**LOUISIANA STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE COMMISSION**
**OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

# *Student Financial Aid Bulletin*

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| SFA No: | S2010-01 |
| DATE ISSUED: | April 29, 2010 |
| EFFECTIVE DATE: | Effective Immediately: Attached Framework and Application elements must be used for ALL ES registrations for the 2011 Academic Year |
| DISTRIBUTION: | High School Counselors, College and University Financial Aid Offices and Registrars, LAICU Financial Aid Offices and Registrars, Technical School Deans and Technical School Personnel |
| TOPICS: | Revised ES Framework and Application |

The Louisiana Early Start Program provides tuition assistance to eligible 11th and 12th grade students from public high schools that enroll in eligible college courses for dual credit at an eligible public or private college or university.

Students must meet general eligibility requirements as well as course requirements to enroll in college level, degree credit courses, enrichment/developmental courses or workskills/technical courses. The framework for the Louisiana Early Start program was modified by the Board of Regents in 2009 to address the shortfall in appropriations. The current application is also posted on the LOSFA website at www.osfa.la.gov

## SUMMARY OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following overview summarizes critical roles and responsibilities of high schools and colleges/universities in the Early Start process. Refer to the attached program framework for a complete outline of program responsibilities.

**HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL (OR DESIGNEE) –**

You must select the college course the student will take for high school credit. If the student enrolls in more than one course, you must designate the course to be paid with Early Start funds. You are responsible for ensuring that the student meets the minimum PLAN or ACT score for the college course. If the student's PLAN or ACT score does not meet the minimum required, the Early Start program will not pay for the student to enroll in the course.

**COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES –**

Before a college course will be paid by the Early Start Program, a student must have enrolled in the college course approved by the high school on the application. Colleges/universities may NOT change a course selected by a high school. If the college/university determines that the student is ineligible for a course, that a course is not available or that there is a more suitable course, the application should be returned to the high school with an explanation.

Since a student is not eligible for Early Start unless he earns an A, B, C, or P the previous semester, if enrolled, colleges/universities are responsible for ensuring the student earned the required grade before certifying the student's eligibility for the subsequent semester.

**Colleges/Universities must submit grades by the reporting deadline. Institutions that fail to meet the grade reporting deadline must receive permission from the Board of Regents to be approved for continued program funding for that semester. Payment requests for approved institutions will not be processed until LOSFA has received all grades from the institution for all courses funded by Early Start.**

**Colleges/Universities must submit billings by the billing deadline. Billings received after the deadline will not be processed without Board of Regents' approval and may jeopardize the college/university receiving payment.**

## LOUISIANA *EARLY START* PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

## ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

### I. General criteria

1. Student must be at least 15 years of age and currently enrolled in 11th or 12th grade at a public Louisiana high school.
2. Student must have either PLAN or ACT (or SAT) scores on file at the high school.
3. Student must be in good standing as defined by the high school and meet the college/university enrollment criteria.
4. Student must have permission from the high school and his/her parent/guardian to participate.
5. Student must be enrolled in a college course for which dual credit (both college and high school credit) is attempted and recorded on both the student's secondary and postsecondary academic record.
6. Student may enroll in a maximum of 3 credit hours per semester/term, up to 6 credit hours per academic year, with Early Start funding. (The student is responsible for additional enrollment costs if exceeding the 3 credit hours/semester limit, even if the student enrolls in more than one college or university.) A dual-enrolled student is expected to follow the same withdrawal deadlines as any other undergraduate student in the college or university.
7. To continue enrollment in subsequent semesters/terms through this funding opportunity, student must have successfully completed (earned a college grade of A, B, C or P) current dual credit courses. Students who earn less than C or who withdraw/resign from a course may not enroll in the following semester or term with Early Start funding. *Limited, documented* exceptions for continuation after withdrawal may be granted by the college/university.
8. Continued state funding is not guaranteed. These criteria are subject to change.

### II. Eligibility criteria to enroll in a College Level, Degree Credit Course

1. College Level, Degree Credit Course: A course in an academic subject that generates postsecondary institutional credit and appears (a) as a General Education course on the current Board of Regents' Master Course Articulation Matrix (public institutions) or (b) on a list of general education courses approved by the Board of Regents (for LAICU institutions).
2. Student must be on track for completing (a) the Regents/TOPS high school core (if graduating in 2011) or (b) the Louisiana Core 4 Curriculum (if graduating in 2012 and beyond).
3. Student must have a PLAN or an ACT Composite score of at least 18 (or SAT equivalent).
4. To enroll in an entry level, college level English course, a student must (a) have a PLAN or ACT English sub-score of at least 18 (or SAT equivalent) or (b) meet the postsecondary institution's pre-requisite requirements.
5. To enroll in an entry level, college level mathematics course, a student must (a) have a PLAN or ACT mathematics sub-score of at least 19 (or SAT equivalent) or (b) meet the postsecondary institution's pre-requisite requirements.

### III. Eligibility criteria to enroll in an Enrichment/Developmental Course

1. Enrichment/Developmental Course: An English or mathematics course that generates postsecondary institutional credit, but not degree credit, and is designed to prepare the student for college-level instruction.
2. Student must be a 12th grader/senior on track for completing (a) the Regents/TOPS high school core (if graduating in 2011) or (b) the Louisiana Core 4 Curriculum (if graduating in 2012 and beyond).
3. Student must have a PLAN Composite score of at least 14 or an ACT Composite score of at least 15 (or SAT equivalent).

### IV. Eligibility criteria to enroll in a Work Skills Course

1. Work Skills Course: A course in a skill or occupational training area that contributes to a declared Career Area of Concentration and leads to a recognized industry based certification.
2. Student must be on track (a) for completing the Regents/TOPS high school core (if graduating in 2011) or (b) for completing the Louisiana Core 4 Curriculum (if graduating in 2012 and beyond) or (c) to graduate from high school (having earned at least 11 Carnegie hours if a junior, or 16 if a senior) and have declared a Career Area of Concentration.
3. Student must have a PLAN Composite score of at least 14 or an ACT Composite score of at least 15 (or SAT equivalent) or a WorkKeys Bronze Certificate.

## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION (For High Schools and Colleges/Universities)

1. For the purpose of the Early Start program, a <u>college</u> course is defined as: (1) a college course taught at the postsecondary institution or (2) a specially scheduled college course taught at the high school.
2. The Program payment shall cover all costs to the student enrolling in a college course, for up to 3 credit hours (only) per student per semester or term, excluding the costs for textbooks, parking, laboratory fees, etc.
3. Students must successfully complete a current Early Start course to be eligible for Early Start funding in the following semester or term.
4. Participating colleges and universities enrolling eligible students in eligible dual credit courses through the Early Start Program will be paid at a rate of $100 per college credit hour, not to exceed $300 per course. Non-public students may enroll in dual credit courses with the same eligibility requirements and limits, paying no more than the rate paid by the state for public school students. Institutions will not be paid for non-public school student enrollments under this program.
5. Postsecondary institutions shall report grades to and bill LOSFA by the following deadlines.

**REPORTING AND PAYMENT REQUEST DEADLINE DATES**

**Fall Semester/Term:**
Jul 1-                        Deadline for submission of grades from prior spring term/semester: Institutions that fail to meet the grade reporting deadline must receive permission from the Board of Regents to be approved for continued program funding. Fall funding is not guaranteed for those institutions.
Sept 1-                      Portal Opens: Begin Billing after your school's census date
Oct 15                       Portal Closes: Billings after this date require Board of Regents approval (payment is not guaranteed)
Oct 16-Nov 14-        ALL billing corrections must be completed and processed
Nov 15-                    Payments Processed

**Winter Term:**
Dec 1-                      Deadline for submission of grades from prior fall term/semester: Institutions that fail to meet the grade reporting deadline must receive permission from the Board of Regents to be approved for continued program funding. Winter funding is not guaranteed.
Dec 15-                     Portal Opens: Begin Billing after your school's census date
Dec 30-                     Portal Closes: Billings after this date require Board of Regents approval (payment is not guaranteed)
Dec 31-Jan 14  -      ALL billing corrections must be completed and processed
Jan 15-                     Payments Processed

**Spring Semester/ Term:**
Jan 15-                     Deadline for submission of grades from prior fall term/semester (March 1 for institutions reporting grades from prior winter **term**): Institutions that fail to meet the grade reporting deadline must receive permission from the Board of Regents to be approved for continued program funding. Spring funding is not guaranteed.
 Feb 15-                    Portal Opens: Begin Billing after your school's census date
April 1-                    Portal Closes: (April 15 for **term billings only**) Billings after this date require Board of Regents approval (payment is not guaranteed)
April 2-April 30-     ALL billing corrections must be completed and processed
May 1-                     Payments Processed

**In cases where the dates above fall on a weekend or declared holiday, the deadline will be the next working day.**
**Questions regarding payment submission and processing should be referred to LOSFA's Special Program Staff at:**
**SGSP@osfa.la.gov**

# Louisiana Early Start Program
# Student Application

*Please type or print in dark ink. See the Instructions on Page 3.*

## I.  TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT

A.  College Semester/Term of Application:  ☐ Fall    ☐ Winter    ☐ Spring     Year: 20_____

B.  Is this your first semester participating in the Early Start Program?   ☐ Yes ☐ No

C.  Last Name: _____First Name: _____ Middle Name: _____

D.  Other names you might have used: _____

E.  Gender:  ☐ Female  ☐ Male

F.  Social Security Number (Required): _____ - _____ - _____

G.  Date of Birth: Month: _____ Day: _____ Year: _____

H. Mailing Address: _____
                    Street or P. O. Box              City                 State                    Zip Code

I.  Home Phone: (_____) _____Cell Phone: (_____)_____ E-mail:_____
        (Area code) Phone Number         (Area code) Phone Number

J.  In case of emergency, notify: _____(_____)_____
                    Last Name       First Name          Relationship        (Area code)  Phone Number

K.  Are you a United States Citizen? ☐ Yes  ☐ No   If no, country of citizenship: _____

L.  Ethnicity/Race:  This information is voluntary and the information will be used for federal and/or state law reporting purposes in a nondiscriminatory manner consistent with civil rights laws.
☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native          ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander              ☐ Black (Non-Hispanic)
☐ Caucasian (Non-Hispanic)                ☐ Hispanic (Mexican-American)         ☐ Other

M.  **CERTIFICATION:**
   - I certify that all information I have provided in this application is correct.
   - I have received a copy of the Early Start Program Student Eligibility Criteria Framework (see page 2).
   - I understand that the Early Start Program will fund (only) up to 3 credit hours per semester/term, and that I will be responsible for any additional enrollment costs if I enroll in more than 3 credit hours this semester/term through Early Start, even if I enroll in more than one college/university.
   - If I am approved for participation in the Early Start Program, I will comply with all the requirements.
   - I understand that I am enrolling as a Visiting/Guest Student at the college/university.  Upon graduation from high school, if I desire to enroll at a college or university, I will apply for admission as a regular student and meet the college/university admission requirements.
   - I understand that the college courses and high school and college grades earned in those courses in which I enroll through the Early Start Program will be on my permanent high school and college academic records.
   - **I understand that the grades I earn on college courses in which I enroll through the Early Start Program will be used by other programs, including TOPS, to determine my continuing eligibility for those programs.** See TOPS Q&A Q.150-151 located in TOPS section of www.osfa.la.gov.
   - I do hereby authorize the Board of Regents and the Office of Student Financial Assistance access to my high school and college academic records.
   - I acknowledge that I am enrolling in the course listed on the back of this form and also understand that **it is my responsibility to OFFICIALLY WITHDRAW or DROP** a class I decide not to complete by the college/ university published deadline.  If I withdraw I may not be eligible for Early Start funding next semester.

_____
            Student Signature                                                                                          Date

**(over)**

## CERTIFICATION - TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/CUSTODIAN (GUARDIAN):

- I certify that all information provided on this application is correct.
- I have received a copy of the Early Start Program Student Eligibility Criteria Framework (see page 2).
- If my child is approved for participation in the Early Start Program, he/she will comply with all the requirements.
- I understand that the Early Start Program will pay for up to 3 credit hours per semester/term, even if my child enrolls in more than one college/university. I accept responsibility for any additional enrollment costs if my child enrolls in more than 3 credit hours this semester/term through the Early Start Program.
- I understand that the college courses and high school and college grades earned in those courses in which my child enrolls through the Early Start Program will be on my child's permanent high school and college academic record.
- **I understand that the grades my child earns on college courses in which he/she enrolls through the Early Start Program will be used by other programs, including TOPS, to determine his/her continuing eligibility for those programs.** See TOPS Q&A Q.150-151 located in TOPS section of www.osfa.la.gov.
- I do hereby authorize the Board of Regents and the Office of Student Financial Assistance access to my child's high school and college academic records.

_____
                    Parent/Custodian (Guardian) Signature                                                                                Date


## III.   TO BE COMPLETED BY HIGH SCHOOL:

A.  **COURSE ENROLLMENT REQUEST**: The High School Principal (or designee) must indicate the college course in which the student has permission to enroll and the respective high school course in which the student will receive high school credit.

| College Course Dept/Number | College Course Title | College Credits. **Max of 3** | High School (LDE) Course Number | High School Course Title | High School Units | Early Start Funded Y/N* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Funding designation MUST be completed by high school: *limited to 3 credit hours per semester/term

B.  Name of High School _____

C.  ACT HS Code _____   ☐ Public High School  ☐ Non-public High School  ☐ Home School

D.  Current School Year: 20___ - 20___      ☐ 1st Semester  ☐ 2nd Semester

E.  Student's current grade level: ☐ 11th Grade ☐ 12th Grade      Number of Carnegie Units completed: _____

F.  Student is on track for completing (by graduation from high school) the required high school core curriculum: ☐ Yes ☐ No

G.  A copy of this student's PLAN, ACT or SAT Scores is attached.  *Work Keys Certificate is required for students to enroll in a college work skills course if they do not have the required PLAN/ACT/SAT score.*

H.  Student ☐ has ☐ has not previously participated in the Early Start Program.

I.   Student earned a grade of ___ in the last college course in which s/he was enrolled for participation in the Early Start Program.  S/he was

enrolled in this course in the _____ semester/term of _____.

J.  **CERTIFICATION**:
I certify that the student completing this application has permission to participate in the Early Start Program and that the information provided for this student by the high school is correct.

_____
                    Signature of Principal or Designee                                                                                Date


## IV.   CERTIFICATION - TO BE COMPLETED BY COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY:
I certify that I have reviewed this application and the student's scores on the ☐ PLAN, ☐ ACT,  ☐ SAT, or ☐ the Work Keys certificate; that student meets all Early Start Program and college/university requirements to be enrolled in the course listed in Section III.A. of this application, and that if the student is qualified based on Work Keys, a copy of that Work Keys Certificate is on file at this college.

_____
                    Signature of College/University Official                                                                                Date

# INSTRUCTIONS

**I.      STUDENT**

A.-K.  You must provide **ALL** the information requested.

L.      You are not required to complete this section.  Any information provided will be used only for federal and state reporting purposes and has no impact on whether you are eligible to participate in the program.

M.      You must sign and date.   Once you and your parent have signed the application, submit it to your high school counselor. Your school will complete Section III (High School Certification) and return the application to you.

When your high school returns the application, you must submit this completed application to the college/university you will attend.  You may be required to complete additional college/university enrollment forms and you should obtain those forms in advance and submit them with this application.

**II.     PARENT/CUSTODIAN (GUARDIAN)**

You MUST sign the application in order for your child to be considered for participation in the Early Start Program.

**III.    HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL (OR DESIGNEE)**

A.-J.   You must complete all of Section III, Parts A-J, of the application.  The information provided will be used to determine whether the applicant has met all eligibility criteria for the courses in which he intends to enroll.  By signing the application, you are certifying that the information you have provided is true and correct.

Once you have completed and signed Section III of the application, return it to the student for submission to the postsecondary institution in which the student plans to enroll.

**IV.    COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES**

A.      Determine whether the applicant meets all eligibility criteria of the course in which he intends to enroll, including verification of the WorkKeys Certificate level, if applicable.  If the student meets the criteria for that course, sign the College/University Certification (Page 2, Section IV).

B.      Adhere to reporting deadlines. **Timely grade reporting for Early Start courses is crucial because payment for the subsequent semester is dependent upon successful course completion in the prior semester. Payment requests will not be processed until LOSFA has received all grades from the institution for all courses funded by Early Start.**

C.      After enrolling eligible students, the college/university may bill by submitting a request for payment to LOSFA either by (1) individual web entry or (2) in a batch file.

D.      **Payment Requests/Billing**

1.   If the payment request is submitted by individual student web entry, the college must enter the Early Start Program Menu through the LOSFA Web Portal during the period the portal is open for each semester/term to bill for those students who were enrolled through the census day (14th day of classes for semester schools, or the 9th class day for term schools).

2.   If the payment request is submitted in a batch file, the batch file must be formatted in accordance with the Early Start Payment Request File Layout at the Early Start Program menu on the LOSFA Web Portal.

3.   The LOSFA Web Portal will be open during the following periods for requests both by individual student web entry and in batch files:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Fall Semester/Term | – | September 1 through October 15 |
| Winter Term | – | December 15 through December 30 |
| Spring Semester/Term | – | February 15 through April 1 (April 15 for **Term Only**) |

4.   Payment requests received outside of these timeframes will not be paid unless approved by the Louisiana Board of Regents and payment is not guaranteed.

5.   By submitting a payment request to LOSFA, the college is certifying:

a.   The student meets the eligibility criteria for the college course in which the student is enrolled in the Early Start Program;

b.   The student was enrolled through the census day;

c.   The student's high school has granted permission for the student to continue participation in the program;

d.   The student meets the Early Start continuation requirements;

e.   The student's school has provided notice of the course approved for enrollment; and

f.   The student is in good standing at the institution.