

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 9-11th 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, X: @American_CAC) 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](#).

