

Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA)

Welcome! LOSFA Professional School Counselor Webinar 2016

LOSFA's Vision is to be Louisiana's First Choice for College Access

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LOSFA Administered Programs

- TOPS
- START Saving Program
 - Louisiana's 529 college savings program
- TOPS Tech Early Start Program
- Go Grant
- Rockefeller State Wildlife Scholarship
- Chafee Educational Training Voucher (ETV) Program
- John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program

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LOSFA Social Media Sites

-  <http://www.facebook.com/LOSFA>
-  <http://www.twitter.com/LOSFA>
-  <http://www.youtube.com/LOSFA1000>
-  <http://instagram.com/losfa001>

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Legislative Update

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TOPS

- Funding for TOPS is contingent upon appropriation.

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- **Act 18** of the 2016 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature sets a floor for the TOPS Award Amount beginning with the fall semester of 2016 and provides that the qualifying ACT score shall be truncated to a whole number rather than rounded to the next whole number. **This change is effective beginning with the fall semester of 2016.**

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- **Act 503** of the 2016 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature changes the methodology for eliminating students' TOPS Awards in the event of a budget shortfall. Under this law, when there is a budget shortfall, each student's TOPS award -- including Performance and Honors Award stipends -- is subject to a reduction. TOPS Awards will be distributed to all students according to a pro-rata distribution of the available funds.
- Neither the TOPS Tech Early Start Award nor the National Guard stipends are subject to reduction under this law.

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- **Act 503** also allows a student to "opt out" of receiving his TOPS Award during a budget shortfall. Students will be required to log in to their Louisiana Award System account to reject payment of their TOPS Award during a budget shortfall year.
- If the student rejects his TOPS Award, he will not be required to enroll full time in school or maintain continuous enrollment during that academic year. NOTE that the time period for students whose awards are suspended for failure to meet steady academic progress WILL NOT be extended, even if the student opts out. In addition, a student who opts out must use all of his TOPS eligibility within 5 years of the budget shortfall, which time may be extended if the student requests an exception for cause in accordance with the administrative rules. **This change is effective beginning with the 2016-2017 award year.**

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- **Act 388** of the 2016 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature increases the grade point average (GPA) requirement to qualify for a TOPS Performance Award from 3.0 to 3.25 and increases the GPA requirement to qualify for a TOPS Honors Award from 3.0 to 3.50. **This change is effective for high school graduates of 2021 and later.**

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- **FROM ACT 359 of the 2013 Legislature**
- Beginning with the high school graduating class of 2018, certain honors, advancement placement, gifted, and dual enrollment courses approved by BESE and the Board of Regents will be graded on a 5.0 grading scale for purposes of calculating students' grade point average on the TOPS core curriculum courses.

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- **FROM ACT 230 of the 2015 Legislature** provides that 2017 high school graduates will be able to use the TOPS Tech Award to pursue an associate's degree or other shorter-term training and education programs, including skill, occupational, vocational, technical, certificate, and academic, that the Workforce Investment Council (WIC) and the Board of Regents (BOR) determine are aligned to state workforce priorities.

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- If one of the eligible programs becomes ineligible in future years, students who are currently in the program will be allowed to complete that program and receive their TOPS Tech Award. No new students would be eligible for TOPS Tech funding after a determination that the program has become ineligible.

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- All current TOPS Tech eligible programs remain eligible for 2017 high school graduates. Funding for all TOPS awards is contingent upon appropriations.

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TOPS TECH PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCLUSION		
DEGREE	INSTITUTION	DISCIPLINE
AS	BRCC	COMPUTER SCIENCE
	SUSLA	
AS	Delgado	ELECTRICAL-ELECT. ENGINEER TECH.
AS	SLCC	INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY
AS	Nicholls	PETROLEUM SERVICES
		SAFETY TECHNOLOGY
AA	McNeese	PARALEGAL STUDIES
	Nunez	
AA	Delgado	CRIMINAL JUSTICE
AS	BRCC	
	FTCC	
ASCJ	LSUE	
AS	HSC-NO	DENTAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGY
AS	FTCC	CARDIOPULMONARY CARE SCIENCE
AS	LSUE	RESPIRATORY CARE
AS	BRCC	SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY
AS	LSUA	RADIOLOGIC TECHNOLOGY
	LSUE	

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ASN	BPCC	NURSING
	BRCC	
	Delgado	
	FTCC	
	La Tech	
	LDCC	
	LSUA	
	LSUE	
	NSU	
	SLCC	
	McNeese	
	Sowela	
	SUSLA	
AS	BRCC	BUSINESS
	Delgado	BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
	SLCC	BUSINESS
	SUSLA	BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
AS	SUSLA	ACCOUNTING
	Delgado	

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RULE CHANGE

- At a joint meeting in June 2016, the Board of Regents and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approved **AP Computer Science A** as an equivalent to Advanced Mathematics in the TOPS Core Curriculum for students graduating from high school in 2014 and later.

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- A Consent Form for every public school student is required by law to ensure that PII is disclosed only for those students whose parent or legal guardian has consented and that the parents who deny consent do so with full knowledge of the effect of denial of consent.
- If you filled out a consent form during the 2015-16 school year, the form will be good through the end of high school unless consent is revoked.

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- The Consent Form must be signed by the student rather than the parent or legal guardian if the student is 18 or is judicially emancipated or is emancipated by marriage.

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Schedule a LOSFA Visit!

- LOSFA Representatives are available at no cost for daytime and evening seminars/workshops and college fairs
- Seminars Available
 - TOPS or TOPS/FASFA
 - START
 - General Financial Aid Overview
 - FLY: Financial Literacy for You
 - TOPS Retention
 - College Application Workshops
 - FAFSA Completion Workshops
 - FSA ID Completion Workshop

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- Email or fax Sabrina Johnson or Kendra Williams as early as possible to schedule your event
 - Sabrina.Johnson2@la.gov
 - Kendra.Williams@la.gov
 - Fax: (225) 208-1597
- Requests must be received at least 30 days prior to the date of the event
- Scheduling a college fair with LACRAO does not include LOSFA. Feel free to invite LOSFA to your LACRAO event.

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Email: "Text" to custserv@la.gov
and include Name, High School
and Mobile Number

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What is LCAAM?

- **Louisiana College Application and Access Month (LCAAM)**
- The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA), along with key education stakeholders in the State of Louisiana, have collaborated to develop and implement Louisiana College Application and Access Month during the month of October. **LCAAM was developed to assist 12th grade students with navigating the complex college admissions process and to ensure that they apply to at least one postsecondary institution of interest.** Schools have the opportunity to invite families to attend and to take advantage of completing and submitting college applications with their students. LCAAM events may include college applications, FSA ID registrations, FAFSA Completions, career searches, employment applications, military searches and military applications.

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When is LCAAM?

- The Louisiana College Application & Access Month is scheduled for the month of October (**October 1st - 31st**)
- However, some schools, depending on their schedule, choose to schedule their college application month event outside of this timeframe. This is okay. Our agency asks that you still submit a registration form to us with the date/time of your event, so that we can do the best we can get a staff member assigned to your event and assist with any help that you may need.
- **LOSFA does not schedule your school's event.** You tell us the date/time of your event and we do our best to get one of our staff members to attend it.

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Early FAFSA Completion

- This year students will be able to submit their FAFSA early starting October 1st, which is the same timeframe as LCAAM. This is a great opportunity for your school to promote FAFSA Completion during your LCAAM event.
- If having your LCAAM event and FAFSA completion on the same day isn't possible due to scheduling, then providing FAFSA completion information and materials to students to bring home to their parents at your LCAAM event would work as well.
- Please let your State Coordinator, Brandi Morrison, know if you need any assistance or suggestions.

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What Will My Event Look Like?

- Your high school event is tailored for what fits your school.
- **Size:** Your event can have 20 seniors participating or 250+ students participating.
- **Time:** You can choose to have an all-day event, a morning or afternoon event, or a lunchtime event.
- **Location:** LCAAM events can take place in a computer lab, library, auditorium, etc.
- **Some of the basics that you will need: (See Site Coordinator Checklist in ACAC Manual for more...)**
 - Computer/Internet Access
 - Desks/Tables & Chairs
 - Sign-In Sheets
 - Volunteers/Staff (that will assist students with the application process)

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How Do I Get Help for My Event?

- This is your event. **We encourage you to invite volunteers that will help to assist the students with filling out applications and/or help with any other aspects of your event.** This can include fellow teachers/counselors, parents, local 2yr and 4yr college admission representatives, local business leaders, non-profit organizations, etc. to assist you with this event.
- Our agency will do our best to make sure we have at least one LOSFA staff member assigned to attend your event to help out as well.
- If you need help securing volunteers from local colleges, businesses, etc. please contact your State Coordinator, Brandi Morrison, at 225-219-7583 or brandi.morrison@la.gov.

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Match & Fit Surveys

- For the 2016 LCAAM events, we are asking that the site coordinators make sure that the seniors attending your school's LCAAM event fill out one of the following match and fit surveys **prior to your LCAAM event:**
 - Postsecondary
 - Career
 - Military
- We ask that site coordinators collect the completed surveys prior to your scheduled event. On the day of your LCAAM event, you will hand them out to the students as they check-in. These completed surveys will serve as the student's ticket to get into a LCAAM event.
- The questions on these surveys are to help the student and the volunteer assisting them with making sure they are applying to the proper postsecondary path; whether it be college, career, military, etc. whichever best suits that student's needs and qualifications.
- These surveys will be e-mailed to the schools/site coordinators.

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Check-In Process

- For the 2016 events, we ask that each site coordinator have a sign-in sheet for the students to sign-in on the day of their event.
- Once the student has completed the check-in process, they can be given the Match & Fit Survey that they completed prior to their LCAAM event.
- LOSFA will ask the site coordinators for the original or a copy of the sign-in sheet from each event for record keeping purposes.

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Promoting Your Event

- The ACAC Site Coordinator Manual has several suggestions and ideas for promoting your school's event. It also provides templates for letters to parents and students, press releases, and other materials that you may find helpful to promote your event.
- We also encourage promotion through social media which is easily done and can be very successful. A couple of the hashtags that our agency will be using are **#GeauxApply2017** and **#IHaveApplied2017**. You can create hashtags for your school as well. Get your students involved by asking them to take photos with their classmates at your event and share on their social media pages with our hashtags and your school's hashtags.

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Giveaways

- We all know that students love a "giveaway"! Depending on your resources, you can arrange to have door prizes, giveaways, gifts, etc... to the students in an effort to promote the event and increase attendance.
- LOSFA will provide the "I Have Applied To College" yellow and blue bracelets to your schools as a giveaway and LCAAM t-shirts. ** We don't have enough shirts to give out to each student, but each school will be given shirts for the site coordinator to give away as he/she chooses.**

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SUMMARY

- **LCAAM – Louisiana College Application and Access Month – October 2016**
 - Application & "Access"
 - Encourage participation from students who are applying to 2 and 4 year institutions; as well as credential and career track students. (Military and Job applications, My Life My Way (website), JumpStart credentials, etc.)
- **Registration**
 - PDF registration (sent by e-mail or downloaded from *new website* (when available) (Firefox))
 - LOSFA website online registration (Chrome)
- **Not a "Recruiting" Event**
- **LCAAM Admission – LOSFA Student Survey Pre-Event**
 - College Match and Fit
- **Staffing/Volunteers**
 - LOSFA Staff
 - Volunteers (recruited by schools) *Let us know who will attend/help out at your events.*
- **Social Media**
 - #GeauxApply2017 #IHaveApplied2017
- **Contact: Brandi Morrison - 225.219.7583 - brandi.morrison@la.gov**

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UnlockMyFuture.org



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FLY Tour

FLY
financial literacy for you

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**College
Acceptance Day**

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FAFSA

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FAFSA

- **The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the application for both federal and state aid programs.**
 - Be sure to fill out the FAFSA even if you don't think you'll qualify for need based aid.
- **The FAFSA is the only application needed for the TOPS scholarship.**
- **You should never be asked to pay to fill out the FAFSA. It is a FREE application.**

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FAFSA

- The only financial aid directly determined from the FAFSA data is eligibility for the federal Pell Grant
- The primary purpose of the FAFSA is to establish the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC)
 - The EFC is used by the institution, in a process called packaging, to determine your eligibility for campus based aid programs including FSEOG, Go Grant, Federal Work Study, Perkins Loans and William D. Ford Direct Loans

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FAFSA Filing Methods

- **FAFSA On the Web: www.fafsa.gov**
 - Faster processing
 - "Skip logic" – students are only asked questions which apply to them
 - Immediate EFC estimate
 - Online receipt verification
 - Live online help
- **Paper Application**
 - Available by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 800-433-3243 or downloading from www.fafsa.gov

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FSA ID

- The Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID) replaced the Federal Student Aid PIN as of May 2015. If you already have a PIN, you can link your information to your new FSA ID by entering your PIN while registering for your FSA ID. (This will save you time when registering for your FSA ID.) However, a PIN is not required to create an FSA ID.
- If you are a parent of a **dependent student**, you will need your own FSA ID if you want to sign your child's FAFSA electronically. If you have more than one child attending college, you can use the same FSA ID to sign all applications. *Please note: Each FSA ID user must have a unique e-mail address.*
- Your FSA ID is used to sign legally binding documents electronically. It has the same legal status as a written signature. **Don't give your FSA ID to anyone— not even to someone helping you fill out the FAFSA.** Sharing your FSA ID could put you at risk of identity theft! The FSA ID also allows you to make corrections to the FAFSA online.

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FSA ID

- You, and your parent if you're a dependent student, can apply for an FSA ID at any time. If you don't have one by the time you fill out your FAFSA, you will be prompted to apply for one.
- If you think the Social Security Administration (SSA) might have the wrong name or date of birth for you in its records, go to www.ssa.gov now to find out how to correct any errors. Your information must be correct with the SSA before your FAFSA or FSA ID can be processed.
- Your username does not expire, but your FSA ID password will expire every 18 months.

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FAFSA Submission Dates

When a Student Is Attending College (School Year)	When a Student Can Submit a FAFSA	Which Year's Income Information Is Required?
July 1, 2015–June 30, 2016	January 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016	2014
July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017	January 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017	2015
July 1, 2017–June 30, 2018	October 1, 2016–June 30, 2018	2015
July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019	October 1, 2017–June 30, 2019	2016

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FAFSA: Student Information

- Social Security Number
- State of Legal Residence
- Citizenship status
- Interest in Student Loans and Work-Study programs

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FAFSA: Student Finances

- Records the student's income, assets, and types of federal benefits received

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FAFSA: Student Status

- This section determines your dependency status
- The EFC of a dependent student is based on both your financial information and your parents' financial information
- The EFC of an independent student is based on your (and your spouse's) financial information

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FAFSA: Student Status

- To be considered an independent student, you must be able to answer yes to one of the following questions:
 - Were you born before January 1, 1994?
 - As of today, are you married?
 - At the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, will you be working on a masters or doctorate program?
 - Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training?
 - Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?

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FAFSA: Student Status

- Do you have children who will receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018?
- Do you have dependents (other than your spouse/child) who will live with you and receive more than half of their support from you now and through June 30, 2018?
- At any time since you turned age 13, were both of your parents deceased, were you in foster care, or were you a dependent or ward of the court?

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FAFSA: Student Status Special Circumstances

- Are you or were you an emancipated minor as determined by a court in your state of legal residence?
- Are you or were you in legal guardianship as determined by a court in your state of legal residence?
- At any time on or after July 1, 2016, were you determined by certain governmental agencies to be an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?

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FAFSA: Parental Information

- Skip if you are an independent student
- Whose information do you use?
 - Grandparents, foster parents and legal guardians are not considered parents
 - If your parents are divorced or separated, answer the questions about the parent you lived with most during the past 12 months
 - If this parent is remarried as of today, answer the questions about that parent and their spouse

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FAFSA: Parental Information

- If your parent is single or widowed, answer the questions about that parent
 - If your widowed parent is remarried, answer the questions about that parent and their spouse

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FAFSA: Parental Information

- Records parental income, assets, and type of federal benefits received
- Number of household in college
 - Does not include parents
- Parental residency
- Parents' e-mail address

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FAFSA: School Information

- May list up to 10 institutions to receive FAFSA data when filing online
 - Make sure to list a Louisiana school first for TOPS purposes
- Housing plan
- Enrollment status

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FAFSA: Signatures

- For a dependent student, both the student and the parent must sign
- FAFSA on the Web may be signed by:
 - Using the FSA ID
 - The parent and student must have separate FSA ID
 - Parents may use the same FSA ID for all of their children
 - Printing the signature page
 - Must mail within 14 days

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Student Aid Report (SAR)

- The SAR provides you with:
 - Expected Family Contribution (EFC)
 - Pell Grant Eligibility
 - Listing of Institutions which will receive your data
 - A financial aid history
 - A listing of your responses to the FAFSA
- Corrections may be made:
 - Online at www.fafsa.gov
 - By phone at (800) 433-3243

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Contact LOSFA

www.osfa.la.gov

custserv@la.gov

800-259-5626

(225) 219-1012

8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday

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