

PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE | ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND IMMIGRATION

Campus Checklist to Prepare for a Supreme Court DACA Decision¹

March 3, 2020

To assist campuses in their planning for a Supreme Court decision on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), in February of 2020, the Presidents' Alliance convened a group of campus, higher education, and immigration advocacy stakeholders. During this session, participants created the following checklist representing the top five priorities campuses can consider engaging in to prepare for a decision:

Expand and Continue Legal Representation and Screenings

- Partner with nonprofits, private attorneys, campus clinics, and others.
- Identify existing and emerging paths to legalization for students.
- Establish a relationship with your Member of Congress constituent services staffer.

Audit and Update Internal and Institutional Policies

- Decouple institutional admissions, aid/funding, and tuition policies from DACA; clarify admissions and financial aid policies for undocumented students on your website.
- Ask local, national, and field-specific organizations that provide scholarship/fellowships to expand eligibility access to undocumented undergraduate and graduate students.
- Expand eligibility for admissions, tuition, and aid to undocumented students if not already the case; decouple eligibility from DACA status (if an existing requirement).
- Establish local, state, and regional collaboratives with other higher ed institutions.
- Ensure focus on access and funding includes undocumented graduate and professional students.

Prepare a Comprehensive Communications Plan

- Create a communications plan for pre- and post-decision.
- Participate in unity or coalitional messages in support of DACA post-decision.
- Meet with your or establish a campus immigration task force.

Promote Holistic Support Services and Career Guidance

- Provide and communicate the availability of holistic support services, including mental health support, grants, food security, career guidance, etc.; establish or direct students to a hub where information is available.
- Review and update existing financial aid appeal and adjustment processes.
- Share alternative income options with students and campuses.

Develop Rapid Response Plan

- Develop a rapid response network for steps to take after a decision.
- Train students, faculty, and staff on their rights in response to ICE enforcement on campus.
- Utilize FERPA privacy protections to protect immigrant student information.

¹ For questions regarding this document, please contact jose@presidentsalliance.org or visit <http://www.presidentsalliance.org>.

Expand and Continue Legal Representation and Screenings. Campuses should continue to develop and expand existing access to legal representation for immigrant students and DACA recipients on campus, including non-profits, private attorneys, pro bono representation, campus-based clinics, and partnerships with other institutions that have legal clinics. Campuses should arrange presentations on campus from qualified legal service providers on campus to conduct screenings, intakes, and general informational sessions.

Legal advocates recommend individualized screenings for all DACA recipients, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, and other undocumented & immigrant students. Even if a student was screened in the past, new options may surface due to an individual's current field of study or work, change in family circumstances, or other life changes. DACA recipients who have held DACA since before the age of 18 can likely explore a range of temporary visas and pathways to lawful permanent status (LPR) (also known as a "green card"). For an example of these types of pathways, see [The D-3 Waiver and H-1B Visa: FAQ for Students](#), FAQs related to H-1B visas and Dreamers.

Consider reaching out to your Member of Congress proactively to connect with the office to request legal support and assistance for DACA recipients, including establishing a relationship with that Member's case manager. Finally, campuses should consider building alliances and coalitions with other higher ed institutions on a local, state, or regional basis, including sharing resources, hosting events, and supporting students on a cross campus basis.

Audit and Update Internal and Institutional Policies. Campuses should review internal and institutional policies to ascertain whether admissions, financial aid, donor-funded, scholarship or other grant programs are dependent on a student's DACA status. If so, campuses should update policies wherever possible to decouple DACA status from eligibility and to ensure DACA recipients (and other undocumented students) are eligible and have access.² Institutions are strongly encouraged to improve access, funding and support for undocumented students not only at the undergraduate level, but also for those seeking to pursue graduate and professional programs.

Advocate for Expanding Eligibility for External Fellowships and Programs, and Advocate for Updates to State Policies. Work with local, field-specific, and national scholarship programs that your students may apply to and advocate to those scholarship organizations for the expansion of eligibility to *all* undocumented students to ensure that DACA recipients will still have access to those programs without DACA. This action step will also benefit other undocumented students. For example, see pages 3-4 of [Higher Ed Guide to Tuition, Financial Aid & Other Funding for Undocumented Students FAQs](#).

² For example, this new University of New Mexico *Lobo First Year Promise* program is open to all state residents regardless of immigration status: <https://promise.unm.edu/>

Review your state policies as they relate to the eligibility of undocumented students for in-state tuition, state financial aid or scholarships, professional and occupational licensure, state IDs, and driver's licenses. Are DACA recipients and/or undocumented students eligible? Is eligibility dependent on DACA status? Are there opportunities to advocate extending eligibility to no longer require DACA? Campuses should consider working together across the state and with local advocates and state legislatures to expand eligibility.

Prepare a Comprehensive Communications Plan. Campuses should plan on a comprehensive communications plan post-decision, including campus messaging, specific outreach with affected students, communications with alumni and other stakeholders, and public statements. The Presidents' Alliance will collaborate with other higher education groups and immigration advocacy organizations on the development of unity statements (across sectors, including business, religious, military, civic and other leaders) as well as on the provision of sample campus messaging and other resources. The American Council on Education is developing a stand-alone website to support campuses with DACA messaging, advocacy, and other resources, including from the Presidents' Alliance, and others. If your campus has not yet created an immigration task force or working group, consider forming one now.³

Promote Holistic Support Services and Career Guidance Campuses should ensure that holistic, non-immigration support services are available for DACA recipients, undocumented students, and mixed-status families. These wrap-around services include mental health support, emergency grants, food security programs, flexible financial aid packages and payment plans, career guidance, staff and faculty liaisons, student support groups, and more. Campus should share resources on alternative income, funding, and career pathways; and may want to explore the creation of non-employment based fellowships to support undergraduate and graduate undocumented students. Campuses should also develop best practices on how to share these resources with students (including the development of a centralized hub, center, or staff point of contact), including campus-wide emails, informational sessions, presentations during class, and 1:1 sharing by campus support staff.

Campuses may want to review their existing financial aid appeals processes to determine if they will address work authorization loss and changes in aid for undocumented students. For example, University of Connecticut anticipates utilizing their [existing process](#), but plan to make changes to reflect aid for undocumented students.

Check out the webinars on alternative income and career pathways sponsored by the Presidents' Alliance, TheDream.US, Immigrants Rising, and Democracy at Work. For

³ You may want to consider creating a cross-campus immigration task force encompassing undocumented and international students including those tracked in SEVIS and those who are not, such as H-4 students), TPS recipients, refugees, and other immigrant populations—which brings together administrators/staff, faculty, and students to share information and resources on campus, and identify emergent campus and student needs.

the webinar geared toward students, check out a [recording](#) of the webinar, its corresponding [Powerpoint](#), and shared [resources](#). You can also review [*The Non-Citizen's Guide to Entrepreneurship*](#) by the New York State Youth Leadership Council.

Develop Rapid Response Plan. Campuses should develop a rapid response care team, and outline the steps that they and other stakeholders will take immediately after a decision, including messaging, outreach to students, and protecting students from deportation. The Presidents' Alliance plans to work with members' institutions and other organizations to help develop the elements of a national rapid response network which should assist campuses in their individual preparations.

Ensure that all staff, faculty, and students are provided information on campus protocols regarding ICE officers coming onto campus. Provide training for campus police and Know Your Rights information and training opportunities for students and community members.

Provide training and information to students and campus personnel on how FERPA protections of undocumented students' personal identifiable information **still** apply regardless of the Supreme Court decision. The Presidents' Alliance released an updated [FAQs](#) on ICE enforcement on campus to include additional state contexts and resources.

For additional tips for how campuses can support DACA recipients and undocumented students, see these [suggested actions](#) by Professor Roberto Gonzales, Director of the [Immigration Initiative at Harvard](#), [Top 5 FAQs for Public and Private Colleges and Universities](#) or Immigrants Rising's [Top 10 Ways to Support Undocumented Students](#).