

COUNSELOR CONNECT



A Publication for
Louisiana's Professional
SCHOOL COUNSELORS

In This Issue

Counselor Spotlight: Lindsay Carlino

Continuous Education Guidance

LSCA Award Nominations

Course Credit & Promotion Guidance

Professional Opportunities

Middle and High School News

In Case You Missed It

Counselor Spotlight: Lindsay Carlino



As I have learned to navigate the rapidly changing landscape of education these past few weeks, I have discovered that we school counselors already have the skill set to advocate for our students and provide them with the services they need during this unprecedented time. The difficult part comes when we run into barriers due to inequities in students' access to resources. While I realize that many of these tips and tricks are not feasible for all districts, schools, or grade levels, many of them can be modified to serve our students under a variety of circumstances. Our adaptability is one of our greatest assets. I know you are already receiving emails about what resources are available, providing and participating in webinars, researching best practices and creating modifications to your current comprehensive school counseling programs. Therefore, my intent is not to inundate you with resources but to remind everyone that the core of our work with students remains the same. It is only the method of delivery that has changed.

As school counselors, we are used to looking at the whole picture. Our training of approaching each situation from a holistic viewpoint can be especially helpful to our school communities when planning, implementing, and revising our schools' distance learning plans. It is important that we continue to be the voice for our students by providing suggestions and feedback to our administrators and faculty. Many times, there is information that we are privy to that could be helpful to a teacher or administrator when working with students during this time.

It is important to keep up the rapport that we have built up with our students during the academic year. I have found success with this by continuing to hold virtual academic support meetings and "College & Career Groups" that usually take place during lunch. There are so many platforms to use such as Skype, Zoom, etc. The important thing is that we continue to provide our students with direct and indirect services that facilitate academic achievement, personal growth, and college and career readiness. Each school counselor should be receiving direction from his or her district about how to address these points with students.

As usual, boundaries are of the utmost of importance. Not only are many of us on our computers all day, we are now balancing our professional lives with other responsibilities such as childcare and homeschooling. One thing that has been particularly helpful is that my co-counselors and I have come up with office hours when we are available to all stakeholders by email Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. We also have a consistent auto-reply email message so that students and parents have the most up-to-date information about how our department is assisting students during this time. Additionally, I have included emergency resources should they be needed. One of the most helpful things that I have done is to create a Google Voice account so that I could place calls to parents without disclosing my personal information. Many of these services have "do not disturb" settings so we don't receive notifications outside of school hours.

Self-care is especially important during this time. Networking with our peers is a great way to vent, feel heard, and brainstorm ideas. I have held two debriefing sessions for school counselors within my community of schools and plan on holding more in the upcoming weeks. I got the idea from a friend who is a counselor educator in Oklahoma, and I am so glad that I tried it out here in Louisiana. Many of the school counselors that participated found it very helpful since we are all working in isolation at our homes and are venturing into uncharted territory with various online platforms. It provided a safe space for us to foster community and share our challenges, which is something that everyone needs a lot of right now.

Lindsay Carlino, M.Ed., LPC
LSCA School Counselor of the Year
Class of 2023 School Counselor
St. Joseph's Academy

Continuous Education Guidance

The [Louisiana Continuous Education Toolkit: Academic Resources](#) document includes resources on the following topics:

- Core instruction
- Serving students with disabilities
- At-home learning from Louisiana Public Broadcasting
- World languages guidance
- At-home resources to support physical education
- AP/IB/CLEP exam solutions
- FAQs about ACT preparation providers
- Career and technical education

CTE continuous learning solutions include access to software, learning management systems, self-paced content, remote proctoring options for industry-based certification, and more.

Please visit the [LDOE COVID-19 Information and Resources web page](#) for all LDOE guidance for supporting educators and families during school closures.

LSCA Award Nominations: Deadline Extended

Each year, the [Louisiana School Counselor Association \(LSCA\)](#) formally recognizes those who have made significant contributions to the school counseling profession. LSCA recently extended the deadline to [nominate](#) elementary, middle, high school, and postsecondary counselors of the year. LSCA is also accepting nominations for advocacy, administrator/supervisor, legislator, and writing recognition awards.

Please share the Annual School Counselor Recognition and Awards Program [information document](#) with interested parties, and consider submitting your own nomination. The deadline for nominations is Thursday, April 30, 2020; applications are due Saturday, May 30, 2020. Please visit the [LSCA School Counselor of the Year Award page](#) for more information.

Course Credit & Promotion Guidance 2019-2020

School systems should maintain efforts to provide student learning opportunities for the remainder of the regularly scheduled academic year. The [Department's COVID-19 web page](#) includes various distance education models, samples of daily schedules and communication systems, an inventory of instructional materials, and guidance on how to identify and manage staffing needs.

Senior Course Credit and Graduation Guidance

The April 2020 [Regulatory Flexibility Guidance: Senior Course Credit and Graduation document](#) clarifies policy waivers for instructional time, credentials, and assessment for students who are graduating 2019-2020.

Course Credit and Academic Records

Awarding Credit

When awarding credit, school systems should determine if students have demonstrated proficiency in the grade-level content and/or courses. If it is determined that a student has not demonstrated proficiency, schools can provide options to help students meet credit requirements via distance learning options: online coursework, written work packets, project-based learning portfolios, or work-based learning when current high school course standards align with a student's job. Grades will be awarded on an A-F scale for non-seniors in accordance with the state uniform grading scale as outlined in [Bulletin](#) 741 §2302 Uniform Grading Policy.

Entering Credits in the Student Transcript System (STS)

The school system should enter the grade and course(s) into STS when the course is completed. STS is open through September to enter courses and grades from the previous year/summer and for students needing more time to complete a course as a result of COVID-19.

K-11 Assessments

Louisiana will not require standardized testing for the 2019-2020 school year. The U.S. Department of Education approved Louisiana's waiver request of assessment, accountability, and reporting requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Promotion and Retention

K-8

In 2019-2020, promotion and retention for grades K-8 are local decisions based on a preponderance of evidence from student learning throughout the school year. Performance on classroom assignments, course grades, and any benchmark assessments are examples of items school systems can use when making a local decision. Struggling students should continue to be identified early and receive intensive support to ensure growth and the ability to stay on track academically.

Grade 8

Student placement for the 2020-2021 school year in grade 8, T9, or grade 9 remains at the discretion of the local school or school system, in consultation where the student was enrolled in 8th grade, with the student's parents. Placement in T9 can be based on data from the following sources:

- benchmark assessment results
- classroom assessment results
- course grades
- student growth
- IEP goals
- attendance records

Placement decisions should be made by the sending school no later than July 31, 2020.

Academic Improvement Plans

Grade 4

Based on evidence from student learning throughout the school year, school systems may elect to create Individual Academic Improvement Plans (IAIP) for students who are struggling, though no mandate will be enforced. The LEAP 360 diagnostic assessments will be available to assist with plans for individualized support and intervention in 2020-2021 for English language arts and mathematics. A template for the IAIP is available in the policy library.

Grades 5-7

Students placed on an Individual Academic Improvement Plan (IAIP) at the end of 2018-2019 should continue to receive supports and interventions. The LEAP 360 diagnostic assessments will be available to assist with plans for updated support and intervention in 2020-2021 for English language arts and mathematics. A template for the IAIP is available in the policy library.

Professional Opportunities

2020 Super Summer Institutes

In light of ongoing health concerns, and at the direction of local and national authorities, the 2020 Super Summit Institute will not occur in June and July via a face-to-face model. Instead, these training opportunities will be delivered in a digital format. The dynamic [2020 Jump Start Super Summer Institute Digital Training Opportunities Guide](#) lists the professional development and training opportunities that are currently available. Note: this list is not comprehensive and will continue to be updated as additional training options are confirmed. Please refer to the [2020 Super Summer Institute FAQ Document](#) for information about refunds, registration, etc. Email questions to jumpstart@la.gov.

2020 LCA Annual Conference

The [2020 Louisiana Counseling Association](#) Annual Conference is scheduled to take place October 4 through 6 in Baton Rouge. The theme of this year's conference is, How do We Know We Are Good at What We Do? Please visit the [conference web page](#) for more information.

Free Webinars from ACTE

The Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) online seminars are generally only available to members as a professional development resource, these resources are now available, at least until May 31, to the entire CTE community due to COVID-19. Recent webinars include the following:

- [The Ultimate Learning Experience: Impacting Student Outcomes Using Virtual Reality](#)
- [Expanding Your CTE Programs with Blended Learning](#)
- [Engaging Industry Partners to Create Authentic Learning](#)

Please visit the [ACTE Professional Development web page](#) for more information.

NCAA Professional Opportunities

COVID-19 Impact on Initial Eligibility Webinar

The Eligibility Center will be hosting a webinar on the impact COVID-19 has on student-athletes and their ability to meet initial-eligibility requirements. This webinar will have a live chat function to allow participants to ask questions about what their students need to do to be eligible to play.

Time: Tuesday, April 28 at 2 p.m. Eastern time

Meeting URL: <https://ncaa.webex.com/mw3300/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=ncaa&service=0>

Meeting number (access code): 800 619 299

Meeting password: EC2020

High School Advisory Group: Applications Open

Members of the NCAA High School Advisory Group provide critical insight into the most recent needs, trends, and challenges faced by those who advocate for and support high school athletes. The advisory group is comprised of high school counselors, administrators, and others involved in the high school space nationally. To be considered for membership, please submit a resume and 500-word statement describing why you would like to serve in the High School Advisory Group to ecupdate@ncaa.org. Entries must be submitted by Sunday, May 31. Participation in the group is a two-year commitment and includes monthly teleconferences during the academic year.

Middle and High School News

Individual Graduation Plans

To the extent possible, school systems should complete the Individual Graduation Planning (IGP) process for student planning and scheduling for the 2020-2021 school year prior to the end of the regularly scheduled school year. Graduation planning starts in the 8th grade. Each student's Individual Graduation Plan lists the courses the student will take in subsequent years and identify the diploma path they choose in 10th grade. The plan is reviewed and updated annually.

Jump Start Career Diploma LEAP 2025 and IBC Requirements

The LEAP 2025 initial testing waivers allow students on a Jump Start Career diploma pathway to meet

mathematics testing requirements for graduation as long as they are never enrolled in Geometry. **The regulatory flexibility for the Jump Start IBC credential requirement is only for the 2020 graduating class.** Students who would have taken an IBC related to their Jump Start pathway will have the opportunity to continue engaging with content and take an on-time exam or have an opportunity to take an exam at later date as part of continuous learning in their Jump Start pathway this spring/summer or in the subsequent school year(s).

Jump Start Scholars Construction Connect Scholarship: Deadline Extended

The deadline for [submitting applications](#) for the state's first and only scholarship dedicated exclusively to Jump Start graduates **has been extended to May 1.** The Jump Start Construction Connect Scholars Program is a \$1000 scholarship for students who have earned the Jump Start Diploma, earned a National Center for Construction Education and Research credential, and plan to enroll in an LCTCS campus on a construction pathway or in an Associated Builders and Contractors training program. Please email stephanie.marcum@la.gov for more information.

Dual Enrollment

The Louisiana Board of Regents is bringing a policy recommendation forward this month that would allow a student to

- continue a course via distance learning options through the higher education institution and earn credit when the course ends;
- opt for an "In Progress" designation and have until August 31, 2020, to complete the course and earn credit; or
- opt for an administrative withdrawal and exit the course with no credit and nothing posted to the official college transcript.

These options should be coordinated and determined through the student's IGP planning process. If it has been determined locally that a student has demonstrated proficiency in the requisite high school course content, schools may opt to switch the course to a regular high school course code and award credit without the dual enrollment credit on the higher education institution transcript. The dual enrollment portion of the credit can be registered at a later time.

Supplemental Course Academy/Course Choice Intersession

Due to the extended school closures, the Department has updated SCA protocols and procedures. Please refer to the following documents for more information:

- [SCA COVID-19 FAQs](#)
- [Information for ACT Preparation Providers](#)
- [COVID-19 Intersession Provider Directory](#)
- [COVID-19 Intersession Registration Procedures 2019-2020](#)

AP, CLEP, IB Assessment Updates and Guidance

The College Board and International Baccalaureate have made adjustments to assessment schedules due to COVID-19. Please monitor the [LDOE COVID-19 Exam Guidance Solutions Document](#) for updates. This document is updated with new information as it is released from The College Board. Refer to the [AP Exam FAQ Document](#) for new information about AP exams. Email meredith.mcgovern@la.gov for support.

Financial Aid Planning

Schools may use the hardship waiver for any students who have not met their financial aid graduation requirement. Regardless of whether they use the [sample waiver](#) provided by the Department or create their own, schools must be able to make each waiver available, and every individual waiver must be signed by the principal.

NCAA COVID-19 Response FAQ

The NCAA Eligibility Center has partnered with the NCAA membership to identify adjustments to the initial-eligibility certification process. Please refer to the [NCAA Eligibility Center COVID-19 Response FAQ document](#) to learn more about these adjustments. NCAA Customer Service is available to assist with questions Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Eastern time at 877-622-2321.

In Case You Missed It

[DEPARTMENT RELEASES SURVEY RESULTS REGARDING CONTINUOUS EDUCATION IN](#)

[PUBLIC SCHOOLS](#) (Louisiana Believes)

[THERE ARE STILL OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS TO RECEIVE FINANCIAL AID DURING COVID-19 CRISIS](#) (WAFB)

[CORONAVIRUS: LAFAYETTE LIBRARIANS, TEACHERS FIND WAYS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO READ AT HOME](#) (Daily Advertiser)

[SECRETARY DEVOS ANNOUNCES CTE PROGRAMS CAN DONATE UNUSED PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT, MEDICAL SUPPLIES TO SUPPORT CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE](#) (USDOE)

[LOUISIANA SCHOOLS TO REMAIN CLOSED FOR YEAR AMID CORONAVIRUS; SOME CONTINUING REMOTE LEARNING](#) (NOLA.com)

[SCHOOL COUNSELORS SCRAMBLE TO HELP KIDS GRAPPLING WITH DISRUPTED ROUTINES, CORONAVIRUS ANXIETY](#) (NOLA.com)

[DEPARTMENT DETAILS NEXT STEPS FOR CURRENT HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS AMID COVID-19 SCHOOL CLOSURES](#) (Louisiana Believes)

[SECRETARY OF EDUCATION BETSY DEVOS AUTHORIZES NEW FUNDING FLEXIBILITIES TO SUPPORT CONTINUED LEARNING DURING COVID-19 NATIONAL EMERGENCY](#) (USDOE)