



Counselor Connect



October 2026

[Student Opportunities](#)
[Safe and Healthy Schools](#)
[Fast Forward](#)
[Professional Opportunities](#)
[Resources](#)
[Reminders](#)
[Ask Coco](#)
[Scholarships/Funding Opportunities](#)
[Connect With Our Office](#)
[Monthly Calls](#)

Student Opportunities

ACT - Upcoming Test Dates

Please share with system leaders, counselors, teachers, and students.

Below is the list of upcoming [National ACT test dates](#) and the [registration](#) deadlines.

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>	<u>Late Registration</u>	<u>Scores Released</u>
October 17	September 11	September 29	October 27
December 12	November 6	November 29	December 22
February 27	January 22	February 9	March 16
April 10	March 5	March 23	April 20
June 12	May 7	May 25	June 22
July 10	June 4	June 22	July 20

Please contact mia.edwards@act.org with questions.



Counselor Connect



Safe and Healthy Schools

Safe and Healthy Schools

Please share with school counselors, social workers, school nurses, coordinators, and teachers.

The Safe and Healthy Schools Community of Practice Call will be held on October 22 at 2 p.m. The Community of Practice call is held on the fourth Thursday of each quarter. The focus for the 2026–2027 school year is Creating a Healthy School Environment.

Upcoming discussions will highlight:

- The Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Six-Step Process
- Building and sustaining School Health Advisory Councils (SHACs)
- The Coordinated School Health Initiative
- Strategies, resources, and best practices to support healthy school environments

Community of Practice Call

Phone Dial-In: 1-470-250-9358

Meeting ID: 932 3697 2279

Passcode: 444328

Please contact healthyschools@la.gov with questions.

Occupational and Physical Therapists Annual Summit

Please share with school counselors, social workers, school nurses, coordinators, and teachers.

The Annual Lead Occupational and Physical Therapist (OTPT) Summit will focus on collaboration among Lead OT/PTs. Sessions include discussions on Bulletin 1508 revisions, Medicaid claiming, multi-tiered systems of support, transportation safety, and school-based health services and practices. CEUs are pending.

- **When:** October 29th; 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- **Where:** Calcasieu parish Board Room, 600 S. Shattuck Street, Lake Charles, LA
- **Cost:** Free
- **Registration:** <https://forms.office.com/r/RM6z0kn27L?origin=lprLink>

Please contact debra.harville@cpsb.org with questions.



Counselor Connect



Fast Forward

Individual Graduation Plans Update

Please share with administrators and school counselors.

The [Individual Graduation Plan](#) (IGP) document has been updated to reflect [Act 144](#) requirements. The plan now includes sections for middle school career activities and career interest inventories.

Additional documentation as required by Act 144 will be available in May 2027.

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

Career Coaches and Career Coach Vendors

Please share with CTE supervisors, administrators and school counselors.

As a result of [Act 413 \(2026\)](#), the LDOE will provide a list of Career Coach Vendors that school systems may utilize starting January 2027 on the [Professional Learning Partner Guide](#).

The release date is October 1 for vendors to apply on the [LDOE Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#) platform.

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

Become an AP Reader

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

AP Reading is an annual event where AP teachers and college faculty score millions of responses from AP Exams. As a reader, you gain an in-depth understanding of the AP Exam so you can better assess your own students' work. If you are interested in applying for this professional learning opportunity, [applications](#) are currently being accepted.

Please contact fhorge@collegeboard.org with questions.

AP Registration and Ordering Setup

Please share with school leaders, AP coordinators, and school counselors.

Access codes for the AP Registration and Ordering were disbursed on August 3. This access code is unique to your school and is updated each school year. Codes are active between August 3, 2026 and July 31, 2027. AP coordinators should review and accept the AP Exam Ordering and Administration during setup, as there is no longer a separate AP Participation Form.

Please contact fhordge@collegeboard.org with questions.



Counselor Connect



2027 AP Exam Start Time Changes and Exam Schedule

Please share with school leaders, AP coordinators, and school counselors.

Beginning with the 2027 AP Exam administration, start times for AP Exams administered in some locations have changed to prevent the disclosure of secure exam content across time zones. For most schools, including all schools in the lower 48 states, Hawaii, and Washington, D.C., exams still begin at 8 a.m. and noon local time.

What is changing?

- Exams will begin at start times based on specific time zones.
- AP Exams are offered as **Session 1** and **Session 2**, replacing the former morning and afternoon designations.

The 2027 AP Exams will be administered May 3-14 for the regularly scheduled exam administration and May 17-21 for the late-testing exam administration.

Learn more about the AP Exam Start Times and scheduling on [AP Central](#).

Please contact fhordge@collegeboard.org with questions.

AP Exam Orders

Please share with school leaders, AP coordinators, and school counselors.

The following deadlines apply to all AP Exams and all schools:

- **October 2:** Preferred Ordering Deadline
- **November 13:** Final Ordering Deadline (Full year and fall semester AP courses and exam sections). Exams submitted after this date will incur an additional \$40 late fee.
- **March 12, 2027:** Spring course orders and fall order changes deadline.

Order updates should be managed in AP Registration and Ordering.

Please contact fhordge@collegeboard.org with questions.

AP Resources for Counselors

Please share with administrators, counselors, and testing coordinators.

The College Board offers [free counselor resources](#) needed to support and advise students on their journey to college and career. Resources include assistance with preparing specialized students, advising, [reference guides](#), handouts, and [counselor toolkits](#).

Please contact fhordge@collegeboard.org with questions.



Counselor Connect



K-8 Career Awareness and Exploration

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

[Act 144 \(2026\)](#) requires that each school year, at least six activities shall be conducted at each grade level in **grades six through eight** to expose students to career and technical academic fields of study. The activities shall align with the [high-demand sectors by region and state as provided annually by Louisiana Works](#).

- Each school year, **at least three of the six activities** for each grade level shall meet one of the following criteria:
 - An activity that provides direct interaction with an employer.
 - An activity that involves career pathway instruction linked to high school course options.
 - An activity that provides a work-based learning exposure.
 - A career interest inventory.
- At least **one** career awareness and exploration activity shall be documented for each school year in each student's Individual Graduation Plan (IGP), and **career interest inventories** should be completed in grade six and updated in seventh and eighth grades.

Each school with grades K-5 shall provide students with at least **one** career awareness experience or activity each school year that meets at least one of the criteria listed above. Each school board shall certify compliance to LDOE and maintain auditable records annually for each school and grade level's activities. A form will be disseminated in **May 2027** for compliance purposes.

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

Professional Opportunities

Fall 2026 Counselor Institute Sessions

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

Registration for the Fall 2026 Counselor Institute sessions is available through Eventbrite. This fall, sessions will focus on legislative updates and requirements that affect students in grades K-12.

Session dates, locations, and registration links are below:

October 8- [Rapides Parish](#) Gladys Higdon Instructional Resource Center (*waitlist*)

October 13- [Bossier Parish](#) Bossier Instructional Center

October 23- [East Baton Rouge Parish](#) Claiborne Building (*waitlist*)

October 30- [Jefferson Parish](#) (Jefferson Parish Board Room)

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



Counselor Connect



LOSFA's Professional School Counselor Webinars

Please share with school counselors.

LOSFA will host its annual Fall Professional School Counselor webinars on October 13 and October 14. Please only register for **one** session. Please click the links below to register.

[October 13, 2026 at 1 p.m.](#)

[October 14, 2026 at 10 a.m.](#)

Please contact losfa.scheduling@la.gov with questions.

6th Annual Life After High School Convening

Please share with school counselors.

[Registration](#) is now available for the 6th Annual Life After High School Convening. This free event is for school counselors, but registration is required by October 29. This year's event will provide training in motivational interviewing specifically for school counselors. CEUs will be provided.

- **When:** November 3, 2026, 9 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- **Where:** Lavin-Bernick Center at Tulane University
- **Cost:** Free

Please contact mWashington1@tulane.edu or emoran4@tulane.edu with questions.

Military Child of the Year® Awards

Please share with teachers, school counselors, and administrators.

Operation Homefront is now accepting nominations for the 19th annual Military Child of the Year® Awards, recognizing outstanding military children ages 13–18. Seven recipients — one from each service branch — will receive a \$10,000 cash award, a laptop, and an all-expenses-paid, three-day trip to Washington, D.C., for themselves and their families.

Nominations are open to children of Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard, Gold Star, and retired military families. Anyone can submit a nomination; no account creation or fee is required.

Please contact danielle.campbell@operationhomefront.org with questions.



Counselor Connect



Resources

Free ACT Resources for Counselors

Please share with administrators, counselors, and testing coordinators.

ACT is offering free [ACT practice materials for counselors](#) to help counselors access the most useful materials. Share these materials with students to support test prep, including practice tests and test guides. ACT also provided downloadable 2026-2027 posters for [test dates](#) and a [counselor calendar](#).

Please contact mia.edwards@act.org with questions.

ACT Workforce Website

Please share with CTE supervisors, school counselors, teachers, and administrators.

The [ACT Workforce](#) website has resources for CTE, K-12, and Adult educators. The content focuses on challenges, including career readiness assessment, skills certification, and community approaches to building talent pipelines. Content can be viewed based on your role working with [CTE](#), [Adult Education](#), or [K-12](#).

Please contact mia.edwards@act.org with questions.

Labor Market Briefings

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

LA Works has begun to provide monthly [Labor Market Briefings](#) to explore labor market trends, explain helpful resources, and answer questions from session participants.

[Meetings](#) will be held the 2nd Wednesday of every month at noon through Microsoft Teams.

Please contact LMI@la.gov for more information.

Lela College Planning

Please share with teachers, school counselors, and administrators.

Lela's publications for high school seniors have been published and posted at [Planning for College - Louisiana Education Loan Authority](#). Please share with your senior families.

Please contact info@lela.org with questions.



Counselor Connect



LOSFA Outreach Events

Please share with administrators and counselors.

The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance provides several outreach events, seminars, and workshops for schools, institutions, and organizations. These events can be delivered virtually and in person. Access the [Event Scheduling Guide](#) for more information about LOSFA Events, or submit requests using the [Event Request Form](#).

Please contact losfa.scheduling@la.gov with questions.

LOSFA School Counselor and Administrator Assistance

Please share with administrators and school counselors.

School Counselors and Administrators can [schedule](#) 30-minute one-on-one assistance from a LOSFA representative regarding LOSFA programs and college access information, including TOPS scholarships and Louisiana's savings programs.

Please contact losfa.scheduling@la.gov with questions.

Reminders

Safe and Healthy Schools: School-Based Medicaid

Please share with school counselors, social workers, school nurses, coordinators, and teachers.

As school systems prepare for the 2026–2027 academic year, the Safe and Healthy Schools Division reminds all Charter Local Education Agencies (LEAs) of Medicaid provider enrollment requirements. Charter LEAs must quickly inform the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) and Gainwell Technologies of any changes to their name or if they transition to a new Charter Management Organization (CMO). Charter LEA's that undergo a name change or transition to a new Charter Management Organization are required to:

- Notify the state of Louisiana Medicaid Fiscal Intermediary/Gainwell Technology Provider Enrollment Unit and Louisiana Department of Health immediately
- Update the [Provider Enrollment Update File Form](#)
- Complete the [Louisiana Medicaid Link/Unlink and Working Relationship Form](#)
- Mail forms with an original signature to Gainwell Provider Enrollment Unit

Please contact sbmp@la.gov with questions.

Human Trafficking Prevention Policy Toolkit

Please share with school system leaders and principals.

[Act 737](#) (2026) requires each school, including charter schools, to designate at least one school counselor, mental health professional, or school administrator to complete annual advanced training on human trafficking.



Counselor Connect



School leaders should ensure the required policy is adopted, designate the appropriate employee, and maintain documentation of training and compliance. Leaders should use the [Human Trafficking Prevention Policy Toolkit](#). Information about available training resources is available through the [Governor's Office of Human Trafficking Prevention](#) and will also be posted to the LDOE website.

Please contact humantrafficking@la.gov with questions.

Student Suicide Prevention Awareness Act

Please share with the principals or designee.

[Act 548](#) (2026) requires public schools to post suicide hotline information, including the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, on school websites and on student identification cards to increase awareness and access to crisis support resources.

Schools are required to post the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline information prominently on their school website and include the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline information on student identification cards, if the school issues ID cards to students.

Please contact healthyschools@la.gov with questions.

Suicide Prevention Training

Please share with school counselors, social workers, school nurses, coordinators, and teachers.

[R.S. 17:437.1](#) (Jason Flatt Act), school personnel are required to complete a one-time, one-hour training in suicide prevention and maintain documentation of training completion.

Suicide Prevention Resources for Schools:

- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\): Suicide Prevention Toolkit for High Schools](#)
- [The Jason Foundation: Training Modules for Suicide Awareness and Prevention](#)
- [Peer Initiative Resources](#)
- [Teacher Resources](#)

Please contact healthyschools@la.gov with questions.

Digital Devices Guidelines

Please share with school system leaders, school administrators, and school staff.

The prevalence and use of digital devices (e.g., computers, laptops, tablets, Chromebooks, smart devices, project screens, smartboards, and smartphones) by students and educators is an everyday component of the school day and our individual lives. The Louisiana Department of Health and other stakeholders developed the guidelines in collaboration.

These [guidelines](#) provide school systems with health and safety resources based on best practices for effectively integrating digital devices in public schools. The resources are not exhaustive but are



Counselor Connect



intended to provide school systems with the age-appropriate time and usage guidelines regarding various digital devices.

Please contact healthyschools@la.gov with questions.

Course Choice Reporting for Fall and Full Year

Please share with school administrators and school counselors.

The [Course Choice Portal](#) is open for reporting enrollments. The deadline for reporting Private Provider enrollments was September 18. The deadline for public higher education is October 23.

Please contact coursechoice@la.gov with questions.

Ask CoCo

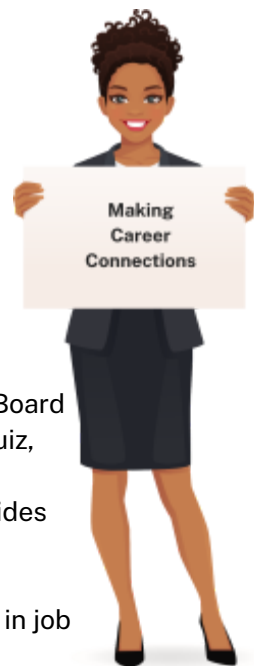
Q and A With Counselor Connect

Q: How can I better assist students with connecting their interests with careers?

A: School counselors are a vital part of assisting students with understanding how their interests connect to various career options. Also, when school counselors understand the options, they are equipped to guide students more effectively.

Options to help students identify and understand the links between their interests and future careers:

- Interest inventories allow students to match their hobbies and values to jobs. College Board offers tools like the [BigFuture Career Tools](#) where students are able to take a career quiz, search over 900 career profiles, and explore career clusters.
- [CareerOneStop Interest Assessment](#), sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, provides tools such as career assessments, videos, tips on resume writing and interviewing, certification information, etc.
- Counselors and students can participate in community learning where they participate in job shadowing, service learning, and workplace field trips.
- Staying informed about career trends in Louisiana and understanding what the [high-demand, high-wage](#) careers are and why it is important to understand.
- College and career planning provides opportunities for students to connect with educational entities and industry so they can better understand training required for specific careers.





Counselor Connect



Scholarship/Funding Opportunities

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

[Army ROTC Scholarship](#) (Deadline: Varies)

[Too Cool to Pay for School Scholarship](#) (Quarterly Deadlines: March, June, September, and December)

[United States Senate Youth Program](#) (Deadline: October 9, 2026)

[National Rice Month Scholarship Contest](#) (Deadline: October 15, 2026)

[Vincent G. June Endowed Scholarship](#) (Deadline: November 15, 2026)

[Hagan Scholarship Foundation](#) (Deadline: December 1, 2026)

[Thurgood Marshall College Fund](#) (Deadline: December 1, 2026)

[Jimmy Rane Foundation Scholarships](#) (Application opens: December 1, 2026)

[Dell Scholars Program](#) (Application opens: December 15, 2026; Application closes: February 15, 2027)

[Louisiana Title 29 Dependents' Educational Assistance Scholarship](#) (Deadline: December 31, 2026)

[Built Ford Tough Scholarship](#) (Deadline: January 15, 2027)

[Louisiana Restaurant Association Education Foundation \(LRAEF\)](#) (Deadline: January 30, 2027)

[Brent P. Poor Memorial Scholarship](#) (Deadline: January 31, 2027)

[Simon Youth Foundation Scholarships](#) (Deadline: February 12, 2027)



Counselor Connect



Connect With Our Office

Office of Career and College Readiness Contact Information

highschoolacademics@la.gov	General questions about the office and about graduation requirements
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 school safety, school bus transportation, coordinated school health, school health advisory councils, mental and behavioral health initiatives, nursing, or school-based Medicaid
ppp@la.gov	Questions related to pupil progression
transcripts@la.gov	Questions about duplicate high school transcripts for graduates

Monthly Calls

Alternative Education	December 3 at 10 a.m.
Office of Career and College Readiness	October 15 at 3 p.m.
School Safety	October 14 at 10 a.m.
Safe and Healthy Schools	October 22 at 2 p.m.

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