



COD Processing Update

September 26, 2014

NEWS/UPDATES

- **End of Federal Fiscal Year 2014 – Impact on Funds Availability (9/8/14)**

Tuesday, September 30, 2014 marks the end of the Federal fiscal year for the Department of Education (the Department). Some of the Department's core financial systems, including G5, will be on a modified processing schedule while the Department finalizes its processing and accounting for Fiscal Year 2014. These interruptions will impact how the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System will process financial data and when schools can obtain funds for the Federal student aid programs as follows:

- ***Tuesday, September 30, 2014 through Wednesday, October 1, 2014*** – The COD System will accept Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant, Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant, and William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) records. However, after 8:00 A.M. (ET) on Tuesday, September 30, 2014, Current Funding Level (CFL) changes (as a result of actual disbursements) and funding will not be processed until G5 re-opens.

All actual disbursements with a disbursement date from September 30, 2014 through October 1, 2014 must be received by the COD System ***no later than 8:00 A.M. (ET) on Tuesday, September 30, 2014***, and subsequently accepted by the COD System, in order to generate the appropriate funding level increase prior to the G5 shutdown. Disbursements submitted by the deadline but not subsequently accepted, disbursements submitted after the deadline, and disbursements with a disbursement date after October 1, 2014 will be funded once G5 re-opens.

- ***9:00 P.M. (ET) on Tuesday, September 30, 2014 through 5:00 P.M. (ET) on Wednesday, October 1, 2014*** – The [G5 Web site](#) will not be available. Schools will not be able to draw down Pell Grant, Campus-Based, Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant, TEACH Grant, or Direct Loan funds during this period. Schools will be able to draw down under their existing authorizations after 5:00 P.M. (ET) on Wednesday, October 1, 2014.

- **Additional TEACH Grant Closeout Information for 2013-2014 Award Year (9/8/14)**

In a [May 22, 2014 Electronic Announcement](#), we provided Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Closeout information for the 2013-2014 Award Year. This announcement provides additional information to supplement the previous guidance. As a reminder, to be considered successfully closed out, a school must--

- Have an Ending Cash Balance (Net Drawdowns – Total Net Booked Disbursements) of \$0 and Total Net Unbooked Disbursements of \$0, as reflected on its TEACH Grant School Account Statement (SAS) Report.



For detailed information about TEACH Grant Closeout for the 2013-2014 Award Year, refer to [the September 5, 2014 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).

- **Pell Grant and Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant 2013-2014 Award Year Processing Deadline (9/8/14)**

The Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) Program regulations at 34 CFR 690.83(a) establishes the deadline by which a school must submit student payment data each award year. The data must be submitted to the Department of Education (the Department) by September 30th following the end of the award year in which the Pell Grant or Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant is made.

As required by regulations, and consistent with the “Applications, Reports, and Other Records for the 2013-2014 Award Year Notice” the final deadline for electronically transmitting Pell Grant and Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant records for the 2013-2014 Award Year to the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System is **Tuesday, September 30, 2014**. The notice was originally published in the [Federal Register](#) on July 8, 2013.

In an attachment to this announcement titled “Pell Grant and Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant 2013-2014 Award Year Processing Deadline,” we provide comprehensive information related to the Pell Grant and Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant 2013-2014 Award Year processing deadline.

Additional information is posted in a [September 5, 2014 Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).

- **September 2014 COD System Update – Changes to Several Direct Loan Edits (9/15/14)**

On September 14, 2014, we implemented additional COD System functionality that changed several Direct Loan edits, added a new edit, and added a new system-generated response. In a [September 4, 2014 Electronic Announcement](#), Federal Student Aid provided operational implementation guidance related to the new functionality.

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

- **Availability of Report Readers for Pell Grant Reconciliation File, Pell Grant Year to Date (YTD) File, and School Account Statement (SAS) Disbursement Detail on Demand File (9/10/14)**

As a reminder, Federal Student Aid has posted three report readers for the following reports:

- Pell Grant Reconciliation File
- Pell Grant YTD File
- SAS Disbursement Detail on Demand File

The readers provide a simplified way of importing the report files into an Excel spreadsheet for school reconciliation purposes. To use the readers, a school must receive the **fixed-length format** of the reports.



The readers, along with instructions on how to use them, are posted on the [Common Origination and Disbursement \(COD\) Web site](#) and can be accessed by clicking on the “COD Resources” link located on the gray bar at the bottom of the home page.

The table below will assist schools in finding the correct reader for the appropriate award year(s).

File Name on COD Resources page	Report and Award Year(s)
PELL Recon Reader 2008-2009 AY – 2013-2014 AY.xlsm	Pell Grant Reconciliation File, 2013-2014 and prior
PELL Recon Reader 2014-2015 AY.xlsm	Pell Grant Reconciliation File, 2014-2015
PELL YTD Reader 2008-2009 AY – 2013-2014 AY.xlsm	Pell Grant YTD File, 2013-2014 and prior
PELL YTD Reader 2014-2015 AY.xlsm	Pell Grant YTD File, 2014-2015
SAS Disb On Demand Reader v1.1.xlsm	SAS Disbursement Detail on Demand, all award years
Note: While there are multiple Pell Grant report readers covering different award years, there is only one instruction file posted for the report reader type.	

If you have questions about the readers or need additional assistance with using them, contact the COD School Relations Center.

• **COD System Warning Edit 211 (5/20/14)**

Since the April 2014 COD System implementation, many schools may have received COD Warning Edit 211 (Failure of Full Schema Enforcement). As a reminder, this warning edit is intended to help schools and software providers identify and fix invalid XML, but still allow the data to be processed by the COD System. Eventually, Federal Student Aid will reject batches sent with invalid XML and the data will not be processed by the COD System.

Since the cause of invalid XML can vary widely, Federal Student Aid cannot provide specific XML error(s) in the response when returning Warning Edit 211. However, some examples of common errors are:

- Submitting tags out of order
- Submitting a string longer than the posted maximum length value specified by the COD XML Schema
- Submitting an integer or decimal outside of the posted value range specified by the COD XML Schema
- Neglecting to submit a required tag within a complex element (for example, <City> in the <PermanentAddress> block)
- Submitting tag names that do not match the COD XML Schema (tag names are case-sensitive)

In addition, Federal Student Aid has posted guidance about using an XML validator tool to help schools identify XML errors. This guidance is posted on the IFAP Web site in a document titled “COD XML Schema Validation Instructions.”

When using an XML validator tool, schools should keep a few things in mind:



- Use of an XML validator tool is optional and a school will need to find the right XML validator tool based on its individual circumstances. Some schools may need to work directly with their technical staff or software provider to select an XML validator tool.
- In some cases, a school can download an XML validator tool to a computer. In other cases, a school can upload files to a Web-based XML validator tool. If a school opts to use a Web-based XML validator tool and it has to upload files to run the validation, for security purposes, the school should use test data for the file upload.
- Federal Student Aid has validated the published COD XML Schema with some of the independent XML validator tools available, including XMLSpy, www.xmlvalidation.com, and XML Notepad 2007.

Finally, schools using a software vendor should consult with that vendor for additional assistance. In many cases, a school may need to ensure it is using the latest version of the chosen product. Additional information about the COD XML Schema can be found on the IFAP Web site at <https://ifap.ed.gov/ifap/codXMLSchema.jsp>. For additional questions about COD System processing or the COD XML Schema, contact the COD School Relations Center.

CURRENT ISSUES

DIRECT LOANS

RESOLVED - Endorser Addendum Linking Issue for Some Direct PLUS Loans [(09/03/14) Updated 09/19/14]

Earlier this month, Federal Student Aid determined there was an issue in which an Endorser Addendum would not link to a Direct PLUS Loan in certain situations. Specifically, the issue occurred in the following scenario:

1. The borrower completes a Direct PLUS Loan Request via the [StudentLoans.gov Web site](#) and receives an adverse credit decision.
2. The borrower's school submits a Direct PLUS Loan for the borrower.
3. An endorser completes an Endorser Addendum via StudentLoans.gov Web site, but uses the Endorser Code instead of the Award ID to access the flow. Note: As a reminder, the Endorser Code is received after the Direct PLUS Loan Request is completed and the credit check is returned as declined.

Federal Student Aid has resolved the issue and endorser addenda are linking correctly.

If you have additional questions about COD System processing, contact the COD School Relations Center.

GRANTS

There are no Grant-related issues at this time

Keep School Contact Information Current in the COD System (9/26/14)

We remind schools and third party servicers that contact information in the COD System must be kept current. Contact information is extremely important for us to be able to reach the right people at the school, particularly about program-specific issues. The e-mail addresses for the President, Financial Aid Administrator, Pell Grant Financial Aid Officer, and Direct Loan Financial Aid Officer are used to deliver time-sensitive materials and critical COD processing information to the school.



Having current contact information for the Pell Grant Financial Aid Officer and Direct Loan Financial Aid Officer is most critical for a school that is an additional location to a main campus. The information allows us to contact those officers directly at the additional location rather than needing to contact the main campus.

For more information on updating School Contact Information, please refer to [the December 20, 2012 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site.](#)