

GEAR UP ACTIVITY IDEA

MARCH MADNESS



Objective

Generate awareness of post-high school pathways/college options among middle school students by leveraging the NCAA basketball tournament.

Procedure	Preparation Steps	Themes
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inform staff. Distribute the March Madness Week announcement to all teachers and staff. Emphasize the goals of the GEAR UP grant and the importance of fostering a culture of college awareness. 2. Class selection. Before the event, provide teachers with a list of the top 20 NCAA teams (to be delivered to their mailboxes). Instruct teachers to discuss the top three college picks with their 1st-period students before the assembly. 3. Assembly planning. Schedule an assembly from 2:00 – 2:30 PM. Prepare a stage setup for representatives from each class to select their colleges. Communicate to students that each 1st-period class will choose one college to research during the week. 	College Exploration, Financial Aid & Financial Literacy
		Audience
		All GU students
		Grade Level(s)
		7-12
	Daily Activities	Cost
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Day 1 - March 12: Kickoff Assembly & Banner Creation. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assembly: Conduct the assembly and allow class representatives to pick colleges. b. Class Activity: Return to class, and guide students to create their banners with the college name, school colors, a picture of the school mascot, the date the college was founded, and hang the banners outside the classroom doors for display. 2. Day 2 - March 13: City and School Information. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Instruct students to add the following to their banner: City and state of the college, population of the city, school enrollment numbers. b. Facilitate a discussion on how the school's size and location can influence college choices. 3. Day 3 - March 14: Academic Programs and Admission Requirements. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Direct students to add to their banner: A list of notable programs offered by the college, admission 	Minimal, poster materials
		Required Materials
		Poster making supplies.
		Prep Time
		Planning meetings
		Additional Notes
		Contributed by Blaine HS.

	<p>requirements (minimum GPA, required high school classes).</p> <p>b. Encourage students to share personal experiences related to their college preparations.</p> <p>4. Day 4 - March 15: Housing Options.</p> <p>a. Have students include housing information on their banners: Types of housing (dorms, apartments, Greek systems).</p> <p>b. Lead a discussion on housing arrangements and experiences.</p> <p>5. Day 5 - March 16: Financial Aid and Wrap-Up.</p> <p>a. Students should finalize their banners by adding: Payment methods for college (scholarships, loans, grants, work-study, jobs)</p> <p>b. Discuss personal financing methods for college and conclude the week with reflections.</p> <p>6. Final Assembly. Schedule a final assembly from 2:20 – 3:00 PM. Ensure each class brings their completed banner to display during the “Parade of Colleges.” Assign a representative from each class to present their banner on stage.</p> <p>7. Conclusion. Celebrate the completion of March Madness Week. Encourage continued exploration of college options and reinforce the belief that all students can attend a post-secondary school with hard work and determination.</p>	
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