

THE FIRST 90 DAYS AS A SPECIALIST

This guide is a resource with suggestions that may be helpful in your job. Not all of the information will work for you exactly the way it is written because of your organizational structure, size, funding source, etc.

This resource does not contain all the details in operating a JAG program. What it does entail is a linear timeline to help you have a successful school year. It is an organizational tool—a checklist to prepare you before school starts and through the first two months of the year.

If you are unsure about any of the terminology and need more explanation, refer to your Specialist Handbook (Senior and Multi-Year Programs) or Dropout Recovery Operations Handbook (Dropout Recovery Programs)

BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS

A lot needs to happen before the students start attending your class. This basic start-up checklist will assist you in managing your time, learning JAG and getting ready for the students/participants. This is modified from Appendix C in Specialist Handbook and Appendix D from Dropout Recovery Operations Handbook.

MEET WITH SUPERVISOR/CSA REPRESENTATIVE

- ___ Secure JAG materials (Specialist handbook, Career/Professional Association Handbook, Curriculum CD-Rom, videos, Crossroad newsletter, JAG annual report, etc.)
- ___ Secure job description
- ___ Secure site agreement between JAG and site/school
- ___ Secure employee manual (for vacation, pay, hours, etc.)
- ___ Secure procedure manual
- ___ Secure calendar of events (staff meetings, training, deadlines, special events, etc.)
- ___ Secure performance evaluation instrument
- ___ Secure marketing materials (brochures, business cards, letterhead, logo, annual report, Crossroads issue, etc.)
- ___ Arrange for JAG Model training
- ___ Arrange for National Data Management training
- ___ Identify a Specialist you can observe, ask questions, receive coaching

LEARN THE JAG MODEL

- ___ Review JAG materials (Specialist handbook or Dropout Recovery Operations Handbook, Career/Professional Association Handbook, videos, Crossroads newsletter, etc.)
- ___ Focus special attention on Appendix A in Specialist Handbook or Dropout Recovery Operations Handbook
- ___ Write down your questions as you read through the materials

MEET WITH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OR SITE DIRECTOR

- ___ Identify office location
- ___ Identify classroom space
- ___ Secure a faculty handbook
- ___ Respond to any questions about the JAG Model
- ___ Attend orientation
- ___ Attend staff meeting
- ___ Find out about sign-out procedures when leaving school for employer marketing and job development
- ___ Ask for a recommended mentor to observe and help you integrate into the school
- ___ Schedule a staff presentation to promote the JAG program
- ___ Schedule a time to present at a school board meeting
- ___ Draft memo/flyer for staff to introduce yourself and program—place in staffs' mail boxes

COORDINATE PROGRAM START-UP WITH FUNDING SOURCE STAFF TO DETERMINE THE FOLLOWING:

- ___ Become familiar with eligibility process for JAG students, including all documentation required
- ___ Secure all funding source forms that must be completed
- ___ Discuss delineation of responsibility of eligibility documentation between funding source and Specialist

SET-UP YOUR OFFICE AND CLASSROOM

- ___ Office should provide privacy for interviewing and advising participants
- ___ Secure a telephone for employer marketing and job development
- ___ Make sure a computer is available for implementation of JAG National Data Management System
- ___ Identify the location of necessary equipment, including:
 - Computer modem (or access)
 - Laser jet printer (or access)
 - Fax machine
 - Desk and chair
 - 4-drawer file cabinet (2) – at least one must have a lock
 - Book case (1-2)
 - Wastebasket
 - Side chairs (2)
- ___ Secure additional supplies and materials
 - Stapler (staples)
 - Tape dispenser (tape)
 - Paper clips
 - Rubber bands
 - Pads of paper
 - Copy paper
 - Mailing labels
 - File folders (200)
 - Hanging file folder system
 - Appointment book and/or pocket calendar
 - Determine classroom needs based on inventory of in-kind supplies and needs
- ___ Place youth-oriented posters on the walls
- ___ Locate a bulletin board for announcements and messages
- ___ Design and print or secure membership certificates and/or cards
- ___ Set-up or review individual file folders and other materials in the file cabinet(s)

SETTING UP FILES

- ___ Student/Participant Folders—you may want to have a checklist on the inside of each students/participant's folder that would include:
 - Original Student/Participant Profile (S/NS/5Y/OS-1) signed
 - Original Student/Parent Commitment form (S/NS/OS-4) signed
 - Monthly Participant Activity Calendar (S/NS/5Y/OS-2)
 - Competency Record (S/NS/5Y/OS-3)
 - Pre-Assessment/Post-Assessment
 - Individual documentation that demonstrates attainment of competencies, i.e. tests, surveys, project reports, observations, rating sheets, assessment instruments, etc.
 - Student/Participant Contact Report (S/NS/5Y/OS-5)
 - Individual Career Plan and Graduation Plan for Non-Seniors. Individualized Development Plan for Dropout Recovery participants. However, it is good practice to have this for the Senior students as well.
 - Progress Report (NS-24)
 - Copy of cumulative record or previous year report card
 - Anything else a funding source may require
- ___ Other files:
 - Blank copies of Student/Participant Profile (S/NS/5Y/OS-1)
 - Blank copies of Student/Parent Commitment form (S/NS/OS-4)
 - Principal's Report
 - Community Service/Service Learning

- Civic Affairs
- Social Awareness
- Leadership Development
- Career Development
- Fundraisers
- Guest Speakers
- Marketing
- Job Development
- Initiation and Installation Ceremony
- Roster (S/NS/5Y/OS-10)
- Correspondence (news articles, letters, state information, etc)
- Recruiting information
- Funding Source requirements
- Lesson Plans or Competency Plans (S/NS/OS-11)

___ Create and post your classroom rules and responsibilities; discipline plan; and classroom procedures

___ Decide on icebreakers and teambuilding exercises the students will do during the first couple of weeks of school. The JAG Teacher's Tips Guide has several and the JAG curriculum has some too.

Getting organized is a great way to lower stress and clear the mind to think! The previous checklist should have helped you do just that. The next things to consider are:

- Selecting your students/participants
- Developing your curriculum delivery system
- Getting the Career/Professional Association organized

Below are many things you can do **BEFORE school starts**.

INITIATE STUDENT/PARTICIPANT SELECTION

JAG MODEL COMPONENT #4—STUDENT/PARTICIPANT SELECTION

NEW SPECIALIST IN AN EXISTING JAG PROGRAM

If you are a new Specialist in an existing program, the previous Specialist may have started or completed student selection in the spring. If this is the case, you will want to:

- ___ Call the students/participants, introduce yourself, and set appointments to meet them at the school/site so you can begin building rapport, learning about their interests, etc.
- ___ While meeting with each student/participant, fill out the Student/Participant Profile (S/NS/5Y/OS-1) if this has not been done
- ___ Verify information on the Student/Participant Profile (access students' cumulative folder, talk with principal, counselor, school nurse, etc.)

SPECIALIST IN A NEW JAG PROGRAM

If you are a Specialist in a new JAG Program, you will want to:

- ___ Talk with principal, counselor, faculty or other stakeholders (WIB office, probation officers, etc.) to begin identifying students/participants who may benefit from the program
- ___ Request a data report on students who have excessive absences, have not past state proficiency test, disciplinary problems, low GPA, etc.
- ___ Develop a recruitment strategy, including flyers, handouts, posters, etc. to be placed at a various locations where participants spend time

- ___ Send a letter or call the potential students/participants to introduce yourself, briefly explain the program, and set appointments to meet them at the school/site so you can interview them and explain the program.
- ___ Complete the Student/Participant Profile (S/NS/5Y/OS-1) during the interview
- ___ Verify information on the Student/Participant Profile (access students' cumulative folder, talk with principal, counselor, school nurse, etc.)

ESTABLISH AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

All JAG programs have an advisory committee to assist in identifying and selecting students/participants.

Senior and Multi-Year Programs advisory committees consist of representatives of the following groups: administration, counseling, basic skills faculty (reading, math, science) and vocational faculty.

Dropout Recovery Programs advisory committees are comprised of stakeholders that can support a Dropout Recovery Program from groups like: local school system (e.g. high school administrators, counselors, vocational faculty, etc.); other educational providers (e.g. adult education, GED instructors, community college representatives, School-to-Work partnerships); community agencies (e.g. homeless shelters, mental health services, workforce development); and juvenile officers.

- ___ Ask the principal or site director to recommend potential advisory committee members
- ___ Contact potential members and explain the program model and the role of the advisory committee

There will be more you will do with the advisory committee, but this will occur after school starts.

DEVELOP A CURRICULUM DELIVERY SYSTEM

JAG MODEL COMPONENT #7—COMPETENCY ATTAINMENT

The JAG curriculum is comprised of 81 competency-based modules and provides you with a variety of learning strategies and activities to use with the students/participants.

Students/participants are expected to complete JAG's 37 core competencies in the following categories:

- A. Career Development
- B. Job Attainment
- C. Job Survival
- D. Basic Skills
- E. Leadership and Teamwork Skills
- F. Personal Skills

Forty-four (44) more competencies are available in two additional competency categories.

- G. Life Survival Skills
- H. Work Place Skills

Things you will want to **do prior to the beginning of school** are listed below.

- ___ Review the 37 core competencies
- ___ Review the JAG curriculum guides (can be printed off the JAG CD-Rom provided to you by your supervisor)

- ___ Determine the order in which competencies will be taught. Traditionally, Specialists start with the Leadership and Teamwork Skills competencies (E). The activities give the students/participants a chance to learn about each other, teamwork, leadership, and followership. This will make a difference in officer elections and having a successful Initiation and Installation (I&I) ceremony. The other area Specialists weave in early in the year is the A.1 competency—identify occupational interests, aptitudes and abilities. These activities build awareness and self-esteem.
- ___ Create a course syllabus that may include: name, office phone number, classroom/office location, pager number, course description, course requirements, grading policy, required materials, disciplinary policy, and make-up policy
- ___ Secure a supply of other assessment instruments (funding source may require a specific assessment)
- ___ Identify possible guest speakers to enhance curriculum
- ___ Assess the capability to use computer assisted instruction for remediation and basic skills development along with development of JAG competencies
- ___ Determine if lesson plans are due regularly and the suggested format (from both supervisor and principal/site director)
- ___ Review the JAG Teaching Tips Guide if you are a first year teacher

ORGANIZING THE CAREER/PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

JAG MODEL COMPONENT #6—CAREER/PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

- ___ Review Career Association Handbooks (Advisor's, Officers', and Competitive Events) or Professional Association Handbook to become familiar with their contents
- ___ Plan how you will introduce and explain the importance of the Career/Professional Association to students/participants.
 - Suggested reading in the Advisor's Handbook are:
 - Unit A – National Career Association-An Overview
 - Unit B – Roles and Responsibilities
 - Unit C – Organizing an NCA Chapter
- ___ Determine how to handle seniors and non-seniors in the same program
- ___ Determine how to handle multiple chapters in the same building
- ___ Determine how to implement the Professional Association (DOR Program) if the participants do not meet regularly in a class setting

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- ___ Familiarize yourself with election of officers. This is the first thing the Career/Professional Association will accomplish.
 - Suggested reading in Advisor's Handbook are:
 - Unit C – Organizing an NCA Chapter
 - Unit D – Using Officers Effectively
- ___ Decide which portions of the Officers' Handbook you will make copies of for the students/participants
 - Suggested sections to copy from Officers' Handbook are:
 - Unit B – Officers and Committees
 - Unit C – Leadership
 - Appendix 2 – Characteristics of a Good NCA Member
 - Appendix 3 – Participation Rules
 - Appendix 24-28 – Constitution and Bylaws
 - Form 22 – Sample Election Tally Sheet
 - Form 23 – Ballot
 - Form 26 – Chapter Officer List
 - Form 30 – Member Commitment

- Form 32 – NCA Officer Information Sheet
- Form 33 – NCA Officer Profile
- Form 34 – NCA Chapter Officer Permission Form

- ___ Decide which teambuilding activities you will use the first few weeks
 - See Officers' Handbook Unit F – Teambuilding
 - See JAG curriculum E.26 – Demonstrate team membership and E.27 – Demonstrate team leadership
- ___ Ask supervisor if there is a deadline for chapter officer elections
- ___ Ask supervisor if there are state officer elections and the procedures
- ___ Ask supervisor the specifics for the Leadership Development Congress (LDC). This is a training session for chapter officers.
- ___ Consider asking a team of officers from a local civic organization to speak to your class prior to officer elections

INITIATION AND INSTALLATION CEREMONY (I&I)

- ___ Initiation and Installation Ceremony (I&I) is the second big event for the Career/Professional Association. Become familiar with this so you can explain the value to your students/participants.
 - Suggested sections to read in Advisor's Handbook are:
 - Appendix J – Initiation and Installation Ceremony
 - Appendix K – Initiation and Installation Ceremony Proposed Script

These two areas are a great place to begin before the start of school. If you have time, begin on the next areas. If not, focus on doing these once school starts.

COMMITTEES

Committees are a great way for all students/participants to have a chance to be in a leadership position. Student-led committees makes sure you're not doing the work.

- ___ Review in Advisor's Handbook Unit E – Using Committees Effectively
- ___ Review in Officers' Handbook
 - Unit B.13-B.18 – Committees
 - Form 19 – NCA Committees for the Year
 - Form 20 – Committee Assignment Sheet
 - Form 21 – NCA Committee Report

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR (PROGRAM OF WORK)

- ___ Review in Advisor's Handbook Unit F – Developing a Chapters Activities Plan
- ___ You may want to copy "Local Chapter Activities Suggestions" as a starting point for the chapter.
 - Officers' Handbook, Appendix 31-33 – Local Chapter Activities Suggestions
- ___ Helpful forms in Officers' Handbook
 - Form 27 – Program of Work Planning Sheet
 - Form 28 – Program of Work Monthly Plan
 - Form 37-38 – Chapter Activities Plan Checklist
 - Form 39 – Project Planning Worksheet
 - Form 40 – Project Action Plan
 - Form 41 – Project Action Plan Budget
- ___ Discuss with administration any specific guidelines on student activities
- ___ Secure a school calendar

FUNDRAISING

- ___ Discuss with administration any specific school guidelines for fundraising
- ___ Discuss with JAG supervisor specifics on fundraising (allowed, encouraged, where to deposit the money, etc.)
- ___ Review in Advisor's Handbook Unit G – Financing Chapter Activities

— You may want to copy two items in the appendix of the Officers' Handbook as a starting point for the chapter.

- Appendix 38-39 – Having a Fundraiser
- Appendix 40 – Fundraising Ideas

— Helpful forms in Officers' Handbook

- Form 10 – Budget Form
- Form 11 – Chapter Receipts and Disbursements
- Form 16 – Projected Chapter Budget Summary
- Form 17 – Actual Chapter Income and Expense Statement
- Form 18 – Chapter Receipts and Disbursements
- Form 35 – Sales Project Evaluation
- Form 36 – Chapter Fundraising Evaluation

FIRST MONTH OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

STUDENT SELECTION

- ___ Continue recruiting, interviewing and selecting students if you don't have a full load.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- ___ Prior to the start of school, you asked the principal or site director to recommend potential advisory committee members and you contacted potential members to explain the program model and the role of the advisory committee
- ___ Conduct an initial meeting of the advisory committee to identify potential program participants
- ___ Review JAG targeting criteria with the committee
- ___ Ask the advisory committee members to help promote the program among other school personnel and faculty

Avoid the selection process being driven by one individual (that includes the Specialist). It is important that the advisory committee accepts ownership of the targeted students and the JAG Program, otherwise, the Specialist is "on their own" and it is a big job when operating in isolation of other schools systems and personnel.

SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- ___ Conduct a presentation to the faculty and staff
- ___ Place information about the program in faculty and staff mail boxes
- ___ Circulate and network. Answer questions about the program. Ask for student referrals from the faculty and staff.
- ___ Make sure you understand school policy and procedures.

CLASSROOM—WEEK ONE

Plan to be flexible and get to know the students the first week. Some of the things that will happen the first week are below.

- ___ Fill out school forms
- ___ Fill out S/NS/5Y/OS-1 if they have not been completed
- ___ Discuss the JAG Program and provide a handout that is an overview
- ___ Discuss the Student/Parent Commitment form (S/NS-4) or Supportive Adult Commitment Form (OS-4). Take your time in explaining the importance of everyone's commitment and responsibilities.
- ___ Collect the signed copies of S/NS/OS-4
- ___ Explain about the Career Association. If your class load is set and you don't expect any changes, go into detail and begin discussing officer elections, etc. If you still have turnover, wait until week two when things settle down.
- ___ Do icebreakers and teambuilding exercises. To help learning take place, it is best if the students begin getting to know one another and building rapport with you. The JAG Teaching Tips Guide has several and the JAG curriculum ("E" competencies) has some too. This is also an ideal way for students to begin seeing the leadership potential in each other.
- ___ Discuss rules, responsibilities, disciplinary plan and procedures for the class

CLASSROOM—WEEK TWO

The following information over the next few weeks is a GUIDE and may not be realistic to your situation. What is suggested for week two may not be able to occur until week three and so on.

- ___ Continue with icebreakers and teambuilding exercises. Use the "E" competencies in the JAG curriculum
- ___ Track contact hours (S/NS/5Y/OS-5)

- ___ Discuss in more detail the officer elections
- ___ Discuss in more detail about the Initiation and Installation Ceremony
- ___ Track competency delivery (S/NS/5Y/OS-3)

CLASSROOM—WEEK THREE

- ___ Begin officer elections—use the Career Association Handbooks as your guide
- ___ After officers are elected, discuss in detail the chapter activities plan
- ___ Discuss in detail fundraising
- ___ Begin planning the Initiation and Installation Ceremony
- ___ May want to begin competencies A.1 – Identify occupational interests, aptitudes and abilities and A.2 – Related interests, aptitudes and abilities to appropriate occupations
- ___ Track contact hours (S/NS/5Y/OS-5)
- ___ Track competency delivery (S/NS/5Y/OS-3)

CLASSROOM—WEEK FOUR

- ___ Train the officers. You may need to meet after school to spend time and coach them on their roles, etc.
- ___ Officers plan the first meeting. The Advisor’s and Officers’ Handbooks have a lot of information to guide the officers on planning an agenda, taking minutes, etc.
- ___ Have the chapter meeting. A key agenda item would be planning the I&I.
- ___ Teach students about committees
- ___ Track contact hours (S/NS/5Y/OS-5)
- ___ Track competency delivery (S/NS/5Y/OS-3)
- ___ Prepare monthly activities report for all program partners

ENTER REQUIRED JAG DATA IN JAG NATIONAL DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NDMS)

- ___ Student/Participant Profiles (S/NS/5Y/OS-1)
- ___ Secure signed Student/Parent Commitment Form (S/NS-4) or Supportive Adult Commitment Form (OS-4)—hard copy—place in student/participant file
- ___ Record data on Student/Participant Contact (S/NS/5Y/OS-5)
- ___ Record data on Competency Record (S/NS/5Y/OS-3)
- ___ Begin building a Program Roster (S/NS/5Y/OS-10)

FUNDING SOURCE DOCUMENTATION

- ___ Provide funding source documentation

FOLLOW-UP

If you replaced another Specialist from a Senior Program or a Dropout Recovery Program, you will need to do follow-up each month with the graduates and non-graduates. JAG programs follow their participants for 12 months after graduation or completion of GED. Specialists assist graduates in securing a full-time quality job immediately after graduation. Non-graduates receive encouragement and assistance in completing a high school diploma or GED. Job placement is not the priority for non-graduates—education is the overriding goal.

- ___ Review the records and begin follow-up
- ___ Track the placement information and follow-up information on S/OS-9
- ___ Input into JAG National Data Management System

MEET WITH SUPERVISOR

- ___ Discuss status of program
- ___ Review system to ensure that guidelines are followed

SECOND MONTH OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

CLASSROOM AND CAREER ASSOCIATION

- ___ Continue delivering competencies based on the syllabus you created

- ___ Meet with students individually to complete the Individualized Graduation Plan (IGP) and Individualized Career Plan (ICP) for non-seniors. Dropout Recovery participants will complete the Individualized Development Plan (IDP).
- ___ Have chapter monthly meetings focusing on I&I, chapter activities plan, and fundraising
- ___ Inform students of state offices
- ___ Prepare students for Leadership Development Congress (LDC) and state officer elections
- ___ Continue daily input of data into the National Data Management System

EMPLOYER MARKETING AND JOB DEVELOPMENT

- ___ Develop employer marketing and job development plan
- ___ Contact employers to begin building relationships
- ___ Ask for employers involvement (guest speaker, job shadow, tour of facility, etc.)

FOLLOW-UP

- ___ Continue follow-up with graduates and non-graduates

MEET WITH SUPERVISOR

- ___ Discuss status of program
- ___ Determine the extent to which the JAG Model has been implemented
- ___ Deadlines for reports

ENTER REQUIRED JAG DATA IN JAG NDMS AND PREPARE REPORTS

- ___ Record data on Student/Participant Contact (S/NS/5Y/OS-5)
- ___ Record data on Competency Record (S/NS/5Y/OS-3)