



**November 14, 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

#### **Web Site Outages Planned for November 15 and 23, 2008 [11/07/08 (Updated 11/10/08)]**

On November 15 and 23, 2008, Federal Student Aid needs to execute extended Web site maintenance activities in addition to its routine Web site maintenance that occurs each weekend. Federal Student Aid provided information about the Web sites that will be affected during each extended maintenance period in [a November 6, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).

Please review all of the information in the Electronic Announcement and evaluate impact on your school or organization during the periods when the affected Web sites will be unavailable.

The Direct Loan Electronic Master Promissory Note (MPN) and TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve (ATS) Web sites will be impacted on November 15, 2008. Specific impact information for *Saturday, November 15, 2008* is as follows:

#### ***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 MPN site](#) between 10:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. (ET).

An individual starting the process by 9:00 A.M. (ET) on Saturday, November 15, 2008 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 ATS Web site](#) between 10:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. (ET).

An individual starting the process by 9:00 A.M. (ET) on Saturday, November 15, 2008 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.

Federal Student Aid appreciates your patience and understanding as it completes the required activities.

### **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 9<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **Implementation of Redesigned IFAP Web Site Planned for November 23, 2008 (11/10/08)**

Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce its plan to implement a reorganized and redesigned Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site on November 23, 2008. For complete information about the implementation of the redesigned Web site, refer to [the November 7, 2008 Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).

### **COD Holiday Schedule For November 26 and 27, 2008 (11/14/08)**

Thursday, November 27, 2008 is the Thanksgiving Day Federal holiday.

- The COD School Relations Center will close at 3:00 P.M. (ET) on Wednesday, November 26, 2008 and reopen at 8:00 A.M. (ET) on Friday, November 28, 2008.
- The COD System will accept and process data from schools and send back responses/acknowledgments on Thursday, November 27, 2008, but schools will not be able to receive any Federal funds on that day.

Due to the overlapping unavailability of G5 (formerly GAPS), requests for changes in funding levels and for funds will not be processed until after G5 is available on Monday, December 1, 2008. As explained in the item titled “Financial Data Processing Facilities Move – Impact on Funds Availability, we expect financial processing to be caught up by Thursday, December 4, 2008.

Further information regarding Thanksgiving Day processing and customer service hours for COD and other Federal Student Aid/Department call centers will be posted in an Electronic Announcement on the [Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).



### **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.



**TEACH Grant – Institutional Participation Request Process Information (11/14/08)**

On June 3, 2008, the Department of Education posted [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-07 on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#). This Dear Colleague Letter clarifies how an institution will establish eligibility to participate in the TEACH Grant Program.

For complete information about the Institutional Participation Request Process, refer to [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-07](#).

- Questions about the issues discussed in the letter should be directed to Gail McLarnon by e-mail at [gail.mclarnon@ed.gov](mailto:gail.mclarnon@ed.gov) or by phone at 202/219-7048.
- Questions about the participation request process should be directed to the School Participation Team for a school's state. Contact information is available on the [Electronic Application for Approval to Participate in Federal Student Financial Aid Programs \(E-App\) Web site](#).

**Participation Request Process Steps** – As outlined in the 10-step participation request process included in [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-07](#), a school must complete Question 1, enter specified language in Section K/Question 69, and complete Section L via the [E-App Web site](#). After completing these steps, the school must mail its signed and dated signature page to the Department of Education (the Department) per the instructions provided on the “Submit Application” page. To aid in expediting receipt of the school's signature page by the Department, the school may want to use an overnight delivery method.

**Participation Request Process Follow Up** – If a school does not receive a response regarding its request to participate in the TEACH Grant Program within two weeks of submitting the request, the school should contact the School Participation Team for the school's state. Contact information is available on the [E-App Web site](#).

**School Addition to ATS Web Site** – Once a school is determined to be eligible to participate in the TEACH Grant Program, the school's name will be added to the TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve (ATS) Web site. As a general rule, Federal Student Aid will update the TEACH Grant ATS Web site on the Tuesday or Thursday most closely following notification of the school's eligibility. If a school has questions about the TEACH Grant ATS Web site, it should contact the COD School Relations Center.

**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.

**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.

| <b>2008-2009 ACG, National SMART Grant, and Pell Grant MRRs</b><br><b>Sent to SAIG Mailboxes (AGMR09OP, SGMR09OP, and PGMR09OP)</b>  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul> |



***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.



## Weekly Reminders



### **COD Computer-Based Training (11/14/08)**

Federal Student Aid takes this opportunity to remind the community of 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 EDEExpress for Windows software and schools that do not use this software, the simulation is especially useful for schools that do not use the EDEExpress 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](mailto:CODSupport@acs-inc.com), please include “COD CBT Question/Comment” in the subject line.