



SFA PARTNER

Quarterly Update

April 2019

From the Director

Hello SFA Partners,

Welcome to the spring issue of the **SFA Partner**. Here in Olympia, we are deep into the 105-day regular legislative session, and continue to monitor several SFA-related bills that are still in play. The most prominent among those is a proposal to rebrand the State Need Grant program and integrate an entitlement component for the lowest income recipients. In addition, the House and Senate each have released their Operating Budget proposals for 2019-21. While bottom lines are similar, differences exist in the details and serious negotiations now begin to reconcile priorities into a single consensus document.

WSAC staff are busy updating the 2019-20 program manuals, and planning for four regional state financial aid workshops. We expect that the workshops and release of the program manuals will take place shortly after the conclusion of the legislative session, following resolution of the final Operating Budget and legislation that may have significant impact on SNG and CBS, and authorized tuition increases at the public institutions. Workshop details will follow soon.

This edition also contains updates for the State Work Study program, and information related to recent Passport expansion activities to support services to tribal and homeless youth. There also is a call for assistance with the ongoing 12th Year Campaign.

Please share this issue of the **SFA Partner** with colleagues at your institution, and encourage them to [subscribe](#), if they have not already done so. We welcome your suggestions for future topics and appreciate your feedback on this publication and the information it provides.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at one of our SFA Workshops!

Becky Thompson
Director of Student Financial Assistance

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Important Dates to Remember

- ✓ **Spring Interim Reports Open: April 5, 2019**
- ✓ **2019 Legislature 105-day Regular Session ends: April 28**
- ✓ **SWS Spring Survey Round: May 1 – 15, 2019**
- ✓ **WSASEA Spring Conference: May 6 – 8, 2019, North Bend**
- ✓ **Spring Interim Reports due: May 10, 2019**
- ✓ **Passport to Careers State Conference: May 15 – 16, 2019, UW-Tacoma**
- ✓ **SFA Workshops: Details to be released soon**

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SNG and CBS Guidance for 2019-20 Awarding

Carla Idohl-Corwin released the following guidance to FAAs on October 2, 2018. We ask that administrators treat this information as initial, and not final, program guidance until the 2019 Legislative Session is complete. WSAC will notify aid administrators if revisions to this guidance are necessary. Please address any questions to Carla at 360-753-7847 or carlai@wsac.wa.gov, or Gabriele Matull Worst at 360-753-7841 or gabrielew@wsac.wa.gov.

Release of 2019-20 SNG and CBS Award Chart

We expect that the 2019-20 award chart will be released after the 2019 Legislative Session is complete (late in the spring of 2019). Tuition at public colleges and universities for the 2019-20 year may also be determined then. For preliminary 2019-20 state aid awarding, WSAC recommends:

- Using the current 2018-19 award chart to provide estimated 2019-20 SNG and CBS award amounts until the official 2019-20 award chart is available. The 2018-19 chart can be found on page 28 of the 2018-19 SNG & CBS Program Manual.

- Including the *Washington State Aid – Conditions of Award* statement with all award letters. The full conditions statement can be found on page 68 of the program manual. The following excerpt appears as condition #9.

The offer of this financial assistance is subject to, and conditioned upon, the availability of funds. The Washington Student Achievement Council and the institution through which the grant or scholarship is awarded reserve the right to withdraw, reduce, or modify the awards due to funding limitations or due to changes in circumstances which affect your eligibility for the program(s).

Be Sure to Include Estimated CBS Awards on Award Letters if “OK to Award = Yes”

When a CBS student record first matches with a FAFSA or WASFA application, the student’s record will appear in the “Cruncher.

If the student has not yet graduated from high school, the information received from OSPI at that time, the “HS Req. Met” status, will show as either:

- Unknown – no GPA available in OSPI record
- Unlikely – the reported GPA was less than 2.0
- Likely – the reported GPA was 2.0 or higher

Those with “Likely” status will also show as “OK to Award = Yes”

- Be sure to award all eligible CBS students in this category with both estimated SNG and CBS awards.

Median Family Income Chart for 2019-2020

The MFI Chart for 2019-2020 State Need Grant (SNG) and College Bound Scholarship (CBS) awarding available on the WSAC FAA Resources web page by clicking [here](#). Please note the 70% MFI column is for SNG awarding only, as the maximum MFI for CBS awarding is 65%.

Please also note that the family income used will normally be the 2017 year income reported by the families on their 2019-20 FAFSA or WASFA.

SNG Allocations for 2019-20

Many factors will impact individual school allocations. These may include enrollment changes, award amounts, state appropriations and program policies such the requirement to award SNG to 100% of your eligible CBS students. WSAC expects to provide colleges with preliminary 2019-20 SNG allocations that will include 90% of the total state funds available for SNG after spring interim, assuming legislative session has ended. In August, 2019, after all college final interim reports for the 2018-19 year have been reviewed and reconciled, final SNG allocations will be sent to colleges.

At this time, WSAC advises colleges to be conservative in how many SNG dollars they commit to students for 2019-20. Colleges will also have to project their enrollment levels of eligible CBS students for the 2019-20 year and hold back sufficient SNG funds to fully coordinate their awards.

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2017-18 Data Summary

We thank all of the institutional aid administrators for their work last Fall in submitting the 2017-18 Final Interim Report. We are including some points of interest from the 2017-18 data:

- **68,204** students received State Need Grant (Unduplicated)
 - Total funds received were \$299,068,945.
 - Average awards were \$4,385 per recipient.
- **18,857** students received College Bound Scholarships
 - Total funds received were \$24,153,067.
 - Average awards were \$1,281 per recipient.
- **262** students received Passport to College Scholarships.
 - Total funds received were \$891,562.
 - Average PTC scholarship awards were \$3,377 per recipient.
 - An additional \$300,000 in Passport Incentive Grant funds disbursed to institutions for student services.

Data for 2017-18 also reveals that the number of unserved SNG students increased slightly. A comparison of the number of unserved since 2015-16 show:

- 2017-18 22,614 unserved
- 2016-17 20,770 unserved
- 2015-16 24,384 unserved

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Financial Aid Administrators - 12th Year Campaign Needs Your Help!

If you are able to volunteer at community financial aid events, please [register](#) so we can share your information with 12th Year Campaign site leads. You can select and limit where you want to volunteer.

Is your campus hosting a FAFSA/WASFA workshop? Please let the 12th Year Campaign [know](#) so we can help advertise your event on our statewide [event map](#).

The 12th Year Campaign boosts college and financial aid application rates in Washington by helping those working with high school seniors and their families complete applications for college admissions and financial aid. There are three models of participation to meet the needs of 12th Year sites. 12th Year Campaign sites receive free training, printed materials, and other resources to support their students.

Visit www.readysetgrad.org/12thyear for more information.



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Passport to Careers – New Promotional Materials Available!

Since 2008, the Passport scholarship has been awarded to an average of 345 students annually. The Passport program provides the first opportunity to obtain verifiable baseline data on foster youth aspirations and performance in postsecondary education in Washington.

In 2018, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 6274, establishing the **Passport to Careers** program to help more Washington students – specifically, foster or unaccompanied homeless youth – prepare for careers. The bill added to the existing Passport to College Promise program, which provides college scholarships and support services for foster youth who have been dependents of the state.

Changes implemented as of July 2018 expanded eligibility to youth in federal and tribal foster care, and to students in pre-apprenticeships or apprenticeships. The program expansion will be [phased-in](#), serving unaccompanied homeless youth beginning in 2019. Under the Passport to Careers program, there are two sub-programs:

- Passport to College
- Passport to Apprenticeship Opportunities

Through the **Passport to College** program, students receive a scholarship that assists with the cost of attending college (tuition, fees, books, housing, transportation, and some personal expenses), support services from [college staff](#), and priority consideration for the State Need Grant and State Work Study.

[Forty-five colleges](#) throughout Washington have committed to developing a viable plan for providing support services to students who are eligible for Passport. These colleges have a designated support staff (DSS) person to help Passport to College students navigate through college.

The **Passport to Apprenticeship Opportunities** program will assist students participating in registered apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship programs with covering occupational-specific costs such as tuition for classes, fees, work clothes, rain gear, boots, and occupation-related tools.

Student and apprenticeship supporters can access new Passport to Careers promotional materials on the WSAC and ReadySetGrad websites. These materials are intended to help increase awareness about the Passport to Careers program expansion, serving a larger pool of foster youth and, beginning in July 2019, unaccompanied homeless youth. To learn more about the program and to download the fliers, visit <https://wsac.wa.gov/passport>.

WSAC has developed a new **Passport Consent Form** and **Tribal Care Verification Form** to assist students with verifying their foster care status. Unaccompanied homeless youth do not need to complete a Passport Consent Form. In most cases, unaccompanied homeless youth will have their eligibility determined by the financial aid office. To download the new forms, visit www.readysetgrad.org/passport.

WSAC also is responsible for managing the [Supplemental Education Transition Program \(SETuP\)](#) to support high school students.

Continue monitoring both websites for additional updates as the program expansion is phased in. If you have questions about Passport to Careers, contact program staff at passport@wsac.wa.gov or call 1-888-535-0747, option 3.

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Passport to Careers State Conference

Make plans to attend the upcoming annual Passport to Careers State Conference! The 2019 event takes place May 15 & 16, at the University of Washington Tacoma campus. This two-day event is designed to strengthen the postsecondary educational pipeline for students who have experienced foster care. It will provide attendees with professional development opportunities: to connect and network, share best practices, acquire skills, knowledge and resources, and draw inspiration from the experiences and ideas of others in the field.

To learn more about the Passport to Careers State Conference and register for the event, go to <https://www.washingtonpassportnetwork.org/passport-to-careers-state-conference/>, or contact Dawn Cypriano-McAferly at dawnc@wsac.wa.gov.

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State Work Study Information

- **Paid Family & Medical Leave (PFML)**

In 2017, the Washington State Legislature established a statewide [Paid Family and Medical Leave](#) (PFML) insurance program. Beginning in 2020, PFML will allow eligible, qualified workers to take necessary time off when they experience a qualifying event, such as having a child or caring for an ailing relative. Employees qualify for PFML benefits by working 820 hours or more during the prior twelve months.

PFML is administered by the [Employment Security Department](#) (ESD). Detailed information on PFML and associated employer and employee requirements, including ESD's April 2018 electronic notice to employers, can be found here: <https://esd.wa.gov/paid-family-medical-leave>.

PFML premium assessments are set at 0.4% of gross wages and are required as of January 1, 2019. We strongly recommend confirming your organization's readiness for PFML implementation by communicating directly with your business, payroll, and/or Human Resources offices now.

All Washington employees at non-exempt employers (see [RCW 50A.04.010\(4\)](#)), including all students working under the State Work Study (SWS) program, are eligible for PFML and are therefore responsible for a share of PFML premiums. All SWS employers must make the appropriate PFML payroll deductions on SWS employees' gross wages, then report on and remit those payments to ESD quarterly. SWS employers with more than 50 employees must also pay a share of applicable PFML premiums.

SWS anticipates that the impact of PFML premium requirements should be relatively modest for most SWS employers and student employees. For example, in 2016-17, gross SWS wages averaged \$2,882 per student and this would equate to a total PFML premium of \$11.53 for the year.

Thank you for your attention to and compliance with PFML premium requirements associated with your SWS student employees. Please let us know if you have SWS specific questions or concerns on PMFL via email at SWS@wsac.wa.gov. For all non-SWS-specific PFML questions, please contact ESD directly: ESDGPPaidFamilyandMedicalLeave@ESD.WA.GOV.

- **Upcoming May Survey Round**

SWS's third Survey Round of the 2018-19 fiscal year will be conducted from May 1 – May 15, 2019. The survey round provides institutions the opportunity to request additional SWS funding or return funds that would otherwise go unspent so they can be redistributed to institutions with additional SWS capacity.

- **WSASEA Spring Conference**

Please save the date for the Washington State Association of Student Employment Administrators (WSASEA) annual Spring Conference for May 6th – 8th, 2019 in North Bend, WA. For more information about WSASEA, please visit their website: <http://www.wsasea.org/>.

- **2019 Minimum Wage Levels**

As a reminder, the following minimum wage levels became effective on January 1, 2019:

- WA State: \$12.00/hour
- Seattle:
 - \$15/hour for employers with fewer than 500 employees
 - \$16/hour for employers with 500 or more employees
- SeaTac: \$16.09/hour
- Tacoma: \$12.35/hour

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WSAC SFA Staffing Updates

- Please welcome **Sarah Hoium**, who joined SFA as a Program Coordinator on January 3. Sarah assumed the position vacated by Kelly Olson. She works with the State Need Grant and College Bound Scholarships, and in support of the WASFA application process. Sarah brings many years of customer service skills to the position as well as campus program experience from her time with Centralia College.
- We say a fond farewell to **Chris Wilkins** as she leaves SFA to enter retirement! She plans to enjoy new adventures, and we will miss her dedication and sense of fun here at the office. Chris's last day with the Health Workforce Programs was March 28.

- Join us as we congratulate **Claudia Shanley**, who has accepted a promotion to Assistant Director for Health here in SFA.
- **J. Lee Schultz**, formerly the Associate Director for Workforce Programs in SFA, also accepted a promotion into a newly created position with WSAC's External Relations Division. J. Lee is working with all divisions throughout WSAC to ensure that implementation of new legislation aligns with the agency's policy goals and reporting requirements. While we are sad to lose J. Lee from the SFA family, we are excited for her in this new career opportunity here at WSAC.
- Current [SFA position openings](#):
 - Program Manager for Health Programs
 - Program Coordinator

You may access other WSAC staff contact information by clicking [here](#).

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Providing Feedback to SFA

We designed the **SFA Partner** with you, our SFA friends and colleagues, in mind. We want to respond to your needs, and are committed to continuous improvement that is achievable through your input, for future issues of the **SFA Partner**.

Let us know what topic areas you would like covered, and where we may provide additional guidance to better assist you in your work. Send your feedback, comments, and suggestions to finaid@wsac.wa.gov and let us know what you think!

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