



MINNESOTA COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE MONTH

Program Overview

PURPOSE

Minnesota College Knowledge Month is a statewide effort which encourages students to take a significant step toward college by providing assistance and building excitement for the application process. Annually, the program brings secondary and postsecondary educators together to engage students in exploring, planning and applying for college during the month of October.

GOALS

- To help schools establish and/or build upon a culture of career and college readiness
- To communicate to all students the importance of preparing and applying to college
- To provide a statewide message and excitement about exploring and planning for college
- To increase the number of Minnesota seniors who complete the college admissions process.
- To engage and inform underrepresented students (first-generation college students, students of color, and low-income students) about postsecondary opportunities, culminating in the application process.

BACKGROUND

The American College Application Campaign (ACAC) is a national American Council on Education (ACE) initiative aimed at providing every graduating high school senior the opportunity to apply for college. The first college application “day” began in North Carolina in 2005. In 2014, all fifty states participated in college application initiatives. Minnesota joined the campaign in 2011 with College Application Week, which piloted at 17 high school sites. Since then, the initiative has expanded to include over 190 schools and college access programs. A month-long effort allows students to do more than just submit an application. Applying is only *one step* of the college application process – the result of thoughtful exploration and planning. During the month of October, students participate in the process at their own pace -- and schools can align this initiative with the many college exploration activities that are already taking place in the fall of the academic year.

STEERING COMMITTEE

College Knowledge Month is sponsored and supported by a steering committee of these K12, higher education and nonprofit partners: AVID, Chicano Latino Affairs Council (CLAC), Greater Mankato Diversity Council, Minneapolis Public Schools, Minnesota Association for College Admissions Counseling (MACAC), Minnesota Association of Counselors of Color (MnACC), Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), Minnesota Private College Council (MPCC), Minnesota School Counselors Association (MSCA), Minnesota State Colleges & Universities (MnSCU), Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE), Saint Paul Public Schools, Sibley East Public Schools, TRIO Programs, University of Minnesota

SECONDARY PARTICIPATION

- Registered sites are required to devote time and space during the school day for college exploration activities.
- Schools decide when and how they participate during October – some schools host one day of college application completion for seniors; others engage in whole-building events and celebrations throughout the month, including kick-off pep-fests, all staff wearing college gear, student contests or presentations.
- College access programs also host College Knowledge Month events and serve students within their program structure.

POSTSECONDARY PARTICIPATION

- Professionals from several postsecondary institutions and college access organizations volunteer at sites to help seniors complete college applications or present to groups of students on various college exploration topics.
- Postsecondary institutions also participate by donating items to local high schools or promoting the month on social media.
- Many colleges waive fees during the last week of October – or never charge a fee for applications.
- All Minnesota postsecondary institutions accept the NACAC fee waiver all year for qualified students.

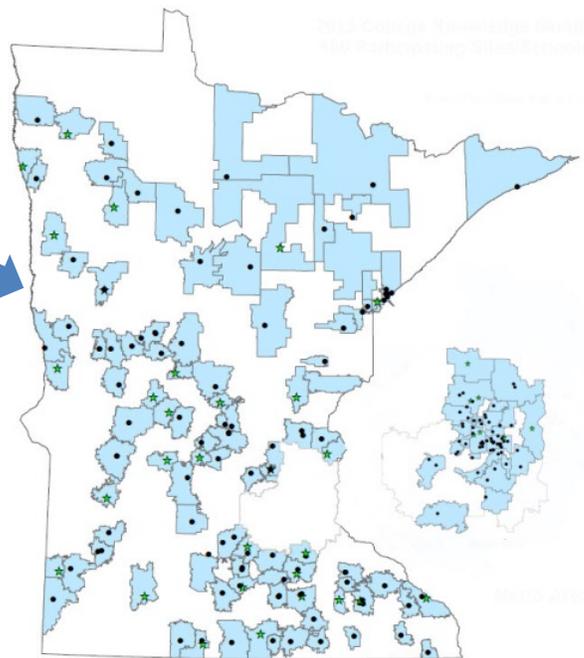
For more information: <http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/collegeknowledge>

Share your college story: [#whycollegeMN](https://twitter.com/whycollegeMN)

2014 MINNESOTA COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE MONTH

CKM SITES

2011: College Application Week - 17 pilot sites
2012: College Application Week - 106 sites
2013: College Knowledge Month - 143 sites
2014: College Knowledge Month – 196 sites



STUDENTS SERVED

During the month of October, over **68,000** Minnesota students received college planning and exploration activities:

Grade	Students
K-6 th	1,101
7 th & 8 th	3,700
9 th	9,070
10 th	10,791
11 th	12,962
12 th	30,639

85% of 12th graders surveyed submitted at least one application during College Knowledge Month events.

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Sample responses and student data are from the 2014 CKM Senior Survey – new this year. 1,373 seniors from 36 schools responded. The sample included a diverse mix of students: 40% said they qualify for free or reduced-price lunch; 29% said that neither of their parents attended college.

My favorite thing about College Knowledge Month:

The help I received from my counselor and English teacher with my application and essay. – *Blue Earth*

It helped me apply to colleges and get information about the schools. It was really useful and I would have been much more stressed if there was no College Knowledge Month! – *White Bear*

The amount of help and focus spent on getting us ready for college and how to find the best fit. – *Milaca*

93% of site coordinators agree that participating in College Knowledge Month helped to promote a college-going culture at their school.

79% of site coordinators agree that their site was successful at helping underrepresented students to complete at least one college application.

Participating in College Knowledge Month at my school:

helped me make a plan for my senior year and my future.
72% of all students

helped me to better understand the admissions process.
67% of all students

increased my interest in going to college.
62% of all students

SITE COORDINATOR FEEDBACK

Sample responses from the 2014 CKM Site Coordinator Survey:

"Our school goal is to have every student attend college. Since many of our students are first-generation college students, it is great to have such universal support from our teachers, counselors, and College Knowledge Month volunteers. We all need to work together to support our students' motivation to go to college as well as in the actual process it takes to be admitted to college."

– *Saint Paul*

"For the first time in many years, I have had more kids applying to colleges early. I believe it is a direct reflection of the efforts of College Knowledge Month and the concerted effort we made during October for kids to become aware and apply!"
– *Pine City*