



# For Educators: Questions About myOptions Encourage

## What is the myOptions Encourage College and Career Planning Program?

**myOptions Encourage** is a **free** college and career planning program that provides over 20,000 educators every year with resources to help their students envision, plan for, and realize success after high school. [Learn more about myOptions Encourage for educators.](#)

## What is Encourage?

**Encourage** is a free college and career planning web and mobile app for students to understand their choices for life after high school and help them make informed decisions about their futures. From exploring colleges, majors, and scholarships to discovering new careers, Encourage meets your students where they are and helps them get to their next steps. [Learn more about Encourage for students.](#)

## What are the benefits to students and educators?

### Students

- Receive personalized college and scholarship matches using a data-driven algorithm based on their interests and preferences
- Connect with U.S. colleges, universities, and educational organizations
- Access Encourage, a free mobile and web app providing college, career, and life readiness resources
- Learn about specific careers, majors, colleges, and scholarship opportunities
- Get recommended majors and careers based on their interests

### Educators and School Counselors

- Receive personalized reports comparing their schools' results with schools across the country
- Access their myOptions Encourage educator accounts, offering tools that help educators understand their students' current interests and visualize data related to student planning activities that complement their college and career counseling initiatives

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- Use each student’s college and scholarship matches to help initiate college and career conversations and narrow down the most suitable paths based on each student's needs

## How is the program free?

Students with the Encourage app have the option of being contacted by our network of partnering colleges, universities, and educational service providers looking for students like them. This network allows us to offer the program for free and provides previously unknown or out-of-reach opportunities, making college more accessible.

Students can control their recruiting preferences at any time, and the app experience is the same whether they are included in recruitment or not.

## Privacy

### How is the privacy of students protected?

We strictly utilize student information for educational purposes and will not share student data with commercial marketers offering to sell you non-education-related products and services. Our compliance team closely monitors all data requests to ensure our program complies with the U.S. Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (“COPPA”) (Children’s Personal Information) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) guidelines.

### What if I need more forms?

Call us toll-free at 1-877-409-6366 or email [educators@encourageme.com](mailto:educators@encourageme.com) if you need additional forms. We’re happy to promptly mail you more forms.

### If I can’t get them done by the deadline, can I get an extension?

We want to be flexible with your busy schedule. Just call 1-877-409-6366 or send an email to [educators@encourageme.com](mailto:educators@encourageme.com) and let us know if you feel that you need additional time.



## **What do I do with unused forms? Do you want me to mail them back?**

There is no need to return unused forms. Please pass them on to another educator who can use them or recycle them

## **Is participation in the myOptions Encourage program mandatory?**

Participation in this free college and career planning program is entirely optional. However, it's a great way for students 13 years or older to learn more about their options after high school including colleges and universities that might be a good fit for them based on their interests and goals

## **Which grades should participate?**

The forms are for students as young as 13 and are typically completed by students in grades 8-12. Since many educational organizations and the U.S. Department of Education suggest students start preparing for college in middle school, we recommend that students begin participating as 7th graders. Additionally, we encourage 12th graders who need help choosing a college or career path or need support identifying scholarship opportunities to participate.

## **Do students need to fill out the personal information section of the college and career preference forms?**

To process the form, we collect some personal information from the students to provide them with valuable information from colleges and universities. We do not share student information with commercial marketers offering to sell you non-education-related products and services, and participation in the program is voluntary.

If the students have the Encourage app, they can update their connection preference in their **Profile** under **Recruiting Preferences**.

## **Who will have access to the students' personal information?**

Students will receive communications from Encourage, and if they opt into recruiting, they will also receive direct communication from colleges and universities. Your students may also hear from educational and career service providers offering products and services such as college admissions services, financial aid, career information, and co-curricular and recognition programs.

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Student data is strictly protected. It will not be shared with companies or marketing services that do not provide educational information or assistance as our goal is to help support students achieve their goals for life after high school.

## **Is parental/guardian consent required for a student to participate?**

Since the program is voluntary, parental/guardian consent is not required. Students' personal information is not released to commercial marketers who sell non-education-related products and services. Additionally, all colleges, universities, and education-related organizations that may reach out to participating students are individually reviewed by us to ensure they provide redeeming educational value and are aligned with Children's Online Privacy Protection Act ("COPPA") (Children's Personal Information) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) guidelines.

## **If my students filled out one of the forms last year, do they need to do it again this year?**

Updated information means students will receive college and career information related to their evolving preferences. If your students actively use the Encourage app, they will continue to see updated college and scholarship matches. If they haven't started using Encourage, filling out the form once a year is a great way to refresh their lists.

## **How long before we receive the College Match and Scholarship Reports?**

You will receive information about how to obtain your College Match and Scholarship Reports in your myOptions Encourage account within four weeks of us receiving the completed forms.

## **Who did you get approval from to send these forms to me?**

We partner with several educator and student organizations, and district superintendents to administer the voluntary myOptions Encourage College and Career Planning Program.

## **How can I manage the communications I receive from myOptions Encourage?**

You can request to delete your data or unsubscribe from communications at any time by submitting a [Privacy Rights Request](#). Students also can delete their accounts at any time by logging into Encourage and selecting **Manage Account > Legal > Delete My Account**. This will remove their profiles, and they will no longer be able to log in and access their matches or other saved information. Additionally, they will be unsubscribed from all future communications from myOptions Encourage.



# For Students: Questions About myOptions Encourage

## How will myOptions Encourage help me?

By participating in the program, you will receive a free online Encourage account at [encourageme.com](https://encourageme.com). After you complete your profile, we will provide you with a personalized list of colleges and universities that match your unique needs and interests. From there, you can explore colleges and scholarships, receive recommended careers and majors after a short quiz, and get tasks to help keep you on track toward your future goals.

Our tools allow you to customize your preferences and access information about financial aid, ACT/SAT entrance requirements, and career and goal planning activities. You will also receive a monthly email that may include wellness, encouragement, college and career exploration, work opportunities, and financial aid topics.

## What is the purpose of the student form?

We use the student form to collect the information we need to create your free profile in Encourage. It helps us generate personalized planning resources for you, including a list of colleges and scholarships that align with your interests and goals. We can also connect you with colleges actively seeking students like you. If your interests change, simply update your preferences, and you'll receive an updated list of college matches and selected scholarship opportunities based on those changes.

## I am not a senior. Can I still get information from Encourage that will help me right now?

We offer timely and helpful resources within each grade level (7th-12th). The resources include planning timelines, personal wellness reflections, and college and career planning articles. It's never too early to connect your future goals to the steps you need to get there. With Encourage, all students can be college, career, and life ready by the time they graduate high school.

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**If you have further questions or would like additional information, please contact:**

**Peggy Jansen**

Educator Liaison

877-409-6366 toll free

[educators@encourageme.com](mailto:educators@encourageme.com)

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