

INVITING POTENTIAL HOST SITES TO YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATION CAMPAIGN



IDENTIFY AND COMMUNICATE

HOST SITE RECRUITMENT LIST

The goal of the American College Application Campaign is to increase the number of first-generation college students and students from low-income families who pursue a college degree or other higher education credential. As such, schools that serve low-income communities (as defined by the free-and-reduced lunch rate at the school) should be identified for participation in your Campaign.

As the program grows annually, additional high-need schools should be considered for participation. However, it is important to note that, regardless of a school's free-and-reduced lunch rate, there are traditionally underserved students at all high schools and students who may not have plans to apply to college. The Campaign event is designed to assist those students at all schools.

In addition to identifying schools based on their free-and-reduced lunch rate, consider inviting schools with pre-college programs. These programs tend to serve traditionally underserved students. Many states have had success recruiting high schools with established college advising corps, GEAR UP, TRIO, or an AmeriCorps program. Often, these high schools quickly thrive as ACAC host sites because they have an established relationship with students and a commitment to postsecondary access and success that allows them to successfully implement and grow the initiative.

Another approach for finding new host sites is to consider statewide organizations that support racial/ethnic groups, people with a disability, and undocumented students that can connect with local high schools where the students attend.

Long-term goals should focus on ensuring host sites engage 100% of the graduating senior class to ensure every student has the opportunity to apply to college.

COMMUNICATION

Once the pool of schools are identified, communicating the opportunity in a clear, concise, and informative manner is essential to gaining the buy-in of school and district leaders. Superintendents, as well as principals and school counselors, at identified high schools should be notified of the program, provided with information about what is involved in joining the Campaign, and told how they can confirm their participation.

Think carefully about what agency should send the invitation to participate. Certainly, more than one agency can send the invitation, but all efforts should be coordinated and seamless so as to not overwhelm and confuse schools with too much information.

A sample invitation letter, recruitment form, and host site FAQ are available on the ACAC resources webpage and upon request. Using these along with the “Why Join” document can be an effective way of communicating the importance of hosting a college application event and what the expectations are. Most resources should be modified to align with your state’s program.

Each Year the State Campaign Should Know:

- How many high schools are in the state.
- How many estimated seniors in the graduating class.
- How many high schools the state campaign hopes to reach this year.
- How the state coordinator will communicate regularly with host sites to keep them engaged and informed.