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## **LUPITA CORTEZ ALCALÁ APPOINTED CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

SACRAMENTO - The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) is pleased to announce the appointment, by unanimous vote, of Lupita Cortez Alcalá as its next Executive Director. Ms. Cortez Alcalá will take the helm at CSAC January 4, 2016. Hal Geiogue, CSAC Chair stated, "The Commission is very pleased that Lupita has accepted the position of Executive Director. We look forward to working together to increase and enhance student financial aid in California."

Ms. Cortez Alcalá leaves the California Department of Education (CDE) where she has served for the past 12 years. As noted in a companion press release by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson, "[Ms. Cortez Alcalá has served] in a variety of roles at CDE, Lupita led teams that produced numerous ground-breaking accomplishments."

Cortez Alcalá, who has a master's degree from the Harvard University School of Education, serves as Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women and Girls. She began her career at CDE in 2003 as a legislative associate and also served as Director of the Government Affairs Division.

During her tenure, Cortez Alcalá oversaw the creation of the English Learner Division, revamped the migrant education program, initiated the Seal of Biliteracy to recognize students fluent in two or more languages, and worked with CDE staff to develop the English Language Arts/English Language development framework and standards, which aim to improve language development for English learners.

In addition, she oversaw the implementation of the \$500 million California Career Pathways Trust (CCPT) grants and initiated CDE's first California Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Symposium.

Ms. Cortez Alcalá was selected from a strong pool of 40 candidates and vetted through a vigorous recruitment process that included three levels of executive interviews. Ms. Cortez Alcalá noted of her appointment, "I'm excited and inspired to direct an organization that has played such a critical role in fulfilling my own college dreams and those of our young people," Cortez Alcalá said. "I'm looking forward to serving the students of California, working with a dedicated, thoughtful board, and with a team of committed, talented, and hard-working employees."

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