

In This Issue:

Federal Updates	1
ED Introduces PLUS MPN.....	1
FSA Releases Closed School Guide	2
Closed School Corner.....	3
TG Updates	3
TG Launches Redesigned Web Site for Financial Aid Community, Students, Borrowers	3
TG Announces Teleconference on Systems Development.....	4
Common Manual	5
<i>Common Manual</i> Reaches Milestone.....	5
This, That, and the Other	8

Federal Updates

ED Introduces PLUS MPN

PLUS loan borrowers will soon be able to take advantage of the same convenience that has been enjoyed by Stafford loan borrowers for nearly four years. After extensive collaboration with the FFELP industry, ED has introduced the Federal PLUS Loan Application and Master Promissory Note (PLUS MPN).

On February 7, 2003, ED published Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) GEN-03-03, announcing the availability of the new PLUS MPN. The DCL outlines the multi-year capability of the PLUS MPN, with which most FFELP participants are already familiar from the introduction of the Federal Stafford Loan Master Promissory Note (Stafford MPN).

When You Can Use It

FFELP participants may begin using the new PLUS MPN immediately for loan periods on or after July 1, 2003. To allow sufficient time to print the PLUS MPN and to make system changes necessary to use the PLUS MPN, a one-year transition period will be allowed during which schools and parent borrowers may complete and lenders may accept the new PLUS MPN or the current Application and Promissory Note for Federal PLUS Loan. For loan periods beginning on or after July 1, 2004, or for any loan certified on or after July 1, 2004, regardless of the loan period, only the PLUS MPN may be used.

Availability of New Forms

TG has posted the following new forms on its web site at http://www.tgslc.org/forms/plus_mpn.cfm:

- The PLUS MPN, including the instructions for completing the form and the Borrower's Rights and Responsibilities Statement.
- The new Endorser Addendum to the Federal PLUS MPN, for instances in which a PLUS applicant has adverse credit history and opts to use an endorser.
- The Federal PLUS Loan Information and School Certification form, which is separate from the PLUS MPN itself.
- The Federal PLUS Loan Plain Language Disclosure.

Supplies of the new PLUS MPN forms will be available to order soon. Watch *Shoptalk Online* for the announcement.

In addition, TG is modifying the application print process in AdvanTG™, AdvanTG Web™ and TG Loans by Web™, and its Application and Printing and Processing Services (APPS) process to support the new PLUS MPN. TG will provide updates through *Shoptalk Online* when these modifications are scheduled to implement.

More Information

To access DCL GEN-03-03, visit the Information for Financial Aid Professionals web site at www.ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/GEN0303.html.

FSA Releases Closed School Guide

In a recent electronic announcement, ED's Federal Student Aid (FSA) Schools Channel posted a new *Closed School Guide for Schools*. The guide is intended to give direction to schools to help students deal with the aftermath of a school closing.

As the guide states, "The closing of a school can be one of the most frustrating and disruptive events possible for a student." To help schools alleviate that frustration, the guide provides school administrators with information to:

- Foster communication between the school and its students.
- Assist students in continuing their education through transfers and teach-outs.
- Help students to access educational services and federal Title IV assistance.

TG's Role

Once a school has closed, the challenge of communicating with the school's former students becomes increasingly difficult. Therefore, in order to help students from these schools continue their education, TG and other agencies (such as the Texas Workforce Commission and ED) facilitate meetings with the students to let them know their options. By sending our team members, TG acts proactively to help students make the transition from a closed school as smooth as possible.

More Information

To access the Closed School Guide for Schools, visit the Information for Financial Aid Professionals web site at <http://ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/>

0128ClosedSchoolGuide.html. For questions about closed school situations, contact TG Customer Assistance at (800) 845-6267 or send an e-mail message to cust.assist@tgslc.org.

Closed School Corner

Following is a list of newly reported school closures from the Postsecondary Educational Participants System (PEPS) and from the January 2003 Closed School Monthly Report supplied by the Department of Education:

OPE School ID	School Name and Address	Unofficial Closure Date	ED's Official Closure Date
02575800	Avanti Hair Tech 905 E. Memorial Blvd. Lakeland, FL. 33801-1919	N/A	11/27/2002 *
02333800	Avanti Hair Tech 937 W. State Road 436 #1119 Altamonte Springs, FL. 32714-2917	N/A	11/27/2002 **
02253100	Euro Hair Design Institute 2525 S. Monroe St. Tallahassee, FL. 32301-3227	N/A	11/27/2002 ***

Notes:

* The institution was removed from ACCSCT accreditation effective 12/18/2002. The school was not participating in the FFELP or Direct Loan Program. It only participated in the Pell Grant Program.

** The institution voluntarily relinquished NACCAS accreditation on 12/12/2002. The school was not participating in the FFELP or Direct Loan Program. It only participated in the Pell Grant Program.

*** The institution was removed from ACCSCT accreditation effective 12/18/2002. The school was not participating in the FFELP or Direct Loan Program. It only participated in the Pell Grant Program.

TG Updates

TG Launches Redesigned Web Site for Financial Aid Community, Students, Borrowers

TG's web site at www.tgslc.org is sporting a new design and a new name: *TG Online*. In addition to updating the site's overall appearance, the redesign also incorporated customer feedback to improve usability and flexibility.

"Over the past three years, we've experienced a 68 percent increase in the number of page views for the site," said Art Martinez, web content director for TG's site. "With more of our customers, families, students, and borrowers relying on our site for information, we want to make it as easy as possible for them to find what they need. In particular, we were able to improve the site by strengthening the organization of content and reducing the amount of scrolling necessary to view information."

Some of the enhancements on the new *TG Online* may require users to download the Flash Player plug-in, available free from Macromedia at www.macromedia.com/downloads/.

Check Your Bookmarks

Users may need to reset their bookmarks for the most popular features and most heavily downloaded files from TG's site. Several of these links are included below:

- *Shoptalk Online*, TG's weekly, electronic newsletter for financial aid industry professionals – <http://www.tgslc.org/shoptalk/index.cfm>
- Information on AdvanTG Web™ and TG's other loan management solutions and tools – <http://www.tgslc.org/resources/advantgweb.cfm>
- Information on TG's Voluntary Flexible Agreement (VFA) – <http://www.tgslc.org/vfa/index.cfm>
- The *Integrated Common Manual* – http://www.tgslc.org/resources/integrated_online_manual.cfm
- TG's *School and Lender Fact Sheets* – <http://www.tgslc.org/schlfs/> and http://www.tgslc.org/schlfs/new_lender.cfm
- Electronic Ordering information for industry forms -- <http://www.tgslc.org/forms/forms.cfm>
- Information and resources for default prevention – <http://www.tgslc.org/resources/default.cfm>
- Listings of Electronic Funds Transfer participants
 - Schools: http://www.tgslc.org/resources/ef_schools.cfm
 - Lenders: http://www.tgslc.org/resources/ef_lend.cfm
- TG Loans By Web™ -- <http://www.tgslc.org/resources/loansbyw.cfm>

Tell Us What You Think

TG welcomes feedback on the site redesign. Please direct your input to webmaster@tgslc.org.

TG Announces Teleconference on Systems Development

Is your FAM System due for an upgrade or overhaul? Are you unsure about how to work with vendors or even where to begin? If so, you may benefit from an upcoming TG teleconference, "What You Should Know about System Development Projects."

The one-hour teleconference is scheduled for 2 p.m. CST on Tuesday, February 25, 2003. As always, the event is free and open to any financial aid professional.

Agenda

The session will include:

- A high-level review of system development project phases.
- A review of project controls with examples of documentation used and timelines and techniques for gathering information to validate project performance.
- Lessons learned and best practices from a variety of system development projects and reference materials.

The presentation portion of the session will be followed by a time for questions, answers, and discussion with participants. To ensure that all areas of interest are covered, participants are encouraged to submit their questions to Sheila Casey at sheila.casey@tgslc.org before the session.

About the Presenter

Phil Flora, session presenter, is the vice president of internal audit at TG. Phil has more than 14 years of student loan experience with TG, and has led the internal audit team since 1994. His experience prior to TG included work in banking, public accounting, and cost accounting. Altogether, Phil has more than 20 years of auditing and management experience, and he has earned the following certifications: CIA, CISA, CFE, and CCSA.

Phil recently became a qualified instructor for "Practical Software and Systems Measurement (PSM): A Foundation for Objective Project Management." PSM is an issues-driven, flexible measurement process for system and software measurement. During the past two years, Phil has facilitated several training sessions and presentations, including the following sessions:

- What You Should Know About System Development Projects – Mapping Your Future 2002 Conference
- Assessing the Systems Development Process – Texas State Auditors Office – External Training & Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts
- Auditing/Monitoring System Development Projects – MIS Training/IIA & ConSec '01

Registration Information

Although the event is free of charge, enrollment is required. To register and get further details, contact Premiere Conferencing at (800) 289-0579. Each registrant must provide the confirmation number 452142 to Premiere when the registration is made to receive a web address where they can review materials related to the topic prior to the telephone conference.

On Tuesday, Feb. 25, registrants should call (800) 946-0785 promptly at 1:50 p.m. CST and again reference the confirmation number.

Common Manual

Common Manual Reaches Milestone

On January 17, 2003, the Common Manual Governing Board approved the 100th batch of proposed policy changes. These policy changes, along with the policies approved in the years since the manual's inception, were developed by guarantors in close consultation with the schools, lenders, and servicers that comprise the FFELP community. The Board believes that this milestone and the collaborative work it represents are great examples of what can be accomplished when representatives of the entire FFELP community work together.

The *Common Manual*, conceived as a vehicle to develop a single, common set of guarantor policies, was first published in 1995. The manual replaced individual guarantor policy guides, which had many proprietary policies, and has simplified the process of administering the nation's largest education loan program.

A Continuing Commitment

Since its initial publication, FFELP guarantors have committed resources to update and improve the manual, ensuring that it is an accurate, comprehensive guide to FFELP policy. The initiative's Governing Board is comprised of a single voting member of each of the 36 guarantors. The Board is charged with the review and approval of all policy changes, as well as ensuring the efficient and timely publication of each update. To assist it in fulfilling these responsibilities, the Board elects an Executive Management Team from its membership and a Policy Committee from the expert staff of its member guarantors. For many years, the Board also was supported by the efforts of the Logistics and Information Committee, charged with editing, publishing, and distributing the manual.

In the seven years since the manual was first published, many guarantors have volunteered the time and considerable talents of their team members to the *Common Manual's* success. These staff members have devoted extensive resources to the development of clear, concise text, collaborative research, and technical advances in the manual's structure and delivery mechanisms.

While there have been many individuals along the way from virtually all sectors of the FFELP community who have participated in the process, the Governing Board especially recognizes the individuals (see "Common Manual Honor Roll" included after this paragraph) who have served in key roles with dedication and perseverance in this "common" effort. The Board also thanks those individuals' respective organizations for allowing team members to participate in this important and remarkable achievement. In addition, the Board recognizes the importance of community involvement and appreciates all of the individuals who throughout the past seven years have reviewed proposals, provided insightful comments and suggestions, and supported the *Common Manual* initiative.

Common Manual Honor Roll

TG is proud of the contributions its team members have made to the success of the *Common Manual*. Seven TG team members have served on *Common Manual* committees (three of them have chaired their respective committees, as well), and several others have put in countless hours in support of their work. These committee members are highlighted in bold on the following honor roll from the Common Manual Governing Board:

Policy Committee Members

Michelle Anderson (current and former co-chair) – TG

Kathy Bliss (current member) – Colorado Student Loan Program

Gail Braum – EdFund

Rachel Brock – Connecticut Student Loan Foundation

Carolyn Brown (current member) – Missouri Student Loan Program

Tammy Burford (current member) – EdFund

Kevin Burke (current member) – American Student Assistance

Ruth Chrismore (current administrative position) – Missouri Student Loan Program

Susan Clinton – Michigan Guarantee Agency

Aaron Cook – Northwest Education Loan Association
Cinda Eresuma (former administrative position) – Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority
Jacki Fairbairn (current member and former chair) – Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation
David Feitz – Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority
Janet Gonyea – Student Loan Guarantee Foundation of Arkansas
Brenda Grady (current member and former chair) – USA Funds
Arlene Hannawalt – Montana Student Loan Program

Margie Harvey (former chair) – TG

Cindy Hepler (current co-chair and former chair) – American Education Services/Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency
Cheryl Hughes (current member and former co-chair) – South Carolina Student Loan Corporation
Melissa Johnson – Oklahoma Guaranteed Student Loan Program
Cathryn Judd – Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority

Kelly Kaelin (current editor) – TG

Tess Keirn – American Education Services/Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency
John Kramer – Student Loans of North Dakota
Kathy Mascaro – Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance
Nancy Masten (current member) – Illinois Student Assistance Commission
Betsy Mayotte – American Student Assistance
Wendy McAlister – North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority
Onaleah McClellan (current member) – Florida Office of Student Financial Assistance
Shari Mecca (former Chair) – Connecticut Student Loan Foundation
Lonny Meloon (current member) – New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation
Lynn Murphy – Education Assistance Corporation
Sharon O'Neal – National Student Loan Program
Elaine Padilla – New Mexico Student Loan Guarantee Corporation
Kathy Pratt – New York State Higher Education Services Corporation
David Raccullia – American Education Services/Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency
Fay Schroeder – Michigan Guaranty Agency
Leesa Sorensen – National Student Loan Program

Sam Wilson – TG

Logistics and Information Committee/Editing Staff

Dana Barzman – American Student Assistance
Scott Brown – Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority
Dan Cosgrove – Northwest Education Loan Association
Susan Degen (former co-chair) – Oregon State Scholarship Commission
Carol Egan – American Education Services/Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency
Char Feist – Student Loans of North Dakota
Tim Fitzgibbon – Iowa College Student Aid Commission
Janet Gonyea – Student Loan Guarantee Foundation of Arkansas
Wendy Hacker – American Student Assistance

Nina Hold – TG

Tenille Manning Heier – Education Assistance Corporation
Susan Johnson – Illinois Student Assistance Commission
Chris T. Keahi – Iowa College Student Aid Commission
Julie Leeper – Iowa College Student Aid Commission
John McGrath – New York State Higher Education Services Corporation
Cannon Mayes – Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation
Tom Melecki (former chair) – National Student Loan Program
Peter Pundt (former co-chair) – American Education Services/Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency

Steve Schmidt – TG

Steven Smith – TG

Ann Scott – Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation
Lori Stevens – Northstar Guarantee
Melanie Tringali – American Student Assistance
Ellen Zimmerman – Education Assistance Corporation

This, That, and the Other...

TG is presenting a special teleconference to help financial aid administrators at two-year and proprietary schools prepare to use the Master Promissory Note (MPN) for multiple loan periods. The teleconference will be held this Thursday, February 13, 2003, at 2 p.m. CST.

Although the event is free of charge, enrollment is required. To register and get further details, contact Premiere Conferencing at (800) 289-0579 and reference confirmation number 204463. On Thursday, registrants should call (800) 946-0719 promptly at 1:50 p.m. CST and again reference the confirmation number 204463.



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To ask questions about *Shoptalk Online*, please contact Communications at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4732 or communications@tgslc.org.

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