

Information/Action Item

CAL-SOAP Advisory Committee

Approval of May 25, 2007 Meeting Minutes

The committee is asked to review and approve the minutes of the June 30, 2006 meeting.

CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION
California Student Opportunity and Access Program
Cal-SOAP
Advisory Committee Meeting
May 25, 2007

Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Cal-SOAP Advisory Committee was called to order on Friday, May 25, 2007 at 9:15 a.m. The meeting was held at 3300 Zinfandel Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA.

Committee Members in attendance:

Kathy Degn, California Community Colleges Representative
Yvette Gullatt, UC Representative
Stacy Wilson, CPEC Representative
Carolina Cardenas, California State University Representative (via telephone)

CSAC Staff in attendance:

Diane Fuentes-Michel, Executive Director
Kim Taylor, Manager, Outreach Unit
Darrine Distefano, CSAC Legislative Analyst

As there was no quorum all items for this meeting were taken as information only. No action was taken on any of the agenda items.

Introductions

Kim Taylor, CSAC Outreach Manager asked for introductions of all advisory committee members in attendance.

Outreach Manager Taylor requested that one of the advisory committee members in attendance volunteer to chair the meeting for the day. Kathy Degn, California Community College representative volunteered to chair the meeting.

Due to scheduling, a request was made to rearrange the items on the agenda. Director Fuentes-Michel was moved to the first item on the agenda.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Director Fuentes-Michel thanked the committee members and the Cal SOAP project directors for attending the meeting. Director Fuentes-Michel also thanked the project directors for the opportunity to meet with them the day prior and to discuss the Governor’s proposed budget changes.

Director Fuentes-Michel reminded the project directors that Cal SOAP would be funded through the General Fund so it is important to be diligent in getting the message out

about Cal SOAP, the success of the programs in the local communities and utilizing the data collected.

Director Fuentes-Michel also encouraged revitalization of the advisory committee and the continued partnership with the project directors to plan out the future of Cal SOAP.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – APPROVAL OF JUNE 30, 2006 MEETING MINUTES

Without a quorum, the meeting minutes of the June 30, 2006 Cal SOAP Advisory Committee could not be approved.

Kathy Degn, volunteer advisory chair asked for any comments regarding the meeting minutes. There were none.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – DISCUSSION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE STATUS

Outreach Manager, Taylor began the discussion with the inability of the advisory committee to achieve a quorum. The Commission asked staff to develop a proposal on how to deal with the issue of the lack of involvement of the Cal SOAP Advisory Committee.

Director Fuentes-Michel asked for further suggestions on how to connect the advisory committee with the projects. Director Fuentes-Michel also asked for suggestions on who and what type of person would be best to sit on the advisory committee and represent the concerns of the projects.

Outreach Manager Taylor reviewed some of the options discussed at the project director's meeting. Project directors proposed having a board orientation for advisory committee members and conducting advisory committee meetings in local project sites. Project directors also suggested that during advisory committee meetings, representatives from each segment provide an update on what is happening in their area and whether or not it has an impact on Cal SOAP. The project directors also expressed interest in spending time with each of the committee members so that they can get a better understanding of how Cal SOAP project operate individually (in their own communities) as well as collectively and also showing them how Cal SOAP impacts each of their segments. This should be the first step taken prior to any decisions being made about restructuring the committee. The project directors feel that the advisory committee plays a vital role in connecting Cal SOAP with the segments. It is also the advisory committee that helped Cal SOAP get statewide recognition and has moved the focus beyond the local Cal SOAP.

To ensure that the advisory committee meetings accomplish what they are meant to, it is important to have a focused agenda. Planning should be laid out for the year. Director Fuentes-Michel suggested having a board retreat that would focus on Cal SOAP advocacy, communication, and comprehensive planning. This would involve a planning committee that will put together a strategic plan and an annual plan for the next two years.

Participants suggested the advisory committee meet more often than they have in the past. For the committee to be effective there needs to be more interaction.

As this in an information only meeting, Outreach manager Kim Taylor has been assigned the responsibility of arranging a teleconference meeting for the advisory committee to act upon the recommendations that were presented at the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Darrine Distefano, Legislative Liaison for CSAC provided an update on current legislative bills being tracked by the Commission. Ms. Distefano reported on two bills affecting Cal Grants. AB 175, would increase the access fees for Cal Grant B recipients and AB 302 which would allow tuition and fees to be paid for first year Cal Grant B recipients. Another bill the Commission is supporting is SB 160, which would make AB 540 students eligible to receive state and institutional financial aid. SB 890 would establish an early college commitment program to encourage students to complete high school, take challenging coursework and enroll in college. Students, grade 6 – 9 would sign pledge cards to signify their commitment to the program. This program would be administered through the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Students that complete the program would be guaranteed a place at a community college or a four year university.

Ms. Distefano also discussed the bills that involve Assumption Program of Loans for Education (APLE) which pay back a portion of student loans in exchange for working a specified number of years in a designated field.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – SELECTION OF A COMMITTEE CHAIR

CSAC Outreach Manager, Kim Taylor discussed the role of the advisory body chair. Since there was no quorum, Ms. Taylor agreed to arrange a teleconference meeting within the following 30-45 days for the advisory committee to select a chair and vice chair. During this teleconference Ms. Taylor will also provide an update on the status of the vacant advisory body positions.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – AUDIT UPDATE

Charles Wood, Program Compliance Manager provided an update on the Cal SOAP audits. The field work for Long Beach's audit has been completed, Merced's audit will be next week and Sacramento is scheduled for August or October. One Cal SOAP audit will be conducted every other month. Currently the audits are fiscal but the unit is looking to update the process to include program operations. Mr. Wood informed the project directors that the compliance reviews are usually scheduled about six months in advance. Projects will be given about a two to three month (or a minimum of sixty days) notice to inform them of their audit date(s).

AGENDA ITEM 6 – PROJECT DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Lead project director Sonia Ramos provided an update. Ms. Ramos informed the advisory committee of the topics discussed at the project director's meeting on May 24th, such as the May Revise, and the implication for Cal SOAP funding. The project directors had also put together a group to lobby at the State Capital to support the continued funding of Cal SOAP. Ms. Ramos also discussed the mobilizing of the local representatives and partners to help garner support for Cal SOAP.

The project directors have established a workgroup that will meet with Tom Mays on June 11th to go over ideas for the statewide marketing plan to increase the visibility of Cal SOAP.

Ms. Ramos asked for clarification on the Cal SOAP Policy and Requirement Manual and some statute language. Of particular interest is the definition of “intensive” vs. “general” services. The project directors have also asked Outreach Manager, Kim Taylor to contact the Legislative Analysts Office to clarify the statute’s definition of “first in family”. Outreach Manager, Kim Taylor reminded the project directors that the issue of “first in family” had been addressed by CSAC’s attorney, and it was interpreted as just that, “first in family”. Ms. Ramos discussed the implications this had on their programs. Kathy Degn, acting chair, recommended possibly going through with a request for a statutory language change, if they want the definition of first in family to be more in line with other program’s definition of “first generation”.

The project directors are also looking for input on the type of data that should be collected in order to get the message of Cal SOAP out statewide. Also the improvement of the Cal SOAP database was discussed. Other issues addressed included the definition of 30% as it relates to the budget and student staff.

It was suggested that information regarding each segment that are partners with Cal-SOAP be listed in a document so that the advisory members will know which ones are involved.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – CSAC STAFF REPORT

Outreach Manager, Kim Taylor reminded the advisory committee that the next scheduled meeting is September 14th. Ms. Taylor mentioned the Annual Program Plans (APP) for the 2007-2008 year. Yvette Johnson of her staff is reviewing the APPs and is expected to complete them within the next month. Approval of the plans is contingent upon the state budget.

Ms. Taylor also discussed the Solano Cal SOAP (SUCCESS) which is in the process of finding a new fiscal agent. CSAC is working with SUCCESS to ensure they have a viable fiscal agent. Committee member Gullatt encouraged staff to continue to work with SUCCESS to ensure that services in the region continue.

Cal SOAP’s involvement with Cash for College and the statewide marketing plan have been added to the contract. Acting chair, Kathy Degn commended the projects on their involvement with Cash for College and commented that in the future it may be a state mandated program so it is good to see that Cal SOAP is ahead of the game.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – CONSIDERATION OF 2007-2008 FUNDING LEVELS

Outreach Manager, Kim Taylor informed the advisory committee that thanks to the efforts of the project directors and Steve Caldwell, the Legislature had voted to keep the Cal SOAP budget at \$8.567 million and to keep the focus of the program as is.

Staff recommended retaining the current funding levels of the projects. The same recommendation will be made at the Commission Meeting on June 20th and 21st. Of course this is all contingent upon the Governor approving the full Cal SOAP budget.

Committee member Wilson asked that in the future more information be included about the budgets for the projects. Monica Montenegro, East Bay Cal SOAP reminded the committee that 30% of each of their budgets is designated for student salaries. Outreach Manager, Taylor included further information, reiterating that the 30% was a statutory requirement.

In the future, staff will include each project's budget information in the agenda.

There being no further business, Acting Chair, Kathy Degn adjourned the Cal SOAP Advisory Committee meeting at 11:30 a.m.