



May 16, 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.

Direct Loan Program

COD News

Data Center Relocation Work – May 16 – 17, 2008 Outage Reminder (05/12/08)

As Federal Student Aid initially informed the community in a [March 28, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#), it plans to implement the data center relocation of the Central Processing System (CPS), the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS), the Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG), and several Web sites in July 2008. Prior to this implementation, Federal Student Aid is conducting two test cycles. The first test cycle was completed in April 2008, and the second test cycle will be completed in May 2008.

In a [May 9, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site](#), Federal Student Aid reminded the community of the May 2008 test cycle outage period. Federal Student Aid will conduct this test cycle outage *during the period May 16 – 17, 2008*.

May 16 – 17, 2008 Outage Period

The CPS, the NSLDS, the SAIG, and the Web sites listed in [the May 9th Electronic Announcement](#) *will be unavailable to users for seven hours from 5:00 P.M. (ET) on Friday, May 16, 2008 until 12:00 A.M. (ET) on Saturday, May 17, 2008*.

Note: As a reminder, Federal Student Aid has changed the outage start time provided in [the March 28th Electronic Announcement](#). The outage will start at 5:00 P.M. (ET)—two hours later than the initial estimate (3:00 P.M.)

Impact on Web sites, CPS compute processing, and SAIG file submission will be as follows:

- For a list of the Web sites that will be unavailable to users during this outage period, refer to [the May 9th Electronic Announcement](#).
- In conjunction with this outage period, Federal Student Aid will not process application or correction data on Friday, May 16, 2008. As a result, application and correction data sent to the CPS during the period May 15 – 18, 2008 will not be processed until May 19, 2008. There are no known state deadlines that will be affected by the suspended compute date.



Note: Per Federal Student Aid's normal processing schedule, application and correction data received by 12:59 A.M. (ET) on May 15, 2008 will have a "processed date" of May 15, 2008.

- During this outage period, file transmission via the SAIG will be interrupted. Users attempting to transmit files via the SAIG during the outage period will receive an error message informing them that the SAIG is unavailable and that data must be transmitted at a later time.

Required EDconnect Upgrade and TDClient Initialization File Replacement

In [an April 23, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site](#), Federal Student Aid reminded the community about upgrading to EDconnect v7.2 and replacing the initialization file (tdclient.ini) to be used with all versions of the Transaction Delivery (TD) Client and Easy Access (EA) Client mainframe and midrange transmission software. These upgrades are associated with the data center relocation.

Federal Student Aid urges all EDconnect and TDClient users who have not already completed the applicable upgrade (or upgrades) to do so immediately. ***Failure to upgrade by the time the transition to the new data center is complete will result in the inability to send and receive files.***

For additional information about these upgrades, refer to [the April 23rd Electronic Announcement](#).

Federal Student Aid appreciates your patience and understanding as it completes the required activities during the May 16 – 17, 2008 period.

COD System Maintenance Planned For Sunday, May 18, 2008 (05/14/08)

The COD System will undergo routine maintenance on Sunday, May 18, 2008 from 1:30 A.M. until 9:00 A.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 1:30 A.M. and 9:00 A.M. (ET).
- Batches submitted by schools via the SAIG between 1:30 A.M. and 3:00 A.M. (ET) will be held and not acknowledged back to schools until after the SAIG comes back up at 11:00 A.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.

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.



Extended Direct Loan Electronic MPN Web Site Outage For Sunday, May 18, 2008 (05/14/08)

As a reminder, the [Direct Loan Electronic Master Promissory Note \(MPN\) Web](#) site is unavailable every Sunday morning from 5:00 A.M. until 11:00 A.M. (ET) while routine maintenance is performed. During this period, individuals are not able to complete new MPNs electronically or retrieve existing MPNs that were completed electronically.

Due to the need for additional maintenance on Sunday, May 18, 2008, the [Direct Loan Electronic MPN Web site](#) will be unavailable for an extended period of time from 1:30 A.M. until 11:00 A.M. (ET). Individuals starting the process by 12:30 A.M. (ET) on Sunday, May 18, 2008 will be able to complete their MPNs before the Web site becomes unavailable. Individuals 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.

Federal Student Aid apologizes for any inconvenience this outage may cause. If you have any questions, contact the COD School Relations Center.

NEW!

2008-2009 COD Technical Reference May 2008 Updates Now Available (05/16/08)

The [2008-2009 COD Technical Reference May 2008 Updates](#) are available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. The 2008-2009 COD Technical Reference consists of multiple volumes that contain development information for the 2008-2009 Award Year. For a complete list of updates, refer to the "0809 COD Technical Reference May 2008 Change Tracking Log." If you have any questions about this material, contact the COD School Relations Center.

NEW!

Impact on COD Processing May 25-26, 2008 (05/16/08)

Federal Student Aid is planning to execute a COD System maintenance activity on May 25, 2008. This activity will result in outages of certain COD System functionality for a period of time. Federal Student Aid appreciates your patience and understanding as it completes this important activity. In addition, funding requests will not be processed on May 26, 2008, the Memorial Day Federal holiday.

An explanation of how this activity and the holiday will impact COD System availability and processing follows below. Please review this information to determine if processing at your school will be affected.

COD System Maintenance

On **Sunday, May 25, 2008**, we will perform system maintenance on the COD System. 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.

For Grant and Direct Loan Participants—

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Memorial Day Federal Holiday

Monday, May 26, 2008 is the Memorial Day Federal holiday.

For Grant and Direct Loan Participants—

- The COD School Relations Center will be closed.
- The COD System will accept and process data from schools and send back responses/acknowledgements, but schools will not be able to receive any Federal funds on that day. Requests for changes in funding levels and for funds will not be processed until Tuesday, May 27, 2008.

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

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.



NOTICES

- Direct Loan Rebuild File— Schools in need of this file should contact the COD School Relations Center.



Weekly Reminders

NEW!

Computer-Based Training Program for COD System Web Site, COD Reports, and Electronic MPN Web site (05/16/08)

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.

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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.

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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.



Grant Programs

ACG, National SMART Grant, Pell Grant, and TEACH Grant

COD News

Federal Pell Grant 2008-2009 Award Year Initial Authorization for Advanced Funded Schools (05/15/08)

Federal Student Aid has processed the Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) Initial Authorization for the 2008-2009 Award Year, for schools that receive Pell Grant funds under the advanced funding method. A school's Initial Authorization, known in the COD System as Current Funding Level (CFL), was determined based on a percentage of the disbursement data submitted and accepted during the 2007-2008 Award Year. Shortly, Federal Student Aid will generate an Electronic Statement of Account (ESOA) that lists the amount of a school's Initial CFL for the 2008-2009 Award Year and send it to the school's Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) mailbox in the message class PGAS09OP.

An Advanced Funded school can view its Initial CFL on the [COD Web site's](#) Funding Information screen. A school will be able to view and draw down 2008-2009 Pell Grant funds in G5 (formerly GAPS) *on Tuesday, July 1, 2008*.

As an Advanced Funded school submits actual Pell Grant disbursement records, the COD System will apply the total accepted and posted amount for each disbursement to the amount of the school's Initial CFL. Only after the Initial CFL amount has been reached will the school's CFL be increased to cover additional accepted and posted disbursements. A new ESOA will be sent to the school each time its Pell Grant CFL amount changes.

For complete information, refer to [the May 15, 2008 Electronic Announcement that is posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).

If you have any questions about the Pell Grant Initial Authorization for the 2008-2009 Award Year, contact the COD School Relations Center.

Data Center Relocation Work – May 16 – 17, 2008 Outage Reminder (05/12/08)

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2007-2008 Verification Status Code “W” Warning Message (04/23/08)

On April 22, 2008, Federal Student Aid began processing a text message (PGTX08OP) as well as a Reconciliation Report (PGRC08OP) to schools that have one or more Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) student records still reported with a verification status code of “W”. The message is a warning that disbursements to all students with a verification status code of “W” will be considered overawards and reduced to a zero dollar amount (\$0.00), even though the disbursements were previously accepted in the COD System. The reduction of the affected disbursements is scheduled to occur on May 22, 2008.

Note Regarding Verification Deadline:

Some of the student records included in the Reconciliation Report may be for students who are still within the allowable timeframe for submitting verification documentation/completing the verification process as will be specified in a forthcoming “Notice of Deadline Dates for Receipt of Applications, Reports, and Other Records for the 2007-2008 Award Year.” This notice will be published in the [Federal Register](#) and subsequently posted on the [Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).



Following the May 22, 2008 reduction, if a school needs additional time to complete verification for an individual student in accordance with the allowable timeframe in the [Federal Register](#) notice, the school may resubmit a disbursement record with a value greater than zero (\$0.00) until September 30, 2008. After September 30, 2008, the COD System will no longer accept “W” as a valid verification status code for 2007-2008 Pell Grant awards.

For complete information, refer to [the April 23, 2008 Electronic Announcement on the IFAP Web site](#). If you have questions about the warning message or about reporting verification status codes to the COD System, contact the COD School Relations Center.



UPDATED!

TEACH Grant Operational Implementation Guidance – Reminders [02/12/08 (Updated 05/16/08)]

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.

Note: For policy information on all of the provisions of the CCRAA, including the TEACH Grant Program, refer to [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-01 on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#). For information on Federal Student Aid’s Regulatory and Legislative Update – Spring 2008 training workshops, which include a CCRAA module, refer to [Dear Colleague Letter ANN-08-02 on the IFAP Web site](#).

Reminders

Operational Implementation Overview – Federal Student Aid provided a high-level overview of how it will implement functionality for processing TEACH Grant awards in [an April 9, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site](#). Over the next several months, Federal Student Aid will supplement this high-level overview through updates to technical references and guides as well as numerous operational communications posted on the [IFAP Web site](#). For complete information, refer to [the April 9th Electronic Announcement](#).

COD Technical Reference Updates – Federal Student Aid has posted updated sections of the [2008-2009 COD Technical Reference](#) that reflect TEACH Grant implementation information. On May 15, 2008, Federal Student Aid posted the most current updates on the IFAP Web site.

CCRAA School Testing – Federal Student Aid plans to implement COD System functionality that will support the processing of TEACH Grant Program awards for the 2008-2009 and subsequent award years during the period June 27-28, 2008. Implementation of TEACH Grant processing requires changes to the COD Common Record Extensible Markup Language (XML) schema. For this reason, it is important to Federal Student Aid to offer and conduct testing for participants before they send data to the “live” production environment using [COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a](#). The new testing opportunity—COD CCRAA School Testing for the 2008-2009 Award Year—will impact the previously published schedule for COD



School Testing for the 2008-2009 Award Year. For complete information about both school testing opportunities, refer to [the April 24, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site](#). This information is also covered in the [2008-2009 COD Technical Reference](#).

Current Issues

Updated Impact Information – YTD Disbursement Amount Not Returned When Actual Disbursements Equal Zero [04/30/08 (Updated 05/06/08)]

On April 30, 2008, Federal Student Aid informed the community of an issue with returning Year-to-Date (YTD) Disbursement Amount information in the <YTDDisbursementAmount> tag of the Common Record Response for certain Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) awards. Upon further research, Federal Student Aid has determined that this issue is broader in scope and also impacts 2008-2009 Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) awards and 2008-2009 National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) awards.

For Pell Grant, ACG, and National SMART Grant awards, the <YTDDisbursementAmount> tag is located in the Response Section of the Award Block and should include a value that is equal to the sum of all actual disbursements (Disbursement Release Indicator or DRI equals “True”) for the specific award. Accordingly, this tag should be returned in all cases, including when the sum of all actual disbursements is equal to zero (\$0.00).

Since March 15, 2008, the COD System has not returned the <YTDDisbursementAmount> tag when the sum of all actual disbursements is equal to zero (\$0.00) for one of the following reasons:

- Only anticipated disbursements (DRI equals “False”) are reported for the award.
- An adjustment to an award results in the sum of all actual disbursements for that award equaling zero (\$0.00).

The issue affects Pell Grant awards for all award years, 2008-2009 ACG awards, and 2008-2009 National SMART Grant awards.

Federal Student Aid plans to implement a code fix in May 2008. In the meantime, a school that needs to verify the YTD disbursement amount for an affected Pell Grant, ACG, or National SMART Grant award can request a Reconciliation Report via the [COD Web site](#) or by submitting the batch data request for the appropriate program/award year message class via the Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG).

Federal Student Aid apologizes for the inconvenience caused by this issue. If you have any questions, contact the COD School Relations Center.



Weekly Reminders



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The CBTs and simulations are as follows:

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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 (05/16/08)

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 EExpress Users: Volume III of the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 COD technical references provides additional guidance for schools that use EExpress in combination with another system. If your school needs help locating information related to EExpress, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support at 880/330-5947 or by e-mail at CPSSAIG@ed.gov.