



**KENTUCKY**  
goes to college

## Close the Deal

### Program Implementation Guide



*In Partnership with:*

*Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE)*

*Kentucky Association for College Admission Counseling (KYACAC)*

*Kentucky Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (KASF AA)*

*Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)*



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## What is Close the Deal?

**Program Summary:** Close the Deal is a one-day program that helps Kentucky high school students make the transition to college by assisting them with the admission and financial aid processes. Schools, community leaders and business representatives are recruited to work with local students in setting and meeting goals for college and their future careers. Students will hear from community leaders about the importance of having a plan to attend college or a technical education program. They will also have an opportunity to participate in small group table talk discussions with: 1) a college representative, 2) a financial aid expert and 3) a local business leader or school alumnus or in mini-conference sessions that may also include military representatives or other options. State education officials can also be brought in to assist counselors with college/career advising. Close the Deal was originally designed for high school seniors, although some schools prefer to conduct the program for students late in their junior year. Formatting for the program can be customized to meet individual school needs and preferences.

**Background:** Concerned about the ability of Louisville's future workforce to fill high-paying, knowledge-based jobs, then Mayor Jerry Abramson wanted to challenge high school students who might not be thinking of going to college to pursue some sort of postsecondary education or training. His approach, called "Close the Deal," was designed to counteract the factors that hinder students from making the transition from high school to college by: creating a college-going culture, improving transitions to postsecondary education and providing students and caring adults with college knowledge. The success of the initial program prompted former Lt. Governor Abramson to create a statewide partnership to expand the initiative to selected high schools in the Commonwealth.



Former Lt. Governor Abramson at Gallatin County High School

**Host agency:** In January 2015, the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) was designated to lead the program. KHEAA is the state agency created to improve access to college and technical school by providing student financial aid and distributing information about college opportunities. KHEAA administers a number of student aid programs, including the KEES program. In addition, the agency provides a multi-faceted outreach program to middle schools, high schools and adult education programs across the state to encourage students to pursue higher education.

## Helping High School Students Close the Deal on College

In Kentucky, community members, elected officials, college access professionals and others are joining with secondary and postsecondary institutions and business organizations to help students make the transition from high school to college and other higher education or training. **Operation Preparation, the Kentucky College Application Campaign (formerly Kentucky College Application Month), Close the Deal and other initiatives** are low-cost ways to make a real difference for the future of any community.

Quite simply, **Close the Deal:**

- Creates a college-going culture that reinforces the connections between enhanced education and successful or accelerated career paths.
- Provides support for and creates a sense of urgency for students applying to college.
- Builds “college knowledge” that helps students make informed choices.

**As a Close the Deal partner your school team of counselors and administrators will:**

- Expose your students to postsecondary institutions across the state.
- Plan and coordinate education activities, fairs and/or celebratory events and to raise awareness about and enhance communication with the state’s postsecondary institutions.
- Coordinate with KHEAA’s regional and mobile outreach staff to provide workshops, presentations, exhibits and/or other activities.
- Coordinate with CPE, KASFAA, KDE and KYACAC to enhance college awareness activities designed to help prepare your students for college or technical school.
- Report the number and grade level of students participating in Close the Deal.
- Recruit community leaders and officials to promote Close the Deal.

***Elected officials and community leaders***

- Get the message out by attending the Close the Deal event and personally delivering the message about the importance of going to college.
- Challenge students to apply to at least one institution.
- Work with principals, counselors and students to get them the assistance they need.
- Celebrate and encourage! Acknowledge students’ hard work and continually challenge them to achieve.



KHEAA Executive Director Dr. Carl Rollins and keynote speaker Colmon Elridge at Lincoln County High School

## Partner Provisions:

KHEAA and our partner agencies (the Kentucky Department of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, the Kentucky Association for College Admission Counseling and the Kentucky Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators) will provide:

- ▲ Regional and mobile outreach staff, available on a first-come, first served basis to help each school staff the event with financial aid and college admissions experts.
- ▲ This *Partner Implementation Guide*, with tips, timelines, sample resources and templates, student expectations and more to help each school plan a successful event.
- ▲ Free college planning and student financial aid resource materials.

## Participating schools provisions:

- ▲ A planning team of school administrators, business leaders and community partners who will organize the one-day program.
- ▲ Space (usually the school's gym or dedicated classrooms) and set up for event, including Table Talk or mini-conference sessions and college fair.
- ▲ Decorations for gym area, tables and school.
- ▲ Staffing of business leaders/elected officials/school alumni for the formatted "table talks" or mini-conference sessions.
- ▲ Lunch for participants (often provided through a Chamber of Commerce member(s)).
- ▲ Data on participating students for program evaluation purposes.

In this *Partner Implementation Guide* you will find information on how to implement and manage your own Close the Deal program. Included are resources that will help you



KHEAA Outreach Counselor Candice Johnson conducts a table talk session with students at Ohio County High School

connect to representatives from the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority and Close the Deal partners, plan your Close the Deal events and engage community leaders and businesses in building a college-going culture at your school or organization. These resources are samples compiled from past Close the Deal events and can be edited, revised, and custom designed to fit your school or organization's needs.



## Close the Deal Resource Directory

### **Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA)**

#### **MAIN CONTACTS:**

##### ***Kim Dolan***

*Director of Outreach Services*

[kdolan@kheaa.com](mailto:kdolan@kheaa.com)

Phone: 502-696-7379

##### ***Summer Gortney***

*Assistant Director of Outreach Services*

[sgortney@kheaa.com](mailto:sgortney@kheaa.com)

Phone: 502-759-0798

#### **MOBILE UNIT CONTACT:**

##### ***Kevin Wilson***

*College Info Road Show Counselor*

[kwilson@kheaa.com](mailto:kwilson@kheaa.com)

Phone: 502-759-9938

#### **REGIONAL OUTREACH CONTACTS:**

##### ***Casi Benedict***

*Northwestern KY Outreach Counselor*

(Breckinridge, Daviess, Grayson, Hancock, Henderson, Hopkins, McLean, Ohio, Union and Webster Counties)

[cclark@kheaa.com](mailto:cclark@kheaa.com)

Phone: 270-392-8675

##### ***John Bergman***

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(Butler, Christian, Logan, Muhlenberg, Simpson, Todd and Warren Counties)

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Phone: 270-392-8675

##### ***Candice Johnson***

*Louisville Metro East Outreach Counselor*

(Jefferson east of Interstate 65, Oldham and Shelby Counties)

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Phone: 502-541-7745

##### ***Chase Durrance***

*Far Western KY Outreach Counselor*

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Phone: 270-498-8291

##### ***Brandon Brown***

*Eastern KY Outreach Counselor*

(Breathitt, Elliott, Floyd, Johnson, Knott, Lawrence, Magoffin, Martin, Morgan, Pike and Wolfe Counties)

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##### ***Amy Marvin***

*Northeastern KY Outreach Counselor*

(Bracken, Bath, Boyd, Carter, Fleming, Greenup, Lewis, Mason, Menifee, Montgomery, Nicholas, Robertson and Rowan Counties)

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##### ***Bob McDermott***

*Northern KY Outreach Counselor*

(Boone, Campbell, Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Henry, Kenton, Owen, Pendleton and Trimble Counties)

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Phone: 859-630-1030

##### ***Tyler Powers***

*Southeastern KY Outreach Counselor*

(Bell, Clay, Harlan, Knox, Leslie, Letcher, McCreary, Perry and Whitley Counties)

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Phone: 606-273-9644

## Close the Deal Resource Directory, Cont.

### **Audrey Price**

*Southern KY Outreach Counselor*

(Adair, Allen, Barren, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Green, Hart, Metcalfe, Monroe, Russell, Taylor and Wayne Counties)

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*South Central KY Outreach Counselor*

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### **David Scott**

*Central KY Outreach Counselor*

(Bourbon, Fayette, Franklin, Harrison, Jessamine, Scott and Woodford Counties)

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### **Steven Held**

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### **Toni Wiley**

*West Central KY Outreach Counselor*

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[tmwiley@kheaa.com](mailto:tmwiley@kheaa.com)

## **PARTNER ORGANIZATION CONTACTS:**

### **Council on Postsecondary Education**

GEAR UP Kentucky

1024 Capital Center Drive, Suite 320

Frankfort, KY 40514

[gearupky.org](http://gearupky.org)

Phone: 502-573-4327

### **Kentucky Association for College Admission Counseling (KYACAC)**

2415 University Station

Murray, KY 42071

[www.kyacac.org](http://www.kyacac.org)

Phone: 270-809-2999

### **Kentucky Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (KASFAA)**

[www.kasfaa.com](http://www.kasfaa.com)

### **Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)**

[education.ky.gov](http://education.ky.gov)

Phone: 502-564-1473

## **Volunteer Table Talk or Mini-Conference Formats**

How it works: Close the Deal programming may be presented in a variety of formats. From the traditional, Table Talk discussions, to mini-conference sessions, to a customized approach designed by your school team, the important thing is that students are given an opportunity to connect with a variety of higher education and business professionals that can help them solidify their plans for training after high school, effectively Closing the Deal on their successful futures.

- Table Talk Format: Volunteers will be assigned to a table as a representative from one of three groups (admissions, financial aid, and recent college-grads/business leaders). This option allows students to interact in smaller groups. It is recommended to have 8-10 students at each table. This format requires a larger number of “expert” volunteers, as one is needed for each small group. Volunteers will rotate three times, so that every student has the opportunity to speak with a financial aid, college admissions and business or college student representative.
- Mini-Conference Session Format: Volunteers will be assigned as presenters in concurrent sessions. At least one representative will be needed from one of three groups (admissions, financial aid, and recent college-grads/business leaders). You may also consider inviting military personnel or other representatives to conduct a session. This option can allow for larger groups and will require a fewer number of “expert” volunteers, as students will rotate between presentation sessions.

### **General Talking Points for Volunteers**

Depending on the program format you choose, you may consider allowing enough time for volunteers to spend a few minutes with their first group orienting the students to the activities of the day. Below are talking points and suggestions for engaging students during this introductory period:

- Volunteers begin by introducing themselves, their organization/university/business
- Ask students what do they think of when they hear “college”?
- Ask if they know anyone who’s gone to college? What are some reasons to go?
- Introduce Close the Deal concept
- Explain the format of the program and how it will work (“table talk” or mini-conference)
- What happens after today?: One-on-one interviews with their counselor, help applying for financial aid, visits from school reps and visits to area campuses
- Ask if anyone has started thinking about life after graduation?
- Ask if anyone has already visited a college or know where they’re applying?
- Have students think about questions for the representatives they’ll be talking to.



## **Volunteer “Table Talk” or Mini-Conference Formats, Cont.**

Once the introductory period has concluded, the program will begin. At this time, volunteers should transition into their area of expertise (admissions, financial Aid/FAFSA, and college life/business) and begin their table talk or presentation until the bell rings again, and they move to their next group.

### **Admissions/Applications Talking Points**

- Choosing the right college or university; the importance of college visits.
- Application process – how it works with schools – similarities and differences.
- Essay writing tips
- Dates and deadlines – what they really mean
- Programs of study – what suits the students’ interest
- Housing – do they want to live on or off-campus. What are the available options?

### **Financial Aid Talking Points**

- Students CAN AFFORD college!
- Types and sources of money for college or technical school.
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) – how and when to complete.
- Scholarships and grants- the ILP has over 1,500 scholarship opportunities. KHEAA’s *Affording Higher Education* and [kheaa.com](http://kheaa.com) are also great resources.
- Deadlines are critical!

### **Recent Graduates Talking Points**

- Volunteers open with their name and their alma mater. Briefly discuss why they chose to go to college, what the application process was like, etc.
- Academics: class scheduling, course intensity, difference between high school classes and college classes, fields of study/choosing a major
- Social: campus organizations (what were they involved in? How did they make friends? Dorm living (independence, meal plans, roommates)
- Stay away from: “partying”, skipping class. Use good judgment.
- Ask questions! What do students know about college? What are they anxious about?

### **Business Leaders Talking Points**

- Volunteers open with their name, their business and their title.
- Volunteers briefly discuss their educational background and how it helps in their role.
- Why is it important to have educated employees?
- What skills are employers looking for when they hire new staff?
- How important are “soft skills” (Punctuality, organization, politeness, dependability, honesty, loyalty, etc.)?
- What benefits and opportunities (promotions, etc.) does higher education provide in your business or organization?

## Close the Deal Timeline

Given the new early FAFSA filing date of October 1<sup>st</sup>, many schools may opt to conduct Close the Deal programs for high school students in the spring of their junior year. Others may find that early fall programs for seniors are more effective in their school's culture and environment. There is no one scenario that will fit every school, but the action items below may guide your team in planning your Close the Deal Program.

The timeline below is for **traditional fall programming**, but can be adjusted to suit your school's individual needs and preferences:

### Late Spring/Early Summer

- Begin to plan Close the Deal event with your school planning team, KHEAA regional and mobile outreach counselors, college admissions personnel and Close the Deal partners.
- Close the Deal school dates are confirmed and added to the school calendar.
- Introduce Close the Deal to elected officials, community and business leaders, and school administrators.

### Fall Semester

- Bring planning team together and refresh everyone on event plans.
- Have senior teachers discuss Close the Deal in class and help prepare students for the event.
- Encourage students to visit [kheaa.com](http://kheaa.com) to create a MyKHEAA account and complete their Individual Learning Plans (ILP).
- **HOLD A CLOSE THE DEAL EVENT!**
- Assist students and families in completing FAFSA forms. (Contact your regional KHEAA Outreach Counselor for help in assisting students. Find your counselor in the Contact Directory on pages 5-6 of this guide or at [kheaa.com](http://kheaa.com) in the Counselors section.)
- Continue visits with college admissions representatives.
- Take students on visits to college campuses.
- Counselors follow up with students to discuss their plans beyond high school.
- College admissions representatives visit the high school and meet with students.
- Assist students with completing college applications. (Find out more about KHEAA's Kentucky College Application Campaign at [kygoestocollege.com](http://kygoestocollege.com).)
- Students should add Close the Deal to college planning activities in their ILP.

## Close the Deal Timeline, Cont.

### Spring Semester

- Participate in Operation Preparation in March
- Begin planning College Signing Day events. Visit [kygoestocollege.com](http://kygoestocollege.com) for resources.
- Continue visits to college campuses.
- Hold a College Signing Day event to recognize students that have been accepted or received scholarships.
- Send final data report to Close the Deal partners.

### Advice from a former Close the Deal Counselor

“One of the best pieces of advice that I could give to schools starting this would be:

1. Talk to the class as a whole and explain the event and the expectations.
2. Present "talking points" to the senior teachers so that they can reinforce the expectations. Review how the ILP can help them to set and reach goals for life after graduation.
3. Involve others in the preparation (our welding class made the stands for the table numbers, my class officers were the first to know about the program and they "talked it up" with their classmates, the entire faculty heard about the program at a faculty meeting and they were included in e-mails as the event neared).”



Students receive information at the min-college fair at Gallatin County High School

## Close the Deal Event Checklist

- ☐ Inform school staff and administrators with information about Close the Deal.
- ☐ Select a program format or customize your own event.
  - Table Talk Format:
    - Multiple financial aid experts, college representatives and community volunteers or college students rotate, approximately every 20-25 minutes, between tables of students. This traditional model for Close the Deal is generally held in the school's gymnasium. Depending upon the size of your study body, many experts may be required from each category.
  - Mini-Conference Session Format:
    - One or two financial aid experts, college representatives and business community volunteers or college students, military representatives and others conduct brief presentations and Q&A sessions for larger groups of students. Students rotate, approximately every 25-30 minutes. This alternative model may work well in areas where recruiting multiple expert volunteers is more challenging.
- ☐ Recruit volunteers for "table talks," mini-conferences sessions or other activities:
  - Coordinate financial aid experts with your regional KHEAA outreach counselor or the financial aid office at colleges or universities in your area.
    - **(Find your counselor in the Contact Directory on pages 5-6 of this guide or at [kheaa.com](http://kheaa.com) in the Counselors section.)**
    - (Contact the KASFAA representative in the Contact Directory on page 6 of this guide.)
  - Contact the admissions office at colleges in your area to invite representatives and ensure attendance at event.
    - (Contact the KYACAC representative in the Contact Directory on page 6 of this guide.)
  - Contact community volunteers, local college students and/or military representatives to serve as college-life/community participants.

## Close the Deal Event Checklist, Cont.

- ☐ Inform students of event and expectations.
- ☐ Create an event agenda. (Sample on page 12 of this guide)
- ☐ Request local chambers, elected officials, and sponsors to attend and contribute (box lunches, door prizes, etc).
- ☐ Create a diagram of your event space with tables, etc.
- ☐ Confirm volunteer and round table or mini-conference session speaker attendance.
- ☐ Create student entrance and exit tickets.
- ☐ Organize communication materials: place articles about Close the Deal in the school newsletter, on the website, and in materials sent home to parents.
- ☐ Use the all-call or one-call system to make parents aware of the event.
- ☐ Assign someone to direct traffic/help with parking on the day of the event.
- ☐ Set up a registration table for volunteers.
- ☐ Confirm lunch delivery and set up.
- ☐ Create a decorations committee.
- ☐ Create a set up committee.
- ☐ Create a clean-up committee.
- ☐ Contact local media for coverage of the event.
- ☐ Ask students to prepare a list of questions for presenters and special guests.

ADD YOUR OWN ITEMS BELOW:

- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
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## Event Agenda-“Table Talks” Format-SAMPLE

### Close the Deal 10:10am – 1:35pm

General Agenda (all times are estimated – this agenda is to be used as a guideline for time)

- 10:05am Speakers and special guests head to the gym
- 10:10am Bell rings to move to gym
- 10:15am Principal of your high school welcomes the students  
Principal introduces and welcomes the guest speaker
- 10:25am Guest speaker encourages students to go to further their education
- 10:40am Principal or school counselor announces remainder of the program day
- 10:45am Lunch is served (LUNCH SPONSOR SECURED BY SCHOOL)
- 11:30am Clear up from lunch; proceed to “table talks”

“Table talks” begin: 3 rounds of 25 minutes each with 5 minutes to switch tables – ring bell or blow whistle

#### 11:35am Admissions “Table Talk”

- Choosing the right college or university for you; the importance of college visits. Application process – how it works with schools – similarities and differences. Essay writing Dates and deadlines – what they really mean

#### 12:05pm Financial Aid “Table Talk”

- What you need to know about financial aid and why. Financial aid forms – how and when to complete. Scholarships and grants. Websites.

#### 12:35pm Student’s or Business Leader’s Perspective “Table Talk”

- Life outside the classroom/need for skilled workforce

## Event Agenda-“Table Talks” Format-SAMPLE, Cont.

- 1:00pm School counselor announces Education Fair
- 1:05pm Education Fair begins
- 1:30pm Principal or school counselor gives closing remarks
- 1:35pm Students leave to return to class

Note: This is a sample schedule. Each school can customize the event as necessary, and schedules will vary from school to school. One variation may be to start the event earlier and have the “table talks” or mini-conference sessions and college fair prior to serving lunch.

## Room and Table Arrangements-SAMPLE

“Table talks” setup: Allows students to interact in smaller groups. It is recommended to have 8-10 students at each table. This format requires a larger number of “expert” volunteers, as one is needed for each small group. Volunteers will rotate three times, so that every student has the opportunity to speak with a financial aid, college admissions and business or college student representative.



“Table talks” setup

## **Event Agenda-Mini-Conference Sessions-SAMPLE**

**8:30 Students to Auditorium**

**8:45 Welcome and Introduction by Principal**

**9:00 Welcome by Superintendent**

**9:15 School Counselor dismisses students to first breakout session (assign students to groups before event and make sure each student has sheet or card with the breakouts they will attend and in which order)**

### **9:30-10:00 First Breakout Sessions**

- Four Year Public Admissions
- Ins and Outs of Community College
- Military Options
- Paying for College 101 with KHEAA
- Business Leader Panel Discussion

### **10:05-11:35 Second Breakout Session**

- Four Year Public Admissions
- Ins and Outs of Community College
- Military Options
- Paying for College 101 with KHEAA
- Business Leader Panel Discussion

### **11:40-11:10 Third Breakout Session**

- Four Year Public Admissions
- Ins and Outs of Community College
- Military Options
- Paying For College 101 with KHEAA
- Business Leader Panel Discussion

**11:20 Students back in auditorium for Key Note Speaker (community leader, former student or other motivational speaker)**

**11:40 Closing Remarks (Counselor or principal)**

**11:45 Group Lunch then dismissed back to class**

NOTE: Mini-conference session setup: Can allow for larger groups and will require a fewer number of “expert” volunteers, as students will rotate between presentation sessions.

## Letter to Community Leaders from Superintendent or Principal-SAMPLE

Dear (NAME),

The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) is taking the lead to help communities challenge high schools with low college-going rates to significantly increase college-going and high school graduation rates. The team, which includes regional and mobile KHEAA outreach counselors, partners from other state organizations and representatives from regional colleges and universities, is offering to share their successful strategy with a team in our community on what we can do to motivate, advise and assist high school students.

Throughout the Commonwealth, schools have held college fairs and brought students information on admissions, financial aid, and what it's like to go to college. The effort, called **Close the Deal**, increased the number of students with college acceptances and helped young people earn scholarships to help pay for education after high school. The effort was so successful that I want to invite you to help us **Close the Deal** in our community.

Here is what past participants learned from **Close the Deal**: First, kids look up to and listen to their community leaders and elected officials; the young people listened when guest speakers told them that having a degree could mean an additional \$1M in earnings over a lifetime, and paid attention when they were challenged to submit at least one college application. Second, they responded when local leaders told them that the community counts on their achieving post-secondary degrees to build the regional economy, and that people who are qualified for and hold 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs are valuable, tax-paying citizens who enjoy a great quality of life.

If they haven't already done so, members of our school **Close the Deal** team will contact you with information on this program. I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to initiate **Close the Deal** in our community.

Sincerely,

## **Thank You Message to Volunteers-SAMPLE**

Thank you all for volunteering for our **Close the Deal** event on DATE in the gymnasium at X HIGH SCHOOL.

If you are receiving this email, you have graciously volunteered to host a table at the Education Fair portion of the day and/or you are serving as one of our “table talk” or mini-conference session presenters on admissions, financial aid or college life outside the classroom/a business leader’s perspective.

The event will begin promptly at XX:XX am at X HIGH SCHOOL and we would like everything to be set up by X:XX am - this includes tables at the education fair. We will be there setting up the remainder of the event at X:XX am, please feel free to come and begin your set up process anytime between X:XX am and X:XX am. There will also be a brief information session at X:XX am wherein details of the day’s events will be given.

If you are speaking at one of our “table talks” or mini-conference sessions, here are the key points we would like for you to discuss during your time with the students:

### **Admissions/Applications**

- Choosing the right college or university for you; the importance of college visits
- Application process - how it works with schools - similarities and differences
- Essay writing
- Dates and deadlines - what they really mean

### **Financial Aid**

- What you need to know about financial aid and why
- Financial aid forms - how and when to complete
- Scholarships and grants
- Websites and Resources

### **College Life outside the Classroom/Business Leader’s Perspective**

- College from a recent graduate's perspective
- The importance of continuing your education from a business perspective.
- What skills and qualities business leaders look for when hiring employees?
- Continue to use your ILP to search for scholarships and to build your resume

The program will end around X:XX pm and at this time you are free to leave and/or begin to take down your education fair table if you are hosting one.

All volunteers will be provided with lunch on this day!

If you have any additional questions - please do not hesitate to let me know!

Thanks again for volunteering your time for this great program!



## **Volunteer Contact Information-SAMPLE**

Close the Deal Event - [School Name] High School

### **Education Fair Tables**

Representative Name	School/Organization	Email Address	Phone Number
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### **Admissions**

Representative Name	School/Organization	Email Address	Phone Number
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### **Financial Aid**

Representative Name	School/Organization	Email Address	Phone Number
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### **College Life**

Representative Name	School/Organization	Email Address	Phone Number
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## Faculty Memo-SAMPLE

**Teachers: Please SHARE these expectations to your students in preparation for CLOSE THE DEAL**

**Close the Deal** will take place on DATE; all students will report to the gymnasium when they are dismissed from second period.

Students are encouraged to dress up for this event. REMEMBER to use good judgment. No spaghetti straps, bare mid- drifts, or short skirts. If students do not choose to dress up they are expected to be in dress code.

Students will be assigned a table to sit at the luncheon by teachers the Monday before the event. All tables will be clearly marked with numbers and placemats that will indicate their seat.

X will be the first person to speak to the large group. He/she will introduce the guest speaker who will speak for about 15-20 minutes.

After the speakers address the group, students will be called (a section of tables at a time) to get their box lunch and drink. After students finish eating, the “table talks” or mini-conference sessions will begin.

“Table talks” or small group sessions are the heart of the **Close the Deal** program. For “table talks,” students will remain at their table and they will participate in a total of THREE 20-25 minute discussions. The adult leading the discussion will rotate to a different table at the end of each discussion. So, students will hear from an admissions professional, a financial aid professional, and either a student who has been through the college selection process before or a local business person in a little over an hour. For mini-conference sessions, students will move between rooms approximately every 25-30 minutes, according to the number of presentations available.

Students are expected to be RESPECTFUL when listening to all speakers. Keep in mind, the people that are here today are here to help students realize their goal to attend college.

Following the “table talks” or min-conference sessions there will be a college information fair with representatives of regional colleges and universities. Students will have time to ask more specific questions to the representatives who are in attendance. If students don’t see the college that they are interested in attending, please have them write their name and preference down for future events and visits.

Never underestimate the power of the first impression! From the moment that students walk into the gym, the college representatives will be seeing them. Help students make the impression that they leave with them a POSITIVE ONE!

## **Student Expectations-SAMPLE**

### **Close the Deal X HIGH SCHOOL**

**Close the Deal** is a program designed to support high school students as they transition from high school to college. It really isn't just a one day event – but rather a year long program to get you into college.

On DATE, we are inviting you to a special luncheon event. This is something that doesn't happen every day! We will bring important community members, college admissions and financial aid representatives, recent college students and local business leaders to our school that are available to help answer your questions about the college admission and financial aid processes. This will be done in small “table talk” or mini-conference sessions, allowing you small group time with an area expert.

X HIGH SCHOOL has chosen to be a part of this special program because over the years, we have been working hard to increase the percentage of students going on to college – in fact, for the Class of X – transcripts were sent to X number of postsecondary schools.

The Class of X has set a higher goal – EVERY member of the graduating class will have an official/final transcript sent to at least one college/postsecondary program -- and EVERY member of the graduating class will also complete a financial aid form.

To achieve this goal, we need your help – we need you to participate. So many of you say that you want to go to college or get additional training after high school – and for some – this is where the conversation stops. This is your chance to follow through and check out the options for yourself!

The third part of the program involves securing the money so that you can go to college. This is done through the completion of the FASFA (Free Application for Student Financial Assistance). The first word is FREE – and there is a little secret that you need to know, especially if you qualify for free/reduced lunch – THERE WILL BE MONEY FOR YOU TO GO TO COLLEGE!

Right before graduation we will gather once again to count up the money that we have earned through the receipt of Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarships (KEES) and private scholarships – or that we have earned through participating in dual credit and advanced placement programs. We will also see where the class of X has gotten accepted! X and I want to see your college admission letters of acceptance! We want to know the scholarships that you have received! We want you to “wear us out” in sending transcripts, asking about scholarships and recommendations to colleges on your behalf!

So you can see that we are really going to work for you – but in return – you must do 4 things to help yourself in this process.

## Student Expectations-SAMPLE, Cont.

The **FOUR** things that we ask of you are:

1. **DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY!** Be here on (DAY/DATE)! But not just on (DAY/DATE) –every day!
2. **ASK QUESTIONS** – Be an active participant in the discussions at your table.
3. **DRESS PROFESSIONALLY** – X has agreed that you can be out of dress code that day – but if you don't wish to dress up – then you must be in dress code or better. Please remember to show respect to our guests and dress professionally; no sagging pants, no inappropriate graphics on shirts, no spaghetti straps, bare mid-drifts, or short skirts. Remember: If students do not choose to dress up, they are expected to be in dress code. Keep in mind that representatives of area colleges and local business will be on hand to talk to you.
4. **MAKE POSITIVE IMPRESSIONS!** Don't underestimate the power of the impression that you make from the moment that you walk into the gym on that day. People who hold your future in their hands will be watching you and they will form opinions of you. Make them POSITIVE IMPRESSIONS!



Students hear from guest speakers prior to “table talks” at Campbell County High School

## Student Exit Ticket–SAMPLE

NOTE: Some schools use complete exit tickets like this one to enter students into drawings for door prizes donated by local businesses or sponsors or to document their participation.

### Close the Deal College Preference Sheet

My counselor's name is: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to major in: \_\_\_\_\_

My "dream college" is: \_\_\_\_\_

However, I would like to find out more information on the following colleges:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My biggest fear about going to college is: \_\_\_\_\_

I will be the FIRST person to go to college in my family: yes or no

I would like to work with a mentor who can help me navigate the College process: yes or no

I expect to enroll in college during the fall following my high school graduation: yes or no

I agree to make the commitment to **"Close the Deal"** by making a sincere effort to

- Use my ILP, counselors and any available resource to help me explore colleges that match my career interests  
Complete (at least one) college application and submit my final transcript to the college of my choice
- Access local, regional and college sponsored scholarships and complete and submit the FASFA (financial aid) that will assist me in locating finances to fund my college education

I agree to make this commitment on this day, X.

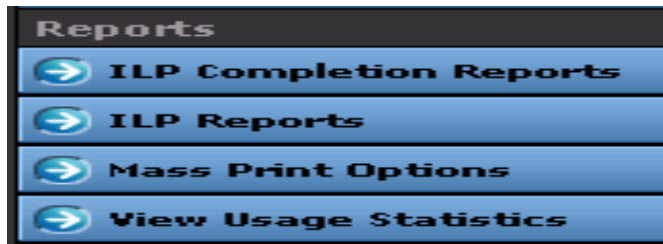
Student signature here: \_\_\_\_\_



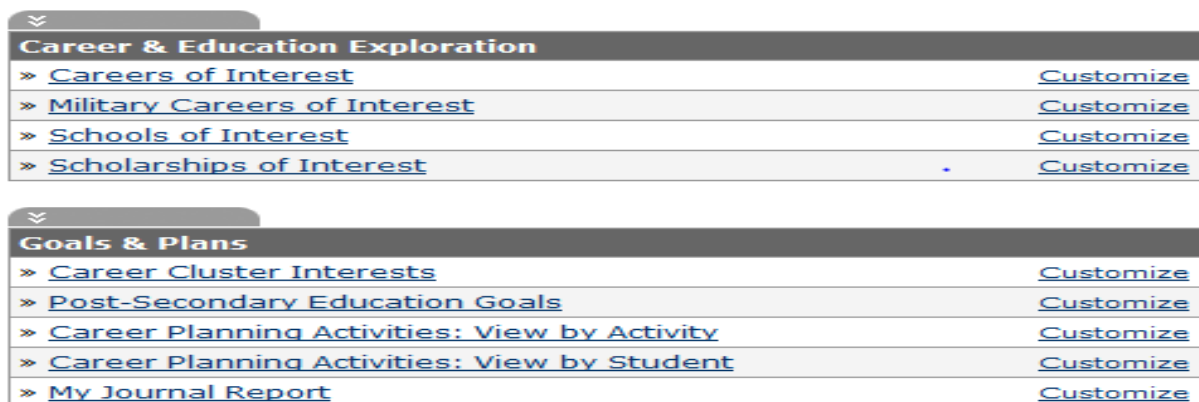
## Customizing the Message to Students

These reports from the ILP can be used to customize class-wide or 1-1 meetings with students. This information allows you to individualize conversations that are relevant to each student by focusing on his/her plans for life after graduation and how the school can help them to reach their goals.

1. From the Advisor Homepage click on "ILP Reports"



2. Next click on the reports you would like to print.



3. Click on "customize this report" to filter by grade, gender or ethnicity. Reports can be exported and printed in excel or text.

A screenshot of the 'Careers of Interest' report customization and export interface. At the top is a grey header bar with the title 'Careers of Interest' and a help icon. Below this is a table with two columns. The left column is titled 'Customize This Report' and contains the text 'Select criteria to define the report for a specific year and/or group of students:' and a 'Custom' button. The right column is titled 'Export Data File' and contains the text 'Please choose the format that you would like the data exported to:' and two radio button options: 'Excel Spreadsheet' (which is selected) and 'Text File'. An 'Export' button is located at the bottom right of the table. Below the table is a navigation bar with five links: 'Career', 'Total', 'Male', 'Female', and 'Detail'.

## Program Evaluation

### Plan to evaluate program effectiveness:

- Only two primary pieces of information need to be collected during your event:
  - Number of students who participated in a Close the Deal event
  - Grade level of students who participated in a Close the Deal event
- Student and Site Coordinator Surveys
  - Each student who participates in your school's Close the Deal event should be asked to complete the Student Survey. See the Online Toolkit or contact your KHEAA outreach counselor for the link to the survey. It is most effective to have students complete the survey before they leave on the day of the event.
  - The site coordinator or designated individual from your school should complete the Site Coordinator Survey. See the Online Toolkit or contact your KHEAA outreach counselor for the link to the survey.
- Additional program review at the school level can include:
  - Collecting additional feedback from students, staff, and volunteers.
  - Hold debriefing meetings with organizers of the event to determine what worked and what should be improved for the school's program next year.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q. What is Close the Deal and why is it important for my school?**

A. Quite simply, Close the Deal:

- Creates a college-going culture that reinforces the connections between enhanced education and successful or accelerated career paths.
- Provides support for and creates a sense of urgency on the part of students applying for college.
- Builds “college knowledge” that helps students make informed choices about their futures.

### **Q. What does my school need to do to be a part of Close the Deal?**

A. There are a few steps that will align to many of your current work with students:

- Introduce Close the Deal to elected officials, community & business leaders, and school administrators.
- Recruit admission and financial aid experts, recent college graduates or local business leaders, military representatives and/or others.
- Begin to plan your Close the Deal program with your partners.
- Coordinate with your regional KHEAA outreach counselor.
- Secure a sponsor for lunch, if one is to be provided.
- Hold a successful Close the Deal program for students
- Have counselors follow up with seniors to talk about their plans beyond high school.
- Hold a “Close the Deal” Celebration event to recognize students that have been accepted or received scholarships.
- Send final data report to KHEAA.

### **Q. What goes into making a successful event?**

A. Be proactive! Work closely and communicate clearly with your team members to engage outside stakeholders, invite volunteers, plan your agenda and room setup, and work with teachers to prepare students.

### **Q. What do principals need to do?**

A. Recruit community leaders and officials to promote Close the Deal and provide administrative support to program planners.

## **Frequently Asked Questions, Cont.**

### **Q. What do counselors and administrators need to do?**

A. Track your students' success! Keep up-to-date records of senior class size, number of students who have applied, been admitted, and enrolled in college and amount of scholarship money received.

Coordinate education fairs and celebratory events with help from the Close the Deal team.

### **Q. How can the local Chamber of Commerce and elected officials help?**

A. Get the word out by personally delivering the message about the importance of going to college.

Challenge students to apply to at least one college or university.

Work with principals, counselors and students to get them the assistance they need.

Celebrate and encourage! Acknowledge students' hard work and continually challenge students to achieve more.

### **Q. How much will this cost?**

A. The services of KHEAA financial aid experts, college admissions counselors and community leaders are free. Many schools work with their local chambers of commerce or individual businesses to have lunch, door prizes and decorations donated. Other options may include sack lunches from the cafeteria or potluck items from school faculty and staff. Since the event is held during the school day, extra transportation and staff costs are not an issue.

### **Q. How do we make this sustainable?**

A. Due to the low financial burden of Close the Deal, many CTD schools have continued to put on events at their schools year after year. Sharing the data and successes of yours and other's Close the Deal events can create advocates for the program who are willing to facilitate and manage the program in future years. Have your Close the Deal teams begin planning for continuing the program before the end of the school year.

**For additional FAQs, visit the Close the Deal page on [kygoestocollege.com](http://kygoestocollege.com).**