

# 10 WAYS TO BUILD EXCITEMENT FOR APPLYING TO COLLEGE

## → START COLLEGE-GOING CONVERSATIONS

Leading up to your event, identify a date to ask all teachers to wear their college gear to school and to take 10-15 minutes at the start of each class to share their college-going experience. If classes are not meeting in person, share the answers on social media or in a short video. Some things for them to consider sharing:

- Where did they apply and why?
- Where did they enroll and why did they choose that college?
- Did they transfer, change majors, etc.?
- What were their fears, their concerns, and their successes?
- What do they wish they'd known when they were a senior in high school?

## → SHARE WITH THE COMMUNITY

Announce your upcoming event on social media and on your website. Host information nights at your school, your community center or library or as a webinar. Set up information tables about your event during football games. Use your high school marquee to inform families and the community of your college application event.



## → GET COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Leading up to your event, identify a date to ask all teachers to wear their college gear to school and to take 10-15 minutes at the start of each class to share their college-going experience. If classes are not meeting in person, share the answers on social media or in a short video. Some things for them to consider sharing:

- Reach out to colleges and businesses in your area and state to let them know you're having a college application event and see if they can donate SWAG – t-shirts, pens, gift cards, etc. – all great giveaways leading up to and during your event.
- Invite alums (during their college fall break) to talk to seniors about their college application process and transition to college.
- Invite local business and community leaders to share their college going experiences.
- Invite your higher education partners from the admissions and financial aid offices to family information sessions held at the school, the community center, the library, and with the faith-based community.
- Invite your partners to serve as volunteers during your event.

## ASK ME!

Ask all staff in your school to complete the [Ask Me! template](#). You can also make [Ask Me! buttons and stickers](#) for staff and volunteers to wear on the day of the event. This activity can also be modified for social media.

## CLASS TIME

Use class time to support the preparation of students. Ask Math teachers to create an assignment around college financial aid. Ask English teachers to require students to write a college essay that outlines their strengths and growth opportunities. For 9th - 12th grade, invite them to download the free college and career planning app called [Encourage](#). The app includes grade-level Journeys that align with [Redefining Ready!](#), an initiative that guides students through milestones, tasks, and timelines so they're ready for college, career, and life.

## BUILD AWARENESS

- Create a college bulletin board that provides details (size, location, popular majors, application deadlines, etc.) for the colleges in your state.
- Establish a College Pride Day where everyone wears college colors/college gear to school.
- Encourage teachers, staff and community members to show their college pride in their yards/on their front doors or windows.



## CHEER THEM ON!

As your seniors walk to the computer lab to apply to college, invite all 9-11<sup>th</sup> graders to stand in the hallway to applaud and cheer them on. Consider a motivation video if unable to gather the students together.

Mission Viejo High School in California  
(you can watch the full video here: <https://youtu.be/WAffZddXR84>)



## CELEBRATE STUDENTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Create a photo booth at your event for students to show off their **#IApplied**. Ask students to use #IApplied and tag ACAC on social media (Facebook: AmericanCAC, Instagram: @American\_CAC, Twitter: @American\_CAC) and your and your ACAC state campaign. #IApplied templates including a selfie printout and pennant are available under "[Day-of Event Resources](#)."



## → HAVE FUN!

- Have college trivia questions during morning announcements – students with the right answer are eligible for prizes (donated from your community!). Example trivia questions are: what schools in our state offer a degree in nursing? What school in our state has a wolf mascot? How many students attend Local Community College?
- Do college door or hallway decorating contests.
- Encourage a social media contest for best #IApplied video on platforms like TikTok or Instagram.
- Have your seniors play Human Bingo to learn more about the college-going experiences of your staff. You can find a printable Human Bingo template on the [ACAC Resources](#) web page.



## → CELEBRATE APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS!

Have students announce their applications by creating a bulletin board where they can share their news.

Set a goal for application submissions and have your students keep track of their progress.

Use the #IApplied pennant and yard sign templates from ACAC that students can tape to their lockers, place in a window, or put in a yard. Print it with #Accepted on the other side and you're ready for College Signing Day! Both can be found under Day of Event Resources [here](#).

