

# FAST BLAST

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

DIANA FUENTES-MICHEL, *Executive Director, California Student Aid Commission*



January 20, 2010

## A Message from Executive Director, Diana Fuentes-Michel

The Commission and staff wish you a successful and prosperous 2010.

The Proposed 2010-11 Governor's Budget was released on January 8, 2010. I want to share with you a bulleted summary of proposals in the 2010-11 Governors' Budget which pertain to the Commission and the programs we administer.

- The Governor proposes to suspend the Cal Grant Competitive Program. Existing awards would be maintained. 22,500 new awards would be eliminated for a projected savings of \$45.5 million.
- The Governor's proposal relies on \$6.9 billion of Federal funding. In the event the funding is not received, the Governor proposes an additional \$79 million reduction in the Cal Grant program by:
  - Freezing the level of the awards (decoupling the Cal Grant award amount from fee increases: 15% for the University of California and 10% for California State University.)
  - Freezing the income ceilings for new Cal Grant awards.

Additional information about the 2010-11 Governor's Proposed Budget can be located at [www.dof.ca.gov](http://www.dof.ca.gov).

### WEBGRANTS COLLEGE COST SCREEN

Update capability is now available on the 2010-11 WebGrants Cost Estimate Screen. **Please complete and submit cost estimate information no later than Thursday, January 21, 2010.** Additional information can be viewed in Operations Memo GOM 2009-34 dated November 25, 2009.

## 2010-11 Student Expense Budgets and Income and Asset Ceilings

The Commission has released the final Student Expense Budgets and the Income and Asset Ceilings for the 2010-11 academic year.

The Student Expense budgets are based on the 2006-07 Student Expenses and Resources Survey (SEARS) data which have been adjusted for inflation or deflation using the California Consumer Price indices.

The Student Expense Budget and Income and Asset documents are located on our homepage at [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov) under the Quick Hits section. If you have any questions, please contact Bev Kerth at 916.464.3332 or [bkerth@csac.ca.gov](mailto:bkerth@csac.ca.gov), or Tabitha Frost at 916.464.2113 or [tfrost@csac.ca.gov](mailto:tfrost@csac.ca.gov).

### **New 2009-10 California National Guard Education Assistance Program (Application Deadline Jan. 22, 2010)**

Administered by the Commission, the California National Guard Education Assistance Program, in partnership with the California Military Department, is a state-funded program designed to provide an educational incentive to improve skills, competencies and abilities for up to 1,000 service members who remain active in the National Guard, the State Military Reserve, or the Naval Militia. Recipients may receive up to \$9,700 for education assistance. For additional information, contact Katrina Beck at 916.854.4255 or go to [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov).

## 2010-11 Cal Grant GPA Verification and Electronic GPA Submission Training

The submission deadline for grade point average (GPA) verifications is March 2, 2010.

The 2010-11 Cal Grant GPA Verification Form is available for download from the Commission's Web site at [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov). Pre-printed paper forms are not available for ordering in bulk. Please download and print the forms if you are not electronically submitting GPAs.

GPA uploads from schools for the 2010-11 academic year Cal Grant awards are now being accepted.

We strongly encourage all schools to upload GPAs electronically. This initiates immediate confirmation that the GPAs were accepted and allows students to immediately view their submitted GPAs through “WebGrants for Students.” As an alternative, schools may continue to use paper GPA Verification forms, which can take 6 – 8 weeks to process.

The Electronic GPA Submission Training Sessions will be conducted via webcast during the months of January and February 2010. This training was developed to support institutions that currently upload GPAs electronically through WebGrants and want to learn more about the process, and to assist institutions that currently mail paper GPA forms and want to learn how the electronic upload process operates. Each online session will be one hour in duration. Participants will be able to ask questions through a “chat” feature during the training.

You may register for the training session at [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov). A confirmation email will be sent to participants with the Website log in instructions and teleconference phone line information. **We recommend that institutions set up a WebGrants account prior to the training session.**

The Commission has also posted videos on You Tube and Teacher Tube to provide guidance to schools on the GPA submission process. The videos can be accessed at <http://youtube.com/castudentaid> and on Teacher Tube at <http://teachertube.com/> (select the “Videos” tab and type in “GPA”).

For additional assistance, schools may contact the Commission’s School Support Services staff at 888.294.0153 or [schoolsupport@csac.ca.gov](mailto:schoolsupport@csac.ca.gov).

### **Fund Your Future Counselor’s Guide and Spanish Language Workbook**

The 2010-2011 Fund Your Future Counselor’s Guide and [Spanish language Fund Your Future workbooks](#) are now available. Schools may order the publication on the EdFund Web site at [www.edfund.org](http://www.edfund.org) or write to the EdFund Shipping Center at: P.O. Box 419045, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9045.

### **Cash for College Organizers Register Workshops**

The 2010 California Cash for College financial aid workshop series is open for registration. High schools, community college and university campuses and outreach and community groups can register to host workshops that begin in January and continue through to the March 2 Cal Grant deadline.

The new Cash for College Organizers registration process will take about 15 minutes for organizers to set up an account, read, accept and print the 2010 Partnership Agreement, create a 2010 Outreach Plan, order materials, and request workshop dates,

times and locations. Requests for workshops will be reviewed and confirmed by the statewide office before posting online at [calgrants.org](http://calgrants.org). An email message will be sent to the organizer when sites post.

### **New online FAFSA**

Beginning in January 2010, the new **online** FAFSA will be simplified with 28 percent fewer questions presented to students through the use of Skip Logic. Skip Logic skips/omits unnecessary and irrelevant questions that don’t pertain to the individual student.

Studies indicate that offering your 2010 workshops with Internet-connected computers increase the probability of low-income, under-represented students completing the FAFSA at the workshop.

### **Registration FAQs**

FAQs are available at the Cash for College site located at [www.calgrants.org](http://www.calgrants.org) to help with the registration process and program details.

If you have any questions about registering your workshops, email the statewide office at [cashforcollege@csac.ca.gov](mailto:cashforcollege@csac.ca.gov).

### **Assembly Bill 187**

[Assembly Bill 187 \(AB 187\)](#) was signed into law on November 5, 2009. This bill requires the Commission to implement a pilot program for an alternative Cal Grant delivery system under which qualifying institutions (according to regulation and Commission determination) would be authorized to voluntarily administer Cal Grant A and B Entitlement awards and Transfer Entitlement awards for students admitted to their campuses.

A summary of the main provisions of AB 187 can be found in the [Commission’s November 19, 2009 meeting agenda](#).

AB 187 requires that the Commission convene an advisory task force composed of Commission staff and institutional representatives to assist in understanding the necessary technical and data requirements of implementing the pilot program. The first task force meeting was held on December 3, 2009. The Commission has established a technical data committee to review and recommend program requirements for the pilot program.

