

January 2001

RE: EDEExpress for Windows 2001-2002, Version 7.0

Dear EDEExpress Users:

We are pleased to announce the availability of EDEExpress for Windows 2001-2002, Version 7.0. This is the initial software version for the 2001-2002 award cycle. This letter describes general changes to EDEExpress for Windows and enhancements to all of the components in this version of the software:

- Global,
- Application Processing, and
- Packaging.

These enhancements make managing your student aid data easier and provide you with more options and greater flexibility.

Schools can begin submitting 2001-2002 data to the Central Processing System (CPS) on January 1, 2001.

We are including the following information in this letter:

- A list of product enhancements,
- The results gathered from EDEExpress benchmark testing, and
- A reminder to back up and optimize your EDEExpress database.

How to Get the Software and Documentation

We are distributing EDEExpress for Windows 2001-2002, Version 7.0 via the Internet. You can download the software and the related user documentation from the SFAdownload Web site, <http://SFAdownload.ed.gov>.

You can obtain the instructions for downloading EDEExpress for Windows in the “Downloading Software/Paper Documentation” chapter of the *EDEExpress for Windows 2001-2002 Installation Guide*.

If you do not have access to the Internet, or you have trouble opening the SFAdownload Web site to download the EDEExpress for Windows, Version 7.0 software, call Title IV WAN Customer Service at **800/615-1189** to request diskettes.

Note: Some organizations restrict their users from downloading from FTP sites. If you have trouble downloading, try again later. If you are still unable to download, contact your technical support staff to ensure you have full FTP download rights.

If You Have Technical Support and Policy Questions

If you have SFA technical support questions and subscribe to SFATECH, you can post an e-mail on the SFATECH listserv:

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/SFATECH/listserv.html>

Make sure you include your telephone number in your message. Department staff or contractors for the system about which you have a question will see your posting and begin preparing a response.

If you have questions regarding EDEExpress for Windows such as installation issues, software problem resolution, software functionality, and technical assistance, you can call CPS Customer Service. You can reach them Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. (CT), at **800/330-5947**. You can also e-mail inquiries, comments, or suggestions 24 hours a day to **CPS@NCS.COM**. A representative will respond within 24 hours.

CPS Customer Service

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EDEExpress for Windows, Version 7.0

EDEExpress consists of four software modules:

- Application Processing,
- Packaging,
- Direct Loan, and
- Pell.

Version 7.0 installs the Application Processing module, which includes all of the global setup options (for example, the security functions), and the Packaging module. The Direct Loan and Pell modules will be released in future versions of the software.

Version 7.0 does not overwrite your EDEExpress for Windows, Version 6.3 database; it begins a new database.

Product Enhancements

We made the following product enhancements in EDEExpress for Windows 2001-2002, Version 7.0.

General Changes

- We updated year indicators and date ranges for the 2001-2002 award year.
- We modified data fields to reflect the changes in the new 2001-2002 FAFSA.

Global

Demo

- Beginning in 2001-2002 you can import all Demographic Data from the previous year.
- We expanded the student's first name to 12 characters and the address to 35 characters.
- The software will no longer perform edits on the Zip Code on the Demographic tab.
- We added the student's e-mail address on the Demographic tab.

Entry

- The software will perform edits on all entered dates to be sure that they are valid calendar dates.

Help Text

- To help you identify fields quickly we added fly-over help text in grids for drop-down list fields, such as marital status. The fly-over feature displays the description of the field when you point the mouse on a value in a drop-down box; it is similar to putting the mouse on a toolbar and seeing descriptive text. We also added hypertext that links the Help screen to the Web.

Import

- The software allows you to update the Demographic Data without overwriting existing data on the tab.
- The software displays the first four characters of all Message Classes in the Import Type field on the Import Dialog box.

Letters

- We added the ability to modify the greeting and closing on the “Document Tracking Letter”.
- We added a new status, “Received Not Reviewed”, to Document Tracking.

Add Documents

- When adding documents under “Process|Add Documents”, the software will display a new dialog box which has a date range field as well as a Transaction Preference dropdown box.

Login

- If any startup messages appear upon entering the software, the Help button contains text explaining how to resolve the warning or error.

Miscellaneous

- We included the student's last name on multiple entry grids. In addition to SSN, you can now also sort by last name. The default sort is last name.
- We renamed the grids under Tools|Browse|Global for Payment Schedule and Low Tuition to more closely match the names of the Pell Payment Schedules.

Print

- The software includes a new option for printing address mailing labels to accommodate the expanded address field.

Query

- The software includes a browsable grid of all query fields for each module under Tools|Browse.
- The software accepts alpha/numeric characters only as valid values for Query Titles.
- Additional predefined queries help you search for comma-separated fields, such as comment codes and reject codes.

Setup

- We added the ability to import global security groups, IDs, document tracking setup, user-defined letter text, most queries, and demographic data (for example, name, address, phone, and current SSN) from the 2000-2001 software.

Tools

- In retrieving a "Format Code" in Tools|File Formats, they are listed in alphabetical order by "File Format Code".

User Database

- In Tools|Setup|Global|User Database, the software will only accept an alpha character in the first position in the field name.

Application Processing

New Data Elements

- We added the student's e-mail address on the demo, FAFSA, and SAR/ISIR tabs. You can enter and correct the e-mail address.

List Processed ISIRs Report

- On the print dialog box, we included the option to limit the list to the highest or active transactions only.

Quick Corrections

- We added assumption and override capabilities to the quick correction process.

Import Records Edit Report

- When you select "Identify Activated Transactions?" on the import dialog, the software will identify and print the EFC and default status for the activated transaction as well as the incoming ISIR transactions on the Import Records Edit Report.

Message Classes

- At the request of the user community, we renamed the SARR02OP and SARE02OP message classes to CORR02OP and CORE02OP.
- We added a new message class, HOLD02OP. Upon import, this message class lists the records that are in the signature hold file at the CPS awaiting receipt of a signature.

Import Dialog

- We combined the ISIR Data (SARA, EAPS, REAP, CORR, YTDO, ESFN, ESFR, and SYSG) and Error Data (FDRE, EAPR, RAPR, CORE, and SIGA) into two import type options under the Import Dialog screen.

Query

- We added a new field for the ISIR Transaction Add Date, labeled “Add Date – ISIR”, that you can query on from the Application Processing database.

Verification Worksheet

- We now display the Yes or No value for the difference in Tax Form Used rather than a calculated value.

Packaging

Fund Maintenance

- We added the following Aid Types:
 - R** – Non-Need Based Grants
 - D** – Unsubsidized Loan (Unsub Need Based)
 - V** – Chapter 30 VA Benefits/Americorps (this aid type automatically excludes the fund as a resource when calculating eligibility for Federal Subsidized Stafford Loans and Federal Direct Subsidized Loans)
- We added a new field, “Do Not Remove if Unpackaged”, on the Fund Maintenance setup to allow you to stop a fund from being removed during **Process|Unpackage** or **Process|Repackage**.

Awards Tab

- The software includes a new Aggregate Loan button that displays the NSLDS aggregate loan information for Federal Subsidized/Unsubsidized Loans and Perkins Loans.

Browse

- We added a browse table so that schools can export student awards by term to external systems.

Remaining Need Ranges

- We added remaining need ranges for S = Subsidized, U = Unsubsidized, and P = PLUS.

Print

- On the List-Eligible Dependent report, we removed the Less than Full-Time column from the income grid so the report matches the FISAP.
- On the List-Students by Fund Code report, we added the option to include Packaged/Not Packaged records.
- On the Award Letter, the school code is suppressed when a user chooses to exclude the school name and address fields.

Entry

- You can view totals in the Awarded Funds grid without scrolling to the bottom. You can also see the totals and detail of the awarded funds on one screen.

Process

- We added a new document status, D = Received Not Reviewed, to prevent a record from being packaged when a document has a status of 'Received Not Reviewed' and is required for packaging.
- When a fund is listed multiple times in a user-defined formula, the software includes all instances the fund appears in the formula when it performs the calculations. For example, if you have Grant1 = \$500, Grant2 = \$500 and Grant1 = \$700, the user formula includes both the first and the second occurrence of Grant1, resulting in \$1700 rather than \$1000. In the past, the user-defined formula used only the first occurrence of the fund in the calculation.
- We allow Process-Package on a packaging record when the packaging status is N-Not Ready and the software displays the reason(s) why the record is not ready to package.

Multiple Entry

- The system updates changes to the Award Letter Received, Received Date, and Print Letter in Next Batch fields only when values are provided for these fields in Multiple Entry and the Packaging Status is P = Packaged, H = Hand packaged, or M = Manually adjusted.

Import

- On the External Add record layout, the last byte of the record cannot be blank.

EDE and Packaging Technical References

The *EDE Technical Reference* and the *Packaging Technical Reference* contain technical details such as record layouts and valid field contents. The *Packaging Technical Reference* also contains worksheets and import and export information for interfacing EDEExpress Packaging with an external mainframe system.

Both technical references can be downloaded from the SFAdownload Web site:

<http://SFAdownload.ed.gov>

EDEExpress Supports These Printers

We tested the following printers that are Windows NT 4.0, Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows 2000* compatible:

- HP LaserJet 4
- HP LaserJet 4000N
- HP LaserJet 4M
- HP LaserJet 4M Plus
- HP LaserJet 4 si
- HP LaserJet 5M
- HP LaserJet 5 si
- HP LaserJet 5 si MX
- HP LaserJet 3 si
- HP LaserJet 8000N*

*No functional Windows 2000 driver was found for the HP LaserJet 8000N printer.

EExpress Benchmarking

We performed benchmarking tests on the EExpress for Windows, Version 7.0 software to determine how it operates in certain operating environments.

Imports

The benchmarking results for EExpress import files are as follows.

- We tested the Import process during normal working hours using different operating systems, PC platforms, and import files (all files had approximately 400 records).
- For the network tests, the EExpress software was on the workstation and the database was on the server.
- The server used is a production server with approximately 200 simultaneous users.
- From previous benchmarking activities, we have not seen a performance difference between the NetWare 3.12 environment and the NT server environment. Thus, only the NetWare network environment is listed below.
- The Time Elapsed column indicates the measurement of time starting when the user clicks OK in the Import dialog box and the import process begins.

Component	Operating System	Benchmarking Volume	Time Elapsed	PC Platform	Network
ISIR Import	NT 4.0	1000	4 min 36 sec	Pentium 200 128MB	No
ISIR Import	Windows 95	1000	4 min 49 sec	Pentium 200 64MB	No
ISIR Import	Windows 98	1000	4 min 59 sec	Pentium 200 64MB	No

Reports

The benchmarking results for EExpress reports and lists are as follows:

- These reports were tested in Windows NT, Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows 2000 on HP LaserJet 3 si, 4, 4000N, 4M, 4M Plus, 4 si, 5M, 5 si, 5 si MX, and 8000N printers.
- These tests were all completed on a Pentium II 266 with 64 MB RAM.

- The Average Time Elapsed column indicates the measurement of time starting when the user clicks OK in the EDExpress Print dialog box and when the operating system (Windows NT/95/98/2000) print dialog appears.
- The Benchmarking Volume is the number of records and approximate number of pages that were printed in the test.

Report	Operating System	Benchmarking Volume	Average Time Elapsed
Document Tracking Letter	NT 4.0	5 records	3 seconds
Document Tracking Letter	Windows 95	5 records	2.5 seconds
Document Tracking Letter	Windows 98	5 records	2.5 seconds
Document Tracking Letter	Windows 2000	5 records	3 seconds
Mailing Labels	NT 4.0	65 records	1 second
Mailing Labels	Windows 95	65 records	1 second
Mailing Labels	Windows 98	65 records	1 second
Mailing Labels	Windows 2000	65 records	1 second
ISIR	NT 4.0	2 records	1.5 seconds
ISIR	Windows 95	2 records	2 seconds
ISIR	Windows 98	2 records	2 seconds
ISIR	Windows 2000	2 records	2 seconds
Processed ISIRs	NT 4.0	29 records	1 second
Processed ISIRs	Windows 95	29 records	1 second
Processed ISIRs	Windows 98	29 records	1 second
Processed ISIRs	Windows 2000	29 records	1 second
Award Letters	NT 4.0	3 records	2 seconds
Award Letters	Windows 95	3 records	2 seconds
Award Letters	Windows 98	3 records	2 seconds
Award Letters	Windows 2000	3 records	2 seconds
Packaging Setup	NT 4.0	25 pages	2 seconds
Packaging Setup	Windows 95	25 pages	2 seconds
Packaging Setup	Windows 98	25 pages	2 seconds
Packaging Setup	Windows 2000	25 pages	2 seconds

Packaging

The benchmarking results of the EDEExpress Packaging process are as follows. Packaging was benchmarked on a stand-alone Pentium 200 with 64 MB of RAM.

Report	Operating System	Benchmarking Volume	Average Time Elapsed
Award Letters	NT 4.0	3 records/9 pages	2 seconds
Award Letters	Windows 95	3 records/9 pages	2 seconds
Award Letters	Windows 98	3 records/9 pages	2 seconds
Award Letters	Windows 2000	3 records/9 pages	2 seconds
Packaging Setup	NT 4.0	25 pages (average)	2 seconds
Packaging Setup	Windows 95	25 pages (average)	2 seconds
Packaging Setup	Windows 98	25 pages (average)	2 seconds
Packaging Setup	Windows 2000	25 pages (average)	2 seconds

Reminders

Back Up Your Database Weekly

You should back up your EDEExpress for Windows database file, EXPRES12.mdb, regularly so you don't lose your data. We recommend that you back up your files at least weekly. You should also back up your data before and after you run utilities as a precautionary measure.

EDEExpress for Windows does not include a backup utility. You must use your own backup software. You should test your backup software to verify its reliability to successfully restore your backups.

Optimize Your Database by Using Software Utilities

The EDEExpress for Windows software contains utilities that allow you to optimize your database if you encounter problems. We recommend that you repair, compact, and verify your database once a week. Once all three are successful, back up the database (see section above).

Run the database utilities in the following order:

- Repair Database
- Compact Database
- Verify Database
- Repair Database
- Compact Database

For specific information regarding repair, compact, and verify, see the appropriate section below.

Run the Repair Database Utility

The repair database utility resolves inconsistencies (also called database corruption) in records storage. Events such as a power outage or a LAN failure can corrupt your database if it occurs while EDEExpress for Windows updates your records.

EDEExpress may not detect database corruption, so if your system behaves unpredictably (for example, you start getting database error messages, even something as simple as a missing flag on a record), use the repair database utility. Running this utility weekly helps to prevent database problems.

Warning: Before using this utility, be sure you have space on your hard drive that is at least equal to three times the current size of the database.

Improve Performance by Using the Compact Database Utility

The compact database utility improves the performance of EDEExpress for Windows by optimizing the database (EXPRES12.MDB) file and reclaiming space on your computer's hard drive. As you add, modify, or delete records in EDEExpress for Windows, the database file can become fragmented.

Running this utility weekly makes the database files smaller and improves system performance. It can also significantly reduce the size of your database. This does not mean that records were removed, only that the database is more compact.

Warning: Before using this utility, be sure you have hard drive space available at least equal to three times the current size of the database.

Prevent Problems by Using the Verify Database Utility

The verify database function checks for data relationship integrity in your database. If EDEExpress for Windows crashes or abnormally halts processing, a record may be missing one of its associated records. Verify Database recreates the missing record.

Running this function weekly helps to prevent problems.

Warning: Before using this utility, be sure you have hard drive space available at least equal to three times the current size of the database.