

Item 7

(Information Item)

Report on Cal Grant Undocumented Students

SUMMARY:

In this item, we examine the postsecondary enrollment and persistence patterns of undocumented students who submitted the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) and were Entitlement Cal Grant eligible in the first three years of the program (2013-14 through 2015-16). Compared to similar FAFSA-submitting students, CDAA students who are Cal Grant eligible are slightly more likely to use the award than peers with similar characteristics, and equally likely to attend the more “selective” UC system, even though these schools are more expensive, have more challenging admissions standards, and may be farther from home.

Undocumented students enroll in community colleges in higher numbers but drop out at higher rates. Yet undocumented students who enroll in the CSU or UC system have persistence rates similar to their peers, pushing against strong evidence of “mismatch” that suggests these students are not prepared for those environments. This finding highlights the need to understand what barriers inhibit or support four-year college enrollment for undocumented students, particularly in relation to the CSU.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an information item; no action is required.

BACKGROUND:

Undocumented students have a legal right to a K-12 education but have not been afforded equal access to pursue a postsecondary degree. In 2013-14, California became one of the first states to offer state aid to undocumented students via the Cal Grant. We study the educational trajectories of California’s undocumented state aid applicants as they leave high school, in the period from the mid to late 2010’s when they were financially supported by both state aid and in-state resident tuition.

RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S):

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ATTACHMENT(S):

Cal Grant Undocumented Students Presentation