



CSAC



The Campaign for College Opportunity



UNITELA
Education Innovation Through Collaboration

Double Down on College Affordability with the Cal Grant Equity Framework

Educational Equity in California will remain out of reach without an accessible financial aid system serving California's diverse student community.

California's college students are some of the most diverse and highest-need student populations in the country. Because of the coronavirus pandemic and its ongoing economic impacts, Latinx, Black, Asian and Pacific Islander and low-income students have struggled to stay in college. Job loss, housing insecurity and countless other affordability challenges are among the barriers these students face. These students represent the majority of our college communities and are the future workforce driving the economic future of our state. Our talented, low-income and diverse students need financial aid that is easy to access and that they can count on. The Cal Grant Equity Framework is the solution.

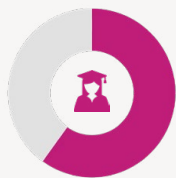


Currently ineligible students that will be served under the Cal Grant Equity Framework have an average income of **\$36,000**

The Cal Grant Equity Framework provides a solution that will reform California's outdated financial aid system.

The Framework, outlined in AB 1746 (Medina, McCarty, & Leyva) will shift California to a state-aid model based on student needs—rather than outdated rationing devices like age and time out of high school – that will

create a more inclusive financial aid system. If adopted and funded through this year's budget, the Framework will ensure thousands more student parents, adult learners, California Dream Act filers and returning learners will receive Cal Grant awards than are currently being served.



Female students represent **60% of all the students** made eligible for aid by the Cal Grant Equity Framework

Under this framework, aid will become available for more than:

- 95,000 eligible Latinx students
- 18,000 Asian and Pacific Islander students
- 11,000 African American students
- 3,000 California Dream Act students
- 91,000 female students

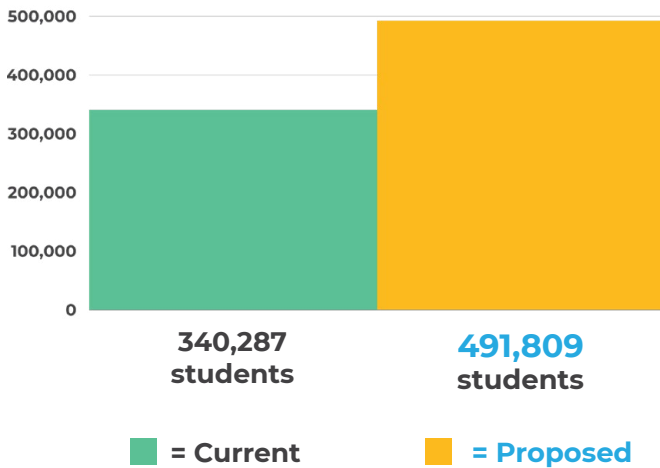
The Governor is calling for more higher education investments to reach critical attainment goals, and the Cal Grant Equity Framework provides a perfect vehicle to reach those goals via this year's budget. As the economic and educational impacts of COVID-19 persist, the time for policymakers to act is now; students and families across our state cannot afford to wait. Together, we can build upon last year's critical Cal Grant investments by adopting and implementing the Cal Grant Equity Framework in the 2022-23 State Budget.

HOW WILL THE CAL GRANT EQUITY FRAMEWORK WORK?

The Cal Grant Equity Framework will streamline our current financial aid system to serve more students and revitalize California's economy, businesses and workforce. The remodeled program would align eligibility of

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Cal Grant Student Eligibility



state-based financial aid with federal policy, eliminate eligibility barriers and target state resources for the most financially vulnerable students by reaching over **150,000 MORE** students by leveraging all parts of the financial aid system.

Fully modernizing California's state financial aid system under the Cal Grant Equity Framework and building off last year's investments would:

- Address gaps in the current Cal Grant program by removing barriers that keep out talented students who make an average income of \$36,000
- Streamline the eight current Cal Grant programs into two programs - Cal Grant 2 for community college students and Cal Grant 4 for students at four-year colleges.

- Align eligibility with the federal Pell Grant to enable earlier and clear communication with students and families about how much aid they can expect to receive.
- Expand access to awards for foster youth and student parents to use for non-tuition expenses, helping address the student basic needs crisis.

As higher education has become more accessible, talented students from diverse backgrounds have pursued college, and they need financial aid support to succeed. The new Cal Grant Equity Framework will:

- Provide additional grants like the Students with Dependent Children (SWDC) to reach more than 44,000 new student parents and uplift more families.
- Work in alignment with other forms of financial aid including the Middle Class Scholarship and institutional aid.
- Enable more students to apply for CalFresh, a federally-funded benefit that helps recipients afford regular meals to help better meet their basic needs.

The Cal Grant Equity Framework will provide a workable, equitable financial aid system that meets the needs of students of color and lower-income students. The Framework must be adopted and funded through this year's budget if the state is to meet the needs of students seeking higher education as well as the Governor's ambitious degree and certificate attainment goals.

California leaders have an unparalleled opportunity to address college affordability and decisively close attainment gaps by simplifying the Cal Grant system. California has what it takes to create the most equitable system in the nation by prioritizing its students and removing remaining barriers.

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