

Louisiana Office Of Student Financial Assistance
A Program of the Board of Regents

Programs



PART 1

A Comprehensive Review of TOPS Processing

Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance
Facilitated by: Ebony Holmes, Program Administrator



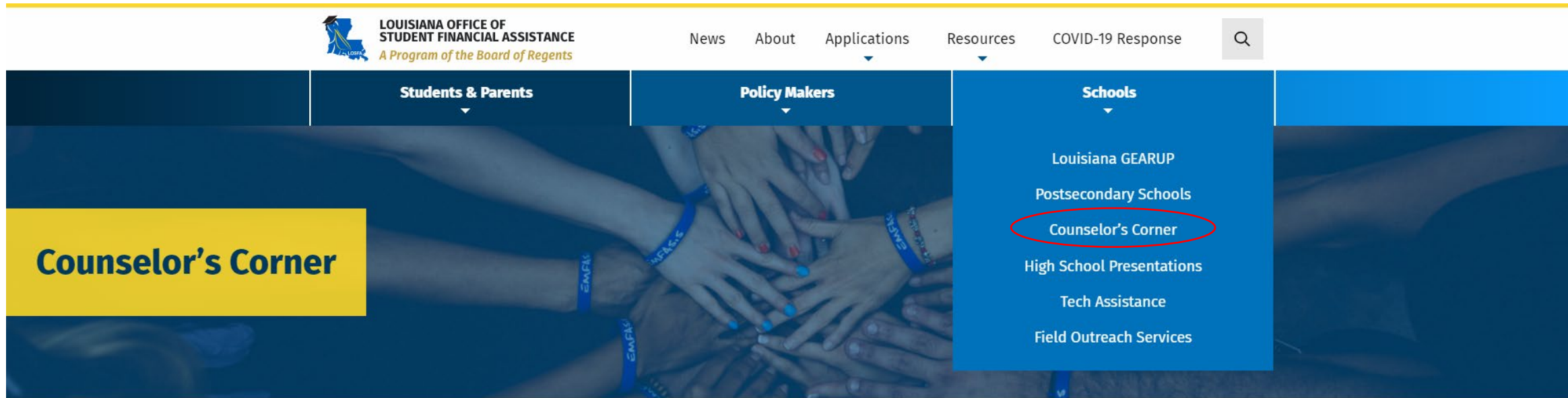
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STATE OF LOUISIANA

Blast E-mail List

- E-mails are now sent through Constant Contact from the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance. Please make sure to check your junk/spam folder for e-mails and make sure Rhonda.Bridevaux@la.gov is not blocked by your school and/or district.
- In order to make sure you are receiving LOSFA updates, please send an e-mail to Rhonda.Bridevaux@la.gov to be added to our list.
- If your e-mail address has changed or if you have moved to a different school/district, please send the new e-mail address as well.



Counselor & Administrator Virtual Office Hours



High school counselors can find all training materials and useful links from LOSFA here!

Click the button below to schedule one-on-one counselor and administrator assistance session.

High School Counselor and Administrator Assistance ►



www.mylosfa.la.gov/schools/counselors-corner

Louisiana Counselor FAFSA Line-by-Line Workshop



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the AMERICAN MIND®

March 2021

Louisiana 2021 - 2022 FAFSA® Completion

Covid-19 has impacted efforts to complete the FAFSA® form nationwide. The state of Louisiana is being proactive in closing the gap to assist students and families.

24,254

As of March 5, 2021, an additional 3,179 FAFSA applications were completed for a total of 24,254 completed applications for the state of Louisiana.

Louisiana Counselor FAFSA Line by Line Workshop

Do you have students with special circumstances? Are you getting questions about the FAFSA that you need tips on how to advise? Join me for a FAFSA Line by Line Workshop.

March 24, 2021 | 4:00PM CST

March 24, 2021
FSA Webinar

How to Tackle
Verification in
the FAFSA®
process

Click Here
to Register

FSA Partner Email

Sign-up to receive tips for students, professional development and more.
outreach.fsapartners.ed.gov

Tanika Mangum
Outreach Specialist, FSA
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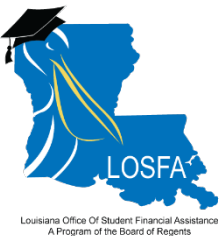
LOSFA Lingo

LOSFA Lingo – a glossary of terms and phrases frequently used by LOSFA staff.



LOSFA LINGO: TOPS Processing Webinar

- **15th Class Day**
A student must be enrolled as a full-time student on this class day to receive their TOPS Award Amount. The 15th class day is the 15th day the college or university is in session, excluding holidays. Example: If a college or university begins the Spring Semester on January
- **1st Year-Not Accepted**
Students have one year after the date of high school graduation in which to accept their TOPS Award. If a student chooses the option, programming uses this term as a placeholder, so the student is eligible for payment the first semester they enroll. The student did not enroll in the first year after high school graduation.



An Overview of the TOPS Processing Cycle

Test Scores

LOSFA downloads ACT scores for 11th & 12th grade Louisiana students, students who use the ACT code 1595 on their registration, and SAT scores for students who include the code of 9019 on their registration.

Applications

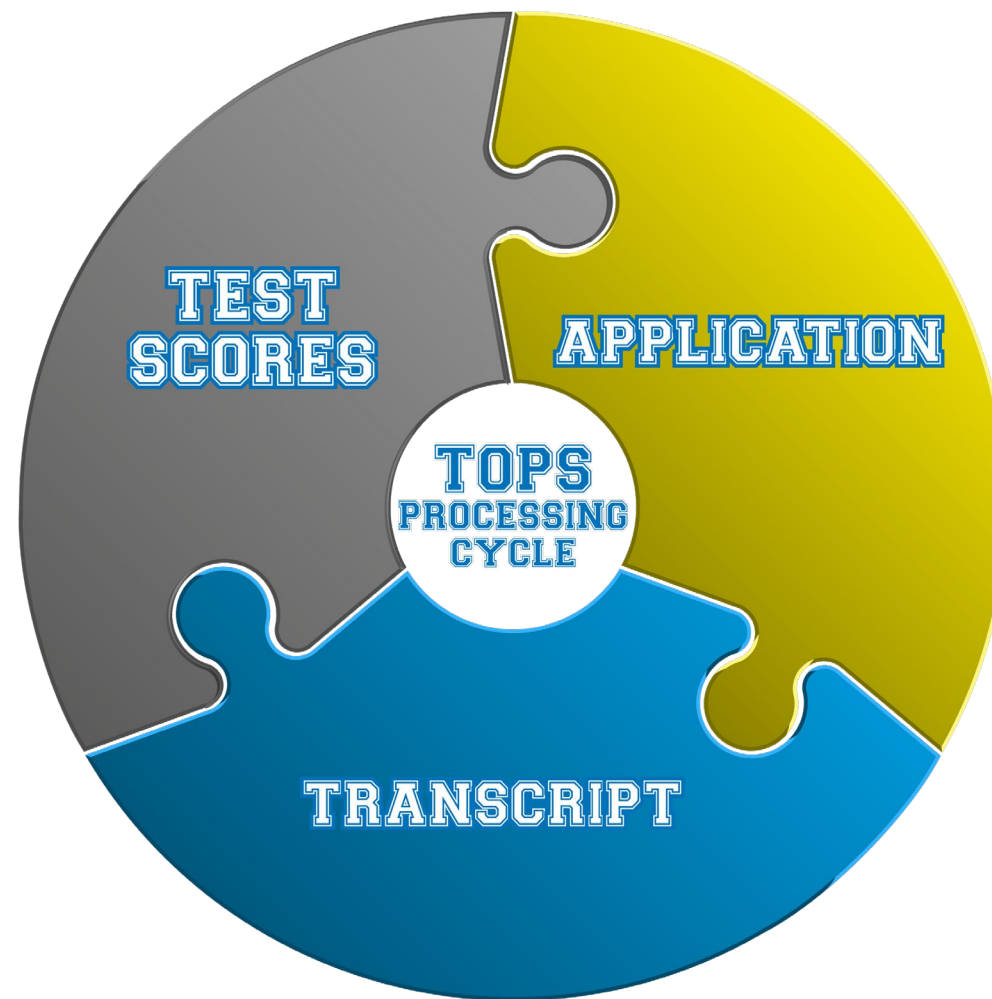
Students apply for TOPS by completing the:

- FAFSA
- TOPS Online Application

Transcripts

Transcript data is received through the Student Transcript System (STS) after graduation.

An Overview of the TOPS Processing Cycle



Consent Forms

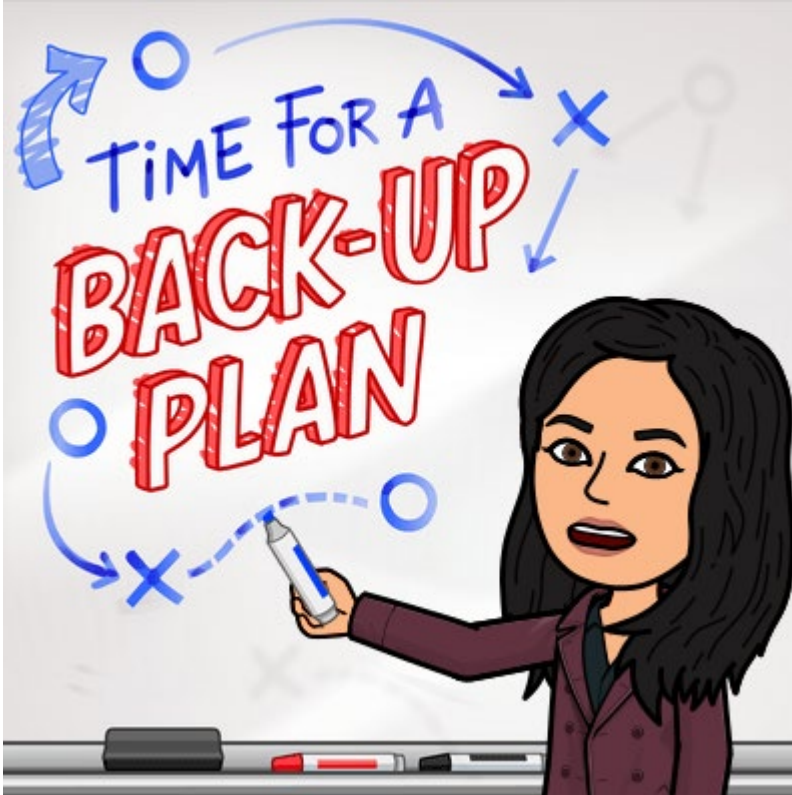
- A parent has the right to determine whether their child's Personally Identifiable Information (PII) can be released to LOSFA and postsecondary education institutions to which their child applies.
- The form is supplied to the parent by the governing authority of each school for students in 8th – 12th grades.
- The parent must sign the form only once, unless the parent (or student upon reaching the age of 18) decides to reverse the original decision.



Recommended Timeline

- **August/September**
 - Make sure you have consent forms on file for graduating seniors and that the parental consent box is checked in STS
- **February**
 - Feb 1: FAFSA Completion is encouraged
 - Feb 15: Submit mid-year data
 - Encourage your seniors to set up Student Hub accounts and check for incorrect or missing information
- **May**
 - Enter WorkKeys scores in STS
- **Early June**
 - Check for missing PII
 - Submit graduate data

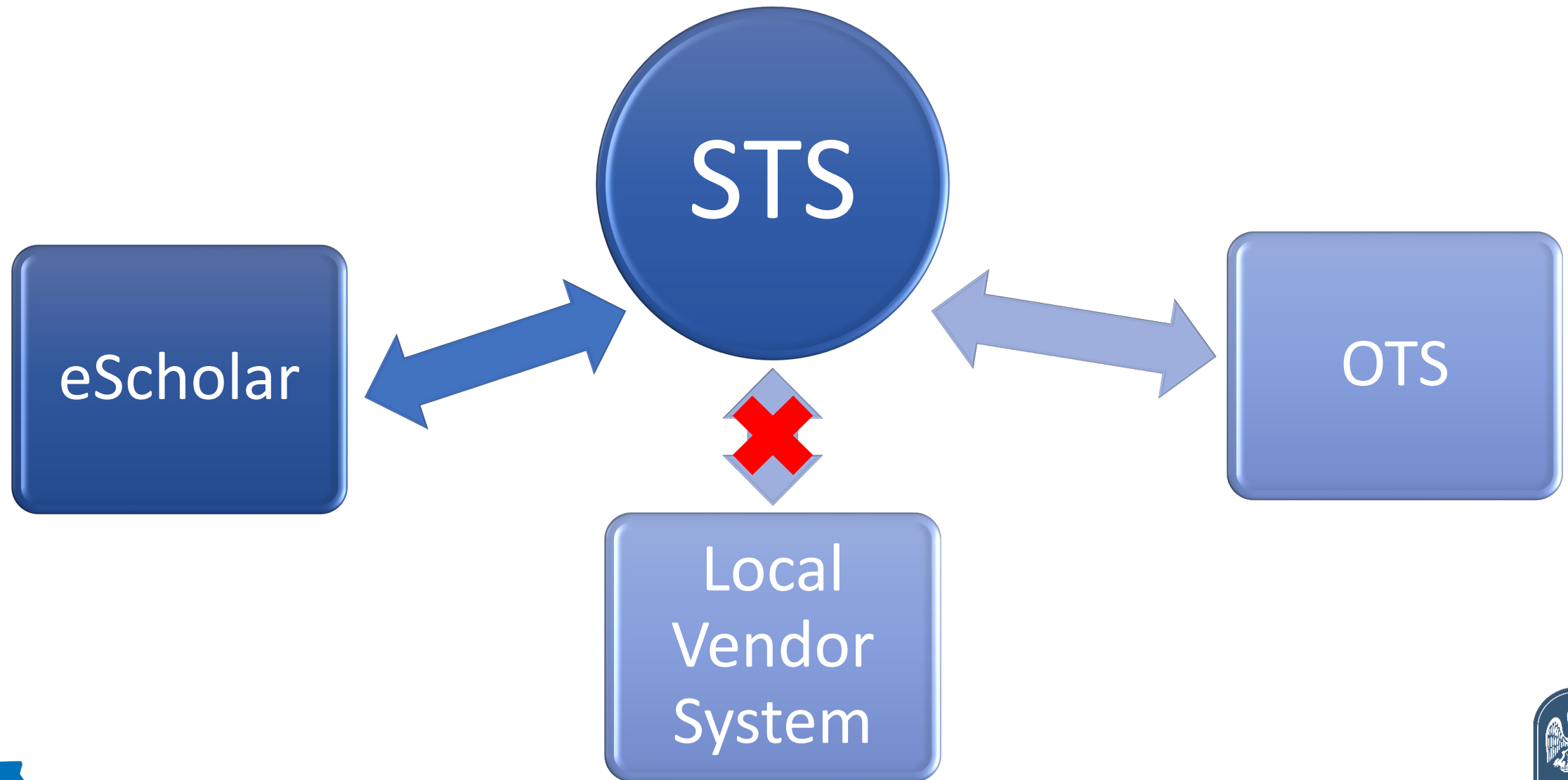
Craft a Backup Plan



Make sure your graduates have a point of contact in case they have an issue being processed for TOPS.

- STS corrections:
 - Grad dates
 - Site certifications
 - Parental consent
 - Course corrections
- Residency Process Checks
- Home Study Certification Letters
- WorkKeys scores

Making Changes In Local Software vs STS



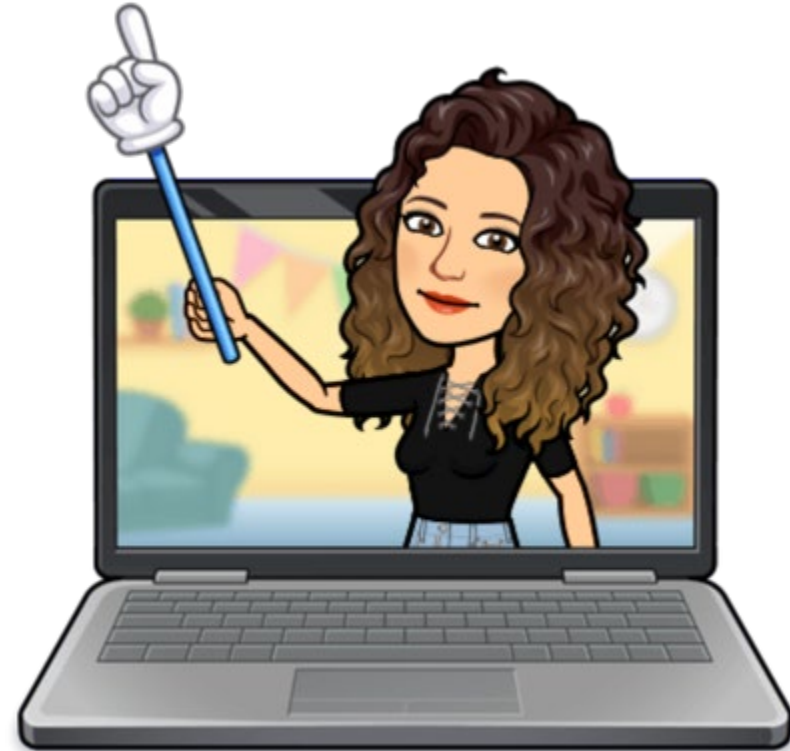
TOPS Processing Issues

FAFSA	ACT/SAT/WorkKeys	High School Transcript
Incorrect SSN/Name/DOB	Incorrect name or DOB	Incorrect SSN/name/DOB
Incomplete/Not signed*	Scores not received	Out-of-state sponsor codes
Cannot confirm citizenship		Missing/incorrect PII
Submitted under parent		Consent indicator flag "N"
Drug conviction		Graduation date missing
		Site not certified (public)
		Courses entered incorrectly

*AN INCOMPLETE FAFSA MAY BE USED TO SATISFY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS; HOWEVER, AN INCOMPLETE FAFSA **CANNOT** BE USED TO DETERMINE A STUDENT'S ELIGIBILITY FOR TOPS.

Missing PII in eScholar

- LOSFA has identified an issue with missing PII (Personally Identifiable Information) in eScholar that prevents recent graduates from being processed for TOPS eligibility, as we are unable to load transcript data for these students.
- The quickest and most efficient way for schools to verify their graduates are not missing PII is to have their STS Data managers access the PII Report from STS.



Missing PII

- Instructions for accessing the report



- If the “No PII Found for Students in BLE (XLS)” reported is not listed, your school does not have any issues with PII in eScholar.



Using STS to Locate Potential Issues

- **NO PII Report**
 - If you have any student that is missing an SSN, name, or birthday in eScholar, they will appear on this report.
- **Print & Export: Export Summary to Excel**
 - Students without Parental Consent
 - Students without a FAFSA

Break

FAFSA: Completion vs Submission

Submission: Submission of a FAFSA that may be incomplete (missing signatures, missing parent information, etc.)

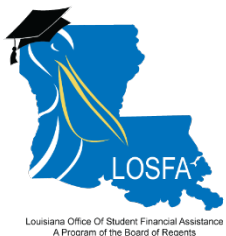
Completion: Submission of a FAFSA that is free of errors and signed

ERROR

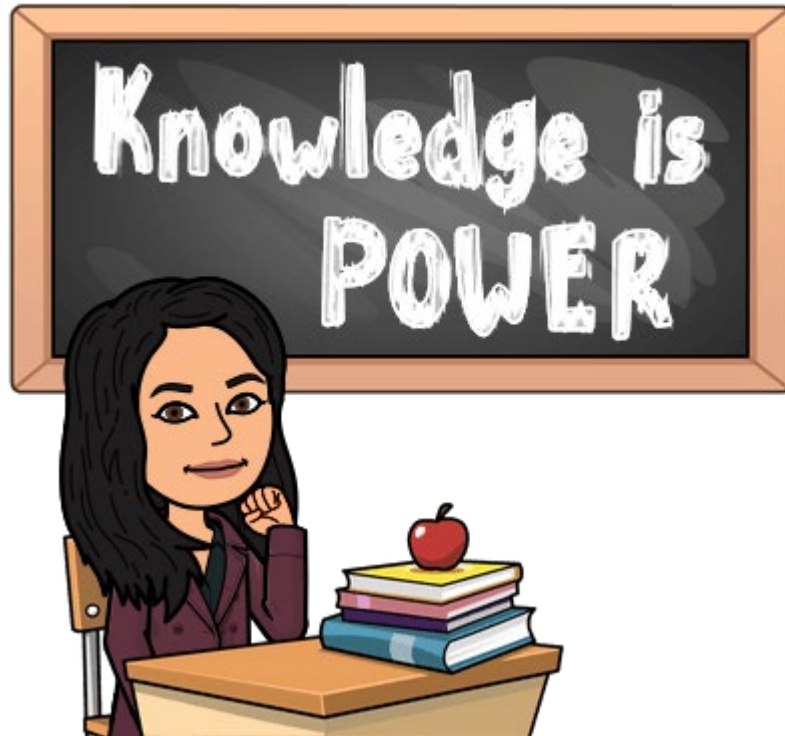


FAFSA Completion Project

- **The FAFSA Completion Project is a federal initiative to encourage all high school seniors to complete the FAFSA.** To participate, school boards, charter schools, and non-public schools must enter agreements with the agency that ensure that all data exchanged is handled in a secure manner and will be used only as intended. Public school boards will enter the agreement on behalf of all public schools within the district, and charter schools and non-public schools will enter individual agreements.
- **The only data that will transfer between the agency and the school boards/schools is the student's name and whether the student has completed the FAFSA.**
 - Personally identifiable information will not be exchanged.
 - LOSFA will not exchange data with those school boards/schools that do not enter an agreement.
 - These schools will still be able to receive aggregate data from the USDOE.
 - The benefit to this project is that the school boards/schools receive student level data so that they know how to follow up and with whom.



How Do I Get Student-Level Data?



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- The only data that will transfer between the agency and the school boards/schools is the student's name and whether the student has completed the FAFSA.
- School boards, charter schools, and non-public schools that enter into agreements assign an authorized requestor to receive the FAFSA data for the district.
- The authorized requestor then provides the data to each individual high school in the district.

FAFSA Completion Project

High School BESE Code	High School Name	Student First Name	Student Last Name	Submission Date	Submitted Without Errors	Submitted With Errors
777931	WHO DAT HIGH SCHOOL	JOHN	DOE	20210121	Y	
777931	WHO DAT HIGH SCHOOL	JANE	DOE	20210113	Y	
777931	WHO DAT HIGH SCHOOL	JOHNNY	BEGOOD	20211220		Y
777931	WHO DAT HIGH SCHOOL	CANDY	SMITH	20210128	Y	

Why Isn't a Student Showing Up On My FAFSA Data Report?

- **Application Date**

- When students complete a FAFSA and submit it to the federal processor, it is considered complete.
- FAFSA applications are usually processed within 2-3 working days after submission.
- Data covers processed applications from the Friday before the data is released.

- **High Schools could be listed under different names**

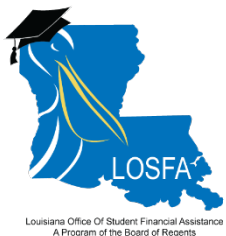
- When providing FAFSA data to schools, LOSFA performs a query of its database by high school. Our database uses the name of the school that appears in the drop-down box on the FAFSA. To avoid this problem, you can have your students use the drop-down box for a high school name when completing the FAFSA.

- **Student's Age at the time of FAFSA Completion**

- Data provided by LOSFA is limited to students who are 19 or younger. We have limited the data in this way to prevent sending you information on prior year seniors.

- **Students Reporting Information Incorrectly**

- If a student reports receiving anything other than a high school diploma, then they will not appear on your FAFSA Completion report.
- If a high school senior reports that he will be anything but an incoming first-year undergraduate, then he will be excluded from your school's report because we will presume that the student is entering their second (or higher) year of college.



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Breakout Sessions

Breakout Room #1: Kayla Gros

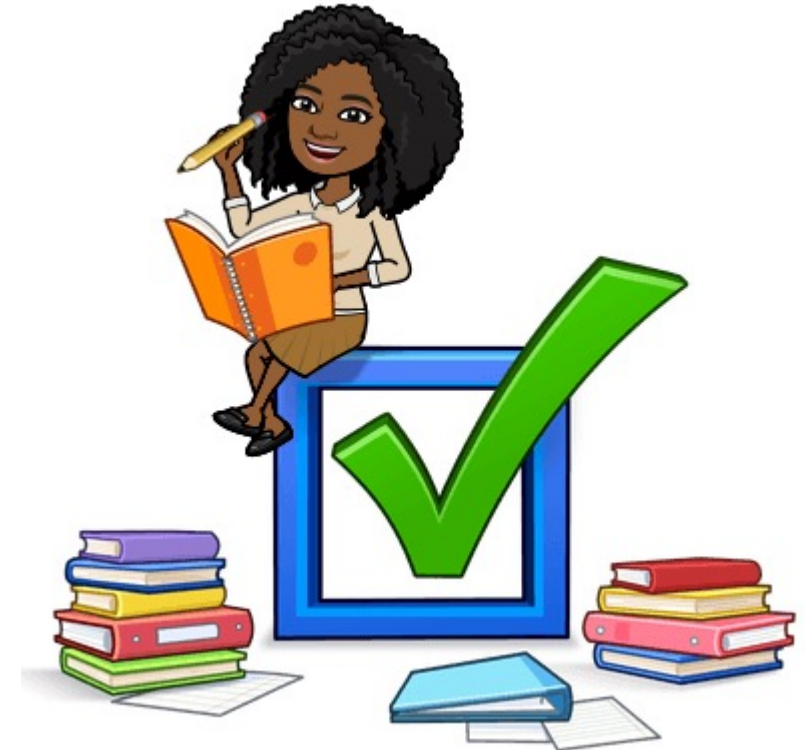
- It is June and Susie Sims, a student that just graduated in May, calls and is very flustered. She explains, “LOSFA needs you to send my transcript right now! My fee bill for school is due in two days and I don’t have TOPS because they don’t have my transcript. Can you please send it to them?”
 - *How can you send LOSFA the transcript?*
- You properly sent the transcript, but Susie calls back. She says, “LOSFA says they still can’t see my transcript. They said something wasn’t marked in the system or you had to make some change.”
 - *What needs to be in STS for LOSFA to utilize the transcript?*



Breakout Room #2: Brandi Morrison

Jonathan, a high school student, moved to Florida with his father who had a temporary job contract. Jonathan's mother stayed in their home in Louisiana. The married couple continued to pay taxes in Louisiana. For his senior year, Jonathan moved back to Louisiana, but continued to take online classes with the school in Florida to graduate. Jonathan's mother wants to know how or if he can qualify for TOPS.

- *Under what conditions can Jonathan meet the Residency Requirement for TOPS and what steps must be taken?*



Breakout Room #3: Rhonda Bridevaux

Jane earned a 19 on the ACT in February of her senior year in high school. Assuming all other initial eligibility criteria are met, she will qualify for the TOPS Tech Award, which provides two full years of TOPS funding to be used for enrollment in certain programs of study aligned to workforce priorities as determined by the Board of Regents and the Workforce Investment Council.

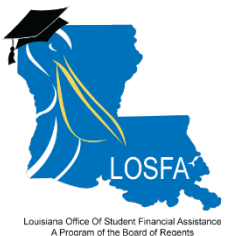
- *If Jane retakes the ACT in June of her senior year, and she scores a 21, what level of TOPS is she now eligible for and how many semesters of TOPS will she be eligible for?*



Breakout Room #4: Scott Burke

After Carla graduated from high school, she was awarded the TOPS Opportunity Award. She was notified by LOSFA that her only qualifying ACT score of 22 was canceled during her second semester of college attendance; however, she knows she earned a score of 20 on another ACT.

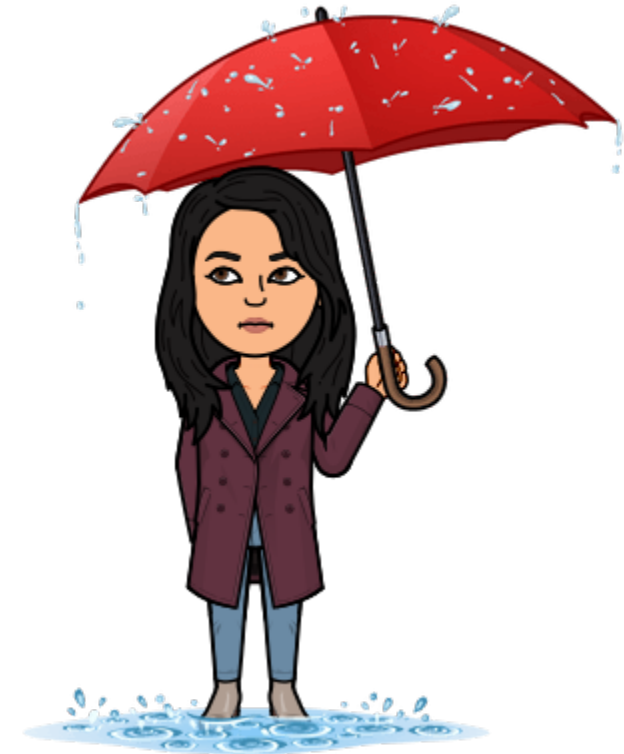
- *What are some reasons her score is not on file with LOSFA and will Carla still be eligible for TOPS?*



Breakout Room #5: Isabel Reyes

Adam submitted his FAFSA in November and reached out to LOSFA to get his LOSFA ID in June; however, LOSFA was unable to find a LOSFA ID for him and told him that his FAFSA contained the incorrect SSN.

- *What steps does Adam need to take with his FAFSA? How will this impact his TOPS eligibility?*

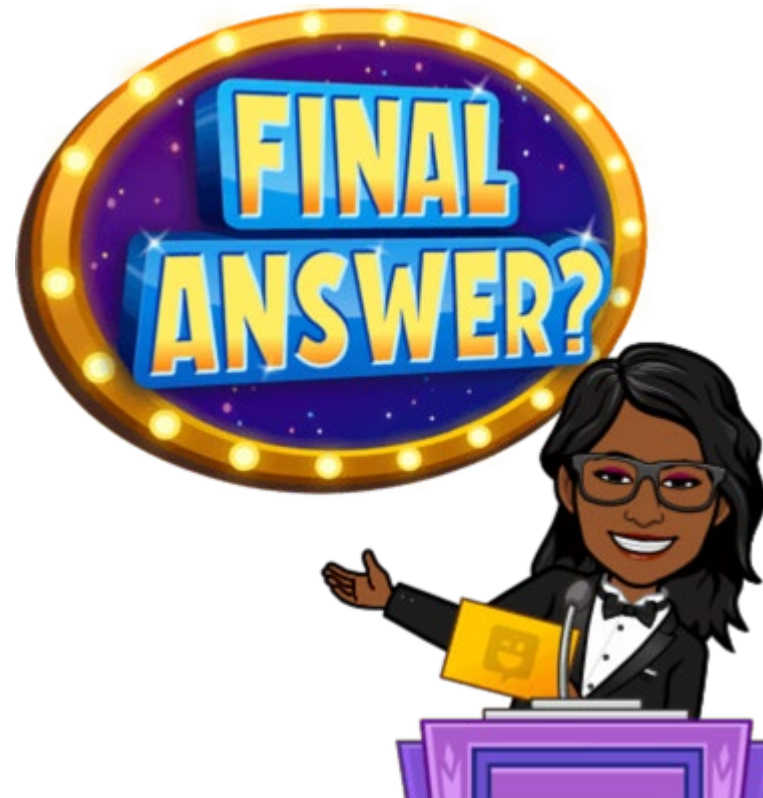


Breakout Room #6: Ebony Holmes



- Martha is a school counselor at Who Dat High School. She's received several calls and e-mails from her students, concerned that they have not yet been processed for TOPS eligibility even though it's July.
- What could be some reasons for the students not processing?
- Martha has her Data Manager check their transcript information in STS and there don't appear to be any issues. However, the students are still stating their transcripts are not available and college starts in August.
- If there are no issues in STS and no issues with the student's FAFSA or test scores, what steps should Martha take next?

Trivia Time



14 \$ 1 MILLION

13 \$ 500,000

12 \$ 250,000

11 \$ 100,000

10 \$ 50,000

9 \$ 30,000

8 \$ 20,000

7 \$ 10,000

6 \$ 7,000

5 \$ 5,000

4 \$ 3,000

3 \$ 2,000

2 \$ 1,000

1 \$ 500

Phone a Friend



Ask the Audience



50/50



Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance
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\$ 500

Which system creates the LASECID for students?

A: Escholar

B: STS

C: OTS

D: Student Hub



\$ 500

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\$ 1000

What data is required before TOPS processing can occur for a student?

A: An application

B: Test scores

C: Transcript

D: All of the above



\$ 1000

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\$ 2000

A glossary of terms and phrases frequently used by LOSFA staff is called:

A: LOSFA Q&A

B: LOSFA Lingo

C: LOSFA Lex

D: LOSFA Language



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\$ 3000

What is the ACT code for LOSFA/TOPS?

A: 1212

B: 9019

C: 1595

D: 0000



\$ 3000

What is the ACT code for LOSFA/TOPS?

A: 1212

B: 9019

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D: 0000



\$ 5000

Which of the following is NOT a common FAFSA error for TOPS processing purposes?

A: Missing signature

B: Residency

C: Incorrect SSN

D: No parental information



\$ 5000

Which of the following is NOT a common FAFSA error for TOPS processing purposes?

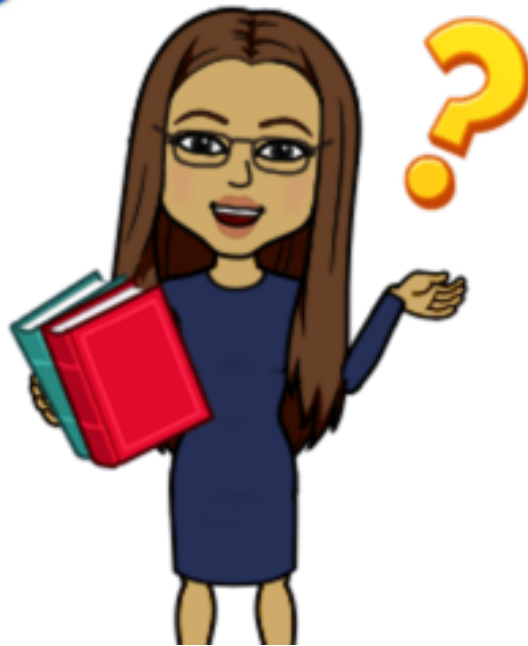
A: Missing Signature

B: Residency

C: Incorrect SSN

D: No parental information

Any Questions??



Raise your hand
-OR-

Type your question in
the chat box

Contact LOSFA

www.mylosfa.la.gov

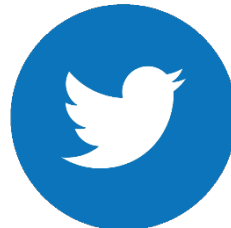
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