

Sample Event Outline

Below is a sample outline for the most popular College Decision Day format, the pep rally celebration. This is merely a suggestion. Site coordinators are encouraged to be as creative as they'd like in planning their event. The most important thing is to create a program that will fit the needs and interests of your school's staff, students and families.

College Decision Day

Student Arrival

If other grade levels are invited, have them seated first, then let the seniors enter last. As students are coming in, fun music, marching bands, or local college cheerleaders and mascots are great additions to build an exciting atmosphere. If seniors will be signing a certificate from their seat, hand these out as they enter or in class beforehand.

Welcome and Overview

Suggested speakers include the principal, superintendent, or member of the school board.

Keynote Speaker/Panel Discussion

Remarks from an individual highlighting the importance of postsecondary education and/or inspiring students to continue their education; suggested speakers include motivational speakers, community leaders who have graduated from college, alumni from the school who benefited from postsecondary opportunities and/or overcame obstacles to pursue their dreams. The most important thing is to pick someone engaging and uplifting!

In lieu of a keynote speaker, schools may choose to have a panel discussion with current college students or recent graduates about life after high school. Again, prep panelists to ensure they are engaging and positive role models.

Recognition of Seniors

Your approach here may depend on time constraints or the size of your school. Options include:

- Recognize students individually, for example by calling their names and having them walk across stage to receive a certificate and sign a poster or banner.
- Pass out certificates as students enter and do a roll call for each college/military branch/apprenticeship program/etc., and students sign their certificate when their college/group is called.

Closing Remarks and Dismissal

The same speaker who welcomed everyone thanks students and guests for coming and congratulates seniors. Music, band, cheerleaders, etc. continue to play as everyone leaves.

Group Photos

After the closing remarks, it is a great time to take photos of students grouped by college/career choice or individually with friends or family members who may have come to the event. If college reps are invited, students can also use this time to ask final questions.

