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Subject: CHECS (College HOPE Eligibility Calculation Service) Status

Dear Colleague:

The Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) first announced a new project to develop a centralized postsecondary HOPE GPA calculation system on May 25, 2017 ([DCL 2018-02](#)). The development of the new system, referred to as CHECS (College HOPE Eligibility Calculation Service), is well underway. As stated in the Project Charter, CHECS is scheduled to go live at the end of Fall term 2018. From that point forward, all HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarship and Grant academic eligibility determinations, including GPA, checkpoints, and attempted hours, will be calculated by GSFC using CHECS, utilizing data provided by eligible postsecondary institutions.

A tremendous amount of work has already been completed by all project participants over the last year and a half in an effort to ensure a successful launch. CHECS is being developed and managed by GSFC; however, the collaborative effort and continued commitment of the University System of Georgia (USG), Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), Georgia Independent College Association (GICA), and other eligible private institutions is key to CHECS being successful and beneficial to HOPE Eligible Institutions and students across Georgia. Please take note of the following milestones, timeline, and general information.

Milestones

- GSFC has conducted ten meetings of the full Joint Application Development (JAD) Group, consisting of USG, TCSG, GICA and GSFC members. Additionally, a number of meetings have been conducted with each sector individually.
- To date, 19 CHECS training sessions have been provided across the three sectors of HOPE Eligible Institutions from September 2017 – June 2018. Trainings have been offered to financial aid, academic records, and technology staff.
- GSFC released project resources for HOPE Eligible Institutions detailing the pilot testing and “go live” requirements. Resources include a helpdesk email, listserv for all HOPE Eligible Institutions, and a variety of information documents housed on the GAfutures testing site under *Postsecondary Functions’ Resources*.
- CHECS business rules, logic and web screen layouts continue to be developed and released. At present, the majority have been completed. On August 17, 2018, five institutions conducted a full day of testing with largely positive feedback.

Current Timeline

- September – October: GSFC will provide additional training sessions.

- The original deadline for submitting a test Historical Snapshot and at least one Transcript Data file was in July. If your institution has not already completed this critical step, please do so immediately. These files must be submitted, pass edit checks and be fully tested before moving to the next phase of testing.
- Each institution must test the calculations returned in response to their test files submission and test their manual processing capabilities as well.
- GSFC is scheduling dial-in live informal Question and Answer session, or CHECS Chats, as another resource for information.
- GSFC will offer onsite testing events during September. More details will be shared soon.
- Full deployment is the end of Fall term 2018 and requires live/production Historical Snapshots to be submitted by September 17, 2018. Historical Transcript Data files that support the Snapshots must be submitted by October 16, 2018.
- Go Live! - The first HOPE calculation by CHECS: End of Fall Term 2018

General Information

- Postsecondary institutions are required to continue to collect all transcripts from transfer students from non-HOPE Eligible Institutions and must submit all course data (attempted hours, grades, etc.) to GSFC, regardless of which credits are accepted for institutional credit.
- Participation, by reporting academic transcript data for their students, is mandatory for all postsecondary institutions. Future program disbursements are contingent upon such participation prior to the receipt of Winter Quarter/Spring Semester 2019 disbursements. Institutions must report Fall 2018 transcript data via CHECS.
- GSFC is responsible for the programing in accordance with current program laws and regulations, as well as future changes to HOPE laws and regulations.
- The CHECS calculation must be used by each HOPE Eligible Institution for all HOPE and Zell Miller programs postsecondary academic eligibility determination.

Additional information can be found on the GAfutures QA test site under *Resources*. Revised program regulations will be provided in November 2018. If you have questions relating to the CHECS project, email chechelpdesk@gsfc.org or contact Pennie Strong, Vice President, Student Aid Services, at 770.724.9014 or pennies@gsfc.org.

We are confident this project will result in numerous efficiencies and benefits to both participating institutions and the students of Georgia. We appreciate your steadfast and continued preparation efforts and partnership as we all work towards the successful launch of CHECS.

Sincerely,



Caylee Noggle,
Interim President