

August 2015

## **RE: EDEExpress for Windows 2015-2016, Release 3.0**

Dear EDEExpress Users:

Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce the availability of EDEExpress for Windows 2015-2016, Release 3.0. Release 3.0 implements enhancements to Financial Aid Shopping Sheet functionality for the 2015-2016 award cycle and resolves several software issues in the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) module from the prior release.

### **About this Cover Letter**

This letter includes the following information:

- An overview of EDEExpress 2015-2016, Release 3.0
- Important notices regarding:
  - Product Registration feature in Release 3.0
  - Financial Aid Shopping Sheet Enhancements in Release 3.0
  - Direct Loan Module Issues Fixed in Release 3.0
- Information on how to obtain the software and documentation
- Microsoft Vista, Windows 7, and Windows 8 Compatibility and Section 508 Compliance notices
- Contact information for technical support and additional assistance

### **EDEExpress for Windows 2015-2016, Release 3.0 Overview**

EDEExpress 2015-2016, Release 3.0 updates functionality in the Global and Direct Loan modules. Release 3.0 can be installed as an upgrade to Release 1.0 (posted in January 2015) or Release 2.0 (posted in April 2015). You must have Release 1.0 or Release 2.0 installed to run an upgrade (or “custom”) installation of Release 3.0.

**Reminder:** Before upgrading to Release 3.0, ensure you have a reliable backup copy of your current EDEExpress 2015-2016 production database (**expres16.mdb**).

To upgrade to Release 3.0, select the Stand Alone Custom or Workstation Custom option during installation, depending on your EDEExpress operating environment.

If you have not previously installed EDEExpress 2015-2016, you can proceed directly to a Stand Alone Full or Network Server/Workstation Full installation of Release 3.0. Be aware, however, that a Stand Alone Full or Network Server/Workstation Full installation loads a new, blank EDEExpress 2015-2016 database to your system. If you have an existing 2015-2016 database, a Stand Alone Full or a Network Server/Workstation Full installation of Release 2.0 will overwrite your database and all previously entered 2015-2016 data will be lost.

For more technical guidance and information regarding the EDEExpress installation process, see the [Installation Guide for EDEExpress for Windows 2015-2016](#), which is available for download from the U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Download (FSAdownload) Web site at [fsadownload.ed.gov](http://fsadownload.ed.gov).

## Product Registration

EDEExpress 2015-2016, Release 3.0 includes a limited-time product registration feature intended to gather more information about how your school or organization uses EDEExpress to assist with future planning and enhancements.

The product registration feature will initiate after you install Release 3.0, log into the software, and run the database update process. You will continue to be prompted to complete the product registration process each time you access Release 3.0 prior to September 16, 2015 until you submit a response. EDEExpress automatically removes the product registration prompt if your PC's system date is on or after September 16, 2015.

**Important Note:** If you responded to the product registration in Release 2.0, you will not be prompted to submit the product registration again after upgrading to Release 3.0.

The product registration process contains several different questions about the EDEExpress modules and specific functionality you currently use; it also gathers some background information about your organization to better understand your needs as a user.

An interactive summary report is displayed at the end of the product registration process, prior to the final submission step. You can click sections of the report to return to specific questions and revise your answers. At the successful conclusion of the product registration process, your responses are automatically transmitted to Federal Student Aid using your PC's default e-mail client.

Please note the following additional guidance:

- The second page of the product registration process includes an option to temporarily bypass entry and submission of your responses. This option is only applicable to your current session of EDEExpress.
- If you are a multi-campus school using multiple EDEExpress databases, we recommend that your main campus submit the product registration response on behalf of all your campuses to avoid duplicate or conflicting feedback. Likewise, if you use a networked EDEExpress database that is shared by multiple PC workstations at a single location, we recommend that your school's EDEExpress lead submit the response.

## Financial Aid Shopping Sheet Updates in Release 3.0

EDEExpress 2015-2016, Release 3.0 updates the template for the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet document to add the American Opportunity Tax Credit to the bullets in the "Other options" section and revise the definition text for Net Costs and Cost of Attendance in the Glossary section.

## Direct Loan Module Issues Fixed in Release 3.0

EDEXpress 2015-2016, Release 3.0 includes the following updates, which resolve software issues discovered in the Release 2.0 Direct Loan module:

- Release 3.0 resolves an error that occurred when using Prior Year Import (**Tools, Global, Import**) after upgrading from EDEXpress 2014-2015, Release 2.0 to EDEXpress 2015-2016, Release 2.0.
- Release 3.0 resolves an issue in Direct Loan Multiple Entry (**Process, Multiple Entry, Direct Loan**) that caused incorrect formatting of Payment Period Start Date values in exported COD Common Record (CRAA16IN) files, leading to rejects of actual disbursement adjustments by the COD System. This issue only occurred when using Direct Loan Multiple Entry to adjust Payment Period Start Date values on actual disbursements using the Disbursement Type of **T** (Adjusted Disbursement Payment Period Start Date Change) in EDEXpress.

**Note:** This issue also exists in EDEXpress 2014-2015, Release 3.0. As a workaround, leave the Value column blank for the Payment Period Start Date on the initial Direct Loan Multiple Entry dialog box. After you click **OK**, a secondary Multiple Entry dialog box displays that enables you to enter unique field values for each record you are updating; use this dialog box to provide the updated Payment Period Start Date values for the actual disbursements that require adjustment.

- Release 3.0 resolves an issue that caused the Direct Loan Origination Record report (**File, Print, Direct Loan**) for PLUS loans to print the parent borrower's information in the student information section.

## How to Get EDEXpress and Documentation

You can download each EDEXpress release and related user documentation from the U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Download (FSAdownload) Web site, located at [fsadownload.ed.gov](http://fsadownload.ed.gov).

### EDEXpress Software

Instructions for downloading EDEXpress are located in the "Downloading Documentation and Software from the FSAdownload Web Site" section of the [2015-2016 Installation Guide for EDEXpress for Windows](#).

**Note:** Some organizations restrict their users from downloading programs from Internet sites. If you have trouble downloading, contact your technical support staff to ensure that you have full download rights.

### User Documentation

The [EDEXpress for Windows 2015-2016, Release 2.0 Desk Reference](#) is now available on the FSAdownload Web site. The desk reference provides detailed, step-by-step instructions on the setup and use of the EDEXpress Pell Grant and Direct Loan modules.

Also, as noted earlier in this letter, the *2015-2016 COD Technical Reference* provides technical specifications and record layouts for transmitting Pell Grant, TEACH Grant, and Direct Loan data to the COD System. You can download the latest version of the technical reference from the FSAdownload Web site.

## Compatibility and Compliance

### Microsoft Windows 7, Windows Vista, and Windows 8 Information

While we do not officially support the Microsoft Windows 7 or the Windows Vista operating systems for use with our EDESuite PC products (including EDEExpress and DL Tools), we have performed compatibility testing with both operating systems and resolved the majority of the issues discovered during testing.

- In 2012, we tested Microsoft Windows 7 as an operating system during the development of the 2012-2013 versions of our EDESuite PC software. Our test results indicated that schools should be able to proceed with use of Windows 7 without encountering any major issues, largely due to enhancements we implemented previously for the Windows Vista operating system. For more information on our Windows 7 testing, see the [August 8, 2012 electronic announcement](#) posted to the IFAP Web site.
- In 2008, we tested Microsoft Windows Vista as an operating system for our EDESuite PC products. We communicated our original Vista testing results, issues we discovered, and steps schools needed to take in order to run EDEExpress on Vista operating systems in the [September 18, 2008 electronic announcement](#) posted on the IFAP Web site. The vast majority of Windows Vista issues discussed in the announcement have been resolved, most recently in our 2012-2013 PC software releases.

**Note:** Federal Student Aid has not yet tested the Microsoft Corporation's Windows 8 as an operating system for its PC software products, including the EDEExpress and DL Tools software. We anticipate completing Windows 8 compatibility testing during Fall 2015. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

### Section 508 Compliance

To comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, all EDESuite PC products are compatible with screen reader technology used by the visually impaired. Screen reader software cannot interpret color shading in EDESuite software entry fields or directly read the contents of software grid cells. To accommodate these restrictions, EDESuite software includes the following features:

- All software fields that are shaded yellow to indicate they are required also display a “-R” after the software label. The “-R” indicates the field is required.
- All software fields that are shaded blue after a previously saved value has been modified also display a “-C” after the software label. The “-C” text indicates the field has been changed.
- All software grids display “floating” text descriptions of the contents of grid cells when cells are selected. The text appears one cell above (or below, if the first cell is selected) the selected cell. The text lists Row number, Column title, and (if applicable) the current Value.

For more information on EDEExpress functionality related to Section 508, see the help topic “Enable 508 Grid Functionality?” in EDEExpress 2015-2016.

## **Getting Help**

### **If You Have Technical Support Questions**

If you have questions regarding EDEExpress installation or functionality, have trouble accessing the FSAdownload Web site, or require other technical assistance, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support.

You can reach CPS/SAIG Technical Support Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. (ET), at **800/330-5947 (TDD/TTY 800/511-5806)**. You can also send e-mail inquiries, comments, or suggestions to [CPSSAIG@ed.gov](mailto:CPSSAIG@ed.gov). A representative will respond within one business day.

You can also post questions regarding EDEExpress on FSATECH. FSATECH is an electronic mailing list for technical questions about Federal Student Aid systems, software, and mainframe products. For more information on subscribing to FSATECH, go to [ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html](http://ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html).

### **If You Have Questions Regarding the COD System**

If you have any questions about the COD System, contact the COD School Relations Center at 800/474-7268 for Grants or 800/848-0978 for Direct Loans. You may also e-mail [CODSupport@ed.gov](mailto:CODSupport@ed.gov).