

# For Educators: Questions about myOptions Encourage

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

The **myOptions Encourage College and Career Planning Program** (*formerly myOptions/myCollegeOptions*) is a **free** college and career planning program that empowers educators with resources to help their students envision, plan for, and realize success after high school. This program serves about 1 million students annually across 5,000 school districts and 13,000 high schools in all 50 states, including Washington, DC. [Learn more about myOptions Encourage for educators.](#)

## What is Encourage?

**Encourage** is a free college and career planning web and mobile app that empowers students to understand their choices for life after high school and helps them make informed decisions about their futures. From exploring colleges, majors, and scholarships to discovering new careers, Encourage is here to meet your students where they are and help 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.
- Discover and save careers, majors, and colleges and find scholarship opportunities.
- Update their preferences and information as their interests evolve.

### Educators and School Counselors

- Receive a personalized report comparing their school's results with schools across the country.
- Access your myOptions Encourage educator account, 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.
- 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 privacy of students protected?

Students receive information relevant to their postsecondary plans while ensuring that their privacy is protected in strict accordance with the guidelines outlined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In addition, an independent Advisory Council provides oversight, ensuring all practices follow the approved guidelines.

## **What if I need more forms?**

If you need additional forms, call us toll-free at 1-877-409-6366 or email [info@encourageme.com](mailto:info@encourageme.com). 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 [info@encourageme.com](mailto:info@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 recycle them or pass them on to another educator who can use them.

## **Is participation mandatory?**

Participation in this free program is entirely optional. However, it's a great way for students to learn more about colleges and universities that might be a good fit for them.

## **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 8th graders. Additionally, we encourage 12th graders who need help choosing a college or career path to participate.

## **Do my students need to fill out the personal information section?**

We're excited to provide your students with valuable information from colleges and universities. Yes, to process the form, we collect some personal information from the students. We do not share student information with commercial marketers. Participation in the program is voluntary.

Students can update their sharing preferences in the Encourage app in their **Profiles** 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.

Student data is strictly protected. It will not be shared with any company or marketing service that does not provide educational information or assistance. The privacy of student information is of utmost importance.

## **Is parental/guardian consent required?**

Parental/guardian consent is not required because it is a voluntary program. Students' personal information is not released to commercial marketers who sell non-education-related products and services.

## **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 list.

## **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 national educators, student organizations, and district superintendents to administer the myOptions Encourage College and Career Planning Program. The program is voluntary.

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

Any email messages you receive from myOptions Encourage adhere to established guidelines for permission-based email messaging. You will always have the option to opt out of communications. To unsubscribe, email [info@encourageme.com](mailto:info@encourageme.com) and ask to be removed from future emails, mailings, or both.

If you no longer wish to have an account, you can request to close it by sending an email to [info@encourageme.com](mailto:info@encourageme.com) with the subject line "Close my account" and let us know that you want your account deleted. This will remove your profile, and you will no longer be able to log in and access your students' matches or other saved information. Additionally, you 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](http://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. Our web-based pages include information on colleges and scholarships. Our mobile app offers those features plus major and career exploration opportunities and 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 online college planning profile in Encourage. It helps us generate personalized planning resources for you, including a list of colleges that align with your profile. 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 (8th-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.

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

You control your email preferences through your account on the Encourage app. Any email messages you receive from Encourage adhere to established guidelines for permission-based email messaging. You will always have the option to opt out of communications. To unsubscribe, email [help@encourageme.com](mailto:help@encourageme.com) and ask to be removed from future emails, mailings, or both.

If you no longer wish to have an account, you can request to close it by sending an email to [help@encourageme.com](mailto:help@encourageme.com) with the subject line "Close my account" and let us know that you want your account deleted. This will remove your profile, and you will no longer be able to log in and access your matches or other saved information. Additionally, you will be unsubscribed from all future communications from Encourage.

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

**Peggy Jansen**

High School Liaison

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877-409-6366 toll free

682-205-1418 direct line

[info@encourageme.com](mailto:info@encourageme.com) email