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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Calling all “dreamers” – application for state financial aid now available

Olympia—The Washington Application for State Financial Aid, or the WASFA, is now available for undocumented students to apply for State Need Grant funds. The application can be accessed on ReadySetGrad.org/WASFA, and students should submit it as soon as possible.

Undocumented students are now eligible to receive State Need Grant funds because of the [Real Hope Act](#), also referred to as the Washington Dream Act, which passed the Legislature during the 2014 session and was signed into law by Governor Inslee on February 26, 2014.

The law is specific to the State Need Grant program and expanded the definition of [in-state residency](#) to include undocumented students. The act also included an additional appropriation of \$5 million for the State Need Grant Program.

The State Need Grant helps the state’s lowest-income undergraduate students pursue degrees, hone skills, or retrain for new careers. Students who meet [program requirements](#) can use the grants at [eligible institutions](#) in Washington.

This new law makes Washington the fourth state (after Texas, California and Minnesota) to provide financial aid to non-citizens. In 2003, Washington offered in-state tuition to students who graduated from high school (having lived in the state for three years) and promised to pursue citizenship.

The additional \$5 million is included in the total appropriation of \$308 million, which is expected to serve 77,000 students. State Need Grant awards are not guaranteed - the additional funding is not earmarked for undocumented students - and all students are encouraged to file either the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the WASFA as soon as possible.

The Washington Student Achievement Council administers the state’s financial aid programs and contracted with Access Group Inc. to provide the WASFA to these newly eligible students. Ready, Set, Grad is the state’s new information and awareness website. The site launched in 2012 to provide college preparation and funding information to students, families and educators statewide.

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About the Washington Student Achievement Council: Established as a new cabinet-level state agency on July 1, 2012, the Council provides strategic planning, oversight, and advocacy to support increased student success and higher levels of educational attainment in Washington. The Council proposes improvements and innovations to meet the evolving needs of students, employers, and the educational community. In recognition of the economic, social, and civic benefits of public education, the Council advocates for increased financial support and civic commitment to ensure a thriving Washington.

The nine-member Council includes five citizens (including a current student) and one representative from each of Washington's four major educational sectors. More information about the Council can be found on our website: www.wsac.wa.gov.