



# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT: Carole Durante**  
**(916) 526-7991**

## **California Student Aid Commission Applauds Governor's 2006-2007 Proposals for College-Going Students** *Maximum Cal Grant Award Restored and Fee Levels Retained*

**RANCHO CORDOVA, CA** – The California Student Aid Commission applauds Governor Schwarzenegger for his budget proposals announced today to restore the maximum Cal Grant award to \$9,708 and retain University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) fees at their current levels for students. The top Cal Grant award that goes to qualifying students attending California's private and independent colleges was dropped from \$9,708 to \$8,322 annually as part of the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 budget cuts to the Cal Grant Program. Restoring the award level would raise the maximum award for these students to the level initially paid by the state when the program was expanded in 2000 into an entitlement program for graduating high school seniors.

"Holding fees at the current level for UC and CSU students, and restoring the maximum Cal Grant award will allow many students from low-income and disadvantaged families to go to college," said Diana Fuentes-Michel, executive director of the California Student Aid Commission. "Cal Grants have helped students with financial access to college since 1955, and assisted over a quarter of a million California college-going students in 2005-2006."

The Cal Grant will continue to pay for system fees of up to \$6,141 annually for students attending a UC, and up to \$2,520 annually for students going to a CSU. The Cal Grant may be renewed for up to four years of college for students who continue to qualify, or longer if the student is getting a teaching credential or attending another mandatory five-year program.

Cal Grants are free money for colleges and career, vocational or occupational programs – money that students do not need to pay back. Depending on which Cal Grant a student qualifies for, the money can be used for tuition, fees, books, supplies, housing, food and even transportation expenses to and from classes. Cal Grants may be used at qualifying two- and four-year public and independent colleges as well as some private career colleges.

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P.O. Box 419045, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9045

## Two Forms. Tons of Opportunity.

The Cal Grant application period started January 1<sup>st</sup> and continues through March 2<sup>nd</sup>. To apply for a Cal Grant, students must complete two forms, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Cal Grant GPA Verification Form. The FAFSA can be found online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) or at high school counseling or college financial aid offices. Students are encouraged to complete and submit the FAFSA as soon as possible to qualify for the most financial aid possible, including a Cal Grant.

To get a Cal Grant, students must also verify their Cal Grant grade point average (GPA) by filling out and submitting the Cal Grant GPA Verification Form. The form is available at high school counseling offices or online at [www.calgrants.org](http://www.calgrants.org). Either way, the GPA must be verified and the form signed by a high school counselor before it is submitted. Some high schools submit Cal Grant GPAs electronically on behalf of their graduating seniors. However, students are ultimately responsible for their GPA reaching the California Student Aid Commission in Rancho Cordova postmarked by March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Help with filling out the forms is available, and often in many languages. High schools, colleges and other organizations statewide are providing financial aid workshops for students and parents, especially during the January through March 2<sup>nd</sup> Cal Grant application period. To find a workshop in communities across the state, go to [www.californiacashforcollege.org](http://www.californiacashforcollege.org) or call the Cal Grant information line at 1-888-CA GRANT (1-888-224-7268).

Visit [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov) for information on the California Student Aid Commission and other college financial aid and scholarship programs.

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*The California Student Aid Commission is the state's principal provider of intersegmental statewide grant aid to postsecondary students. Founded in 1955 as the California State Scholarship Commission, the Commission's primary programmatic responsibilities include operation of the Cal Grant program, which is distributing nearly \$800 million to California's college students during the 2005-2006 school year; operation of the California Chafee Grant Program; and, several multi-million dollar targeted state scholarship and loan forgiveness programs. The 15-member Commission oversees the activities of its nonprofit student loan services auxiliary, EDFUND. The Commission is headquartered in Rancho Cordova, California.*

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