



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

AI Admissions Texting Platform

1. Purpose

Alpena Community College (ACC) is requesting proposals for a three-year AI-driven texting platform that helps admitted applicants complete the steps necessary to enroll and attend.

2. Background and Scope

ACC serves approximately 1,800 applicants each year within the scope of this project. Dual-enrollment and Early College applicants are excluded. The platform will support admitted applicants for fall and spring terms, beginning after admission and continuing through approximately the second week of classes.

The texting platform must provide proactive and applicant-initiated, two-way conversational support, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It should help applicants complete or navigate:

- FAFSA and financial-aid requirements
- Scholarship opportunities and other financial support
- Orientation
- Academic advising
- Course registration
- Payment arrangements and payment deadlines
- Preparation for the first day of class

ACC uses Ellucian Colleague and Ellucian CRM Recruit. ACC anticipates contract award by September 18th, 2026, with contract finalization no later than October 1st, 2026.

3. Required Solution Capabilities

Conversational texting: Provide two-way, AI-driven SMS conversations and proactive outreach based on applicant status, missing steps, and deadlines.

Applicant guidance: Answer ACC-specific questions and guide applicants to appropriate next steps, resources, offices, and deadlines.

Knowledge management: Vendor-led setup and ongoing management of the institutional knowledge used by the AI. ACC staff will provide source information and validate key content, but the vendor must perform the primary work of organizing, maintaining, testing, and improving the knowledge base.

Staff prioritization: Identify applicants facing barriers, applicants requiring immediate attention, applicants whose likelihood of enrolling may improve through intervention, and a recommended next action.

Human follow-up: Explain what happens when the AI cannot resolve a question or when an applicant needs staff assistance, including notification, routing, conversation context, and follow-up tracking.

Barrier identification: Help identify housing, food, financial, and disability-related barriers that may prevent attendance and notify or connect the appropriate ACC staff.

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Enrollment outcome follow-up: Conduct timely follow-up with admitted applicants who decide not to attend or who stop attending during the add/drop period to identify and report the reasons, barriers, or circumstances that affected their decision to withdraw. Provide applicant-level information for appropriate staff follow-up and aggregate reporting to help ACC identify common trends and opportunities for improvement.

Reporting and results: Provide applicant-level and aggregate reporting to help ACC assess critical metrics, including engagement, barriers, completed steps, staff follow-up, enrollment conversion, reasons applicants did not attend or stopped attending, and overall usefulness of the platform.

Implementation: Be ready to support Spring 2027 admitted applicants with a target implementation of late November to early December 2026. The first day of classes for Spring 2027 is January 11th, 2027.

4. Vendor Response

Proposals should address the following. Existing sample reports and standard materials may be attached.

1. Brief company overview and experience serving colleges with applicant conversion and AI texting.
2. Description of the proposed solution and how it meets the capabilities in Section 3.
3. Proposed approach for working with Ellucian Colleague and CRM Recruit, including data needs and prior experience.
4. Proposed dashboards and reports. Include samples if available.
5. Security and privacy protocols for student data and any third-party services used.
6. Implementation plan and timeline demonstrating readiness for Spring 2027 semester.
7. Objective results from comparable institutions, including ROI, the measurement method, plus student feedback or testimonials.
8. At least three customer references, preferably including institutions using Ellucian Colleague, CRM Recruit, and/or Michigan community colleges.
9. Complete three-year pricing, including implementation, support, optional services, and any other fees.

5. Evaluation

ACC will select the proposal determined to provide the best overall value. Evaluation will consider:

- Fit with ACC's applicant-conversion goals and required capabilities
- Total three-year cost and contract terms
- Usefulness of prioritization, reporting, and staff follow-up tools
- Demonstrated results, student experience, and references
- Ability to support ACC's Ellucian environment
- Implementation approach and Spring 2027 readiness

ACC may request a brief demonstration, reference conversation, or clarification before award. ACC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

6. Submission Instructions

Deadline: September 10, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Direct question to: Nick Brege, Vice President for Administration and Finance, bregen@alpenacc.edu



Format: Email proposal in PDF format

Submit RFP to: Lyn Kowalewsky, Controller

Email: kowalewl@alpenacc.edu

Address: Alpena Community College, 665 Johnson Street, Alpena, MI 49707

Fax: (989) 358-7565

Proposals received after the deadline may not be considered. Pricing must include all associated fees. ACC participates in the MiDEAL purchasing program and is eligible for applicable program pricing.

7. Pricing and Authorization

Please include the following information with your bid.

Firm name

Contact name and title

Telephone

Email

Year 1 total

Year 2 total

Year 3 total

Three-year total

Authorized signature

Date