

Introduction

Program Overview

The **American College Application Campaign** (ACAC) is a national effort to help high school seniors navigate the college admissions process and increase the number of students who submit college applications, with a particular focus on first-generation and low-income students. College access professionals volunteer to work with seniors during school time to complete and submit at least one college application. All 50 states participate in this national initiative!

New Hampshire's College Application Campaign is called **ApplyNH** (formerly I Am College Bound), which **Granite Edvance** (formerly the NHHEAF Network) proudly facilitates each year. In 2014, we launched the initiative with the signature event **I Applied**, partnering with six public high schools and volunteers from around the state to help 264 students submit 533 college applications. Each year since, the program has expanded to include more sites, students, and volunteers to support them.

In support of **ApplyNH**, colleges and universities across the state waive application fees for students who submit applications during this event. The incentive both increases college access and drives applications for NH schools. In addition, the **New Hampshire Department of Education** and Granite Edvance also provide scholarships to participating students, with each school receiving one **\$500 scholarship** to award to a participating student at their discretion.

By giving students direct access and support to complete at least one application, we hope students will be more confident in their college application process and will continue to explore this pathway. While one focus of this campaign is the first-generation college student population, we welcome all seniors to participate and encourage schools to make their events as inclusive as possible. This campaign also supports larger state goals of encouraging students to pursue postsecondary education and achieve career success right here in New Hampshire. For students who are unsure of their path, or if college is right for them, they are encouraged to participate as well! *Learn more about how to involve all students in Section 3: Preparation.*

Student Benefits & Support

Before the Event

Part of the college planning process involves students researching and selecting colleges for their list of applications. If your site provides Naviance to your students, you will want to utilize that program so you can monitor student progress and college choices. If your site is not a school or does not provide a system like Naviance, Big Future on CollegeBoard.org is a great tool anyone may access for free.



In **Appendix 8** of this Guidebook, you will find Student Guides that detail everything students should prepare ahead of ApplyNH. The Guides provide tailored information if a student plans to pursue a two- or four-year degree. Part of the four-year college packet includes questions found on the Common Application, as well as an essay guide. Answering the questions ahead of time will prepare your students to fully complete their college application(s) during your school's event.

During the Event

The heart of ApplyNH is for students to receive guidance in completing and submitting their application(s). This support can be provided by external volunteers or your internal school counseling office – or both! If you are working with volunteers, they will be present to provide feedback and advice on the college process, review students' college essays, and answer students' questions, as well as proofread completed applications before submission. Students will also receive encouragement and confidence from the volunteers as they begin or continue their college application process. As part of the student check out process, there is also a data tracking element (see Section 5 – Next Steps).

Student Follow-Up

Once finished, your students may still have pieces of their application to complete, such as submitting their transcripts (they may need a counselor's help for this), letters of recommendation, and fee waivers.

It is crucially important that students also complete their financial aid applications, including their FAFSA. We are seeing an alarming trend in NH and nationwide that students are not making it to this step in the process, leaving money on the table that could significantly impact their college success. **To schedule an individual appointment with Granite Edvance to receive FREE assistance in filing their FAFSA, students/families can book online at graniteedvance.org/help.**

Participating students, parents, and guardians are further encouraged to contact Granite Edvance at 603-227-5444 with questions about the college application process.

School Benefits & Support

As the state facilitator of ApplyNH, Granite Edvance will provide step-by-step support for your school. That support includes promotional materials, resources like sample letters and checklists, and a detailed training prior to your event. We will also recruit, distribute, and train volunteers. Your high school may be assigned a "Super Volunteer" to help manage volunteers, troubleshoot issues that arise, and serve as an on-site resource.

Your students will receive access to comprehensive support as they pursue their higher education goals. Participating students who submit **at least one** college application during your event will also be entered for a chance to win a **\$500 scholarship**, and possibly other prizes. Each high school can award the scholarship at their own discretion.



Questions?

If at any time during this campaign you have questions or concerns, please contact **Rachel Bibeau, ApplyNH State Coordinator** at ApplyNH@graniteedvance.org or contact Granite Edvance's main line at 603.227.5444.

ApplyNH is Sponsored and Supported by:

- New Hampshire Department of Education
- Granite Edvance