State Share-Out: Innovations in State Grant Programs

5 minutes per state to share an innovation in a state grant program

SHEEO
State Higher Education
Executive Officers Association

CA Dream Act Application for Mixed-Status Families

Allows FAFSA-eligible students whose FAFSA contributor(s) do not have a Social Security Number (SSN) to apply for **California state** and **institutional aid**

Developed in response to the unprecedented 2024-25 financial aid cycle that prevented students with Non-SSN contributors from submitting a timely FAFSA

Mixed-Status Family Resources available in seven languages: www.csac.ca.gov/cadaa-msf

SB 323 (Pérez) to implement "CADAA for All"

Systemic Approaches
Simplified Applications

- **Agency**
  - Increasing and simplifying online support
  - Bringing services directly to communities
- **Schools**
  - School Day FAFSA Bill
  - School Point of Contact Bill
- **State**
  - Direct Admission
  - Wraparound Support

21ST CENTURY SCHOLARS AUTOMATIC ENROLLMENT

▶ **HEA-1449-2023** requires the Commission to identify and automatically enroll eligible students into the 21st Century Scholars program.

  ▶ Automatically enrolling all income-eligible students into the program removes that barrier that students and families face.

▶ In the 2027 cohort alone, the number of students who self-enrolled was 19,000. After automatic enrollment, that number grew to **over 40,000.**

▶ The Commission has automatically enrolled students in cohort 2027 – 2030 increasing the overall total for enrollment into the program.

CHE.IN.gov

Implemented:
- Iowa Workforce Grant & Incentive Program

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In the works:
- Program Administration Interest Provision

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Hope to achieve:
- FSA Account in completion reports and data dashboards

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IOWA | **Department of Education**
Bureau of Iowa College Aid

YCP: GO Youth ChalleNGe Grant

- Provides tuition at an eligible Louisiana postsecondary institution for students who graduate from the Louisiana National Guard's Youth ChalleNGe Program.

- The Go Youth ChalleNGe Grant includes a two-year award that will cover the cost of tuition for a student enrolled at any eligible Louisiana postsecondary institution in a program that will lead to a three, four, or five-star job in the Louisiana job industry.

- Developed a partnership with the Youth Challenge Program, including site visits and professional development for YCP counselors.
  - Expanded the partnership to include onsite career fairs. Plans are underway to expand the partnership to include FAFSA® completion support.

Ebony Holmes & Kyleigh Quiroga
College Access, Success, and Communications Division

Maine State Grant Program

Statutory Flexibility

- FAFSA deadline and SAI cap are not fixed
- Support for adult late filers returning to school
- Award Tiers

Wish List

- Pipeline guarantee
- Carve out for short term credentials
- Support non-Title IV eligible programs

The Michigan Achievement Scholarship

Started in AY 2023-24. Largest investment in higher education funding in Michigan!

- 3 Pathways for students (Community College Guarantee, 4-year public/private institution, career training).
- Changes this AY – shift from a minimum award/last dollar award to covering in-district tuition, mandatory fees and contact hours at Community Colleges and Tribal Colleges and up to $5500 per year at 4-year public/private institution towards COA.
- AY 2023-24 = **28,706** students awarded over **$110 million.**
- To date in AY 2024-25 = **61,440** students awarded over **$263.5 million.**
- More than **73%** of Michigan Achievement Scholarship students from last AY returned this AY and were awarded this year as well.
- Michigan Achievement Scholarship's reach is in **all 83 Michigan counties**, so Michiganders in **ALL** geographic regions are utilizing this scholarship!

Michigan Reconnect

- Michigan Sixty by 30 goal: Increase the number of working-age adults with a skill certificate or college degree from **51.8% today** to 60% by 2030.
- Each student is assigned to one of **13** Reconnect Navigators to assist them from point of scholarship acceptance through graduation.
- AY 2023-24 = **26,755** students awarded over **$36 million.**
- To date in AY 2024-25 = **23,760** students awarded nearly **$24 million.**

Reconnect Expansion

- AY 2023-24 = **6,335** students awarded nearly **$11 million.**
- To date in AY 2024-25 = **13,830** students awarded **$19 million.**
  - Increase of 7,481 expansion students!

- Launched the North Star Promise and North Star Promise Plus programs
- Significant enrollment growth + increase in FAFSA completion + increase in students with high financial need = strain on State Grant resources for current and future fiscal years
  - Developed models to test interplay between existing State Grant program and new NSP program
  - Working with Legislature to determine ways to ration State Grant dollars for current budget scenario
  - Working to determine potential State Grant impacts if changes to Pell in House Reconciliation Bill would be implemented and working on drafting protective language within statute to avoid budget deficits

MINNESOTA OFFICE
OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Mississippi: Innovating for Attainment

MTAG Works

Redesign MTAG (residency grant) for expanded access

- Remove Pell exclusion
- Allow part-time enrollment
- Remove academic requirements
- Increase award amounts

Outreach Innovation

Increase HELP (need grant) awareness and applications for success

- Create dual FAFSA/MAAPP tracker
- Target counselor/student education and outreach

Missouri FAFSA Completion Project

- A free online resource from the MDHEWD that helps school districts monitor and increase their students' FAFSA completion rates by providing access to *student-level* FAFSA completion data.
  - Secure & Password Protected
  - Includes student-level data on Complete | No Signature | Error

- Districts enter into a data-sharing agreement with MDHEWD
  - Superintendents enter into the Agreement with the Commissioner of MDHEWD
    - As many authorized users as necessary

- Allows counselors to:
  - Identify seniors who have (and have not) completed a FAFSA
  - Offer individualized assistance
  - Check on seniors who were marked for verification and support that process
  - Making sure students have access to any financial aid opportunities

- Landing Page: https://dhewd.mo.gov/ppc/fafsa-completion

DEPARTMENT OF
HIGHER EDUCATION &
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- 2003 – Nebraska Opportunity Grant
- 2007 – Access College Early (ACE) Scholarship
- 2014 – FAFSA Completion Initiative
  - Universal FAFSA Class of 2025
- 2019 – Community College GAP Grant

- 2024
  - Door to College Scholarship
  - Career Readiness & Dual Credit Grant
  - Attracting Excellence to Teaching Loan Forgiveness
  - Attracting Excellence to Teaching-Student Teaching Loan Forgiveness
  - Enhancing Excellence in Teaching Loan Forgiveness
  - Career Scholarships
    - Community Colleges
    - Private Colleges

Direct and Guaranteed Admissions

- Establishes a direct admissions pilot program.
  - Voluntary participation by high schools and IHEs
  - Automated process that uses student record to determine if that student meets IHE admission requirements resulting in admission with no requirement to apply
- Guarantees admission to a state IHE for each HS graduate in the top 10% of their class.
  - o Permits the IHE to delay admission to main campus and admit to a regional campus it the student does not meet unconditional admission standards
- Guarantees admission to the main campus of a state IHE for each recipient of the Governor's Merit Scholarship (HS graduate in the top 5% of their class)

Department of Higher Education

HigherEd.Ohio.gov

OKLAHOMA

OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
Improving our future by degrees

OCAP
Oklahoma College Assistance Program

▶ 2024-25 was Oklahoma's first year to require FAFSA completion for graduation

▶ OCAP and the State Regents provided free FAFSA completion support:
- Monthly FAFSA webinars
- FAFSA Data Portal for schools to track seniors' FAFSA completion status

| 377 School Districts | 52,000+ Students |

- FAFSA FastTrack initiative shared FAFSA completion events held across the state
- FAFSA publications, videos, PowerPoint presentations provided
- In-person FAFSA and college planning presentations for students, parents, counselors

| 240 presentations | 10,500+ attendees |

▶ Oklahoma ranks #1 in year-over-year FAFSA completions at 71.2% (5/2/2025)

Pennsylvania State Grant Program Innovation

The new Student Aid Index (SAI) Formula triggered several policy recommendations for the PA State Grant Program, effective for the 2024-25 award year. Decisions were made in August 2023, prior to receipt of 2024-25 FAFSA data.

- Key decision: Eliminating Pell from raw PA State Grant calculation of student need
  - Prior Calculation: COA – SAI **– Pell** = Student Need
  - New Calculation: COA – SAI = Student Need

- Projected academic year expenditures:
  - Using EFC calculation, with Pell subtracted = $348,564,992
  - Using SAI calculation and no Pell subtraction = $360,477,444
  - **Projected Outcome of $11.9 million additional award dollars provided to over 72,700 Pell-eligible PA State Grant Program recipients**

PHEAA

Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency

South Carolina Program Updates

- The SC Commission on Higher Education joined the Holistic Credit Mobility Acceleration Cohort, led by Complete College America, and in partnership with the American Council on Education, sponsored statewide training modules for faculty and administrators with the goal of validating learning from previous work and military experience to improve outcomes for transfer students and adult learners.

- The State of South Carolina has introduced Scholarship Enhancements for students majoring in Education and Accounting, awarding an additional $2500 in addition to base scholarship awards ($5,000 and $7,500). The Commission has incorporated tracking and reporting of these enhancements into its new CRM, providing for greater ease and communication among institutions and recipients.

- The State of South Carolina has tripled its investment in need-based student financial assistance programs since 2022, resulting in increased award amounts and expanded access to programs.
  - Maximum annual award for SC Tuition Grant up from $3,600 to $5,000
    - FAFSA Filing Deadline extended to August 1 for Tuition Grant applicants; Deadline date for satisfaction of all eligibility requirements also extended by a month, providing students and colleges additional time to collect certain documents
    - Program eligibility opened to mid-year transfer students and Spring semester starts for the first time; Expansion of eligibility to non-standard terms
    - Simplification of academic eligibility requirements for new and returning students
  - Maximum annual award for SC Need-Based Grant up from $2,500 to $3,500
    - South Carolina awarded SC Need-Based Grants to 41,511 students in 2023-24, totaling $88 million. This represents a 43% increase in student awards made since 2021. The funding level has increased 182% since over that same timeframe.

THECB Programs

- Student Financial Aid Programs (SFAP)

- Data Management and Research (DMR)

- ApplyTexas Counselor Suite

- Direct Admissions

- TXWORKS Internship Program

- Work-Study Student Mentorship Program

APPLY ★ TEXAS

MY TX FUTURE

TX WORKS
Supported by THECB

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Washington State

Washington Student Achievement Council's Spring FAFSA Push

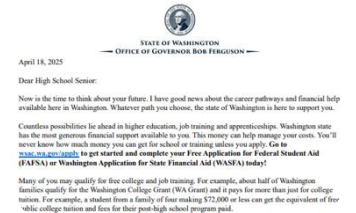Four-Pronged Approach to Increasing Financial Aid Awareness and Completion Rates

Priority School Pilot Project

Statewide Financial Aid Event Calendar

Texting and Email Campaign

Governor's Letter and School Visits

WASHINGTON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL
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CLASS OF 2026
Financial Aid Nights

Join the 12th Year Campaign to learn more about financial aid and take your first step creating your FSA ID or WASFA account.

Hosted on Zoom in English and Spanish

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12th Year Campaign

TO REGISTER GO TO HTTPS://WSAC.WA.GOV/FINANCIAL-AID-EVENTS

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Noche de Ayuda Financiera

Únase a la campaña del duodécimo año para obtener más información sobre la ayuda financiera y dé el primer paso para crear su FSA ID o cuenta WASFA en este evento.

Esta presentación está disponible en inglés y español

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