

VIRTUAL COLLEGE DECISION DAY

2025 VIRTUAL GUIDEBOOK

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 the 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, 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

Important Dates to Remember

- College Decision Day events must occur between April 1 and June 1, 2024.
- The survey must be completed within seven days after your school's event.



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 also 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, a reliable internet connection, and good lighting.

Helpful Tips

- Don't include features for the sake of including them. Make sure everything has a purpose.
- 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 your audience sees 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 we 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 X or LinkedIn and ask others 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.

Helpful Tip

Think about guest speakers. Invite high school alumni, elected officials, college admissions and financial aid representatives, local businesses and leaders to do an Facebook Live or X chat. Both formats will allow students to ask questions in real time. Be sure to advertise the time and date of the event, so students know when to tune in.

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/CollegeDecisionDay25 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

- Include quotes from students about their plans.
- Highlight students by requesting photos to include.
- Create slideshows.
- Fill out certificates in advance.
- Invite students to submit photos of a teacher or mentor who has been instrumental in their lives.
- Encourage families to get involved in the celebration.
- Ask students to dress in college colors on behalf of the institution they plan to attend.
- Invite students to share advice for younger students.
- Extend an invitation to alumni to share their experiences.
- Post students' college acceptance letters on your school's social media pages.
- Host a celebration parade! Schools can celebrate seniors' postsecondary plans by decorating their vehicles and driving by the school, student homes, etc.
- Suggest students create "College Decision Day reveal videos" with hats, cupcakes, homemade college flags, or "Superman reveal" with a college shirt under a button down, revealing their final decision. Invite them to share their creation on social media or submit to the school to share.

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 shared photos on social media with the hashtags #CollegeBoundWV and #MyClimbWV.
- Tag us @cfwv in your post, so we can all celebrate together.
- Start a TikTok challenge focused on a college fight song or an "I Decided" reveal.
- Ask students to post pictures of their college acceptance letters.
- Encourage parents to join in and share about their student's successes and future plans on social media.

Other Ways to Celebrate on Social Media

- Post photos of alumni in their college gear or throwbacks of their days on campus.
- Share fond memories and experiences from your days on campus.
- Share facts about the importance of postsecondary education.



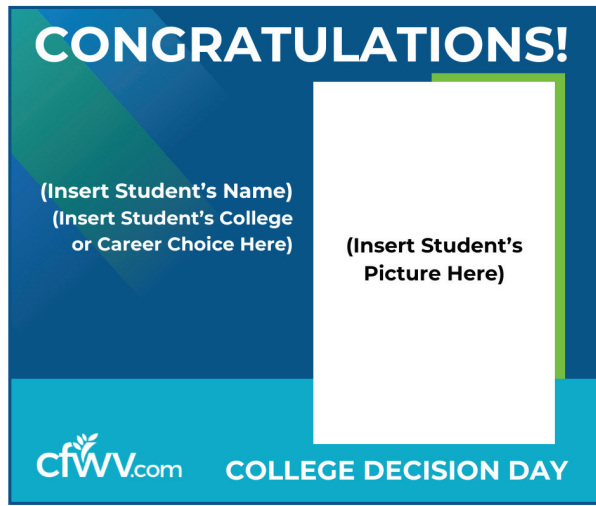
Sample Social Media Posts

- Seniors! Next week is College Decision Day. Be sure to tell us where you plan on going to college.
- On College Decision Day, we're recognizing your hard work and decision to pursue a postsecondary education. Look out for our grads as they continue to shine.
- Today is College Decision Day! Cheer on our grads as they embark on their post-high school journey. #CollegeBoundWV
- Seniors, our school is celebrating all students who are planning to enroll in some type of education and training after high school. What are your plans? Tell us using #MyClimbWV or #CollegeBoundWV!
- Those long nights of studying and planning for the future were worth it. Check out where our students are headed. #CollegeBoundWV
- Get ready because College Decision Day is tomorrow, and we're pumped! Let's celebrate all your hard work to get to this point, you deserve it. Share your big plans for next year in the comments.
- It's College Decision Day and our seniors are telling the world where they're headed. Join us in our celebration. #CollegeBoundWV
- Tomorrow is College Decision Day. Be sure to wear your favorite college gear or colors!
- They said it. They did it. Now, they are headed to college and beyond. Congrats to our #classof2025! #CollegeBoundWV
- Cheer on our grads as they embark on the next step of their educational journey during College Decision Day!
- We couldn't be prouder of our seniors who have committed to pursuing an education or training beyond high school!
- The future is here and these grads are going to college. We can't wait to see what great things they accomplish. #CollegeBoundWV
- Congrats to our #CollegeBoundWV seniors! @CFWV

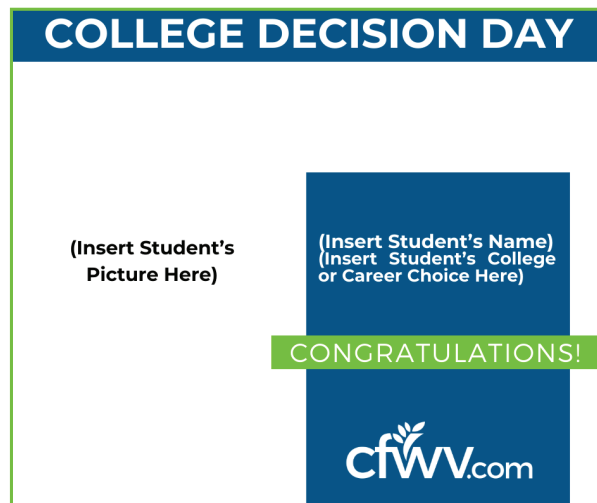


Sample Social Media Templates

Insert your student's picture, name, and college decision into these templates and post to your social media outlets! Feel free to customize these graphics using your high school's colors!



Example



Example

Sample Social Media Posts and Invitations

Insert the date and any activities that you have planned for College Decision Day. If possible, organize and advertise giveaways and drawings. These items can be something from the school's office like college swag, prizes, or even scholarships. Plug in pictures of your school's mascot or even pictures of your students from previous years. Make sure you tell them to use the hashtags #MyClimbWV and #CollegeBoundWV in their posts and tweets, so we can all celebrate together! Also, check out online graphic design platforms such as Crello or Canva for more great ideas and templates!

WE'RE CELEBRATING COLLEGE DECISION DAY!

Post a picture on Facebook, tag us, and let us know your plans for after high school. The winner will be announced at the end of the day. Contact (counselor's name) for details.



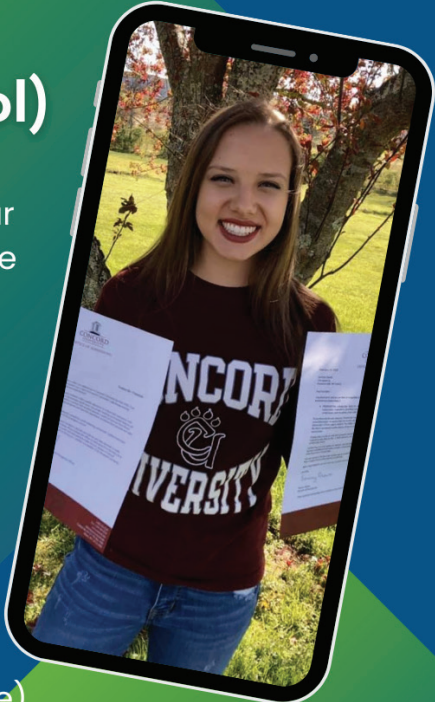
**You Could Win
(Insert Prize!)**

cfwv.com

COLLEGE DECISION DAY

(Name of School)

We want to hear about your postsecondary plans. To be included in our slideshow, send us your selfies. Our celebration is taking place on (Date and Time).

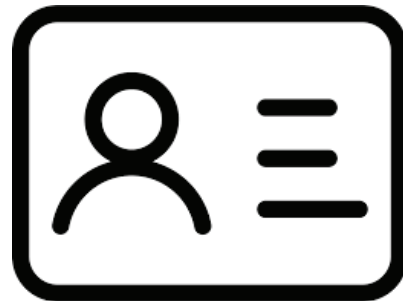


Contact (Counselor's Name) for details!

cfwv.com



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



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