



OPERATIONS MEMO

Update from the California Student Aid Commission

STATE OF
CALIFORNIA



August 21, 2014

GOM 2014-28

TO: Financial Aid Administrators
High School Counselors

FROM: Catalina G. Mistler 
Chief, Program Administration & Services Division

SUBJECT: **2015-16 Cal Grant GPA Verification**

This Operations Memo from the California Student Aid Commission (Commission) provides information to high school counselors, financial aid and registrar staff submitting grade point average (GPA) verifications on behalf of their students applying for the 2015-16 Cal Grant program awards. GPA upload file specifications have changed.

Electronic GPA Submission

- 2015-16 GPA upload capabilities will be available by September 22, 2014. Electronic submission is secure, fast, and free.
- Using the electronic upload option increases the probability that more of your eligible students will receive a Cal Grant award.
- Districts and schools may submit Cal Grant GPAs with or without student social security numbers (SSN). When submitting GPAs without the SSN, other student demographic data is provided with the uploaded GPA file and used to match GPAs with FAFSAs and Dream Act applications. Schools are asked to submit Non-SSN Cal Grant GPAs for AB540 eligible students.
- Final deadline for GPA submission is March 2, 2015.

High Schools GPA Verification

- **The Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) field is now mandatory.** The SSID is a student identifier assigned to most California public school students and must be provided if available. If the SSID is not available, all zeroes must be entered as filler. Please take the necessary steps at your campus to fulfill this new requirement.
- High Schools are encouraged to prepare and upload GPAs for currently enrolled seniors as soon as possible, since these do not include senior year grades.
- In order to allow Cal Grant Entitlement award consideration for prior-year high school graduates, schools are invited to submit GPAs for 2014 high school graduates. The Cal Grant GPA should be recalculated to include the senior year coursework.

GPA Upload via WebGrants

- GPAs uploaded through WebGrants (the Commission's secure, online information transfer system) are received instantly and certified electronically; there is no need to fax, e-mail or mail separate paper GPA verification forms for your students.
- The WebGrants GPA function provides immediate feedback regarding the number of GPAs accepted via batch upload. The system also identifies any errors in uploads so that schools may complete the needed corrections immediately.
- WebGrants additionally offers the option of keying GPAs directly, eliminating the need for an upload batch file. The direct online entry method may be preferred by schools with relatively small quantities of GPAs to submit.
- GPA File Specifications are identified in the GPA Upload User Guides located within the Help Link in WebGrants. Both the [Non-SSN GPA Upload file specifications](#) and [SSN GPA Upload file specifications](#) have changed from last year; please review these specifications prior to upload.

GPA Upload Training

- The Commission provides electronic GPA submission training sessions via webcast. Training sessions include both training for SSN and non-SSN uploads. For a list of training dates and times please visit [CSAC Events WebEx website](#) to register.
- The Commission will be contacting schools that have not been utilizing the electronic upload process to provide assistance and guidance.

Need to contact us?

- Institutional Support phone number: (888) 294-0153
- E-mail: schoolsupport@csac.ca.gov

Working together to effectively promote education beyond high school!