October 24, 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−Related Web Site Maintenance Planned For Sunday, October 26, 2008 (10/22/08)
The COD-related Web sites will undergo routine maintenance on Sunday, October 26, 2008 from 5:00 A.M. until 11:00 A.M. (ET). This activity will result in Web site outages for a period of time. Federal Student Aid appreciates your patience and understanding as it completes this important activity.

An explanation of how this activity will impact availability of the COD-related Web sites follows below. Please review this information to determine if processing at your school will be affected.

COD Web Site

- Users will not be able to submit or retrieve data via the COD Web site between 5:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. (ET).

Direct Loan Electronic Master Promissory Note Web Site

- An individual will not be able to complete a new MPN electronically or retrieve an existing MPN that was completed electronically via the Direct Loan Electronic Master Promissory Note (MPN) Web site between 5:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. (ET).

   An individual starting the process by 4:00 A.M. (ET) will be able to complete his or her MPN before the Web site becomes unavailable. An individual attempting to access the Web site after the cutoff time will see a Web site maintenance message and will not be able to start the process or retrieve an existing MPN.

TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve Web site

- An individual will not be able to complete a new ATS electronically or retrieve an existing ATS via the TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve (ATS) Web site between 5:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. (ET).

   An individual starting the process by 4:00 A.M. (ET) will be able to complete his or her ATS before the Web site becomes unavailable. An individual attempting to access the Web site after the cutoff time will see a Web site maintenance message and will not be able to start the process or retrieve an existing ATS.

Contact Information

Federal Student Aid apologizes for any inconvenience these outages may cause. If you have any questions about the COD System, the Direct Loan Electronic MPN Web site, or the TEACH Grant ATS Web site, contact the COD School Relations Center.

COD Computer-Based Training (10/23/08)
Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce the availability of the COD Computer-Based Training (CBT). The COD CBT includes enhancements that have been made to the COD System, the COD Web site, and associated Web sites and software products through June 28, 2008.

The COD CBT consists of component simulations and CBTs. Each COD CBT component is explained below. The electronic files associated with each component, as well as information about downloading and navigating the COD CBT, are available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. Under the "Tools for Schools" section on the home page, click on COD Computer-Based Training.

The components of the COD CBT are as follows:

COD System Simulations – The COD System Simulations offer lessons that explain the COD Web site screens and functionality available to a school administrator. There are 14 lessons (one with two parts) with text to guide a user through each area of the COD Web site. By entering fictitious data, the user can explore basic navigation and functions of the COD Web site and practice locating and creating information in a safe environment that includes tips for assistance.

Direct Loan Reports CBT – The Direct Loan Reports CBT includes 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.

Grant Reports CBT – The Grant Reports CBT includes 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 (DL) Tools Simulation – The DL Tools Simulation demonstrates how to use the DL Tools software to assist with the reconciliation process for Direct Loan awards. Although the simulation can be used both by schools that use the EDExpress for Windows software and schools that do not use this software, the simulation is especially useful for schools that do not use the EDExpress software on a regular basis but are interested in a Direct Loan reconciliation resource.

eMPN Online Simulations – The eMPN Online Simulations offer a step-by-step walk through of the process for completing a Direct Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN) via the Direct Loan Electronic MPN Web site. There are four lessons with text to guide a user through student, parent, and school administrator aspects of the eMPN process.

Completing an Agreement to Serve (ATS) Website Simulation – The Completing an ATS Website Simulation provides a step-by-step walk through of the process for completing a Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant ATS via the TEACH Grant ATS Web site.

If you have questions or comments about the COD CBT, contact the COD School Relations Center. If you e-mail your question or comment to CODSupport@acs-inc.com, please include "COD CBT Question/Comment" in the subject line.

Availability of New TDClient for Windows Software for SAIG Transmissions (10/22/08)
Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce availability of new TDClient for Windows software for Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) transmissions. For complete information about this software, refer to the October 21, 2008 Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site.

Financial Data Processing Facilities Move – Impact on Funds Availability (10/10/08)
As explained in an October 9, 2008 Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, the Department of Education's (the Department's) Deputy Chief Financial Officer recently disseminated a letter informing the community that the Department is in the process of moving its financial data processing facilities. During the transition period, G5 (formerly GAPS) will be unavailable *from 3:00 P.M. (ET) on Friday, November 21, 2008 through 6:00 A.M. (ET) on Monday, December 1, 2008.*

This interruption will impact how the COD System will process financial data and when a school can obtain funds for the Federal student aid programs. In preparation for the shutdown, all schools should review the October 9th Electronic Announcement and the impact information below.

Note: While the financial data processing facilities move will impact financial processing for a short period of time as explained below, once completed, there will be no change to how users interface with G5 via the G5 Web site or receive funds under either the ACH or FEDWIRE payment system on a regular basis.

Impact Information

The impact on how the COD System will process financial data and when a school can obtain funds for the Federal student aid programs is as follows:

- *Thursday, November 20, 2008 through Sunday, November 30, 2008* – The COD System will accept Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant), Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant, and William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) records. However, after 10:00 A.M. (ET) on Thursday, November 20, 2008, Current Funding Level (CFL) changes (as a result of actual disbursements) and funding will not be processed by G5 until Monday, December 1, 2008.

  Records for disbursements that a school plans to make during the period November 20, 2008 through December 1, 2008 and that need to be funded prior to the shutdown must

be received by the COD System *no later than 10:00 A.M. (ET) on Thursday, November 20, 2008,* and subsequently accepted by the COD System, in order for them to be included in the funds available for drawdown prior to the shutdown. Disbursements submitted by the deadline but not subsequently accepted, disbursements submitted after the deadline, and disbursements with a disbursement date after December 1, 2008 will be funded after G5 re-opens on December 1, 2008.

Note: As a reminder, COD System business rules related to the acceptance of future-dated actual disbursement records always apply.

- *3:00 P.M. (ET) on Friday, November 21, 2008 through 6:00 A.M. (ET) on Monday, December 1, 2008 –* The G5 Web site will not be available. A school will not be able to draw down Campus-Based, ACG, National SMART Grant, Pell Grant, TEACH Grant, or Direct Loan funds during this period. In addition, G5 Hotline customer service representatives will be limited in the assistance they will be able to provide during this period, as they too will be unable to access G5 and complete draw downs (and other actions) for customers.

  Note: In some cases, a school will be unable to operationally comply with returning cash to the Department within the timeframes specified in the Cash Management regulations at 34 CFR 668.166. The school will be considered to be in compliance with the excess cash requirements provided that the school disburses such funds to eligible students (or parents) by the end of the shutdown period and/or promptly returns such funds to the Department when G5 resumes processing on December 1, 2008.

The Department appreciates your patience and understanding as it completes this important activity during the upcoming period. All financial processing is expected to be caught up by Thursday, December 4, 2008.

TEACH Grant Operational Implementation Guidance – COD System Implementation and Guidance Summary [07/01/08 (Updated 10/03/08)]
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. During the period September 26-27, 2008, Federal Student Aid implemented COD System functionality that supports TEACH Grant reporting functions.

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.

- [September 3, 2008 Electronic Announcement](#) that provides information on Federal Student Aid's implementation of system functionality that supports TEACH Grant reporting functions.

- [2008-2009 COD Technical Reference](#) provides technical information related to the processing of TEACH Grant awards.

Note: On an ongoing basis, Federal Student Aid posts updated listings of schools that are eligible to participate in the TEACH Grant Program for the 2008-2009 Award Year. These listings are posted as Electronic Announcements.

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.

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.

- TEACH Grant SAS—   The first TEACH Grant School Account Statement (SAS) for the period ending September 30, 2008 will be run this weekend. Schools with any TEACH Grant activity through the end of September should expect to see the TEACH Grant SAS (message class THSM09OP or THSY09OP) in its SAIG mailbox on or after Monday, October 27, 2008. (10/24/08)

Issue Alert – Multiple Issues With 2008-2009 ACG, National SMART Grant, and Pell Grant MRRs (10/10/08)
On September 12, 2008, Federal Student Aid identified a format issue with 2008-2009 Multiple Reporting Records (MRRs) for the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) programs that have been sent to schools' Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) mailboxes since March 16, 2008. These reports may have been automatically generated by the COD System or requested by a school via the COD Web site or batch data request.
In short, the issue that was identified initially involves the formatting of Percent Eligibility Used and Total Percent Eligibility Used fields within reports. These fields are not formatted as outlined in Volume VI, Section 8 of the 2008-2009 COD Technical Reference.

Through its work to resolve the issue that was identified initially, Federal Student Aid has identified other issues with the 2008-2009 ACG MRR (AGMR09OP), National SMART Grant MRR (SGMR09OP), and Pell Grant MRR (PGMR09OP). None of the issues identified to date impact a school's ability to import the affected reports.

Federal Student Aid is working on code fixes to resolve the issues outlined below. The issues fall into three categories—those that affect all three MRRs, those that affect only the ACG and National SMART Grant MRRs, and those that affect only the Pell Grant MRR.

Notes:

1) Two of the issues also affect 2007-2008 MRRs. The issues that impact both 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 MRRs are identified in the tables below.

2) None of the issues affect the 2008-2009 Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant MRR that was recently implemented for COD System generation when applicable.

2008-2009 ACG, National SMART Grant, and Pell Grant MRRs
Sent to SAIG Mailboxes (AGMR09OP, SGMR09OP, and PGMR09OP)

- The format for Percent Eligibility Used and Total Percent Eligibility Used fields is 0000000. The last four digits should represent less than one percent. A Percent Eligibility Used of 25.02 percent should be reflected as 0250200. Instead, it is incorrectly reflected as 0002502. As a result, the percentages reflected in the reports are incorrect.

  Note: All Percent Eligibility Used and Total Percent Eligibility Used calculations stored in the COD System, reflected on the COD and National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) Web sites, and provided on Institutional Student Information Records (ISIRs) are accurate.

- Each Percent Eligibility Used or Total Percent Eligibility Used amount in a row should correspond to the school identified in the same row. In some cases, this information does not correspond correctly or is populated with invalid values.

2008-2009 ACG and National SMART Grant MRRs
Sent to SAIG Mailboxes (AGMR09OP and SGMR09OP)

- The format for Scheduled Award field is 0000000. The last two digits should represent zero cents. A Scheduled Award of $4000.00 should be reflected as 0400000. Instead, it is incorrectly reflected as 0004000. As a result, the scheduled award amounts reflected in the reports are incorrect.

- The Institution Street Address – Line 1 field value should be populated in positions 115-149. The information is not populating as it should.

- Concurrent Enrollment information should reflect all awards reported by all schools that have the same student enrolled and awarded for the same period of time. For some schools that have reported more than one award for the affected student and enrollment period, only information about the student's first award is reflected.

  Note: This issue also impacts the 2007-2008 ACG MRR (AGMR08OP) and National SMART Grant MRR (SGMR08OP).

2008-2009 Pell Grant MRRs
Sent to SAIG Mailboxes (PGMR09OP)

- Record Type field values PR and PB, which respectively indicate the school that first disbursed funds and the school (or schools) that subsequently disbursed funds to a student in a Potential Overaward Process (POP) situation, are not correctly reflected. In addition, POP notification records within some reports are reflected more than once.

  Note: This issue also impacts the 2007-2008 Pell Grant MRR (PGMR08OP).

After Federal Student Aid has resolved these issues, a school will be able to request corrected reports via the COD Web site or batch data request. Federal Student Aid will update this communication after the issues have been resolved.

Federal Student Aid apologizes for the inconvenience caused by these issues and appreciates your patience and understanding as it completes its work. If you have questions about these issues, or experience issues with any COD reports, contact the COD School Relations Center.