

## Texas Taps Artificial Intelligence to Expand Access for Low-Income and First-Generation Students

*New statewide chatbot, developed in partnership with AdmitHub, provides personalized guidance to help students navigate COVID-19 impact on college access and student success*

**Oct. 29, 2020, Austin, Texas** – High school students across the state of Texas have a new resource to guide them through the college application process, thanks to a public-private partnership announced today by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The new initiative will tap AdmitHub’s pioneering technology to enable students to access [ADVi](#), a conversational artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot that offers proactive, personalized guidance to help students navigate their way to and through college. ADVi can communicate with students 24/7 via text message, and if students need additional support, directs them to a cohort of live advisers who are trained and funded through a partnership with the College Advising Corps.

Texas students may access ADVi by texting “COLLEGE” to 512-829-3687 or starting a freshman application in [ApplyTexas](#). The THECB launched the text messaging tool this month to 60,000 high school seniors who opted into receiving messages in their ApplyTexas applications. High school juniors may also opt-in to ADVi to start receiving messaging in November.

“Texas students and families have faced unprecedented challenges due to COVID-19, which is why we’re eager to provide innovative solutions to help students get through this critical time and achieve their dreams of higher education, and ultimately, a fulfilling career,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Harrison Keller. “This new platform uses familiar technology like texting to reach students where they are and break down the barriers for low-income and first-generation students. Advising students virtually via text is a safe and cost-effective way that the THECB can help protect our students from the potentially devastating impacts of the pandemic on educational attainment.”

Research from the National Student Clearinghouse [suggests](#) that despite steady college enrollment in Texas, college enrollment nationwide has continued to trend downward in the wake of the pandemic. The THECB has been an active partner in the state’s response. The agency is distributing [more than \\$150 million in financial aid](#) to Texas higher education institutions through the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund, and has worked in partnership with the Texas Higher Education Foundation to raise [more than \\$700,000](#) in privately funded grants for emergency student aid for higher education institutions across Texas. This new partnership is designed to build upon that support by providing more direct outreach to students as they begin their ApplyTexas applications. [Research](#) has found that students who received text message reminders from a trusted source were 17% more likely to complete a financial aid application.

“With one of the largest college student populations in any state, Texas has long been a leader in new approaches with the potential to expand access and advance equity in higher education,” said Drew Magliozzi, Co-Founder and CEO of AdmitHub. “At a time when communication with students has never been harder or more important, THECB is doubling down on its commitment to ensure that every student in Texas has the support and guidance they need to not just enroll but succeed.”

[AdmitHub](#)’s conversational AI chatbots are used by a growing number of colleges and nonprofit organizations to help boost enrollment, improve persistence, and advance student success. Recent research conducted in partnership with Georgia State University found that AdmitHub’s technology can [reduce](#) so-called “summer melt” by more than 20% among incoming students, and also [increases](#) FAFSA completion rates and fall registration rates for returning students. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, AdmitHub has [joined forces](#) with the Common App and College Advising Corps to bring empathetic communication to help nearly 200,000 low-income and first-generation students navigate the college admissions process.

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