
13.a

Information Item

California Student Aid Commission

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

Staff has prepared a written status report on the California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP)

Recommended Action: For Information only. No action is required.

Responsible Staff: Tom Mays, Director
Public Affairs Branch

Kim Taylor, Manager
Outreach Unit

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

For more than a year, the Cal-SOAP Advisory Committee has not met with a quorum of members. Consequently, the committee has not been able to take action on any program issues or bring any recommendations to the Commission. At the direction of Commission Chair, Louise McClain, staff has discussed the issue with the Cal-SOAP project directors and committee members. The project directors expressed a strong desire to see the committee revitalized. The project directors, committee members and staff all agree that over the next several months and into the upcoming fiscal year, the following actions can serve to revitalize the Committee and renew its ability to advise the Commission on Cal-SOAP program development:

- Resubmit to the appointing offices, letters of request for nominations to fill the current vacancies on the Committee.
- Clarify the role of the Committee through regular board orientations.
- Clarify the role and responsibility of the Committee chair.
- Schedule meetings a year in advance and hold at least three meetings per year.
- Hold at least one yearly meeting at a local Cal-SOAP site.
- Structure meetings to include committee members reporting on their segments' program activities as well as regular reports from the Cal-SOAP project directors.

Project Update

Staff is closely monitoring the Solano University and Community College Educational Support Services Consortium (SUCCESS) Cal-SOAP 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 is seeking 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 Cal-SOAP services are vital in the uniquely rural/urban service area. Commission staff will work with the consortium representatives and report back to the Commission's Executive Director as this process develops.

California 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 this year. Throughout the state, all of the Cal-SOAP consortia have taken part in the Cash for College effort. Cal-SOAP projects provide staffing, resources, and training for the Cash for College events in their regions. To formalize the integration of the Commission's programs, the Cash for College program was added to the Cal-SOAP contract as a required program activity. Including Cash for College in the Cal-SOAP contract ensures continued collaboration of the programs and allows each program to leverage the resources of the other.

Statewide Marketing Plan

As part of the Commission's Statewide Marketing Plan, staff will work with the project 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. Staff is currently scheduled to meet with a project director work group on June 11, to develop a plan for the 2007-2008 fiscal year. Details of the plan will be shared with Commissioners at a later meeting.

13.b

Action/Information Item

California Student Aid Commission

Update on the Public Awareness Campaign

Staff has provided the Executive Summary of the 2006-07 Cal Grant Public Awareness Campaign.

As background, the Commission approved \$2 million for the 2006-07 Cal Grant Public Awareness Campaign in June 2006. Over the last year, the campaign has been able to maintain and build upon the momentum of previous Cal Grant Campaigns.

Recommended Action: For information only. No action required.

Responsible Staff:

Tom Mays, Director
Public Affairs Branch

Cheryl Lenz, Manager
Public Awareness Campaign



CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

Where
will it
take you?

The California Student Aid Commission (Commission) contracted Runyon Saltzman & Einhorn (RS&E) through a Request for Proposal for the 2007 Cal Grant Public Awareness Campaign. RS&E assembled a team of advertising, public relations, outreach, digital marketing, and research professionals to help craft messages and inform the public about California's college financial aid program – Cal Grant, as administered by the Commission.

Our key objective for the 2007 campaign was to increase the number of qualified grant recipients. In addition, we wanted to inform students of the benefits of receiving a Cal Grant and pursuing higher education and encourage them to submit the two application forms—the FAFSA and GPA verification form—by the March 2 deadline.

With high school seniors and multi-cultural parents of those students serving as the main target audiences for the campaign, we developed attention-grabbing creative and selected media and outreach channels that effectively reached both groups.

The overall theme of the campaign was *Cal Grant: Your Ticket to Success*. The tag line, *Cal Grant: Where will it take you?*, was featured inside a ticket graphic and incorporated in all advertising, PR and outreach materials. The messaging was inspirational in tone, encouraging students to continue their education beyond high school. The call to action drove families to both the toll-free phone line and the CalGrants.org Web site, which was redesigned and subsequently translated into Spanish.

Our messaging also drove families to Cash for College workshops throughout the state to get assistance with filling out financial aid forms.

Most creative executions were developed in English and Spanish to ensure that we effectively reached bilingual and Spanish-dominant speakers.

Our public relations partner, PainePR, generated significant news coverage of the campaign using statewide and local media events as a catalyst and a team of students and recent graduates, the College Cash Crew, as spokespeople.



CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

PainePR also helped recruit corporate partners and community groups to assist in spreading Cal Grant messages.

Advertising

In this year's campaign, the RS&E team utilized traditional and digital media to help spread the word about free cash for college. Radio, television, transit, online and text messaging helped support community campaign activities.

Our primary target audience consisted of high school seniors and recent graduates, ages 17-19. RS&E reached these teens primarily through radio using a music-based ad that sounded like songs played on popular radio stations.

Our digital/online partner, Real Branding, also reached out to teens using the Internet and mobile messaging. Banner ads, search engine optimization and text messaging helped reach teens where they live, work and play.

Television spots ran on Univision stations in Los Angeles, San Diego, and Fresno to help reach parents. In Sacramento, Stockton and Modesto, TV ads reached parents through a partnership with KCRA-TV.

Radio ads also targeted different ethnic populations throughout Southern California, the Central Valley and the San Francisco Bay.

In addition, direct mail pieces were sent to most income-qualified households throughout the state.

Public Relations/Outreach

Public relations activities included extensive media relations, multiple media events and outreach to corporate and community partners.

Media relations efforts set out to publicize the Cal Grant application period, Cash for College workshops, pending deadlines, as well as other relevant information key to the Cal Grant application process.

PainePR began the media relations push with outreach to educational trade publications. This was followed with a push to get Cash for College workshops placed in media calendar listings.

PainePR also recruited the College Cash Crew to help put a face to the campaign. A total of four California college students and recent graduates, all Cal Grant recipients, served as peer-to-peer campaign spokespeople. The College Cash Crew members also helped with outreach to Spanish language media outlets since all members were bilingual.

The official launch of the campaign took place in San Diego at Mission Bay High School. The event was hugely successful and served as a jumping off point for several other local media events throughout the state. Events in the East Bay, Los Angeles and Sacramento helped maintain media coverage throughout the duration of the campaign.

Overall, the media relations component of the 2007 Cal Grant campaign was incredibly successful.

Additionally, we relied on community-based organizations and businesses to distribute materials to both teens and parents. Three hundred Partner Kits were distributed throughout the state. We also placed greater emphasis on quality partnerships versus quantity, to ensure messaging was communicated strategically – focusing on businesses, organizations, service centers and places of worship that reach larger groups of the Cal Grant target audience statewide.

High school outreach was also a vital component of the campaign. More than 4,500 College Cash Boxes were distributed to counselors and school administrators. These “toolkits” included Cal Grant marketing materials and important financial aid information aimed at encouraging students to continue education beyond high school. Student influencer packets were also distributed to all high schools via the College Cash Box. These packets included press release templates for school newspapers, banners and information on the Taco Bell challenge which encouraged students to reach out to their peers and help increase Cal Grant applications.

Further, RS&E successfully partnered with several California media organizations that helped extend the campaign reach



CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

and impact beyond a traditional media buy. Clear Channel, Univision, and KCRA-TV all provided significant promotional opportunities and exposure.

Clear Channel radio stations promoted Cash for College workshops via remote broadcasts, web postings and promotional mentions.

Univision stations in L.A., San Diego and Fresno hosted and promoted Spanish-language call-in programs that provided callers with answers to specific financial aid questions. Call-in programs were promoted during the evening news and prime time programming.

KCRA-TV also supported the Cal Grant program with a full-day phone-bank. Representatives from the financial aid community served as volunteers to help answer questions about the Cal Grant program and other financial aid issues. California Student Aid Commission staff was also on hand for live cut-in interviews.



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 5,000 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 Telmundo 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 through media negotiations, public relations and partnership support.

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**Executive Summary of Results
of the
California Student Aid Commission
Awareness & Motivation Survey
Baseline Telephone Survey**

Target Market Population

Project Code: 07-1201
March 2007

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**Executive Summary of Results
of the
California Student Aid Commission
Awareness & Motivation Survey
Pre-Test/Post-Test Tracking Telephone Survey**

Target Market Population

Project Code: 07-1201
March 2007

BACKGROUND

Jenkinson Associates conducted a research project for the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) regarding applicants' awareness of and motivation to apply for college financial aid. The project involved two surveys: a Pre-Test conducted in December 2006 (before the bulk of the media campaign began) and a Post-Test, completed in March 2007 (after the media campaign concluded). This summary highlights changes discovered when comparing the Pre-Test and the Post-Test results.

The research design and final questionnaire were the result of collaboration between Patricia Jenkinson, CSAC, and Runyon Saltzman & Einhorn (RS&E) staff.

Research Methods

The California statewide survey was administered via telephone interviews. Telephone numbers came from a telephone-matched list that RS&E used to target mailings to senior high school students with annual household incomes below \$50,000.¹ Both the Pre-Test and Post-Test surveys used the same sampling frame. The questionnaire included some questions from previous CSAC research.

Fieldwork was conducted using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system from December 18-20 (Pre-Test) and March 2-8, 2007 (for the Post-Test). Professional interviewers were supervised and monitored as they interviewed respondents during the late afternoon and evening hours (after traditional school hours), weekdays, with callbacks made during the afternoon and morning hours, as needed. The completed sample sizes were 402 for the Pre-Test and 400 for the Post-Test, yielding sampling errors less than +/- 4.9% (at the 95% confidence level).

¹ The \$50,000 threshold was based upon a review of 2005 Cal Grant recipients.

Caveats

This document discusses the *highlights* of the study. It is not meant to be a detailed analysis of every question asked in the survey. Detailed statistics for all survey questions can be found in the frequency and crosstabulation tables, also provided to the Client. Additionally, JA provided a detailed description of the research methods employed during the study. The findings discussed in this summary are the professional opinions of JA, and are not meant to be taken as endorsement nor criticism of the client, its staff, its policies, or procedures.

Although this research project is almost identical to the ones conducted in 2004-2005 and 2003-2004, comparisons are not made between the two studies. This decision was based on the assumption that, with the annual graduation of current seniors and the incoming new seniors, the target population is essentially a new one every year.

It is also important to note that the public education campaign was designed to appeal to different target audiences: high school seniors, their parents and other adult influencers, and high school staff. This study focuses on only one of those populations.

While this summary often uses the term college to mean any education after high school, the questionnaire focused on higher education as “education after high school” and did not specifically mention college.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

- *Most high school seniors (in this sample) said they planned to attend college in the fall, and have a positive view of the value of college.* However, it must be noted that an affirmative response to this question is socially desirable; thus, this overestimates actual enrollment rates.
- *Positive messages regarding the value of attending college are more believable than the barrier messages tested.* The strongest barrier message is still the concern about tuition increasing to the point where students can't afford to go to college. However, even this message (believed by 44% of respondents) was effective for only 5% of the sample.
- *Virtually all respondents were aware of at least one financial aid option; 96% were aware of student loans and 92% were aware of the Cal Grant.* (The rankings of the top three financial aid opportunities in the 2007 study were identical to those found in the 2005 and 2005 studies.) Increased awareness was observed for the Cal Grant and work study.
- *The “name identification” portion of the Cal Grant campaign appears to have been successful, since significant gains were observed in recall of the Cal*

Grant as a financial aid option. Cal Grant's name identification increased significantly from 84% to 92%.

- *Intent to apply for financial aid and the Cal Grant in before the campaign, for the most part, did not appear to have translated into action in March.* Fewer students reported actually applying for financial aid in the Post-Test than said (in the Pre-Test) that they planned to apply for financial aid (decrease of 10%). In the case of the Cal Grant, the difference between intent to apply and actual reported application was 7% (fewer reported applying in the Post-Test than had said they planned to apply in the Pre-Test). This finding is different from previous year's data.
 - Those students planning to attend community colleges reported significantly lower application levels for both financial aid and Cal Grant in particular than did students planning to attend a CSU or a UC.
- *Most information sources tested showed at least some increase in recall, although some were not statistically significant.*
- *This year's survey showed many areas of increased recall of information sources for financial aid in general and Cal Grant in particular. The most marked increases of 15% or more were for direct mail (both financial aid and Cal Grant). Increases of 10% or more were for local workshops (both financial aid and Cal Grant), school announcements (Cal Grant), television (Cal Grant) posters (Cal Grant), and radio (Cal Grant).*
- *Sources recalled as providing students with financial aid information with greatest frequency are school staff members (e.g. teacher or counselor), school announcements, internet ads/email, specific financial aid websites, direct mail, and parents/adult relatives/friends.*
 - Other information sources for financial aid or Cal Grant recalled by more than half the respondents were other educational institutions and school newspaper articles or ads.
- *Across both financial aid in general and the Cal Grant in particular, the least recalled information sources (recalled by fewer than 20% of respondents) were text messages, local radio station events, bus/public transit ads, local businesses, general newspapers, community-based organizations, and billboards.*
- *Combining the highest recalled information sources with the reported increases in recall, the most effective information sources appear to be the high schools (staff, announcements), direct mail, website, word of mouth through family and friends, radio, and posters.*
- *With the increase of recall of many of the information sources, it appears there is a synergistic effect amongst the varying media and outreach efforts.*
- *Education efforts about the Cal Grant directed at parents and high school counselors appear to be effective.* Although there were no statistically significant changes between Pre-Test and Post-Test data, 97% of students

said they received data about financial aid from a high school teacher or counselor and 77% reported hearing about it from parents/adult relatives/friends.

- Almost half of respondents who were “education bound” claimed that parents influenced them to consider continuing their education after high school.
- The most motivational messages included parents wanting a better life for their children, bettering themselves, and need education for employment/financial betterment.

STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES

Following are the statistically significant differences discovered when comparing data obtained from the Post-Test with data collected from the Pre-Test (at the $p \leq .05$ level using chi square test).

- *Students were more aware of the Cal Grant and work study opportunities.*
- *More students are aware that the Cal Grant carries a GPA requirement and requires only two application forms.*
- *Significantly fewer students reported actually applying for financial aid or the Cal Grant (in March) than said they intended to apply in December.*
- *Increases in recall were observed for the following general financial aid information sources:*
 - Direct mail
 - Radio
 - Television
 - Local radio station events
- *Recall increased for the following Cal Grant-specific information sources:*
 - School staff members
 - School announcements
 - Cal Grant website
 - Direct mail
 - Parents, adult relatives, friends
 - Television
 - Posters
 - Radio
 - Local radio station events

RECOMMENDATIONS

Again, it is important to realize that these recommendations are specific to the high school senior population. Thus, some messages and information sources that were directed toward an adult population may test lower in the teen population.

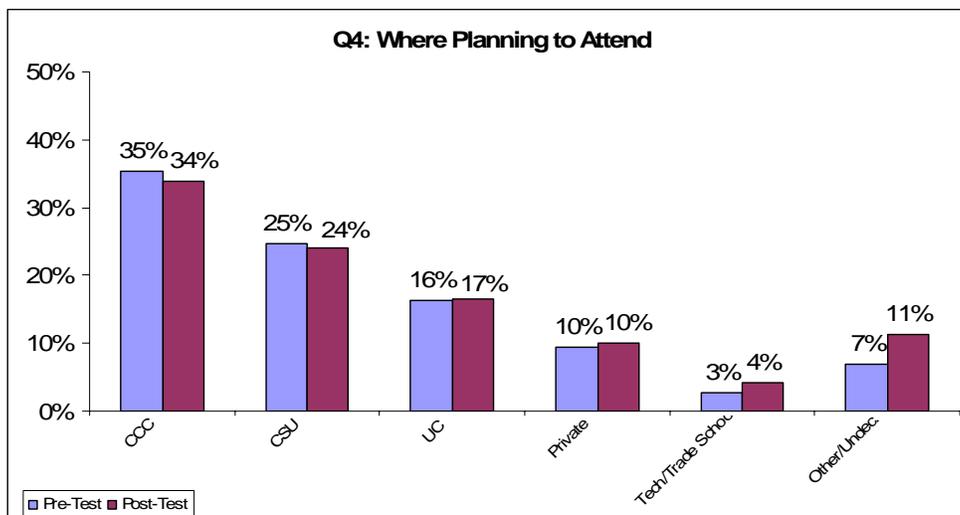
- *Continue using school staff members and school announcements as methods to deliver financial aid and Cal Grant messages.*
- *Given the statistically significant increase in the recall of radio from the Pre-Test to the Post-Test, continue using radio to deliver messages to high school seniors.*
- *Continue using Internet resources, including both the general financial aid/Cal Grant websites and the Internet ads and email.*
- *With the significant rise in recall of television as an information source, consider ways to use this medium more effectively.*
- *Direct mail appeared to be more effective this year, indicating a need to continue the design and implementation of that campaign.*
- *Reduce reliance upon general newspapers, bus/public transit and text messaging, or improve the use of these mediums.*
- *Primary campaign messages should include the following:*
 - The financial aid application process is easy and requires only two forms.
 - College graduates earn \$1 million more than non-college graduates in their lifetimes
 - Financial aid awards are large enough so that, even with increases in tuition, college aid is still affordable.
 - The Cal Grant is a form of financial aid that is “free” money.
- *Secondary messages should include the following:*
 - GPA requirements are not too restrictive to prevent application for financial aid
 - Income requirements for financial aid are not too restrictive for students.
 - The benefits of receiving financial aid far outweigh the risk of disclosing financial information in the application process.
 - Financial aid is versatile and can be used at community colleges and vocational schools.
- *Target students who are community college bound, since they indicated lower application rates for both financial aid in general and the Cal Grant than those planning to attend a CSU or a UC.*

STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

This document focuses on the significant differences found when comparing Post-Test study results with Pre-Test study results. When percentages are given for a particular response, data reported is from the Post-Test (assuming no significant differences between the two surveys' data).

College Outlook

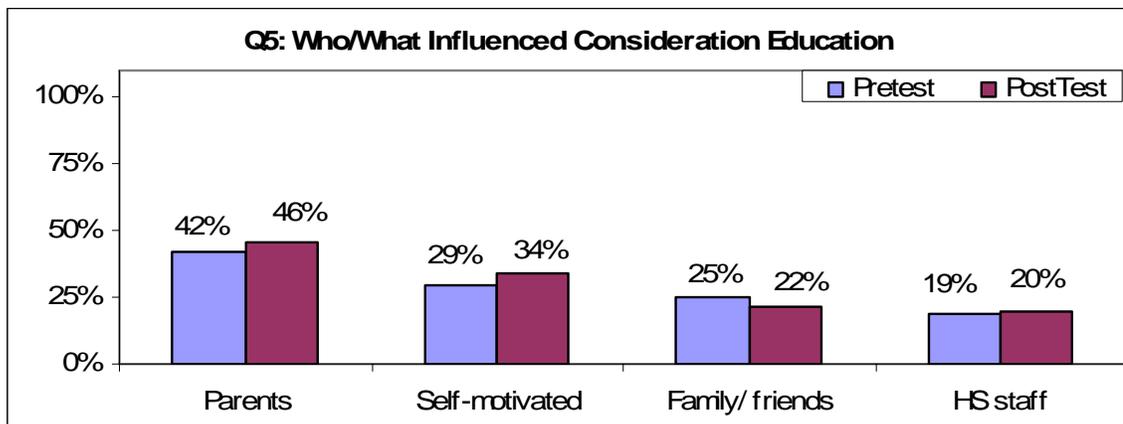
- *The vast majority of survey respondents (95%) stated they intend to attend a college or university in the fall.*
 - The 95% college intent figure found in the Post-Test is consistent with the 94% figure found in the Pre-Test.
 - It is important to note that there is a social desirability to stating an intent to attend college. Further, the Post-Test took place in March—well in advance of application deadlines for many colleges. Thus, the percentage actually attending college in the fall is likely to be much less than that found in the study.
 - Females were more likely than males to say they planned to attend college (97% to 92%, respectively).
- *Of those planning to continue education beyond high school, more students were planning to attend California Community Colleges (34%), as compared to CSU and UC campuses (24% and 17%, respectively).*
 - No significant differences were observed in college choice when comparing the Pre-Test and Post-Test results.
 - Five percent intended to complete their education outside of California.



- *For the few high school seniors who are not planning to pursue education beyond high school, concerns about financial ability and grade qualification did not top the list of reasons for their decision.*

Influential Agents in Consideration of Education after High School

- *Parents appear to be influential in their teens desire to continue their education after high school.*
 - Although there were no statistically significant changes between Pre-Test and Post-Test data, 97% of students said they received data about financial aid from a high school teacher or counselor and 77% reported hearing about it from parents/adult relatives/friends.
 - Almost half of respondents who were “education bound” claimed that parents influenced them to consider continuing their education after high school.



- The most motivational messages included parents wanting a better life for their children, bettering themselves, and need education for employment/financial betterment.

Perceptions of Education after High School

- *Very encouraging is the finding that the most believable messages about college and financial aid tested were positive ones: financial aid is available for community colleges and vocational schools, college, it's easy to get financial aid for education after high school, and college graduates earn \$1 million more in their lifetimes than those without a college degree. These rankings were consistent between the Pre-Test and the Post-Test.*
 - Close to nine out of every ten respondents (86%) believed that financial aid was available for use at community colleges or vocational schools, and 26% said this message made them more likely to continue their education beyond high school.

- The lowest positive message in terms of belief is that it's easy to get financial aid for education after high school; slightly more than three in four respondents (77%) accepted this premise.
- *The most believable arguments against continuing education after high school are that private information must be divulged and that tuition is increasing so that students can't afford to continue their education beyond high school.*
 - About half (49%) believed that, even with assistance from financial aid, tuition is increasing to the point that students won't be able to afford to go to college.
 - Slightly fewer (45%) believed that very private family information needed to be provided to be considered for financial aid.

Q6: Perceptions of College and Financial Aid				
MESSAGES	% Believing		% Positively Influenced*	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test
INCENTIVES				
Financial aid is available for community colleges and vocational schools	86%	87%	26%	19%
Easy to get financial aid	77%	78%	29%	28%
College graduates earn \$1 million more in their lifetimes	77%	77%	47%	49%
MESSAGES	% Believing		% Negatively Influenced	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test
BARRIERS				
Tuition increasing so students can't afford to go to college (even with financial aid)	45%	44%	8%	5%
Need to provide private family information to qualify for financial aid	42%	45%	3%	9%
Income threshold for financial aid is extremely low	27%	29%	5%	4%
Too much time/paperwork for financial aid applications	26%	26%	1%	2%
Grade threshold for college is too high	18%	19%	4%	6%

* Influence (positive or negative) is determined by the percentage of respondents saying they not only believed a particular message but said it would either make them more likely to continue their education after high school (positive influence) or less likely to continue their education after high school (negative influence).

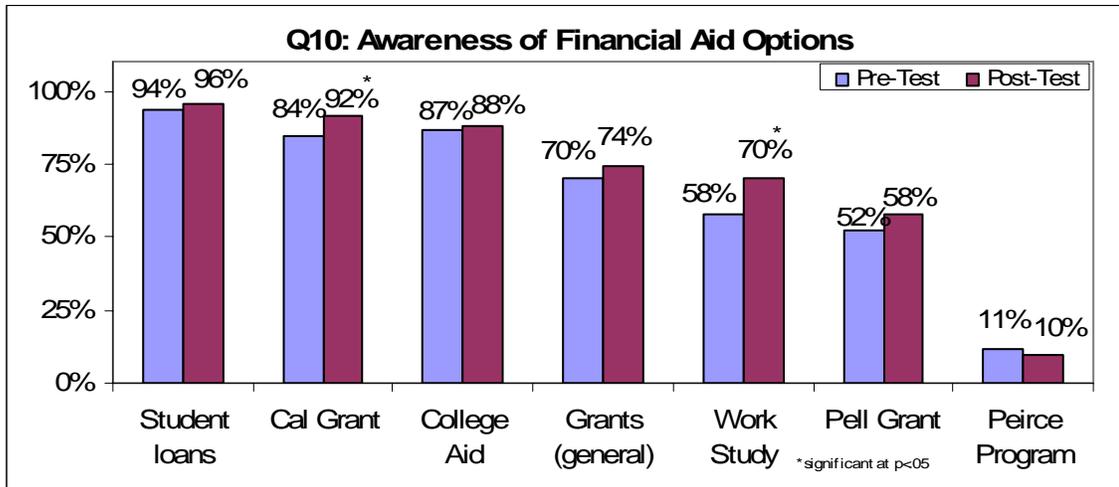
** No significant differences between Pre-Test and Post-Test data.

- *None of the negative messages achieved higher than 6% support as a reason not to pursue higher education.*
- *The most influential positive message (incentive to continue education beyond high school) was that those with college degrees earn \$1 million more in their lifetime than those without college degrees.*
 - Not only did 77% of the respondents believe the claim that financial aid was easy to get (“you only have to apply”), but 47% said it made them more likely to go to college.
- *Second in persuasiveness was that financial aid is easily accessible.*
 - While almost four in five respondents (78%) believed that financial aid was easy to get (“you only have to apply”), 28% said it was more likely to influence them pursuing education after high school.
- *Among the messages influencing students to not go to college (barriers to attending college), the most influential were the increased tuition, low income threshold and high grade threshold.*
 - All of these negative messages achieved fairly low persuasive impact. The highest (financial aid not sufficient to cover increased tuition) was perceived as a persuasive argument against attending college by only 8% of respondents.
- *Oddly, significantly fewer respondents reported being positively influenced by the availability of financial aid for community colleges and vocational schools (down 7% between the Pre-Test and Post Test).*

Awareness of Financial Aid Options

- *Virtually all respondents (99% in the Pre-Test and 100% in the Post-Test) were aware of at least one type of financial aid option.*
- *The most well known type of financial aid was student loans, with 96% of respondents claiming recall.*
- *The Cal Grant also achieved high recall, at 92%--up 7% in recall from the Pre-Test.*
 - 88% were aware that there was financial aid available directly from colleges.
 - A significant increase was observed in the awareness of work study (awareness levels jumped 12% from the 58% in the Pre-Test to 70% in the Post-Test).
 - Awareness of grants in general was at 74%.
 - The percentage of respondents claiming awareness of the fictitious (control) program (Peirce Program) dropped from the 11% level

discovered in the Pre-Test to just 10% in the Post-Test (the difference, however, is not statistically significant). The fact that this percentage did not increase should attest to the accuracy of any observed statistically significant increases in awareness of other programs.



- Assuming all of the respondents who claimed awareness of the fictitious program were only claiming to have heard of any of these programs in an effort to appear knowledgeable, awareness for the top three programs is still very high, at 86% for student loans, 82% for the Cal Grant, and 78% for college aid.
- *Almost all respondents (95%) were aware of financial aid for college, and were planning to attend college. Fewer (87%) were not only aware of the Cal Grant but were planning to attend college.*
 - While the percentage of awareness of financial aid and college bound showed an increase between the Pre-Test and the Post Test (93% vs. 95%), this finding is not significant.
 - However, the increase in the percentage of respondents who were aware of the Cal Grant and planned to attend college was statistically significant (81% in the Post-Test as compared to 87% in the Pre-Test).
- *No differences exist in awareness of financial aid options based upon geographic location.*
- *Those students planning to attend a CSU or UC institution were significantly more likely to be aware of work study.*

Cal Grant Awareness

- *When asked to define a Cal Grant, awareness levels increased significantly from the levels found in the Pre-Test in the categories of “GPA requirement” and “only two forms.”*

- The most significant increase was found in the “GPA requirement” description. While 6% used this attribute to describe the Cal Grant in the Pre-Test, that percentage jumped 9 points to 15% in the Post-Test.

Q12: Description of Cal Grant		
ATTRIBUTE	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Free Money	52%	57%
Has a GPA Requirement	6%	15%*
Can be used at most schools in California	1%	4%
Financial Aid	16%	17%
Only 2 forms (FAFSA and GPA Verification Form)	0%	6%*
Other (loan, guaranteed money, income requirement, lots of paperwork, little paperwork, can apply online, can get free help, can pay out-of-state tuition, March 2 nd deadline, forms available at school)	16%	18%***
Don't know (coded only on 1 st mention)	21%	17%

* Significant at $p < .05$ (also identified by yellow highlighting).

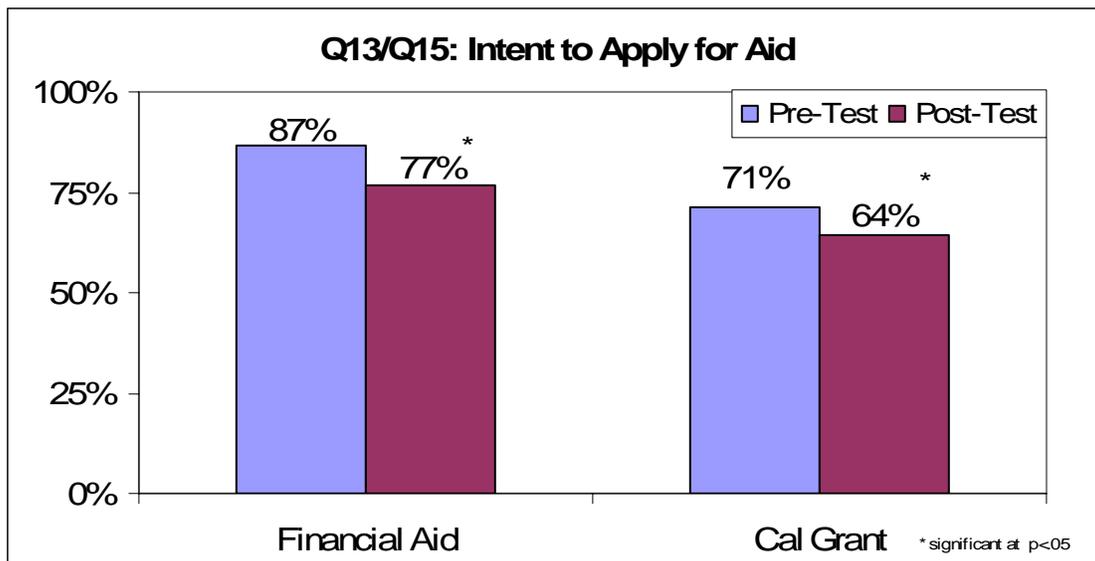
** Any observed increase is noted by blue font color.

*** This may include multiple mentions, since this was a multiple response question (with the exception of the Don't Know category, which only includes those stating “Don't Know” as their first and only response). Thus, these figures probably overstate the percentage of respondents mentioning these attributes.

- *Other significant increases in Cal Grant specifics were observed: GPA requirement and only two forms needed to apply.*
 - Awareness that only two forms were required to apply for the Cal Grant increased from 0.3% in the Pre-Test to 6% in the Post-Test.
 - Another attribute most frequently recalled were that the Cal Grant was a form of financial aid (17%).
 - Seventeen percent did not know enough about the Cal Grant to mention even one thing about it.
- *Students planning to attend a community college were significantly more likely to respond with a “don't know” response to the question of what a Cal Grant is (23% vs. 8% for CSU and 7% for UC).*

Intent to Apply for Financial Aid/Cal Grant

- The percentage of those who were college bound and said they intended to apply for financial aid (87%) and those who reportedly did apply (77%) dropped significantly between the Pre-Test and the Post-Test.
- Females were more likely than males to claim to have applied for financial aid (83% vs. 65% for financial aid and 70% vs. 54% for Cal Grant)).
- The percentage of students who expressed an intent to apply for a Cal Grant in the Pre-Test (71%) dropped significantly to 64% in the Post-Test (indicating lower Cal Grant application rates).



- Students bound for community colleges were significantly less likely to report that they applied for financial aid (61% vs. 92% for CSU and 94% for UC).
- The percentage of community college bound students who said they applied for a Cal Grant was even less (35% vs. 85% for CSU and 87% for UC).

Information Sources Recalled for Financial Aid and Cal Grant

- When comparing recall of information sources from the Pre-Test to the Post-Test, many information sources tested showed some level of increase (although not all increases observed were statistically significant).
 - For financial aid in general as well as Cal Grant specifically, twelve of the nineteen information sources showed significant increases in recall between the Pre-Test and the Post-Test.
 - Exceptions for financial aid in general were internet ads/email, college/other educational institution, billboards, community-based

organizations, general newspapers, local businesses, and bus/public transit ads).

- Exceptions for Cal Grant in particular were internet ads/email, college/other educational institution, school newspaper article/ad, billboards, community-based organizations, general newspapers, local businesses, and bus/public transit ads).
- *This year's survey showed many areas of significant increase in recall of information sources for financial aid in general and Cal Grant in particular. The most marked increases of 10% or more were for direct mail (both financial aid and Cal Grant), local workshops (both financial aid and Cal Grant), and television (Cal Grant).*
 - Direct mail showed the greatest gains for both financial aid in general (up 17%) and the Cal Grant in particular (up 23%).
 - Local workshops were recalled more frequently, up 11% for financial aid in general and up 13% for Cal Grant.
 - Television ads showed an increase in recall of 11% for Cal Grant.
- *Still, the sources recalled as providing students with financial aid information with greatest frequency are school staff members (e.g. teacher or counselor), school announcements, internet (including specific financial aid websites), direct mail, parents/adult relatives/friends, and colleges/other educational institutions.*
- *Significant increases in recall were observed for the following general financial aid information sources:*
 - Direct mail
 - Radio
 - Television
 - Local radio station events
- *Recall increased significantly for the following Cal Grant-specific information sources:*
 - School staff members
 - School announcements
 - Cal Grant website
 - Direct mail
 - Parents, adult relatives, friends
 - Television
 - Posters
 - Radio
 - Local radio station events

Q17/Q18: % “Definitely” Recalling Information Source on Financial Aid and Cal Grant				
Information Source	Financial Aid		Cal Grant	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test
High School Teacher/Counselor	91%	95%	89%	93%*
School announcements	82%	86%*	71%	81%*
Internet ads or email	81%	74%	64%	64%
Financial aid/Cal Grant website	71%	76%	50%	59%*
Direct Mail	54%	71%*	40%	63%*
Parents, Adult Relative, Friend	63%	66%	50%	59%*
College/other educational institution	65%	64%	51%	54%
School newspaper article/ad	56%	57%	54%	53%
TV	41%	49%*	24%	35%*
Posters	39%	42%	27%	37%*
Local Workshop/Event	28%	32%	23%	25%
Billboard	24%	24%	12%	15%
Radio	14%	19%*	13%	21%*
Community-based organization	22%	16%	15%	11%
Newspaper (general)	14%	14%	13%	12%
Local businesses	20%	16%	10%	8%
Bus/Public Transit	12%	11%	7%	7%
Local Radio Station events	6%	10%*	2%	7%*
Text Messages	3%	4%	1%	3%

* Significant at p < .05 (also identified by yellow highlighting for increased recall).

** Any observed increase is noted by blue font color.

- *Across both financial aid in general and the Cal Grant in particular, the least recalled information sources (recalled by fewer than 20% of respondents) were community-based organizations, general newspapers, local businesses, bus/public transit ads, radio promotion events, and text messaging.*
- *Geographically, some differences in information source recall exist:*
 - For general financial aid information, recall was higher among Southern California high school students for information via the internet, financial aid website, and radio station events.
 - For Cal Grant specific information, Southern California high school students recalled the following sources more frequently than Northern

California high school students: radio, newspaper, Cal Grant website, and local workshops.

- *Females were more likely than males to recall financial aid information provided through television (both financial aid and Cal Grant), internet (both financial aid and Cal Grant), direct mail (financial aid), and parents/adult relatives/friends (financial aid).*
- *Recall rates of financial aid information were significantly lower amongst those students planning to attend a community college for the following sources:*
 - Internet
 - Financial aid website
 - Local businesses
- *Recall rates of Cal Grant-specific information were significantly lower amongst those students planning to attend a community college for the following sources:*
 - Internet
 - Cal Grant website
 - Local workshops

13.c

Information Item

California Student Aid Commission

Update on the California Cash for College Campaign

Staff has included a recap of the 2007 California Cash for College workshop series. This report was prepared by a third party evaluator, Public Works, Inc. (Final workshop evaluation results and additional evaluation components on follow-up calling and e-marketing projects will be provided to the statewide office by July 1.)

Recommended Action: For Information only. No action is required.

Responsible Staff: Tom Mays, Director
Public Affairs Branch

Despina Costopoulos, Statewide Coordinator
California Cash for College

CASH FOR COLLEGE

2007 California *Cash for College* Workshop Evaluation: Preliminary Results

May 2007

Who Are We?

Public Works, Inc. is a nonprofit in Pasadena dedicated to working with communities, government, schools and parents by providing services and resources to educate and inform children, youth and families. Our work is in three areas:

- Education Reform
- Workforce Development
- Intervention/Prevention

Preliminary Workshop Statistics

- Over 14,000 students across CA are estimated to have attended the Cash for College workshops in 2007.
- 14,257 unduplicated workshop evaluations were completed and returned, the response rate was 95%.
- A total of 420 workshops were held between January 8, 2007 and March 1, 2007, and evaluation from 398 workshops were returned and analyzed.

Workshop Evaluation Data

- The 2007 workshop evaluation data are more reliable than the past years because more evaluations were completed - the data set grew 46% (or 4,501 more) from 2006.
- Evaluation counts did not reflect true workshop attendance since not all participants completed the evaluation forms, when compared to the sign-in sheets at some of the workshop sites.

New Questions Added to Survey in 2007

Q5: Are you planning to attend college, university, or career/trade school?

Q7: What is the highest school your parent(s) completed?

Q8: Are you a high school senior?

Q10: Where do you access the internet?

Q12: Have you received, or do you currently receive foster youth services?

Q18: Did you receive a Cal Grant GPA Verification form today?

Q20: What reason(s) may keep you from applying for financial aid by the March 2 Cal Grant deadline?

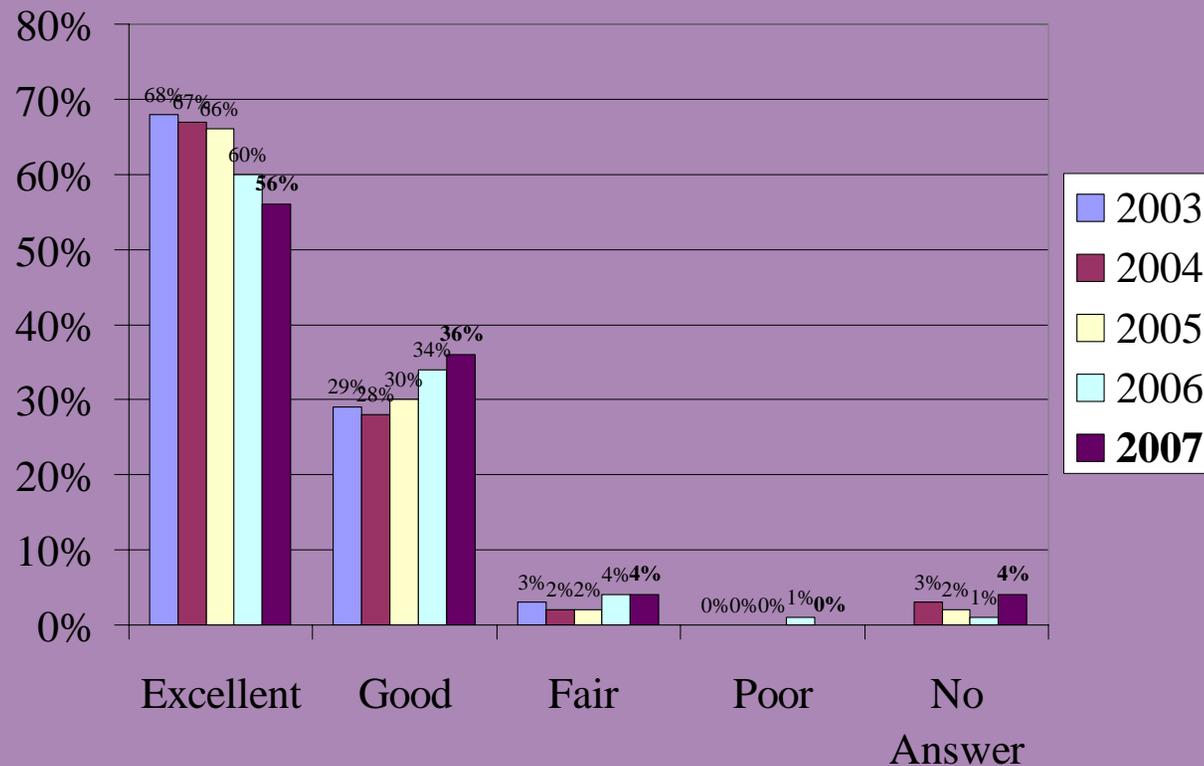
Q21: Did the extra \$1,000 scholarship motivate you to attend today?

Overall Workshop Rating

- **92%** of the survey respondents (13,125 respondents) rated the workshop either **Excellent** or **Good**.
 - 56% rated the workshop Excellent.
 - 36% rated the workshop Good.
- Only 3% (492 respondents) rated the workshop Fair.
- Less than 1% (29 respondents) rated the workshop Poor.
- 611 respondents didn't answer this question.
- In general, workshop ratings were consistent with ratings in previous years.

Overall Workshop Rating

Q1: How would you rate this workshop overall?

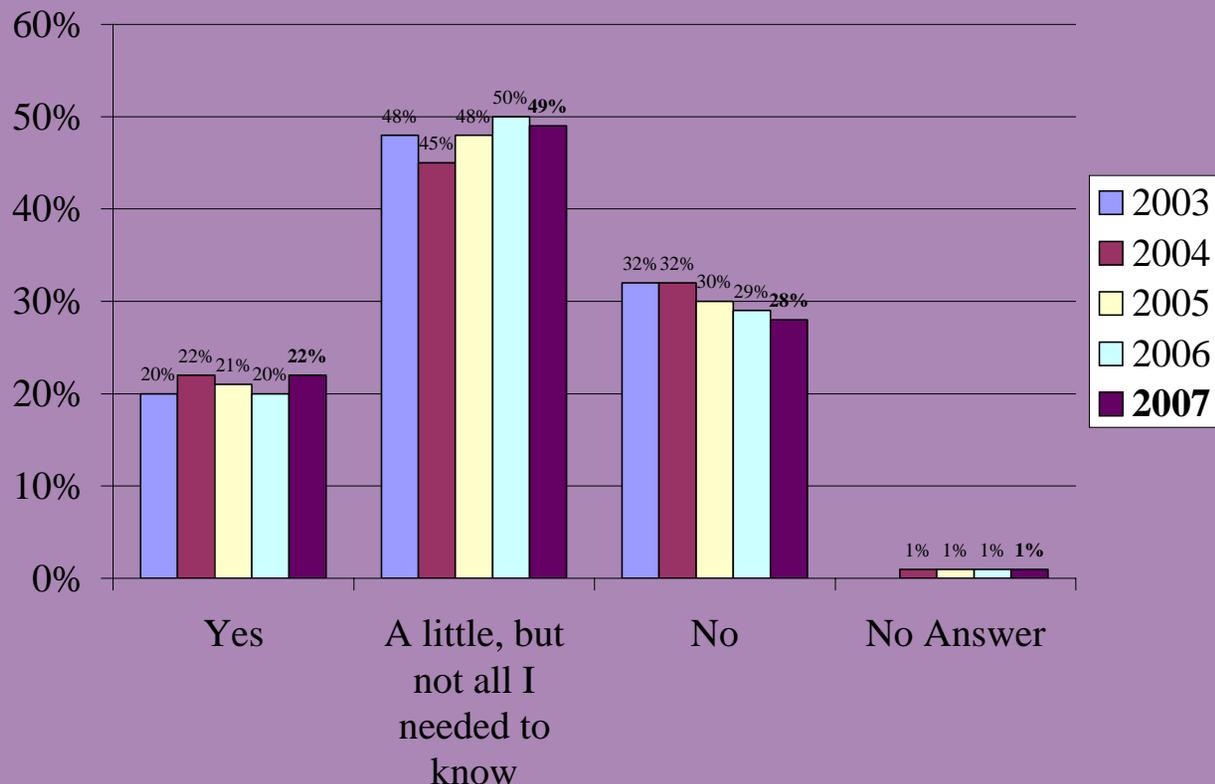


Previous Knowledge of Financial Aid

- Most workshop participants, 77%, had limited or no knowledge of how to apply for financial aid prior to the workshop.
 - 26% didn't know how to apply for financial aid.
 - 49% knew a little, but not all they needed to know.
- The data didn't change much from previous years.
 - Similar percentage of respondents indicated that they knew "A little, but not all I needed to know" as in the previous years (e.g. 50% in 2006 and 48% in 2005).
 - Slightly fewer respondents indicated that they did not know how to apply for financial aid (compared to 29% in 2006 and 30% in 2005).

Previous Knowledge of Financial Aid

Q2 : Before you heard about this workshop, did you know how to apply for financial aid?

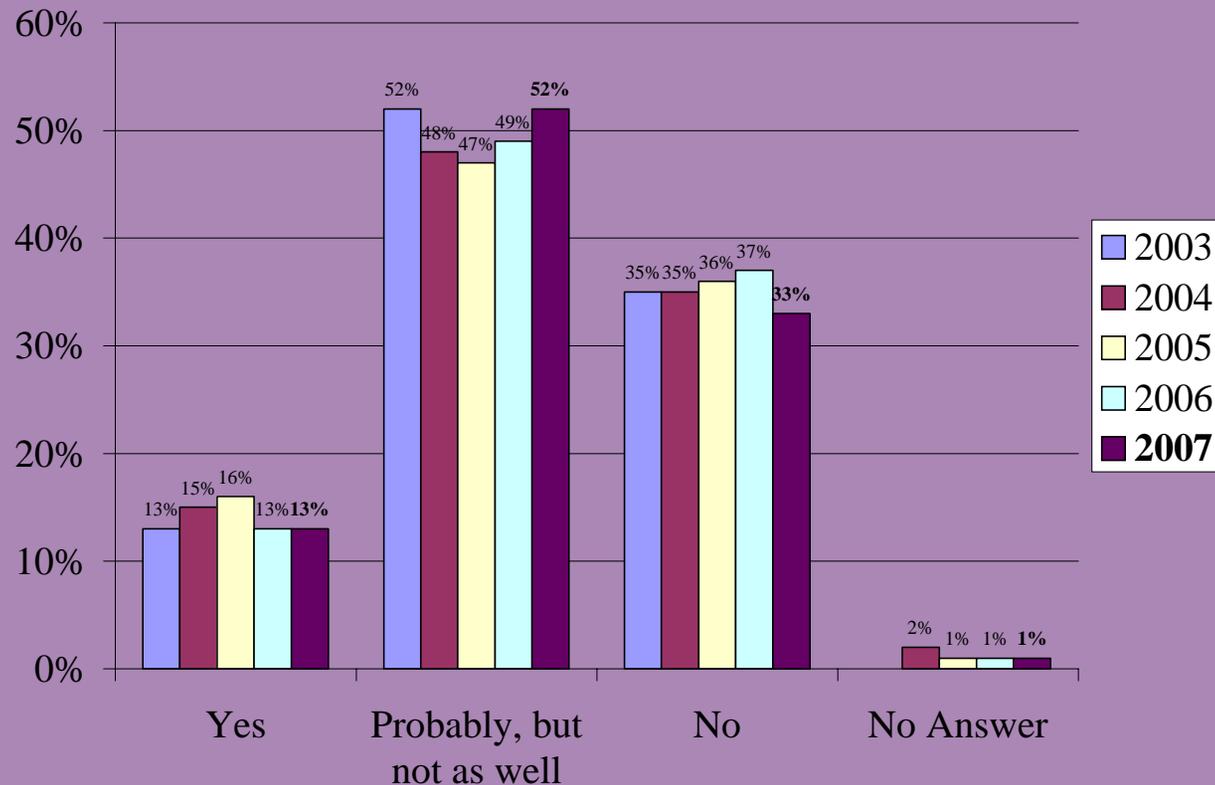


Value of Workshops

- A strong majority of respondents (86%) indicated that they could not have completed the FAFSA on their own (33%) or as well without attending the workshop (52%).
- Same percentage of respondents indicated that they could have completed the FAFSA on their own as in 2006, 13%.
 - It was 16% in 2005 and 15% in 2004.

Value of Workshops

Q3: Could you have completed the FAFSA on your own, without the help provided by the Cash for College workshop?

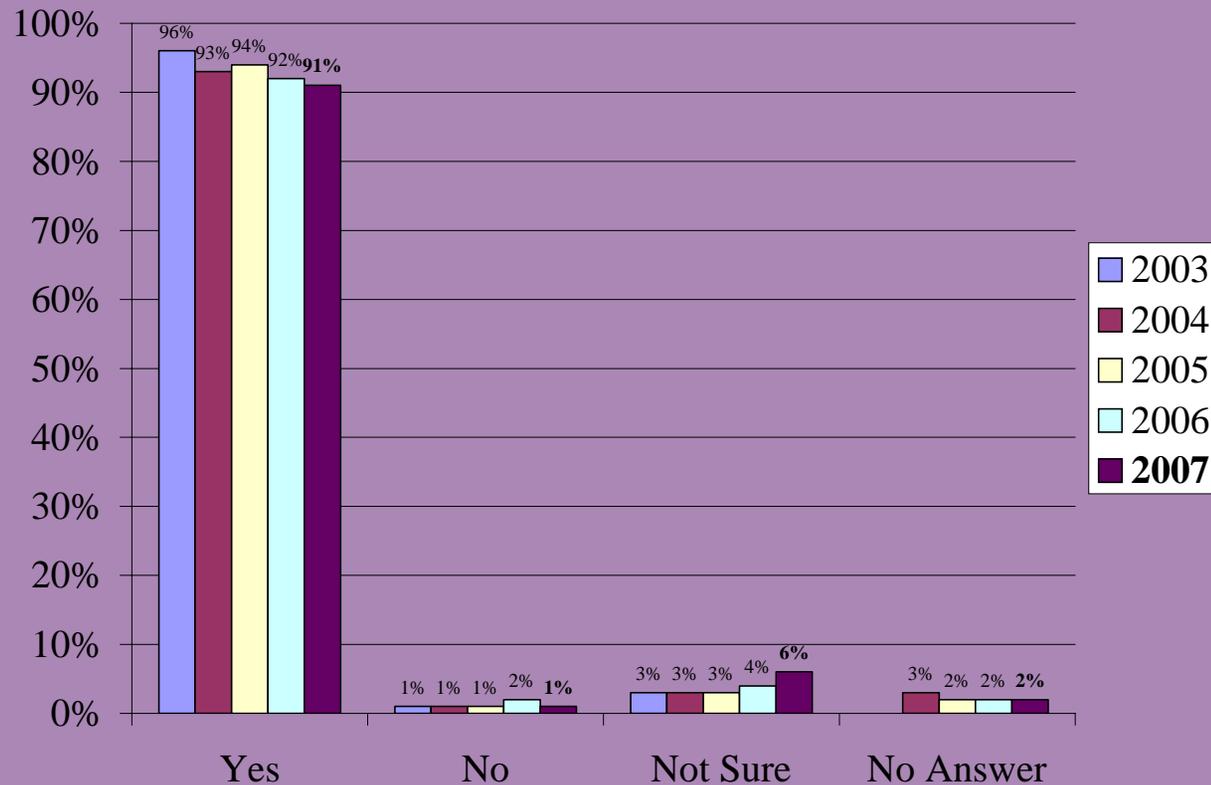


Help Worth the Effort

- A strong majority of respondents (91%) indicated that the help they received at the workshop was worth the effort of attending.
- 1% (146 respondents) indicated that the help was not worth the effort of attending.
- 6% of respondents were not sure.
- Responses were quite similar to those in past years.

Help Worth the Effort

Q4: Was the help you received worth the effort of coming?

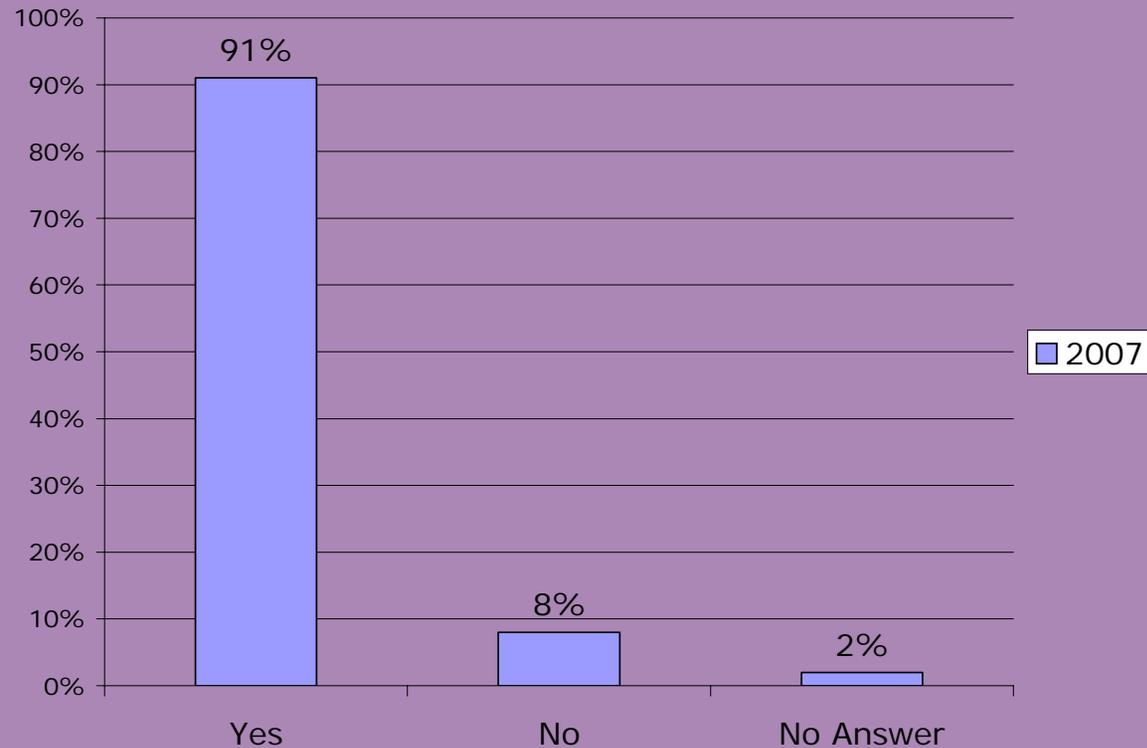


High School Senior?

- 91% (12,921 respondents) indicated that they were high school seniors.
- 8% (1,110 respondents) indicated that they were NOT high school seniors.
- 2% (226 respondents) didn't answer this question.

High School Senior?

Q8: Are you a high school senior?

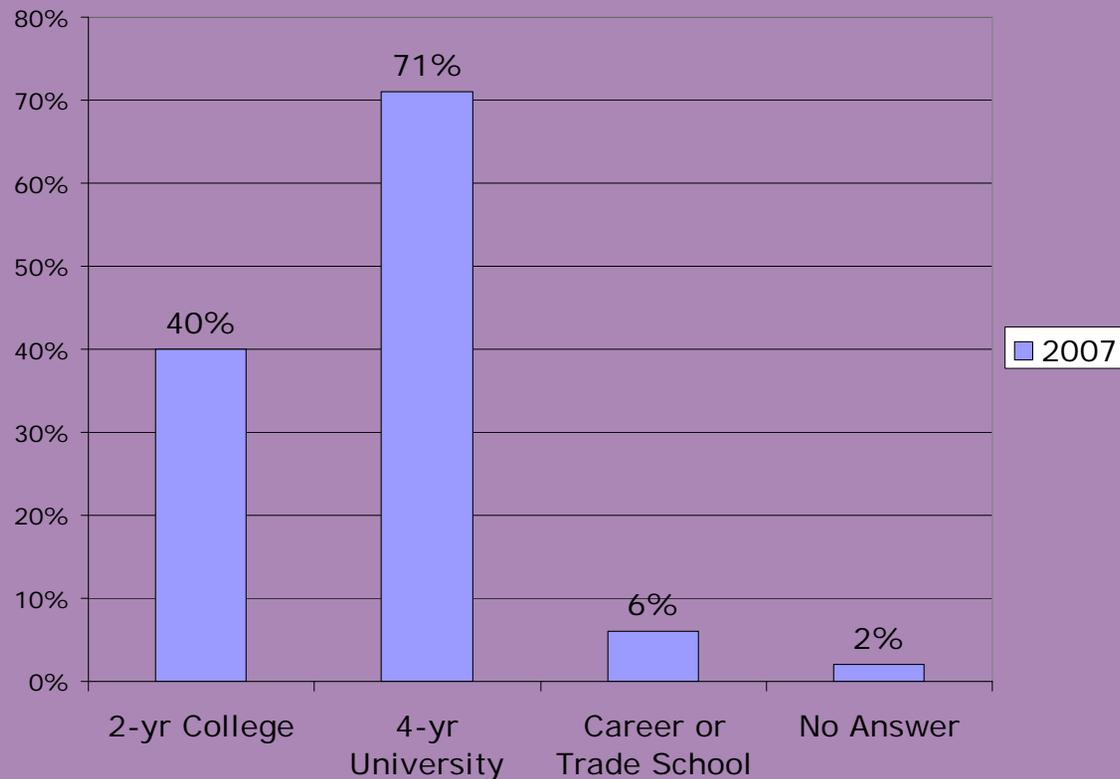


Plan to Attend Higher Education

- 55% (7,817 respondents) indicated that they planned to attend 4-year college or university.
- 40% (5,656 respondents) indicated that they planned to attend 2-year college.
- 4% (506 respondents) indicated that they planned to attend a career or trade school.
- 2% (278 respondents) didn't answer this question.

Plan to Attend Higher Education

Q5: Are you planning to attend college, university, or career/trade school? (Mark all that apply)

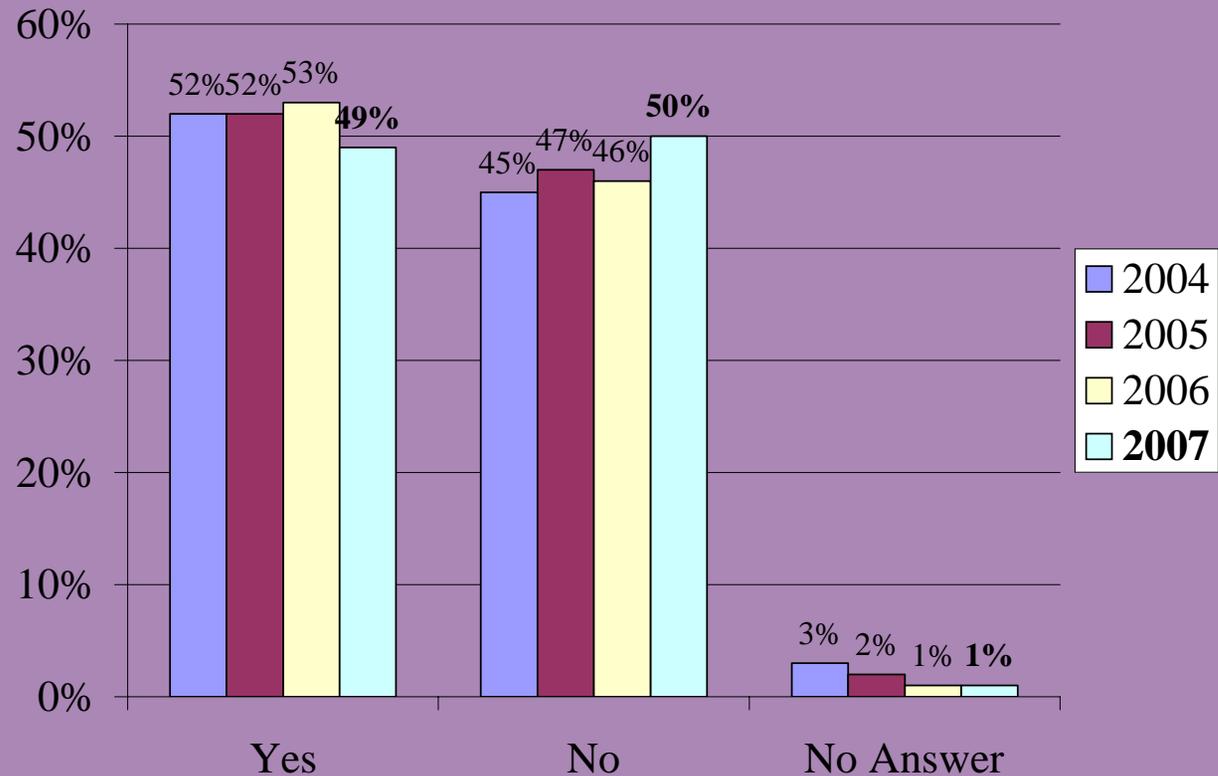


First to Attend College

- More respondents will be the first in their family to attend college than those who will not.
 - 49% of respondents will be the first in their family to attend college, compared to 50% who will not be the first in their family to attend college.
- There is a slight change in the percentage of students who will be first in their family to attend college between last two year and this year.
 - 53% on 2006, 52% in both 2004 and 2005

First to Attend College

Q6: Will you (the student) be the first member of your family to attend college?



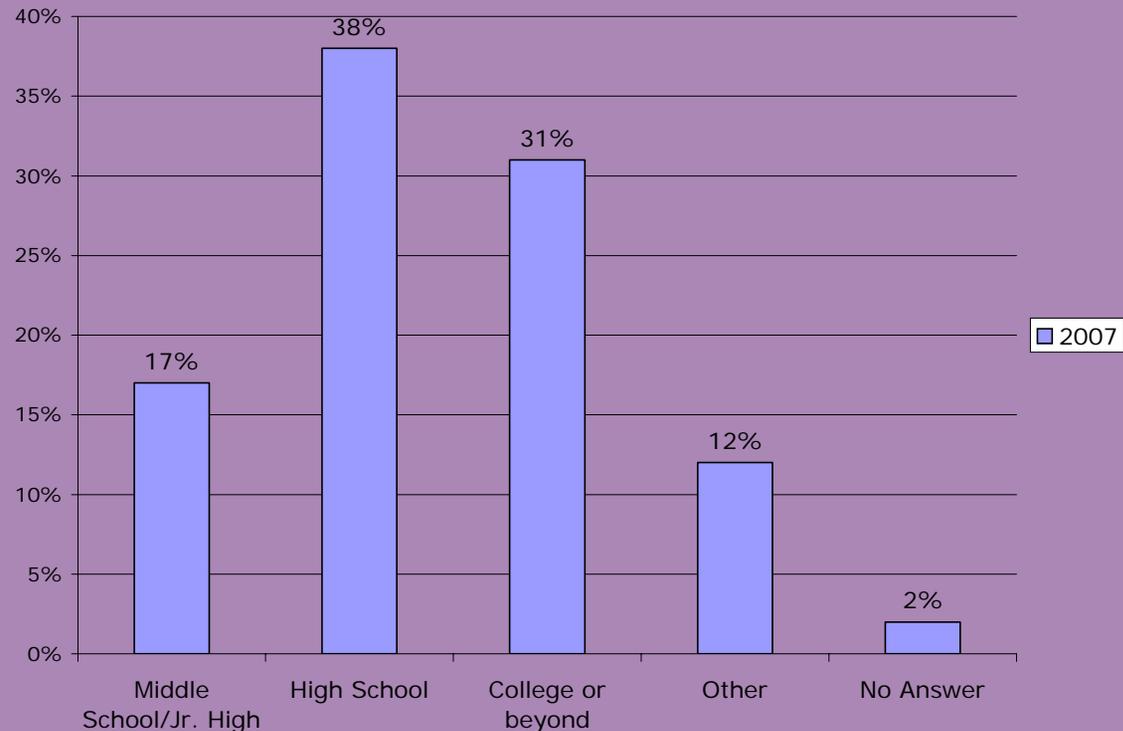
Parent(s) Highest Education

When a student chose more than one choice for this question, the choice with the higher education level was used to indicate the highest education a parent completed.

- 38% (5,418 respondents) indicated that their parent's highest school completed was high school.
- 31% (4,420 respondents) indicated that their parent's highest school completed was college or beyond.
- 17% (2,424 respondents) indicated that their parent's highest school completed was middle school.
- 12% (1,711 respondents) indicated that their parent's highest school completed was other than those listed in the survey.
- 2% (285 respondents) didn't answer this question.

Parent(s) Highest Education

Q7: Highest school your parent(s) completed?

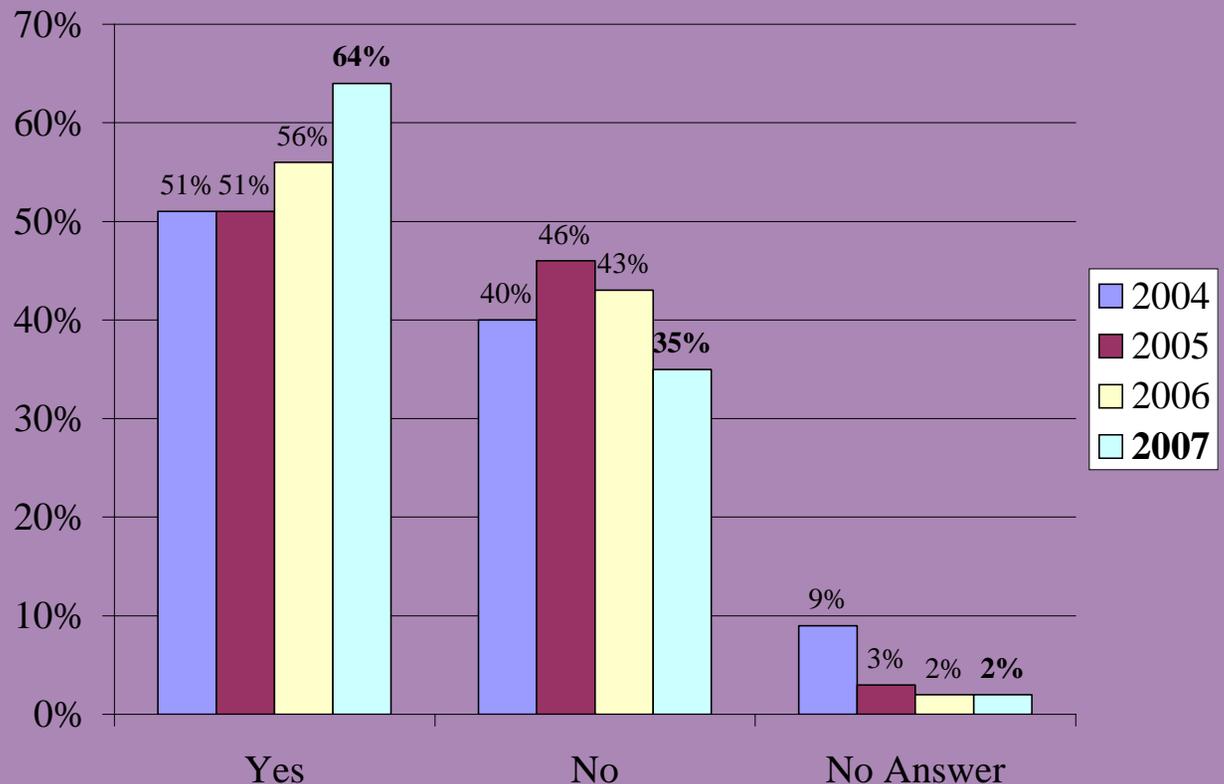


Attendance with Parent or Guardian

- More students (64%) attended with a parent or guardian than those who did not (35%).
- A higher percentage of students attended with a parent or guardian this year.
 - 56% in 2006
 - 51% in both 2004 and 2005
- Similar percentage of respondents were willing to answer this question this year than in the previous years.
 - 3% did not answer in 2005
 - 2% did not answer in 2006
 - 2% did not answer in 2007

Attendance with Parent or Guardian

Q11: Did you (the student) attend with your parent or guardian today?



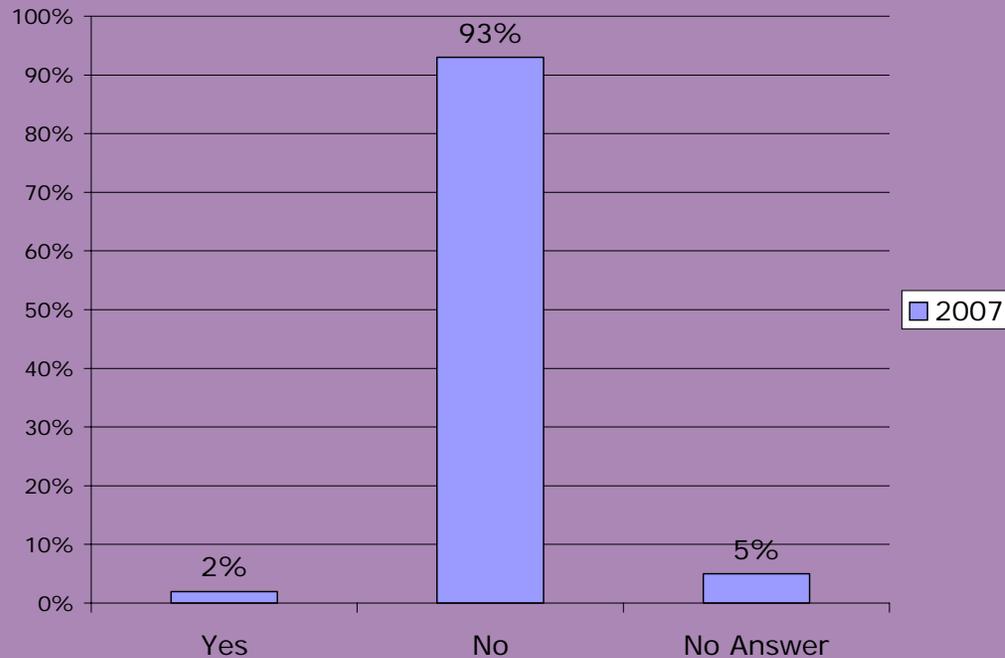
Note: Total for 2006 does not equal 100% due to rounding.

Foster Youth Services

- 93% (13,311 respondents) indicated that they had not received foster youth services.
- 2% (308 respondents) indicated that they were receiving or had received foster youth services.
- 5% (638 respondents) didn't answer this question.

Foster Youth Services

Q12: Have you received, or do you currently receive, foster youth services?

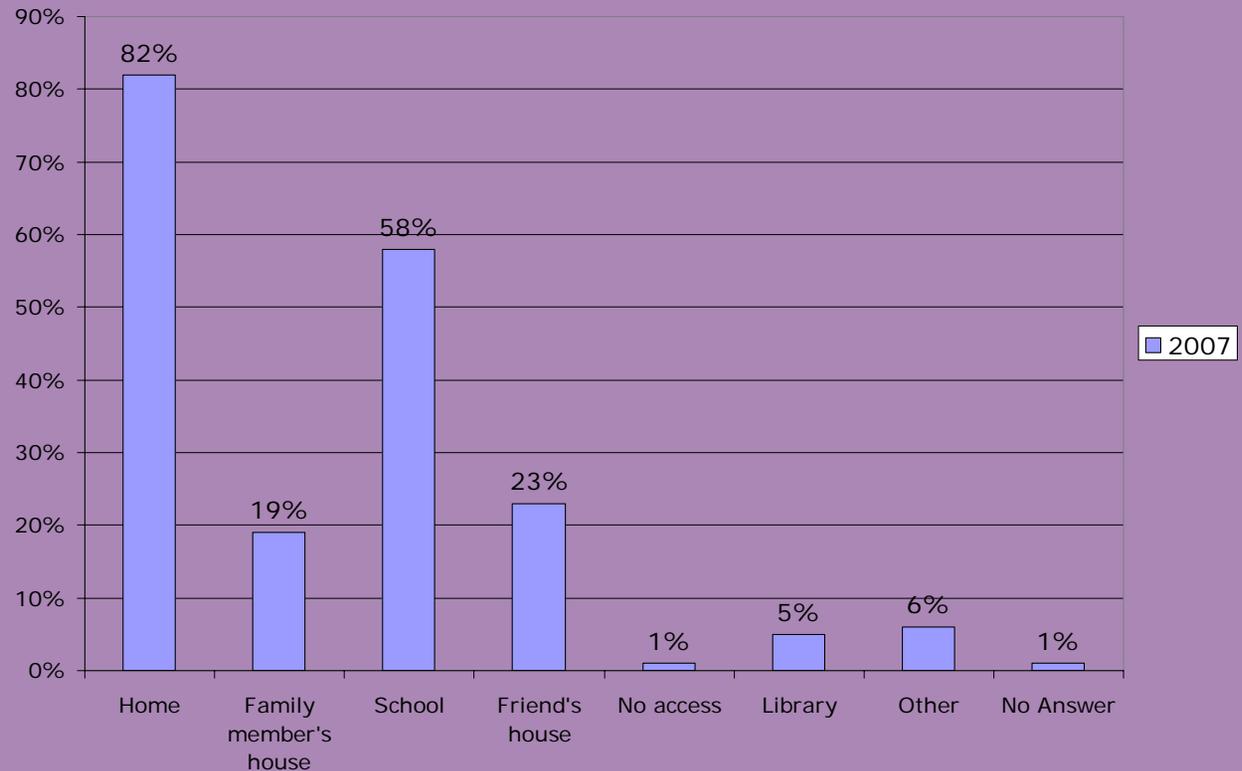


Internet Access

- 82% (11,650 respondents) accessed the internet from home.
- 18% did not have access to the internet from home.
- 58% (8,241 respondents) accessed the internet from school.
- 23% (3,288 respondents) accessed the internet from friends' house.
- 19% (2,640 respondents) accessed the internet from family member's house.
- 5% (646 respondents) accessed the internet from library.
- 6% (890 respondents) accessed the internet at locations other than those listed.
- 1% (144 respondents) had no internet access.

Internet Access

*Q10: Where do you access the internet?
(Mark all that apply)*



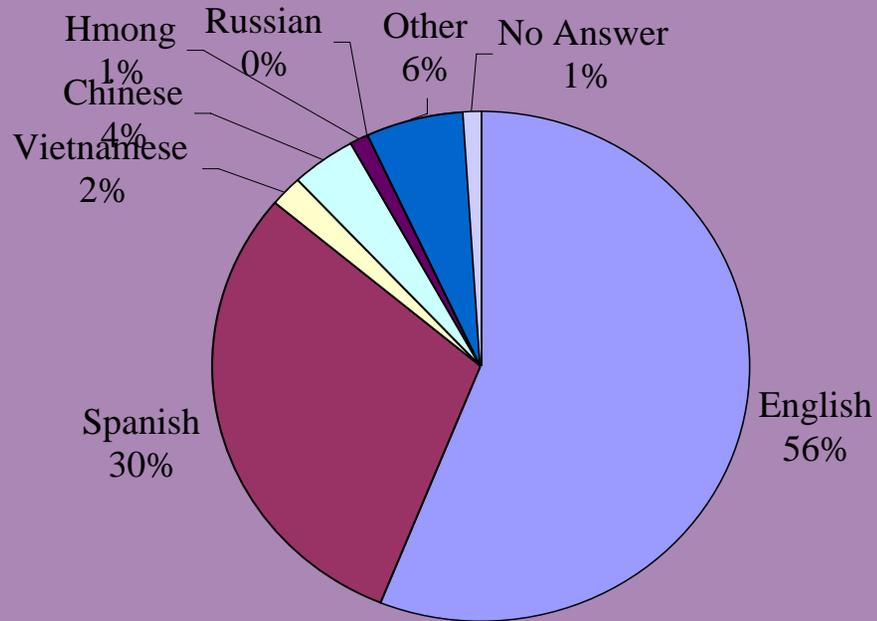
Note: Total does not equal 100% because respondents were able to select more than one response.

Primary Language at Home

- This question is added in 2006.
- 56% of the respondents have English as the primary language spoken at home.
- 30% of the respondents have Spanish as the primary language spoken at home.
- Vietnamese, Cantonese/Mandarin, Hmong and Russian are some of the other choices on the survey. 7% of the respondents identified these listed as their primary languages at home.

Primary Language at Home

Q13: What is the primary language spoken in your home?



How Attendees Heard About Workshop

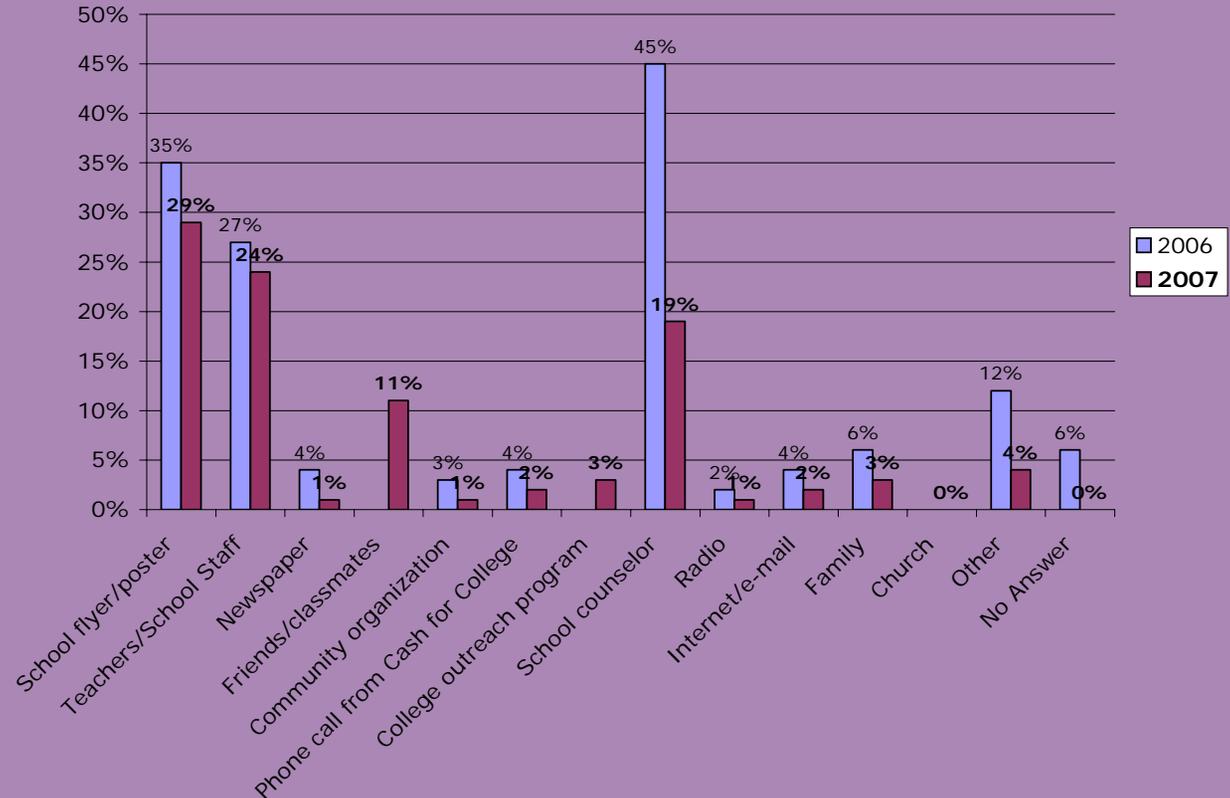
- 10,265 respondents, 83%, heard about the workshop through their **School Flyer/ Poster (29%)**, **Teachers/School Staff (24%)**, **School Counselor (19%)** or **Friends/Classmates (11%)**.
- **Media** was the communication vehicle next cited as sources of information about the workshop:
 - Internet (2% or 643 respondents)
 - Newspaper (1% or 379 respondents)
 - Radio (1% or 280 respondents)

How Attendees Heard About Workshop

- 3% (or 913) heard about the workshop through a **family** member
- Respondents also heard about the workshop through the following means:
 - Phone calls from Cash 4 College (3% or 490 respondents)
 - Community Organization (1% or 289)
- 4% of respondents heard about the workshop through means other than those listed.
- All respondents did answer this question.

How Attendees Heard About Workshop

Q14: How did you hear about this Cash for College workshop? (Mark all that apply)



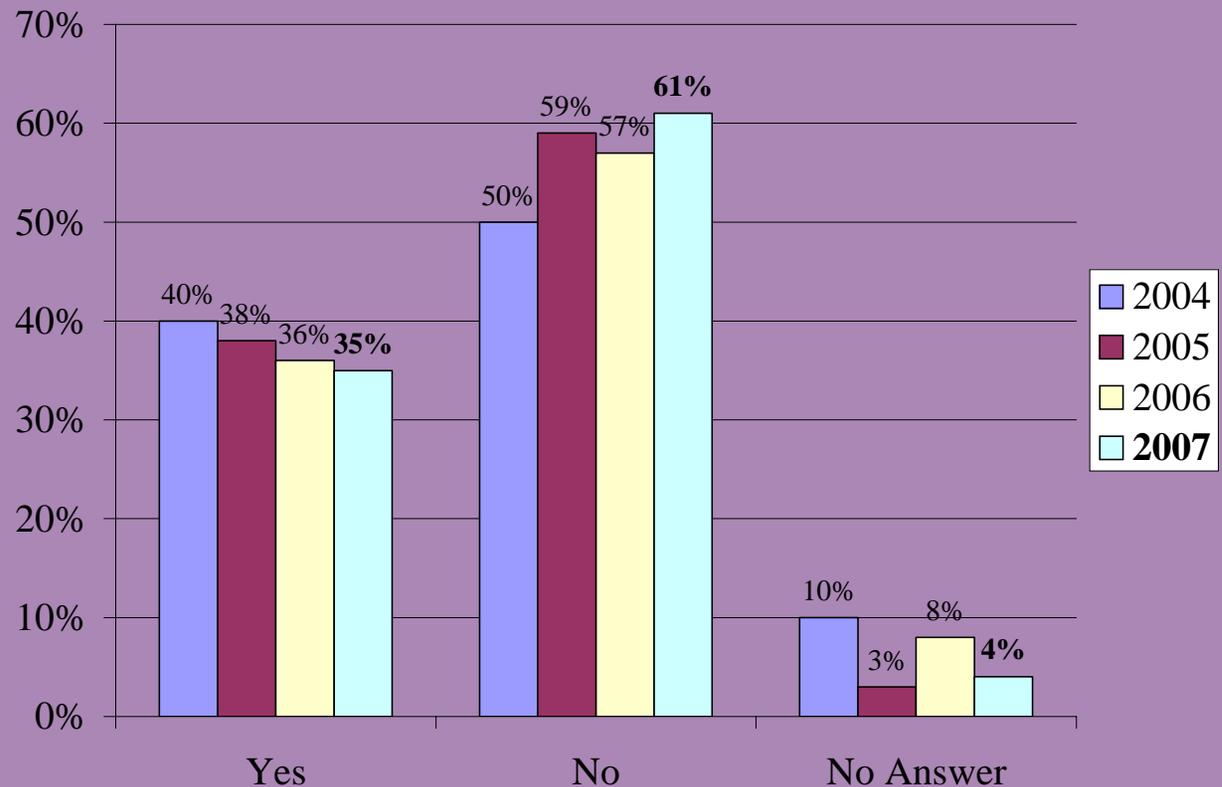
Note: Total does not equal 100% because respondents were able to select more than one response.

FAFSA Completion Rate

- A majority of respondents (61%) were not able to complete their FAFSA at the workshop. It is higher than in 2005 (59%) and 2006 (57%).
- A smaller percentage of respondents were able to complete their FAFSA than in the previous year
 - 40% in 2004
 - 38% in 2005
 - 36% in 2006
 - 35% in 2007
- The percentage of respondents who did not answer this question increased from 3% in 2005 to 8% in 2006, and dropped to 4% in 2007.

FAFSA Completion Rates

Q:15 Did you complete your FAFSA form today?

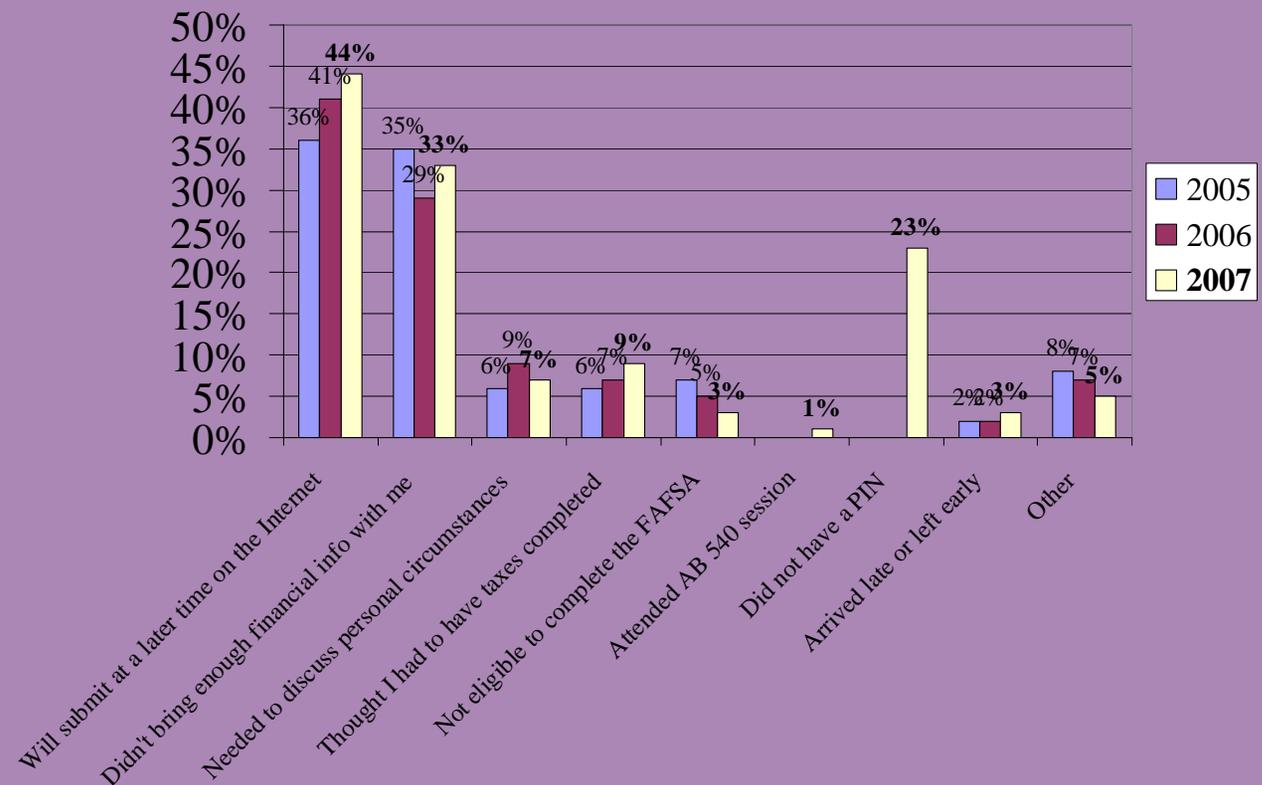


Barriers to FAFSA Completion

- Of those 9,554 who marked their reasons, the primary reasons cited were:
 - 44% of them plan to submit at a later time on the Internet (4,183 respondents)
 - They did not bring enough tax or financial information with them (33% or 3,141 respondents)
 - Didn't have a PIN (23% or 2,202 respondents)
- Other reasons included:
 - Thought they had to have taxes completed (9% or 906 respondents)
 - Needed to discuss personal circumstances (7% or 700 respondents)
 - Not eligible to complete the FAFSA (3% or 253 respondents)
 - Arrived late or left early (3% or 308 respondents)

Barriers to FAFSA Completion

Q16: If you didn't complete your FAFSA form today, please let us know why (mark all that apply).



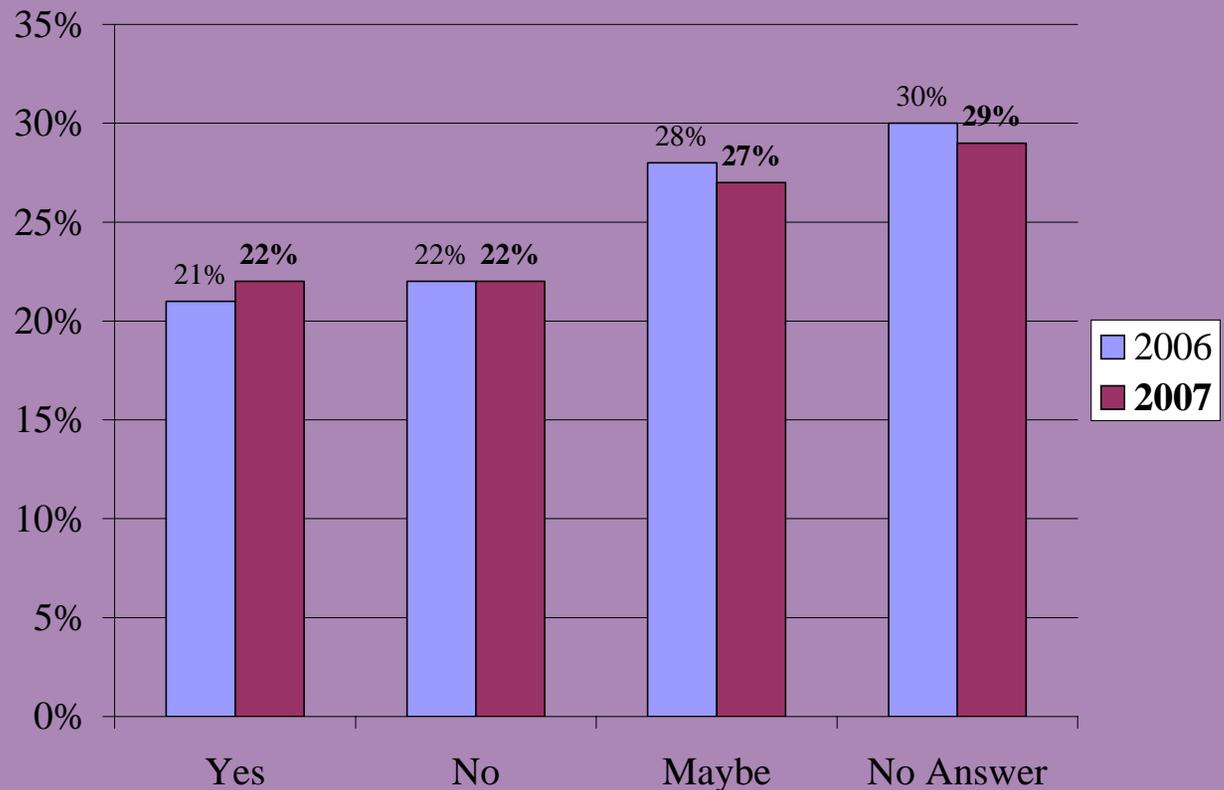
Note: Total does not equal 100% because respondents were able to select more than one response.

Need More Help in Completing

- Among the 10,191 respondents answered this question:
 - 31% (3,155 respondents) said they liked more help in completing the FAFSA.
 - 31% (3,156 respondents) said no, and
 - 38% (3,880 respondents) said maybe.

Need More Help in Completing

Q17: Would you like more help in completing the FAFSA?

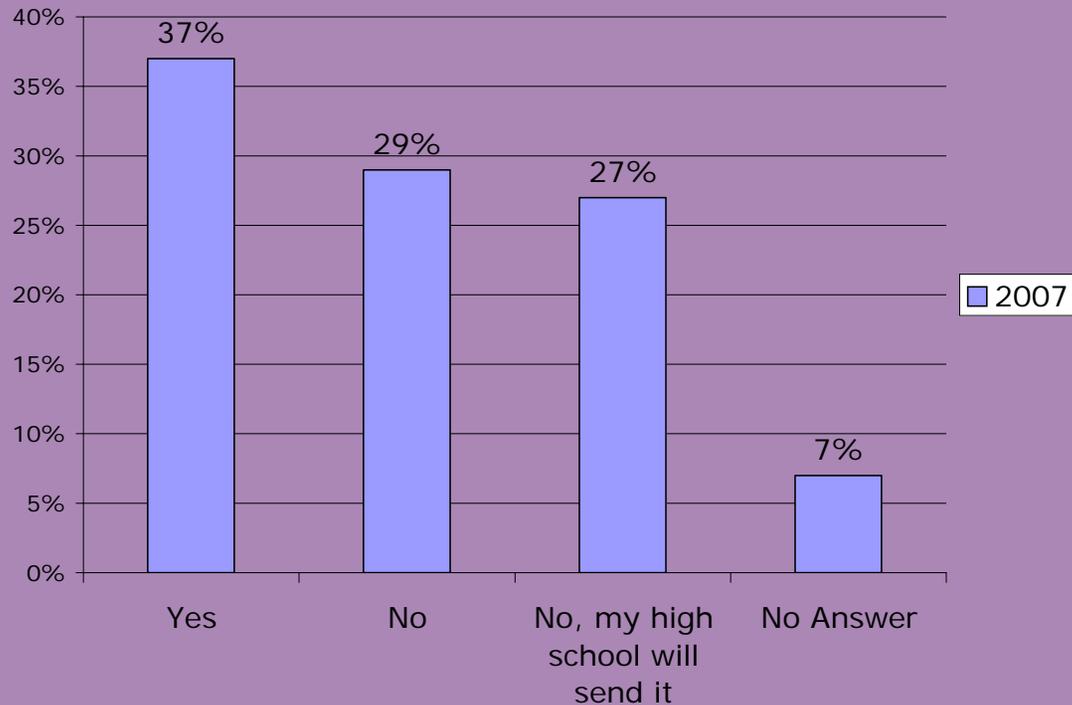


Cal Grant GPA Verification Form

- 37% (5,231 respondents) indicated that they received a Cal GPA verification form today.
- 29% (4,137 respondents) indicated that they did not receive a Cal GPA verification form today.
- 27% (3,851 respondents) indicated that their high school will send it in.
- 7% (1,038 respondents) didn't answer this question.

Cal Grant GPA Verification Form

Q18: Did you receive a Cal Grant GPA Verification form today?

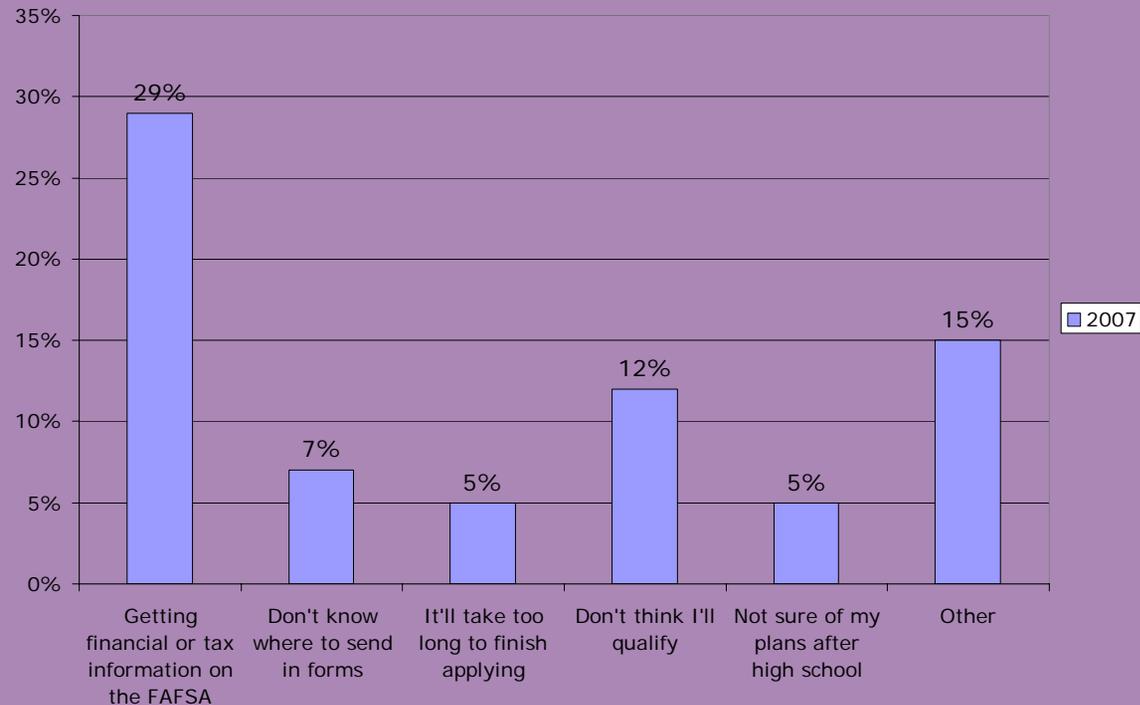


Barriers to Meeting Cal Grant Deadline

- 29% (4,134 respondents) cited “getting financial or tax info on the FAFSA” as the reason.
- 12% (1,747 respondents) didn’t think they will qualify.
- 7% (982 respondents) said they didn’t know where to send in the forms.
- 5% (678 respondents) cited “it’ll take too long to finish applying” as the reason.
- 5% (665 respondents) said they were “not sure of my plans after high school”.
- 15% (2,062 respondents) cited reasons other than those listed in the survey.

Barriers to Meeting Cal Grant Deadline

Q20: What reason(s) below may keep you from applying for financial aid by the March 2 Cal Grant deadline? (Mark all that apply)



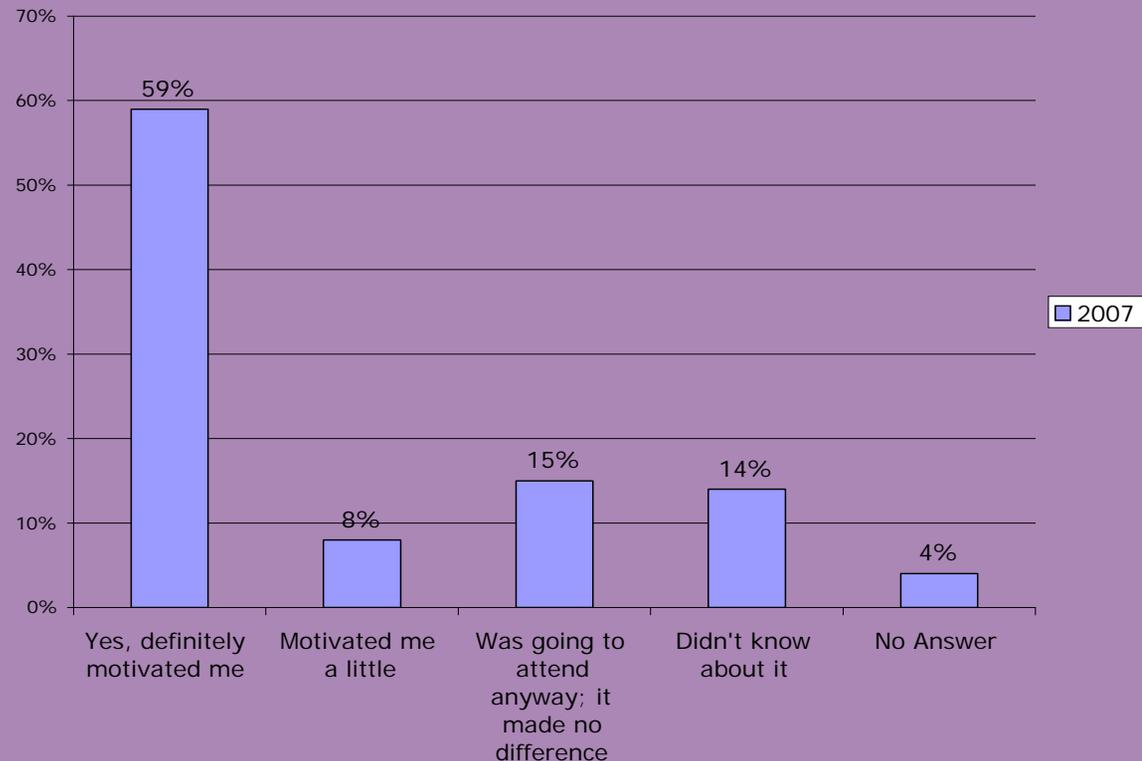
Note: Total does not equal 100% because respondents were able to select more than one response.

Scholarship - Motivation to Attend

- 59% (8,371 respondents) said the scholarship definitely motivated them to attend.
- 8% (1,144 respondents) said the scholarship motivated them a little.
- 15% (2,176 respondents) said the scholarship didn't make any difference in their attendance.
- 14% (1,954 respondents) said they didn't know about the scholarship.
- 4% (612 respondents) didn't answer this question.

Scholarship – Motivation to Attend

Q21: Did the extra \$1,000 scholarship motivate you to attend today?

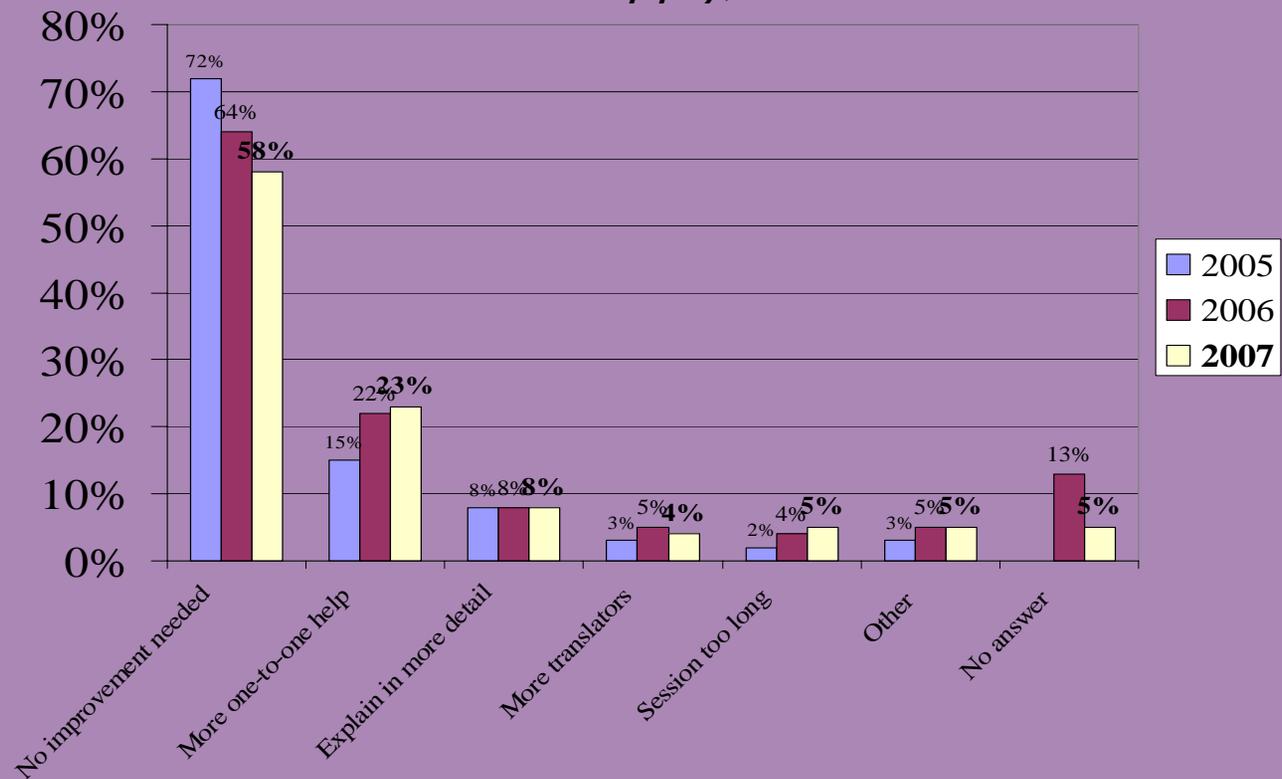


How to Improve Workshop

- The responses on this question are:
 - 58% (8,301 respondents) thought “No improvement needed”
 - 23% (5,956 respondents) suggested more one-to-one help
 - 8% (1,110 respondents) would like the materials to be explained in more detail
 - 5% (678 respondents) thought the session was too long
 - 4% (601 respondents) recommended more translators
 - 5% (678 respondents) selected “other”

How To Improve Workshop

Q19: How might this workshop be improved? (Mark all that apply)



Note: Total does not equal 100% because respondents were able to select more than one response.

13.d

Action/Information Item

California Student Aid Commission

Update on Communications

Staff has prepared a written summary on communications activities currently under way within the Public Affairs Branch.

Recommended Action: For information only. No action required.

Responsible Staff:

Tom Mays
Director
Public Affairs Branch

Carole Durante,
Communications Manager
Public Affairs Branch

Communications Update

2006-07 Marmaduke Award

Each year the Commission/EDFUND presents the Arthur Marmaduke High School Counselor Award to an outstanding California high school counselor who demonstrates commitment and exceptional skill in motivating and helping graduating high school seniors receive financial aid for education beyond high school. This year's award candidate was selected from a well-qualified field of candidates nominated by high school principals from throughout the state.

Established by the Commission in 1985, the award honors Arthur Marmaduke who served as the executive director of the Commission for 25 years, helping students gain access to postsecondary education through the Commission's many grant, scholarship and loan programs.

This year's award recipient, Robin Sroka of Woodrow Wilson Classical High School in Long Beach, California, has been recognized locally during her more than 20-year counseling career for her extensive and outstanding financial aid counseling practices. During 2006 alone, Ms. Sroka is credited with Woodrow Wilson Classical High students earning more than \$3 million in college scholarships and financial aid to use at universities all over the country, and with Wilson Classical seniors submitting more than 700 completed Cal Grant applications.

Ms. Sroka was honored during an awards ceremony at her high school on Wednesday, June 6, 2007. Commission Chair Louise McClain presented the award.

Fast Blast

The Commission's monthly communication, the *Fast Blast*, distributed through Listservs, provides comprehensive and timely updates to members of the Commission's prominent stakeholder groups: the California Community College Student Financial Aid Administrators Association (CCCSFAAA), the California Association of Student Financial Aid Advisors (CASFAA) and an email distribution featuring many high school counselors. The Commission initiated this important communication tool in fall 2006. Feedback from recipients indicates the *Fast Blast* is an anticipated communication that is effective in providing breaking Cal grant and program news and updates on a variety of topics of interest to our segments.

Partnerships

The Commission is fostering ongoing positive partnerships with a variety of agencies and organizations. We are providing updates on partnership activities with the following:

- **Scholarshare**

The Commission is working with Scholarshare, the state's 529 savings plan, on ways to help cross-promote this invaluable student financial aid option. A meeting was held in late April with the Scholarshare Investment Board and the State Treasurers office to look for synergies, including linkages with Cal-SOAP directors and California Community Colleges; campus and parent publicity through the State Superintendent's Office; and program placement in the widely circulated Fund Your Future financial aid resources booklet.

- **Eastfield Ming Quang Children & Family Services**

The Commission is working with Eastfield Ming Quang (EMQ) Children and Family Services to assist their effort in funding a limited number of scholarships for orphans or former foster youth pursuing a graduate degree in pharmacy or nursing.

- **California Community Colleges**

The Commission's ongoing partnership with the California Community College's public awareness campaign, *I Can Afford College*, supported two recent collaborative efforts: exterior bus banners on commuter buses in Los Angeles County, and a poster distributed to all California Community Colleges statewide the first week of May in support of the community colleges' financial aid awareness month. Additionally, the Commission's calgrants.org website linked students to the *I Can Afford College* website for additional financial aid information.

- **Make It In Scrubs – Sponsored by the California Wellness Foundation**

Health care is a rapidly growing field that needs trained personnel in a variety of professions in California. The Commission is partnering with the California Wellness Foundation's *Make It In Scrubs* public education campaign to inform students and their families of the financial aid opportunities available to help with an education in the health alliance fields. The Commission offers Cal Grant C and education loan relief programs to assist students pursuing career training in health care.

In May, the executive director testified at the Assembly Committee on Health's informational hearing on Developing the California Health Care Workforce of Tomorrow. She addressed employment shortages and diversity.

Also in May, Catalina Mistler, chief of the Commission's Program Administration & Services Division, spoke at the National Hispanic Womens' Conference in Los Angeles. The event addressed career planning, educational achievement, financial planning, and life empowerment. Ms. Mistler was a co-speaker at a *Make It In Scrubs* workshop, with former senator Deborah Ortiz that focused on health care workforce shortages.

Again in early June, Ms. Mistler participated in a *Make It In Scrubs* bus tour of three health education clinics in Los Angeles. The purpose of the tour was to inform reporters of major media outlets on the *Scrubs* public education effort. Ms. Mistler spoke at each of the three stops on financial aid opportunities, the Cal Grant opportunity for GED recipients, and financial aid opportunities offered by the Commission specific to those seeking an education in health care.



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 31, 2007

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State Programs Pay Education Loans for Certain Qualified Professions ***Teachers, Nursing Faculty, Nurses in State Facilities and Those Enlisted in Some Military Programs Benefit***

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA – The California Student Aid Commission offers a platter of state-sponsored loan assumption programs to pay education loans for those seeking professional training and employment in specific areas of need in California. If you have an education loan, the state may pay it in return for employment service in specific kinds of jobs and facilities needing workers.

By providing education loan relief, the state through the California Student Aid Commission encourages individuals to seek careers as teachers, nursing faculty, and nurses in state facilities. In addition, the programs support enlistees in the National Guard, the State Military Reserve, or the Naval Militia who are enrolled in, or have completed, a baccalaureate degree or a program of instruction in a vocational diploma program.

“These loan forgiveness programs encourage students to train in specific career paths where jobs are waiting for them,” said Diana Fuentes-Michel, executive director of the California Student Aid Commission. “Both students and the citizens of California benefit – students get education loan relief while pursuing a career of their liking, and California residents are supplied with trained professionals to staff areas with previous shortages of workers.”

These programs may provide pathways to successful careers and better lives particularly for those from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds, including those who are the first in their families to attend vocational training or college programs, those from bilingual families, foster youth, and others with challenging backgrounds.

The loan assumption programs are patterned after the state’s general Assumption Program of Loans for Education, or APLE. Originally a competitive teacher incentive program designed to encourage students to become teachers, the APLE program has provided an example in recent years for education loan assumption opportunities for trainees on other career paths.

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“The APLE concept has blossomed in recent years at the state Capitol,” said Steve Caldwell, chief of the Commission’s Governmental & Public Affairs Division. “With the amount of student loans increasing daily, state loan assumption programs provide an exceptional opportunity to get a career and get rid of education debt, all at the same time.”

In recent years, the APLE for prospective teachers has been cloned to include other generous programs for a variety of career paths. Applications for these programs are available on the Commission’s Website at csac.ca.gov:

- APLE for Prospective Teachers – The original APLE, this program was designed by the Legislature to address California's growing shortage of quality classroom teachers in specific subject areas such as math or science; teachers of children with special needs; and, teachers for schools serving children from low-income families. For those who qualify, the program may assume up to \$19,000 in outstanding educational loan balances in return for four consecutive years of full-time eligible teaching service in a California K-12 public school. Participants must agree to complete a teaching credential, and to teach in a California public school in a designated subject matter area, or in a school that meets criteria specified by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

This APLE program is offered annually. The Commission is continuing to accept applications for 2006-07 through June 30, 2007, and for 2007-08, until all slots are filled.

- State Nursing APLE for Nursing Faculty – This program is intended to encourage students to complete a baccalaureate or graduate degree and teach in a nursing program at a qualified college or university in California. It will pay up to \$25,000 on outstanding student loans for nursing faculty over the course of three academic years on a full-time basis, or on a part-time basis for the equivalent of three full-time academic years. A qualifying student must be enrolled in, or be admitted to a program in which they will be enrolled at least half-time each academic term; they must be making satisfactory academic progress; and, they must be nominated for participation in the program by their institution.

This program is a one-year only program offering 100 awards. The Commission is currently accepting applications for the 2006-07 academic year, and these awards will be made by June 30, 2007. Future awards for the program are currently being discussed as part of the state budget process.

- State Nursing APLE for Nurses in State Facilities – This program is intended to encourage registered nurses, and students who will become registered nurses, to seek employment in state-operated 24-hour facilities with a registered nurse vacancy rate of greater than 10 percent. It will pay up to \$20,000 on outstanding student loans for full-time employment service as a registered nurse in an eligible position. Applicants must have completed 60 semester units or the equivalent, and 1) be admitted to, or enrolled in, an accredited program on a full-time basis; or 2) have completed a pre-licensure nursing program within the award year that he or she applies for the program.

Program funding has been allocated for 40 awards. Applications will be available pending state approval of regulations for the program. If approved, the Commission will have an application available immediately at csac.ca.gov, and awards will be made by June 30, 2007.

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- National Guard APLE for Education – This program is intended to provide an incentive for persons to enlist, reenlist, or if an officer, commit to serve in the National Guard, State Military Reserve, or the Naval Militia. It will pay up to \$11,000 on outstanding student loans for four consecutive years of service for those who seek to complete, or have completed, degrees at institutions of higher education within California, or those who are enrolled at least half-time in, or have completed a program of instruction in, a vocational diploma program at an institution located in California.

This program is a one-year only program offering 100 awards. Applications are available on the Commission's Website. The Commission is anticipating that awards will be made by June 30, 2007.

The original APLE program, started in 1983 with the enactment of legislation, focused on credentialed teachers. The program was later expanded to include non-credentialed individuals training to become fully accredited teachers in areas with critical teacher shortages serving large populations of students from low-income families. Initially, 500 awards were offered. With support over the years of state administrations and legislators, the program is currently offering 7,400 awards for 2006-07.

The recent addition of other APLE programs expands the APLE loan forgiveness concept to California's under-represented populations where the programs will not only benefit these populations, especially, but will become a boon to California's economy. One example of this is the Scrubs program, sponsored by The California Wellness Foundation, which encourages students to plan and pursue a career in the allied health professions.

“The synergy generated by the state APLE programs administered by the Commission and the allied health professions for example, provides greater opportunity for under-represented populations,” said Deborah Ortiz, former long-time state Senator and consultant to the *Make It In Scrubs* public education campaign funded by a grant from The California Wellness Foundation. “I am personally encouraging students, especially under-represented students, to take advantage of the Scrubs program and all applicable financial aid opportunities in their career explorations.”

To find out more about financial aid opportunities in California including the APLE programs, visit the Commission's Website at csac.ca.gov. To learn more about the allied health professions and the Scrubs program, visit makeitinscrubs.com.

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The California Student Aid Commission is the state's principal provider of intersegmental statewide grant aid to postsecondary students. Founded in 1955 as the California State Scholarship Commission, the Commission's primary programmatic responsibilities include operation of the Cal Grant program, which is distributing nearly \$900 million to California's college students during the 2006-2007 school year; operation of the California Chafee Grant Program; and, several multi-million dollar targeted state scholarship and loan forgiveness programs. The 15-member Commission oversees the activities of its nonprofit student loan services auxiliary, EDFUND. The Commission is headquartered in Rancho Cordova, California.

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 6, 2007

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Outstanding High School Counselor Honored with 2006 Arthur Marmaduke Award

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA — The California Student Aid Commission and EDFUND, its student loan auxiliary, announce today that Robin Sroka of Woodrow Wilson Classical High School in Long Beach, California is the recipient of the distinguished 2006-07 Arthur Marmaduke High School Counselor Award. Established by the Commission/EDFUND in 1985, this annual award goes to an outstanding California high school counselor who demonstrates commitment and skill in motivating and helping an exceptional number of graduating high school seniors to receive financial aid for education beyond high school. Sroka, long recognized locally for her extensive and outstanding financial aid counseling practices, was selected from an exceptional field of candidates. She will be honored tonight at Woodrow Wilson Classical High School's spring award night.

Having provided over 20 years of counseling services to students, Sroka is credited with Woodrow Wilson Classical High students earning over \$3 million during 2006 in college scholarships and financial aid to use at universities all over the country. This amount of aid goes to students with backgrounds from virtually every socio-economic group and family situation—students who are traditionally under-represented with low income backgrounds; those from broken families; second language learners; those with cultural barriers unique to the demographics of the school; those from middle class homes just missing the financial need levels for financial aid; and, those with especially challenging individual circumstances.

In addition to millions in financial aid dollars for her students, Sroka's efforts in extending the Career Explorer Workshops, the Long Beach Unified School District's online career information system, to 2,000 Wilson Classical High School students earned the school a \$10,000 cash prize from Perkins funding. The prize allowed the school to purchase additional equipment for the school's Technical Education programs, and the effort acquainted many of the district's instructors and administrators with this career resource, enabling them to integrate career information concepts into their regular instructional activities.

"It is with heartfelt congratulations that the Commission applauds the remarkable contributions of Robin Sroka to the students and families of Woodrow Wilson Classical High School. Ms. Sroka is truly a crusader in making students' dreams a reality," said Diana Fuentes-Michel, executive director

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P.O. Box 419045, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9045

of the California Student Aid Commission. "With this award, the Commission recognizes the day-by-day, dedicated hard work of California high school counselors as they strive to assist students in reaching their academic and career goals."

Throughout her counseling career, Ms. Sroka's simple philosophy has prevailed: "There are no barriers to attaining your goals." She lives this philosophy treating all students equally and with respect as she helps them create a step-by-step plan to achieve their goals. Planning begins in the 9th grade when Sroka offers each entering student an orientation class on the High School's College/Career Center. She works with more than 75 percent of all the juniors and 50 percent of all 10th grade students. Most students, out of a total student body of 4,204 students, will have worked with Sroka at least three times before their graduation.

In 2007, as a result of Sroka's non-stop daytime, nighttime and Saturday time commitment to students, Wilson High submitted more than 700 Cal Grant applications to the Commission. Over the past five years, 877 Wilson High students have qualified for a Cal Grant and many, many more have benefited from other scholarships, Federal aid and other programs. Sroka works with over 40 community agencies to help accomplish this feat.

"High school counselors are a vital link in encouraging students and helping them navigate various financial aid programs for college," said EDFUND President Sam Kipp. "We're delighted to congratulate Robin Sroka on her outstanding activities that provide financial aid education to Woodrow Wilson Classical High's students and families."

As an advocate for her students, she spoke last year with local and regional scholarship committees to plead with these organizations to amend their eligibility requirements to include undocumented students who have limited access to financial aid. Due to Sroka's efforts, two students received \$1,000 each and were able to attend local community colleges.

"I have never worked with any one who knows more or does more in assisting students through the financial and college admissions process," said Lew Kerns, principal of Woodrow Wilson Classical High School. "Robin Sroka goes so far beyond the call of duty to ensure the future success of every student on this campus."

Arthur Marmaduke served as the executive director of the Commission for 25 years. This award is made in honor of his dedication and commitment to helping students gain access to postsecondary education through the Commission's many grant, scholarship and loan programs. Robin Sroka was presented with a commemorative plaque and a \$1,500 monetary award at tonight's award ceremony. Visit csac.ca.gov and edfund.org for information on programs and services available through the Commission and its auxiliary, EDFUND.

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EDFUND, a nonprofit public benefit corporation, is the nation's second largest provider of student loan guarantee services under the Federal Family Education Loan Program. EDFUND offers students a wide range of financial aid and debt management information while supporting schools with advanced loan processing solutions and default prevention techniques. Operating as an auxiliary corporation of the California Student Aid Commission, EDFUND processes more than \$7.8 billion in student loans annually (including consolidation loans) and manages a portfolio of outstanding loans valued at \$26 billion. EDFUND is headquartered in Rancho Cordova, California with regional offices located throughout the nation.

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