

**In order to ensure a strong start to the 2020-2021 school year, school systems should support the academic progress of students in grades K-12 and beyond.**

School systems should begin the year with an updated [Pupil Progression Plan](#). A focus should also be placed on the [individual learning](#) of students by developing plans for students identified with the most significant learning gaps. [Support should be provided to 2020 graduates](#) as they transition to life after high school, be it in college or career. School systems may choose from the approved list of [Student Planning Partners](#) to provide assistance with Individual Graduation Plans, postsecondary planning, or entering the workforce.

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## **Pupil Progression Guidance**

### **2020-2021 Promotion Guidance**

Bulletin 1566 supports school system flexibility with regard to student promotion and retention. However, students who struggle must be identified early and receive the necessary support to ensure their growth and ability to stay on track toward graduation. The [2020-2021 Promotion Guidance and FAQ](#) document outlines the Department's guidance with respect to those supports.

**Note:** For 2019-2020, the Department has issued flexibility regarding pupil progression in the [K-11 guidance](#) and [Senior Course Credit and Graduation guidance](#) documents.

### **2020-2021 Pupil Progression Plan Template**

The Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the Department require assurances that local school system supervisors of Elementary and Secondary Education, Special Education, Career and Technical Education, Adult Education, Title I, teachers, principals and other individuals deemed appropriate by the school system Superintendent are included in the development of a local pupil progression plan.

A committee of parents should also be established by the local school board and should be engaged in the development of the pupil progression plan.

The local school system should keep on file a written description of the method of selection, composition, and function of the local committees.

The Pupil Progression Plan shall be adopted at a public meeting of the local school board, notice of which shall be published pursuant to Open Meetings Law. Once the plan has been adopted and approved, the policies in the local plan shall be incorporated into the policies and procedures manual of the local school board.

Upon adoption, the plan should be submitted to the Department at [ppp@la.gov](mailto:ppp@la.gov).

The [2020-2021 Pupil Progression Plan Template](#) is due on September 11, 2020. The template has been updated to include sections covering credit recovery, NCAA policy, and continuous learning.

### Individual Learning Support

The tools listed in this section are designed to assist school systems with creating an individual plan for students with the most significant [learning gaps](#). The [Individual Academic Improvement Plan](#) and the [Individual Graduation Plan](#) are tools available to support these efforts.

### Individual Academic Improvement Plan

School systems may elect to create an [Individual Academic Improvement Plan](#) (IAIP) for struggling students due to assessment waivers, though no mandate will be enforced. Teachers should use evidence from student learning throughout the school year to determine if a plan is needed. To assist with creating plans for individualized support and intervention in 2020-2021, teachers of English language arts and mathematics should begin with [diagnosing and communicating student readiness](#).

Students in grades 5-7 who were on an IAIP at the end of 2018-2019 should continue to receive supports and interventions. [High-quality curriculum resources and assessments](#) will be available to assist with plans for individualized support and intervention in 2020-2021 for English language arts and mathematics.

### Grade 8 and Transitional Ninth Grade

Student placement for the 2020-2021 school year in grade 8, transitional ninth grade (T9), or grade 9 remains at the discretion of the local school or school system, in consultation with the student's parents, where the student was enrolled in 8th grade.

Placement in T9 can be based on data from the following sources:

1. High-quality interim assessment results
2. Curriculum-embedded assessments
3. Course grades
4. Student growth
5. Individual Education Plan goals
6. Attendance records

The decision should be made by the sending school no later than July 31.

### Individual Graduation Planning

The Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) serves as a guide for the academic course work of students in grades 9-12. Entering the fall 2020, the IGP of each student should be reviewed and updated to reflect any changes that need to be made as a result of the school facility closures. School systems may utilize funding to engage with [Student Planning Partners](#) to support updates to the Individual Graduation Plan.

The Department provides the following resources to support schools in the development of these plans:

- [Individual Student Planning for College and Career Readiness web page](#)
- [IGP template](#)
- [IGP form for students assessed with LEAP Connect](#)
- [2019-2020 IGP Webinar](#)
- [Guidance for Individual Graduation Plan and Diploma Pathway Selection](#)

### Individual Tutoring and Student Learning Supports

Students may demonstrate a need for support beyond the traditional classroom setting. Individual students may require individual tutoring in order to obtain mastery of academic skills and grade-level standards or to remain on path for graduation. Tutoring and support for learners who require additional instruction can be utilized in a face-to-face setting or in a distance learning environment.

Supports can include the redelivery of content via an online provider or through the use of resources found in the [Continuous Education Toolkit for School Systems: Academic Resources](#).

Funding for tutoring is available through [Direct Student Services](#) or 21st Century Learning grants.

### Supporting and Mentoring and Graduates

School systems have worked to ensure students are prepared for college via a college-prep curriculum or have earned credentials to prepare them for a career with lifelong opportunities. School systems have the opportunity to continue to support graduates through December 2020 by providing access to resources students may need to succeed beyond high school like postsecondary counseling, soft skills, and/or employment placement. School systems may request incentive funding to engage with an [intermediary](#) to assist with postsecondary planning, financial aid planning or workforce transitions.

### Postsecondary Planning

There are a variety of resources that can support high school seniors and their families in the absence of an experienced high school counselor. School systems may request funds for approved [Student Planning Partners](#) to further support Louisiana schools, students, and families with planning for graduation, exploring postsecondary possibilities, and researching funding options.

### Financial Aid Planning

For any student needing to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), online and phone support can be accessed by sending a request to [ldefianancialaid@la.gov](mailto:ldefianancialaid@la.gov). The primary benefit for completing the FAFSA is to reduce post-secondary expenses. The FAFSA is a requirement for TOPS and other state and federal financial aid, including:

- Pell Grants

- Supplemental Education Opportunity Program (SEOG)
- Federal Work Study
- Federal Direct Loans

The FAFSA is available to students and parents to complete through the [My Student Aid App](#). It provides a wealth of information on all aspects of financial aid along with real-time application processing information.

The following entities offer assistance with completing the FAFSA:

- The Louisiana Education Loan Authority (LELA) has a helpline available Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. They can be reached at 1-844-GO-FAFSA (1-844-463-2372).
- The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) has FAFSA Now virtual office hours Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. offering online assistance to help families complete the FAFSA and or make corrections to an existing application. Families can schedule an appointment with [LOSFA](#).

### School Counselor and Scholarship Resources

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) position statement, [The School Counselor and Individual Student Planning for Postsecondary Preparation](#), details the components of a school counseling program including educational and career planning activities for all students.

- [The Individual Student Graduation and Postsecondary Planning Partners Guide](#) lists organizations that can further support Louisiana schools, students, and families with planning for graduation, exploring postsecondary possibilities, and researching funding options. The ASCA position statement, [The School Counselor and College Access Professionals](#), explains some of the ways school staff can collaborate with these partners.
- Many colleges and universities offer virtual college tours on their official websites. In addition, sites such as [YouVisit.com](#) feature 360° visits and virtual reality tours of hundreds of universities. These tools can help students become familiar with institutes of higher education--especially if they have never visited a college campus.
- As students consider their education options, it is important for them to understand the importance of choosing an [accredited school](#) and knowing [the difference between regional and national accreditation](#). Students who want federal grants and loans must attend an accredited college, university, or program. Degree-seeking students are generally best served by enrolling in an institution with **regional** accreditation. Schools should arm students with this information and help families make informed decisions about the programs they select.
- Job seekers and college applicants are increasingly being required to participate in some form of online interview. The 2019 NCDA article, [Preparing Students for Career Success: Exposing Students to Online Interviewing](#), provides strategies for supporting students who are preparing for virtual interviews. Students should familiarize themselves with online conferencing software and practice interview techniques as part of their postsecondary planning.
- [Unlock my Future](#) helps students find potential dream careers based on their own interests. It guides students to schools that are best for them and assists with finding resources to help pay for college.
- [College Navigator - National Center for Education Statistics](#) is a tool to find colleges and career schools that may fit the needs of students.

Schools in [Louisiana's Community and Technical College System](#) (LCTCS) offer certifications and associate degrees while providing opportunities to those students who wish to start their degree program at a smaller school and transfer to a larger college or university. The LCTCS [bridge programs](#) offer students a transfer degree guarantee should they choose to transfer to a Louisiana public university. This option is particularly attractive to students who have not met the entrance requirements of a university.

Students who already know which college or university they want to attend should request information directly from the institution(s). Students who plan to attend an in-state institution may find the following links helpful:

- [Louisiana State University System](#)
- [University of Louisiana System](#)
- [Louisiana's Community and Technical College System](#)
- [Southern University System](#)
- [Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities](#)

There are a plethora of resources available surrounding the location of potential scholarships. Many scholarships require the completion of the FAFSA or various placement exams (i.e, ACT or SAT). Due to the flexibility offered for 2020 graduates, students should investigate scholarship opportunities to ensure they are meeting the requirements.

Here are some reputable sites to assist school counselors with locating scholarships for students:

- [Career One Stop](#) - sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor and a partner of the American Job Center network. This site searches through more than 8,000 scholarships, fellowships, grants, and other financial aid award opportunities. It has a filter which allows for searching for awards by type, location, levels of study, and more.
- [Cappex](#) - a database with more than \$11 billion dollars in scholarship opportunities
- [Chegg](#) - a resource for scholarships and internships
- [Crush College Debt](#) - The College for Free paid platform educates families on how to S.E.N.D. their kids to college for FREE, minimizing student loan debt.
- [Fastweb](#) - a scholarship search website providing a comprehensive approach to helping students pay for school through a variety of resources like scholarships, grants, fellowships, student loans, and work-study programs. The site offers a database of 1.5 million college scholarships for students to access by creating a free profile.
- [Good Call](#) - has a mission to provide students and families the knowledge, tools, and tips they need to make *Good Calls* when it comes to post-secondary decisions.
- [Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance](#) - LOSFA is the gatekeeper of Louisiana's state grants and scholarships. Many of these grants and scholarships can be received just by completing the FAFSA. There is no application fee or fees of any kind for these state scholarships.
- [Peterson's](#) - a leading educational service company dedicated to furthering education after high school and beyond.
- [Scholarship.com](#) - helps students find money for college as well as learn about the entire financial aid process.
- [Unigo](#) - provides cutting-edge tools, compelling content, and essential information, empowering students to make the best decisions about their college experience.

### **Career Supports for Graduates Transitioning to the Workforce**

Many of our 2020 graduates will exit high-school and move on to the workforce. To support graduates seeking to enter the workforce, school systems may support those students by requesting funds for [Student Planning Partners](#). Additional resources are listed below.

- [Post-Secondary Academic Career Conversations](#) offers conversational prompts aligned to each of the college- and career-readiness standards. These conversation starters can be used in helping students prepare for their future career.

- [High-School Counselor's Guide](#) provides an explanation of components of college and career readiness counseling and how to implement them systematically.
- [Louisiana Career Development Association \(LCDA\)](#) offers links to resources that support career development and exploration.
- [SkillsUSA](#) is a national membership association serving high school, college and middle school students who are preparing for careers in trade, technical and skilled service occupations, including health occupations, and for further education.
- [2020 Internships in Louisiana](#) offers a list of current internships available in our state.
- [Apprenticeship Louisiana](#) supports students searching for an opportunity by location, salary, and job.
- [Louisiana Star Jobs](#) offers the opportunity to explore top-rated careers in Louisiana.
- [Louisiana Community and Technical Colleges bridge programs](#) are designed to improve the preparation and ease the transition into college.
- [College Access in Louisiana](#) includes an overview of the federal, state, and outreach programs available to eligible students. This resource also outlines postsecondary education access and college and career planning resources.
- [Propel America](#) is a nonprofit that helps young adults successfully transition from high school into a career and higher education. If a student completes the Propel I "Core Course", in which they identify a career pathway of interest, they will receive support preparing for that career. If they successfully complete the course, they can become Propel Fellows upon graduation. Fellows receive tuition for a training program and a stipend.
- [Work Readiness Standards and Benchmarks](#) mentions the important factors needed to establish readiness for transition from postsecondary programs to employment.
- [21st Century Job Center's Practitioner's Guide](#) provides web-based tools that present low-cost training, career exploration, and job search opportunities.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact [highschoolacademics@la.gov](mailto:highschoolacademics@la.gov).