



January 9, 2009

This edition of the COD Processing Update will remain on the [COD Web site](#) until a new edition is posted. We will notify schools via a COD Web Message when a new edition has been posted.

Grant Programs

ACG, National SMART Grant, Pell Grant, and TEACH Grant

COD News

NEW!

Beta Test Volunteers Needed for EDEXpress for Windows 2009-2010, Release 2.0 (01/09/09)

Federal Student Aid is recruiting schools and servicers to participate in the beta test of EDEXpress for Windows 2009-2010, Release 2.0. Beta testing is scheduled to run from February 2 through February 27, 2009.

If you are interested in being considered as a beta test participant for the Grant and/or Direct Loan module(s) for Release 2.0, please send an e-mail to CPSSAIG@ed.gov with the subject line "Attention: EDEXpress 2009-2010 Release 2.0 Beta Testing". For further information, refer to [the January 8, 2009 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site](#).

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (01/06/09)

On January 2, 2009, the Department of Education published [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-12 on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#). This Dear Colleague Letter discusses the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), Public Law 110-315, which was enacted on August 14, 2008, and reauthorizes the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (the HEA). The HEOA makes a number of changes to programs authorized under the HEA, authorizes new programs, and makes changes to other laws.

Operational guidance about the specific provision covering Direct Unsubsidized Loans to dependent students without parental FAFSA information was posted in a [December 10, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site](#).

Availability of EDEXpress for Windows 2009-2010, Release 1.0 (01/06/09)

Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce the posting of EDEXpress for Windows 2009-2010, Release 1.0, on the Federal Student Aid Download (FSAdownload) Web site, located at <https://www.fsadownload.ed.gov>. This release contains Global, Application Processing, and Packaging functionality for the 2009-2010 cycle.

In addition, related EDEXpress 2009-2010 documents that contain important information regarding EDEXpress 2009-2010 installation, functionality, and enhancements are available on the FSAdownload Web site.

Note: The U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) Fiscal Year 2009 Appropriation has not been approved. Therefore, the 2009-2010 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursement Schedule used by the Release 1.0 Packaging module is based on the current \$4,731 maximum Pell Grant



award. After ED's Fiscal Year 2009 Appropriation is finalized, we will update the Pell Grant Payment Schedule, if necessary, through a future release of EExpress. If you use the EExpress Packaging module to award Pell Grants, you may want to wait until it is known if the Pell Payment Schedule changes.

For complete information about Release 1.0, refer to [the January 2, 2009 Electronic Announcement](#) posted on the IFAP Web site.

CCRAA Operational Implementation Guidance - Availability of EExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 4.0 (01/06/09)

The U.S. Department of Education is pleased to announce the posting of EExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 4.0, on the Department's Federal Student Aid Download (FSAdownload) Web site, located at <https://www.fsadownload.ed.gov>.

Release 4.0 is the most recent of three planned EExpress 2008-2009 enhancement releases that implement provisions of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (CCRAA), Pub. L. 110-84. Release 4.0 also includes updates to data edits in the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) module to enable the origination and disbursement of Direct Unsubsidized loans according to the annual loan limit increases authorized by the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act of 2008 (ECASLA), Pub. L. 110-227.

In addition to the Release 4.0 software, the EExpress 2008-2009, Release 4.0 Cover Letter is now available on the FSAdownload Web site. This document, along with the Installation Guide for EExpress for Windows 2008-2009 (also available on the FSAdownload Web site), contains important information and guidance regarding EExpress 2008-2009 functionality that you should review.

For complete information about Release 4.0, refer to [the January 2, 2009 Electronic Announcement](#) posted on the IFAP Web site.

COD School Testing For The 2009-2010 Award Year (12/29/08)

The COD School Relations Center will conduct Common Record Manual Verification and Structured Application Testing for the 2009-2010 Award Year from January 5, 2009 through June 26, 2009. Optional Unstructured Testing will be available June 1, 2009 through September 29, 2009.

School Testing provides schools, third party servicers, and software vendors an opportunity to test Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant), Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH Grant), and William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) business processes and system software with the COD System prior to the transmission and processing of actual production data using [COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0b](#). It also allows schools, third party servicers, and software providers the opportunity to make corrections or enhancements to software applications and processes prior to sending data to the "live" production environment.

All entities that wish to participate in COD School Testing must submit the "COD School Testing 2009-2010 Sign-Up Sheet" to the COD School Relations Center. The sign-up document



is posted on the [COD Web site](#) under the “Click here if you are looking for more information on Common Origination and Disbursement.” link.

For additional information, refer to [the December 29, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site](#).

TEACH Grant Operational Implementation Guidance – COD System Implementation and Guidance Summary [07/01/08 (Updated 10/03/08)]

The College Cost Reduction and Access Act (the CCRAA), Pub. L. 110-84, authorized the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program for implementation beginning with the 2008-2009 Award Year. The TEACH Grant Program provides up to \$4,000 a year in grant assistance to a student who agrees to serve for at least four years as a full-time teacher in a high-need field in a public or private elementary or secondary school that serves students from low-income families. A TEACH Grant recipient who does not complete the required teaching within a specified timeframe, or fails to meet certain other requirements of the TEACH Grant Program, will be required to repay the TEACH Grant as a Direct Unsubsidized Loan under the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program.

During the period June 27-28, 2008, Federal Student Aid implemented COD System functionality that supports the processing of TEACH Grant awards for the 2008-2009 and subsequent award years. This functionality included implementation of the [TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve \(ATS\) Web site](#). During the period September 26-27, 2008, Federal Student Aid implemented COD System functionality that supports TEACH Grant reporting functions.

For TEACH Grant guidance refer to the following postings on the [Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#):

- [Final Rule published on June 23, 2008 \(73 FR 35472\)](#) in the [Federal Register](#) provides the final regulations effective July 1, 2008 for the 2008-2009 Award Year.
- [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-01](#) provides policy information on all of the provisions of the CCRAA, including the TEACH Grant Program.
- [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-07](#) provides information on institutional eligibility for the TEACH Grant Program.
- [June 19, 2008 Electronic Announcement](#) provides information on Federal Student Aid’s operational implementation of TEACH Grant Program functionality.
- [June 27, 2008 Electronic Announcement](#) provides information on the student aspects of the TEACH Grant Program that will be operational for July 1, 2008. This communication includes a “TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve (ATS) Web Site User Guide” designed to assist a student in completing his or her first electronic ATS.
- [September 3, 2008 Electronic Announcement](#) that provides information on Federal Student Aid’s implementation of system functionality that supports TEACH Grant reporting functions.
- [2008-2009 COD Technical Reference](#) provides technical information related to the processing of TEACH Grant awards.



Note: On an ongoing basis, Federal Student Aid posts updated listings of schools that are eligible to participate in the TEACH Grant Program for the 2008-2009 Award Year. These listings are posted as Electronic Announcements.

Federal Student Aid will continue to inform the community of the implementation of additional TEACH Grant functionality scheduled for implementation over the next several months. Please monitor the [IFAP Web site](#) for the forthcoming communications.

TEACH Grant – Institutional Participation Request Process Information (11/14/08)

On June 3, 2008, the Department of Education posted [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-07 on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#). This Dear Colleague Letter clarifies how an institution will establish eligibility to participate in the TEACH Grant Program.

For complete information about the Institutional Participation Request Process, refer to [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-07](#).

- Questions about the issues discussed in the letter should be directed to Gail McLarnon by e-mail at gail.mclarnon@ed.gov or by phone at 202/219-7048.
- Questions about the participation request process should be directed to the School Participation Team for a school's state. Contact information is available on the [Electronic Application for Approval to Participate in Federal Student Financial Aid Programs \(E-App\) Web site](#).

Participation Request Process Steps – As outlined in the 10-step participation request process included in [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-07](#), a school must complete Question 1, enter specified language in Section K/Question 69, and complete Section L via the [E-App Web site](#). After completing these steps, the school must mail its signed and dated signature page to the Department of Education (the Department) per the instructions provided on the “Submit Application” page. To aid in expediting receipt of the school's signature page by the Department, the school may want to use an overnight delivery method.

Participation Request Process Follow Up – If a school does not receive a response regarding its request to participate in the TEACH Grant Program within two weeks of submitting the request, the school should contact the School Participation Team for the school's state. Contact information is available on the [E-App Web site](#).

School Addition to ATS Web Site – Once a school is determined to be eligible to participate in the TEACH Grant Program, the school's name will be added to the TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve (ATS) Web site. As a general rule, Federal Student Aid will update the TEACH Grant ATS Web site on the Tuesday or Thursday most closely following notification of the school's eligibility. If a school has questions about the TEACH Grant ATS Web site, it should contact the COD School Relations Center.



Weekly Reminders



COD Computer-Based Training (01/09/09)

Federal Student Aid takes this opportunity to remind the community of the availability of the COD Computer-Based Training (CBT). The COD CBT includes enhancements that have been made to the COD System, the [COD Web site](#), and associated Web sites and software products through June 28, 2008.

The COD CBT consists of component simulations and CBTs. Each COD CBT component is explained below. The electronic files associated with each component, as well as information about downloading and navigating the COD CBT, are available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. Under the “Tools for Schools” box on the home page, click on [COD Computer-Based Training](#).

The components of the COD CBT are as follows:

COD System Simulations – The COD System Simulations offer lessons that explain the [COD Web site](#) screens and functionality available to a school administrator. There are 14 lessons (one with two parts) with text to guide a user through each area of the [COD Web site](#). By entering fictitious data, the user can explore basic navigation and functions of the [COD Web site](#) and practice locating and creating information in a safe environment that includes tips for assistance.

Direct Loan Reports CBT – The Direct Loan Reports CBT includes three lessons that explain the COD reports a school can use to assist with the reconciliation process for William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) awards.

Grant Reports CBT – The Grant Reports CBT includes three lessons that explain the COD reports a school can use to assist with the reconciliation process for Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) awards.

Direct Loan (DL) Tools Simulation – The DL Tools Simulation demonstrates how to use the DL Tools software to assist with the reconciliation process for Direct Loan awards. Although the simulation can be used both by schools that use the EDEXpress for Windows software and schools that do not use this software, the simulation is especially useful for schools that do not use the EDEXpress software on a regular basis but are interested in a Direct Loan reconciliation resource.

eMPN Online Simulations – The eMPN Online Simulations offer a step-by-step walk through of the process for completing a Direct Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN) via the [Direct Loan Electronic MPN Web site](#). There are four lessons with text to guide a user through student, parent, and school administrator aspects of the eMPN process.

Completing an Agreement to Serve (ATS) Website Simulation – The Completing an ATS Website Simulation provides a step-by-step walk through of the process for completing a Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant ATS via the [TEACH Grant ATS Web site](#).



If you have questions or comments about the COD CBT, contact the COD School Relations Center. If you e-mail your question or comment to CODSupport@acs-inc.com, please include “COD CBT Question/Comment” in the subject line.