



KNIGHTDALE HIGH SCHOOL'S WINNING STRATEGY

Engage students and parents/guardians in a personalized manner to build trust and create open communication leading to better outcomes in FAFSA completion rates—and opening the door to college.



01 Personalized Outreach

The school held two Finish the FAFSA Blitz events in partnership with Wake Tech's financial aid department, including sessions in Spanish

Prior to the event, the school's college adviser and counselor

- Met with students who hadn't completed the FAFSA yet to discuss their financial/academic situation, explain the benefits of the FAFSA, and provide a FAFSA worksheet in English and/or Spanish
- Called the students' parent/guardian to introduce themselves, explain the FAFSA and event, and answer any questions about the process

During the day of the event, students brought in the completed FAFSA worksheet and their tax forms to work one-on-one with a Wake Tech financial aid officer or college adviser to complete the FAFSA. If students couldn't finish the FAFSA that day, they scheduled a follow-up.

02 Building Trust

Tailored conversations to students' needs and show many students—especially those who are first-generation, low-income, or unsure about postsecondary education—that college can be accessible with the help of the FAFSA

Many students were initially intimidated by the FAFSA due to a lack of familiarity and knowledge, but by working through each step with support, they felt safe to engage in this new and often confusing process

03 Open The Door To College

Conversations about the FAFSA opened the door to talk about college for students who hadn't been considering it due to the financial burden

Once students learned about the Pell and Longleaf Commitment grants as well as Wake Tech's free tuition, college became a reality—several students immediately scheduled appointments to start their applications

Knightsdale High School

Wake County Public Schools

Located in Wake County, Knightsdale High School is home to the Knights. 80% are students of color. 55% of students are low income. The 2022 senior class has 310 students.

@knightsdalehs
www.wcpss.net/knightsdalehs

DATA



The 40+ students who participated in the FAFSA Blitz had never stepped foot into the Student Services office before the event, and have since met with the college advisor 5+ times in order to continue the college application process.

PARTNERSHIPS



The partnership with Wake Tech strengthened immensely, with different representatives coming to the school for information sessions on FAFSA completion, application assistance, and course enrollment over 18 times this year.

PRO TIP!

Read more about the school's success with college access strategies: <https://community.duke.edu/impact-story/the-ripple-effect-of-college-education-access>



55.8%

FAFSA completion rate
as of June 3, 2022