July 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

Issue Alert for EDExpress 2008-2009, Release 3.0 (07/22/08)
Federal Student Aid has identified an issue with the recently posted EDExpress 2008-2009, Release 3.0, that impacts the display of available CRWB09OP and CRAT09OP Import files on the Pell Grant, Direct Loan, and TEACH Grant import dialog boxes.

This issue only impacts users who run a Custom installation of Release 3.0 (for example, to upgrade from Release 2.0 to Release 3.0).

For complete information about the issue and the workaround to resolve the issue permanently in Release 3.0, refer to the July 21, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site.

E-mail Outreach Regarding ACG And National SMART Grant Participation (07/15/08)
On July 15, 2008, Federal Student Aid communicated via e-mail to Financial Aid Administrators at approximately 400 schools that had not yet submitted origination and disbursement records reflecting participation in the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) Program and/or the National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) Program for the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 award years. These e-mails were disseminated by the COD School Relations Center (CODSupport@acs-inc.com) on behalf of William Leith, Acting General Manager of Federal Student Aid's Application, Operations and Delivery Services.

Federal Student Aid has asked each affected school to review its records and processes regarding compliance with the ACG Program and/or National SMART Grant Program regulations and then complete and return a certification for one program or both programs, as applicable. The certifications are to be mailed or faxed to the COD School Relations Center by July 25, 2008.

If you received one of these outreach e-mails and have any questions, you may contact the COD School Relations Center.

TEACH Grant Operational Implementation Guidance – COD System Implementation and Guidance Summary (07/01/08)
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.

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.
- 2008-2009 COD Technical Reference provides technical information related to the processing of TEACH Grant awards.

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.

Weekly Reminders

Computer-Based Training Program for COD System Web Site, COD Reports, and Electronic MPN Web site (07/25/08)

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, please include "CBT Question/Comment" in the subject line.

ACG and National SMART Grant Resources (07/25/08)
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.