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FEDERAL UPDATES

Final Neg Reg Session Occurs This Week

The third and final Negotiated Rulemaking (Neg Reg) session convenes this week. During this final session, scheduled from April 22-26, 2002, the participants will negotiate any unresolved issues and hammer out any additional details concerning regulatory language. The goal of the participants is to reach consensus on as many issues as possible.

Previous Session

At the second Neg Reg session, participants on both teams reached tentative agreement on a number of issues; however, some issues require further discussion before consensus can be achieved. Based on discussions from the second session, ED has provided Neg Reg participants with the latest revised regulatory language pertaining to each of the issues being considered at the negotiating table.

After Neg Reg

Once the final session is concluded, ED will release proposed regulatory language in a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) published in the *Federal Register*. ED will establish a comment period for the public to respond. Interested parties may submit comments and suggest changes, which ED will consider and either incorporate or reject before publishing final regulations, also known as Final Rules. For any year in which Final Rules are issued, the regulations must be published by November 1 to be effective the following July 1.

Questions or Comments

TG encourages you to submit comments on the proposed language following the final Neg Reg session. Please submit comments to Vickie Tanner, TG Assistant Vice President of Customer Services, at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4526, or send an e-mail message to vickie.tanner@tgsllc.org.

More Information

See *Shoptalk Online*, Editions 137 and 144 for previous articles about the Neg Reg process, its participants, and this year's two Neg Reg teams.

Closed School Corner

NEWLY REPORTED CLOSURES				
OPE ID#	SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL ADDRESS	UNOFFICIAL CLOSURE DATE	ED'S OFFICIAL CLOSURE DATE
02576500	CC's Cosmetology College*	206 E. Duke St. Hugo, OK 74523-4007	N/A	10/23/1998
02218500	South Texas Vocational Technical Institute	2255 N. Coria Brownsville, TX 78520	4/5/2002	N/A
00948204	Mansfield Business College	807 Roosevelt Ave. San Antonio, TX 78210	N/A	4/6/1993
00948206	Mansfield Business College	129 Little York Rd. Houston, TX 77076	N/A	4/12/1993
00948207	Mansfield Business College	4025 E. Belknap Fort Worth, TX 76111	N/A	3/31/1993
00948208	Mansfield Business College	740 Wynnewood Vlg. Dallas, TX 75224	N/A	3/30/1993
00948213	Mansfield Business College	6994 S. Zarzamora San Antonio, TX 78224	N/A	1/20/1993
00948214	Mansfield Business College	6101 Montana El Paso, TX 79925	N/A	3/31/1993

* This school withdrew from Title IV participation in June 1998. This was reported erroneously and then removed from the Closed School Monthly Report. The school closed permanently on October 23, 1998.

TG UPDATES

TG Presents 2002 Conference Awards for Financial Aid Leadership

Everyone who attended the memorable TG 2002 Conference came away a winner. But for three winning leaders, in particular, the conference event they are most likely to remember was the conference wrap-up.

The TG Academy Awards for Leadership found hundreds of conference attendees gathered in the Marriott Ballroom on April 12 for a ceremony that recognized those who demonstrated leadership in serving the financial aid community and students. Congratulations to the following award winners:

- Marcus Wilson, Financial Aid Director at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, received the award for “Best Director.” As Texas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (TASFAA) President-elect, and as a member of both the Board of Directors of Panhandle-Plains Higher Education Authority and the Advisory Committee of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, he was honored for impacting his financial aid office and exhibiting true leadership during a difficult time of restructuring.
- Ronny Barnes, Panhandle Plains SLC, received the award for “Best Producer.” The Senior Vice President for Lender-School Services is also President-elect of the Association of Texas Lenders for Education (ATLE) and the former Financial Aid Director for Texas Tech University. Through his dedication, he has made a difference in the lives of many students and their families, helping them to realize their educational dreams.
- The award for “Best Production” went to “Removing the Barriers with MERV (Mobile Education Resource Vehicle),” COSTEP’s newest outreach service that combines state-of-the-art technology and a mobile environment. The “campus cruiser” provides free Internet services at any location, allowing students to work at their own pace while conducting scholarship searches, to receive individualized counseling on all aspects of the student financial aid process, and to transmit their student financial aid forms via the Internet.

Winning Nominees

Ultimately, the students of Texas are the “winners,” as they benefit from the energy and dedication of all the nominees. Our heartfelt congratulations go to the additional nominees in each category:

- Best Director: Carolyn Cunningham, University of North Texas; Karen Krause, University of Texas at Arlington; and Lyn B. Wheeler, Angelo State University
- Best Producer: Gail Smith, Educaid; Michelle Spurgeon, Bank One; and John Tipton, Brazos Higher Education Servicing Corporation
- Best Production: Awareness/Default Prevention Efforts, The University of Texas at El Paso Team; and Outreach Efforts, Verna LaStrapes of Brazos Higher Education Servicing Corporation

TG is grateful to the members of the Lender and School Advisory Committees, who served as the “Academy” to determine the award winners. The committee members were impressed with the caliber of the nominees’ accomplishments and had a difficult time selecting the recipients in each of the categories.

More to Come

Now that the 2002 conference is a wrap, we’re taking time to regroup and look at the results. We’ll be sharing those with you in future editions of *Shoptalk Online*.

Questions

For questions about the conference, contact Judy Cunningham at (800) 252-9743, ext. 2905, or send an e-mail message to judy.cunningham@tgsllc.org.

Golfers Donate Funds to Charley Wootan Grant

If they gave away green jackets for generosity, members of the financial aid community would have their share. Even without green jackets, some TG 2002 Conference attendees took advantage of an opportunity to make contributions to a program that helps fund higher education while enjoying a round of golf.

On April 9, 2002, 60 TG 2002 Conference attendees gathered at Forest Creek Golf Club in Round Rock to enjoy an afternoon scramble and to network with their colleagues. Prior to play, each participant was given the opportunity to purchase mulligans for the tournament and the funds were then donated to TG's Charley V. Wootan Grant Program.

Although we're sure none of the purchased mulligans were needed during play, the group purchased 93 of them for a total contribution of \$465. The players were happy, and, in the end, the winners are the students.

TG's Charley V. Wootan Grant Program honors the memory of former TG Board Chair, Dr. Charley V. Wootan, by recognizing his generous contributions and service to Texas and the nation. Over the next five years, TG plans to award \$2.5 million through the program to higher education institutions based on the average unmet need of their students.

TRENDS AND ISSUES

JobGusher™ to Host Summer Job Fair

The clock is ticking but students seeking summer employment still have an opportunity to find a job. Although there are available positions, sometimes students need help knowing where to go to find them. JobGusher.com™ has come to their rescue!

JobGusher.com (www.JobGusher.com) will be hosting an Online Summer Job Fair, from April 29 through May 5, 2002. The job fair will bring together employers and students seeking full-time and part-time positions.

At the Online Job Fair, job seekers can decide which positions to apply for on the spot and then apply electronically through the site. For employers, participation in the Job Fair improves exposure and access to job seekers without the high costs usually associated with traditional job fairs.

Students can take simple steps to prepare for the online job fair. These steps will make the job fair more productive for student job seekers.

Job seekers need to take time before the event to do the following:

- **Plan Ahead.** Job seekers should think about where they would like to work and what compensation range will meet their needs.
- **Prepare Documents.** Job seekers should have their résumés, cover letters, and reference information complete. Making sure their résumés reflect the type of position they're seeking is important. Also, they can create a cover letter expressing their interests and highlighting their experience that makes them unique for the position.

There is no cost for job seekers to attend the Online Job Fair. To participate, they simply need to visit www.JobGusher.com from April 29 to May 5, 2002.

Employers wishing to participate must be registered JobGusher employers. For more information on exhibiting, contact customercare@jobgusher.com.

More Information

For more information on JobGusher, visit www.JobGusher.com or contact JobGusher at 1-866-JOB-GUSH.

JobGusher is a student-focused online job recruitment service dedicated to connecting students and recent graduates with full-time and part-time entry level positions, internships, seasonal employment, and other career opportunities. JobGusher is a service of Education Assistance Services Inc., a subsidiary of TG.

NASFAA Enhances State Plan Summary Chart

Have you heard a lot of talk lately about section 529 plans, state education savings plans, tuition prepayment plans, and the like? Is your head spinning with the thought of amassing all of those plans so that you can provide information to inquiring customers? Well, you don't have to. The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) has compiled an easy-to-use State Plan Summary Chart—recently updated—that gives basic information on the various programs available in each state and in Washington, DC.

Chart Features

The chart, available at www.nasfaa.org/PDFs/2002/csp0202.pdf, provides quick facts about each program listed, including a distinction between whether the program is a prepaid tuition or savings program, whether the program has an application fee, if the program is portable, and if the program covers more than tuition and fees. The chart also provides links so that interested users can visit the web sites for each of the programs listed.

More Information

For more information on the general characteristics of the various prepaid tuition or college savings programs, contact TG Customer Assistance at (800) 845-6267 or send an e-mail message to cust.assist@tgsdc.org.

TG SOLUTIONS AND TOOLS

Alternative Loans, Non-TG FFELP Loans, and TG's EFT Q&A

TASFAA Regional Rallies always produce much discussion about emerging issues and changes to the student loan process. One topic that has been receiving a great deal of attention at the 2002 rallies is TG's ability to disburse alternative loan funds along with both TG-guaranteed and non-TG-guaranteed FFELP funds through our enhanced Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) process.

The following Q&A offers answers to some of the most common questions about this new process:

Q. Can AdvanTG™ receive CommonLine response files for alternative and non-TG FFELP loans?

- A. Many TG school partners currently have AdvanTG 3.0 Build 4a, which does facilitate the exchange of alternative loan and non-TG FFELP loan applications and the exchange of responses for non-TG FFELP loans. However, Build 4a is unable to accommodate response files from alternative loan providers. AdvanTG 3.0 Build 5 (released in March 2002) and AdvanTG Web™ do, however, accommodate processing of CommonLine response files for alternative loan processes when the alternative loan provider returns a response. (Some alternative loan providers do not include the return of a response file.)
- Q. Some alternative loan processes are borrower initiated. Does AdvanTG facilitate these borrower initiated alternative loan processes?
- A. When lenders facilitate borrower initiated processes (for FFELP and alternative loans), a CommonLine Certification Request is created and forwarded to the school. AdvanTG Web Phase II will facilitate the submission of Certification Requests from the lender to the school and will also facilitate borrower initiated TG FFELP loan requests through TG Loans By Web™.
- Q. How do schools receive notification of EFT disbursements for alternative and non-TG FFELP loans?
- A. Schools can receive notification of alternative and non-TG FFELP loan EFT disbursements from TG via the CommonLine Disbursement Roster received through AdvanTG or via POP3. TG's proprietary reports, the Advance Debit Notification and the Payment Detail Report, do not include alternative and non-TG FFELP loan disbursement information.
- Q. How can schools process cancellations and loan reductions on alternative and non-TG FFELP loans through AdvanTG?
- A. AdvanTG users process cancellations and loan reductions through CommonLine Change Transactions. However, AdvanTG simply passes these change transactions on to the alternative or non-TG FFELP loan provider. Processing depends on the capabilities and processes of the alternative loan and non-TG FFELP loan providers. (TG's EFT project, which is scheduled for completion in late spring, will process post-disbursement returns for non-TG FFELP or alternative loans that were previously disbursed via TG's EFT.)
- Q. Which schools are currently set up to process alternative and non-TG FFELP loans via AdvanTG?
- A. As of March 2002, Hardin Simmons University, Howard Payne, UT – El Paso, McMurry University, Texas Tech University, UT – Southwestern Medical, Texas A&M Health Science Center, and West Texas A&M are set up to process these loans.
- Q. Which schools currently receive alternative and/or non-TG FFELP disbursements via TG's EFT process?
- A. Although the process has been available since the fall of 2001, the lender providing the funds must be able to send a CommonLine roster to TG to initiate this disbursement process. Several schools are interested in pursuing this process and a few lenders have completed testing of the CommonLine Disbursement Roster exchange. However, as of March 2002, no lenders or schools are using this EFT disbursement enhancement.

Questions

For questions about processing alternative and non-TG FFELP loans with TG's AdvanTG and/or TG's EFT process, contact TG Product Support at (800) 332-1455 or send an e-mail message to product.support@tgscl.org.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

April 16 Legislative Report

The April 16 issue of TG's *Legislative Report* includes an update on budget issues now that Congress is back in session, an article relating to an expected bill to make last year's tax cuts permanent, and a summary of Senator Joseph Lieberman's plans for higher education reform. Read the entire report online at www.tgslc.org/tgslc/publications/lege_report/2002/lr_020416.htm.

THIS, THAT, AND THE OTHER

Recent changes to the federal tax code mean tax relief for families this year and into the future. A recent press release from the Department of Education offers a summary of those changes, which include the following:

- Increases in the annual contribution limits for education savings accounts.
- A change that allows tax-free distributions from state tuition plans if used for qualifying higher education expenses.
- Increasing tax deductions for higher education expenses.
- Permanent exclusion from employee income for employer-provided education assistance, expanded to include graduate-level education.
- Modification to the student loan interest deduction.
- Tax relief for awards under certain federal health education programs.

The press release (www.ed.gov/PressReleases/04-2002/04152002.html) offers details about each of the items listed above and also includes information about tax changes that affect teachers and schools.

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To ask questions about the articles in *Shoptalk Online*, subscribe or order additional copies, please contact Communications at (800) 252-9743, ext. 2878 or communications@tgslc.org.

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