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## FEDERAL UPDATES

### Neg Reg Sessions Completed

Negotiated Rulemaking, or Neg Reg, has concluded. Now, all of the hard work and negotiation of the Neg Reg participants will be reflected in the Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRMs) that ED is expected to release by the beginning of June. The following is brief information about the outcomes of both of the Neg Reg teams.

#### Team I

Team I negotiated 24 issues pertaining to the federal student loan programs. The team was able to reach consensus on all of the issues on its agenda, which means that the NPRM that ED will release on Team I's issues will contain agreed-upon language of all of the industry participants on that team. A couple of issues were removed from the table to permit consensus.

#### Team II

Team II negotiated 25 issues pertaining to program and other school related topics. The team agreed to language on all but two of the issues (the 12-hour rule and incentive compensation). Since consensus was not reached on these two unresolved issues, ED will write the language for the NPRM on Team II's issues. ED has assured Team II participants that it will make a strong effort to write proposed regulations using the team's negotiated language.

Neal Combs, a negotiator on Team II for guarantors and servicers, commented, “The negotiators worked hard to achieve consensus on all issues except the 12-hour rule and incentive compensation but in the end failed because of entrenched positions by some negotiators and their constituencies on these issues. It is a shame that differences on these two issues could not be resolved by Team II.”

### **Neg Reg Summaries**

The National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP) developed summaries of the activities of all three Neg Reg sessions. These documents are posted on TG’s 2002 Negotiated Rulemaking page, located at [www.tgslc.org/tgslc/resources/negreg02.htm](http://www.tgslc.org/tgslc/resources/negreg02.htm).

## **ED Launches Financial Partners Site**

In a cooperative effort with representatives from the FFELP community, ED’s Financial Partners Channel has developed the Financial Partners Portal, available at [www.fp.ed.gov](http://www.fp.ed.gov). The site, which went live on April 30, 2002, is geared toward the channel’s various business associates, including:

- Schools
- Lenders
- Servicers
- Secondary markets
- Guaranty agencies
- Trade associations
- Trustees
- State grant associations

The Financial Partners Portal was created as a one-stop shop with information to help ED’s financial partners conduct their daily business, as well as plan ahead for future events. The site provides links to the following Federal Student Aid (FSA) Financial Systems:

- The Financial Management System (FMS)
- The Financial Partners Data Mart
- The National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS)

The page also contains the following resource tools:

- A community members section, which allows users to search for links to various financial partners’ web sites
- A contact resources page to search for information regarding ED’s Financial Partners Channel
- A “What’s New” section that lists current projects in development
- A link to the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) web site for access to ED publications
- A link to current interest rate and special allowance rate information

## Other Portals

The launch of this site comes approximately one year after the debut of the Schools Portal, located at [www.sfa4schools.sfa.ed.gov](http://www.sfa4schools.sfa.ed.gov). (See the April 2001 edition of *Shoptalk* for an article announcing the Schools Portal.) ED is also developing a Students Portal, which will live at [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov). The Students Portal will accommodate various audiences, including elementary, secondary, and postsecondary students, as well as parents.

## Questions

If you have questions or comments about the new Financial Partners Portal, you can complete the online survey available on the site, or you can submit “quick feedback” at [www.fp.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/fp/feedback/feedback.jsp](http://www.fp.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/fp/feedback/feedback.jsp).

# TG UPDATES

## Neg Reg Participants to Lead Quarterly Telephone Conference

Following the success of TG’s most recent telephone conference on distance education, e-signatures, and the Meteor Project, TG is offering a chance for the financial aid community to focus on another timely topic this spring: Negotiated Rulemaking (Neg Reg).

Numerous members of the financial aid community have been participating in Neg Reg in Washington, D.C., this spring. Among the participants have been Neal Combs, TG Senior Vice President, Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel, and Carol Lindsey, TG Vice President of Policy and Compliance. This is Neal's third appearance as a Neg Reg negotiator and Carol's third time to serve as a FFELP resource to the negotiators.

### Teleconference Details

The spring telephone conference is scheduled for Thursday, May 16, 2002, from 2-3 p.m. (Central). During the telephone conference, Neal and Carol will address suggested regulatory changes and share the insight they have gained through their practical Neg Reg experience. Neal will also address the possible results arising from Team II having failed to reach agreement on the issues under consideration. The presentation portion of the conference will be followed by a time for questions, answers, and conversation with participants.

This event is free of charge and open to unlimited participants from any institution. Please submit any questions in advance to Sheila Casey at [sheila.casey@tgslc.org](mailto:sheila.casey@tgslc.org) to ensure that your specific questions are answered. Registrants will receive a web address where they can review materials related to the topic prior to the telephone conference.

### Participation

To register and obtain further details, contact Premiere Teleconferencing at (800) 776-0700 and reference confirmation number 311999. On Thursday, May 16, 2002, registrants should call (800) 238-9007 promptly at 2 p.m. and again reference the confirmation number.

TG's next telephone conference is tentatively scheduled for September 2002 and will address issues related to the PLUS Master Promissory Note.

## Click Me In

Things are heating up!

As we near the end of the spring semester, and summer approaches, there are numerous opportunities to get involved. State and regional association conferences abound in May and June. Maybe one of these will strike your fancy:

- Alabama Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (AASFAA) Spring Conference, May 7-11, Gulf Shores, ([www.aasfaaonline.org/sp02conf.htm](http://www.aasfaaonline.org/sp02conf.htm))
- Minnesota Association of Financial Aid Administrators (MAFAA) Spring Conference, May 8-10, Brainerd, ([www.mafaa.org/events/2002\\_spring/2002\\_spring\\_conference.html](http://www.mafaa.org/events/2002_spring/2002_spring_conference.html))
- Georgia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (GASFAA) Spring Conference, May 15-17, St. Simons, ([www.gasfaa.org/conferences.htm](http://www.gasfaa.org/conferences.htm))
- Eastern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (EASFAA) Conference, May 19-22, Boston, ([www.easfaa.org/easfaa/index.html](http://www.easfaa.org/easfaa/index.html))
- Ohio Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (OASFAA) Spring Conference, May 22-24, Aurora, ([www.atacdev1.com/docs/events\\_training/conference\\_Spring2002/](http://www.atacdev1.com/docs/events_training/conference_Spring2002/))
- Florida Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (FASFAA) Spring Training Conference, June 5-7, Ft. Myers, ([www.fasfaa.org/](http://www.fasfaa.org/))
- Mississippi Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (MASFAA) Spring Conference, June 19-21, Biloxi, ([www.olemiss.edu/orgs/masfaa/conferenceinfo.html](http://www.olemiss.edu/orgs/masfaa/conferenceinfo.html))

Visit the TG Events Calendar on a regular basis to find other events that might interest you. You'll find the calendar online at [www.tgslc.org/tgslc/abouttg/dates.htm](http://www.tgslc.org/tgslc/abouttg/dates.htm).

## TRENDS AND ISSUES

### Chat Event to Focus on Financial Aid and the FAFSA

Students and parents can obtain helpful information about financial aid and the application process during a May 9, 2002, Chat Event on *Mapping Your Future* (<http://mapping-your-future.org>). Financial aid experts from all over the country will answer questions during the event, which will take place from 3-4 p.m. (Eastern), 2-3 p.m. (Central), 1-2 p.m. (Mountain), and 12-1 p.m. (Pacific).

During this “Financial Aid and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)” Chat Event, students and their families will learn more about:

- Paying for school,
- Completing the FAFSA application,
- Determining eligibility for federal student aid, and
- Calculating financial need and expected family contribution.

Of course, at all MYF Chat Events, counselors field questions from participants on a variety of topics, including college, scholarship, and career issues.

Anyone with Internet access can join in the Chat Event by visiting [mapping-your-future.org](http://mapping-your-future.org) on the afternoon of the Chat and selecting the Chat session. Simple instructions will tell them how to join the event.

## Future Events

Other special Chat Events scheduled during the year include:

- June 13, 2002, Evening Chat – Summer Financial Aid Questions and Career Planning
- July 11, 2002, Daytime Chat – On-Line and Distance Education
- August 8, 2002, Evening Chat – FAFSA and College Admission
- September 12, 2002, Daytime Chat – Deferments, Forbearances, and Default Prevention

## Questions and More Information

For questions about the upcoming chat or about *Mapping Your Future*, contact Cathy Mueller at [cathy.mueller@mapping-your-future.org](mailto:cathy.mueller@mapping-your-future.org).

MYF is a public service web site sponsored by TG and other student loan guaranty agencies. It offers college, career, and financial aid information and services to students, families, and schools.

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

## **April 30 Legislative Report**

The April 30 edition of TG's *Legislative Report* includes two articles about the Administration's proposal to repeal the fixed interest rate provision in the Federal Consolidation Loan Program. Despite reports that the proposal has been withdrawn in response to opposition, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee has scheduled a hearing on the proposal and surrounding issues on May 14. Additionally, Representative John Boehner (R-OH), Chair of the House Education and Workforce Committee, issued a statement highly critical of the opposition, claiming that the savings from the proposal would go to the Pell Grant Program, and, therefore, to needy students, while the primary beneficiaries of the low fixed interest rate on consolidated loans would be middle- and upper-income borrowers. He also has requested that the General Accounting Office issue a comprehensive report on the Consolidation Loan Program, focusing on who benefits the most from the program.

## THIS, THAT, AND THE OTHER

Do you know anyone who's getting ready to make the leap into or who's already in high school? Why not encourage them to sign up for AIEmail?

Summer is a great time for high school students to think about what they want to do with their futures. And AIEmail offers hints and tips geared to each grade level—freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. By the way, parents who subscribe get their own information, too, and can find out what their students learned at the same time.

Spread the word! AIEmail delivers free weekly electronic messages straight to personal e-mail addresses. All you need to do is sign up at [www.adventuresineducation.org/Subscribe/index.cfm](http://www.adventuresineducation.org/Subscribe/index.cfm).

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