June 2019

RE: Direct Loan Tools for Windows, Release 19.0

Dear DL Tools Users:

Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce the availability of William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (DL) Tools for Windows, Release 19.0. DL Tools is a Windows-based application designed to provide the following functionality related to all Direct Loan schools' software:

- Compare the School Account Statement (SAS) to loans and actual disbursements recorded in EDExpress or an external file, and/or compare the SAS to the DL Tools Cash database.

- Print the SAS in a readable format.

- Track Cash Receipts (drawdowns) and Refunds of Cash.

- Rebuild your Direct Loan origination and disbursement records in EDExpress using an automated process.

- Run the Disbursement Measurement Tool Report to help monitor Direct Loan records in your EDExpress database.

Release 19.0 was developed to process data for both the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 cycles. In future versions, we will add functionality for each new cycle year, enabling DL Tools to assist you with Direct Loan tasks for the three most recent cycles.

All Direct Loan schools can use the SAS Compare and Cash Management functions. The Rebuild function can be used by schools to rebuild Direct Loan records in EDExpress for Windows databases. Non-EDExpress users can export data from a rebuilt EDExpress database to recreate non-EDExpress loans or databases. For information on creating file formats and exporting data from EDExpress to an external system, see Volume III of the *2019-2020 Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) Technical Reference*.

The Disbursement Measurement Tool Report (available in DL Tools if connected to EDExpress) and the List–Document Activity report (available in EDExpress) assist schools with monitoring current operations, procedures, and program status and can also help meet the Quality Assurance requirement in the Direct Loan program. Tolerances can be applied when running these reports. Tolerances are guidelines you set for evaluating the effectiveness of your school's Direct Loan processes and procedures.

Your school decides which DL Tools reports to use, when to run them, and what action to take as a result. You can use the reports to review progress as part of a continuous improvement plan.

If you do not use EDExpress, you can still use DL Tools to assist in reconciling Direct Loans. You can import cash, loan, or disbursement data from your external Direct Loan system into DL Tools and compare your data to the SAS. Fixed-length record layouts for each of these file types are included in Volume IV, Section 3 of the *2019-2020 COD Technical Reference*.

Important DL Tools Comparison Reports Note: DL Tools Loan and Disbursement Comparison Reports are designed to be run using the SAS with year-to-date (YTD) detail, *not* monthly detail. See Volume VI, Section 8 of the *2019-2020 COD Technical Reference* for information about default settings and SAS option selections. You can change your SAS options (YTD detail, for example) by accessing the COD Web site at cod.ed.gov.

About this Cover Letter

This letter includes the following information:

- Release 19.0 installation and login guidance

- A list of additional enhancements available in Release 19.0

- Release 19.0 software and user documentation download instructions

- Microsoft Windows Compatibility and Section 508 Compliance notices

- Contact information for technical support and additional assistance

Release 19.0 Installation

DL Tools Release 19.0 can be installed as an upgrade to DL Tools Release 18.0, which enables you to carry 2018-2019 data from your Release 18.0 database forward to Release 19.0. You cannot upgrade to Release 19.0 from a DL Tools version earlier than Release 18.0. If you require DL Tools functionality for award years prior to 2018-2019, use Release 17.0 or earlier DL Tools releases.

To upgrade your DL Tools database from Release 18.0 to Release 19.0, run the Stand Alone Custom installation option (for standalone PCs) or the Workstation installation option (for PC workstations accessing a database stored on a network drive).

If you are installing the DL Tools software for the first time, choose the Stand Alone Full installation option (for standalone PCs) or the Network Server and Workstation installation options (for PC workstations accessing a database stored on a network drive).

For more information on installing DL Tools Release 19.0, see the *DL Tools for Windows Release 19.0 Installation Guide*.

Logging into DL Tools

When you first access the software after installation, the default User ID is SYSADMIN and the default password is **$y$tem Adm1n**. Be sure to include the space between **$y$tem** and **Adm1n** (the two parts of the default password).

After you enter the default user ID and password, DL Tools requires that you immediately define a new password for the SYSADMIN. New passwords must be a minimum of 12 characters and must include at least one uppercase letter, one lowercase letter, one number, and one keyboard character that is not a letter or number (such as an exclamation mark or other punctuation symbol). You can adjust the minimum password length and other requirements in the Password Setup dialog box (**Tools**, **Setup**, **Password Setup**).

In addition, the SYSADMIN user ID only provides access to critical administrative functions in order to limit its use for routine software tasks and improve your ability to trace actions taken in the software to specific users. DL Tools administrators at your school should create unique user IDs in Security Users setup with the necessary access and log into the software under those IDs for most software tasks they perform.

For more information on security setup, see DL Tools Help in the software and the *DL Tools Release 19.0 Installation Guide*.

Release 19.0 Enhancements

The following additional enhancements are available in DL Tools Release 19.0:

General Changes

- **Program Year 2019-2020 Added** – We added DL Tools functionality and message classes applicable to program year 2019-2020. Be sure to select the appropriate Program Year value (2018-2019 or 2019-2020) in the DL Tools toolbar before running major functions such as import, print, or compare.

Disbursement Detail External Add (DLEXDISB)

- **Disbursement Date Range Updated for 2019-2020 –** We updated import functionality for the Disbursement Detail External Add file (message class DLEXDISB) to only allow a date range of 10/1/2018 to 12/28/2023 for 2019-2020 disbursement transactions.

Compatibility and Compliance

Microsoft Windows Information

DL Tools, Release 19.0 is supported currently for the Microsoft Windows 7, Windows 8, and Windows 10 operating systems. For more information on minimal and optimal system recommendations, see the *DL Tools Release 19.0 Installation Guide* and the March 7, 2017 electronic announcement posted to the IFAP Web site.

Note: Federal Student Aid has completed compatibility testing using the Microsoft Corporation's Windows 10 as an operating system for both the EDExpress and DL Tools programs, and we did not identify any issues. Watch for an electronic announcement on the IFAP Web site describing our Windows 10 testing in more detail.

Section 508 Compliance

To comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, DL Tools is compatible with screen reader technology used by the visually impaired. Screen reader software cannot interpret color shading in DL Tools software entry fields. To accommodate this restriction, all DL Tools fields that are shaded yellow to indicate they are required also display a "-R" after the software label. The "-R" indicates a required field.

Getting Help

If You Have Technical Support Questions

Contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support if you have questions regarding DL Tools installation or functionality or you require other technical assistance.

You can reach CPS/SAIG Technical Support Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. (ET), at **800/330-5947** (**TDD/TTY 800/511-5806**). You can also send e-mail inquiries, comments, or suggestions to CPSSAIG@ed.gov.

You can also post questions regarding DL Tools on FSATECH. FSATECH is an electronic mailing list for technical questions about Federal Student Aid systems, software, and mainframe products. For more information on subscribing to FSATECH, go to https://www2.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html.

If You Have Questions Regarding the COD System

If you have any questions about the COD System, contact the COD School Relations Center at **800/848-0978**. You may also e-mail CODSupport@ed.gov.