



**April 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.\*\*

## *Grant Programs*

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

### COD News

#### **COD System Maintenance Planned For Sunday, April 27, 2008 (04/23/08)**

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

**NEW!**

#### **Changes To 2008-2009 COD CCRAA School Testing And Schedule For 2008-2009 COD CCRAA School Testing (04/25/08)**

As schools, third party servicers, and software providers are aware, during the period June 27-28, 2008, Federal Student Aid plans to implement COD System functionality that will support the processing of Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program awards for the 2008-2009 and subsequent award years. Implementation of TEACH Grant processing requires changes to the COD Common Record Extensible Markup Language (XML) schema. For this reason, it is important to Federal Student Aid to offer and conduct testing for participants before they send data to the "live" production environment using COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a.



The new testing opportunity—COD CCRAA School Testing for the 2008-2009 Award Year—will impact the previously published schedule for COD School Testing for the 2008-2009 Award Year. In [an April 24, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#), Federal Student Aid provided the following information:

- Changes to the 2008-2009 COD School Testing schedule that are necessary to accommodate the plan and schedule for 2008-2009 COD CCRAA School Testing
- The plan, schedule, and process for 2008-2009 COD CCRAA School Testing

This information is also covered in the [2008-2009 COD Technical Reference](#).

For complete information about both school testing opportunities, refer to [the April 24<sup>th</sup> Electronic Announcement](#). If you have any questions, contact the COD School Relations Center by phone and ask for COD School Testing Support. You may also e-mail [CODsupport@acs-inc.com](mailto:CODsupport@acs-inc.com) with “COD School Testing Support” in the subject line.

### **Reminder for Action – Required EDconnect Upgrade And TDClient Initialization File Replacement (04/24/08)**

On April 23, 2008, Federal Student Aid posted a reminder on the [Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#) about upgrading to EDconnect v7.2 and replacing the initialization file (tdclient.ini) to be used with all versions of the Transaction Delivery (TD) Client and Easy Access (EA) Client mainframe and midrange transmission software. In both cases, the upgrades are associated with Federal Student Aid’s relocation of the data center that supports numerous Federal Student Aid systems and Web sites.

Federal Student Aid urges all EDconnect and TDClient users who have not already completed the applicable upgrade to do so immediately. *Failure to upgrade by the time the transition to the new data center is complete (early July 2008) will result in the inability to send and receive files.*

For complete information about these upgrades, refer to [the April 23, 2008 Electronic Announcement on the IFAP Web site](#).

### **2007-2008 Verification Status Code “W” Warning Message (04/23/08)**

On April 22, 2008, Federal Student Aid began processing a text message (PGTX08OP) as well as a Reconciliation Report (PGRC08OP) to schools that have one or more Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) student records still reported with a verification status code of “W”. The message is a warning that disbursements to all students with a verification status code of “W” will be considered overawards and reduced to a zero dollar amount (\$0.00), even though the disbursements were previously accepted in the COD System. The reduction of the affected disbursements is scheduled to occur on May 22, 2008.

### ***Note Regarding Verification Deadline:***

Some of the student records included in the Reconciliation Report may be for students who are still within the allowable timeframe for submitting verification documentation/completing the verification process as will be specified in a forthcoming “Notice of Deadline Dates for Receipt of Applications, Reports, and Other Records for the 2007-2008 Award Year.” This notice will



be published in the [Federal Register](#) and subsequently posted on the [Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).

Following the May 22, 2008 reduction, if a school needs additional time to complete verification for an individual student in accordance with the allowable timeframe in the [Federal Register](#) notice, the school may resubmit a disbursement record with a value greater than zero (\$0.00) until September 30, 2008. After September 30, 2008, the COD System will no longer accept “W” as a valid verification status code for 2007-2008 Pell Grant awards.

For complete information, refer to [the April 23, 2008 Electronic Announcement on the IFAP Web site](#). If you have questions about the warning message or about reporting verification status codes to the COD System, contact the COD School Relations Center.

### **TEACH Grant Operational Implementation Guidance – TEACH Grant Operational Implementation Overview Electronic Announcement [02/12/08 (Updated 04/22/08)]**

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.

**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 on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#). For information on Federal Student Aid’s Regulatory and Legislative Update – Spring 2008 training workshops, which will include a CCRAA module, refer to [Dear Colleague Letter ANN-08-02 on the IFAP Web site](#).

### ***April 9, 2008 TEACH Grant Operational Implementation Overview Electronic Announcement***

In [an April 9, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site](#), Federal Student Aid provided a high-level overview of how it will implement functionality for processing TEACH Grant awards. Through the Electronic Announcement and its two attachments, Federal Student Aid covers the following information:

- Basic components of TEACH Grant processing
- Implementation schedule for TEACH Grant functionality
- High-level explanation of TEACH Grant processing functions

Over the next several months, Federal Student Aid will supplement this high-level overview through updates to technical references and guides as well as numerous operational communications posted on the [IFAP Web site](#).

For complete information, refer to [the April 9<sup>th</sup> Electronic Announcement](#).

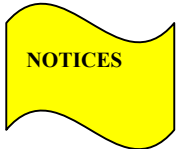


### *Reminders*

Federal Student Aid has posted updated sections of the [2008-2009 COD Technical Reference](#) that reflects TEACH Grant implementation information and will continue to do so. If you have any questions about these materials, contact the COD School Relations Center.

In addition, Federal Student Aid will post numerous communications about the operational implementation of the TEACH Grant Program over the next several months. Please continue to refer to the [IFAP Web site](#) for applicable guidance and information

### **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.

#### **Temporary Suspension of National SMART Grant YTD Records [04/08/08(Updated 04/21/08)]**

Federal Student Aid previously informed schools of an issue with 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) Year-to-Date (YTD) Records requested during the period March 14, 2008 through April 7, 2008. These reports were sent to schools' Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) mailboxes as requested; however, within the reports, the data fields for origination records were off by two (2) bytes beginning at position 255. The record length (350 total bytes) was correct, but all data after field position 255 were in incorrect positions. The COD School Relations Center notified affected schools via telephone, and Federal Student Aid placed new requests for National SMART Grant YTD Records on hold beginning April 8, 2008.

On April 15, 2008, Federal Student Aid implemented a code fix to resolve this issue. Also on April 15, 2008, Federal Student Aid began processing new requests for National SMART Grant YTD Records.

On April 18, 2008, Federal Student Aid processed requests for National SMART Grant YTD Records received during the period March 14, 2008 through April 14, 2008. This group of requests included those requested before the issue was discovered (March 14, 2008-April 7, 2008) and those requested during the hold period (April 8, 2008-April 14, 2008). All reports were sent to the affected schools' SAIG mailboxes and include data through the report generation date.

Federal Student Aid apologizes for the inconvenience caused by this issue and appreciates schools' patience and understanding. If you have any questions, contact the COD School Relations Center.



## Weekly Reminders

**NEW!**

### **Computer-Based Training Program for COD System Web Site, COD Reports, and Electronic MPN Web site (04/25/08)**

Federal Student Aid takes this opportunity to remind schools of the availability of an updated Computer-Based Training (CBT) for the [COD System Web site](#). The updated COD CBT includes enhancements that have been made to the COD System from March 2004 through April 14, 2007. Additionally, a new Direct Loan Reports CBT, a new Grant Reports CBT, and new simulations of the [Direct Loan Electronic Master Promissory Note \(MPN\) Web site](#) have been developed and are available for download.

The electronic files for the CBTs and simulations, as well as instructions for downloading and using these files, are available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. Under the “Tools for Schools” section, click on [COD Computer-Based Training](#).

The CBTs and simulations are as follows:

#### ***COD System Web Site CBT***

The COD System Web site CBT simulates the COD System and functionality available to a school administrator. In the updated COD System Web site CBT, there are eight lessons with text and an open format to guide a user through each area of the COD System Web site simulation. The user can explore basic navigation and functions of the COD Web site and practice locating and creating information in a safe environment with tips for assistance.

#### ***Grant Reports CBT***

The Grant Reports CBT offers 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 Reports CBT***

The Direct Loan Reports CBT offers 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.

#### ***EMPN Online Simulations***

The EMPN Online Simulations serve as a guide for understanding the Direct Loan Electronic MPN Web site. The four simulations are as follows:

- EMPN online Grad PLUS Pnote
- EMPN online Parent PLUS
- EMPN online School Administrator
- EMPN online Subsidized-Unsubsidized



If you have any questions or comments about the CBTs and simulations, contact the COD School Relations Center. If you e-mail your question or comment to [CODSupport@acs-inc.com](mailto:CODSupport@acs-inc.com), please include “CBT Question/Comment” in the subject line.



### **ACG and National SMART Grant Resources (04/25/08)**

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 EDEExpress Users:** Volume III of the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 COD technical references provides additional guidance for schools that use EDEExpress 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).