

Funding Financial Aid Application Completion Efforts in California

Thanks to the 2021-2022 State Budget and AB 469 (Reyes), California has a critical opportunity to increase financial aid application completion and ultimately help more students attend college! Beginning October 1, 2022, local education agencies (LEAs) in California will be required to ensure that students and their families receive support to complete a financial aid application.

This document covers how LEAs can leverage different funding sources for financial aid application completion expenses.



Local Control
Accountability
Plan (LCAP)



1

Elementary and
Secondary School
Emergency Relief
Fund (ESSR)



2

Foundations



3

Reimbursements



4

1. Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)

In 2021, California LEAs were allocated \$66 billion through the Local Control Funding Formula to improve educational outcomes.



BRIGHT SPOT: Jurupa Unified School District

Amount:

- ❖ **\$812,500** – Support and resources for career center staff for high schools ([Jurupa Unified School District LCFF](#))
- ❖ **\$157,000** - District and site-based parent trainings on student opportunities ([Jurupa Unified School District LCFF](#))

LCFF Goal: All students will be college and career ready.

LCFF Activities:

- ❖ Hourly for career center staff and CCGI Leadership team to prepare for College and Career Kick-Off Day, FAFSA workshops, parent workshops, college decision day events, etc.
- ❖ Parent and student events, such as Career Day and trainings on college systems, FAFSA completion, the college application process, etc.





BRIGHT SPOT: Moreno Valley USD

Amount:

- ❖ **\$235,000** - To maintain the director of college and career readiness position ([Moreno Valley Unified School District LCFF](#))
- ❖ **\$400,000** - To maintain a robust College and Career Ready program ([Moreno Valley Unified School District LCFF](#))

LCFF Goal: Ensure equitable opportunities for every student. Increase FAFSA completion rate district to 85% by 2023-24.

LCFF Activities:

- ❖ The director of college and career readiness oversees college and career readiness programs, including career technical education (CTE).
- ❖ The career development facilitator supports the director in maintaining a robust education CTE program, including directly supporting teachers and students.



2. Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSR)

California K–12 education received \$33.5 billion in state and federal funds for COVID-19 relief funding



Activities:

- ❖ LEAs can utilize several federal government funding sources for financial aid application completion expenses.
 - CARES Act ESSER I (March 2020): Allowable uses are flexible, but they must be used by September 30, 2023.
 - CARES Act ESSER II (December 2020): Allowable uses are flexible, but they must be used by September 30, 2023.
 - ARP, ESSER II, and GEER IIII (March 2021): Allowable uses are flexible, though 20% must be used to make up for "lost learning" and maintain equity. Funds must be used by September 30, 2024.



Resource:

- ❖ Look Up How Much COVID Relief Aid Your School District Is Getting: <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/look-up-how-much-covid-relief-aid-your-district-is-getting/2021/09>

California LEAs can utilize foundation funding for fun, engaging activities to incentivize financial aid application completion.



BRIGHT SPOT: Val Verde Unified School District

Activities:

- ❖ Celebration events for completing financial aid applications (e.g., Money Gras Party at Orange Vista High, Cash Cella at Rancho Verde High, and FAFSA Fiesta at Citrus Hill High)
- ❖ Raffles and prizes
- ❖ Food incentives
- ❖ Awards



4. Reimbursements

In the next two to three years, California LEAs can apply to be reimbursed for financial aid application expenses through California's mandate block grant.



BRIGHT SPOT: Val Verde Unified School District

Activities:

- ❖ Val Verde Unified School District is filing a test claim for AB 469 for financial aid application expenses. If approved, all California LEAs will be able to submit mandate block grant applications to be reimbursed for financial aid expenses for the fiscal year.

“Test claim” means the first claim filed with the commission alleging that a particular statute or executive order imposes costs mandated by the stat; it functions like a class action. After initial claims have been filed, a statewide cost estimate for eligible costs is adopted by the commission. These estimates are reported to the legislature and form the basis of state budget appropriations to fund the costs of the mandated program.

Resources:

- ❖ Learn more about the California Department of Education’s mandate block grant: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/ca/mandatebgfaq.asp>
- ❖ Learn more about the California Department of Education’s mandate determination process: <https://csm.ca.gov/docs/brochure.pdf>