



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

February 17, 2023

College Access Adviser & School Counselor Training

Every year, K-12 educators engage in training from the Commissioner's office. K-12 educators include Utah college access advisers, school counselors, and regional college access partners (e.g., GEARUP and TRIO); these K-12 educators reach students directly. Training is guided by strategy to ensure high school students are meaningfully informed about their paying for college options. Examples include scholarships (institutional, state, national, and private), financial aid options, my529 savings options, concurrent enrollment and dual enrollment programming, and higher education pathways to all 16 USHE institutions. These options are part of students' many options to cover college costs. The training aims to provide updates on statewide programming and follow-up with resources (i.e., the Utah College Application and Financial Aid Resources [webpage](#)) on three overarching topics: preparing, applying, and paying for college. Training and resources are for educators to use during Planning for College and Career Readiness (PCCR) meetings and activities with students and their families. As a result, the train-the-trainer model was created to ensure the content and delivery align with college awareness and financial aid activities during a specific time of the school year.

State-level Train-the-Trainer Model

The train-the-trainer model has a logistical alignment with the activities that 9-12th grade high school students experience. It seeks to maximize limited resources, minimize scarce labor, and maximize the use of established network structures (e.g., PCCRs and UCAC) in K-12 schools. Therefore, paying for college information is coupled with a conversation about college awareness. For example, when training educators about the Utah college admissions process, there is a conversation about how to help students successfully complete the FAFSA form. This approach helps ensure that students are meaningfully informed about their paying for college options and simultaneously know how to apply to college.

Utah College Advising Corps (UCAC) Training

The statewide train-the-trainer model is in sync with other training offered specifically to college access advisers; for example, the well-established UCAC summer training. The UCAC training includes a two-week summer training program to advise seniors on FAFSA, scholarships (state, national, institutional, and private scholarships), applying to Utah colleges, technical education in high school, higher education pathways, and Keys to Success. In addition, college access advisers are trained on all 16 USHE institutions

to provide meaningful college exploration to high school seniors. UCAC advisers engage in role-play activities to start a meaningful conversation with a student about their college plans and covering the cost of college. Moreover, to refer students to specialists who connect students to basic-needs resources at the high school and college campuses. Therefore, the summer training program includes touring degree-granting and technical colleges to develop an ongoing relationship with the college's financial aid offices in the adviser's region. The two-week summer training is the beginning of many trainings the UCAC advisers receive. The Commissioner's Office, along with other organizations, provides year-round training to prepare UCAC advisers with applicable and specialized content required at specific times of the year.

Commissioner's Recommendation

This is an information item only; no action is required.