



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TUESDAY, March 30, 2021

Sebring High School Named School of Excellence by ACT's American College Application Campaign

Sebring High School in Sebring, Florida (Highlands County) today received national recognition for its work to increase the number of first-generation college students and students from low-income families who are pursuing a college degree or other higher education credential.

The [American College Application Campaign](#) (ACAC) and the Florida College Access Network have awarded Sebring High School as the 2020 School of Excellence for Florida. ACAC, which is part of [ACT's Center for Equity in Learning](#), selected Sebring High School based on three criteria:

- its commitment to student success;
- for serving as an exemplary model within the state's college application campaign; and
- for timely submission of data.

Deena Wright, College Coach & Teacher at Sebring High said, "Every senior attends College Application Week during their English class period the first week of October to learn how to complete a college application. Leading up to College Application Week, English teachers share information in class about how to research a college and degrees."

Wright added, "During College Application Week, each senior completes a minimum of one online college or university application with my help and the help of the Sebring High Peer Leader student team. Students planning to enlist in the military still complete an application so that they have the experience for the future. Sebring High really creates an atmosphere of students planning for success after high school throughout the year! "

ACAC Director Lisa King said, "Congratulations to Sebring High School for its vision and leadership—you've led the way in your community, your state and for the nation. We are thrilled to take this moment to recognize your impactful work, especially in difficult times. We join you in celebrating the achievements of the class of 2021. At the same time, we know you have already begun preparing the class of 2022 for their application season and we look forward to building momentum with you to achieve success next year."

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The winning schools all played key roles in helping ACAC reach the following national achievements, as reported by state campaigns on the 2020 annual survey:

- Nearly 5,600 high schools (almost one quarter of [high schools in the U.S.](#)) hosted a College Application Campaign event.
- More than 363,000 seniors submitted at least one college application during events.
- Nearly 628,000 college applications were submitted during 2020 College Application Campaign events.
- Additionally, younger students also learned about the college-going process during events hosted by 750 elementary and middle schools or community-based organizations.

Schools will receive a plaque and will be recognized during FCAN's second Virtual Awards ceremony.

"While we are unable to meet in person to present this award to Sebring High School, we want to spotlight them for being an exemplary school in the Apply Yourself Florida college application campaign this past fall," said LaVerne Handfield, FCAN's Programs Coordinator.

Nationally, more than 3.69 million students have been served by ACAC and 5.99 million applications have been submitted since the Campaign began in 2005.

About the American College Application Campaign

The American College Application Campaign® (ACAC) is a national initiative designed to increase the number of first-generation college students and students from low-income families who pursue a postsecondary degree. The purpose is to assist high school seniors as they navigate the college application and admissions process and ensure each participating student submits at least one admissions application.

The Campaign is conducted state by state and each state determines which week or month is officially designated as the College Application Campaign. Events across the country often take place between September-December. <https://equityinlearning.act.org/acac/>

About ACT's Center for Equity in Learning

ACT's Center for Equity in Learning focuses on closing gaps in equity, opportunity, and achievement for underserved populations and working learners. Through purposeful investments, employee engagement, and thoughtful advocacy efforts, the Center supports innovative partnerships, actionable research, initiatives, campaigns, and programs to further ACT's mission of helping people achieve education and workplace success. <http://equityinlearning.act.org>

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About Apply Yourself Florida

Apply Yourself Florida is one of four College Ready Florida statewide initiatives led by the Florida College Access Network as part of the national effort to increase the number of low-income and first-generation students applying to college. This initiative gives students the opportunity to complete their college applications during normal school hours with the help of trained volunteers. Florida is proud to have participated in the American College Application Campaign since 2014.

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