



**CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION
TELECONFERENCE MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, March 26, 2020

10:00 am

Commission's Boardroom, 11040 White Rock Road, Rancho Cordova, CA

**COMMISSIONERS
PRESENT:** Catalina Cifuentes, Chair
Jamillah Moore, Vice Chair
Judith Maxwell Greig, Secretary
Juanita Doplemore
Hal Geiogue
Maria Manjarrez
Debra Maxie
Guillermo Mayer
Charles Nies
Caroline Siegel-Singh
David Valladolid

**COMMISSIONERS
ABSENT:** Wm. Gregory Sawyer

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Catalina Cifuentes called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Roll call was taken and a quorum was recognized.

2. Public comment on items not on the agenda.

Chair Cifuentes announced that with the use of Zoom video conference, the Commission kindly asks the public to wait until called upon to make a public comment.

There was no public comment.

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

Chair Cifuentes welcomed everyone and reminded everyone to state name before speaking in order to record statements correctly. Chair Cifuentes spoke on the impact that the coronavirus has had on everyone right now, especially on students.

4. Executive Director's oral report (Information)

Executive Director Marlene L. Garcia welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for joining the meeting. She spoke on the various impact that the coronavirus has made on students such as transition to online learning and postponement of commencement. She added that the Commission staff quickly transitioned to telecommute in less than two weeks.

Executive Director Garcia highlighted priority goals for the Commission regarding communication to students, who may be concerned about the impact to their financial aid, and guidance to Commission staff, who may develop emotional and mental issues due to the coronavirus.

Executive Director Garcia also announced and welcomed the new Fiscal Administration and Services Division Chief, Lilly Myers. She also announced the departure of Virginia Jo Dunlap, Chief Deputy Director/Chief Legal Officer, and David O'Brien, Director of Government Relations. Ms. Dunlap will be joining the Department of Education as an Assistant General Counsel. Mr. O'Brien will be joining the California Community Colleges as the Vice Chancellor of Government Relations.

Chair Cifuentes thanked the Commission staff for maintaining the call center. She asked about what the call center is doing to keep the phone lines open. Executive Director responded that the call center is still receiving the same number of call and that the current duties the staff are performing is listening and providing reassurance to students who are worried about losing their financial aid. She also noted that staff are also tracking issues that students may be encountering such as GPA uploads.

5. Update on state legislation and issues affecting Commission programs (Action)

David O'Brien, Director of Government Relations, and Melissa Bardo, Legislative Analyst, were invited to present on item 5. Mr. O'Brien thanked the Commissioners and Commission staff for their leadership and support for the past few years.

Mr. O'Brien proceeded to his presentation and noted that the legislature has adjourned for the last week due to the coronavirus. He explained the difference attachments for the item.

Ms. Bardo presented the high priority legislative bills and staff recommended positions for these bills.

Commissioner Mayer asked about how the current crisis is going to impact the Commission budget and if there are any emergency funds that can help alleviate some of the financial concerns this has created.

Executive Director Garcia responded that the message received from the Department of Finance is that the current crisis will likely create a negative impact to the upcoming budget. She also noted that there has been no indication that there will be emergency funds to address the ongoing projects that are already in place.

Commissioner Geiogue asked what the Commission's role would be in AB 2030. Mr. O'Brien responded that the Commission may be responsible for administering the award level that is approved for each student, depending on the calculation that is approved based on the formula.

Alex Graves from AICCU, explained the formula and calculation. He also added that the Department of Finance will be involved in reviewing and approving the calculation.

Commissioner Doplemore asked about the different requirements for the student loan services. Executive Director Garcia added that Samantha Seng, from NextGen, will provide more insight on this.

Ms. Seng responded that most of the details will be hashed out on Department of Business Oversight (DBO) regulation meeting. She added that the questions brought up by Commissioner Doplemore are important and will be brought up during their meeting with DBO. She highlighted that especially with the current crisis, students have been experiencing issues with reaching loan services due to telecommuting, making this an important bill to support to ensure that students do not have to encounter the same problem.

Moved By Valladolid
Seconded By Moore
Carried (11 to 0)

The Commission unanimously **APPROVED** the staff recommended position for the following high priority legislative bills: **SUPPORT** AB 376 (Stone), **SUPPORT** AB 2030 (Rubio), **SPONSOR** AB 2819 (Limon), and **SUPPORT** SB 860 (Beall).

In Favor (11): Moore, Greig, Doplemore, Geiogoue, Manjarrez, Maxie, Mayer, Nies, Sawyer, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid

6. Consideration of Child Savings Account Council (Action)

Catalina Mistler, Deputy Director of the Program Administration and Services Division, and Steve Caldwell, Assistant Deputy Director of the Customer Relations Branch, were invited to present on item 6.

Commissioner Geiogoue stated to avoid the possibility of a conflict of interest, he would like to recuse himself from voting on the item.

Mr. Caldwell provided a background on the Child Savings Account and explained the need for establishing a Child Savings Account Council. He briefly presented on the interested candidates who would like to serve on the council and staff recommended approval of the individuals for the council.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6 CONSIDERATION OF CHILD SAVINGS ACCOUNT COUNCIL (ACTION)

There was none.

Moved By Mayer

Seconded By Maxie

Carried (10 to 0, with 1 recused)

The Commission **APPROVED** the recommended membership of the Child Savings Account Council as follow: Lande Ajose, Kris Perry, Hal Geiogoue, Marlene Garcia, Shira Markoff, Christopher Keil, Michele Wei Layne, Mark Kantrowitz, Yvette Stowers, Dr. Zoe Corwin, Margaret Clancy, Jessica Bartholow, Linda English, and Julio Martinez.

In Favor (10): Moore, Greig, Doplemore, Manjarrez, Maxie, Mayer, Nies, Sawyer, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid

Recuse (1): Geiogoue

7. Consideration of the Cal-SOAP statewide allocation process (Action)

Catalina Mistler, Deputy Director of the Program Administration and Service Division, Steve Caldwell, Assistant Deputy Director of the Customer Relations Branch, and Patrick Perry, Director of the Data, Analysis and Research team, were invited to present on item 7. Mr. Caldwell provided a brief background on the item. Mr. Perry explained the outcome measures that the Commission will be collecting from the Cal-SOAP consortia.

Executive Director Garcia added the ongoing process to understand the outcome measures for Cal-SOAP and guiding the direction of all the consortia. She noted

that the 5-year data requested from Cal-SOAP is one piece of the outcome measures.

Commissioner Greig asked how long the process will take and how the 5-year project will look for the different consortia.

Mr. Caldwell responded that the staff will look at the data points for the 2020-21 academic year (AY) and are looking to establish the 5-year project in 2021-22 AY through 2025-26 AY. Mr. Perry added that data for some short-term measures can be retrieved earlier than long-term measures.

Commissioner Doplemore asked if there will be a mid-term check point to review if consortia are meeting requirements. Mr. Perry responded that since consortia are required to submit annual reports, the data drawn from these reports can be weighed to evaluate if each consortium is successfully on track and what are areas that need improvements.

Chair Cifuentes asked if there were any discussion on ongoing metrics that can be measured throughout the year rather than the end of the year. Mr. Perry responded that measures, such as the FAFSA and CADAA submission, can be used as frequent measures. He added that this will have to be a discussion with the Cal-SOAP project directors.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 7 CONSIDERATION OF THE CAL-SOAP STATEWIDE ALLOCATION PROCESS (ACTION)

There was none.

Moved By Greig
Seconded By Mayer
Carried (11 to 0)

The Commission **ADOPTED** the staff recommendation to: 1) update the Cal-SOAP contracts and mission to increase the consortia's focus on financial aid literacy, while continuing to assist students in preparing for post secondary education, and 2) continue to fund the current Cal-SOAP consortia through an annual allocation process while establishing data requirements and outcome measures that will inform the Commission's release of a competitive RFA at least every five years.

In Favor (11): Moore, Greig, Doplemore, Geiogoue, Manjarrez, Maxie, Mayer, Nies, Sawyer, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid

8. Consideration of Cal-SOAP additional expenditures (Action)

Catalina Mistler, Deputy Director of Program Administration and Services Division, and Steve Caldwell, Assistant Deputy Director of the Customer

Relations Branch, were invited to present on item 8. Mr. Caldwell provided a brief background on the item and presented the recommendation to augment the budgets for ten Cal-SOAP consortia.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 8 CONSIDERATION ON CAL-SOAP
ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES (ACTION)**

There was none.

Moved By Maxie
Seconded By Valladolid
Carried (11 to 0)

The Commission **APPROVED** the staff recommendation to augment the budgets for ten Cal-SOAP consortia as illustrated on Attachment 8.1. Commission staff will work with the Cal-SOAP project directors to amend current contracts to reflect the augmentations as quickly as possible.

In Favor (11): Moore, Greig, Doplemore, Geiogoue, Manjarrez, Maxie, Mayer, Nies, Sawyer, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid

9. Consideration of delegation of authority to grant request for postponement of application deadline (Action)

Chair Cifuentes invited Virginia Jo Dunlap, Chief Deputy Director/Chief Legal Officer, Catalina Mistler, Deputy Director of the Program Administration and Services Division, and Julia Blair, General Counsel, to present on item 9.

Ms. Blair noted that David O'Brien, Director of Government Relations, may be asked to provide some background information on the item, if necessary. She also stated that based on the Bagley-Keene Act, the Commission may seek action on an item that was added after the ten-day deadline. She proceeded to explain that the item can be voted on if the Commission feels comfortable enough to vote.

Ms. Blair explained that the Commission received notice that there was a possibility of a school district seeking postponement of the application deadline.

Executive Director explained that with last year's request from the Oakland district to extend the application deadline, there may be a similar request for the current crisis. She noted that there has not been a request yet, however, she would like to get this approved to ensure that the students are not impacted during the event of a crisis.

Commissioner Moore asked if this applies to the institutional level in regards to financial aid processing. Executive Director responded that the recommendation is meant to support students to grant a 30-day extension on the deadline.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 9 CONSIDERATION OF DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO GRANT REQUEST FOR POSTPONEMENT OF APPLICATION DEADLINE (ACTION)

There was none.

Moved By Geiogoue
Seconded By Moore
Carried (10 to 0)

The Commission **APPROVED** to Adopt the staff recommendation to: 1) determine that there is a need to take immediate action on this item, brought to the attention of the Commission subsequent to the agenda being posted on March 16, 2020, and 2) delegate to the elected officers of the Commission the authority to approve a request by a school district, community college district, or the president or chancellor of a California institution of higher education to postpone the application deadline for a financial aid program administered by the Commission due to a qualifying event, including a natural disaster or unforeseen emergency outside the control of the student.

In Favor (10): Moore, Greig, Doplemore, Geiogoue, Manjarrez, Maxie, Mayer, Nies, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid
Absent (1): Sawyer

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

Executive Director identified that the only item for ongoing discussion is the status of the May meeting, which may be dependent on the status of the current crisis. She also added that this could be the same case for the June Commission meeting.

Chair Cifuentes explained that with the current pandemic, there has been many agenda items that are postponed for future meetings.

Commissioner Mayer would like to know if there is any way to get updates on real time efforts to help students. Executive Director Garcia responded that there will be much attention on the idea of whether emergency aid will be made available to students.

Commissioner Nies suggested to put together a list of federal and state support for students throughout this crisis. Executive Director responded that Commissioner are welcome to send updates that they have to the her and the team.

Melissa Bardo, Legislative Analyst, provided a brief federal update on the financial aid.

Chair Cifuentes thanked David O'Brien and Virginia Jo Dunlap for their work and commitment to the Commission.

11. Adjournment

The Commission teleconference meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

JUDITH MAXWELL GREIG
SECRETARY