



California Department of Education

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California Student Aid Commission

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October 13, 2022

Dear County and District Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, High School Principals, and High School Counselors:

California Dream Act Application: Help Undocumented Students Safely Apply for College Financial Aid

Every year, thousands of students apply for financial aid as they consider their college, university, or training options after high school graduation. While this process is not always easy, it is a critically important one to help students access up to \$20,000 in grant aid, depending on which institution they attend, to help pay for postsecondary education or training. Students from undocumented or immigrant backgrounds face additional challenges in this process given their status. However, California has made state financial aid available since 2013 through the California Dream Act Application (CADAA), a state-based application. It is available on the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) Dream Act web page at <https://dream.csac.ca.gov/landing>. It allows undocumented students to receive state financial aid.

The California Department of Education (CDE) and CSAC want to assure undocumented students and their families that it is safe to apply for the CADAA.

- Information provided by the CADAA is used solely to determine eligibility for state financial aid.
- Information provided through the CADAA is **not** shared with the federal government, and it is **not** used for immigration enforcement.
- Students do **not** need to have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals status to attend college or receive state financial aid. This chart on the Immigrants Rising website helps explain the differences: <https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/understand-the-differences-in-state-tuition-ca-dream-act-and-daca/>.
- We will work to the fullest extent of the law to protect all students that share their information through the CADAA.

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To increase access to financial aid, California enacted legislation (Assembly Bill 469) requiring local educational agencies, including charter schools, to confirm that all high school seniors have completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid or a CADAA, expanding access to financial aid to thousands of students who may have otherwise not been aware of this opportunity. We strongly believe it is crucial for all educators to inform students and families about the importance of filling out a CADAA, which could open the door to a college education for thousands of students, and to remind them of the priority state aid deadline of **March 2**.

The opportunity represented by a college education in California is a pathway to success for students, including those who might be undocumented or from mixed-status families. We remain steadfast in our commitment to protecting and serving all students and families. We are proud to stand with Governor Gavin Newsom, leaders of the California State Legislature, community partners across our state, and our state's private and public colleges and universities in upholding the rights of California students.

Should you have any questions, please contact the CSAC at 888-294-0153 or schoolsupport@csac.ca.gov or the CDE High School Innovations and Initiatives Office at 916-323-6398.

More information about the CADAA is available on the CSAC Undocumented/Dreamer Students web page at <https://www.csac.ca.gov/undocumented-dreamer-students>, and the CADAA is available on the CSAC California Dream Act web page at <https://dream.csac.ca.gov/>.

We urge you to share this information with your schools, students, parents, and guardians as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Tony Thurmond
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