

# Apply Kansas

Partner American College Application Campaign

**Dream.  
Explore.  
Apply.**

## SITE COORDINATOR MANUAL

2022 Edition



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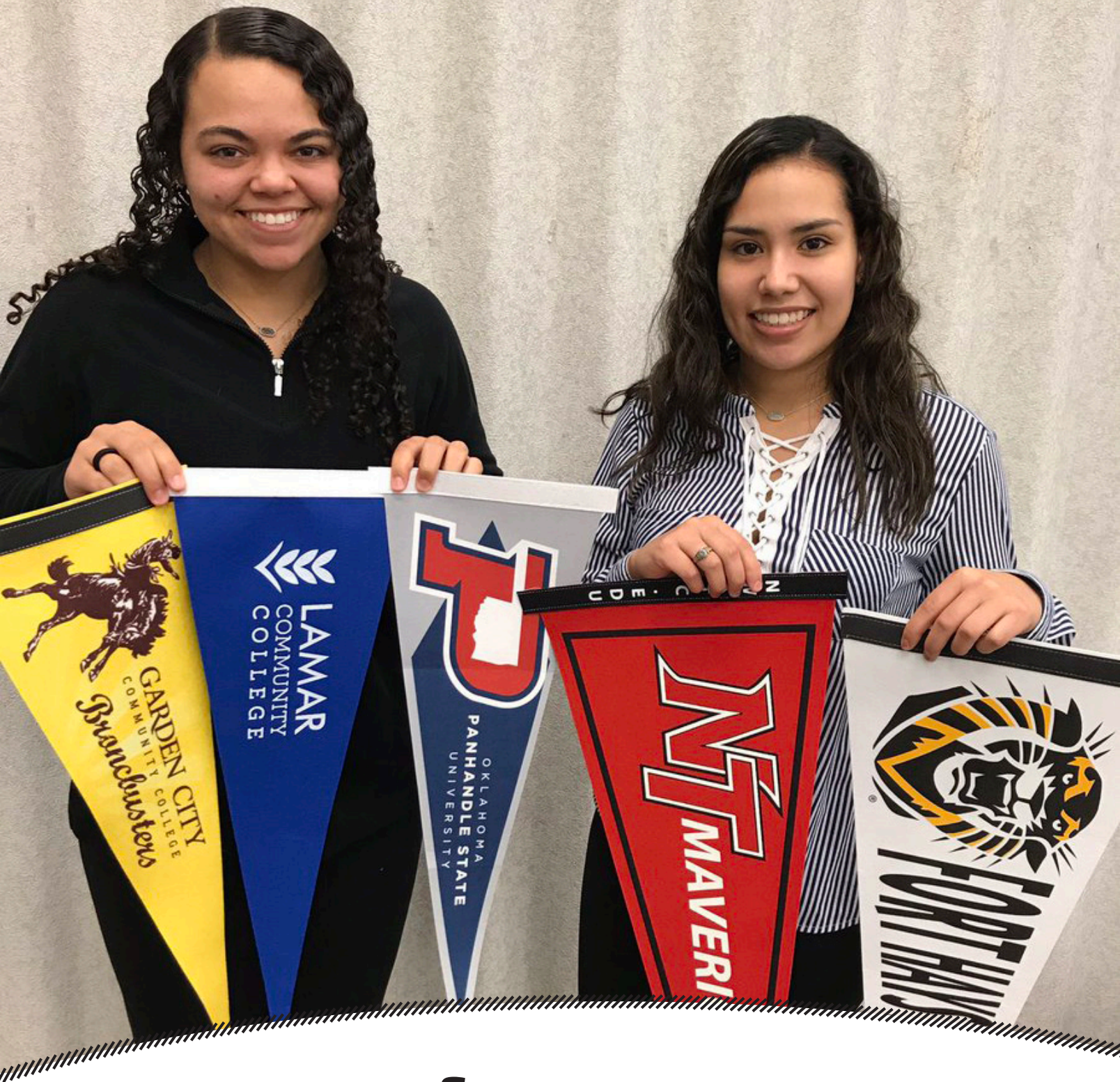
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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

## Welcome to the American College Application Campaign!

The American Council on Education is pleased to provide a home to the American College Application Campaign, a multi-state effort to increase college access through dissemination of ideas, development of practices, and technical assistance for implementation of a College Application Campaign event.

This manual gives an overview of the American College Application Campaign and particularly its efforts to assist states and US territories as each implements a College Application Campaign event. This manual is intended for high school site coordinators, typically school counselors, college access advisors, or assistant principals, as they plan and implement a College Application Campaign event at their school.

The ACAC initiative began in 2005, in a single GEAR UP program in a North Carolina high school in Chatham County. Since that time, the program has expanded nationwide. In 2014 ACAC took place in all fifty states. Apply Kansas was born when Kansas joined the effort in 2014 with one test location. Fast forward, and today, nearly 200 sites are scheduled to host events for Fall 2022.

This manual highlights the most effective practices from all states. We hope you find this a useful guide as you implement strategies to achieve increased college access in your school. Education access transforms lives!

Sincerely,

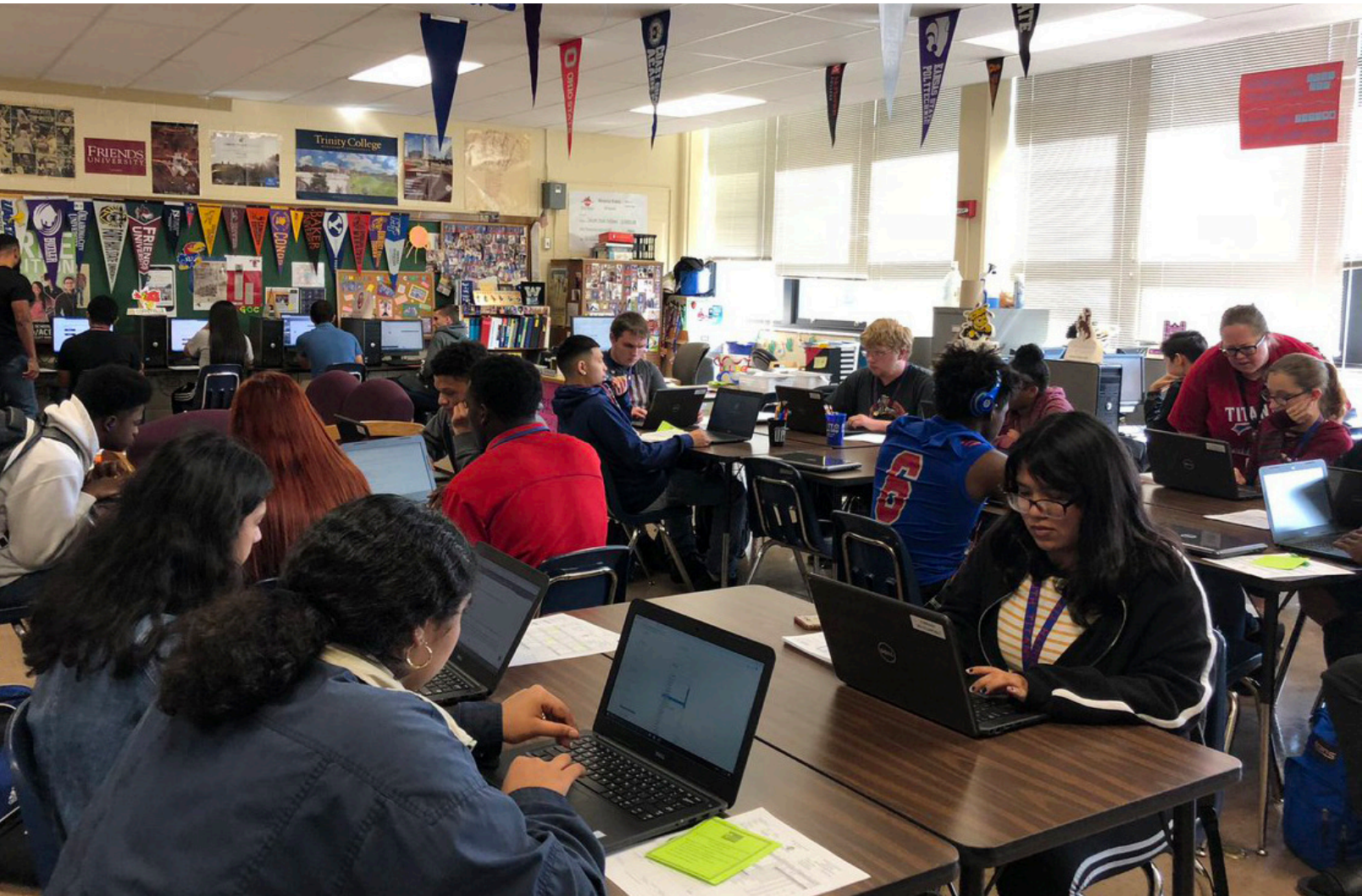


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# Joining the American College Application Campaign



The American College Application Campaign (ACAC), is a national initiative to increase the number of first-generation and low-income students who pursue a postsecondary education. The purpose is to help high school seniors navigate the college admissions process and ensure each participating student submits at least one admissions application. In January 2019, the ACAC program was acquired by the ACT Center for Equity in Learning.

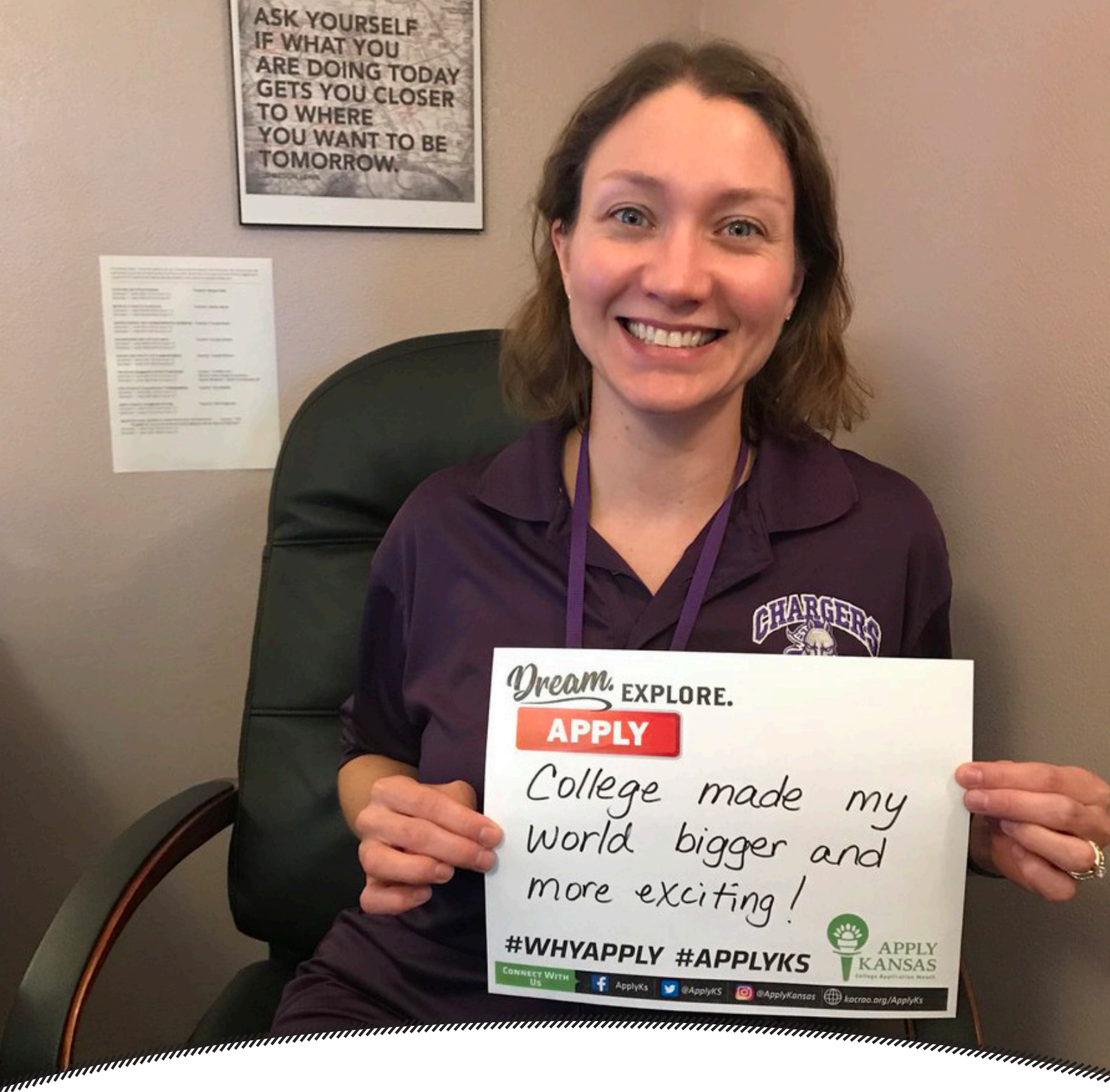
In November 2014, Kansas joined the effort with a small test school and expanded to a pilot program in 2015 with 11 schools, reaching more than 1500 participants. There is no participation fee or cost to join Apply Kansas efforts although success is heavily reliant on school buy-in.

## 2021 Year in Review

- **159 Schools hosted events**
- **7,818 Students participated**
- **11,506 Applications were submitted**







## SECTION 1: SITE COORDINATOR PLANNING



# Implementing a College Application Campaign Program: Overview

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPATING HIGH SCHOOLS

*High schools implementing a successful College Application Campaign event at their school will include the following as part of their initiative:*

- Hosting a program that is open to any student interested in applying with a focus on engaging first-generation students, students from low-income families, and students who may otherwise not apply to college. The Kansas initiative lasts for one month, but most schools host events on only one or two days, depending on the size of the senior class.
- Identifying and convening a school team comprised of staff and community members.
- Ensure that students are prepared to participate in the event. (students have researched the institutions to which they want to apply, provided transcripts, applicable fee waivers, helped seniors anticipate personal information needed on applications, etc.).
- Engaging the local community, families, and others through volunteer opportunities, information letters, and advertising the program.
- Creating a college-going culture within the school through a variety of approaches.
- Collecting data as requested by the State Coordinator typically including the number of students participating and the number of applications submitted.
- Following-up with students after the event regarding next steps in application process. (transcripts, sending test scores, completing the FAFSA, scholarship applications, etc.).



## Program Implementation at the School-Level: Site Coordinator

Each high school will identify a site coordinator, typically a high school counselor, college access advisor, or assistant principal, who will be responsible for implementing the program locally. Site Coordinators are responsible for recruiting and training all volunteers for their program from school teachers or staff, parents/PTA, alumni students, community groups or local businesses. Many schools have found success with one week for awareness followed by a week of applications, however we encourage all site coordinators to implement Apply Kansas in a way that will work with their individual school demographics, geography, and resources. Part of the success of the American College Application Campaign is coordinators having flexibility to tailor the program to best serve the school's schedule, population and culture.

## SCHOOL BUY-IN

Based on feedback from previous College Application Month campaigns, the schools with the most success during College Application Month had strong support and buy-in from the administration and support from the school district. Engaging teachers and other staff to help with awareness activities and application events also created a more successful event. Using student government representatives or other peer-to-peer mentors throughout the process was reported as very positive from several school sites.

## PLANNING AND COMMUNICATING THE CAMPAIGN PROGRAM

It is important that your school communicate the opportunity to students, their families and your local community. Suggestions for communicating and marketing your state's College Application Campaign event are available in this manual and on ACT Center for Equity in Learning's website at <https://equitylearning.act.org/acac/resources>.

Volunteers are a critical component of a school's College Application event. To assist your school in identifying volunteers from your local community, information letters intended for community partners and families of your seniors are included.

Although your school's program will not be implemented until the fall, it is important to begin planning for the program early in the calendar year or at the beginning of the school year at the very latest.

# Identifying Stakeholders and Convening a School Team

Schools that have successfully implemented a College Application Campaign event have done so through the collaboration of multiple stakeholders. A key approach to engaging stakeholders is the creation of a school team that will provide input on and support for the various logistics necessary to implement a successful College Application Campaign event at the school level. Below, you will find a list of recommended local resources that you can use to identify the key stakeholders in your community. Keep in mind that this list is not exhaustive and you should engage any other community partners that have a vested interest in college access and success. When planning and implementing your school's College Application Campaign initiative, you should follow all district and school policies regarding non-school personnel visiting, volunteering, or otherwise assisting with your school's program.

Potential community partners include:

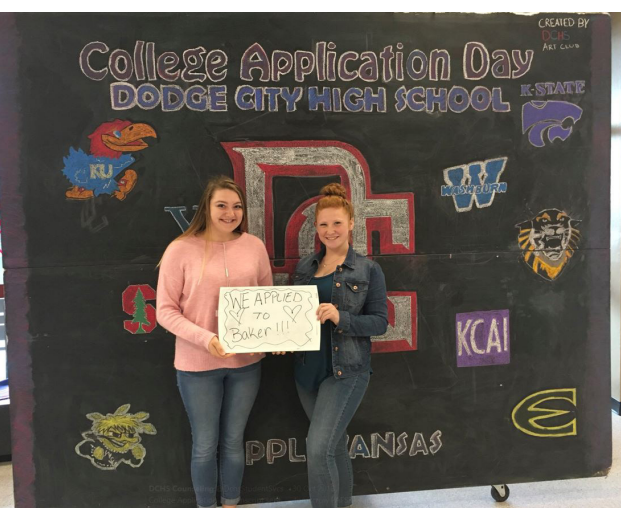
- ➔ Admissions representatives from local colleges (technical, two-year, and four-year)
- ➔ Local business leaders
- ➔ Local Chamber of Commerce
- ➔ College access initiatives (federally-funded, state-funded, or community-based)
- ➔ Faith-based community
- ➔ Non-profit organizations such as the YMCA, 4H, Boys and Girls Club, etc.
- ➔ PTO/PTA and other parents/family members who want to be engaged in the process
- ➔ Student leaders in your high school
- ➔ Retired school personnel

*Resource Appendix: (Resource 1)*

## Your High School College Application Week Team

Potential Partner	Name	Email Address	Phone Number
Administration (Principal, Assistant Principal, etc)			
Chamber of Commerce representative			
Kansas College Advising Corp representative			
Community non-profit supporting organization			
Faith-based community representative			
K-12 or K-16 Alliance			
Local Business Leaders			
Mayor's Office			
Non-profit representative			
PTA, parent, or school or community council representatives.			
School Board Association School Counselors			
School District Foundation			





## BRANDING

Apply Kansas: College Application Month is not a school-specific program, although implementation is done at a school level. This is a state-wide program working under a national umbrella and should be branded as such. All Apply Kansas: College Application Month documents and information are protected and is to be used only by participating partner schools. As schools plan and execute their own advertising, marketing, and communication efforts they must include the Apply Kansas logo in addition to any district or school logos; including all letters or communications to students and parents, handouts, any printed posters, press releases, and thank you letters.

## School Team: Agenda Items for your Convening

A school team comprised of a variety of stakeholders is extremely effective in creating support and buy-in for your school's Apply Kansas event. There are a variety of topics that can be and should be discussed with your school team.

### Key Topics:

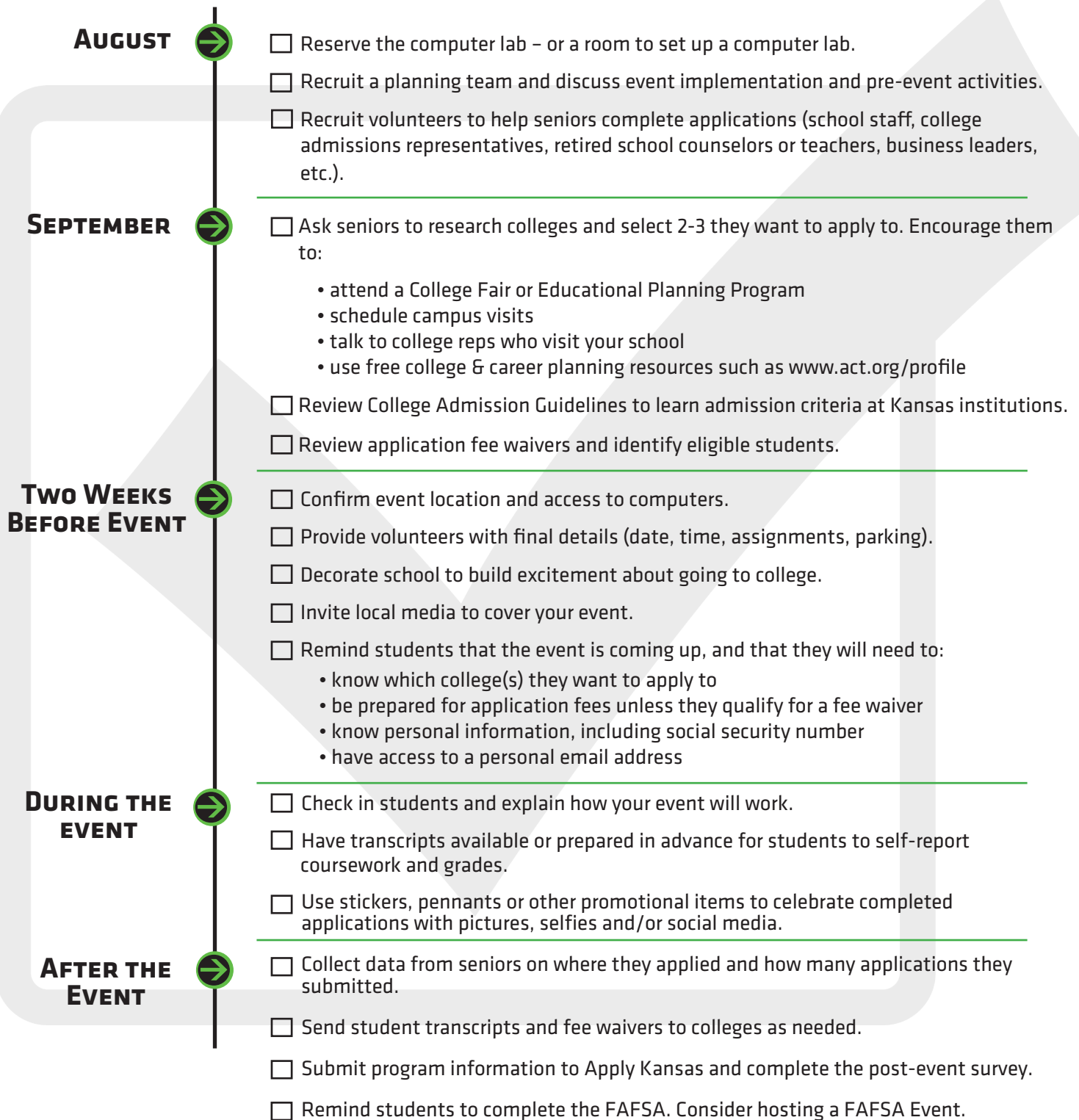
- ➔ What is the Apply Kansas, American College Application Campaign event?
- ➔ Outlining the role and responsibilities of the school team
- ➔ Identifying date(s) for the event in October
- ➔ Developing a communication strategy: student, parents, school staff, community
- ➔ Ensuring students are prepared well before the event (researching schools, learning how to pay for the application, understanding additional admission requirements)
- ➔ Creating or enhancing a college-going culture that is visible in the school in the weeks leading up to the event
- ➔ Requesting a Mayoral Proclamation
- ➔ Encouraging and recruiting students to participate in the initiative
- ➔ Including underclassmen in the effort
- ➔ Engaging volunteers
- ➔ Ensuring a process for evaluation and data collection
- ➔ Following-up with applications – ensuring the college and financial aid processes are completed

After your College Application event, your school team should meet to debrief on the successes and challenges of the current year's initiative – feel free to use the topics above to guide the discussion. The debrief meeting should occur as close to the conclusion of your school's Apply Kansas: College Application Month event as possible. By quickly assessing what worked and what areas need improvement, your school team can get a jump-start on planning for next year's program and create an action plan to follow-up with participating students who need to complete the college application and begin the financial aid application processes.

# Timeline: Implementing a College Application Program

Although your school's College Application program won't be implemented until the fall, it is important that your school begin planning for the program early, ideally no later than the start of the school year. Below, you will find a recommended timeline for your school's College Application Campaign program.

*–Adjust this timeline if your event is outside the official Apply Kansas: College Application Month dates.*





# Site Coordinator: College Application Event Timeline

## SPRING OR START OF SCHOOL YEAR

- Register your high school for participation in the Apply Kansas program ([www.kansasregents.org/students/apply-kansas](http://www.kansasregents.org/students/apply-kansas))
- During spring course enrollment meetings with juniors, make each student aware of the Apply Kansas application program and encourage them to begin thinking about and researching the colleges and universities to which they want to apply
- Print and review the current Site Coordinator Manual
- Establish a school team to assist with your school's preparations; host first meeting
- Add the Apply Kansas event to your school's master calendar
- Reserve the facilities (library, classrooms, computer lab, commons, etc) for your school's Apply Kansas event
- Will you host a kick off assembly for Apply Kansas: College Application Month? If so, determine date and time of kick off assembly, reserve auditorium and other necessary arrangements including possible guest speaker.
- Consider pairing with a FAFSA completion event.

## 8 WEEKS PRIOR TO EVENT

- Communicate the opportunity to students, families, and the community. This is a great way to recruit volunteers!
- Communicate with volunteers for your event or by making announcements at school meetings, PTA/PTO meetings, and/or parent nights. If your school has a criminal background check requirement, be sure to follow those guidelines.

## 7 WEEKS PRIOR TO EVENT

- Arrange a schedule for your event, including which groups or classes of students will participate at what time.
- Begin preparation lessons/activities with seniors in anticipation of the event. Making college lists, attending college fairs, college timeline lessons, etc.
- Review supplemental activities provided in this manual and determine which activities you want to use to make your school's event fun and exciting.
- Encourage teachers to begin connecting classroom lessons to your Apply Kansas program.

## 6 WEEKS PRIOR TO EVENT

- Provide eligible students with application fee waiver information. Discuss or create worksheet with payment options for students who do not qualify for fee waivers.
- Begin implementing College Application event supplemental activities. Recommendations are included in this manual.
- Contact the Mayor's office to have your College Application Day(s) proclaimed. If other schools in your district are hosting events, coordinate with them on the request.

## 5 WEEKS PRIOR TO EVENT

- Reconfirm that facilities are reserved for the event and that your school's technology coordinator is ready and willing to serve should any technology issues arise.
- Decide how/when you will collect your summary data. (At the end of your event, the end of the month or later date). Prepare the survey instrument and how students will submit that to you.

#### **4 WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR EVENT**

- Create a schedule for volunteers, taking into account the availability of your volunteers, as well as breaks and lunch.

#### **3 WEEKS PRIOR TO EVENT**

- Remind families of your school's College Application event using school communication methods, and let them know that their students may need their help to prepare.
- Send a message to your volunteers to give them the details of your event, including when/where to meet.

#### **2 WEEKS PRIOR TO EVENT**

- Remind teachers, counselors and administrators of the event schedule and ensure all seniors will have the opportunity to participate.
- Be sure that you have and use event materials provided by the State Coordinator.

#### **1 WEEK PRIOR TO EVENT**

- Make an announcement to remind students that the event is next week, and remind them that they will need to:
  - Know where they would like to apply
  - Have a plan for application fees and to speak with school counselor if they believe they qualify for a fee waiver
- Gather the information needed to complete applications. See sample worksheets to send home in resource packet. Some information may need to come from parents (residency information, social security number, etc.).
- Make final preparations for your event.
- Encourage school staff to wear college clothing on the day(s) of the event.
- Alert your local media about your event.
- Send volunteers a reminder about the event a day or two prior to your event.
- Place a reminder about the event of your school's website home page.

#### **YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATION DAY!** *Enjoy your College Application Event!*

- Welcome volunteers and thank them for their support!
  - Let them know what their role is for the day; ensure they receive a badge or sticker identifying them as a volunteer.
- Participating students should celebrate their completed applications with a selfie, pennant, sticker, etc.
- Ensure students get the Next Steps and FAFSA Completion event handouts after they apply to college.
- Take pictures, upload to Twitter and Facebook with hashtags, #ApplyKS and #IApplied

#### **AFTER YOUR EVENT**

- Submit your summary data to the State Coordinator
- Share your application data with school team, administration, parents, and other stakeholders.
- Communicate the program's impact with the local media
- Thank your volunteers.





## **SECTION 3:**

### **EVENT PLANNING & AWARENESS ACTIVITIES**

# Preparing and Implementing a College Application Event

*There are a variety of activities that high school site coordinators can do prior to, during, and after the school's College Application Event to ensure it is successful and meaningful for participating students. These activities are outlined below and samples are included in the resource appendix.*



## PRE-EVENT ACTIVITIES: CREATING A COLLEGE- GOING CULTURE AND GETTING STUDENTS PREPARED

There are several activities that schools participating in the College Application Campaign program can do prior to the event in order to prepare students and to generate enthusiasm and support for the program.

- College Research Worksheet
- College Application Worksheet
- Application Fee Waivers
- "Ask Me!" About It Signs
- Information Letters
- Phone Blasts/Email Blasts
- Sample Press Release
- Mayoral Proclamation
- Other Pre-Event Activities



## DURING YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATION PROGRAM

You have completed all of the planning for your College Application Campaign program and due to the pre-event activities, your students are prepared and the community is engaged in this exciting initiative. Use these activities and resources to help make your event a success!

- Ask Me! Button, Badges, Stickers
- Volunteer Tasks
- Student Instructions for Day of Event
- Reminders and Recognition
- Next Steps Handout
- Reminders for FAFSA Completion Event
- Selfies, Celebrations posts, social media



## AFTER YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATION

Congratulations! You have successfully implemented a College Application Campaign program for your students and started them on the pathway to enrolling in college next fall. The following templates and suggestions are provided to assist you with post-event activities.

- Collect Student Application Data
- Volunteer Thank You Letters
- Post-Event Press Releases
- Other Follow-Up Activities

As we all know, the journey to successfully enrolling in postsecondary education does not end with the submission of a college application. There are several more steps that each participating student will need to complete over the next few months including, but not limited to, submitting college admissions test scores, submitting transcripts (current and final), submitting recommendation letters, and completing and submitting a FAFSA. As such, it is important that your team implements a plan to follow-up with participating students.



# Pre-event Activities: Creating an College-Going Culture and Getting Students Prepared

## STUDENT INTEREST SURVEY

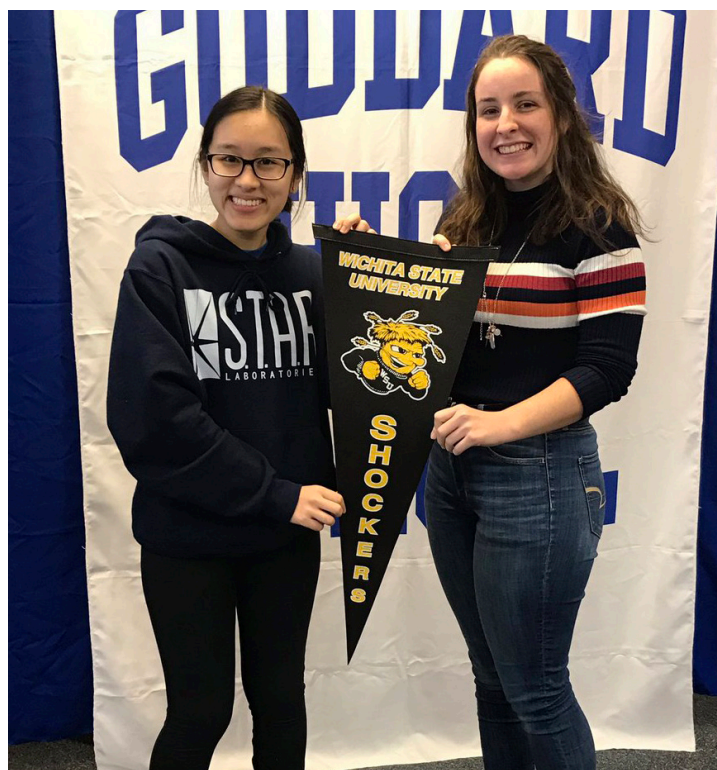
This can be given to senior's weeks prior to College Application Week (or the week before) to help get them thinking about where they want to apply, where they have a good chance of getting in, what programs they may want to study, etc.

## COLLEGE APPLICATION WEEK FOLDER

This has become a popular way to make sure students have all the correct information in some states. A folder is created for each student with their name on it, their current transcript inside, and copies of all Apply Kansas worksheets, informational documents, and the student survey inside as well as places for students to write down their username and passwords for college or university applications, and the Apply Kansas hashtags for social media. Students receive their folder either at their senior planning meeting with a counselor, or when they check in to the computer lab. The folders are theirs to keep and refer back to throughout their senior year.

## INFORMATION LETTERS

To assist getting the word out, sample letters are included that can be sent to parents and community partners about your school's College Application event. These should be sent about two months prior to your College Application event on school letterhead.



## COLLEGE APPLICATION WORKSHEET

This worksheet is an opportunity for students to identify some of the most common information asked on college applications prior to the event. Ensure students have this well in advance of the College Application event so they can ask any questions they may have before they apply.



## "ASK ME!" ABOUT IT SIGNS

This is a quick and low-cost way to create awareness and excitement for your school's College Application event. Send the "Ask Me!" sign to all staff members in the school – ask them to customize it to their school(s) and display it outside their classroom or office.



## PHONE/News LETTERS

To remind parents that the College Application opportunity is available to their child, a sample newsletter or phone blast is included. To ensure students still have time to prepare for the event, it is recommended that this is implemented at least three weeks prior to the program.



## DOOR DECORATING CONTESTS

Encourage teachers and other staff to employ students to assist them in decorating their classroom or office doors to reflect the colleges and/or universities where they earned a degree.

## SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

Contact your local media to inform them of your College Application event. If school policy allows, invite them to be a part of your program. Media coverage will help students, families, and the community recognize the importance of this program for your school and students.

## MAYORAL PROCLAMATION

Your state's College Application program State Coordinator is likely seeking a gubernatorial proclamation for the state's initiative. A mayoral proclamation for your school's event is a wonderful complement. If there are multiple schools in your area implementing an event, be sure to coordinate with them so the proclamation is accurate and reflects all participating schools.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is one of the easiest and quickest ways to share information, photos, and updates from your Apply Kansas: College Application Month event. Please see basic instructions on how to use social media, examples of Facebook and Twitter posts, and the Apply Kansas hashtags. In creating posters that include the Apply Kansas hashtags, you can encourage students to use their own social media accounts to share the event with their friends.

Pre-selected hashtags #ApplyKS and #iApplied will brand the Apply Kansas campaign and make those messages searchable and grouped online. For media-savvy schools or districts, utilizing your own high school hashtags can help further brand your Apply Kansas program. Follow @ApplyKS on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. You can also follow Apply Kansas on Pinterest for creative ideas to enhance your event.



**CONNECT  
WITH  
US**



Apply Kansas: College  
Application Month



@ApplyKansas



@ApplyKansas



[www.kansasregents.org/  
students/apply-kansas](http://www.kansasregents.org/students/apply-kansas)



## Other Pre-Event Activities

There are a variety of other activities your school can implement before your College Application event to help enhance the college-going culture and spread the word and excitement about the upcoming event.

### INCORPORATE COLLEGE APPLICATION ACTIVITIES INTO THE CLASSROOM

Ask English teachers if they would be willing to assign a college application essay, personal statement, or a scholarship essay as homework prior to the event. Students should be able to research the prompts on the college applications or scholarship applications to which they are interested in applying.

See if Civics or Social Studies teachers will lead a college match lesson where students research and identify schools that are a good fit to their academic records and goals. Educated citizens are more likely to vote and be engaged in their communities.

Ask Math teachers if they would be willing to do a lesson on calculating financial need and repayment options. A critical component to a student being an informed consumer is having an understanding about the cost of attending college, the financial aid that is available, and what, if any, repayment students will need to do. Investigating average salaries of students who graduate with their major is an important piece of the research.

The Federal Student Aid Office at the US Department of Education has grade-level checklists and research tools to help students become academically and financially prepared for postsecondary education. These checklists and resources can be utilized in classroom preparation activities:

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/prepare-for-college/checklists>.

#### MARQUEE

Use your school's marquee to inform and remind students, families, staff, and the community about your upcoming College Application event. Post this information about two weeks prior to your school's event: Apply Kansas: College Application Month Class of 2019 Applying to College on (Dates)!"

#### COLLEGE T-SHIRT/ SWEATSHIRT DAY

An easy and fun way to generate some excitement in your school is to host college t-shirt or sweatshirt days. Get everyone involved – students, staff, and administrators! Many schools will host these types of college spirit days on Fridays for a few weeks prior to the school's College Application program.

#### DOOR DECORATING CONTEST

Taking the "Ask Me!" signs one step farther, have staff and administrators participate in a door decorating contest focused on the college they graduated from or what college means to them. Students can then vote on which door wins and the winner can be announced the week prior to your College Application program. See if a local store is willing to donate a gift card to the winning educator as a prize.

#### COLLEGE WALL

Use a bulletin board in the school to celebrate the applications submitted by your seniors. Have students write their name and the names of the colleges they applied to on construction paper and post it to the college wall. Students who apply prior to your College Application event can participate and get the wall started. Students who apply during your event can join the fun and add their notes after they submit their applications.





## FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

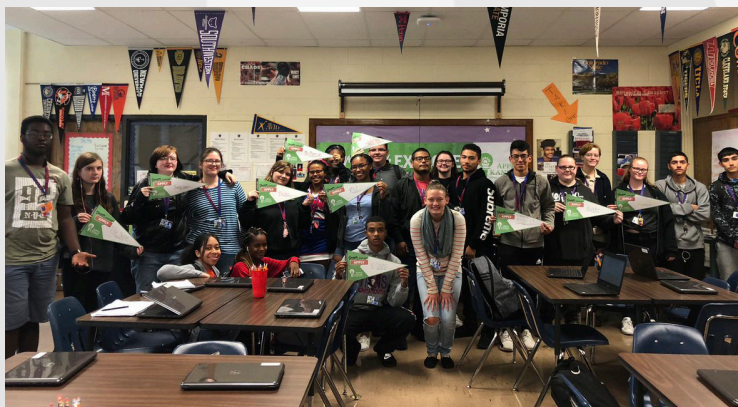
Set up an information table at your high school's football games to make students and families aware of your school's upcoming event. Make an information sheet available and a volunteer sign-up sheet for parents or community members who would like to volunteer at your program. During the game, have your College Application event dates flash on the score board.

## ENGAGING UNDERCLASSMEN IN THE PROGRAM

The earlier students begin thinking about college, the better. Many schools have started engaging underclassmen in their College Application event activities to create awareness and excitement for the school's event. This is a great way to ensure students are prepared when it's their time to apply to college! Here are some information sessions and activities you can implement with your underclassmen prior to or during your College Application event:

- ➔ **9th grade:** Decision making, learning styles, study habits, HS transcript and academic planning, connection between school and careers, how to qualify for a scholarship, colleges and the degrees offered, and college admission criteria
- ➔ **10th grade:** Progress check, extracurricular activities, earning college credit during HS, world of work, college costs and ways to pay, college visits (online), PSAT, PLAN, etc.
- ➔ **11th grade:** Money management, finding scholarships, admission process, college entrance tests, preparing to apply, writing personal statements and essays, etc.

Also, use the grade-level checklists available on the US Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Office website to ensure students understand the steps they need to take to become academically and financially prepared for college:



## MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Generate excitement by highlighting different colleges and universities during morning announcements on the weeks leading up to your event. Students, staff who are alums, community alums, or representatives from the colleges themselves can do the announcements. Make the announcements exciting by having speakers provide a unique fact about the school, sing the school's spirit song, or other creative approaches.

## GUEST SPEAKER

Engage a local community leader or a recent graduate of your high school who is attending college to speak with your senior class about the importance of attending college and applying early. Ask the speaker to encourage your students to take advantage of the College Application event that will be hosted at your high school.

## SCHOOL WEBSITE

Use your school's website to communicate the opportunity to participate in your school's College Application event to students, their families, and the community. In addition to adding your College Application event to your school calendar, be sure to include pre-event activities as well. Use your website to post any materials that you want students and their families to have access to prior to your event.

## PARENT/SCHOOL INFORMATION NIGHTS

Invite students and their families to an information night on your College Application event. Provide details on why your school is hosting this event, the importance of students applying to college early in their senior year, and the resources that are available for their students to plan and prepare for participation in the program. This is also a great opportunity to encourage family members to participate in your school's event.

The Federal Student Aid office at the US Department of Education has checklists for parents to use to track the steps their students need to take to prepare financially and academically for college:  
<http://studentaid.ed.gov/prepare-for-college/check-lists>



## **SECTION 4:**

# **COLLEGE APPLICATION PROGRAM**

# Application Fee Waivers

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Typically, fee waivers are available to students for whom the college application fees would create a financial burden or hardship. Students who were eligible for fee waivers to college entrance exams, such as the SAT or ACT, are usually also eligible for college application fee waivers.

## WHAT FEE WAIVERS ARE AVAILABLE?

There are three types of fee waivers typically accepted by colleges and universities, but it is important to note that not all colleges and universities will accept fee waivers. Students or school counselors should confirm with the admissions office at specific institutions to ensure fee waivers are accepted.

### ➞ ACT Fee Waiver

ACT provides a fee waiver application in their ACT User Handbook for Educators publication, link below. Students who are eligible for a fee waiver to the ACT college entrance exam are also eligible for a college application fee waiver. School counselors need only print out the number of fee waivers needed and sign-off on student eligibility. Students must also sign the form. The fee waiver may be found here:

<http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/FeeWaiver.pdf>

### ➞ College Board Fee Waiver

The College Board states that students who have received a College Board fee waiver for the SAT or the SAT subject tests may also be eligible for up to four college application fee waivers. Students should receive their college application fee waivers at the beginning of their senior year through their SAT accounts. College Board fee waivers will no longer require school counselor approval.

More information on the College Board fee waiver can be found here:

<http://professionals.collegeboard.com/guidance/applications/fee-waivers>

The College Board also provides additional information including a link to which colleges accept the College Board application fee waiver here: <http://www.sat.org/fee-waivers>

### ➞ National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) Fee Waiver

This fee waiver can be downloaded from NACAC's website, provided below. Students must complete their portion of the fee waiver request and a school counselor or TRIO representative must verify that a student is eligible to use the form (a list of eligibility requirements are provided on the NACAC website and on the fee waiver request – students must meet only one of the requirements to be eligible). NACAC recommends that students receive no more than four fee waivers for the college application process.

Additional information on the NACAC fee waiver can be found on their website here:

<http://www.nacacnet.org/studentinfo/feewaiver/Pages/default.aspx>

## WHO ACCEPTS FEE WAIVERS IN THE STATE OF KANSAS?

- During the month of October 2022 all public universities in the state of Kansas have agreed to use the same application fee waiver form in support of College Application Month. Students must meet one of the eligibility requirements listed on the form.
- A majority of the community colleges and private/independent universities in the state of Kansas do not have an application fee.
- During the month of October 2022 all private schools are waiving their application fee in honor and support of College Application Month.
- See [Apply Kansas Site Coordinator Webpage](#) for list of institutions waiving their application fees for Apply Kansas students.





## APPLICATION FEE WAIVER

Apply Kansas: College Application Month

[kansasregents.org/students/apply-kansas](http://kansasregents.org/students/apply-kansas)

Apply Kansas: College Application Month has reached an agreement with the public universities in Kansas (Emporia State University, Fort Hays State University, Kansas State University, Pittsburg State University, University of Kansas, Washburn University and Wichita State University) to allow this form to serve as a common fee waiver request form.

- ☐ Emporia State University    ☐ Fort Hays State University    ☐ Kansas State University    ☐ Pittsburg University  
☐ University of Kansas\*    ☐ Washburn University    ☐ Wichita State University

*\*form does not need to be submitted to KU. Fee Waiver eligibility is embedded in the KU application.*

To be considered for an application fee waiver, a student must submit a complete application and be eligible for admission. Application fee waivers will be awarded to admissible students who have submitted an application for admission, transcript, test scores and this form on a funds-available basis.

**Please complete this form and return it to the appropriate university's Office of Admissions.**

---

### To be completed by counselor/liaison:

To be considered for an application fee waiver, a student must meet one of the following requirements and submit a complete application for admissions. Please attach any additional documentation to support this request.

Student Name (first name, middle initial, last name) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

### Check all that apply:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Receives an ACT/SAT Fee Waiver                    | <input type="checkbox"/> JAG-K (Jobs for America's Graduates KS)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participant in Federal Free/Reduced Lunch Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Participant in Federal TRIO program  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participant in Project Discovery                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Upward Bound Program   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participant in GEAR UP                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Talent Search  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participant in 20/20 Leadership Program           | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Support Services   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selected as Kauffman Scholar                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Opportunity Center   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other unique need or circumstances (write below): | <input type="checkbox"/> Training Program for Federal TRIO Programs Staff   |
| _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> Participant in Expanding College Opportunities Program                                     |
| _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> Applying to Fort Hays State University (available for all student at Apply Kansas schools) |
| _____  |   |

I, the High School Counselor/Program Liaison, verify that the student named on this document participates in the qualifying program(s). I also understand that the Office of Admissions will not process the application until all documents are received and the student is admissible.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Counselor/Liaison Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Counselor/Liaison Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sponsoring Program, High School or College

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
State

# During your College Application Program

Samples of the following materials are included in this manual. Common uses for each are detailed below. The materials have been updated by your College Application State Coordinator to reflect your state's implementation.

## ASK ME! BUTTONS, BADGES, AND STICKERS

These are an easy and low-cost way for volunteers and school staff to identify themselves as a resource to students during your College Application event. If budget allows, create buttons or name tag badges that can be reused for future College Application programs. Otherwise, print these out on stickers or labels for the day of your event.

## REMINDERS AND RECOGNITION

Reminder Cards and Stickers – Two templates of reminders (a sticker and card) are provided in this manual. Use these the week of your event to ensure students remember.

Recognition Stickers – Similar to the “I Voted!” sticker we receive on Election Day, these stickers are a cost-effective way for students to proudly display their accomplishment – they applied to college! Your state may provide these stickers or you can easily print these on copier labels and have a volunteer assist you in distributing them to students after they submit their college application.



## STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS ON DAY OF EVENT

This handout details the step-by-step process students will need to complete during the day of your event including where to log-in to apply to college online, how to register for a FSA ID, and a reminder of the handouts available after the event. A critical component to a student completing the college admissions and financial aid application processes is submitting a complete FAFSA. The first step in completing the FAFSA is registering for a FSA ID. We encourage all participating schools to make FSA ID registration a part of their College Application event. All students participating in your school's College Application event should register for their FSA ID immediately following the submission of their college application(s).

## VOLUNTEER REFERENCE GUIDE

Complete this reference sheet and email it to volunteers prior to their arrival at your school.

## NEXT STEPS HAND-OUT

The Next Steps hand-out should be distributed to students after they complete their applications during your College Application event. The handout includes a helpful list of reminders and next steps that students will need to do in order to complete the college application and financial application process.

## REMINDERS FOR FAFSA COMPLETION EVENT

This manual includes a reminder for your state's FAFSA completion event that your students should receive after submitting their college application(s). You can assign the distribution of this reminder flyer to one of your volunteers!

## COLLEGE APPLICATION SIGN-OUT SHEET

Crucial to your ability to know who participated in the program, where they applied to college, and with whom you will need to follow-up after the initiative, please use a sign-out sheet to keep track of individual student's information. Assign this task to one of your volunteers!

# Volunteer Tasks

## How VOLUNTEERS CAN SUPPORT THE COLLEGE APPLICATION CAMPAIGN

Although familiarity with the college application process is a plus, it is not required for someone to fulfill a useful task and have a meaningful volunteer experience at a participating campaign high school. Here are a few tasks that volunteers could contribute to the initiative at any given campaign high school:

- ➔ Post directional signs in the school for the event. Good signage is key to reminding students of the event and getting them to the right place.
- ➔ Greet students as they arrive.
- ➔ Guide students through the college application process and help answer any questions students may have, regardless of where the student wishes to apply.
- ➔ Monitor printers to ensure that any applications that need to be printed remain in order and replenish the paper supply as needed.
- ➔ Share personal college experiences with students, as requested.
- ➔ Instruct each student to complete an evaluation of their College Application event experience, if applicable.
- ➔ Handout materials to students after they complete their college application(s) such as an “I Applied!” button or sticker, a “Next Steps” handout
- ➔ Congratulate each student on applying to college and encourage them to complete their admission file by sending in their high school transcript, test scores, or any other documentation that the college may require.
- ➔ Encourage students to share their experience with other classmates.





# Student Instructions on Day of Event

You are taking the first step necessary for going to college – applying! Apply Kansas: College Application Month is a program designed to assist you with this process. Be aware, there are several things you will need to do after today to complete the college application process including submitting a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) which will help you determine the financial aid you are eligible to receive.

## *The college and financial aid application process in 10 steps!*

1

If you are applying online, go to the college application website and find the colleges to which you are prepared to apply. Check with your school counselor or volunteer if you are unsure. If you are not applying to college online, get a hard copy of the admissions application from your school counselor.

2

If you think you qualify for an application fee waiver – talk to your school counselor.

3

Complete the application(s) to the colleges and universities to which you want to apply.

4

Make note of any additional items you need to submit with your application (essay, transcripts, SAT or ACT scores, recommendation letters).

5

Print out a copy of your confirmation page if you applied online. If you are applying through a paper application, talk to your school counselor about how to make a copy of your application. Keep the confirmation page or a copy of the application for your records!

6

Register for your FSA ID – you will need this to complete your Free Application for Federal Student Aid form. Many grants, loans, and scholarships will require that you submit a FAFSA so this is a very important step. Go [here](#) to register for your FSA ID

You will need your Social Security Number (SSN), your mailing address, and an email address to complete the process. REMEMBER YOUR FSA ID! Write it down if that will help you remember it and keep it in a safe place!

7

After you submit your college application and register for your FSA ID, check to see if there are any scholarship opportunities at the college or schools you are interested in attending and make note of any deadlines.

8

Complete the student sign-out sheet before you leave the computer lab. You will need to list the colleges you applied to and whether you completed the FSA ID process.

9

Be sure to get the handouts provided by your school after you sign-out!

10

Follow-up! Make sure you submit any additional information the colleges you applied to require. This could include recommendation letters, test scores, and high school transcripts. Also, the next important step in the process is completing your FAFSA. The FAFSA is available beginning October 1, 2022 at [www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov). Complete this as soon as possible to maximize your financial aid opportunities.

**CONGRATS! YOU ARE ON YOUR WAY!**

## Reminders and Recognition

***APPLY YOURSELF!***



***Apply Kansas: College Application Month***

***(High School Name)***

***[Dates of ACAC Program]***

***Apply Kansas: College Application Month Reminder***

***for*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***ALL Seniors***

***on*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***(Dates)*** ***at*** \_\_\_\_\_

***in*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***(Location)***

***(Site Coordinator's Name), (Site Coordinator's Title)***





# What's Next Handout

## *I've Applied...What's Next?*

Congratulations! You have taken the very important first step to going to college – you’ve applied! **During the program you also should have applied for and received your FSA ID.** Here are some tips and reminders of tasks that you need to complete over the next several months. If you have questions, contact your school counselor.

### **PAYING YOUR APPLICATION FEE**

When you submit your application, you may be required to pay an application fee. If so, you can pay your application fee the following ways:

- ➡ You can pay via credit or debit card online. Some colleges require a credit card to apply online. If you chose this option, you will need the following information: credit card type (Visa, MasterCard, etc.), credit card number, security code, name on credit card, date credit card was issued, or expiration date.
- ➡ You can submit your application online and pay via check in the mail. You will likely need to include a copy of your confirmation page with your check.
- ➡ You can choose the fee waiver option on most applications if you qualify. Check with your school counselor about this option. You will likely need to include a copy of your Confirmation Page with the fee waiver. Do Not Choose Fee Waiver Option if You Do Not Qualify. Ask your school counselor for more information.
- ➡ You can save your application, print it, and mail it in with your payment or fee waiver.

### **FOLLOW UP WITH TRANSCRIPTS, TEST SCORES, and other materials if needed (essays, recommendation, resume, etc)**

Many admission offices require students to submit additional information in order to complete the application process. It is important to find out what other information is required and send it to the campus ASAP! The more quickly you submit all the necessary forms, the sooner you will receive a response from the admission office.

### **SCHOOLS SHOULD CONTACT YOU!**

Once you have submitted your online application, campuses should be in touch with you via email or letter to inform you of the status of your application. Make sure to check your email! If you have not been contacted by the school within two weeks of your submission, get in touch with the college or university’s admission office to inquire about your application status.

### **NOW THAT I APPLIED TO COLLEGE, WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT PAYING FOR COLLEGE?**

- ➡ The U.S. Department of Education has resources to help you understand the types of financial aid, whether you qualify for aid, and how to apply for aid: <http://studentaid.gov/>
- ➡ Speak with your family and school counselor about your financial aid options.
- ➡ Mark your calendar for informational sessions at a college, university, or community center near you to learn more about your options.
- ➡ Complete and submit the FAFSA as early as possible. The sooner you submit the form, the better chance you have of getting an affordable financial aid package.

## After Your College Application Program

It is important to ensure that students complete their college applications by submitting other required materials institutions may require such as high school transcripts, college entrance exam scores, recommendation letters, etc. In addition, students should be encouraged to submit additional applications after the event if they did not have time to complete as many as they wanted to during the event.

Other post-event activities are included below. Samples of the following materials are included in this manual. The materials have been updated by your College Application State Coordinator to reflect your state's implementation.

### VOLUNTEER THANK YOU LETTERS (RESOURCES 17)

It is important to recognize the time, energy, and effort that volunteers contributed to your school's College Application event. A template thank you letter has been provided. Feel free to print this on school letterhead and mail. Or, if you would like to send by email, that is a great way to show your appreciation as well.

### POST-EVENT PRESS RELEASE (RESOURCES 18)

You notified your community that the event was coming up – now make sure you communicate about the success of your program! Use this template to update your local media about the impact of your program.

### UNDERSTANDING FINANCIAL AID AWARD LETTERS

Provide this information to students and/or host information sessions as financial aid award letters begin to arrive. These guidelines to understanding financial aid award letters are pulled directly from the Federal Student Aid office at the U.S. Department of Education.

Comparing School Financial Aid Offers

13 Things to Know when Evaluating Financial Aid Offers



### COLLEGE SIGNING DAY

**APPLY KANSAS, ENCOURAGES ALL HIGH SCHOOLS TO HOST A COLLEGE SIGNING DAY. INTENDED TO RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF STUDENTS AND THEIR DECISION REGARDING WHERE THEY WILL ENROLL IN COLLEGE, COLLEGE SIGNING DAYS CELEBRATE THIS IMPORTANT MILESTONE.**

### OTHER FOLLOW UP

As noted on the timeline and checklist included in this manual, it is important that your school team meet after the College Application program to discuss what worked and identify areas for improvement. This time can also be used to share the results of your program. Use the student sign-out sheet to understand the number of students who applied to college and the number of applications that were submitted. During this debrief meeting, the school team should identify a plan to follow-up with participating students to ensure they complete the application process (by submitting transcripts, test scores, etc.) and that they submit a completed FAFSA.



# Understanding Financial Aid Award Letters

The Financial Aid Office at a college or university is responsible for sending information letters regarding financial aid. It is important that you read your award letters carefully to understand the type of aid being offered and how you indicate the aid you would like to accept. The information below is provided by the Financial Student Aid office of the U.S. Department of Education. For additional information on the various types of aid, definitions of common language found in financial aid award letters, a budget calculator to help you estimate the amount of aid you need, and other helpful information regarding paying for college, please visit their website at: <https://studentaid.gov/>

When you receive a reward letter, there may be a variety of aid options available. Be sure to read your letter carefully in order to make an informed decision about what aid you will accept. The general rule is: accept free money first (scholarships and grants), then earned money (work-study), and then borrowed money (federal student loans). The following outlines the order in which to accept specific types of aid and some important points to keep in mind.

1

The first type of aid to accept is aid that you do not need to pay back: Scholarships and Grants. Make sure you understand the conditions you must meet (for instance, you might have to maintain a certain grade-point average in order to continue receiving a scholarship, or a grant may turn into a loan if you don't follow specific requirements.

2

The second type of aid to accept is aid that you earn: through work-study. Keep in mind, you don't have to pay the money back, but you do have to work for it, so take into account that that'll mean less time for studying. However, research has shown that students who work part-time jobs manage their time better than those who don't!

3

The third type of aid to accept is federal student loans: You'll have to repay the money with interest. Subsidized loans don't start accruing (accumulating) interest until you leave school, so accept a subsidized loan before an unsubsidized loan.

4

The next type of aid to accept is loans from your state government or your college: You'll have to repay the money with interest, and the terms of the loan might not be as good as those of a federal student loan. Be sure to read all the fine print before you borrow.

5

The final type of aid to accept is private loans: You'll have to repay the money with interest, and the terms and conditions of the loan almost certainly will not be as good as those of a federal student loan.

<https://studentaid.gov/complete-aid-process/accept-aid>

If accepting a loan, always accept the loan with the most favorable terms and conditions. If you have any questions or don't understand what types of loans are in your award letter, contact the Financial Aid Office at the college. Always ask questions and be an informed borrower. Make sure you understand what you're receiving and the repayment terms.

When it comes to loans, you should only borrow what you need. If your living expenses are not going to be as high as the amount estimated in the award letter, you can turn down the loan or to request a lower loan amount. In the award letter, the college will tell you how to do this. Use the budget calculator available on FSA's website to get an idea of your college expenses.

To tell the college what aid you are accepting, read and follow the directions on your award letter. Pay close attention to deadlines!

If you have questions about your award letters, talk with your school counselor, call the Financial Aid Office at your college, and/or visit the FSA website (<https://studentaid.gov>).

# College Signing Day



Apply Kansas encourages all high schools to host College Signing Days, “a simple and inexpensive way to celebrate our students, their accomplishments, and their futures.” Similar to athletic signing days, during which high school seniors sign a letter-of-intent regarding the college they plan to attend, College Signing Days are an opportunity to recognize the important academic accomplishments of your graduating senior class.

Here are some suggestions for hosting your own College Signing Day to celebrate the important milestone of your students deciding where they will attend college in the fall. Pick one approach, create your own, or incorporate all of them into your celebration! The key to a College Signing Day is to have fun and celebrate!

1

## ***Host a College Signing Day pep rally or student assembly.***

Have each senior come to the microphone and announce the college they plan to attend. Invite parents/guardians and high school underclassmen to attend the event to cheer each student’s decision. Invite a speaker such as a college admissions representative, community member, high school principal, or district superintendent to open the event.

2

## ***Create a College Signing Day Bulletin Board.***

Have students write their name and the college they are going to attend and post it on a bulletin board. Let your creativity flow in how the information is presented! Some ideas include: create a tree with branches and have student announcements on leafs; put a map of your state on the bulletin board and student announcements in the city/town they are attending college (have space for out-of-state students too!); have announcements written on graduation cap cut-outs.

3

## ***Print it in the school and/or local newspaper.***

Print college enrollment plans in your school newspaper, school newsletter, and/or the local newspaper. Some local newspapers may be willing to “donate” the page– so be sure to ask!

4

## ***Have a College Signing t-shirt Day.***

On your College Signing Day event, ask students to wear a t-shirt of the school they will attend. Or, they can dress up in their school’s colors. Encourage school staff to wear the t-shirts or colors of their alma mater too!

5

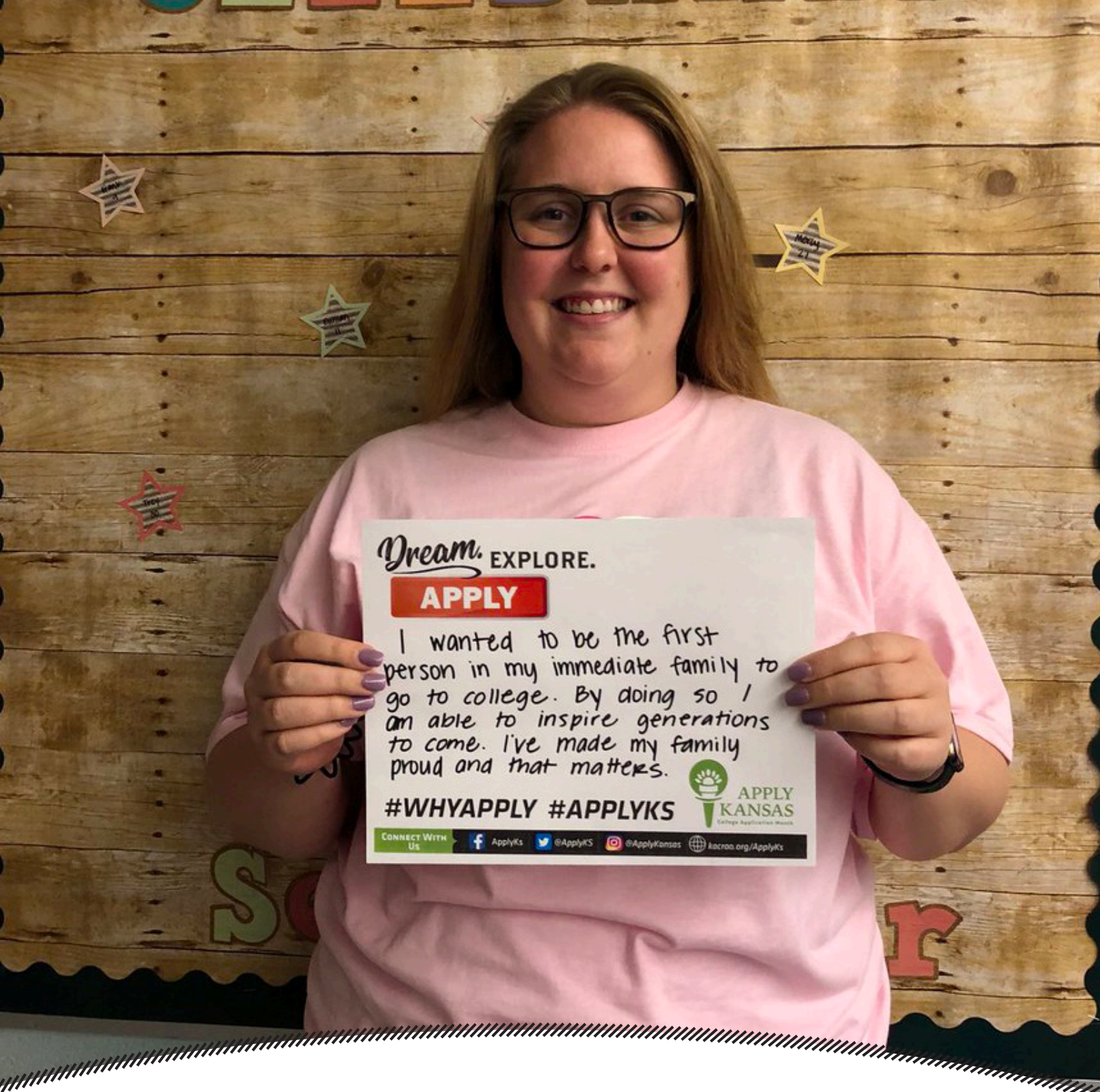
## ***Senior Class Vinyl Banner***

Get a plain Senior Class vinyl banner (some vendors may even have one to give you for free). Have seniors draw their school mascots & sign their names indicating their post-secondary destination. You can hang this banner at graduation activities or in the hallway for underclassmen to see. All senior names & destinations should be included.

Many colleges require that students sign enrollment commitment letters by May 1st. So, hosting your College Signing Day in May would be ideal.

Learn more and get a free college signing day tool kit at <https://www.bettermakeroom.org/collegesigningday/>





*Dream.* EXPLORE.

**APPLY**

I wanted to be the first person in my immediate family to go to college. By doing so I am able to inspire generations to come. I've made my family proud and that matters.

#WHYAPPLY #APPLYKS



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