

# COUNSELOR CONNECT

A Publication for Louisiana's  
Professional School Counselors



**January 2024**

[Student Opportunities](#)

[Professional Opportunities/Monthly Calls](#)

[Resources](#)

[Reminders](#)

[Ask Coco](#)

[Scholarships/Funding Opportunities](#)

[Contact Our Office](#)

## Student Opportunities

### **From LOSFA: ACT Discount Code**

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

Students who paid to register\* for the December 2023 ACT received a discount code that can be used to take another ACT® test for **FREE**.

**Students must redeem their ACT discount code by January 31, 2024.** The ACT test® discount code can be used for the following 2024 test dates: February 10, April 13, June 8, and July 13.

The ACT late registration deadline for February's ACT is Friday, January 19.

Visit the [link](#) for more information about the ACT.

Please email [rhonda.bridevaux@la.gov](mailto:rhonda.bridevaux@la.gov) or call 225-219-7597.

### **\$5 ACT Registration Voucher**

**Please share with counselors.**

ACT® is celebrating counselors by offering a [\\$5 test registration voucher](#), valid for a February, April, June, or July 2024 ACT® test. This special gift, exclusively for counselors to distribute, is designed to enhance the vital connections they have with students by creating an opportunity for a unique touchpoint. Download the customizable end-of-year cards to access the voucher code and share this unique opportunity. **The voucher will be available until January 22, 2024.**

Please contact [charmaine.cureton@la.gov](mailto:charmaine.cureton@la.gov) for more information.

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## Professional Opportunities/Monthly Calls

### Spring 2024 Counselor Institutes

Please share with middle and high school counselors, assistant principals, CTE supervisors, JAG instructors and secondary supervisors.

Registration for the Spring 2024 Counselor Institutes is scheduled to open mid January 2024. **Please share with your JAG, ROTC and CTE colleagues.** Counselor Institute sessions are a great opportunity for counselors and others who work with students on their journey towards graduation and beyond, to get updated information on policy, resources, and communications. Maximum registration is based on location capacity.

Date	8 - 11a.m.	1 - 4p.m.
<b>February 27</b>	Bossier Parish	Ouachita Parish
<b>February 28</b>	Rapides	Calcasieu Parish
<b>February 29</b>	Livingston Parish	Jefferson Parish

Please contact [angela.jordan@la.gov](mailto:angela.jordan@la.gov) with questions.

### 2024 Teacher Leader Summit

Please share with school system leaders, and secondary principals, assistant principals, and school counselors.

The 2024 Teacher Leader Summit is an annual professional learning conference that brings together Louisiana birth to grade 12 educators and content experts. Educators participating in the event will share their knowledge, learn new skills, and prepare for the 2024-2025 school year. This year's [Teacher Leader Summit](#) will focus on our ability to lead the next level every single day. **School Counselors** are encouraged to attend, as several sessions within the Office of Career and College Readiness will be curated for their work streams. The [Teacher Leader Summit Overview](#) outlines the specifics of the Teacher Leader Summit.

- The TL Summit will take place from **May 28 - May 30, 2024** at the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center (NOENMCC) in New Orleans, LA.
- Registration for this event will open on **January 5, 2024**, and will be on a first-come, first-serve basis. As space is limited, it is **strongly encouraged** to register early.
- Registration Fees: \$175 (Early Bird; ends February 2, 2024); \$200 (Regular)

Please contact [events@emergentmethod.com](mailto:events@emergentmethod.com) with questions.

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## **Teacher Leader Summit Presenter Applications**

LDOE is looking for talented educators to apply to present sessions at this year's Summit. [Presenter applications](#) will open January 5 and will close February 2.

Applications on the following topics will be prioritized during selection:

- High Quality Professional Learning Cycle
- Observation and Feedback
- [Professional Learning Roadmap](#) Implementation
- Instructional Leadership Teams
- Teacher Collaboration
- Career Pipeline

Please contact [events@emergentmethod.com](mailto:events@emergentmethod.com) 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 3rd 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:** Thursday, January 18; 3 p.m.
- **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](mailto:erica.spencer@la.gov) with questions.

## **Alternative Education Leaders Community of Practice**

**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, January 11; 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/94546407532?>
- **Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Webinar ID:** 945 4640 7532
- **Passcode:** 764614

Please contact [terran.perry@la.gov](mailto: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 service stakeholders.**

Monthly community of practice calls will be held the 4th Thursday of each month at 2 p.m. The call will address school safety, school health, transportation, nursing, suicide and bullying prevention, health/physical education, School-based Medicaid funding, Whole Child (WSCC) initiative, school health advisory councils, Project Aware. The January call will feature the Office of Behavioral Health presenting on Mobile Crisis Response Teams.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** Thursday, January 25, 2 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/91984395787?>
- **Webinar ID:** 919 8439 5787
- **Passcode:** 784203

Please contact [healthyschools@la.gov](mailto:healthyschools@la.gov) with questions.

## **School Physical Activity Award Overview Call**

**Please share this with school systems leaders, principals, health and physical educators, and school staff.**

To recognize outstanding public elementary and secondary schools implementing an outstanding physical activity program, the Department will recognize and honor exemplary schools through the [School Physical Activity Award](#).

January 5 through February 2 applications are being accepted for elementary and secondary public schools that are demonstrating a [comprehensive physical activity program](#) (CSPAP). A CSPAP is a multi-component approach by which school districts and schools use all opportunities for students to be physically active, meet the recommendations of physical activity each day, and develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to be physically active for a lifetime. A CSPAP reflects strong coordination and synergy across all of the components: physical education as the foundation; physical activity before, during, and after school; staff involvement; and family and community engagement.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** Thursday, January 10 at 11:30 am.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/96960075378>
- **Webinar ID:** 969 6007 5378
- **Passcode:** 699766

Please contact [healthyschools@la.gov](mailto:healthyschools@la.gov) with questions.

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## **New Fast Forward Career Option Codes**

Share with CTE supervisors, principals, counselors, and secondary supervisors.

Postsecondary Readiness will host a webinar discussing the recent updates to the Fast Forward Pathways and Course Codes. The new codes became effective during the 2023-2024 school year.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** Wednesday, January 17, 9 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/99482276597>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312.626.6799
- **Meeting ID:** 948 8227 6597
- **Passcode:** 859060

Please contact [caronda.bean@la.gov](mailto:caronda.bean@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](mailto:charmaine.cureton@la.gov) for more information.

## **2024 Louisiana ACT® Summit**

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

[Registration](#) is open for the 2024 Louisiana ACT® Summit. The Summit will provide attendees with the opportunity to gain new perspectives, expand their knowledge, and find solutions to problems facing the education and workforce landscape.

- **When:** February 1, 2024; 7:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.
- **Where:** Pennington Biomedical Research Facility in Baton Rouge
- **Cost:** \$135 (non members) and \$125 (State organization members)

Please contact [charmaine.cureton@la.gov](mailto:charmaine.cureton@la.gov) for more information.

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## **ACT® Data: Accelerating Your School and Student Success 2.0**

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

[Registration](#) is open for the ACT® Data Workshop. This workshop will involve a deep dive into student, school, and district ACT® assessment reports through ACT's Online Reporting System. Participants should bring their laptop and have access to their school/district's ACT® Online Reporting System through ACT's Success Portal.

- **When:** February 29; 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
- **Where:** 1201 N Third St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802
- **Cost:** Free

Please contact [charmaine.cureton@la.gov](mailto:charmaine.cureton@la.gov) for more information.

## Resources

### **Counselor Evaluation Survey**

**Please share with school system leaders, school administrators, school counselors.**

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) has contracted with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) to assist with reimagining the Louisiana evaluation system based on research and best practice, along with developing resources to support professional learning. An evaluation survey for counselors will be published in January to gather feedback from counselors to inform decisions regarding the counselor evaluation process. **The link to the survey will be posted in the January 16 LDOE Weekly Newsletter.**

In addition, **a draft observation rubric** will be shared with counselors at the **Spring Counselor Institutes** in order to obtain feedback on the tool.

Please reach out to [compass@la.gov](mailto:compass@la.gov) with questions.

### **From the LOSFA Counselor Connect**

Hailey Pellegrin joins LOSFA's College Access, Success, and Communications (CASC) Division as the Outreach Coordinator for parents and counselors.

Before joining LOSFA, she worked as a TOPS and Scholarship Counselor at Louisiana State University. **Hailey will be the new point of contact for professional school counselors.**

Please contact [LOSFA.Counselors@la.gov](mailto:LOSFA.Counselors@la.gov) with questions.



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## **FAFSA Frenzy Week**

LOSFA is hosting a statewide **FAFSA® Frenzy Week (Monday-Sunday), February 5-11, 2024**, and is inviting [postsecondary institutions](#) to host at least one FAFSA® Completion event during the week. Institutions will have the flexibility to host one event during this week or multiple events, depending on their availability.

High schools are encouraged to direct their students and parents to local sites to receive FAFSA® completion assistance. Returning and non-traditional students will also be encouraged to participate.

Under the new process, all contributors who are required to provide financial information on a FAFSA® form will need a StudentAid.gov (FSA ID) Account. This means neither students nor parents will be able to access the FAFSA® form until they have created a StudentAid.gov Account. It will take 1-3 days for the information to be confirmed by the Social Security Administration (SSA) before the StudentAid.gov account (FSA ID) can be used to complete the FAFSA® form.

To ensure that your students and their contributors are prepared to begin the 2024-2025 FAFSA®, please encourage them to create their StudentAid.gov Account prior to attending a FAFSA® completion event. You can also request an FSA ID workshop with LOSFA.

Please contact [LOSFA.Counselors@la.gov](mailto:LOSFA.Counselors@la.gov) with questions.

## **2023-2024 ACT Counselor's Guide**

**Please share with administrators, counselors, and testing coordinators.**

ACT is offering a **free** [Counselor's Guide for the 2023-2024 school year](#). The guide will provide information regarding national offerings of the ACT test, tools and resources to help support students, season-based timelines for juniors and seniors, test preparation, and so much more.

Please contact [charmaine.cureton@la.gov](mailto:charmaine.cureton@la.gov) with questions.

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## Reminders

### **SCA Spring Reporting**

**Please share with CTE supervisors, secondary supervisors, school administrators and counselors.**

The [SCA Portal](#) is **currently open**. School systems are to register with the course provider then report the enrollments in the [SCA Portal](#). The portal will **close for spring reporting on January 22 at 5 p.m.** for enrollments with private providers and on **March 11** for Public Higher Education providers.

Please contact [sca@la.gov](mailto:sca@la.gov) with questions.

### **2024 Jump Start Convention and Child Welfare and Attendance Summit**

**Please share with school system leaders, high school administrators, school counselors, and child welfare and attendance stakeholders.**

[Registration](#) is still open for the 2024 Jump Start Convention & CWA Summit. Space is limited, and registration is on a first come, first served basis. [Hotel blocks and the agenda](#) are available.

**When:** Tuesday, January 23; 7:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Where:** Cajundome and Convention Center; 444 Cajundome Blvd., Lafayette, LA

***Should you need to cancel your registration, please do so through the Whova app.***

Contact [jumpstart@la.gov](mailto:jumpstart@la.gov) with questions.

### **2023-2024 Graduate Diploma and Seal Orders**

**Please share with principals, school counselors, and data coordinators.**

Please use the [Diploma and Seal Order Form](#) to submit an order for the 2023-2024 graduates. The order form is open and ready for orders to be placed. All diploma and seal requests must be submitted through the electronic form. The deadline to submit orders is **February 2, 2024**. Only one form should be completed for each school system. The Department will cover the costs for the initial order and distribution request that are received by the due date.

For more information, please contact [suzette.rabalais@la.gov](mailto:suzette.rabalais@la.gov).



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Professional School Counselors



## **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 [suzette.rabalais@la.gov](mailto:suzette.rabalais@la.gov) with questions.

## **Proficiency by Exam/Portfolio**

**Please share with school system administrators and counselors.**

Bulletin 741 §2314. Carnegie Credit and Credit Flexibility contains a policy concerning student's earning proficiency credit by exam or portfolio.

- Per policy, school systems must [report](#) exams/portfolios used to award credit by proficiency
- Students may only earn credit by exam or portfolio in a course in which **they have never been enrolled and received no formal instruction**

Contact [stephanie.marcum@la.gov](mailto:stephanie.marcum@la.gov) with questions.

## Ask CoCo

### **Q & A With COounselor COnnect!**

**Q:** STS has been closed since October. What should I do now that it's open?

- The "Informed" Counselor

**A:** Since the most current student transcripts are in your local systems, it would be beneficial to review them for accuracy prior to the upload by your system Data Manager. 2023-2024 transcripts uploaded fulfill STS categories. Best practice is to ensure Spring schedules are correct based on students' STS Core Progress Reports.

Also, verify mid term (December) graduates are exited properly and have graduation dates in STS. **As a reminder, a student without a graduation date in STS is NOT a Louisiana graduate.**



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## Scholarships/Funding Opportunities

[Amtrak Academic Scholarships](#)

[Costco Employee Scholarship](#)

[National Merit \\$2500 Scholarships](#)

[Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Science Competition](#)

## Contact Our Office

### Office of Career and College Readiness Contact Information

<a href="mailto:highschoolacademics@la.gov">highschoolacademics@la.gov</a>	General questions about the office and about graduation requirements
<a href="mailto:ldefinancialaid@la.gov">ldefinancialaid@la.gov</a>	Questions related to the financial aid policy or for assistance with FAFSA completion
<a href="mailto:sca@la.gov">sca@la.gov</a>	Questions related to Supplemental Course Allocation/Course Choice
<a href="mailto:jumpstart@la.gov">jumpstart@la.gov</a>	Questions related to Jump Start
<a href="mailto:healthyschools@la.gov">healthyschools@la.gov</a>	Questions related to healthy schools, healthy communities, and whole child
<a href="mailto:ppp@la.gov">ppp@la.gov</a>	Questions related to pupil progression

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