



Counselor Connect



August 2025

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Student Opportunities

Community Service Diploma Endorsement

Please share with school system administrators and counselors.

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

Please contact stephanie.marcum@la.gov with questions.

Fast Forward

Intuit Food Truck Program for Career & Technical Education (CTE)

Please share with system leaders, counselors, CTE supervisors, and ProStart teachers.

The [Intuit Food Truck Program](#) is a free work-based program for CTE high school students. The program provides hands-on training in running a business. Selected districts will receive a state-of-the-art food truck, supporting grants, curriculum, and free access to Intuit products to prepare students for the real world with vital financial, technical, and entrepreneurial skills. [Applications](#) are accepted year-round and should be completed by the CTE Director or a District Leader.

Please contact fastforward@la.gov with questions.



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Course Choice School Systems Webinar

Please share with counselors and school system administrators.

The Fast Forward team is excited to discuss the policy changes to the [Louisiana Course Choice Program](#) and explain how these changes impact school systems, parents, and students. This webinar will also discuss the [Course Choice Portal](#), registration, reporting, funding, and payment guidelines. It is highly recommended that someone from each school system participate in one of the options.

Option 1

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 14 at 10 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/94562522959>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 1 312 626 6799
- **Meeting ID:** 945 6252 2959

Option 2

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 18 at 3 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/99422005165>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 1 312 626 6799
- **Meeting ID:** 994 2200 5165

Please contact coursechoice@la.gov with questions.

Professional Opportunities

Elementary School Counselor Report Survey

Please share with K-6 administrators and school counselors.

Elementary school counselors or administrators serving grades K-6 are asked to complete the [Elementary School Counselor Report Survey](#). This survey provides feedback on your school counseling programs and should be submitted by **October 1**.

Per [R.S. 17:3005](#), “School counselors shall provide preventive and developmental counseling services to all public elementary school students in kindergarten through grade six in order to prepare them for middle, junior, and senior high school responsibilities and their social and physical development”.

Please contact candace.joseph@la.gov with questions.



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2025 ACT College & Career Readiness Workshops

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

[Registration](#) is open for ACT College and Career Readiness Workshops. These in-person workshops offer participants a chance to connect and network with peers as well as collaborate with an ACT expert. Workshops will be tailored to the Louisiana landscape and include discussions and strategies systems can implement to improve outcomes.

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

- **September 16, Baton Rouge**
- **September 18, New Orleans**
- **September 23, Alexandria**
- **September 24, Ruston**
- **September 25, Lafayette**

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

2025 College Board Counselor Workshops (Virtual)

Please share with counselors.

[Registration](#) is now open for the annual College Board Fall Counselor Workshops. These virtual sessions will provide valuable updates and resources to help support students during the 2025-2026 school year. Topics will include the SAT Suite of Assessments, College Board programs and services, the BigFuture School Mobile App, and tools for college and career planning.

Workshops will be held virtually on various dates from August 26 through September 11, and there is no cost to attend.

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

Resources

Free ACT Practice Materials for Counselors

Please share with administrators, counselors, and testing coordinators.

ACT is offering free [ACT practice materials for counselors](#). These materials will help counselors access the most useful materials. All materials can be shared with students to help with test prep, including practice tests and test guides.

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



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Louisiana Course Choice Program Policy Updates

Please share with administrators, counselors, parents, and teachers.

In October 2024, BESE approved policy changes based on Act 91 of the 2024 Regular Legislative Session. Major changes to the policy can be categorized as either School System responsibilities or Parental Choice Enhancements. You can find helpful guidance and resources for schools and parents on the Course Choice [landing page](#).

Please contact coursechoice@la.gov with questions.

Reminders

Return to School 2025 Virtual Event

Please share with administrators, BTAM team members, counselors, school psychologists, school resource officers, school safety teams, and school system leaders.

In anticipation of the Fall 2025 return to school, the U.S. Secret Service's National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) will host a virtual event on **August 13 at 11 a.m.** This event will highlight the Center's latest release, titled Aligning Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management with a Multi-tiered System of Support: Building a Continuum of Prevention and Intervention.

NTAC's newest publication, published in partnership with the Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), focuses on how education practitioners can best align BTAM programs with multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) in K-12 schools. This event will further highlight key findings and implications from NTAC's decades of research and guidance on preventing school violence.

Registration is free. For more information and to register, visit [Enhancing School Safety Using Behavioral Threat Assessment](#).



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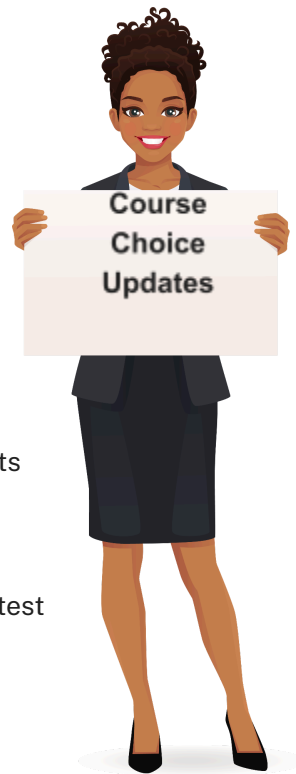
Ask CoCo

Q & A With COounselor COnnect!

Q: What revisions have been made to the Course Choice program?

A: The revised policy defines clear responsibilities for School Systems to promote transparency, accountability, and fair access to high-quality courses funded by the Course Choice program.

- Parental Involvement & Course Approval – Schools must obtain written parental permission and ensure courses align with students' graduation pathways.
- Increased Transparency & Outreach – Schools are required to actively inform parents and students about Course Choice opportunities, funding, and course options.
- Funding & Accountability – Schools must prioritize funding based on graduation requirements, TOPS-aligned and college credit courses, Fast Forward and career pathways, support for struggling schools, academic and career-technical recovery, test preparation, and school system-defined priorities approved by LDOE.



Scholarship/Funding Opportunities

Scholarship awards can range significantly, from modest amounts like \$50-\$500 from local organizations to substantial sums, even covering full tuition, from larger institutions. Smaller scholarships, despite their lesser amounts, can be a great way to secure funding and often have fewer applicants.

[United States Senate Youth Program](#) Deadline: October 3

[Regions Riding Forward Scholarship Contest](#) Deadline: September 30

[Stromberg's Scholarship Program](#) Deadline: December 31

[SkillsUSA Member Scholarships](#) Deadline: Varies

[Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education \(TEACH\) Grant](#) Deadline: Varies

[BigFuture Scholarships](#) Monthly drawing



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Connect With Our Office

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
coursechoice@la.gov	Questions related to Course Choice/Supplemental Course Allocation
fastforward@la.gov	Questions related to Fast Forward and Jump Start
healthyschools@la.gov	Questions related to healthy schools, healthy communities, and the whole child
ppp@la.gov	Questions related to pupil progression
transcripts@la.gov	Questions about duplicate high school transcripts for graduates

Monthly Calls

Alternative Education	August 14
Office of Career and College Readiness	August 21
Safe and Healthy Schools	August 28

Do you or a colleague need to sign up for the [Counselor Connect](#) newsletter? Please subscribe via the following [link](#).