California Student Aid Commission (CSAC)

Non-SSN GPA Q & A

For the 2013-14 Cal Grant Application Year

Includes related questions on the Dream Act (AB 131)

1. **What is the Non-SSN GPA Submission process?**

   The CSAC non-SSN GPA submission process allows high schools, high school districts or private school central offices to submit Entitlement Cal Grant GPAs for students without including a Social Security number (SSN). Instead of the student's SSN, CSAC uses other demographic information with the Grade Point Average (GPA) to match with the student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Dream Act Application.

   New for the 2013-14 year is the capability for community colleges to upload Non-SSN GPAs for their AB 540 eligible students.

2. **Why was this system created?**

   GPAs received for the Entitlement Cal Grant application process must be matched with the student's FAFSA or Dream Act Application to allow selection of potentially eligible Cal Grant program participants. Many high schools and districts do not collect student SSNs. Also, students completing the Dream Application do not have an SSN at all, thus making the submission of GPAs without an SSN both useful and necessary. By using additional demographic data other than the SSN, the CSAC can match GPAs with the FAFSA or Dream Act Application data.

3. **When does CSAC plan on implementing the Dream Act for Cal Grants?**

   The Dream Act (AB 131) for Cal Grant applicants will be implemented January 2013 for the 2013-14 academic year.

4. **Who can submit Non-SSN GPAs?**

   Non-SSN GPA submission is allowed only for certain school types and GPA types:

   1) High school GPAs from any California high school with WebGrants access. If a high school does not have WebGrants access yet, we encourage the school to complete the necessary forms to establish a WebGrants account.

   2) Community colleges for community college GPAs. These are used for the Community College Transfer Entitlement Cal Grants. Only AB 540 eligible students' GPAs should be submitted.

   3) Other California Colleges for submission of high school GPAs and College GPAs. Community college GPAs may be submitted only by community colleges. High school and college GPAs must be submitted as separate files and only for AB 540 eligible students.

5. What Cal Grant programs are available for Dream Act students?

    1) High School Entitlement Cal Grants – Only a high school GPA can be used.

    2) Community College Transfer Entitlements – Only a community college GPA can be used.

    3) Cal Grant C award – High school and college GPAs can be used.

6. Can Non-SSN GPAs be submitted for all students?

High schools may use this method for any student. Colleges may submit GPAs only for AB 540 eligible students. Submission of all college GPAs using the Non-SSN method would overwhelm the system

7. How was the Non-SSN GPA project tested?

The CSAC began working with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) staff during the 2010-11 academic year on data requirements for matching against the FAFSA. Due to the success of that pilot, submission using this method was opened for any California high school.

8. How does the Non-SSN GPA work?

Along with the GPA, the submitting school includes additional student demographic information. This data is matched to the student's FAFSA or Dream Application. This data includes the student's full name, address and phone number, student's date of birth and e-mail address, as well as the parent's last name and e-mail address. From these, a score is determined which indicates the likelihood of a match. The higher the score, the more likely that the GPA and FAFSA/Dream Application match.

9. What if the records do not match a FAFSA?

Non-SSN GPA records might fail to match for two primary reasons:

    1) The demographic data received with the GPA varied too much to match with any FAFSA.

    2) There was no FAFSA or Dream Application submitted by the student.

In the case of a non-match, the "Non-SSN GPA Unmatched Report" is produced and made available to the school in WebGrants.

10. What is the deadline for submission of Non-SSN GPA data?

The same March 2 filing deadline is in place for all GPA data regardless of delivery method. The earlier that any data is delivered is better so that any problems in submission or processing can be worked out and corrected, if necessary. Since GPAs for current high school seniors do not include senior year grades, we recommend schools attempt to deliver any GPAs to the CSAC before January. Using that time frame for delivery, GPA matches can be made as soon as FAFSA data is processed.

Colleges must also submit by March 2, but should include grades posted for the fall semester or quarter.

11. Does this affect FAFSA or Dream Act Application submission at all?

There is no connection between the federal FAFSA submission process and the California GPA submission process. Likewise, although the Dream Act Application is submitted to the Student Aid Commission, that is handled as a separate process. Once both are filed, however, the CSAC will attempt to match the two records.

12. Does current WebGrants functionality change?

All current WebGrants functionalities are still in place. The data file layout for traditional GPAs **with** SSNs is the same as it has been.   The data file layout for the non-SSN match is significantly different with more than three times as many data fields.

13. Can we submit paper GPAs without an SSN?

No. CSAC cannot manually match paper GPAs based on data fields other than a SSN. For the 2013-14 year, all paper GPAs must include the student's SSN.

For the much smaller number of students applying under AB 131, if a student completes the Dream Application, they may complete a Non-SSN GPA Verification form. The Non-SSN GPA Verification form must only be used by AB 540 eligible students. Despite the availability of paper forms, we advise schools to submit electronic GPAs.

14. Is the Non-SSN submission method only for AB 131 Dream Act applicants?

No. The Non-SSN electronic GPA submission method is for all students. Since some Dream Act applicants do not have a SSN, this method will be the most efficient for that student population.

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