

Timeline: Implementing a College Application Campaign Program

Although the College Countdown MS College Application Campaign 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. The timeline may need to be shifted based on the dates selected for your state's Campaign program and other nuances of your state's initiative. Most of these tasks will need to be implemented annually as your College Application Campaign program is scaled.

Site Coordinator: College Application Event Timeline

Spring or Start of School Year

- Register your high school for participation in the College Application program.
- During spring course enrollment meetings with juniors, make each student aware of the College 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 as provided by your State Coordinator.
- Establish a school team to assist with your school's preparations; host first meeting.
- Add the College Application event to your school's master calendar.
- Reserve the computer facilities for your school's College Application event.
- Ensure you have adequate knowledge of how to obtain fee waivers for those students who are unable to afford the application fees through College Board, ACT, NACAC, or institutional/state level resources. Links to these resources are included in this manual.

8 weeks prior to event, Week of: _____

- Confirm that your school's information is listed correctly on the state's College Application event website. Contact your State Coordinator if there are issues.
- Communicate the opportunity to students, families, and the community using the information letters available in this manual. This is a great way to recruit volunteers!
- Communicate with volunteers for your event using the Volunteer Manual, 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 your event, Week of: _____

- Arrange a schedule for your event, including which groups or classes of students will participate at what time.
- If your state is using a web portal for the program, ensure seniors have created web accounts, if applicable.
- Encourage students to begin career, major, and college research. Use ACT's ACT Profile www.act.org/profile/, College Board's Big Future <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>, Education Trust's www.collegeresults.org, and other appropriate resources.
- Review supplemental activities provided in Site Coordinator Manuals 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 College Application program. Suggestions are included in this manual.

6 weeks prior to your event, Week of: _____

- Provide application fee waiver information to eligible students. Discuss/create worksheet with payment options for students who do not qualify for fee waivers.
- If your state has a web portal, determine which students have not created accounts. Likewise, have students create accounts with The Common Application if they are applying to institutions that accept that application.
- 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 your event, Week of: _____

- If applicable, follow-up with those students who have not created state web portal accounts and those who have not begun college research.
- Reconfirm that computer facilities are reserved for the event and that your school's technology coordinator is ready and willing to serve should any technology issues arise.

4 weeks prior to your event, Week of: _____

- Create a schedule for volunteers, taking into account the availability of your volunteers, as well as breaks and lunch.
- Determine how your school will collect data to track student participation and applications submitted. Contact your ACAC state coordinator for guidance and state data collection requirements.

3 weeks prior to your event, Week of: _____

- Remind families of your school's College Application event using the phone tree and/or blast emails, and let them know that their students may need their help to prepare. Suggested information to share is included in the Site Coordinator Manual Part 1: Pre-Event Planning.
- Send a message to your volunteers to give them the details of your event, including when/where to meet.
- If using a web portal to apply, confirm that all seniors have created an account. Follow up with seniors as needed.

2 weeks prior to your event, Week of: _____

- 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 your event, Week of: _____

- 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.
 - Write required essays or personal statements, have them proofed, in a final version, and bring to the event on a flash drive or as an email attachment they can access.
 - Gather the information needed to complete applications. 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. A press release is included in this manual.
- 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.
- Confirm all volunteers and staff understand the data collection process.

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. Templates and recommended volunteer tasks are included in the Site Coordinator Manual Part 1: Pre-Event Planning.
- Students should register for their FSA ID during the College Application event.
- Participating students should “sign-out” of the event and provide the requested information.
 - This is a critical step for proper data collection.
- Ensure students get the Next Steps and FAFSA Completion event handouts after they apply to college.
- If required by your State Coordinator, students, volunteers, and/or site coordinators should complete requested surveys.

After Your Event

- Submit any requested data to your State Coordinator
- Communicate the program's impact with the local media. A post-event press release is included in the manual.
- Thank your volunteers. A sample thank you letter is included in the Site Coordinator Manual Part 3: Post-Event.
- Follow-up with school team to share your success!

The 3-part Site Coordinator Manual, referenced throughout this timeline, is available on the ACAC Resources web page. www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/ACAC-Resources.aspx

Site Coordinator Checklist

Use the checklist below to assist you as you implement a College Application event. The checklist includes the activities outlined in the Site Coordinator Manual, which is broken into three parts: pre-event planning, during the event, and post-event.

— — — — —	<p>Pre-event preparation: first steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print and Review College Countdown Mississippi Site Coordinator manual • Identify and reserve site for the College Application event • Add College Application event to school calendar • Identify a School Team to build support and assist with tasks; use Resources Audit available in this manual to identify members of team • Host school team meeting to discuss implementation of program at your school
— — — —	<p>Communicate opportunity to students, their families, and the local community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By information letters • By phone blasts • By posting information on school website, school newsletter, school marquee • Pre-event press release
— — — —	<p>Prepare students for the event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on activities that encourage students to research and identify schools that are the best fit for them. Use the College Research Worksheet available in the Site Coordinator Manual Part 1: Pre-Event Planning. • Sponsor and/or support participation in college fairs or college visits • Distribute College Application Worksheet for students to complete before event • Implement college exploration and preparation assignments in classrooms • Identify and meet with students eligible for application fee waivers
— — — — — — — —	<p>Implement school-wide activities to build awareness and enthusiasm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College t-shirt/sweatshirt days • College wall bulletin boards • “Ask Me!” signs on offices and classroom doors • Door decorating contests • Morning announcements • Guest speakers • Parent/Student Nights • Engage underclassmen in school’s College Application Campaign event • Get active on social media. Join the #WhyApply day efforts on Sept. 22
— — —	<p>Get volunteers involved to assist with the event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with volunteers (letter and/or email) • Assign tasks • Ensure volunteers have “Ask Me!” stickers
— — — — —	<p>HOLD COLLEGE APPLICATION EVENT!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure students receive a 10 Steps document before they begin applying • Ensure students register for the FSA ID • Ensure students sign-out • Ensure students receive Next Steps, and FAFSA Completion flyers • Be active on social media! Encourage students to take selfies and post using #IApplied

— — — — — —	<p>Post-event follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write thank you letters to volunteers• Submit data to state coordinator if requested• Host post-event debrief with school team• Release post-event press release• Follow-up with students to ensure they complete the college admissions <i>and</i> financial aid application processes. Help them navigate award letters.• Host College Signing Day celebration
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