

Item 11

(Information Item)

Update on Survey Results; COVID-19 and Cal Grant paid rates

SUMMARY:

This informational item will provide an update on activities currently underway in the California Student Aid Commission's (Commission) Data, Analysis, and Research Team (DART) specifically related to two recently completed surveys:

- A recently conducted survey ("Fall 2020 COVID Survey") highlighting the ongoing effects on students of the COVID pandemic. The survey is complimentary to the earlier "Spring 2020 COVID Survey" previously presented. This new Fall survey gets at a new set of questions for students as to how they are coping with the pandemic and how it has affected their lives and scholastic progress.
- A recently conducted survey ("Cal Grant Paid Rate Survey") that specifically targeted students at California Community Colleges (CCC) and California State University (CSU) who were awarded a Cal Grant, but who subsequently did not use their Cal Grant. The survey asks them about their awareness of their Cal Grant offer and delves into the reasons behind the failure to use their Cal Grant.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an information item; no action is required.

BACKGROUND:

Fall 2020 COVID Survey: On the heels of the March 2020 release of the "Spring 2020 COVID Survey", the Commission, along with its academic partners at the California Education Lab at UC Davis, conducted a follow-up survey in Fall 2020 to further track student opinions on how COVID has affected their lives and educational pathways. The survey garnered well over 100,000 responses, making it the most highly responded to student survey on COVID effects in the nation. A summary of the major response themes will be presented.

Cal Grant Paid Rate Study: The Commission has previously signaled its desire to explore gaps in the Cal Grant "Paid Rate" (total paid Cal Grants / total offered Cal Grants) to see what reasons are behind the phenomenon of students being offered but not using their awards. Early analysis of the issue yielded that most students who went unpaid were in the CCC and CSU sectors, so these were chosen to further study. The Commission contracted with the Research and Planning Group of California Community Colleges ("RP Group") and the EdInsights Center at Sacramento State to create and administer a survey to students in prior years who were awarded a Cal Grant but did not use their

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award. A summary of the underlying issues behind unpaid awards from the survey results will be presented.

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