



OPERATIONS MEMO

Update of the California Student Aid Commission

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GOM 2011-10

TO: Financial Aid Administrators
High School Counselors

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SUBJECT: Cal Grant Update

This Operations Memo updates schools on the status of the 2011-12 Entitlement Cal Grant awards, the completion of paper grade point average (GPA) verification forms, and the late Entitlement GPA appeals process.

2011-12 High School Entitlement Cal Grant Awards

As of March 28, 2011, the California Student Aid Commission (Commission) has offered approximately 100,000 Cal Grant awards to high school Entitlement eligible students. As mentioned in prior communications, the awarded students are immediately sent e-mails regarding their Cal Grant award status. The e-mail encourages students to open a WebGrants for Students (WGS) account and view their electronic California Aid Report (CAR).

WGS has other useful tools, such as updating demographic information, requesting school changes and checking other requirements. Most importantly, as of June 1, 2011, high school Entitlement Cal Grant applicants will be able to confirm their high school graduation in WGS.

Since paper CARS are no longer sent, except to those students without e-mail addresses, it's imperative that students check e-mail messages from the Commission. The Commission urges schools, especially high schools, to communicate to students the importance of reading e-mail correspondence from the Commission and of opening a WebGrants for Students account at www.webgrants4students.org. Once they establish a WGS account, they can manage their account to make important updates that may affect their award.

Paper GPA Verification Forms

Commission staff have successfully keyed approximately 66,000 paper GPA verification forms for the 2011-12 award year. These GPAs include students who



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have submitted test scores such as the GED, SAT and ACT in lieu of GPAs. Students who have incomplete data or errors on the GPA form will be sent a 10-day letter to correct any information on the form. State regulations specify that students who respond within the 10 days will still retain their March 2 priority filing date.

2011-12 Late Entitlement GPA Appeals Process

State regulations also allow Entitlement Cal Grant applicants to appeal the late submission of their Cal Grant GPA if circumstances beyond their control delayed or prevented the applicant from submitting a verified GPA by the March 2, 2011 filing deadline.

To receive appeal consideration, the applicant must submit an explanation of the circumstances that were beyond their control which prevented them from submitting an on-time Cal Grant GPA. The applicant must also have submitted a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the March 2 deadline.

Schools may also submit late GPAs on behalf of students. The school's appeal should make it clear there were circumstances beyond the student's control preventing the student from meeting the March 2 filing deadline.

Entitlement applicants may submit a late March 2 GPA on the "Late Cal Grant GPA Verification Form." The form is only for Entitlement Cal Grant applicants who filed a FAFSA by the March 2, 2011 deadline, but whose GPA was not sent on time due to circumstances beyond the student's control. This form is available online at <http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=1177>. A 2011-12 Entitlement Cal Grant candidate must graduate high school or achieve the equivalent on July 1, 2009 or later and, if submitting a GPA, the GPA must be calculated from high school grades.

In order for an appeal to be accepted, it must be **received** at the Commission by **May 16, 2011**. In the event that an appeal is accepted, the student will be processed for Entitlement Cal Grant award consideration and will receive correspondence from the Commission based on their application status. For appeals that are not accepted, the GPA will be retained to use for the September 2, 2011 Cal Grant award selection process.

If you have questions regarding any of this information, please contact School Support Services at (888) 294-0153 or at schoolsupport@csac.ca.gov.

Working together to effectively promote education beyond high school!