

# 2025 Decision Days Toolkit



**COLLEGE  
SIGNING DAY**

I'M GOING TO

MAKE ROOM

10  
REACH HIGHER

common  
app



# Welcome to Your 2025 Decision Days Toolkit

Decision Days is the fourth event in the academic year as part of the College Access Arc of Events through the Montana University System and Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education.

These events are designed to help students graduate with tools and skills for success in postsecondary education, career, and life. Collectively, the events encourage students to APPLY, AID, and ACT.

Decision Days celebrate students' plans for postsecondary education, military service, or career. For the students who have applied to college and secured financial aid, they still need to act. Decision Days recognizes the act of signing college acceptance letters and committing to postsecondary pursuits. Decision Days are a week in which schools celebrate all students who made it to graduation and are going to college, serving their country, starting a career, or embarking on other adventures.

If you are receiving this toolkit, your school is registered to participate in the College Access Arc of Events. We know planning a spring event can be challenging. That is why we set a week aside for Montanans to celebrate our high school seniors. Pick a single day or do something every day during the week. Personalize Decision Days to match your needs.

If you need ideas or have questions, please contact Madie Moore (MMoore@montana.edu) or Dawes Elwood (DElwood@montana.edu) at the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education.



# Decision Days Activities Ideas

- Display a “Where are you going?” map: Post a map of Montana (or the U.S.) so students can mark where they are going. You can leave the map up next year to inspire younger students!
- Pledge to go: Hang a “College Bound” banner in a prominent area of the school for seniors who are planning on furthering their education to sign.
- Post college acceptance letters: Hang copies of your students’ college acceptance letters around the school or post them on your school’s social media pages.
- Create a “college wall”: Hang banners or signs for each college students from your school plan to attend. Put their names alongside their intended college.
- Dress the part: Encourage students and staff to wear their favorite college gear leading up to College Decision Days.
- Invite a panel of past students: Invite alumni from your school to come back and share their college experiences.
- College slideshow: Play a slideshow on your school’s televisions highlighting each college-bound student and their postsecondary plans.
- Giveaways and contests: These items can be something from the school’s office like college swag, money, or even scholarships! Montana’s colleges and universities love showing off their school colors! Reach out to them and see if they have merchandise to give away.
- Photo booths: Design a backdrop and adopt college-themed props for seniors to use to take photos.
- “Real world” preparation: Plan activities around your College Decision Days event that helps students prepare for life beyond high school. Some examples might be a chance to learn interviewing skills, professional networking, and financial literacy.
- Door decorating contests: Have students work together decorating doors based on the college or university they plan to attend. Have staff and faculty vote for their favorites.
- Video challenges: Issue a video challenge to students focused on their plans after high school. They can perform the college’s fight song or have an “I’ve Decided” reveal. Upload videos to the school’s social media accounts.
- Car parades: Have a car parade! Teachers can celebrate seniors’ plans after high school by decorating their vehicles with signs, balloons, and window chalk and drive a specific route to pass by seniors’ homes.
- Baby photos: Have seniors share a baby photo saying what they wanted to do when they were younger and a current photo saying what they are thinking about now. You can post them on social media or put them on a bulletin board.



# Encourage Community Collaboration

Getting the community involved in the celebration is a great way to make your students feel special. Here are some ideas to encourage that collaboration:

- Work with your local newspaper to include seniors' postsecondary plans alongside published senior photos.
- Ask local business leaders to post signs congratulating college-bound students and wishing them luck.
- Ask community leaders to "adopt" a college-bound student for the next year. Ask them to check in with their adopted student to see how they're doing in college and offer to help them with any issues they're having. They can send cards or care packages to their adopted student encouraging them to keep pursuing their dreams.

## Sample Social Media

### Before Decision Days Events:

- Learn what our seniors are doing after graduation... #MTDecisionDays May 5-9.
- You watched them grow; find out where they're going next May 5-9.
- #CollegeSigningDay APPLIED? Accepted. FAFSA? Done. SIGNED
- College? Enlistment? Workforce? Let us know! #iDecidedMT

### After Decision Days Events:

- Thank you to all the students who participated! #MTDecisionDays
- To all the parents, families, loved ones of this year's graduates - thank you for the support! #iDecidedMT
- Thank you to the volunteers who helped make our #DecisionDays a success!

### During Decision Days Events:

- Learn what our seniors are doing after graduation... #MTDecisionDays
- See what the future holds for this year's graduates. #CollegeSigningDay
- These students worked hard to get here. Let's celebrate! #MTDecisionDays
- A special shout out to our seniors who are signing their college acceptance letters this week. #MTDecisionDays
- Congratulations to our seniors who will be starting military service. #iDecidedMT
- Today we celebrate our graduating class and all the different paths they will take after graduation. #iDecidedMT

### Suggested Hashtags:

#iDecidedMT #CollegeSigningDay #DecisionDays #MTDecisionDay

**Don't forget to tag @AccessMUS on Facebook and X, and @AccessMUS on Instagram**



# Decision Days Sample Announcements

*It's time to put that intercom system to good use with these sample Decision Day announcement messages:*

**Friday before:** "Starting next week we will be celebrating our senior class and highlighting their future plans. We are proud of our graduating class."

**Monday:** "This week, we are celebrating our senior class and what they will be doing after high school. Here are some opportunities you can join as part of our celebration: [List of activities]"

**Tuesday:** "As we continue to celebrate our senior class and their post-graduation plans, we would like to mention the following students who are going to college: [Student Name; College Name]"

**Wednesday:** "This week we are celebrating our senior class and what they will be doing after high school. Today, we recognize those who are going into the military: [Student Name; Military Branch]"

**Thursday:** "This week, we are celebrating our senior class and what they will be doing after high school. Today, we recognize those who are going to start a career, get on the job training, or pursue other opportunities: [Student Name; Plans]"

**Friday:** "This week, we were celebrating our senior class and what they will be doing after high school. Today, we would like to encourage all students to begin thinking of your future. If you hope to go to college, please talk with your advisor to make sure you take the right classes and know how to afford it. Congratulations to our senior class!"

## Additional Announcements for Events

"As part of our celebration of our senior class, we would like to ask that tomorrow you wear clothing to represent your future plans. For example, if you are thinking about attending college, wear something that shows the college you want to attend. "

"Our senior class is signing a banner to show their future plans. Seniors, please stop by and add your plans. The banner is located [identify where]. We hope you will take a minute to stop and check out the next step for our seniors. Congratulate them when you see them in the halls."

"Our college-bound seniors studied took time to meet graduation requirements, apply for college, and apply for financial aid, and today they are going to sign their college acceptance letters. Please join us [Location, Time] to watch them take this exciting step."



"As we celebrate our seniors' decisions to go to college, we've asked our teachers to wear clothing that represents their colleges. We encourage you to ask teachers about their college experiences."

"All week we are celebrating our senior class and what they are doing after graduation. If you are unsure of what you want to do, we want to tell you about Montana Career Information Website. This website is an excellent tool to help identify your strengths, specify your interests, and explore your future. The address for the MCIS website is <https://lmi.mt.gov/career/MCISResources>"

## Posters

You can download these posters for your students to use and share on social media. Click on a poster to download for your students.



#MTDecisionDay



I'M GOING TO



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