
WebGrants for Students Update

Issue:

To update the status of the Phase 1 of “WebGrants for Students” and identify items to be considered for Phase 2 beginning in January 2006.

Background

In December 2004, the Commission began the work of developing a website for Cal Grant and Chafee students to access their grant information. Students require a convenient, timely, and modern method to access information regarding financial aid and in particular their grant information. The only method that was available for students was through the phone or written communication with CSAC or with the school. The Commission felt that providing the student with the ability to access their data utilizing web technology would greatly enhance communication with the students.

Status

Phase I of “WebGrants for Students” was launched on September 19, 2005 with great success. To date, the Commission has released approximately 20,000 postcards and 17,000 emails to Cal Grant and Chafee students asking them to preview the “WebGrants for Students” and to provide us with feedback. We are pleased with the initial feedback we are receiving from students and the positive enthusiasm expressed by these students. Most responses indicated the ease of using the WebGrants tool and how much time it saves them from calling on the phone or going to the financial aid office.

The Commission released an insert in the September 2, 2005 award letters, encouraging students to view their information on the “WebGrants for Students”. As students establish accounts and continue to access their information more, we expect to receive more feedback and suggestions on what their needs are and how we can better improve our services and this online resource.

The Commission will continue to solicit feedback and recommendations from students, financial aid staff, and other stakeholders to enhance the “WebGrants for Students”. As we receive new proposals and ideas, Commission staff will identify how to implement and begin discussions for coding for Phase 2 in January 2006. Currently, the following items to be considered for Phase II include: 1) Electronic Corrections, 2) Leave of Absence Requests, 3) TCP/5th Year Request Form, and 4) Leave of Absence Simulator. The Commission will continue to communicate our enhancements with all stakeholders, students and financial aid staff as we enter Phase II.



OPERATIONS MEMO

Update of the California Student Aid Commission

September 2, 2005

GOM 2005-10

TO: Financial Aid Administrators

FROM: Max Espinoza 
Chief, Program Administration & Services Division

CONTACT: Program Administration & Services Division
Phone: (888) 294-0153
Fax: (916) 526-8002
E-mail: schoolsupport@csac.ca.gov

SUBJECT: WebGrants for Students

The California Student Aid Commission (Commission) is pleased to announce an important milestone and improvement to student services – **WebGrants for Students**. During mid-September 2005, approximately 20,000 students will be asked to assist the Commission by using **WebGrants for Students** in preparation for full utilization by all Cal Grant and Chafee students later this year.

WebGrants for Students is a Web-based tool that will:

- provide a secure, convenient, and student-friendly method for students to access Cal Grant and Chafee award information;
- ensure successful grant application processing and maintenance of their award; and,
- provide links to other financial aid Web sites.

These students will be able to:

- determine if their application has been received by the Commission,
- check their award status and view their payment history,
- check their address and make changes on-line,
- make school change decisions by simulating a school change, and
- submit the school change on-line.

As testing progresses and refinements are made, more students will be notified of the availability of **WebGrants for Students**. We anticipate that all Cal Grant and Chafee applicants and recipients will have access in late fall 2005. We will notify you as **WebGrants for Students** is made available to the general student population.



State of California
Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

For more information you may contact us at:
California Student Aid Commission, Program Administration & Services Division
P.O. Box 419028, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9028 (888) 294-0153 Fax: (916) 526-8002
Website: www.csac.ca.gov E-mail: schoolsupport@csac.ca.gov

If your students have questions or comments concerning their grant award status, please refer them to our Student Support Services Branch at 1-888-224-7268. For technical questions and suggested system modifications, we encourage students to contact our Help Desk at (888) 294-0148.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this Operations Memo, please contact School Support Services at 1-888-294-0153 or at their new e-mail address schoolsupport@csac.ca.gov.

Thank you for your continued efforts to serve students.