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## **Historic reform and expansion of the Cal Grant financial aid program included in 2022 State Budget**

**SACRAMENTO, Calif., June 27, 2022** – The California Student Aid Commission applauds Governor Newsom and the Legislature for this historic change to better support students through the Cal Grant Equity Framework. The 2022-23 State Budget marks a landmark shift in the state’s premier financial aid system, the Cal Grant program, which had not been updated in nearly six decades.

“These major reforms to the Cal Grant program make financial aid more inclusive and equitable, putting California on course to establishing true pathways to debt-free higher education,” said Marlene Garcia, Executive Director of the California Student Aid Commission, “This represents work that has been years in the making to fix financial aid and remove barriers that have kept out thousands of students every year. The adoption of the Cal Grant Equity Framework in the State Budget, will help thousands more students afford their college dreams every year and re-establish California as a national leader on issues of college affordability. We are grateful to Governor Newsom, Speaker Rendon, Senate Pro Tem Atkins, and our legislative champions Assemblymember Jose Medina, Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, Senator Connie Leyva, and Senator John Laird for their demonstrated commitment to our students and California’s future.”

Through adoption of the Cal Grant Equity Framework, the 2022-23 State Budget will make state financial aid more equitable and accessible by:

- Removing barriers to financial aid based on age, time since high school graduation, and Grade Point Average, making thousands more students eligible for a Cal Grant award
- Streamlining and simplifying financial aid so that it is easier to understand, consolidating the eight current types of Cal Grant into a Cal Grant 2 for community college students and a Cal Grant 4 for students attending public universities or eligible private institutions
- Aligning the Cal Grant with new changes in federal financial aid so that counselors and educators can send a clear message about all the forms of aid for which students will qualify

- Providing the Commission with resources to start implementing changes now while connecting the funding of new awards to revenue projections in May 2024

In addition to the historic adoption of the Cal Grant Equity Framework, the 2022-23 State Budget includes several other critical investments and new programs that will be administered by the Commission, including:

- Additional funding for the **Learning-Aligned Employment Program**, reaching a total of \$500 million that will be distributed to public colleges and universities to provide work-based learning opportunities to underrepresented students.
- Overhaul of the **Middle Class Scholarship** and over \$600 million in funding to serve thousands more students at California public universities with awards that seek to address the total cost of attendance.
- Funding to support the Commission's implementation of Cal Grant reform changes, as well as universal financial aid applications for high school seniors.
- Cal Grants for students at private, non-profit institutions will increase to \$9,358 and eligible students at private, non-profit institutions will now be able to access additional support for student-parents and current or former foster youth.
- Expansion of eligibility for **Golden State Teacher Grants** to provide up to \$20,000 to students seeking to serve as teachers or in other pupil services at high-needs schools.
- Important changes to the **California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant** to increase award amounts to \$4,500 for students that complete community service hours and broaden access for more California Dream Act students.

"As Commissioners, we serve to put students at the center of everything we do. This year's State Budget with its expansion and overhaul of the Cal Grant reflect that focus," said Catalina Cifuentes, Chair of the California Student Aid Commission, "we are thrilled for what these changes will mean for thousands of families and are incredibly grateful for the support from Governor Newsom and our legislative leadership for such a critical reform for our students."

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*The California Student Aid Commission administers the state's \$3.4 billion portfolio of student financial aid programs and services, including the Cal Grant, the Middle Class Scholarship, and the California Dream Act Application. The Commission serves as a resource for policymakers and the public on college affordability and financing issues, and advocates for policy changes to eliminate cost as a barrier to any qualified California student pursuing a higher education. Visit our website at <https://www.csac.ca.gov/> or follow us on Social Media by clicking on our Link Tree, <https://linktr.ee/castudentaid>.*