

Item 1

Information Item

Executive Director's report



Executive Director's Report September 2016

Dear Commissioners,

We are in full implementation mode for the Early FAFSA Application season, which includes the Dream Act and Chafee application, and are on target for meeting our Oct. 1, 2016 deadline to open our FAFSA Application season. The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) and staff has distinguished itself nationally, with our implementation efforts, because of our ability to coordinate outreach, communication and make enhancements to our grant delivery system centrally.

In early September, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson, State Board of Education President, Mike Kirst, and I sent a co-signed letter to all California high school superintendents, principals, charter schools and counselors notifying them of the Early FAFSA Application opportunity and to encourage them to upload student GPA's to CSAC by October 1.

In addition, CSAC has coordinated twenty three 2016 High School Counselor Financial Aid Workshops from August 25 to October 19 to coincide with the Early FAFSA Application season. The new Cash for College Workshop Management System has also rolled out in time for students to register to attend a workshop in their community. We also included a Legislative portal feature for Members to find and participate in Cash for College workshops in their regions. We are expecting close to 900 Cash for College workshops to be offered in 2016-17.

Finally, I've recorded Public Service Announcements in Spanish and English and have been interviewed regarding the Early FAFSA Application season opening Oct 1, that will air statewide by KVIE and the California Channel. Our FAFSA Application launch will take place on Oct. 1, in

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conjunction with Sacramento State's Feria de Educación, expecting up to 8,000 students and families.

Sincerely,

Lupita Cortez Alcalá
Executive Director
California Student Aid Commission

COMMISSION PROGRAM UPDATES

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION & SERVICES DIVISION (PASD)

- Staff coordinated twenty three 2016 High School Counselor Financial Aid Workshops (HSCW) being held from August 25 to October 19. The presentation provides updates related to the Early FAFSA, the importance of timely GPA uploads, and the new Cal Grant Award Processing among others.
- The Financial Aid Advisory Board (FAAB) held its second meeting on September 7, 2016. The group discussed the Early FAFSA and Prior Prior Year preparations, as well as some ideas for the Grant Delivery System Modernization project. Based on FAAB feedback from the first meeting in June, FAAB meetings will be held the Wednesday prior to each Commission meeting.
- Staff continues working on the development of the new Cal Grant Awarding Process that follows the new application timeline for the 2017-18 FAFSA and Dream Act Application.
- Staff implemented new fiscal budget changes on Web Grants which included an increase to the Cal Grant B access award through the College Access Tax Credit Fund, adjustments to the maximum annual household income and asset amount for the Middle Class Scholarship program based on inflation, and an increase to the UC mandatory system-wide tuition and fees.
- The 2016-17 Cal Grant fall term advance was increased from 50 percent to 95 percent. Eligible institutions received their funds in August 2016.
- Staff managed deployment of:
 - 2016-17 Cal Grant renewals;
 - Changes to the Cal Grant C program per Senate Bill 1028 which included updates to the Priority Occupational List and modifications to the eligibility criteria of Cal Grant C applicants among others; and
 - 2016-17 Middle Class Scholarship awards including the release of Phase 1 of the newly mandated eligibility cap.

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- Staff collaborated with California Community College representatives on an award tracking and disbursement solution for the upcoming Community College Baccalaureate Program.
- The Commission rolled out phases 1 and 2 of the three-phase Workshop Management System project for the Cash for College program. These two initial phases allow partner agencies to create user accounts, request workshops, assign site users and contacts to workshops, and order materials. Students are able to search and register to attend a workshop nearest them and access other available resources. There were 260 registered workshops as of September 1, 2016.
- Staff has completed the scheduled changes and enhancements to the Chafee Foster Youth Grant Program which included the elimination of the Need Analysis Report and other measures that aim to benefit Chafee students and improve the overall utilization of the awards. Six webinar trainings were conducted in August to allow institutions to familiarize themselves with the new procedures to confirm their students' eligibility. In addition, the Chafee Coordinators' Guide was revised and updated to provide a comprehensive overview of the program, recent changes, and other useful information.
- Staff finalized the procurement process for a consultant to work on the needed updates to the Cal-SOAP database and initiated the project in early July 2016 with completion targeted for Spring 2017.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES DIVISION (ITSD)

- The ITS Division has recently hired a new Information Security Officer and a Systems Software Specialist III in the Infrastructure Section.
- In addition, the Commission has passed the GATE 1 Stage for the Grant Delivery System Modernization Project and a Request for Offer has been released for GATE 2 and 3 consultant services.

STRATEGIC POLICY, MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS (SPMC)

- In early August, Executive Director Alcalá recorded a 15 second message at the KVIE-TV Channel 6 station, (a non-profit public television serving Northern California and the Central Valley), that will air from Sept. 2 through Oct. 15, 2016, for 28 spots at the open and close of the Friday, 7:30 pm and Sunday 5 pm airings of *Studio Sacramento* and 28 bonus primetime (8pm-11pm) rotator spots on KVIE2.
- Executive Director Alcalá also recorded Public Service Announcements (PSAs) in Spanish and English for the Early FAFSA Application season, starting Oct. 1. The PSAs will air in 128 cities in all 58 California counties reaching more than 4 million households. The 30 second PSA script was provided to the Assembly and the Senate for Members to record and distribute in their districts, including Jim Cooper, Freddie Rodriguez, Adrin Nazarian, Evan Low, Sebastian Ridley-Thomas, Kansen Chu, Mike Gipson and Rudy Salas. In addition, Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom agreed to record the PSA using iPhone technology for social media distribution.

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- Executive Director Alcalá was an in-studio guest for a 10-minute interview segment on the Charter/Times Warner Communications produced television program California Edition with host Brad Pomerance. California Edition airs on the Cal Channel, which is known for its coverage of politics and public affairs, focuses on elected officials, current state affairs, and live coverage of the California Assembly, Senate, and the Governor's Office.

COMMISSION ACTIONS UPDATE

Below is an update of the actions taken by the Commission at its June 16-17, 2016 meeting.

	ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE COMMISSION	STATUS UPDATE
1	<p>Commission Meeting Minutes</p> <p>On June 16, 2016, the Commission approved the minutes of the May 6, 2016, May 20, 2016 and April 7-8, 2016 meetings.</p> <p><i>In Favor:</i> Commissioners Anton, Foresti, Graves, Le Grande, Maxie, Moore, Sawyer, Solorio and Geiogoue <i>Abstained from voting on April 8, 2016 minutes:</i> Commissioners Moore and Salinas <i>Absent:</i> Commissioners AJose and Becerra</p>	<p>The Commission Secretary has signed the minutes.</p>
2	<p>Consideration of proposed 2016-17 Cal-SOAP consortia allocations</p> <p>The Commission approved the Student Impact Committee's recommendation to move forward with the proposed allocations and authorize the Executive Director flexibility to reallocate funds if necessary.</p> <p><i>In Favor:</i> Commissioners Anton, Cifuentes, Foresti, Graves, Le Grande, Maxie, Moore, Salinas and Geiogoue <i>Absent:</i> Commissioners AJose, Becerra, Solorio</p>	<p>Commission staff has implemented the approved budgets and the Cal-SOAP projects are providing services accordingly. No action is required at this time.</p>
3	<p>Consideration of Designating Commissioners as Directors of the EdFund Board</p> <p>The Commission unanimously approved the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Appoint new Commissioners Maxie, Valladolid, Becerra, Cifuentes and Salinas as members of the EdFund Board of Directors. 2) Designate all Commissioners appointed to the Student Aid Commission after June 17, 2016, to the EdFund Board of Trustees, effective as of the date of their Oath of 	<p>No action is required.</p>

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	ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE COMMISSION	STATUS UPDATE
	<p style="text-align: center;">Office for the Commission without requiring further action by the Commission until EdFund is dissolved.</p> <p><i>In Favor: Commissioners Ajose, Anton, Becerra, Foresti, Graves, Le Grande, Maxie, Moore, Salinas, Sawyer, Solorio, Valladolid and Geiogoue</i> Absent: Commissioner Cifuentes</p>	