January 25, 2008

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.

ACG, National SMART Grant, and Pell Grant Programs

COD News

UPDATED!

COD Processing Alert – Batch Processing Caught Up Friday, January 25, 2008 [01/24/08 (Updated 01/25/08)]
On January 24, 2008, Federal Student Aid informed schools of an issue with the processing of batches submitted to the COD System. The issue required Federal Student Aid to temporarily place batch processing on hold. By the afternoon of January 24, 2008, Federal Student Aid had resolved the issue and resumed batch processing.

At this time, Federal Student Aid has processed and acknowledged the majority of the outstanding batches. The COD School Relations Center will communicate directly with schools that have unprocessed batches.

Federal Student Aid again apologizes for the inconvenience caused by this issue and appreciates your patience and understanding as it worked to resolve the issue and resume normal operations.

COD System Maintenance Planned For Sunday, January 27, 2008 (01/23/08)
The COD System will undergo routine maintenance on Sunday, January 27, 2008 from 1:30 A.M. until 9:00 A.M. (ET). In addition, the Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) will be unavailable from 3:00 A.M. until 11:00 A.M. (ET) due to its regular Sunday morning maintenance. The impact of these overlapping outages is as follows:

- Users will not be able to submit or retrieve data via the COD Web site between 1:30 A.M. and 9:00 A.M. (ET).

- Batches submitted by schools via the SAIG between 1:30 A.M. and 3:00 A.M. (ET) will be held and not acknowledged back to schools until after the SAIG comes back up at 11:00 A.M. (ET).

- Schools attempting to transmit batches via the SAIG between 3:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. (ET) will receive an error message informing them that the SAIG is unavailable and that the data must be transmitted at a later time.

Federal Student Aid apologizes for any inconvenience these outages may cause. If you have any questions about the COD System, contact the COD School Relations Center. If you have any

questions about the SAIG, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support at 800/330-5947 or by e-mail at
CPSSAIG@ed.gov.

**Beta Test Volunteers Needed for EDExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 2.0 Pell
(including ACG and National SMART Grant) and Direct Loan Modules (01/21/08)**
Federal Student Aid is recruiting schools and servicers to participate in beta tests of the Pell and
Direct Loan modules of EDExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 2.0. The Pell and Direct
Loan beta tests are scheduled to run from February 4 through February 29, 2008.

Beta test participants download an in-development version of the EDExpress software and test
documentation from an FTP site, replicate typical usage of the software in a mock-production
environment, report any problems encountered, and submit a summary report detailing test
findings and software suggestions for our analysis.

Note: In addition to testing existing functionality, Pell beta test participants will have the
opportunity to examine enhancements related to the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG)
and the National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART
Grant) in the 2008-2009 Pell module.

If you are interested in being considered as a beta test participant for the Pell 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 2008-2009 Release 2.0 Beta Testing". For further information, refer to
the January 18, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site.

**New TEACH Grant Program Question Added To 2008-2009 FAFSA On The Web
[12/24/07 (Updated 01/09/08)]**
The College Cost Reduction and Access Act (the CCRAA), Pub.L. 110-84, created the Teacher
Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program (TEACH
Program). This program is effective beginning with the 2008-2009 Award Year and provides up
to $4,000 a year in grant assistance to students who plan on becoming a teacher and meet certain
specified requirements. If a student who receives a TEACH Grant does not complete the
required teaching, the grant must be repaid as a Direct Unsubsidized Loan under the William D.
Ford Federal Direct Loan Program.

Note: For policy information on all of the provisions of the CCRAA, including the TEACH
Grant Program, refer to Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-01 posted on the Information for
Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site.

Federal Student Aid posted a December 21, 2007 Electronic Announcement on the IFAP Web
site that is the first in a series of communications intended to focus on the operational
implementation of the CCRAA changes that will affect the Central Processing System (CPS),
Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System, and EDESuite. Federal Student Aid is
very close to finalizing the operational changes that it must make to its Federal student aid
processes and procedures to implement the provisions of the CCRAA, including the TEACH
Grant Program for the 2008-2009 Award Year, and appreciates the community's patience as it
completes this work. Forthcoming communications will fully explain the necessary changes and
implementation schedule. All participants in the Federal student aid programs should refer to the
IFAP Web site for applicable guidance and information.

In the December 21st Electronic Announcement, Federal Student Aid informs the community of a new question relating to the TEACH Grant Program that has been included on the 2008-2009 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). For 2008-2009, this question will only be on the FAFSA on the Web application and not on the paper FAFSA. The question is intended to assist in identifying potentially eligible TEACH Grant recipients and will be available on both the English and Spanish versions of FAFSA on the Web. Please refer to the December 21st Electronic Announcement for important information about the implementation of the new TEACH Grant Program question.

NEW!

Updating School Contact Information in the COD System (01/25/08)
Federal Student Aid wants to remind all schools and third party servicers that contact information in the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System must be kept current. Contact information is extremely important for the COD School Relations Center. Of utmost importance are e-mail addresses and mailing addresses.

- The e-mail address for the Financial Aid Administrator is used to deliver time-sensitive materials and critical COD processing information to the school.

- For a Direct Loan school, correct mailing address information ensures that Direct Loan closeout letters are delivered timely and to the correct place.

Please ensure that all contact information is updated as needed.

Submitting Updates to School Contact Information

Depending on the type of information to be updated, a school must submit updates in one of the following two ways:

1. In accordance with 34 CFR 600.21, most changes must be reported using the Electronic Application for Approval to Participate in Federal Student Financial Aid Programs (E-App). This includes changes to the following information:

   - School name

   - School address (including any branches and locations)

   - Names of the President (or equivalent title), Chief Financial Officer (or equivalent title), and Financial Aid Administrator (or equivalent title)

   - Telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for the above officials

   Once the E-App is processed, the COD Web site is updated within 24 hours. It may take longer if there is additional information required by the School Participation Team (formerly known as the Case Management and Oversight Division).

2. Two specific changes can *only* be made via the COD Web site. These are changes to the Direct Loan Officer contact information/mailing address and the Pell Grant Officer contact information/mailing address. To view and/or update the current contact information for these officers, complete the following steps:

   - Log in to the COD Web site.

   - From the School tab, select the "Financial Aid Contact" link (located under the School Information menu). The School Financial Aid Contact Information screen displays the current information for the school.

- Update or add new contact information by clicking on the "Update" or "Add New" button in the heading for the officer to be updated.

- Complete the new information and submit the changes.

This information will be processed and updated immediately on the COD Web site.

An Electronic Announcement with this same information is posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. If you have any questions about updating your school's contact information, contact the COD School Relations Center.

NEW!

ACG and National SMART Grant Resources (01/25/08)
As a reminder, the Department of Education (the Department) has posted a number of Dear Colleague Letters and Electronic Announcements that communicate regulatory, policy, and operational information related to the implementation of the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) programs. In addition, Federal Student Aid has updated the 2006-2007 COD Technical Reference, the 2007-2008 COD Technical Reference, and posted the 2008-2009 COD Technical Reference. A school should refer to the communications posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site and to the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 COD technical references for complete information about the ACG and National SMART Grant programs.

More specifically, the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 COD technical references cover all aspects of the operational implementation of the ACG and National SMART Grant programs. This includes information on the following key aspects of ACG and National SMART Grant processing:

- Financial Award ID and Financial Award Number (Award Sequence Number)
  Volume II, Section 1 "Implementation Guide"

- Citizenship and Student Level Code
  Volume II, Section 1 "Implementation Guide"

- Message Classes
  Volume II, Section 2 "Message Classes"

- Common Record Layout
  Volume II, Section 3 "Common Record Layout"

- Reports Generated by COD System
  Volume VI, Section 8 "COD Reports"

- Eligibility/Payment Reason and Rigorous High School Program Code for ACG
  Volume VI, Section 9 "Rigorous Secondary School Programs of Study, and Eligible Majors"

- Major/Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) Code for National SMART Grant
  Volume VI, Section 9 "Rigorous Secondary School Programs of Study, and Eligible Majors"

If your school needs help locating information related to the operational implementation of the ACG and National SMART Grant programs, contact the COD School Relations Center.

Note for EDExpress Users: Volume III of the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 COD technical references provides additional guidance for schools that use EDExpress in combination with another system. If your school needs help locating information related to EDExpress, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support at 880/330-5947 or by e-mail at CPSSAIG@ed.gov.