

COUNSELOR CONNECT

A Publication for Louisiana's
Professional School Counselors



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Student Opportunities

Civics Guidance (Urgent Item)

Professional School Counselors are encouraged **NOT** to schedule **2023-2024 T9** students in **Civics**. The Civics assessment will be **field tested** during the **2023-2024 school year**; it will **NOT** meet the assessment graduation requirements.

NCAA Nontraditional Programs

Please share with school counselors, school leaders, and athletic coaches.

Core-course time limitations are reverting to the pre-COVID-19 rules. Changes were made to the NCAA initial-eligibility processes due to COVID-19. Some of those exceptions (nontraditional/distance learning) are ending on September 1, 2023, and others (removal of test score) will continue moving forward.

Distance and e-learning program reviews were paused spring/summer 2020 through the 2022-2023 academic year. Courses completed using a nontraditional program on or after September 1, 2023, will be subject to the program review process.

If a student graduates from high school on time, one core-course unit may be completed in the year after graduation (summer or academic year) and before enrolling full time at any Division I college or university.

For Division II, student-athletes may use an unlimited number of core courses completed after graduation (summer or academic year) and before enrolling full time at any college or university.

Courses completed **on or after September 1, 2023**, via nontraditional programs are once again subject to review.

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Be prepared to answer questions from the NCAA about how your school implements the nontraditional program.

Call NCAA customer service to request a program review or with questions, 1-877-622-2321.

Reminders from LOSFA

TOPS Tech Awards: A student who earns a WorkKeys score of Silver or higher qualifies for the [TOPS Tech Award](#).

ACT/WorkKeys scores: LOSFA now receives ACT WorkKeys directly from ACT. Scores no longer need to be sent to LOSFA, except for qualifying scores earned by graduating seniors after April 30. Please use [LOSFA's WorkKeys Test Result Form](#) to submit scores.

The completed form can be emailed to SGIE@la.gov.

Health & PE Category in STS

Bulletin 741 lists the minimum course [requirements for all students to graduate](#). All students must complete 2 credits in the Health & PE category which includes 1.5 credits of acceptable physical education courses and 0.5 credits of Health Education.

It has been reported some students have transcripts in STS with 2 credits in PE accepted; please note although Health may not be shown in the STS Core Progress view, a health course (or an acceptable substitute) **MUST** be taken and reflected in the STS Transcript list.

Please contact systemsupport@la.gov with questions.

FAFSA Completion

TOP 5 2022-2023 FAFSA Completion School Systems

Catahoula Parish	100%
East Carroll Parish	100%
Union Parish	100%
Grant Parish	96%
St. Bernard Parish	95%

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TOP 5 2022-2023 FAFSA Completion Schools

Sicily Island High	100%
Georgetown High	100%
Harrisonburg High	100%
Simpson High	100%
Monterey High	100%

All 2024 graduating seniors must complete one of the following:

- Complete [2024-2025 FAFSA](#) application (if you want to apply for the federal Pell grant, federal student loans, the Louisiana GO Grant, and TOPS)
- Fill out a [TOPS application](#) on the LOSFA website(if you want TOPS only)
- Complete and have a waiver on file

The U.S. Department of Education is revamping the FAFSA application. The 2024-2025 application will open in December 2023 instead of October 2023 (this year only).

Please contact ldfinancialaid@la.gov with any questions.

2024-2025 FAFSA Roadmap

Please share with school system leaders, school counselors, students and families.

The 2024–2025 *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®) includes unprecedented changes to how students and families apply for federal student aid and how we determine eligibility, giving students a better and simpler experience with the FAFSA form. Improvements include a direct data exchange with the IRS for income data elements, a new “Who’s My Parent?” wizard, and a single consolidated portal for all FAFSA help resources.

To help ensure that students and families—and the partners critical to getting student aid dollars into the hands of students—are best prepared for a successful [2024–2025 FAFSA cycle](#), we have launched the [Better FAFSA Better Future Roadmap](#). Please note that the 2024-2025 FAFSA will be available in December 2023.

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Credit Recovery

Please share with school counselors, school leaders, and secondary supervisors.

School systems may offer Credit Recovery Programs for students who have failed courses taken previously.

- Students may earn a maximum of seven credit recovery units with no more than two annually
- All coursework should be documented on the official transcript
- Credit recovery courses are identified and labeled on the official transcript
- Credit recovery courses should be aligned to the state's content standards and should include a pre-test to identify unfinished learning and a post-test to demonstrate proficiency
- Online credit recovery courses must have an assigned Louisiana certified teacher of record or certified teacher of record recognized through state reciprocity facilitating instruction

If a student falls out of line with the policy, earning more than two Credit Recovery units annually or over seven Credit Recovery units in total during high school, the overage is reported to LDOE with a rationale. Please complete the [Credit Recovery Overage Form](#) at the end of each semester.

Please contact caronda.bean@la.gov with questions.

Community Service Diploma Endorsement

Please share with school counselors.

Students in high school have the opportunity to earn the [Community Service Diploma Endorsement](#) if they earn 80 hours of community service during their high school years. Visit the [Diploma Endorsement webpage](#) for more information.

Please contact suzette.rabalasi@la.gov with questions.

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Professional Opportunities/Monthly Calls

Fall 2023 Counselor Institute

Please share with secondary supervisors, CTE supervisors, and secondary principals, assistant principals, and school counselors.

Registration for the Fall 2023 Counselor Institute sessions is open. Please invite your CTE Supervisor to join in conversations regarding pathway collaboration. **Each participant must register individually through Eventbrite**; registration is on a first come, first served basis. Maximum registration is based on location capacity.

Date	8 a.m. - 11 a.m.	1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
October 24	West Monroe	Bossier
October 25	Rapides	Lafayette
October 26	St. Tammany	East Baton Rouge

Please contact angela.jordan@la.gov with questions.

Office of Career and College Readiness Monthly Call

Please share with secondary supervisors, CTE supervisors, and secondary principals, assistant principals, and school counselors.

A monthly webinar hosted by the Office of Career and College Readiness is held at 3 p.m. the 4th Thursday of the month, and focuses on sharing updates around the various work streams within the office. Slide decks from previous calls may be found in the [Monthly Call Library](#).

- **Webinar Date and Time:** 3rd Thursday of each month (August 17)
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92322549210>
- **Phone Number:** (312) 626-6799
- **Meeting ID:** 923 2254 9210
- **Passcode:** 130834

Please contact erica.spencer@la.gov with questions.

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Child Welfare and Attendance Monthly Call

Please share with Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) directors, supervisors, and all attendance stakeholders.

CWAs are provided with relevant professional development, resources, and tools to support students and families within their systems. As members of the Louisiana Attendance Alliance, CWAs are afforded evidence-based, best-practices to address chronic absence and family engagement during these meetings. This opportunity for learning and collaboration is held the first Thursday of each month.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** Thursday, September 7; 8 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92878267285>
- **Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Webinar ID:** 989 2999 8429
- **Passcode:** 292522

Please contact shelneka.adams@la.gov with questions.

Alternative Education Leaders

Please share with Alternative Education Supervisors, Site Leaders and all AE stakeholders.

A webinar for Alternative Education Supervisors and Site Leaders is held the second Thursday of each month and focuses on supporting AE sites leaders with the delivery of criteria outlined in Bulletin 131.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** Thursday, September 14; 10 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97847044276>
- **Phone Number:** 312 626 6799
- **Webinar ID:** 978 4704 4276
- **Passcode:** 261398

Please contact terran.perry@la.gov with questions.

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Healthy Communities Community of Practice Monthly Call

Please share with school safety personnel, Health and Physical Educators, Nurses, Health Providers and all health and well-being stakeholders.

Monthly community of practice calls will be held the 4th Thursday of each month at 2 p.m. beginning August 24. They will address school safety, school health, transportation, nursing, suicide and bullying prevention, health/physical education, School-based Medicaid funding, Whole Child (WSCC) initiative, Well-being advisory councils, Project Aware.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** Thursday, August 24, 2 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/91984395787?>
- **Webinar ID:** 919 8439 5787
- **Passcode:** 784203

Please contact healthyschools@la.gov with questions.

AP® Coordinator Back-to-School Workshops

Please share with the AP® testing coordinator.

[Registration](#) is open for the AP Coordinator Back-to-School Workshops. These workshops run from July 24 - September 21. These workshops are designed for new and experienced coordinators.

Workshops will begin in a whole group format that will focus on updates and resources for the upcoming school year and then have breakout sessions. You will need to have your College Board account in order to register for the workshops.

Please contact charmaine.cureton@la.gov with questions.

College Board Counselor Workshops

Please share with counselors.

[Registration](#) is now open for the 2023 College Board [Counselor Workshops](#). The workshops will be held on various dates between August 29 - September 19 for new and experienced counselors. Topics for the workshops will include College Board program updates including SAT, AP, and higher education trends to support students for the 2023-2024 school year. All workshops are free to attend.

Please contact charmaine.cureton@la.gov with questions.

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ACT® College & Career Readiness Workshops

Please share with counselors.

ACT® will be hosting [College and Career Readiness Workshops](#). [Registration](#) for in-person workshops that offer content specific to Louisiana is open. Please register at least two weeks in advance of the workshop date to ensure availability of workshop materials.

In person workshops are at 9 a.m. at the following locations:

- September 26 (Baton Rouge)
- September 28 (New Orleans)
- October 10 (Lafayette)
- October 16 (Alexandria)
- October 17 (Lake Charles)

Please contact charmaine.cureton@la.gov with questions.

College Board Weekly Office Hours

Please share with principals, counselors, AP teachers, and testing coordinators.

The College Board is offering weekly office hours starting on August 8. Topics will include the AP 2024 exam schedule and digital AP exams. Please feel free to join the weekly discussion on any questions that you have about AP exams and resources.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** Every Tuesday; 10 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** [Microsoft Teams Meeting Link](#)
- **Webinar ID:** 232 293 189 414
- **Passcode:** 7VQcYk

Please contact charmaine.cureton@la.gov for more information.

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Resources

2023-2024 High School Planning Guide

Please share with system leaders, secondary supervisors, high school and middle school leaders, and school counselors.

The [2023-2024 Louisiana High School Planning Guidebook](#) is now available on the LDOE [Graduation Requirements](#) webpage. This guidebook consolidates the policies and programs most relevant to high school educators as they plan for the upcoming academic year and prepare every student for college and career success.

Please contact highschoolacademics@la.gov with questions.

Graduation Requirements Documents

Please share with principals, counselors, and data specialists.

The TOPS University and TOPS TECH graduation requirements documents have been updated to reflect changes to Bulletin 741.

All Louisiana [graduation requirements](#) can be found on the LDOE website.

Please contact jumpstart@la.gov with questions.

Jump Start Documents

Please share with principals, counselors, and data specialists.

The [Jump Start 2.0 pathway](#) documents have been updated to reflect recommendations made by CTE supervisors and approved by the Jump Start 2.0 review committee and BESE.

Please contact jumpstart@la.gov with questions.

NCAN State Policy Lever: Universal FAFSA

Please share with system leaders, secondary supervisors, high school school leaders, and school counselors.

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Suicide Prevention Training and Resources

Please share with Special Education Supervisors, social workers, counselors, mental health professionals.

[VIA LINK](#) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that provides a range of services to the people of Louisiana. They provide crisis support, connect people to resources and services, and provide vital data and trend information to ensure policies and programs to meet community needs.

Vialink has and is happy to ship free teen text wristbands and posters to any group that would like them.

The wristbands are blue and list the teen text number on them (833-TXT-TEEN). They will also go to a school to give out wristbands or speak to students and/or faculty about the text line.

Along with the Teen Text program Vialink can provide free presentations for students on Suicide Education and Response. They can also provide free trainings for school faculty on Suicide Education and Response, Crisis Intervention & De-Escalation, Trauma, and Grief. Additionally, a free weekly virtual support group for teens called Real Talk meets every Tuesday from 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. and is a support group for teens who live with thoughts of suicide.

Please contact screspo@vialink.org with questions.

What is a CEEB Code?

Please share with Counselors, School Test Coordinators, Administrators

The College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) code is a unique identifier that helps students send colleges they are applying to the right information, such as SAT® scores, transcriptions, and applications. These codes are used to identify different institutions in the college application process—including colleges, universities, and scholarship programs, as well as individual high schools.

The CEEB code for your high school is often provided to you by your school or in the online registration process. If you need to find your CEEB code though, start by using the [K-12 School Code Search](#).

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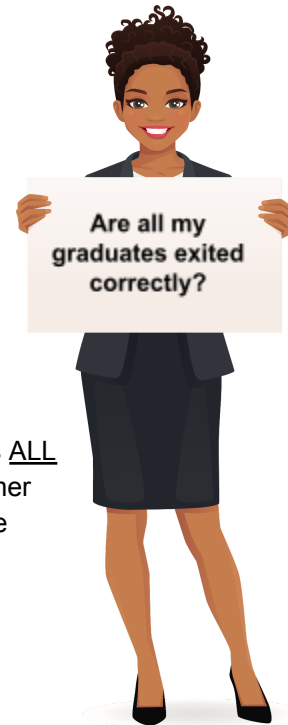
Ask CoCo

Q & A With COUNSELOR COnnect!

Q: I have students who attended summer school. They passed the course they needed to graduate. Since they didn't graduate in May, would they be coded as 2022-2023 or 2023-2024 graduates?

- The "I Want to be Sure" Counselor

A: According to the STS User Guide, a graduation date is the date a student actually completes ALL requirements for graduation. In the case of a summer graduate, this would be the date the summer coursework was completed. Any student with a graduation date on or before August 31 would be considered a graduate of the previous year.



Scholarships/Funding Opportunities

[Nitro by Sallie Mae](#)

[Scholarships360](#) (Top No Essay Scholarships)

[CTE Scholarships & Grants through ACTE](#)

[FastWeb](#)

[Plexuss Student Opportunity Network](#)

[CLTCC CTE Scholarships](#)

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Reminders

From the LDOE Assessment, Accountability and Analytics team

LEAP High School Non-senior Scores

When will schools and systems receive high school assessment results for students who are not seniors?

- As in prior years, non-senior scores are typically delivered near the end of the testing window. While the department plans to release well in advance of the May 24 ending date, no specific date can be shared at this time. As soon as we can finalize all quality checks, we will send out notification to DTCs via email.
- Final grades for LEAP assessment-eligible courses must include LEAP assessment results. School systems should make sure that future calendars take into account the release of LEAP scores.

Graduation Requirements

Are there any waivers this year of the assessment graduation requirements?

- No, there are no waivers of assessment graduation policy this year. The only waiver that may still affect current graduates would be the Covid exemption, which is subject specific and very limited. Please see policies below that currently apply to graduating students:
 - o A Covid exemption is subject specific. The test requirement for a credit earned for an assessment-eligible course completed in the spring of 2020 was waived. Please note that students who earned the credit in the fall or summer are NOT eligible for this exemption since there were test administrations for both of those semesters. This waiver cannot be used to meet the pair requirement if the student:
 - § Earned the credit for the other subject in the pair in a Louisiana public or state scholarship school in any other semester.
 - § The student had taken or was supposed to take the LEAP for the subject earned in the spring of 2020 in a prior administration.
 - o For students transferring in from out of state, an approved nonpublic school or BESE-approved home study, the student does not have to take the subject test for the credit earned prior to entering a Louisiana public or state scholarship school. This, however, cannot be used to meet the pair requirement if the student earned the credit for the other subject in the pair at a Louisiana public or state scholarship school and does not have a Covid exemption for the subject.
 - o Students who have a waiver for Algebra I and are on the Jump Start pathway and did not enroll in Geometry do not have to take the Geometry assessment.

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ELPT and ELPT Connect Score Report Release

When will school systems receive ELPT and ELPT Connect scores from the spring 2023 administration?

- ELPT scores will be available in TIDE in mid-May. The department will release a more specific date as soon as the date is determined.
- ELPT Connect scores will be available in TIDE later in the fall. Because the assessment is new, additional processes for standard setting will need to be completed and submitted to BESE for approval prior to release. Please note that the ELPT Connect will set a new baseline for students who were eligible to participate. Baseline scores are not used in accountability the year that they are established. Additional policy related to expected progress toward proficiency will be determined and shared in 2024.

Office of Career and College Readiness Contact Information

highschoolacademics@la.gov	General questions about the office and about graduation requirements
ldefinancialaid@la.gov	Questions related to the financial aid policy or for assistance with FAFSA completion
SCA@la.gov	Questions related to Supplemental Course Academy/Course Choice
jumpstart@la.gov	Questions related to Jump Start
healthyschools@la.gov	Questions related to healthy schools, healthy communities, and whole child
PPP@la.gov	Questions related to pupil progression