

A Statewide College Access Advising Program



Too many Utah high school students are not going on to college. Though college is accessible to everyone in Utah—the majority of the public colleges and universities in the state are open-access, meaning anyone can attend—many high school students don't think college is possible for them. And even if they do, many have no idea where to even start. These problems are often especially true for those with significant barriers to college entry, such as students who are low-income and first-generation.

A recent survey commissioned by the Utah Board of Regents found 90% of Utah parents expect their children to attend college, yet only about two-thirds of all Utah's high school graduates enroll in college within five years. The cost of attending college is the top ranking higher education issue for Utah parents, but only about half feel confident in finding information on scholarships, grants, and financial aid.

To better support Utah high school students on their path to college, and to change the outcome for a generation of Utahns, the Utah Board of Regents is introducing a statewide program that will put a permanent, full-time college access advisor in every high school in Utah.

90%

of Utah parents expect their children to attend college

- YET ONLY -

2/3

of all Utah's high school graduates enroll in college within five years



College Access Advisors will help high school students:

Register for and complete college entrance exams

Submit college applications

Apply for scholarships, grants and financial aid

Connect to first-year experience programs for a seamless transition into higher education

College access advisors will be available to every high school student, but will have an intentional focus on supporting low-income and first-generation students.

College access advisors are recent college graduates. This “near-peer” model allows the advisors to speak from experience about navigating college systems, sharing college experiences, and supporting students who are experiencing similar barriers to entry.

This statewide program is an expansion of the Utah College Advising Corps, a University of Utah program that, for over 10 years, has successfully helped students navigate the process of getting into college. This program has been in 12 Utah high schools since 2007, and has demonstrated effectiveness in improving college enrollment and college graduation rates.

College Enrollment
Meeting with a college access advisor increases likelihood of enrollment:

One advisor meeting
13%
INCREASE

Three to five advisor meetings
42%
INCREASE

Six advisor meetings
145%
INCREASE

Timeline

By the **2020-2021 school year** college access advisors will be available in

50%
of Utah
high schools

By the **2021-2022 school year** college access advisors will be permanently available in

100%
of Utah
high schools

Investment

The program is estimated to cost **\$7 million**.

The projected state investment for the program is **\$5,995,000** with the remainder of the funding coming from existing resources.

Anticipated total number of advisors and programmatic staff employed:

150+

Long-term benefits

Utah needs more high school graduates to earn a college credential to ensure the state has the educated workforce necessary to continue to strengthen Utah's economic growth, meet workforce needs, and provide an opportunity for every Utahn to better their circumstance.

As the Board of Regents enters into its 50th year, it is making a permanent mark on Utah's future landscape with the statewide college access advising program. By making this landmark investment in getting more students to attend—and graduate from—college, especially those who likely would not have otherwise attended, this first-in-the-nation, statewide college access advisor program will:

- **Increase college enrollment**
- **Increase college graduation**
- **Change the course of intergenerational poverty**

College Graduation

For every meeting with a college access advisor, the likelihood of college graduation increases:

All students

5%
INCREASE

First-generation students

8%
INCREASE

- A Proven Model -



Without a doubt, **our college access advisor is an integral piece of the process of getting our seniors accepted into college** with financial aid and scholarships. He works tirelessly to provide access and means to all students—specifically those with limited resources and experience—and does so in a way that facilitates trust, respect, and establishes him as a mentor and friend to our students.

Amanda Colton

Counselor, Cottonwood High School



We have loved having a college access advisor at Cyprus High School! They are great at connecting with our students and giving them the most current information.

In times past, our college access advisor has been Spanish speaking, which has really helped our students feel connected, have a role model and also keep their parents in the loop! Please keep sending them to us!

Michele Callahan

Assistant Principal, Cyprus High School



I was lucky to have access to a college access advisor during my senior year at Hillcrest High School. My mother did not know anything about the U.S. education system as she is an immigrant from China. As I had no other adult caretaker in my life, college was a distant goal with no accessible route. During my senior year, our teachers introduced to us the college access advisor as an expert in college resources. I had no plans for financing college access, for applying, or for making the transition between high school and college. I met with Savannah, our college access advisor, **who took time out of her day to listen to my situation, assess, and introduce me to different college resources.** **Most importantly, she matched several scholarships that fit my situation.**

Franco Jin

Student, Hillcrest High School