

**Information /Action Item**

***CAL-SOAP Advisory Committee***

***CSAC Staff Report***

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Commission Staff will update the Committee on activities in Cal-SOAP. Staff will also discuss the role and responsibilities of the Cal SOAP Advisory Committee and its members. The Commission's Public Affairs Director will discuss the role of Cal-SOAP in the Commission's strategic communications efforts.

***Responsible staff:*** Kim Taylor,  
Commission Outreach Manager

## **Excerpt from the Uniform Policies and Procedures for Commission Advisory Bodies (11/0/06) regarding the roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee members.**

### **4. Role and Expectations of an Advisory Body Member**

- 4.1. Attends and actively participates at meetings of the advisory body.
- 4.2. Adequately prepares for discussion on agenda items by reading agenda materials in advance of the meetings and, if necessary, gathers information and conducts their own research on an item.
- 4.3. Notifies the staff liaison to the advisory body of any changes, such as changes in address and phone number, or any change that affects their appointment to the advisory body.
- 4.4. Remains in attendance at a meeting until it is formally completed.
- 4.5. Promptly notifies the chair and staff liaison if unable to attend a scheduled meeting.

### **5. Conflict of Interest Affecting a Member's Participation at Meetings**

- 5.1. Members must disqualify themselves from voting or participating in an advisory body decision when a conflict of interest is present.
  - 5.1.1. A conflict of interest refers to situations in which a member may have the opportunity to influence the advisory body's business decisions in ways that could lead to personal or other gain or give advantage to firms in which the member has an interest.
  - 5.1.2. A conflict of interest exists when a member is aware, in a particular circumstance, that someone in his/her family has existing or potential financial or other interests which impair or might reasonably appear to impair such a member's independent judgment in the discharge of his/her responsibilities.
- 5.2. If a member determines that a conflict of interest does exist, the member must disqualify and recuse himself/herself from voting or participating in any way in the decision or using his or her status to influence any other person with respect to the matter in which he or she has a conflict of interest.
- 5.3. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect the member's recusal from voting due to a conflict of interest.

### **6. Attendance Policy**

The Commission adopted an attendance policy for advisory bodies on March 14, 1997. The attendance policy was updated as follows when the Uniform Policies for Advisory Bodies was adopted in September 2000:

It is the Commission's belief that advisory body representatives serve a critical role in providing expertise and assisting the Commission in formulating and refining policies that represent the best interests of all Commission program participants. Given the critical nature of advisory body assignments, it is imperative that the Commission seeks the fullest participation of its advisory body members. The Commission has therefore adopted the following attendance policy for all appointed advisory body members:

- All advisory body members are expected to attend each meeting of the advisory body and participate to the fullest extent possible.
- In order to ensure that quorum requirements are met and maintained, advisory body members are expected to be in attendance at meeting commencement and remain in attendance until the meeting is formally completed.
- The advisory body chair will contact members who miss two meetings or display a pattern of partial attendance during a twelve-month period and will remind them of their responsibilities and ask them to confirm their commitment to their advisory body assignments. The advisory body chair will determine whether further discussion or referral to the Commission chair is warranted. The advisory body chair will notify the nominating or appointing authority of the advisory body member's missed meetings.
- Advisory body members who miss three meetings during a twelve-month period will be sent a letter by the Commission chair that will ask whether they can responsibly fulfill their advisory body assignment. A copy of this letter will be sent to the appropriate nominating or appointing authority and the advisory body chair. The letter should include an explanation of the advisory body member's responsibilities and a reminder of the critical significance of those responsibilities to the advisory body. The Commission chair will review the advisory body member's response and determine whether further review or action is warranted. Based on the member's response, the Commission chair may suggest that the member consider resigning from the advisory body.
- Advisory body members who miss four meetings during a twelve-month period will be sent a letter by the Commission asking the member to submit a letter of resignation. The letter will stress that attendance is vital to the success of the advisory body process. A copy of this letter will be sent to the appropriate nominating or appointing authority and the advisory body chair. The advisory body representative will be given two weeks to respond to the chair's letter. After the two-week response period, the Commission chair will consider any response and determine whether to initiate further action.
- In the event that an advisory body member is unable to attend meetings due to unusual or compelling circumstances, such as a long-term illness or personal tragedy, the appropriate chair may waive any of the above actions.

## **7. Alternate Representatives for Advisory Bodies**

The California Attorney General has published an opinion which concludes that

alternate voting is not permitted where members of a body do not serve ex officio and are required to exercise judgment and discretion (Opinion number 79-613, issued August 31, 1979, Volume 62, Opinions of the Attorney General, page 479).

The Commission has concluded that this opinion applied to both the Loan Advisory Council and the Cal-SOAP Advisory Committee. The Commission expects appointed Grant Advisory Committee members to attend each meeting and participate fully in those meetings. However, since there are circumstances that might prevent appointed members from attending scheduled meetings, the Commission feels that it is in the interest of the Commission and the public to allow committee alternates to ensure the most consistent and informed representation possible for advisory bodies. The Commission has therefore adopted the following policy for alternate representatives on its advisory bodies:

#### 7.1. Cal-SOAP Advisory Committee

Alternates are not allowable.

## Cal-SOAP UPDATE

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

### Advisory Committee Update

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

### Project Update

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

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

### Budget update

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

### Cash for College participation

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

### Statewide Marketing Plan

As part of the Commission's Statewide Marketing Plan, staff will 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.