Dear Path To College Event Coordinator,

On behalf of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), thank you for hosting a Tennessee College Signing Day event during the months of April or May at your school or organization. We hope the event will help bolster your efforts to expand the college-going culture of your community.

The purpose of College Signing Day is to build statewide excitement around going to college. For many years, College Signing Day was often associated with students signing athletic scholarships, but every student should have the opportunity to publicly celebrate their postsecondary plans. The event can also be an inspiring opportunity for younger students. By applauding seniors who are transitioning to higher education, younger students begin to form their own educational aspirations. Additionally, schools that partner with local higher education institutions to implement College Signing Day have the opportunity to grow the relationship between local colleges, their school, and their students.

Please contact our statewide services coordinator, Mary Nelle Hall, at (615) 253-1155 or marynelle.hall@tn.gov if you have any questions or concerns about planning and implementing College Signing Day. We will keep you updated regarding any changes or additional information you may find useful.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in this important college access event. Your participation will encourage Tennessee students and their families to make college a part of their futures.

Sincerely,

Troy Grant
Associate Executive Director, Division of College Access and Success
Tennessee Higher Education Commission
(615) 532-0423
Troy.Grant@TN.gov
During the 2017-2018 academic year, Tennessee public high schools will have the opportunity to earn the designation of “Path to College” school, recognizing their commitment to building a college-going culture and their active role in supporting the Drive to 55.

To earn the Path to College Designation, a school must have hosted all of the following four events and completed each required survey by the stated deadline.

1. An application event during College Application and Exploration Week (Sept. 25-29) as demonstrated by the completion of a counselor survey documenting student attendance and application filing by October 20th, 2017.
2. A FAFSA filing event held on or before the TN Promise FAFSA Filing Deadline (January 26th) in support of the TN FAFSA Frenzy as demonstrated by the completion of a counselor survey documenting student and/or parent attendance by February 1st, 2018
3. A College Planning Night as demonstrated by the completion of a counselor survey documenting student and/or parent attendance by June 1st, 2018
4. A College Signing Day as demonstrated by the completion of a counselor survey sharing highlights /best practices from the event and anticipated college enrollments by June 15th, 2018

Links to electronic surveys will be emailed out to the staff member at your school who registered for the Path to College events. The surveys will be sent closer to the event date and will also be available on the Path to College website. If you have any issues locating or accessing the surveys, please contact Mary Nelle Hall at marynelle.hall@tn.gov or at 615-253-1155.
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Section 1: Introduction to College Signing Day

Tennessee’s statewide College Signing Day is an event designed to promote your school’s college-going culture. The event is a time for the entire school community to celebrate the achievements of your seniors. As you begin to plan College Signing Day at your school, tailor the event to the needs of your school community.

In this section, you will find more information on College Signing Day as well as ideas and best practices from Tennessee and across the country.

IN THIS SECTION

- About College Signing Day
- Best Practices from Tennessee Schools
About College Signing Day

What is Tennessee’s College Signing Day?
College Signing Day is an event to celebrate seniors going to college and an opportunity to encourage a college-going culture among all students, with college meaning any formal education that is continued after graduating from high school.

Focused on celebrating ALL students who are continuing their education after high school, Tennessee’s statewide College Signing Day event takes its cue from the tradition of college athletics, where high school athletes get national attention as they sign letters of intent to attend a particular institution. In a similar way, College Signing Day is intended to publicly commend seniors who commit to attend college. Seniors will have the chance to publicly proclaim their plans which will promote a college-going culture in your school community.

Through Governor Bill Haslam’s Drive to 55 initiative, Tennessee is focused on increasing college degree attainment across the state so that by 2025, 55% of adults will have a college degree or credential. The Path to College events, including College Signing Day, play an important role in reaching the Drive to 55’s goals. By implementing the event statewide, College Signing Day will bring attention to college for many students and community members.

What Does College Signing Day Look Like?
The event should be what works best for each individual school. For some schools, that might mean a pep rally or assembly, while for others it might mean a smaller event, such as an ice cream social or a pizza party. If it works best for a particular school, they can start smaller the first year and grow the event year after year. As long as the event celebrates a community’s high school seniors who have chosen to pursue a postsecondary credential, the day will be a success. College Signing Day isn’t just for high schools. Elementary and middle schools are also encouraged to host events celebrating local seniors. Seeing older students prepare to enroll in college is a great way to build a college-going culture in the early grades.

When is College Signing Day?
Across the country, many schools are planning events on or around May 1 to celebrate college decisions. We encourage schools in Tennessee to plan your College Signing Day for one day in late April or early May. The exact date will depend on your particular school schedule.

What is the Purpose of College Signing Day?
The purpose of College Signing Day is to grow excitement around going to college and model the college-going culture for younger students. Every student should have the opportunity to be publicly celebrated for going to college. When your school partners with higher education institutions, College Signing Day can also be a way to develop strong relationships with local colleges.
106 Glencliff High School seniors went on stage to proudly announce the college they would be attending and signed a commitment to finish their degrees. Local colleges and universities donated pennants and t-shirts. Students held up their college t-shirts when they announced over the microphone which institution they would be attending. Each student received a certificate of achievement. They had a student speaker deliver a speech to close the ceremony.
College Signing Day Across Tennessee

Clinton High School Celebrates after Practice
College Signing Day Banners Put to Use
At the end of graduation practice, students were called forward by groups based on institution to sign the banner that represented the school they would be attending the next year. All students were called individually, which was an emotional moment for all in attendance. The next day, these banners were hung around the auditorium for a senior breakfast and then carried by students proudly during a senior walk around the school.

Anderson County High School Senior Breakfast
Seniors Sign a Letter of Intent
Students who have been granted a scholarship or award have been honored by signing a “letter of intent” in which they commit to be scholars at their institution and to be good stewards of the money being invested in them. This is a celebration where parents, media, and local officials are invited to attend and a keynote is delivered from a retired teacher. Students receive a personalized pen to sign their letters of intent with their class year on it. Letters were posted in the hallways after the ceremony.

A Tradition of Celebrating College Going
Springfield High School
Springfield High School has hosted a College Signing Day for several years and each year it gets bigger! The entire student body is welcomed into the gym to cheer on the graduating seniors as college choices are announced. Seniors who announce their college choice form a circle spanning the entire basketball court! During the celebration, seniors are the stars but the entire school takes time to focus on going to college and the importance of postsecondary education.
College Signing Day Across Tennessee

Let Students Leave Their Mark on High School
College Signing Day Banners Put to Use

Cherokee High School and Sullivan Central High School are two campuses where the senior class is able to leave their mark in an important way on College Signing Day. Each senior who declares a college choice signs a banner to commemorate the day and inspire underclassmen. The banners are hung in prominent places during the following school year to continue to build a strong college-going culture.

Inspire Young Students: College Choices On Parade
Seniors Walk Their Elementary School Halls

Seniors at East Hickman High School have the special privilege of walking in their caps and gown on College Signing Day. What makes this tradition even more special? The students walk the halls of local middle and elementary schools while younger students cheer them on and celebrate the great accomplishments of the graduating class.

College Signs and School Spirit
Celebrate Your Seniors

To add some extra college spirit to your College Signing Day, encourage your students to make posters that announce their college choice. The posters are a great way for students to celebrate their next step, and are an excellent visual for your younger students to see the wide variety of college options available. At Cumberland Gap High School and Claiborne County High School, juniors make a poster for a senior! With an order of bulk poster board and permanent markers, juniors make a creative and colorful poster cheering on a graduate on this special day.
College Signing Day Across Tennessee

Smiling for the Camera: College Edition

College Signing Day Photo Booths

Seniors at David Crockett High School documented their college choice with a College Signing Day Photo Booth. Having a photo area for students and parents is always fun, but one way to make the photo booth even better is some with college swag from local institutions. Reach out to local postsecondary campuses to see if they can donate pennants, pom poms or sunglasses. Students can also create their own college posters or pose with their acceptance letter. These photos are special keepsakes for families and can also be used later on bulletin boards and your school website.
Section 2: Planning Your College Signing Day

With proper planning and creativity, you can host a College Signing Day that will inspire all students to feel proud of their choice for education after high school. To reach as many students as possible, get the whole school involved and pull out all the stops for an exciting event.

As you begin to plan College Signing Day, tailor the event to the needs of your school. From the timing of your event to the location, work with your school’s administrators and teachers to plan an event that works best for your school and students.

In the following pages, you will find a checklist that can be tailored to your specific event, a page of helpful reminders for the day of your event, and tools to use throughout College Signing Day.
Event Ideas for College Signing Day

All Levels:
College Walk: Have seniors walk the halls in their caps and gown on the way to their college signing ceremony. Play music or have the band lead the way. Allow underclassmen to line the halls, make signs, and cheer for their classmates. When possible, partner with middle and elementary schools to allow the seniors to walk through their halls as well.

High School:
- Pep Rally: Organize a pep rally to celebrate graduating seniors and their postsecondary plans. During the pep rally, invite seniors up to say their name and where they plan to attend college.
- Banners: Have seniors sign a banner and list where they plan to attend college. Display this banner in the halls so that underclassmen can see where the seniors are going.
- Signing Ceremony: Invite college representatives to set up a table and have seniors sign where they will be attending college. Invite the entire school to celebrate.
- Roll Out the Red Carpet: Host a “red carpet event” and collaborate with the TV and Film classes to conduct interviews on the red carpet about where seniors will be attending.
- Display Acceptances: Create a bulletin board to display college acceptance letters to celebrate seniors’ success.

Middle & Elementary Schools:
- Congratulate Seniors: Assign different classes seniors from a feeder high school to celebrate. Have students make and decorate congratulations cards for their assigned students.
- Make a Pledge: Imitate high school signing events by having elementary and middle students sign a pledge to attend a postsecondary institution or to “keep going” to the next step in their education.
- Bulletin Board: Create a “Look At Us Now” bulletin board featuring former students and where they are now.
- Photo Booth: Make a photo booth using college pennants as a back drop. Have students hold “Class of ___” signs.
- Bright Futures Ahead: Have a dress up day where students wear sunglasses for their “bright futures”.
- Graduation Caps: Allow students to make and decorate graduation caps for the year of their graduation.
- Pennants: Help students make college pennants decorated with their future school and career choice.
Possible Event Needs

Prizes
- Big Prizes: Tablets, laptops, mini fridge, microwave, other items students might want/need for college
- Little Prizes: College survival kit, pencils, flags, back pack, gift cards, t-shirts

*Note: Don’t forget to ask partners or community organizations about donating prizes.*

Food
- Ask a local restaurant or catering company to donate food or eating utensils/napkins
- Time of day (breakfast event, lunch event, snacks, or dessert event)
- Determine the number of people for whom to provide food

Atmosphere
- Music (DJ or audio player)
- Balloons, streamers
- Games
- Performances or entertainment, such as a dance routine or band performance
- Guest speaker(s)

Volunteers
- Counselors
- Teachers
- Tennessee Promise Partners
- College Admission Representatives
- Parents
- Business Leaders
- Alumni
This is a recommended planning process and timeline for College Signing Day.

- Set up a College Signing Day committee or team at your school to discuss the timeline and event. Your team might include school counselors, teachers, administrators, students, parents/guardians, college admissions/financial aid/outreach staff, and other community members or organizations.
- Evaluate current resources and budget. Once your budget is set, you will be able to better determine the type of event and what organizations and volunteers could provide or donate.
- Determine the type of event(s) and schedule for your College Signing Day based on resources and budget.
- Confirm College Signing Day location and time.
- Plan and prepare outreach and publicity efforts to get the word out about the event in the community. Create invitations (paper or electronic) to send to teachers/staff, parents, community partners, military recruiters, local scholarship orgs, alumni, etc.
- Reach out to seniors to announce College Signing Day and the requirements needed to attend.
- Contact higher education institutions, local businesses, and local non-profits or community organizations for donations and/or sponsorships for college t-shirts or other swag.
- Distribute resources to faculty and staff at your school and request that they promote the event by decorating their classroom and/or door with related information.
- Finalize arrangements for a pep rally and/or assembly, if applicable. Remind teachers, counselors, and administrators of the day’s schedule and planned activities.
- Communicate with seniors regarding the logistics of your event. Let them know what to expect. (for example: Will they be lined up to announce their college choice?) You may want to do a practice run with your students leading up to the event or right before the event.
- Utilize your schools call-out or texting system to remind students and parents of your event.
- Confirm any additional personnel needed. Coordinate set up and clean up needs with custodial staff.
- Create a fun playlist or ask the school’s pep band to play during the event.
- Purchase decorations and supplies for the event (i.e., balloons, streamers, pep rally appropriate noise makers).
- Distribute media advisory to media. We recommend sending out your media advisory 2 weeks before your event and following up with media outlets the week prior to the event.
- Confirm all seniors have informed you of their college choice.
- Ensure your event supplies are ready the day before College Signing Day.
Reminders for Your Event

The day before and the day of your College Signing Day event, please keep the following things in mind:

- Follow up the day before the event with any media you invited.
- Set up any decorations and music the night before or day of the event(s), if applicable.
- Check in with volunteers to make sure they know where to go and what to do.
- Remember to take pictures during College Signing Day events and upload them to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. using the hashtag #TNCollegeSigningDay.
- Congratulate students and families on being one step closer to college. Remind them of steps to take over the summer.
- Remind seniors to update their CollegeforTN.org account after College Signing Day to indicate where they were accepted. Remind them to transition their account from High School to College.
- Complete the College Signing Day survey by June 15th to remain eligible for the Path to College school designation.
- Send thank you letters to individuals involved, such as volunteers, school administration, catering, businesses, higher education institutions, and guest speaker(s).

Sample Agenda for High Schools

One of the hallmarks of Tennessee's College Signing Day is that it looks different at every school! Each school can design a College Signing Day that best fits their students and school community. Below is a sample agenda of what your school’s College Signing Day could look like.

- Principal welcomes audience, gives some stats about the seniors, and reminds audience to be respectful
- A senior sings a song about life transitions
- Seniors come on stage one at a time to state their name and what college they’ll attend (crowd cheers)
- Military recruiters introduce the students who’ve enlisted to join (each branch announces their students separately)
- A few local scholarship organizations introduce the students who’ve received their scholarships
- Emcee or principal closes the event; music plays
Who to Involve

Students

• Recruit students to help in the planning of College Signing Day as student ambassadors. Identify student leaders who would love to bring their own ideas to the table.

• Allow student ambassadors to count their College Signing Day event experience as community service hours.

• Ask students to promote College Signing Day through their social media accounts using the hashtag #TNCollegeSigningDay. Suggest creating an “Event” on Facebook and inviting their peers to attend. You can also work with a graphic design student to create a Snapchat filter for the event.

Teachers

• Teachers are your greatest allies in building a college-going culture in your building. We recommend enlisting their help to make your school’s College Signing Day a huge success. Share your planning with them and ask for their help in brainstorming ways to make this event something the whole school embraces.

• Suggest that teachers use College Signing Day to encourage their students to come up with ideas on how to market an event to their peers.

• Ask teachers to have classroom challenges for College Signing Day activities like poster designs.

• Ask faculty to dedicate at least one class during College Signing Day to plan for college-related activities such as essay writing or lessons on paying for college and financial aid.

• Encourage teachers to come up with their own ideas.

Higher Education Institutions

• Strong partnerships with higher education institutions will bolster the long-term success of your event.

• Reach out to higher education institutions where your students will commit to attend. Ask if they can attend the event and/or provide any college gear for the students.

Tennessee Promise

• We encourage you to include your partner organization in College Signing Day. This is a great opportunity to invite local mentors to attend the event and support their students.

• Your partner organization may also want to recognize their Tennessee Promise Students with a certificate at College Signing Day.
Volunteers/Community Representatives

- Volunteer and community involvement is crucial to the success of your event. Identify contacts in your community that may be interested in helping make your College Signing Day a success by either donating time and/or resources. Some examples may include:
  - School alumni
  - Students' families, PTA, School Improvement Council
  - Your school’s athletic department and coaches
  - Retired educators
  - Volunteer, senior, or church groups
  - Community college and university representatives and faculty
  - Business, community, and political leaders
  - Tennessee Promise partnership organization
  - Youth programs (e.g., YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, Girl and Boy Scouts of America)

- Check with your school’s leaders about policies for visitors on your campus.
- Send all potential volunteers and/or groups a College Signing Day recruitment email/letter with an event explanation and details.
- When promoting College Signing Day, always mention the need for volunteers in your communication.
- Create a system for collecting volunteer information, such as an Excel spreadsheet or Google document.

Contact Information for Tennessee's Public Four-Year Universities

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>City, TN</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Admissions Office</th>
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<td>Austin Peay State University</td>
<td>Clarksville, TN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.apsu.edu">www.apsu.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:admissions@apsu.edu">admissions@apsu.edu</a></td>
<td>(931) 221-7661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Tennessee State University</td>
<td>Johnson City, TN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.etsu.edu">www.etsu.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:go2etsu@etsu.edu">go2etsu@etsu.edu</a></td>
<td>(423) 439-4213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Tennessee State University</td>
<td>Murfreesboro, TN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mtsu.edu">www.mtsu.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:admissions@mtsu.edu">admissions@mtsu.edu</a></td>
<td>(615) 898-2233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee State University</td>
<td>Nashville, TN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tnstate.edu">www.tnstate.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:admissions@tnstate.edu">admissions@tnstate.edu</a></td>
<td>(615) 963-5101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee Tech University</td>
<td>Cookeville, TN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tntech.edu">www.tntech.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:admissions@tntech.edu">admissions@tntech.edu</a></td>
<td>(931) 372-3888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Memphis</td>
<td>Memphis, TN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.memphis.edu">www.memphis.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:admissions@memphis.edu">admissions@memphis.edu</a></td>
<td>(901) 678-2111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Tennessee - Knoxville</td>
<td>Knoxville, TN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.utk.edu">www.utk.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:admissions@utk.edu">admissions@utk.edu</a></td>
<td>(865) 974-1111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Tennessee - Chattanooga</td>
<td>Chattanooga, TN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.utc.edu">www.utc.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:utcmocs@utc.edu">utcmocs@utc.edu</a></td>
<td>(423)425-4662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Tennessee - Martin</td>
<td>Martin, TN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.utm.edu">www.utm.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:admitme@utm.edu">admitme@utm.edu</a></td>
<td>(731) 881-7020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who to Involve

Contact Information for Tennessee's Community Colleges

Chattanooga State Community College
Chattanooga, TN
www.chattanoogastate.edu
Admissions Contact:
Kisha Caldwell
kisha.caldwell@chattanoogastate.edu
(423) 697-3250

Cleveland State Community College
Cleveland, TN
www.clevelandstatecc.edu
Admissions Contact:
Suzanne Bayne
SBayne@clevelandstatecc.edu
(423) 472-7141

Columbia State Community College
Columbia, TN
www.columbiastate.edu
Admissions Office:
admissions@columbiastate.edu
(931) 540-2790

Dyersburg State Community College
Dyersburg, TN
www.dscc.edu
Admissions Contact:
Margaret Jones
mjones@dscc.edu
(731) 286-3350

Jackson State Community College
Jackson, TN
www.jscc.edu
Admissions Contact:
Robin Marek
rmarek@jscc.edu
(731) 424-3520 x50308

Motlow State Community College
Tullahoma, TN
www.mscc.edu
Admissions Contact:
Greer Alsup
admissions@mscc.edu
(931) 393-1520

Nashville State Community College
Nashville, TN
www.nscc.edu
Admissions Contact:
recruiting@nscc.edu
(615) 353-3215

Northeast State Community College
Blountville, TN
www.northeaststate.edu
Admissions Contact:
Jennifer Starling
jgstarling@northeaststate.edu
(423) 279-7635

Pellissippi State Community College
Knoxville, TN
www.pstcc.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@pstcc.edu
(865) 694-6400

Roane State Community College
Harriman, TN
www.roanestate.edu
Admissions Contact:
Priscilla Gitschlag
gitschlagp@roanestate.edu
(865) 481-2000 x2200

Who to Involve

Contact Information for the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology

TTCAT - Athens
www.tcatathens.edu
admissions@tcatathens.edu
(423) 744-2814

TCAT - Chattanooga
www.chattanoogastate.edu/tcat
Sandra Winters
Enrollment Services Counselor
admissions@chattanoogastate.edu
(423) 697-4433

TCAT - Covington
www.tcatcovington.edu
admissions@tcatcovington.edu
(901) 475-2526

TCAT - Crump
www.tcatcrump.edu
admissions@tcatcrump.edu
(731) 632-33933

TCAT - Crossville
www.tcatcrossville.edu
Jena Demars
Student Services
jena.demars@tcatcrossville.edu
(931) 484-7502

Southwest Tenn. Community College
Memphis, TN
www.southwest.tn.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@southwest.tn.edu
(901) 333-5924

Volunteer State Community College
Gallatin, TN
www.volstate.edu
Admissions Contact:
admissions@volstate.edu
(615) 230-3688

Walters State Community College
Morristown, TN
www.ws.edu
Admissions Contact:
Mike Campbell
mike.campbell@ws.edu
(423) 585-2682
Who to Involve

Contact Information for the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (continued)

TCAT - Dickson
www.tcatdickson.edu
admissions@tcatdickson.edu
(615) 441-6220

TCAT - Elizabethton
www.tcatelizabethton.edu
admissions@tcatelizabethton.edu
(423) 543-0070

TCAT - Harriman
www.tcatharriman.edu
Becky Gilbert
Student Recruiter
bgilbert@tcatharriman.edu
(865) 882-6703

TCAT - Hartsville
www.tcathartsville.edu
admissions@tcathartsville.edu
(615) 374-2147

TCAT - Hohenwald
www.tcatokenwald.edu
admissions@tcatokenwald.edu
(931) 796-5351 x122

TCAT - Jackson
www.tcatjackson.edu
admissions@tcatjackson.edu
(731) 424-0691

TCAT - Knoxville
www.tcatknoxville.edu
admissions@tcatknoxville.edu
(865) 546-5567

TCAT - Livingston
www.tcatlivingston.edu
admissions@tcatlivingston.edu
(931) 823-5525

TCAT - McKenzie
www.tcatmckenzie.edu
admissions@tcatmckenzie.edu
(731) 352-5364

TCAT - McMinville
www.tcatmcminnville.edu
admissions@tcatmcminnville.edu
(931) 473-5587

TCAT - Memphis
www.tcatmemphis.edu
admissions@tcatmemphis.edu
(901) 543-6169

TCAT - Morristown
www.tcatmorristown.edu
admissions@tcatmorristown.edu
(423) 586-5771

TCAT - Murfreesboro
www.tcatmurfreesboro.edu
Cindy Beverley
Student Services
CBeverley@tcatmurfreesboro.edu
(615) 898-8010 x132

TCAT - Nashville
www.tcatnashville.edu
admissions@tcatnashville.edu
(615) 425-5500

TCAT - Newbern
www.tcatnewbern.edu
admissions@tcatnewbern.edu
(731) 627-2511

TCAT - Oneida
www.tcatoneida.edu
Jennifer Trammell
Coordinator of Student Services
jtrammell@tcatoneida.edu
(423) 663-4900

TCAT - Paris
www.tcatparis.edu
Jan Latimer
Student Services Coordinator
Jan.latimer@tcatparis.edu
(731) 644-7365 x151

TCAT - Pulaski
www.tcatpulaski.edu
admissions@tcatpulaski.edu
(931) 424-4014

TCAT - Ripley
www.tcatripley.edu
admissions@tcatripley.edu
(731) 635-3368

TCAT - Shelbyville
www.tcatshelbyville.edu
admissions@tcatshelbyville.edu
(931) 685-5013 x100

TCAT - Whiteville
www.tcatwhiteville.edu
Summer McClain
Student Services Coordinator
summer.mcclain@tcatwhiteville.edu
(731) 254-8521
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School ___________________________  Event Coordinator ___________________________
The Tennessee Higher Education Commission wants to celebrate and promote College Signing Day. Help us by reporting your scheduled activities.

It is our goal that Tennessee Path to College events improve and expand each year. Collecting feedback and resulting data is an important part of accomplishing that goal. Please review the Data Reporting Requirements found on the following page.

As you plan your event, ensure that you track the information listed. You will need to keep track of the number of students who participate in your event and the schools they plan to attend. Event Coordinators will receive a link to an online reporting form via email.

On the following page is an example of the type of information you should collect during your College Signing Day event. If you have any questions regarding the data or surveys, please contact Mary Nelle Hall at marynelle.hall@tn.gov.

Don’t forget: schools who host all four Path to College events (College Application and Exploration Week, TN FAFSA Frenzy, College Planning Night, and College Signing Day) and complete the respective post-event surveys before the deadline will be eligible to receive the Path to College School Designation. The deadline to complete the College Signing Day survey is June 15, 2018.
Thank you for participating in 2018 College Signing Day for Tennessee. Please track the following data items to help us improve this initiative and better serve you in the future. You will receive an electronic version of this form for submission, but you can use this form to keep notes and data from your event.

Your Name: ____________________________________________

Your School District/Organization: ____________________________________________

Your High School or Program: ____________________________________________

1. How many students make up your senior class? __________

2. How many seniors at your school participated in College Signing Day? __________

3. How many non-seniors at your school attended or participated in College Signing Day? __________

4. How many of your seniors have been accepted and plan to enroll in postsecondary education or join the armed forces? __________

5. Do you plan on participating in College Signing Day next year?   YES    NO

6. How helpful was College Signing Day in promoting a college-going culture in your school or program? (Please circle one answer below. 1 = Not At All Helpful; 5 = Very Helpful).

   1  2  3  4  5

7. How helpful were the College Signing Day materials (handbook, wall clings, etc.) in planning and implementing your event? (Please circle one answer below. 1 = Not At All Helpful; 5 = Very Helpful).

   1  2  3  4  5

8. Please describe your event and share any best practices.

9. Please list (to the best of your ability) the schools your seniors plan to attend.
Section 3: Engaging Volunteers and Partners

The success of your College Signing Day relies not just on you, but on your school and your community. Engaging the school community in the planning and implementation of College Signing Day will create excitement about the event. And the more support you have, the more success you will see. Additionally, the community plays an important role in creating and sustaining a college-going culture for students.

In the following pages, you will find ideas and templates to use for engaging students, families, school faculty, and members of the community, including a volunteer resource guide that will help you to prepare your volunteers for event day.
Our school is participating in Tennessee’s College Signing Day! To ensure that our event is a success for our students, we need your help in promoting and coordinating this event. We hope that this initiative is exciting and fun for our students, families, and community!

**What is College Signing Day?**

College Signing Day is an event to celebrate seniors going to college and an opportunity to encourage a college-going culture among all students.

**What is the purpose of Tennessee’s College Signing Day?**

The purpose of College Signing Day is to grow excitement around going to college and model the college-going culture for younger students. College Signing Day is something most often associated with students signing athletic scholarships, but every student should have the opportunity to be publicly celebrated for going to college. The event can also be an inspiring opportunity for younger students. For underclassmen, attending the event gives them an opportunity to applaud students who are going to college, gain knowledge of where students are attending college, and increase their own educational aspirations. By adding participation of and partnerships with local higher education institutions, the event can also be a way to grow the relationship between the local colleges, our school, and our students who will be attending those institutions.

**What happens during College Signing Day?**

All students are recognized for their postsecondary education plans. As a school, we will work together to build excitement and awareness surrounding college selection and the enrollment process. We can do this by integrating fun activities about college into our school and community environments. For example, we can decorate our doors and classrooms in college themes, post signs and pennants in our community, or have college trivia contests - let’s get creative!

**How can I help?**

You can help by talking to students about their college choices, contributing to the spirit of College Signing Day, or reaching out to students to encourage the enrollment process. Seek out students who might need extra help in college planning and talk to them about their options. Be sure to ask students about their plans after high school as they board the bus, go through the lunch line, or walk into your classroom!
Sample Student/Family Letter

Use this letter to start conversations with students and families about College Signing Day. Update the bold pieces with your school’s event information and add any other event details.

Dear Students and Families,

Name of Your High School is hosting a College Signing Day to celebrate the senior class of 2018 making the important decision to enroll in college and pursue their dreams. On Date of Event, our seniors will declare what they want to do with their futures and decide where they will go after high school. College Signing Day is something most often associated with students signing athletic scholarships, but every student should have the opportunity to be publicly celebrated for going to college.

Throughout the month, high schools across the state will host College Signing Day events to celebrate students who have made the decision to pursue postsecondary education. The event is sponsored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and the State’s all-access college portal, CollegeforTN.org. In the fall, we helped our seniors apply to college during College Application and Exploration Week and today we get to celebrate their efforts as they take this next big step. These events help us to grow the college-going culture in our school and in our community.

Insert information about all activities leading up to and during College Signing Day. Include speakers, games, prizes, food, etc.

All graduating seniors are invited to attend and are encouraged to celebrate the school spirit of the college of their choice. Parents, school administration, teachers, staff, and community members are invited to join the celebration. To RSVP: Insert Information.

Thank you in advance for your support of this exciting initiative to encourage Tennessee students to make college a part of their future.

Sincerely,

School Counselor/Principal/Event Coordinator
Volunteer Resource Guide

Volunteers can help to you to implement your College Signing Day and provide support for the event. If you do recruit volunteers, either from within your school or in your local community, this guide can help to ensure you have a well-informed and efficient volunteer force. Here are some suggestions for how to maximize the support of your volunteers.

Notify them

Once you have recruited and finalized your volunteer roster for College Signing Day, you will need to notify them of the event details. You can use the template on the next page as a guide.

Information for Volunteers

Identify specific responsibilities and duties for your volunteers. Create a short explanation of each responsibility for volunteers to follow. Here are a few examples of responsibilities for your volunteers on College Signing Day:

- Greet students
- Sign in students
- Hand out prizes or certificates
- Set up and clean up
- Manage food and beverage table(s)

Identify them

Help identify your volunteers as a source of help for students by providing name badges for volunteers on the day of the event.

Train them

On the morning of the event, conduct a quick orientation to familiarize volunteers with details of your event.

Thank them

Send a thank-you letter to all volunteers for their dedication to College Signing Day. Handwrite a note to each volunteer. You may also want to give students the opportunity to thank the volunteers.
Welcome to College Signing Day! We appreciate your hard work and dedication to making college a reality for our students. Use this information sheet to familiarize yourself with the details of our College Signing Day program.

What is College Signing Day?
College Signing Day is an event to celebrate seniors going to college and an opportunity to encourage a college-going culture among underclassmen sponsored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and CollegeforTN.org.

What is the purpose of College Signing Day?
The purpose of College Signing Day is to grow excitement around going to college and model the college-going culture for younger students. College Signing Day is something most often associated with students signing athletic scholarships, but every student should have the opportunity to be publicly celebrated for going to college. The event can also be inspiring for younger students. By applauding students who are going to college and gaining knowledge of where students are attending college, younger students will increase their own educational aspirations. Partnering with high education institutions for this event can also be a way to grow the relationship between the local colleges, our school, and our students who will be attending those institutions.

What are the most common colleges for our students to attend?

How many seniors are participating in College Signing Day? _________

How many different colleges will they be attending? _______________
Sample Volunteer Training Agenda

Volunteers for College Signing Day will need to have enough information to be useful to you and the students. In addition to the much needed assistance they can provide, they are also likely to become stewards of the college-going process in the community.

You are not required to provide a volunteer training; it will be your decision based on who you have selected as volunteers and if they feel comfortable with the tasks you have selected for them. You can provide a volunteer training as a short gathering either a week before the event or on the day of the event, before the event begins.

I. Welcome and Thank You!
- Have all volunteers sign in and provide you with name and phone number(s). If you’d like to send handwritten or email thank you notes, we recommend you collect their addresses and email addresses when they sign in.

II. Purpose of Tennessee’s College Signing Day
- Use information provided on the volunteer information sheet.

III. College Signing Day Logistics
- Provide a short tour of the school highlighting where the event will be held, the principal’s office, and any facilities they may use or go into.
- Dates and times of College Signing Day.
- Times that volunteers are expected to be available. For example, you may want to ask volunteers to arrive 15-20 minutes prior to the start of the event.
- Assign tasks and responsibilities to be done by volunteers.

IV. Questions?

V. Again - Thank You!
Sample Volunteer Recruitment E-mail/Letter

This letter should be distributed to any volunteer prospects and/or groups. Update the bold pieces with your school’s event information and feel free to add more event details to generate interest.

[School Logo/Name]

[School Address]

[Date]

Dear Name of Organization or Person,

Name of Your High School is pleased to announce its participation in the statewide College Signing Day. College Signing Day will be held each year during the month of May to coincide with the date that most seniors must inform a college of their enrollment plans.

Tennessee’s College Signing Day is an event to celebrate our seniors going to college and to encourage a college-going culture among underclassmen. The purpose of College Signing Day is to grow excitement around going to college and model the college-going culture for younger students. College Signing Day is something most often associated with students signing athletic scholarships, but every student should have the opportunity to be publicly celebrated for going to college.

We will be hosting our event on Date and Time and would welcome your help with our exciting and important event. Volunteers can greet and sign in students, hand out prizes, set up, clean up, manage the food and beverage table, or just be there to cheer on the students [tweak this sentence to fit school’s needs]. Our students would really appreciate your help and support as they announce their college plans.

If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity, or know anyone who might also be interested in volunteering, please contact Name, Contact Info at Name of Your High School.

Thank you,

Your Name
Your Title
Dear Name of Volunteer,

On behalf of Name of High School, I would like to personally thank you for volunteering at our College Signing Day event. This event would not have been a success without your help and the help of many others who volunteered their time.

During College Signing Day, we recognized Number of Seniors of our senior class for their college plans. Our students are one step closer to actualizing their dreams of attending college!

Summarize Events or Include Any Press Coverage

Once again Name of High School thanks you for your efforts and time at College Signing Day! We hope to see you at the event next year.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Your Title
Contact Information
College Signing Day Higher Education Letter

This letter should be distributed to any higher education institutions who may be able to donate items or volunteer time during College Signing Day.

Be sure to include a list of seniors who plan to enroll in their institution.

[School Logo/Name]
[School Address]

[Date]

[Address of Recipient]

Dear Contact’s Name or Institution,

I am writing to you on behalf of the senior class of Name of High School. This year our school is excited to celebrate our seniors and their college decisions. College Signing Day is an event to celebrate our seniors going to college and to encourage a college-going culture among underclassmen. The purpose of College Signing Day is to grow excitement around going to college and model the college-going culture for younger students. College Signing Day is something most often associated with students signing athletic scholarships, but every student should have the opportunity to be publicly celebrated for going to college.

We will be hosting our event on Date and Time and would welcome representatives from Name of Institution to visit our school during this exciting and important time. Building a college-going culture and raising awareness about postsecondary options starts with partnerships between high schools and higher education institutions. We would be honored to have your support for our event.

We are including a list of seniors who plan to attend Name of Institution and we would like to respectfully request any promotional items to present to these students during the event, such as t-shirts, pennants, stickers, water bottles, etc.

If you or any of your colleagues at Name of Institution are interested in attending, please contact Name, Contact Info at Name of Your High School. Additionally, thank you for considering our request. If you would like further information, please feel free to contact me at Contact Information.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Your Title
Dear Contact’s Name or Institution,

On behalf of Name of High School I would like to personally thank you for volunteering your time at our College Signing Day event. I would also like to personally thank you for your Donation/Gift of X to support our College Signing Day event. This event would not have been a success without partners like you.

During College Signing Day, we recognized Number of Seniors of our senior class for their college plans, including Number of Seniors planning to attend Name of Institution. Our students are one step closer to actualizing their dreams of attending college!

Summarize Events or Include Any Press Coverage

Once again Name of High School thanks you for your efforts and contribution of time at College Signing Day! We hope to see you at the event next year.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Your Title
Contact Information
Dear Contact’s Name or Organization/Company,

I am writing to you on behalf of the senior class of Name of High School. This year our school is excited to celebrate our seniors and their college decisions on College Signing Day. The purpose of College Signing Day is to grow excitement around going to college and build a college-going culture for younger students. College Signing Day is something most often associated with students signing athletic scholarships, but every student should have the opportunity to be publicly celebrated for going to college.

A donation from Company Name will go directly to support our school, make this event possible, and **Mention How You Will Use the Donation**. Your donation will help students celebrate the college-going process and remind them of the support they have in their community.

We also invite you to join us during the celebration. [Insert Event Schedule].

Thank you for considering our request. If you would like to make a donation, volunteer in any way with College Signing Day, or would like further information, please feel free to contact me at **Contact Information**.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Your Title
Dear \[Name of Sponsor\],

On behalf of \[Name of High School\] I would like to personally thank you for your \[Donation/Gift of X\] to support our College Signing Day event. This event would not have been a success without your contribution and the help of many others who volunteered their time or resources.

During College Signing Day, we recognized \[Number of Seniors\] of our senior class for their college plans. Our students are one step closer to actualizing their dreams of attending college!

\[Summarize Events or Include Any Press Coverage\]

Once again \[Name of High School\] thanks you for your efforts and contribution during College Signing Day! We hope to see you at the event next year.

Sincerely,

\[Your Name\]
\[Your Title\]
\[Contact Information\]
Section 4: Promoting Your Event

Promoting your school’s College Signing Day is crucial. While much of the focus for College Signing Day is geared toward seniors, a truly successful event has the entire school community actively engaged. In the following pages, you’ll find ideas and sample activities you can use to promote the event to all those involved both within your school community and outside the walls of your school.

IN THIS SECTION

- In-School Promotion Ideas
- Promoting College Signing Day to the Media
- Sample Media Advisory
- Sample Flyer
- Social Media Tools
In-School Promotion Ideas

You can use the following ideas to promote College Signing Day within your school community and to help raise awareness around the college-going process.

Get the Word Out

Use your school’s daily announcements to generate awareness of College Signing Day at your school. If your school has a morning news program, coordinate with producers to feature a countdown or a fun fact about college each morning leading up to the event. Coordinate interviews with seniors who plan to participate in the event or local admissions counselors. Student newspapers are also a great place to highlight the event. Encourage student writers to feature stories. You may even wish to place an ad in the paper with all of your seniors and where they decide to attend college.

Class of 2018 - “Where will you find them?” Activity

Have a map of Tennessee and a map of the country to let your students mark where they are going. Try reaching out to your local AAA for maps. You can leave the map up for the following year until the lead up to the next College Signing Day event.

Pledge to Go

Have seniors pledge to go to college. You can hang an “I Am Going To College” banner in a prominent area of the school and have seniors sign it. You can also have seniors sign college pledges and hang those pledges in a high-traffic area, such as the front hallway or cafeteria.

Post College Acceptance Letters

Collect acceptance letters or copies of acceptance letters and hang them around the school.

Create a “College Wall”

Have seniors write the names of the college where they plan to attend on banners or strips of construction paper to hang in a main hallway. If available, enlist the support of art teachers, as they may be helpful in developing additional promotional materials to create a “college-going culture” on the walls of your school.

Involve Teachers and Staff

During College Signing Day, ask teachers to share their college experience, wear their alma mater gear, and post signs on classroom doors advertising where they went to school. Be sure to promote the idea of college in general, not a specific school.

Dress the Part

During the days leading up to College Signing Day, encourage teachers and staff to wear a t-shirt, sweatshirt, or hat from the college they attended, or have them bring in their college yearbook or other items with their college mascot to share with students. Tap into students’ interests (and lingering March Madness enthusiasm) by asking students, faculty, and staff to dress in the colors and apparel of their favorite college or college sports team for a day. Have a contest to see which college gets the most support. This could also be a great photo opportunity for the school website or local newspaper.
Invite a Panel of Past Students
Reach out to your high school’s alumni who are now in college and invite them to come and speak about their experiences.

Give Away College “Stuff”
Hold drawings before or after College Signing Day. Ask colleges and universities to donate promotional items (banners, hats, t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc.) to use as giveaways during your event. Also, ask local businesses for items for your drawing.

Communicate
Send letters or e-mail reminders to all parents, students, and school staff. Also, include information in the school newsletter and post flyers around the school and community about your College Signing Day event.
Promoting College Signing Day to the Media

Inviting local media to your College Signing Day is a great way to increase public awareness of your school’s activities and promotion of a college-going culture in Tennessee. Here are some tips for contacting the media:

1. **Write a media advisory:** Write a brief media advisory/press release with information about your College Signing Day event and any other activities.

2. **Distribute the media advisory:** Send out the media advisory to your local media outlets approximately two weeks before College Signing Day.

   If you email a copy of the advisory, send it directly in the body of your email. This will help your email avoid spam filters. If you can, send the email from an address linked to a person’s name (rather than a general organizational mailbox). For example, an email from marynelle.hall@tn.gov is more likely to be read than an email from CollegeforTN@tn.gov.

   **Tip:** If you or someone on staff at your school has a relationship with the media or a specific reporter, have that person reach out and/or follow up with the media. Also try reaching out to reporters who have covered your school(s) previously.

3. **Follow-up once you send the advisory:** Once you have sent the advisory, follow up by phone to make sure the newsroom received it. Prepare a small script ahead of time with the most important information. Prepare to be brief on the phone- newsrooms and reporters are usually busy and being prepared when you speak to them will help you keep their attention.

4. **Designate a media point-of-contact:** Choose someone involved with College Signing Day to be the point person for any members of the media who may attend.

   The media point-of-contact should be prepared to greet anyone from the media who attends your College Signing Day event and direct them to students, faculty, or anyone else willing to be interviewed for a news piece.

5. **Follow up the day before your big event:** The day before your College Signing Day event (or the Friday before), follow up with your media targets by phone or email to remind them of the event and/or confirm their attendance, and give them contact information for your designated media point-of-contact.

6. **On College Signing Day:** Make sure parking is available for any media and that your school’s front office is aware that media may be arriving.

   Ensure that your media point-of-contact is prepared to answer basic questions about your College Signing Day, including the event(s) and any other activities your school is hosting, the number of seniors at your school, and your most recent college-going rates.

   Try to get contact information from any media that attend so you have their contact information for future events/announcements and to send a follow-up thank you.

7. **Send a thank you:** Send thank you notes to members of the media that attend your event. This will help to maintain a good relationship with your local media outlets.
CITY, TN (DATE) - In an effort to promote a college-going culture in our school, Name of Your High School will participate in Tennessee’s College Signing Day, a statewide initiative sponsored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and CollegeforTN.org, on Date of Event.

What: Name of Your High School is hosting a College Signing Day to celebrate the senior class of 2018 making the important decision to enroll in college and pursue their dreams. This celebration will continue to create a college-going culture within our school as well as within the community. We are extremely proud of our senior class for taking this next big step for their future.

When: Insert Date from Time

Where: Location

RSVP: Name, Title, Contact Information

Press: This event is open to the media. We ask that you RSVP in advance. If you are unable to RSVP, please check in at the school’s main office.

Event Highlights:

- Speaker Names and Information
- Plans for Games and/or Prizes
- Announcing senior’s college decisions

###
Tennessee’s College Signing Day

Who?
• Class of 2018
• Families
• Underclassmen

What?
• Seniors from our school will announce and celebrate their college decisions.

Where?
• [NAME OF SCHOOL, ROOM NUMBER, OR LOCATION]

When?
• [DATE AND TIME OF EVENT]

Why is College Signing Day Important?
• To celebrate and recognize our seniors for their college decisions and the hard work leading up to this decision.
• To encourage a college-going culture within our school community.
• To influence younger students to apply for and enroll in college.
• To recognize ALL seniors for postsecondary plans.
• To support our students and their decision.
• To wrap up our school year with a joyful celebration.

For more information about Tennessee’s College Signing Day contact the counselor at your student’s school.
Social Media Tools

Social media is an excellent way to create buzz around your event. Use social media tools and network to engage students about where they want to go to school, what they are doing to get there, and answer questions or concerns they have. Ask for suggestions or input from the community.

Social Media Hashtags

We encourage you to use the hashtag #TNCollegeSigningDay on social media.

**Facebook:** Post at least 3 times a week leading up to important dates and deadlines. It is important to post items that will engage the audience and encourage them to participate in the conversation. Open-ended questions and asking for opinions are good ways to initiate dialogue. We also recommend the use of pre-selected hashtags.

Facebook Examples:
- Seniors! May 1 is #TNCollegeSigningDay 2018. Tell us where you are going to college!
- May 1 is #TNCollegeSigningDay! Join us in congratulating our seniors for this big decision.
- Congrats seniors on your college decision. #TNCollegeSigningDay
- Tomorrow is the day our seniors tell us where they are going to college at our #TNCollegeSigningDay. Don’t forget to wear your college gear to celebrate!
- We are proud of our seniors! Your hard work is about to pay off. Our #TNCollegeSigningDay is [date]. We can’t wait to hear where you are going this fall.

**Twitter:** With a limit of 280 characters per post, you have to keep it short and sweet on Twitter. We recommend the use of pre-selected hashtags. Simply note on posters or flyers the chosen hashtags or note them in Facebook posts.

Twitter Examples:
- May 1 is #TNCollegeSigningDay. Where are you going?
- Congrats seniors on your college selections. #TNCollegeSigningDay
- College Signing Day is next week. Remember to wear your college colors to school. #TNCollegeSigningDay

**CollegeforTN.org Social Media:**
- Follow CollegeforTN on social media leading up to and during your College Signing Day event for updates, resources, and shout outs!
- **Twitter:** @CollegeforTN
- **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/CollegeforTN](http://www.facebook.com/CollegeforTN)
- **Instagram:** @collegefortn
Section 5: Student Templates and College Planning Resources

This section includes technical guidance on how to guide students through College Signing Day and beyond as they begin their postsecondary path. Key information in this section includes enrollment steps for college and resources for students before they begin college.

IN THIS SECTION
- Enrollment Steps
- The Summer Before College
- Sample Student Certificates
- Sample College Signing Day Pledge
Enrollment Steps

Congratulations on taking the next big step towards achieving your dream and enrolling in college! Here are some steps that will help you during the enrollment process.

- **Send official documents**
  - Check with your college or university and make sure you’ve submitted all required documents. These can include official transcripts from your high school, ACT scores, healthcare forms, and enrollment deposits.

- **Attend new student orientation or equivalent**
  - Attend new student orientation at your college or university or access it online, if applicable.

- **Access college email**
  - You will receive a student email account from your college or university. Set it up!
  - Make sure you can log in and check this email account regularly. Your college or university will start sending all information through this account.

- **Complete placement testing**
  - You may need to complete placement testing if you scored below the following grades on your ACT: math (19), English (18), reading (19).
  - Placement testing is different for every school. Please contact your institution to determine what is required.

- **Talk to your advisor**
  - Be sure to talk to your advisor before registering for classes. You may have to create an advising appointment through your institution, and every school handles it differently.
  - Create an educational plan and get assistance in scheduling your classes.

- **Talk to the Bursar**
  - Check in with the Bursar’s office to make sure that they have all of your paperwork and your account is up to date and that any outstanding bills are paid.

- **Register for classes**
  - Register early! The earlier you register, the better your chances to get the classes you want. Figure out which classes are needed in your first semester with your advisor.

- **Double check credit hours**
  - Most institutions require you to take at least 12 hours to be full-time. Completing 15 hours per semester is often necessary to finish an Associate’s degree in two years or a Bachelor’s degree in 4 years.

- **Register for parking**
  - Each campus handles parking differently and if you plan to have a car, make sure you check out parking regulations and when to register.

- **Begin classes!**
  - Remember to ask for help, go to class, introduce yourself to professors, engage during class, read and understand your syllabus, manage your time, and use resources to your advantage.
The Summer Before College

You can use the summer break to prepare for the rigors and time management challenges of college course work with these 5 must-do tasks to accomplish according to the U.S. News and World Report.

- **Read often**
  - Create a list of books, visit the bookstore or public library, and read as often as possible this summer.
  - College will likely require you to complete longer and more frequent reading assignments than high school, so it is important to prepare accordingly.
  - Consider a novel or short story that you hoped to read, but never found the time to start.
  - Check to see if your college has any required summer reading.

- **Review academic content**
  - It is in your best interest to refresh your knowledge of key high school content.
  - If you are aware of your class schedule before the start of the semester, focus on past coursework that applies to these classes.
  - Otherwise, review material like math and writing, and you may also benefit from studying content specific to your intended major.

- **Strengthen time management skills**
  - Time management is key to success in college, and you should begin to practice this skill before you start your first semester.
  - You don’t need to arrange each second of your day, but create a schedule for certain activities and then follow it.

- **Find summer work**
  - Getting a job is a wonderful way to learn how to budget your hours and your money.
  - If you worked during high school, you are one step ahead. If you plan to work while in college, then this is an excellent chance to ensure you can manage both responsibilities.

- **Investigate career options**
  - If you have a particular major in mind, investigate the most common careers within that field. Speak with individuals who are involved in such work and try to determine if the career is right for you.
  - If you are not certain about a career or major, explore jobs of those people who you frequently encounter. A significant component of college is preparing yourself for your future career, so use this summer to decide what that future might look like.
  - Continue to update your resume.

Be sure to sign in to CollegeforTN.org and use this resource as you prepare for your first semester!
Congratulations to [Student Name] for making the decision to attend college at [University Name] in the fall of 2018.

Presented on College Signing Day 2018.

Principal

School Counselor
I officially announce my intention to attend the following college or enlist in the following military branch:

I promise to represent my high school well with my academic, personal, professional and social endeavors. I promise to become a responsible citizen of my community. I will encourage other young people to do the same. When given the opportunity, I will be an effective mentor.

I promise to successfully finish my postsecondary education or military service in a timely manner.

Student

Principal

COLLEGE SIGNING DAY

PATH TO COLLEGE
COLLEGE SIGNING DAY

COLLEGEFORTN.ORG
College Signing Day Registration Form

Student First and Last Name: _________________________________

Please Fill In Your Chosen Program:

Name of College You Will Attend: ______________________________________
Miliary Service in Which You Will Enlist: ________________________________
TCAT or Technical School You Will Attend: _____________________________

What Career Will You Pursue?
________________________________________________________________________

Parents'/Guardians’ First and Last Names:
________________________________________________________________________

Tee Shirt Size: _________________

Name of Underclassman You Will Challenge to Apply to College:

________________________________________________________________________

Please return this form by ______________ to participate in College Signing Day. We’re excited to celebrate this milestone in your life with you, your family, and your school. Please contact _________________________ with any questions.
Appendix: Fostering a College Going Culture

College Signing Day, along with our entire suite of Path to College events, is aimed at promoting your school’s college-going culture. This section contains the research we used to develop the Path to College events, and we hope you will share these resources with anyone in your school community interested in learning more about college access.

IN THIS SECTION

- Overview: College-Going Culture
- Research: College-Going Culture
Overview: College-Going Culture

Why is Having a College-Going Culture Important?

Many of our students in Tennessee understand that college is important, but there is a gap between those who indicate a desire to seek postsecondary education and those who actually enroll. According to research from the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, at least 54% of all new jobs in Tennessee will require a postsecondary credential by 2018, and Tennessee will need tens of thousands more college graduates to meet the workforce demands of our economy.

Students who have expectations from their parents, school, and community that college is the next step after high school see college as the norm. However, the idea that college is the next step after high school may not feel as automatic or realistic for all students, particularly for students who have been historically underrepresented in higher education. For these students especially, engaging in a school environment where college is made a priority is important. College Signing Day is a great time to focus on building and enhancing a college-going culture within your school.

College-Going Culture Terms to Know

- **Articulation**: incorporating college access throughout a student’s life, starting at the earliest possible point and supporting the student all the way through high school graduation, and beyond!
- **Clear Expectations**: communicating and reinforcing the foundation that all students can go to college and can take the steps to officially enroll in college.
- **College**: any formal education beyond high school. College is an inclusive term, which can mean students planning to get a technical certificate or diploma, students going to community college, students going to four-year institutions, or any other formal postsecondary education.
- **College Partnerships**: developing relationships between schools and postsecondary institutions to support the official enrollment process and transition to college.
- **College Talk**: engaging others in talk about college ensures that no matter where the students go or to whom they speak, college is discussed and the question of “where are you going to college?” is a norm.
- **Comprehensive Support**: helping students and families in preparing for and enrolling in college while also assisting with the related stress of the college preparation, application, and enrollment process.
- **Faculty Involvement**: engaging educators both within and outside of the classroom to create a college-going culture. Ask teachers to be part of the College Signing Day celebration both inside and outside the classroom.
- **Family Involvement**: engaging family members to increase the chances of student success in the college preparation, application, and enrollment process.
- **Information and Resources**: connecting students and families to relevant and necessary information about how to officially enroll in college and apply for financial aid, and what to do if the student has not applied or been admitted to college.
Hossler and Gallagher’s College Choice Model

Hossler and Gallagher (1987) break down college choice into three phases:

1.) **Predisposition**, in which students develop attitudes toward attending college,

2.) **Search**, in which students explore college options, and

3.) **Choice**, in which students select the college to which they will apply and the college in which they will enroll.

Different factors can influence a student’s college predisposition, such as family socioeconomic status, parental involvement, peers, high school teachers and counselors, interactions with higher education institutions, high school involvement, and the relative value placed on attending college (Perna and Titus, 2004).

In the search phase, students form choice sets and determine which institutional characteristics are most important (Bergerson, 2009). Learning more about themselves, gaining information about institutions in which they are interested, and taking college entrance exams and obtaining results are important parts of the search phase.

The choice phase is when students use information to select an institution and complete the enrollment process (Bergerson, 2009). College cost and financial aid, information about institutional characteristics, parental encouragement, student aspirations, and student academic achievement are all factors in the college choice phase. Choice is the phase that will be celebrated through College Signing Day.

High School Context

Relationships between high school and higher education institutions are important to build a college-going culture (Mullen, 2009; Wolniak and Engberg, 2007). Despite a considerable amount of research examining college enrollment and attainment, most studies are based on status attainment models that focus primarily on individual characteristics of students and their families (Engberg & Wolniak, 2010; Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper, 1999).

However, an emerging body of research suggests that the social, informational, educational, and network resources available at a particular high school may structurally determine students’ range of college choices and provide opportunities to compensate for deficiencies in family resources (Hill, 2008; Perna & Titus, 2005).

Planning and implementing College Signing Day is a great opportunity to develop or further cultivate a strong relationship with higher education institutions and, thus, further boost student interest and engagement in the higher education process.