

FAST BLAST



OUR MISSION: "Make education beyond high school financially accessible to all Californians."

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April 10, 2009

Budget Update

In late spring, the Governor and Legislature are expected to revisit decisions made in the 2009-10 State Budget. The items noted below were initially included in the Governor's Proposed 2009-10 Budget. However, they were not included in the 2009-10 Budget Act approved in February 2009. On April 1, 2009, the Governor submitted a finance letter to the Legislature to consider these proposals as a revision to the 2009-10 Budget. These proposals require legislative action to be implemented. (Note: At this time, the Commission will continue processing the 2009-10 Cal Grant awards at the amounts in the approved 2009-10 Budget Act.)

- A General Fund decrease of \$87.5 million in the Cal Grant Program to reflect cost savings measures proposed to keep costs flat from year to year:
 - freezing income eligibility limits (\$7 million);
 - reducing the maximum award for new students attending non-public institutions from \$9,708 to \$8,322 (\$11 million);
 - partially decoupling awards to public institutions from fee increases (\$16.6 million, which reflects approximately one-third of the undergraduate fee increases assumed for UC and CSU in 2009-10); and
 - elimination of the Cal Grant Competitive Program (\$52.9 million).
- A General Fund decrease of \$2 million for anticipated savings from a proposal to consolidate the functions of California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) and the Commission through a reorganization proposal and to decentralize the administration of financial aid, including Cal Grants, to the higher education segments.

Electronic Funds Transfers

On Thursday, April 9, 2009, the State Controller's Office notified the Commission that institutions will again receive electronic transfer funding for the grant programs.

WebGrants for Students

In an effort to make the WebGrants for Students URL more student friendly, the URL was changed to www.webgrants4students.org. To assist students and professionals with this modification, the previous URL will continue to redirect inquiries to the new URL.

The Commission and institutions have been encouraging students to sign on to this website to verify the status of Cal Grant or Chafee Grant applications, update address information, view payment history and communicate school changes. We are experiencing a 38 percent increase in student usage since last year.

The site is experiencing up to 5,000 logins each day, including more than 7,000 school changes to date.

The data results underscore the commitment and ongoing efforts of the Commission's Internet Technology Department to generate universal and efficient clearinghouse methods for information retrieval. The availability of this inclusive records delivery mechanism is a critical module for students as they navigate through time sensitive and multi-level decisions associated with the award of financial aid and selection of an appropriate postsecondary path.

Thank you again for your input and communication to students regarding this resource.

WebGrants Real Time Migration

The migration of the real time online roster payment change has been completed. This new feature to the WebGrants system provides financial aid administrators the ability to update payments, generate school changes and instantly correct errors.

School of Origin Report

The Commission's *School of Origin Report* provides eligibility information to high schools for Cal Grant Entitlement participants. This report is updated monthly

and is available to high schools by accessing the Data Transfer menu in WebGrants. To obtain access to WebGrants, contact the Commission's Technology Help Desk at (888) 294-0148 or csachelpdesk@csac.ca.gov.

2009-10 Cal Grant Entitlement Awards

The Commission sent notification letters to more than 65,000 students who were determined eligible for new 2009-10 Entitlement Cal Grant awards. Students who do not qualify for Cal Grant Entitlement awards are sent notification letters informing them of their ineligibility status. The 2009 rosters are available for viewing on the WebGrants Display Roster screen.

Confirmation of high school graduation is required for newly awarded Cal Grant Entitlement participants prior to release of any payments. Following graduation, students will be able to log on to www.webgrants4students.org to provide their confirmation information.

Additional information about the 2009-10 Cal Grant Entitlement awards can be found in [Operations Memo GOM 2009-09](#)

2009-10 Cal Grant Transfer Entitlement Awards

In late April, Transfer Entitlement preliminary eligibility letters will be sent to potentially eligible students who are transferring from a California Community College to a California baccalaureate degree granting institution for the 2009-10 school year. These applicants will be required to use webgrants4students to confirm their California residency at the time of their high school graduation. Upon receipt of this information, the Commission will either offer the student a Transfer Entitlement Cal Grant or send an ineligible letter.

2009-10 March 2nd Cal Grant Competitive Awards

After the Transfer Entitlement Award Processing, Cal Grant Competitive Award applicants will begin receiving letters from the Commission reflecting their award eligibility status. This year, we anticipate an increased number of applicants as more students seek higher education during challenging economic conditions.

2009-10 Cal Grant C Awards

The Commission staff and Grant Advisory Committee Members have proposed recommendations to streamline the Cal Grant C application process. An electronic form, rather than paper, is being proposed for the 2009-10 academic year. Staff will be proposing this recommendation for the Commission's approval at its April 16, 2009 meeting. If approved, the electronic application will become available soon.

Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Deadline

The deadline for high schools to submit nominations for the 2009-10 Federal Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program, **May 1, 2009**, is fast approaching. Each high school may submit two student nominations for this scholarship.

In order to create a more accessible and timely application submission process for high school administrators, a nomination screen for the Byrd Program has been added to WebGrants providing the option to submit on-line in lieu of utilizing paper forms.

Annual Report to the Legislature on EdFund

The Commission has completed the **2007-08 Annual Report to the Legislature on EdFund** for Federal Fiscal Year October 1, 2007 - September 30, 2008. The report includes a description of the services provided by EdFund, changes in the delivery of loans, program enhancements, the loan program annual budget, and the level of compensation of EdFund managers and executives.

This report, as well as other valuable reports produced by the Commission, can be viewed at www.csac.ca.gov.

Assumption Program of Loans for Education (APLE)

The Commission has approximately 4,400 unused APLE allocations. We encourage participating schools to continue submitting applications before the June 30, 2009 deadline.

The Commission remains dedicated to keeping you apprised of any new information that may affect our programs. Please forward your ideas and comments to Fastblast@csac.ca.gov.

