

The Cal Grant Reform Coalition Statement on California Governor Gavin Newsom's Proposed Budget for FY 2024-25

Together, California can fulfill the promise made to students for a better Cal Grant program.

With the release of Governor Newsom's proposed 2024-25 Budget, policymakers, advocates, and students brace for a potentially challenging budgetary landscape which projects a \$38 billion shortfall. While The Cal Grant Reform Coalition understands the fiscal situation California is currently facing – budgets are a value statement and students are struggling with the ever rising costs of attending college. Making higher education more accessible and affordable across California means prioritizing an investment in California's economic growth, workforce development, students, and its future! As California continues to improve its higher education systems to better serve students, Cal Grant Reform must be a priority.

The Cal Grant Reform Coalition is a diverse coalition of higher education advocacy, civil rights and social justice, business and workforce, and student leadership organizations who are seeking to implement the [Cal Grant Reform Act](#), which was adopted by the legislature in 2022. The Cal Grant Reform Act would streamline the state's largest financial aid program, replacing the existing Cal Grant program with a new version of the program that provides a Cal Grant 2 award for eligible community college students with financial need, and a Cal Grant 4 award for eligible four-year university students with financial need. The Cal Grant program has a transformational impact on students' ability to access and afford college, and in preparing a college educated future workforce. Furthermore, implementing the Cal Grant Reform Act is a foundational step in addressing the Supreme Court decision to strike down affirmative action, by [offering over 150,000 additional](#) low-income students - many of whom come from racially marginalized backgrounds - a chance to attend college. Without financial aid these students are not able to consider pursuing a higher education and are likely to remain in a cycle of poverty.

In the past few years, the Governor and Legislature have made gains towards the goal of making college more accessible and affordable through the passage of a state mandate for high schoolers to apply for financial aid by filling out the FAFSA or CADAA; the California Community College Expanded Entitlement Cal Grant; and the UC and CSU Compact and CCC Roadmap. Cal Grant Reform would build upon these and other successes to realize California's ambitious goal of a 70% statewide postsecondary education attainment level and an economic rebound after COVID.

We look forward to working with the Newsom Administration and the California Legislature over the coming months to ensure that the final 2024-25 state budget works to fulfill the promise made to thousands of students – and implements Cal Grant Reform.

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