

Education Bi-Weekly Update

February 19, 2010

FAME News

Create Maine Sponsorship

FAME, along with Maine Technology Institute, Maine Angels, and other individuals will sponsor the February 23 Create Maine event at the Hannaford Lecture Hall on the campus of the University of Southern Maine. The event is part of Maine Entrepreneurship Week and is geared to an audience of high school and college students. The event will feature the stories of six Maine entrepreneurs. FAME is very pleased to provide a sponsorship that blends our dual mission of business and education. For more information – www.createmaine.com

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Ask FAME

Q: Can a student receive Federal Pell Grant funds if they hold a master's degree without having earned an undergraduate degree?

A: A student that completes a master's program without holding an undergraduate degree is considered to have earned a professional degree which generally involves receiving appropriate licensure documents. Examples of such a program include dentistry, pharmacy and law. The student is not eligible to receive Pell funds even if they subsequently enroll in an undergraduate program.

The 2009-2010 FSA Handbook, Volume 1, Chapter 7, page 75 provides further clarification.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ The **Advisory Committee on Medical Education** is scheduled to meet on **March 11, 2010**.

State Education Programs

The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) eligibility cut-off used for the 2009-2010 State of Maine Grant Program has been increased from 4100 to 4600.

- The new EFC cut-off applies to full and part time students. Newly eligible students should now appear on your rosters.
- Students must be enrolled in the Spring semester in order to be paid retroactively for the Fall semester. In other words, if a student has withdrawn or graduated in the Fall semester, he/she is not eligible for a retroactive State of Maine Grant disbursement for the Fall semester. Students in this situation will appear on your roster with a status of awarded, not certified; please do NOT certify them.
- New students that meet the 4600 EFC cut-off now appear on your rosters as awarded, not certified. Institutions that use the send file process may include these new students in their files.

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- If you awarded students with your own institutional funds to replace State of Maine Grant funds lost from a student's award when the EFC was reduced last spring from 5400 to 4100, then you may now choose to replace those institutional funds with the re-awarded State of Maine Grant. This will only impact students that are again eligible, i.e. students between the 4100 and 4600 EFC cut-off range AND for whom you used your own institutional funds to replace lost state of Maine Grant last spring.

Federal Loan Programs

Common Manual Updates

On January 21, 2010, the *Common Manual* Governing Board approved policy changes to the *Common Manual* as proposed in the four proposals advanced to the Board from Batch 164. The changes made in these proposals will be incorporated into the *Common Manual's* annual update. These changes will also be incorporated into the *Integrated Common Manual*. The *Integrated Common Manual* is available on several guarantor websites and is also available on the *Common Manual* Website at:

www.commonmanual.org

State Legislative Update

On Tuesday, the Education Committee held another work session on the latest amendment to L.D. 1296, *An Act to Strengthen the Job Creation Through Educational Opportunity Program*, the Opportunity Maine bill. Representatives from the Maine Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (MASFAA), Opportunity Maine, FAME, Maine Revenue Services, MSHA and the Department of Education attended. The latest amendment would involve Maine Revenue Services and FAME in the program's administration, and abolish the requirement of a contract but still require colleges to play a role in promoting the program and retaining certain documents. FAME objected to its proposed role as trainer of all Maine schools, as well as language in the amendment allowing FAME to adopt new rules for the program to replace those created by the Board of Education a few years back. OM expected FAME to assume these duties without extra resources. Some state agencies tasked with promoting the program in their outreach activities (MSHA, DHHS) communicated their confusion as to why they were included in the draft. After approximately two hours of comment and discussion, the committee tabled the matter and asked stakeholders to try once more to reach consensus. In view of that directive, FAME circulated a revised amendment for the parties' consideration. We've also agreed to arrange a teleconference in the very near future to hash out remaining differences. It is clear that some change to the law on the books is necessary. A third work session on the bill will be scheduled sometime the week of Feb. 22-26.

On Thursday, the Taxation Committee held a second work session on Pres. Mitchell's bill, L.D. 1666, to expand FAME's Seed Capital Tax Credit Program.

Also, the committee worked on Rep. Cain's tax expenditure program accountability resolve, L.D. 1694. This legislation would direct DAFS to convene a working group to define the purpose of certain tax expenditure programs like Seed Capital Tax Credit, design a method to collect data that measures their economic impact, and recommend a reporting and review schedule of such programs.

Washington D.C. Update

Draft Cohort Default Rates Distributed

On February 8, 2010, the US Department of Education distributed the FY 2008 Draft Cohort Default Rates notification packages to all eligible domestic and foreign schools using their Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) mailbox. The notification packages included:

- Cover Letter (message class SHDRLROP)

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- Reader-Friendly Loan Record Detail Report (message class SHCDRROP)
- Extract-Type Loan Record Detail Report (message class SHCDREOP)

Institutions may also download their cohort default rates from the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) at: [NSLDS Professional Access Web site](#).

Starting on February 17, 2010, schools may challenge their cohort default rates which may require a data manager's contact information. This information is available on the home page of the Cohort Default Rate Guide located at: <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/DefaultManagement/finalcdrq.html>.

Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) provisions:

Did you know...?

That the HEOA has added a new provision that allows an eligible institution located in an area affected by a major disaster to make Federal Work Study (FWS) payments to "disaster-affected students" under the following criteria:

- The term "disaster-affected student" refers to:
 - A student who received an FWS award during the academic year in which the disaster occurred;
 - A student who received FWS wages for work performed during the academic year prior to the major disaster;
 - A student who was prevented from fulfilling their FWS obligations during part or all of the academic year affected by the disaster; and
 - A student who was unable to be reassigned to another FWS job.
- Payments may be made to FWS eligible students for a period not to exceed one academic year;
- Payments may be made in an amount equal to or less than the amount of FWS wages the student could have earned had they been able to complete their work study obligations; and
- Any payments made must meet the FWS matching requirements.

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

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

GOALS

Outreach Update

Mila Tappan conducted FAFSA labs at Hermon High School and Narraguagus High School (Harrington) and helped 12 students complete the financial aid application.

She also presented three 30-minute presentations to 60 high school juniors and their parents from Rockland High School, Camden Hills Regional High School, Medomak Valley High School (Waldoboro) and Georges Valley High School (Thomaston).

Pam Crate provided financial aid information and FAFSA completion assistance to five students at the Lisbon Adult Education program and 13 students at the Bonny Eagle/Gorham Adult Education program. She also joined the Maine Adult Education Association at their annual Hall of Flags event. Governor Baldacci attended the event and spoke in support of Maine adult education.

Mary Dyer provided financial literacy and loan repayment information to 33 students at Beal College (Bangor) as part of their BC 101 Class.

Mary was the presenter at this month's Wednesday Webinar training. Twenty-five school counselors, college access advisors and financial aid administrators participated in the session that provided various tools and methods to provide financial literacy information to students.

Trish Malloy offered the *Get A Life* program to 47 seniors at Casco Bay High School (Portland).

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In addition, Trish Malloy joined David Mahoney from Bates College to discuss financial aid programs and applications on a local public television show "All Things College". This series is hosted by College for ME Androscoggin and Great Falls TV at Central Maine Community College. This show will be airing several times during 2010 to help local families understand the process of applying for financial aid and to promote college access. All Things College offers information online at <http://allthingscollege.net>.

FY 2008 Draft Cohort Default Rates Distributed February 8, 2010

On Monday, February 8, 2010, the Department of Education distributed the FY 2008 Draft Cohort Default Rate notification packages to all eligible domestic and foreign schools. The announcement included information regarding the distribution and the begin dates for challenging the draft rates. For additional information regarding the school cohort default rate calculation or the adjustment/appeal processes, please refer to the [Cohort Default Rate Guide](#), or review the full [electronic announcement](#).

To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#)



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