
Engaging Your Community

1. Promote your event school-wide

- Register at https://www.ohiohighered.org/content/3_get_ready to become an Ohio College Application Month site. Once you register, ODHE will send your site stickers (for students), buttons (for staff), and one “3 To Get Ready!!!” poster to support the campaign (Additional posters can be downloaded and printed from the website).
- Talk with administrators about holding a kick-off “pep rally” to get everyone in the college frame of mind. Ask students to wear college gear from their favorite schools. Incorporate contests and fun activities.
- Enlist the help of student leadership. Student ambassadors from all grade levels can help share ideas, distribute materials, and help decorate the school.
- Get your campus clubs involved. See if they will promote your event on their websites and social media pages.
- Hang banners around the school.
- Request that teachers and staff post the “**3 To Get Ready!!!**” posters on their classroom doors or bulletin boards.
- Make use of:
 - Morning announcements
 - School and district websites
 - School kiosk
 - School newspaper
 - School newsletters

2. Engage with teachers.

Enlisting the help of teachers to help create enthusiasm for your event gives them a stake in creating a college-going culture. It will also let your students know that the whole school is behind them in their quest to obtain a postsecondary education.

Teachers can help in the following ways:

- Essays, personal statements can be done in English class
- Math teachers can build a lesson around personal finance and budgeting
- Social Studies teachers can lead a college match lesson where students research and identify schools that are a good fit for their academic records and goals
- All teachers can take time at the start or end of class to talk about their college experience and answer questions for students

3. Engage your students’ parents or caregivers.

Be sure to keep your students’ parents informed about the College Application Campaign

Encourage parents to:

- Talk to their child about their future education plans
- Encourage them to complete the College Pre-Application Data Collection Form and bring it to school on the day(s) of the event
- To ask you any questions they may have about the event or the child's plans for after graduation

4. Create a “college wall” or “college thermometer”.

Seniors write the names of the colleges to which they have applied or are going to apply to on banners or strips of construction paper to hang in the main hallway. Highlight the names when acceptance letters are received. A “College Thermometer” can be used to gauge the number of seniors who have completed a college application with the target being 100% of all seniors. Utilize art teachers for additional promotional materials to create a college-going atmosphere around the school.

5. Widely publicize students’ college aspirations.

Interview seniors about their college plans and send to local newspapers. Create a special section in the student newspaper that gives the names of the seniors and their prospective colleges announcing applications submitted and acceptances.

6. Engage your community.

Ask local businesses, especially those where your students and their families shop, to show their support of students’ college aspirations and your event by hanging a poster promoting your event in their storefront. Don’t forget to ask your local Elks lodge, VFW Posts and other organizations to do the same.

7. Invite a guest speaker to your event as part of a kick-off ceremony.

Invite a prominent member of your community or alumnus from your school to elaborate from personal experience the importance of applying to and completing college.

8. Provide low-cost or free giveaways.

Hold drawings or coordinate contests during your event. Ask colleges and universities to donate promotional items (banners, hats, t-shirts, etc.) and businesses to provide donations students can use in their first year of college (e.g. microwaves, coffee pots, XL twin sheet sets, gas cards, etc.) to use during your event.

Ask a local restaurant, café or bakery to celebrate participating students by offering a tasty treat to anyone wearing their ***I applied to college*** button, badge, sticker, or label.