

for school administrators on issues affecting the financial aid community

# accessupdate



## Access Group Announces Fee Structure for 2007 Conference

Access Group and this year's Conference Planning Committee are busy preparing for the 20th annual Graduate and Professional Financial Aid Conference. As always, we are committed to offering the highest quality educational conference filled with interesting speakers and compelling sessions to meet the needs and concerns of graduate financial aid administrators.

Consistent with its nonprofit mission, Access Group historically has tried to keep the cost of the conference low to ensure that any school administrator wishing to attend is able to do so. But in the rapidly changing student loan environment, we know that your institution's requirements for attendance at industry conferences may have changed.

With this in mind, we are planning to make the following changes to the 2007 conference fee structure:

- This year, the hotel costs for the three nights of the conference will no longer be included as part of the conference fee package; attendees will reserve and pay for all hotel room expenses directly through the hotel. The negotiated room rate at the conference hotel is \$169 per night plus tax, single or double occupancy.
- The registration fee paid by attendees will cover a larger portion of the conference expenses, including the full cost of all conference meals. We expect that the early bird registration fee will be \$550, and the regular registration fee will be \$650.
- Travel, as usual, will be at the expense of registrants or their institution.

We hope this new fee structure will eliminate concerns regarding many of the issues facing industry conferences at this time and allow us to continue to provide this premier educational experience to graduate and professional school administrators as we have done for the past 20 years.

### Help us in our planning

We realize these fee changes may affect your ability to attend the conference. If you have not already done so, please help us determine probable attendance by completing a one-question survey at [www.accessgroup.org/conf2007](http://www.accessgroup.org/conf2007).

*Thank you for your help!*



## 2007 Graduate and Professional Financial Aid Conference: 20 Years on the Winding Roads of Financial Aid

**November 15 – 18, 2007**

**The Palace Hotel  
San Francisco, CA**

Now in its 20th year, the Access Group conference is known for combining practical information with thoughtful discussions on the philosophy and future direction of graduate education financing. In addition, the conference provides a unique opportunity for a collegial exchange of views on current critical issues.

Online registration begins in early August! Watch the mail for your registration materials, filled with even more information about programs and sessions or check out [www.accessgroup.org/conf2007](http://www.accessgroup.org/conf2007).

### Also in this issue

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## Technology Track

### ELM Real-Time Processing now available

We are pleased to inform our school customers that Access Group is now able to offer ELM Real-Time Processing. As a participant in this technology, Access Group and our schools who use ELM can now receive up-to-the-minute loan data from the ELMNet system.

For more information, please call your Access Group internal account executive.

### Our FAA phone line has a new feature

Access Group is pleased to announce that another feature you've requested is now in place.

Our FAA phone line has been re-engineered to eliminate some menu options, so now you can more quickly and easily reach your internal account executive.

We thank you for your suggestions, and we welcome your calls!

## Federal Interest Rate Poster

Access Group's new 2007 – 2008 interest rate poster is now available on our Web site in the Financial Aid Administrator's section. In addition to the fixed rates for Federal Stafford Loans and PLUS Loans disbursed on or after July 1, 2006, it includes the new interest rates for FFELP loans disbursed July 1, 1998 through June 30, 2006.

To view and print a copy of the new poster, go to our [AccessGroup.Org](http://AccessGroup.Org) home page and click "Interest Rates" for a link to the poster. Or, you may request a printed copy from your internal account executive.

**2007-2008 Interest Rates**

Access Group  
Your specialist for graduate and professional student loans for nearly 25 years

**Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP)**

- **Federal Stafford Loans**  
First disbursed on or after July 1, 2006, will have a fixed rate of **6.8%**
- **Federal PLUS Loans**  
First disbursed on or after July 1, 2006, will have a fixed rate of **8.5%**

Note that FFELP loans first disbursed July 1, 1998, through June 30, 2006, have the following variable interest rates to reflect from July 1, 2007, through June 30, 2008:

- Federal Stafford Loans with in-school, grace, or deferment status: 6.62%  
Based on the FFELP Loan Rate of 5.75%
- Federal Stafford Loans in repayment or forbearance: 7.22%  
Based on the FFELP Loan Rate of 6.25%
- Federal PLUS Loans (FFELP and Direct Programs): 8.02%  
Based on the FFELP Loan Rate of 7.25%

Access Group's payment incentives can help students reduce the 6.8% interest rate on **Federal Stafford Loans by up to 1.05%** and the 8.5% interest rate on **Graduate PLUS Loans by up to 1.25%**.

For more information about Access Group loan programs, visit [AccessGroup.Org](http://AccessGroup.Org) or call 800-282-1550

access group  
AccessGroup.Org

## Access Group Materials New for 2007 – 2008

Have you seen all of our new loan program materials for 2007 – 2008?

### Brochures

- Our "all-in-one" brochure – an overview of our Federal Stafford, Federal Grad PLUS, and Access Group Private Loans
- Federal Grad PLUS Loans
- Access Group Private Loans
- Private loan brochures by discipline: Business Access® Loan, Dental Access® Loan, Graduate Access® Loan, Health Access® Loan, Law Access® Loan, and Medical Access® Loan. Each brochure also includes Stafford and PLUS Loan information.
- "Credit Tips for Student Borrowers" presents the facts about good credit and why it's so important, along with tips to follow and a list of credit resources.



### Loan applications

- Federal Stafford Loan Program Application Materials – consumer information, loan application form, Master Promissory Note
- Federal PLUS Loan Program Application Materials – consumer information, loan application form, Master Promissory Note
- Federal PLUS Loan Program Endorser Application Materials – consumer information with repayment information and examples
- Private Loan Program Application Materials – consumer information and loan application form
- Bar Exam Loan Materials – consumer information and loan application form
- Dental Residency/Dental Board Examination Loan and Medical Residency Loan Materials – consumer information and loan application forms

**Order these new Access Group materials at [AccessGroup.Org](http://AccessGroup.Org) or contact your internal account executive.**

### Have our loan application mailing address?

Access Group loan applications and related correspondence should be sent to:

Access Group, Inc.  
P. O. Box 17162  
Wilmington, DE 19850-7162

# Students and FAAs Find Access Group Reputable and Trustworthy

An outside survey of students and financial aid administrators from colleges and universities across the United States shows that 99% of the financial aid administrators who participated consider Access Group a reputable and trustworthy company.

The online survey was conducted for Access Group from February through April 2006 by a third-party marketing research firm. The survey polled a mix of existing, previous, and prospective Access Group student loan borrowers as well as the financial aid administrators who serve them.

Research showed that 95% of all Access Group in-school customers who participated in the survey would recommend us to a friend. Over 96% of our in-school customers would consider using Access Group as a student loan provider in the future. Eight out of 10 of our current borrowers gave us a superior rating in overall customer satisfaction.

According to Daniel R. Lau, president and chief executive officer of Access Group, "Making a choice about a student loan provider is a vitally important decision for most students, and they need the advice of seasoned professionals to help them in this effort. These survey results show that Access Group continues to set the pace for the student lending industry with a reputable and trustworthy reputation supported by top-notch loan programs and services."

## Pilot Program Helps Loan Applicants

Thanks to a pilot program launched in March 2007 and concluding in September, some of your students who were denied a PLUS or private loan may be getting some good news from Access Group's Customer Contact Center specialists.

The objective of the program is to conduct a case-by-case credit review of PLUS and private loan applicants who were denied a loan and evaluate if they are eligible for a different loan.

For example, in some cases applicants who did not qualify for a PLUS loan are being re-evaluated to determine if they qualify for an Access Group private loan, while some private loan applicants who were denied a loan may be eligible for a PLUS loan.

Those who do qualify for different loans than the ones they were originally denied then receive a phone call from a specialist in our Customer Contact Center. The specialist will explain the new option and assist students who choose it in completing an application on the phone.

To date, we have found that more than a third of students who were denied their original loan request are now eligible for a different type of loan, and many have accepted the option of applying for that loan.

According to Jean Francois, senior vice president, Student and Borrower Services at Access Group, "If this program expanded access to education funding for even one student, it has been a success – not only for the student, but also as an achievement that is in keeping with Access Group's mission."



## New FAQs for Spring 2007 on [FederalConsolidation.Org!](http://FederalConsolidation.Org)

Federal loan consolidation may not be the right choice for all student loan borrowers this spring, even though borrowers may have eligible federal student loans they could consolidate.

According to Jeff Hanson, director, Borrower Education Services at Access Group, "The new interest rates will only be 0.08% higher on Federal Stafford and Federal PLUS Loans with variable rates for the period July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008, than they were for the period from July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007. That change is too small to impact the fixed rate that would result if a borrower consolidated those loans. The new higher variable interest rates that take effect on July 1, 2007, will round up to the same 'nearest 1/8 percent' for a fixed rate consolidation loan as the current variable rates."

To help guide and educate graduating students about consolidation as an option, Access Group has developed a new set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and posted it on [FederalConsolidation.Org](http://FederalConsolidation.Org).

These FAQs are formatted as a flyer that you can print, copy and distribute. In addition, they are now available as a podcast that can be downloaded from [FederalConsolidation.Org](http://FederalConsolidation.Org).

Part of Access Group's mission is to positively influence education financing practices. We hope this information will assist borrowers in making the wisest choice.

## 3-Month LIBOR for Second Quarter 2007

The current index effective for April, May and June 2007 is 5.348%.

The interest rate charged on a borrower's private loan from Access Group will equal this index rate plus the per annum percentage margin applicable to the loan.

**Reminder:** The effective 3-month LIBOR rate is always available by clicking on "Interest Rates" from the home page of [AccessGroup.Org](http://AccessGroup.Org). Also on our Web site is information about LIBOR, which includes a 10-year comparative history of LIBOR, Prime and T-bill rates. And our Interest Rate Comparison Calculator also helps students determine the lowest interest rate when comparing rates based on different indexes. Try it for yourself using the "Calculators" link from our home page.

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P.O. Box 7430  
Wilmington, DE  
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### Toll-free lines:

**School Services**  
800-227-2151  
800-449-8204 (fax)

**Customer Contact Center**  
800-282-1550

**[AccessGroup.Org](http://AccessGroup.Org)**  
**[FederalConsolidation.Org](http://FederalConsolidation.Org)**  
**[NeedAccess.Org](http://NeedAccess.Org)**

**Federal Stafford Loan  
and Federal PLUS Loan**  
Lender Code: 808851

*To subscribe to an electronic version of this newsletter, send your name and your school's name to [accessupdate@accessgroup.org](mailto:accessupdate@accessgroup.org).*

  
**access group**  
*The nonprofit graduate loan specialist*

# Monthly Planner



## Visit Access Group at NASFAA 2007

If you're attending the NASFAA Annual Conference in our nation's capital July 8 – 11, please visit our exhibit booth #113 in the Marriott Wardman Park. We're eager to greet you and give you more details about the products and services that make our organization unique. And be sure to stay for a live demonstration of the innovations in our new eAccess.

We also invite you to attend the Financial Aid Business Seminar presented by Jeff Hanson, Access Group's director, Borrower Education Services:

**"Creating Wise Borrowers"**  
**Monday, July 9, 4:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.**  
**Tuesday, July 10, 10:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Whether you want to develop a financial literacy program or simply expand on a program that's already in place, this session can help you respond to the financial challenges your students face. As part of the session, you'll review what students need to know and how to present it, plus learn about tools and resources that can make your job easier and more effective.

As always, we're excited to be a part of the annual NASFAA Conference and its valuable professional development opportunities. We look forward to seeing you there!

## Celebrating Independence

Access Group offices will be closed on Wednesday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day. Our Voice Response System will continue to be in service, as will eAccess and My Account on our Web site.