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Achieve a Higher Standard... with HEAG!

Message from Milton

Greetings from HEAG for 2013! HEAG has added several new consultants in order to more fully meet your needs. Along those same lines, we have expanded our topics for our webinar series and increased our presence and participation with Facebook and Linkedin. As in the past, we will continue to summarize significant Title IV related cases for your consideration. Unfortunately, all these good things seem to be taking a back seat due the federal government's pending sequestration, the across-the-board cuts to government agencies totaling $1.2 trillion over 10 years. To assist you, the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) has created a spreadsheet of simulated post-sequester allocations (only fair share increases are reduced) per school. Though just estimates, the potential consequences are daunting none the less. Please be assured that HEAG stands ready to assist you in these trying times.

Best Regards,

~ Milton Kerstein, President

WELCOME 2013

On behalf of The Higher Education Assistance Group, Inc., (HEAG) —Welcome to 2013! We hope you are excited and happy at the prospect of all the good things a new year brings! At HEAG, we are bringing on the new year with:

1. Free webinar series just updated on our website. Watch for our emails with information on our webinars on a wide range of pertinent topics dealing with financial aid.

2. Chat feature to get an immediate response to your questions. You can now chat with a HEAG financial aid analyst about process questions, compliance concerns, or inquire about the services that we provide.

3. Follow us on Facebook and Linkedin with our new look and expanded news features. Check in daily to get and follow the news and updates that are important to your work. PLEASE FRIEND US on Facebook!

4. Visit our website for expanded reviews on legal cases effecting financial aid and higher education. Articles titled The Law and Your School and are located on our front page.

5. Finally, we conducted a survey to financial aid administrators and asked what was important to you. The results were so interesting that we thought you should see them as well. Go to www.heag.us and look at the top tool bar and click on Survey Results.

As always, we look forward to working with you and are excited at all the possibilities!

TECH TALK CORNER

Banner Winter Release 8.16

On January 10, 2013, Ellucian's Banner Winter Release 8.16 was made available for download. One of the most significant aspects of the release was the functionality to identify and load students chosen for verification under the new verification tracking codes (V1-V5). The purpose of this new tracking mechanism is to better target exactly what the Department of Education (ED) has determined to be a conflict. With the individual tracking groups, administrators will no longer be mandated to request a long list of items in order to complete verification, but instead can focus their

FINANCIAL AID SHOPPING SHEET

January 18, 2013

By: David A. Bergeron

Acting Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education

Subject: Institutional Metric Data File for the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet

This Electronic Announcement provides the institutional data necessary to implement the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet (Shopping Sheet) for the 2013-14 award year. The Secretary of Education first shared details about the Shopping Sheet on July 24, 2012 (http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/guid/secletter/120724.html).

Institutions and their software providers produce the Shopping Sheet using the HTML specifications provided in an Electronic Announcement posted on September 28, 2012 (http://ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/092812Implemento ftheFinancialAidShopSheet.html). The student information on the Shopping Sheet is populated using the applicable fields from institutions' existing data systems. The data and information necessary to populate the institutional metrics section of the Shopping Sheet — the graduation rate, the loan default rate, and the median borrowing figures — are provided in the attached files. In addition, this announcement includes the image files necessary for when there is no graduation rate data or cohort default rate data available for a particular institution.

As described in Dear Colleague Letters GEN-12-12 and GEN 12-17, all institutions are encouraged to use the Shopping Sheet format as part of their financial aid awarding process beginning with the 2013-14 award year. In addition, the Shopping Sheet will help institutions that have agreed to comply with the Principles of Excellence Executive Order 13607 meet the requirement in section 2 (a) by providing prospective students who are eligible to receive Federal military and veterans educational benefits with a personalized and standardized form displaying financial aid information.

Background information on the Shopping Sheet and other resources are available on the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet Web page at: http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/guid/aid-offer/index.html.

We appreciate your continued efforts to provide clear information to inform students' educational choices. Please direct any questions about the Shopping Sheet toShoppingSheet@ed.gov.

THE LAW AND YOUR SCHOOL—TITLE IV FUNDS MUST BE ADMINISTERED WITH THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF CARE

Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) is an institution of higher education located in Niceville, Florida. On January 18, 2012, FSA issued a final audit determination letter citing two findings. NWFSC appealed the first finding, which stated that, for award year 2009-2010, NWFSC failed to apply its published satisfactory academic progress (SAP) policy.

FSA contends that NWFSC failed to demonstrate that it established, published, and applied reasonable standards for measuring a student's SAP as required by federal regulations. FSA states that NWFSC submitted two different SAP policies that it maintained were in effect for the 2009-2010 academic year. The two policies were the Catalog SAP and the Revised SAP. The policies are essentially the same, the difference being that the Catalog SAP did not allow for a probationary semester of eligibility and the Revised SAP allows a probationary semester of eligibility.

This policy was published in the catalog and in the Policy & Procedures manual. It does not mention a probationary period of eligibility. NWFSC maintained that the Catalog SAP policy was outdated and had been revised, but the catalog had not been updated.

NWFSC argued that the Revised SAP policy was established and published during the 2009-2010 academic year. The Revised SAP policy was included with the student's financial aid award letter at the beginning of the Fall 2009 semester. NWFSC also claimed that the Revised SAP policy was published on the institution's website, though it offered no evidence to demonstrate this.

The Court, however, disagreed and found that there was no persuasive proof that the SAP policy letter was sent with the award letter. It also found that the SAP policy should have been sent to all enrolled students, not just students failing to meet SAP.

The Court reasoned that an institution can have only one SAP policy, otherwise implementation would create inconsistencies in the institution's ability to measure SAP. It stated that an institution has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure financial aid funds are directed to the correct source. Institutions must ensure that financial aid documentation is accurate. To that end, the Court found that the practiced SAP policy at NWFSC should have been consistently applied in all print and electronic forms of communication. NWFSC did not properly review its financial aid documentation, which created a discrepancy in how SAP was measured . NWFSC did not act with the highest standard of care and diligence in administering federal education funds.

The assessed liability of $340,845 was upheld.

If you have any comments or questions, you may contact Milton L. Kerstein, Esq. via email at mkerstein@kcl-law.com or by telephone at 617-965-9698.

This article is provided, with the assistance of Sherron Heller and Russ Romandini of The Higher Education Assistance Group, Inc., for general information purposes only and with the understanding that neither the authors or publisher are engaged in rendering legal advice or opinion. If legal advice is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought.

PAY AS YOU EARN PAYMENT PLAN

December 21, 2012

By: **William Leith**, Service Director, Program Management, Federal Student Aid

Subject: **Loan Servicing Information - Availability of Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan and Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Repayment Plan Request**

We are pleased to announce the availability of the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan for eligible William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program borrowers. On November 1, 2012, the Department of Education (the Department) issued final regulations for this new repayment plan based on the President's "Pay As You Earn" initiative and announced its intention to implement the plan as soon as possible (77 FR 66087). On December 7, 2012, the Department issued a notice designating the amended Direct Loan Program regulations at 34 CFR 685.208(k)(1) and 685.209(a) for implementation beginning on December 21, 2012, at the discretion of individual borrowers (77 FR 72960). This means that eligible Direct Loan borrowers can be placed on the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan beginning on December 21, 2012.

Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan

The members of our federal loan servicer team are ready to work with Direct Loan borrowers who wish to apply for the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan. If a borrower's student loan debt is high relative to his or her income, and depending on when the borrower has taken out federal student loans, the borrower may qualify for the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan. The plan helps keep the borrower's monthly student loan payments affordable, and usually has the lowest monthly payment amount of the repayment plans that are based on the borrower's income. Most Direct Loans—except for Direct PLUS Loans for parents and Direct Consolidation Loans that repaid PLUS loans for parents—are eligible for Pay As You Earn.

Complete information about the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan is available on the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan page of the StudentAid.gov Web site. This information includes a detailed explanation of the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan, a list of eligible loans that may be repaid under the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan, and a calculator that can be used to estimate a borrower's eligibility for and initial monthly payment amount under the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan.

In addition to reading the information available on the StudentAid.gov Web site, we strongly encourage each borrower to contact the federal loan servicer that services the borrower's Direct Loans to learn more about the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan. A borrower's servicer is the best resource to help the borrower understand repayment plan options and determine which plan is right for the borrower.

In late January 2013, our federal loan servicers will begin to report the code "PA" to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) when a borrower is repaying a Direct Loan under the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan. School users will see the code when they access the Loan Detail Page on the NSLDS Professional Access Web site. In addition, school users will see the code reflected on the School Portfolio Report (SCHPR1) and the Delinquent

Borrower Report (DELQ01). We will inform the community of the new code's implementation through future communications posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site.

Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Repayment Plan Request

To assist borrowers in applying for the Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan, as well as the two other "income-driven" repayment plans—the Income-Based Repayment (IBR) Plan and the Income-Contingent Repayment (ICR) Plan, we have implemented an Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Repayment Plan Request on the StudentLoans.gov Web site. The Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Request has replaced the Electronic IBR Application that we implemented in September 2012.

The new Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Request functions in the same way as the previous Electronic IBR Application. The request interfaces with the NSLDS and, at the borrower's request, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to streamline the application process for the majority of borrowers who choose to repay their eligible Direct Loan and/or Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program loans under IBR, Pay As You Earn, and/or ICR.

A borrower will use the Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Request to complete the following actions that will ultimately be evaluated by the borrower's servicer:

- Initially apply to repay under IBR, Pay As You Earn, and/or ICR
- Subsequently meet the selected plan's annual income documentation requirement
- Subsequently request the recalculation of the borrower's monthly payment amount due to a change in circumstances

In the attachment to this announcement titled "Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Repayment Plan Request," we provide a high-level summary of the request and its associated process. Within the attachment, we cover the following information:

- Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Request Submission Criteria
- Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Request Process
- Additional Actions Needed by Certain Borrowers
- Access to Submitted Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Requests
- Contact Information for Borrowers

Contact Information

We understand that borrowers will contact members of the financial aid community with questions about the IBR, Pay As You Earn, and ICR plans and the Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Request. We hope you find the attached information helpful in answering their questions and appreciate the assistance you will provide in referring borrowers who contact you as follows:

IBR, Pay As You Earn, and ICR Plan Information

A borrower's servicer is the primary point of contact for all questions about the IBR, Pay As Your Earn, and ICR plans. In addition, general information about

CHANGE TO LOGIN PROCESS FOR ALL FEDERAL STUDENT AID SYSTEMS BEHIND AIMS

February 6, 2013

By: **Pamela Eliadis**, Service Director, System Operations & Aid Delivery Management, Federal Student Aid

Subject: **Change to Login Process for All Federal Student Aid Systems Behind AIMS**

Over the last year, we have implemented several new technology security initiatives at Federal Student Aid. As described to the community in a January 13, 2012 electronic announcement posted to the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, these initiatives were designed to comply with mandated government-wide security requirements and are part of an ongoing effort to ensure the security of the Federal Student Aid data systems.

One of these initiatives will result in a change in early March 2013 to the login process for all systems that are behind Federal Student Aid's Access and Identity Management System (AIMS). AIMS enables authorized users to log in once to access multiple Federal Student Aid systems rather than needing to log in multiple times using various identification methods.

Beginning Monday, March 11, 2013, any user of a system behind AIMS will be required to read and accept the Federal Student Aid Privacy Act Acknowledgement and Rules of Behavior, as well as be required to take Security Training on an annual basis.

The systems/Web sites that are currently behind AIMS and which will be affected by this change are eCampus-Based (eCB), eCDR Appeals, Experimental Sites, FAA Access to CPS Online, Financial Partners Datamart, National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) Professional Access, and Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) Enrollment.

As a result of this change, users of NSLDS will no longer be required to accept the NSLDS-specific Privacy Act Acknowledgement and Rules of Behavior, or complete the NSLDS Security Training. In addition, users of eCDR Appeals will no longer need to accept the eCDR Appeals-specific Rules of Behavior as part of the initial enrollment process. These system-specific processes will be replaced by the new AIMS security process.

Note: As described in a January 25, 2013 electronic announcement, we are also preparing to implement a change in how authorized users access the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System via the Web. Upon implementation of that change in May 2013, COD Web site users will follow an updated AIMS login process similar to the one described in this communication. Additional information about the COD Web site access change will be included in forthcoming electronic announcements posted to the IFAP Web site.

In the following sections, we describe each step in the new process, and provide important detail about what the user will see upon login to a system behind AIMS. We present this information in the following order:

 • Privacy Act Acknowledgement
 • Rules of Behavior
 • Annual Security Training
 • Contact Information
 • Privacy Act Acknowledgement

After implementation of this change on March 11, 2013, a user logging in to any system that is behind AIMS will first be presented with the new Privacy Act Acknowledgment. The Privacy Act Acknowledgment reminds the user that Federal Student Aid systems contain personal information protected by the Privacy Act of 1974 (as amended). By logging in, the user is personally confirming that they are an authorized user of the Federal Student Aid system, will adhere to the requirements of the Privacy Act, and understand the consequences for violating the Privacy Act.

The new Privacy Act Acknowledgment page will appear each time a user logs in to a system behind AIMS, regardless of how many times the user logs in that day.

Rules of Behavior

After the user reads and navigates past the Privacy Act Acknowledgment page, they will be presented with the new Rules of Behavior page. The Rules of Behavior identify responsibilities and expectations for all individuals accessing Federal Student Aid systems and includes information about authorized use of the systems, password security, properly storing Personally Identifiable Information (PII), and training requirements. By checking the box at the end of the page, the user is confirming that they understand and agree to the Rules of Behavior.

Unlike the Privacy Act Acknowledgment, which will be presented to the user upon every login, the Rules of Behavior will appear only the first time a user logs in to a system behind AIMS each day. After that first login, the user will not see the Rules of Behavior again that day, even if they log out and then log back in to a system behind AIMS.

Annual Security Training

Following the Privacy Act Acknowledgment and Rules of Behavior, a user who is required to take the new Security Training will be presented with the training module. The Security Training consists of a series of Web pages that provide important information about the acceptable uses of Federal Student Aid systems, data protection, creating a secure password, and other reminders critical to maintaining system security. A mandatory checkbox is presented at the conclusion of the training, for the user to acknowledge they have completed the training.

The Security Training will be required on an annual basis, one year from the date the user completes the training. Users who are required to take the training will be presented with a reminder, which will appear after the Privacy Act Acknowledgment and Rules of Behavior pages ten days prior to the training due date. After receiving the reminder, the user may complete the training at that time and the reminder will cease to be presented. Alternatively, the user may choose to skip the training, and the reminder will continue to be presented to the user upon every login for the remainder of the ten day period. Once the ten days have passed the user will be required to complete the training before accessing any system behind AIMS.

DIRECT LOAN CLOSEOUT

February 7, 2013

By: **William Leith**, Service Director, Program Management, Federal Student Aid

Subject: **Direct Loan Closeout Information for 2011-2012 Program Year**

The Direct Loan closeout deadline for the 2011-2012 Program Year is Wednesday, July 31, 2013. This is the last processing day of the program year, so all school data must be received and accepted by this date in order to be included in a school's final Ending Cash Balance for the year.

Note: Exceptions to the last processing day of the program year may be made on a case-by-case basis, if the school's processing period extends beyond the closeout deadline. Schools falling within this category should contact the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) School Relations Center at the number provided below for further assistance. Once the closeout deadline has passed, requests may be made through the COD Web site.

As a reminder, all cash management, disbursement reporting, and monthly reconciliation regulatory requirements supersede the closeout deadline. If a school is meeting these regulatory requirements, the final closeout stage should begin no later than the last award end date at the school for a given program and year. In other words, a school should be able to reconcile to a zero Ending Cash Balance and close out soon after its final disbursements and should **not** wait until the closeout deadline.

To be considered successfully closed out, a school must—

- Have an Ending Cash Balance of $0 and Total Net Unbooked Disbursements of $0 internally, and as reflected on the School Account Statement (SAS), and
- Complete the Balance Confirmation form on the COD Web site.

As part of the closeout process, we will send ongoing notices via Zero Balance or Remaining Balance e-mails. In addition, we will distribute a Notification/Warning Letter via e-mail to schools in May 2013. This letter will go to the Financial Aid Administrator and President at each school that has not confirmed closeout on the COD Web site (including any schools with a zero balance). It will serve as a reminder to finish processing and confirm closeout before the final deadline. After the closeout deadline, schools with remaining balances will be billed.

A school must be aware of its closeout status even if its Direct Loan processing is handled by a third party servicer. We encourage each school to communicate regularly with your third party servicer to ensure closeout is completed. It is the school's responsibility to ensure that it finishes processing and confirms closeout on time.

A key factor to an easy reconciliation and closeout is staying on top of the process. We encourage schools to review the following information:

- Complete monthly reconciliation. This should include:
  - Internal reconciliation - compare internal student accounts and Business Office/Bursar records with Financial Aid Office records
  - External reconciliation - compare internal records to your Direct Loan School Account Statement sent via your SAIG mailbox
  - Resolution of any discrepancies and documentation of any outstanding timing issues.
  - Ensure that all drawdowns and refunds of cash are accounted for and applied to the correct program year.
- Ensure that all batches have been sent to and accepted by the COD System, all disbursements and adjustments are accurately reflected on the COD System, and all responses are imported into the school's system.
- Ensure that all unbooked loans are booked or inactivated (reduced to $0).
- Resolve all outstanding rejected records.
- Return all refunds of cash to us.
- Request any remaining funds owed to the school based on actual disbursements accepted by the COD System.

There are numerous tools available to assist schools in reconciliation and closeout efforts. These tools are as follows:

- School Account Statement (SAS)
- School Monitoring Report
- 30-Day Warning Report
- Pending Disbursement Listing
- Actual Disbursement List
- G5 Web Site and Reports
- COD Web site (particularly the School Summary Financial Information, Funding Information, Cash Activity, Refunds of Cash, and Action Queue screens)
- DL Tools software/SAS Compare Program
- Customer Service Representative/Reconciliation Specialist Assistance

Contact Information

We appreciate your cooperation as we work to close out the 2011-2012 Direct Loan Program Year. If you have questions about this announcement or need assistance with closeout, contact the COD School Relations Center at 800/848-0978. You may also e-mail CODSupport@acs-inc.com.

Attachments/Enclosures:

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Direct Loan Closeout for 2011-2012 Program Year in PDF Format, 29KB, 2 Pages

TECH TALK CORNER

attention only on the point of contention. To recap on what each verification group represents, see below:

- V1: Standard Verification Group
- V2: SNAP Verification Group
- V3: Child Support Paid Verification Group
- V4: Custom Verification Group
- V5: Aggregate Verification Group

In addition, the release also addressed the new Financial Aid Shopping Sheet. The Shopping Sheet is a product of the Department of Education's effort to standardize information from Financial Aid Offices to simplify the process for students and their families. However, the Shopping Sheet remains optional for all institutions except for those that have committed to Executive Order 13607, also referred to as Principles of Excellence. Institutions have until August 1, 2013 to pledge their participation. Regardless of whether institutions utilize the Shopping Sheet voluntarily, or as a part of their commitment to Executive Order 13607, it will require significant set-up within Banner. It is essential that all financial aid funds are identified correctly and none are missed so that the student's Shopping Sheet is accurate. Though it is not mandated, schools have the option to utilize the Shopping Sheet as a substitute for a traditional award letter. Students may access the Shopping Sheet on Bannerweb in either a PDF and or an HTML format. However, if an institution chooses to use the PDF format, additional Advance Queuing (AQ) must be implemented as outlined on pg. 119 of the release guide.
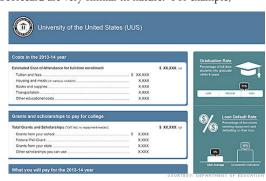
If your institution has not already begun to address the new verification tracking group process or the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet and need assistance setting these pieces up, please contact HEAG and a consultant can certainly assist you. You can also visit our website or view our blog as it is constantly updated with tips, guidance, and reminders.

Written by Brittany Barker, HEAG consultant, bbarker@heag.us

COLLEGE SCORE CARD VS FINANCIAL AID SHOPPING SHEET

On February 13, 2013, President Obama delivered the annual State of the Union Address. During the address, the President touched on a series of higher education related topics. One particular item that he highlighted, "the College Scorecard", is worth taking note. As has been previously discussed, the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet is voluntary at the moment. However, the President is very keen on the idea of simplifying the college selection process for students and he strongly feels that this is the way to do it. The Shopping Sheet and the College Scorecard are very similar in nature. For example, almost all of the data shared in the margins of the Shopping Sheet –graduation rates, median loan amounts, loan payments, and default rate—are also recorded upon the College Scorecard. However, the College Scorecard also has an

COURTESY: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

employment section that will soon list the employment rates, and, as Amy Laitinen, a former education policy advisor at the Department of Education and White House anticipates, it will also list average earnings.

The College Scorecard and the Shopping Sheet also have a few unique differences. For one, the Scorecard is accessible online on demand. The Shopping Sheet, on the other hand, is student specific including offered financial aid to students who have already been accepted to the selected institution. Likewise, the Shopping Sheet can be campus specific, meaning, that a graduate school may have it's own Shopping Sheet with information pertaining only to their student population. Currently, the College Scorecard only targets dependent undergraduate students. Though, it is important to note that there is an initiative to expand to scope of the Scorecard.

Regardless of how and when the information is accessed, students have more informational power than ever before. They will be able to make more educated choices about where they choose to enroll and be more able to compare these institutions to their competitors. This transparency will require institutions to be more thoughtful about their programming, career services, and financial aid packages. In addition, it will be imperative that institutional reporting be accurate as this information will ultimately be what fuels potential student enrollment decisions.[1]

[1]Sheehy, K. (2013). How to use obama's college scorecard.U.S. News, Retrieved from http://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/2013/02/13/how-to-use-obamas-college-scorecard

Written by Brittany Barker, HEAG consultant, email is: bbarker@heag.us

UPDATED NSLDS ENROLLMENT REPORTING GUIDE AVAILABLE

January 11, 2013

By: **Pamela Eliadis**, Service Director, System Operations & Aid Delivery Management, Federal Student Aid

Subject: **Availability of Updated NSLDS Enrollment Reporting Guide**

We are pleased to announce the availability of an updated NSLDS Enrollment Reporting Guide, a comprehensive document containing step-by-step instructions for reporting enrollment, using both the batch and online options.

The updates to the guide, most recently published in November 2012, include the following changes to the file layouts in the Appendix:

The Reporting values for the fields Term Begin Date, Term End Date, and Credential Level have been correctly labeled as "Optional". These three fields were incorrectly labeled as "Mandatory" in the November 2012 posting.

Note: While these fields are optional, schools are encouraged to provide the data when possible. This is particularly true with Credential Level. Providing the credential level of the academic program that a student completed when reporting the enrollment status of 'G' (Graduated) will assist the Department in tracking the success of the use of Title IV funds.

The Reporting value for Address Effective Date has been changed from "Mandatory" to "Mandatory, Conditional" to clarify it is required only if an address is provided.

The Reporting value for Good Address Flag has been corrected from "N/A" to "Optional".

The field positions for Student Address State/Province have been revised to clarify it is a two position field, not three, and the extra space has been identified as filler.

The fields sizes for Error Code 1 through Error Code 5 have been adjusted to clarify they are two position fields, and the extra spaces have been identified as filler.

The updated guide, dated January 11, 2013, is now available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, in the NSLDS Reference Materials, NSLDS User Documentation section.

Contact Information
If you have questions about NSLDS, contact the NSLDS Customer Support Center at 800/999-8219. You can also contact Customer Support by e-mail at nslds@ed.gov.

DEFAULT RATES COMING OUT IN FEBRUARY

Subject: **FY 2011 2-Year and FY 2010 3-Year Draft Cohort Default Rates Release Scheduled for February 2013**

In February 2013, we plan to release draft cohort default rates to all eligible schools, guaranty agencies, and lenders. This year, we plan to release a 2-year and a 3-year draft cohort default rate as follows:

On February 19, 2013 we plan to release the FY 2011 2-year draft cohort default rates

On February 25, 2013 we plan to release the FY 2010 3-year draft cohort default rates

After we release the draft rates, we will post an Electronic Announcement on theInformation for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site.

HEAG PRESENTS AT THE 47TH ANNUAL EASFAA CONFERENCE

"Make Way for EASFAA" • May 7-10, 2013 • Boston, Massachusetts

Description: Making the Most of Your Financial Aid System

Many financial aid offices are experiencing pressure to increase productivity, improve customer service, and monitor Title IV compliance often with staff turnover and limited operating budgets. To help them, aid offices are looking at their financial aid management system to do more. This session is intended to help schools learn how to evaluate their systems, institute enhancements and procedures so that their system does more for them.

Presenters: **Russ Romandini**, Senior Systems Analyst and Consultant, HEAG **Anna Kelly**, Director of Financial Aid, New England Institute of Technology (NEIT)

TWO NEW SERVICERS

At this time, we are pleased to announce that EDGEucation Loans and COSTEP are now members of our federal loan servicer team

Servicer Name	NSLDS Name	NSLDS ED Servicers Code
EDGEducation Loans	DEPT of Ed/EdgEucation Loans	509
COSTEP	Dept. of Ed/COSTEP	510

ACCEPTABLE IRS DOCUMENTATION FOR 2013-14 VERIFICATION

March 1, 2013

Author: Jeff Baker, Director, Policy Liaison and Implementation, Federal Student Aid

Subject: **Acceptable IRS Documentation for 2013-2014 Award Year Verification**

Working with our colleagues at the IRS we have developed, and have attached to this Electronic Announcement, general guidance on when tax filers can expect that their 2012 tax return information will be available for the FAFSA on the Web IRS Data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT) and for requesting IRS Tax Return Transcripts for purposes of completing verification for the 2013-2014 award year.

2013-2014 FAFSA Verification
Availability of 2012 IRS Information for
The FAFSA on the Web IRS Data Retrieval Tool (IRS-DRT) and for Requesting IRS Tax Return Transcripts

When a tax return filer who—	IRS DRT Available and IRS Tax Return Transcript May Be Requested	
	If Tax Return Filed Electronically	**If Tax Return Filed by Paper**
At the time their tax return was submitted to the IRS, has no amount owed or has an expected refund	• Generally tax returns are accepted by the IRS within a day or two of the return having been electronically filed with the IRS. • In most cases, IRS DRT is available and an IRS Tax Return Transcript may be requested within 2‑3 weeks after the return has been accepted by the IRS.	• Generally tax returns are accepted by the IRS when the tax return is received by the IRS. • In most cases, IRS DRT is available and an IRS Tax Return Transcript may be requested within 8‑11 weeks after the tax return has been accepted by the IRS.
At the time their tax return was submitted to the IRS, has an amount owed and makes a full payment on that amount	• Generally tax returns are accepted by the IRS within a day or two of the return having been electronically filed with the IRS. • In most cases, IRS DRT is available and an IRS Tax Return Transcript may be requested within 2‑3 weeks after the return has been accepted by the IRS.	• IRS will process the tax return in June. • In most cases, IRS DRT is available and an IRS Tax Return Transcript may be requested within 2‑3 weeks after the tax return has been processed by the IRS.
Has an amount owed and subsequent to submitting their tax return to the IRS, pays the full amount due	• Generally tax returns are accepted by the IRS within a day or two of the return having been electronically filed with the IRS. • In most cases, IRS DRT is available and an IRS Tax Return Transcript may be requested within 3‑4 weeks after the after full payment is made.	• IRS will process the tax return in June. • In most cases, IRS DRT is available and an IRS Tax Return Transcript may be requested within 2‑3 weeks after the tax return has been processed by the IRS.
At the time their tax return was submitted to the IRS, has an amount owed and has not paid in full.	• Generally tax returns are accepted by the IRS within a day or two of the return having been electronically filed with the IRS. However, IRS will not process the return until May. • In most cases, IRS DRT is available and an IRS Tax Return Transcript may be requested within 2‑3 weeks after the return has been processed in May.	• IRS will process the tax return in June. • In most cases, IRS DRT is available and an IRS Tax Return Transcript may be requested within 2‑3 weeks after the tax return has been processed by the IRS.
Tax filers can expect to receive their IRS transcript If requested **online**— wi 10 business days after request is submitted If requested by **phone**— wi 10 business days after request is submitted If requested by **paper (IRS Form 4506‑T or IRS Form 4506T‑EZ)**— 30 calendar days from the time the IRS receives and processes the signed request		

HEAG WELCOMES TWO NEW CONSULTANTS TO OUR TEAM:

Ellen Cost;

Ellen joined us in the Spring 2013. Ellen is the former Director of Financial Aid at the University of Maine at Fort Kent as well as the former Director of Financial Aid at Tufts University School of Medicine. Ellen looks forward to working with HEAG with our private, public and proprietary schools on a wide range of projects and assignments.

Judy Henderson;

Judy joined us in the Fall 2012 and was recently the Associate and Assistant Director of Financial Aid at Dean College, from 2003-2012. Judy is proficient on a variety of computer systems and software programs such as Datatel, COD, Entrinsik, EdConnect, ELM and ASA. She currently works for HEAG on a part time basis.

PAY AS YOU EARN ~ FROM PAGE 3

the plans is available on the following StudentAid.gov pages:

- Income-Based Repayment Plan
- Pay As You Earn Repayment Plan
- Income-Contingent Repayment Plan
- Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Request Technical Assistance

A borrower who is logged in to StudentLoans.gov and completing the Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Request may request technical assistance by clicking on the Contact Us tab in the top menu bar of the StudentLoans.gov Web site. The borrower can 1) complete and submit the feedback form or 2) click on Additional Information and contact Applicant Services at the phone number provided.

A borrower who has completed the Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Request and received a confirmation page must request assistance from the servicer or servicers identified on the confirmation page.

Attachments/Enclosures:

Electronic IBR/Pay As You Earn/ICR Repayment Plan Request in PDF Format, 89KB, 7 Pages

CHANGE TO LOGIN PROCESS ~ FROM PAGE 4

Upon implementation of this change on March 11, 2013, the new annual Security Training requirement for users accessing systems behind AIMS will be applied as follows:

• NSLDS Users– We will populate the AIMS database with the last NSLDS annual training date of all users who are currently authorized to use NSLDS. This date will be used by AIMS to identify when training is due for each current NSLDS user (the AIMS due date will be one year from the NSLDS completed date). The user will be prompted when training is due.

• Non-NSLDS Users– All other users will be prompted to complete the new Security Training the first time they log in to AIMS after implementation of this change. Due to the critical nature of this requirement, we will not provide the ten-day warning for these users during this initial implementation.

Contact Information

We appreciate your cooperation in providing secure access to Federal Student Aid systems.

If you have any questions regarding this message, contact FSA Security Architecture atsecarched.gov@ed.gov.

About The Higher Education Assistance Group

The Higher Education Assistance Group, Inc.(HEAG) is a comprehensive higher education and financial aid consulting group located in Wellesley, Massachusetts. In operation since 1989, we provide comprehensive financial aid consulting support to private, public and proprietary institutions. We provide administrative and professional consulting services in the areas of program regulatory compliance, financial aid processing and verification, interim staffing and technology. With over 25 years of experience,we have a proven track record of satisfied school clients.