



STARTing LINE

2nd Quarter 2012

Volume 5-2

Online START deposits now available

Online payment for START account deposits is now available on the START Saving Web site, www.startsaving.la.gov.

Account owners are now able to log into their START account, select the "Deposit Forms" option from the menu and then select "Electronic Online Deposit". From here account owners can select the account(s) into which they want to make a deposit and indicate the amount they wish to deposit.

One deposit can be distributed among a maximum of five accounts. If an account owner has more than five accounts, he or she will have to log back into his or her START account and select the additional accounts in a second transaction.

When online payment is selected, the account owner will be transferred to a secure Web site operated by First Data Corporation, PayPoint. This organization was contracted by the state to support online payments.

On the PayPoint site, the account owner will see the LOSFA logo, the START title, a listing of a maximum of 5 accounts with the amount selected for deposit, and two payment options. The account owner can select to pay by electronic check or by credit card. The credit cards accepted include Mastercard and Discover. Visa will not be accepted at this time due to company restrictions on charging convenience fees that make recoupment of the transaction costs difficult to achieve.

The account owner will enter his or her financial data on the PayPoint secure Web site to complete the deposit transaction. LOSFA will not receive any credit card or checking account financial information from First Data.

A convenience fee will be charged to use the online payment process to cover the transaction costs and thus keep the START Savings Program free of administrative fees. The fee will be in addition to the amount of the deposit(s). The fee will be displayed prior to the account holder's final authorization of the payment.

Taking the ACT & Applying for TOPS?

Read carefully *before*
completing your
ACT Registration
form!

- TOPS processing cannot begin until LOSFA can match FAFSA data, high school academic data, and ACT score.
- This data is matched by **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER**.
- IF YOU DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER** ON YOUR ACT REGISTRATION, YOUR TOPS PROCESSING **WILL BE DELAYED**.



For more information, contact LOSFA at 1-800-259-5626, Ext. 1012 or custserv@osfa.la.gov.



STUDENTS – Opportunity is Just a Click Away!

The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) is pleased to announce the launch of **Louisiana Connect**, a comprehensive, college & career planning resource just for you!

Create Your Louisiana Connect Account Today:

1. Go to <https://louisianaconnect.org/>
2. On the right hand side of the page you will see an area to “Create An Account”
3. Enter the following information:

Student ID (School ID number)

Student’s First Name

Student’s Last Name

High School

4. Select “I’m a Student”

5. Click 

6. Complete the profile information and create a Username and Password.

Your Username must be your email address

With Louisiana Connect You Can:

- Connect with colleges and universities that are a match for you
- Learn about careers and connect with employers
- Find scholarships and other programs designed to help you succeed
- Stay Connected with Your Communication Center
- Access Your Exclusive News Feed and Event Planner
- Build Your Profile. Show Off Your Skills and Achievements
- You Can Afford a College Education...Learn How

Opportunity is Just a Click Away...



PARENTS – Get involved in your child’s college and career planning!

The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) is pleased to announce the launch of **Louisiana Connect**, a comprehensive, college & career planning web portal available to all 8th - 12th grade students in the State of Louisiana. As a parent you can create an account to help your student through the process. You will also have access to Louisiana Connect’s full range of college & career exploration tools.

Counselors will be instructing students to activate their accounts in Louisiana Connect, so please encourage your child to get going right away!

Create Your Account Today:

1. Go to <https://louisianaconnect.org/>
2. On the right hand side of the page you will see an area to “Create An Account”
3. Enter the following information:

Student ID (School ID number)

Student’s (your child) First Name

Student’s (your child) Last Name

High School

4. Select “I’m a Parent”

5. Click 

6. Complete the profile, Username and Password.

 A screenshot of the "CREATE AN ACCOUNT" form. It has a blue background. Fields include: "Student ID:" with a text input; "Child's first name:" and "Child's last name:" with text inputs; "High school:" with a dropdown menu labeled "Please Choose"; and two radio buttons: "I am a Student" (unselected) and "I am a Parent" (selected). Below the radio buttons is a link: "Don't know your child's ID number? Click here". At the bottom right is a yellow "Register" button.

With Louisiana Connect You Can:

- Track student progress against important college and career planning activities
- Search for colleges, compare costs and make recommendations to students
- Search for scholarships and make recommendations to students
- View your child’s Individual Graduation Plan (IGP)
- View your child’s career plan and explore occupation profiles
- Learn about college costs, need-based aid and other financial options
- Access your personal Communication Center where you can communicate with your child and receive important messages, alerts and event invitations

Your Username must be your email address

3 ways to receive notification of your TOPS status:

Processing for 2012 high school graduates awaiting their initial TOPS award begins the first week of June. Processing will continue weekly until all eligible students are awarded.

Three ways to receive notification of your TOPS Status!



For more information, please contact the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) at 1-800-259-5626 or e-mail custserv@osfa.la.gov.

1

Create an account on the Louisiana Connect Portal: <http://www.osfa.la.gov/louisianaconnect>
Once you have an account on the Louisiana Connect portal you can provide a mobile telephone number in order to receive a text message once your TOPS status has been determined.

2

Create an account on the Louisiana Award System: <https://www.osfa.la.gov/AwardSystem>
Once you have an account on the Louisiana Award System you can check your account at anytime for your TOPS status.

3

Wait to receive notification via United States mail.

**REGULAR SESSION 2012 - BILLS AFFECTING ROLE, SCOPE, OR MISSION
As of June 11, 2012**

	No.	Author	Subject And Summary	Status
1.	Act 108 (HB 926)	Simon	TOPS: Allows acceptance of a first time qualifying score on the ACT/SAT taken no later than the September 30 immediately after high school graduation, if the Commission determines the applicant was prevented from taking a timely test due to circumstances beyond the immediate control of the student and attributable to the administration of the test.	Signed by Governor 5-11-12
2.	Act 215 (HB 945)	H Burns	TOPS: Extends the deadline for first-time, full-time enrollment for students who enlist in and enter on active duty in the U.S. military within one year of high school graduation from five years after high school graduation to the semester immediately following the one year anniversary of the student's separation from active duty. Extends the deadline for students on active duty who are suspended for grades to bring up their grades to the minimum required to include periods of active duty after reenlistment. This bill would allow the student to reenlist through retirement.	Signed by Governor on 5-22-12.
3.	HB 954	Danahay	LOUISIANA TUITION TRUST AUTHORITY: Places the Authority within the Department of Education as established in the Title 36 Organization of the Executive Branch of Government. This is the same broad Department of Education in which the Board of Regents and Department of Education (K – 12) are placed. Currently the Authority is not placed within any unit of the Executive Branch.	Pending Governor's Signature.
4.	Act 617 SB 62	Appel	EDUCATION DEPARTMENT: Re-creates the Department of Education, including all statutory entities made a part of the Department by law.	Signed by Governor on 6-7-12.
5.	Act 658 SB 458	Lafleur	START SAVING PROGRAM: Removes the restriction that START Saving Program funds must be used in a postsecondary institution that is accredited by a regional accrediting organization and makes the program requirements consistent with Section 529 of the IRC that only requires that the postsecondary institution have U.S. Department of Education approval.	Signed by Governor on 6-7-12.
6.	SB 590	Alario	LOUISIANA OPPORTUNITY LOAN PROGRAM (LA-OP): Eliminates certain special funds including the LA-OP Loan Fund. Note that LA-OP is administered by the Commission but has not been funded for years.	Pending Governor's Signature

Other Legislation

	No.	Author	Subject And Summary	Status
1.	Act 581 HB 435	Lorusso	TUITION: Provides that a military veteran would be classified as Louisiana residents for tuition purposes if the veteran: (1) is a resident of Louisiana (without regard to the length of time as a resident in Louisiana), AND (2) is enrolled in or applying for enrollment in a Louisiana public college or university, AND (3) physically resides in Louisiana for the duration of his enrollment in a state public institution of postsecondary education, AND (3) served on active duty for at least two years and was honorably discharged, OR (4) is currently serving in the reserves, OR (5) has been assigned a service-connected disability.	Signed by Governor on 6-7-12.



For more information, contact the
START Saving Program:

By Phone: 800-259-5626, Ext. 1012

By E-mail: start@startsaving.la.gov

By Mail: P.O. Box 91271, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9271

Web Address: www.startsaving.la.gov

For submissions, opinions or comments for STARTing Line, please
contact David Roberts at droberts@osfa.la.gov.