



OPERATIONS MEMO

Update of the California Student Aid Commission

October 7, 2013

GOM 2013-26

TO: High School Counselors

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SUBJECT: 2014-15 Cal Grant GPA Verification for High Schools

This Operations Memo provides information to high school counselors submitting grade point average (GPA) verifications on behalf of students applying to the California Student Aid Commission (Commission) for the 2014-15 Cal Grant program awards. Please review the "[GPA Calculation Instructions](#)" and the "[Questions and Answers for High Schools](#)" for details on preparing the GPAs for your students. **The deadline for submission is March 3*, 2014.**

**Due to March 2, 2014 being a Sunday, the deadline extends to the next business day, Monday, March 3, 2014.*

Electronic GPA Submission

The Commission is currently accepting GPA upload files from schools for academic year 2014-15 Cal Grant awards. Electronic submission is secure, fast, and minimizes errors. Since high school GPAs do not include senior year grades for graduating seniors, schools are encouraged to prepare and upload their 2014-15 GPAs as soon as possible.

GPAs uploaded through WebGrants (the Commission's secure, online information transfer system) are certified electronically, so there is no need to fax or mail a separate certification or paper GPA verification form. The WebGrants GPA function provides immediate feedback regarding the number of GPAs that have been accepted and identifies any errors in the upload.

Prior to actually submitting GPAs, schools should review the GPA submission procedures to ensure their upload will be accepted by the Commission. The GPA Upload File specifications have changed from last year with the addition of the Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) field. Failure to ensure that the Commission has received the GPA upload file will result in students not being deemed eligible for award consideration. Instructions on electronically submitting GPAs are available in the WebGrants *Help Center*. To view the guides, log on to WebGrants, click on "Help" and look under *User Guides – GPA Upload User Guide* and *Non-SSN GPA Upload User Guide*.



One way WebGrants can be used by schools to submit GPAs is to create a list using the school's student information system to upload them all at once to the Commission. The list can be created by entering the required data into an Excel spreadsheet that follows the proper specifications. Then, save the file as a text file before submitting it to the Commission.

Another way schools can use WebGrants to submit GPAs is to directly key the GPAs into the Commission's system. In contrast to completing multiple paper forms, directly keying GPAs on WebGrants is quicker, more secure, and saves the student or school the cost of postage for mailing paper forms. The direct online method is easiest if the school has a relatively small number of GPAs to enter. The *Add GPAs* screen in WebGrants has been enhanced to support a more user friendly process and also allows schools to provide the Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) which will be used to help match the GPA to the student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or California Dream Act Application (CA Dream Application).

Commission staff will be contacting campuses that have not been using the electronic upload process in order to provide assistance with GPA submission.

Non-SSN GPA Submission

Districts and schools can submit Cal Grant GPAs without using Social Security numbers (SSNs). Instead of an SSN, other student demographic data is supplied with the uploaded GPA file which is used to match with the student's FAFSA or CA Dream Application. Please refer to the WebGrants *Non-SSN GPA Upload User Guide* for more information on this submission process.

GPA Training

To assist you with electronically uploading GPAs, the Commission will be providing electronic GPA submission training sessions via webcast. There are two separate training options to choose from *GPA Submission Training - SSN* and *GPA Submission Training - Non-SSN*. For a list of training dates and times please visit [CSAC Events WebEx website](#) to register.

WebGrants 4 Students Website and Contacting the Commission

WebGrants 4 Students (WGS) provides students with their Cal Grant information and allows them to manage their Cal Grant account online. Students can see if the Commission has received their GPA and FAFSA or CA Dream Application and can identify missing information. Students offered a Cal Grant can update their information, including school changes to transfer their award to their school of choice.

Students with questions should be directed to WGS at www.webgrants4students.org or to the Commission's Student Support Services at (888) 224-7268 or at studentsupport@csac.ca.gov.

For assistance in learning how to use WebGrants and for any questions on GPA submission, schools can contact the Commission's School Support Services staff at (888) 294-0153 or at schoolsupport@csac.ca.gov.

Working together to effectively promote education beyond high school!