

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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For Further Questions

- *If you have further questions or would like additional information, please contact:*
Peggy Jansen, High School Liaison
peggy@mycollegeoptions.org
877-409-6366 toll free
817-562-1403 direct line

QUESTIONS ABOUT My Options:

What is My Options and My College Options?

My Options is a non-profit education organization. Through specialized platforms, such as My College Options, the nation's largest college and career planning program, My Options offers free assistance and valuable resources to millions of students, their parents, and high school faculty and staff nationwide. Coming soon will also be, My Career Options and My Scholarship Options to further assist students with their post-secondary planning.

What types of organizations partner with My Options?

Many student organizations, educator associations and community-based organizations participate in cooperative research with MyOptions. The organizations' members, educators and their students across the country are invited to participate in the research program on a voluntary, no-cost basis.

What type of research would be completed in this partnership?

Our goal for each research partner is to provide an annual snapshot of research results that support their organizational mission, and to identify trends which develop over several years. Employing current educational research best practices, all analysis is completed by research professionals and reviewed by a Research Advisory Board.

What are the benefits to students, parents, and educators?

Students - All participating students receive a free Online College Planning Account which will be matched, through a unique process, with colleges and universities that fit their individual needs and interests. Using the My Options program, students can further specify their preferences and needs for information about financial aid, SAT/ACT entrance requirements, and other planning activities. Students are able to change their preferences and other data as their interests change or their knowledge about the process increases. They also have access to valuable information about paying for college, types of institutions, career exploration, how to apply to college, and much, much more.

Parents - Parents can use MyOptions to find answers to their college planning questions. Listed on the website are numerous articles and tips to help parents navigate through the college search process. These include tips on what parents should know about choosing a college, the level of parental involvement that will best help a student make the right college decision, and deadlines for financial aid. By taking the time to explore this resource, parents can gain a better understanding of how to help their children in their college selection.

Educators and Guidance Counselors – Educators that participate in the research program will be provided with a personalized report that details how their school's results compare with others around the country. They will also gain access to a MyOptions Mentors account, which provides tools for progress monitoring and visualization dashboards reflecting student-planning activities. This information can help evaluate and improve school programs. Counselors will find the service particularly helpful as a supplement to their college and career counseling programs. The custom content created by MyOptions for each student can be used by counselors and educators to not only begin conversations with students about exploring their college options, but will also provide a valuable tool in helping to narrow down the most appropriate institutions that fit the student's needs. Listed on the website are step-by-step tutorials that walk educators and counselors through how the site operates and how to interpret the resources available.

How is the privacy of students protected?

Students will receive information relevant to their post-secondary plans while ensuring that their privacy is protected in strict accordance with the guidelines set forth in The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). **Student information is used only for educational purposes. No student data is released to commercial marketers.**

Compliance is maintained through a compliance officer who evaluates all requests for use of the data to ensure that student information is only being used under the ESEA guidelines. In addition, an independent Advisory Council provides oversight to make sure that all practices follow the approved guidelines.

QUESTIONS FROM THE EDUCATORS/COUNSELORS:

What if I need more forms?

If you need additional forms, call us toll-free at 1-877-409-6366. We'll be 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 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 to you?

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

Is participation mandatory?

High school students participate voluntarily and at no cost, enabling them to receive information which is related to their educational needs and helps them plan for the future. The most important benefit of participating is the information that students and their families will receive from suitable colleges and universities.

Which grades should participate?

The student forms are intended for distribution to all 9th, 10th and 11th grade students and any 12th graders still needing assistance in selecting a college education or career path. We also encourage 8th graders to participate as many educational organizations and the U.S. Department of Education recommend that college readiness should begin in middle school.

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

In order for a form to be processed and for a student to receive valuable information from colleges and universities, the student's personal information is required. As previously stated, the student's information is not shared with commercial marketers.

Who will have access to the students' personal information?

Besides receiving communications from My Options, students who participate can expect to hear directly from colleges and universities, suited to their interests and selected through a unique matching process, as well as educational and career service providers offering products and services such as college admissions services, financial aid, career information, extracurricular enrichment and recognition programs. Student data is strictly protected and is not be made available to any company or marketing service that does not provide educational information or assistance.

Is parental consent required?

Parental consent is not required because students' personal information is not released to commercial marketers offering to 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?

Yes, it's important that we get their updated information so that they can continue to receive appropriate college and career information related to their selected preferences. However, one time a year is enough.

How long before we receive the College Match Reports?

Within 4 – 6 weeks after we receive the completed student forms, you will receive a communication providing you with website information where you can download the College Match Reports.

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

We have partnered with your educator, student organization or District Superintendent on this important research project. The program is completely voluntary and all of the information collected is for educational and research purposes only.

QUESTIONS FROM THE STUDENTS:

How will My College Options help me?

All students are invited to join My Options (www.myoptions.org) by completing our student profile. Our system is set up to match students' interests and aspirations to colleges that best match what they are looking for in a college choice.

All participating students receive their **free** Online College Planning Account, detailing colleges and universities that fit their individual needs and interests. This program allows students to proactively further specify their preferences and needs for information about scholarships, financial aid, SAT/ACT entrance requirements, and other planning activities. Students are able to change their preferences and other data as their interests change or their knowledge about the process increases. They also receive a My Options monthly email which gives students information on topics such as preparing for college, financial aid, sources for college information, and the application process along with many other relevant topics for today's college bound student.

What is the purpose of the student form?

The student form is intended to gather the essential information necessary to create your FREE Online College Planning Account in the My College Options program. Having this information about you allows My Options to develop personalized planning information for you including a list of colleges that match your profile and to connect you with institutions that are looking for students like you. After your account is created, you can change your preferences and other data to reflect your current interests and can receive an updated list of college matches.

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

You will find lots of information for each class (9th - 12th grades) at My Options. There are planning calendars, as well as all sorts of articles providing general and specific college planning information. Although you will not begin the application formally until your senior year, it is almost never too early to begin thinking about college. Even in middle school, students can gain valuable information that will help them make wise decisions later about which colleges will suit them best.

How can I manage the email communications I receive from My Options?

A student can manage their email preferences through their college planning account at the My Options website. Some students decide to create a unique email account for their college information. Any email messages that you receive from My College Options or the interested colleges and universities will meet the established guidelines of permission-based email messaging, meaning that there will always be provisions for you to opt out. You can also opt out by sending an email to mrc@nrccua.org indicating the desire to be removed from future emails, mailings, or both.

How can I close my college planning account?

You may request to close your account at any time by sending an email to mrc@nrccua.org with the subject "Close my account". This will remove your profile from the site and you will no longer be able to log in to view your matches or other saved information. You will be removed from all future communications from My College Options.

