



California Department of Education

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May 13, 2021

Dear County and District Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, and School Principals:

ScholarShare 529, California's College Savings Plan

Financial preparation is an important part of college readiness. As the cost of pursuing a postsecondary education continues to rise, families need to be aware of all the resources and tools available to help them save so that higher education remains an accessible goal. In recognition of **National 529 College Savings Day** on May 29, 2021, we are providing important information about ScholarShare 529, a highly successful state program designed to help families save for their children's future higher education expenses, as well as an upcoming special week-long promotion for students and their schools. We ask that you share this important information with your students' teachers, parents, guardians, and other interested parties.

529 college savings plans, such as California's ScholarShare 529 program (named after the section of the Internal Revenue Code in which the plans were established), provide families with a valuable tool that offers a diverse set of investment options; tax-deferred growth; and withdrawals free from state and federal taxes when used for qualified higher education expenses such as tuition and fees, books, certain room and board costs, computer equipment, and other required supplies.

Since its launch in 1999, ScholarShare 529 has grown to more than 357,000 accounts with over \$12 billion in total plan assets. More importantly, ScholarShare 529 has helped families meet their higher education needs with more than \$553 million withdrawn by families in 2020 alone for qualified higher education expenses.

To celebrate **National 529 College Savings Day** on May 29, 2021, and encourage a greater number of California families to start saving for college now, ScholarShare 529 will be offering a \$50 contribution to families that open a new ScholarShare 529 account between May 24 and May 31. Eligible individuals must open the account with a minimum \$50 initial deposit and set up automatic monthly contributions of \$25 or more for at least six consecutive months.

May 13, 2021

Page 2

If you are interested in helping us promote **National 529 College Savings Day** and this exciting limited-time offer, please visit www.ScholarShare529.com/529Day. You will have access to an online marketing toolkit that contains materials such as flyers, brochures, sample articles for e-newsletters and emails, and sample social media posts. Additionally, ScholarShare 529 is offering opportunities for families to attend a free online webinar to learn more about the plan and this special promotion. Families can visit www.ScholarShare529.com/529Day to register for one of the online webinars listed below:

- Wednesday, May 19, 2021, at 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, May 26, 2021, at 11 a.m.

Disseminating information about this upcoming 529 Day promotion will help more California families better prepare for the expenses that come with pursuing a higher education.

For more information, contact ScholarShare 529 staff at scholarshare@treasurer.ca.gov or 916-651-6380. Thank you for your attention to this important topic.

Sincerely,



Tony Thurmond
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



Fiona Ma, C.P.A.
California State Treasurer