



December 12, 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

NEW!

COD Holiday Schedule For December 24, 25, and 31, 2008, And January 1, 2009 (12/12/08)

The COD School Relations Center will close at 3:00 P.M. (ET) on Wednesday, December 24, 2008 and Wednesday, December 31, 2008. In both cases, the COD School Relations Center will reopen at 8:00 A.M. (ET) on the next business day—Friday, December 26, 2008 and Friday, January 2, 2009, respectively.

The COD System will accept and process data from schools and send back responses/acknowledgments on Thursday, December 25, 2008, and Thursday, January 1, 2009, but schools will not be able to receive any Federal funds on those days. Requests for changes in funding levels and for funds will not be processed until Friday, December 26, 2008 and Friday, January 2, 2009, respectively.

Further information regarding Christmas Day and New Year's Day processing, funding impact, and customer service hours for COD and other Federal Student Aid/Department systems and call centers will be available in an Electronic Announcement on the [Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).

COD Batch Processing Suspensions and Web Site Outages December 12-14, 2008 (12/10/08)

As explained in [a December 10, 2008 Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#), during the period December 12-13, 2008, Federal Student Aid plans to update the 2008-2009 COD System with functionality that will support the new statutory provision that provides a financial aid administrator with the authority to use his or her professional judgment to award a Direct Unsubsidized Loan to a dependent student when that student's parent or parents have stopped providing financial support for the student and refuse to provide parental information on a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In such a case, the financial aid administrator may exercise this authority after receiving a signed statement from the parent and confirming the student's submission of a FAFSA.

Note: The Department of Education (the Department) will soon issue a Dear Colleague Letter that provides complete policy guidance related to the new authority. Please monitor the [IFAP Web site](#) for this guidance. ***Schools that will approve students for Direct Unsubsidized Loans under the new authority must read [the December 10th Electronic Announcement](#) and the forthcoming Dear Colleague Letter in their entirety.***



During the period December 12-13, 2008, the following suspensions and outages will occur while Federal Student Aid installs the new COD System functionality:

Batch Processing

- COD batch processing will be suspended from 8:00 P.M. (ET) on Friday, December 12, 2008 until 8:00 P.M. (ET) on Saturday, December 13, 2008. Records submitted during this period will be held and processed after 8:00 P.M. (ET) on Saturday, December 13, 2008.

Web Sites

- The [COD Web site](#) will be unavailable from 8:00 P.M. (ET) on Friday, December 12, 2008 until 8:00 P.M. (ET) on Saturday, December 13, 2008.
- The [Direct Loan Electronic Master Promissory Note \(MPN\) Web site](#) will be unavailable from 8:00 P.M. (ET) on Friday, December 12, 2008 until 8:00 P.M. (ET) on Saturday, December 13, 2008.

An individual starting the process by 7:00 P.M. (ET) on December 12, 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.

- The [TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve \(ATS\) Web site](#) will be unavailable from 8:00 P.M. (ET) on Friday, December 12, 2008 until 8:00 P.M. (ET) on Saturday, December 13, 2008.

An individual starting the process by 7:00 P.M. (ET) on December 12, 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.

Note About Extended Routine Maintenance Outage on December 14, 2008: The COD System will undergo extended routine maintenance on Sunday, December 14, 2008. Batch processing and the [COD Web site](#) will be impacted from 1:30 A.M. until 9:00 A.M. (ET). The [Direct Loan Electronic MPN Web site](#) and [TEACH Grant ATS Web site](#) will be impacted from 1:30 A.M. until 11:00 A.M. (ET).

Federal Student Aid apologizes for any inconvenience the batch processing and Web site suspensions and outages may cause and appreciates your understanding and patience while it completes these important activities.

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 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



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.

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)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.