

# NASFAA Webinars

## TEACH Grant: The Final Rules

Presented July 22, 2008

National Association of Student  
Financial Aid Administrators

**NASFAA's Webinar Series**  
**TEACH Grants:  
The Final Rules**  
July 22, 2008  
Co-sponsored with  
**American Association of Colleges  
for Teacher Education (AACTE)**

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National Association of Student  
Financial Aid Administrators

**A New Way to Meet a Critical Need of  
the United States of America**

**The TEACH Grant Program**

**Meeting the Challenge:  
NASFAA and AACTE**

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Introduction: NASFAA Staff

Jennifer Martin  
Assistant Director  
Professional Assessment, Training, &  
Regulatory Assistance

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Introduction: NASFAA Staff

Joan Berkes  
Director of Legislative and  
Regulatory Analysis

David Futrell  
Assistant Director  
Professional Assessment, Training, &  
Regulatory Assistance



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Introduction: AACTE Staff

Dr. Jane West  
Vice President  
Government Relations & External Affairs  
American Association of Colleges for Teacher  
Education

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Introduction: Old Dominion University Staff

Dr. William Graves  
Dean  
Darden College of Education  
Old Dominion University

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## TEACH Grant: The Final Rules



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Introduction: Department of Education Staff

Kay W. Gilcher  
Senior Policy Analyst

Policy & Budget Development  
Office of Postsecondary Education

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Introduction: Department of Education Staff

Lisa DiCarlo  
Director, Direct Loan Operations  
Acting Director, COD Systems

Debbie Miller  
Requirements Manager  
Application, Origination, and Disbursement  
Systems (AODS)



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TEACH Grant Program

- New grant program authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act to encourage highly-qualified teachers to serve low-income schools in high-need fields
- Grants became available July 1, 2008
- New 34 CFR 686 published as final rules in the *Federal Register* on June 23, 2008
- Preamble to final rules discusses comments and questions submitted in response to NPRM

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### Grant Amounts

- Up to \$4,000 per year
  - Undergraduate study (2- and 4-year programs)
  - Post-baccalaureate certification program
  - Graduate study (Master's)
  - Prorated for part-time attendance
- Total of \$16,000 for undergraduate + post-baccalaureate study
- Total of \$8,000 for graduate study

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### Relationship to Other Resources

- TEACH Grant is non-need-based aid
  - At school's option, TEACH Grant can replace expected family contribution (EFC) just like unsubsidized Stafford loan
  - Amount not used or needed to replace EFC is counted as aid when packaging other funds
  - FAFSA required
- Grant plus other aid may not exceed COA
  - Grant may be reduced to avoid overaward

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### Service Obligation

- Full-time highly-qualified teacher in high-need field
- Teach in low-income school for 4 years within 8 years of program completion
  - Suspensions of 8-year period available
- No credit for part-time teaching
- No partial fulfillment of service

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### TEACH Grant Program – NPRM

- Failure to complete service obligation causes grant to convert to **unsubsidized Stafford Loan**
  - Collected under the Direct Loan Program
  - Interest charged back to date of grant disbursement



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### TEACH Grant Program – NPRM

Grant that becomes a loan

- Can never revert back to grant
- Does not count against annual or aggregate loan limits
- Does not count in cohort default rate
- Could be eligible for loan forgiveness

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### Eligible Students

- "Student"
  - Undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, graduate
- Current or former teachers, or retirees from other professions [686.11(b)]
  - Graduate only
- Categories are not mutually exclusive but some eligibility criteria differ

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### Student Eligibility Criteria: All Recipients

- ★ Meet general T-IV student eligibility criteria
- ★ File FAFSA
- ★ Sign Agreement to Serve
  - ED collects and tracks via Web site
- ★ Complete annual counseling
- 🔑 Enroll in TEACH Grant-eligible program

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### Student Eligibility: “Students”

- Score above 75th percentile on any nationally-normed standardized admissions test (any level)
  - School need not require test for admission but must *be* a test used for admission, not *just* placement (e.g., **not** PPST Praxis I)

**or**

- Maintain at least 3.25 cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)
  - First year undergrad uses high school GPA
  - First year grad uses undergrad GPA



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### Student Eligibility: “Students”

- Regulation: “Is completing coursework and other requirements necessary to begin a career in teaching or plans to complete such coursework and requirements prior to graduating”
- NPRM Preamble: Graduating from a program may not be the same as completing all of the coursework necessary to begin a career in teaching... a student may obtain an undergraduate degree, but need a post-baccalaureate program or other coursework before he or she can begin a career in teaching. Where the regulations refer to completion of coursework and other requirements before graduating, ED interprets “graduating” to mean the point at which the student has completed all the coursework and other requirements necessary to prepare that student to begin a career in teaching.

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### Student Eligibility



#### Former Teacher

- Must be pursuing high-quality alternative certification in a master's degree program


#### Current Teacher or Retiree

- Must be either
  - In a master's degree program, or
  - Pursuing alternative certification in a master's program

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### TEACH Grant Program Objectives



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graph LR
  A[Increase Teachers in Critical shortage areas] --> B[Increase HQT in low income schools]
  B --> C[Support High Quality Clinical Teacher Education Programs]
  
```



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### Why is this Important?

- Quality Teachers**
  - Quality teachers are the single most important factor on student achievement (Darling Hammond, 2000; Ferguson, 1991; Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain, 2000).
- Achievement Gap**
  - Special Education
  - Minorities
  - Poverty
- Critical Shortage**
  - Urban Settings
  - Special Education
  - STEM

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### The Achievement Gap Facts

**Special Education**

- NCLB Has unmasked this severe learning gaps
- More than 1/2 of states report a 40 point gap
- While improving, 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading scaled scores continue to show a 32 point gap (NAEP, 2007)



**Minorities**

- Black-White mathematics score gap unchanged since 1990 (IES, 2008)
- Whites graduate at a higher rate than any minority category.
- Black-White immediate collage enrollment gap has changed little since 1972 (IES, 2008)

**Poverty**

- Children living in poverty have lower reading achievement levels, early childhood NTLs, 2008)
- Youth in poverty have lower standard scores in all domains (NTLS, 2006)
- Urban schools have an average graduation rate of only 60%. NYC has a rate of 38.2% (Swanson, 2004)

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### Critical Shortage Facts

**Urban Settings**

- Teacher turnover rates for high poverty schools are at 21% (USDOE, 2008)
- States report problems in meeting HQT (CEP, 2007)
- More Likely to be taught by non-HQT (NCES, 2000)



**Math and Science**

- Annual turnover rates are the highest at 16% (Ingersoll, 2003)
- Project need of 240,000 new science and mathematics teachers in the next decade (USDOE, 2000)
- 56% of high school students are taught by out of field teachers, 27% in mathematics

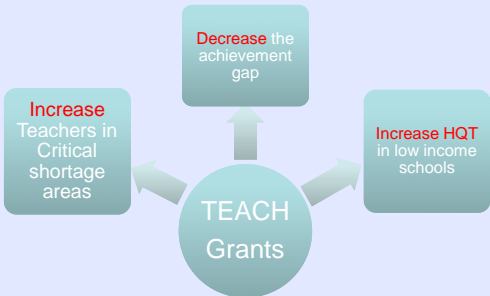
**Special Education**

- 13.7% turnover each year (NCES, 2004)
- 20% increase special education teacher need from 2006-2016 (US Labor Department, 2008)
- 1/2 of teachers needed graduate each year

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### In Conclusion...



```

graph TD
    A[TEACH Grants] --> B[Increase Teachers in Critical shortage areas]
    A --> C[Decrease the achievement gap]
    A --> D[Increase HQT in low income schools]
    
```



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### Significant Differences Between NPRM and Final Rule

- 686.2 Definitions
- 686.3 Duration of Student Eligibility
- 686.31 Determination of Eligibility for Payment
- 686.40 Documenting the Service Obligation
- 686.41 Periods of Suspension
- 686.43 Obligation to Repay the Grant



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### High-need Field 686.2(d)

- Added definitions of the terms “bilingual education” and “English language acquisition”
  - Bilingual education: An educational program in which two languages are used to provide content matter instruction. This definition does not encompass foreign language immersion programs.
  - English language acquisition: The process of acquiring English as a second language.



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### TEACH Grant-eligible Institution 686.2(d)

- Amended the definition to allow institutions that do not meet financial responsibility standards to participate in the TEACH Grant Program by qualifying under an alternative standard.

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#### TEACH Grant-eligible Program 686.2

- Revised the definition to specify that a teacher preparation program that is approved by a State must provide a minimum of 10 weeks of full-time pre-service clinical experience, or its equivalent.
- Amended the definition to clarify that a TEACH Grant-eligible program must be designed to prepare an individual to teach as a highly-qualified teacher.

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#### Duration of Student Eligibility 686.3(a) Determination of Eligibility for Payment 686.31(a)(2)

- Clarified that a student may not receive a TEACH Grant for enrollment in a second baccalaureate degree program or in a second post-baccalaureate program, even if the first program was a non-TEACH Grant-eligible program.
- Clarified that an institution is required to do initial or subsequent counseling annually, prior to the first disbursement of any TEACH Grant.

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#### Documenting the Service Obligation 686.40 Periods of Suspension 686.41

- Removed the “list of conditions covered” by the FMLA and added, in its place, a reference to qualifying reasons for leave under the FMLA and provided a statutory citation.
- Amended 686.41(b) to require that a grant recipient must apply for a suspension prior to being subject to any of the conditions in 686.43(a)(1) through (a)(5) that would trigger a conversion of the grant to a loan.

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#### Obligation to Repay the Grant 686.43

Added a new paragraph (e) and amended 34 CFR 668.165(a)(2) to require that an institution provide the same notices and cancellation opportunities to TEACH Grant recipients that it provides to borrowers in the Title IV, HEA loan programs.

- Institution must notify grant recipient of her right to cancel all or part of the TEACH Grant no earlier than 30 days before and no later than 30 days after crediting the recipient's account (668.165 and 686.31)

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#### Obligation to Repay the Grant 686.43 (cont'd)

- Institution must return or cancel the TEACH Grant if a cancellation request is received by the later of the first day of a payment period or 14 days after the date student was notified of cancellation rights.
- Institution may return or cancel the TEACH Grant if a request is received after 14 days but within 120 days of the disbursement date.

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#### Obligation to Repay the Grant 686.43 (cont'd)

- If institution does not return or cancel the TEACH Grant, student must be notified to contact the Department so that she can request conversion to DL.
- Amended 686.43(c) to provide a six-month grace period for a grant recipient whose TEACH Grant has been converted to a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan.

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### Identification of Eligible Programs



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### Basics of TEACH Grant Program Eligibility

- A program of study that is designed to:
  - Prepare an individual to teach as a highly-qualified teacher, in a high-need field
  - Leads to a baccalaureate or master's degree or
  - Is a post-baccalaureate program of study



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### Basics of TEACH Grant Program Eligibility (cont'd)

- A two-year program of study that is acceptable for full credit toward a baccalaureate degree is considered to be a program of study that leads to a baccalaureate degree
- Institutions designate which of their programs are TEACH Grant-eligible and establish when a student is considered to be enrolled in a TEACH Grant-eligible program



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### Highly Qualified Teacher: NCLB Requirements

- Possess State Certification
- Have a B.A. degree or higher
- Demonstrate knowledge of the subjects they teach

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### Demonstrating Knowledge



**New Teachers:** State assessment or major in the subject they teach

**Veteran Teachers:** HOUSSE (High, Objective, Uniform, State Standard of Evaluation) Coursework, teaching experience and professional development

**Special Education:**

- Must demonstrate knowledge in each subject they teach.
- Those who teach children with severe and profound disabilities can be show knowledge on the elementary education assessment



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### High-Need Fields

- Statute defines high-need fields as:
  - Mathematics, science, a foreign language, bilingual education, special education, reading specialist; or
  - Other fields documented by Federal or State government, or LEA, and approved by U.S. Department of Education
- *Teacher Shortage Areas Nationwide Listing* is official source for listing of teacher shortage areas
  - Published annually by U.S. Department of Education

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### Different Way of Thinking about Program Eligibility

- Title IV regulations do not specifically define “program”
- For most Title IV purposes, the term is used in a very general way – e.g., AA, AS, BA, BS, Masters, Doctorate, etc.
- For most Title IV purposes, a baccalaureate program is four years in length

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### Program Eligibility for TEACH

- For TEACH, the term is used to mean something much more specific
  - Programs must be defined in the context of majors
  - A TEACH Grant-eligible program that leads to a baccalaureate degree may be shorter than four years in length
  - Defining the program is an academic, not FAO, decision
  - When the student enters the program is important
- One service obligation is incurred per baccalaureate, post-bacc or masters degree

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### Relationship Between Teacher Preparation and Post-Baccalaureate Programs

- If an institution offers both a baccalaureate teacher preparation program and a post-baccalaureate program:
  - The post-baccalaureate program cannot be a TEACH Grant-eligible program
  - The institution may designate the baccalaureate teacher preparation program as TEACH Grant-eligible

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### Teacher Education Baccalaureate Program – ABC State University

- Studies in the College of Education begin in a curriculum described as pre-professional, either elementary education pre-professional (EDPPE) or secondary education pre-professional (EDPPS)
- In this curriculum a student will complete 50 semester hours of general education and prerequisites for the professional courses.

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### Teacher Education Baccalaureate Program – ABC State University (cont'd)

- Upon completion of these semester hours – and other testing, GPA and specific course requirements – **a student will be eligible to make formal application to the teacher education program.**
- At that time, the curriculum will be changed to a degree track curriculum in either elementary or secondary education.

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### What are ABC State University's options?

- The institution could choose to designate the teacher preparation program(s) as beginning after completion of 50 semester hours and formal admission to the teacher education program
- The institution could choose to designate the teacher preparation program as beginning in the freshman year with the pre-professional programs
  - This jeopardizes students who receive TEACH Grants in the freshman year but fail to be admitted to the teacher education program

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### BA in Spanish Language and Literature – Private University

- General Education Requirements
- Prerequisite language courses
- 30 credit hours selected from the following courses:
  - Three courses in literature
  - Six upper-level courses in Spanish, with at least four in literature distributed as follows: two in literature before 1800; two in literature since 1800; and two chosen from among all upper-level Spanish courses
- Two Proseminar courses and a comprehensive exam taken during senior year

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### Private U's Policy on Declaring a Major

Each student must declare a major during the sophomore year. A student will normally declare a major in the third full-time semester but not later than the registration period during the fourth full-time semester or the semester following completion of 45 credit hours, whichever comes first.

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### What are Private U's options?

- The institution may choose to designate the program as beginning in the freshman year.
  - This might present difficulties in determining whether a student is in the program since a student cannot declare a major until well into sophomore year.
  - The institution will need to determine how a student will indicate his/her intent to pursue this degree.

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### What are Private U's options? (cont'd)

- The institution may choose to designate the program as beginning in the second semester of sophomore year (after completion of 45 credits), or at the beginning of the junior year.
  - Students who have formally declared Spanish as a major would be enrolled in the TEACH Grant-eligible program from that point on.

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### BA in Biology – XYZ College

- Fundamental Skills Requirements: English Comp, Writing, Foreign Language (4 courses),
- Mathematics (1 course)
- Distribution Requirements: Arts and Humanities (4 courses), Social and Historical Studies (4 courses), Topics (1 course), Culture Studies (2 courses)
- Human Biology Core Lectures (4 courses)
- Human Biology Core Seminars (4 courses)
- Foundation Courses (4 courses, one from each foundation)

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### More About XYZ College

- The institution has developed a detailed four-year plan to help students determine what courses they need to take each semester to fulfill degree requirements.
- Students may declare a major upon entering the university or at any time prior to the junior year.

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#### What are XYZ College's options?

- Designate the program as beginning in the freshman year for TEACH Grant purposes
  - Consider a student's declaration of Biology as a major as evidence of enrollment in the program.
- Designate the program as beginning in the junior year
  - The detailed four-year plan would provide the basis for defining program
  - Consider a student's declaration of Biology as a major as evidence of enrollment in the program.

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#### Chemistry and Biochemistry (Science A.S.) – Community College

- General Education Requirements (31 credit hours)
- Courses in English, Chemistry, Speech, Arts, Behavioral and Social Sciences, Humanities, and Health
- Track Requirements (25 credit hours)
- Courses in Biology, Organic Chemistry, Calculus, and Physics
- Track Electives (at least 4 credit hours)  
Courses in Computer Science, Mathematics, or Physical/Natural Science

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#### Unique Aspects of a Two-year Program

- Must be acceptable for full credit toward a baccalaureate degree in chemistry or biochemistry.
  - School must be able to document this for each program it designates TEACH Grant-eligible
- Program is defined to begin in first semester

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#### Student Eligibility: School Requirements

- Normally a school cannot add eligibility criteria
- To achieve purpose of TEACH Grant Program, a school could require a student to file an academic plan in addition to enrolling in a TEACH Grant-eligible program
- May be helpful for students in programs that do not themselves lead to a teaching credential but contribute to high-need field expertise

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#### Critical Tasks for FAAs and Academic Leaders

- Commit to purpose of TEACH Grant
  - Meet critical need of children attending low-income schools to have highly qualified teachers in high need fields
- Decision to participate in the TEACH Grant Program

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#### Conversations and Policy Discussions for the CFAO and Academic Leadership

- Internal MOU between FAO and Academic Division
- Definition of TEACH Grant-eligible programs
  - Protocol for tracking student's enrollment and progress in TEACH Grant-eligible program
  - State, LEA, and federal identification of high-need fields
    - ✓ Predictability
    - ✓ In-state versus other state identified programs

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### Conversations and Policy Discussions for the CFAO and Academic Leadership

- Graduate programs
- Opportunities for retirees and others interested in careers in teaching
- Counseling
  - Federal initiatives and relief
  - Local initiatives and responsibilities
    - ✓ Academic
    - ✓ Financial aid
  - Suitability of TEACH Grant for traditional aged first year students

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### TEACH Grant Counseling

March 21, 2008 Proposed Rule:

"The counseling requirement is an institutional responsibility. As such, the Department encourages institutions to establish collaborative working relationships between their financial aid office and the entity that would be most knowledgeable about teaching requirements for TEACH Grant recipients. For instance, several non-Federal negotiators recommended that an institution's college of education or teacher preparation program work closely with the financial aid office to ensure that students receive the best information available about financial aid as well as about academic requirements, teaching opportunities, and teacher certification."

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### TEACH Grant Counseling

- Beginning 2009-10, ED will provide on-line interactive counseling
- Even then, financial aid offices *should* partner with education departments and other academic officials when conducting TEACH Grant counseling

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### TEACH Grant Counseling

- Schools will still need to supplement ED counseling with information on requirements specific to:
  - State law
  - Accrediting and/or licensing agencies
  - Local school districts
  - Institutional academic majors

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### TEACH Grant Counseling

- Schools may want to supplement ED counseling with information about how to identify:
  - Low-income schools
  - Documented high-need fields

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### TEACH Grant Counseling

- ED TEACH Grant counseling that will be linked to annual completion of Agreement to Serve (ATS)
  - Students will have to complete counseling before being allowed to access and complete on-line ATS
- Detailing terms and conditions of Agreement to Serve (ATS) is key part of initial, subsequent, and exit counseling

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### Agreement to Serve Terms and Conditions

- Recipient must sign ATS and receive applicable TEACH Grant counseling prior to receiving TEACH Grant
- For each TEACH Grant-eligible program for which grant funds are received, recipient must:
  - Fulfill service obligation by serving as highly-qualified teacher at low-income school in high-need field in majority of classes taught during each elementary and secondary academic year

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### Agreement to Serve Terms and Conditions

- For each TEACH Grant-eligible program for which grant funds are received, recipient also must:
  - Upon completion of each year of service, submit certification of service by school's chief administrative officer, and
  - Comply with terms, conditions, and other requirements for documenting, suspending, or discharging service obligation, or for repaying grant funds as a loan

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### Agreement to Serve Terms and Conditions

- If completing TEACH Grant-eligible program in field listed in Nationwide List, recipient cannot satisfy service obligation to teach in that high-need field unless high-need field in which he or she has prepared to teach is listed in Nationwide List for state in which he or she begins teaching, at time he or she begins teaching in that field

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### Agreement to Serve Terms and Conditions

- Recipient may request suspension of 8-year ATS completion period
- Failure or refusal to complete service obligation results in repayment of full amount of all TEACH Grants received, with interest accruing from date of each TEACH Grant disbursement

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### TEACH Grant Counseling

- ED Web site for students to access and complete ATS on-line
  - [www.teach-ats.ed.gov](http://www.teach-ats.ed.gov)
- See ED Electronic Announcements:
  - June 27, 2008, *CCRAA Operational Implementation Guidance - Student Aspects Of TEACH Grant Processing*
  - June 19, 2008, *CCRAA Operational Implementation Guidance - Additional/Updated TEACH Grant Operational Implementation Information*

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### TEACH Grant Counseling

- Text of ED's ATS available for schools to mimic and use to meet review of ATS terms and conditions aspect of TEACH counseling requirements
  - May be used to supplement, not supplant, institutional TEACH Grant counseling

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### ED Agreement to Serve Content

- **Section A:** TEACH Grant Recipient Information
- **Section B:** Institutional Information
- **Section C:** TEACH Grant Program Terms and Conditions
- **Section D:** Terms and Conditions and Borrower's Rights and Responsibilities for TEACH Grants that are Converted to Direct Unsubsidized Loans

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### ED Agreement to Serve Content

- **Section E:** Important Notices (e.g., Privacy Act)
- **Section F:** Grant Recipient's Agreement to Serve, Promise to Repay for Failure to Meet Service Obligation, and Authorizations

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### TEACH Grant Counseling—Other Aspects

- Initial and Exit Counseling:
  - Conditions for which suspension of 8-year ATS completion period is granted
- Initial, Subsequent, and Exit Counseling:
  - Circumstances under which TEACH Grant will be converted to an unsubsidized Direct Loan

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### TEACH Grant Counseling—Other Aspects

- Exit Counseling: Conduct before recipient ceases attendance at institution, at time determined by institution
  - Also required if student ceases enrollment in TEACH Grant-eligible program

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### TEACH Grant Counseling—Other Aspects

- Exit Counseling: Provide in acceptable format or mail written counseling materials to last known address within 30 days of learning that:
  - Student has withdrawn from institution
  - Student has ceased enrollment in TEACH Grant-eligible program
  - Student did not complete exit counseling

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### TEACH Grant Counseling—Other Aspects

- Exit Counseling: Repayment terms and benefits if TEACH Grant converts to unsubsidized Direct Loan, including:
  - Repayment plan options
  - Loan consolidation

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