school students to help them focus on the importance of planning for college and/or a career. A joint effort of the Kentucky Department of Education and the Department of Workforce Development, Operation Preparation has the potential to reach more than 100,000 statewide.

## why?

**To inform and inspire students as they move along the path to college/career readiness.** You may be thinking, "isn't this the job of a school counselor?" Unfortunately, with a statewide student-to-counselor ratio of about 450:1, many school counselors are overloaded with the number of students they need to reach. Operation Preparation gives parents and community members a chance to partner with their local schools in support of Kentucky's goal to increase the college/career-readiness of students. It will help students maximize their educational opportunities in high school and also provide them with the opportunity to hear about the importance of college/career planning and readiness from an unbiased adult—someone other than a parent or teacher.

## who?

**8th- and 10th-grade students.** These are pivotal years in the college/career planning process. In 8th grade, all Kentucky public school students take the EXPLORE high school readiness exam which is designed to help 8th graders explore a broad range of options for their future as they prepare for high school and beyond. In 10th grade, Kentucky students take the PLAN assessment, which helps build a solid foundation for future academic and career success. The exam assesses the same subjects as EXPLORE (English, mathematics, reading and science) and is a predictor of success on the ACT exam that all students take in spring of their junior year in high school.

## when?

**March 12-16, 2012.** It will be up to each middle and high school to determine whether to participate in Operation Preparation and how it wishes to structure the program to meet the needs of its students and the local community. Look for Operation Preparation to become an annual event.

## where?

**Your local school district.** Contact the school district office in your community to find out which schools in your area are participating in Operation Preparation and let them know you'd like to help. All advising sessions will take place at the school in a public setting.

For more info, visit [www.operationpreparation.com](http://www.operationpreparation.com)

# How can you get involved in Operation Preparation?

## Support your child's participation

### Be a Volunteer.

Parents play a critical role in the advising process and in ensuring that their student graduates from high school college/career ready. As a parent, you can support the middle and high schools in your district and their students by volunteering to be a community advisor. Your participation could make the difference in the life of a child.

### Talk with your child.

If you are the parent of an 8th- or 10th-grade student, you can support and encourage your child's participation in Operation Preparation. One-on-one advising can be a powerful tool and a valuable experience for the student and should help them maximize their education and preparation for the future.

### Get to Know the ILP.

If you have a middle or high school student, help them in the development of their Individual Learning Plan -- an online tool designed to allow students to explore careers, track coursework and activities, and search for postsecondary options. It is mandatory for students in grades 6-12 and parents are required to sign off on a student's Individual Learning Plan each year. Log-in credentials are available from your child's school. Spend some time looking over your child's ILP and discussing it with him or her - especially soon after Operation Preparation.



Parent Cristi Hawkins talks with her daughter Haley about what courses the 8th grader plans to take in high school. The Jessie Clark Middle School student is already preparing academically for college and eventually to become a nurse practitioner. Photo by Amy Wallot, Kentucky Department of Education.



Individual Learning Plan for Kentucky students  
<https://www.careercruising.com/ilp>

# Be a community volunteer

Community volunteers who care about students' and Kentucky's future are the heart of Operation Preparation. Ensuring our students are college/career-ready will benefit us all.

Community volunteers can be:

- school/district personnel
- School-Based Decision Making Council (SBDM) members
- PTA members
- college/university employees
- local business people
- elected officials and government employees
- retirees
- parents
- community members concerned about Kentucky's and our children's future

Each school/partner will recruit its volunteer community advisors. Each volunteer is encouraged to advise more than one child; however, each session should be individualized for the student.

As a volunteer, you will be required to do three simple things:

## Complete a 30-minute online training session.

To be completed prior to the advising session, this training will familiarize you with the components of the student Individual Learning Plan, EXPLORE (8th grade) or PLAN (10th grade) results, what they mean in relation to college/career readiness, and whether the student is on target to meet his or her current postsecondary education/job goals.

## Sign a non-disclosure form.

In accordance with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), you will sign a form agreeing not to disclose student-specific information. As a volunteer, you may be subject to a background check and may need to sign an Acceptable Use Policy, agreeing to the



*Campbell County Middle School student Zania Rogers talks with Jennifer Fritsch, executive producer for Q102 radio in Cincinnati about career goals. Fritsch has volunteered to advise and mentor the 8th grader as part of Operation Preparation. Photo by Amy Wallot, Kentucky Department of Education*

proper and appropriate use of any school/district technology. In many districts these requirements are standard operating procedure for school volunteers, based on local board of education policy.

## Meet with a student.

After completing training, community advisors will be assigned a mutually agreed-upon time during the week of March 12-16, 2012 to meet with a student one-on-one at school for about 20 minutes to offer guidance to help the student prepare for a successful future in high school and beyond. On the scheduled day, you will check in at the school office, be given your student's data and shown where the advising session will take place.

During the advising session, you will use the student's Individual Learning Plan or ILP (including career interest inventory

and EXPLORE/PLAN results) to discuss the student's:

- career aspirations, required education/training and workforce skills
- whether the student is on target to meet his or her goals
- whether the student is taking the courses recommended to prepare him or her for a successful future

The meeting is designed to provide both information and inspiration for the student to achieve college/career-readiness. Once the advising session is over, you will return any student data to the office before signing out.



*James Hardin, career and technical education coordinator for Fayette County Schools, and Tates Creek High School sophomore Devin Hairston discuss college plans as part of Operation Preparation. Photo by Amy Wallot, Kentucky Department of Education.*

# Don't let money stand between you and a college degree



Elaine Larson, Director of Student Financial Planning at Centre College in Danville, helps a high school senior navigate through [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) at the 2011 College Goal Sunday event.

**JOIN US at a location near you  
January 29, 2012 at 2:00 p.m.  
for FREE professional help  
getting financial aid for college**



College could be your ticket to the future. Postsecondary education increases your chances of getting an interesting job, earning good money, being a community leader and serving as a role model. Hundreds of volunteers, teachers, business and community leaders and college administrators across the state want YOU to go to college.

College Goal Sunday is brought to you annually by the Kentucky Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators to provide **free, professional help** completing the financial aid application. This statewide event on January 29 mobilizes financial aid professionals from Kentucky colleges and universities at 22 sites across the state to help college-bound students and their families complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This form is required for any student seeking federal financial aid—including grants and loans—for all colleges and universities in the nation. It is important that families complete the FAFSA as early as possible to be considered for maximum aid. The FAFSA becomes available January 1.

**For more information, visit:  
<http://www.kasfaa.com/cgs>**



Find us on facebook -  
Kentucky College Goal Sunday

College Goal Sunday is sponsored by:



**KnowHow2GOky**

## Questions/Comments?

If you have questions or comments about this issue of the GEAR UP Gazette, please contact:

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