

## Item 17 (Information)

### Update on California Dream Act

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#### **SUMMARY:**

This information item provides an update on the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 academic years (AY), including information on awards, paid rates, and the 2018-19 application changes.

This item summarizes the technical enhancements to the 2018-19 CADAA from Commission staff and the California Dream Act workgroup, and explains the communication efforts made in relation to the federal government announcement to terminate the 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Commission staff continue to focus on communications and training to Dream Act applicants and their parents to encourage them to utilize the state financial aid resources available. Commission staff continue to streamline the CADAA application process and clarify to students, and high school and college administrators, that DACA status is not correlated with receiving state financial aid.

#### **BRIEF HISTORY OF KEY ISSUE(S):**

The CADAA was launched during the 2013-14 Cal Grant application period with the passage of the California Dream Act in 2011. Since then, California has been a model in the nation for ways to promote equity and financial aid services to all eligible students. Currently, the CADAA allows students who qualify under Education Code section 68130.5 to apply for various forms of state-funded financial aid, including but not limited to, the Cal Grant Program, Middle Class Scholarship (MCS), Board of Governor's Fee Waiver at California Community Colleges (CCC), institutional aid, California DREAM Loan Program at certain UC and CSU campuses, and private scholarships.

Since 2013, combined efforts from Commission staff, institutions and other key stakeholders have made the successful administration of the California Dream Act possible. Staff are very aware of the challenges that Dream Act students face, including understanding their eligibility, the critical components of the application process, meeting the March 2 deadline, the confusion between the DACA program and CADAA, and the uncertainty created by media coverage.

The Commission has collaborated with campus financial aid staff, high school counselors and other advocates to assist Dream Act students in the application process and have supported them to apply for all state financial aid.

## ANALYSIS:

**Table 1**  
**New Dream Act Applications by Academic Year**  
**Data as of 11/0/2017**

	2015-16 Counts	2016-17 Counts	2017-18 Counts*
<b>On Time (met March 2 deadline)</b>	30,775	34,207	37,165
<b>After March 2</b>	12,909	14,077	9,403
<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>43,684</b>	<b>48,284</b>	<b>46,568</b>

\* Not final count for 2017-18

The numbers in Table 1, show the gradual increase of on time applications by year through the 2017-18 academic year. While at the beginning of the 2017-18 application year, the CADAA numbers were significantly lower than in prior years, application numbers increased before the March 2 deadline through an aggressive, collaborative and united campaign by the Commission, the State legislature, the California Department of Education, colleges, high schools, Cal SOAP projects and other advocates to show support for Dream Act students and inform them about their eligibility for state financial aid. These joint efforts contributed to the increased number of submitted CADAA's from 17,819 on February 9, 2017 to 37,165 by the March 2 deadline.

The success of the 2017-18 CADAA effort was followed with the announcement by the federal government to terminate the 2012 DACA program. On September 5, Commission Chair Lande Ajose and Executive Director Lupita Alcalá responded to this news by releasing a press release urging Congress to find a permanent resolution in supporting DACA families. The communication clarified that DACA status is not required to be eligible for California state financial aid or admission to college in California and explained how California law provides state financial aid resources for Dream Act students to attend college and earn a degree. This message was communicated to all college financial aid administrators and high school counselors.

### **Dream Act Training and Outreach**

Commission staff provided CADAA information and training through:

- Hosting 35 high school counselor financial aid workshops from August to October, 2017 serving over 5,000 counselors.
- Partnering and participating on October 1, 2017 with the Sacramento State event Feria de Educacion to support Dream Act and other high school students completing the CADAA.
- Partnering with the California Department of Education and other organizations to present CADAA information and clarify the difference between DACA and the CADA.
- Participated with the California Community College Chancellor's Office on the California Dream Act "Follow Your Dreams" Video:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odPnB21MB7U&feature=youtu.be>
- Attending several immigration workshops to learn about the resources available to Dream Act students and families.

### **Updates to the 2018-19 CADAA**

Commission staff and the California Dream Act Advisory Workgroup (Workgroup) recommended three changes to the 2018-19 CADAA with the intent to protect student information. The questions removed were related to gathering information about DACA status, Selective Service Registration and the UC/CSU Dream Loan.

The following questions were removed from the 2018-19 CADAA :

<b>2017-18 CADAA Question Number</b>	<b>2017-18 CADAA Question</b>
8a.	If you entered a SSN in question 8, was it issued after you went through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) process?
23a.	Most males between 18 and 25, including undocumented males, must register with the U.S. Selective Service System to be eligible to receive state financial aid. If you are male, age 18 to 25, or will turn 18 before July 1, 2017, fill in this box if you would like us to register you.*
31.	If your campus offers a student loan program, would you be interested in a student loan? Indicating “Yes” does not obligate you to accept a loan, if offered.

As a result of removing the Selective Service question from the 2018-19 CADAA, the Commission will no longer exchange data with the US Selective Service System (SSS) for CADAA applicants. In most cases, males between the ages of 18 and 25, are required to register with the SSS and show proof of registration to their institution before receiving state financial aid. Dream Act students cannot register online because they do not have a Social Security number. These students will be required to mail in proof of registration to their campus financial aid office in order to receive disbursement of their Cal Grant funds. A communication with SSS information with the steps to register to meet the Cal Grant program requirements will be sent to all male Dream Act applicants.

The California Dream Act FAQ on the Dream Act information and resource webpage was updated to reflect the changes. A communication was released to all financial aid administrators and high school counselors of these changes and included resources to help streamline the application process.

## Student Application Enhancements

The Workgroup recommended the following application enhancements:

Application Enhancement	Application Changes
Countdown Timer Minimized	Countdown timer was minimized to reduce student anxiety. It was changed, so it's not viewable by the student. However, when there are 2 minutes remaining, a pop up window will appear warning students they have 2 minutes to either save or submit their application.
Increase Font size on U Visa/TPS Question	To improve visibility, the font was increased for the sentence "If you have Temporary Protected Status or hold a U Visa, select "Yes" question. "
Edits for Household Size	<p>To maintain consistency with the validation for the household size questions #52 and #99 were updated to provide a validation error/message if a student indicated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Yes" to question 52 that he/she has dependents other than their children, but the indicated only 1 person lived in the student's household.</li> </ul> <p>*A message will now display that the response they provided was not consistent with the answer to question #51 or #52.</p>
Include the EFC on top of the Confirmation Page	The EFC (Estimated Family Contribution) was embedded in the text under "Section III Next Steps" and was not easily identifiable. The EFC is now on the top of the CADAA Confirmation Page just below the Transaction Number.

These CADAA enhancements aim to facilitate and streamline the application process. The CADAA Home Page was updated to mirror the FAFSA. The changes include:

- The center box is now the "Login box
- The Parent Signature box is now on the right-hand side
- Verbiage was added to clarify information for students

### Email Confirmation upon Submission

Based on the Workgroup recommendation, an automatic system generated email was developed. It is sent to students upon submission of their CADAA application, informing them that their application was successfully submitted, and instructing them to create a WebGrants for Students account.

Commission staff monitor the paid rate of Cal Grant awards to Dream Act students to identify any trends or issues with the unpaid CADAA award offers. The final 2016-17 AY paid rate is 68% as shown in Table 2. This percentage is consistent with prior years at this same point in time, with a slight increase in the paid rate for Private 4-year institutions.

**Table 2  
Dream Act Award Offers & Payment by Segment Data as of 11/07/2017**

	2015-16			2016-17			2017-18*		
	Offered Awardees	Paid Recipients	Paid Rate	Offered Awardees	Paid Recipients	Paid Rate	Offered Awardees	Paid Recipients	Paid Rate
Community College	4,085	2,235	55%	4,748	2,670	56%	4,686	1,339	29%
UC	1,078	983	91%	1,290	1,181	92%	1,304	942	72%
CSU	2,392	1,866	78%	2,871	2,221	77%	3,186	1,616	51%
Priv. 2-yr Non-Profit	1	-	0%	-	-	0%	-	-	0%
Private 4-yr/ Priv. Grad	187	113	60%	224	156	70%	239	90	38%
Vocational/ Hospital Ed.	35	13	37%	51	23	45%	45	9	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,778</b>	<b>5,210</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>9,184</b>	<b>6,251</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>9,460</b>	<b>3,996</b>	<b>42%</b>

**\*Not final count for 2017-18**

Table 3 shows the paid rate by type of Cal Grant program. There is a 16% increase in the number of 2017-18 Transfer Entitlement award offers when compared to the 2016-17 academic year.

**Table 3  
Dream Act Award Offers & Payment by Program Data as of 11/07/2017**

	2015-16			2016-17			2017-18*		
	Offered Awardees	Paid Recipients	Paid Rate	Offered Awardees	Paid Recipients	Paid Rate	Offered Awardees	Paid Recipients	Paid Rate
High School Entitlement	6,767	4,385	65%	7,972	5,223	53%	8,140	3,465	43%
Transfer Entitlement	799	725	91%	994	913	54%	1,129	483	43%
Competitive	212	100	47%	218	115	35%	191	48	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,778</b>	<b>5,210</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>9,184</b>	<b>6,251</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>9,460</b>	<b>3,996</b>	<b>42%</b>

**\*Not final count for 2017-18**

**Conclusion**

Efforts will continue to inform eligible Dream Act students of the financial opportunities available through the CADAA. Commission staff will continue to collaborate with Workgroup members and other partnerships to streamline the California Dream Act Program application and the award process.

**RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S):**

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