

HOME-STUDY PROGRAMS

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Q-1. I am a home-study student. Can I receive TOPS, and, if so, are there any special requirements?

A. Yes. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) must certify to LOSFA that you are a student who successfully completed the eleventh, if applicable, and twelfth-grade levels of a home-study program approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE).

If you ever enrolled in a Louisiana public high school or nonpublic high school or an approved non-Louisiana high school that was or has been approved by BESE, you must have successfully completed both the eleventh and twelfth grades of a home study program approved by BESE the student must begin the home study program no later than the conclusion of the 10th grade and the previously attended high school must provide LOSFA with certification that you were in good standing at the time you last attended that school.

LOSFA may grant exceptions with regard to the requirement that a student begin a home study program no later than the end of the tenth-grade year. Students who meet the requirements for these types of exceptions must provide a Request for Exception Form to LOSFA along with the proper documentation for the exception.

In addition, you must have an ACT score of at least 19 for TOPS Tech, 22 for TOPS Opportunity, 24 for TOPS Performance, or 28 for TOPS Honors, or an SAT score of at least 990 for TOPS Tech, 1100 for TOPS Opportunity, 1160 for TOPS Performance, or 1300 for TOPS Honors.

Q-2. I am a home-study student. How does LOSFA know that I am interested in applying for TOPS?

A. Home-study students are identified by the high school code they entered on their ACT or SAT Registration. You should use the high school code 969999 on the ACT and 970000 on the SAT. These codes will cause your name to be placed on a list of students to be verified by LDE as being registered in an approved home-study program.

If you complete the FAFSA, you will be asked, “When you begin college in the 2024-2025 school year, what will be your high school completion status?” If you mark “home schooled” after this question, LOSFA will include your name on the list sent to LDE if you have an ACT score of at least 19 or an SAT score of at least 990.

If you complete the TOPS Online Application, you will be asked to name the high school you attended or that you were in a home-study program. If you answer “home study,” LOSFA will include your name on the list sent to LDE if you have an ACT score of at least 19 or an SAT score of at least 990.

Be sure that the name that you use on the ACT and the FAFSA exactly matches your name on file with LDE. For example, if LDE records your name as John Q. Smith, your ACT and your FAFSA should use the name John Q. Smith, not John Smith, not John Quincy Smith, and not Quincy Smith. If your name differs in the slightest way in any of these documents, the determination of your eligibility for TOPS will be delayed. Your date of birth, home address, and email address must also be the same on all documents.

Q-3. Is a home-study student eligible for TOPS in an early admissions program?

- A. No. Only students enrolled in public or BESE-approved non-public high schools are eligible for early college admissions under the Department of Education’s Early College Admissions Policy. For additional information, see the Q&A entitled “Early Graduation and Early College Admissions.”

Q-4. I attended a traditional school until the end of my 11th grade year in high school. Can the rule that I must have completed both 11th and 12th grade in home study be waived?

A. In limited circumstances, you may be granted an exception to the rule that you must complete both 11th and 12th grades in a home-study program. You must complete a Request for Exception form and return it to LOSFA with documentation indicating that the reason you did not complete both 11th and 12th grades in a home-study program was beyond your control.