

As of 7-3-2019

AB 19 created the California College Promise that provides funds to districts to advance the goals of the legislation. One specific use of funds in the law allows colleges to, if a district chooses to use the funds in this way, cover the fees for first time, full-time students. However, a grant for students to pay their fees is not required.

The 2019-20 state budget authorized districts to cover the fees of second year students who met program requirements in their first year. Students who maintain full-time status into their second year may continue to be paid for these second year. Accordingly, district allocations were increased to help pay for these students. Be aware that, as of the date of this Q&A, AB 2 has not been chaptered into law. As a result, current law regarding the required number of units to receive a College Promise waiver of fees is in place.

GENERAL COLLEGE PROMISE QUESTIONS

- 1.

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- a. Grants to pay the first time, full-time student's enrollment fees
- b. Grants to pay student non-enrollment fees
- c. An

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- c. Increasing the percentage of students who successfully transfer from a community college to the California State University or the University of California and increasing the percentage of students who graduate from college with a baccalaureate degree.
- d. Reducing and eliminating regional achievement gaps and achievement gaps for students

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To determine if disabled students should be considered full-time for College Promise eligibility under if enrolled in less than 12 units, a local determination would have to be made based on a fact-intensive analysis that would depend on the student's specific circumstances. Such a factually-dependent analysis is most appropriately conducted by a district's legal counsel.

10. What are districts required to do to receive funding?

Answer:

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13. If a student completely withdraws or drops down to less than the college's full-time attendance, do they need to repay the grant/fee waiver? Can they regain eligibility in the program?

Answer: Each institution will establish its own return of funds policies. The law states that participants must maintain full-time status. Dropping all coursework, or dropping below full-time causes the student to lose eligibility going forward.

14. How are mid-year high school graduates, who begin college enrollment in the Spring handled,

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22. Is this one-time or continuing funding?

Answer: The law creates an ongoing program subject to annual funding in the state budget.

21. If the initial allocation falls short, will we be able to request more funding?

Answer: All 2019-20 funds were fully allocated with the initial 2019-20 advance. Districts should plan on expending all allocated funds, track fund expenditures and ration the funds by some means, if necessary.

We believe that additional allocations will not occur.

22. If we have funds left over, should they be returned?

Answer: All funds are to be spent to meet program goals.

23. Are the California College Promise funds restricted?

Answer: Yes, College Promise funds are restricted and should be recorded in the Restricted General Fund – Object Code 8620 (General Categorical Program). Expenses for eligible services as described in the law can also be recorded in the same restricted fund. Student grants for first year enrollment fees may also be recorded under object code 7500 or processed through Fund Type 74.

24. Are College Promise funds that are used to pay for student enrollment fees refundable to students?

Answer: No, College Promise funds are not refundable to students and each district should ensure that its accounting system has audit checks in place to identify these transactions.

USE OF THE FAFSA OR DREAM ACT APPLICATION

25. Must colleges require the completion of the FAFSA or Dream Act AppS

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27. Question 8 describes the participation requirements for the California College Promise. One requirement is to "Partner with one or more Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to establish an Early Commitment to College Program. Is this still required?

Answer: The "Early Commitment to College" program was repealed as of 1/1/19 in accordance with prior EC section 54716. However, the first goal of the legislation (Question 6) is "Increasing the number and percentage of high school students who are prepared for and attend college directly from high school and increasing the percentage of high school graduates who are placed directly into transfer-level mathematics and English courses at a community college."

Clearly, the intent of the law is for districts to have significant involvement with local high schools towards meeting the goals of the legislation.

QUESTIONS ON A STUDENT SECOND YEAR IN THE PROGRAM

28. For students continuing as full-time for their second year, must they have been paid the year before in the program or only have been first-time, full-time at that college or another college?

Answer: A student can be considered for a second year of College Promise eligibility only if they were a first time, full-time student at that college or another community college.

29. May a student be paid for 2019-20 summer if 2019-20 allocation is authorized only after July 1?

Answer: Yes, for the College Promise summer is treated as a leader and students attending 12 or more units can receive fee waivers even if the summer term began prior to July 1.

30. Can a student have attended more than one college in the prior year to establish eligibility for their second year?

Answer: A student who was a first-time college student the year before and attended more than one college to reach 12+ units in each primary term, can receive a College Promise fee waiver for the second year.