



SFA PARTNER

Quarterly Update

August 2017

From the Director

Hello SFA Partners,

Happy August! We hope the end of summer finds you well and that you survived the recent heat wave in air-conditioned comfort!

With passage of the state operating budget finally behind us, this issue of the **SFA Partner** contains guidance to assist you with administration of state aid in the new biennium, as well as upcoming training opportunities and reminders. As I write, 2017-18 State Need Grant (SNG) final allocations have been distributed to institutions and we are in the thick of preparing for the Unit Record Report.

These thoughts cause us to pause and appreciate YOU, our **SFA Partners!** We recognize the flurry of activity taking place on your campuses as you prepare to enter fall term, and we thank you for your work and dedication in support of students and state aid opportunities for them.

We look forward to this new academic year with you. As you read this issue, we hope you find the articles relevant and helpful to your work. We invite you to share the **Partner** with your colleagues at your institution and to encourage them to subscribe to the [listserv](#) if they have not yet done so. As always, your feedback and suggestions are welcome.

Becky Thompson
Director of Student Financial Assistance

Click on these links or scroll down to learn more about the following topics:

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Important Dates to Remember

- ✓ **Unit Record Report Training Webinars: August 1, 3, 29, and 31, 2017**
- ✓ **Unit Record Report Portal Opened: August 14, 2017**
- ✓ **WASFA 2018-19 Application Submission Opening Date: October 1, 2017**
- ✓ **WFAA Fall 2017 Conference: October 11-13, 2017 (Vancouver)**
- ✓ **WSASEA Fall Conference: October 2017 (CWU Ellensburg – **Date TBA**)**
- ✓ **Pave the Way Conference: October 19, 2017 (CWU Ellensburg) - **Save the Date!****

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2017-19 Legislative and Budget Update

Following the 105 day regular session, and three special sessions, the 2017 Legislature enacted the 2017-19 State Operating Budget on June 30, 2017. Of special note is the 2.2 percent public institution tuition increase for 2017-18, followed in 2018-19 with an additional 2 percent increase. The State Need Grant (SNG) award amounts for public colleges and not-for-profit institutions have been adjusted to reflect those increases (see the Maximum Award Amount Chart for SNG and CBS in this publication). The Legislature increased SNG appropriations to accommodate these award amount increases at the current service level and to decrease the waiting list of eligible, unserved students by 875 students annually. Appropriations for all other major state aid programs have been flat-funded for the biennium.

In other recent changes, College Bound Scholarship (CBS) program administration is affected by revisions implemented beginning 2017-18, as related to two populations:

- Former foster youth who are eligible for auto-enrollment in CBS now may meet high school graduation requirements without a high school diploma, in some circumstances, IF the student has a high school equivalency certificate.
- The Washington Opportunity Scholarship (WSOS) is no longer considered state aid for the purpose of determining CBS state-aid award commitments.

For additional detail and guidance regarding these topics and more, please refer to WSAC's "2017-18 State Aid Program Guidance" memo issued on July 18, [review the WSAC session wrap up](#), or contact appropriate WSAC program staff.

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2017-18 Program Manuals Now Available

The 2017-18 Program Manuals are available at <http://wsac.wa.gov/FAA-resources>. Be sure to review these vital tools carefully, paying particular attention to the Updates and Reminders sections.

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All Colleges on Real-Time Reporting for 2017-18

All colleges will use the real-time reporting method for requesting funds for the 2017-18 year. With every college using the same reporting method, WSAC anticipates receiving better data earlier in the year and quicker turn-around on reconciliation completion. This should result in more consistent and accurate reporting throughout the year, with the final archive and final allocations made available to colleges sooner.

WSAC conducted a real-time reporting training webinar on August 9, which was well attended by a cross-section of institutions. Training content focused on those colleges that will convert to real-time in the 2017-18 year. The [webinar video recording](#) is available online, under Program Training on WSAC's FAA Resources web page, for aid administrators who missed the presentation or who are interested in a refresher.

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2016-17 Unit Record Report (URR) Training Webinars and Deadlines

Institutions will find the current Unit Record Report Manual and an example of the .csv file record lay-out for 2016-17 reporting available for download on the WSAC [website](#).

Four Unit Record Report training webinars have been scheduled for **August 2017**, two of which have already taken place on **August 1 and 3**. The two remaining webinars planned for **August 29 and 31** will cover similar information; however, these last two presentations also will include specialized information related to the CTC FAS and ctcLink data systems. URR administrators may choose to attend the session that best suits their schedules and data system needs, or multiple sessions if so inclined. Reminders with specific webinar date and access details are emailed to URR contacts a day or two prior to each training, and recordings of selected webinars will be posted to the agency website for later review.

The [URR Portal](#) has gone live on **Monday, August 14**. However, institutions are encouraged to test files in the Portal training environment prior to submitting via the main URR Portal. The test environment provides institutions with an opportunity to identify edits for correction prior to live submission. The [Portal training site](#) also is live now and ready to accept test uploads.

Final institutional URRs are due to WSAC by 5 p.m., **Friday, October 20**.

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State Need Grant and College Bound Scholarship Award Amounts and MFI Chart

State Need Grant and College Bound Scholarship award amounts were emailed to colleges on July 18, 2017. Those charts represent the maximum award amounts for full time students attending three quarters or two semesters. Maximum award amounts for students who are enrolled part-time need to be reduced based on their enrollment status.



2017-18 Maximum Award Amounts
State Need Grant and College Bound Scholarship

Maximum award amounts for eligible students enrolled full-time for 3 quarters/2 semesters*

Institution/Sector	Median Family Income									
	CBS Max	0% - 50%	0% - 50%	51% - 55%	51% - 55%	55% - 60%	55% - 60%	61% - 65%	61% - 65%	66%-70%
	SNG + CBS = Full CBS Award*	(full SNG award)	CBS Amount	(70% of full SNG award)	CBS Amount	(65% of full SNG award)	CBS Amount	(60% of full SNG award)	CBS Amount	SNG ONLY (50% of full award)
University of Washington	\$ 10,802	\$ 9,553	\$ 1,249	\$ 6,687	\$ 4,115	\$ 6,209	\$ 4,593	\$ 5,732	\$ 5,070	\$ 4,777
Washington State University	\$ 10,591	\$ 9,553	\$ 1,038	\$ 6,687	\$ 3,904	\$ 6,209	\$ 4,382	\$ 5,732	\$ 4,859	\$ 4,777
Central Washington University	\$ 7,248	\$ 6,431	\$ 817	\$ 4,502	\$ 2,746	\$ 4,180	\$ 3,068	\$ 3,859	\$ 3,389	\$ 3,216
Eastern Washington University	\$ 6,757	\$ 6,090	\$ 667	\$ 4,263	\$ 2,494	\$ 3,959	\$ 2,798	\$ 3,654	\$ 3,103	\$ 3,045
The Evergreen State College	\$ 7,177	\$ 6,411	\$ 766	\$ 4,488	\$ 2,689	\$ 4,167	\$ 3,010	\$ 3,847	\$ 3,330	\$ 3,206
Western Washington University	\$ 7,379	\$ 6,638	\$ 741	\$ 4,647	\$ 2,732	\$ 4,315	\$ 3,064	\$ 3,983	\$ 3,396	\$ 3,319
Private Four-year - Non-Profit	\$ 11,904	\$ 9,553	\$ 2,351	\$ 6,687	\$ 5,217	\$ 6,209	\$ 5,695	\$ 5,732	\$ 6,172	\$ 4,777
Private Four-year - For-Profit	\$ 11,904	\$ 8,517	\$ 3,387	\$ 5,962	\$ 5,942	\$ 5,536	\$ 6,368	\$ 5,110	\$ 6,794	\$ 4,259
WGU-Washington	\$ 6,280	\$ 5,619	\$ 661	\$ 3,933	\$ 2,347	\$ 3,652	\$ 2,628	\$ 3,371	\$ 2,909	\$ 2,810
Community & Technical Colleges	\$ 4,438	\$ 3,620	\$ 818	\$ 2,534	\$ 1,904	\$ 2,353	\$ 2,085	\$ 2,172	\$ 2,266	\$ 1,810
CTC Applied Bachelor's	\$ 6,757	\$ 6,090	\$ 667	\$ 4,263	\$ 2,494	\$ 3,959	\$ 2,798	\$ 3,654	\$ 3,103	\$ 3,045
Private Two-Year Non-Profit	\$ 4,438	\$ 3,620	\$ 818	\$ 2,534	\$ 1,904	\$ 2,353	\$ 2,085	\$ 2,172	\$ 2,266	\$ 1,810
Private Two-Year For-Profit	\$ 4,467	\$ 2,823	\$ 1,644	\$ 1,976	\$ 2,491	\$ 1,835	\$ 2,632	\$ 1,694	\$ 2,773	\$ 1,412
Dependent Care Allowance**		\$ 920		\$ 644		\$ 598		\$ 552		\$ 460

7/18/2017

*Eligible students will receive more than these amounts if enrolled for more than 3 quarters or 2 semesters.

**Dependent Care Allowance is in addition to the SNG max. Recipients of CBS and DCA will exceed the Total Maximum SNG and CBS maximum.

The 2017-18 MFI chart was distributed to colleges on September 30, 2016. Both the award and the MFI charts can be found in the 2017-18 SNG/CBS program manual, and also are shown as separate links in the purple Resources box on right-hand edge of the [FAA Resources](#) webpage. You also will find award amounts for your college in the Portal by clicking the Grant Amounts option in CSAW.

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State Need Grant Institutional Set-Aside to Accomplish 100 percent Coordination

Each institution is responsible for assuring that ample SNG funds are “set-aside,” or reserved, for all eligible CBS students who enroll during the year. This means that all institutions must do their best to

predict the number of eligible CBS students who will enroll for all terms during the 2017-18 year (Summer 1, Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer 2) and hold ample funds back from their 2017-18 final SNG allocation to fund them.

From a statewide perspective, the Caseload Forecast Council estimated in its June 2017 report that there will be a 7.5 percent increase in CBS funded students in 2017-18, over the previous year. Changes in enrollment levels may vary considerably by sector, and from one college to another. Therefore, to determine the SNG funds to set aside for eligible CBS students, each institution should carefully review their own institutional data, by asking:

- What have been the annual percentage changes in eligible CBS students enrolling at your institution since the first year of CBS funding in 2012-13?
- How has the annual percentage changed in the most recent year(s)?
- What do key staff in enrollment services or other areas at your institution believe the growth rate in eligible CBS students might be for the 2017-18 year?
- What has been the average SNG award per term and per year that CBS students have received at your institution in 2016-17?
- What do you estimate will be the average SNG award per term and per year for the CBS students at your institution in 2017-18?

As the year progresses, adjustments should be made in the set asides in order to assure that all eligible CBS students receive fully coordinated CBS and SNG awards and that 100 percent of SNG funds are fully spent by the end of the year.

Decisions on the amount of SNG funds to hold back are institutional decisions. For institutions interested in additional discussion on this process, please contact Carla Idohl-Corwin at WSAC.

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Acceptable Forms of DACA Documentation

Previous WSAC guidance directed that students with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) must provide their I-797 “Notice of Action” form to verify their DACA status. This form clarifies that the student has DACA and includes an expiration date.

If a student does not have an I-797, they may provide an unexpired Employment Authorization Card with Category “C-33.” An example of the card and location of the Category and expiration date may be found on the [USCIS website](#).

Remember that the student must have unexpired DACA status at the time of the residency determination. Once the college has determined residency, the determination does not need to be revisited as long as the student remains continuously enrolled at the college and no conflicting information is received.

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Retroactive CBS and SNG Awards and Payments for Previous Terms

The information that follows is covered in Chapter 2 of the 2017-18 SNG/CBS Program Manual:

- Retroactive SNG and CBS awards and payment **MUST** be made to **eligible CBS Scholars** for a prior term(s) as long as the term is within the current program year and other program rules are followed.
- Retroactive SNG awards and payments also **MAY** be made to eligible SNG students (who are not also eligible CBS Scholars) for a prior term(s). Students do not have to be enrolled at the time retroactive payments are made.
- Retroactive awards and payments must be based on a student's rate of satisfactorily completed credits (minimum of three credits) determined by the institution at the end of the term(s).

If an institution retroactively awards SNG funds to a student who completed fewer credits for that term than they would have been awarded had the award been made at the beginning of the term, the student's CSAW enrollment status for the term must be updated to reflect the enrollment status for which the payment was actually made.

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Receivables Reminders

□ Institution to Bill Accounts

A reminder to those institutions processing "Institution to Bill" collections for State Need Grant, College Bound Scholarship, and Passport to College repayments during the academic year. The last day to accept in-house student payments for 2016-17 accounts was **June 30, 2017**.

Any outstanding balances must be referred to WSAC for continued billing activity no later than **August 31**, after the close of the academic year. Refer to the SNG/CBS program manual for more information. Direct additional questions to WSAC's receivables coordinator at repayment@wsac.wa.gov or call 888-535-0747, option 4.

□ Timely Referral of State Aid Repayments

Timely referral of state aid repayments is essential for maintaining accurate records between WSAC and colleges, and providing the best customer experience for students. Clarified repayment referral timelines can be found in Chapter 5 of the SNG/CBS Program Manual. Repayments that are not referred within the designated timeframes will become the financial responsibility of the institution for failure to report.

□ Canceling Accounts In "In Repayment" Status

Institutions may cancel a repayment only when the institution has determined the student did not owe the repayment. Examples are proof of an updated last date of attendance, grade change, proof of high school diploma, etc. Institutions may not accept payment for an In-Repayment account and then cancel the debt in the Portal.

When cancelling a repayment in the Portal, the institution must enter a clear explanation for why the repayment has been cancelled. Any funds the student has paid WSAC towards the repayment will be refunded to the student by WSAC.

Cancellation of repayments created more than one academic year before the current year must be done by contacting WSAC at repayment@wsac.wa.gov.

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Review Portal Institutional Contacts and Update Permissions

Each institution's director of financial aid or his/her designee should review the names of authorized users on a regular basis to add, delete or modify staff and permissions. When in the WSAC Portal, select the "Manage Users" tab and then click the "Search" button near the bottom. If you need assistance, please contact Kelly Olson at (360) 753-7637 or sng@wsac.wa.gov.

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WSASEA Spring Conference

The Washington State Association of Student Employment Administrators (WSASEA) members met in May for the annual Spring Conference at North Bend, WA. This year's theme was Working Together to Improve Our Community and featured a federal update from the U.S. Department of Education, an update on the Federal Form I-9 by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and many roundtable discussions.

WSASEA was founded to support people working in student employment and provides an interactive learning opportunity around best practices in student employment from peers. The spring conference was a unique opportunity to hear relevant updates and be exposed to experts in the field. This year, WSAC sponsored the first-time attendance of nine new SWS administrators at the conference, an opportunity WSAC intends to offer again in spring 2018.

The WSASEA Fall Town Meeting, a one-day event, will be held at Central Washington University this fall. A final date will be set soon, and more information about WSASEA events is available at their [website](#).

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State Work Study Information

There were no changes made to SWS program policies or the 2017-18 appropriation within the 2017-2019 biennial operating budget passed during the 2017 Legislative Session.

The 2017-18 SWS appropriation remains at \$7.8 million.

Please note the following important updates and reminders on 2017-18 SWS operations:

- **SWS Reserves**
 - Allocations are based on the institution’s calculated percentage of available program resources as adjusted by historical utilization performance.
 - 2017-18 SWS initial allocation notification letters were emailed to institutions on July 20, 2017 following passage of the final legislative budget.
 - Initial allocations represent approximately 75 percent of an estimated final allocation amount for 2017-18.
 - Once 2016-17 SWS activity is fully complete, typically in August, allocations will be recalculated and adjusted to ensure that institutions receive 100 percent of the appropriate amount.
 - Please note that opportunities to significantly redistribute SWS funds throughout 2017-18 are not anticipated.

- **Employer Match Rates**
 - 2017-18 employer types and associated maximum reimbursement and minimum match rates will remain at 2016-17 levels, as follows:

Employer Type	Reimbursement/Match
For-profit	40% maximum SWS program reimbursement 60% minimum employer match contribution
Public institutions, on-campus Private institutions, on-campus Governmental agencies: city, county, state, federal	60% maximum SWS program reimbursement 40% minimum employer match contribution
Non-profit community service providers School districts STEM - businesses whose primary business activity is in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and/or mathematics	70% maximum SWS program reimbursement 30% minimum employer match contribution

- Institutions must apply appropriate minimum matching rates/maximum employer reimbursement rates per employer type as described above.
 - SWS contract renewal instructions will be mailed to all employers with active 2016-17 contracts in the Portal beginning in May 2017.
 - All employers must have approved and active 2017-18 SWS contracts and job descriptions prior to students earning SWS dollars between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018.
- **Minimum SWS Wages**
[Initiative 1433](#)'s passage directs new, higher state minimum wages for all employees working in Washington beginning on January 1, 2017, and increasing incrementally as follows:
 - \$11.00 per hour as of January 1st, 2017
 - \$11.50 per hour as of January 1st, 2018
 - \$12.00 per hour as of January 1st, 2019
 - \$13.50 per hour as of January 1st, 2020
 - Each January 1st thereafter, as adjusted by the rate of inflation

Thank you for ensuring that all SWS student employees' hourly pay rates continue comply with applicable minimum wage requirements.

Please note that localities with higher minimum rates than the state minimum (Seattle, Tacoma, and the City of SeaTac currently) must ensure compliance with the higher, local minimum wage (see below).

- **Comparability with Local Minimum Wages**

SWS comparability rules require that SWS student employees are paid comparably to what a non-student would earn in the same position.¹

When local laws require a higher minimum wage, the minimum wage for SWS students working both on and off-campus within that locality must be aligned with local minimums in order to maintain comparability.

Seattle

As of January 1, 2017, the City of Seattle required the following minimum wages for Seattle-based employees:

- For employers with fewer than 500 employees, a minimum of \$13 per hour.
- For employers with 500 employees or more, a minimum of \$15 per hour.

Additionally, the ordinance requires annual increases through the year 2021—raising the city minimum for all employers to \$15 an hour by that point in time.

¹ [RCW 28B.12.040](#); [RCW 28B.12.060\(5\)\(b\)](#); [WAC 250-40-030\(6\)\(c\)](#); [WAC 250-40-050\(2\)](#); [WAC 250-40-070\(3\)\(a\)](#)

As of January 1, 2018, the minimum wage for Seattle-based employers will again increase:

- For employers with fewer than 500 employees, the minimum will increase to \$14 per hour.
- For employers with 500 employees or more, the current minimum wage will be increased by the rate of inflation.

SeaTac

As of January 1, 2017, the City of SeaTac required a minimum wage hourly wage of \$15.34.

As of January 1, 2018, SeaTac's current minimum wage will be increased by the rate of inflation.

Tacoma

As of January 1, 2017, the minimum hourly wage within Tacoma city limits increased to \$11.15.

As of January 1, 2018, the minimum hourly wage within Tacoma city limits will increase to \$12.00.

WSAC expects all affected SWS institutions and employers to continue to ensure the comparability of SWS wages and to therefore align minimum SWS pay rates with any new minimums as required by local ordinances for non-student employees.

For private institutions participating in SWS, WSAC will not process employer reimbursements for affected employers if the hourly wage is less than the proscribed minimum.

For public institutions participating in SWS, please note that SWS pay rates are subject to audit.

For all participating institutions, WSAC encourages you to work directly with employers subject to higher local minimum wages to revise affected job descriptions to ensure maintained compliance with SWS wage comparability rules.

In order to assist institutions with this requirement, WSAC communicates minimum wage guidance to affected SWS employers in advance of local changes.

- **State Mandated Sick Leave:**

In addition to its state minimum wage provisions, [Initiative 1433](#)'s passage also requires that Washington employers provide all employees with **paid sick leave**.

Beginning **January 1, 2018**, all Washington employers must provide paid sick leave to all their employees, including SWS student employees.

Employees must accrue at least one-hour of paid sick leave for every 40 hours worked.

An employee may use paid sick leave for the following reasons:

- An absence resulting from an employee's mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; to accommodate the employee's need for medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; or an employee's need for preventive medical care;
- To allow the employee to provide care for a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; care of a family member who needs medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; or care for a family member who needs preventive medical care;
- When the employee's place of business has been closed by order of a public official for any health-related reason, or when an employee's child's school or place of care has been closed for such a reason; and
- For absences that qualify for leave under the state's existing Domestic Violence Leave Act

Employees are entitled to use accrued paid sick leave beginning on the 90th day after starting their employment. Unused paid sick leave carries over to the following year, however, an employer is not required to allow an employee to carry over more than 40 hours of sick leave.

Because the minimum paid sick leave hours as defined by I-1433 are a required component of state-mandated employee compensation, and not a fringe benefit such as employer-provided health insurance, or a required tax owed to the state or federal government such as Workers Compensation or FICA, the paid sick leave hours required by I-1433 are eligible for SWS reimbursement as hours worked.

SWS employers should document student employee sick leave hours on SWS timesheets as they would any other hours of SWS employment.

Please note that average weekly SWS hour limitations still apply, including any sick leave hours associated with the calculation period.

State-mandated sick leave hours under I-1433 do not impact federal FICA tax exemptions. Student employees who would otherwise be exempt from FICA deductions would retain that exemption regardless of state-mandated sick leave requirements. Please see <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/rp-05-11.pdf>, page 12, item 6.04 for more information.

The Department of Labor & Industries is currently writing the rules on I-1433-mandated sick leave benefit implementation. These rules should help clarify many institutional/employer questions but will not be final until fall 2017.

WSAC will work to ensure SWS stakeholders are informed on the latest I-1433 developments and we appreciate your patience prior to final rules. In the meantime, the latest information on I-1433 implementation can be found at <http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/Wages/Minimum/1443.asp>.

- **Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA)**

Students completing the WASFA may be eligible for SWS. If the student is authorized to work in the United States as a result of participation in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA), can demonstrate residency and need via the WASFA, and meets all other SWS eligibility criteria, the student would be eligible for SWS.

- **Other Policy Reminders**

Non-residents remain ineligible for SWS in 2017-18.

Due to the loss of Federal Title IV funding formerly incorporated into the SWS program, SWS earnings no longer meet the federal definition of the type of income that can be excluded from income benefit calculations for federally funded assistance programs.

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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 and let us know what you think!

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