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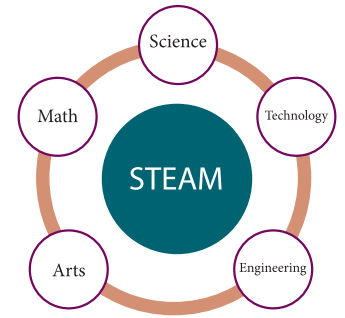
**Take Your Family
to School Week**
**Creative
Career Fair Guide**



What Is a Creative Career Fair?

A Creative Career Fair is an interactive experience and powerful tool for career exploration. Together, families connect a student's current interest in the arts with tomorrow's career potential.

At your Creative Career Fair, parents will see how their investment of time and resources in arts education translates to a variety of careers, including but not limited to the arts. For example, what do careers in the arts have in common with science, technology, engineering and math? These professionals all use creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration skills every day.



During a Creative Career Fair, families will:

- Experience first hand how professionals from an array of careers use the arts in their work.
- Understand how an arts education inspires creativity, expands critical thinking and fosters communication and collaboration skills that are used in today's workforce.
- Begin to match students' arts interests with specific career opportunities.

Why Are the Arts Important?

- Arts participation encourages all students—despite individual challenges—to explore ideas, express their individuality and support their peers in a positive way.
- Arts education provides all students with an academic advantage by increasing student engagement and teacher effectiveness, which lead to increased school attendance rates and social connectedness among students.
- Arts celebrations enhance family engagement by connecting families and schools to one another.

Steps for Planning Your Creative Career Fair

1. **Connect with school administrators, guidance counselors and arts teachers** to discuss the objectives for this event, as well as event logistics (e.g., space, time, date, promotion).
2. **Recruit your PTA STEAM Team to lead 10-minute conversations with families about how the arts influence their work.** Consider parents, teachers and professionals in the community that have both artistic talents and work experience in science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM). Consider your school's current arts education opportunities as well as students' interest in arts areas such as dance, literature, media arts, music, photography, theatre and visual arts. Use the sample letter in the back of this guide to help you.
3. **Plan your STEAM Reception.** Secure a location in the school that is large enough for all attendees, as well as performances (e.g., gym, auditorium, multi-purpose room, library or cafeteria). Then identify student or professional arts groups to exhibit or perform during the STEAM Reception. Consider your PTA STEAM Team and arts teachers.
4. **Collaborate with classroom teachers to decorate the school with student artwork.** Prior to the event, recruit parent and student volunteers to assist teachers with the classrooms and hallways with displays of student art.
5. **Promote your event.** All families are welcome, whether the student is interested in the arts currently or not. Use all of your PTA and school communications tools. Invite local media to attend and gain great visibility for your school and PTA. Use the event promotion tools available at www.PTA.org/TYFTSW.
6. **Gather event supplies including name tags for your PTA STEAM Team, volunteers and attendees.** Consider color coding the name tags by role. This will help families to know who to ask what, while also making them feel more comfortable when talking with each other. Other supplies may be refreshments, small gifts to recognize presenters, table cloths, posters for signage, tape, pens, markers, microphones, decorations or presenting tools, such as laptops.
7. **Host your Creative Career Fair.** Revise the schedule below to best fit your school community. This approach is designed for a two-hour event with 30 minutes of celebration in the beginning as families congregate, 75 minutes of creative career exploration and dialogue with the PTA STEAM Team and 15 minutes of celebration at the end. Consider having welcoming or closing remarks from your PTA president, PTA Reflections Chair and/or school principal.

- *Set-up:*
 - o Designate each classroom by career area.
 - o Decorate reception room and prepare refreshments, exhibits and performing space.
 - o Prepare the welcome table to include a sign in sheet, marked school maps, as well as PTA membership information.
 - o Create “Starting Point” cards that indicate the career area and location families will explore first.
 - o Hang directional signage where appropriate (including parking areas).
 - o Assist PTA STEAM Team with audio visual (AV) presentation needs.
- *Families Arrive:*
 - o Welcome families; encourage them to sign in and take membership card if new to PTA.
 - o Provide each family with a “Starting Point” card indicating in what room they will begin.
- *STEAM Opening Reception (30 minutes):*
 - o Families enjoy student and PTA STEAM Team performances or exhibited artwork.
 - o Offer welcoming remarks and direct families to their starting points.
- *Creative Career Fair (75 minutes):*
 - o Participate in 10-minute conversations with professionals from each career area (science, technology, engineering, arts and math)
 - o Move to next room and get settled within five minutes for next PTA STEAM Team presentation.
 - o Repeat until all families have explored all 5 career areas.
- *STEAM Closing Reception (15 minutes):*
 - o Families enjoy refreshments, as well as student and PTA STEAM Team performances or exhibited artwork.
 - o Families network with PTA STEAM Team, guidance counselors and each other.

Recommended Resources

- **PTA Take Your Family to School Week** – <http://www.PTA.org/TYFTSW>
- **National PTA Reflections®** - <http://www.PTA.org/Reflections>
- **STEAM Caucus** – <http://www.SteamToSteam.org>
- **Partnership for 21st Century Skills** – <http://www.P21.org>

Sample Letter

Dear {PRESENTER},

Please accept this invitation to join us as a presenter at {PTA NAME}'s Creative Career Fair on {DATE} from {START TIME} to {END TIME}. The Fair will take place at {SCHOOL NAME} for grades {GRADES}. By sharing your career experiences and insights with our students, you will be helping them learn about how the arts have influenced your work.

A Creative Career Fair is an interactive experience and powerful tool for career exploration. Together, families connect a student's current interest in the arts with tomorrow's career potential.

Parents will see how their investment of time and resources in arts education translates to a variety of careers including, but not limited to the arts. For example, we know careers in the arts have a lot in common with science, technology, engineering and math careers. As professionals, you all use creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration skills every day. This is the key message we want families to bring home.


During a Creative Career Fair, families will:

- Experience first-hand how you use the arts in your work.
- Understand how the arts have inspired your creativity, critical thinking, and communication and collaboration skills.
- Begin to match students' arts interests with specific career opportunities.

As a presenter – or member of the PTA STEAM Team – we ask that you prepare a five to seven-minute presentation (AV optional) answering some of the following questions:

- What arts did you enjoy as a student and what arts do you participate in now?
- What did you gain personally from your arts participation?
- What do you do professionally?
- How do you apply the skills gained through the arts to this work? Consider creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration.
- Which character traits are most important for your career? Can you connect this trait back to the arts? If so, how?

You will conduct this presentation up to five times for different family audiences. We encourage you to bring props, hands-on materials and handouts to enliven your presentation. If your job requires a uniform, please consider wearing it to add a visual element. We welcome any materials



you would like to bring as long as school policies and safety guidelines are met. Let us know if you will need audio visual tools, such as a laptop, screen, etc.

We will host a STEAM Reception that includes performances and exhibits of artwork. Would you be willing to share your artistic abilities? Please let us know. We would love to showcase your talents!

Thank you for considering this opportunity to bring your career experience to our students. We will follow-up with you to answer any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,
{NAME}

{PTA NAME}