The American College Application Campaign® (ACAC) is a national effort of ACT’s Center for Equity in Learning to increase the number of first-generation students and students from low-income families who pursue a postsecondary education. By removing the barriers that often prevent these students from applying to a postsecondary institution, ACAC ensures that all high school seniors complete at least one college application. To achieve this success, state leaders, school staff, and community members provide students with individualized support and assistance as they prepare for and complete the college application process.

ACAC has seen a meteoric rise in participation and impact since it began in a single North Carolina high school in 2005. By fall 2014, it reached a tipping point, expanding to all 50 states and the District of Columbia to include more than 4,100 high schools and almost 265,000 high school seniors, generating approximately 411,000 college applications. During the 2019 implementation, almost 7,200 high schools hosted programs with more than 745,000 students submitting approximately 1,195,750 college applications.
The ACAC strategy employed by the national program, the 51 partners representing each state and the District of Columbia, and the thousands of high schools that host college application events annually is intended to enhance and expand current college-going culture efforts, not replace them. Even schools that have implemented some approach to supporting the college application process are jumping into the campaign and here’s why:

**STRENGTH IN NUMBERS**
This is more than a senior-year event at a participating school. This is a school-wide, a community-wide, a state-wide, and a national movement. Together, we can elevate all of our student-focused efforts and shine a light on the important work all of us do to achieve a common goal.

**COLLECTIVE IMPACT**
By working across schools, across communities, and across state lines, we can more successfully impact who pursues education and training beyond high school.

**NAVIGATION**
Many students find the college-going process stressful, overwhelming, or confusing and don’t know how to ask for help. ACAC events help students break down the steps for applying to college and guide them along the way.

**A NETWORK OF PEERS**
The national and state-level college application campaigns are comprised of engaged, creative, and committed educators. By joining this network, it allows all participating schools to share what works and to learn from others for continuous improvement in service delivery.

**LEADERSHIP**
If your school is already implementing an approach to support students through the college application process, ACAC and your state’s college application program not only provide a platform to elevate your good work, but also provide a platform to serve as a leader in this work and share your efforts with others who can learn from your success.