



# Financial Aid 101

Presented in collaboration with the  
California Student Aid Commission

# Goals for Today. Let's Talk About:



- ✓ Preparing for college
- ✓ Financial Aid Overview
- ✓ Answering your questions
- ✓ Provide you with contact information

Q&A

Use the **Zoom Q&A box** to ask your questions. Just type them in!

Here is my question...

Send Anonymously

Send

You can ask questions in English or Spanish!



¡Se puede hacer preguntas en inglés o español!



# It's Never too Early to Start Preparing for College

9th  
Grade

- Take the “A-G” courses to meet college admission requirements
- Aim for A’s and B’s in all your classes; focus on homework and develop good study skills
- Join clubs, play sports and volunteer. This is a good way to develop and expand your interests
- Explore different career options
- Meet with your high school counselor

10-12<sup>th</sup>  
Grade

# It's Never too Early to Start Preparing for College

- Start researching college degree requirements your sophomore year
- Visit your favorite college campuses starting early spring of your junior year if possible
- Volunteer; get involved extracurricular activities
- Prepare and practice your note-taking skills
- Continue to get good grades
- Continue to meet with your counselor
- **In 12<sup>th</sup> grade:** submit the FAFSA/CADAA and apply to colleges after **October 1st!**

Note: 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> year grades are used for your Cal Grant GPA

## GRANTS

FREE Need-based money that doesn't need to be repaid. Federal, state, and campus grants are available.

FREE Merit-based money that doesn't need to be repaid.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Fixed, low-interest rate money that must be repaid after graduating college.

## WORK STUDY

A federal program that allows students to work on campus and earn \$. Earnings applied towards tuition, fees, etc.

## FEDERAL LOANS

# Types of Financial Aid



# How Much Federal Student Aid Can I Receive?

Maximum amounts for the major programs for a dependent freshman in 2021-22:

- Federal Pell Grant: **\$6,495** (**FREE MONEY!**)
- Federal Work-Study: **depends on funds available at school**  
(Average amount nationwide is approximately \$1,800/year)
- Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans: **\$5,500 to \$12,500**  
depending on year in school and dependency status
- Direct PLUS Loan (for parents): **COA** minus other aid received

Federal Aid





# How Much State Aid Can I Receive?

Cal Grants will pay for up to 4 years of college, if you are awarded as a **Freshman** in college.

**Cal Grant** maximum yearly award amounts (**Free Money!**)

- Up to **\$12,570** at a **UC** for tuition & fees
- Up to **\$5,742** at a **CSU** for tuition & fees
- Up to **\$1,648** at a **Community College** for books and supplies
- Up to **\$9,220** at a **Private Schools** for tuition & fees
- Up to **\$4,000 - \$8,056** at a private, for-profit School (non WASC accredited/WASC accredited)

**INSTITUTIONAL AID** is also award directly from the college

California State Aid (Cal Grant)





# What Are Other Sources of Aid?

Search for scholarships on free scholarship matching web sites, like Fastweb.com and the College Board's Big Future

Start searching ASAP, as many scholarships have early deadlines in the fall and younger grades and continue searching for scholarships after high school, since some scholarships are available only to current college students

Apply to every scholarship for which you are eligible

Undocumented students should also look for lists of scholarships on immigrantsrising.org and [www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resources/](http://www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resources/)

Beware of scholarship scams: If you have to pay money to get money, it's probably a scam

Merit based aid and scholarships



# Free Financial Aid

Most scholarships will require one or more of the following:

- Application
- Essay
- Letter(s) of recommendation
- Transcript
- Interview
- Presentation
- Participate in volunteer opportunities



Merit based aid and scholarships



# How to Apply for Financial Aid

**How to Apply**

**What is a Cal Grant?**

**Why should I want one?**

**How do I get one?**



Cal Grants are **FREE MONEY** for college that you don't have to pay back!

# FAFSA & the California Dream Act Application



# Two Applications

Submit **only one** - every year!



Federal Student Aid  
BY OFFICE OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

UNDERSTAND AID ▾ APPLY FOR AID ▾ COMPLETE AID PROCESS ▾ MANAGE LOANS ▾

## Complete the FAFSA® Form

Use the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)* form to apply for financial aid for college or graduate school.

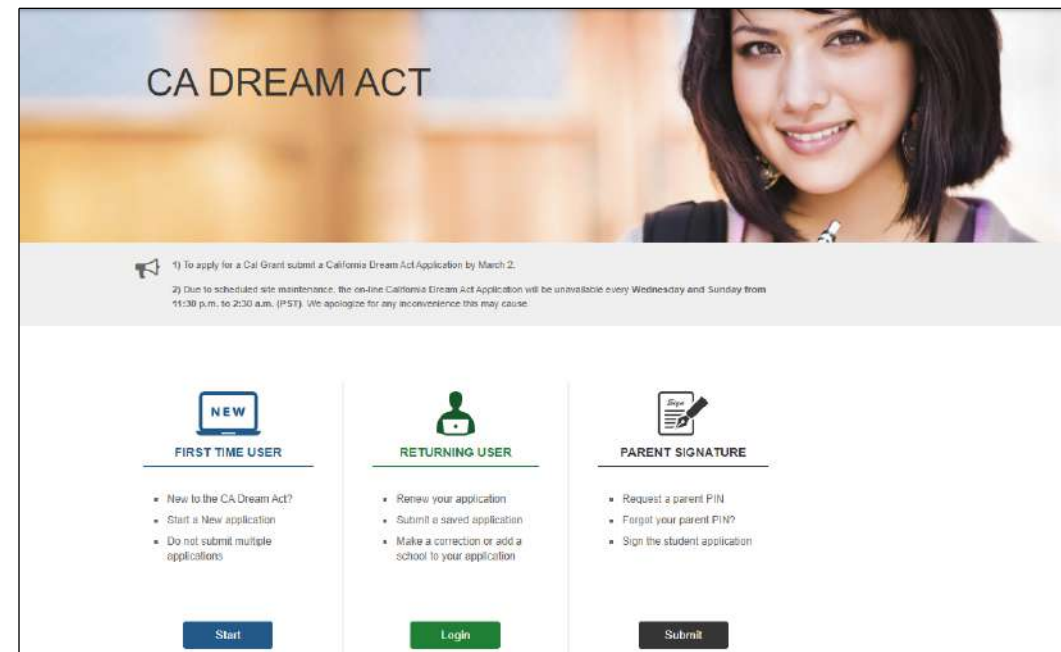
**New to the FAFSA® Process?**  
Completing the FAFSA form is free. Fill it out now.  
[Start Here](#)

**Returning User?**  
Correct info | Add a school  
View your *Student Aid Report (SAR)*  
[Log In](#)

FAFSA® Announcements

## FAFSA

(Free Application for Federal Student Aid)  
Eligible for federal and CA state financial aid,  
campus aid, and some scholarships.



## CA DREAM ACT

1) To apply for a Cal Grant submit a California Dream Act Application by March 2.  
2) Due to scheduled site maintenance, the on-line California Dream Act Application will be unavailable every Wednesday and Sunday from 11:30 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. (PST). We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

**NEW**

**FIRST TIME USER**

- New to the CA Dream Act?
- Start a New application
- Do not submit multiple applications

[Start](#)

**RETURNING USER**

- Renew your application
- Submit a saved application
- Make a correction or add a school to your application

[Login](#)

**PARENT SIGNATURE**

- Request a parent PIN
- Forgot your parent PIN?
- Sign the student application

[Submit](#)

## CADAA

(California Dream Act Application)  
Eligible for CA state financial aid, campus  
aid, and some scholarships.



# CSS Profile (for institutional aid)

- Some colleges ask for additional information by utilizing the **CSS Profile**. This form is used to determine eligibility for institutional aid.
- Not all private colleges require it. Some participating Institutions in California are Occidental College, Pomona College, Stanford University, University of Southern California (USC), all of the Claremont Colleges, and Caltech.
- There is space for explanation of special circumstances on the Profile, that is not provided on the FAFSA.
- Fee waivers- student used an SAT fee waiver or parental income is approx. \$45,000 or less or student is orphan or ward of the court under the age of 24.

<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>





## Who Can Apply?

- U.S. citizens
- Legal permanent residents
- Certain designations, including refugees or those granted asylum
- T visa holders

A screenshot of the Federal Student Aid website homepage. The top navigation bar includes the "Federal Student Aid" logo and four menu items: "UNDERSTAND AID", "APPLY FOR AID", "COMPLETE AID PROCESS", and "MANAGE LOANS". The main content area has a dark teal background with a large heading "Complete the FAFSA® Form" and a "Start Here" button. Below this, there is a sub-heading "New to the FAFSA® Process?" with a "Start Here" button, and another sub-heading "Returning User?" with a "Log In" button. At the bottom, there is a link for "FAFSA® Announcements".

Federal Student Aid  
AN OFFICE OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

UNDERSTAND AID ▾ APPLY FOR AID ▾ COMPLETE AID PROCESS ▾ MANAGE LOANS ▾

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Start Here

### Returning User?

Correct info | Add a school

View your *Student Aid Report* (SAR)

Log In

FAFSA® Announcements





# California Dream Act Application



## Who Can Apply?

- Undocumented Students
- With or without DACA
- TPS Status
- U Visa Holders



 **FAFSA**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
FEDERAL STUDENT AID

OR

California  
**DreamAct** 

+

 **GPA**

---

= Cal Grant Consideration

**Apply beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> each year when you are a high school SENIOR**



## 2021-22 CAL GRANT PROGRAM INCOME CEILINGS

**Minimum GPA for A: 3.0**  
**Minimum GPA for B: 2.0**

Cal Grant  
 A and C

Cal Grant  
 B

Dependent students and  
 Independent students with dependents other than a spouse

Family size:

Six or more	\$127,700	\$70,100
Five	\$118,400	\$65,000
Four	\$110,400	\$58,100
Three	\$101,700	\$52,200
Two	\$99,200	\$46,300

Independent students

Single, no dependents	\$40,500	\$40,500
Married, no other dependents	\$46,300	\$46,300

✓ Cal Grant  
 Type

✓ Family  
 Size

✓ Family  
 Income

Find this information on our website: [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov)

To apply for aid for the 2022-2023 academic year you will use tax information from the 'prior-prior' year, i.e., 2020.

Tax information is always from 2 years ago

There is no need to update your tax information on the financial aid application once you do your current taxes



**Note: Tax information is always from 2 years ago**



**A**

Community College	CSU	UC	Private Non-profit	For Profit
CC Reserve	\$5,742	\$12,570	\$9,220	\$4,000

**B**

Community College	CSU	UC	Private Non-profit	For Profit
\$1,648 up to 4 years	\$5,742* + \$1,648	\$12,570* + \$1,648	\$9,220* + \$1,648	\$4,000* + \$1,648

**C**

Community College	CSU	UC	Private Non-profit	For Profit
\$1,094	N/A	N/A	B/S \$547 T/F \$2,462	B/S \$547 T/F \$2,462

**Cal Grants A, B & C**





The **Middle Class Scholarship** pays up to **35% of tuition and fees** per academic year at a UC or CSU for eligible students whose income exceeds the limits for Cal Grant A or B. No special application needed- just the FAFSA or California Dream Act Application submitted by 3/2.

UC Maximum Award  
2021-2022: \$4,398

CSU Maximum Award  
2021-2022: \$2,010

**Maximum income for  
award: \$191,000**



The **Chafee Grant** is available to current and former foster youth who were dependent or wards of the court, living in foster care, for at least 1 day between the ages of 16-18. Pays up to **\$5,000** per academic year for eligible participants.

<https://chafee.csac.ca.gov/>

State Aid: Middle Class Scholarship/Chafee Grant



# Find Out More About CA State Financial Aid Programs

Financial Aid Programs

<https://www.csac.ca.gov/>

View All >



## Cal Grant

Providing aid to California undergraduates, vocational training students, and those in teacher certification programs.

Learn more about Cal Grant >

## Middle Class Scholarship

Provides undergraduate students, including students pursuing a teaching credential, with family incomes and assets up to \$184,000

Learn more about MCS >

## Chafee Grant Program

If you are or were in foster care and have financial need, you may qualify for up to \$5,000 a year in job training or college.

Learn more about Chafee Grant Program >

## California National Guard

If you are an active member in the California National Guard, the State Military Reserve, or the Naval Militia you may be eligible for a state-funded program.

Learn more about CA National Guard >

## Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents

The Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant Program provides need-based educational grants to dependents and spouses of: California peace officers...

Learn more about LEPD >





# California College Promise Grant

- Apply online for financial aid with the FAFSA by March 2nd
- Apply online at the community college for the Promise Grant
- Note: Must be a California resident to apply
- Per-unit enrollment fees (currently \$46 per unit) are waived for eligible students

\* Available at **California Community Colleges** only



# The Student Success Completion Grant

up to  
**\$4,000**/year  
in financial aid

A maximum of **\$1,298 annually** for 12 through 14 units per term

A maximum of **\$4,000 annually** for 15 units or more per term



**\* Available at California Community Colleges only**

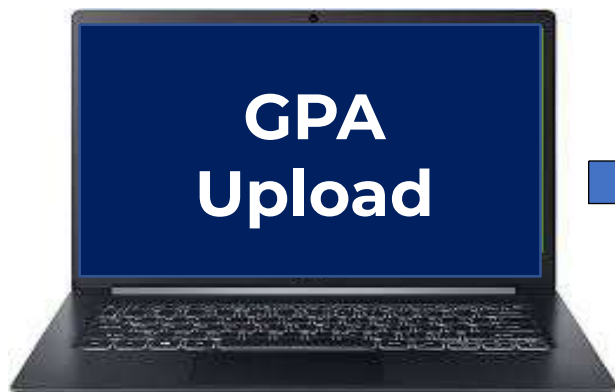
# HELPFUL TIPS

- ❖ Name Mismatches
- ❖ College Selection
- ❖ Special Circumstances
- ❖ Gap Year





# Most Common Reason GPAs do not Match to an Application?





**Name** mismatches!  
**Address** mismatches!

*TIP: Update your high school records if your name and contact information is different than what appears on your official ID/legal documents*



# College Selection

## Housing Plans

Select housing plan	▼
Select housing plan	
On campus	
With parent	
Off campus	

- Choose up to **10 colleges**
- Add at least one college from **each segment:**  
(Community College, CSU, UC, Private University)
- Be sure to include at least one **California College**
- Select a **housing plan** for each college
- Need to add **more than 10 colleges?**  
Wait a week to 10 days to remove previous colleges and add new ones

# “We make too much money! Why fill out a financial aid application?”



1. It takes about 30 minutes and it's free
2. Merit and athletic scholarships are another important reason to fill out the FAFSA. Many schools will request that you at least complete the FAFSA/CADAA before they can award you any other funds
3. Consider it an insurance policy! If your family experiences a job loss, illness or death that reduced a student's ability to pay for college this year you can file an appeal with your college financial aid office for additional aid if there is an on-time application on file.

# Special Circumstances

Financial Aid Administrators have the authority to make certain adjustments to the information reported on the FAFSA/CADAA to help account for the unusual circumstances our students and their families encounter.

- Loss of job/income
- Divorce
- Death in the family
- Unexpected medical expenses
- Adverse home situations
- Dependency status
- Loss of home due to fire, etc.







# What Isn't a Special Circumstance?

- Special circumstances do not include discretionary lifestyle choices
  - Financial aid administrators focus on circumstances that are beyond the family's control
- Special circumstances do not include routine expenses
  - Vacation expenses
  - Tithing expenses
  - Utilities, mortgage payments, HOA fees, homeowner's insurance
  - Car payments and auto insurance
  - Credit card bills
  - Gardening, snow plowing and housekeeping
  - Cable TV, internet access and cell phone service
  - Children's allowances, yearbooks and prom expenses
- Future expenses that have not yet occurred



# How to Appeal for More Financial Aid

- Contact each college's financial aid office to ask about their appeals process. Some colleges have a form and others just ask the family to write a letter.
- Identify the special circumstances that affect the family's ability to pay for college.
- Write the appeal letter.
- Attach copies of documentation of the special circumstances to the financial aid appeal letter. Do not send originals.
- Mail the letter, documentation and completed forms to each college's financial aid office as soon as possible.
- Confirm receipt by calling the financial aid office a week after mailing the appeal letters. Ask if they need more information.

# Taking a “Gap Year”



- High School Students who receive a Cal Grant but don't wish to use it immediately can place it “on hold” for up to two academic years
- A Cal Grant ‘Leave of Absence’ (LA) can be placed for as little as one semester or up to 200% of the award eligibility (2 years). The holds do not need to be consecutive
- The student, the college or CSAC are all able to place an LA on the award, but we recommend the student does it via their WebGrants 4 Students account
- When a Leave of Absence is placed on the Cal Grant, no eligibility is lost for that period
- **Failure to place a leave on an active Cal Grant may result in losing the award**

Putting your Cal Grant on hold

# Helpful Hints

Complete your application as soon as **beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>** but no later than March 2<sup>nd</sup>



## **Apply to at least one California College**

Even if you are 'sure' you are going out-of-state



## **Apply every year, regardless of income**

Don't assume you can't get any aid. Don't disqualify yourself!



**Don't be afraid to ask for help!** Contact your counselor, college financial aid office or the California Student Aid Commission if you need assistance



## Create a new e-mail account



Use a personal email vs. a school email account for college and financial aid applications, etc. Check your e-mail (including your 'junk' and 'spam' folders) on a regular basis.

The beginning of the school year is a great time to have students create and use a personal email for the FSA ID and the FAFSA or the California Dream Act Application.



## TIP

Financial aid offer letters are not standardized. Each one is different. Read, compare and evaluate each financial aid offer with care.

## When can students expect to receive a financial aid offer?

Generally, 2-to-3 weeks after acceptance at a four-year college and late spring to early summer from a community college.

## Can aid offers change?

Yes! Offers can change based on further verification, budget finalization or other changes. That's why an initial aid offer is often referred to as “estimated”, “pending” or “tentative”.



## Sample Award Letter

Financial Aid		\$26,015		
<b>GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS</b>				
University Grant	Fall	Spring	Total	
	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$5,000	
Federal Pell Grant	\$1,323	\$1,323	\$2,645	
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)	\$400	\$400	\$800	
Cal Grant	\$6,285	\$6,285	\$12,570	
Private Scholarships	\$750	\$750	\$1,500	
<b>LOANS</b>				
Federal Direct Subsidized Loan	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$2,500	
Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan	\$500	\$500	\$1,000	

Estimated Cost of Attendance		\$42,982		
<b>DIRECT BILLABLE COSTS</b>				
Tuition	Fall	Spring	Total	
	\$7,156	\$7,156	\$14,312	
Fees	\$180	\$180	\$360	
Room/Housing	\$9,844	\$9,844	\$19,688	
Meal Plan	\$1,960	\$1,960	\$3,920	
<b>INDIRECT COSTS</b>				
Book/Supplies	\$559	\$559	\$1,118	
Transportation	\$310	\$310	\$620	
Health Insurance	\$1,332	\$1,332	\$2,664	
Other Educational Costs	\$150	\$150	\$300	

## Key Steps to Reading Your Financial Aid Offers



1. Start with the **full cost** - including all categories of expenses
2. Then, look for your "**free money**" - money you won't have to earn or pay back
3. Subtract to see your "**net price**" - what you'll have to cover using savings, income, or loans
4. Make sure to **think beyond the first year** of college, as your financial picture can change, and you want to be prepared



# Financial Aid Comparison Tool

We highly recommend that students use a **financial aid comparison tool** and a **college cost calculator** in order to better understand the full cost of attendance. Anne what their aid will actually cover. There are a number of great college costs estimator apps available.

FIRST YEAR COSTS

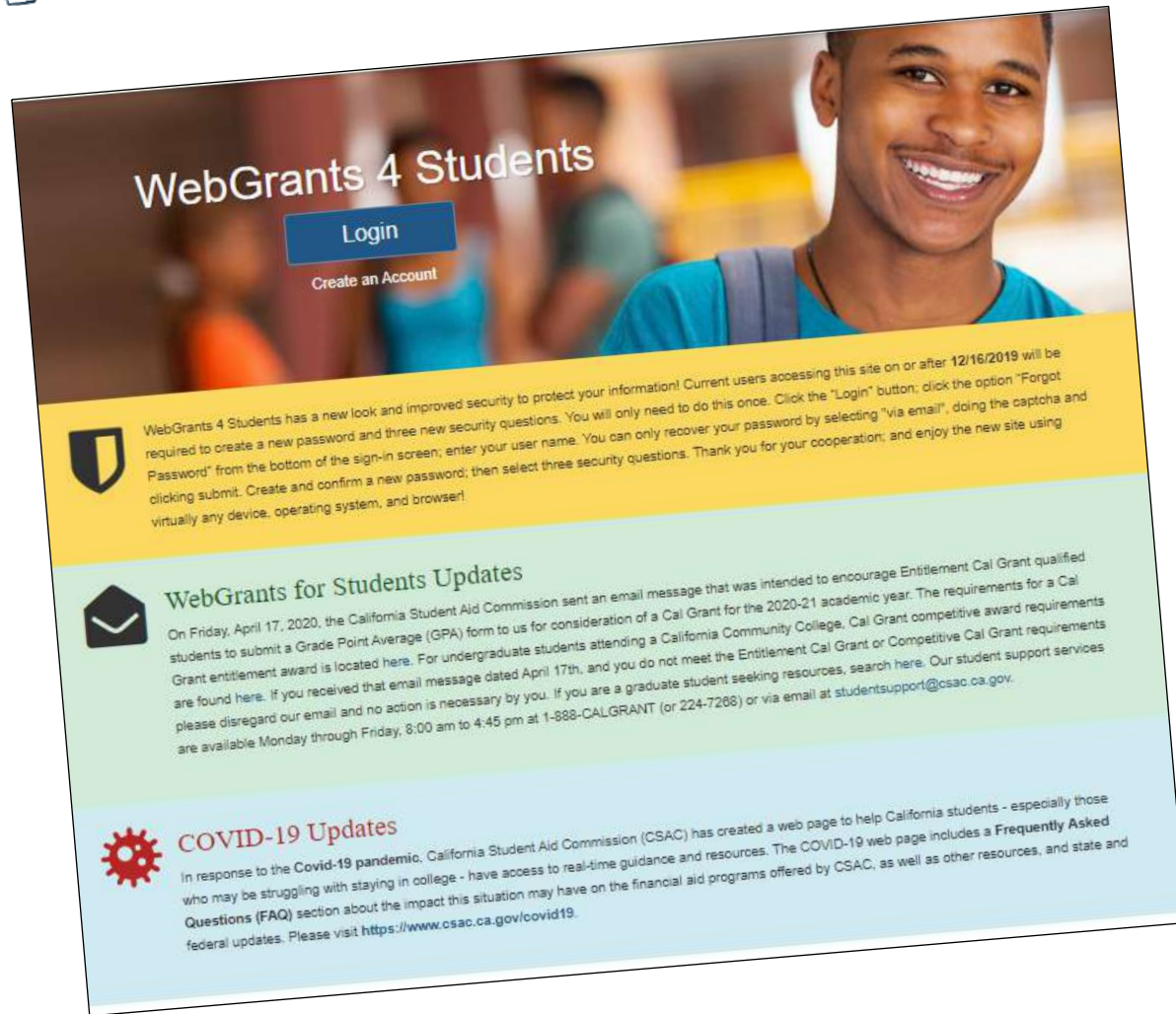
▼	Cost of attendance	\$0	\$0	\$0
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If you have a financial aid offer from this school, use it to enter your information here. If not, you can go to [www.collegenavigator.gov](http://www.collegenavigator.gov) to look up this school's cost of attendance info, add it to the fields below, then add more schools to see how they compare.

<u>Tuition &amp; fees</u>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>
<u>Housing &amp; meals</u>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>
<u>Books &amp; supplies</u>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>
<u>Transportation</u>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>
<u>Other education costs</u>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>	<input type="text" value="\$"/>

FIRST YEAR FINANCIAL AID OFFER

>	Money for school	\$0	\$0	\$0
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- Shows the award status of the Cal Grant or Middle Class Scholarship
  - Create an account 7-10 days after you complete your application
  - Check for any pending requirements
- If awarded the Cal Grant, you must claim your award:**
- Confirm your college of attendance
  - Self-certify high school graduation



- Direct links to financial aid and college applications
- FAQs and information & financial aid resources
- Career education programs
- Transfer degree information
- Tips for successful online learning

**We all  
face tough  
financial  
choices.**



**Paying for  
college  
shouldn't  
be one.**



**Financial aid is available  
now to help with tuition,  
books, supplies and  
sometimes even rent!**

**Apply NOW**

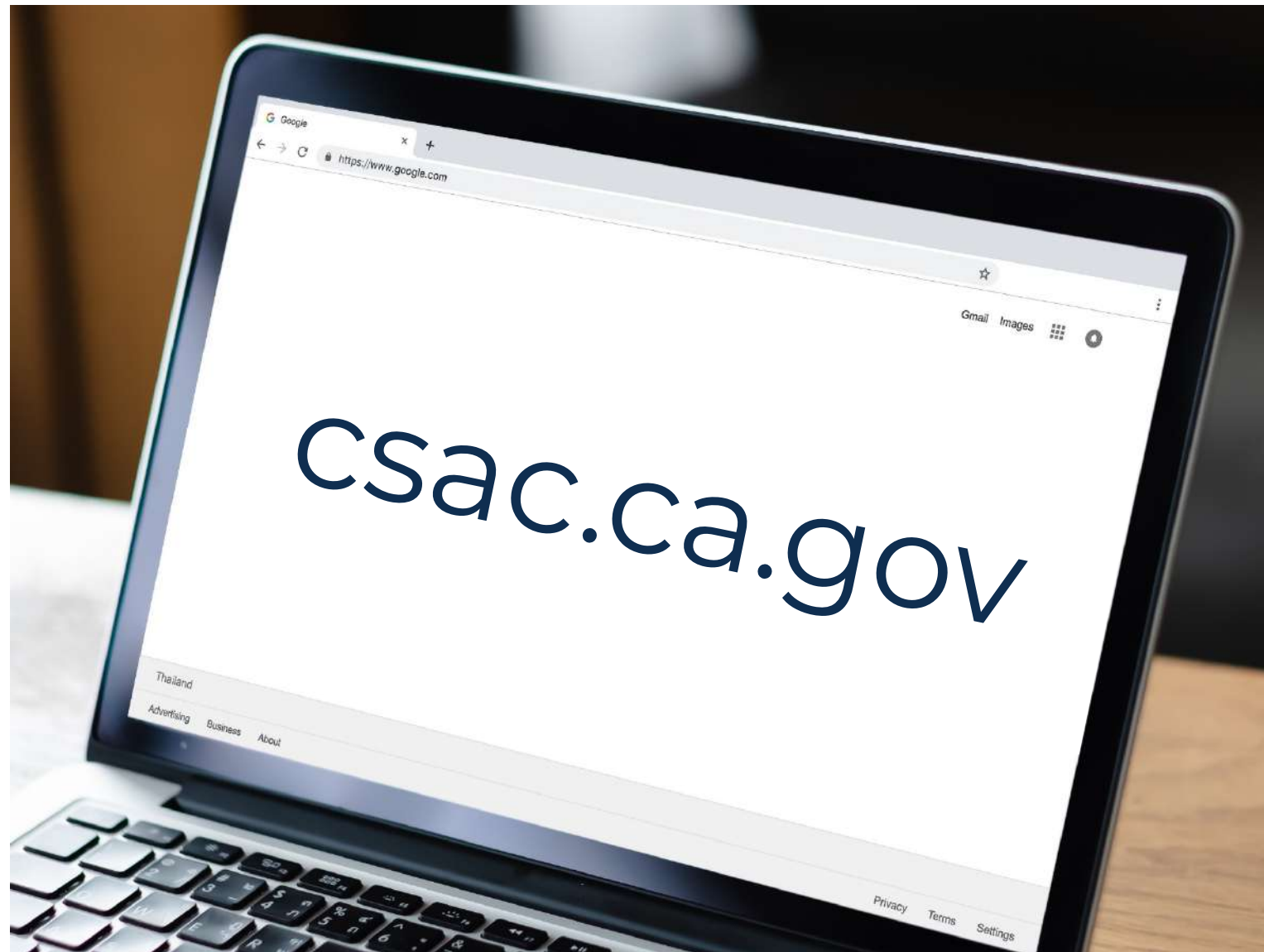


[stayenrolled.com](http://stayenrolled.com)

[icangotocollege.com](http://icangotocollege.com)



Check our website for  
additional information  
& resources







Contact the  
**C**alifornia **S**tate **A**id  
**C**ommission (CSAC)

**studentsupport@csac.ca.gov**  
**1-888-224-7268**

\*Monday – Friday during business hours

Want to ask a Question?

