

California Student Aid Commission  
Data, Research, and Strategic Planning Committee

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## Item 6

### (Information Item)

#### Update on the Student Expenses and Resources Survey (SEARS)

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**SUMMARY:**

This item will summarize the activities that have been completed in the last 12 months related to the Student Expenses and Resources Survey (SEARS). SEARS is conducted once every three years and is used to calculate California Student Aid Commission's (Commission) Student Expense Budgets (<https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/student-expense-budget>). The SEARS Survey of students has now been completed for the 2021-22 survey cycle. The weighting of survey responses and calculation of the actual Student Expense Budget for 2023-24 is currently underway.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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

**BACKGROUND:**

The Commission has a statutory mandate to "Collect and disseminate information concerning the financial resources and needs of students..." [Education Code sec. 69514(b)]. The SEARS survey accomplishes this, along with establishing the Commission's Student Expense Budget. It also provides similar campus and segmental level data to participating institutions and segments, and the Commission's periodic reports on student experiences on paying for college.

The 2021-22 SEARS survey cycle began in its planning phase in Summer, 2021 when the SEARS advisory committee met with student, segmental and institutional representatives. After that, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) of participation were sent out to participating segments and institutions. Modifications to the survey questionnaire were refined, and the proposed survey was submitted for State Institutional Review Board for human subjects' approval. The survey sampling methodology was broadened to get a higher number of responses from each participating institution. The survey was administered online to students at four-year institutions in Fall 2021 and to students at community colleges in Spring 2022.

**RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S):**

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**ATTACHMENT(S):**

SEARS Update Presentation