

COUNSELOR CONNECT



A Publication for
Louisiana's Professional
SCHOOL COUNSELORS

March 24, 2016



My name is Jeanez Beckcom and I am a Louisiana licensed professional school counselor with over 30 years' experience in K-12 professional school counseling. During my career I had the privilege of working in Beauregard Parish. Currently, I provide services for the Statewide Counselor Assistance Center. In that role I provide students, parents, and professional school counselors with support services for student planning.

Time is always short in the counselor's office. New policies and programs always arise, and there is little time to effectively research each to better assist our students. It is important to note that there are many excellent and easy to use resources available for assisting middle/high school students, and [Louisiana's High School Student Planning Guidebook](#) is one of those resources.

The newly released 2016-2017 Louisiana High School Student Planning Guidebook provides detailed information on state policies, statewide programs, and access to tools that help educators achieve goals with their students. It provides comprehensive guidance for counselors and students in planning for college and career readiness and should be a counselor's go-to resource for all things needed when working with middle and high school students.

The *Guidebook* includes brief chapters on the following:

1. **Plan for Struggling Students** through Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) and Pupil Progression Plan (PPP) assistance, guidance and provision of high school courses necessary for completion of freshman course requirements
2. **Focus on 9th and 10th Grade Students** by ensuring their mastery of a set of foundational academic skills in core subjects
3. **New Jump Start Opportunities** that indicate to parents and students which Jump Start graduation pathways are available through community colleges, industry training facilities, and local industry
4. **Development of Advanced & Basic College & Workplace Skills** for 11th and 12th Grades through student pathways that connect with real outcomes after school for college-bound and career-bound students
5. **Principal and Counseling Supports** that provide links to all counselor support sites from the Counseling Assistance Center (CAC) to LOSFA, as well as tables for each diploma type with listed course requirements
6. **Additional Resources** that provide simple charts showing accountability measures/points from drop out/credit accumulation, EOC and ACT, as well as those from graduation types and diploma strengths Accountability System, All Things Jump Start Web Portal, and Graduation Pathways

Please take time to look through the [High School Student Guidebook](#). It is indeed "A Path to Prosperity for Every Student" and includes everything a counselor needs in one document to successfully guide students through graduation and beyond.

Jeanez Beckcom
Professional School Counselor, Retired
Statewide Counselor's Assistance Center

Financial Aid Planning Study Group Update

On March 1, 2016, to ensure parents, students, and districts have a forum to provide feedback on Louisiana's financial aid access and supports, the Department organized and held the first meeting of the [Financial Aid Working Group](#), a diverse group of organizations with an interest in increasing post-secondary access to Louisiana's students.

The group is tasked with the following:

- develop a state action plan for school-level financial aid form completion and propose recommended policy or funding changes ensure that the new policy is effectively implemented
- assist the Department in the ongoing identification of support services and programs available for secondary schools and families
- assist in the development of partnerships and alliances with financial aid-related support programs, services, and other stakeholders

Next Meeting Dates: April 21 and June 9.

For more information contact: JumpStart@la.gov.

Student Planning Guidebook Webinar Series

The High School Student Planning Guidebook is a series of short documents showing administrators, counselors, and teachers how to use key policies, programs, and resources to help both students and schools achieve their goals.

Weekly Guidebook webinars will be held from 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. on the dates outlined below:

April 21, 2016: Guide Overview & Planning for Struggling Students

April 28, 2016: Guide Overview & 9th and 10th Grade Students/New Jump Start Opportunities

May 5, 2016: Guide Overview & Developing Advanced and Basic College and Workplace Skills

May 12, 2016: Guide Overview & Counseling, Supports, Rewards, Jump Start Web Portal, Alternate Jump Start Pathways

Webinar information below: (*No pre-registration required)

- Click <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/studentplanningguide/>
- Enter meeting room as a guest and provide your name
- Audio access: (800) 832-0736 / room number: 2834406
- For additional information, please contact CollegeReadiness@la.gov.

LOSFA - Assistance for Students and Parents with Financial Aid

LOSFA's mission is to promote and provide postsecondary access. LOSFA representatives can help students and parents register for FSA IDs and complete their FAFSA applications. Representatives can also help parents and students interpret Student Aid Reports and answer questions about student award letters, the FAFSA verification process and federal and state aid programs. Representatives are available to provide a variety of financial aid seminars and additional information for workshops, parent nights and community events. LOSFA also sends out text message reminders for students and updates its social media accounts with additional resources.

For more information: www.osfa.la.gov.

Student FAFSA Completion Data

The Louisiana Office of Student and Financial Assistance (LOSFA) has an agreement with the U.S. Department of Education that now allows LOSFA to communicate FAFSA completion rates with each Local Educational Agency (LEAs) in the state as well as with certain college access service providers, provided that those LEAs and service providers enter an agreement with LOSFA. LOSFA is partnering with the state's school boards and college access providers to ensure that all high school seniors have an opportunity to complete the FAFSA.

If you would like to participate in this project, please contact LOSFA at custserv@osfa.la.gov with the subject line FAFSA Completion Project.

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Requesting Copies of High School Equivalency Transcripts

Submit the request for [Copy of High School Equivalency Transcript Scores](#) to obtain a copy of your high school equivalency transcript. Please complete the form in its entirety and return via fax, 225-922-1203, email, rwhite@lctcs.edu, or mail to the address on the form. Please contact 225-922-2800, if additional assistance is needed.

Requests are processed in the order received;

- Allow 3-5 days for processing;
- ALL record results WILL be mailed and CANNOT be faxed; and
- A student can pick up a copy of his/her transcript at the [LCTCS office](#) from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Friday

NOTE: If you recently completed the Louisiana High School Equivalency Test, HI SET®, your test results will be mailed to you in approximately 3 weeks. There is no need to submit a request form.

LCTCS, Work Ready U Main Contact:
265 South Foster Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

2016-2017 Assessment Calendar

The calendar provides a schedule of all assessment dates for grades K- 12 for the 2016-2017 school year. Please email assessment@la.gov with questions. The 2016-2017 assessment calendar can be found [here](#).

Graduation Cohort Data Certification and Exit Code Review Audit

Louisiana calculates school, district, and state graduation rates as part of its accountability system. School systems undergo a graduation cohort data certification process each year to ensure these measures are accurate. Cohort graduation rosters are now posted in the Louisiana Data Review online system. The rosters will include the data used to calculate the graduation rate and strength of diploma indices for school performance scores. This review is the final opportunity for districts to request changes to the 2014-2015 cohort graduation data.

NOTE: The CLEP test scores for 2014-2015 graduation cohort members were not available for the rosters that are posted in the Louisiana Data Review online system. The Department will automatically update the strength of diploma index data with the College Board file when data certification closes, as done last year for the 2013-2014 graduation cohort.

Please email assessment@la.gov with additional questions.

Assessment Administration Update

Across the state, educators are preparing for the administration of the Spring 2016 assessments. This section will provide LEAs with a weekly update on all information related to assessment preparation. Test Administration for District Test Coordinators (DTCs):

LEAP Assessments: From February 1 to April 1, 2016, districts should complete the following:

- **NEW:** Receive and distribute Braille practice test materials by March 18, 2016
- **NEW:** Submit schedules for schools testing online to assessment@la.gov by April 4, 2016. Only schools testing online need to submit schedules.
- **NEW:** Provide test security and test administration training to all staff involved in testing. Resources are available in the assessment library.
- **NEW:** Review Online Test Scheduling Guidance.
- Access and refer to the LEAP Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document located in the assessment library.
- Access Large Print practice tests for students with this accommodation.
- Review the LEAP Accessibility and Accommodation Manual, with new Math Read-Aloud guidance.

ELDA/LAA1

- **March 15:** DTCs should have submitted voids and other testing irregularities to

assessment@la.gov by March 15, 2016.

ACT Assessment:

- **March 25:** School test coordinators must submit ACT and WorkKeys answer documents to ACT. Documents that arrive late will not be scored.

WorkKeys Assessment:

- **March 17:** School test coordinators must securely transport initial test date materials to the district office. Test materials are picked up at the district office via the prescheduled pickup.
- **March 25:** School test coordinators must submit ACT and WorkKeys answer documents to ACT. Documents that arrive late will not be scored.

PLAN and EXPLORE Assessments:

- **March 25:** DTCs must send PLAN and EXPLORE answer folders to ACT for processing. Districts that send answer folders to ACT after this date may be charged for processing.

EOC

- **March 24:** DTCs need to ensure IEP, IAP, and LEP accommodations for the Spring 2016 EOC tests administration window are finalized.
- **April 4:** DTCs must submit schedules for EOC testing to assessment@la.gov.

2016 Jump Start Super Summer Institute

The 2016 Jump Start Super Summer Institute (SSI) is July 18 - 22, 2016, at South Louisiana Community College in Lafayette, LA. The Institute, co-hosted by the Louisiana Department of Education, South Louisiana Community College, and the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, will provide teacher certification training for Industry-Based Certifications aligned with Jump Start Statewide Pathways and the Louisiana Industry-Based Certification (IBC) State Focus List.

Registration is open and will close April 19, 2016. To register, click [here](#).

For a list of Lafayette Jump Start SSI discounted hotels, click [here](#).

The Department will pay training costs and provide lunch for secondary instructors attending SSI. LEAs are responsible for all travel expenses and a nominal registration fee (\$150.00/instructor) for which Career Development Funds (CDF) or 2015-2016 Carl Perkins funds may be used. Each district/charter will be invoiced for total registration fees due and will submit payment no later than June 17, 2016, to the following address:

Louisiana Department of Education
Appropriation Control
ATTN: Michelle S. Hill
P. O. Box 94064
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064

Instructional resources (books, etc.) will be mailed to CTE supervisors, by June 15, 2016, for distribution to registered instructors. Please direct all questions about Super Summer Institute to JumpStart@la.gov.

2016 Advanced Placement® Exam Administration

AP® Exams start the week of May 2. The complete exam schedule can be found [here](#). April 8 is the deadline to order pre administration materials. All orders placed after April 8 will incur a \$55 late fee. Please visit and review your school's online AP coordinator account to ensure that your orders have been properly placed and processed [here](#).

As an additional resource, please take a moment to review the AP® Coordinator Planning Calendar for important dates and deadlines.

For more information contact the College Board at 877-274-6474 or emailapexams@info.collegeboard.org.

The cohort graduation index recognizes a score of 3 or higher on at least one AP® exam as one of the highest levels of achievement earned by a cohort graduate. Each student with at least one AP® score of 3 or higher will earn the maximum 150 points toward the graduation index. Students who take an AP® course and associated exam and earn a 1 or 2 on an AP® exam will receive 110 points toward the graduation index.

Youth Suicide Prevention "Training of Trainers" Training Sessions

Louisiana state law requires all school staff to receive annual suicide prevention training. The Department of Education recommends every school district have procedures in place to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide.

The Louisiana Department of Education, in collaboration with the Office of Behavioral Health, will offer a series of free Youth Suicide Prevention "Training of Trainers" training sessions designed to help schools develop appropriate prevention policies, to recognize signs of suicide and to react appropriately.

- ***Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for Middle and High Schools***, March 16, 2016, LSUS University, Shreveport, LA, University Center Ballroom, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- ***Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for Middle and High Schools***, March 24, 2016, Claiborne Building, Baton Rouge, LA, Thomas Jefferson Room, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- ***Suicide Prevention Policy Development Training***, May 3, 2016, Claiborne Building, Baton Rouge, LA, Iowa Room, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- ***Signs of Suicide (SOS) Training***, May 11-12, 2016, Jefferson Parish Public School System Administration Building, Harvey, LA, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Participants may register for any or all the sessions on Coursewhere by clicking [here](#).

LDOE Contacts

[John White](#)
State Superintendent of Education
877.453.2721 (toll-free)
Twitter [@LouisianaSupe](#)

LDOE Links

[LDOE Website](#)
[Contact Us](#)