



STUDENT SUCCESS SOCIETY MENTOR GUIDEBOOK



Overview

The WV GEAR UP Student Success Society Program is committed to providing students with the resources needed to build strong relationships throughout their academic experience. The program objectives directly support the goals of WV GEAR UP. You may find a list of program goals at wvgearup.org. The program objectives, listed below, aim to provide students with the support necessary for academic success.

Objectives:

- Increase student self-awareness and responsibility.
- Increase student self-confidence and promote social awareness.
- Encourage academic success.
- Enhance participation in school activities.
- Increase leadership and team building skills.
- Promote training and education beyond high school.

Expectations

Academic Support: Sponsors encourage students to remain in school and achieve the standards necessary to enroll in postsecondary education.

Goal Development and Encouragement: Sponsors help students set goals for themselves and take steps to realize those goals, and – ultimately – their dreams.

Guidance: Sponsors must listen and show an interest in students, especially those who might not otherwise receive much attention or support.

Sponsor Growth Mindset: Sponsors will encourage and strategically support a growth mindset, understanding that the underlying belief of the ability to learn is developed, while helping students focus on improvement rather than negativity or having a fixed mindset.

Accountability and Positive Examples: Sponsors serve as a reliable resource for students; they are honest, trustworthy, and dependable. Sponsors should encourage students to adhere to positive values as exemplified by the mentor.

College Access and Student Success Guidance: Sponsors strategically serve as a guide to help students in the college-readiness process.

SSS Sponsors shall furnish reports in a manner prescribed by West Virginia GEAR UP on forms approved by West Virginia GEAR UP. Backup documentation is to be submitted at the end of each month using the official WV GEAR UP sign in sheet. Mentoring services complement and support the WV GEAR UP program goals and objectives. Sponsors will collaborate with WV GEAR UP site coordinators and regional program directors. Student SSS members are selected from the class of 2027 and 2028 cohorts, this year's 11th and 12th graders. Sponsors will work with the GEAR UP site coordinator(s) and/or program directors during the selection process.

The sponsor will meet monthly for a minimum of 20 minutes with their designated group of students. Sponsors should also have one individual meeting with each student on a monthly basis. Mentee

groups will consist of a minimum of ten students and may include more. Sponsors will work approximately 5 hours each month above-and-beyond their normal work duties and outside normal work hours. SSS sessions will occur preferably during the day. Meetings may take place after school, but only if appropriate transportation accommodation can be made for SSS students to be able to participate. Sponsors will work with school administration to determine the days and times each week that SSS sessions occur. Hours spent during the normal workday do not count toward the 5 hours each month. The position is a 50/50 job: half volunteer, half contract employee. Sponsors are required to attend the Mentor Summit training on October 21, 2026, in Charleston, WV.

Below, find a monthly guide with activities for your monthly meetings with your SSS students.

October: Build your team! If you had low participation last year and/or your SSS numbers have declined, please work to recruit new students who could benefit from SSS services.

November: Work with your school's GEAR UP site coordinator to include your SSS students in the November Student Preview Day at WV State University. This is a great opportunity for students to begin thinking about their post-graduation plans, as the event is specially tailored for students who are either undecided, uncommitted, or early in their post-graduation planning process.

December: It's time to get Festive with Financials! Have your students complete the Life Skills Challenge activity and discuss their results as a group. Follow it up by having them complete the Lifestyle Costs Calculator on CFVW: cfv.com/lifestyle-calculator/

January: Have your students research their careers that best meets their skills and lifestyle choices from December. Students should talk with a partner about their career and include details on required education, expected income, and ways the career supports their future lifestyle.

February: Complete the College Match and Fit activity from CFVW: cfvconnect.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/College-Match-and-Fit-Game.pdf. Work with your school's GU site coordinator so that seniors can also participate in the Future U! event at the end of February.

March: Spring into Test Prep! With the school day SAT exam coming up soon for juniors and the seniors who may want to retake to beef up their scores, complete the Preparing for the Test activity. Additionally, work with students to get them signed up for the GEAR UP SAT Prep Event in April.

April: Have a check-in with the group to see what they need to complete before the end of the year. For juniors, do they know their schedule or what they need for their senior year? Do they have their necessary credits? For seniors, have they completed their FAFSA or other graduation requirements? What do they need to plan to complete in the summer?

May: As a group, celebrate the year and all your accomplishments. Recognize your seniors and their plans.



Life Skills Challenge Lesson Plan

Title/Name of Lesson	Life Skills Challenge Lesson Plan
Grade Level(s)	11/12th
Lesson Standard(s)	
Main Idea/Question	Students will discuss the skills they need to know when they are on their own and learn the true cost of the lifestyle they want.
Lesson Introduction	The Life Skills Challenge worksheet was adapted from materials in Cal Farley's After High School Tool Box: calfarley.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2020-BR-Road-Series-Tool-Box-A.pdf The Lifestyle Calculator can be found here: cfwv.com/lifestyle-calculator.
Lesson Agenda/Procedure	Have students complete the Life Skills Challenge worksheet, then start a discussion with students about what to expect when they are on their own. Which life skills are they the most confident about and which life skills are they the most uncertain about? Next, have students identify the kind of lifestyle they might want for their future. What home, car, cell phone plan, and other financial costs will they have to prepare for? How will they make ends meet while pursuing other things that matter, like family, vacation, and fun? Have students complete the Lifestyle Costs Calculator on CFWV: cfwv.com/lifestyle-calculator/
Closing Activity	Ask students if their lifestyle changed before and after the activity AND which careers align with their lifestyle.
Assessment (if applicable)	

Lesson Reflection (for teacher of lesson): Do you have any suggestions to improve this lesson? What did you like best?

Life Skills Challenge

The Life Skills Challenge worksheet was adapted from materials in Cal Farley's After High School Tool Box: calfarley.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2020-BR-Road-Series-Tool-Box-A.pdf

On a scale of 1 - 5, rate how confident you are about the following life skills:

1: Not Yet Confident

2: A Little Confident

3: Somewhat Confident

4: Confident

5: Very Confident

- **Communication:** ____
 - Examples: Presenting ideas clearly in writing and when speaking, listening and responding to others appropriately, respectfully solving disagreements with others
- **Educational Planning:** ____
 - Examples: Calculating the cost of postsecondary education/training, completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), applying for postsecondary education/training programs and scholarships
- **Emergency and Safety:** ____
 - Examples: Identifying when an emergency is happening, knowing when to call 911, understanding what steps to take if involved in a car accident
- **Food Preparation:** ____
 - Examples: Cooking a meal, finding and following a recipe, planning and shopping for groceries
- **Health:** ____
 - Examples: Knowing when to seek medical help, scheduling a doctor's appointment, filling a prescription at a pharmacy
- **Housekeeping:** ____
 - Examples: Performing routine cleaning tasks like doing laundry, using cleaning products/chemicals safely
- **Housing:** ____
 - Examples: Applying for housing at a college or university, signing a lease for an apartment
- **Job Seeking:** ____
 - Examples: Creating a resume and cover letter, finding and applying for jobs, practicing interview skills
- **Legal Knowledge:** ____

Security Card, birth certificate, driver's license), understanding legal consequences for actions

- **Money Management:** ____

- Examples: Creating a personal budget, opening a bank account, paying bills on time

- **Transportation:** ____

- Examples: Researching and purchasing a vehicle, keeping track of vehicle maintenance, obtaining car insurance

Which life skill(s) do you feel the most confident about? _____

Which life skill(s) do you feel the most uncertain about? _____

Next, complete the Lifestyle Calculator on CFV (cfv.com/lifestyle-calculator/). The Lifestyle Calculator shows you the true cost of the lifestyle you want and how much you'll need to earn to afford it. Knowing how much you'll need to earn and help you make informed decisions about the career path that's right for you.

Career Interest Inventory

Title/Name of Lesson	Career Interest Inventory
Grade Level(s)	11/12th
Lesson Standard(s)	
Main Idea/Question	Which career path is right for you?
Lesson Introduction	Adapted from the RIASEC Test for Hawaii Public Schools This activity will help students identify some career areas they may want to explore further. Give each student a copy of the RIASEC test printout and have them complete it. You should complete one, too! Have the students use the scoring page to identify their top interest areas.
Lesson Agenda/Procedure	During this discussion, students will explore the results of their RIASEC test. Have students share out at least one of their top areas after completing the test.
Closing Activity	• What were the students' top results on the RIASEC test? Do you feel they were accurate? How so (or how not)? • If you already had a career in mind, does it align with the RIASEC results? Does the test make you consider any careers you may not have previously thought of? • Do these careers support the lifestyle they are interested in? • Share your results, too. How do they match up with your lived experience? How have aspects of your values affected your college and career choices? • What steps can they take to prepare for a career in their selected area while still in high school? If students need some ideas, they can think of volunteer work, advanced courses (AP or Dual Enrollment), part-time jobs, etc.
Assessment (if applicable)	

Which Career Pathway is right for you?

THE RIASEC TEST

Follow these easy steps to see where your interests are.

1 Read each statement. If you agree with the statement, fill in the circle. There are no wrong answers!

1. I like to work on cars	☐						
2. I like to do puzzles		☐					
3. I am good at working independently			☐				
4. I like to work in teams				☐			
5. I am an ambitious person, I set goals for myself					☐		
6. I like to organize things, (files, desks/offices)						☐	
7. I like to build things	☐						
8. I like to read about art and music			☐				
9. I like to have clear instructions to follow						☐	
10. I like to try to influence or persuade people						☐	
11. I like to do experiments		☐					
12. I like to teach or train people				☐			
13. I like trying to help people solve their problems				☐			
14. I like to take care of animals	☐						
15. I wouldn't mind working 8 hours per day in an office						☐	
16. I like selling things						☐	
17. I enjoy creative writing			☐				
18. I enjoy science		☐					
19. I am quick to take on new responsibilities						☐	
20. I am interested in healing people				☐			
21. I enjoy trying to figure out how things work		☐					
Total							
R I A S E C							

22. I like putting things together or assembling things	☐						
23. I am a creative person			☐				
24. I pay attention to details						☐	
25. I like to do filing or typing						☐	
26. I like to analyze things (problems/situations)		☐					
27. I like to play instruments or sing			☐				
28. I enjoy learning about other cultures				☐			
29. I would like to start my own business						☐	
30. I like to cook	☐						
31. I like acting in plays			☐				
32. I am a practical person	☐						
33. I like working with numbers or charts		☐					
34. I like to get into discussions about issues				☐			
35. I am good at keeping records of my work						☐	
36. I like to lead						☐	
37. I like working outdoors	☐						
38. I would like to work in an office						☐	
39. I'm good at math		☐					
40. I like helping people					☐		
41. I like to draw			☐				
42. I like to give speeches						☐	
Total							
Grand Total							
R I A S E C							

2 Add up the number of filled in circles in each column and then add the two columns together for a grand total.

3 Using your grand total scores from above, transfer the scores for each letter into the appropriate column below.

R	= Realistic	Total: _____
I	= Investigative	Total: _____
A	= Artistic	Total: _____
S	= Social	Total: _____
E	= Enterprising	Total: _____
C	= Conventional	Total: _____

4 Take the three letters with the highest scores and record them under "My Interest Code".

MY INTEREST CODE

5 Turn the page to see what this means!

Which Career Pathway is right for you?

RESULTS OF THE RIASEC TEST

R = Realistic

These people are often good at mechanical or athletic jobs. Good college majors for Realistic people are...

- Agriculture
- Health Assistant
- Computers
- Construction
- Mechanic/Machinist
- Engineering
- Food and Hospitality

Related Pathways

Natural Resources
Health Services
Industrial and Engineering Technology
Arts and Communication

I = Investigative

These people like to watch, learn, analyze and solve problems. Good college majors for Investigative people are...

- Marine Biology
- Engineering
- Chemistry
- Zoology
- Medicine/Surgery
- Consumer Economics
- Psychology

Related Pathways

Health Services
Business
Public and Human Services
Industrial and Engineering Technology

A = Artistic

These people like to work in unstructured situations where they can use their creativity. Good majors for Artistic people are...

- Communications
- Cosmetology
- Fine and Performing Arts
- Photography
- Radio and TV
- Interior Design
- Architecture

Related Pathways

Public and Human Services
Arts and Communication

S = Social

These people like to work with other people, rather than things. Good college majors for Social people are...

- Counseling
- Nursing
- Physical Therapy
- Travel
- Advertising
- Public Relations
- Education

Related Pathways

Health Services
Public and Human Services

E = Enterprising

These people like to work with others and enjoy persuading and performing. Good college majors for Enterprising people are:

- Fashion Merchandising
- Real Estate
- Marketing/Sales
- Law
- Political Science
- International Trade
- Banking/Finance

Related Pathways

Business
Public and Human Services
Arts and Communication

C = Conventional

These people are very detail oriented, organized and like to work with data. Good college majors for Conventional people are...

- Accounting
- Court Reporting
- Insurance
- Administration
- Medical Records
- Banking
- Data Processing

Related Pathways

Health Services
Business
Industrial and Engineering Technology

College Match and Fit: Building a College List

Title/Name of Lesson	College Match and Fit: Building a College List
Grade Level(s)	11/12th
Lesson Standard(s)	
Main Idea/Question	Complete the College Match and Fit activity from CFWV: cfwvconnect.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/College-Match-and-Fit-Game.pdf This activity demonstrates how CFWV.com helps narrow a large group of colleges into a manageable list of potential options. Following the group activity, students will use CFWV.com to develop a college list for further research.
Lesson Introduction	Discuss important factors students consider when deciding on colleges to learn about or add to their college lists. Here are a few questions to help guide the discussion: • What are the first things you think about when someone asks what you like about colleges? • Think about when you have visited a college campus. What did you see or learn that you liked most? • What are the most important things to you when choosing a college?
Lesson Agenda/Procedure	After the discussion. 1. Choose the PICKER. 2. The rest will be volunteers in the COLLEGE POOL. 3. Give the PREFERENCE CARDS to the PICKER. Ask them to look through the cards and put them in order of importance. For example, they should put that card on the top if the location is most important to them. 4. Randomly hand out one COLLEGE CARD (double-sided) to each member of the COLLEGE POOL. Ask them to stand in a group facing the audience and to hold the card so the group can see the name and logo of the college and the volunteers can see the characteristics. The Play: 1. The PICKER reads the bolded question on their first preference card and states which choice(s) they prefer. They can choose to keep 1, 2, or all options. Remind them that making some choices is important because the goal is to find colleges that will fit them well. Doing so requires ideas about what type of environment or experience they want. 2. After the PICKER states their preference, the members of the COLLEGE POOL review the information on the back of their cards. If their college does not meet the PICKER'S preference, they are eliminated and should sit down or leave the front of the room. 3. Continue play until 6-10 colleges remain in the pool. If one preference card eliminates so many colleges that fewer than 6 remain, ask the PICKER if they are flexible about that preference. If so, invite the last group of eliminated

	colleges to return to the pool. The PICKER then moves on to the next preference card. 4. When the COLLEGE POOL has been narrowed to 6-10, ask the pool members to read their fun facts. For each college, the PICKER decides whether they like the fun fact. If they do, the college remains in the pool. If they do not, the college is eliminated. 5. The final remaining colleges are the PICKER's College List. 6. Repeat play with a new PICKER to show that different preferences result in different final lists.
Closing Activity	• As the game concludes, students will notice that the PICKER did not have an opportunity to select all the things that might be important to a student when researching colleges. Ask students for examples of other characteristics that are important to them. • The answers will vary, but all are valid. Please ensure that items such as academic programs and costs are included in the list. • Blank cards are also provided if you would prefer that students do the initial research themselves. Additionally, specific career and tech centers from your region can be included. • Students can then research their final lists on cfwv.com and apply to their top schools. • At the end of February, seniors can attend GEAR UP's Future U! event, where they can connect with college representatives and participate in a mock enrollment activity.
Assessment (if applicable)	

Lesson Reflection (for teacher of lesson): Do you have any suggestions to improve this lesson? What did you like best?

Preparing for the Test

Title/Name of Lesson	Preparing for the Test
Grade Level(s)	11/12th
Lesson Standard(s)	
Main Idea/Question	Why should I prepare for the SAT?
Lesson Introduction	This mentoring session will provide an opportunity for students to discuss the importance of learning test prep strategies, as well as combatting any test anxiety.
Lesson Agenda/Procedure	Read students the following questions one by one and have them decide if they are True or False. You can share the correct answers and explanations after they answer. - Grammar doesn't matter in a multiple-choice question. False. Sometimes, a careful re-reading of the test question can show that the sentence is structured in such a way as to make one answer more correct than any others. "All of the above" is USUALLY the right answer to a multiple-choice question. False. There is no "usual" answer to multiple-choice questions. - Your first choice is usually the right answer. False. While it can be helpful to go ahead and answer the question and move on if you are very confident of the answer, if you are not absolutely sure, your first guess may not be your best one. After careful rereading, you may find something you missed the first time around. - After completing a multiple-choice test, you should go back and review your answers. True. While you want to make sure you're using your time efficiently, if you do have extra time at the end, spend it reviewing the questions where you were not completely confident of your answer, but do feel like you could get it right if you spent a bit more time. That way you can confirm if you were right or wrong! - There really is no way to prepare for the SAT...you're going to know what you know. False. The SAT has special rules, question types, and special strategies. If you can study these types of questions and learn some of the tricks the test has, you WILL do better on the test! - You only get one shot to do well on the SAT. False. You can retake the SAT multiple times after taking it in 11th grade.

	You can receive a waiver for the registration fees for it from your school counselor to retake it for free!
Closing Activity	- You will take the SAT this year if you're in 11th grade. If you are in 12th grade, you can retake the SAT. The SAT is used by many colleges and financial aid programs to determine scholarships and other important information. How are you feeling about the test? If you are nervous, what would make you feel more confident going into the test? - What is one thing you can do to improve your performance on the test this year? Hint: WV GEAR UP offers 24/7 tutoring support through Brainfuse and is hosting a SAT Prep Event in April. - What ways have you found to combat anxiety during tests or stressful situations? What are some things you can do both beforehand and in the moment? Feel free to share your own strategies for combatting test anxiety!
Assessment (if applicable)	

Lesson Reflection (for teacher of lesson): Do you have any suggestions to improve this lesson? What did you like best?