

California Student Aid Commission  
Data, Research and Strategic Planning Committee

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## Item 7

### (Information Item)

#### WestEd Report on Cal-SOAP data

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**SUMMARY:**

The attachment provides five key takeaways and a set of recommendations related to the findings from interviews of the California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP) Project Directors and staff. These takeaways include:

1. Current data measures used by Cal-SOAP grantees are consistent despite a wide array of variables affecting data access and use.
2. There is strong support within the consortia for shared data collection, practices, and use.
3. There is a collaborative environment among Consortium directors.
4. Directors shared a desire for the California Student Aid Commission (Commission) to strengthen their leadership in improving data collection and use.
5. Directors aspire to build a better bridge to college for all students.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This is an information item only; no action is required.

**BACKGROUND:**

To better serve students, the Commission has engaged a research and evaluation partner (WestEd) in the creation of a statewide evaluation and accountability system for the Cal-SOAP. The proposed system is aimed to document Cal-SOAP programs' impact on participating students and institutions. As part of the initial work, WestEd conducted 45-60-minute interviews with all 16 Cal-SOAP project directors over the course of three weeks in fall 2020 to understand the activities and measures that are being used for program delivery across the state. This document summarizes findings from those interviews within five key takeaways and associated recommendations and provides plans for the project in early 2021 based on what was learned.

**RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S):**

Patrick Perry, Deputy Director  
Data, Analysis and Research Team

Randy Tillery, Director of Postsecondary Pathways and Career Mobility, WestEd  
Rachel Antrobus, Ed.D., Senior Program Associate, WestEd

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

CalSOAP Data Project Insights & Initial Recs – CSAC.docx  
Data Project Update Presentation presented on March 10, 2021