The following steps help you to plan your Save for College Read-A-Thon!

☐ 1. Pick a Date
Define the length of the Read-a-thon. Pick a start and end date.
Start date: ____________ End date: ____________

☐ 2. Define a Theme
You can choose to give your Read-a-thon a theme that connects to your curriculum or keep it open.
☐ Unthemed
☐ Themed: ____________________________

☐ 3. Define the Rules
Define the rules for your Read-a-thon, considering the following:

- **Reading list**: Define whether all children are reading books from a predefined list or can choose their own books. In either case, the organization conducting the Read-a-thon should help families to access books, e.g. through a partnership with a local library or bookstore.

- **Reading times**: Define whether reading times are limited to reading sessions spent collectively (e.g. in the classroom) or extended to any time during the length of the Read-a-thon (e.g. any time outside of school). You can also choose to designate homework time for reading.

- **Counting mechanism**: For counting purposes, decide whether to track the number of books read or the amount of minutes spent reading. For younger children (K-1) it might be easier to count the number of books read. In addition, reading aloud and/or listening to audio books should be counted as reading time for younger children. Each child should set their personal reading goals to allow for differing reading abilities and levels.

- **Prizes**: If you plan to include prizes or giveaways, set rules on how they are distributed. This could be merit-based on an individual level (e.g. when a child’s personal goal is met or surpassed) or collective level (e.g. when a certain amount of collective books or minutes read are met), or distributed to all participants at a set time regardless of reading progress.

- **Collecting donations**: Parents or guardians are responsible for collecting donations for their child. This toolkit provides resources and instructions to help families do so.

Once you set the rules for your Read-a-thon, update the Read-a-thon Q&A to inform families about the rules.

☐ 4. Incentives
What additional incentives can you provide for students to read, such as small gifts or matching donations? Think of who in your community might be willing to support saving towards student’s future education. There are also school resources (such as School Dollars or i-Ready) that you might be able to use for the Read-a-thon.

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5. Create a Reading List

Providing a topical reading list might make sense for a themed Read-a-thon. When using books to include in your list, make sure to check for the appropriate reading level for participating kids.

Grade: _____________

Reading list: See pages 30 and 31 of the playbook for sample reading lists per grade.

6. Prepare to Offer Support for Building Block #1 and #2 Completion

Plan to make your staff available to help parents complete Building Block #1 and Building Block #2 prior to the Read-a-thon. This could include hosting a separate event, offering 1:1 appointments or making yourself available during office hours. For more information on supporting families to complete the Building Blocks, see the family orientation toolkit on pages 18 - 23 of the Engagement playbook.

7. Reading Sessions & Read-a-louds (optional)

Hosting reading sessions or read-a-louds and inviting parents to participate in those events can further motivate students.

8. 1:1 Family Session to Identify Champions (optional)

Depending on your audience, it might make sense to offer 1:1 sessions to help families identify champions to financially support their child’s future college and career training.

9. Closing Event (optional)

Hosting a closing event can motivate students to read and provide a fun environment to celebrate success.

- Location: ____________________________
- Date: ____________________________
- Time: ____________________________
- # of Invitees: ____________________________

Provision of:

- Food
- Giveaways
- Other: ____________________________