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## Tip<sup>of</sup> the Week

Many students begin managing their finances for the first time when they start college. You can teach your incoming freshmen the basics of money management — including using credit cards wisely — with the help of *Adventures In Education (AIE™)*. You'll find a variety of AIE's financial literacy resources at [www.adventuresineducation.org/financialliteracy/index.cfm](http://www.adventuresineducation.org/financialliteracy/index.cfm).

## Federal updates

### ED delays release of Master Agreements

Last Thursday, ED announced that it has delayed its posting of the Master Sales Agreement and the Master Participation Agreement that will be used to implement ED's loan purchase and participation plans under the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act (ECASLA). ED indicated during a webinar held last Tuesday that it would post the agreements the following day, but later determined that the documents required additional revisions based upon comments and questions raised during the webinar.

## **Delay does not impact filing of Notice of Intent to Participate**

A lender may submit the Notice of Intent to Participate to ED even though the Master Sales Agreement and the Master Participation Agreement are not yet available. The Notice of Intent to Participate, provided as Appendix D to the Federal Register notice regarding the loan purchase programs published on July 1, 2008, serves as a lender's preliminary notification to ED that it is interested in participating in the new loan purchase and participation programs, without actually obligating the lender to participate. Submission of the Notice of Intent to Participate also establishes the earliest disbursement date applicable to 2008-09 academic year loans that a lender may include in either plan. A lender considering participation in the program(s) must submit the Notice of Intent to Participate by **July 16** in order to include loans originated as early as May 1, 2008; if a lender submits the Notice of Intent to Participate after that date, only loans made on or after ED's receipt of the Notice of Intent to Participate are eligible for the program(s).

### **For more information**

To view the announcement, visit the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site at <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/070308DelayofAgreementsNotice2.html>.

ED's July 1 *Federal Register* notice, including the Notice of Intent to Participate, is available at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-14820.pdf>.

## **Official Notice of Proposed Rulemaking published**

As announced in *Shoptalk Online* edition [460](#), ED recently released an unofficial Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) addressing various loan-related provisions enacted by the College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 (CCRAA). On July 1, the official NPRM was published in the *Federal Register*, providing the public with a 45-day comment period. The NPRM is available online at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-14140.pdf>.

### **To submit comments online**

- Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).
- In the Comment or Submission box, enter the docket ID for this NPRM, ED–2008–OPE–0009, and click Go.
- To submit comments, click Send a Comment or Submission in the middle of the page.

Comments must be submitted no later than August 15. ED reminds commenters that all comments — including personal identifiers and contact information — will be available for public viewing on the Federal eRulemaking Portal, regardless of the submission method. ED also recommends that commenters clearly identify the

specific section(s) of the proposed regulations that each comment addresses, and arrange comments in the same order as the proposed regulations.

### **More information**

For questions about the recently released regulations, contact TG customer assistance at (800) 845-6267, or send an e-mail message to [cust.assist@tgslc.org](mailto:cust.assist@tgslc.org).

## **Remaining 2008-09 interest rates released**

Two categories of interest rates were announced at the end of June, as mentioned in *Shoptalk Online* edition [457](#). Interest rates for older PLUS and SLS loans are based on the weekly average of the one-year constant-maturity Treasury yield for the last calendar week ending on or before June 26. Interest rates for the HEAL portion of Federal Consolidation loans are based on the 91-day Treasury bill (T-bill) auctioned for the quarter ending June 30.

### **PLUS and SLS**

Following are the interest rates for older PLUS and SLS loans, which are effective July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2009:

- 5.67 percent for loans first disbursed on or after October 1, 1992, but before July 1, 1998.
- 5.82 percent for loans disbursed on or after July 1, 1987, but before October 1, 1992.

### **HEAL Consolidation**

Following is the interest rate for the HEAL portion of Federal Consolidation loans:

- 4.71 percent for loan applications received on or after November 13, 1997.

### **More information**

To access TG's annual interest rate chart for all applicable interest rates, visit [www.tgslc.org/policy/intrates.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/policy/intrates.cfm).

## **TG updates**

### **TG hosts Financial Literacy Counseling Symposium**

On Friday, June 27, TG brought together financial literacy experts and financial aid administrators in a unique one-day seminar — the 2008 TG Financial Literacy Counseling Symposium. Held in the Dallas area, the Symposium offered a forum where administrators, faculty members, and other professionals could discuss techniques for helping students manage their finances more responsibly.

## **Focused discussion and interactive format**

Over the last decade, student debt levels have doubled, and tuition rates have risen dramatically. Many financial aid administrators want to equip students with a basic understanding of financial concepts and skills — tools for surviving in today's economically-challenging times. Some schools have created financial literacy training programs; many more are looking for the best ways to design such a program.

TG's Symposium featured ideas for spearheading a financial literacy initiative and offered examples of successful efforts. Speakers included Danielle Champagne, assistant director of the Student Money Management Center at the University of North Texas; and Dr. Dottie Durband, director of the Red to Black™ program and associate professor of personal financial planning at Texas Tech University.

After a presentation on these two programs, participants broke out into smaller groups where they asked questions and shared ideas on the development of programs at their own schools.

According to Mike Nowlin, TG product manager, the Symposium provided a unique opportunity for financial aid professionals. "The focused dialogue and small size of the discussion groups allowed for a more interactive format," he said. "Attendees really felt they could get their questions answered and go back to their home schools with fresh, innovative ideas."

John Zanot, TG vice president for marketing and product management, agreed. "With mounting student debt and current economic conditions, it's more important than ever for students to have good financial literacy skills," said John. "This Symposium generated significant discussion on how to provide effective financial literacy training, and we look forward to further dialogue."

## **TG's Positive+Balance™ overview video available online**

Each year, a growing number of students graduate with large levels of debt. Many college campuses now provide financial literacy seminars to teach their students critical skills to help them manage their debt burden and make wise decisions about their personal finances.

TG offers Positive+Balance™ to help schools provide important financial literacy training to students. Positive+Balance consists of training sessions on a variety of financial literacy topics. Popular session topics include money management, budgeting and saving, credit cards and credit reports, and identity theft.

### **New video**

To learn more about the program and how it works, visit *TG Online* at [www.tgslc.org/positivebalance](http://www.tgslc.org/positivebalance).

In addition to a list of all the available courses and details on how to enroll, the site now features an overview video. View the short video at

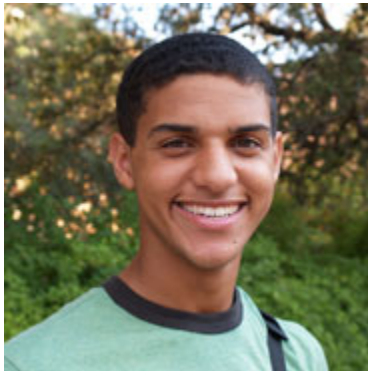
[www.tgslc.org/positivebalance/index.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/positivebalance/index.cfm) to learn how Positive+Balance can help you and your students by providing important financial literacy training.

### Contact us

To learn more about Positive+Balance, you can speak with your TG account executive at (800) 252-9743. Or you can direct questions to Rett Anderton or Joe Braxton, TG's default aversion consultants. Rett Anderton may be reached at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4765, or by sending an e-mail message to [rett.anderton@tgslc.org](mailto:rett.anderton@tgslc.org). Joe Braxton may be reached at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4696, or by sending an e-mail message to [joe.braxton@tgslc.org](mailto:joe.braxton@tgslc.org).

### With a grant from TG, Ursuline College offers science help to high school seniors

The 21st century will be much like the 20th in one important regard — the need for new and better technologies. Cultivating food to feed the world, engineering alternatives to carbon-emitting fossil fuels, and staying competitive in a rapidly-developing business world are all undertakings that require an educated workforce, one with a sophisticated understanding of science and technology.



Colleges and universities recognize the need for offering students a strong foundation in the sciences. Ursuline College, a 4-year private college based outside of Cleveland, Ohio, has designed a unique program for helping high school seniors prepare for college, and particularly for science coursework. Called Science FIRST (Focusing Interest in Real-life Science and Technology), the program helps high school seniors, especially first-generation students, make a smooth transition to a college science curriculum.

The project includes an intensive two-week course, Current Topics in Science: A Global Perspective, taught on the Ursuline College campus, coupled with a distance-learning component. Participants will explore the world's energy options, global water and air quality, as well as global perspectives on infectious disease. The program also helps students apply to college and provides mentoring throughout the freshman year.

Upon successful course completion, participants receive college credit for their work and a tuition scholarship toward the college or university of their choice. TG supports the initiative with a grant from its Public Benefit Grant Program.

### Building for the future

First-generation students who come from lower socio-economic backgrounds are a prime focus for the program. These students can experience a kind of "culture shock" when they take college-level classes. To create a supportive environment

before college, administrators for the Science FIRST program have created partnerships with local high schools.

“We worked hard to develop relationships with guidance counselors and science and math teachers from a variety of schools, with a focus on the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and inner-ring suburbs,” said program administrator Christine DeVinne. “We discovered that the key to recruiting students is a solid — and extensive — network of first-person communication. Our recruiter specialist has been at the center of this network and established strong connections that we plan to build on for future years.”

Administrators for Science FIRST also developed a hands-on, “technology-enriched” course. Students discuss topics with guest speakers, complete readings and case studies, and even do some computer modeling.

“Over the course of the two-week summer session, they will practice a variety of lab techniques and expand their creative thinking skills,” said Christine.

### **Benefits for all**

Mentoring is a central part of the Science FIRST program. Participants are paired with college students from Ursuline, who offer information on the practical, financial, and motivational aspects of higher education. The goal is to guide the mentee from being a passive receiver in the mentoring relationship to an active participant. A Web-based chat room will be available for students to share their experiences with mentors and with each other.

Throughout the year, participants will be asked to keep a “reflection guide” so that they can analyze the strengths and challenges of their mentoring relationship. The guide will also be completed by the project director and reviewed as a regular part of the mentoring process.

Mentoring offers a diverse set of benefits for participants, according to Christine. “Because the program gives us the chance to know the students individually, we can help them plan for what will be their best possible educational future,” she said. “The curriculum will develop not just their academic skills but all the skills that they will need for their careers: leadership, original thinking, communication, personal interaction and confidence. Setting all this in the global context enables us to envision growth for these students and for their families.”

### **About TG's Public Benefit Grant Program**

To receive funds, organizations are required to submit proposals that address the issue of access to postsecondary education for low- to moderate-income students.

### **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/publicbenefit/index.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/publicbenefit/index.cfm).

## **TG and *Mapping Your Future*® announce updates to system**

*Mapping Your Future* (MYF) recently made changes to its Online Student Loan Counseling system in order to better meet the needs of participating schools and students.

### **TEACH Grant counseling**

MYF introduced TEACH (Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education) Grant counseling on June 30. The TEACH Grant counseling session provides information about the terms and conditions of a TEACH Grant agreement to serve, as well as the rights and responsibilities that apply if a grant is converted to a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan. Regulations require TEACH Grant applicants to complete an initial counseling session prior to receiving the first disbursement of the grant, and subsequent counseling prior to the first disbursement of a TEACH Grant in a subsequent award year (see 34 CFR 686.32). MYF's counseling session will serve both purposes.

### **Enhanced average indebtedness customization**

On July 1, MYF released its enhanced indebtedness customization option for schools using Online Student Loan Counseling. This option allows a school to provide Stafford loan borrowers who have also borrowed a Grad PLUS loan with an average loan figure per federal loan type, instead of the current process that allows it to enter one average loan figure per counseling session. The school then will choose to display average loan information for students within the federal loan counseling sessions, giving students a total debt picture.

### **More information**

If you have questions about these updates and changes, contact MYF at [feedback@mappingyourfuture.org](mailto:feedback@mappingyourfuture.org).

## **Trends and issues**

### **Question of the week**

**Q.:** Does a 22-year-old student who was married — and thus independent — last year but is divorced this year remain independent for federal student aid purposes?

**A.:** According to the 2008-09 *Federal Student Aid Handbook* (FSA Handbook) Application and Verification Guide, page AVG-23, “[a] student who was independent only because he was married becomes dependent for the next award year if he divorces and cannot answer yes to any of the dependency questions.”

Pages AVG-22 and AVG-23 explain in more detail how to determine marital status for the purpose of completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

On page AVG-24, the FSA Handbook reminds us that “the Higher Education Act allows a financial aid administrator (FAA) to make dependency overrides on a case-by-case basis for students with unusual circumstances,” such as abandonment and an abusive family environment.

### **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](http://tgslc.custhelp.com).

### **This, that, and the other**

You've probably heard something about green vacations, green activism, even green technology. Add to that growing list “green curriculum.” The environmental movement is having an effect on many parts of society, including college classrooms, according to a *Washington Post* article.

The University of Maryland offers landscape architects a class on “green” real estate strategies. Business graduate students of the University of Virginia recently created a way to produce power in rural Indian villages using discarded rice husks. Architecture students at Catholic University have converted old shipping containers into material for their home models. And hundreds of university presidents have signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, pledging to take leadership on eliminating greenhouse gases.

The trend isn't without its critics in academia, who see the embrace of “green thinking” in classrooms and school projects as too political.

Find out more about the debate by reading the complete article at [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/06/21/AR2008062101673.html?nav=rss\\_education](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/06/21/AR2008062101673.html?nav=rss_education).



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