

Smart Choices: Financial Aid 101

11th Grade Student/Parent Workshop

Career Development

Goal

Participants will investigate the financial aid process and receive materials and resources to assist in the process.

Objectives

- Define financial aid
- Understand the different types of financial aid
- Recognize the myths surrounding financial aid
- Identify and give examples of sources for financial aid
- Identify and discuss the FAFSA and CSS PROFILE financial aid forms
- Identify financial aid resources, including free scholarship search sites
- Understand the Georgia HOPE program

Delivery

- Counselors can customize the PowerPoint presentation for local system requirements, programs, initiatives, and local policies (i.e., promotion/retention policy)
- Optional: Link to GCIS in the presentation (time may not permit). If time does not permit, use the slides in the presentation to give parents/students an overview of the type of files located in the program
- Use transparencies copied from the PowerPoint presentation if an LCD projector and laptop are not available

Materials/Personnel Needed

- Middle school guidance staff/principal are encouraged to attend
- High school guidance staff/principal are encouraged to attend
- LCD projector and laptop OR transparencies and overhead projector
- PowerPoint presentation via www.GeorgiaCRN.org to "Career-Related PowerPoints, "Paying for Postsecondary Education" select 11th grade. Follow the directions for accessing the PowerPoint presentation at the bottom of the web page.
- List of financial aid resources that you might have available i.e. Federal Student Guide, bank brochures, educaid www.educaid.com, finaid www.finaid.org
- LCD projector and laptop

- A packet of information for students/parents
- Guidance team from local high school
- GDOE recommends that a representative from the Georgia Student Finance Commission be invited to conduct a workshop after December of the senior year to assist parents/students in filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Planning Considerations

Date and time- GDOE recommends that local high schools offer this workshop in the spring of the junior year. Keep your date relevant to the type of workshop you are conducting. Make sure you're giving the information far enough in advance to be helpful. Avoid nights that coincide with major entertainment or athletic events, community or PTA functions, or those too close to a holiday. Choose a time late enough in the evening (7 pm) to include the widest majority of your working parents but not so late as to discourage parents from attending. Provide babysitting services - utilize the child development class from the high school.

School approval- Once approval is received, confirm and reconfirm that your program is on the master calendar.

Location and Set-up- The workshop will have more impact if it is done at the high school. The room should be large enough to accommodate the number of attendees you anticipate. If you have decided to make a hands-on GCIS presentation, secure the computer lab. If you have good parent participation, you may consider a separate parent workshop for GCIS. Set up the room so parents can see and get handouts efficiently. (Handouts should be in packets, preferably in folders, in the order of your presentation).

Publicity- Publicize, Publicize, Publicize. Get your information to parents early and often. Utilize your PTSA/PTO organization. Mail flyers to parents if funding permits (if report cards are mailed home prior to meeting date, send a flyer). Advertise on your school website or on the kiosk in the front office if available. Use incentives to get students/parents to attend.

Format and Handouts- Since your purpose is to disseminate information and the one-hour-15-minute time frame will limit the time for discussion, have enough handouts for **everyone!** Print your PowerPoint presentation as handouts so parents will have something to follow. An agenda would help parents and provide names, titles, and how parents can reach counselors and administrators. Do not overlap

information - make your handouts count! Avoid information overload. Let parents know you understand how overwhelmed they must feel about this amount of information. Reassure them that you will be available by telephone or email to address questions or other needs that may occur as a result of the information received. Create packets of information. Please **do not** let parents pick up individual pieces of paper nor pass out individual pieces during the presentation.

PowerPoint- If you are unfamiliar with PowerPoint, have students or your tech specialist assist you. If you do not have the proper computer equipment, make transparencies from the slides. The **11th Grade Student/Parent Smart Choices: Financial Aid 101 PowerPoint** is available: <http://www.GeorgiaCRN.org>.

Materials:

- LCD projector and laptop
- A packet of information for students/parents
- Guidance team from local high school

Activities:

- Decide who will be responsible for specific information and consolidation of materials; decide on a time and date.
- PUBLIZE the workshop with announcements, flyers, Teacher as Advisor sessions, newsletters, email, automated telephone tree to junior parents if available.
- Gather information for parents that can be copied, such as: a list of websites or a disk with those websites listed in a work document; a copy of the current FAFSA and a copy of the CSS PROFILE; a copy of the Georgia Student Finance Commission Postsecondary Catalog; a HOPE brochure; order or download the High School Booklet from Educaid at <https://www.educaid.com/guidancecounselors/ordermaterials.htm> and the Quick Guide referred to in the slide presentation from <http://www.educaid.com/downloads/brochures.htm> ; a list of career center resources; any federal resources/publications you can copy, order, or download at www.studentaid.ed.gov federal publications (many federal publications are also in Spanish, GCIS has a brochure on financial aid in Spanish located on the homepage as well a large scholarship, scholarship search and general financial aid information). It will not be necessary to copy information for students, however they should understand where and how they can access the information.

- Select a place in building that will accommodate the number of parents expected to attend. Student workshops can be done in smaller groups or in a grade-level workshop.
- *GOOD LUCK!*