

# Sacramento City Unified School District

## *Media Release*



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**For Immediate Release**

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

#### **Sac City Unified Celebrates Record High FAFSA Completion Rate; Teams up with California Student Aid Commission to Kick Off 2020-21 FAFSA Application Period**

**SACRAMENTO** - Sacramento City Unified School District today announced that record numbers of its students had completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) last school year.

“We want every Sac City Unified student to graduate college and career ready, and to have the widest array of options when they graduate,” **said Superintendent Jorge Aguilar**. “Completing the FAFSA expands students’ access to college. This school year we hope to break our record again when all Sac City Unified seniors complete the FAFSA.”

The district announced today that the number of Sac City Unified graduating seniors eligible for college aid increased from 47% in 2015-16 to over 76% in 2019-20. This marked increase is a result of the district’s efforts to ensure all students have financial resources to pursue postsecondary education aspirations.

Each year, Sac City Unified conducts targeted outreach and student support to ensure that students are college ready. High school students receive customized college information packets outlining their college eligibility, using each student’s unique academic profile so that students can match schools with their interests. These efforts have paid off for students throughout the district.

“We want to assure students that even during this ongoing public health and economic crisis, there is financial aid available to them,” **said CSAC Executive Director Marlene Garcia**. “The Student Aid Commission is ready to help and be a valuable resource in making college affordable for all students. Even though deadlines may be months away, we encourage all students and their families to file their financial aid applications as soon as possible.”

Today’s announcement comes on the official kick-off date for the new financial aid season, October 1 when California students and families can apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) and Chafee Grant to receive college financial aid for the 2021-2022 academic year. The state financial aid priority deadline is March 2, 2021. The Cal Grant deadline for foster youth and students attending a California community college is September 2, 2021.

During this time, students complete these applications to qualify for federal and state aid to help pay for college, an important step towards their college education. CSAC conducts a statewide Race to Submit campaign to increase the number of California high school seniors who complete the FAFSA and California Dream Act Applications.

The Race to Submit encourages all California high schools and districts to view and track their FAFSA and CADAA number. An online tool helps measure the number of submitted and completed applications. This initiative aims to motivate California high schools and districts to increase the number of completed applications by supporting their students with FAFSA and CADAA submission.

During the application period, beginning October 1 and up until the March 2 Cal Grant deadline, each high school, district, and county can use the Race to Submit to gauge the submission and completion of the FAFSA and CADAA, along with how many Cal Grants have been awarded.

Sac City Unified was proud to announce in August that West Campus High School was honored by CSAC as one of the top California schools in the 2020 Race to Submit statewide campaign, which measures FAFSA and CADAA completion rates statewide. Sac City Unified has conducted coordinated outreach to increase engagement in the FAFSA process, and to increase access to college for its students. The district partners with CSAC, Cal SOAP, and other college access partners to ensure students and families are aware of how and where to access support.

“I want all our students to know that we believe in you, and the State of California wants to invest in you getting a college degree. I encourage students to complete the FAFSA or CADAA applications to help them with their future goals,” **said President of the Board of Education Jessie Ryan**. “Our educators are committed to providing all available resources so our students can embark and pursue a professional pathway of their choosing.”

For more information about financial aid programs that benefit California students visit <https://www.csac.ca.gov>.