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# California Higher Education Policy Institute

FOR LEGISLATIVE STAFF

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April 2024  
SACRAMENTO, CA





# California Competes: *Higher Education for a Strong Economy*

## What we *believe*

Higher education is both a vaccine and an antidote against economic stagnation and social stratification—for individual Californians, our communities, and the state’s economy.

# Our Policy *Priorities*

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College Access and Success for Adults


Higher Education & Workforce Alignment

Effective & Accessible Online Education

Coordinated Policy Setting & Implementation

# Today's *Agenda*

- ✓ Examining California's Postsecondary Landscape: Affordability, Access, and Opportunity
- ✓ Reimagining California's Postsecondary System to Meet The Needs of Today and Tomorrow
- ✓ Improving College Access and Affordability with Holistic Student Support
- ✓ Dig Deep with California Competes



# Examining California's Postsecondary Landscape: *Affordability, Access, and Opportunity*

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SU JIN JEZ, PHD  
CEO



HIGHER EDUCATION FOR A STRONG ECONOMY

Who is  
*flourishing?*

Who is  
*struggling?*



Explore at:

[p2p.californiacompetes.org](https://p2p.californiacompetes.org)

# Reimagining California's *Postsecondary System* to Meet the Needs of Today and Tomorrow

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CEO



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# Governor's state attainment goal and *current status*

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Attainment Goal



70%

postsecondary  
attainment

*by 2030*

State



53%

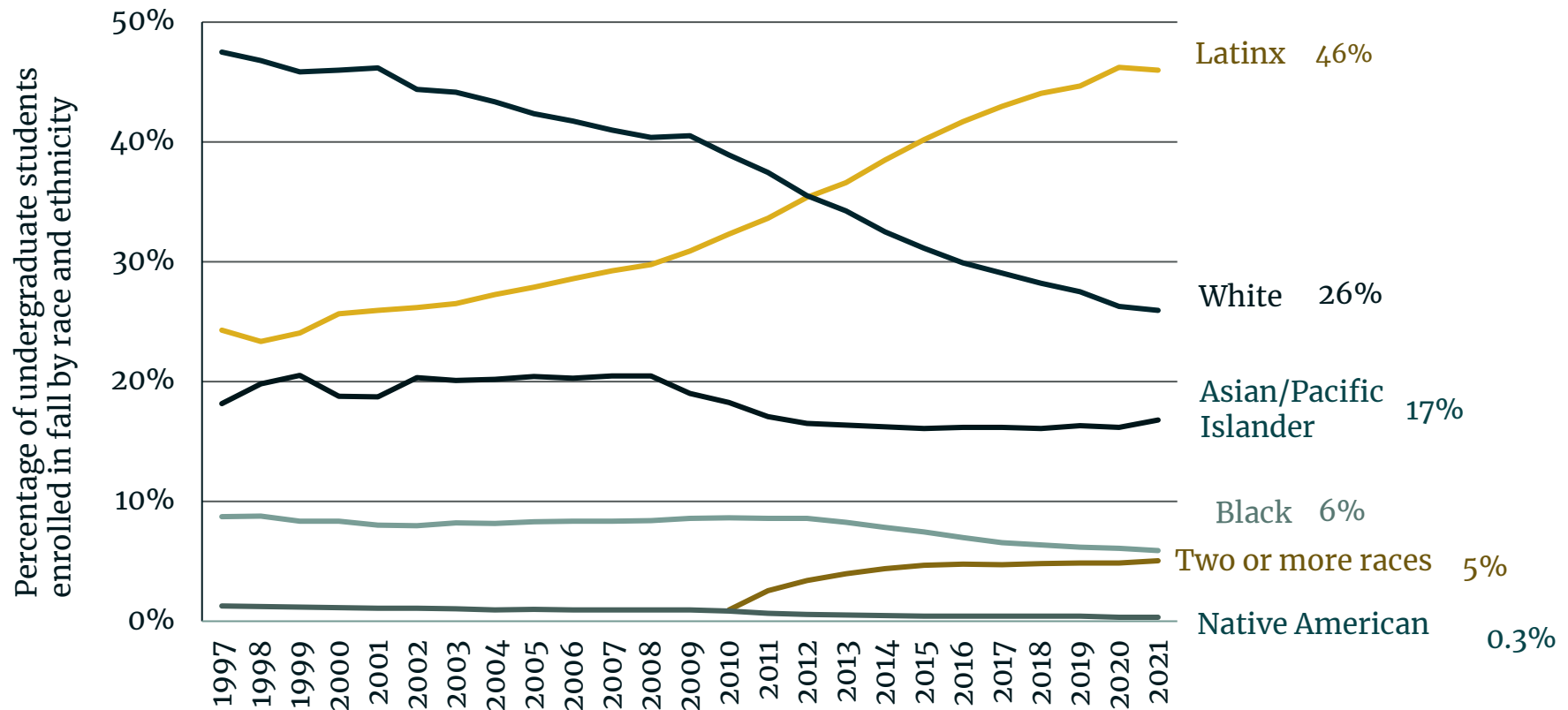
postsecondary  
attainment

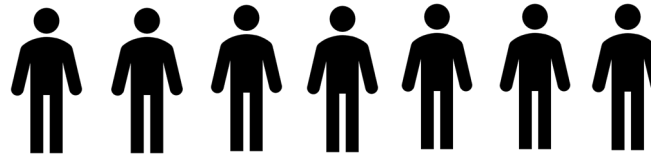
*as of 2022*



# Who goes to college has *changed* over time.

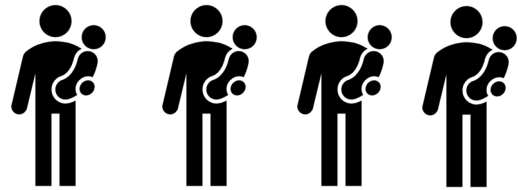
Students of color make up a *larger* share of today's students.



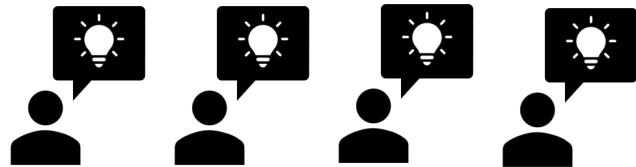


**6.8 Million**

*Adults with a HS diploma and no college degree*



*Majority are parents*

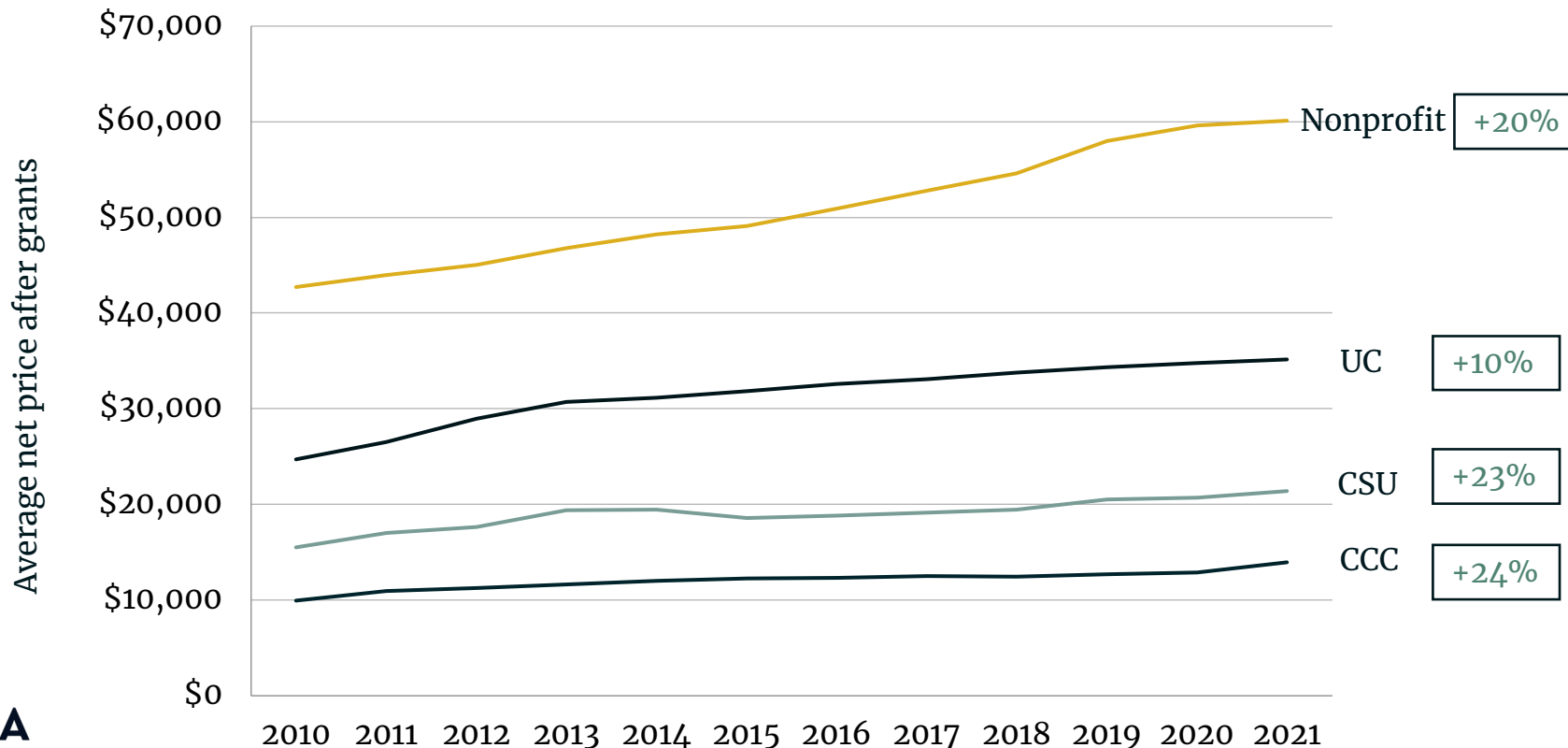


*Majority have some college experience*



# *Rising costs* of college have made higher education less affordable.

Cost of attending college continues to *increase*.



# The current situation calls for a *paradigm shift*.

A *new vision* requires that we determine the following:

The goal of  
higher education  
in today's  
California

Structures and  
resources to  
meet these goals

Student needs and  
the challenges  
they face

# Key principles for a *reimagined higher education system*

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Equity

Accessibility

Affordability

Meaningful  
education

Adaptability

# Transforming California's higher education starts with *designing for the student.*

- ✓ Regional structure
- ✓ Connections to careers
- ✓ Open access with numerous entry points
- ✓ Flexible learning modalities
- ✓ Expanded conceptions of the college experience
- ✓ A debt-free path to completion
- ✓ Equitable transitions from high school to college
- ✓ A reconstituted coordinating entity

# Improving College Access and Affordability with *Holistic Student Support*

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AJ JOHNSON  
POLICY DIRECTOR



HIGHER EDUCATION FOR A STRONG ECONOMY

*California Competes's  
Cal Grant Reform Primer  
demystifies the program  
and future plans.*



## Demystifying the Cal Grant Program and Plans for Reform

APRIL 2024

For over 60 years, the Cal Grant program has stood as a cornerstone of California's commitment to making higher education accessible and affordable by offering crucial state-funded financial aid to eligible students. However, the postsecondary landscape has evolved significantly since the program's inception, creating complexities and limitations within the current system. This primer provides an overview of the current Cal Grant program, traces the trajectory that led to current reform efforts, and offers a high-level comparison between the existing program and the modernized version.



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# What will *change* with the Cal Grant Reform?

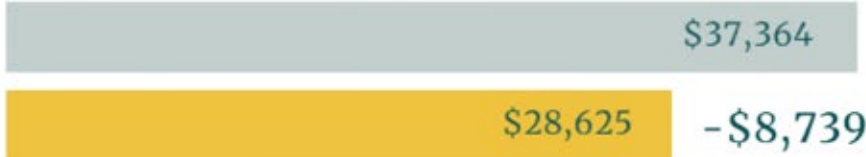
- ✓ The structure will be simplified.
- ✓ Age, GPA, and income requirements will be streamlined.
- ✓ Financial aid will address the full cost of attendance.

# Who will be newly *eligible*?

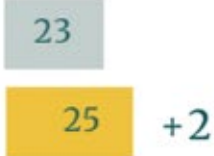
## Number of Recipients



## Recipients' Average Income



## Average Age



# Who will be newly *eligible*?

Latinx



African American

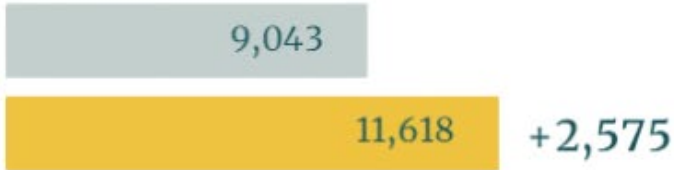


Asian



# Who will be newly *eligible*?

## California Dream Act Applicants



## First-Generation Students



## Student Parents



*California Competes's  
Student Housing Primer  
highlights recent  
legislative actions and  
common strategies to  
address housing  
challenges.*



## Understanding the Critical Role of Housing on Student Success

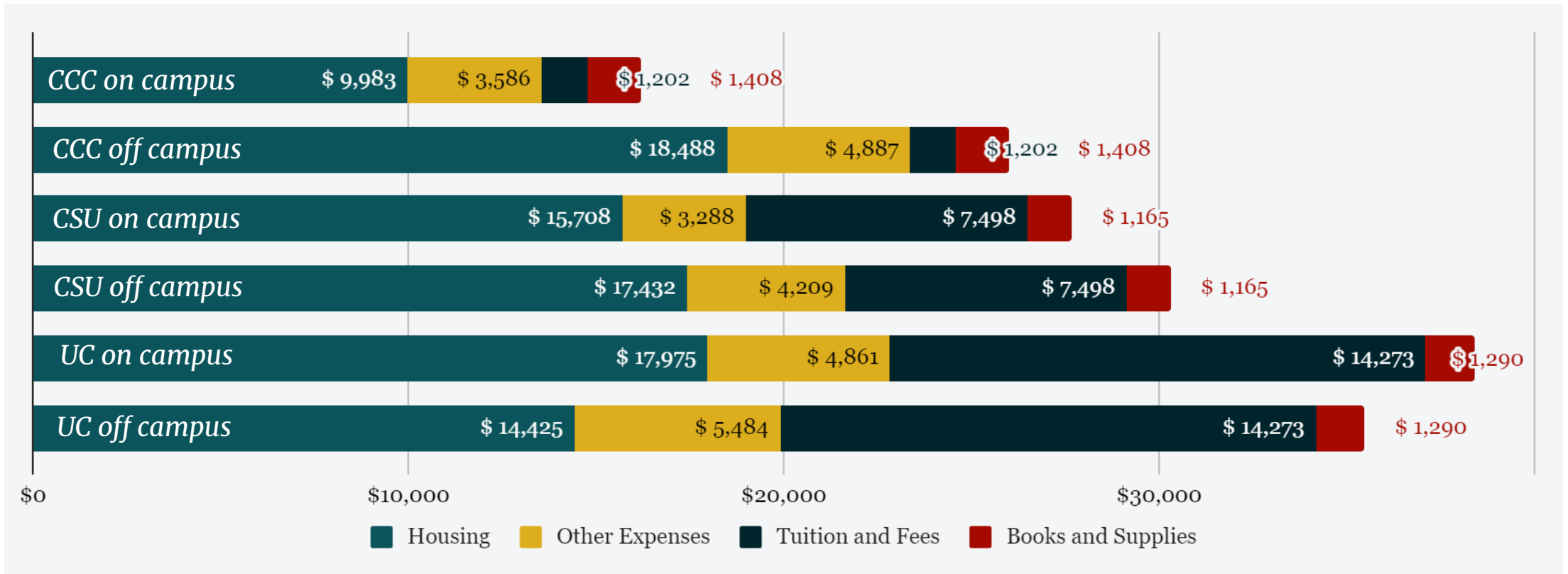
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Students consistently name the cost of college as a main barrier to college entry and success. To empower current students, along with the millions of Californians who currently do not have a college degree, to attend college, the state must help them with their greatest college cost—housing. This primer discusses housing insecurity and homelessness among California students, legislative efforts to tackle this issue, and common strategies for providing affordable housing and stabilizing student costs.



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# Housing contributes greatly to students' *cost of attendance*.



# Many California students *lack stable housing*

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**1 in 5**

*California Community  
College students*

**1 in 10**

*California State  
University students*

**1 in 20**

*University of  
California students*

*face housing insecurity and homelessness*

# Recent legislative actions to *inform and advance housing efforts*

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Information  
Gathering

Understand housing costs, availability, and student needs



Housing Capacity  
Expansion

\$9 billion for developing affordable student housing and addressing homelessness



# Strategies to *promote safe and adequate* student housing

Align housing investments with student needs

Leverage community partnerships

Employ emergency housing interventions

Monitor progress and revisit plans



# California Affordable Student Housing (CASH) Coalition


## Affordable Student Housing Spotlights



[bit.ly/student-housing-spotlights](https://bit.ly/student-housing-spotlights)

### PROTECT AFFORDABLE STUDENT HOUSING

**Cabrillo College Profile:**  
*Affordable housing empowers Cabrillo students to pursue and complete college.*



**“** As a first-generation teen mother, I knew that having a stable home for me and my children was essential. It’s important to have affordable housing to give single parents a chance to succeed and pave the way for future generations. **”**







- Victoria Magallon, student parent

This project was funded through the housing program authorizing legislation, Senate Bill 169 (2021). Recognizing the need for new affordable student housing, the governor and legislature established the Higher Education Student Housing Grant Program (HESHG) to provide colleges with grants to build new affordable housing for low-income students.

Learn more at [www.californiacompetes.org/HESHG](https://www.californiacompetes.org/HESHG)


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ABOUT CABRILLO COLLEGE’S PROJECT:


 # of Units	624
 # of Family Units	60
 Type/Style	Mixed style units including family unit wing, apartment wing, and dormitories
 Monthly Rent per Student	\$922
 Local Fair Market Rent (for comparison)	\$2,849 (studio)
 Project Status	Groundbreaking expected fall 2024


MAKE COLLEGE DREAMS A REALITY WITH AFFORDABLE STUDENT HOUSING

- 1** APPROVE a state public bond solution to maintain and expand the HESHG program.
- 2** FUND viable project proposals to increase access to affordable student housing.





The California Affordable Student Housing (CASH) Coalition brings together civil rights, advocacy, and student-led organizations committed to ensuring equitable access to higher education.





Sign on to our budget letter to protect and expand affordable student housing:  
<https://bit.ly/budget-sign-on>

# California Competes's Compendium of Public Benefits Programs



[bit.ly/public-benefit-programs](https://bit.ly/public-benefit-programs)

## Compendium of Public Benefits Programs

**Purpose:** California Competes: Higher Education for a Strong Economy has been conducting [research and advocacy](#) to drive California to streamline the myriad of financial assistance programs so students can access the supports they are entitled to and manage the costs of attending college. This spreadsheet is the first step of this work and includes an extensive analysis of over 100 public benefit programs available, including eligibility requirements, support provided, and administration rules.


**Organization:** This file is organized in several tabs of public benefit programs, organized by whether they are operated and controlled at the federal, state, or institutional level.  
*Note: For several programs, there may be less clarity in the delineation of who operates the program. For example, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federal program but states also have their own regulations governing the program. For programs where there is less clarity about operation and control, a judgement call has been made about grouping the program under one or the other tab.*

Programs are categorized by the type of benefit provided (ex. cash aid, child care, etc.)  
Each program includes details about the program governance and funding, program benefits, application and eligibility procedures, and website information.

**User-Friendly Tool:** We took the high-value programs and created The Public Benefit Finder for California Students: (<https://californiacompetes.org/resources/public-benefit-finder-for-california-students/>)

Name	Type of Program	Category	Program benefits	Benefit Level/Threshold	Administering Agency/Who determines rules	Who funds the program?	Application Process
Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI)	Cash Aid	State, County or CBO Administered Safety Net Programs	Federal benefit rate is \$914 for an individual and \$1,371 for a couple. Some States supplement the Federal SSI benefit with additional payments. California has a supplement that is administered by SSA. SSI benefit amounts and State supplemental payment amounts vary based upon income, living arrangements, and other factors. There is also a SSI for Children program for children that have a physical or mental disability or who are blind.	\$914 for an individual and \$1,371 for a couple.	Social Security Administration	Social Security Administration; US Treasury	Apply online or by phone. Calling us at 1-800-772-1213 (or TTY 1-800-325-0778 if you are deaf or hard of hearing) and making an appointment to apply for SSI. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, we also will take your telecommunications relay services (TRS) assisted calls at 1-800-772-1213. You can have a telephone appointment with one of our representatives at your local Social Security Office to file for SSI benefits.
Unemployment Insurance	Cash Aid	State, County or CBO Administered Safety Net Programs	Cash aid for 12 months	Varies	California State Employment Development Department (EDD).	State and federal taxes on employers or unemployment taxes. Federal Unemployment Tax Act is 6% of the first \$7,000 of an employee's wages	Varies by state. In California, individuals should apply in the first week in which they lose their job or have their hours reduced. Individuals need to submit the name of their employer, the last day they worked, the reason they are no longer working, the gross earnings earned in the last week of work, employment history for the past 18 months (with contact details of the employers), submit documentation.
Earned Income Tax	Cash Aid	State, County or CBO Administered Safety Net Programs	Helps low to moderate-income	California Earned	IRS administers the Federal EIC.	It is a tax credit so	To claim EITC you must file a tax

# User-friendly tool to *streamline access* to public benefits



**Public Benefit Finder for California Students**

California Competes's online tool helps you learn about public benefits you may qualify for as a student in California. The tool shows benefits you may qualify for including the link to apply and steps to take. Use the filters to change the results, print, and share. California Competes's research team has included in the description of each program, the official government website links for each program and how to apply to the program. These links are safe to explore.

Total Benefit (Up to)

**\$ 45,600**

**What kind of benefit are you looking for?**

**Are you single or married?**

**How many children do you have?**

**What is your income level each year?**

Do you have a disability?

Are you pregnant?

Are you a current or former foster youth?

Reset Filters

[Download Excel](#)   [Download PDF](#)

	Name	Type	Maximum Benefit Up to (Yearly)
▶	Cal Grant (UC)	Financial Aid	\$15,400
▶	Federal Pell Grant	Financial Aid	\$7,395
▶	Cal Grant (CSU)	Financial Aid	\$7,390
▶	CalFresh	Food	\$3,492
▶	CalWORKs	Cash	\$3,200
▶	Pandemic Stimulus Checks	Cash	\$3,200
▶	Lifetime Learning Credit (LLC)	Cash	\$2,000
▶	Cal Grant (Community Colleges)	Financial Aid	\$1,648
▶	American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC)	Cash	\$1,000
▶	Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)	Cash	\$600
▶	California Earned Income Tax Credit (CalEITC)	Cash	\$275
▶	Child Tax Credit (CTC)	Cash	\$0
▶	California Chafee Grant for Foster Youth	Financial Aid	\$0
▶	Young Child Tax Credit (YCTC)	Cash	\$0
▶	Young Child Tax Credit (YCTC)	Cash	\$0
▶	Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	Food	\$0
▶	Covered California	Health care	You receive health insurance coverage. Use this calculator to find out how much you could qualify for.



[bit.ly/public-benefit-finder](https://bit.ly/public-benefit-finder)

# Strategies to *increase uptake* of benefits

- ✓ Establish categorical eligibility for students
- ✓ Simplify application & re-certification processes
- ✓ Reduce documentation requirements
- ✓ Facilitate data sharing across agencies
- ✓ Outreach to potential participants
- ✓ Enhance accessibility



# *Dig Deep* with California Competes

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APRIL 2024  
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Thank you for joining us!

Please submit your feedback:



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