



**APPLY
YOURSELF
FLORIDA**

*2022 Site Coordinator
Toolkit*

ACAC
American College Application Campaign

FLORIDA
COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK

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Dear College Access Champion,

On behalf of Florida College Access Network (FCAN) ***thank you for participating in Apply Yourself Florida!*** This initiative would not be possible without the work of schools and community-based organizations like yours across the state!

Apply Yourself Florida is one of four statewide initiatives that encourage and support high school seniors as they take their next educational steps. FCAN also coordinates the [**Florida FAFSA Challenge**](#), [**Florida College Decision Day**](#) and [**Plan It Florida**](#). These initiatives assist high school seniors with applying for financial aid, celebrating students plans for life after high school, and ensuring every Florida student graduates high school with a college or career plan. We look forward to your organization participating in Apply Yourself Florida and, we hope, all four College Ready Florida initiatives!

This guide offers an overview of Apply Yourself Florida and provides resources to help you implement the initiative. [You can find additional resources here.](#)

Please share your successful strategies with us! Much of what makes this toolkit helpful is the many successful strategies shared with us from schools like yours around the state. Your story will help fellow coordinators host impactful programs at their schools. We may even feature your achievements throughout the campaign on our blog or social media!

Contact Adriana Pavicic, community engagement coordinator, at apavicic@floridacollegeaccess.org with questions and suggestions.

FCAN's work is possible thanks to the generous support of



Cornerstone Funder

About Florida College Access Network

Florida College Access Network (FCAN) is the heart of a movement to ensure today's students are prepared for tomorrow's jobs.

Our Mission: We lead the collaborative movement to ensure every Floridian achieves an education beyond high school and a rewarding career.

Our Vision: We envision a Florida working together where education is the pathway to economic mobility for all.

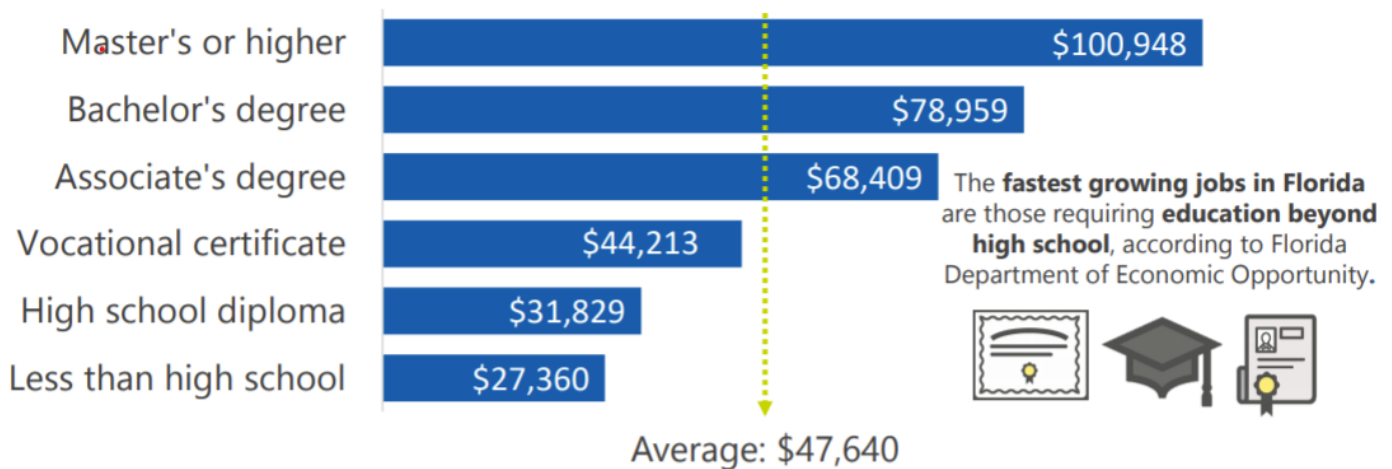
Our work is guided by our Seven Conditions for Success:

1. **Opportunity for Everyone:** To build a talent-strong economy, all Floridians need access to a postsecondary education and the supports to complete it.
2. **Clear information and guidance:** Students of all ages and families need exposure and counseling early and often to make informed decisions about their futures.
3. **Affordable:** Postsecondary education needs to be within everyone's financial reach, regardless of household income or life circumstances.
4. **Multiple Pathways to Success:** Floridians benefit from multiple learning opportunities for academic achievement and career advancement.
5. **Lifelong learning:** No degree or credential is "one and done;" Floridians need to prepare for career changes through continuous learning.
6. **Effective use of data:** Transparent access to data on education and economic outcomes, especially for Florida's diverse populations, help achieve our goals.
7. **Community Collaboration:** When community partners work together toward a shared vision, they remove barriers, build a robust workforce, and improve the quality of life for their regions.

The More You Learn, The More You Earn!

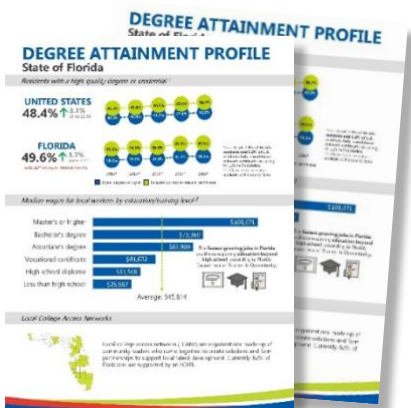
By the time today's students enter the workforce, 2 out of every 3 jobs in Florida will require a degree or credential beyond high school. The word "college" is used to describe any high-quality, credential-granting **education or training beyond high school**, including **2-year degrees, 4-year degrees, technical certificates** and **industry-recognized credentials**.

Median wages for local workers by education/training level ²



Why College Matters

- **Higher education levels** lead to higher paying jobs and **more lifetime earnings** - **\$1 million** more on average for those with a bachelor's degree vs. a high school diploma.
- Today's students need a postsecondary degree or credential to **earn a middle-class income**.
- By the year 2025, **67% of jobs** will require education beyond high school; currently, **only 52.7% of Floridians** hold such a credential.



Learn about Your County's Degree Attainment

Download your county's degree attainment profile to learn more about your area's college-going rates

² Average earnings: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, 2019.

About Apply Yourself Florida

Apply Yourself Florida is part of the [American College Application Campaign \(ACAC\)](#), a national effort to increase the number of students applying to college from low-income households and/or are the first in their families to attend college. Host sites hold Apply Yourself Florida events over one or more days in September through November, depending on the school's needs.



Apply Yourself Florida is endorsed by:



The purpose of Apply Yourself Florida is to help students navigate the college application admissions process with the assistance of school staff and volunteers while removing barriers they may face such as transportation and access to technology.

Apply Yourself Florida events should:

- Be hosted **at a time for students to conveniently participate**. The aim is to dedicate time during a regular school day/time to help students with application.
- Be open to **all graduating seniors**.
- Give students the opportunity to apply to the college, university, or technical college **of their choice**.

Register Today!

- Schools, districts, PTAs, local college access networks (LCANs), and community organizations can **register as host sites** for Apply Yourself Florida.
- Registrants get access to **free resources and promotional materials**, as well as email support with helpful just-in-time examples and tools.
- Registering helps FCAN track the progress of Apply Yourself Florida and grow the initiative, which makes more free resources available for coming years!

Best Practices for Participating Host Sites

- **Designate a host site coordinator** as the primary point of contact for the event.
- **Secure a space with computer access** for student use during the event (e.g. your school's media center or library).
- **Promote the event** to students and parents via your virtual communications channels like text messages or robocalls, on social media and within the school to build participation.
- **Ensure students are prepared** to participate (students have researched the institutions they want to apply to, know what materials are needed to submit with applications, etc.). See the [*Apply Yourself Florida Student Guide*](#) for worksheets to provide to students.
- **Recruit volunteers.** Ask community leaders from the local area to help with the event. Some examples of volunteers include representatives from the admissions and financial aid offices at local colleges and universities, local library staff, parents/PTAs, LCANs, Board of Education staff and school board members, after-school programs, local professional associations, and Chambers of Commerce.
- **Collect and submit data** to FCAN following the event on the number of students that participated and the number of applications submitted using the survey on page 32 of this guide.
- Organize a **planning committee** to support implementation of the event.
- Seek support from your area's [**Local College Access Network \(LCAN\)**](#) if you have one.
- Follow up with students to ensure they have **completed their applications and the FAFSA**.
- Continue building a college-going culture by [**registering**](#) for the [**Florida FAFSA Challenge**](#), [**Florida College Decision Day**](#) and [**Plan It Florida**](#).

Here's a tip!

School buy-in is important for a successful event. Engage teachers, athletic coaches, and other staff to help with pre-event activities and application events. Use student government representatives or other peer-leaders to spread the word amongst students.

Track Your Results!

Track your impact to share with school and district leadership (and FCAN!). This can help you raise donations, plan for volunteer support, track what's working, and inform what programs and activities that students need. Use the form on page 36.

How to Host a Virtual Apply Yourself Florida Event

With COVID-19 still affecting students' ability to receive support during the college application process, FCAN is highlighting best practices for hosting virtual **Apply Yourself Florida** events.

The following is adapted from Handshake's [How to Host a Virtual Event](#).

Determine the type of event you want to host.	
Q&A Panel Discussion or "Office Hours"	Connect students directly to admissions representatives. Reach out to area college and university admissions representatives to speak
Application Completion Drive	Take the traditional in-person college application completion event virtual. Select a platform to host your event where you are able to see students' faces and possibly share screens (in case they have a question they can't explain and would prefer to show you the issue).
"On-site" admissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to area college admissions representatives. • Have state colleges review students' applications, provide feedback, and/or admit students on the spot. • Have students sign up for time slots to meet virtually with admissions representatives.
How-to Training	Inform students of the steps to complete their college applications. Consider who can provide the most insight to your students such as admissions counselors or near peers – your recent high school graduates who now attend near-by institutions.

Determine what platform to use to host your event.

Various platforms, such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom can allow many attendees in one place with the capabilities of screen sharing, video conferencing, and chat/instant messaging.

Promote your virtual college application completion event to your students using multiple channels.

What communication channels are your school and district already using to reach students and families? What social media platforms are your students on? How can you reach students and families that are hard to get a hold of?

<u>Social media</u> Use visually appealing designs to capture your audience and targeted messages for each audience group. Parents tend to use Facebook and students tend to use Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat.	<u>Robocalls</u> If your district communications department has the ability, record a voicemail message with the details of your event to be sent out to parents on a designated day and/or time.
<u>Remind</u> Send quick and simple text messages and updates on a mass scale.	<u>Newsletter</u> Include information in the school's newsletter. (Tip: partner with your school's PTA to reach parents not connected to other school communication channels.)

Preparing Students

College Exploration and Application



Helping Students with College Exploration

It is important that students have the opportunity to apply to the school of their choice during your school's Apply Yourself Florida event. There are many resources available to help students determine which schools are a good fit for them.

Explore Fit and Match

Schools that are a good **fit** align with a student's values and preferences regarding student life, class size, location, etc. Schools that are a good **match** align well with a student's academic record.

The following resources help students explore these factors:

- [MyCareerShines](#)
- [FloridaShines](#) (Specific to Florida schools)
- [MyACT](#)
- [myOptions](#)
- [Big Future](#)

Text Advising

Text advising can be a helpful way for your students to get information about college. [GetSchooled](#) provides free text advising from real people on topics like college applications and financial aid.

Preparing Students to Complete Applications

The [Apply Yourself Florida Student Guide](#) helps students with:

- Writing admissions essays
- Requesting letters of recommendation
- Obtaining application fee waivers



Application Fee Waivers



of Florida students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.¹ Most of these students also qualify for **college application fee waivers**.

ACT College Application Fee Waivers

Eligibility: Students who used a fee waiver to take the ACT exam.

Access: School counselors should print the necessary number of fee waivers and sign off on student eligibility. Students must also sign the form. [Download the fee waiver here.](#)

SAT College Application Fee Waivers

Eligibility: Students who used a fee waiver to take the SAT exam or SAT subject test.

Access: Students can access the fee waivers directly through their online College Board Account. Students may use up to four fee waivers. Counselor approval is not required. [Find more information here.](#)

National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC) College Application Fee Waivers

Eligibility: Students are eligible for up to four fee waivers if they meet at least one of these criteria:

- The student used a fee waiver to take the SAT or ACT
- The student is enrolled in a free or reduced-price lunch program
- The student is enrolled in a program for low-income students (TRIO, Upward Bound)
- The student's family qualifies for public assistance
- The student is a ward of the state
- Other special circumstances outlined by the school counselor

Access: School counselors must print the form and sign off on student eligibility. [Download the form here.](#)

Make Sure Students Know...

- ❖ Their college application is not considered complete until the fee waiver is received by the school.
- ❖ If they are not using a fee waiver, they will need a credit card to pay the application fee or they can send a payment with cashier's check or money order.

¹ U.S. Department of Education, Number and percentage of public school students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, by state: 2019-20. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21_204.10.asp.

Fee Waivers by School

School Name	Waivers Accepted	How to Use the Waiver
Florida Atlantic University (FAU)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Students should submit the application without payment, then submit their fee waiver with their FAU "Z" number included (from the application) either by email to admissions@fau.edu
Florida A&M University (FAMU)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Apply online using the application for FL Fee Waiver applicants. Attach the fee waiver prior to submission.
Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Complete online application and answer question about application fee waivers. If you indicate that you qualify for a fee waiver, send the application fee waiver form to Undergraduate Admissions by email to admissions@fgcu.edu , or mail to: Florida Gulf Coast University Office of Undergraduate Admissions 10501 FGCU Blvd. S. Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565
Florida International University (FIU)	ACT, SAT,	Upon reaching payment page, select "pay by check" option. Upload your waiver to your student portal on MyFIU or send it directly to your admissions counselor (check FIU's website).
Florida Polytechnic University	ACT, SAT	On the payment page, select the "pay by fee" waiver option. Submit the ACT or SAT fee waiver to admissions@floridapoly.edu .
Florida State University (FSU)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Students who qualify for an application fee waiver or who meet other indicators of economic need may have the application fee waived by selecting the qualifying application fee waiver category on the admissions application.
New College of Florida	No application fee	---

Fee Waivers by School (Cont.)

School Name	Waivers Accepted	How to Use the Waiver
University of Florida (UF)	ACT, SAT	On the application, indicate in the profile section you qualify for a fee waiver.
University of Central Florida (UCF)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	<p>Submit a written request and fee waiver via email to myapplicationdocs@ucf.edu, or mail to:</p> <p>Office of Undergraduate Admissions P.O. Box 16011 Orlando, FL 32816-0111</p> <p>Include your name and date of birth with any email requests. If a Social Security Number (SSN) appears on the waiver request, please black out all but the last four digits for security purposes.</p> <p>If using the Common App, submit the fee waiver through the Common App website.</p>
University of North Florida (UNF)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Completed waivers can be uploaded through your applicant portal.
University of South Florida (USF)	ACT, SAT	Mail fee waiver to address listed on application screen or email to admissions@usf.edu
University of West Florida (UWF)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	<p>Send waivers to UWF via email, mail, or drop it off in person.</p> <p>Email: admissions@uwf.edu</p> <p>Mail to:</p> <p>UWF Undergraduate Admissions 11000 University Pkwy. Bldg. 18 Pensacola, FL 32514</p>

Student Changes in Financial Circumstances

If a student's financial situation has changed recently, they should contact the financial aid office at their college or university as soon as possible to discuss their options. Each institution has its own method for documenting new financial situations and reassessing a student's financial need.

SwiftStudent

[SwiftStudent](#) is a new, free digital tool for requesting changes to college financial aid packages. This tool carefully walks users through the process to appeal the financial aid they were initially offered, focusing on numerous special circumstances that may warrant a student requesting an adjustment to their financial aid, such as recent job loss of a parent, a medical crisis, loss of childcare or housing, etc. It also produces customized templates for specific types of appeals. SwiftStudent is free to use, available to all current and prospective college students receiving federal student aid and does not share or sell personal data.

[Explore how students can use SwiftStudent to prepare their financial aid appeals.](#)

Supporting Undocumented Students

Florida is home to many undocumented students or students with undocumented parents. These students may have unique needs when completing their college applications.

Students may be eligible for an Out-of-State Tuition Fee Waiver if...

- They attended high school in Florida for 3 consecutive years immediately prior to graduation
- They apply to a postsecondary institution within 24 months of high school graduation
- They submit an official Florida transcript to verify attendance and graduation

Did You Know?

- Some undocumented students qualify for out-of-state tuition fee waivers that allow them to pay in-state tuition at Florida institutions.
- Undocumented students do not qualify for state or federal financial aid and should only complete a FAFSA if they are applying for a scholarship or college-based aid that requires it.
- DACA students with a social security number can complete the FAFSA. They are not eligible for federal aid but will receive a Student Aid Report that demonstrates financial need and can be used to apply for college-based and other scholarships.

Best Practices for Working with Undocumented Students

- Make undocumented student resources available to all students. This will help students feel more comfortable asking for help. This also ensures that all students can get access to these resources without having to disclose their immigration status.
- Once admitted to a school, eligible **students will need to file an HB851 Out-of-State Fee Waiver**. Students may need help finding this waiver on the institution's website and submitting it to the correct office.
- Some documented students may have undocumented parents. For parents without a social security number, they should use 000-00-0000 instead. Always encourage parents to use their discretion in these cases.

Event Planning

Resources & Strategies



Pre-event Awareness & Activities

Build Your Dream Team!

As the saying goes, “**many hands make light work.**” Many successful host site coordinators for Apply Yourself Florida work with a planning committee, or **Dream Team**, to plan and promote college readiness activities at their schools.

Why have a committee?

Planning committees can serve a variety of roles, including:

- Dividing labor in planning your school’s Apply Yourself Florida event
- Planning other events surrounding college application activities
- Planning college readiness activities throughout the year (FAFSA completion, Decision Day, etc.)

Possible Planning Committee Members

- School counselors
- Teachers
- Administrators
- Parents/PTA
- Student leaders
- Community organizations / members
- Local College Access Network (LCAN) members

Spotlight

Lecanto High School’s College and Career Center, a converted computer lab on the school’s campus, allows students to receive support for their postsecondary plans during school hours.

Students seeking help at the center are directed to a Canvas page to complete a questionnaire. That initial survey includes questions to help gauge the postsecondary readiness of Lecanto seniors.

The center was spearheaded by Peter Rausch, who teaches A.P. World History and coaches football at the school. The center is also powered by faculty and staff who volunteer time during school days to serve as mentors and help students with the postsecondary process.

Event Timeline

Time to Event	Tasks to Complete
7-8 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Designate a site coordinator and register with FCAN <input type="checkbox"/> Form a committee to aid in event planning <input type="checkbox"/> Confirm event dates with your school's administration and tech team <input type="checkbox"/> Reserve computer lab space for event and volunteer training
6 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Finalize your event schedule and create an event promotion plan <input type="checkbox"/> Reach out to local businesses for in-kind donations <input type="checkbox"/> Decide how many volunteers you need (we recommend 3 per 20-25 students)
5 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Determine raffle prizes and begin contacting local businesses if necessary <input type="checkbox"/> Start recruiting volunteers <input type="checkbox"/> Begin preparing students for the application process (share the Apply Yourself Florida Student Guide)
4 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Make a list of all the supplies you will need for the event and begin collecting supplies <input type="checkbox"/> Begin promoting the event in the school and/or community <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to reach out to businesses/volunteers <input type="checkbox"/> Invite elected officials <input type="checkbox"/> Finalize how you will recognize donors before, during, and/or after the event
3 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Make arrangements for students who need application fee waivers <input type="checkbox"/> Create a schedule for volunteers (be sure to account for breaks) <input type="checkbox"/> If hosting volunteer training, prepare a presentation.
2 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Finalize volunteer list and complete required background checks <input type="checkbox"/> Share time/place of the event and confirm volunteer participation <input type="checkbox"/> Send out a press release if you plan to work with local media <input type="checkbox"/> Send out parent information letter
1 Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all supplies are ready <input type="checkbox"/> Send reminders to volunteers, and host volunteer training/send webinar link <input type="checkbox"/> Remind school and community of event schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Remind students and families to complete worksheets in Apply Yourself Florida Student Guide <input type="checkbox"/> Remind students to bring a form of payment for their applications
Day of Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask volunteers to arrive early (15 minutes for a quick orientation, 45 minutes if hosting day-of training) and provide refreshments <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure computers and printers are working <input type="checkbox"/> Set up a sign-in/sign-out station to track participating students and collect data <input type="checkbox"/> Hang signs/decorations <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure each student receives an instruction sheet <input type="checkbox"/> Pair volunteers with students who need extra assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Remind students to print confirmation pages after submitting applications <input type="checkbox"/> Direct students who have completed applications to sign out/receive sticker <input type="checkbox"/> Hand out flyers for follow-up activities, like FAFSA completion events <input type="checkbox"/> Take pictures to share with FCAN, your donors, parents and on social media!
After Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Follow up with students who need to submit application fee waivers <input type="checkbox"/> Thank volunteers and businesses who supported the event with letters and pictures <input type="checkbox"/> Send follow-up letters to participating students and families about next steps in the college-going process <input type="checkbox"/> Remind students to complete the FAFSA <input type="checkbox"/> Submit participation data and feedback (see form on page 36) to Adriana Pavicic at FCAN at APavicic@FloridaCollegeAccess.org or completing the Apply Yourself Florida survey that will be shared via a link in the counselor e-blasts in late fall.

Budgeting

What Will My Event Cost?

Most site coordinators host their events with a small budget. Some coordinators have hosted their event at no cost by having supplies donated.

Make sure to check with your supervisor before soliciting donations. Your school may have a policy in place.

For help reaching out to local businesses, FCAN provides [letter templates](#).

What Supplies Will I Need?

The supplies you will need for your event will depend on the type of event you plan to host. These may include:

- Food
- Prizes/raffle
- Games/entertainment
- Decorations



Sample Budget Table

Item/Service	Purchased/Donated	Anticipated Cost	Actual Cost
Total			

Ideas for Your Event

Successful Apply Yourself Florida events often create excitement about college applications by incorporating special activities or incentives. Many schools also like to dedicate a week to college readiness activities for students of all ages.

Activities for Your Event

- Provide computers and trained volunteers so students can work on college applications, [FAFSA](#), or [FFAA](#).
- Help with writing essays for college applications or scholarships.
- Invite local college and career technical school admissions or financial aid reps, employers, and military recruiters to familiarize students with their options.
- Consider providing snacks or pizza and/or playing music to create a fun environment for students.

Offer Incentives!

These small incentives offer a motivation for students to focus and complete applications:

- **School-related raffles (yearbooks, prom tickets, etc.)**
- **Gift cards from local businesses**
- **College gear**

Spotlight

Jennifer Batchelor at Wiregrass Ranch High School planned a College Spirit Week in the fall (see next page) to encourage high school seniors to apply and/or explore options to at least one pathway for education beyond high school.

Daily events included completing college applications, attending FloridaShines Virtual College Week webinars (when available), meeting with representatives from area colleges and universities, engaging with alumni to learn about their experiences and pathways after graduating, and engaging in activities to learn about school staff's college experiences and ensuring they had their "ducks in a row" to graduate.



**Wiregrass Ranch High School
2019 College Spirit Week**

EXAMPLE

College Spirit Week

Wiregrass Ranch High School

OCT 28 - NOV 1
2019

WHAT IS COLLEGE SPIRIT WEEK?

College Spirit Week is part of Apply Florida and the American College Application Campaign (ACAC). This is an initiative that assists college-bound seniors with completing their admissions applications & focuses on increasing the number of first generation & low-income students pursuing a college degree or other post-secondary education. This initiative helps students recognize their opportunities and the path to make it happen!

GENERAL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Application Central

Laptop computers will be available in 3-104 & 3-108A for Seniors to:

- ▶ Start and/or complete admissions applications
- ▶ Explore admission pages of specific colleges or universities
- ▶ Apply to vocational or technical programs

Virtual College Webinars

Through the Florida Shines website, we will provide recordings or webinars covering a variety of topics.

- ▶ Admissions
- ▶ Survival Tips for Parents
- ▶ Transition to life after high school
- ▶ Financial Aid

virtualcollegeweek.org



We are striving to have as many Seniors apply and/or explore options to at least one post-secondary institution.

- 2 year college
- 4 year university
- Certificate Program
- Vocational School



MONDAY 10/28

Application Central - Laptops available in 3-104 & 3-108A for college application assistance periods 1-7, before/after school

College Bingo! - Seniors can get a BINGO card from their 1st period teacher or Student Services. Complete the ENTIRE card by locating the teachers/staff who had that college experience listed in the different squares. Staff is asked to sign in the square that pertains to them. Students - please submit COMPLETED cards to Student Services for prize drawings!!!

Marchman Tech College Presentation - Reps from MTEC will present to Seniors interested in learning about the programs offered, as well as, other career options. (Interested in the presentation? Sign up on the C/O 2020 Canvas page)

TUESDAY 10/29

Application Central - Laptops available in 3-104 & 3-108A for college application assistance periods 1-7, before/after school

PHSC Concept College - Information for specific Seniors/INVITATION ONLY!

Are Your Ducks in a Row? - This activity takes place during lunches & will see if your 'ducks are in a row to graduate!' Test your knowledge about college & career terms, degrees, college life, high school & financial aid!!!

WEDNESDAY 10/30

Application Central - Laptops available in 3-104 & 3-108A for college application assistance periods 1-7, before/after school

INTERESTED IN COSMETOLOGY? - Pasco Schools/Adult Education Cosmetology program. Interested students will sign up to attend this informative program. Learn about how to access this program!

(Sign up for presentations via link on 2020 Canvas page)

THURSDAY 10/31

Application Central continues!! 3-108A & 3-104

PHSC Porter Campus - Sign up to learn about college admissions & available programs at PHSC - 3rd period. Sign up on the 2020 Canvas page!

FRIDAY 11/1

Application Central continues! 3-108A & 3-104

COLLEGE SPIRIT DAY!!! Students, faculty & staff are encouraged to wear college/university spirit attire!

WRHS Alumni Panel - Alumni from several different classes will be here to share their experience and pathways after graduating...from the workforce to college!

- APPLICATION CENTRAL
- MTEC
- PHSC
- WEBINARS
- COLLEGE BINGO
- DUCKS IN A ROW!
- ALUMNI PANEL
- COLLEGE SPIRIT DAY!!!



FINANCIAL AID NIGHT
WEDNESDAY, 10/30 6:00PM
WRHS CAFETERIA

College-Going Culture Activities

Many schools coordinate other activities to create a college-going culture during their Apply Yourself Florida events to engage lower grades. This can be a great way to help students start thinking about college. Here are some ideas. You can find more in the [Plan It Florida toolkit](#).

College Bingo

- Print out the college bingo card and distribute it to students during your event
- Students complete the card by finding teachers/faculty to sign off on experiences they had during college
- Give a small prize to the student who completes their card first!

**Download the
College Bingo Card**

A blue rectangular button with yellow text that reads "Download the College Bingo Card". A white mouse cursor icon with a black outline is pointing at the bottom right corner of the button.

"Ask Me About It"

- Print out the "Ask Me About It!" posters and have teachers display them.
- Encourage teachers to set aside 10-15 minutes at the beginning of class to share their college experience and answer questions

**Download the "Ask Me
About It!" Poster**

A yellow rectangular button with blue text that reads "Download the 'Ask Me About It!' Poster". A white mouse cursor icon with a black outline is pointing at the bottom right corner of the button.

Door Decorating

- Assign each homeroom a college or university to research, and give them time to decorate their doors for that college
- Give the best decorated homeroom door a prize (candy, pizza party, homework pass, etc.)

Other Activities

- Designate a college t-shirt day during spirit week
- Host college trivia during announcements
- Host a panel discussion with representatives from a local college/university to answer student questions



Community Outreach

Reaching Out to Parents, Volunteers, and Businesses



Parent/Guardian Outreach

When helping students take steps towards continuing their education, it is important to include parents/guardians. Including them helps to build a college-going culture at home.

Parents/Guardians can:

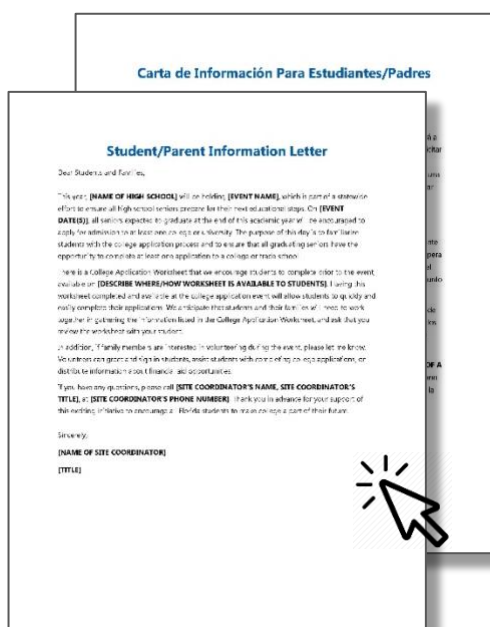
- Help students explore options for education beyond high school.
- Provide students with information they may need for completing college applications and the FAFSA, like Social Security Number(s) or tax information.
- Volunteer during Apply Yourself Florida events.

Tips for Parent/Guardian Outreach:

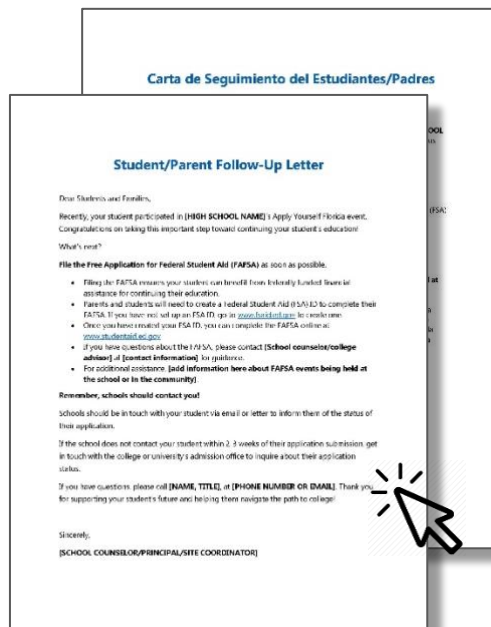
- Mail letters to parents instead of relying on students to take them home.
- Send letters in English and Spanish to all parents.
- Use text reminders or phone calls through free services like Remind or check with your school district for options for recording robocalls.
- Follow up after the event to thank them for participating, congratulate their students, and encourage them to take next steps.

Here's a tip!

Consider recruiting volunteers to contact parents/guardians via text message or phone call. Student assistants can also help with this task.



Parent Information Letter
(English & Spanish)



Parent Follow-Up Letter
(English & Spanish)

Recruiting Volunteers

Volunteers can help during any stage of event preparation to keep things running smoothly.

Where to Find Volunteers:

- School alumni, especially near peers
- Student families/Parent-Teacher Association
- Area college or university admissions and financial aid representatives
- Student organizations from local colleges/universities
- Business, community, and local government leaders
- Members of your Local College Access Network (LCAN)
- Youth programs (YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, United Way)

Here's a tip!

We recommend 3 volunteers for every 20-25 students working on applications. Make sure you have volunteers to cover breaks too!

Many campus organizations require their members to participate in community service. This can be a good source for volunteers.

Strategies for Contacting Volunteers

- Send potential volunteer groups the [volunteer recruitment letter or email](#).
- Always mention the need for volunteers in promotional communications.
- Reach out to student leaders in your school. For example, students who have already completed their applications could help other students during the event.
- Reach out to near peers – alumni from your high school that have recently graduated and are attending a nearby college, university, or career/technical school.
- Create a system for collecting volunteer information. Sites like Google Forms and Survey Monkey can help you create online forms.
- Seek bilingual volunteers in the languages spoken most by your school's families.



Make sure to find out whether your school requires background checks for volunteers

Managing Volunteers

Training Volunteers

- Plan to hold volunteer training either the week before or the day(s) of your event.
- Host training in-person or virtually.

Tasks for Volunteers

Before the Event

- Assist students with admissions essays
- Seek sponsors from the business community
- Support promotion and outreach efforts
- Post directional signs around the school and decorate for the event

During the Event

- Help students access the college/university websites, begin applications, and answer any questions students may have, regardless of where they wish to apply.
- Monitor printers to ensure printed applications remain in order and paper is stocked.
- Ensure students sign in when they arrive and sign out reporting the number of applications they submitted; tracking participation can help you measure your event's success and attract in-kind support in the future.
- Hand out "I Applied!" stickers to participating students after they sign out.

Here's a tip!

Clearly define tasks and responsibilities before the event so that all volunteers know what they should be doing.

Volunteer Reference Guide

Thank you for volunteering for (HIGH SCHOOL NAME)'s Apply Yourself Florida event! On (DATES), all graduates of your school will be encouraged to apply to intern. The collaborative efforts of the coordinator, teachers, staff, students, and volunteers like you make (EVENT NAME) possible. We appreciate your commitment to making this a reality for our students!

About Apply Yourself Florida

Apply Yourself Florida is an initiative to increase the number of first-generation and low-income students pursuing postsecondary education. This initiative helps high school seniors navigate the complex college admissions process and ensures that every graduate of your school applies to at least one postsecondary institution (2-year or 4-year college, certificate program, or vocational school).

On (DATES), (NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL) will be participating in the event. Our goal for this event is to help every graduate of your school have the opportunity to explore and start the college application process. Your name will be on hand for anyone questions about the process.

Logistical Information for (HIGH SCHOOL NAME)

Location: (NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL) is located at (Address). (SITE COORDINATOR NAME) will be held in the (Location), which is located (direction).

Event time/Shift times: (When the event and when the volunteers be working at your school). Please plan to arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of your shift on (Date).

Parking: (Provide information here regarding where volunteers can park (near by volunteer parking) and where it is located. What time of volunteers do it that parking is full? (Provide information about the school, please go to (Location) to check in).

Attire: (The volunteers please come dressed in college attire. (Add other details as needed).

Breaks: (If needed, will breaks be given? (If not, please provide information about the school, please go to (Location) to check in).

Contact information for volunteer questions on day of event: For questions on the day of event, please call (SITE COORDINATOR) at (PHONE NUMBER).

Volunteer Recruitment Letter/Email

Dear (NAME OF ORGANIZATION/INDIVIDUAL),

This year, (NAME OF YOUR HIGH SCHOOL) will participate in Apply Yourself Florida, also known as Florida College Application Week. This is part of a nationwide effort to increase the number of first-generation and low-income students pursuing postsecondary education. The event helps high school seniors navigate the complex college admissions process. It also ensures every graduating student applies to at least one postsecondary institution (2-year or 4-year college, certificate program, or vocational school).

Volunteers who support students are essential to the success of this event. We will be hosting our event on (DATES AND TIME) and welcome representatives from (NAME OR ORGANIZATION) to assist our school.

Volunteers can greet and sign in students, assist students with the completion of online college applications, or distribute information about financial aid opportunities. Our students appreciate your help and support as they take a big step toward going to college.

If you or any of your colleagues at (NAME OF ORGANIZATION) are interested in working with (NAME OF YOUR HIGH SCHOOL), please contact me at (SITE COORDINATOR INFO).

Thank you!

(SITE COORDINATOR NAME) (YOUR TITLE)
(CONTACT INFO)

Volunteer Reference Guide

Volunteer Information & Thank You Letters

Business Outreach Best Practices

Local businesses can be great resources for your event. Many Apply Yourself Florida site coordinators can plan their events at no cost thanks to in-kind donations received from businesses.

Finding Donation Sources

- Ask around your school community, planning committee, etc. to see if there are established connections to local businesses.
- Identify businesses/individuals that have donated in the past. That said, be careful not to fatigue donors by asking them too often.
- Remember that parents or faculty may be willing to donate.

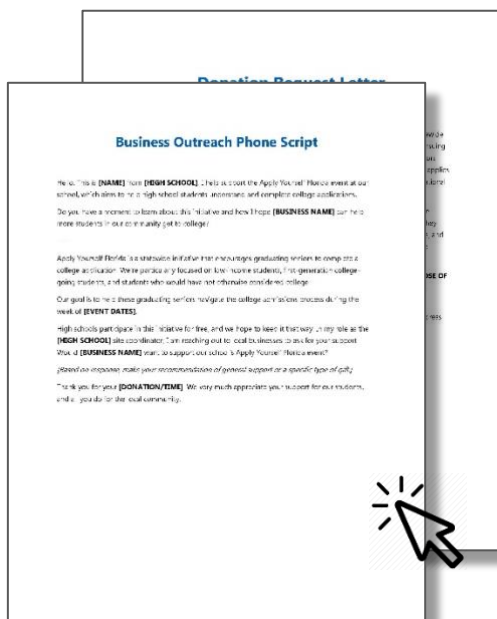
Tips for Approaching Businesses

- Call ahead to schedule a time to speak with the manager in person.
- Bring a [Donation Request Letter](#) to the meeting as the business may need documentation to justify the donation or qualify for tax benefits. If you've tracked your events in the past, it's helpful to share the number of students you anticipate participating.
- Be specific about what you're seeking (gift cards, food, etc.) and describe how these donations will help the event.
- Consider inviting the business's employees to volunteer.

Thank your donors!

To encourage businesses to donate year after year, it is important to recognize and thank them.

Consider recognizing donors as event sponsors. After the event, send thank you letters and highlight the successes (number of students participating, applications submitted, etc.).



Business Outreach Phone Script & Letter



Business Thank You Letter

Promoting Your Event

Reaching Out to Your School and Community



Promotion Strategies

Site coordinators can use a variety of promotion strategies to make sure their students, parents, and community know about the event.

Traditional Media

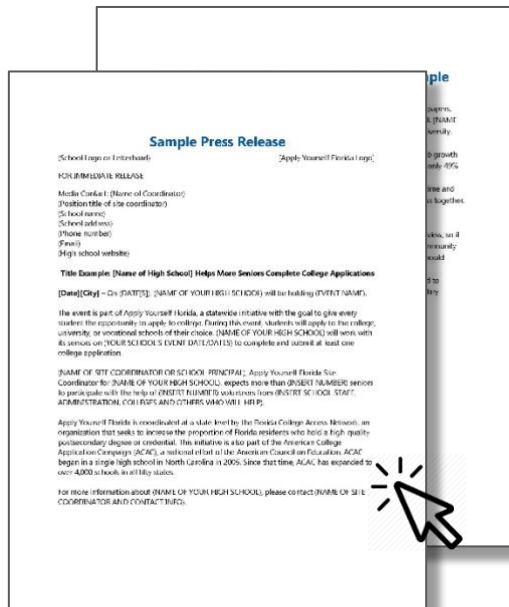
- Consider contacting television stations, radio, newspapers, community newsletters, etc. to spread the word about your event.
- Use the Sample Press Release to inform the media, and Sample Newsletter Article to publish in a school newsletter.
- Reach out to other area schools to explore the option of issuing a joint press release.



Check with school administration to ensure your media outreach complies with the district media policy

Flyers and Posters

Copies of posters and flyers can be downloaded from the [Apply Yourself Florida webpage!](#)



Sample Press Release & Newsletter Article



Printable Flyers & Posters

Social Media Quick Tips

Social media can be a great way to promote your event, create excitement, and answer questions that students, parents, and volunteers might have.

Use #Hashtags

- Using hashtags can make it easy for community members and statewide partners like FCAN to find updates and pictures from your event and amplify your good work!
- FCAN recommends using the hashtags **#IApplied**, **#ApplyYourselfFL**, and **#CollegeReadyFL**.
- Include hashtags on your posters and encourage students to use them.
- Engage with FCAN on Twitter and Instagram at **@FLCollegeAccess** and Facebook at **Florida College Access Network**.

Tips for Different Social Networks

- **Facebook:** Create an event that volunteers can RSVP to; limit updates to 2-3 times a week.
- **Twitter:** Post 1-3 times a day leading up to your event and use hashtags; tag volunteers or community members you hope to work with. Tag local reporters to encourage them to cover your event. Tag and publicly thank local businesses for supporting your event.
- **Instagram:** Post pictures of students working on applications, participating in college readiness activities, etc.
- Be sure to follow your district's privacy policy when sharing student photos!

Spotlight

Broward County's (Broward Advisors for Continuing Education) [BRACE Cadets](#) are high school students who implement special projects in their schools to help their peers get ready for college, career, and to succeed in life once they graduate.

During their social media trainings, the cadets learned how to create a posting schedule by tracking users' highest time of activity, how to engage with followers in different ways, and the varying levels of importance of hashtags on different platforms.

Some of their past social media campaigns include FAFSA 123, in which the cadets tackled the federal financial aid form by posting information to help students understand it, and Finishing Stronger, which featured the cadets and some of their student peers sharing how the previous year affected them and how they it.

After Your Event

Following Up with Your Students & FCAN



Next Steps for Students and Schools

Submitting a college application is the first step students must take in the complex college admissions process. Students often require additional support navigating their next steps.

After applying, students should:

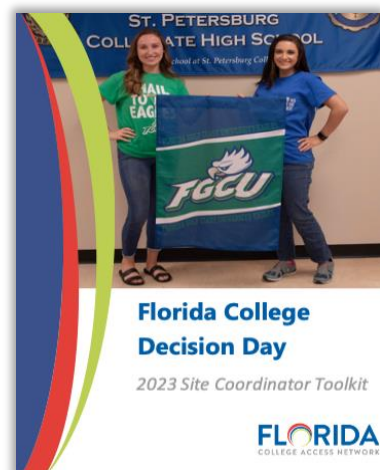
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) starting October 1st to learn what financial aid they might qualify for.
- Send in application fee waivers (if eligible).
- If students mailed in fee waivers, encourage them to follow up with schools in 2-3 weeks to ensure their materials were received.
- Make sure they included all necessary supplemental materials (letters of recommendation, admissions essay, etc.).

After the event, site coordinators should:

- **Submit tracking data to FCAN** (see next page for more details).
- Follow up with students to provide help with completing applications and making final decisions about where to attend.
- Follow up with parents to let them know the next steps in the admissions process.
- Begin working with students on FAFSA completion (the application opens on October 1st).
- Begin planning school participation in the Florida FAFSA Challenge and Florida College Decision Day (see toolkits to get started).



[Access resources for the Florida FAFSA Challenge](#)



[Access resources for Florida College Decision Day](#)

Data Collection

Collecting data about the number of students participating in your event and the number of applications submitted helps you to measure the success of your program from year to year. This can help you raise in-kind support in the future and built support from administrative leaders.

Reporting your data helps FCAN to track the growth of the campaign across the state and to attract funders to provide the most helpful free resources.

Best Practices

- To protect student privacy, do not include student names in data submitted to FCAN.
- Schools may choose to collect student-level data to follow up with students and track long-term effectiveness of their application week events.

How to Collect Data

- Print out the Senior Sign-out Form and have students complete it before leaving.
- Set up a table where students will sign out.
- If you are not interested in collecting student-level data, simply have a volunteer ask students how many applications they submitted and maintain a tally sheet.

**Download the
Senior Sign-out Form**

Reporting Your Data



- You can email your tracking sheet to Adriana Pavicic with FCAN at APavicic@FloridaCollegeAccess.org after your event or fill out the survey sent through the site coordinator weekly coordinator e-blasts.
- Best estimates are acceptable for reported numbers of students participating and applications submitted.
- Site coordinators are encouraged to also submit pictures highlighting the success of their event(s).

Apply Yourself Florida Survey

Participation Data

Please report the number of seniors participating in your application event(s), as well as the total number of applications submitted at these events.

School name, county: _____

Date(s) of your College Application event: _____

Approximately how many students participated in your event? _____

Approximately how many applications were submitted? _____

Were students able to get assistance with their FAFSAs and/or create their FSA ID? Yes/No

Did you take pictures of your event? Yes/No

If yes, are you able to share pictures with FCAN? Yes/No

Did you find the Apply Yourself Florida Site Coordinator Guide helpful? Yes/No

Did you find the Apply Yourself Florida Student Guide helpful? Yes/No

What other resources could FCAN provide to help support your future events?

Please share a testimonial on how your Apply Yourself Florida event has helped your students.

Share your results with FCAN through the survey link you'll get in an email in late fall, or email this completed form to: apavicic@floridacollegeaccess.org

Acknowledgments

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