

# House Bill 3 Financial Aid Graduation Requirements Project: Summary of Financial Aid Director and Community-Based Organization Director Interviews

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## List of Acronyms

AIR	American Institutes for Research
CBO	community-based organization
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
HB 3	House Bill 3
IHE	institution of higher education
TASFA	Texas Application for State Financial Aid
TEA	Texas Education Agency
THECB	Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

## Introduction

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In 2019, with the signing of House Bill 3 (HB 3), Texas became the second state to pass legislation requiring students to complete and submit a financial aid application. Generally considered a school finance bill, HB 3 focuses on several major school policy areas, including improving college, career, and military readiness. A key provision of HB 3 makes a major change to Texas high school graduation requirements. Specifically, since the beginning of the 2021–22 school year, Grade 12 students in Texas have been required to complete and submit a financial aid application—that is, a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or a Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA)—or an opt-out form before they can graduate from high school. In partnership with organizations across the state, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) received funding from the Institute of Education Sciences at the U.S. Department of Education to explore (a) the implementation of this statewide financial aid graduation requirement, (b) how implementation varies across schools and districts, (c) the means through which the policy is supported by state education systems, and (d) how implementation is related to students’ high school and postsecondary outcomes.

## Report Overview

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Although the financial aid application requirement is targeted at students, implementation of this requirement involves the support of institutions of higher education (IHEs) and community-based organizations (CBOs). To better understand the support provided by financial aid offices at Texas colleges and CBOs, the research team conducted 11 interviews in spring 2024. Nine interviews shed light on how financial aid offices at IHEs responded to HB 3, including changes they made to their office operations and support they provide to high schools. An additional two interviews shed light on how two CBOs responded to HB 3 and regularly provide resources to their communities. Recommendations on improving communication, support, and partnership are highlighted throughout the report. Detailed information on the methods and sample is in Appendix A. The interview protocols are in Appendix B.

This report begins by describing how interviewees understand HB 3 and the challenges they experienced as they supported implementation of the bill. We then describe the supports IHEs and CBOs provide to students and their families and the recommendations they have for the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), school staff, and other IHEs and CBOs. We conclude by describing how interviewees perceive HB 3, feedback they have received, and their views on the future of financial aid amid legislative changes like HB 3.

## Findings

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All interviewees could accurately describe the basics of the HB 3 bill and the high school graduation requirement. In Texas, all high school students must complete either a FAFSA or a TASFA before they graduate. An opt-out form is available for students who choose not to complete the FAFSA or TASFA, but the specifics of how to use the opt-out form remain unclear. Completing a FAFSA, a TASFA, or the opt-out form is a prerequisite for high school graduation and is perceived as an indicator of college readiness. However, there are mixed perceptions about this requirement and whether it is going to accomplish the intended outcome—i.e., that increased awareness of financial aid options will lead to an increase in the number of students enrolling in and completing college and reducing student college debt.

### Challenges Resulting From Implementing HB 3

Interviewees were divided on whether HB 3 had affected their office operations. Four financial aid directors and one of two CBO directors reported that operations did not change in response to HB 3 and that there was no increase in their workload or volume of applications. These interviewees reported having strong partnerships and outreach programs in place prior to HB 3 to assist high school students with FAFSA completion, which meant that the passage of HB 3 did not necessitate any changes. Almost all the directors interviewed said the workload and burden resulting from HB 3 was minimal compared to what high school counselors have experienced.

Five of the nine financial aid directors and the other CBO director reported that HB 3 did affect their office operations. We detail their challenges and the changes they made to their operations below.

#### *Uptick in the Volume of Applications*

The five financial aid directors who reported that HB 3 had changed their operations described an uptick in the number of financial aid applications they received from students. One director mentioned an increase of about 4,000 FAFSAs. Although directors noted that a greater number of students applying to their schools is a good thing, they also reported that, unfortunately, many students who have no intention of attending their school still submit the financial aid application. This is an unintended consequence of requiring students to submit a FAFSA, which includes a space for students to enter school codes, regardless of whether they intend to go to college after graduating high school. The increase in applications and the inclusion of nonintending students has led to an increased workload for some institutions.

To help manage the increased workload and ensure the allocation of resources to students who intend to enroll, some offices have changed their approach to only review and process FAFSAs

for students who are accepted to their school. Offices that made this change had to implement a system to flag applications and/or work closely with admissions to monitor applications. Another director advocated for pay increases for some of their staff to assume the additional responsibilities brought on by the increased workload.

### ***Increased Demand for FAFSA Events at High Schools***

Three financial aid directors reported that they had increased the number of FAFSA events for high school students and their families given increased demand for FAFSA assistance from high school counseling offices. Most financial aid offices offered FAFSA events prior to HB 3 but needed to increase the number of events and further tailor their support for high schools. This increased demand often resulted in staffing and scheduling challenges for financial aid offices—for example, needing to offer events earlier in the year, on more nights, and even on weekends to meet demand. They worked closely with high schools, often refusing to say no to any high school that needed assistance. During FAFSA events, they sent out staff members to help share information and complete the FAFSA process. A couple of directors mentioned the need to hire or find volunteer translators to ensure they had staff who could help alleviate any language barriers during events.

### ***Increased Communication With School Staff, Students, and Families***

Three financial aid directors described increasing their efforts to maintain open lines of communication with high school counselors, students, and families to debunk myths about the FAFSA process. These myths often involved misunderstandings about eligibility for financial aid. Directors mentioned that families often assume they are ineligible for financial aid because of their income status. Directors emphasized that this narrative is important to correct because money left on the table could significantly affect a student’s decision to attend college. Misinformation or lack of information can lead to confusion and a refusal to participate. A financial aid director discussed a lack of understanding regarding the opt-out form as well, even among counselors.

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Our high school counselors in this area were not offering the opt-out option. It [filling out the FAFSA] was a mandatory requirement and parents refused . . . Just bridging the gap with that transparency and communication and really educating the high school counselors on that role and on the rule that there [are] opt-out options and they have to be presented and even going straight to the statute to show them that.

—Financial Aid Director

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Directors also emphasized the importance of providing information to students and families earlier and initiating the FAFSA process at the beginning of the school year instead of waiting until spring. They perceived that early engagement could help students and families understand

the process better, complete it in a timely manner, and avoid missing out on scholarship and grant opportunities. Another director noted the importance of going beyond providing basic information to families and raising awareness about changing situations (such as financial hardship) that should be reported to financial aid offices to ensure accurate income reporting on the FAFSA, potentially leading to a larger award.

### ***Updated Training for IHE and High School Staff***

Two financial aid directors highlighted how they have changed their training for office staff. They emphasized the importance of additional training for recruiters, enrollment guides,<sup>1</sup> and other departments who interact with students and may field questions about financial aid. One director described conducting a training on how to fill out a FAFSA and made each participant complete one to gain firsthand experience. This training with other departments was deemed an essential cross-training approach, where trained individuals could then train new hires in their respective offices. Another director shared that they brought high school counselors to campus to join a summer financial aid training to better prepare them to help high school students.

### **Supports Provided to High Schools and Recommendations to Consider**

Directors described a variety of supports they provide to high schools and community members. The most common types of support include communicating about the FAFSA, fostering partnerships with high schools, and providing hands-on support to help complete FAFSAs. Although provided less frequently, directors also described offering direct training to high school counselors. In addition to describing these supports during interviews, directors provided recommendations for high schools, TEA and THECB, and other IHEs and CBOs to consider.

### ***Communication and Outreach***

Directors reported having dedicated staff for outreach, often housed in the financial aid office. Their primary role is to work in high schools and at community events to assist with FAFSA preparation. They also provide one-on-one advising to handle specific student situations. They participate in high school FAFSA nights and conduct presentations in their local areas. With the increasing shift toward online structures, institutions also provide remote assistance using tools like Zoom meetings or on-demand videos that walk through updates and the application process.

Communication Recommendations to Consider. Directors shared their communication reflections and suggestions for support for students, families, and school staff. Directors noted that college recruitment is not season- or year-specific; it is a year-round process that is not

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<sup>1</sup> A comprehensive resource that details the enrollment process, providing valuable information to students navigating the college application and enrollment process.

limited to a specific month or semester or even to students' senior year. Students are thinking about their postsecondary plans before their senior year and need to understand their financial options and the requirements prior to starting their senior year. School staff, especially principals and counselors, play a crucial role in helping families understand HB 3 requirements. Interviewees shared the following to support better communication:

- Directors acknowledged that TEA does provide information, but there is a communication gap in making these resources known and accessible. There is a need for more targeted resources, like a one-page flyer or a timeline, to help families understand what they should be doing from their junior year through their senior year. This would help students and parents understand when to start the college application process, fill out the FAFSA, and apply for scholarships.
- Another suggestion was to develop a statewide handout or flipbook. This resource would provide consistent information on comparing colleges, FAFSA, TASFA, and the waiver.
- Directors emphasized the need for communication and collaboration between IHEs, CBOs, and high schools. This includes regularly sharing information about financial aid, FAFSA completion, and the importance of meeting financial aid deadlines.
- Directors mentioned that building and maintaining relationships with high schools, districts, and other community entities is crucial. These relationships should be established at multiple levels, from top administrators to school-level counselors.

### ***Partnerships***

Directors described partnering with high schools, other colleges, not-for-profit organizations, and other organizations to provide support and resources. Two directors noted that they had specifically targeted partnerships with schools with low FAFSA completion rates to provide additional support. One CBO director mentioned partnering with a number of organizations to provide wraparound supports that address difficulties paying for college requirements such as tests and required vaccines.

**Partnership Recommendations to Consider.** Directors shared their reflections and suggestions on what might be helpful to support school staff and reduce burden on their own office staff:

- Directors recommended strategic coordination between high schools in the service area and suggested inviting multiple schools to attend the same event to maximize staff time. One director suggested working with other IHEs to coordinate events, lessen the burden, and share resources.
- This strategic coordination extends to working with other departments (recruitment, enrollment, admissions, etc.) to cross train on basic information about financial aid,



including how to complete an aid application and the verification process. Training various team members helps to meet demand for support, despite limited personnel.

### ***Hands-On Support for Students and Families***

All the directors reported the provision of assistance to help students and families complete the FAFSA. This assistance includes ensuring students and families have the necessary documents and walking them through the application process. Directors described hosting FAFSA events (e.g., FAFSA nights, financial aid Saturdays, and college nights), often in the evenings or on weekends to accommodate students and their families. During these events, directors provide presentations on the FAFSA process and sit with students and families to work on their FAFSAs, answer questions, and address specific situations. Some programs even provide computers for students to use and offer food as an incentive to attend the events.

### **Support Recommendations to Consider.**

Directors shared their reflections and suggestions on what might be helpful to support school staff and reduce the burden on their own office staff:

- Directors stressed the importance of having an outreach staff person at their IHE dedicated to working in high schools and at community events to assist with FAFSA preparation. The implementation of HB 3 has increased demand for outreach events, leading to an uptick in requests for assistance. However, having an outreach person in place prior to the passage of the bill helped institutions manage this increased demand more readily. One director mentioned that their office is considering adding a second outreach person dedicated to financial aid support.
- With the increase in requested events, directors reported that finding time to attend all high school events was challenging. One director described implementing a more structured approach to managing and coordinating events, including a centralized online location for high schools to request a financial aid night, instead of via phone or email.

### **CBO-SUGGESTED APPROACH FOR ASSISTING UNDOCUMENTED FAMILIES**

Assisting undocumented families through the process involves addressing language barriers so that conversations are held in a family's primary language. If an advisor is not fluent in the family's language, a bilingual advisor should be made available to ensure the delivery of accurate information. The goal is to alleviate concerns and guide families through the process, assuring them that the information collected is solely for financial aid purposes and will not lead to any unwanted inquiries. However, the decision to proceed is ultimately up to the individual and it may take multiple conversations for them to feel comfortable enough to proceed.

### **High School Counselor Support**

Two directors described hosting annual high school counselor training on financial aid. During the training, they discuss changes to the FAFSA, application requirements, and what support would be helpful in the coming year to ensure students receive the information they need.

**Counselor Support Recommendations to Consider.** Directors shared their reflections and suggestions on what might be helpful to support counseling staff:

- Directors recommended coordinating with counselors for events and training and understanding their needs and expectations. Some institutions have a high school liaison to facilitate this process and ensure timely and quality support.
- Keeping lines of communication open with high school counselors and letting them know they are supported—and are not expected to know everything about the FAFSA—was reported as important for alleviating stress and encouraging collaboration. One director reported that they sit in on counselor staff meetings to stay in the loop and regularly touch base with counselors about needed support.

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I purposely invite myself to high school counselor conversations. I'll invite myself because I need to have this conversation. They may not listen, but I want to have it. I do think it's very important for financial aid to be at the table and have those conversations. It may be only just one bullet item, but it is important for financial aid to be there, especially to advocate for the student and the parent side.

—Financial Aid Director

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- Directors indicated that they are doing their best to provide information and support to schools, but they also suggested requiring mandatory financial aid training for school counselors and principals to increase consistency in communication and information about financial aid, application updates, data security, talking to students and parents about the FAFSA, and so on.

### **Other Perceptions and Feedback Received About HB 3**

Directors were asked if they had received any feedback—positive or negative—from school staff and families about the HB 3 graduation requirement. Feedback revealed a mix of concerns and perceptions. Directors drew on their staff's interactions with students and families during FAFSA events, as well as their own perceptions of the bill, to answer this interview question.

### ***Perceived Benefits of HB 3***

Directors reported that HB 3 offers several benefits. At its most basic level, the requirement is beneficial because it exposes students to potential financial aid opportunities that they may not be aware of otherwise. It encourages students to complete the FAFSA, positioning them to receive maximum financial aid from the institutions to which they apply, which potentially shapes where they enroll and indeed their decision to enroll at all. Despite being one more requirement for schools to manage, it is a way to support K–12 education and help students secure the finances they need to pursue postsecondary education. Furthermore, HB 3 serves an educational purpose, imparting life skills to students such as developing a financial plan, saving money, and understanding how to complete a financial application.

### ***Drawbacks of HB 3***

Directors have heard some complaints about HB 3 and have their own concerns. The financial aid application process and its maintenance are significant administrative burdens to some, especially high school counselors. Some view the graduation requirement as unfair, particularly for parents and students who believe they will not qualify for financial aid because of their income. This belief has led to frustration about having to complete an application or opt-out form. There is a noticeable lack of understanding about the FAFSA process among students and parents, causing confusion and even leading some to suspect it is a scam. Families, particularly those from immigrant populations, have expressed fear about sharing personal information given government involvement in the FAFSA.

Some argue that HB 3's implementation, especially the opt-out component, is flawed and needs revisiting. Although it allows affluent families who do not need financial aid to opt out, it also makes it possible for families to opt out if they are afraid to provide information because of their legal status. Some believe this option has been granted too easily, undermining the requirement's intent, whereas others worry about high schools not being transparent about the option. Directors have suggested a need for improved communication and support during the

## **CHALLENGES POSED BY THE NEW FAFSA AND FAFSA DELAY**

Almost all directors interviewed reported that the administration of financial aid is becoming increasingly difficult due to various factors, including simplification of the FAFSA and the FAFSA launch delay. Simplification of the FAFSA has led some schools to develop an additional aid application to collect information they need to appropriately process a student's application. The new FAFSA system has led to issues such as adaptation difficulties and system glitches. The demand for FAFSA assistance was reported as overwhelming for staff, especially with the FAFSA delay as they are required to reschedule events or plan for a rush of events within a truncated timeline.

FAFSA process, including clear information about the purpose of the FAFSA and the opt-out form and more time for private discussions to address individual concerns and family situations.

## Perceptions of the Future of Financial Aid

Directors were asked to contemplate the future of financial aid, particularly considering legislative changes such as HB 3. Two main themes surfaced:

- **Simplification of the FAFSA and a Reduction in Verification Requirements.** There is a desire for a more seamless connection between the Internal Revenue Service and the FAFSA, making the application process simpler for students and parents. This includes the idea of adding a question to tax returns about completing a FAFSA, especially for those with college-age children. There is a hope that this would reduce the burden on institutions, thanks to fewer requirements regarding verification. The idea is that if the necessary data are already available (e.g., from tax returns), there should be fewer redundancies in verification.
- **Administrative Challenges and Anticipating Changes.** There are concerns about the administrative burden of financial aid processes. Some directors feel that the administration of financial aid is becoming harder than it needs to be. Institutions are trying to adapt to and work through legislative changes, such as the FAFSA delay, and to anticipate the impact of those changes. Directors suggested cross training more departments to increase the number of staff at IHEs who can support financial aid events and application processing. It also was suggested that financial aid directors could be brought to the table to inform future policy, providing on-the-ground perspectives and practical information about the implications of proposed legislative changes for students, families, and office personnel.

## Conclusions

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AIR is conducting research to examine the implementation of the HB 3 statewide financial aid graduation requirement and how schools and districts are being supported as they try to help senior students fulfill the requirement. AIR interviewed directors from nine financial aid offices and two CBOs about the support they are providing. According to these directors, counselors have reported that the HB 3 requirement adds additional tasks to their already overloaded job responsibilities. They also shared that families are confused and, in some cases, frustrated by the requirement. Directors pointed to a need for clear and transparent communication about the HB 3 requirement, especially regarding the purpose of the FAFSA and the option to fill out the opt-out form.

Feedback from directors about the HB 3 requirement was positive, recognizing that students who complete the financial aid graduation requirement will better understand their postsecondary options and costs. Although directors are interested in examining findings from this study about the requirement's impact and its effectiveness in preparing students for college, they remain uncertain and somewhat skeptical about whether HB 3 will achieve the intended goals of increasing the number of students who enroll in and complete college and reducing student college debt.

## Appendix A. Methods

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Interview participants were provided Zoom call-in information, and interviews were recorded using Zoom audio conferencing software. Recruitment for both financial aid directors and CBOs proved challenging. We do not provide a list of the final sample to protect the confidentiality of interviewees. All interviewees received a \$50 gift card for their participation in the interviews.

### Financial Aid Directors

AIR randomly sampled one IHE from each of the seven university systems and 12 community college clusters.<sup>2</sup> Across the sample, we accounted for urbanicity to get a mix of urban, suburban, and rural IHE perspectives. We planned for 19 interviews but experienced a low response rate, often having to resample within the same system or cluster. Ultimately, we interviewed nine financial aid directors from three of seven university systems and six of 12 community college clusters (see Exhibit 1).

#### Exhibit 1. IHE Financial Aid Director Interview Sample by Urbanicity

Urbanicity	Number of IHEs
Urban	5
Suburban	1
Rural	3

Interview topics included the following: the impact of HB 3 on financial aid office operations, support provided by financial aid staff to high schools, suggested supports for school staff to better manage HB 3 requirements, feedback about HB 3, lessons learned and advice interviewees would give other institutions and schools, and interviewees' outlook on the future of financial aid.

### Community-Based Organizations

Based on the interviews AIR conducted with school staff and financial aid directors, we developed a list of CBOs to contact for interviews. Of the five we contacted, only two agreed to participate in an interview. Interview topics included the following: resources and supports the organization provides to help students with college applications, the financial aid application process, the enrollment process, partnerships to enhance college readiness, feedback about HB 3, and suggested supports for school staff to better manage HB 3 requirements.

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<sup>2</sup> See <https://comptroller.texas.gov/economy/economic-data/colleges/texas.php>.

## Respondents

One staff member from each IHE and CBO was interviewed for this project, yielding 11 interviewees. The job roles of the interviewees included titles such as executive director, program manager, director of financial aid services, and director of scholarships and financial aid.<sup>3</sup> In addition to their titles, interviewees were asked how long they had served in their current position. Responses ranged from 10 months to 20 years (see Exhibit 2).

### Exhibit 2. Tenure in Current Position

Tenure	Number of interviewees
1 year or less	2
2–5 years	5
6–10 years	2
11+ years	2

Financial aid directors described their responsibilities as follows:

- **Overseeing the day-to-day operations** of their respective departments, including managing staff, ensuring compliance with regulations, and maintaining eligibility for federal and state financial aid programs
- **Administering financial aid**, including awarding and verifying students for federal, state, and local aid scholarships, work–study programs, and other forms of financial assistance
- **Completing reporting** for all federal, state, and local reporting
- **Facilitating outreach activities** to provide additional resources to high schools
- **Communicating and collaborating** with district and school-level stakeholders, especially counseling staff about financial aid

CBO directors described their responsibilities as follows:

- **Overseeing all aspects of the organization**, managing everything from administrative tasks to strategic planning and programs
- **Communicating and collaborating** with various stakeholders, school-level staff, students, and families
- **Providing resources and support** to campuses and individual community members on postsecondary planning

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<sup>3</sup> For brevity, we refer to these individuals as directors.

## Appendix B. Interview Protocols

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### Financial Aid Interview Protocol

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm a researcher with the American Institutes for Research, or AIR.

AIR received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to understand the implementation and outcomes associated with the House Bill 3 financial aid application graduation requirement.

As part of this research, AIR is conducting interviews with financial aid directors to learn more about how HB 3 has affected financial aid processes and how institutions are managing the changes and supporting students in meeting the new application requirements. Thank you for taking the time to participate in today's interview. As a thank you for your time, we are offering a \$50 Amazon gift card.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. We will treat the data collected during this interview as confidential and will not include any names or identifying information in any of our reports. Do you agree to participate? *Confirm that participant says "yes."*

We typically audio record interviews to ensure that we accurately capture your responses, rather than relying solely on typed notes. This recording will not be shared outside our evaluation team and will be deleted upon completion of the study. Do you agree to be audio recorded?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

*If the participant agrees, begin the recording after answering any questions.*



**Financial Aid Application Requirement Evaluation**  
**Financial Aid Director Interview Protocol**

**After starting recorder, state the following:**

**Today's date is [Date]**

**Financial Aid Director interview at [REGION #]**

Q#	Protocol Questions
1	What is your exact title?
2	How long have you been in this role?
3	What are your primary responsibilities in this role?
4	What is your understanding of the HB 3 requirements?
5	How has HB 3 impacted the financial aid application process or processes at your institution? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the specific changes or updates your office has had to make in response to HB 3?</li> <li>• Would you share any lessons learned or strategies you've found effective in managing the transition to the HB 3 requirements?</li> </ul>
6	Are there any challenges or concerns that you have encountered in implementing HB 3's requirements? Please describe.
7	Does your office support K–12 schools with the HB 3 requirement? Please explain.
8	Would you discuss any additional resources or support services that your institution has introduced to assist students in filling out the financial aid application?
9	What supports do you think should be provided by school staff (principals, counselors) to help students and their caregivers understand and meet HB 3 requirements?
10	Have you received any feedback, positive or negative, from districts, school staff, caregivers, or partners about the HB 3 graduation requirement (completing a FAFSA or TASFA)?
11	Do you think the HB 3 Financial Aid Application Requirement is beneficial for students? Why or why not?
12	What advice do you have for other institutions that are also adapting to the changes brought about by HB 3?
13	How do you foresee the future of financial aid processes evolving considering legislative changes like HB 3?
14	Do you have any additional comments that you want to share?

## Community-Based Organization Interview Protocol

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm a researcher with the American Institutes for Research, or AIR.

AIR received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to understand the implementation and outcomes associated with the House Bill 3 financial aid application graduation requirement.

As part of this research, AIR is conducting interviews with community-based organizations to learn more about how HB 3 has affected the way in which your organization supports and provides services to students. Thank you for taking the time to participate in today's interview. As a thank you for your time, we are offering a \$50 Amazon gift card.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. We will treat the data collected during this interview as confidential and will not include any names or identifying information in any of our reports. Do you agree to participate? *Confirm that participant says "yes."*

We typically audio record interviews to ensure that we accurately capture your responses, rather than relying solely on typed notes. This recording will not be shared outside our evaluation team and will be deleted upon completion of the study. Do you agree to be audio recorded?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

*If the participant agrees, begin the recording after answering any questions.*

### Financial Aid Application Requirement Evaluation CBO Interview Protocol

**After starting recorder, state the following:**

**Today's date is**

**CBO interview at**

Q#	Protocol Questions
1	What is your exact title?
2	How long have you been in this role?
3	What are your primary responsibilities in this role?
4	Please describe your organization's overall mission or goals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How would you describe the community you serve?</li><li>• How does your organization support students and families in your community?</li></ul>

**Financial Aid Application Requirement Evaluation**  
**CBO Interview Protocol**

5	<p>How does your organization engage with the community to identify and address college readiness needs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What supports and services do you provide that specifically target assisting students interested in enrolling in college (2- or 4-year institutions)?</li> <li>• Please describe any supports provided to help students access information about college opportunities.</li> </ul>
6	<p>What are the most common challenges that students face when applying to college?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please describe any resources or supports that your organization provides to help students with the <b>application process</b>.</li> </ul>
7	<p>Please describe any resources or support services that your organization has introduced to assist students in filling out the <b>financial aid</b> application?</p>
8	<p>Please describe any supports your organization provides to help students with the <b>enrollment process</b>.</p> <p>Please describe any support your organization provides to students <b>during their college careers</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does your organization provide additional FAFSA support during the time students are attending college? Please describe.</li> </ul>
9	<p>How does your organization partner with local schools, colleges, or other organizations to enhance college readiness and success efforts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What makes these partnerships successful?</li> </ul>
10	<p>What are some ways that organizations like yours can collaborate with schools to maximize services for students and families?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific services, outreach strategies, understanding and assessing needs, etc.</li> </ul>
11	<p>More generally and looking to the future, what support or services do you think your community needs in order to alleviate barriers/obstacles for potential college students?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are some of the most important lessons that you have learned while working with students and families in your community that you'll carry forward in your work?</li> </ul>
12	<p>What is your understanding of the HB 3 requirements?</p>
13	<p>What are you hearing from your community about HB 3?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you received any feedback, positive or negative, from students, caregivers, IHEs, district or school staff about the HB 3 graduation requirement (completing a FAFSA or TASFA)?</li> </ul>
14	<p>What supports do you think should be provided by school staff (principals, counselors) to help students and their caregivers understand and meet HB 3 requirements?</p>
15	<p>Do you think the HB 3 Financial Aid Application Requirement is beneficial for students? Why or why not?</p>
16	<p>Do you have any additional comments that you want to share?</p>

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