

In this issue:

Federal updates	1
Closed School Corner	1
A hectic week on the hill	2
Economic hardship deferment form updated with new federal minimum wage rate	3
TG updates	4
TG announces 2008 dates for Financial Aid Leadership Symposium.....	4
Meet Kathy Campbell, TG's account executive for California.....	5
Spotlight on TG's Public Benefit Grant Program: the McLennan Community College Foundation's "First Generation College Student Initiative"	7
Trends and issues	9
Question of the week	9
This, that, and the other	9

Tip^{of} the Week

Paying for college can be akin to putting together a puzzle — calculating costs, locating financing, and managing the whole process. Offer your students some help with this college planning page from *Adventures In Education*, located at [Hwww.aie.org/HighSchool/Paying/index.cfm](http://www.aie.org/HighSchool/Paying/index.cfm).

Federal updates

Closed School Corner

The following table provides a list of newly reported school closures and error corrections from the Postsecondary Educational Participants System (PEPS) and from the June 2007 Closed School Monthly Report supplied by the Department of Education.

Newly reported closures

OPE School ID	School Name and Address	Unofficial Closure Date	ED's Official Closure Date
01298200	Border Institute of Technology 9611 Acer Ave.	N/A	6/22/2007

02538900	International Business College – Lubbock 4630 50th St. Lubbock, TX 79414-3509	Date or N/A	11/13/2006
----------	--	-------------	------------

03026100	Polytechnic Institute 5206 Airline Dr. Houston, TX 77022-2914	N/A	12/19/2006
----------	--	-----	------------

A hectic week on the hill

“There are two things you don’t want to see being made — sausage and legislation.” This comment, attributed to German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck in the 1800s, has never seemed truer for those following Congressional proceedings this week. As members of Congress rushed to debate and vote upon an impressive amount of legislation while preparing to adjourn for the August recess, even seasoned politicians and policymakers could be forgiven for feeling as if they’ve been put through the grinder. In this article, we will provide a status report on the various pieces of higher education-related legislation working their way through the House and the Senate and offer a look at what may be yet to come.

Bill fatigue

Some of the uncertainty surrounding current legislation is due to the sheer number and variety of bills under consideration. Two types of pending legislation would impact the Higher Education Act (HEA): budget reconciliation, traditionally used as a means to reduce the federal deficit, but also used to increase spending in this case; and reauthorization of the HEA, a mandated and long-overdue periodic review and update of the statute. In both of these categories, the Senate and the House are working to develop and vote upon their versions of bills, which often contain overlapping and conflicting provisions. In addition to HEA-related legislation, fiscal year 2008 budget appropriations for federal financial aid programs are also being debated.

Aside from legislation in Congress, and adding to the confusion, are ED’s pending regulatory changes (see *Shoptalk Online* edition [409](#)), which also propose to make modifications affecting the financial aid community — at times contradictory to changes currently being discussed in Congress.

Reconciliation

HR 2669, the College Cost Reduction Act, is the House reconciliation bill. Approved by the House by a margin of 273 to 149 on July 11, HR 2669 incorporates many of the piecemeal provisions scattered throughout previously-introduced House bills, such as HR 5, HR 472, and HR 1608 — essentially creating a merger of reconciliation and reauthorization measures.

S 1762, the Higher Education Access Act, is the Senate reconciliation bill that addresses many of the same issues as HR 2669. It was passed on July 20 by a vote of 78 to 18. A conference committee of Senate and House members will work to draft a compromise version of S 1762 and HR 2669.

Reauthorization

As mentioned previously, many of the measures found in various House reauthorization-related bills were encompassed in the House reconciliation bill, HR 2669.

S 1642, the Higher Education Amendments of 2007, is the Senate's comprehensive reauthorization bill. The Senate will presumably use S 1642 as a vehicle for making desired changes to the HEA that would not be accomplished by S 1762. S 1642 was passed by unanimous vote today.

In the event a final reauthorization bill cannot be developed through the conference process before the current HEA extension expires, Rep. George Miller (CA) has introduced yet another HEA extension bill, HR 3122.

What's next

S 1762, S 1642, HR 3043 (the House FY 2008 appropriations bill), and HR 2669 were passed under threat of veto by President Bush. In a series of Statements of Administration Policy, the President cites concerns over excess spending and "other objectionable provisions" and states his intent to veto the bills if presented to him in their current form. In the coming weeks and months, Congress will use the conference process to attempt to integrate the various bills into legislation that is acceptable to all parties. *Shoptalk Online* will keep you informed of changes as they develop.

Economic hardship deferment form updated with new federal minimum wage rate

The English and Spanish versions of the Economic Hardship Deferment Request (HRD) form have been updated to reflect the new minimum wage rate that goes into effect today. The updated HRD forms are available on *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/forms/frms_def.cfm.

The federal minimum wage is provided on the form for reference when determining borrower eligibility for the deferment. Among other criteria for an economic hardship deferment, a borrower may qualify for the deferment if the borrower is working full time and has a monthly income that does not exceed the greater of the federal minimum wage rate or an amount equal to 100 percent of the poverty line for a family of two. A borrower may also qualify for the deferment if the borrower is not working full time and has a monthly income that does not exceed the greater of two times the federal minimum wage rate or an amount equal to two times the poverty line for a family of two and, after deducting an amount equal to the borrower's federal education debt burden, the remaining amount of that income

does not exceed the larger of the federal minimum wage rate or the poverty line for a family of two.

Scheduled changes to federal minimum wage

On May 25, 2007, President Bush signed into law the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, which, among other changes, mandated incremental increases in the federal minimum wage. As of July 24, 2007, the first of three annual increases in the federal minimum wage will take place as follows:

- July 24, 2007 — July 23, 2008: increase from \$5.15 per hour to \$5.85 per hour
- July 24, 2008 — July 23, 2009: increase from \$5.85 per hour to \$6.55 per hour
- July 24, 2009 and beyond: increase from \$6.55 per hour to \$7.25 per hour

More information and questions

For more information about the economic hardship deferment, call TG customer assistance at (800) 845-6267 or send an e-mail message to cust.assist@tgsic.org.

TG updates

TG announces 2008 dates for Financial Aid Leadership Symposium

If you're a supervisor or manager looking to advance in financial aid, you may have noticed the dearth of training opportunities geared specifically for your needs. TG helps fill the void with a unique training experience — the Financial Aid Leadership Symposium, a week-long workshop on the building blocks of good leadership. One of the great advantages of the Symposium is that it applies the principles of leadership — building trust, motivating staff, and having a vision, for example — in the context of a financial aid office. Another advantage is that participants get to learn these concepts as they discuss real-world issues drawn from their own work experiences.

TG has hosted the Symposium annually since 2006. Recently, the corporation set training dates for the 2008 Financial Aid Leadership Symposium, which will be held February 4 - 8 in Round Rock, Texas.

A distinguished track record

The Symposium follows a strongly interactive format so that participants learn the content in a hands-on way. Participants work in small-group exercises, make individual presentations, and discuss financial aid issues in an open forum. Throughout, attendees hear from experts in financial aid and get the feedback of colleagues.

The Symposium helps to groom participants to be leaders, but it also offers a number of other lasting benefits, including an informal network of peers who stay in touch via e-mail. Graduates use the e-mail 'tree' to seek advice or to get feedback from fellow Symposium participants. "We've become a lifelong 'family' of financial aid administrators," said Sherri Ornelas, director of financial aid at Texas State Technical College in West Texas.

The Symposium also offers participants an opportunity for talking candidly about the challenges and issues they currently face in financial aid. For that reason alone, many find the experience invaluable.

"Authentic feedback, unbiased, unscripted, and sometimes unabashed, is something we do not achieve regularly as adults," said Melet Leafgreen, assistant director of loan programs at Texas Christian University.

TG's second Financial Aid Leadership Symposium, held in February 2007, was a definite success with the 15-member cohort of student financial aid leaders drawn from across the country. Members were energized by discussion and carried back the insights and the spirit of the Symposium to their respective home schools.

"Last year's cohort banded quickly and built strong relationships during the Symposium," said Tom Rebstock, TG senior corporate trainer. "The trust they developed enabled them to analyze issues very deeply and openly."

How can I attend the 2008 Symposium?

To enhance the hands-on learning environment, enrollment in the Symposium is limited to a small, diverse cohort of selected applicants.

To apply, complete an application located on *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/training/leaders.

The application deadline is December 1, 2007.

The fee for the symposium is \$1,000 per participant. The fee includes the full week of classes and materials, as well as hotel accommodations and selected meals.

More information

To learn more about TG's Financial Aid Leadership Symposium, visit *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/training/leaders or contact Tom Rebstock at (800) 252-9743, ext. 2835, or send an e-mail message to tom.rebstock@tgslc.org.

Meet Kathy Campbell, TG's account executive for California



After working 23 years in most every area of financial aid, Kathy Campbell stays dedicated to her profession for one simple reason.

“Knowing how many doors higher education can open for an individual who is willing to make the long term commitment to college has always inspired me,” said Campbell.

Campbell is energized by the social good that she contributes to as a professional working for higher education. And she projects that enthusiasm as TG’s account executive for California, traveling the state for much of the year and meeting with financial aid administrators on campus or at conferences and training events. Her mission is simple: Help schools educate students and families about financial aid — and student loans, in particular; and offer TG’s expertise in training on industry and regulatory issues to financial aid staff.

She describes the concrete benefits that training can offer this way.

“It’s very gratifying when someone tells you that you’re the first person who has really listened and offered solutions to a question or problem,” said Campbell.

A varied perspective

Campbell has a rich background of professional experience to draw on. She taught elementary school — grade 4 — for five years. She was then drawn to work in financial aid in 1984 when a position came open at Indian River Community College in Ft. Pierce, Florida.

“It seemed a good fit, having been a teacher for the previous five years,” said Campbell. “The kids were a little older certainly, but still looking for answers. I hoped to be able to help them find those answers. Even now, more than two decades later, I still hope I can help them find the answers.”

After three years in Indian River, Campbell went to work for a developer of financial aid software. Later, she augmented her financial aid and industry knowledge by serving with several lenders, including Sallie Mae.

“I remember thinking that I would probably stay in a traveling job for three years or so,” said Campbell. “After I got tired of the traveling, I would get out and return to a more traditional office job at a school. It hasn’t happened yet!”

As an account executive for TG, Campbell likes the one-on-one opportunity of talking with schools about their needs and tailoring solutions for those needs. Sometimes this help comes in the form of training in better office practices; it can also come by answering questions on CommonLine processing, or even providing advice on using staff better.

At the moment, Campbell is pouring energy into planning a training session for schools in the Los Angeles area for the fall. And she and co-presenters will be offering several sessions at the California Community Colleges Student Financial Aid Administrators Association (CCCSFAAA) Annual Conference in December. Check future editions of *Shoptalk Online* for more information.

To learn more

Campbell can be reached at (800) 252-9743, ext. 2506, or by e-mail at kathy.campbell@tgslc.org. You can also find out more about TG's training and learn how to request a training event for your institution at www.tgslc.org/speakers/index.cfm.

Spotlight on TG's Public Benefit Grant Program: the McLennan Community College Foundation's "First Generation College Student Initiative"



McLennan Community College, located in Waco, Texas, serves about 7,500 students, one-third of whom live at or below poverty level and more than half being first-generation college students. About two years ago, the college's nonprofit, fundraising arm — the McLennan Community College Foundation — began a multi-faceted campaign, called the First Generation College Student Initiative, to support these students as well as reach out to the Central Texas community.

The initiative's objective is two-fold: to ensure the long-term academic and career success of the college's students, and to raise levels of college enrollment among local communities. The approach is comprehensive — offering scholarships, organizing college-prep courses, partnering with community organizations, providing a summer orientation program, conducting research, offering early outreach to students in grades 4 and up, and even connecting students with mentoring services.

TG supports the work of this varied and interesting initiative with a grant from its Public Benefit Grant Program. To learn more about the program, *Shoptalk Online* recently talked with Harry Harelik, executive director for the First Generation College Student Initiative.

Q.: The First Generation College Student Initiative relies partly on partnerships with local churches, schools, and other organizations. Can you describe how you established your partnerships and what they do for the initiative?

A.: We established a broad-based advisory committee, which has roots in the community and provided connection to many of the partnerships with whom we work. The Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants provided the financial literacy training for participants. McLennan County Youth Collaboration conducted roundtable discussion for our research activities. Waco Independent School District (ISD) is assisting with the ACT/SAT preparation courses at all area high schools. We hope to get college access information — and support for higher education — to come through the pastors at local churches. Parents of some ethnic groups are more comfortable going to church

than coming to their children's school and the message may be more meaningful coming from pastors and church-going peers.

Q.: Why does the initiative begin its outreach activities so early — at the fourth grade?

A.: After studying the First Generation College Student Initiative and objectives, we realized that many local students were dropping out in or just before the ninth grade. Therefore, efforts to talk to 11th and 12th graders about college weren't reaching many of the students. Also, unless a student and his or her parents are aware of the grade and course requirements for college entrance early in the student's educational career, the student can and often does end up as a senior in high school with the wrong courses and inadequate grades to enter many colleges in which he or she might be interested. The key to higher successful graduation rates is early knowledge of the requirements to achieve higher education. The seed must be planted very early for students to do well in reading, writing, and math and to lay the foundation for later learning successes.

Q.: Students who were mentored as freshmen in your initiative become mentors to students entering the program. What is the benefit of this?

A.: Though this part of the program is in its infancy, we have two things in mind with this expectation of students. The student will have a feeling of "giving back" or "repaying" and hopefully experience the thrill of helping someone else — hopefully laying the groundwork for future leadership and a sense of civic and philanthropic responsibility. And, because the student mentor has already been through the initial year, we are hoping the student mentors will relate more candidly and completely to those they mentor.

Q.: Can you describe how the initiative's research will be used?

A.: The hope is that the research will guide us on how to approach Hispanic families in our outreach. We will make this information available to other colleges and universities so that our successes might be duplicated in other areas of the state and nation.

About TG's Public Benefit Award Program

TG established its Public Benefit Award Program to promote college access and student retention in higher education. The program provides grants to institutions that have projects and services created to enhance academic access and success.

To receive funds, organizations were required to submit proposals that addressed the issue of access to postsecondary education and that focused on the needs of first-generation college students, students from high schools with low college-going rates, and/or students who are underrepresented in higher education.

To learn more

If you'd like to learn more about TG's Public Benefit Grant Program, you'll find a description of its purpose and process on *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/public_benefit/index.cfm.

Trends and issues

Question of the week

Q.: Is a student allowed to change (increase) his or her household size on the FAFSA after completing the FAFSA?

A.: According to the 2007-08 *Federal Student Aid Handbook, Application and Verification Guide (AVG)*, there are two circumstances in which the household size may be changed after the filing of the FAFSA:

1. If the original application has an error in any non-dollar item, such as household size, the student or school must correct it. (page 89)
2. If the student is selected for verification, the household size may be updated to be correct at the time of verification unless it changed due to a change in the student's marital status, in which case updating is not permitted. (page 97)

In the case of remarriage and stepparents, the AVG states that "while the applicant does not update household size or number in college because of a change in his marital status, if he is a dependent student and his parent remarries between application and verification, he must update household size to include the new stepparent. However, the student would not count the new stepparent's income and assets. The school could use professional judgment to include the stepparent's income or to otherwise account for the change."

The 2007-08 *Federal Student Aid Handbook, Application and Verification Guide* can be accessed at www.tgslc.org/policy/fsa_handbook.cfm.

Do you have a question?

If you have a question that needs an answer, feel free to *Ask TG™*. *Ask TG* is TG's online query tool for borrowers, schools, and lenders. It includes a database of frequently asked questions about financial aid, student loan processing, and TG's products and services. To submit a question to *Ask TG*, visit tgslc.custhelp.com.

This, that, and the other

Mapping Your Future™ recently acquired a new Web site address, giving students and schools another link to access the services and information that *Mapping Your Future* offers on college and career planning. Effective immediately, Web site visitors going to www.mappingyourfuture.org — leaving out the dashes in the

address — will be directed to the *Mapping Your Future* home page. The www.mapping-your-future.org address — with the dashes — will also work and take visitors to the appropriate location on the Web.

Mapping Your Future acquired ownership of this Web site address to protect its trademark and to prevent the confusion of students who went to the www.mappingyourfuture.org address and did not find the appropriate information. *Mapping Your Future* also will be adding a second e-mail address for all staff, which will include the additional address, e.g., feedback@mappingyourfuture.org.

Mapping Your Future will be adding the new address to its promotional materials as well. For questions about this change or to learn more about *Mapping Your Future*, contact CariAnne Behr at (573) 634-8641. You can also send an e-mail message to carianne@mapping-your-future.org.



P.O. Box 83100
Round Rock, TX 78683-3100
(800) 252-9743
(512) 219-5700
(512) 219-4560 TDD

Shoptalk Online is published by TG. Unless specifically noted, the policies and procedures outlined in *Shoptalk Online* apply only to loans made under the TG guarantee and not to loans underwritten by other guarantors.

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

Contributors to this edition: Rob Davenport, Kelly Kaelin, Charles K Macy, Cindy Marrs, Art Martinez, and Cecilia Ortiz. Edited by TG Communications and Policy and Regulatory Affairs. Designed by TG Communications.

©2007 Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation.
Ask TG and the TG logo are trademarks of Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation.