





About College Decision Day

The idea for College Decision Day was inspired by sports events, such as the NCAA national signing day and the NFL draft. College Decision Day events provide schools and communities with an opportunity to showcase the academic excellence of students with the same enthusiasm and pride as are devoted to sports.

West Virginia's College Decision Day initiative is part of a growing national effort to celebrate seniors for their postsecondary plans and assist them and their families in enrolling in and transitioning to college. The event was first piloted in the Mountain State by Summers County High School (SCHS). The school showed that College Decision Day events can inspire communities and help strengthen a college-going culture. As a result, this year's College Decision Day continues to be celebrated in high schools statewide.

The College Decision Day initiative is one of West Virginia's three statewide college-planning milestone events that, along with College Application and Exploration Week and statewide FAFSA completion events, help guide 12th grade students in planning, applying and paying for college.

College Decision Day events recognize students who plan to pursue...

- ✓ a two-year degree
- ✓ a four-year degree
- ✓ a skillset certificate
- ✓ a career or technical program
- ✓ an apprenticeship
- ✓ military service

How to Host a Virtual Event

The only limitation to virtual events is your own imagination! They allow for us to come together as a group when we can't physically be there in person. Also, an event's content can be instantaneously accessed repeatedly, allowing students, family and friends to relive that happy moment after the event is over.

Outline Your Plan

All events require a great deal of planning and virtual events are no exception. Allow yourself 2–4 weeks to plan your virtual event. This will also give you time to get the word out and promote it. Please note that some people may need additional time to get their plans in order. If anyone is helping you work on the event, make sure they know their roles and responsibilities in accordance with your timeline.

You should send out at least three reminders. Send one reminder the week prior to the event, a second reminder a day prior to the event, and a reminder the morning of the event. Consider and use all digital tools available including email, online posts, eNewsletters and social media when spreading the word about the event. When you send out reminders, please communicate that this is a recognition event and encourage parents to participate, as well.

Think of what supplies you may want or need for the event. Four items that you will definitely want to include are a microphone, camera, stable internet connection and good lighting.

Helpful Tips

- ✓ Don't include features for the sake of including them. Make sure everything has a functionality.
- ✓ Remember that every small detail needs addressed, not unlike a physical event.
- ✓ Do a dry-run. You want to test all of the functionality of your virtual event.
- ✓ Pay attention to your background. Remember that when your audience is watching you, they also see everything around you.



Picking a Platform that is Right for You

There are many platforms available for virtual events. We will discuss a few here, but feel free to explore the abundance of options.

Facebook Live

Facebook Live launched in 2016 and since then more than 3.5 billion broadcasts have been sent from the platform. If you haven't used this platform, it is easy to learn. Going Live is as simple as a click of a button. Facebook Live is a live video streaming service that lets anyone broadcast from their mobile devices and desktop computers straight to their Facebook feed.

First, you want to create an event page on Facebook. You will need to put a description of the event and also adjust your settings for who you would like to see your event when you go live. Create it as early as possible to build interest and get the word out about your event. Share the link to the event on other sites such as Twitter or LinkedIn and ask others to reshare the event, as well.

When you are ready for the event to begin, go to your event page. Instead of typing text, look for the "LIVE VIDEO" button. A Facebook Live event can only run for 90 minutes. If you run out of time, you are off the air. Please note, when it comes to audio, avoid using any music clips that could trigger copyright filters that might shut down your live event.

3.5 BILLION

BROADCASTS SINCE FACEBOOK LIVE LAUNCHED

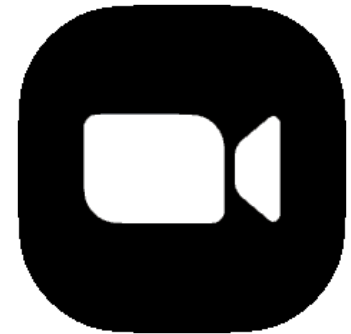


Zoom Video Conferencing

Zoom is a web conferencing service that is free to use for group meetings up to 40 minutes. You can have up to 50 participants. If you would like to download the Pro version, you can have unlimited minutes for your event for a small fee. In order to utilize Zoom, you need to first set up a Zoom account. You will be required to download Zoom onto your computer and/or phone.

Complete the Following Steps

- ✓ Set your audio and video settings.
- ✓ Review and edit your profile settings.
- ✓ Schedule your event and add details about it.
- ✓ Send out invitations.
- ✓ Set up your desktop with documents and material that you would like to share.
- ✓ Start your event!



A tutorial for Zoom can be found at:
support.zoom.us.com

YouTube and YouTube LIVE

YouTube is a video-sharing platform created in 2005. With YouTube, you can pre-record your event and post it on your Youtube channel. Then, you can invite people to watch. If you do not have a YouTube channel, one is easy to create. You must create an account on YouTube and then click on the user icon at the top right of your screen. Click on the gear icon to get to your account's YouTube settings. Then, choose "Use a business or other name". After that, you will need to add a title to your channel and click "create".

YouTube Live is an easy way to reach your audience in real time. Live streaming on YouTube began in 2011. If you already have an account set up, click the camera icon and you will have the options of either recording or going live. You can live stream up to 12 hours.

Other platforms include WebEx, GoToMeetings, Skype, ClickMeeting and Google Hangouts. Remember to be creative, enthusiastic and have fun!

Capturing Participation

You will need to complete the post-event survey at surveymonkey.com/r/CollegeDecisionDay21 following College Decision Day. Here are some ways to collect participation information.

- ✓ If your Zoom meeting has registration or polling enabled, you can generate a registration or polling report.
- ✓ With YouTube, you can use Live stream metrics. Metrics are available between 48–72 hours after your Live stream ends.
- ✓ During Facebook Live, you are able to see anyone who interacts with you on video. If you are friends with them on Facebook, you will be notified when they start watching the video. After your event is over, you can see demographics of the viewers, but not names. It is recommended that you ask questions, request feedback and opinions, and encourage your viewers to engage with the video.

Ideas and Tips to Make Your Virtual College Decision Day a Success

- ✓ Ask students for quotes.
- ✓ Request pictures of students.
- ✓ Do slideshows.
- ✓ Have certificates already filled out.
- ✓ Tell students to send in images of a teacher or mentor who has been instrumental in their lives.
- ✓ Get families involved in the celebration.
- ✓ Tell students to wear their college colors during your virtual event.
- ✓ Invite students from younger grades to attend the virtual event to get them excited to celebrate postsecondary education.
- ✓ In addition to recognizing students, ask them to share a bit of advice for younger students or share why they chose their intended pathway.
- ✓ Invite the cheerleaders and band to join in and to cheer each student.
- ✓ Ask alumni from your school to participate and share their experiences in college.
- ✓ Post students' college acceptance letters on your school's social media pages.

- ✓ Be creative and think outside of the box!

If you need certificates or additional information about College Decision Day, please visit www.cfwvconnect.com and download the College Decision Day toolkit.

Spread the Word with Social Media

Showcase the Accomplishments of Your Students on Social Media

- ✓ Ask your students to share pictures of themselves holding signs and wearing college gear to celebrate College Decision Day.
- ✓ Post them on social media with the hashtags #CollegeBoundWV and #MyClimbWV.
- ✓ Tag us @cfwv in your post, so we can all celebrate together.

Other Ways to Celebrate on Social Media

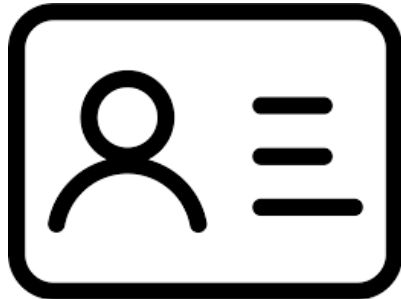
- ✓ Post photos of alumni in their college gear or throwbacks on their days on campus.
- ✓ Post about your own fondest memories on campus.
- ✓ Post about school spirit and remind students how important higher education is.

Hashtag Meanings

- ✓ #CollegeBoundWV: Students across the country are using this hashtag to share their college going plans.
- ✓ #MyClimbWV: This hashtag is used by students to describe their “climb” to pursue postsecondary education.



If you have questions about this toolkit or West Virginia's College Decision Day effort, please contact:



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