

COUNSELOR CONNECT



A Publication for
Louisiana's Professional
SCHOOL COUNSELORS

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As we focus on finishing this semester strong and moving into 2020, assessing how students performed in the first semester is a top priority when we return after the holidays. Meetings with seniors to address any barriers to graduation will soon follow, and scheduling students for next school year is on the horizon. Individualized graduation planning can be a daunting task; however, it is in everyone's best interest to be on track for graduation.

Updating the IGP each year can happen in a variety of ways. Whether presented in a large group setting, as part of a classroom guidance lesson, or individually, there are opportunities to capitalize on building rapport with students. For example, I have teamed up with the Introduction to Business Computer Applications (IBCA) teachers for the last three years to present to incoming freshman and explain the importance of earning industry-based credentials. It sets the tone for expectations and gives me an opportunity to learn the names and personalities of the students. We also cover how to read a transcript as we walk through the components of their IGPs.

The relationships formed during those presentations, as well as the ones reserved for the upperclassmen, have been foundational for discovering the career plans and dreams of many students. This year, I added a short student survey of personal interests, accomplishments, and goals to all grade-level IGP presentations in order to have starting points for individual conversations. Several students have reflected back on the impact of personalized follow-up. Not only was it an opportunity to build trust, it relayed to the students that they are valued and their voice mattered.

A recurring challenge is getting teenagers to bring back signed forms. However, I have found that the more informed the students are about their educational progression options, the more responsibility they take for their successes. At Sumner, we have tied the task to receiving PBIS points as a reward and have had great success in the return rate!

Sometimes we have to think outside of the box to accomplish tasks. It is helpful when we share suggestions with each other, especially ones we can adjust to fit our specific school settings and that aid us in being more time efficient. The creativity is often motivation to keep us inspired. I look forward

to sharing more about my processes and other resources at the [2020 Jump Start Convention](#) next month, and I eagerly await the conversations with my colleagues as we all work together to prepare students for their future careers.

Kristi Lawson, M.A., M.Ed., LPC-S, LMFT, NCC
Jewel M. Sumner High School Counselor

National School Counseling Week 2020

[National School Counseling Week \(NSCW\)](#) is a time to highlight the countless ways school counselors ensure their students become productive, well-adjusted adults by supporting academic achievement, career development, and social/emotional development. Sponsored by the American School Counselor Association, NSCW is always celebrated the first full week of February. **NSCW 2020 is February 3-7.**



Please follow the [Department](#) on social media to share your #NSCW2020 activities. Visit the [NSCW](#) website for ideas and inspiration, and download additional resources from the [LDOE Counselor Support Library](#).

Student Opportunities

Scholarship for AP Computer Science Students

The [Amazon Future Engineer](#) scholarship program offers \$40,000 scholarships and guaranteed Amazon internships to high school seniors who plan to enroll in computer science, software engineering, computer engineering, and other computer-related fields of study.

Application deadline: January 17, 2020 3:00 p.m.

Please visit the Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship Program [web page](#) for more information. Visit [The Amazon Blog](#) for a short video that tells the story of a previous winner.

Career Development Poetry and Art Contest

One of the many ways the National Career Development Association (NCDA) promotes career exploration for **all ages** is by sponsoring an annual poetry and art contest. This year's contest theme is **My Inspiring Future Career**.

The winning entries for each division will be recognized and displayed on the NCDA [website](#) and at the annual [Global Career Development Conference](#). National winners will also receive a special certificate and congratulatory gift from the NCDA.

Award Divisions

- Primary: grades K-2
- Intermediate: grades 3-5
- Middle: grades 6-8
- Senior: grades 9-12
- Adult Student: ages 18 and older, enrolled in school
- Open Adult: ages 18 and older, not enrolled in school

Entries for the state-level contest can be submitted to info@louisianacareerdevelopment.org as a PDF or JPG by **January 20, 2020**. Please see the [contest brochure](#) for complete details.

Professional Development Opportunities

2020 Teacher Leader Summit: Call for Presenters

The Department is looking for knowledgeable educators to share resources and best practices with others around the state by designing and facilitating sessions at the 2020 Teacher Leader Summit. **Interested parties [must submit an application online](#) by January 13, 2020.**

Note: The Department will waive the Summit registration fee for up to three presenters per session.

The 2020 Teacher Leader Summit is May 27-29, 2020, at the Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. Please see the TL Summit [overview document](#) for more information.

2020 Jump Start Convention: Registration Closing Soon

[Registration for the 2020 Jump Start Convention](#) closes on January 3.

Sessions topics include the following:

- new STEM pathways
- math content and industry expectations
- advanced approaches to career readiness
- resources to support Jump Start students

In the afternoon, all participants will learn about the new pathways that will be considered for adoption in spring 2020.

When: January 28, 2020

Where: Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Please visit the [Jump Start Meetings and Training Opportunities](#) web page or email jumpstart@la.gov for more information.

Louisiana Career Connections Conference

[Registration](#) is now open for the 2020 Career Connections Conference.

Hosted by the [Louisiana Career Development Association](#) (LCDA), the 2020 conference will feature NCDA President-Elect Seth Hayden and LCDA President-Elect Christopher Belser. Conference sessions will center on connections between career development and mental health and fostering partnerships among professionals who provide career development programming. These sessions have been approved by the Louisiana Counseling Association and the National Board for Certified Counselors for a combined 6.0 CEU hours (4.5 hours are approved for LPCs in the area of diagnosis).

When: January 24, 2020

Where: Baton Rouge, Louisiana

LCDA members can purchase tickets at a discounted rate until January 1. See the [event registration page](#) or email info@louisianacareerdevelopment.org for more information.

Professional Development from the College Board

The upcoming free webinar, "Beyond Opportunity: Advanced Placement Program for Your Students," is an introductory presentation about the AP program, the types of courses and exams offered, and an overview of exam scores.

When: February 11, 2020

Where: Online

Visit the College Board [Professional Learning page](#) for more information about professional development opportunities available to school counselors.

Evidence-Based School Counseling Conference

The [Evidence-Based School Counseling Conference](#) highlights emerging interventions created by innovative school counselors and leading edge research produced by school counselor educators from around the country.

2020 conference topics include developing student academic success; closing achievement, opportunity and/or attainment gaps; promoting mental health and wellness; improving coordination of services; and using efficacious college and career counseling models and methods.

In addition to the two regular conference days is a pre-conference research day focused on equipping school counselor educators, school counseling practitioners, and other educational stakeholders with the methodological, evaluation, and writing skills to successfully implement school counseling research agendas.

Research Day: March 19, 2020

Conference: March 20-21, 2020

Where: Florida Atlantic University

Visit the [conference website](#) for more information.

Middle and High School News

Spring 2020 Course Choice Registration Closing Soon

Schools must document all SCA private provider and dual enrollments in the [Course Choice Registration System](#) by the end of registration deadlines in order to use SCA funds for a course. **Registration for Course Choice Spring 2020 closes at 5:00 p.m. on January 10, 2020.**

Please refer to the [Course Choice Registration Instructions](#) document for details; email sca@la.gov with questions.

Military Selective Service Act

Per the United States [Military Selective Service Act](#), men living in the U.S., citizen and non-citizens alike, are required to register with Selective Service at 18 years old. Men who register with Selective Service remain eligible for federal student financial aid, state-funded student financial aid, federal employment, state employment, job training under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, security clearances, and U.S. citizenship for immigrant men. Selective Service accepts early registrations as young as 17 years and 3 months.

[Registration](#) can be completed online or by mail. Please visit the [Selective Service System website](#) for more information.

In Case You Missed It

[STUDENTS DO BETTER IN SCHOOL WHEN THEY CAN UNDERSTAND, MANAGE EMOTIONS](#)
(American Psychological Association)

[CONGRESS JUST MADE IT A LOT EASIER FOR STUDENTS TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID](#)
(CNN)

[CALCASIEU AND CADDO PARISHES TO PILOT DEBT-FREE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO EARN CAREER SKILLS, CREDIT TOWARD COLLEGE DEGREE](#) (Louisiana Believes)

[NEW POLICY MAY ALLOW STUDENTS TO BOOST ACT SCORES](#) (The Advocate)