



Direct Admission: What and How?

WHAT IS A DIRECT ADMISSION POLICY?

Direct admission automatically offers college acceptance to eligible high school students—no application, test scores, or fees required. Instead, states or institutions use verified data like GPA, coursework, or class rank to determine eligibility. Students receive admission offers, often with financial aid details and advising support, making college access simpler, clearer, and more attainable.



A **Direct Admission Policy** aims to:

- Notify students of the colleges where they've been admitted.
- Remove common application barriers.
- Build confidence and awareness, especially for first-generation students.
- Encourage FAFSA completion by linking admission offers to FAFSA prompts.

HOW ARE STATES APPROACHING DIRECT ADMISSION?

Utah (2018)

Utah pioneered statewide direct admissions. Each senior receives one envelope containing multiple admission offers based on GPA and completion of core coursework. Letters include FAFSA reminders, encouraging students to connect college admission with financial aid. The streamlined Admit Utah system allows families to compare options, plan ahead, and make informed decisions with less stress.

Georgia (2023)

Georgia MATCH is a statewide direct admission program that automatically matched 132,000 high school seniors to eligible public colleges based on their academic records in its first year. Students receive a personalized letter and online portal showing where they qualify and can accept up to three offers. The program waives application fees and supports FAFSA completion. Early results were strong: technical college applications rose 26%, enrollment 9%, and the University System of Georgia saw a 10% rise in applications and a 6% increase in enrollment.

Ohio (2025)

Ohio's new Direct Admission Pilot Program automatically notifies students of their eligibility for participating colleges, universities, or technical centers. Using existing state data systems, the program minimizes paperwork for students.



ACTION STEPS FOR STATES: EXPANDING DIRECT ADMISSION OPPORTUNITIES

States can take immediate action to expand direct admission opportunities for students, such as:

- **Ensure that community colleges align admission expectations across their institutions, and universities do the same within the four-year system**, making it easier for students to understand eligibility and reduce confusion across institutions.
- **Send personalized admission letters early in the senior year** that clearly list eligible colleges and universities.
- **Automate eligibility matching through the state longitudinal data system (SLDS)** using transcripts, test scores, and coursework completion.
 - OR for states without a SLDS develop memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to share data between state K–12 and postsecondary systems to streamline data sharing on high school juniors and seniors, enabling earlier identification of eligible students.
- **Develop a consolidated web portal** that serves as a single centralized source for direct admission application, where students can easily review their admission offers, explore options and take the next steps all in one place.

Direct admission is more than a policy. It is a **pathway to opportunity**. By removing barriers and simplifying the process, we can help more students see college as a real and reachable goal.

