



**CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION
TELECONFERENCE MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, July 23, 2020
9:00 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 Geogue
Maria Manjarrez
Debra Maxie
Guillermo Mayer
Charles Nies
Caroline Siegel-Singh
David Valladolid

COMMISSIONERS

ABSENT:

Steve Ngo
Wm. Gregory Sawyer

The minutes that follow are not in agenda order, but are in order that were taken up by the Commission.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Catalina Cifuentes called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

Roll call was taken and a quorum was recognized.

2. Public comment on items not on the agenda.

There was no public comment.

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

Chair Cifuentes welcomed everyone and announced that most Committee meetings will be postponed for future dates as staff and Commissioners figure out the best ways to meet.

Chair Cifuentes also noted that the Commission plans on conducting future research to understand and address certain issues such as Summer Melt and challenges of finding financial aid for students during the pandemic.

4. Executive Director's oral report (Information)

Executive Director Marlene L. Garcia welcomed everyone and provided an update on Commission related programs.

Executive Director Garcia announced that the Commission will convene two work groups: the Student Loan Debt Services work group, which will be led by Patrick Perry, Director of Policy, Research and Data, and the CalFresh work group, which will be led by Catalina Mistler, Interim Chief Deputy Director. She added that the Commission will also reconvene the Cal Grant Modernization work group soon.

5. Approval of minutes of February 20, 2020, March 26, 2020 and May 15, 2020 (Action)

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

Roll call vote:

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

Absent (2): Ngo, and Sawyer

Carried (11 to 0)

The Commission **APPROVED** the minutes of the February 20, 2020 special meeting, and the March 26, 2020 and May 15, 2020 teleconference meeting.

6. Approval and ratification of the Cal-SOAP contracts over \$100,000 (Action)

Steve Caldwell, Interim Deputy Director of Program Administration and Services Division, summarized staff recommendations to amend contracts for the 14

established Cal-SOAP consortia, increase base finding for each of the new Inland Empire Cal-SOAP projects, approve base funding for 2020-21 for each of the 14 established consortia, and authorize the Executive Director for flexibility to reallocate Cal-SOAP funds.

Commissioner Geiogue asked how the selection of South County Gilroy was made and why they were selected over other groups. Mr. Caldwell responded that the county was a larger group and Cal-SOAP group agreed the entity was best.

Executive Director explained that the \$3.5 million will be used for higher education tracking and outreach. She added that South County Gilroy will help with data metrics in regards to impact and outcome.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6 APPROVAL AND RATIFICATION OF THE CAL-SOAP CONTRACTS OVER \$100,000

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Mayer **moved to approve** the staff recommendations.
Seconded by Commissioner Maxie.

Roll call vote:

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

Abstention (1): Cifuentes

Absent (2): Ngo, and Sawyer

Carried (10 to 0)

The Commission **APPROVED** the following staff recommendations:

1. Amend the current 2019-20 Cal-SOAP contracts for the 14 established consortia to remain valid through June 30, 2021, thus creating two-year contracts.
2. Increase the 2019-2021 base funding for each of the new Inland Empire Cal SOAP projects by \$1.4 million for a total of \$2.8 million and extend funding through 2019-2022.
3. Approve the base funding for 2020-21 for each of the 14 established consortium as well as a portion of the \$5 million augmentation.
4. Authorize the Executive Director the flexibility to reallocate funds, if necessary.

7. Ratification of contracts over \$100,000 (Action)

Lilly Myers, Deputy Director of Fiscal Administrative Services Division, summarized the contracts and purchase order listed on the attachment for the Grant Delivery System Modernization (GDSM) project.

Commissioner Geiogoue asked if the amended contracts would take up the work of other contracts that were not awarded. Ms. Myers responded that the amended contracts are for specific work and the unspent funds from 2020 would be redirected to these amendments.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 7 RATIFICATION OF CONTRACTS OVER \$100,000

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Greig **moved to approve** the staff recommended contracts and purchase order in the proposed new and amended contracts. **Seconded by** Commissioner Moore

Roll call vote:

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

Absent (2): Ngo, and Sawyer

Carried (11 to 0)

The Commission **APPROVED** to ratify the contracts and purchase order described in the proposed new and amended contracts.

8. Consideration of authorization to commence rulemaking process for the California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program (Action)

Julia Blair, General Counsel, and Gary Collard, Retired Annuitant, were invited to present on the item. Ms. Blair provided an overview of the recommended rulemaking process.

Mr. Collard provided a brief background of the legislative changes that impacts the California National Guard Education Assistance Program. He presented an overview of the rulemaking changes and explained the timeline for the regulation process.

Commissioner Geiogoue asked if staff will be able to address changes to proposed regulations by July 2021. Mr. Collard responded that the draft regulation will follow the 45-day public notice timeline and should allow staff and the Commission enough time to stay on schedule.

Commissioner Doplemore asked if the grants apply to spouses, family members, or dependents. Mr. Collard and Ms. Blair explained that the program is only for the recipient and does not extend to anyone else.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 8 CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZATION TO COMMENCE RULEMAKING PROCESS FOR THE CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AWARD PROGRAM

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Valladolid **moved to approve** the authorization for staff to commence rulemaking process for adoption of amendments to regulations. **Seconded by** Commissioner Doplemore.

Roll call vote:

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

Absent (2): Ngo, and Sawyer

Carried (11 to 0)

The Commission **APPROVED** to authorize staff to commence rulemaking process for adoption of amendments to regulations, Sections 30730-30741, Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Division 4, to interpret, implement and make specific Sections 69999.10-69999.24 of the Education Code, implementing the changes to these sections established by Assembly Bill 2722 (Chapter 547, Statutes 2019) to the California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program, including drafting the proposed regulation and accompanying documents, request that the effective date of the regulations be the date of filing, and authorize staff to take the necessary steps to complete the regulatory process.

9. Presentation by institutional segmental representatives COVID-19 impact on enrollment and student services (Information)

Jake Brymner, Director of Government and External Relations, invited Shawn Brick, from University of California (UC), Dean Kulju, from California State University (CSU), David O'Brien, from California Community Colleges (CCC), and Alex Graves, from Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU), to present on the item.

Mr. Brick presented COVID-19 impact on UC students and how schools are trying to address student concerns. Mr. Brick added that the Commission should find regulatory relief for students during this time, as well as assisting with the plan to ensure that changes at high school level does not inhibit students from qualifying for Cal Grant.

Mr. Kulju presented COVID-19 impact on CSU students and how CSU is responding to address student concerns. Mr. Kulju added that the Commission should encourage recent high school graduates to enroll in CSU and provide a public announcement with available financial aid resources.

Mr. O'Brien presented COVID-19 impact on CCC students and how CCC is helping their students. Mr. O'Brien added that the Commission should continue the discussion around Cal Grant Reform, increase both FAFSA and CADAA completion, increase Cal Grant paid rates, and implement statutory amendments to help undocumented students.

Mr. Graves presented COVID-19 impact on AICCU students and how AICCU is helping their students. Mr. Graves added that the Commission should address ongoing barriers in financial aid eligibility that create inequitable treatment of students.

Commissioner Manjarrez asked Mr. Graves how the emergency funds are packaged with other financial aid for students at AICCU. Mr. Graves responded that the federal emergency relief funds may impact some students financial aid since it looks like students are receiving funds over the total cost of attendance. Mr. Brick agreed that the emergency fund was considered as an additional aid on top of all the other financial aid that students were already receiving, therefore, causing a question regarding taxable income.

Commissioner Geiogue asked about the enrollment outlook for non-resident California students. Mr. Brick stated that there has not been a reported concern over the enrollment rate for non-resident California students.

Commissioner Greig asked Mr. Brymner if the state plans to develop guidance on returning to school. Mr. Brymner responded that the state has not released any guidelines yet.

Commissioner Siegel-Singh asked if each institution can provide information on how they are providing or maintaining student access to food and basic housing at future meetings.

Commissioner Moore asked if segments can submit income verification without having to go through such a tedious process. Mr. Kulju clarified that the

verification process is part of the U.S. Department of Education regulatory component and segments do not have much authority over it. Commissioner Moore asked if there is a way to encourage data sharing with federal entities to simplify the verification process.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON UPDATE ON PRESENTATION BY INSTITUTIONAL SEGMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES COVID-19 IMPACT ON ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT SERVICES

There was no public comment.

11. Update on COVID-19 Student Survey (information) – taken out of order

Chair Cifuentes invited Patrick Perry, Director of Policy, Research and Data, Jessica Moldoff, Research Data Specialist, Michal Kurlaender, Professor of Education Policy and Department Chair of School of Education at the University of California, Davis, and Sherrie Reed, Executive Director of the California Education Lab of the School of Education at the University of California, Davis, to present on the item.

Mr. Perry provided background information on the COVID-19 student survey and presented key findings from the survey.

Mr. Perry introduced Jesus Alexander Gomez, who is a student at Fresno Pacific University, to speak about his experience. Mr. Gomez shared his personal concerns with the COVID-19 scare and how it has impacted the way he financially supports his family and education.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 11 UPDATE ON COVID-19 STUDENT SURVEY

There was no public comment.

10. Update on 2020-21 final State budget and legislative issues, and consideration of statewide initiatives (Information/Action) – taken out of order

Chair Cifuentes invited Jake Brymner, Director of Government and External Relations, Melissa Bardo, Legislative Analyst, and Valerie Johnson, Intern, to present on the item. Mr. Brymner introduced the Government and External Relations' intern, Valerie Johnson, and asked Ms. Johnson to share her background.

Mr. Brymner provided an overview of the 2020-21 State budget. He presented key budget outcomes for new programs, the Middle Class Scholarship, and the Student Loan Debt Service work group.

Mr. Brymner also presented an update on the 2020-21 budget change proposals for GDSM, NVRA, Office Acquisition (withdrawn), Dreamer Incentive Grant Program, Child Savings Account Grant Program, and the Golden State Teacher Grant Program (withdrawn). He shared next steps regarding provisions to restore programs or allocations depending on federal assistance received by October 15, and how that will impact adjustments to 2020-21 State Budget before the close of legislative session.

Ms. Bardo provided an update on priority state legislation and summarized the following bills that the Commission supports: AB 376 (Stone), AB 2030 (Rubio), and SB (860).

Ms. Bardo welcomed Valerie Johnson to introduce herself and present on the Proposition 16 Review and staff recommendation. Ms. Johnson provided a brief overview of Proposition 16 and impact on California voters if the Proposition is reinstated.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 10 UPDATE ON 2020-21 FINAL STATE BUDGET AND LEGISLATIVE ISSUES, AND CONSIDERATION OF STATEWIDE INITIATIVES

Marissa Johnson, with Campaign for College, expressed Campaign for College's support for Proposition 16 and encourages the Commission to endorse Proposition 16 to ensure that higher education institution reflects California's population and that the Commission creates race-conscious programs.

Commissioner Moore asked how Proposition 16 would impact the Commission and how implementation would work with race and ethnicity data. Executive Director responded that there would be more research and information related to race and ethnicity, specifically in regards to outreach and Competitive Cal Grants. Ms. Bardo also added that the data would provide a direct impact to college admission.

Commissioner Geiogou suggested to replace the word "could" to "would" for a stronger motion.

Commissioner Nies **moved to adopt** support of Proposition 16.
Seconded by Commissioner Mayer.

Roll call vote:

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

Absent (2): Ngo, and Sawyer

Carried (11 to 0)

The Commission **ADOPTED** the following resolution in support of Proposition 16: **Resolved**, that the California Student Aid Commission endorses Proposition 16 on the November 2020 General Election ballot, the legislatively referred initiative constitutional amendment to repeal Proposition 209 and allow the use of affirmative action in higher education, given that it ~~could~~ *would* support the ability for historically underrepresented California students to access public colleges and universities.

14. Consideration of institution appeals for 2020-21 Cal Grant Participation (Action)

Chair Cifuentes invited Steve Caldwell, Interim Deputy Director of Program Administration and Services Division, and Alessandra Morrison, Assistant Deputy Director of Program Support Services Branch to present on the item.

Mr. Caldwell noted that pursuant to Section 69432.7(l)(3)(l)(iv)(II) of the California Education Code, staff made recommendations for Cal Grant participation appeals for the four institutions:

- West Coast University,
- Design Institute of San Diego,
- Los Angeles Pacific University, and
- Providence Christian College.

Chair Cifuentes asked Mr. Caldwell to present the appeals one at a time.

Appeal by West Coast University

Mr. Caldwell provided an overview of the West Coast University appeal and the staff recommendation.

The President of West Coast University, Jeb Egbert, provided public comment on the appeal by West Coast University.

Mr. Caldwell presented the staff recommendation that:

The Commission approve West Coast University's appeal pursuant to Section 69432.7(l)(3)(l)(iv)(II) of the California Education Code because the cohort is less than 20 students and the graduation rate is not representative of the institution's overall graduation performance

Commissioner Geogue **moved to approve** the staff recommendation.

Seconded by Commissioner Mayer.

Roll call vote:

In Favor (10): Cifuentes, Moore, Greig, Doplemore, Geiogoue, Manjarrez, Maxie, Mayer, Nies, and Valladolid

Opposed (1): Siegel-Singh

Absent (2): Ngo, and Sawyer

Carried (10 to 1)

The Commission **APPROVED** staff recommendation to approve the appeal.

Appeal by Design Institute of San Diego

Margot Doucette, CEO of Design Institute of San Diego, provided public comment on this appeal.

Mr. Caldwell presented the staff recommendation that:

The Commission approve Design Institute of San Diego's appeal pursuant to Section 69432.7(l)(3)(l)(iv)(ll) of the California Education Code because the small cohort is less than 20 students and the graduation rate is not representative of the institution's overall graduation performance.

Commissioner Mayer **moved to approve** the staff recommendation. **Seconded by** Commissioner Geiogoue.

Roll Call vote:

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

Absent (3): Manjarrez, Ngo, and Sawyer

Carried (10 to 0)

The Commission **APPROVED** staff recommendation to approve the appeal.

Appeal by Los Angeles Pacific University

Mr. Caldwell provided an overview of the appeal request by Los Angeles Pacific University, the relevant law, and the staff recommendation.

President John Reynolds of Los Angeles Pacific University and Mr. Wayne Herman of Los Angeles Pacific University provided public comment on the appeal.

Commission staff and the Executive Director responded to Commissioners questions regarding the legal requirements for determining an appeal and flexibility, if any, under existing law.

Commissioner Mayer suggested that after action on this item there be a follow-up motion to direct staff to draft an appeal process for future institutional appeals.

Mr. Caldwell the staff recommendation that:

The Commission deny Los Angeles Pacific University's appeal pursuant to 69432.7(l)(3)(l)(iv)(II) of the California Education Code because although the institution has a small cohort of less than 20 students, the institution's overall graduation rate (full cohort) does not meet the over 30 percent graduation rate requirement for Cal Grant participation and therefore the institution does not meet the statutory grounds for approving an appeal.

Commissioner Geiogue **moved to approve** the staff recommendation.
Seconded by Commissioner Maxie.

Roll call vote:

In Favor (8): Cifuentes, Doplemore, Geiogue, Manjarrez, Maxie, Mayer, Siegel-Singh, and Valladolid

Opposed (2): Greig, and Nies

Abstain (1): Moore

Absent (2): Ngo, and Sawyer

Carried (8 to 2).

The Commission **APPROVED** the staff recommendation to deny the appeal.

Appeal by Providence Christian College

Mr. Caldwell provided an overview of the appeal by Providence Christian College default cohort and Cal Grant participation appeals.

Dawn Dirksen, CFO/Vice President for Finance and Operations of Providence Christian College, provided public comment on the appeal.

Commission staff responded to Commissioner questions about when an institution can appeal to the Commission.

Mr. Caldwell presented the staff recommendation that:

The Commission deny Providence Christian College's appeal pursuant to Section 69432.7(l)(3)(l)(iv)(II) of the California Education Code because the cohort size exceeds 20 students, the statutory grounds for approving an appeal.

Commissioner Mayor **moved to approve** the staff recommendation. **Seconded by** Commissioner Doplemore.

Roll call vote:

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

Opposed (1): Greig

Absent (2): Ngo, and Sawyer

Carried (10 to 1)

The Commission **APPROVED** the staff recommendation to deny the appeal.

Further action

Discussion by Commissioners and Executive Director Garcia of further actions that will be taken to try to keep students from being harmed by the decisions.

Commissioner Greig **moved to direct staff** to actively pursue remedy for the students for a year, with institution not receiving eligibility for a year.

After further discussion by Commissioners and Executive Director, Commissioner Mayer **seconded**.

Roll Call vote:

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

Absent (2): Ngo, and Sawyer

Carried (11 to 0)

The Commission **APPROVED** to direct staff to actively pursue remedy for the students for a year whose institution will not be receiving eligibility for a year.

Commissioner Geiogoue asked if the Commission can get a motion to direct staff to start drafting regulations on this appeals process. Ms. Blair responded that if the Commission would like to direct staff today so that regulations are drafted for a future meeting, the Commission does not have vote. Chair Cifuentes confirmed that the Commission would start working on regulations for the appeals process.

15. Update on Cal-SOAP in a COVID-19 environment (Information)

Chair Cifuentes invited Steve Caldwell, Interim Deputy Director of Program Administration and Services Program, Ramona Carlos, Specialized Programs

Manager, Joanna Romo, Cal-SOAP Lead Project Director from Santa Barbara consortium, representatives from Riverside County Office of Education consortium, and representatives from University Enterprises at California State University, San Bernardino, to present on the item.

Ms. Romo presented on the ways Cal-SOAP has transitioned to virtual platforms to contact students and families.

Commissioner Doplemore commended the Cal-SOAP project directors for providing the Summer Melt checklist on social media to keep students focused on the college.

Ms. Doughty presented on the impact of COVID-19 and how the San Diego/Imperial Cal-SOAP consortia has quickly adjusted to virtually support students, staff, and families. She also shared upcoming Fall plans to provide more assistance to students.

Theresa Fowler, from the Riverside County Office of Education, provided a brief overview of the consortium.

Vice-Superintendent Mark Lennor presented data that covers the seven different districts in Riverside County and the goals for the consortium. Superintendent Michael McCormick highlighted different partnerships that help the districts achieve their goals.

Commissioner Geiogue asked if Val Verde Unified School District is getting any other districts in the region who want to compete with FAFSA filing and completion. Superintendent McCormick responded that there are some competing district neighbors who are slowly following suit with the high school requirement of FAFSA completion.

Summer Steele, Executive Director of University Enterprises at CSU San Bernardino, provided updates for the Cal-SOAP consortium at University Enterprise at California State University, San Bernardino.

Commissioner Siegel-Singh expressed gratitude for Cal-SOAP work.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 15 UPDATE ON CAL-SOAP IN A COVID-19 ENVIRONMENT

There was no public comment.

- 13. Status of financial aid for California higher education undocumented students (Information) – taken out of order**

Chair Cifuentes invited Teresita Martinez, Executive Fellow, to present on the item.

Ms. Martinez presented on the status of financial aid for California higher education undocumented students.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 13 STATUS OF FINANCIAL AID FOR CALIFORNIA HIGHER EDUCATION UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Mayer asked if there is currently a CADAA work group. Ms. Martinez responded that the another CADAA work group was created to kick-start the application process, however, the work group has been on inactive for at least two years.

Executive Director agreed that there should be a CADAA work group that establishes from this research and would be a strategic opportunity to improve and address issues with the application.

Commissioner Nies asked if Executive Director Garcia needs assistance from the Commission and other partners to get this work group started.

12. Update on logo and rebranding (Information) – taken out of order

Chair Cifuentes invited Judith Gutierrez, Policy and Project Manager, and Michael Lemus, Communications Manager, to present on the item.

Ms. Gutierrez provided a brief background of the Commission logo rebranding process.

Mr. Lemus explained the logo implementation process for email signature, letterhead, newsletter, website, and press releases.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 15 UPDATE ON LOGO AND REBRANDING

There was no public comment.

16. Personnel, Evaluation and Nominations (PEN) Committee Report (Information/Action)

Committee Vice Chair Geiogue announced that the PEN Committee met on the Executive Director survey evaluation and encouraged respondents to submit their responses. He added that the Executive Director evaluation will be added to the September Commission meeting agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 16 PERSONNEL, EVALUATION AND NOMINATIONS (PEN) COMMITTEE REPORT

There was no public comment.

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

Chair Cifuentes noted the request to invite student presenters at the next meeting and more outreach data and initiative for the African American community.

Commissioner Moore asked to add another discussion of COVID-19 impact on basic needs.

Commissioner Doplemore asked for breakout Zoom meetings for subcommittee meetings.

Commissioner Siegel-Singh asked for updates on how institutions are making sure students have the technology needs to perform academic work.

Commissioner Doplemore asked to invite other nonprofit organizations to present on their outreach to local and district areas.

Executive Director Garcia asked to follow up on collaborating with CCC to increase FAFSA/CADAA rates in correlation to Cal Grants.

18. Adjournment

Chair Cifuentes adjourned the meeting at 4:53 p.m.

JUDITH MAXWELL GREIG
SECRETARY