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TG UPDATES

TG Offers Meteor Access to Schools

Schools seeking the most current, accurate account information available should look to Meteor, now available from TG.

Meteor aggregates student loan information from TG and other student loan sources in real time, and consolidates it online for display to financial aid professionals. Schools can access Meteor through TG’s web site at www.tgslc.org/tgslc/resources/meteor.htm after obtaining a user ID and password.

The Meteor Story

Meteor is a collaborative effort involving 40 leading student loan organizations. Meteor is presented by sponsors—including TG and lenders, secondary markets, servicers, and other guarantors—as a gift to the financial aid community.

The National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP) has facilitated the collaborative efforts of the sponsoring organizations in developing and implementing the project through the Meteor Advisory Team.

A Technological Milestone

“The technology involved in developing this project is truly amazing,” said TG’s Will Thien, who co-chairs the Meteor Advisory Team and serves as Technology Team Lead. “In fact, we believe this is the first industry-wide network built in open source code with open source tools to be successfully launched for any industry—not just within the financial aid community—and it couldn’t have happened without the collaborative effort of everyone involved. Of course, TG’s integral involvement in the development of Meteor from concept to completion makes it particularly rewarding for us, as one of the first guarantors to actually offer Meteor access to schools and lenders.”

According to Thien and Sam Wilson, TG's Assistant Vice President for Customer Assistance, Meteor will improve the service and timeliness that financial aid professionals are able to provide their students.

"With Meteor, schools will have the ability to access real-time, aggregated student loan data from any participating data provider," said Wilson. "That means the financial aid office is getting the most current, accurate information available. Meteor also has the potential to provide schools with access to more comprehensive financial aid information in the future, which could include alternative loans, scholarships, grants, state-based aid, Perkins, campus-based aid, etc."

Meteor Implementation

Currently, Meteor access is only available to financial aid administrators, who can quickly retrieve complete loan information to better serve students when processing aid. Authentication protocols are in development to allow students to access their own information.

Once student access to Meteor data is enabled, TG will be ready to assist schools interested in offering access to Meteor data through their own web sites.

Schools should note that the comprehensiveness of loan information available through Meteor is fully dependent on the number of student loan service providers offering their data. TG is among the first few student loan organizations to offer Meteor access to its customers. As the number of service providers sending data to Meteor increases, the usefulness of the aggregated information presented by Meteor will increase as well.

For More Information

For more information on Meteor, contact your TG school consultant or national account representative. To request a user ID and password for Meteor access, send an e-mail to product.support@tgslc.org or call TG at (800) 332-1455.

Meteor Project details are available from the official project web site at www.nchelp.org/Meteor.htm.

FEDERAL UPDATES

End of the Road for CLASS ACT?

With the November elections rapidly approaching, and with budget and national security issues looming large, time is running out for passage of Rep. Lindsey Graham's (R-SC) H.R. 5091, also known as the CLASS ACT (Canceling Loans to Allow School Systems to Attract Classroom Teachers) Act.

The bill, approved by the full U.S. House of Representatives on October 1, would increase teacher loan forgiveness amounts for mathematics, science, and special education teachers from \$5,000 to \$17,500. It would also provide loan forgiveness for relatives of those killed in the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Time Running Out

The Senate is in the frenzied process of trying to resolve the most pressing national issues so members can return to their home states in time for last-minute election campaigning. Currently, the most pressing issues are the federal budget and the proposed Department of Homeland Security. In this environment, almost everything else, including CLASS ACT Act, has fallen by the legislative wayside.

Although a post-election or “lame-duck” session of Congress is all but guaranteed, it is highly unlikely that any issues other than the budget and national security will make the agenda. Between time and spending constraints (the government is currently without a permanent budget), it looks increasingly likely that the 107th Congress will adjourn without Senate approval of the CLASS ACT Act, effectively ending the bill.

Issue for Reauthorization

The issue of expanding the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program is widely expected to resurface, however, during the upcoming reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, tentatively scheduled to begin in 2003. With the continued concern over education and teacher recruitment nationwide, the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program should remain an important issue well into next year.

More Information

To view the text of the CLASS ACT Act, visit the U.S. Congress on the Internet site at <http://thomas.loc.gov/> and enter “HR 5091” under bill number. For more information about the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program, contact TG Customer Assistance at (800) 845-6267 or send an e-mail message to cust.assist@tgslc.org.

Special Allowance Rates: Quarter Ending September 30

The following rates apply for the quarter ending September 30, 2002:

- The average of the bond equivalent rates of the 91-day Treasury bills auctioned during the quarter ending September 30, 2002, is 1.67 percent.
- The average of the bond equivalent rates of the quotes of the three-month commercial paper (financial) rates in effect for each of the days in the quarter ending September 30, 2002, is 1.77 percent.

The FFELP special allowance rates for the most recent quarter are available at <http://www.tgslc.org/tgslc/lenders/SA100702.pdf>.

Questions

For questions about special allowance rates, contact TG Customer Assistance at (800) 845-6267 or send an e-mail message to cust.assist@tgslc.org.

Closed School Corner

Newly reported closures from the Postsecondary Educational Participants System and from the September 2002 Closed School Monthly Report supplied by the Department of Education:

NEWLY REPORTED CLOSURES

TG SCHOOL ID#	SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL ADDRESS	UNOFFICIAL CLOSURE DATE	ED'S OFFICIAL CLOSURE DATE
02182500	Mid South School of Beauty	3974 Elvis Presley Memphis, TN 38116	N/A	6/15/1995
01164401	University of Maryland – University College Schwäbisch Gmünd *	University Blvd. Adelphi, MD 20783-1622	N/A	5/17/2002

*Students' Arrangements: A school official confirmed that the international students remained overseas to finish their program of study at other foreign institutions while the U.S. students transferred back to the U.S. to continue their program of study through the University of Maryland University College, or at other U.S. schools.

TRENDS AND ISSUES

Mapping Your Future Now Addresses Options for Defaulted Borrowers

The Mapping Your Future (MYF) web site now includes information about options for borrowers who have defaulted on their federal student loans. The post-default options page (located at <http://mapping-your-future.org/features/dmpostdflt.htm>) includes information about:

- Loan rehabilitation.
- Consolidation.
- Reinstatement of federal financial aid eligibility.

MYF contains information for borrowers trying to avoid default as well. Default prevention features on MYF include:

- A guided tour for student loan borrowers (<http://mapping-your-future.org/student/>)
- 10 Steps to Financial Fitness (<http://mapping-your-future.org/features/dmtensteps.htm>)
- The Deferment Navigator (<http://mapping-your-future.org/paying/defernav.htm>)
- The Loan Forgiveness Chart (<http://mapping-your-future.org/paying/loanForgiveness.htm>)
- The Debt Salary Wizard (<http://mapping-your-future.org/apps/debtwizard/>)

MYF is a public service web site providing college, career, and financial aid information and services. MYF is sponsored by TG and other student loan guarantors and is supported by many lenders and servicers across the country.

THIS, THAT, AND THE OTHER...

This afternoon, Mapping Your Future (MYF) will hold a live chat event on personal finance and default prevention. Financial aid and career experts from all over the country will answer questions during the chat event, which is scheduled from 2 to 3 p.m. (Central).

Topics to be covered include:

- Managing credit card and student loan debt.
- Warning signs that finances are out of control.
- Solutions to personal finance problems.
- Consequences of default and bankruptcy.

Anyone with Internet access can join in the chat event by visiting the MYF web site at <http://mapping-your-future.org> and selecting the Chat session. Simple instructions will guide users through the quick process to join the chat.

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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. 4732 or communications@tgsic.org.

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