Event Planning Guide
High Schools and Community Based Organizations

Background:
College Goal Oregon (CGO) is an event that helps college-bound students, and their families complete their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA). Free help will be available from trained staff and volunteers in completing various applications including FAFSA/ORSAA. CGO events are open to high school seniors, college students, and adults interested in college.

Purpose of This Event Planning Guide:
This guide is simply a tool for sites to use in preparing to host their event. You can use as much or as little of the recommend event planning. Ask questions when needed.

Let's Get Started:
Hosting a financial aid night can be fun and rewarding. This guide will give an easy-to-follow and easy-to-adjust outline to planning your perfect event.

60 Days Out
- ☐ Select Location, Date, and Time
- ☐ Notify OSAC of your chosen location, date, and time
- ☐ Solicit donations for food, money, materials, scholarships, giveaways

30 Days Out
- ☐ Invite guests, presenters, clubs, or other services (*if you choose*)
- ☐ Recruit volunteers & engage partners
- ☐ Request Spanish or other-language presenters and volunteers
- ☐ Gather printed materials (*publications, handouts, brochures, etc.*)
- ☐ Announce your event

1 Week Out
- ☐ Get Organized

Day Of Event
- ☐ Checking Off Your Check List

During Event
- ☐ It's Happening

After Event
- ☐ You Did It! Now What?

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www.OregonStudentAid.gov

Event Planning Guide: 60 Days Out

Selecting a Location
We recommend securing a location 60 days in advance. Consider the following:
- ☐ Location/room availability for the date(s) you have in mind?
- ☐ Is location convenient or easily accessible to guests?
- ☐ Is their adequate parking?
- ☐ Is the room/computer lab large enough? Will there be multiple rooms?
- ☐ Is extra seating or space available for overflow?
- ☐ Will worktables be available, if needed?
- ☐ Are the temperatures in the room adjustable?
- ☐ If offering a presentation, ensure you have proper equipment and access.
- ☐ Ensure Wi-Fi is easily accessible for guests.
- ☐ Ensure printing is available for guests.
- ☐ Consider what signage is needed to get guests to each room/lab.

Selecting a Date
You will want to consider dates that ensure the largest possible attendance. CGO will be hosting regional events, local events, and individual events throughout Oregon. Regional events are asked to host on a Saturday in October. Local events are asked to host on an evening during October or November. Individual HS and CBO events are asked to host later in October or November. Consider the following:
- ☐ Will there be a regional event near you? *(Larger, likely Saturday event)*
- ☐ Will there be a local event near you? *(Mid-sized, likely evening event)*
- ☐ Are there any major events occurring near selected date?
- ☐ Is it far enough out for planning and advertisement?

Selecting a Time
Select a time around the type and size of your event. Consider the following:
- ☐ What all do you plan to offer?
- ☐ Be flexible for families finishing. *(Example: If you must leave the space by 8pm, say the event run until 7:3pm allowing 30-minutes to wrap-up.)*

Notify OSAC
Once you have chosen your location, date and time, notify OSAC. OSAC will have a master calendar on their website where students and families can find an event near them. As you plan, keep OSAC informed of any special announcements or marketing.

Event Planning Guide: 30 Days Out

Inviting Guests, Presenters, Clubs, or Other Services
Remember, this event is yours. It can be as little or big as you choose. Depending on the type and size of the event, you may have various areas for students and families to get a variety of information and resources. You may also simply host open computer labs for application help. That is okay. In either case, consider the following:
- ☐ Having a financial presentation? Contact potential presenters.

- ☐ Do you want a "welcome ceremony" where guests meet and learn about the support and resources available?
- ☐ Do you want to have a resource fair?
- ☐ Do you want to showcase clubs, programs, athletics?
- ☐ Invite and confirm commitments early.
- ☐ Recruit volunteers, staff, and partners for the event.
  - ○ Staff from your local college, high school, community-based organization, school board, Chamber of Commerce, etc.

Gather Printed Materials

There are various materials available depending on the scale of your event. Some of our favorites are available below. In addition, consider the following:
- ☐ Local community services or announcements.
- ☐ Local training, community college or university materials.
- ☐ Opportunities Booklets for 2022-23 (*Pre-order in English and Spanish*) https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2022-2023_Opportunities_Booklets
- ☐ OSAC Brochure (*Available for print or order in English and Spanish*)
- ☐ OSAC Posters (*Available for print or order in English and Spanish*)
- ☐ Oregon Promise Handout (*Available for print in English and Spanish*)
- ☐ ORSAA Tip Sheets (*Available for print in English and Spanish*) https://oregonstudentaid.gov/publications.aspx
- ☐ ASPIRE Publications
- ☐ FAFSA on the Web Worksheet (*Available in English and Spanish*)
- ☐ If ordering, plan early to allow for shipping.

Announce Your Event

OSAC will have a master calendar of all events. OSAC will be advertising the regional and local events in partnership with host sites. Consider the following:
- ☐ Social Media (*Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.*)
- ☐ Direct E-mail or postal mail to potential guests
- ☐ Local newspaper or radio advertisement
- ☐ Flyers/posters around school or in high traffic areas like athletic events
- ☐ Notices to social service agencies, community-based organizations, or other programs in the area that support college-going access
- ☐ Every announcement should include name of event, brief description, location, date, and time of event. Include steps to complete before event and materials needed at the event. (*Tips to come – FSA ID, taxes, etc.*)

Event Planning Guide: One Week Out

Get Organized

By this point, you have planned, organized, and confirmed all the important parts. This week will be about making sure everything is ready to go. This week can look different depending on the type and size of your event. Consider the following:
- ☐ Do you have an agenda? Print it.
- ☐ Plan and prepare signage as needed.
- ☐ Confirm any special reservations, technological requests, or staffing reminders as needed.
- ☐ Conduct a walk-through

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- ☐ Send out reminders to your staff, volunteers, and event guests
- ☐ Send out reminders to students and families
- ☐ Assemble any materials needed. Prepare them for the locations they will be provided at.
- ☐ Consider name tags for staff and volunteers or "Hello, My Name is.." stickers
- ☐ Do you have supplies ready? *(Pens, scratch paper, Kleenex, etc.)*
- ☐ Have a clean-up crew ready.

Event Planning Guide: Day of Event

Checking Off Your Check List

Today will be great! Students and families will get hands-on assistance completing their FAFSA/ORSAA and any other applications that may be available for them at the time. They will have a lot of questions and our job today is all about supporting them!
- ☐ Set up a sign-in location. *(Paper or electronic)*
- ☐ Set up a table and/or volunteer to distribute handouts where appropriate
- ☐ Ensure that equipment and WiFi is working where needed
- ☐ Ensure signage, posters, and other information is properly located
- ☐ Provide water throughout your venue for staff/volunteers
- ☐ If your event is larger, prepare for a "runner" to help throughout

Event Planning Guide: During the Event

It's Happening!

Remember to breath! Drink your water. Most importantly, have fun!
- ☐ Be alert to the needs of staff, volunteers, and special guests
- ☐ Watch your audience - are they comfortable, are they enjoying the event
- ☐ Monitor time

Event Planning Guide: After the Event

You Did It! Now What?

First, pat yourself on the back, you did it!
- ☐ Prepare a written summary and evaluation of the event
- ☐ Conduct and/or attend wrap-up meetings
- ☐ Contact guests or organizations that attend for any future collaborations
- ☐ Thank your staff, volunteers, partners, and outside guests
- ☐ Follow-up with students and families who attended- thank them!
- ☐ Follow-up with students and families who did not- is there another opportunity coming up for support? Share details and information.

Questions?

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