

## Item 3

(Action Item)

District and/or institution requests to postpone financial aid application deadline(s), pursuant to Education Code Section 69513.2

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### **SUMMARY:**

California Education Code (CEC) Section 69513.2 authorizes the California Student Aid Commission (Commission) to grant an additional 30 calendar days beyond an application deadline for any financial aid program under its administration, if the Commission finds that a qualifying event meets the criteria specified in CEC Section 69513.2. For these requests, institutions and districts are requesting postponement of the March 2nd financial aid application deadlines for the programs based on applications because the COVID-19 pandemic has drastically impacted the educational sector the past year including efforts to counsel, to conduct outreach, and to promote financial aid opportunities and key deadlines such as the March 2<sup>nd</sup> priority deadline, therefore adversely impacting students' ability to meet the application deadline for financial aid programs based on these applications.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Commission elected officers find that the Covid-19 pandemic is a qualifying event, and that this event has adversely impacted the ability of pupils or students within the school district, community college district, or an area or region within the state, to successfully complete and submit their financial aid applications by the March 2<sup>nd</sup> priority deadline and grant the requests for a 30-day extension of the 2021-22 March 2nd state financial aid application deadline for each of the postponement requests presented in this item.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Current statute allows the Commission to grant up to an additional 30 calendar days beyond an application deadline for any financial aid program under its administration if both of the following conditions are met:

- (1) The Commission receives a formal request to postpone the application deadline from either the superintendent of a school district or community college district or from the president or chancellor of a California institution of higher education that is eligible to receive state funds for student financial assistance.
- (2) The Commission finds that a qualifying event, including but not limited to, natural disasters, state of emergency declared by the Governor or President of the United States, labor actions, or any event or extenuating circumstance

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outside of the students' control that, in the judgment of the Commission, has had an adverse effect on their ability to successfully complete and submit their financial aid applications by an established statutory deadline.

Section 69513.2 authorizes the commission, on a permanent basis, to delegate to its elected officers the authority to grant, by a unanimous decision of all such officers, the deadline postponement authorized by this section. At its March 26, 2020 Commission meeting, the Commission delegated the authority to grant, a financial aid application deadline postponement request to its elected officers, which include the chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary.

Commission staff received several requests to postpone the March 2, 2021 state financial aid deadline due to the adverse impact of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic on students' ability to meet the March 2 financial aid program deadline, including significant drops in financial aid application submissions, difficulties in reaching high school students in remote learning environments, and the districts' and intuitions' inability to host annual cash for college events with limited resources and remote operations, among others.

On March 17, 2021, staff released a Grant Special Alert reminding districts and institutions of their ability to, and the requirement for, requesting postponement of the application deadline pursuant to CEC Section 69513.2, for financial aid programs using the FAFSA and CADAA applications, as well as an optional form template districts and institutions may use to submit their request including the information specified in this Section:

- A description of the qualifying event and how it impacted the students' ability to submit their financial aid applications by the applicable state financial aid deadline.
- A list of any financial aid outreach events that were canceled or delayed due to the qualifying event.
- Data showing that there has been, or is likely to be, a reduction in the number of students who have completed a financial aid application from the previous year (if available).

Due to the numerous challenges students, districts, and institutions are facing during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, Commission staff recommends granting the 30-day extension requests of the 2021-22 March 2 state financial aid application deadline for each of the postponement requests presented in this item.

### RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S):

Tae Kang, Deputy Director  
Program Administration and Services Division

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Alessandra Morrison, Assistant Deputy Director  
Program Support Services Branch

## **ATTACHMENT(S):**

2021-22 Application Deadline Postponement Request Summary

2021-22 Application Deadline Postponement Request ALL