

# COMMON MANUAL

*Unified Student Loan Policy*

**Policy Committee Update**

**August 20, 2008**

## **Policy Proposal Development**

The Policy Committee opened the 2009 *Common Manual* production year by distributing Batch 151, which contains six Federal and four Correction proposals. Comments on this batch were due August 15th. The Committee is currently reviewing those comments and plans to bring the policies to the Governing Board for consideration during its September 18th meeting.

Also on August 15th, the Committee distributed Batch 152, which contains two Correction proposals and one Organizational proposal. Comments on this batch are due September 5th.

During its August 21st meeting, the Governing Board will consider two proposals that the Committee deferred for additional research after their original distribution last spring in Batches 149 and 150. Policy proposal 1023 from Batch 149 proposes to establish an industry standard for acceptable documentation to make a change or correction to a borrower's last name. Policy proposal 1041 from Batch 150 incorporates July 1, 2008, final rule changes concerning the treatment of loan funds that were delivered to a student who failed to begin attendance.

## **New Legislation**

A comprehensive Higher Education reauthorization bill, The Higher Education Opportunity Act, was signed into law on August 14th. Many, although not all, of its provisions are effective upon enactment. The Committee will soon begin an assessment of the areas of the Manual that are impacted by this legislation.

## **Policy Committee Survey**

The Committee conducts an annual survey of Governing Board members and the FFELP community at large to obtain feedback on the work of the Committee over the past year. The Committee utilizes the survey responses to identify issues it needs to address regarding the policy development process and communications with FFELP community participants. The survey also polls the community's satisfaction with the *Common Manual* web site. For the first time this year, the Committee established a web-based survey via the Survey Monkey Web site. Interested parties were asked to complete the survey by August 15th. The Committee was pleased to note an increase in the number of respondents to this year's more concise, electronic survey. After the Committee completes an analysis of the comments received, the results of the survey will be released to the Governing Board, the public list serve, and shared with members of the community who attend the annual *Common Manual* industry meeting. Additional information about that meeting will be forthcoming from the Governing Board in the near future.

## **Membership Update**

The Policy Committee is pleased to announce that Jessica Hartung (EAC) and Stephanie Aylor (TSAC) have joined the Committee as voting members effective on August 1st. This is Jessica's first term on the Committee, and Stephanie previously served for over two years in a non-voting administrative position. Lori Yaun (Great Lakes) and Betsy Adams have also joined the Committee as of August 1st as non-voting, administrative members of the Committee. Lori will serve in the position of the Committee's scribe, and Betsy will be responsible for maintaining the Committee's logs. Susan Fields (ISAC) began her term as Committee Chair on August 1st.

Two voting members concluded their terms of service with the Committee on July 31st. Kim Elston (OGSLP) was a member of the Committee for four years, served as an internal workgroup leader, and just completed a term as Co-Chair. Diana Oglesby (NSLP) completed a two-year term on the Committee and made a valuable contribution to the Committee's work on lender/servicer policy issues. Justin Rummel (AES/PHEAA), who served for several years as a non-voting member responsible for maintaining the Committee's logs, concluded his term of service with the Committee in mid-July.

The Committee regrets to report one of its returning, voting members, Dan Tryon (MGA), resigned from the Committee during the summer due to a change in his job responsibilities. Dan was a member of the Committee for five years, served as an internal workgroup leader, and completed two terms as Co-Chair.

The Committee greatly appreciates the hard work and dedication demonstrated by Dan, Kim, Diana, and Justin and thanks MGA, OGSLP, NSLP, and AES/PHEAA, respectively, for supporting Committee participation on the part of a valuable member of each agency's team.

On July 15th, the Governing Board sent out a call for nominations to fill two voting Committee member vacancies that still remain. Nominations were due on August 1st, and the Committee is pleased to announce that it received one nomination. The Governing Board is scheduled to conclude voting on this nomination by August 22nd. The newest member of the Committee will be announced around August 26th.

The Committee still has one vacant position for a voting member. The Committee encourages members of the guarantor community to consider nominating individuals from their organizations to fill this vacancy. The Committee reminds guarantors that Policy Committee members need not be drawn solely from the ranks of guarantor policy staff. Highly successful members have come to the Policy Committee from audit and review departments, from guarantor operations and claims shops and from other guarantor support functions. If any guarantor has questions about the duties of this position, please contact Susan Fields at [sfields@isac.org](mailto:sfields@isac.org), or 217-524-7931.

### **Community Workgroup for Proposals 991 and 997**

Policy proposals 991 and 997 were distributed for community comment in batches 146 and 149. These proposals address the servicing of Consolidation loans for which the lender or servicer has established more than one loan servicing record for a single Consolidation loan. The draft policies were presented to the Governing Board for consideration at its April 17, 2008, meeting. During that meeting, the Board instructed the Committee to form a community workgroup to further discuss and analyze these proposals. The Workgroup, which consisted of representatives from the Governing Board, lender/servicer organizations, and the NCHELP Program Regulations Committee, has concluded two rounds of discussion concerning these proposals. During its August meeting, the Governing Board will review a Committee-developed white paper that summarizes those discussions and the Workgroup's policy proposal recommendations.

### **Policy Committee Communications**

All correspondence related to the Policy Committee's activities should be sent to its Chair, Susan Fields at [sfields@isac.org](mailto:sfields@isac.org). If you have questions about the Committee's activities, please contact Susan at 217-524-7931, or by email at the address provided.

Information regarding the *Common Manual*, including the current and historic versions of the manual, may be accessed on the *Common Manual* website at [www.commonmanual.org](http://www.commonmanual.org).