



ScholarMatch Virtual Advising FAQ Guide

This guide answers common questions regarding our virtual advising program including our origin, processes and goals.

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1. What is ScholarMatch?

Founded by author Dave Eggers, ScholarMatch began as a simple crowdfunding platform and grew into a full service college access organization. Our mission is to make college possible for underserved youth by matching students with donors, resources, colleges and professional networks. We offer comprehensive college advising services for high school students at our drop-in center in San Francisco and have relied on the generous support of trained volunteer college coaches for years. Now in its second

year, our virtual program expands the reach of our services to students across the nation.

2. What is CollegePoint?

CollegePoint is a college access and success initiative conceived by Bloomberg Philanthropies that aims to help students enroll in and graduate from top institutions by providing support and guidance. CollegePoint's goal is to increase the number of high-achieving, low- and moderate- income students enrolling in top-performing colleges from 1/3 of eligible students today to more than 1/2 in 2020. To deliver on this goal, CollegePoint is partnering with four college access organizations across the country, including ScholarMatch.

3. What are the eligibility requirements for students to participate in virtual advising?

Our virtual advising program serves primarily high-achieving, low- and moderate- income students. This means that most students have a GPA of 3.5 or higher and have tested in the 90th percentile or above on the SAT (math and critical reading combined score of 1370) or ACT (composite score of 28). Additionally, they must have an annual household income of less than \$80,000. This year, we are also serving a small number of students who do not meet the 90th percentile test score criteria, so it is possible that your student may have lower test scores.

4. How does ScholarMatch find students?

Through our partnership with CollegePoint, we receive the names and contact information of eligible students who have indicated interest in receiving college advising support by signing up online, via mail, or over the phone. After receiving these names,

we also follow-up with students ourselves, requiring them to reaffirm their interest by completing a matching survey used to pair them with volunteer coaches. Thus, to be matched with a virtual college coach, each student will have had to confirm their interest in participating in our program twice.

5. When are coaches and students matched?

We aim to match pairs starting in mid-June through mid-July. Both you and your students will be notified of your match via email. Once you have received email confirmation of your student matches, we expect you to follow-up with your students to schedule your first calls within one business day.

6. What do students know about ScholarMatch before they are matched with coaches?

All students will understand that we offer college admissions advising and will expect to be matched with a volunteer coach. Students may need clarification on certain aspects of the program, such as the difference between ScholarMatch and CollegePoint, and may have questions about our program scope and expectations. We will provide a thorough discussion guide for your first phone or video call to help you answer these questions, and are always accessible to you should you have additional questions before you begin collaborating with your students.

7. What happens if my student is unresponsive?

It is possible that students who initially indicate interest in receiving our support may change their mind, though our initial screening process is intended to minimize this possibility. If a student becomes unresponsive at any point during our program cycle, which we define as a lack of response to 3 or more attempts

at contacting them (via email, phone, text, etc.), please notify program staff and we will follow-up promptly. Students who opt-out of our program will still receive light-touch support, such as emails offering guidance for important admissions milestones.

8. What does a typical year look like for a coach?

Our program will span from June 2018 – June 2019. After satisfactory completion of all introductory trainings, coaches can expect to begin to receive their students starting in mid-June through August. Additionally, coaches will be invited to a 1.5-day, all-expenses paid kick-off convening in San Francisco, currently scheduled for July 13th - 14th 2018. Once working with students, we expect coaches to have consistent communication throughout the end of the summer and fall, touching base at least 2x per month or more depending on student preference. By winter, when most college applications have been submitted and students are primarily awaiting decisions, communication frequency may decrease but coaches are expected to reach out to students at least monthly. By early spring, we expect communication to pick back up as students seek help in evaluating financial aid offers and making decisions, though this may not always be the case. From then on, coaches will continue to support students as they start preparing for the transition to college and communication frequency will vary based on the preferences of each pair.

9. What support is available for coaches?

We are committed to providing comprehensive support for our volunteer college coaches. In addition to regularly providing resources and guidance relevant to the timeframe of the college application process via email, ScholarMatch staff is always

accessible to you through phone, email or video call should you have additional questions or concerns. Furthermore, each coach will be placed in a coach cohort where you will be able to navigate challenges and celebrate successes with other volunteer coaches.

10. What does the kick-off convening entail?

We are excited to invite all coaches who satisfactorily complete our introductory training modules to an all-expenses paid kick-off convening held in San Francisco July 13th – July 14th 2018. This 1.5 day training will offer volunteers the opportunity to meet fellow coaches, get to know the ScholarMatch team, and participate in skill-building activities centered on college admissions advising, virtual relationship building, and more!

11. Who can I contact with further questions?

Please email virtual@scholarmatch.org for any additional questions.