

# Frequently Asked Questions

## *Part 4: AB 469 Alignment: Using Financial Aid Lessons & FAFSA/CADAA Applications*

This document is designed to answer educators' most frequently asked questions regarding Financial Aid tools on CaliforniaColleges.edu.

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## Legislative Compliance

### What is AB 132, or the Cradle-to-Career System?

California's Cradle-to-Career System, established by AB 132, is intended to be a suite of user-friendly resources focused on early learning through K-12 and higher education, as well as on the financial aid and social services that help students reach their goals.

CaliforniaColleges.edu is currently the platform through which the Cradle-to-Career System provides planning and application tools for students, families, and educators to streamline the college and financial aid processes and monitor student progress. For more information, please visit the [Cradle-to-Career System website](#).

### Partner vs. Basic Accounts

#### What is a Partner Account?

A Partner Account allows you to use all of the tools available on CaliforniaColleges.edu.

- To be eligible for a Partner Account, you must be enrolled in or employed at one of our [Partner Districts](#).
- Our Partner Districts have established a formal data-sharing agreement with California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI).
- The formal data-sharing agreement makes it possible for school districts to securely upload student transcript data into CaliforniaColleges.edu.
- Student transcript data is required for certain tools, such as the CSU and UC Eligibility Tools, as well as to import their verified "a-g" coursework and grades into the Cal State Apply application.

#### What is a Basic Account?

If you are not enrolled or employed by a Partner District, you can still sign up for a Basic Account. Students, educators, and other users who have Basic Accounts are able to use many of the tools on CaliforniaColleges.edu. Basic Account users are not able to access tools that require the upload of students courses and grades, such as the CSU and UC Eligibility Tools.

To view a CaliforniaColleges.edu functionality comparison between a Partner Account & Basic Account, click [here](#).

#### How do I know if I am a partner?

Want to find out if your school and district are already partners? [Check it out here](#).

## How do I become a partner?

To become a Partner District, a school district must first establish a formal data-sharing agreement with the California College Guidance Initiative. The formal data-sharing agreement makes it possible for a school district to securely upload student transcript data into CaliforniaColleges.edu. To ensure that Partner Districts have the support they need to successfully bring CaliforniaColleges.edu to their students, CCGI will provide them several forms of support throughout the implementation process.

## What are the requirements for a data-sharing agreement with CCGI?

In order for a district to enter into a data-sharing agreement with CCGI, the district must demonstrate that it will:

- Utilize the same Student Information System (SIS) for the next 1-2 years
- Be responsive to CCGI's support to align their local "a-g" course list with the University of California Office of the President (UCOP) Course Management Portal (CMP)
- Serve students in the 9th-12th grades at one or more school sites
- Be able to identify points-of-contact for implementation, data, and contracting

Once a district has determined that it is prepared to bring CaliforniaColleges.edu to their students, it can submit an Intent to Partner form. We encourage districts that are interested in bringing CaliforniaColleges.edu to their students to [Contact Us](#) to learn more about the platform and implementation process.

## Financial Aid Tools

### What is AB 2015, or FAFSA/CADAA Instruction?

Beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, Local Education Agencies (LEAs)/school districts must ensure that each student receives information on how to properly complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the California Dream Act Application (CADAA), as appropriate, at least once before the pupil enters grade 12.

### What is AB 469, or Universal FAFSA/CADAA?

Starting in 2022, this new law will require school districts, county Offices of Education, and charter schools to ensure that all graduating seniors complete and submit a FAFSA or CADAA, if the student has not opted out.

### What is the purpose of the financial aid tools on CaliforniaColleges.edu?

The financial aid tools on CaliforniaColleges.edu were developed to help districts comply with:

- AB 2015, by helping students acquire the financial literacy they need to make an informed choice regarding financial aid programs; and
- AB 469, by providing districts with tools to monitor and run verified reports on which seniors have submitted a FAFSA or CADAA.

### Are students required to complete every module in the financial aid lessons in order to launch their financial aid application?

AB 2015 requires LEAs/districts to report data indicating that they have comprehensively provided financial aid instruction to students prior to their senior year. While students can launch their FAFSA/CADAA application through the platform without completing all of the financial aid lesson modules, we encourage you to have your students complete all modules to ensure your district meets compliance with AB 2015.

### **How soon can students access the financial aid lessons?**

The financial aid lessons contain modules that are sequenced by grade level. Students can access the lessons as early as the 6th grade and run through the 12th grade. Each module is made up of a series of individual lessons focusing on specific aspects of financial aid knowledge, planning, and the application process.

### **Can students access previous grades' modules?**

Students can access modules for their current and previous grade levels by going to the Gear (⚙) icon at the top right of the page.

### **How can students access modules not in their grade level? For example, can a 6th grade student access modules for 12th grade students?**

Students can access modules only for their current and previous grade levels. They can do this by going to the Gear (⚙) icon at the top right of the page. Specifically:

- 6th-10th grade students have access to the 6th-10th grade modules
- 11th grade students have access to the 6th-11th grade modules
- 12th grade students have access to all modules

### **When does the FAFSA/CADAA launch button go live?**

Between October 1st through June 30th, students will be able to see the FAFSA/CADAA launch button in My Financial Aid Plan.

### **What if my student already started their Financial Aid Application?**

Students can launch and link their application at any point of the application cycle.

### **Why should students launch their financial aid application from CaliforniaColleges.edu instead of directly from the FAFSA or CADAA websites?**

When your student launches their FAFSA or CADAA from CaliforniaColleges.edu, their data is hard-matched using their State Student Identifier (SSID), as well as their name, date of birth, and Social Security Number. If they launch directly from the FAFSA or CADAA website, their SSID is not included. By associating their SSID with their application, students benefit from accurate Cal Grant GPA verification and increase the chances that their data can be easily and accurately matched to them across both federal and state systems.

### **Is financial aid application completion tracking only available if the student accesses the FAFSA/CADAA via californiacolleges.edu account?**

Students must launch from CaliforniaColleges.edu to show up in the reports.

### **Can students switch their FAFSA/CADAA path after they have already selected one?**

Yes, students can switch their application path so long as they have not yet completed Module 2. After Module 2 has been completed, students can no longer change their application path.

### **Does the reporting on CaliforniaColleges.edu include a flag for students who have opted out of AB 469 implementation?**

Given that this is the first year of AB 469 implementation and that districts have different ways of logging the opt out information, that information is not currently flagged on CaliforniaColleges.edu.

## How can I use the Financial Aid report on CaliforniaColleges.edu?

Educators are able to track student progress toward completing the financial aid modules and track a student's status of FAFSA/California Dream Act Application if they launched from CaliforniaColleges.edu. Please see step-by-step instructions below:

1. Login to your CaliforniaColleges.edu account and navigate to the Educator Dashboard and click Report Management.
2. Set the Category to "Financial Aid" and the Report Type to "What is the status of FAFSA/California Dream Act applications launched from CaliforniaColleges.edu?"
3. Click Run Report.

## If the Cal Grant GPA Verification is not submitted, will a student's status remain as Launched, but Submitted/Completed Not Verified?

Yes. Based on what we know, CSAC's internal matching process requires the SSID from the district's GPA Verification.

## What do the different statuses for a student's application mean?

- **Not Launched:** These students have not launched their FAFSA or California Dream Act Application from CaliforniaColleges.edu.
- **Launched, but Submitted/Completed Not Verified:** These students have launched their FAFSA or California Dream Act Application from CaliforniaColleges.edu, but submission or completion has not been verified.
- **Submitted:** These students have launched their FAFSA or California Dream Act Application from CaliforniaColleges.edu and CSAC says the application is being processed or may be incomplete.
- **Completed:** These students have launched their FAFSA or California Dream Act Application from CaliforniaColleges.edu and CSAC confirms the application is complete. A completed FAFSA has an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and can be used to determine Cal Grant eligibility if the GPA is matched.

## Training

### Register for a Virtual Training Session Today!

The Virtual Training experience is a critical first step in successful implementation. To ensure that you acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for successful platform usage, we offer training support from the foundational to the advanced. We recommend users attend the full series of training sessions to best learn how our tools will streamline your approach to college readiness and preparation for your students.

Our Administrator series invites district and school decision makers to understand the scope of our tools and its capacity to elevate your college readiness priorities.

**Part 1:** Elevating Your College Readiness Programming w/CaliforniaColleges.edu

**Part 2:** Aligning Your Course List with the Course Management Portal (CMP)

Our School Counselor series benefits practitioners with an interactive experience which includes a granular overview of platform tools followed by platform navigation, focused exploration and Q&A.

**Part 1:** Using CaliforniaColleges.edu: College & Career Exploration with Students

**Part 2:** Educator Dashboard: Student Account Management & Reports

**Part 3:** College Application Process Using CaliforniaColleges.edu (CCC/CSU/UC)

**Part 4:** AB 469 Alignment: Using Financial Aid Lessons & FAFSA/CADAA Applications

Click here for [Virtual Trainings for Educators and Administrators](#).

## Help with CaliforniaColleges.edu

After bringing CaliforniaColleges.edu to their students, school districts will continue to receive year-round support from the California College Guidance Initiative staff to ensure that the district, educators, students, and parents are able to effectively use the tools on the platform.

### Educator Help Page

Visit our [Educator Help Page](#) for frequently asked questions in the areas of:

- Accounts
- Managing Student Accounts
- Managing Other Educator Accounts
- Lessons
- Assignments
- Resources

### Student Help Page

Visit our [Student Help Page](#) for frequently asked questions in the areas of:

- Account Management
- Using CaliforniaColleges.edu

### Demo Accounts

Did you know you can request a CaliforniaColleges.edu demo account? If you are interested in viewing the platform in a student's view or are interested in a demo Educator Account, please [Contact Us](#).

### Contact Us

Educators, whether they have Basic or Partner Accounts, will have access to responsive, individualized support for any platform-related questions or issues they may encounter. Send us a message through our [Contact Us form](#). We do our best to respond within one business day.