



TO: Chief Executive Officers
Chief Instructional Officers
Chief Student Services Officers

FROM: Marty J. Alvarado
Executive Vice Chancellor, Educational Services & Support

RE: Guidance Regarding Potential State Fund Sources of Direct Emergency Aid to Students

The COVID-19 pandemic and the required social and physical distancing has disrupted the lives of many students and has created financial challenges that impact their education. Students are struggling to make ends meet and have increased instruction-based needs as well as basic needs related to food and shelter that have been made more acute by the pandemic. Under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), Pub. L. No. 116-136, 134 Stat. 281 (2020), colleges may use designated federal funds to provide emergency financial aid to help students with unmet needs associated with the pandemic. However, the federal Department of Education has interpreted the Act to provide emergency aid only to those students who have established eligibility for federal financial aid under Title IV of the Higher Education Act. This interpretation exclude potentially hundreds of thousands of community college students, many of whom are in financial crisis.

This memo provides a summary of current state programs that may provide direct aid to eligible students, including to those students who are prohibited from receiving CARES Act assistance, according to the federal Department of Education's interpretation. Colleges should work directly with Chancellor's Office program staff to ensure appropriate federal, state, and local student eligibility and verification processes are followed. Colleges are encouraged to maximize the use of these funds for direct aid to students where unmet need exists due to the pandemic, and where funding is available. Individual colleges may not have access to all of the funding sources referenced in this memo.

This memo references the following programs:

- California Promise Program
- California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids
- Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Education Support
- Currently & Formerly Incarcerated Students Reentry Program
- Extended Opportunities Programs & Services
- Mathematics, Science, Engineering Achievement
- Student Equity & Achievement Program

California Promise Program (AB 19/AB 2). Colleges may use California Promise Program funds to either waive student tuition fees or to support the Vision for Success goals, including providing direct aid to students, such as cash grants, gas cards, or grocery cards. Student eligibility is based on full-time enrollment and requires the completion of either the FAFSA or the Dream Act Application.¹

California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs). CalWORKs programs may use Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or TANF funds to provide direct grants to students participating in the CalWORKs program. Colleges should work with their financial aid office to ensure grants do not exceed a student's total cost of attendance. Colleges may only use TANF funds for direct grants and may not redirect CalWORKs' work study or child care program funds for these grants. CalWORKs eligibility is based on the student being a current CalWORKs recipient who has not met their initial educational objective or exceeded their time limit.

Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Education Support (CAFYES or NextUp). Through the NextUp program, participating colleges may provide grants or loans to foster youth students enrolled in the program. Colleges should work with their campus financial aid office to maximize the aid that NextUp students receive. Student eligibility for the NextUp program is based on many factors including residency (California or students eligible for non-resident tuition waiver), age, course enrollment, and foster youth status.²

Currently and Formerly Incarcerated Students Reentry Program. Assembly Bill 1809, authorized funding to support currently and formerly incarcerated students. The Rising Scholars program allows community colleges to provide direct aid to previously incarcerated students enrolled in the program. Student eligibility is based on current term enrollment.

Extended Opportunities, Programs, and Services (EOPS). As detailed in [Executive Order 2020-03](#) and the corresponding guidance memo [ES 20-13](#), the EOPS program may provide grants or loans to enrolled students. The grant and loan amount limits and timelines have been suspended during the pandemic by the Chancellor's Executive Order 2020-03 (Apr. 6, 2020). All students eligible for and enrolled in the EOPS program are eligible to participate in the grant or loan program.³

Mathematics, Science, Engineering Achievement (MESA). Assembly Bill 74 (2019-20 Budget Act) provides funding to eligible districts through grants for MESA programs. These programs provide academic and support services to economically and educationally disadvantaged students. Student eligibility is based on enrollment in a community college in a STEM major and financial need, as determined locally. Colleges should consult with their districts to determine if grant funds are available for direct aid to students.

Student Equity and Achievement Program (SEA). Colleges may use SEA program funds to provide direct aid to eligible students who are experiencing an unforeseen financial hardship due to the COVID-19 crisis.⁴ Student eligibility for these funds is based on guidelines established by the

¹ Cal. Ed. Code § 76396 et. seq.

² 5 Cal. Code Regs, § 56403

³ 5 Cal. Code Regs, § 56220

⁴ Cal. Ed. Code § 78220(e)

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colleges to address the unique needs of their students, satisfactory academic progress, as defined by the college, and the student being at risk of not persisting in their course of study.

It is critical during this current crisis that our system remain focused on directly addressing inequities experienced by students with limited access to resources and continue to provide the necessary supports for students to not only persist, but to succeed. For questions regarding this memo or the funding sources please contact Michael R. Quiaoit, Dean of Educational Services and Support at mquiaoit@cccco.edu.

cc: Eloy Ortiz Oakley, Chancellor
Daisy Gonzalez, Deputy Chancellor
Aisha Lowe, Vice Chancellor
CCCCO Staff