

**TOPIC:** PROPOSED REVISIONS TO CCHE POLICY VI F STATE-FUNDED STUDENT FINANCIAL AID TO INCLUDE CASFA AND HOUSE BILL 19-1196 PROCESSES

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## **I. SUMMARY**

This discussion item outlines proposed revisions to CCHE Policy VI, Part F: State-Funded Student Financial Aid Policies to codify new processes required as a result of the passage of HB 19-1196 and the implementation of a statewide financial aid application for undocumented students, commonly referred to as the CASFA (Colorado Application for State/Student Financial Aid).

## **II. BACKGROUND**

Financial aid statutes found in Section 23-3.3-101 through 901, C.R.S., as well as 23-3.5-101 through 104 and 23-3.7-103 through 107 give CCHE substantial authority in the allocation and administration of state-funded financial aid. Commission policies govern the distribution of state financial aid awards; however, because financial aid packaging is decentralized, individual awards of student aid are made exclusively at the institutional level.

HB 19-1196 allows ASSET students who are classified as in-state for tuition classification purposes to be newly eligible for state-funded financial aid awards. When HB 19-1196 was signed into law during the 2019 legislative session, Department staff worked with institutional staff to implement the legislation. In doing so, Department staff learned that the application processes by which institutional staff were assessing need for ASSET and other undocumented students varied greatly. Department and institutional staff determined that the best way to address the wide variety of needs assessment methodologies was to develop a uniform statewide application that mirrored the federal application (FAFSA) that citizen/documentated students complete in order to be awarded state-funded financial aid.

In order to allow newly eligible ASSET students timely access to this new source of aid, Department and institutional staff agreed that, with the approval of the Commission, a temporary measure could be adopted to allow institutions to continue to use their existing applications and methodology to determine need for ASSET students while a statewide application was developed. If an institution did not have an existing application or needs-analysis methodology in place, there was an option to use the CTE Grant Needs-Analysis methodology (see Appendix B). The Commission approved this approach at the June 2019 meeting.

The new online statewide financial aid application is live as of October 1, 2020. The Colorado Application for State Financial Aid (CASFA) allows students who are not eligible for Title IV (federal) aid to complete a financial aid needs-analysis that mirrors the methodology in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In this way, institutional financial aid offices are now able to equally compare the demonstrated need of a student who is eligible for Title IV aid (completing the FAFSA) and a student that is not (completing the CASFA).

This agenda item seeks Commission recognition of the CASFA as the official statewide application to be utilized by students who are not eligible for Title IV aid as well as Commission approval of confirming changes to the CCHE Policy VI, Part F: State-Funded Student Financial Aid Policies.

### **III. STAFF ANALYSIS**

Staff has worked closely with institutional financial aid offices, community organizations, and the software provider to ensure that this application meets the needs of students and institutions. Staff will continue to work to ensure that the application and accompanying software are continuously improved as all involved parties gain a better understanding of the process in the first years of implementation.

### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Commission take action on this item and approve the revisions to CCHE Policy VI, Part F: State-Funded Student Financial Aid Policies, see Appendix A.

### **V. STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

C.R.S. §23-3.3 -101, 103; §23-3.3 401-501

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A: Revised Policy  
(forthcoming)

Attachment B: Agenda Item IV B  
CCHE Meeting June 6, 2019: HB  
19-1196 PROPOSED INTERIM  
REVISIONS TO CCHE  
POLICY VI, PART F: STATE  
FUNDED FINANCIAL AID  
POLICIES