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The greatest factor in both the growth of our state’s economy and the ability of our people to participate as productive citizens will be the skills with which young people are equipped. While most jobs do not require a four-year college degree, high-growth, high-wage jobs in Louisiana almost always require an education after high school. A high school’s most important role is to help students attain the knowledge and capabilities that provide them future opportunity.

*Louisiana Believes*, the state’s comprehensive plan to prepare students for college and career success, includes a system of related policies and programs that: a) help schools provide students with pathways to future prosperity; b) give schools the resources to offer these pathways; and c) reward schools when students achieve their goals.

This Guidebook is a series of short documents showing administrators, counselors, and teachers how to use key policies, programs, and resources to help both students and schools achieve their goals.

The Guidebook includes brief chapters on the subjects below.

1. **Planning for struggling students** through Individual Graduation Plan guidance and providing high school courses necessary to complete fundamental freshman course requirements in a [Transitional 9th Grade](#).

2. **Focusing 9th and 10th grade students** on mastering a set of foundational academic skills in core subjects instead of committing them to a single graduation path too early in high school, before they have had the chance to explore and discover their true interests.

3. **Developing basic and advanced college and workplace skills** in the 11th and 12th grades to prepare students for college and career success, and ensure they are competitive in any workplace or academic environment.

4. **Counseling and supporting** student access to graduation pathways they discover are right for them by utilizing assessments, data, new sources of funding, the Supplemental Course Academy, and the Statewide Counselor Assistance Center.

5. **Earning recognition for school excellence** through an [accountability system](#) that rewards schools for helping students successfully pursue their college and career aspirations.
HIGH SCHOOL GUIDEBOOK:
PLANNING FOR STRUGGLING STUDENTS

MIDDLE SCHOOL CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES
Middle school students may earn high school credits if the district can assure course content meets Louisiana Core Academic Standards and is at a high school level. LEAs may permit students to earn Carnegie credit as middle school and high school students in two ways:
1. by passing a course in which the student is enrolled and meeting instructional time requirements, as set forth in the Carnegie Credit and Credit Flexibility section below; or
2. by demonstrating proficiency, as set forth in the Carnegie Credit and Credit Flexibility section below.

ARRIVING ON THE HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS
The 9th grade transition is a critical time for high school students, often determining the likelihood of graduation. As districts and schools seek to address the challenges of 9th grade transition, it is critical (a) to ensure a smooth, well-planned transition for all students and (b) in particular, to plan proper supports for struggling students who need additional academic remediation.

This reference document is intended to help counselors (a) support school-wide student planning through the Individual Graduation Plans and (b) implement transitional 9th grade for appropriate students.

*Counselor Tools & Supports*

INDIVIDUAL GRADUATION PLANS
By the end of the eighth grade, every student, with the assistance of his parent or other legal custodian and school guidance personnel, or counselor, shall begin to develop an Individual Graduation Plan to guide the next academic year’s coursework and to assist the student in exploring educational and career possibilities and in making appropriate secondary and postsecondary education decisions as part of an overall career/postsecondary plan.

PUPIL PROGRESSION PLANS
The Pupil Progression Plan is the comprehensive plan developed and adopted by each LEA. The plan is based on student performance on the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program and is aligned to state laws and BESE policies. At the conclusion of the 2014-2015 school year, due to a delay in test scores resulting from the administration of new assessments, placement decisions for fourth and eighth grade students shall be made according to local pupil progression plans, which shall outline the evidence of student learning used to make promotion decisions. Such evidence shall include, but not be limited to, performance on classroom assignments or benchmark assessments (Bulletin 1566 §701).

STUDENTS STRUGGLING ACADEMICALLY
BESE adopted policy to support student placement into transitional 9th grade to improve the likelihood of high school graduation. The policy highlights of the transitional 9th grade include:

- Remediation and Retesting: Students failing to achieve the standard required for promotion to the 9th grade shall participate in summer remediation and take the applicable retest to be placed in transitional 9th grade. Schools shall provide counseling and a variety of remediation options (face-to-face and online) to help students succeed in their remediation efforts.
• **Local Decision Making**: Placement in Transitional 9th Grade shall be at the discretion of the local school or school system where the student was enrolled in 8th grade. However, schools are highly encouraged to make such placements, as data show that students placed on a high school campus are less likely to drop out. The School Building Level Committee (SBLC) at the middle school will review standardized test scores, past coursework, and student behavioral data to determine the most appropriate setting for each student.

• **Inclusion in High School Graduation Cohort**: Students placed in Transitional 9th Grade shall not be included in the high school’s graduation cohort during their first year on the high school campus. These students can enroll in high school level classes, including career education courses, that parents and schools deem appropriate, with a goal of keeping them on track for an on-time graduation. Following one year in Transitional 9th Grade, students shall enter the high school cohort, the same year in which they would enter the cohort had they been held back in eighth grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MILESTONE</th>
<th>DECISIONS FOR CONSIDERATION</th>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. IDENTIFY the students in need | • Identify non-proficient 8th grade students and areas in which they are proficient or non-proficient.  
• Determine placement of non-proficient students. | • Student’s reading level (e.g., The Lexile® Framework for Reading)  
• Statewide assessments results (if available)  
• Results of benchmark assessments rated as Tier 1 and Tier 2 through the Instructional Materials Review  
• State-released ELA and Math practice test results  
• Performance results on classroom assessments aligned to the State Standards (e.g. teacher-made assessments in EAGLE)  
• Results of assessments aligned to the priority content outlined in the assessment guidance  
• Growth from beginning of the year pre-test to end of the year post-test aligned to the State Standards  
• IEP goals  
• Explore® test  
• Student growth data  
• Course grades  
• Attendance  
• Student Graduation Support Profile |
| 2. PLAN for student support | • Create a customized counseling structure (e.g., a support team) to support each transitional 9th grade student.  
• Determine how often this structure should evaluate an individual student’s progress, specifying the data the support team will use to identify student progress and gaps. | • Appendix 1 of the Transitional 9th Grade Promotion Policy Guidance  
• Benchmarking data  
• Student Graduation Support Profile  
• Student involvement (attendance, discipline, extracurricular) |
| 3. PLAN for student’s academic pathway | • Create/identify quality course offerings for transitional 9th grade students.  
• Offer quality remediation support for transitional 9th grade students based on each student’s needs and available offerings.  
• Identify student areas of proficiency and non-proficiency and determine individual transitional 9th grade student plans based on needs and available offerings. | • Appendix 2 of the Transitional 9th Grade Promotion Policy Guidance  
• Math: Teachers should target the specific standards that prepare students for the on-grade level standards with which they are struggling. The remediation guidance and tables in the math guidebooks help teachers do this.  
• Reading and Writing: Students should practice their grade-level standards in both on-grade level texts and below-grade level texts. The text sets included in the ELA Guidebook unit plans detail high-quality texts at every grade level. |
**MILESTONE DECISIONS FOR CONSIDERATION RESOURCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MILESTONE</th>
<th>DECISIONS FOR CONSIDERATION</th>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4. EVALUATE student growth and IDENTIFY next steps | • Review academic data to determine if the student is progressing.  
• Assess whether the student has socially acclimated to the high school campus and matured in his/her approach to academic life (e.g. attendance, homework, class participation and study habits).  
• Plan ongoing counseling and mentoring.  
• Create an Individualized Graduation Plan that will support the student in the 9th grade cohort based on his/her ongoing needs. | • Academic Resources  
• Standardized testing data  
• Graduation Student Support Profile  
• Benchmarking assessments  
• Reading inventories  
• Mathematical skill proficiency assessments  
• Other Resources  
• Discipline reports  
• Attendance Report  
• Teacher Feedback  
• Club and organization rosters |

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**Accountability Implications**

Schools are held accountable for the success of students transitioning between middle school and high school in the following ways:

1. **Dropout/Credit Accumulation**: The transition from 8th to 9th grade is critical for student success. Schools with an 8th grade earn points for the numbers of credits students accumulate by the end of the 9th grade (and transitional 9th grade, where applicable). This encourages a successful transition to high school by allowing students access to Carnegie credits early and often. Points are awarded as such:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARNEGIE COURSE CREDITS (earned by the end of 9th grade)</th>
<th>DCAI POINTS PER STUDENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>150 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>125 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>75 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>50 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>25 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>0 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 year 8th grade student</td>
<td>0 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout</td>
<td>0 pts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Transitional 9th Grade**: Offering remediation in an age-appropriate setting is critical to the success of low-performing students, particularly during the transition to high school. Thus, BESE has implemented a few critical policies to support the creation of high-quality transitional 9th grade programming.

   • **Dropout Credit Accumulation Index (DCAI)**: Students in T9 will be counted like 9th graders for the DCAI, as they should be earning Carnegie credits just like their 9th grade peers.

   • **Cohort Graduation Rate**: Students in T9 will not enter the graduation cohort until the year following transitional 9th, just as they would if they remained in 8th grade.

   • **End of Course (EOC) exams**: Students in T9 are encouraged to take EOCs. If they score below proficient, then they may retest without penalty to the school. If they score proficient, then the score shall count toward the high school, just as it would for an 8th grader who was successful on an EOC.
HIGH SCHOOL GUIDEBOOK:
FOCUSBING ON 9TH AND 10TH GRADE STUDENTS

During the first two years of high school, students should focus on attaining basic levels of literacy, numeracy and problem solving skills. Every 9th and 10th grade student (beginning 2014-15 and thereafter) will take core academic classes to work towards a diploma. Following the student’s 10th grade year, a student may choose to work toward a Jump Start TOPS Tech Pathway or pursue the TOPS University Pathway. Students may choose both pathways. Decisions are made with counseling and guidance, based on the student’s interests, capabilities and ambitions.

*Counselor Tools and Supports*

INDIVIDUAL GRADUATION PLANS

Each student’s Individual Graduation Plan shall list the required core courses to be taken through the tenth grade and shall identify the courses to be taken in the first year of high school. The plan shall be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to identify the courses to be taken each year until the required core courses are complete prior to entering a student-selected graduation pathway.

COMPONENTS OF COLLEGE AND CAREER COUNSELING

The College Board’s National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA), has created guides for school counselors to create a comprehensive program of individual student planning for college and career readiness.

Indicators for student placement:

ACT® Aspire™: ACT® Plan© and Explore® test results can be used to provide guidance for placement in the appropriate diploma pathway.

- **Benchmark Data**: School districts that use benchmark assessments and common assessments can use that data to guide students to the pathway where they will be most successful.
- **EOC Data**: Students’ EOC results may be used as a guidepost over time to select pathways for students.
- **Teacher/Parent Feedback**: Both teacher feedback and parental input are essential in successful placement of students in the best pathway. Schools and districts can work to develop forms that are effective at communicating best placement to school counselors.
SUPPLEMENTAL COURSE ACADEMY

Students who cannot find the necessary courses at their school should consult with their counselor and consider leveraging the resources of the Supplemental Course Academy (SCA). SCA gives school districts and other public schools an allocation related to the cost of high school credit courses. SCA course offerings are individualized to the needs of secondary students and provided outside the traditional secondary school. SCA course offerings include:

• Career and technical preparation course offerings;
• Academic work required to achieve TOPS;
• Advanced coursework not available at the school due to limited resources (including AP® courses);
• Dual Enrollment course offerings at virtually all Louisiana post-secondary institutions; and
• Intensive remediation for students struggling to stay on pace for graduation

To access the student enrollment system for SCA offerings click here.

FUNDING

The newly-approved 2014-2015 MFP provides schools with a variety of new funding sources (as described in this memo). These funding sources include:

• Supplemental Course Academy
• MFP Career Development Fund
• Carl Perkins
• Jump Starting Jump Start Grant Funding (new applications due in October, 2014)
• TOPS TECH EARLY START

Importantly, districts and schools are not limited to spending only these funds on Jump Start courses and capabilities. Each district and school will determine what is best for their students, and which Jump Start investments help districts and schools earn the highest level of accountability points.

COMMON FUNDAMENTAL COURSEWORK

Louisiana’s 9th and 10th grade students will take common fundamental coursework, irrespective of the diploma pathway they ultimately receive. Each student will be required to complete 2 units of English, Math, Science, Social Studies and Health & PE in these grades.

COMMUNITY SERVICE ENDORSEMENT

Local education agencies (LEAs) may award a Community Service Diploma Endorsement to students who were entering freshmen in school year 2013-14 and beyond who complete a minimum number of documented, approved community service hours by graduation as outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>MINIMUM HOURS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Students should continue to benefit from student organizations to support their educational endeavors. Examples:

• National Beta Club (often called “Beta Club” or simply “Beta”) is an organization for 4th through 12th grade students in the United States. Its purpose is “to promote the ideals of academic achievement, character, leadership and service among elementary and secondary school students.”

• 4-H helps develop citizenship, leadership, responsibility and life skills of youth through experiential learning programs and a positive youth development approach. Though typically thought of as an agriculturally-focused organization as a result of its history, 4-H today focuses on citizenship, healthy living, science, engineering, and technology programs.

• Future Farmers of America (FFA) continues to help the next generation of farmers develop their own unique talents and explore their interests in a broad range of career pathways.

• Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) is a state-based national non-profit organization dedicated to preventing dropouts among young people who are most at-risk.

• Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) enhances the preparation for college and careers by providing co-curricular programs that integrate into classroom instruction, applying learning in the context of business, connecting to business and the community, and promoting competition.
DIPLOMA FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS COURSE REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS CORE CREDITS</th>
<th>EXAMPLE COURSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>English I, English II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Algebra I, Geometry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Biology I, Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Civics, U.S. History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CARNEGIE CREDIT AND CREDIT FLEXIBILITY

When awarding credit based on instructional time, LEAs shall provide a minimum of 7,965 instructional minutes for one Carnegie credit, and students shall be in attendance for a minimum of 7,515 minutes. In order to grant one-half Carnegie credit, LEAs shall provide a minimum of 3,983 instructional minutes, and students shall be in attendance for a minimum of 3,758 minutes.

When awarding Carnegie credit based on demonstrated proficiency, LEAs must inform the LDE of the following on behalf of any student or group of students:

- if nationally recognized, the name of the examination used to measure proficiency or a copy of the examination used to measure proficiency
- if locally developed or not nationally recognized, the score required to demonstrate proficiency or a listing of requirements to demonstrate proficiency through portfolio submissions.

Proficiency in a course with a state-administered end-of-course exam must be demonstrated using the end-of-course exam. The LDE may require revisions of assessments in order to ensure that they adequately measure proficiency.

Students meeting the requirements for Carnegie credit based on proficiency shall have the course title, the year proficiency was demonstrated, P (pass) and the unit of credit earned entered on their transcript. LEAs shall determine whether to award the letter grade earned on the proficiency assessment(s) or a P (pass) when a student demonstrates proficiency.
Student pathways should connect with real outcomes after high school – for both college-bound students and career-bound students. The TOPS University Pathway ensures that students going to four-year colleges have taken a true college preparatory curriculum while in high school and have every chance possible to receive TOPS. Students who complete a Jump Start TOPS Tech Pathway will have attained an industry credential and will also be prepared to continue post-secondary opportunities.

Students on the TOPS University Pathway are rewarded for completing more rigorous AP®, IB®, and dual enrollment courses because these courses receive additional weight in the calculation of the TOPS GPA: TOPS weighted GPA Grid. The TOPS GPA determines not only a student's eligibility for the TOPS award but also determines if the student is qualified to receive additional financial support during college. Students who receive TOPS tend to graduate from college; students who attend a four-year university but do not achieve TOPS tend to end up with no diploma and a great deal of debt.

Jump Start is the state’s new graduation pathway for Louisiana’s students. Post-secondary institutions, business and industry will form partnerships with LEAs to work collaboratively in providing career courses and workplace experiences for high school students. The Jump Start vision: students of all interests and capabilities will graduate high school by earning credentials that provide new opportunities for a successful adulthood for all students.

State-of-the-art career and technical education facilities with equipment and instruction will be the elements of Jump Start success. Students completing a statewide or regional Jump Start pathway will also be prepared to continue their post-secondary education and training utilizing a TOPS Tech scholarship. Because Jump Start credentials offer meaningful workplace opportunities for students on any diploma path, the state will merge the Basic Diploma with the Career Diploma, starting with the cohort entering high school in 2014. No student who plans to graduate in 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017 will be forced to vacate his/her path to a Basic Diploma, but starting in 2017-2018, the state will not award a Basic Diploma. Students pursuing a Basic Diploma through spring 2017 can either achieve a Jump Start credential or complete an Area of Concentration to meet graduation requirements. However, through spring 2017, Area of Concentration options for this diploma remain in place.

*Accountability Implications*

The graduation index in the accountability system is the core measure of the extent to which high schools have prepared students for college or a career – with both treated as equally valuable. The table below indicates how schools are rewarded in the accountability system for the achievements of both TOPS University Pathway and Jump Start TOPS Tech Pathway students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADUATION INDEX POINTS AWARDED</th>
<th>STUDENT RESULT (2013-14 Graduates)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>150 pts.</td>
<td>Four-year graduate with any diploma achieving an advanced statewide Jump Start credential OR having at least one test score at the following levels: AP® score of 3 or higher, IB® score of 4 or higher, or CLEP® score of 50.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Four-year graduates achieving both an advanced statewide Jump Start credential AND a qualifying test score listed above will generate 160 points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110 pts.</td>
<td>Four-year graduate with any diploma achieving a basic statewide Jump Start credential OR having at least one passing course grade for TOPS credit of the following type: Advanced Placement®, college credit, dual enrollment*, or International Baccalaureate®.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Four-year graduates achieving both a basic statewide Jump Start credential AND a passing course grade for TOPS credit will generate 115 points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 pts.</td>
<td>Four-year graduate with any diploma (includes Career Diploma student with a regional Jump Start credential)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 pts.</td>
<td>Five-year graduate with any diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 pts.</td>
<td>Six-year graduate with any diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 pts.</td>
<td>HiSET® (formerly GED)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 pts.</td>
<td>Non-graduate without HiSET®</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* For the basic credential 110 point reward, dual enrollment must count for TOPS Core Curriculum starting with 2014-15 graduates.
INDIVIDUAL GRADUATION PLANS

By the end of the tenth grade, each student’s Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) will be updated to include the recommended sequence of courses for successful completion of his/her chosen pathways. This updated IGP will be based on the student’s academic record, talents, and interests, and shall outline high school graduation requirements relevant to the student’s chosen postsecondary goals. Each student, with the assistance of his/her parent or other legal custodian and school guidance counselor, shall be allowed to choose the high school curriculum framework and related graduation requirements that best meets his/her postsecondary goals. Each student’s IGP will continue to be reviewed annually and updated or revised as needed.

Identifying an appropriate individualized student graduation pathway is a critical step at the end of the 10th grade year. Students can participate in one or both pathways, TOPS University or Jump Start TOPS Tech. Both pathways help students prepare for postsecondary success and gain access to scholarships. Both pathways enable schools to receive equal accountability system rewards.

COUNSELORS NEED TO WORK WITH STUDENTS TO:

1. Select the initial Pathway
Student academic records and PLAN® score results should be reviewed prior to pathway selection. The PLAN® results enable teachers and counselors to take a close look at students’ skills and knowledge, design a college or career readiness plan to meet the needs of each student, and identify potential coursework to enhance the student’s curricular options.

2. Identify Students’ Interests
Utilizing the PLAN® World-of-Work Map can assist students to identify careers. This is a system that summarizes and displays basic similarities and differences among occupations. It is visual and interactive, designed to engage users in the process of career exploration. Louisiana Workforce Commission tools can be utilized to identify relevant regional job demand. Construction companies will hire more than 86,000 workers in Louisiana through 2016. Employers need welders, pipefitters, electricians, scaffold builders, carpenters and many other craft professionals. Through the Louisiana Build Your Future website students can research the requirements to start working toward a craft profession. They can research wages, learn about skills and training required for various trades, and view and apply for current job openings.

3. Research Credential and Career Opportunities
Students need to research credential and career opportunities. Regional Jump Start Teams will identify specific career opportunities relevant to each region of the state. Students will pursue industry credentials for these career pathways. Statewide IBC credentials provide graduates the opportunity for a credential with livelong value.

4. Identify Appropriate Coursework
Jump Start offers students flexibility by choosing a pathway and spending time in the junior and senior year taking courses designed by regional teams of industry leaders, economic development organizations, technical colleges, and school districts with sequences of in- and out-of-school courses and apprenticeships designed to yield work-ready graduates. The specific credentials will vary by region, but they may include partial or full completion of an Associate Degree at community college or receive a nationally recognized career certification. Students need to meet pre-requisite course/pathway requirements prior to enrollment (age, course pre-requisites, PLAN®, WorkKeys®, etc). This will vary by pathway. Various curricular, age, exam, and certifying agencies of each pathway can be found in the Appendix 3 of the Jump Start Blueprint.

Students pursuing the TOPS University Pathway will continue to pursue core academic credits that mirror the TOPS Core curriculum. Having completed all core course credits, students may graduate from high school early, or pursue AP®, IB®, CLEP®, or dual enrollment credits. Students graduating on the TOPS University Pathway may also complete Jump Start courses as electives and earn a credential that would generate Jump Start accountability points. TOPS University Pathway requirements can be found on page 14.

Students pursuing the Jump Start TOPS Tech Pathway may earn basic or advanced credentials in statewide or regional career areas or equivalent credentials earned through dual enrollment coursework (Certificates of Applied Sciences, Certificates of Technical Studies, or Technical Diplomas). Students graduating with a Jump Start TOPS Tech Career Diploma will be required to attain Jump Start statewide or regional credentials. Through elective coursework students may also earn the TOPS University credential. Jump Start TOPS Tech Career Diploma graduation requirements can be found on page 13.
Students staying in-state need to meet the TOPS requirements in order to receive this valuable state-sponsored scholarship.

- TOPS Core Curriculum
- TOPS Opportunity Requirements
- TOPS Honors Requirements
- TOPS Tech Early Start
- TOPS Tech

5. Distinguish Among the Various Potential Secondary Pathways

**Louisiana’s Community and Technical Colleges:** These are typically nonresidential and offer hundreds of two-year degrees and certifications that transfer to four-year universities.

**Four-year State Universities:** These are public universities, private universities, liberal arts colleges and career colleges offering bachelor’s degrees. All fall into the category of 4-year colleges and universities. These schools offer bachelor’s degrees, which are usually completed in four years of full-time study, and some may also have a graduate school that offers masters degrees.

**Private and Out-of-state Universities:** Using the ACT® College Search Tool students can explore private school and out-of-state college options.

6. Pursue Postsecondary Coursework Options while in High School

Articulated CTE credit: The goal of Statewide Articulation, **Success Through Articulation (STArt)** is to assist in creating a coherent secondary-to-postsecondary transition process and reducing duplication of instructional efforts and costs associated with student mobility, in this case from a high school to a postsecondary institution, primarily to an LCTCS campus.

Advanced Placement: AP® courses offer students the opportunity to earn college credit by demonstrating mastery of rigorous content through high school-based courses.

- To explore Advanced Placement® courses available, click here.
- To view the AP® Exam schedule for Advanced Placement® tests, click here.
- To ensure Advanced Placement® test fees are covered by the LDOE, click here.
- To train more teachers to offer AP®, click here.

For more information on increases AP® participation, click here. The new cohort graduation index recognizes a score of 3 or higher on at least one AP® exam as the highest level of achievement earned by a cohort graduate. For details, click here.

**International Baccalaureate®:** IB® courses offer rigorous educational options to students with the potential to earn college credit while still in high school. For more information, click here.

**CLEP®** is a computer-based credit by exam opportunity that offers the chance for students to be awarded college credit for knowledge gained through dual enrollment coursework. CLEP® recognizes the value of prior learning and validates a student’s experience and knowledge acquired inside and outside of the classroom, such as workforce training and life experience.

- High schools may apply to become an authorized CLEP® testing center through an application and certification process.
- For a list of CLEP® exam titles, click here.

**Dual enrollment** is the simultaneous enrollment of a student at both high school and college in which the student receives credit on both their high school and college transcripts for the same course. Students may enroll in college courses at local technical, community and/or four-year colleges. Students enrolled in a college course follow the college curriculum. The course is taught by either the college instructor or a high school instructor who is approved to teach the college course.

With dual enrollment, students may begin accumulating college credits while still in high school, thus providing a smoother transition to college after high school graduation. Students also have the opportunity to complete college faster – and at a lower cost – by earning college credits while still in high school.

Students must meet the admission standards of the college awarding the credit. Admissions standards vary among technical colleges, community colleges, and four-year universities. Dual enrollment courses are available to Louisiana students through the Supplemental Course Academy.

For a list of TOPS aligned dual enrollment courses, click here.

7. Postsecondary Pursuits

Students should follow the Junior/Senior year college planning steps that are outlined in the LELA College Planning Guide, Louisiana’s non-profit resource for college planning and support for statewide outreach initiatives to help assure their path to college.

8. Complete the Federal Student Aid FAFSA

Students attending post-secondary schools and training are expected to contribute towards their education costs. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the form the U.S. Department of Education (ED) requires to determine the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). To apply for TOPS, students must complete the Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the TOPS Online Application. The FAFSA must be completed by students who qualify for federal grant aid and by students who are seeking other forms of financial aid.
APPENDIX I:

HIGH SCHOOL GUIDEBOOK: COUNSELING & SUPPORTS

Appropriate supports need to be available and in place to facilitate student access to individualized graduation pathways. These necessary student supports include counseling structures, supplemental course offering opportunities, funding, and data resources.

LOUISIANA CONNECT

Louisiana Connect created by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) in partnership with the Louisiana Board of Regents, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), and the Louisiana Workforce Commission, is an online tool to support students, family members, and counselors to explore careers, employers, and colleges, assess career interest, identify scholarship and grant opportunities to pay for post-secondary education, track TOPS and TOPS Tech eligibility, and create an Individual Graduation Plan.

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COUNSELOR ASSISTANCE CENTER

The Counselor Assistance Center is a resource to support students, parents and professional school counselors. All stakeholders have direct access to a licensed professional school counselor. Contact information is: 1-877-453-2721; SCA@la.gov

COUNSELOR SUPPORT TOOLBOX

A variety of school level professional school counselor tools are available via the LDOE Counselor Support Toolbox.

DATA RESOURCES

21st Century Careers are challenging. Data resources such as the ACT® Aspire™ series are useful when guiding students to choose the best pathway for college and career readiness.
## Jump Start TOPS Tech (Career Diploma) Course Requirements
2014-15 Entering 9th Graders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENGLISH = 4 Units</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit</td>
<td>English I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit</td>
<td>English II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Units from the following:</td>
<td>English III, English IV, AP® or IB® English courses, Business English, Technical Writing, or comparable Louisiana Technical College courses offered by Jump Start regional teams as approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MATH = 4 Units</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit</td>
<td>Algebra I, Algebra I Part One and Algebra I Part Two, or an applied or hybrid Algebra course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Units from the following:</td>
<td>Geometry, Math Essentials, Financial Literacy (formerly Financial Math), Business Math, Algebra II, Algebra III, Advanced Math - Functions and Statistics, Advanced Math - Pre-Calculus, Pre-Calculus, or comparable Louisiana Technical College courses offered by Jump Start regional teams as approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitutions</td>
<td>Integrated Mathematics I, II, and III may be substituted for Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II for three mathematics credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCIENCE = 2 Units</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit</td>
<td>Biology I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit from the following:</td>
<td>Chemistry I, Earth Science, Environmental Science, Physical Science, Agriscience I and Agriscience II (one unit combined), or AP® or IB® Science courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOCIAL STUDIES = 2 Units</strong> (One credit of Civics may be substituted for any two of the one-half credit Social Studies courses specified.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit from the following:</td>
<td>U.S. History, AP® U.S. History, IB® History of the Americas I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ credit from the following:*</td>
<td>Government, AP® U.S. Government and Politics: Comparative, or AP® U.S. Government and Politics: United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ credit from the following:*</td>
<td>Economics, AP® Macroeconomics, or AP® Microeconomics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health/Physical Education = 2 Units</strong> (JROTC may be substituted for PE.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit from the following:</td>
<td>Physical Education I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ Unit from the following:</td>
<td>Physical Education II, Marching Band, Extracurricular Sports, Cheering, or Dance Teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ Unit from the following:</td>
<td>Health Education (JROTC I and II may be used to meet the Health Ed) requirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jump Start = 9 Units</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Units from the following:</td>
<td>Jump Start course sequences, workplace experiences, and credentials as approved in Regional Jump Start proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL = 23 Units</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. A student shall complete a regionally-designed, district-implemented series of Career and Technical Education Jump Start coursework and workplace-based learning experiences leading to a statewide or regional Jump Start credential. Each student’s Jump Start graduation pathway shall include courses and workplace experiences specific to the credential, courses related to foundational career skills requirements, and other courses (including career electives) that the Jump Start regional team determines are appropriate for the career pathway.

Note: In order to meet the current TOPS Tech requirement students will need to complete an additional 3rd unit of science, 3rd unit of social studies, and a credit in a basic computer course. (The LDOE will be working with the Legislature during the next session in an attempt to harmonize the requirements of Jump Start and TOPS Tech.)
# TOPS University Diploma Requirements

## For Incoming Freshmen Beginning Fall 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENGLISH = 4 Units</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit</td>
<td>English I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit</td>
<td>English II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit from the following:</td>
<td>English III, AP® English Language Arts and Composition, IB® Literature, IB® Language &amp; Literature, or IB® Literature &amp; Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit from the following:</td>
<td>English IV, AP® English Literature and Composition, IB® Literature, IB® Language &amp; Literature, or IB® Literature &amp; Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MATH = 4 Units</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit</td>
<td>Algebra I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit</td>
<td>Geometry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit</td>
<td>Algebra II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Integrated Mathematics I, Integrated Mathematics II, and Integrated Mathematics III may be substituted for the Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II sequence)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit from the following:</td>
<td>Algebra III; Advanced Math - Functions and Statistics, Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit from the following:</td>
<td>Math - Pre-Calculus, Pre-Calculus, IB® Math Studies (Math Methods), Calculus, AP® Calculus AB, AP® Calculus BC, Probability and Statistics, AP® Statistics, IB® Mathematics SL, or IB® Mathematics HL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCIENCE = 4 Units</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit</td>
<td>Biology I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit</td>
<td>Chemistry I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Units from the following:</td>
<td>Earth Science; Environmental Science; AP® Environmental Science or IB® Environmental Systems; Physical Science, Agriscience I and Agriscience II (the elective course Ag I is a prerequisite for Ag II); one of Chemistry II, AP® Chemistry, IB® Chemistry I, or IB® Chemistry II; Physics I, or IB® Physics I; one of AP® Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, AP® Physics C: Mechanics, or IB® Physics II; AP® Physics I, AP® Physics II; one of Biology II, AP® Biology, IB® Biology I, or IB® Biology II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOCIAL STUDIES = 4 Units</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit from the following:</td>
<td>U.S. History, AP® U.S. History, IB® History of the Americas I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Unit from the following:</td>
<td>Government, AP® U.S. Government and Politics: Comparative, AP® U.S. Government and Politics: United States, or Civics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Units from the following:</td>
<td>One of Western Civilization, European History, or AP® European History; one of World Geography, AP® Human Geography, or IB® Geography; World History or AP® World History; IB® History of the Americas II; Government, Economics; AP® Macroeconomics; AP® Microeconomics; or IB® Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Units</td>
<td>Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art = 1 Unit</td>
<td>Visual Arts courses (Bulletin 741 §2333). Music courses (Bulletin 741 §2355). Dance courses (Bulletin 741 §2337), Theatre courses (Bulletin 741 §2369), Speech III and IV (one unit combined), Fine Arts Survey, Drafting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Health/Physical Education = 2 Units (JROTC may be substituted for PE.) | 1 Unit from the following: Physical Education I  
½ Unit from the following: Physical Education II, Marching Band, Extracurricular Sports, Cheering, or Dance Teams  
½ Unit from the following: Health Education (JROTC I and II may be used to meet the Health Ed) |
| Electives = 3 Units                       | Electives                                                                                                                                |
| Total Units = 24                          |                                                                                                                                          |
APPENDIX II: SEEKING REWARDS

Accountability System

The Louisiana school accountability system is a reflection of the values and aspirations for students. As school officials and districts work with students to plan their career and college pathway, they should do so with the accountability system in mind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K-8 School Accountability Formula</th>
<th>High School Accountability Formula</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Assessment/Tests (95%)</td>
<td>- End-of-Course Assessment/Tests (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Dropout/Credit Accumulation by 8th graders (5%)</td>
<td>- ACT® Composite (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Progress Points</td>
<td>- Graduation Rate (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Quality of Diploma (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Progress Points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITIONING AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

Dropout/Credit Accumulation: The transition from 8th to 9th grade is critical for student success. Louisiana’s accountability system rewards schools for ensuring student preparation in high school through the Dropout/Credit Accumulation Index (DCAI). Schools with an 8th grade earn points for the number of credits students accumulate by the end of the 9th grade. This encourages a successful transition to high school by allowing students access to Carnegie credits. Points are awarded as such:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARNEGIE COURSE CREDITS (earned by the end of 9th grade)</th>
<th>DCAI POINTS PER STUDENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>150 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>125 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>75 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>50 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>25 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>0 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 year 8th grade student</td>
<td>0 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout</td>
<td>0 pts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transitional 9th is designed to ensure a successful transition for struggling students from 8th to 9th grade. For accountability specific implications for students in transitional 9th, please see the Transitional 9th Guide.

HIGH SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES: EOC AND ACT® ASSESSMENTS

Students on both the career and college paths will take courses with End-of-Course tests as part of their required diploma coursework. When students take a course corresponding with an End-of-Course test, they are required to take the test to reflect their ability and successes. The accountability system rewards schools for students who achieve the top two levels (proficiency), Excellent and Good.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EOC SCORE/LEVEL</th>
<th>POINTS EARNED PER TEST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>150 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good (Proficient)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>0 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Improvement</td>
<td>0 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All Louisiana 11th graders take the ACT®, a nationally recognized measure of postsecondary readiness. Schools earn points for students who score an 18 (composite) or above on the ACT® in the manner of the chart below. For students to be eligible for TOPS Opportunity, they must achieve an ACT® score of 20 (105.6 ACT® Index points); for TOPS Performance a 23 (114 ACT® Index points); for TOPS Honors, a 27 (125.2 ACT® Index points).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT® COMPOSITE SCORE</th>
<th>POINTS EARNED PER STUDENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19-36</td>
<td>102.8 to 150.4 points (maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 (Proficient)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 18</td>
<td>0 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beginning in 2014-15, Louisiana students pursuing the career path can take ACT® WorkKeys®, a nationally recognized workforce readiness assessment. Beginning in 2015-16, student performance on WorkKeys® will be included in the ACT® index through a concordance table between it and ACT®. For additional information, please see link.

HIGH SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES: GRADUATION AND DIPLOMA STRENGTH

The base expectation for all high school students is that they graduate in four years. The cohort graduation rate represents the extent to which schools achieve this desired outcome. A cohort of students is established upon first-time entry in 9th grade. Schools earn points for graduating students in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADUATION COHORT RATE (CGR)</th>
<th>FORMULA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 60 percent graduation rate</td>
<td>CGR x 1.166667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 to 100 percent graduation rate</td>
<td>(CGR x 2.0) - 50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The graduation index in the accountability system is the core measure for the extent to which high schools have prepared students for college or a career – with both treated as equally valuable. The table below indicates how the coursework discussed earlier is rewarded in the accountability system, for college and career pathway students. Please see here for additional information on the Jump Start policy implications timeline, which reflects forthcoming improvements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADUATION INDEX POINTS AWARDED</th>
<th>STUDENT RESULT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>150 pts.</td>
<td>Four-year graduate with any diploma achieving an advanced statewide Jump Start credential OR having at least one test score at the following levels: AP® score of 3 or higher, IB® score of 4 or higher, or CLEP® score of 50. Four-year graduates achieving both an advanced statewide Jump Start credential and a qualifying test score listed above will generate 160 points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110 pts.</td>
<td>Four-year graduate with any diploma achieving a basic statewide Jump Start credential OR having at least one passing course grade for TOPS credit of the following type: Advanced Placement®, college credit, dual enrollment*, or International Baccalaureate®. Four-year graduates achieving both a basic statewide Jump Start credential and a passing course grade for TOPS credit will generate 115 points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 pts.</td>
<td>Four-year graduate with any diploma (includes Career Diploma student with a regional Jump Start credential).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 pts.</td>
<td>Five-year graduate with any diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 pts.</td>
<td>Six-year graduate with any diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 pts.</td>
<td>HiSET®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 pts.</td>
<td>Non-graduate without HiSET®</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* For the basic credential 110 point reward, dual enrollment must count for TOPS Core Curriculum starting with 2014-15 graduates.
APPENDIX III: Accountability FAQs

This document is designed to answer frequently asked questions regarding high school planning and accountability.

PREPARING 8TH GRADE STUDENTS (DCAI AND 9T)

1. **DO THE CREDITS EARNED BY TRANSITIONAL 9TH GRADERS EARN COUNT TOWARDS DCAI?**
   
   Yes, credits earned by transitional 9th graders count towards the dropout credit accumulation index. The Carnegie credits earned by a transitional 9th grader are analogous to that of a first-time 9th grader. This is done to incentivize transitional 9th graders to not only take coursework to address academic gaps, but also to earn high school credits.

2. **DO THE CREDITS EARNED BY TRANSITIONAL 9TH GRADERS, AFTER THEIR 9T YEAR, COUNT TOWARDS DCAI?**
   
   Transitional 9th graders have through the end of their transitional 9th grade year to earn Carnegie credits for the dropout credit accumulation index. Credits earned by the transitional 9th grader during their first time 9th grade year are not included towards DCAI.

3. **DO EOC SCORES EARNED BY A TRANSITIONAL 9TH GRADER GET “BANKED”?**
   
   EOC scores for transitional 9th graders are “banked,” or transferred, the same as students who take EOC exams in middle school.

4. **WHEN DOES A TRANSITIONAL 9TH GRADER ENTER THE FIRST-TIME 9TH COHORT?**
   
   A transitional 9th grader enters the first-time 9th grade cohort the year after transitional 9th.

5. **WHAT HAPPENS IF A TRANSITIONAL 9TH GRADER BECOMES A DROPOUT?**
   
   If a transitional 9th grader drops-out in the transitional 9th year, the student is included in the cohort and earns zero points.

6. **WHAT HAPPENS IF AN 8TH GRADER IS NOT READY TO ENTER 9TH GRADE, BASED ON STATE ASSESSMENT?**
   
   Schools should refer to their Transitional 9th Grade Policy within their Pupil Progression Plan for student options.

END-OF-COURSE EXAMS

7. **DO CAREER AND COLLEGE PATHWAY STUDENTS HAVE TO TAKE THE SAME TESTS AND/OR COURSES?**
   
   All students will take a core set of academic classes in the 9th and 10th grade. A student must take an EOC test for any course that has a corresponding EOC test when the student is taking the course for the first time.

8. **WHAT HAPPENS IF A STUDENT TRANSFERS IN FROM A DIFFERENT SCHOOL OUT OF STATE? DO THEY TAKE EOC COURSES?**

   **Bulletin 118 outlines this policy:**
   
   The following rules apply for transfer students who are Louisiana residents transferring into the Louisiana public school district from out-of-state schools, nonpublic schools, or approved home study programs.
   
   • A transfer student is not required to take the EOC tests for courses he/she already successfully completed for Carnegie credit.
   • A transfer student shall be required to take the EOC test for courses he/she previously took but did not pass.
   • A transfer student may choose to take an EOC test for a course he/she already successfully completed if he/she scored “Needs Improvement” on an EOC test in another course, and the student must pass the EOC test for one of the EOC pairs.

9. **WHICH SCORE COUNTS IF A STUDENT RE-TAKES AN EOC EXAM?**
   
   The score from an initial EOC test is the only score that is used for accountability. If the initial test is taken in summer, the EOC will be used for accountability calculations in the following academic year. The EOC test score from a student in middle school is banked for use at the high school to which the student is enrolled for grade 9. If the score earned in middle school is not proficient (Needs Improvement or Fair), then the high school has one additional opportunity to test the student. If the student scores proficient, the retake score will replace the initial banked non-proficient score.
1. **IS THE STATE TEST DURING 11TH GRADE USED TO CALCULATE ACCOUNTABILITY POINTS?**
   
   A student’s highest ACT® test score, through the April test date of the student’s 12th grade year, is included for accountability purposes.

2. **WHAT IF A STUDENT TAKES THE ACT® MANY TIMES?**
   
   Students frequently take the ACT® multiple times, and the school and district is held accountable for the highest ACT® score a student earns through April of their 12th grade year.

3. **HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT WORKKEYS®?**
   
   ACT® WorkKeys® is a national career readiness assessment—information can be found here.

4. **WHAT HAPPENS IF A STUDENT TAKES THE ACT® AT A DIFFERENT SCHOOL?**
   
   The highest score for a 12th grade student will count at the school where the student is considered full academic year for their 12th grade year regardless of where the test was taken. A student is considered full academic year in an LEA if the student is enrolled on October 1 and for the date of ACT® testing. If the student counts at the LEA, the student score is included in the SPS of the school at which the student was enrolled on February 1.

**GRADUATION COHORT**

1. **HOW DOES THE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM WORK FOR STUDENTS WHO ENTER THE SCHOOL THROUGH DIFFERENT GRADES?**
   
   If a student enters a Louisiana school for the first time as a tenth grader, then the student will be placed with the cohort that is in his/her second year of high school. If a student enters a Louisiana school for the first time as an 11th grader, then the student will be placed with the cohort that is in his/her third year of high school. All students who enter the cohort at grades other than 9th are included in the cohort graduation rate for the district if they entered the district on or before Oct. 1 of the third cohort year. Additionally, all students who transfer within an LEA on or before Oct. 1 of the fourth cohort year are included in the graduation rate.

2. **ARE STUDENTS WHO GRADUATE IN FIVE OR SIX YEARS CONSIDERED FOR ACCOUNTABILITY?**
   
   The cohort graduation rate measures the extent to which students achieved an on-time, four-year graduation and therefore does not include students who graduate in five or six years. However, students who graduate in five years are included in the graduation index, for strength of diploma. Each student who graduates in five years with a regular high school diploma may earn the school 75 points. Beginning in 2015-16 (2014-15 graduates), students who graduate in six years will be awarded 50 points in the graduation index.

3. **WHAT HAPPENS IF A STUDENT GRADUATES EARLY?**
   
   A student who graduates early (e.g. in three-years) is included for graduation cohort and graduation index calculations in the forthcoming year.

**GRADUATION INDEX**

   
   The graduation index for 2013 and 2014 graduates is largely the same for students pursuing the college path and provides greater incentives for schools and districts with students pursuing the career path. This was done to recognize and equalize the efforts of students, teachers, schools, and districts to prepare for college and career outcomes. For students who graduate in 2013-14, additional points will be awarded for achieving advanced or basic Jump Start credentials. Additionally, schools will be able to earn points for students who graduate in six-years.

2. **WHAT ARE TOPS CORE COURSES AND HOW DO I FIND INFORMATION WHAT COUNTS AS TOPS CORE COURSES?**
   
   The Louisiana Office of Student and Financial Aid (LOSFA) maintains current lists of TOPS requirements. More information can be found at www.osfa.la.go
3. HOW IS HİSET® DIFFERENT THEN THE GED? HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT IT.

The GED was phased out as the Adult Education Equivalency Exam and replaced by the HİSET® in January 2014. More information can be found here: [http://www.lctcs.edu/workready-u](http://www.lctcs.edu/workready-u)

4. WHAT IS THE CLEP® TEST? HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT IT?

CLEP® is a computer-based credit by exam opportunity that offers the chance for students to be awarded college credit for knowledge gained through dual enrollment coursework. CLEP® recognizes the value of prior learning and validates a student’s experience and knowledge acquired inside and outside of the classroom, such as workforce training and life experience.

- High schools may apply to become an authorized CLEP® testing center through an application and certification process.
- For a list of CLEP® exam titles, click here.

5. IF A STUDENT EARNS MULTIPLE AP®, IB®, OR CLEP® SCORES, WHICH ONE IS USED?

A student’s highest score is used to determine points in the graduation index. For example, if a high school graduate earned an AP® score of 5 and an IB® score of 3, the graduate would earn 150 points in the graduation index.
APPENDIX IV: HYPERLINKS
A PATH TO PROSPERITY FOR EVERY STUDENT
APPENDIX IV: Hyperlinks

HIGH SCHOOL PLANNING GUIDEBOOK: A PATH TO PROSPERITY FOR EVERY STUDENT

Transitional 9th Grade Promotion Policy Guidance:

Accountability System Overview:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/accountability

FOCUSING ON 9TH AND 10TH GRADE STUDENTS:

Individual Graduation Plan Form:

Pupil Progression Plan Guide:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/school-policy

BESE Agenda item regarding amendments to Bulletin 1566 (Pupil Progression Policies and Procedures):
http://www.boarddocs.com/la/bese/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9EYLYW5502F0

Link to The Lexile® Framework for Reading:

Link to statewide assessment results:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/classroom-support-toolbox/teacher-support-toolbox/student-achievement-results

Instructional Materials Review:

http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/practice-tests

EAGLE 2.0:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/assessment/eagle

Assessment Guidance 2013-2014:

ACT® Explore®: Resources for Educators:
http://www.act.org/explore/downloads.html#

Compass Information System (CIS) information:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/teaching/compass-information-system-(cis)

Math Remediation Guides:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/k-12-math-year-long-planning

Text Sets 2014-2015, English Language Arts:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/teacher-toolbox-resources/k-12-ela-unit-plan-text-list.pdf?sfvrsn=4

ELA Guidebook Unit Plans:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/k-12-ela-year-long-planning
DEVELOPING ADVANCED & BASIC COLLEGE & WORKPLACE SKILLS:

TOPS weighted GPA Grid (via Counselor Resource Library):
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/classroom-support-toolbox/counselor-support-toolbox/counselor-toolbox-library

TOPS Tech Scholarship Information:
http://www.osfa.louisiana.gov/TOPS_T.htm

Individual Graduation Plan Template:

National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA):
http://nosca.collegeboard.org/

High School Counselor’s Guide of College and Career Readiness Counseling:

Using ACT® Plan® Results:
http://www.act.org/plan/results.html

Using ACT® Explore® Results:

End of Course Tests and Scoring:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/assessment/end-of-course-tests

Supplemental Course Academy (SCA) Information:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/courses/supplemental-course-academy

Student Enrollment System for SCA:
http://lacourses.net/

Link to Memo- "NEW (OR MODIFIED)LEA-DETERMINED FUNDING STREAMS FOR CAREER EDUCATION:

Information on Supplemental Course Academy (SCA) and Career Development Funds (CDF):

Jump Start Grant Funding/Information:

National Beta Club:  http://www.betaclub.org/

4-H: http://www.4-h.org/

Future Farmers of America (FFA):  https://www.ffa.org/Pages/default.aspx

Jobs for America Graduates (JAG):  http://www.jag.org/

Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA):  http://www.deca.org/

TOPS Core, 2018: Dual Enrollment/Matrix Options for TOPS Core:

TOPS Tech Award Information:
http://www.osfa.louisiana.gov/TOPS_T.htm

Sample Individual Graduation Plan:
Jump Start TOPS Tech Pathway Requirements:

Sample PLAN® Results:

ACT® PLAN® Interactive World-of-Work Map:
http://www.act.org/wwm/index.html

Louisiana Workforce Commission Tools:
http://lwc.laworks.net/sites/LMI/Pages/IndustryProjections.aspx

Louisiana Build Your Future Site:
http://louisiana.byf.org/

Statewide IBC Credentials:

Jump Start Appendix 3: Jump Start Statewide CTE Pathways/Certifications:

LOSFA TOPS Scholarship Pamphlet:
http://www.osfa.la.gov/MainSitePDFs/TOPS_OPH_brochure_8-14.pdf

TOPS Tech Early Start Program Information:
http://www.osfa.la.gov/TTES.htm

TOPS Tech Award Information:
http://www.osfa.la.gov/TOPS_T.htm

Louisiana’s Community & Technical Colleges Site:
http://www.lctcs.edu/

Louisiana Board of Regents site listing four-year universities:
http://regents.louisiana.gov/about-regents/colleges-amp-universities/

Fox Business Report Outlining Pros/Cons of Private and/or Out-of-State Universities:
http://www.foxbusiness.com/personal-finance/2012/05/29/decision-points-state-vs-private-college/

Louisiana Success Through Articulation (STArt) Information:

Available AP® Courses:

AP® Exam Testing Schedule:

AP® Exam Reimbursement Information:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/courses/advanced-placement

Information on AP® Participation:

Information on International Baccalaureate®:
http://www.ibo.org/

CLEP® Test Center Application Process:
http://clep.collegeboard.org/test-center/open
CLEP® Exam Titles:
http://clep.collegeboard.org/exam

Junior/Senior College Planning Guide (Lela):
http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/nextstep/lela_custompub2013/#/o

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Information:
http://www.fafsa.com/understanding-fafsa/

TOPS Index Page:
http://www.osfa.state.la.us/schgrt6.htm

TOPS On-line Application:
http://www.osfa.la.gov/

APPENDIX I: COUNSELING AND SUPPORTS

Louisiana Connect:
https://www.louisianaconnect.org/Ext/Louisiana/Home/index.html

Louisiana Department of Education Counselor Support Toolbox:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/classroom-support-toolbox/counselor-support-toolbox

ACT® Aspire™ information:
http://www.discoveractaspire.org/assessments.html

TOPS Tech Core Curriculum:
http://www.osfa.louisiana.gov/MainSitePDFs/TOPSTechCoreCurriculum.pdf

APPENDIX II: SEEKING REWARDS

Accountability System (Assessment and Curriculum):
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/classroom-support-toolbox/district-support-toolbox/assessment-curriculum

Transitional 9th Grade Promotion Policy Guidance:

Jump Start Policy Implementation Timeline:

APPENDIX III: ACCOUNTABILITY FAQS

ACT© WorkKeys© information:

Information on Work Ready U:
http://www.lctcs.edu/workready-u

CLEP®: How to Open a Test Center:
http://clep.collegeboard.org/test-center/open

Listing of CLEP® exams:
http://clep.collegeboard.org/exam