

# Fast Blast

## California Student Aid Commission

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Revised October 10, 2007

*In support of the Commission's ongoing goal of providing California's financial aid community with proactive and current updates, we are providing this update on programs and projects. Please share this with any interested person who may not have received this newsletter.*

### Grant Delivery System Project Kickoff

The Commission has kicked off the initial phase of its real time database, Grant Delivery System Project (GDS). The Commission will host its first GDS advisory committee meeting with participating stakeholders next Tuesday, October 16..

The primary goal of GDS is to deliver real time WebGrants and five scalable Web Services so that we may better serve our students, institutions and staff. The scheduled completion date is October 4, 2008.

The changes will increase our online flexibility, provide quicker turnaround from inputs to results, and give stakeholders more direct access to their information.

For schools and institutions, this means a greater ability to integrate with participating postsecondary financial aid management systems and high school student information systems.

The database will create the foundation for implementing the new Federal Student FAFSA data transfer for calendar year 2009, allow institutions a single data entry to receive and update current award status, payment, GPA, and school change transactions, and synchronize systems by automatically passing information between systems.

A local web portal will provide schools and institutions the ability to directly pull and integrate data from GDS. This will reduce the complexity of reconciling systems and workload for student support services and grant operations staff.

GDS will provide students the ability to view real time award eligibility, award status, financial aid availability and Web Grant for Student Screens so they may apply real time updates.

We're very excited about GDS and the benefits to all of our stakeholders. Stay tuned for our progress updates in future editions of the Fast Blast.

### Commission Awarded 2007-08 Cal Grant Competitive Awards

The Commission received and processed more than 191,000 applications for the September 2 Community College Competitive Cal Grant awards. Of that number, the Commission was authorized to award Cal Grants to 11,250 students who met the general Cal Grant A and B eligibility criteria, household status and access scoring criteria.

Last week, we began mailing award notifications to students. Notifications to ineligible applicants and eligible non-recipients will be mailed this week.

Schools can receive access to scoring information for a Competitive student's Cal Grant score on the WebGrants Student Award Detail screen at <https://webgrants.csac.ca.gov/logon.asp>. The information may help you understand why a student was not awarded and to prepare for possible questions from your students.



### New FAFSA PIN CARD is Now Available

The new FAFSA **PIN CARD** has arrived! This perforated card allows for a student or parent to write their PIN number on a small card that they can tear off and place in a secure area, such as a wallet or business card holder for easy retention. The PIN CARD is in Spanish on one side and English on the other.

The PIN CARD is typically inserted in the "College Cash Boxes", however the new PIN CARD is

available now. To order, contact the Commission's Shipping Center at (916) 526-7282 or fax your request to (916) 526-8838. (If you're with a college, you'll need your federal code; if you're with a high school, have your CEEB code handy. Be sure to use the new Item # G 67.

### **2008-09 Fund Your Future Series Available**

As a reminder, our award winning Fund Your Future Series is now available. Schools may order the publications by calling (916) 526-7282 or faxing their request to (916) 526-8838. Publications can also be ordered online at [www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=1072](http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=1072). (Be sure to include your school code with your orders.)

### **Transfer Entitlement Awards Offered**

I am pleased to let you know that the Commission offered 4,229 Transfer Entitlement awards to students.

Eligible students were sent a California Aid Report notifying them of the award amount and school of attendance.

Cal Grant Transfer Entitlement awards are for students who did not receive a Cal Grant within a year of high school graduation and who meet eligibility requirements and plan to attend a California Community College after high school before heading to a four-year college.

### **Grant Rosters**

Rosters displaying all 2007-08 award recipients are now available at <https://webgrants.csac.ca.gov/logon.asp>. Schools may begin reporting transactions for these students.

### **College Cash Crew Captains Wanted**

The Commission is searching for College Cash Crew Captains. The Captains will serve as media spokespeople for the 2007-08 Cal Grant campaign, acting as an inspirational program element to help motivate target students to continue their education and to apply for a Cal Grant to make their college dreams a reality.

We need your help. If you know of any engaging, dynamic and articulate students who are currently enrolled or recent graduate of California College or career/technical school, please let them know about this exciting opportunity. Please send all College Cash Crew Captains' applications and personal essays to [CynthiaSmith@painepr.com](mailto:CynthiaSmith@painepr.com) and/or via fax to (213) 996-3783. **The application deadline is November 1, 2007.**

### **Two Bills Awaiting Governor's Signature**

The Commission is committed to equal educational access and affordability for all students. SB 1- the California Dream Act, provides equal access and minimizes the economic burden imposed on students and families. As we are all aware, a well educated population will only benefit our State.

The Cash for College program is administered by the Commission. AB 1540 would establish the Cash for College program in statute, and would establish mechanisms to receive non-state funds, to help support and expand the student benefits offered through the program.

The Cash for College program goal is to boost the state's diminishing college entrance rates by getting more students to complete the financial aid process and enroll in college.

The program offers a statewide annual workshop series and outreach effort that provides multi-lingual hands-on financial aid application assistance to students and their families to apply for Cal Grants and other college financial aid. This program is a partnership effort of high schools, community colleges, universities, regional and local communities

Both SB 1-the California Dream Act and AB 1540-Cash for College Program are currently on the Governor's desk awaiting either his signature or veto.

The Governor has until October 14, 2007 to sign or veto all bills. We will keep you informed of any new developments with SB 1 and AB 1540.

**Talk with us-** The Commission appreciates any comments or feedback you may have regarding the *Fast Blast*. Please forward your comments to [fastblast@csac.ca.gov](mailto:fastblast@csac.ca.gov). If this message reaches school staff who are not currently on the Commission's ListServ and wish to be added, they can log on to [csac.ca.gov](http://csac.ca.gov) and click on Links and CSAC List Services.

