LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Career Coaching

## Request for Applications (RFA)

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# Overview and Objectives

Fueling Louisiana's economy starts with equipping our youth with hands-on, practical skills. A seamless, top-tier technical training network is vital for preparing local students for high-priority jobs while satisfying the hiring needs of regional businesses. Within this system, high school career coaches can serve as the critical bridge connecting classrooms to local industries, guiding students toward high-wage opportunities and turning classroom learning into statewide economic strength. By providing personalized guidance, these professionals help students navigate Louisiana's unique graduation pathways, align their skills with high-demand regional sectors, and secure the industry-based credentials necessary to transition seamlessly from high school into the state's workforce.

Career coaches can help students connect their interests with long-term goals, building the foundation for post-graduation success. Regardless of a student's graduation pathway or postsecondary plans, high-quality career coaching will enable them to understand, explore, and engage with a variety of opportunities linked to a higher probability of long-term success.

## ACT 413 & ACT 144

ACT 413 (2026) includes career coaches in the process of developing, updating, and maintaining Individual Graduation Plans (IGPs) for students in grades 8-12. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) will provide professional development and in-service training opportunities for school counselors and/or career coaches on developing IGPs.

Career coaches will be able to assist students in choosing their high school curriculum framework and related graduation requirements that best meet their postsecondary goals. Career coaches will have the autonomy and responsibility to meet with students and parents regarding changes or updates made to their IGPs.

Career coaches will also be able to provide support for the new career awareness requirements enacted by ACT 144 (2026). Career coaching will align classroom learning to real-world jobs available via a variety of pathways. Informing students of career and college options early will allow students to make the most informed decisions post-graduation. As the trades are critically important to our state's future economic success, students will learn how technical skills acquired in CTE courses connect to post-secondary education options.

# RFA Application/Selection Process

The table below outlines the RFA process for the Louisiana Career Coaching model. Approved applications will be reviewed periodically by the LDOE. To apply to become a LDOE-approved Career Coaching provider, please follow the guidance document to create your My.LA and LDOE Professional Learning Partner Accounts. Information regarding persons or organizations selected through this RFA will be provided to school systems for informational purposes only. Any contractual agreements that result from this RFA will be between Louisiana schools or school districts that choose to enter into contracts with approved vendors, and the schools or school districts are responsible for ensuring that their contracting processes comply with any applicable federal procurement law, state procurement law, and local school/school district procurement policies.

| Louisiana Career Coaching Provider RFA Process | |
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| Step 1 | Career coaching applicants submit an application. New users must create an account and select the Louisiana Career Coaching Provider RFA. |
| Step 2 | The LDOE schedules and convenes review panels each year to review applications. Rejected applicants receive feedback and will have one opportunity to reapply during a future review cycle. |
| Step 3 | Approved Career coaching providers will be added as options in the Career Coaching Vendor Guide. |

## 2026-2027 Review Cycle

| Review Cycle Timeline: Submission and Review Process | |
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| October 1, 2026 | The submission window opens. |
| November 20, 2026 | The submission window closes. |
| November 23-December 11, 2026 | The LDOE leads teams of reviewers in the state review process. |

## Required Application Components and Format

Career Coaching applicants submit an application through the LDOE Request for Applications (RFA) platform powered by Canopy Education. No cover letters, executive summaries, or organizational marketing materials will be accepted. Please upload your submission documents in PDF format.

| Career Coaching Vendor Template: Required Components Description | | |
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| **Section** | **Application Section** | **Template Section Components** |
| **1** | **Career Coach Organization Information** | • Contact information<br>• Organization overview<br>  ○ Mission statement<br>  ○ Founding year<br>  ○ Corporate structure<br>  ▪ Operations<br>  ▪ Supervision<br>• Data security and technology compliance |
| **2** | **Organization Goals and Background** | • Summary of career coaching experiences<br>• A list of Louisiana schools the organization has contracted with and a detailed description of the scope and scale of work being done with the system, if applicable<br>• Quality measurement of career coach services |

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| **3** | **Organization Description and Scope of Services** | ● Approach to:<br>○ Facilitating career interest inventories and assisting students in connecting interests to outcomes<br>○ Facilitating career awareness activities for students as mandated by ACT 144 (2026)<br>○ IGP support for 8th-12th grade students<br>○ Post-secondary planning support linked to Louisiana initiatives (TOPS Awards, TOPS Tech, CTE, Dual Enrollment, Certificates of Technical Studies, and Advanced Credentials)<br>○ Parental Engagement<br>○ Data management system to track and report student progress and outcomes<br>● Method of instruction/technologies used to deliver career coaching materials and platforms<br>○ Note: For virtual career coach vendors, providers must provide LDOE and school system leaders with open access to career coach vendor session links to observe sessions for monitoring and quality assurance.<br>● Qualifications of Career Coaches if providing this service as a vendor<br>○ Background checks must align with the school system's expectations<br>● Career Coaching effectiveness<br>○ Monitoring<br>○ Evaluation<br>○ Support<br>○ Training<br>● Scope of services:<br>○ Number of coaches<br>○ Coach-to-student ratio<br>● Supporting students with English as a second language<br>● Supporting students with disabilities |
| **4** | **Engagement and Support** | ● Plan includes how the provider will engage and collaborate with school system leaders and school leaders about<br>○ Each student's progress and needs<br>○ Coherence between school counseling services requirements of the IGP continuum, Louisiana initiatives, and career coaching services<br>○ Students' performance data to effectively group students |
| **5** | **References** | Letters of reference from heads of organizations that provide evidence of results. |
| **6** | **Risk Clearances** | ● Liability insurance<br>● Youth safeguard training and clearances<br>● Background checks<br>● Adherence to student privacy laws |

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| **7** | **Appendix** | • Instructional Materials<br>• Scope and Sequence<br>• Guides/Manuals/Lesson Plans<br>• Student Materials |
| | **Certify Application** | Signature and date verifying that the provider's application is complete and ready for submission. |

## Application Evaluation Criteria

LDOE provides rigorous evaluation criteria for RFA applications. Applications are evaluated based on:

1. Ability of the provider to help Louisiana achieve key education goals.
2. Commitment of the provider to serve young learners, including English learners and students with disabilities.
3. Quality career coaching, coherence with Louisiana priorities, and proposed instructors.
4. Commitment of the provider to engage stakeholders.

All determinations whether or not an application meets these evaluation criteria will be indicated on a "Pass/Not Pass" basis. The LDOE will interpret these evaluation criteria as indicated in the table below.

| Evaluation Criteria | How the Evaluation Criteria will be Assessed: Evaluation Sub-Components |
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| **Section 1:** Provider's information and mission align with Louisiana's key educational goals and priorities. | 1a) Provider's organization information aligns with Louisiana's key educational goals and priorities.<br>1b) Provider's organizational mission aligns with Louisiana's educational goals and aims at ensuring students are prepared beyond high school.<br>1c) Provider includes founding year and corporate structure. |
| **Section 2:** Provider communicates organizational goals and background. | 2a) Provider's organizational goals align with Louisiana's key educational goals.<br>2b) Provider has relevant experience to conduct the work.<br>• Provider has a history of completing work effectively and/or has favorable reviews.<br>2c) Provider includes a brief description of Outcomes-Based Contracting experience.<br>2d) Provider includes a plan for quality measurement of the organization's services. Include specific data collected. |
| **Section 3:** Provider demonstrates the ability to achieve key career coaching goals. | 3a) Provider's methodology and approach blends hands-on learning with interactive experiences.<br>3b) Provider communicates a sound strategy to support learning graduation pathways, career interests, the alignment of academics and career, and soft skills through specific progress monitoring.<br>3c) Provider communicates a strategy to prepare students in grades six through eight for high school by incorporating |

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| | activities that expose them to career and technical education and academic fields of study.<br>3d) Provider details a strategy to provide students with the required career awareness activities in Kindergarten through grade eight.<br>3e) Provider communicates a strategy to introduce students to high-demand regional occupations in Louisiana.<br>3f) Provider communicates a strong strategy to support districts in providing all (TOPS U and TOPS Tech) students with postsecondary career/educational advising.<br>3g) Provider describes the data management system used to track and report student attendance, progress, and outcomes.<br>● Provider includes examples of data management system reports or dashboards that illustrate student outcomes.<br>3h) Provider presents a clear plan for using technology to deliver services. Note: For virtual career coaching, providers must provide LDOE and school system leaders with open access to career coaching session links to observe sessions for monitoring and quality assurance.<br>3i) Provider lists reasonable qualifications, hiring process, and background checks for coaches.<br>● All coaching must be provided by an individual who meets at least one of the following criteria:<br>○ Trained staff understanding all requirements of career coaching, including but not limited to graduation pathways, graduation requirements, and work-based learning.<br>○ Current or retired teachers.<br>○ Trained paraprofessionals.<br>3j) Provider describes a plan to assess career coaching effectiveness. The plan includes how career coaches will be monitored, evaluated, and supported.<br>3k) Provider includes career coach training requirements.<br>3l) Provider includes the current number of available career coaches and the maximum career coach-to-student ratio for sessions.<br>3m) Provider is committed to serving all learners, including students with disabilities and English Learners. |
| **Section 4:** Provider engages, communicates, and collaborates with all stakeholders. | 4a) Provider will describe a plan for collaborating with school system leaders, school leaders, school counselors, and CTE supervisors to ensure instructional coherence.<br>4b) Provider describes a plan for collaborating with school and district personnel on student goals and performance data.<br>4c) Provider describes a plan with system and school leaders on collaborating with students and parents.<br>4d) Provider describes plans for scheduling events for all stakeholders that will connect students with schools, training programs, and employers in one place. |

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| **Section 5:** References | All references attached should be one-page documents. Provider includes:<br>5a) Letter of support from any organizations that have used the provider's career coaching services.<br>5b) Letter of support with evidence of results for implementing a career coaching model.<br>5c) Provide proof of LLC or corporate structure. |
| **Section 6:** Risk Clearances | Providers should provide the following for the company and staff:<br>6a) Proof of General and Professional liability insurance.<br>6b) Youth safeguards such as appropriate training and clearances.<br>6c) Completed background checks, fingerprinting, and child abuse registry clearances for all staff.<br>6d) Signed compliance documentation ensuring adherence to student data privacy laws.<br>6e) Providers using Artificial Intelligence (AI) must agree with the following data privacy statement: "No student's personally identifiable or confidential data shall be shared in an AI system."<br>● Providers must submit a signed statement on official organizational letterhead, addressed to LDOE, confirming that:<br>○ No student's personally identifiable or confidential data will be shared with any AI system.<br>○ Provider agrees to submit the program for final school system approval. |
| **Section 7:** Appendix | **Instructional Materials**<br>7a) The provider will submit a structured curriculum that maps directly to the most current guidelines of Louisiana's *Bulletin 138- Jump Start Program* and Chapter 31 of *Bulletin 741 - Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators*, course requirements, and graduation pathways.<br>● The submitted curriculum will also detail how the coaching model will fit into the LDOE Jump Start 2.0 Framework by guiding students towards earning Industry-Based Credentials (IBCs) that are recognized by the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council and included on the Louisiana IBC State Focus List.<br>● The submitted curriculum will show how it supports students pursuing an associate degree, technical certificate, and university degree.<br>7b) Providers must include all materials necessary to implement each career coaching session, including activities, worksheets, assessments, and any other referenced resources.<br>7c) The provider will submit explicit strategies showing how their career coaching model can be scaled for students with IEPs, 504 Plans, or language barriers. |

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| | **Scope and Sequence**<br>7d) The provider will include detailed scope and sequence documents for all grade levels 6-12. Each document will outline the progression and alignment of information shared with students depending on the grade level.<br><br>**Student Materials**<br>7e) The provider will include all materials that students will use directly through coaching. This includes digital content, workbooks, worksheets, assessments, and instructional activities aligned to the scope of services. |
| **Certify Application** | The provider will sign and date to certify that all information has been read and understood. The signature also indicates that all application responses are complete and accurate. |

## Evaluation Process Notes

LDOE will review each application based on the Evaluation Criteria.

- Applicants must "pass" all seven eligibility standards to be accepted. In order to "pass," the provider must meet each sub-component of that criterion.
- A provider's application package will be accepted and listed on the Louisiana Career Coaching page if:
    - the application achieves a "pass" on all seven evaluation criteria; and
    - the application conforms with all of the RFA's administrative and legal requirements.
- LDOE will not consider appeals at any stage.
- Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to submit new proposals during future RFA application processes.
- LDOE may observe approved programs and review resources periodically to ensure alignment with career coaching program quality.

# List of Appendices

## Appendix 1: Miscellaneous Resources

| Resource | URL Link |
|---|---|
| Career and College Readiness: Ensuring a Meaningful High School Experience | https://doe.louisiana.gov/school-system-leaders/ccr |
| Louisiana's Graduation Requirements | https://doe.louisiana.gov/school-system-leaders/ccr/graduation-requirements |
| Louisiana's High School Planning Guidebook | https://doe.louisiana.gov/docs/default-source/career-and-college-readiness/2026-2027-high-school-planning-guidebook.pdf?sfvrsn=8dd4ec39_1 |
| Individual Student Planning | https://doe.louisiana.gov/educators/counselor-support/individual-student-planning |
| LA Works: Workforce Pell | https://www.laworks.net/WorkforcePell/WFP_Methodology.asp |
| JumpStart Graduation Pathways | https://doe.louisiana.gov/school-system-leaders/ccr/jump-start/jump-start-graduation-pathways |
| TOPS Award Info | https://mylosfa.la.gov/tops/ |
| Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) Policies and Bulletins | https://bese.louisiana.gov/policy |

## Appendix 2: Administrative

1. Application Time Frame

    1.1. Applications are accepted during designated windows. All applicants are solely responsible for ensuring their application is complete.

2. Applicant Code of Conduct

    2.1. Applicants are responsible for determining that there will be no conflict or violation of the Ethics Code once they begin working with students, schools, and families. Ethics issues are interpreted by the Louisiana Board of Ethics.

3. Public Disclosure

    3.1. All materials submitted in response to this request become the property of the State. Selection or rejection of an application does not affect this right.
    3.2. Only information that is in the nature of legitimate trade secrets or non-published financial data may be deemed proprietary or confidential. Any material within an application identified as such must be clearly marked in the application and will be handled in accordance with the Louisiana Public Records Act, R.S. 44: 1-44, and applicable rules and regulations. Any application marked as confidential or proprietary in its entirety may be rejected without further consideration or recourse.
    3.3. By submitting, the applicant grants the State of Louisiana Department of Education the right and license to republish its application, if the Department so chooses, as an example or sample application for the edification of other applicants.

4. Determination of Responsibility

    4.1. Determination of the applicant's responsibility relating to this RFA shall be made according to the standards set forth in LAC 34: 136. The State must find that the applicant:
        4.1.1. Has adequate financial resources for performance, or has the ability to obtain such resources as required during performance.
        4.1.2. Has the necessary experience, organization, technical qualifications, skills, and facilities, or has the ability to obtain them.
        4.1.3. Is able to comply with the proposed or required time of delivery or performance schedule.
        4.1.4. Has a satisfactory record of integrity, judgment, and performance.
        4.1.5. Is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations.
        4.1.6. Applicants should ensure that their application contains sufficient information for the State to make its determination by presenting acceptable evidence of the ability to perform the services called for by this RFA.

5. Right to Prohibit Award

    5.1. Any public entity is authorized to reject an application from, or not award the contract to, a business in which any individual with an ownership interest of five percent or more has been convicted of or has entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to any state felony or equivalent federal felony crime committed in the solicitation or execution of a contract or bid awarded under the laws governing public contracts under the provisions of Chapter 10 of Title 38 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, professional, personal, consulting, and social services procurement under the provisions of Chapter 16 of this Title, or the Louisiana Procurement Code under the provisions of Chapter 17 of this Title.

6. RFA Addenda

   6.1. The State reserves the right to change the calendar of events or revise any part of the RFA by issuing an addendum to the RFA at any time.

7. Waiver of Administrative Informalities

   7.1. The State reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive administrative informalities contained in any applications.

8. Application Rejection

   8.1. Issuance of this RFA in no way constitutes a commitment by the State to award a contract. The State reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or part, all applications submitted and/or cancel this announcement if it is determined to be in the State's best interest.

9. Withdrawal and Resubmission of Applications

   9.1. An applicant may withdraw an application that has been submitted at any time up to the date and time the application is due. To accomplish this, a written request signed by the authorized representative of the applicant must be submitted to the RFA Coordinator.

10. Subcontracting Information

    10.1. Unless provided for in the contract with the State, the prime contractor shall not contract with any other party for furnishing any of the work and professional services herein contracted for without the express written approval of the State.

11. Cost of Preparing Applications

    11.1. The State is not liable for any costs incurred by prospective applicants prior to issuance of or entering into a contract. Costs associated with developing an application, preparing for oral presentations and interviews, and any other expenses incurred by the applicants in responding to this RFA are entirely the responsibility of the applicants, and shall not be reimbursed in any manner by the State of Louisiana.

12. Errors and Omissions in Applications

    12.1. The State will not be liable for any errors in applications. The State reserves the right to make corrections or amendments due to errors identified in applications by the State or the applicant. The State, at its option, has the right to request clarification or additional information from the applicants.

13. Corporation Requirements

    13.1. If the applicant is a corporation not incorporated under the laws of the State of Louisiana, the applicant shall have obtained a certificate of authority pursuant to R.S. 12:301-302 from the Secretary of State of Louisiana.

    13.2. If the applicant is a for-profit corporation whose stock is not publicly traded, the applicant shall ensure that a disclosure of ownership form has been properly filed with the Secretary of State of Louisiana.

Please contact candace.joseph@la.gov with any questions.