
18.1

Action/Information Item

California Student Aid Commission

Update on the Cal Grant Public Awareness Campaign and Consideration of 2007-08 Campaign Budget and Timeline

Staff will present an update on the 2007-08 Cal Grant Public Awareness Campaign activities.

In addition, a discussion paper on a proposed funding extension for the Cal Grant Public Awareness Campaign and California Cash for College program will be presented. The funding extension will provide for year-round Campaign and program activities through 2007 and into 2008 for the 2008-09 Cal Grant application process. The requested funding extension is in response to Outreach Committee and stakeholder suggestions that the program be in effect year-round.

The Outreach Committee had not yet met when the Commission agenda was produced. Staff will summarize any actions taken or changes made between the February 15, 2007 Committee meeting and the February 22 and 23 Commission meeting.

Responsible Staff: Tom Mays
Director
Public Affairs Branch

Cheryl Lenz
Campaign Coordinator



Cal Grant Outreach Campaign Summary

- Distributed 4,500 Cash Boxes to high schools, community groups and financial aid partners.
- Sent 4,500 student influencer packets to schools to encourage peer to peer outreach.
- Placed statewide teen-targeted radio advertising to deliver approximately 30.7 million impressions to people 12-17 years old.
- Placed radio and television advertising in key markets targeting multi-cultural parents. Radio advertising will deliver more than 3.6 million impressions to African American adults 35-54 years old and 9.6 million impressions to Latinos 35-49.
- Secured the opportunity for more than 50 radio remotes to help promote financial aid workshops.
- Aired more than 266 television spots on Univision stations in Los Angeles, San Diego and Fresno and 60 spots on KCRA in Sacramento. Television ads will generate more than 6.5 million impressions to target audiences.
- Orchestrated three successful Univision call-in programs in Los Angeles, San Diego and Fresno targeting Spanish speaking audiences. It's estimated that more than 4,000 callers have or will speak with volunteers to get information on Cal Grants, workshops or financial aid. In Fresno alone more than 84,000 adults were tuned in to the prime time programming on Univision.
- Conducted a full-day KCRA Call 3 program in Sacramento, generating 1,300 calls about the Cal Grant program and financial aid.
- Secured pro-bono placement of 500 bus posters in the Greater L.A. area.
- Sent out more than 121,000 direct mail pieces with the GPA Verification Form enclosed to targeted priority homes.
- Translated the calgrants.org Web site into Spanish.
- Placed Internet banner ads and optimized online financial aid searches to achieve more than 25 million impressions.



Cal Grant Outreach Campaign Summary, Continued

- Recruited and trained student ambassadors called the College Cash Crew to carry the Cal Grant message to youth in a peer to peer manner.
- Conducted a successful San Diego media launch event at Mission Bay High School. Attendees included *San Diego Union-Tribune*, *Diario San Diego*, KUSI-TV (Ind), Univision / Telemundo, XETV-TV (FOX), KGTV-TV (ABC) and KNSD-TV (NBC).
- Associated Press picked-up two Cal Grant event photos taken at the San Diego launch event, making them available to media outlets across the country.
- Conducted a successful media event in Oakland at Fremont Federation of Small Schools. Attendees included KNTV-TV (NBC), KGO-TV (ABC), KTSF-TV (Ind), KDTV-TV (Univision), KBLC-TV (Local cable channel), KCBS-AM, Post Newspaper Group (*Oakland Post*, *Berkeley Tri-City Post*, *Richmond Post*, *San Francisco Post*, *South County Post*, *Oakland Globe* and *Ming Pao Daily News* (Chinese-language publication)).
- Produced and distributed an English-language radio news release that was aired by 37 California radio stations with an audience of more than 840,000; also produced a Spanish-language radio news release that was aired by 14 stations with an audience reach of more than 4.7 million - for a combined total of 51 stations reaching an audience of more than 5.5 million.
- Secured print placements in *San Diego Union-Tribune*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Oakland Tribune*, *Sacramento Bee* and *La Opinion*, in addition to more than 35 additional print stories throughout California.
- Conducted in-studio interviews with San Francisco NBC, Univision and Telemundo affiliates, as well as with the San Diego Univision affiliate. More than 50 additional broadcast segments featuring Cal Grants/Cash for College workshops have aired as a result of our media launch. In-studio interviews with the Sacramento and Fresno ABC affiliates are pending.
- Secured notable high-profile corporate partners such as Metro, Blockbuster, Old Spice, Ivory, California Pizza Kitchen, Johnny Rockets, Galaxy Theatres, Food 4 Less, Walgreen's, Bank of the West and Goodwill.
- Expected to generate more than \$2 million in pro-bono exposure.

**Consideration and Approval of Outreach Funding for the 2008-09
Cal Grant Public Awareness Campaign and
California Cash for College Program**

Commission Staff Recommendation:

The Commission's Public Affairs Branch is recommending that the Commission approve \$2.49 million from the Student Loan Operating Fund (SLOF), effective March 2007, to fund an early jump-start to the 2008-09 Cal Grant Public Awareness Campaign and California Cash for College program. This request would draw from the remaining balance of the \$25 million earmarked from the SLOF to administer outreach activities through the annual public awareness campaign, California Cash for College program and grantee funding. Commission staff also recommends that this funding be used to support amendments to the exiting contracts with Runyon, Saltzman and Einhorn and Despina Costopoulos to allow a seamless transition to the 2008-09 Cal Grant Public Awareness campaign and California Cash for College program.

Justification:

Prior funding for the Cal Grant Public Awareness Campaign and California Cash for College program coincided with EDFUND's fiscal year of October 1 through September 30. However, the Commission has been criticized over the last few years by many key stakeholders – ranging from Cal-SOAP directors, high school counselors, EDFUND grantees, Cash for College Advisory Committee members, and CASFAA-CCCSFAAA leadership – for starting the Campaign too late each year. The delayed start inherently causes a “ripple effect” that results in delays in development, implementation and delivery of collateral and online materials to local financial aid workshops and high school activities such as financial aid nights in the fall and beyond, the impacts of which are felt by the entire financial aid information delivery system in the state. In effect, by funding these efforts far into implementation timeframes the outreach investment has less impact.

The requested \$2.49 million would cover March 3, 2007 to March 2, 2008, the 2008 Cal Grant application deadline. Amending the exiting contract with Runyon Saltzman and Einhorn, and Despina Costopoulos will allow for the continuity of public awareness activities and year-round planning for Cash for College. Commission staff believes that both efforts would involve relatively simple contract amendments, and would not require time-intensive requests for proposals that would delay the implementation of the 2008-09 campaigns.

Staff anticipates that portions of the \$2.49 million would be expended during the 2006-07 and 2007-08 EDFUND fiscal years. Staff is currently working on a detailed distribution of the \$2.49 million to be presented at a future Commission meeting. However, initial discussions indicate that the \$2.49 million may be allocated as follows:

- Approximately \$2 million to fund the existing, ongoing Cal Grant Public Awareness campaign contract; and
- Approximately \$490,000 to fund the California Cash for College program.

Benefits:

Commission staff is pleased that the state budget shows a continued upturn in Cal Grant awards, reflecting a direct correlation between continued publicity efforts and financial aid availability for California high school seniors, recent graduates and other non-traditional students. This year alone, there will be nearly 400,000 high school graduates weighing post-secondary education opportunities, and continued communications and outreach efforts are needed to support the Commission's mission of ensuring maximum access to financial aid for an education after high school.

By shifting the start of the campaign to March 3, 2007 rather than the fall as in previous years, numerous strategic objectives can be achieved:

- Financial aid advisors at college campuses and high school counselors will receive collateral materials (the College Cash Box) before their actual financial aid events which run in October and November. This greatly benefits financial aid night organizers in informing families about upcoming events to help them file for financial aid. In 2006-07, 50,000 students failed to complete both application forms.
- Campaign radio and television spots can run earlier and longer, drawing more attention to the "apply" message. The campaign will use the same creative with minor revisions, resulting in a significant cost savings.
- "College Cash Crew" members (former Cal Grant recipients hired through the campaign to promote the Cal Grants application cycle,) will have additional time to make local appearances to urge their peers to apply.
- The early start time will relieve the stress imposed on our limited internal resources by allowing staff and management more time to develop and implement campaign materials and activities.
- The additional publicity window will support the state's effort to improve the low college-going rates (California currently ranks 40th in the nation in this critical category) and support the Commission's mission.
- The earlier window will continue to strengthen and expand our corporate and community partnerships, and benefit the Commission's relationships with its education partners by addressing the chronic complaints of lateness expressed by our key stakeholders in the financial aid community.
- The new March 3 start time fully supports the Commission's objective to implement a "year-round" campaign that not only promotes the March 2 Cal Grant deadline, but other important efforts, including earlier outreach, the community college "I Can Afford College" spring campaign, and the September Cal Grant filing window.

- Continuing the current “Ticket to Success” branding will further streamline the impact of campaign messaging and will result in additional cost savings.

Recommended Action:

The Outreach Committee is asked to recommend that the Commission approve the use of the remaining balance of \$2.49 million in outreach funding beginning March 2007 as follows:

1. Approximately \$2 million for the 2008-09 Cal Grant Public Awareness Campaign and the amendment of the contract with Runyon, Saltzman and Einhorn for this purpose; and
2. Approximately \$490,000 for the 2008-09 California Cash for College program, including the amendment of the contract with Despina Costopoulos for this purpose.

18.2

Action/Information Item

California Student Aid Commission

Update on California Cash for College and Consideration of 2007-08 Budget and Timeline

Staff will present an update on the recent 2007-08 California Cash for College program activities, and invite any further discussion of the funding extension proposal for year-round program activities referenced in Tab 1.

The Outreach Committee had not yet met when the Commission agenda was produced. Staff will summarize any actions taken or changes made between the February 15, 2007 Committee meeting and the February 22 and 23 Commission meeting.

Responsible Staff: Tom Mays
Director
Public Affairs Branch

Despina Costopolous
Statewide Coordinator



The 2007 California Cash for College effort is well under way with more than 350 workshops registered across forty-four counties in California, exceeding the goal to increase the number of workshops by twenty-five percent. This year, more than half of all workshops are offered in February. Workshop evaluation data shows that students complete the FAFSA at workshops by significant margins during the month of February.

Six Regional Coordinating Organizations, including Shasta Union High School District, Sacramento Cal-SOAP/Office of Assemblyman Dave Jones, East Bay Cal-SOAP Consortium, Kern County Cash for College Coalition/CSU Bakersfield, LA Area Chamber of Commerce, and San Diego County Cal-SOAP Consortium are heading up regional coordination of workshops this year. About half of the workshops are coordinated through their broad collaborative efforts.

Highlights of Cal Grant/Cash for College efforts

This year, the campaigns used collateral materials to more effectively link Cal Grant awareness with help to apply for Cal Grants offered at Cash for College workshops. Regional flyers were also developed for the first time, tying campaign elements together. The CCFC effort also helped to recruit more than 100 volunteers for the Cal Grant Univision and KCRA Call-In programs.

More than \$350,000 in Scholarship Incentive to Apply for Cal Grants

Thanks to generous grant funding from The Education Financing Foundation of California, this year more than \$350,000 in scholarships will be awarded through statewide and Los Angeles area workshop efforts. The purpose of the scholarship is to make sure students take advantage of maximum financial aid and apply for a Cal Grant. High school seniors must attend a Cash for College workshop, complete both the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Cal Grant GPA Verification form by the March 2 Cal Grant deadline to be eligible for the scholarship. Scholarships can be applied at a 2-year or 4-year degree granting institution in fall 2007. Awards will be announced in May.

Pre/Post Workshop Activities

Scholarship grant funding is also supporting pre- and post-workshop outreach conducted through call center or regional lead office efforts. Additionally, CCFC is piloting a statewide e-mail follow up project to provide tailored messages to those students who indicate they need specific types of assistance, such as more help to get financial and tax information completed on the FAFSA. Finally, several regional lead offices are piloting more intensive post workshop follow up assistance to students who are at-risk for not meeting the Cal Grant March 2 deadline. Results will be shared and evaluated after the March 2 deadline.

2.0 GPA + 2 Forms: + 1 Deadline: = Up to \$9,700 annually
1. FAFSA
 2. GPA Verification
 March 2*

18.3

Action/Information Item

California Student Aid Commission

Update on the California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP)

Staff will present an update on the California Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP).

The Outreach Committee had not yet met when the Commission agenda was produced. Staff will summarize any actions taken or changes made between the February 15, 2007 Committee meeting and the February 22 and 23 Commission meeting.

Responsible Staff: Tom Mays
Director
Public Affairs Branch

Kim Taylor
Outreach Manager

Cal-SOAP UPDATE

The California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP) continues to provide services, including tutoring, academic advising and financial aid information to students and families in 16 regions throughout the state.

Advisory Committee Update

The Cal-SOAP Advisory Committee has scheduled three meetings in 2007: February 15, May 25 and September 14. With established meeting dates, the committee will be better able to fulfill its role and advise the Commission on the development and operation of the Cal-SOAP projects.

Project Update

The Los Angeles Cal-SOAP will be the last project to complete the contracting process this year. Issues with the contract signatures have been resolved and we have moved forward with the final phase of the process. We expect a contract to be in place after Department of General Services gives final approval.

We are closely monitoring the Solano University and Community College Educational Support Services Consortium (SUCCESS) Cal-SOAP which operates in the Dixon/Solano area. The Solano County Office of Education can no longer serve as fiscal agent after the current fiscal year. As a result, the consortium will need to find a new fiscal agent in order to continue operating in the upcoming 2007-2008 fiscal year. SUCCESS is one of the oldest Cal-SOAP projects and we want to see services continue in its uniquely rural/urban service area. Commission staff will work with the consortium representatives and report back to the CSAC executive director as this process develops.

Budget update

Last fall the Commission submitted a budget change proposal (BCP) requesting a 3% (\$274,000) increase in the statewide Cal-SOAP budget. Unfortunately, the Governor's current fiscal policy requires any request for an increase in program funding be accompanied by an offsetting decrease from another program. Consequently, the Cal-SOAP program continues to operate on an \$8.5 million budget that has not increased in five years. Meanwhile, project directors report that costs continue to rise, making it difficult to pay operating costs.

Cash for College participation

The San Diego and East Bay Cal-SOAP consortia again served as regional coordinators for the Commission's Cash for College program. Throughout the state, most of the Cal-SOAP consortia have taken some part in the Cash for College effort. Cal-SOAP projects provide staffing, resources, and training for the Cash for College efforts in their regions.

Statewide Marketing Plan

As part of the Commission's Statewide Marketing Plan, staff will move forward with Cal-SOAP directors to develop strategies to enhance Cal-SOAP name recognition and promote Cal-SOAP services and activities. Through increased partnership with other Commission outreach programs and development of publicity vehicles, the Commission will enhance the cohesion of all its statewide outreach efforts.

18.4

Action/Information Item

California Student Aid Commission

Update on the Preparation of an Annual Work Plan for Commission Outreach and Communication Programs

Staff will present an update on the Annual Work Plan for the Commission's Public Affairs Branch.

The Outreach Committee had not yet met when the Commission agenda was produced. Staff will summarize any actions taken or changes made between the February 15, 2007 Committee meeting and the February 22 and 23 Commission meeting.

Responsible Staff: Tom Mays
Director
Public Affairs Branch

HIGHLIGHTS: CSAC PUBLIC AFFAIRS WORKPLAN 2007

PURPOSE: Devise a year-round work plan to streamline branch and grant program function and improve outreach efforts to stakeholders

ACTION STEPS

COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

Centralize Editing Process: Previously, editing functions were shared by many in the communications and grants program offices. Editing processes were lengthy, and took program staff away from processing of grant awards. The public affairs branch, communications unit will now be the primary writers and editors of all external outreach correspondence, thereby freeing program staff to concentrate more fully on grant delivery processes. The branch's communications unit will also sit in on program staff weekly meetings, and will handle the writing and editing of all operations memos and alerts (previously handled by program staff.)

Generate Year-Round Campaign/Create Planning Calendar: Previously, external outreach efforts have focused heavily on the Cal Grant March 2 deadline, and efforts are under way to generate a year-round campaign. This campaign would not only focus on other Cal grant opportunities at community colleges, but also highlight Cal-SOAP program activities, community outreach and specialized program publicity. The unit will create a detailed planning calendar to build other publicity opportunities throughout the year.

Assume Web Posting/Content Management for CSAC: Traditionally, web updates and revisions have taken a great deal of time to implement as we've had to pass through requests to personnel in our IT office. We hope to become more involved in direct web postings and content management within the communications unit, as we begin to utilize the web more for external outreach efforts.

Implement new Campaign Implementation Cycle (March 3): In an effort to maximize the effectiveness of our public awareness campaign, and get products and materials to stakeholders in a timely fashion, we hope to kick-start our campaigns much earlier than in previous years. Rather than start the Cal Grant campaign in the fall, we would like to begin the cycle immediately following completion of the previous year's campaign. This will provide additional communications opportunities with students and parents, aid financial aid counselors in utilizing materials much sooner to host financial aid and Cash for College workshops, and ease the stresses on staff, who previously had to work under unrealistic deadline pressure due to the compressed deadline cycle. The new start is contingent on approval in March of new student loan operating fund money to pay for campaign and CCFC program expenses.

Continue to Refine CSAC Fast Blast as a Primary Communications Tool: The public affairs branch, communications unit, on behalf of the executive director, launched this

electronic newsletter to stakeholders in December. Feedback to date has been very positive. The branch will continue to utilize this newsletter as our Commission's primary communications tool to reach out monthly to the financial aid community on pressing news from our office.

Develop Distance Learning Projects – To Support Outreach/Training: The communications unit will also help develop web conferencing and online teaching tools to support the efforts of our training and outreach staff. These distance learning projects will greatly enhance our ability to reach more students, parents and financial aid counselors throughout the state.

Maintain current workload: The communications unit will continue with its current workload and projects:

- Media relations: press calls, news releases, Fact Sheets, communications strategy
- Monitor contract with CustomScoop: daily distribution of newspaper articles
- Generate articles on behalf of the executive director for the CASFAA & CCCSFAAA newsletters (bi-monthly)
- Check various Web sites for accuracy and consistency of information on the Cal Grant program and all other Commission programs
- Produce an internal communication to staff from the executive director (currently the “Keeping You Informed”)
- Research/produce Resolutions for retiring Commissioners and for positions the Commissioners take on pressing issues
- Track majority of Commission printing orders and projects
- Order federal materials such as the FAFSA Worksheet for program staff
- Produce/coordinate/update all Commission collateral materials for all programs, including Cal Grant flyer and PIN card, Chafee, LEPD, APLE programs, Byrd
- Assist with production of Commission's annual reports: edit Commission's annual report on EDFUND, edit and print APLE programs annual reports
- Coordinate/produce materials for the CCC September Cal Grant deadline: work with the CCC Chancellor's office
- Coordinate the annual Marmaduke Award process including the award event (November to May annually)
- Annual fall outreach summit: assist the outreach unit with materials production and event coordination
- Production of all Commission videos including the annual FAFSA instructional video for students (College Cash Box) in English and Spanish
- Annual review of the Fund Your Future set of materials (January through July): Coordination of information update activities from external stakeholders such as CASFAA, CCCSFAAA, high school counselors, and others. Coordinate internal trainers and outreach staff review and updates
- Facts at Your Fingertips: Demographic statistics for entitlement and competitive awards – edit and print

- Monitor the Publications Activity Report: ensure adequate amounts of materials are at the CSAC/EDFUND warehouse, especially during the peak Cal Grant application months of Jan-Feb
- Intranet content development: assist other divisions with development of the content of their CSAC intranet pages; encourage internal communication and use of the intranet by CSAC staff

OUTREACH UNIT

Develop Distance Learning Training (high schools/college): In coordination with the communications unit, the outreach and training units will help direct online training scripts and sessions that can be uploaded to our website, for future use. The training and outreach videos can then be accessed by students, parents and financial aid counselors on a 24/7 basis.

Cal-SOAP

Develop Marketing Plan (With Communications Unit Assist): Cal-SOAP Directors and the CSAC outreach and communications unit will coordinate on development of a statewide marketing plan to strengthen the Cal-SOAP program's branding and outreach efforts throughout California. The marketing plan will outline joint publicity ventures that will build upon local efforts, avoid duplication of effort and take advantage of CSAC communications expertise on such public affairs activities. The marketing plan will be developed in the spring.

Develop E-Resource Library: As part of this marketing plan, CSAC will help in creating an electronic resource library that will feature communications templates, curriculum, collateral and other outreach tools that all can share to strengthen local efforts.

Revise Annual Project Plans: The outreach program will begin to revise protocols for annual project plans and other advisory documents to streamline programs budgets and operations, and to ensure consistency in Cal-SOAP functions and administrative oversight.

CALIFORNIA CASH FOR COLLEGE (CCFC) PROGRAM

Foster New Partnerships to Further Strengthen Statewide Effort: CSAC public affairs branch will continue to strengthen existing partnerships and form new partnerships to further solidify this highly-leveraged program. A large part of the program's success relies on the generous in-kind and financial contributions of local and state partners, and CSAC needs to continue to acknowledge and support these ongoing professional networks.

Increase Contract Support of Program Activities, Projects and Publicity: The CSAC public affairs branch will continue to look for ways to integrate program activities and

needs in the yearly campaign budget. By doing so, the CCFC statewide coordinator will be freed to concentrate on stakeholder and regional program support efforts.

Develop Internal Staffing and Branch Support for CCFC Activities: In an effort to further integrate the CCFC program into the CSAC public affair branch, efforts will continue to be made to develop internal staffing and branch support for program activities. Currently, three part-time student assistants are helping on an interim basis assisting with administrative duties, and both the communications team, the campaign coordinator and contractor are all providing resources to support program promotion during the Cal Grant publicity cycle.

EXTERNAL OUTREACH

Stakeholder Interviews: The public affairs director and government affairs chief are now interviewing key stakeholders statewide to ensure the branch and commission readily respond and act upon stakeholder needs. Input will be used to flesh out future communications projects and strategies and build the final annual work plan.

Public Comment Opportunities: The public affairs branch is also working on developing more opportunities to collect stakeholder feedback on current and pending programs, activities and documents produced at the commission. For example, the CSAC public affairs branch will be assisting the grants program in the next few months on a set of public meetings in the state to collect feedback on the draft Interagency Participation Agreement. It is hoped that through such public participation, the commission will be able to more readily respond to stakeholder needs, and strengthen its relationships with these groups.