



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

January 13, 2023

Utah College Advising Corps: Expanding navigational supports for Utah high school students

Ensuring high school students are meaningfully informed about their higher education options, pathways, scholarships and financial aid, and more is a key strategy in the Board of Higher Education's strategic plan. Below are programs and initiatives coordinated through the Commissioner's office that have a significant impact on supporting high school seniors as they navigate the high school-to-college transition.

Utah College Advising Corps (UCAC)

The Utah College Advising Corps (UCAC) program provides a recent college graduate as an adviser to partner high schools. The UCAC adviser helps students determine possible future careers, guide them through institutional admissions and financial aid applications, and connect them to their receiving institution.

- Currently have 52 advisers serving 72 high schools across the state during the 2022-23 school year
- Advisers had 1:1 advising meetings with 14,969 high school seniors during the 2021-22 school year, reaching 41% of the Utah high school graduating class
- Schools with an adviser saw a 3% increase in FAFSA completion over schools without an adviser

Regional College Access Partners (RCAP)

In 2022, the Commissioner's office launched the Regional College Access Partners (RCAP) project, supporting the Board's strategy of facilitating collaboration among college access groups statewide. UCAC regional coordinators chair each region's quarterly meetings, which are designed to help RCAP members strengthen relationships, receive professional development, and collaborate toward achieving equitable college access outcomes for students.

- Eight regions totaling over 100 college access professionals
 - Include leaders from school districts (e.g., counseling directors, CTE directors, etc.), higher education institutions (e.g., financial aid directors, multicultural center directors, GEAR UP directors, etc.), and the nonprofit sector (e.g., Latinos in Action)
- All eight networks have identified up to three regional projects or goals for the year – examples include:

- Doubling the number of seniors who attend a FAFSA completion event (Northern Utah and Southern Wasatch regions)
- Connect high school students with current college students who took Concurrent and Dual Enrollment to expose them to firsthand, near-peer narratives about the benefits of taking college coursework during high school (Southwestern region)
- Utilize UCAC and other high school-based access programs to educate seniors about basic needs resources available on college campuses (Southern Wasatch region)
- UCAC regional coordinators report on RCAP efforts to their respective K-16/P-20 alliances
- The Commissioner's office will host an in-person convening at UVU on Friday, April 28, 2023, where participants can share best practices and lessons learned from the project.

Utah College Application Week (UCAW)

UCAW provides high school seniors in partner high schools the opportunity to apply to college during the school day with support from counselors and volunteers. The Commissioner's office provided training, coordination, and supporting materials to partner high schools.

- 150 Utah high schools participated in UCAW in 2022, the most ever

FAFSA Completion Events

The Commissioner's office coordinates FAFSA completion events statewide, providing training, technical support, and volunteer coordination for partnering high schools

- 159 FAFSA completion events are scheduled for the 2022-23 school year, a record high

Commissioner's Recommendation

Discussion item only.

Attachments