

Direct Admissions

Direct Admissions Frequently Asked Questions for High School Partners

1. What is Direct Admissions?

The Direct Admissions pilot is designed to encourage all high school seniors on track to graduate in Spring 2023 to view themselves as “college ready”. This pilot will hopefully help alleviate some of the anxiety around the college application process by proactively informing students of colleges/universities who are committed to admitting them. Students will receive a personalized letter indicating that they have met the academic criteria for guaranteed general admission to participating colleges and outlines the steps required for students to select their institution(s).

2. Who is in charge of Direct Admissions?

The Direct Admissions program is coordinated by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education and funded by the State of Minnesota. The pilot is a partnership between the selected high schools, participating colleges and universities and the Office of Higher Education.

3. How will individual students find out about Direct Admissions?

High school staff are encouraged to begin conversations about Direct Admissions Minnesota with seniors at the beginning of the school year. Students will receive the official Direct Admissions communication in early October, co-signed by their high school and the Office of Higher Education, that notifies them that they have direct admissions opportunities to a specific list of schools.

High schools will be provided with an FAQ document designed for students and parents, a printed and digital fact sheet for students and parents, and promotional posters. They will also receive optional social media graphics, newsletter copy, and website copy that high schools can use to share information about Direct Admissions with their students and families.

4. Are there financial aid, scholarships, or grants associated with Direct Admissions?

No, there are not scholarships or grants associated with Direct Admissions, though participating colleges have agreed to waive application fees for participating students. All students will be encouraged to complete the FAFSA as part of their college search process.

5. What do student do once they get their letter?

Students will be encouraged to select the college or colleges/universities that they are interested in by clicking a link their chosen schools. Those schools will then be informed of the student's interest and will send the student more information directly. Students who are not interested in participating do not need to do anything to follow up. No student's information will be shared with the participating colleges and universities without the student expressing interest via the Direct Admission process.

6. Do students still have to submit an admissions application?

Yes, students must still complete an admissions application and supply any additional documents required (essay, test scores, letters of recommendation, etc.) by the institution.

7. What happens after the student applies for admissions?

While the student is guaranteed admission to the colleges and universities on their list (provided that they complete their application by the school's application deadlines), we anticipate that they will get their admissions notification/acceptance letter in the same cycle as non-Direct Admissions students. Once admitted, the rest of the admissions process (orientation, enrollment, financial aid) happens in the same time as for newly admitted students. It can be helpful to think of Direct Admissions as a way into the front door ... but once in the front door they are a part of the applicant and admit pool as usual.

8. Are other schools participating in this program?

Yes, during the 2022-2023 school year, over 35 high schools will be participating. In future years, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education hopes to expand the program to all public and charter high schools in the state.

9. Was there any cost to the school or students for participating in this program?

No, funding for the staff time require to prepare for Direct Admissions was covered by the Office of Higher Education. There is no cost for students or families to participate.

10. Does Direct Admissions mean students get accepted into all programs or majors a college or university may offer?

Direct Admissions guarantees students will have general admission into an institution. Some programs or majors may have additional admissions criteria or require an additional application, submission of a portfolio, or other steps as determined by the college or university. Students interested in space limited programs should work with the college or university to find out more about additional steps required.

11. Can students opt out of this program?

Yes, parents or students can let their student's counselor (or the Minnesota Office of Higher Education) know that they (or their student) do not wish to receive college planning information from Direct Admissions Minnesota. If emailing OHE directly, emails should include the student's name, high school, and counselor name (if known).

12. Are we allowed to share student data (names, addresses, high school transcript data) with you?

Yes. Participating high schools and the Minnesota Office of Higher Education will complete the necessary data sharing agreements and memorandums of understanding to ensure compliance with all applicable data privacy and security regulations.

13. Why was our school selected to participate?

The Office of Higher Education and the Direct Admissions workgroup sought participation from high schools that represent the geographic and demographic diversity of Minnesota as well as schools that identified increasing college going rates for their students as a priority or part of their strategic plan.

14. Which colleges/universities are participating in this program?

Fifty Minnesota colleges and universities are participating, including all of the Minnesota State community and technical colleges; tribal colleges; the University of Minnesota campuses at Crookston, Morris, and Duluth; Dunwoody College of Technology, and many of the state's private, non-profit colleges. The University of Minnesota Twin Cities, Macalester, and Carleton are not participating.

15. Will this include information for students who want to go into trade programs?

Yes, all of Minnesota's community and technical colleges and Dunwoody College of Technology were invited to participate. The Minnesota Office of Higher Education recognizes that any and all forms of education and training beyond high school are important. If there is a specific college or technical school you have questions about, please let the Minnesota Office of Higher Education know.

16. What happens if a student's grades drop or they don't graduate as expected?

Direct Admissions options will be available for students who graduate in Spring 2023. If a student fails to graduate or has a significant decline in academic performance, a college or university may rescind their acceptance, in accordance with their usual admissions processes.

17. Who is responsible for sending the letters? Are they physical letters?

In order to maximize the privacy of students, high schools will be sending the letters (or emails or portal notifications) using the means of communication the high school feels is most effective. We've received feedback from schools that some prefer physical letters, some prefer emails, and some prefer portal notifications. Direct Admissions is seeking to use the method that will have the highest level of student responsiveness and trust that schools know their students best.

18. Are undocumented students eligible for the direct admissions program?

Yes, undocumented Minnesota residents are eligible.

19. How does Direct Admissions work with the U of M ShareMyApp program?

Here's how the U of M ShareMyApp program works:

- Students who submit a complete freshman admission application to the Twin Cities campus can request to have their application materials shared with one or more of the Greater MN campuses (Crookston, Duluth, Morris and Rochester) with no additional fee (or fee waiver) required.
- Students wishing to be considered for freshman admission to the Twin Cities campus must still complete the Twin Cities admission application.

The U of M ShareMyApp opens in mid-October. The University of Minnesota doesn't want to prevent students from applying earlier if they're ready (especially if they'll be eligible for the fee waiver). It is a preference to have students apply directly to their college(s) of interest; eligible students interested in applying to the University of Minnesota Crookston, Duluth, and/or Morris campuses are encouraged to take advantage of Direct Admissions to facilitate those applications.

20. How will the Direct Admissions process work for students that are attending a pilot high school, studying-abroad in the U.S. (considered international students) and wanting to attend a participating institution?

Students who are classified as international students are not eligible for the Direct Admissions pilot. These students must work directly with colleges or universities they are interested in to apply for admissions and to submit additional required documents