

# COUNSELOR CONNECT



A Publication for  
Louisiana's Professional  
SCHOOL COUNSELORS

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May 2018



## Counselor Spotlight: Cathy Smith



As the school year comes to an end, I think it's important to reflect on the year--on things that could be improved, but also on things that were a success. We are the cheerleaders for our students and faculty, so why not be our own cheerleaders if only for a day or two?

As I reflect on this year, I have to say it has been my most rewarding, stress-free, and overall best year yet as a school counselor. I came to my new school with one goal in mind--build rapport with the students and faculty. I felt that I needed them to trust me and see that I care before I could begin to help my students or make a difference. It may seem like I was setting the bar low, but actually this was the key to having a great start at my new school.

I recently did a short survey with my teachers. I asked them just three questions, but I received some really good feedback. I asked them what is going right with the counseling program, ways I could improve the counseling program, and what in their opinion is the biggest need for our students that the counseling program could address. Much to my surprise, most couldn't think of ways to improve the program, but I know there is always something that could be made better. I sometimes can be my worst critic, as I know some of you are too.

To focus on the positive, I'm going to share what I think was my shining moment this year and something that I think will have a lasting effect on my school. A few months back, my principal and I went to the superintendent and asked for a second school counselor. I shared with him the ASCA model, my school counseling program brochure, and research and data to support my request. He wholeheartedly agreed to the need, and here we are at the closing of the year on an exciting search

for another school counselor.

Reflecting on your accomplishments as well as looking for ways to improve is an excellent way to boost your confidence as a school counselor. However, as important as it is to reflect on your school year, it is equally important to spend time with your family and to enjoy some "me" time. Relax, rest, and rejuvenate, so next year can be your best year yet.

Cathy Smith  
Professional School Counselor  
Jefferson Davis Parish Schools  
2016 Louisiana School Counselor of the Year

## Resources for School Testing Coordinators

**Please share this information with the testing coordinator in your school.**

### **Assessment Resources**

- The [May Quick Reference for Test Coordinators](#) has LEAP 2025, LEAP 360, LEAP Connect, DRC, ELPS, and ELPT updates and reminders.
- The [Parent Guide to the LEAP 2025 Student Reports](#) for grades 3-12 helps parents read and interpret the LEAP 2025 student reports; Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, and English versions are available.

Please email [assessment@la.gov](mailto:assessment@la.gov) for support.

## Professional Development

### **ASCA Annual Conference**

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Annual Conference provides attendees with the chance to earn CEUs, contact hours, and/or graduate credit. This year's conference is in Los Angeles from July 14 through 17, 2018. Please visit the [conference website](#) for more information.

### **LCA Annual Conference**

Mark your calendars for the [Louisiana Counseling Association \(LCA\) Annual Conference](#) at the Baton Rouge Crown Plaza hotel October 7-9, 2018. Presenters from the Louisiana School Counseling Association (LSCA) will be hosting ten 90-minute content sessions at the conference.

## High School News

### **Conservation Leadership Corps**

**Please share this information with students who are interested in conservation leadership.**

The Louisiana Wildlife Federation's (LWF) new [Edgar Veillon Conservation Leadership Corps \(EV-CLC\)](#) is a training program to develop leadership skills and techniques to analyze and develop conservation policies. Please visit the [LWF website](#) to learn more and download an [application](#).

### **Future Leaders Mentorship Scholarship**

**Please share this information with your colleagues and consider submitting your own nominations.**

The [Future Leaders Mentorship Scholarship](#) program partners students with top-tier mentors from across the globe. Mentors include members of the State Department, USAID, Capitol Hill, Georgetown University, World Bank, National Institute of Health, NASA, FBI, ACLU, The Peace Corps, Johns Hopkins, and more.

Students receive a \$1000 scholarship toward the cost of the program, free SAT/ACT training through [TestRocker](#), college application training and essay editing assistance, two letters of recommendation, and scholarship application assistance. These benefits remain available for four years to allow nominations for rising freshmen through rising seniors.

There are advanced [business](#), [law](#), or [medical](#) programs for students. These career-oriented experiential learning opportunities will have students discovering what they can do now to change the world. Through these week-long programs, students will start to discover and develop their own skills and passions. Please visit [www.BeTheChangeNow.org](http://www.BeTheChangeNow.org) for the [online nomination form](#). Nomination emails have a 24 hour turnaround time from when a student is nominated. While academic performance is important to our Scholarship Committee, the most significant factor is a student's passion and potential.

## **Career and Technical Education Data Submission**

The [Career and Technical Education \(CATE\) Data System](#) will be open for 2017-2018 Career and Technical Education data from May 15 to August 31.

The Department is hosting two webinars to support users with data entry. The webinar for new users introduces the system's processes, and the webinar for current users highlights updates to the system.

Please join the webinar for **new users** on May 16 at 10:00 a.m. or 3:00 p.m.

1. Go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/newusers2018/>.
2. Enter the meeting room as a guest and provide your name.

Please join the webinar for **current users** on May 17 at 10:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m.

1. Go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/cate2018/>.
2. Enter the meeting room as a guest and provide your name.

Please email [martha.moore@la.gov](mailto:martha.moore@la.gov) for assistance.

## **NCCER Approval Timeline**

The Louisiana Department of Education approves thousands of NCCER credentials each year. The approval process is as follows:

- At completion of coursework, the NCCER instructor of record submits "Registration of Training Modules" through NCCER Registry.
- LDOE representatives audit each submission and request documentation. Instructors are given up to two weeks to send documentation.
- After the LDOE review, pending no issues, the forms are submitted to NCCER and should arrive within ten business days.

The process can vary for courses taught through third-party providers. If you have questions or need further assistance, please email [jumpstart@la.gov](mailto:jumpstart@la.gov).

## **Career Development**

The [Louisiana Career Development Association](#) (LCDA) is a division of the [Louisiana Counseling Association](#) and a state chapter of the [National Career Development Association](#). Membership is now open to individuals with a variety of educational backgrounds including teaching, business, and counseling. If you are interested in career counseling, or if you are responsible for implementing career activities within your school, please email [2016lcda@gmail.com](mailto:2016lcda@gmail.com) or visit the [LCDA website](#) for more information.

## **NCAA Reminders**

### **End-of-Year Tasks for Counselors**

- **Upload Transcripts**: Submit either a six-semester or a final official transcript for junior and senior students registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- **Update Core Course List**: The end of the school year is a great time to update your list of NCAA courses. An outdated list could delay a graduating senior's academic certification or prevent them from meeting the requirements.

### **End-of-Year Tasks for Student Athletes**

- **Submit Test Scores**: Students may take the ACT or the SAT an unlimited number of times prior to full-time collegiate enrollment, and the best score will be used in the final academic certification.
- **Request Final Amateurism Certification**: Student athletes enrolling at an NCAA Division I or II college or university in fall 2018 may now request their final amateurism certification.

## **Financial Aid Planning**

**Please share with staff responsible for implementing financial aid planning policy.**

Louisiana is a [national leader](#) in FAFSA completion rates, **but we still have several thousand students left to go.**

1. If you would like to have financial aid form support stations at your schools to help parents complete their forms before or after graduation ceremonies, please email [ldfinancialaid@la.gov](mailto:ldfinancialaid@la.gov).
2. **If any parents submitted a letter of non-participation, please store the signed letters for graduation cohort verification.**
3. If you would like to be featured in a future counselor or school spotlight, please email [leslie.gilliland@la.gov](mailto:leslie.gilliland@la.gov).
4. If you would like to share your student success stories, please email [ldoecommunications@la.gov](mailto:ldoecommunications@la.gov).

With your leadership, we can support every student who wants funding for future training or education.

## **Countdown to Priority Deadline**

**July 1, 2018 is the state recommended application deadline** for the 2018-2019 academic year. Please visit the Federal Student Aid [website](#) for more information about FAFSA. Please see the individual college or university for institutional deadlines.



# A Message from LSCA President, Royce Hooks

It has been a pleasure serving as your Louisiana School Counselor Association president for the 2017 -2018 academic year. We have all collectively been through our share of struggles this year, but we have managed once again to pull through. We have all continued to serve our students, parents, and communities by assisting and supporting them. I am most proud of serving on a state task force for both bullying and Medicare, collaborating with the School Counselor Study Group, increasing LSCA membership, and working with Governor John Bel Edwards on issues resulting from school shootings. These have been beneficial collaborations that have seen excellent results.

As I leave my post, I welcome Ms. Denise Latour, who will begin as the new president. Ms. Latour brings a wealth of knowledge to the profession, and will advocate for the profession and for you, while bringing a wealth of leadership skills to the role.

I wish you all a happy summer, and offer you congratulations for a job well done. We are one beat, one sound. We are school counselors. It has been my pleasure to speak up for you all.

Sincerely,  
Royce Hooks  
LSCA President, 2017-2018

## In Case You Missed It

[SPECIAL EDITION: COUNSELOR SPOTLIGHTS](#) (Office of Student Opportunities)

[NUMBER OF LA. GRADS REACHES ALL-TIME HIGH](#) (WAFB)

[LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HOSTING FINANCIAL PLANNING SESSIONS FOR STUDENTS, FAMILIES](#) (BRProud.com)

[THIRTY-ONE STRUGGLING HIGH SCHOOLS TO COLLABORATE WITH PEERS, NATIONAL EXPERTS ON PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT](#) (Louisiana Believes)

[LAST-MINUTE COLLEGE OPTIONS FOR FALL 2018](#) (U.S. News and World Report)

***Note: There will be no June Counselor Connect.***

***Expect a back-to-school edition in July!***

Louisiana Department of Education, 1201 N. Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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