

December 8, 2016

LACCD – Legislative Committee

1. Work-Study for Undocumented Students

The California Student Aid Commission is considering Legislation that would create a work-study program for undocumented students. Federal work-study programs allow documented students the opportunity to work while going to school with their wages being part of their financial aid package. These programs allow students to connect with business and industry providing advantages to both students and the businesses for which they work. Dream students, however, cannot take advantage of these opportunities.

California addressed a similar deficiency in Dreamers' financial aid eligibility by introducing the Dream Loan Program, a state-based alternative to Federal Direct Loans. The loan program has not been active long enough to generate data on its efficacy, but anecdotal evidence from students indicates that it may have a positive impact on closing the financial aid gap for Dreamers, and increasing their ability to complete their degree objectives. A state-run work study program allowing eligible students to work while attending classes would serve a similar goal. The total cost would depend on various factors including how significantly the state subsidizes the wages of participating students, the percentage of Dream Act students eligible under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and how broadly the program is offered. The program could also be impacted if the incoming administration decides to end DACA.