

OHIO DIRECT ADMISSION GUIDANCE MEMO

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TOPIC: OHIO DIRECT ADMISSION
AUTHOR: JANA FORNARIO,
VICE CHANCELLOR, P-16 AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
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RELEVANT LAW: Section 381.770 of HB 96 of the 136th General
Assembly.

The following is important information for the Ohio Direct Admission Program which is included at <https://highered.ohio.gov/initiatives/access-acceleration/direct-admission-program/direct-admission-program>.

Overview

The Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE), in collaboration with the Director of the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW), is launching the Ohio Direct Admission program to simplify and expand access to college for Ohio students — beginning with a pilot program for the graduating class of 2027. Ohio Direct Admission enables participating colleges and universities to proactively offer undergraduate admission to eligible students from participating high schools based on data the high school already has, such as grade point average (GPA), class rank, and/or standardized test scores. If a student meets a college's requirements, then they will receive an offer of admission without even having to apply.

To support this initiative and its related programs, Ohio will develop a centralized, web-based portal. This platform will enable participating institutions to define admission criteria, allow participating schools to indicate which students have opted in to direct admission and upload data as necessary, facilitate matching of student information against institutional admission criteria, and allow students to view admissions offers and send limited information (please see K-12 Data Sharing and Participation Agreement) to selected institutions.

Eligible Institutions

Institutions must opt-in to participate. Eligible institution types include:

- All participating state institutions of higher education, as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised Code.
- All participating private nonprofit institutions of higher education that hold a certificate of authorization pursuant to Chapter 1713 of the Revised Code.

- All participating Ohio Technical Centers, as defined in section 3313.901 of the Revised Code.

Eligible School Governing Bodies

School governing bodies must opt-in to participate and may authorize any high school they operate to participate in the program. Eligible school governing bodies include governing bodies of:

- All public schools - including city, local, exempted village, and joint vocational school districts
- All chartered nonpublic high schools
- Community schools established under Chapter 3314
- STEM schools established under Chapter 3326 of the Ohio Revised Code

Eligible Students

Students enrolled at high schools participating in Ohio Direct Admission may opt-in to participate. To opt-in, the student must follow the process established by their school.

Institutional Responsibilities

By agreeing to participate, the institution agrees to implement the Ohio Direct Admission program in full without modification. This includes:

- Establishing selection criteria including grade point average, standardized test scores, and/or class rank.
- Guaranteeing acceptance to students who meet selection criteria.
- Assigning a designated email inbox and a process by which accepted students can communicate with the institution.
- Ensuring that the email systems and firewalls are configured to allow delivery of official communications from the Portal.
- Assigning a designated contact person and providing timely updates should any transitions occur.
- Following guidance issued by ODHE. Up-to-date versions of ODHE guidance will be available at <https://higher.ed.ohio.gov/initiatives/access-acceleration/direct-admission-program/direct-admission-program>.

School Governing Body and School Responsibilities

By agreeing to participate, the school governing body agrees to implement the Ohio Direct Admission program in full without modification and in compliance with state and federal privacy laws. This includes:

- A school governing body opts-in to participate and authorizes one or more of their high schools to participate in the program.
- Participating schools identify a staff member to oversee Ohio Direct Admission implementation and serve as the point of contact.
- Participating schools promote the program to all high school seniors and their families and/or guardians.
- Participating schools facilitate the process to allow students to opt in/out of Ohio Direct Admission in compliance with privacy laws and ODHE guidance.
- Participating schools indicate which students are opting out of the program in the Ohio Direct Admission portal.
- Participating schools should ensure student data is correct, including giving notifying students/parents of the process by which they may review the data elements being matched for Ohio Direct Admission.
- Participating schools should review information uploaded into the portal and/or upload information into the portal in a timely fashion.
- Participating schools should ensure that the email systems and firewalls are configured to allow delivery of official communications from the portal.
- Participating schools notify students/families once Ohio Direct Admission notifications of admission have been made.
- Participating schools provide follow up support to students once they have received Ohio Direct Admission notifications of admission.
- If the LEA chooses to adopt a written policy authorizing any LEA-operated high school to participate in Ohio Direct Admission, the LEA shall transmit not later than ninety days after the adoption of the policy an electronic copy of the policy to admission@highered.ohio.gov to be shared with the Chancellor and the Director of Education and Workforce.

Student Responsibilities

Students must elect to participate in Ohio Direct Admission through their school's opt-in process. This allows the student's verified information to be matched against participating institutions' eligibility criteria and allows students to receive notification of where they have been accepted through a centralized online portal. To utilize an Ohio Direct Admission offer students must:

- Accept an offer at their selected institution by the stated deadline and according to the process specified by the institution.

- Apply separately for selective programs or majors, as required by the institution. The Ohio Direct Admission program guarantees admission to the institution, not to specific programs.
- Graduate on time from high school.
- Complete financial aid steps, including FAFSA, to secure funding for college.

Reporting

Participating institutions and schools agree to report on Ohio Direct Admission participation, in compliance with state and federal privacy laws, as requested by ODHE for program evaluation and legislative reporting.

Any questions should go to the Ohio Direct Admission inbox at admission@highered.ohio.gov.