

## Education Bi-Weekly Update

December 10, 2009

### FAME News

#### Did you know that FAME is on Facebook?

Become a fan of [FAME on Facebook](#) and stay connected the way your students do via the social web.

#### FAME Wednesday Webinar

The December Wednesday Webinar, "FAFSA Overview" was held on December 9. The next Webinar will be held on Wednesday, January 13. During that session, we will review the FAFSA form and focus on the specific areas that generally cause concern or questions from families.

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### Upcoming Events

- ◆ The **Higher Education Advisory Council** is scheduled to meet on **December 16, 2009**.
- ◆ The **FAME Board of Directors** is scheduled to meet on **December 17, 2009**.

### Ask FAME

**Q:** Is it considered discriminatory to ask for an explanation from a student who is indicating that they have an unreasonably low income amount that would make it difficult to believe that they can support their family?

**A:** If a student reports income that seems insufficient to support him or his family this either indicates that an income source has been unreported or that the student has an extreme financial need.

An institution's fiduciary responsibility to the federal government requires them to verify any application's data that is used to calculate the estimated family contribution. In addition, it is appropriate to use this data to identify at-risk populations that may require additional financial assistance.

To view additional information concerning the above question, please proceed to the 2009-2010 Federal Student Aid Handbook, Application and Verification Guide, pages 106-108.

### State Education Programs

#### State of Maine Grant for Spring 2010

There had been some question as to State of Maine Grant eligibility for students attending the spring only semester. As a reminder for spring only awards, if you determine that a student meets all the State of Maine Grant eligibility criteria for the 2009-2010 academic year and would be attending your institution for the spring only then you may award them as you normally would do.

#### **IMPORTANT REMINDER**

Payment Processing for State of Maine Grant Program will be unavailable until the system reopens on **January 4, 2010**. Please be advised that you **will** be able to request **fall and spring** payments when the system reopens in January.

Payment processing for the Educators for Maine Program. Robert C. Byrd Honors

Payment processing for the Educators for Maine Program, Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program, and GEAR UP Program will not be affected by this shut down and FAME will continue to process payments for these programs.

If you need assistance with the “certify student roster” and/or the “process payment” function, please contact FAME by email [faadmin@famemaine.com](mailto:faadmin@famemaine.com) or by phone 1-800-228-3734.

## Washington D.C. Update

### Student Loan Proposal Scores

On December 2, 2009, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) published preliminary estimates concerning the two student loan proposals presently being considered by the US legislature and according to the report the all-in savings (mandatory savings less discretionary costs) difference between the two proposals has been reduced to \$4.2 billion over a ten year period.

The “community proposal”, which would allow schools the option to have Direct loans originated and serviced by current Federal Family Education Loan program organizations would save \$75.4 billion. The Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (H.R. 3221) which calls for 100% use of Direct lending for all student loan processes would save \$79.6 billion.

Additional information concerning the student loan proposals can be viewed at:

<http://www.cbo.gov/publications/bysubject.cfm?cat=45>

### EFC Formula Guide Published

On November 16, 2009, The U.S. Department of Education published the 2010-2011 Expected Family Contribution (EFC) formula guide. The guide includes EFC worksheets and tables for the 2010-2011 processing cycle. These worksheets and tables can be used to calculate an estimated EFC for students.

The U.S. Department of Education's EFC guide can be viewed online at IFAP:

<http://ifap.ed.gov/efcformulaguide/attachments/111609EFCFormulaGuide20102011.pdf>

### ECASLA Extension Introduced

On November 18, 2009, Representative Kline of the House Education and Labor Committee and Senator Enzi of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee introduced H.R. 4103; legislation to extend the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act (ECASLA).

ECASLA is currently set to expire on June 30, 2010 and the new legislation would extend the US Department of Education's authority to purchase Federal Stafford and PLUS loans from Federal Family Education Loan Program lenders by one year, through June 30, 2011.

### Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) provisions:

#### Did you know...?

That the HEOA's provisions have been adjusted concerning student eligibility under the following conditions:

- A student without a high school diploma or its equivalent can become eligible to receive Title IV funding upon satisfactory completion of six credit hours that are applicable towards a degree program offered by the institution. Students are ineligible to receive federal student aid while earning the six credit hours;
- A student's Title IV funding eligibility that has been suspended due to a drug conviction can regain eligibility by successfully passing two unannounced drug tests conducted by a drug rehabilitation program that complies with the U.S. Department of Education's criteria; and
- A student with intellectual disabilities can receive funding under the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and Federal Work Study Programs if the student is:
  - Enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a comprehensive transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities at an institution of higher education;
  - Maintaining satisfactory academic progress; and

- Institution of higher education;
- Maintaining satisfactory academic progress; and
- Meets the other student eligibility requirements under section 484(a)(3), (4), (5) and (6) of the Higher Education Act.

A full summary of the HEOA provisions are available on IFAP:

<http://ifap.ed.gov/dpccletters/GEN0812FP0810.html>

## GOALS

The outreach staff has been very busy travelling the state and working with parents, students and counselors. Since the last Bi-Weekly Update, we have attended 50 events and had 2,091 attendees: 528 at Get A Life sessions, 1335 at financial aid nights and 228 at financial aid information sessions.

Trisha Malloy presented at Mt. Valley High School in Rumford, Leavitt Area High School in Turner, Carrie Ricker Middle School in Litchfield, Oak Hill High School in Sabattus, Catherine McAuley High School in Portland, Gorham High School, Fairview Elementary School in Auburn, Freeport High School, Buckfield Junior/Senior High School, Monmouth Academy, Jay Middle School, Geiger School in Lewiston and Livermore Falls High School.

Mila Tappan has been to Old Town Middle School, Penobscot Valley High School in Howland, Piscataquis Valley High School in Guilford, Searsport High School, Greenville Middle School, Orono Middle School, Orono High School, Woodland Junior High School, Calais Middle School, Camden Hills Regional High School, Carrabec High School in North Anson, Machias Memorial High School, Old Town High School, Skowhegan Area High School, Ellsworth Middle School, and Lawrence High School in Fairfield.

Mary Dyer went to Greely High School in Cumberland, Lawrence High School in Fairfield, Glenburn School, Erskine Academy in South China and John Bapst Memorial High School in Bangor. Angela Dostie presented at Hall-Dale High School in Farmingdale and Lincoln Academy in New Castle.

Trisha and Angela also attended the Maine School Counselor Association annual conference in South Portland. Over 125 school counselors attended this two-day conference. In addition to exhibiting and providing financial aid information, Trisha presented a session titled "Preparing Early for College Expenses" to counselors.

On Saturday, November 21, Mila Tappan went to University of Maine at Presque Isle and presented two sessions to students and parents. One session covered the FAFSA and the financial aid process and the other focused on applying for scholarships.

Mila also worked with MEOC Staff and College Transition Staff to provide financial aid updates and training to counselors and advisors.

College Goal Sunday is scheduled for Sunday, January 31. Volunteers can sign up online at [www.collegegoalsundaymaine.com](http://www.collegegoalsundaymaine.com).

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