

## Item 3

(Action Item)

District request(s) to postpone financial aid application deadline,  
pursuant to Education Code Section 69513.2

---

### 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.

Mendocino College is requesting postponement of the March 2nd financial aid application deadline on behalf of high school and community college students within the Mendocino-Lake Community College District due to extenuating circumstances beyond their control. These circumstances include road closures and weather-related power outages, and rain and high winds causing downed trees and power outages in Lake and Mendocino counties. The Commission was notified of these events in an email dated March 13, 2023.

San Bernardino Community College District is requesting postponement of the March 2nd financial aid application deadline on behalf of students and families served by the San Bernardino Community College District, including Crafton Hills College and San Bernardino Valley College due to series of severe winter storms that began in late February and continued into March. On March 1, 2023, Governor Newsom proclaimed a state of emergency in San Bernardino County following the storms, and on March 10, 2023, President Joseph R. Biden approved California's emergency declaration. The Commission was notified of these events in a letter dated March 10, 2023.

Santa Rosa Junior College is requesting postponement of the March 2nd financial aid application deadline on behalf of Sonoma County Junior College and Sonoma County High Schools due to extenuating circumstances beyond their control. The circumstances include weather-related power outages, and rain and high winds that caused downed trees and power outages in Sonoma, Marin, Lake, and Mendocino Counties. Additionally, Sonoma County high school students and the community experienced a trauma on March 1, 2023. A fatal stabbing occurred on campus at Montgomery High School. The school was closed on March 2, 2023. The Commission was notified of these events in an email dated March 13, 2023.

# California Student Aid Commission

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Commission's elected officers find that financial aid application deadline postponement requests from Mendocino College, San Bernardino Community College District and Santa Rosa Junior College are based on qualifying events, and that these events have adversely impacted the ability of pupils or students within the school district, community college district, or an area or region, to successfully complete and submit their financial aid applications by the March 2nd priority deadline and grant the requests for a 30-day extension of the 2023-24 March 2nd state financial aid application deadline for each of the postponement requests presented in this item.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The Commission received three separate requests to postpone an application deadline pursuant to Education Code section 69513.2 after the California Student Aid Commission meeting on March 9, 2023.

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 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.

### Mendocino-Lake Community College District

In its email and attached Application Deadline Postponement form dated March 13, 2023, Mendocino College details effects of winter storms impacting Northern California which severely impacted students and their ability to access the FAFSA website before the March 2nd application deadline. Examples include road closures and weather-related power outages, and rain and high winds causing downed trees and power outages in Lake and Mendocino counties. As a result, many students within their service area were unable to access off-site and in-person assistance. Financial aid workshops to support FAFSA completion were also canceled due to inclement weather.

Due to the extreme weather events in March 2023 and its severe impact on students, staff, and the larger community surrounding Lake and Mendocino counties,

## California Student Aid Commission

Commission staff recommends granting the 30-day extension request of the 2023-24 March 2 state financial aid application deadline.

### San Bernardino Community College District

In its letter dated March 10, 2023, San Bernardino Community College District details severe winter storms that began in late February and continued into March which severely impacted students and their ability to access the FAFSA website before the March 2nd application deadline. These storms caused widespread power outages, road closures, and significant damage to homes and infrastructure. The adverse effects of these winter storms have significantly impacted the ability of students to submit their financial aid applications by the established deadline.

Financial aid support services were interrupted for K-12 and college students and their families served by the San Bernardino Community College District, Cal State University, San Bernardino, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, Bear Valley Unified School District, Rialto Unified School District, Rim of the World Unified School District, San Bernardino City Unified School District, Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified School District, among others. This interruption has resulted in the cancellation or delay of many financial aid outreach events in the community, including two in-person workshops at Crafton Hills College (February 2 and March 6; "I've Been Admitted to Transfer to a Four-Year University: What's Next?").

On March 1, 2023, Governor Newsom proclaimed a state of emergency in San Bernardino County following the storms, and on March 10, 2023, President Joseph R. Biden approved California's emergency declaration.

Due to the extreme winter storms during late February and continuing into March 2023 and its severe impact on students, staff, and the larger community surrounding the San Bernardino Community College District, Commission staff recommends granting the 30-day extension request of the 2023-24 March 2 state financial aid application deadline.

### Sonoma County Junior College District and High Schools

In its email dated March 13, 2023, and Application Deadline Postponement form dated March 10, 2023, Santa Rosa Junior College details the effects of winter storms and circumstances regarding a fatal stabbing at an area high school which severely impacted students and their ability to access the FAFSA website before the March 2nd application deadline.

Effects from the storm include weather-related power outages, and rain and high winds that caused downed trees and power outages in Sonoma, Marin, Lake, and Mendocino Counties. As a result, many students within their service area were unable to access off-site and in-person assistance with their financial aid applications. Events to support FAFSA completion were canceled because of inclement weather. These included several Cash 4 College events at surrounding area high schools. Sonoma County high school students and the community experienced a trauma on March 1, 2023 when a

## California Student Aid Commission

fatal stabbing occurred on campus at Montgomery High School. The school was closed on March 2, 2023. Students and parents throughout the district were focused on processing this traumatic event and how to avoid or mitigate violence on high school campuses.

On March 1, 2023, Governor Newsom proclaimed a state of emergency in Sonoma County following the storms, and on March 10, 2023, President Joseph R. Biden approved California's emergency declaration.

Due to the extreme winter storms and traumatic events at the beginning of March 2023 and its severe impact on Sonoma County Junior College and Sonoma County High Schools, Commission staff recommends granting the 30-day extension request of the 2023-24 March 2 state financial aid application deadline.

### **RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S):**

Alessandra Morrison, Associate Deputy Director  
Program Administration and Services Division

Terry Artica, Assistant Deputy Director  
Program Support Services Branch

Tae Kang, Deputy Director  
Program Administration and Services Division

Julia Blair, General Counsel  
Executive Office

### **ATTACHMENT(S):**

Mendocino-Lake Community College District Request for Extension  
San Bernardino Community College District Request for Extension  
Sonoma County Junior College District and High Schools Request for Extension