

Item 7

(Information Item)

Update on the Student Expenses and Resources Survey (SEARS)

SUMMARY:

This item provides an update on the next administration of the California Student Aid Commission's (Commission) Student Expenses and Resources Survey (SEARS) beginning in the fall of 2021 and spring 2022.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an information item; no action is required.

BACKGROUND:

SEARS, administered triennially from 1971-72 through 2006-07 and revived recently in 2018-19, is used to determine the costs associated with attending higher education in California, and to create the annual Student Expense Budget (SEB) that CSAC compiles. SEARS fulfills part of the Commission's mandate in Education Code Section 69514(b) to "collect and disseminate data concerning the financial resources and needs of students and potential students, and the scope and impact of existing state, federal, and institutional student aid programs."

When the Commission formally publishes the SEB for an academic year, institutions can use this data to build their official Cost of Attendance figures, which help determine student financial need and, therefore, financial aid award amounts. In this context, it is crucial to student financial aid that accurate, up-to-date information on the true costs of attending college be collected and published by the Commission.

RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S):

Patrick Perry, Director
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ATTACHMENT(S):

June 2021 Commission SEARS Presentation