



Graduation Game Plan

Partnership Toolkit

Fostering student engagement and success through partnerships



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According to research conducted by the *Brookings Institution*:

- Houston ranks in the top 10% nationally for jobs that require a bachelor's degree at 36%.
- 7% of 18-24 year old Houston youth have a bachelor's degree.
- Houston is ranked 6th in the nation for jobs requiring knowledge in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

The future of Houston's youth is based on our ability to work together...

JOIN OUR GRADUATION GAME PLAN!

Our Vision:

Make it easier for Houston's youth to access a community that supports their academic and professional goals!

Graduation Game Plan Overview

What is the Graduation Game Plan Program?

The *Graduation Game Plan Program* provides middle and/or high school students with a practical planning guide to help them graduate high school, prepare for life after high school, acquire workforce skills and manage themselves effectively.

Through this planning guide, students are better prepared, more aware of fundamental resources, and will identify a support system that will help them create a personalized plan for success.

How can we work together to help students?

- Provide students with on-site resources to bridge the gap between their needs and their college & career goals
- Utilize mentors to help students identify the required steps to achieve their short-term & long-term goals
- Align program activities between organizations to connect students to existing post-secondary support systems



Graduation Game Plan Overview

Who can be a Graduation Game Plan Mentor?

- Any caring adult who wants to help a young person plan their education and career after high school
- Mentors can come from any educational and career background
- Mentors have to pass a background check

How are students selected and who is eligible?

- The participating organization is responsible to manage recruitment of students
- There are no age requirements
- Students can be paired with a mentor on a 3:1 ratio or the capacity in which the mentor feels comfortable in

Students focus on the following activities:

- Identifying people & organizations that can continue to support their academic and career goals after the program
- Connecting subjects of interest to possible careers
- Determining which Texas Graduation Plan they will complete
- Setting goals for high school and after high school
- Identifying extracurricular activities
- Understanding what is meant by workforce skills
- Learning about job etiquette and how to create a résumé
- Learning about financial aid and the college admissions process
- Learning about personal management skills



Graduation Game Plan Program Roles

Mayor's Office of Education Initiatives:

- Provides Graduation Game Plan (GGP) curriculum and access to additional on-line resources
- Develops and maintains GGP program partnerships
- Assists ongoing GGP programs as agreed upon by partners
- Provides resources to assist students participating in a GGP program that includes:
 - Résumé Building
 - Peer-to-Peer Networking
 - Academic and career planning



Partner Organization:



- Establish a Program Coordinator to manage the day-to-day program operations
- If necessary, secures and supervises all volunteers/mentors and speakers that will participate in the GGP program
- Coordinate all volunteer trainings and orientations for mentors
- Acts as the primary communicator between all partners throughout the program
- It is important to note that the program coordinator can be a staff member of the partner organization
- Supports the GGP program with additional resources
- Provides and assists with outreach to target student population

Students appreciate how engaging the Graduation Game Plan is and how the materials & resources can be organized around their goals. Our curriculum is built for them, and in many ways, built by them.

“The Graduation Game Plan helped me prepare to be a college bound student...if I stick with my goal, I will reach it.”

R.J., student



“If you give me the chance, I would like to come back after I graduate and be a mentor.”

M.L., student

Program Contacts and Resources

We look forward to collaborating on the Graduation Game Plan with your organization and developing innovative partnerships for students!

To begin, contact us at education@houstontx.gov.

If you like this program, you can learn about more programs in the Office of Education Initiatives and the Department of Neighborhoods on Social Media!



www.twitter.com/NeighborHOU



www.facebook.com/NeighborHOU

Additional Resources:

Mayor's Office of Education Website

More college planning resources!

www.houstontx.gov/education

Department of Neighborhoods Website

More in your neighborhood!

www.houstontx.gov/neighborhoods

Houston Public Library Website

More free education resources!

www.houstonlibrary.org

Houston Volunteer Website

Give a little, learn a lot!

www.houstonservice.org

Countdown to Graduation Game Plan

Here are some key steps to help you start planning for your Graduation Game Plan Program!

Three Months Before:

- Establish Program Coordinator
- Establish days and times you will like to host Graduation Game Plan.
- Announce and pass out marketing material for Graduation Game Plan
- Begin student and mentor recruitment; select mentors and conduct the background checks

Two Months Before:

- Meet with Program Coordinator to get familiar with space and resources.
- Develop a pre and post-survey for the students and mentors to complete; surveys will be used to research program improvements and suggestions from all participants
- Organize mentor and student materials
- Keep promoting Graduation Game Plan to students and mentors

One Month Before (4 weeks):

- Reach out to the students and mentors to share program dates and thank them for volunteering and participating in the program
- Conduct an orientation for mentors and volunteers
- Print out all materials that will be needed

Two Weeks Before:

- Make sure you have all materials (handouts and booklets) for Graduation Game Plan.
- Meet with Program Coordinator to do a final walkthrough of program location
- Make calls to mentors and students to remind them the first day is approaching.

Graduation Game Plan Kickoff:

- Pass out pre-surveys
- Explain the sign-in and sign-out process.
- Introduce students and mentors to each other and provide a brief overview of what the program will cover.

Last Day of Graduation Game Plan:

- Pass out post surveys

One Week after GGP:

- Follow up meeting to evaluate results and suggest improvements for next year.
- Review post surveys from students.

Appendix

- A. Sample Mentor Flier** – highlighting the role of the mentors and the innovative components of the program

- B. Sample Student Flier** – outlines the base level of what the program is, emphasizing the importance of identifying the steps it takes to not only graduate high school, but to take the steps needed to get into college and/or start a career after high school

- C. Sample Recruitment Email** – messaging resource that helps to communicate information to mentors

Appendix A. Mentor Flier



Mayor's Office of
Education Initiatives

MENTOR WITH US



& Help Change A Life in Just 6 Hours!

WHAT DO MENTORS DO?

- Help a group of 3-5 students for an hour and thirty minutes once a week for four weeks.
- Use the "Game Plan" to guide students toward a successful education and help them identify career goals.
- Share professional and academic experiences to guide students.
- Help students identify a network of positive role models in their lives, while providing general support, motivation, and encouragement.

HOW IS THIS MENTOR PROGRAM DIFFERENT?

- The program partners with the Houston Public Library's After School Zone program, connecting students and mentors with a focus on college and career-planning using the "Graduation Game Plan".
- The "Graduation Game Plan" outlines the steps to help students graduate from high school, prepare for life after graduation, gain the workforce skills needed, and learn about personal management skills.
- Through the program, students are better prepared, more aware of fundamental resources, and will have identified a support system tailored to their needs as they continue to progress.

SIGN-UP TODAY AT

www.houstontx.gov/education/mentor



= Current Program Location

The "After School Zone with the Graduation Game Plan" Mentor Program is a partnership between the Mayor's Office of Education Initiatives in the City of Houston Department of Neighborhoods and the Houston Public Library

SPRING 2013 LIBRARY LOCATIONS, TIMES, & DATES:

Park Place Regional Library

8145 Park Place Blvd.
Houston, TX 77017

Mondays, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
(March 25, April 1, April 8, & April 15)

Carnegie Neighborhood Library

1050 Quitman St.
Houston, TX 77009

Tuesdays, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
(March 26, April 2, April 9, & April 16)

Stella Link Neighborhood Library

7405 Stella Link Rd.
Houston, TX 77025

Tuesdays, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
(March 26, April 2, April 9, & April 16)

Henington-Alief Regional Library

7979 South Kirkwood Rd.
Houston, TX 77072

Wednesdays, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
(March 27, April 3, April 10, & April 17)

Smith Neighborhood Library

3624 Scott Street
Houston, TX 77004

Thursdays, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
(March 28, April 4, April 11, & April 18)

Stanaker Neighborhood Library

811 S-Sgt. Macario Garcia Dr.
Houston, TX 77011

Thursdays, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
(March 28, April 4, April 11, & April 18)

PROGRAM CONTACT:

If interested or have any
questions please contact Anne
Lohoues at

Anne.Lohoues@houstontx.gov

OR

call: 832-393-0901 (office)

832-231-5503 (cell)

Appendix B. Student Flier



Mayor's Office of
Education Initiatives

Free College & Career Prep Mentor Program



WHAT IS THE "AFTER SCHOOL ZONE WITH THE GRADUATION GAME PLAN" MENTOR PROGRAM?

- The program partners with the Houston Public Library's After School Zone program, connecting students and mentors with a focus on college and career-planning using the "Graduation Game Plan".
- The "Graduation Game Plan" outlines the steps to help students graduate from high school, prepare for life after graduation, gain the workforce skills needed, and learn about personal management skills.
- Through the program, students are better prepared, more aware of fundamental resources, and will have identified a support system tailored to their needs as they continue to progress.



STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE:

- Develop a personal plan to help them graduate high school and prepare for college
- Create a résumé
- Create a positive support network in their lives
- Understand workforce skills required to achieve career goals



HOW CAN YOUR CHILD PARTICIPATE?

- Contact the program coordinator to have your child placed on the participants' list
- Fill out and sign the attached permission slip (*your child will need to come to the library with the permission slip on the first day of the program*)

The program is free and open to all!

SPRING 2013 LIBRARY LOCATIONS, TIMES, & DATES:

Park Place Regional Library
8145 Park Place Blvd.
Houston, TX 77017
Mondays, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
(March 25, April 1, April 8, & April 15)

Carnegie Neighborhood Library
1050 Quitman St.
Houston, TX 77009
Tuesdays, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
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Stella Link Neighborhood Library
7405 Stella Link Rd.
Houston, TX 77025
Tuesdays, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
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Henington-Alief Regional Library
7979 South Kirkwood Rd.
Houston, TX 77072
Wednesdays, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
(March 27, April 3, April 10, & April 17)

Smith Neighborhood Library
3624 Scott Street
Houston, TX 77004
Thursdays, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
(March 28, April 4, April 11, & April 18)

PROGRAM CONTACT:

For additional questions,
please contact Anne Lohoues
at:
Anne.Lohoues@houstontx.gov

or call : 832-393-0901/ 832-231-5503

Appendix C. Sample Recruitment E-mail

Make a Difference as an After School Zone Mentor

March and April 2013

Will you please help change students' lives by volunteering 7 hours of your time over 5 weeks this spring as an after-school mentor. The "After School Zone with the Graduation Game Plan" Mentor Program is in need of volunteers at 6 Houston Public Library locations. The program depends on volunteers like you who can commit just an hour and a half a week for five consecutive weeks during March and April 2013.

Volunteers will guide a small group of students through the basic steps of achieving a high school graduation and getting prepared for college and/or careers. Spanish and bilingual speakers are highly encouraged to sign-up, in addition to anyone else interested in helping Houston youth.

Applying for college and thinking about careers can be a very complicated process. Previous programs have taught us that many students are not informed about important financial aid programs like the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Many students do not know how to create a resume. This program helps organize resources for students and mentors to easily have conversations about how students can establish and achieve goals.

Some of the responsibilities include:

- Mentors will be provided with training and resource materials for their small group
- Each student will create a personal plan that connects college and career resources to their goals after high school
- Mentors will share their experiences to help guide students through the program
- Mentors will help students identify a positive support network in their lives, while providing general support, motivation and encouragement

To learn about the "After School Zone with the Graduation Game Plan" Mentor Program sign-up procedures, locations, times and dates visit www.houstontx.gov/education/mentor. If interested, please sign up by Friday, March 8, 2013.

For more information, contact Anne Lohoues, Office of Education Initiatives at Anne.Lohoues@houstontx.gov or 832.393.0901 (office) or 832.231.5503 (cell).

The "After School Zone with the Graduation Game Plan" Mentor Program is a partnership between the City of Houston Department of Neighborhoods and the Houston Public Library.

To learn more about the Office of Education Initiatives, visit www.houstontx.gov/education/. To learn more about the Department of Neighborhoods, visit www.houstontx.gov/neighborhoods. To learn more about the Houston Public Library, visit www.houstonlibrary.org. And to learn more about volunteer opportunities in the City of Houston, visit www.houstonservice.org.



www.houstontx.gov/education