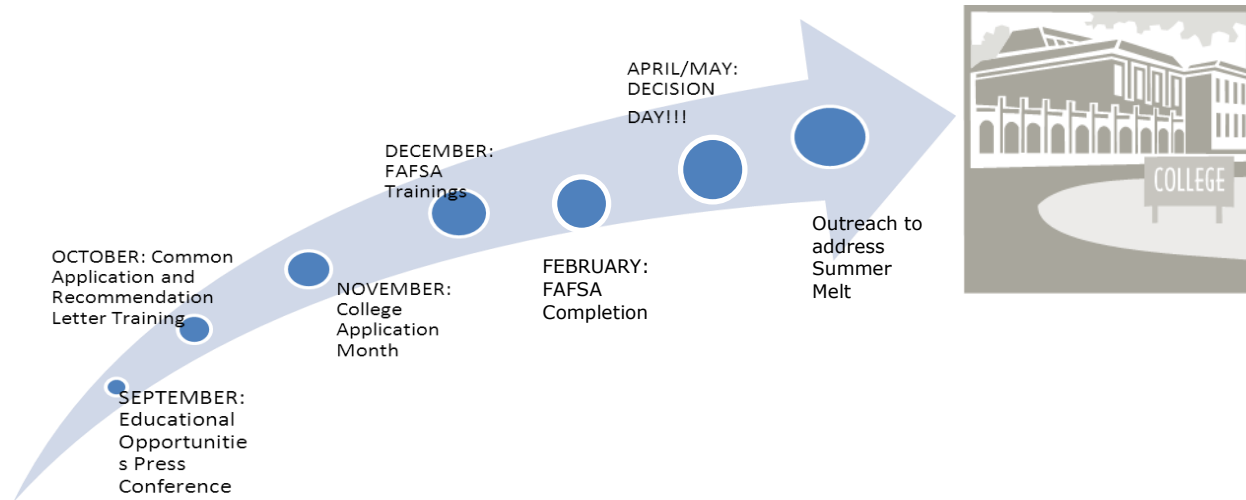


# Delaware's "Getting to Zero" Campaign



## The Delaware Getting to Zero Campaign

### The Department of Education Mission

Every single student in our system will graduate college and career ready, with the freedom to choose his or her life's course.

**Rationale:** Every year there are Delaware students who have done the hard work to become college-ready yet don't make it to college. In fact, a recent study conducted by the Harvard Strategic Data Project found that 18% of college-ready students in Delaware did not apply to any college or university. The goal of Getting to Zero is to get this number to zero, by providing the guidance and support needed to ensure that these students, who have shown the potential to succeed in college, apply and actually enroll in a post-secondary program.

### What is Being Done to Address This Challenge?

#### APPLY TO FOUR AND EXPANDING COLLEGE OPPORTUNITIES INITIATIVES

The Department of Education has partnered with the College Board to implement these two initiatives. The goal is to increase awareness and access to college opportunities to low income and college-ready students. Information packets were sent to "college-ready" students providing information on applying to college, information on paying for college, up to eight application fee waivers (*for qualifying students*), and a letter signed by colleges and universities encouraging students to consider their schools.

#### COLLEGE APPLICATION WEEK

College Application Month (CAM) is a national effort to increase the number of first-generation and low-income students pursuing a college degree or other higher education credential. The Delaware

Higher Education Office (DHEO) and the Institute for Public Administration at UD are leading Delaware's CAM by providing volunteers and technical assistance to 20 participating schools.

*Note: As part of college application week, all participating students completed a state-created survey which allowed the school, district, and state to gather data on which schools students had and planned on apply to.*

## **FAFSA CAMPAIGN**

Through targeted marketing campaigns and increased professional development we are raising awareness about the importance of FAFSA completion. Delaware has partnered with the U.S. Department of Education on their FAFSA campaign month and with our local post-secondary institutions to provide professional development to counselors on financial aid (December) and help support the tracking process to monitor completion of the FAFSA. Community organizations are also invited to participate in the FAFSA training. Financial aid information sessions will be held throughout the state for parents and students.

*Note: The state will receive information on which students submitted FAFSA forms and to which institutions. The state will be able to track this as another data point to ensure students are doing what they need to complete the application process.*

## **DECISION DAY**

Celebrating student success regarding college acceptance is one way to create a college-going atmosphere for the entire school. Publicly acknowledging a commitment to postsecondary education or training will create awareness among younger students who may not consider going to college.

*Note: The College Board will help support the Delaware DOE's "Delaware Goes to College" student contest. Students will be able to submit a design around the theme: "Delaware Goes to College." Students in the state will vote on their favorite design using social media. The winning design will appear on a draw string bag that seniors will receive during the acceptance recognition/event in their high schools.*

## **SUMMER NUDGE**

Through Summer Nudge – a partnership between the Delaware Department of Education, the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University and the College Board – the state reached out to students identified as ready for college who did not enroll, with the intent to provide support and resources to facilitate their transition to college.

*Note: Summer 2014, the Delaware DOE will reach out to graduated students via email, text, and/or mailings to encourage those who have been accepted to a post-secondary institution to take that next step and arrive on campus in the fall.*

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Delaware has created a "Getting to Zero" webpage (<http://www.delawaregoestocollege.org/>) and Facebook page with communications and resources for students, parents and counselors.