September 21, 2007

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, September 23, 2007 (09/19/07)
The COD System will undergo routine maintenance on Sunday, September 23, 2007 from 12:30 A.M. until 12:30 P.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 12:30 A.M. and 12:30 P.M. (ET).

- Batches submitted by schools via the SAIG between 12:30 A.M. and 3:00 A.M. (ET) will be held and not acknowledged back to schools until after COD comes back up at 12:30 P.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.

- Batches submitted by schools via the SAIG between 11:00 A.M. and 12:30 P.M. (ET) will also be held and not acknowledged back to schools until after COD comes back up at 12:30 P.M. (ET).

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.

New COD Web Site Functionality – Multiple Disbursements for Each Online Grant Award Submission (09/11/07)
During the period September 14 - 15, 2007, Federal Student Aid implemented an improvement to the COD Web site. The new functionality will better serve schools in the online creation and submission of disbursements for Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), National Science and

Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant), and Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) awards.

Previously, a school was able to create only one disbursement per award submission via the COD Web site. Now that the new functionality has been implemented, a school will be able to create up to 20 disbursements per award submission via the COD Web site.

A new "CONTINUE" button will display at the bottom of the COD Web site's Create Disbursement screen. After creating an award disbursement via this screen, a user will take one of the following actions:

- *If the user needs to create more than one disbursement for the award,* he or she will click on the "CONTINUE" button to create each additional disbursement (up to 20 total).

- *If the user does not need to create more than one disbursement for the award,* he or she will click on the "SUBMIT" button.

If you have any questions about the new COD Web site functionality, contact the COD School Relations Center.

COD Batch Processing, COD Web Site, and Direct Loan Electronic MPN Web Site Functionality Restored (09/11/07)
On September 10, 2007, Federal Student Aid experienced problems with a database that is used by the COD mainframe, the COD Web site, and the Direct Loan Electronic Master Promissory Note (MPN) Web site. To minimize the impact of these problems, Federal Student Aid ceased batch processing and brought down both Web sites. These actions resulted in Federal Student Aid's delay in processing Current Funding Level (CFL) changes and funding requests submitted to the COD System between 10:00 P.M. (ET) on Friday, September 7, 2007 and 10:30 A.M. (ET) on Monday, September 10, 2007.

Federal Student Aid has resolved the database problems, and normal batch processing and Web site operations have resumed. In addition, Federal Student Aid has caught up on all financial processing that was affected by the database problems.

Federal Student Aid appreciates your understanding and patience while it resolved the database problems and apologizes for any inconvenience the delay in financial processing caused schools. If you have any questions, contact the COD School Relations Center.

E-mail Address Change for HERA Questions (09/13/07)
During the summer of 2006, Federal Student Aid established an e-mail address (HERAQuestions@ed.gov) to which schools could send questions about the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (the HERA). In particular, the e-mail address was intended for questions about the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) programs that were established by the HERA.

Recently, it was necessary for Federal Student Aid to change the e-mail address to which schools submit these questions. Federal Student Aid attempted to make the e-mail address change invisible to its customers; however some customers may need to take action.

While Federal Student Aid changed the e-mail address under the "Submit Your ACG & SMART Question" button on the HERA page of the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, e-mails sent to the old address via any other functionality will result in an "Undeliverable" response. At this time, Federal Student Aid asks that you review electronic bookmarks, paper references, etc. and delete the old e-mail address.

The new e-mail address is CODSupport@acs-inc.com. Schools will recognize this e-mail address as that of the COD School Relations Center. When using this e-mail address to ask a HERA-related question*,* please include "HERA Question" in the subject line of the e-mail.

Federal Student Aid apologizes for any inconvenience this e-mail address change may cause schools and appreciates your understanding.

This same information is posted in a September 12, 2007 Electronic Announcement on the IFAP Web site.

2006-2007 Grant Processing Deadline Is October 1, 2007 (09/05/07)
The deadline for electronically transmitting Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant), and Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) records for the 2006-2007 Award Year to the COD System is *11:59 P.M (ET) on Monday, October 1, 2007.* To meet this deadline, a school's transmissions must be completed and accepted by 12:00 midnight (ET).

For additional information about the deadline, refer to the September 4, 2007 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site.

Note: As explained in the September 4th Electronic Announcement, Federal Student Aid sent 2006-2007 Reconciliation Reports to schools' Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) mailboxes during the period September 6 - 8, 2007. Due to the mass generation of these Reconciliation Reports, the Pell ID in the header and trailer of each file will not necessarily be associated with the school that receives the report.

If a school is unable to download and then view, print, or import a report into a spreadsheet as explained in the September 4th Electronic Announcement, the school can request the report via the COD Web site or by submitting the batch data request for the appropriate program/award year message class via the SAIG. For information about how to request these reports, refer to Volume VI, Section 8 of the 2006-2007 COD Technical Reference.

End of Federal Fiscal Year 2007 – Impact on Funds Availability (08/14/07)
September 30, 2007 marks the end of the Federal fiscal year for the Department of Education (the Department). Some of the Department's core financial systems, including the Grant Administration and Payment System (GAPS), will be on a modified processing schedule while the Department finalizes its processing and accounting for Fiscal Year 2007. These interruptions will impact how the COD System will process financial data and when schools can obtain funds for the Federal student aid programs as follows:

- *Monday, September 17, 2007 through Wednesday, September 26, 2007–* Financial processing between the COD System and EDCAPS/GAPS will be reduced to once every evening (instead of the normal twice-a-day, morning/evening processing). As a result, early morning processing will be completed in the evening. Current Funding Level (CFL) changes and funding could be delayed by a day.

- *Thursday, September 27, 2007 through Monday, October 1, 2007 –* The COD System will accept Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant), Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), and William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) disbursements, but CFL changes and funding will not be processed by EDCAPS/GAPS until Tuesday, October 2, 2007.

- All actual disbursements with a disbursement date from September 27, 2007 through October 2, 2007 must be received and accepted by the COD System *no later than 10:00 A.M. (ET) on Wednesday, September 26, 2007,* in order for them to be included in the drawdown prior to the shutdown. Disbursements submitted after this time and disbursements with a disbursement date after October 2, 2007 will be funded after EDCAPS/GAPS re-opens on October 2, 2007.

- *8:00 P.M. (ET) on Sunday, September 30, 2007 through 6:00 A.M. (ET) on Tuesday, October 2, 2007 –* The GAPS e-Payments Web site will not be available. Schools will not be able to draw down Campus-Based, ACG, National SMART Grant, Pell Grant, or Direct Loan funds during this period.

This same information is posted in an August 13, 2007 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. The Department appreciates your patience and understanding as it completes the required activities during the upcoming period. All financial processing is expected to be caught up by Friday, October 5, 2007.

G5 Implementation Coming Soon (06/29/07)
Recently, the Department of Education (the Department) announced the development of *G5—a state-of-the-art electronic system for grants management and payments.* G5 will replace the current Grant Administration and Payments System (GAPS), including the e-Payments functionality used by schools to draw down Campus-Based, Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant), Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), and William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) funds. G5 will provide a number of performance, processing, and customer enhancements.

The Department will implement G5 in three phases over several years. Phase I of G5 will address e-Payments and provide improved drawdown functionality. Full implementation of Phase I is currently targeted for the last quarter of calendar year 2007—most likely over the Veterans Day holiday weekend (November 8-12, 2007).

Over the next several months, the Department will provide additional information about Phase I of G5. This information will usually be posted first on the GAPS e-Payments Web site and then will be followed by an Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, an update to this item in the COD Processing Update, and a

message on the COD Web site. Please monitor these communications and share the information, as appropriate, with others at your school/organization.

The most current G5 information is posted on the GAPS e-Payments Web site and in a June 28, 2007 Electronic Announcement on the IFAP Web site.

If you have any questions about the status and/or implementation of G5, you may e-mail G5_Admin@ed.gov (G5_Admin@ed.gov).

NEW!

Updating School Contact Information in the COD System (09/21/07)
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 (09/21/07)
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 and the 2007-2008 COD Technical Reference, and has posted some volumes of the 2008-2009 COD Technical Reference Draft. 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:

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

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

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

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

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

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

o   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.

Grant Reports And Data Requests

NOTICES

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.

UPDATED!

**Status of Delay in Daily Reports and Data Requests for September 19 and 20, 2007
(09/21/07)**
As previously reported to schools, Federal Student Aid was delayed in sending Daily Reports and
Data Requests for September 19, 2007 to schools' Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG)
mailboxes and posting the reports on the COD Web site. Federal Student Aid released all of
these reports on September 20, 2007.

Federal Student Aid has experienced another delay in sending the Daily Reports and Data
Requests for September 20, 2007 to schools' SAIG mailboxes and posting these reports on the
COD Web site.   Federal Student Aid expects to release all of these reports by 11:00 A.M. (ET)
today, September 21, 2007.

The impacted Daily Reports and Data Requests for all award years are as follows:

Daily Reports

- Pell Funded Disbursement List

- Pell POP Report

Data Requests

- Pell Verification Status Report

- ACG Year-to-Date (YTD) Report

- National SMART Grant YTD Report

- Pell YTD Report

Federal Student Aid apologizes for any inconvenience these delays cause schools and is working to avoid additional delays.