



Greetings Families,

The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC), in partnership with the Val Verde Unified School District, are excited to launch “Cali” an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Chatbot! CSAC is the state agency responsible for administering state financial aid to all eligible California students. We are working with your local high school to ensure your students have the resources they need to apply for financial aid to pay for their education beyond high school.

What is the AI Chatbot? Cali is an innovative, two-way chatbot engagement platform that has shown to be highly effective in helping low-income, first-generation students prepare for college. We are working with Mainstay, a company who created this intelligent behavioral chatbot specifically designed to address college education equity gaps and helping students complete their financial aid applications.

Mainstay’s behaviorally intelligent chatbots have been effective in driving positive behavior. In collaboration with college partners, their chatbots have helped more than 600k students navigate college applications, scholarships, selection decisions, and financial aid. The data show impressive outcomes. For example, there was a 28% increase in financial aid progress toward completion within the first week of sending students’ nudges.

Cali proactively engages students via text message to increase engagement, drive action, build connection and gain insights into the barriers and challenges students face when completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or California Dream Act Application (CADAA).

Why your student should opt-in to the AI Chatbot? Completing a financial aid application can help you and your family in making an informed decision about pursuing a college, university, or vocational school education. Cali can guide you in completing a FAFSA or CADAA. Cali will be available 24/7 to answer financial aid questions in a personalized manner and provide encouraging nudges to meet critical deadlines. We believe Cali can provide you the help you need to prepare for college!