



2025 Fast Forward Convention and CWA Summit

Session Titles and Descriptions

Session Topic	Session Description	Presenter(s)
<p>Leveraging Perkins Funding to Serve Special Populations</p>	<p>This session will discuss how Carl Perkins funding can be utilized to better serve Special/Sub Populations. You will hear from 3 Perkins recipients on the unique ways that they use their Perkins funding through activities, professional development, and career exploration. By the end of the session, attendees will gain insight on how Perkins funds can be used and how to make Perkins funds stretch to serve various populations.</p>	<p>Jennifer Naum, <i>New Orleans Military & Maritime Academy</i> Nathan Stockman, <i>YouthForce NOLA</i> Shelley Gill, <i>Bogalusa City Schools</i></p>

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Making WorkKeys Count for Students	Students and Educators have a crucial role in the local workforce that can lead to increased economic outcomes for the communities they serve. Discover how schools improve compliance and performance with industry-driven cognitive skill certifications, such as WorkKeys. Gain a deeper understanding of local and regional partnerships that fully integrate education resources and strategies as a win-win with Work Ready Communities. When schools align with employers and economic development, they help provide poverty-ending career pathways in their parish, region and state.	Mia Edwards and Reenie Laginess, <i>ACT</i>
The State Focus List Explained	A representative from the Louisiana Workforce Commission will provide historical context of the purpose of the state focus list, how it came about, and the process to add IBC's to the list.	Kaffia Arvie, <i>Louisiana Workforce Commission</i>
Business and Industry: Bridging the Communication Gap	Attendees will hear from a representative of the Louisiana Association of Business & Industry on best practices for communicating with business and industry partners.	Brian Davis, LDOE Mary Beth Hughes-Derrickson, <i>Louisiana Association of Business & Industry</i>
Internship Program Spotlight	Explore ExxonMobil's high school summer internship program and gain valuable insights into how this successful initiative was developed. ExxonMobil will share the journey of building the program, lessons learned along the way, and strategies for creating meaningful work-based learning opportunities for students. Leave with practical takeaways to inspire and guide similar programs in your organization.	Baraynia Robillard, <i>ExxonMobile</i>



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Pre-Ed Pathway, Work-based Learning, and You	Attendees will get a crash-course in the Pre-Educator pathway, how to leverage Work-based Learning to enrich their programming, building a more enriching "Grow Your Own" experience for their students.	Brandy Morin, LDOE Dr. Amy Weems, <i>University of Louisiana-Monroe</i>
RoyOMartin Programs and Internships	RoyOMartin offers internships to high school students in various roles in woodworks. This session will explore those internship opportunities and offer insight on how to create these opportunities for students in other fields.	Donna Bailey, <i>RoyOMartin</i>
Tops Tech Early Start - Leveraging Opportunities to Increase Student Outcomes	Discover how Louisiana's TOPS Tech Early Start Program equips students with the skills and credentials needed for high-demand careers. This session highlights program benefits, eligibility, and strategies for maximizing its impact on student success and workforce readiness.	Deborah Paul, <i>LOSFA</i>
SCA Updates	The Department will provide updates on policy changes in Bulletin 132 regarding the Course Choice program and implications for school systems, schools, and parents.	Tiffany Thomas, <i>LDOE</i>
Regional CTE Workgroup and EdLink Dashboard Training	This working group is designed for CTE supervisors and system leaders to engage in collaborative discussions focused on Work-Based Learning, Perkins funding, Industry-Based Credential (IBC) attainment, and CTE programming. Participants will have the opportunity to share ideas, exchange best practices, and collaborate on effective strategies for advancing CTE initiatives within their systems. It will also provide system supervisors with a comprehensive demonstration of the CTE dashboard in EdLink. Participants will learn how to utilize the dashboard to efficiently catalog and analyze system data, enabling them to make informed, data-driven decisions to enhance future Career and Technical Education programming.	Dr. Timberly Monaghan and Josh Posey <i>LDOE</i>

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Work-based Learning: System Roundtable	This session will be a panel discussion with Ascension, St. Tammany, and Livingston school systems that are successfully running work-based learning programs including cooperative education and internships. It will cover the components of successful work-based learning programming including recruiting, the classroom instruction component, and how to recruit business and industry partners.	Stacey Alexius, St. <i>Tammany Parish Schools</i> Brandi Desselle, <i>Livingston Parish Schools</i> Ronda Matthews, <i>Ascension Parish Schools</i>
LDOE Summer Internship Program	This session will outline the key elements of establishing an internship program at LDOE. Topics will include the planning process, creating MOUs, working with contracts, and developing appropriate job descriptions. In the summer of 2025, students will have the opportunity to apply for an LDOE internship. The information presented in this session can be adapted and applied to your own systems.	Stephanie Marcum, <i>LDOE</i>
Southern University: Agriculture and Internships	Attendees will gain insight into the Southern University Ag Center's work-based learning pilot program in collaboration with the St. Landry School System. This session will cover key aspects of planning, programming, and building strategic connections to consider when developing a work-based learning program within a school system.	Dr. Harold Mellieon and Dr. Raquel Ayles, <i>Southern University Ag Center</i> Dr. Therese Ellender, <i>St. Landry Parish Schools</i>

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Jump Start and Fast Forward: Transitions and Post-Secondary Partnerships	This session will connect Jump Start to Fast Forward and highlight opportunities available for the expansion of programs, timelines for starting conversations with (and the importance of engaging and working with) post-secondary partners as systems plan for program expansion.	Dr. Timberly Monaghan, LDOE
Building Rich CTE Programs in Rural School Districts	This session will explore strategies for creating a successful Career and Technical Education (CTE) program in rural school systems. Participants will gain practical insights into overcoming challenges unique to rural settings, as well as best practices for developing and sustaining effective CTE programs that meet the needs of students and local industries.	Kim Rider, Allen Parish Schools
Dual Enrollment for Automotive, CNA, and Medical Assistant	This session will explore how community colleges and local high schools/career centers can collaborate to offer Certificates of Technical Studies and other Industry-Based Credentials (IBCs). Participants will learn how these partnerships can expand career education opportunities for students, helping them gain valuable credentials that enhance their readiness for the workforce.	<p>Courtney Schoolmaster and Kelita Johnson, South Louisiana Community College</p> <p>Dr. Therese Ellender, St. Landry Parish Schools</p>
New Computer Science Standards and Preparing for 2025-2026	The approval of the K-12 Student Standards for Computer Science have brought many exciting opportunities to our 9-12 students and teachers. This session will provide school systems with information about the standards, tools for implementing the K-12 Computer Science Education Plan, and computer science teacher certification preparation training. The session will feature time for school systems to review resources, reflect on their computer science needs, and ask questions.	Elizabeth Wrzesinski, LDOE

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Guidance for Improving Career and Technical Education Programs	This session is for school systems interested in learning more about the guidance offered by the LDOE for improving CTE programming. It will explain the components of CTE valued in the revised accountability system and how school systems and LDOE can collaborate to improve the state of CTE in your school system.	Dr. Timberly Monaghan and Stephanie Marcum, <i>LDOE</i>
Middle School and CTE Exposure	Participants will review CTE activities/opportunities that introduce career exploration in the middle grades. These foundational exposures will help students make more informed decisions when planning for their high school experience.	Candace Joseph, <i>LDOE</i>
Redesigning Dual Enrollment as a Purposeful Pathway to College and Career Opportunity	Explore innovative approaches to dual enrollment that align secondary education with meaningful post-secondary and career opportunities. This session will delve into strategies for making dual enrollment programs more accessible, intentional, and impactful for all students. Discover actionable insights for building stronger collaborations between K-12 and higher education institutions to enhance student outcomes.	Dr. Wendi Palermo, <i>Louisiana Community & Technical College System (LCTCS)</i>
Registered Apprenticeship Training Provide Panel Discussion	A panel of current Registered Apprenticeship Program providers will discuss bridging the gap between education and apprenticeship training. Registered Apprenticeships focus on introduction to trades and occupations, basic skill development, and work-based learning opportunities.	Bonnie Lefort and Jarad Walker, <i>Lafourche Parish Schools</i> Andrew Vincent, <i>Jefferson Parish Schools</i> Connie Britt, <i>Vernon Parish Schools</i> Ellis Bourque, <i>New Orleans Plumbers & Steamfitters</i>

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		James Foster, <i>Ironworkers 623</i>
Tools to Provide Quality Counseling to Students Seeking Early Access to College Credit	This session will provide counselors with valuable tools and resources to introduce Dual Enrollment and other college credit opportunities to students. Participants will gain strategies for effectively guiding students through these options, helping them understand the benefits and requirements, and supporting their path toward earning college credits while still in high school.	Angela Jordan, <i>LDOE</i>
State of Economic Development with LED FastStart	This session will feature the Director of Workforce Initiatives for Louisiana Economic Development FastStart. The presentation will include an overview of current economic development initiatives in Louisiana, as well as a look into the future of what projects may be coming soon.	Mark Bond, <i>Louisiana Economic Development Fast Start</i>
Internships with International Paper and Bogalusa School System	This session will provide an overview of the internship program for high school students in the Bogalusa School System, in partnership with International Paper. Participants will learn about the structure, goals, and outcomes of the program, as well as the benefits for students and the community.	Shelley Gill, Cody Magee and Colby Davis, <i>Bogalusa City Schools</i>
Braiding Funding for CTE Programming	This session will provide an overview of how a school district strategically braids various funding sources to support and enhance Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming. The presentation will cover how federal, state, and local funding streams, as well as grants and other financial resources, are effectively combined to maximize program sustainability, expand opportunities for students, and ensure alignment with workforce development needs. This discussion will offer valuable guidance on managing and optimizing funding to strengthen CTE programs.	Shelley Gill and Keisha Ward, <i>Bogalusa City Schools</i>

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<p>Child Labor Law Requirements and Connections to Internships</p>	<p>This session will provide a thorough understanding of Louisiana Child Labor Laws and the Employment Certificate (Work Permit) process, which is crucial for ensuring compliance when hiring minors in the state. Participants will learn about the specific regulations that govern the employment of minors in Louisiana, including the types of jobs they can hold, the permissible working hours, and the required documentation to legally employ underage workers. The session will also cover how businesses, educational institutions, and parents can navigate these laws to ensure the safety and well-being of young workers while supporting their educational and professional development.</p>	<p>Radiah Duhon, Rhea Woods, Kim Redman, and Carl Gray, <i>Louisiana Workforce Commission</i></p>
<p>Louisiana's Labor Market: Trends and Insights</p>	<p>Discover the latest trends and data shaping Louisiana's labor market with the Director of Research and Economic Analysis from the Louisiana Workforce Commission. This session will provide an overview of economic indicators, workforce projections, and key industry needs, offering actionable insights for educators and industry leaders. Learn how data-driven strategies can support workforce development and align education with the evolving demands of Louisiana's economy.</p>	<p>Emily DiPalma, <i>Louisiana Workforce Commission</i></p>
<p>Work-Based Learning 101</p>	<p>This session will focus on the basics of Work-Based Learning. It will include references to the revised accountability system. Details on the descriptions of Work-Based Learning regarding state policy will be covered as well as how to begin or continue these programs to align with quality career and technical education programming.</p>	<p>Stephanie Marcum, <i>LDOE</i></p>
<p>Let Cooperative Education Programs Take You "HIRE"!</p>	<p>Find out how Cooperative Education programs strengthen partnerships with Business and Industry and how they can take your students HIRE! Give your students the opportunity to put theory into practice with real-life work experiences and explore what they have learned in the classroom within a</p>	<p>Ronda Matthews, <i>Ascension Parish Schools</i></p>

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	real world context. Students who participate in Cooperative Education programs are sure to be the ideal candidate that business and industry will want to HIRE after graduation! Leave with tools to use to ensure your Cooperative Programs are adequately monitored.	
Classroom to Career: Ochsner's Blueprint for a Successful Workforce Development Program	Ochsner has set the standard for transforming student internships into a thriving workforce pipeline. In this session, learn how Ochsner's innovative work-based learning program equips students with hands-on experience, industry-aligned training, and direct career pathways in healthcare. Discover key strategies for employer engagement, program structure, and student success that can be replicated across industries.	Quentin Bradley, <i>Ochsner Health</i>
Enhancing School Attendance A Collaborative Approach	This session will have a panel from the Baker School System to discuss how they utilized MTSS and other data driven attendance approaches to completely turn around their school systems attendance decline. Baker school system partnered with LSU and received training and data support to positively support students and families to encourage school attendance.	Dr. Tammy Armant-Hill, <i>City of Baker Schools</i>
Chronic Health Conditions Affecting Student Attendance	This session will cover the effects of Chronic Health Conditions that most affect Louisiana students, the effects of these conditions on attendance, and the school Registered Nurse's Role in management and reduction of absenteeism rates.	Susan Dupont, <i>LDOE</i>
Reducing Chronic Absenteeism	This session discusses the differences of chronic absenteeism and truancy, the link of chronic illness on attendance and how the School Registered Nurse can help administrators keep these students in school.	Susan Dupont, <i>LDOE</i>
Everyday Labs Panel	Everyday Labs: 5 Strategies for Identifying & Supporting Students at Risk of Chronic Absenteeism. How busy educators can get ahead of absenteeism challenges before they become even more severe and difficult to address? Explaining five strategies to incorporate into your efforts to help you ensure students receive the support and guidance they need to succeed.	Cindy Welling, Emily Orngard, <i>Everyday Labs</i>

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Families In Need of Services	FINS will discuss strategies utilized to combat truancy, work with families to keep them out of the judiciary system, and how they can better partner with schools to prevent students being referred to FINS	Jonathan Winfrey, <i>Jefferson Parish Juvenile Court</i>
How Parental Engagement and Involvement Can Increase the Attendance Rates	Attendees will learn how involving parents in conversations about attendance can allow open dialogue between school and home-this can lead to a decrease in absenteeism.	Erin Valls, Salonge Smith, Otis “Chip” Guichet, <i>Jefferson Parish Schools</i>
Partnering with the Community In Efforts To Increase Attendance	How creating meaningful community partnerships can provide your schools with resources to invest back into the school/students.	Da Vante’ Jenkins-Gethers, Lauren LeDuff, <i>Warren Easton Senior High School</i>
Combating Truancy with Court Support	Attendees will learn how the court system can assist with decreasing truancy rates.	Jennie Ponder, <i>Truancy Assessment & Service Center</i> Tirzah Smith, <i>East Baton Rouge Parish Schools</i> Kelly Bonaventure, <i>East Baton Rouge District Attorney’s Office</i> Gail Grover, <i>East Baton Rouge Juvenile Court</i>

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Utilizing edGear/JCampus as Student Support Mechanisms	Attendees will learn how they can utilize attendance features in JCampus to target student absenteeism/truancy.	Kevin Ebarb , <i>EDgear of America</i>
How Student Performance is Impacted by Outside Factors	Attendees will explore the essential connection between external factors, the hierarchy of needs, and academic performance. We'll discuss how meeting students' basic needs – such as safety, belonging, and self-esteem – lays the foundation for higher levels of achievement. By examining how factors such as family support, community resources, and school environment influence a student's ability to focus, learn, and thrive, we will gain a deeper understanding of the holistic approach necessary for academic success. Attendees can expect practical insights into how to recognize and address these needs in order to foster a positive, supportive learning environment that encourages not only academic growth but personal well-being as well.	Dr. Raven Dunlap , <i>Unbreakable Counseling & Consulting</i>
Preventing Suicide and Boosting Attendance: A Holistic Approach to Child Welfare	Participants will describe trends in Louisiana absenteeism, identify common factors of absenteeism and suicidal ideation, define peer support programming as an MTSS strategy for boosting attendance in high schools.	Ken Brown, Jennifer Underwood, Dr. Felicia Coleman, Ashlon Roberts, <i>Calcasieu Parish Schools</i>
Improving Attendance by Elevating Healthy Schools through Out-of-School Time	Participants will be able to identify the benefits of Out-of-School Time (OST) as a strategy to support attendance and school health, identify OST partners and resources that can support attendance and school health priorities, use the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) Standards to capture strengths and growth opportunities to support students' health and well-being and create a plan of action to implement physical activity, nutrition, and/or health policies, practices, and programs in OST to increase student attendance.	Stephen Guccione , <i>LDOE</i>