

Text4College Project: Information for Parents and Guardians



The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is partnering with the Minnesota Department of Education, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and the Minnesota Office of Higher Education to learn whether text message reminders help students complete the tasks they need to go to college. The project is funded by a grant from the Institute of Education Sciences at the U.S. Department of Education. All graduating seniors will be invited to participate in the study, and participation is voluntary. If you would like to opt out of participation on behalf of your student, please complete the form on the next page.

To learn more about the Text4College project, please visit www.text4college.com.

Participation is as easy as 1, 2, 3. Your student will . . .

1	Complete a 10-minute survey during the school day. The survey will include about 15 questions. Students will be asked to identify their race and ethnicity, what types of college supports are available in their school or in their community and whether they have used these supports, and what their plans are after graduation. The information obtained from this survey will help the researchers at AIR understand whom the text messages help the most. Students may choose not to participate in the study at any time. If they choose to participate, they will provide a cell phone number at which they would like to receive text messages related to college enrollment.
2	Receive 10 to 15 text messages in <u>the summer before</u> college. Researchers at AIR will identify students to receive these text messages through a lottery method. Selected students will receive messages about tasks they need to complete before they start their fall semester. If students have questions or need help, they can text back and get connected to a trained counselor. Students may opt out of text messages at any time. Students who are not selected to receive text messages as part of this study will continue to have access to all supports typically provided to students before they begin college.
3	Receive 10 to 15 text messages in <u>the first year of</u> college. Researchers at AIR will choose some of the students who received the summer text messages and enrolled in college to continue receiving messages through their first year. Again, students will be chosen through a lottery method. Selected students will receive text messages about tasks they need to complete to stay enrolled the next year of college. As with the summer text messages, students will be able to text back and get connected to a trained counselor who can provide help and answer questions. Students may opt out of text messages at any time. Those students not selected to receive text messages as part of this study will continue to have access to all supports typically provided by the college they attend.

Why should my student participate?

Participation is easy and does not take much time. Text messages will remind students to complete important tasks related to enrolling in college. Students can text back to connect with real people if they need help or have questions. Participating may help your student get to college and stay in college!

How will AIR use your student's data?

AIR will use your student's survey responses to determine if your student is eligible to receive text messages, and we will also use the contact information provided to send text messages to selected students through a text messaging platform called Signal Vine.

Data that AIR will share with your high school: We will not share your student's individual survey responses with their high school. We will share the overall percentage of students who selected each response in a report to your student's high school. We will also share whether your student took the survey through their high school counselor. Accessing the survey and choosing not to participate counts as having taken the survey.

Data that AIR will share with your student's college and receive from their college: AIR may share your student's identifying information such as their name, high school, and birth date with the college that your student tells us they plan to attend. Providing this information to the college can help us direct the right text reminders to your student. The college may share your student's educational data back with us, including but not limited to whether your student has applied or completed necessary forms to enroll in college, filed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) and completed other steps necessary to receive financial aid, attended or completed orientation tasks or events, requested that their final high school transcript be sent to their college, completed course placement testing if necessary, met with an advisor and registered for courses, paid tuition, or enrolled in and attended classes.

What are the risks to participating?

There are no risks to participating in this study.

How will AIR protect my student's information?

AIR follows best practices for securing and protecting student data. Students' names and dates of birth will be shared only to match them to their state identification (ID) number assigned by the state educational agency and to their college ID. After the study is complete, the data will be destroyed. We will not share this information with anyone else for any other purpose. AIR will share students' cell phone numbers only with Signal Vine, the texting platform. Students' survey responses will be used by AIR to determine which students are eligible for the text messages and which types of students benefit the most from receiving them. AIR will not provide cell phone numbers or any individual student's survey data to high schools, colleges, or anyone else. For more information about AIR's data security, please contact Dr. Jill Bowdon, the project manager for this study, at jbowdon@air.org.

Do you have questions about this survey or project?

Please email the study team at text4college@air.org, or call us toll-free at (866) 815-5094.

Do you have questions about your student's rights as a research participant?

If you have questions about your student's rights as a research participant, you may contact AIR's Institutional Review Board (IRB), which is responsible for the protection of project participants, at IRB@air.org; toll free at 1-800-634-0797; or c/o IRB, 1400 Crystal Drive, 10th Floor, Arlington, VA, 22202.

YES, I want my student to participate.

If your student will participate, you do not need to take further action. You can stop here.

No, I want to opt out of this project on my student's behalf.

If you would like to opt out on behalf of your student, you can do so by visiting <https://form.jotform.com/210535563934053> and filling out a brief form that we will provide to your student's high school counselor.