



# **2024 Texas Rider Report: Advise TX College Advising Corps**

**A Report to the Texas Legislature in accordance with the  
General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, Article III,  
Rider 44, 88th Texas Legislature**

**Evaluation and Assessment Solutions for Education  
& Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
Division for College and Career Advising**

**December 2024**

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The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) will be recognized as an international leader in developing and implementing innovative higher education policy to accomplish our mission.

### Agency Philosophy

The THECB will promote access to and success in quality higher education across the state with the conviction that access and success without quality is mediocrity and that quality without access and success is unacceptable.

The THECB's core values are:

**Accountability:** We hold ourselves responsible for our actions and welcome every opportunity to educate stakeholders about our policies, decisions, and aspirations.

**Efficiency:** We accomplish our work using resources in the most effective manner.

**Collaboration:** We develop partnerships that result in student success and a highly qualified, globally competent workforce.

**Excellence:** We strive for excellence in all our endeavors.

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## Executive Summary

Advise TX programming, established in the 2011-12 school year, is a collaboration between the College Advising Corps and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) intended to increase students' college enrollment rates. This annual report, required by the General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, Article III, Rider 44, 88th Texas Legislature, describes and evaluates the impact of Advise TX. Overall, the findings in this report align with the program's stated goals and are consistent with the original randomized controlled trial study of Advise TX, which found that college enrollment gains were larger for student subgroups with historically lower enrollment rates.<sup>1</sup>

The data presented in this report covers three high school graduating classes, reflecting variations in data availability: 2021-22 student-level college enrollment outcomes benchmarked against peers not served by Advise TX, 2022-23 completion rates for high school-level college application and Free Application for Federal Student Aid [FAFSA] benchmarked against schools not served by Advise TX, and 2023-24 Advise TX's key performance indicators [KPI], student evaluations of advisers, and school-level demographic data.

During the most recent school year (2023-24), eight Advise TX programs collectively hired, trained, and placed at least one near-peer adviser in 156 public high schools.<sup>2</sup> These advisers directly supported more than 61,000 seniors at schools enrolling a total of 285,000 students, representing approximately 17% of Texas public high school enrollment. Advise TX monitors six KPIs that support college enrollment. KPI activity for the class of 2024 was favorable, and four KPI rates improved compared to the prior school year. The most recent graduating class was more likely to meet with their adviser, apply to college, apply to three or more colleges, and have a family member interact with their adviser. The other two KPIs which measure FAFSA completion and adviser FAFSA assistance rates, experienced a reduction. This is likely caused by the challenges of the release of the new FAFSA that led to a nationwide reduction in FAFSA completion rates.<sup>3</sup>

Advisers' positive impact on college enrollment for the class of 2023 is evident in internal data connecting students' KPIs with their enrollment outcomes. Students who met with their adviser were more likely to enroll in college and were 8 percentage points more likely to attend college if they met with their adviser three or more times. Similarly, two-year college enrollment rates for students with GPAs below 2.5 rose from 18% (392) to 26% (794) if they met three or more times with their adviser.

Enrollment analysis for the class of 2022 using ApplyTexas, the state's admission application, reveals modest but statistically significant gains for Advise TX students. Compared to a

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<sup>1</sup> Bettinger, E., & Evans, B. (2019). College guidance for all: A randomized experiment in pre-college advising. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 38(3), 579-599.

<sup>2</sup> The eight Advise TX programs are: Texas A&M University, Texas A&M University-San Antonio, Texas Christian University, Trinity University, University of North Texas at Dallas, and The University of Texas at Austin, The University of Texas at El Paso, and The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

<sup>3</sup> The National College Attainment Network reported in October 2024 that national FAFSA completion rates declined by about 9%: <https://www.ncan.org/news/685038/Freshman-Enrollment-Down-5-Following-FAFSA-Completion-Declines.htm>

benchmark of peers, Advise TX students were nearly 1 percentage point more likely to enroll in college, and their enrollment rate at four-year colleges was about 1.5 percentage points higher. Enrollment gains were most pronounced for students from larger schools, students from low-income backgrounds, and African American students. Further analysis suggests these gains result from students at Advise TX schools being more likely to submit college applications and complete financial aid forms.

## Background

All Advise TX programs share a unified mission to increase college enrollment, especially for student subgroups that have historically lower college attendance rates. This goal aligns with the stated objectives of the current Texas strategic higher education plan, "*Building a Talent Strong Texas*."<sup>4</sup> Advise TX serves schools that disproportionately enroll low-income, first-generation college. These schools also tend to be “high need.”<sup>5</sup>

Advise TX programming is fundamentally distinct from that of other college access organizations because it intentionally targets all students. Advisers are asked to serve every senior regardless of whether they are prepared, interested, or intend to pursue a postsecondary credential or degree. Additionally, any student at an Advise TX school, from any grade, can ask the adviser for help with career planning, which is referred to as an “open-door” policy.

Delivering advising services through “near-peer” advisers is another defining feature of Advise TX. Advisers are recent college graduates who serve as effective role models. Many advisers are Pell Grant recipients or first-generation college graduates. Frequently, they have lived in the same high school communities they now serve.

Lastly, advising services typically are delivered by a single adviser placed at each school. With limited resources, this approach allows Advise TX to serve more schools to reach more students, but it results in large caseloads that limit advisers’ ability to engage more deeply with students. For example, the average caseload in 2023-24 was close to 450 seniors. In 2023-24, several new “hybrid” program partners launched a delivery model that asks one adviser to serve two schools at the same time, sometimes helping students in person at a school and sometimes assisting them remotely. The impact of this hybrid advising model has not yet been rigorously evaluated.

Dr. Eric Bettinger has served as the principal investigator for the annual evaluation of Advise TX programs since the class of 2018. He was also the principal investigator for the groundbreaking randomized controlled trial on college enrollment outcomes for Advise TX. That study found Advise TX significantly increased college enrollment rates, particularly among low-income students. Dr. Bettinger is currently the Conley-DeAngelis Family Professor of Education at Stanford University and a partner in Evaluation and Assessment Solutions for Education.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.highered.texas.gov/our-work/talent-strong-texas/>

<sup>5</sup> When Advise TX was introduced (2011-12), qualifying schools had to enroll at least 35% of students who were eligible to receive free and/or reduced-price lunch, did not offer a widespread rigorous curriculum, had a minimum class size of 100 students, and their historical “direct-to-college going” enrollment rates were below 70%.

## Advise TX Student and School Comparisons

During the 2023-24 school year, Advise TX placed at least one adviser at 156 high schools. Nearly 300,000 students were enrolled at these schools, which account for approximately 17% of all Texas public high school students. Advisers' caseloads consisted of nearly 70,000 of these students.<sup>6</sup>

Advise TX serves schools that demonstrate a greater need for resources. The average senior class at an Advise TX school, for example, is more than twice the size of the average senior class at other public Texas high schools. Additionally, three of every four students at Advise TX schools are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, compared to fewer than half of students at other schools in Texas. And a smaller share of students at Advise TX schools are also considered to be "college ready." According to 2021 Texas Education Agency data, students at Advise TX schools have significantly lower STAAR achievement scores (average raw score of 38 versus 48) and fewer of them test at grade level.<sup>7</sup>

### Short-Term Advise TX Outcomes

#### Key performance indicators

Advise TX advisers are trained to increase college enrollment by encouraging and assisting students with the completion of six key performance indicators (KPIs) during their senior year. According to multiple independent analyses, completing these KPIs increases the odds of enrolling in college. Half of the KPIs are student-centered actions (applying to college, submitting three or more college applications, and submitting a Free Application for Federal Student Aid [FAFSA]), while the others are adviser-facing actions (holding one-on-one meetings with students, assisting with FAFSA submissions, and engaging family members in the college-going process). Further, these KPIs are aligned with key strategies of *Building a Talent Strong Texas*, which includes an emphasis on limiting student debt. The six KPIs are:

- Student actions
  - o Submitting one or more college applications
  - o Submitting three or more college applications
  - o Completing the FAFSA
- Adviser actions
  - o One-on-one meetings with students
  - o Engagement with students' family members
  - o Assisting students with completing their FAFSA

Cumulative KPI activity for the class of 2024 is presented in Table 1. The second column in Table 1 displays the number of unique students who completed a KPI, while the third column

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<sup>6</sup> Caseloads include students from grades 9-11, plus seniors. In 2023-24, advisers directly supported over 8,000 students who were not seniors. In most of these schools, a second adviser was assigned to directly support students before they became seniors, usually juniors. Advisers at a handful of Advise TX schools worked exclusively with juniors because another college access organization supported the senior class.

<sup>7</sup> Data downloaded from: <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2023/xplore/DownloadSelData.html>

presents the total number of times a KPI activity occurred. Some students met with their adviser more than 10 times, for example, which counts for one student in the second column but 10 meetings in the third column. Overall, about 52,000 students had at least one “one-on-one” meeting with their adviser, and close to 144,000 one-on-one meetings with advisers took place during the school year. Likewise, close to 47,000 Advise TX students submitted at least one college application, and Advise TX students submitted a total of nearly 166,000 college applications.

**Table 1. Advise TX KPI Activity for the Class of 2024**

Student Actions	Number of Students	Number of Actions
Submitted one or more college applications	46,986	165,954*
Submitted three or more college applications	19,915	---
Completed FAFSA	39,580	39,580
<b>Adviser actions</b>		
One-on-one meeting with students	51,849	143,934*
Engagement with students' families	19,471	27,557*
Assisted a <i>student</i> with FAFSA submission	42,420	42,420

Source: Advise TX

\*These counts refer to the total number of college applications that were submitted, one-on-one meetings that were held, and engagements with a family member of a student.

Advise TX KPI rates for both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years are presented in [Table 2](#). Rates are calculated by dividing the KPI counts in Table 1 by the percentage of seniors who were enrolled across Advise TX schools. The comparison of rates over time is intended to be apples to apples, which means results are presented only for schools that were served both years by Advise TX.

Four of Advise TX’s six KPI rates increased in 2023-24. This includes one-on-one meetings with advisers, which increased by 4 percentage points, and the rate of engagement with a students’ family member, which increased by six percentage points. College application rates also increased by 3 percentage points, while the uptick was smaller for students who submitted three or more applications. The two KPI rates that declined, FAFSA completion and FAFSA assistance, were likely negatively affected by delays in launching the new FAFSA and the technical issues plaguing the submission portal. Across all Texas public schools, FAFSA completion rates declined on average by about 10%.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ncan.org/page/fafsatracker>

**Table 2. Advise TX KPI Rates, Classes of 2023 and 2024**

KPI	2023 KPI Rate	2024 KPI Rate	Percentage Point Difference
One-on-one Meetings	83.8%	88.0%	4.2%
Family Engagement	27.7%	33.3%	5.7%
1+ College Applications	76.7%	79.4%	2.6%
3+ College Applications	33.3%	34.7%	1.3%
Adviser Assisted with FAFSA	69.1%	65.8%	-3.3%
FAFSA Completion	74.0%	62.0%	-12.0%

Source: Advise TX

### Seniors' evaluation of Advise TX

This section introduces another source of information. At the end of each school year, seniors at participating Advise TX schools are surveyed about their post-graduation plans.<sup>9</sup> Students are also asked several questions about their advisers' influence on their career and college-related decisions. Over 90% of student respondents agreed, with 41% strongly agreeing that their Advise TX adviser helped them “make better choices about what to do after graduating from high school.”

Another question asked seniors to rate the influence of parents/guardians and their Advise TX adviser for their college-related decisions. Responses were recorded on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (“not influential at all”) to 5 (“very influential”). On average, parents were rated as the most influential, which is unsurprising, and their influence was unaffected by how often students met with their adviser. However, the more frequently students met with their adviser, the more influential students rated the adviser. For the subset of students who met with their adviser three or more times, advisers were rated as equally influential as parents.

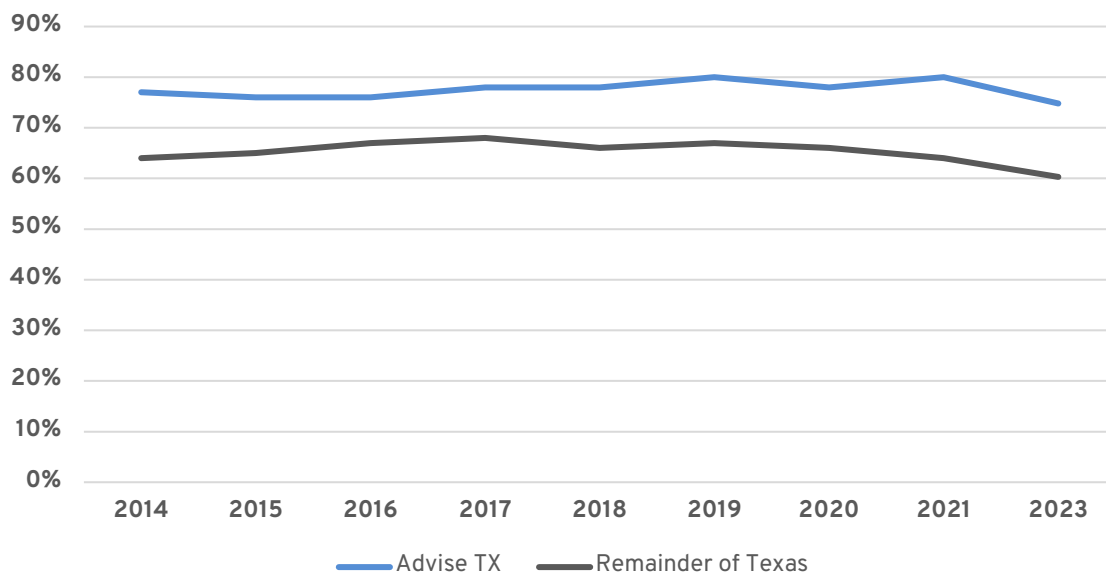
### College applications

In addition to comparing KPI activity over time within Advise TX schools, this report compares college application rates between Advise TX schools and the remainder of Texas public schools. These results, based on application data from the 2022-23 school year, are shown in [Figure 1](#). Note that ApplyTexas data are needed to make this comparison, which excludes out-of-state college enrollment and in-state “independent” college enrollment.

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<sup>9</sup> All Advise TX programs administered the senior survey except for Trinity and The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. The survey was not administered at every school served by the six programs. A total of 6,061 seniors completed the survey; the response rates for participating program ranged from 20% to 49%.

**Figure 1. Annual College Application Rates for In-State, Public, Two- and Four-Year Institutions**



Source: THECB/ApplyTexas

Note: Application data for the class of 2022 was unavailable at the time of this report.

Consistent with prior years, the college application rate for the class of 2023 is higher at Advise TX schools. Although the absolute rate of applying to college has fluctuated over time, the gap between Advise TX and all other schools for 2023 was as large as it has been since tracking started in 2014. The consistent difference is impressive, considering that student characteristics generally negatively correlated with applying to college are more prevalent at Advise TX schools.

### FAFSA completion rates

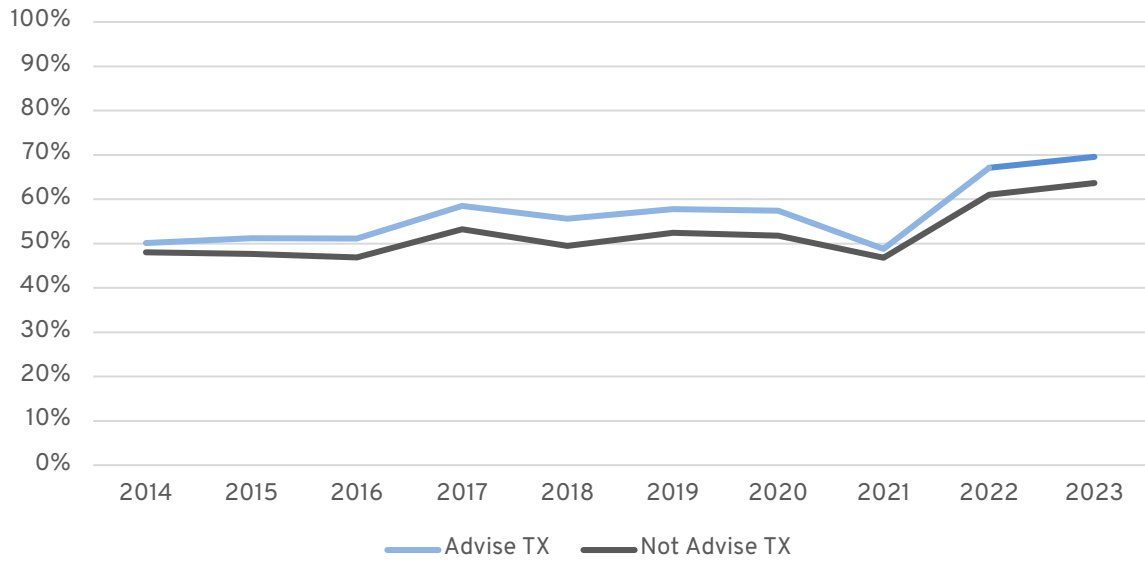
Similar to the results presented about college application rates, FAFSA completion rates, as shown in Figures 2 and 3, are higher for Advise TX schools compared to the rest of the state.<sup>10</sup> [Figure 2](#) highlights that since 2014, Advise TX schools have consistently exceeded the state’s completion rate by a margin ranging from 2 to 6 percentage points. Notably, the gap has remained steady for the past two cycles at approximately 6 percentage points. [Figure 3](#) illustrates the most recently completed cycle and how the gap in FAFSA completion rates starts early in the cycle and grows over time. Advise TX schools complete their FAFSA

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<sup>10</sup> Source: Department of Education, August 2024. Advisers also logged Texas Application for State Financial Aid but these forms are not included in FAFSA counts or completion rates in this report.

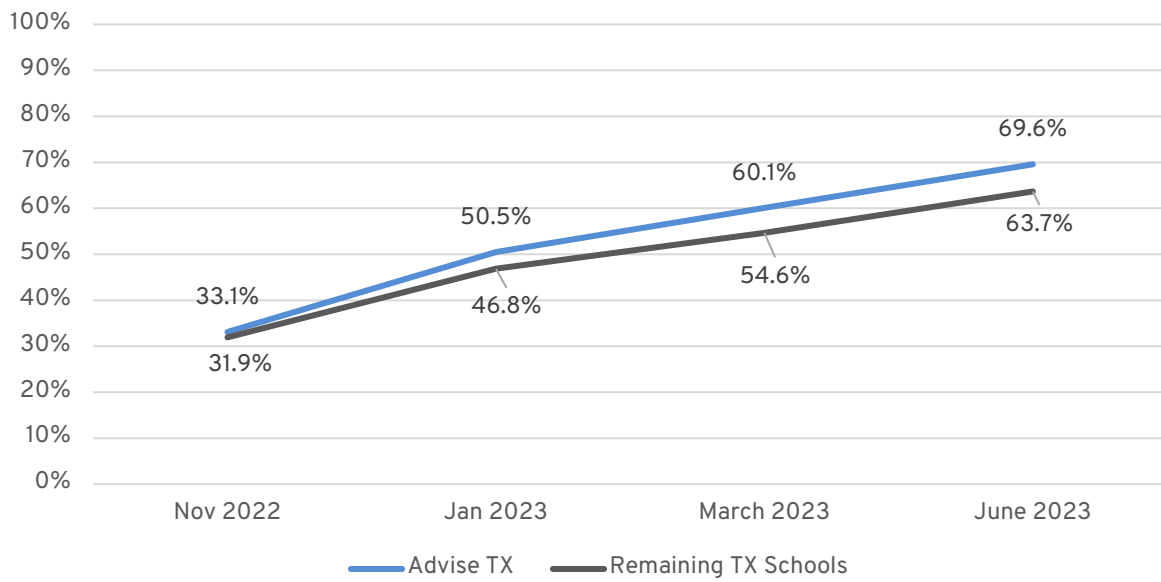
applications earlier than schools in the rest of the state, which is significant because students who complete the FAFSA earlier have access to more funding opportunities.

**Figure 2. Annual FAFSA Completion Rates**



Source: Office of Federal Student Aid, US Department of Education

**Figure 3. Monthly FAFSA Completion Rates, Academic Year 2022-23**



Source: Office of Federal Student Aid, US Department of Education

## Enrollment Outcomes for Advise TX Students

The last reporting section presents information about college enrollment outcomes and is divided into two main parts:

1. **Internal Advise TX Enrollment and KPI Data (2023):** This part briefly analyzes advisers' impact on enrollment rates using validated enrollment outcomes for the class of 2023. Enrollment data collected annually by Advise TX cannot be compared to a benchmark because the program only collects it for students who graduated from schools the program serves. However, enrollment data is linked to other information internally tracked by Advise TX, such as a student's GPA and how often they met with their adviser.
2. **Comparison to Benchmarked Peers (2022):** The second part, which is consistent with prior reports, examines the most recent enrollment data available from the ApplyTexas system. The advantage of these data, though lagged due to availability, is that outcomes for Advise TX students can be compared to a benchmark group of their peers. The benchmark is created using a propensity score matching technique, whereby an additional set of analyses are conducted to estimate the effect of a treatment. In this case, to examine 2022 enrollment outcomes for specific student subgroups, which has also been reported in previous reports. This set of findings highlights the influence of submitting college applications and completing financial aid forms on enrollment outcomes.

### **2023 enrollment rates, by adviser meetings and GPA**

ApplyTexas has traditionally been the primary source of enrollment data analyzed in this report series. However, the 2023 report incorporated additional enrollment data provided by Advise TX to more comprehensively assess its impact. While this year's report does not repeat the same analyses, the Advise TX data are again used to extract insights unavailable from ApplyTexas alone. These data include detailed student-level information, such as GPA and college-going behaviors, like the KPIs discussed earlier. This information is then merged with validated enrollment outcomes from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC)<sup>11</sup> to provide a nuanced understanding of program effectiveness.

Evaluations of the relationship between students' KPI and enrollment outcomes generate important insights, especially for the role of adviser meetings. Prior analysis, for example, assumed all Advise TX students receive some level of support from their adviser. An "intention to treat" research design, though, is blind to how much support each student receives from their adviser. While most students are invited to meet with their adviser once during their senior year, not all do, and many interactions are limited to just three to five minutes due to large caseloads. Additionally, the impact of adviser meetings on students with GPAs below 2.5 warrants specific attention. Advise TX uniquely serves students with GPAs below 2.5, which comprises one-third of advisers' caseloads.

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<sup>11</sup> NSC data cover about 97% of all postsecondary-degree-granting institutions in the United States. Another advantage of examining NSC data supplied by Advise TX is that it includes out-of-state and independent college outcomes, which is roughly 10% of all Advise TX student enrollment.

The relationship between adviser meetings and students' enrollment outcomes is reported in Tables 3 and 4. Table 3 presents enrollment rates for students who simply did or did not meet with their adviser, while the results in Table 4 expand the prior comparison by distinguishing between students who met with their adviser once, twice, or three or more times.<sup>12</sup>

Students who met with their adviser at least once had an enrollment rate of 49%, compared to just 41% for those who did not. Additionally, students who met with their adviser experienced a 3-percentage-point increase in two-year college enrollment rates and a 6-percentage-point increase in four-year college enrollment rates.

For students who met with their adviser three or more times, the enrollment rate was 12 percentage points higher compared to those who did not meet at all. The difference is even more pronounced for four-year college enrollment rates, which increase from 19% for students who did not meet with their adviser to 27% for those who met three or more times.

**Table 3. 2023 College Enrollment Rates, by Having a Meeting with an Adviser**

# of Meetings	Enrollment Rate	Two-Year Enrollment Rate	Four-Year Enrollment Rate
None	41%	22%	19%
One or More	49%	25%	25%

Source: Advise TX and NSC

Note: One or more Includes students who met with their adviser one, two, three, or more times through the year.

**Table 4. 2023 College Enrollment Rates, by Number of Meetings with an Adviser**

# of Meetings	Enrollment Rate	Two-Year Enrollment Rate	Four-Year Enrollment Rate
None	41%	22%	19%
One	45%	23%	23%
Two	49%	25%	25%
Three or More	53%	27%	27%

Source: Advise TX and NSC

Enrollment rates by the number of meetings for students with a GPA below 2.5 are found in [Table 5](#).<sup>13</sup> For this subset of students, adviser meetings are associated with a 9-percentage-point increase in overall enrollment rates. However, the increase in enrollment depends on the type of postsecondary institution. The number of meetings is uncorrelated with four-year college enrollment, which is to be expected since university admission is more closely tied to a student's GPA. In contrast, two-year college enrollment rates increase significantly, from 18% for students with no meetings to 26% for those who met with their adviser three or more times.

<sup>12</sup> The reason for the last category, "three or more times," is that Advise TX emphasizes the importance of having three or more meetings for its "match & fit" programming to promote enrollment, persistence, and degree completion.

<sup>13</sup> These students have a GPA that falls within the lower third of the overall distribution of GPA.

**Table 5. 2023 College Enrollment Rates for Students with GPA below 2.5**

# of Meetings	Enrollment Rate	Two-Year Enrollment Rate	Four-Year Enrollment Rate
None	24%	18%	6%
One	26%	21%	5%
Two	32%	25%	7%
Three or More	33%	26%	7%

Source: Advise TX and NSC

### **2022 enrollment outcomes: propensity score matching**

This section outlines the process used to establish a benchmark for evaluating enrollment rates in Advise TX schools. A simple comparison of enrollment rates between Advise TX schools and all other Texas schools would introduce a significant bias because Advise TX schools were intentionally selected based on low college enrollment rates. Additionally, these schools have significantly larger cohorts of students with characteristics commonly linked to lower college attendance.

A different analytic approach is needed to address the issue of incomparability among schools. Previous reports also sought to create a fairer evaluation of Advise TX enrollment outcomes by developing a student-level benchmark. The aim is to compare the enrollment outcomes of Advise TX graduates with those of other Texas graduates who, all else being equal, differ only in not attending an Advise TX school, regardless of which school they graduated from.

Matching techniques are commonly used in evaluation research about education outcomes. The method used here, often referred to as the propensity score model, relies on a limited set of student demographics to pair students in Advise TX schools with similar students in non-Advise TX schools. While matching techniques like this one can provide unbiased estimates of effects, such as the potential impact of Advise TX, they have limitations. The primary limitation is the quality of the data used for matching. If the variables required for accurate matching are too general or not sufficiently predictive, matches can be biased.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, if the matching

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<sup>14</sup> A common way to gauge the success of the matching is to compare the predicted probability of being designated for participating in the treatment group based on the selected matching criteria across treatment and control groups. Without matching, there is a significant difference in propensities. With matching, there is no measurable difference in these likelihoods.

process is flawed, the analysis of enrollment outcomes will likely underestimate the impact of Advise TX.

The propensity score matching process used here attempts to account for both school and student characteristics. Matching on each factor can enhance the validity of student comparisons by increasing the likelihood that matched students share similar life experiences and circumstances. While unobserved characteristics may still exist, they should be more evenly distributed.

## College Enrollment Outcomes: Class of 2022

The overall class of 2022 enrollment rate at in-state, public colleges for students served by Advise TX was 45.3%. Compared to the class of 2021, college attendance for Advise TX students increased by nearly 2 percentage points in 2022. These findings are presented in the first column of [Table 6](#). Coefficients in Columns 2-4 of Table 6 are reported as proportions. So, .007 refers to a 0.7 percentage point change.

The comparison to the designed benchmark, which accounts for both school and student characteristics, estimates an increase of 0.7 percentage points for Advise TX students. This growth is primarily attributed to a 1.4 percentage point increase in enrollment at four-year institutions, relative to matched students at non-Advise TX schools. However, unlike other recent Rider Report analyses, the matched comparison does not show an increase in two-year college enrollment rates for Advise TX students.

### Impact on low-income students

The class of 2022 college enrollment rate for all Texas students from low-income families was 40.5%, which is lower than the overall rate for Advise TX students, but it represents an increase of 2.8 percentage points compared to the class of 2021.<sup>15</sup> Further, students from lower-income families served by Advise TX increased their enrollment rate at four-year institutions by 1.1 percentage points compared to similar students who did not graduate from an Advise TX school.

### Other student subgroups

The impact of Advise TX on other student subgroups is consistently positive. For example, 46.3 percent of students at larger schools attend college. Students from large schools served by Advise TX are 0.5 percentage points more likely to enroll in any college. The increased enrollment rate for these students is most visible at four-year institutions, which is 2.1 percentage points higher than at non-Advise TX schools. In addition, female students served by Advise TX had a higher college attendance than elsewhere, while both male and female students were more likely to enroll at a four-year college by about 1 and 1.8 percentage points, respectively.

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<sup>15</sup> [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. \(2023\). 2023 Texas Rider Report: Advise TX College Advising Corps. Austin, TX.](#)

**Table 6. Advise TX Impacts on Enrollment for High School Class of 2022, Matched on Student and School Characteristics**

	Baseline Overall Attendance	Advise TX Difference in Overall Attendance	Advise TX Difference in Four-Year Attendance	Advise TX Difference in Two-Year Attendance
Overall	45.3%	.007*	.014**	-.003
Free/Reduced Lunch	40.5%	-.0001	.011*	-.009
Hispanic	43.5%	-.004	.005	-.009*
African American	41.9%	.020	.040**	-.009
White	47.5%	.002	.005	.005
Large Schools	46.3%	.005	.021**	-.013
Female Students	50.3%	.011*	.018**	-.002
Male Students	40.2%	.003	.009*	-.004

Source: Evaluation and Assessment Solutions for Education analysis using student-level Texas administrative data, Sept. 2024

\*p -value ≤ 0.01,

\*\*p-value ≤ 0.001

## College Applications and Enrollment

Less than 40% of all public school students in Texas applied to an in-state, four-year college in 2022. That rate is significantly higher for students who attended an Advise TX high school. As [Table 7](#) shows, enrollment is 1.7 percentage points higher for Advise TX students who apply to a four-year college. Students from Advise TX schools were also more likely to apply to at least three colleges. Although there are similarly positive impacts for students applying to three colleges, there is less statistical precision in these estimates. Combining the results from Table 6 with Table 7, Advise TX produces net gains in college applications.

**Table 7. Advise TX Impacts on Application and Enrollment to In-State Colleges for High School Class of 2022**

	Mean	Advise TX Difference (Propensity Score with School Characteristics)
Ever Applied to a Four-Year College	36.3%	.022*
Ever Enrolled Among Students Who Applied	78.0%	.017*
Ever Enrolled in Four-Year College Among Students Who Applied	59.2%	.008
Applied to at Least Three Colleges	6.1%	.022*
Ever Enrolled (Applied to at Least Three Colleges)	86.0%	.014
Ever Enrolled in Four-Year College (Applied to at Least Three Colleges)	71.8%	.018

Source: Evaluation and Assessment Solutions for Education analysis using student-level Texas administrative data, Sept. 2024

\*p-value ≤ 0.001

## Financial Aid Applications and College Enrollment

Table 8 introduces a new set of outcomes that have not previously been explored. Using propensity score matching, these results examine the impact of Advise TX on financial aid applications to increase college attendance. In Texas, students can complete either the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA) or the FAFSA. A significant contribution of Advise TX advisers is their support in helping students to complete these financial aid forms and to interpret financial aid offers.

**Table 8. Advise TX Impacts on FAFSA/TASFA Application and Enrollment**

	Mean	Advise TX Difference (Propensity Score with School Characteristics)
Ever Filed FAFSA or TASFA	43.3%	.014***
Ever Enrolled After Filing FAFSA/TASFA	93.9%	-.002
Ever Enrolled in Four-Year College (Filed FAFSA/TASFA)	48.0%	.018***
Date FAFSA/TASFA Filed (Fiscal Year 2023)	Jan. 21, 2023	-14.0 (days)***
Fall Tuition	\$3,520.8	104.0**
Fall Cost of Attendance	\$22,939.5	233.8*

Source: Evaluation and Assessment Solutions for Education analysis using student-level Texas administrative data, Sept. 2024

\* p-value ≤ 0.05

\*\* p-value ≤ 0.01

\*\*\* p-value ≤ 0.001

Statewide, approximately 43% (158,880) of students from the class of 2022 completed the TASFA or FAFSA and applied to a Texas college through ApplyTexas. Students attending Advise TX schools are 1.4 percentage points more likely to complete the FAFSA or TASFA. Notably, 94% (149,150) of students who complete financial aid forms enroll in college. Among these students, those at Advise TX schools are 1.8 percentage points more likely to attend four-year colleges. Furthermore, [Table 8](#) shows that financial aid forms are submitted about two weeks earlier at Advise TX schools compared to other schools. Students at Advise TX schools also tend to attend slightly more expensive institutions. However, this aligns with the finding that the program's impact in 2022 was increasing four-year college attendance.

## Conclusion

Advise TX was established to increase college-going behaviors and college enrollment among Texas high school graduates. By design, Advise TX focuses on schools that, on average, enroll more than twice as many seniors and have historically sent fewer graduates to college.

Despite these challenges, data tracked internally by Advise TX and reported through ApplyTexas indicate that key performance indicators (KPIs) at Advise TX schools remained high in 2024, and for 2023, these KPIs outpaced those of other Texas schools. This means a higher percentage of students at Advise TX schools applied to college or completed their FAFSA. Because college enrollment data analyzed in each annual report typically lags behind KPI data by one to two years, future enrollment outcomes are likely to reflect these improvements in KPIs—despite the complications caused by the FAFSA rollout for the class of 2024.

The [2023 enrollment section](#) of this report highlights the importance of linking student-level caseload histories provided by Advise TX with their enrollment outcomes—something that is not currently feasible with ApplyTexas data. Findings from this section suggest that the impact of Advise TX is closely tied to advisers having sufficient time to meet with more students more frequently. For instance, the enrollment rate for students who did not meet with their adviser is 41%, but it increases to 53% for those who met with their adviser three or more times. Another notable takeaway is that even students with the lowest GPAs experienced a significant boost in two-year college attendance, rising from 18% without adviser meetings to 26% when they met with their adviser three or more times during the school year.

The initial randomized controlled trial of Advise TX was designed to evaluate potential enrollment gains following the introduction of its services. In contrast, the annual Rider Reports analyze whether enrollment rates are higher for students graduating from Advise TX schools compared to a cohort of hypothetically similar students enrolled elsewhere. Consistent with previous Rider Reports, the current findings indicate that Advise TX services increase students' enrollment rates. Notably, a key difference this year is the reversal of a prior trend: In past years, increases in two-year college attendance were accompanied by declines in four-year college attendance. But this year, we observed the largest increase in four-year college enrollment to date.

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