

**State Partner and Resources Guide**

**Identifying Stakeholders and Convening a Steering Committee**

States that have successfully implemented a College Application Campaign event have done so through the collaboration of multiple stakeholders and existing resources and structure. A key approach to engaging stakeholders is the creation of a steering committee that will provide input on and support for the various logistics necessary to implement a successful College Application Campaign event.

The American College Application Campaign and the associated state programs are collaborative initiatives. As such, engaging education partners from K-12, higher education, the state financial aid authority, the Governor’s office, and pre-college initiatives is highly recommended at the state-level. It is also important to engage community-based organizations, the business community, media, PTA, and other groups dedicated to improving lives through increased access to postsecondary education.

The following pages are intended to assist your state in identifying potential partners and steering committee members as well as other college access initiatives that could be leveraged or complementary to your state’s College Application Campaign program. Keep in mind that this list is not exhaustive, and you should engage any other statewide partners that have a vested interest in college access and student success.

The ACAC team is available to join your initial steering committee meeting or as needed to provide insight on effective practices implemented in other ACAC states. Further, utilizing the ACAC team as an “outside facilitator” for your initial meeting(s) allows you to express your opinions throughout the conversation. Also available are a sample agenda of items typically covered in steering committee meetings and a state coordinator recommended timeline for implementation.

**Education Landscape**

Use the following table to summarize the education landscape in your state, including the number of high schools, number of postsecondary institutions, and information regarding a variety of college access resources and initiatives. Space has been provided at the bottom of the table for you to add additional data.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of public high schools in state |  |
| Number of school districts in state |  |
| Number of public four-year institutions in state |  |
| Number of two-year institutions in state |  |
| Number of private colleges and universities in state (if applicable, differentiate by private, not-for-profit and for-profit) |  |
| College navigation and college application website/web portals in the state |  |
| FAFSA completion events/campaign in the state |  |
| Point of contact for FAFSA initiative |  |
| College Signing/Decision Day events/campaigns in state |  |
| Point of contact for College Signing Day initiative |  |
| Are there any college access marketing campaigns? |  |
| Does K-12 or Higher Education have regional training or technical assistance locations? |  |
| What methods are used for professional development for educators or pre-college programs? |  |
| What is the post-high school educational attainment rate for our state? |  |
| Does the state have an educational attainment rate goal? |  |
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**Education Partners**

Use the following table to identify potential education partners in your state’s College Application Campaign event. Typically, representatives of these groups will be individuals already working on college access initiatives. Space has been provided at the bottom of the table for you to add additional partners, if needed.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Potential Partners** | **Name of Contact** | **Email Address** | **Phone Number** |
| Governor’s Education Advisor |  |  |  |
| State Board of Education/ Board of Regents, etc. |  |  |  |
| Commissioner for Education |  |  |  |
| State Department of Education |  |  |  |
| State University System |  |  |  |
| President of Community Colleges/2-year institutions |  |  |  |
| President of Independent Colleges and Universities |  |  |  |
| State or Regional AACRAO or Association |  |  |  |
| State or Regional NACAC Affiliate |  |  |  |
| State Financial Aid Authority |  |  |  |
| Career Education/Workforce Development |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**Pre-College Program Partners**

Use the following table to identify potential pre-college program partners in your College Application Campaign event. Typically, representatives of these groups will be individuals already working on college access initiatives. Space has been provided at the bottom of the table for you to add additional pre-college program partners, if needed.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Potential Partners** | **Name of Contact** | **Email Address** | **Phone Number** |
| AVID |  |  |  |
| College Advising Corps |  |  |  |
| Communities in Schools |  |  |  |
| GEAR UP – State and/or Partnership Grants |  |  |  |
| TRIO – Talent Search |  |  |  |
| TRIO – Upward Bound |  |  |  |
| State College Access Network |  |  |  |
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**Other Potential Partners**

Use the following table to identify other potential stakeholders in your state’s College Application Campaign event. Ideally, selected representatives of these groups will be individuals already working on college access initiatives. Space has been provided at the bottom of the table for you to add additional partners, if needed.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Potential Partners** | **Name of Contact** | **Email Address** | **Phone Number** |
| School Boards Association |  |  |  |
| School Counselor Association |  |  |  |
| School Administrators Association |  |  |  |
| Teacher Association |  |  |  |
| Financial Aid Association |  |  |  |
| Homeschooling Association |  |  |  |
| Business Committee for Education Organization |  |  |  |
| Chamber of Commerce |  |  |  |
| State PTO/PTA Association |  |  |  |
| Foundation or Scholarship Provider |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## Steering Committee: Agenda Items for your Convening

As outlined above, a broad-based steering committee including a variety of stakeholders is fundamentally important and critical to the success of a state’s College Application Campaign effort. Not only can steering committee members serve as advisors, they can also become effective advocates for the project and complete some of the tasks of implementing the program.

There are a variety of topics that can and should be discussed with stakeholders at your state’s College Application Campaign steering committee meetings. It is recommended that your state have a minimum of one steering committee meeting annually, no later than the spring prior to your Campaign event. Additional meetings closer to the Campaign event, especially for states piloting the initiative, may be helpful.

Some of the key topics the Steering Committee should discuss are:

• What is ACAC?

• Role of steering committee

• Dates for the event

• Host sites, both high schools and community-based organizations, as well as the approach to recruitment

• Training and support of participating sites

• Identifying resources and existing infrastructure to support your state’s effort

• Ensuring an inclusive event: incorporating all postsecondary education options, as well as military and workforce pathways in campaign events

• Securing a Governor’s Proclamation

• Using application fee waivers

• Marketing the program

• Developing a communication strategy

• Identifying potential volunteer groups

• Ensuring evaluation and data collection

• Identifying additional agencies to involve/engage

• Goal setting - scaling and expanding the effort

After your College Application Campaign event, it is strongly suggested that you convene the steering committee to debrief the successes and challenges of the current year’s initiative using feedback provided by the participating sites. Feel free to use the topics listed above to guide the discussion. The debrief meeting should occur as close to the conclusion of your state’s College Application Campaign event as possible. By quickly assessing what worked and what areas need improvement, your steering committee can begin its planning for the following year’s program. Any debrief meeting should also include your date regarding the number of participating sites, the number of participating students, and the number of applications submitted during the campaign.