

## **Appendix A. Call for Volunteers**

## Volunteer to Try a New Student Messaging Program in Your 7<sup>th</sup> Year!

### *Have you heard that text messaging can help improve students' college-related outcomes?*

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) invites FY 2011 GEAR UP State and Partnership Grantees to sign up for a research demonstration that will provide, and assess the effectiveness of, text messages sent to GEAR UP students. These messages are designed to help students take the final steps to college enrollment and successfully persist through their first year in college.

We know lots of projects are using, or thinking about using, digital messaging. This is your chance to gain access to a set of messages that have been developed based on research about effective messaging to students. *This is a great opportunity to give your students additional support as they transition to college!*

New research has shown that texting is a promising strategy to support students transitioning to and persisting in college. The demonstration is designed to deliver high-quality information that students may not be aware of or may not have easy access to. The messages—*sent during the summer after high school completion and during the first year of college*—will inform students about:

- **Key enrollment-related tasks** such as submitting a deposit, filling out the housing form, and registering for classes;
- Important steps to **lay the groundwork for upcoming terms** such as paying tuition, registering for the next semester, and completing the FAFSA;
- **Common challenges** faced during the first year in college such as academic unpreparedness and lack of knowledge about campus supports; and
- **GEAR UP supports** available through your project's 7<sup>th</sup> year activities.

FY 2011 GEAR UP State and Partnership Grantees are eligible to participate. The first 12 projects that volunteer, representing the broad array of grantees, will be invited to participate. As a research demonstration, two-thirds of college bound 2016-2017 high school seniors from participating schools will be assigned by lottery to receive messaging, which will start in summer 2017.

Interested? Here's how to participate.

1. Attend one of our upcoming information webinars:
  - Tuesday, DATE, TIME, EST
  - Thursday, DATE, TIME EST

Note: The content will be the same in each webinar. Stay tuned for an email with information on how to sign up for a webinar.

2. Sign up: Visit the sign-up page on the study website: [www.XXXX.com/signup](http://www.XXXX.com/signup) and fill in basic information about your project.

Study Website

Study Email

Study Phone

## WHY PARTICIPATE?

### TARGETED, RESEARCH-BASED SUPPORT FOR YOUR STUDENTS

The demonstration aims to benefit your students after they leave high school and transition into college. It will:

- Deliver high-quality information to your students at *key time points* during the transition into college;
- Provide your students with *action oriented* messages;
- Customize messages based on students' college intentions; and
- Direct students to supports that your project can provide them during the 7<sup>th</sup> year.

## HOW WILL THE DEMONSTRATION WORK?

### EASY ROLL-OUT AND ADMINISTRATION

The study team will conduct a brief survey of all 2016-2017 senior students in spring 2017 to determine which students intend to go to college. Two-thirds of the college bound 2016-2017 high school seniors from participating schools across all grantees will be assigned by lottery to receive one of the messaging programs. Data collected for the study will be kept confidential, except as required by law, and appropriate measures will be taken to keep all data secure.

To participate, GEAR UP grantees will:

- Sign up with GEAR UP high schools that are committed to participate;
- Provide lists of all seniors as of spring 2017;
- Work with the study team to obtain consent from parents and students;
- Encourage students to complete a short survey at the end of the senior year;
- Agree to have students be part of a lottery to determine which students receive the messaging program; and
- Support messaging program efforts throughout the implementation, summer 2017 through spring 2018.

This demonstration is sponsored by ED's Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) and Institute of Education Sciences (IES). The research will be conducted by Abt Associates, in partnership with Survey Research Management (SRM) and Program and Policy Insight (PPI).

## HOW WILL RESULTS BE USED?

### TO INFORM BEST PRACTICES IN COLLEGE TRANSITION SUPPORT SERVICES!

Ultimately the goal of this investment is to understand if these types of student messages, delivered during the college transition period are effective, and if so, to share this type of program with other grantees, schools, and students.

The Department is committed to **investing in and studying promising practices** to help your students succeed in college!

Study Website

Study Email

Study Phone