



**February 8, 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

#### **COD System Maintenance Planned For Sunday, February 10, 2008 (02/06/08)**

The COD System will undergo routine maintenance on Sunday, February 10, 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](mailto:CPSSAIG@ed.gov).



#### **Impact on COD Processing February 16-18, 2008 (02/08/08)**

Federal Student Aid is planning to execute a COD System maintenance activity during the period February 16, 2008 through February 17, 2008. This activity will result in outages of certain COD System functionality for a period of time. Federal Student Aid appreciates your patience and understanding as it completes this important activity. In addition, funding requests will not be processed on February 18, 2008, the Washington's Birthday Federal Holiday.

An explanation of how the COD System maintenance activity and the holiday will impact COD System availability and processing follows below. Please review this information to determine if processing at your school will be affected.



### **COD System Maintenance**

During the period ***Saturday, February 16, 2008 through Sunday, February 17, 2008***, we will perform routine system maintenance on the COD System. The impact to COD users is outlined below.

For Grant and Direct Loan Participants—

- Users will not be able to submit or retrieve data via the COD Web site between 10:00 P.M. (ET) on Saturday, February 16, 2008 and 4:00 P.M. (ET) on Sunday, February 17, 2008.
- Federal Student Aid will suspend COD batch processing beginning at 10:00 P.M. (ET) on Saturday, February 16, 2008. Records submitted after this time will be held and processed after 4:00 P.M. (ET) on Sunday, February 17, 2008.

### **Washington's Birthday Federal Holiday**

***Monday, February 18, 2008*** is the Washington's Birthday Federal holiday.

For Grant and Direct Loan Participants—

- The COD School Relations Center will be open.
- The COD System will accept and process data from schools and send back responses/acknowledgments on Monday, February 18, 2008, but schools will not be able to receive any Federal funds on that day. Requests for changes in funding levels and for funds will not be processed until Tuesday, February 19, 2008.

Complete information regarding processing and customer service hours for COD and other Federal Student Aid/Department of Education call centers on the holiday is posted in [a February 8, 2008 Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).

### **Request For Designation Of Additional National SMART Grant Majors For 2008-2009 Award Year (02/07/08)**

The Department of Education has posted [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-02 on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#). This letter explains the process for requesting that additional majors be included on the list of eligible majors for the National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) Program for the 2008-2009 Award Year.

For complete information, refer to [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-02](#). Questions should be directed to Sophia McArdle by e-mail at [sophia.mcardle@ed.gov](mailto:sophia.mcardle@ed.gov) or by phone at 202/219-7078.

### **New 2008-2009 SAR Comments for TEACH Grant Program (02/06/08)**

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. 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.



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**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 available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).

In a [February 5, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site](#), Federal Student Aid provided more information about the operational implementation of the TEACH Grant Program. The information is specific to the new 2008-2009 Student Aid Report (SAR) comments for the TEACH Grant Program.

As Federal Student Aid informed schools in a [December 21, 2007 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site](#), a question relating to the TEACH Grant Program was added to the 2008-2009 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) prior to system start up. For 2008-2009, this question is only on the [FAFSA on the Web](#) application (English and Spanish) and not on the paper FAFSA. The question, intended to assist in identifying potentially eligible TEACH Grant recipients, asks “Are you planning on completing coursework, now or in the future, necessary for you to become an elementary or secondary school teacher?”

Although 2008-2009 [FAFSA on the Web](#) filers have been presented with the new TEACH Grant Program question as of January 1, 2008, the applicant’s response to the question has not been included on either the student’s SAR or the school’s Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR). Instead, Federal Student Aid has stored the applicant’s answer to the question in the Central Processing System (CPS).

In mid-February 2008, Federal Student Aid will reprocess student records for [FAFSA on the Web](#) filers who answered “Yes” to the TEACH Grant Program question and for filers who were not presented with the TEACH Grant question. The resulting ISIR transactions, which will be sent to all schools listed on the applicant’s FAFSA, will include new comment code number 281 or 282, depending on whether the applicant was presented with the TEACH Grant question. For additional information about the new comment codes and corresponding SAR comment text, refer to [the February 5<sup>th</sup> Electronic Announcement](#).

As a reminder, forthcoming communications will fully explain the operational changes that Federal Student Aid 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. All participants in the Federal student aid programs should continue to refer to the [IFAP Web site](#) for applicable guidance and information.

### **New NSLDS Fields For ACG And National SMART Grant To Be Zero-Filled On 2008-2009 ISIRs Until Implementation Of COD System Functionality (02/04/08)**

In a [February 4, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#), Federal Student Aid alerted schools that 2008-2009 Institutional Student Information Records (ISIRs) are currently being sent with zeroes in new fields specific to the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) and the National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant). The new fields are Scheduled Award Amount, Percent Eligibility Used by Scheduled Award (EU), and Total Percent Eligibility Used by Academic Year Level (TEU). Information for up to three ACG and National SMART Grant awards is displayed on the 2008-2009 ISIR.



**Note:** Only the new fields are zero-filled. ACG and National SMART Grant history continues to display on the ISIR.

As described in the [2008-2009 COD Technical Reference](#), the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System will calculate these amounts for all award years after the 2008-2009 COD System implementation scheduled for March 15, 2008. After the calculation is performed by the COD System, the data will be passed to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) and then on to the Central Processing System (CPS), which in turn will provide the data on the ISIR. The specific schedule for when this data will display on the ISIR is as follows:

- **For 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 ACG and National SMART Grant awards**, the new data will display on the ISIR shortly after the March 15, 2008 COD System implementation. When this occurs, the new data will also be available on the COD and NSLDS Web sites.
- **For 2008-2009 ACG and National SMART Grant awards**, the new data will display on the ISIR after the first actual disbursement for a 2008-2009 award has been accepted by the COD System. When this occurs, the new data will also be available on the COD and NSLDS Web sites.

For information about the location of the new fields in the NSLDS section[0] of the 2008-2009 ISIR, refer to [the February 4<sup>th</sup> Electronic Announcement](#).

If you have any questions about 2008-2009 ISIRs, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support at 800/330-5947 (TDD/TTY 800/511-5806) or by e-mail at [CPSSAIG@ed.gov](mailto:CPSSAIG@ed.gov). For more information regarding the calculation of the new ACG and National SMART Grant fields, refer to the [2008-2009 COD Technical Reference](#) and to forthcoming IFAP Electronic Announcements about the 2008-2009 COD System implementation.

### **2007-2008 Pell Grant CFL Reduction To NAPD Warning Message (01/29/08)**

At this time, the majority of Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) funds for the first payment period of the 2007-2008 Award Year should have been disbursed to students. In general, schools are to submit Pell Grant disbursements to the Department of Education (the Department) no later than 30 days after making an actual disbursement or becoming aware of the need to adjust a student's previously reported disbursement. Accordingly, the majority of disbursements for the first payment period of the 2007-2008 Award Year should have already been submitted to the COD System for processing.

### **2007-2008 Pell Grant CFL Reduction to NAPD Warning Message Sent on January 28, 2008**

On January 28, 2008, Federal Student Aid sent a message to schools that have a Pell Grant Current Funding Level (CFL) for the 2007-2008 Award Year that is greater than their Net Accepted and Posted Disbursements (NAPD). The message warns an affected school that its 2007-2008 Pell Grant CFL will be reduced to the NAPD if the CFL is still greater than the NAPD on February 13, 2008. After the reduction, schools that have drawn down funds in the G5 System but that have not submitted the applicable disbursements to the COD System may be in an excess cash situation and must rectify the situation as soon as possible.

Federal Student Aid sent the January 28, 2008 warning message to an affected school's Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) mailbox in the message class PGTX08OP. A school that receives the warning message should review its internal records and submit all outstanding Pell Grant



disbursements for the 2007-2008 Award Year to the COD System as soon as possible but before February 13, 2008.

This same information is posted in [a January 29, 2008 Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#). If you have any questions regarding the 2007-2008 Pell Grant CFL reduction to NAPD, contact the COD School Relations Center.



### **Updating School Contact Information in the COD System (02/08/08)**

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.



### **ACG and National SMART Grant Resources (02/08/08)**

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

### Grant Reports And Data Requests



This section contains important notices regarding reports and/or data requests. While we encourage you to review this section, note that some schools may not be impacted by the information presented below.

- SSN/Name/Date of Birth Change Report— On February 4, 2008 Federal Student Aid sent duplicate SSN/Name/Date of Birth Change reports (Message Class PGSN08OP) to some schools' Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) mailboxes. Federal Student Aid apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause schools. (02/06/08)