



CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION
TELECONFERENCE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 11, 2021
9:00 am
Virtual Meeting
Marlene L. Garcia (Executive Director)

COMMISSIONERS

PRESENT:

Catalina Cifuentes, Chair
Jamillah Moore, Vice Chair
Debra Maxie, Secretary
Juanita Doplemore
Hal Geogue
Guillermo Mayer
Steve Ngo
Charles Nies
Caroline Siegel-Singh
David Valladolid

COMMISSIONERS

ABSENT:

Isaac Alferos

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Catalina Cifuentes called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Roll call was taken and a quorum was recognized.

2. Public comment on items not on the agenda (Information)

Andrew Nickens, from Fix Financial Aid, provided a comment.

3. Approval of the Commission minutes of December 3, 2020 and January 21, 2021 (Action)

Commissioner Nies **moved to approve** the minutes. **Seconded by** Commissioner Valladolid.

Roll call vote:

In Favor (9): Cifuentes, Doplemore, Geiogue, Maxie, Mayer, Moore, Nies, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid

Absent (2): Alferos and Ngo

Carried (9 to 0)

The Commission **APPROVED** the minutes of December 3, 2020 and January 21, 2021 virtual meetings.

4. Chair's oral report on Commission related issues (Information)

Chair Catalina Cifuentes welcomed everyone and announced new Commissioners who recently joined the Commission: Patrick Day, Shannon Gary, and Angel Rodriguez.

5. Executive Director's report (Information)

Executive Director Marlene Garcia highlighted important topics that would be discussed at this meeting.

6. Presentation of Resolutions to Jessica Bartholow and Wm. Gregory Sawyer, former Commissioners (Information)

Chair Cifuentes read the resolution for former Commissioner Wm. Gregory Sawyer.

Executive Director Garcia read the resolution for former Commissioner Jessica Bartholow.

Commissioners were provided an opportunity to share their thoughts and gratitude for the former Commissioners.

7. Update and ratification of contracts over \$100,000 (Action)

Chair Cifuentes invited Lilly Myers, Deputy Director of the Fiscal Administrative Services Division, Gurinder Bains, Chief Information Officer, and Michael Lemus, Program Outreach and Marketing Manager, to present item 7.

Ms. Myers presented the contracts over \$100,000.

Commissioner Ngo **moved to approve** the ratification of contracts. **Seconded by** Commissioner Mayer.

The Commission **APPROVED** the ratification of contracts described in the proposed new contracts over \$100,000.00.

Roll call vote:

In Favor (9): Cifuentes, Doplemore, Geiogoue, Maxie, Mayer, Ngo, Nies, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid

Absent (2): Alferos and Moore

Carried (9 to 0)

8. Consideration of adoption of amendments of regulations to interpret and make specific amended Sections 69999.10 through 69999.24 of the Education Code relating to the California Military Department GI Bill Award Program (Action)

Chair Cifuentes invited Julia Blair, General Counsel, Gary Collord, Retired Annuitant, Colonel Paul S. Eck, Deputy General Counsel from the California Military Department, Clarita Cortez, CMD GI Bill Coordinator, J1 – Manpower and Personnel from the California Military Department, and First Sergeant (CA) Rebecca Wolkenhauer Legislative Liaison NCOIC, Office of External Affairs from the California Military Department to present on item 8.

Ms. Blair provided a brief background on the California Military Department GI Bill Award, previously known as the National Guard Award. She presented staff recommendations for the Commission to adopt the proposed regulations and authorize staff to complete the regulatory process including making any necessary changes.

Commissioner Geiogoue moved to approve staff recommendations.

Seconded by Commissioner Doplemore.

The Commission **APPROVED** staff recommendations to adopt the proposed regulations and authorize staff to complete the regulatory process, including making any necessary changes.

Roll call vote:

In Favor (10): Cifuentes, Doplemore, Geiogoue, Maxie, Mayer, Moore, Ngo, Nies, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid

Absent (1): Alferos

Carried (10 to 0)

9. Presentation on incarcerated students and dependents (Information)

Chair Cifuentes invited Jake Brymner, Director of Government & External Relations, Danny Murillo, Author of "The Possibility Report: From Prison to College Degrees in California" and Founder of the Underground Scholars Initiative, and Sara Arce, Vice President of Policy & Advocacy from the Campaign for College Opportunity, to present on item 9.

Mr. Brymner provided a background on the request for information and data on incarcerated students and dependents. He invited Mr. Murillo to present on the findings in "The Possibility Report: From Prison to College Degrees in California." Ms. Arce presented the recommendations from the report.

10. Update on CalFresh Workgroup (Information)

Chair Cifuentes invited Executive Director Garcia and Melissa Bardo, Legislative Analyst, to present item 10.

Executive Director Garcia provided some background on the CalFresh Workgroup. She also presented findings that came out of the group. Ms. Bardo presented efforts that the Commission is currently taking in order to address CalFresh and food insecurity issues.

11. Update on Survey Results; COVID-19 and Cal Grant paid rates (Information)

Chair Cifuentes invited Patrick Perry, Director of the Data, Analysis, and Research Team, Jessica Moldoff, Research Data Specialist, Michal Kurlaender, Professor of Education Policy and Department Chair of the School of Education at the University of California, Davis, Sherrie Reed, Executive Director of the California Education Lab, School of Education at the University of California, Davis, and Alyssa Nguyen, Director of Research and Evaluation at The RP Group, to present on item 11.

Mr. Perry presented the findings from the survey results on COVID-19 and Cal Grant paid rates.

12. Report on and consideration of the March 10, 2021 Legislative, Audit and Budget Committee meeting (Information/Action)

Andrew Nickens, from Fix Financial Aid.

Denise Castro, from Education Trust-West.

Commissioner Geiogoue **moved to approve** the staff's positions on specified legislation and pending further review of "Watch" bills. **Seconded by** Commissioner Valladolid.

The Commission **APPROVED** the Committee's recommendation to endorse staff's positions on specified legislation and review pending legislation with "watch" positions at the May meeting.

Roll call vote:

In Favor (10): Cifuentes, Doplemore, Geiogoue, Maxie, Mayer, Moore, Ngo, Nies, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid

Absent (1): Alferos

Carried (10 to 0)

13. Report on and consideration of the March 10, 2021 Student Impact, Outreach and Communications Committee meeting (Information/Action)

Committee Chair Caroline Siegel-Singh reported out on the Student Impact, Outreach and Communication Committee meeting on March 10, 2021.

14. Report on and consideration of the March 10, 2021 Data, Research, and Strategic Planning Committee meeting (Information/Action)

Committee Chair Debra Maxie reported out on the Data, Research and Strategic Planning Committee meeting on March 10, 2021.

15. Report on and consideration of the March 10, 2021 Personnel, Evaluation and Nominations Committee meeting (Information/Action)

Committee Chair Guillermo Mayer noted that there was nothing to report out on the Personnel, Evaluation and Nominations Committee meeting on March 10, 2021.

16. Consideration of institutional appeals for 2021-22 Cal Grant Participation (Action)

Chair Cifuentes invited Tae Kang, Deputy Director of the Program Administration and Services Division, and Alessandra Morrison, Assistant Deputy Director of the Program Support Services Branch, to present item 16.

Appeal by Gnomon College

Chris Freeman, Director of Financial Aid at Gnomon College, presented the institution's appeal.

Commissioner Geiogoue **moved to approve** the appeal for Gnomon College. **Seconded by** Commissioner Maxie.

Roll call vote:

In Favor (10): Cifuentes, Moore, Maxie, Doplemore, Geiogoue, Mayer, Ngo, Nies, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid

Absent (1): Alferos

Carried (10 to 0)

The Commission **APPROVED** Gnomon's appeal pursuant to CEC Section 69432.7(l)(3)(l)(iv)(ll) because the cohort is less than 20 students and the graduation rate is not representative of the institution's overall graduation performance.

Appeal by University of the West

Vanessa Karam, Chief Student Services Officer for University of the West, presented the institution's appeal.

Commissioner Doplemore **moved to approve** the appeal for University of the West. **Seconded by** Commissioner Maxie.

Roll call vote:

In Favor (10): Cifuentes, Moore, Maxie, Doplemore, Geiogoue, Mayer, Ngo, Nies, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid

Absent (1): Alferos

Carried (10 to 0)

The Commission **APPROVED** University of the West's appeal pursuant to CEC Section 69432.7(l)(3)(l)(iv)(II) because the cohort is less than 20 students and the graduation rate is not representative of the institution's overall graduation performance.

17. Commission Closed Session

Chair Cifuentes invited Julia Blair, General Counsel, to announce closed session.

Ms. Blair announced that the full Commission would meet in Closed Session to discuss and may take action on personnel matters pursuant to California Government Code, Section 11126(a).

The Commission went into Closed Session at 3:52 p.m.

RECONVENE OPEN SESSION

Chair Cifuentes reconvened Open Session at 4:46 p.m. and announced that there is nothing to report.

18. New business to be considered at future meetings (Information/Action)

Chair Cifuentes noted the following items to consider:

- Continue work on communication to students (outreach and marketing)
- Incarcerated students
- Update on legislation in "watch" position at the May meeting
- Map/outline of areas where Cal-SOAP covers (schools/districts)
- Update on the five additional consortium

19. Adjournment

Chair Cifuentes adjourned the meeting at 4:54 p.m.

CATALINA CIFUENTES
CHAIR