

# COUNSELOR CONNECT

A Publication for Louisiana's  
Professional School Counselors

September 2021

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## Counseling Team Spotlight: Carroll High School



*Left to Right: Wanda Scurfield, Constance Wilson, Aletha A. Nelson*

As high school counselors, we contribute to the academic and personal growth of our students. We play an integral part in their lives as we advocate, support, celebrate and guide them toward adulthood. We continually consult with our students and assist them in identifying their strengths, abilities, and weaknesses, to ensure they reach their full potential. As we direct them and help them to think seriously about their academic futures and prepare for graduation, there are many challenges we face along the way: lack of time, non-participation, and the ongoing COVID pandemic are just a few.

At our Carroll High School, Mrs. Nelson and I are meeting these challenges by working closely with our Graduation Coach, Mrs. Constance Wilson. Together we collaborate with our administrative team, teachers, students, and parents to ensure that students are on track towards graduation. We work together to see that students make informed decisions about their future education or career plan. As a team, we implement workshops designed to teach students how to effectively complete college and scholarship applications and resumes. We discuss TOPS eligibility requirements. And to give our students firsthand experiences, we host college and career fairs and participate in college tours.

Other programs available to our students through Mrs. Wilson's office include Match and Fit, Financial Literacy, Cross Curricular and FAFSA completion. It is through her diligence in working with us, the counselors, students, and parents, that Carroll High School has placed first in the LOSFA FAFSA Connect competition for the past six years!

Another result of the collaborative approach at Carroll High School is an increase in both graduation rates and the number of students entering postsecondary institutions. Seeing our students walk across the stage in May makes all of it worthwhile!

**Wanda Scurfield, M.Ed.**

Professional School Counselor, Carroll High School

**Aletha A. Nelson, M.S., LPC-S**, School Counselor; **Constance Wilson, M.Ed.**, Gear Up Coordinator, Graduation Coach

## Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

Childhood obesity remains one of the greatest challenges to our national public health. Louisiana is among the states with the highest rates of childhood obesity, and the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the increases that have been observed over the last several decades. September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, which is a time to promote resources and tools that advocate for healthy growth and prevent obesity in Louisiana children. Please visit the [Louisiana Fit Kids](#) website for the [April](#) and [September Understanding Childhood Obesity](#) webinars hosted by the Louisiana Department of Education and Pennington Biomedical Research Center.

## National Attendance Awareness Month

September is National Attendance Awareness Month—an opportunity to inspire students and families to attend school more regularly, whether in person, virtual, or hybrid. The pandemic, hurricanes, and hurricane recovery have become barriers to attendance for many Louisiana students, but our students and families are resilient! Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) directors, supervisors, and attendance stakeholders continue to offer support and resources to keep students and families engaged as they transition back to in person, virtual, or hybrid learning.

## Student Opportunities

### **Reminder: U. S. Senate Youth Scholarship Opportunity**

Two outstanding students from Louisiana who will be awarded \$10,000 scholarships and will represent our state as delegates for the U.S. Senate Youth Washington Week. Please encourage rising high school juniors or seniors who hold elected or appointed offices in school or community groups to submit a Louisiana [application packet](#) and assist them with securing the needed recommendations, transcripts and essay topics. The application portfolio is due by **October 5**.

Many schools have been impacted by Hurricane Ida, and students may be unable to access the necessary resources for their portfolios. High school personnel should contact [marian.johnson@la.gov](mailto:marian.johnson@la.gov) for the secure essay topics as soon as a student request is made. Please see the [national program brochure](#) for a list of qualifying student government, civic and educational organizations.

Please email [marian.johnson@la.gov](mailto:marian.johnson@la.gov) for assistance.

### **Rescheduled: 2022 Student of the Year Webinar**

The 2022 Student of the Year guidelines webinar has been rescheduled for **Tuesday, September 28**.

- Webinar Date and Time: Tuesday, September 28 at 10 a.m.
- Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92786427342>
- Webinar Phone Number: 1-312-626-6799
- Meeting ID: 927 8642 7342

To participate in the program, please complete the [School System Information Form](#) and email it to [marian.johnson@la.gov](mailto:marian.johnson@la.gov) by October 16. Make the [Student Application Packet](#) available to the parents of students who are eligible to participate in the program.

Please review the recently revised [Student of the Year Selection Guidelines](#) and the [2022 Student Application Packet](#) for information about the program. Contact [marian.johnson@la.gov](mailto:marian.johnson@la.gov) with questions or to request an extension on the deadline.

## Professional Opportunities

### **College Board Pre-AP Framework Informational Webinar**

A webinar with College Board has been scheduled for September 29 from 1 until 2 p.m. to introduce the Pre-AP Curriculum framework to educators, administrators, teachers and counselors in Louisiana. This webinar will include information on best practices for implementation, resources available to support implementation and a panel discussion with school systems in Louisiana who have piloted the Pre-AP framework within their schools.

- Webinar Date and Time: Wednesday, September 29 at 1 p.m.
- Webinar Link: <https://collegeboard.zoom.us/j/95895951174>
- Webinar Phone Number: +1 312 626 6799
- Meeting ID: 958 9595 1174
- Meeting Passcode: 5a6SsJbRL9

Please contact [meredith.mcGovern@la.gov](mailto:meredith.mcGovern@la.gov) with any questions.

### **Fall 2021 Counselor Institutes: Cancellations and Additions**

The LDOE Fall 2021 Counselor Institutes that were planned for New Orleans and Livingston on October 21 have been canceled. Instead, the Department is offering Zoom meetings at the times those meetings were scheduled to take place.

The chart that follows includes links to participate in both the virtual and live meetings. Participants should plan to attend **only one meeting**. Note: a virtual meeting will be recorded and posted in the Counselor Support Library to accommodate any school counselors who are unable to attend in real time.

	8 - 11 a.m.	1 - 4 p.m.
October 19	<a href="#">Bossier City</a>	<a href="#">West Monroe</a>
October 20	<a href="#">Alexandria</a> FULL	<a href="#">Youngsville</a> FULL
October 21	<a href="#">Virtual AM</a>	<a href="#">Virtual PM</a>

Please email questions to [leslie.gilliland@la.gov](mailto:leslie.gilliland@la.gov).

## Middle and High School News

### **#WhyApply Day**

This Friday, September 17, #WhyApply Day kicks off college application season. Put on your favorite gear from your undergraduate program and let high school seniors know why applying to college is essential. It is also a perfect opportunity to share your postsecondary journey, including why you chose your college.

Spread the word and get others in your school and network to help inspire students! Tag LOSFA and ACAC (American College Application Campaign) on social media and use the hashtag #WhyApply, #GeauxApply2021, and #LCAAM. Visit the #WhyApply Day [web page](#) for more information and resources. File your FAFSA for next year close to October 1

### **FAFSA Opening October 1**

The [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA) opens on October 1 every year. Filing the FAFSA early improves a student's chances of qualifying for the most grant, scholarship and work-study aid. Please email [ldefinancialaid@la.gov](mailto:ldefinancialaid@la.gov) for assistance.

### **Office of Career and College Readiness Contacts**

Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement	<a href="mailto:collegereadiness@la.gov">collegereadiness@la.gov</a>
Graduation Requirements, General Questions about the Office of Career and College Readiness	<a href="mailto:highschoolacademics@la.gov">highschoolacademics@la.gov</a>
Jump Start	<a href="mailto:jumpstart@la.gov">jumpstart@la.gov</a>
Financial Aid Policy, FAFSA Completion	<a href="mailto:ldefinancialaid@la.gov">ldefinancialaid@la.gov</a>
Pupil Progression	<a href="mailto:PPP@la.gov">PPP@la.gov</a>
Supplemental Course Academy/Course Choice	<a href="mailto:SCA@la.gov">SCA@la.gov</a>

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