

FIGURE 1: Timeline for planning STEM Career Conference event.

Prior to event	Tasks
4–6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with staff and administration to set day for event. • Obtain necessary permissions for event, according to district/school policies. • Review district/school protocols for vetting school guests. • Begin to recruit speakers.
2 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select presenters. • Confirm availability with presenters; request written presentation plan.
1 month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain written presentation plan from presenters. • Review presentation plans. Are presentations safe? What educational technology needs are required? • Assemble conference session descriptions.
3 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserve rooms for presentations. • Recruit student ambassadors to help with event day. • Students select individual conference schedules.
2 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students research careers and write questions for speakers. • Meet with staff to review event day logistics. • Meet with student ambassadors to review event day logistics.
1 week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm speakers. • Send welcome packet to speakers.
Day before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review behavior expectations with students. • Review overall schedule with students. • Distribute schedules and note-taking sheets to students. • Make and hang signs to indicate session locations. • Check rooms for necessary equipment/technology.
Day of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give list of guest speakers to office staff. • Set up hospitality area/welcome station. • Escort guest speakers to/from designated rooms. • Share events of the day on social media.
After	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debrief with staff. • Students debrief—complete reflection and feedback survey. • Students write thank-you notes. • Students create informational STEM career posters. • Email thank-you messages and feedback survey to speakers. • Mail students' thank-you notes to speakers.

STEM Career Conference Team Roles

The following list can be used to help select and direct a team of volunteers to carry out the many tasks associated with the STEM Career Conference. Depending on the size of your student population, each Lead Coordinator may wish to assemble a small team of fellow teachers, staff, parents, and students.

Title	Description of tasks
Conference Coordinator	Coordinates all team members, tasks, and timelines. Responsible for securing administrative/district permissions, vetting speakers, conference schedule, and conducting team meetings. All team members report to Conference Coordinator. We have found it helpful for the Conference Coordinator Lead and the Day-of Support Services Lead to use handheld radio devices for communicating during the event. We suggest utilizing such devices if they are available or coming up with a day-of plan for communicating urgent needs.
Community Outreach Liaison	Recruits potential speakers through networking with parents and local community. Provides potential speakers with information about event. Confirms community partners one week before event, one day before event, day of event, and follows up the postevent for community member feedback.
Speaker Support Specialist	Sends welcome packet to vetted speakers. Communicates with speakers to provide information about goals of the day and how to best design presentations appropriate for middle-grades students. Reviews written presentation plans and provides feedback to speakers in advance of conference day. Contacts speakers after conference to distribute feedback surveys and send thank-you notes from students.
Equipment and Safety Supervisor	Reviews written presentation plans for safety. Assembles list of requested equipment and technology for each presenter. On conference day, ensures that each room is equipped with necessary materials and equipment.
Student Scheduling Coordinator	Assembles conference session descriptions. Creates individual schedules based on student selections. Distributes schedules to students. Assists students with following schedules on conference day. Creates and posts signs to indicate session locations on conference day.
Conference Session Hosts	Provides support for speakers as needed and monitors student behavior during sessions. Helps facilitate question-and-answer sessions; must remain in room with speaker and students.
School Ambassadors	Greets speakers, assists with check-in, maintains hospitality area. Escorts speakers to/from assigned rooms. This is a great opportunity for parents, students, and community member volunteers.
Conference Day Support Services	Floats among conference sessions to provide help as needed. Monitors hallways during transitions. If your administration uses handheld radio devices for communicating between members of the admin team, inquire if the Support Services Lead and Conference Coordinator Lead may also use them.

FIGURE 2: Timeline for planning STEM Career Conference event: Sample schedule and note-taking sheet for students.

Welcome to the DMS STEM Career Conference!

Student name:

Overall Schedule:
Keynote 8:40-9:00
Session 1 9:05-9:25
Session 2 9:30-9:50
Session 3 9:55-10:15
Session 4 10:20-10:40
Session 5 10:45-11:05

My schedule:

Session 1:	Room number:
Questions:	
Notes:	

Session 2:	Room number:
Questions:	
Notes:	

Session 3:	Room number:
Questions:	
Notes:	

Session 4:	Room number:
Questions:	
Notes:	

Session 5:	Room number:
Questions:	
Notes:	

Don't forget...

- Be an active listener!
- Look at the presenter, take notes, and ask questions!
- Cell phones should be on silent and put away.
- Ask appropriate, on-topic questions. Personal questions, such as how much money the speaker makes, are not appropriate.
- Be respectful – you are representing our school community.