



# SFA PARTNER

Quarterly Update

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April 2017

## From the Director

Hello SFA Partners,

Thankfully spring has *finally* arrived in Washington State! The Legislature continues to meet on many important topics that will impact state financial aid, tuition amounts at public institutions, K-12 funding throughout the state, and a wide variety of other issues. Meanwhile your established students are studying hard (we hope!) in their spring classes, and prospective students are anxiously waiting to see how their financial aid works out for the next academic year. I'm sure it is a very busy time on all of your campuses.

This edition of **SFA Partner** provides a reminder of the SFA Workshops coming up in May in Tumwater, Spokane, Yakima, and Seattle. We hope to see you, and others from your institution, at one of these sites.

We plan to release the 2017-18 program manuals (State Need Grant/College Bound Scholarship, Passport to College, and State Work Study) within about a week after the conclusion of the legislative session. You'll receive an email from us when they are available on the WSAC website. The big unknowns at this time are the maximum award amounts for SNG and CBS eligible students, and the tuition amounts at public institutions. We are all anxiously awaiting the final Operating Budget for the 2017-19 Biennium.

Please share this issue of **SFA Partner** with other colleagues at your institution, and encourage them to subscribe, if they have not already done so. We look forward to your suggestions for future topics and always appreciate receiving feedback on this publication and the information it provides.

Looking forward to seeing you at one of our SFA Workshops next month!

*Becky Thompson*  
*Director of Student Financial Assistance*

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## Upcoming May SFA Workshops

We are pleased to announce the dates and locations for the 2017 SFA Workshops. We'll be offering the same information at each of these four workshops. Please choose to attend at any one of the following locations:

- **Monday, May 15**      **Capital Event Center, Tumwater**
- **Wednesday, May 17**      **Gonzaga University, Spokane**
- **Thursday, May 18**      **Yakima Valley Community College**
- **Friday, May 19**      **Cascadia College, Bothell**

These will be half-day events, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., organized around topics important to your work with the state aid programs, including:

- Legislative and WSAC Updates
- Discussion on the October 1, 2016, FAFSA/WASFA Implementation
- Interface between WASFA and Regent Processor
- How the SNG "Fair Share" Model for Fund Distribution Works
- Misc. Program Issues for State Aid Program Administration
- Information Needed and Reporting Timelines for 2017-18 Awarding
- WSAC Resources, Information, and Questions

Watch for additional Workshop details to be emailed to you soon. We look forward to seeing you!

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## Additional Important Dates to Remember

- ✓ **WSASEA Spring Conference: May 1-3, 2017**
- ✓ **Spring Interim Report for SNG and CBS due: May 5, 2017**
- ✓ [Passport to College Seminar](#) - Yakima Convention Center: May 10-11, 2017
- ✓ [OSPI Student Support Conference](#) (“Enhancing Support, Increasing Success”), Yakima Convention Center: May 11-12, 2017

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## Supplemental SNG Allocations for 2016-17

As was reported in the January 2017 SFA Partner, approximately \$2 million dollars in supplemental SNG funds were awarded to 60 institutions in December 2016. Award amounts were determined based upon the WSAC fair share SNG funding model.

Should additional SNG funds be available later this year, our plans are to distribute them through the fair share model as well. If your institution will be deobligating 2016-17 SNG funding, please notify Carissa Glassburn as far in advance as possible.

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## Identifying and Reviewing Conflicting Information for State Aid Eligibility

Aid administrators should have received an email from Carissa Glassburn on March 15, with comments related to the Department of Education's August 2016 guidance on resolution of conflicting student information. The text of Carissa's message is repeated here to alert aid administrators regarding WSAC's perspective and the potential for adjustments to a student's state aid eligibility as a result of the recent federal information:

“On August 3, 2016, the U.S. Department of Education provided guidance to institutions on the subject “2017-2018 Early FAFSA—Identification and Resolution of Conflicting Information.” In the department's guidance, it indicates that during the review of 2017-18 FAFSA ISIRs, cases may be identified where institutions must review and update student 2016-17 FAFSA ISIR information. The required federal resolutions could result in changes in 2016-17 federal financial aid awarded which could in turn result in repayment of 2016-17 federal financial aid if it had been previously disbursed.

“Related to this, we received a recent inquiry that we want to share with all institutions.

**“Q. Does WSAC require that state aid eligibility be reviewed and possibly be revised and/or repaid in situations where this required resolution has been completed?”**

**“A. Yes. This required resolution could change a student's need for state programs such as SNG, CBS, Passport to College, and State Work Study and/or the median family income (MFI) amounts for SNG and CBS eligibility. If so, adjustments must be made to a student's current year state financial aid. If this review results in a repayment in state award amounts, those repayments should be handled in the manner described in the SFA program manuals.**

“Although this response is specific to the situations identified on ISIRS by the FAFSA federal processor, institutions may (but are not required to) implement a review of the state aid eligibility for students who file both 2016-17 and 2017-18 WASFAs. The WASFA process will not, however, identify specific situations where resolution of data between the two years is required.”

Please feel free to contact WSAC staff at [sng@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:sng@wsac.wa.gov) if we may assist you in resolving any questions.

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## Summer 2017 Guidance for Awarding of CBS and SNG

All eligible CBS Scholars must be awarded SNG during the summer 2017.

SNG and CBS maximum award amounts for summer 2017, are to be based on the award chart for the 2016-17 year (page 29 of 2016-17 SNG and CBS Program Manual). This will be the same whether the summer award is considered as Summer 2 (trailer) or as Summer 1 (leader) at your institution. 

- Additional information and options when awarding SNG to eligible CBS Scholars in (2016-17) Summer 2.
  - Award all eligible CBS Scholars, who have complete files with your school by June 1, with Summer 2 CBS and SNG funds from your 2016-17 SNG allocation.
  - If you have CBS Scholars whose files are completed between June 1 and August 1, who enroll in your summer term, contact WSAC for payment instructions if you don't have remaining SNG 2016-17 funds to award.
  - Be sure your 2016-17 allocation is fully spent and reported to WSAC by July 7, on your final Interim Report.
  - No Summer 2 CBS or SNG awards should be made to students whose files are complete after August 1. Contact WSAC if you later need to adjust your final Interim Report.
- Additional information and options when awarding SNG to eligible CBS Scholars in (2017-18) Summer 1.
  - Award all eligible CBS Scholars Summer 1 SNG awards, and charge it to your institution's 2017-18 SNG allocation when available.
- Additional information when awarding SNG to non-eligible CBS Scholars in either (2016-17) Summer 2 or (2017-18) Summer 1.
  - If your approved institutional awarding policies allow, you may make Summer 1 awards and charge them to your institution's SNG allocation.
  - Remember to use the 2016-17 SNG award chart though for determining the summer SNG award amount.
- If eligible for SNG funding, but no award is made, report as unserved.

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## SNG and Passport to College Self-Help Calculation 2017-18

The self-help calculation gets updated each year that there is a change to the state minimum wage. With an increase to the state minimum wage as of January 1, 2017, there will be an update to this section of the 2017-18 SNG and CBS Manual. The self-help requirement does not, however, apply to eligible CBS Scholars.

The information that follows should be used in 2017-18 awarding. Changes from the 2016-17 year manual are shown in red below. This same self-help requirement applies to Passport to College recipients if they were CBS Scholars but were not eligible to receive CBS funding due to their family income.

## *What is the self-help requirement for all other SNG students who are non-eligible CBS Scholars?*

**The self-help contribution required for all other State Need Grant recipients is equal to the lesser of:**

- 12 percent of a student's Cost of Attendance if the institution is using an "at home" Cost of Attendance for a student. In most cases this will mean using a "living with parent" budget for the student.
- 25 percent of the student's Cost of Attendance if the student's total annual cost is \$16,092 or less.
- \$4,023 if the student's Cost of Attendance is greater than \$16,092.

**Note:** Institutions may require higher self-help requirements than any of these items shown above (except for eligible CBS Scholars) if this is covered in their institutional gift equity policies submitted to WSAC for review and approval.

**Note:** The \$4,023 self-help contribution amount has been determined by WSAC. This assumes that a student could have earnings of at least the value of a minimum wage job (minus Social Security and Medicare taxes) for 12 hours per week for 33 weeks during the year.

The 2017 minimum wage is \$11.00 per hour (minus \$0.84 per hour in taxes) equals net wages of \$10.16 per hour x 12 x 33 = \$4,023.

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## **Successful SNG and CBS Training Webinars for Financial Aid Administrators**

Approximately 90 financial aid administrators participated in the SNG, CBS, and Passport to College training webinars on March 6 & 7. Feedback from survey participants showed a high degree of value for both content and method of communication. According to one of the participants:

*I loved that WSAC put together these training sessions! It was great to get an update on how WSAC goals are going and a refresher on eligibility requirements. I definitely think it is important to get this refresher after you have been working in these programs for one year or more because you understand the terminology way better than when you first start learning it.*

Of survey responders, 95 percent also indicated that they would be interested in attending future SFA webinar training opportunities. Our thought at this time is to offer similar training each year. Let us know if you have particular topics you would like us to consider adding.

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## Passport to College Seminar

The Passport to College Seminar will be held May 10-11, 2017, at the Yakima Convention Center. This two-day meeting for Passport to College professionals will precede OSPI's Student Support Conference, which is being held on May 11-12. To learn more about the Passport Seminar, go to <https://www.washingtonpassportnetwork.org/events/2016/passport-to-college-state-conference>, or contact Dawn Cypriano-McAferly at [dawnc@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:dawnc@wsac.wa.gov).

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## Reminder – Grant Repayments, Billing and Collection Servicing

Effective March 1, all students who owe a repayment to the Washington State Need Grant, Passport to College or College Bound Scholarship Programs, that have been referred to WSAC for collection, should be directed to contact WSAC directly at 1-888-535-0747 option 4. We are no longer using the billing services of Heartland ECSI and are in transition to our new servicer, University Accounting Service (UAS). Please do not refer students to Heartland ECSI.

Additional information will be communicated to all debtors directly regarding our new service and instructions with how to make payments beginning May 1, 2017. We will share the student contact information for UAS in the coming weeks.

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## Now Available: WASFA Application Guide

A step-by-step user guide to assist students and families in completing the WASFA application is now available under Application Resources on the [www.readysetgrad.org/WASFA](http://www.readysetgrad.org/WASFA) page. The application guide focuses on the following areas:

- How to Access the Application
- New and Returning Users
- Creating an Account
- Completing demographic and income information
- Obtaining Parent signature
- Making changes to a WASFA
- Next steps after filing a WASFA

Assistance is available for WASFA completion at [wasfa@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:wasfa@wsac.wa.gov) or 1-888-535-0747 Option #2.

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## State Work Study Information

### 2016-17 State Work Study (SWS) Update and Reminders

- **SWS Expenditures**

Thank you to institutions for your diligent work to ensure that SWS opportunities are maximized by eligible students. Current 2016-17 expenditures are on track for 100 percent utilization. WSAC was able to provide supplemental SWS funding during the February Survey Round to institutions indicating the capacity for additional student earnings. Please continue to carefully monitor your 2016-17 expenditures so that funds that may go unearned at your institution can be transferred in a timely fashion to institutions in need of additional SWS resources. SWS intends to conduct one more 2016-17 survey in May.

- **WSASEA Spring Conference and WSAC Sponsorship**

WSAC will sponsor new SWS Administrators' first-time attendance at the upcoming Washington State Association of Student Employment Administrators (WSASEA) spring conference, a value of \$240! The conference takes place on May 1 - 3, 2017 at Rainbow Lodge in North Bend.

This year's topic is "Working Together to Improve Our Community" and agenda items include a WSAC/SWS update, a Federal update with the US Department of Education, and a sector breakout session. Please see our March 27 email to Financial Aid Directors and Student Employment Administrators for more information on the sponsorship, including the conference agenda and registration form.

### 2017-18 SWS Update and Reminders

- **SWS Employer Contract Renewal**

All SWS employers who have an active contract in the Portal for 2016-17 will receive a letter mid-May with detailed instructions on how to renew their SWS contract and private college job descriptions online for 2017-18. Employers will also receive a SWS update on important 2016-17 year end requirements and 2017-18 program guidance.

- **SWS Program Manual**

Once finalized, the 2017-18 SWS program manual will include important policy updates and guidance for program stakeholders. Please see the "Updates" section at the beginning of the manual for full details. The goal is to have 2017-18 program manuals available electronically in late April. Key 2017-18 SWS guidance will also be covered in the July edition of the **SFA Partner**.

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## Changes to “SFA Resources” Page on WSAC Website

There have been some changes made to this page: <http://www.wsac.wa.gov/FAA-resources>. In the gray “Contact Information” box, you will now find staff contact information. The purple “Resources” box now includes program manuals and program training information. When 2017-18 program manuals are available they will be included in this section.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Becky Thompson  
Director for Student Financial Assistance  
[finaid@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:finaid@wsac.wa.gov)

To contact program staff:  
[Student Financial Assistance staff list](#)

### RESOURCES

#### Program Manuals

- [Passport to College Scholarship \(2016-17\) \(2015-16\)](#)
- [State Need Grant & College Bound Scholarship Program \(2016-17\) \(2015-16\)](#)
  - [MFI Chart for SNG and CBS Awarding \(2017-18\)](#)
  - [CSV Sample file for CSAW Interim Reports \(2016-17\) \(2015-16\)](#)
- [State Work Study \(2016-17\) \(2015-16\)](#)
- [Student Teaching Grant Program \(2016-17\)](#)

#### Program Training

New Aid Administrator Training Webinars: SNG, CBS, and Passport

- [Day 1 \(Video - 90 minute\)\(PowerPoint PDF\)](#)
- [Day 2 \(Video - 90 minute\)\(PowerPoint PDF\)](#)

#### Additional Resources

- [Unit Record Report](#)

### SFA PARTNER ARCHIVES

Past editions of the SFA Partner are available in our [archives](#).

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## Providing Feedback to SFA

The **SFA Partner** was designed 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](mailto:finaid@wsac.wa.gov) and let us know what you think!

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