

**Outreach Committee  
Chair's Report – August 23, 2006 Meeting**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Commissioners McClain, Dyke and Ortiz

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Diana Fuentes-Michel and Catherine Brown (by phone) Gloria Lopez, Steve Caldwell, Kim Taylor, Despina Costopoulos, Cheryl Lenz, and Ryan Carter

**Public Present:** Jason Marone/Crocker Flanagan, Sonia Ramos (Cal SOAP – by phone)

**TAB 1 – PROPOSED OUTREACH COMMITTEE CHARTER:** The Committee discussed its charge from the Commission Chair to establish a committee charter.

- Update the draft charter to encompass the roles of Cal-SOAP and California Cash for College in the Commission's outreach efforts.
- Clarify and enhance the charter to focus on program awareness and a call to action to apply for financial aid.
- Committee members expressed an interest in moving forward, but are interested in seeing the charters developed by the other committees and by the Commission as a whole in the final Roles and Responsibilities document.

No action was taken on the charter – staff was asked to continue to incorporate the discussion points into the draft and to work with the Committee.

**TAB 2 – PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN UPDATE:** – Commissioner McClain explained that the 2006-07 Public Awareness Campaign will include; earlier outreach, year-round outreach, and messaging to get the word out that Cal Grants are available for all institutions - including career technical schools. Campaign practices to include feedback from our financial aid community which includes best practices, discussions on what worked and what didn't work. Building upon what has been accomplished will create a stronger campaign.

- Over the last year, the Commission worked on a \$ 2 million Public Awareness Campaign with the Public Relations firm, Crocker/Flanagan. The campaign focused on informing the public about California's higher education financial aid programs, specifically Cal Grants, as administered by the California Student Aid Commission. Through these efforts we reached out to audiences through television, radio, mall kiosks, print ads, billboards, transit cards and over the Internet. That body of work included both English and Spanish messaging.
- The Commission worked directly with the Cash for College Coordinator, Despina Coustopoulos to integrate Cash for College into the campaign.
- A key campaign objective was to increase program awareness and Cal Grant applications submitted in priority school areas. Priority school areas were identified through a research report provided by the University of California UC/ACCORD.
- A specific goal within the campaign was to inform students about the benefits of receiving a Cal Grant and encouraging them to apply by completing two forms for

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tons of opportunity. A result of that effort was that 95% of California high school seniors contacted in a focused survey could identify the Cal Grant program as a means for their education beyond high school.

- As a result of the Campaign and the Cash for College program, the number of students submitting a complete FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) increased from 106,000 in 2001 to over 151,000 in 2005, a 30% increase.
- Students that submitted a complete Cal Grant application (FAFSA and verified Grade Point Average, or GPA) increased from 77,000 in 2001 to over 116,000 (June) – a 40% increase.
- Ethnic outreach activities focused on the Hispanic, African American and Asian American Pacific Islander influencers, parents and families of youth – and that was accomplished through media relations and partnerships with community-based and faith-based organizations throughout the state.
- Through corporate sponsorships, the approved Commission funding of \$2 million was leveraged to a total of \$4.3 million in sponsorship support and pro-bono activities resulting in a \$6 million campaign.

Currently Commission staff are working on a fall campaign which includes:

- Updating the Cal Grant Customer Service phone line script and the result will be a professionally recorded script and include a referral in Spanish to the Grants website for information in Spanish.
- Website Redesign – the object is to redesign our current web site for calgrant.org or calgrants.org and integrate californiacashforcollege.org. The result will be a look and feel that students can easily navigate. Project includes, design, programming, content population, consulting and project management. And Crocker/Flanagan passed on their 10% partnership discount to this project. The current campaign designs will be the look and feel used in the influencer pieces of the current campaign.
- Year Round Messaging –Starting September 4th ,and running through October 22nd, 289 billboards will display the following Cal Grant message “Take Hold of Your Future. Apply for a Cal Grant”. The billboard directs students to our web site. The aspiration focused 8-sheet billboards will be placed in Los Angeles, Orange County, Riverside, Fresno and Bakersfield, these are affordable and available markets with ethnically diverse populations.
- Blu Line Media - 9 transit cards on 180 Blu Line Buses from September 12th through December 18th, 2006. This contract is offered to the Commission at a nonprofit discount rate from Blu Line Media. Focus is on influencers, parents, aunts, uncles, relatives, other adults. The text messaging is: "You can help them go to college or a technical school. Money is available and some of it's free. No paying it back. Because without college, you may never know who they could become. for more information go to" We then list three web sites; [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov) and [www.icanaffordcollege.com](http://www.icanaffordcollege.com) and [www.calgrants.org](http://www.calgrants.org)

**TAB 5 – CAL-SOAP UPDATE:** The committee received an updated from CSAC staff including the following issues:

- Program resources from the state have remained unchanged for the last five years. Despite significant leveraging of \$8.6 million in state funds with more than \$14 million in-kind from local resources, Cal-SOAP projects have reduced staffing and program activities and services in order to accommodate cost of living adjustments (COLAs) and other budget increases required by their fiscal agents.
- Staff presented a BCP proposal to the Commission's Fiscal Policy and Long Range Planning Committee, to increase the state allocation for the Cal-SOAP. The initial request will address COLA requirements but may also include program services. If the BCP is successful, staff will work with the Cal-SOAP Advisory Committee to develop a method to equitably allocate the additional funds.
- Cal-SOAP Project Directors reiterated their need for an increase in program funding and voiced their intention to continue to work with CSAC staff in providing information to support of the BCP.
- The ongoing challenges in setting Cal-SOAP Advisory Committee meeting dates and achieving a quorum.

## CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION OUTREACH COMMITTEE CHARTER

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Outreach Committee (Committee) is to ensure awareness of educational opportunity and financial aid assistance for education after high school among Californians, in coordination with other entities.

The Outreach Committee is responsible for general oversight of the Commission's activities and programs, the establishment of outreach policies, development of strategic plans for outreach and evaluations of outreach programs.

### **Mission**

To ensure that all Californians are aware of the availability of financial aid for education after high school.

### **Vision**

Postsecondary education can and should be the norm for Californians in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. California Student Aid Commission's outreach program is collaborative in nature and strives to maximize state resources, stresses financial assistance programs, and promotes a culture that prepares students for a postsecondary education.

### **Principles**

1. Outreach can and should begin early in the life of a child/student
2. Outreach should be focused on students, family and community
3. Outreach programs must use diversified strategies that will be responsive to the citizenry of California. Diverse efforts are needed because California is a diverse society economically, ethnically, socially and geographically.
4. Outreach through building coalitions and partnerships with public and private members and supporters of the educational community is a key.

Outreach should focus on implementation of programs that reach those students and families not traditionally a focus of previous programs. The Commission's programs should be strategically designed to reach the historically underserved communities, families and students.

### **Goals**

1. Ensure that all graduating California high school seniors are aware of Cal Grant entitlement and competitive program opportunities, and that all who are eligible apply.
2. Ensure that all community college students are aware of financial aid opportunities, and that all who are eligible apply.
3. Coordinate with other entities to incorporate information regarding student financial aid into existing programs.
4. Provide information for middle school students regarding access to and affordability of, education beyond high school.
5. Develop new educational outreach programs for primary students or adapt existing programs for a lower grade level.
6. Promote financial planning for all levels of postsecondary education including career and technical school.

7. Utilize a variety of media to expand and enhance outreach activities.
8. Develop community and private sector partnerships to enhance outreach.
9. Ensure awareness of financial aid opportunities for post secondary education for those that are more than a year or two beyond high school.

### **Objectives**

To assist the California Student Aid Commission in fulfilling its responsibilities regarding the following:

1. Provide oversight and promotion of a financial aid awareness program for students pursuing education after high school.
2. Oversee the pursuit of quality and engaging outreach activities that result in higher awareness of financial aid opportunities for higher education.
3. Provide direction for the promotion of financial aid awareness and literacy among both high school and college-age students.
4. Maintain and build upon the comprehensive student outreach program.
5. Annually evaluate and reassess outreach programs and efforts.
6. Consult with financial aid practitioners in schools, higher education institutions, and other stakeholders to promote increased financial aid awareness.
7. Collaborate with existing school and educational agencies and stakeholders.
8. Provide oversight for development of clear and concise information for students, parents, high school counselors and other stakeholders regarding financial aid for educational opportunities.
9. Provide clear and concise information regarding financial aid programs administered by the Commission.
10. Provide oversight of the review of information and written materials that can be used as tools for conveying essential outreach messaging.
11. Monitor funds and ensure funding for outreach purposes.
12. Serve as a resource to those involved in outreach, counseling and teaching in California.
13. Ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements for outreach program development.

### **Authority**

The Outreach Committee is empowered to:

1. Monitor the work milestones of the firm contracted to conduct any public awareness activities.
2. Monitor all phases of work performed by external agencies.
3. Meet with the Commission and Commission management, as necessary.

### **Composition**

The Outreach Advisory Committee is a committee of the Commission consisting of at least three members of the Commission. The Chair of the Commission appoints the members.

Each member of the Committee shall be free from any relationship that would interfere with the exercise of his or her independent judgment as a member of the Committee.

The Chief, Governmental and Public Affairs Division, is the staff liaison to the Committee and is responsible, in consultation with the Committee Chair, for developing and presenting agenda items for the Committee meetings and for keeping members informed of outreach issues. The Chief reports directly to the Chief Deputy Director of the Commission.

**Meetings**

The Committee will meet at least four times a year, with authority to convene additional meetings, as circumstances require. All Committee members are expected to attend each meeting, in person or via tele- or videoconference. The Committee will invite members of management, or others to attend meetings and provide pertinent information, as necessary.

The meetings must be publicly noticed in accordance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act whenever two or more of the Committee members will be present. Formal minutes will be produced for each meeting. The Chief, Governmental and Public Affairs Division, or designee will attend the Committee meetings.

**Responsibilities**

To inform every eligible high school student of the Cal Grant Entitlement and Competitive Programs in order to increase the number of Cal Grant Recipients.

To become a strong partner with other outreach programs and groups in order to increase the number of California students who are prepared to meet both the academic and financial requirements necessary to enroll and succeed in postsecondary education.

Consult with educational practitioners in schools, higher education institutions and other stakeholders to develop recommendations for school-based and/or statewide strategies for achieving goals.

**Compliance**

The Committee gives special emphasis to compliance with State and federal laws, rules, regulations, and policies and procedures developed and administered by the Commission.

The Committee shall:

1. Review the effectiveness of the system for monitoring compliance with laws and regulations and the results of management's investigation and follow-up of any instances of noncompliance.

**Reporting Responsibilities**

The Committee shall:

1. Regularly report to the Commission about Committee activities and issues that arise with respect to the quality or integrity of the Commission's outreach activities and funding.
2. Provide an open avenue of communication between stakeholders and the Commission.

**Other Responsibilities**

The Committee shall:

1. Discuss with management the Commission's major policies with respect to risk assessment and risk management.
2. Perform other activities related to this charter as requested by the Commission.
3. Institute and oversee special requests, if applicable.
4. Review and assess the adequacy of the Outreach Committee Charter annually, request Commission approval for proposed changes, and ensure appropriate disclosure as may be required by law or regulation.
5. Confirm annually that all responsibilities outlined in this charter have been carried out.

**The Outreach Committee Charter is adopted by:**

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Chair, California Student Aid Commission: James Fousekis                      Date

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Chair, Outreach Committee: Louise McClain    Date

Approved {INSERT DATE}