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# Agenda

## Statewide Programs

Wednesday, March 26, 2025  
1:30 PM

Claiborne Building, 1st Floor ▪ Louisiana Purchase Room 1–100  
1201 N. Third St. ▪ Baton Rouge, LA 70802

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Consent Agenda
  - A. Final Rulemaking Financial Circumstances for TOPS  
Exceptions – Allows for consideration of financial circumstances as a reason for which students may request an exception to the continuous enrollment, full time, and earned annual hours requirement
  - B. TOPS Home Study Exceptions – TOPS statutory provision that requires a student to begin a home study program no later than the conclusion of the tenth-grade year
  - C. TOPS Exceptions – TOPS regulatory provisions that require students to remain continuously enrolled and to earn the annual credit hours required during the academic year
- IV. Other Business
- V. Adjournment

Committee Members: Wilbert D. Pryor, Chair; Samer Shamieh, Vice Chair; Phillip May Jr.; Christy Oliver Reeves; Terri P. Sterling; Kennedy Orr (Student Member)  
Staff: Carrie Robison, Deputy Commissioner for Sponsored Programs

### **Agenda Item III.A**

#### **Consent Agenda: Approval of Final Rulemaking - Financial Circumstances for TOPS Exceptions**

Final Rulemaking to allow for consideration of financial circumstances as a reason for which students may request an exception to the continuous enrollment, full time, and earned annual hours requirements

#### **Background:**

At its September 25, 2024, meeting, the Board of Regents authorized publication of a Notice of Intent to effect the below-described rule changes. The Notice of Intent was published in the Louisiana Register on November 20, 2024.

No comments have been received.

This rulemaking broadens a student's ability to request an exception when financial circumstances prevent them from enrolling in school. Students will still be required to provide documentation that circumstances beyond their control caused them to fail to meet the TOPS continuation requirements; however, it will allow staff to consider only the student's income rather than requiring that the family's financial circumstances be the issue. In addition, students will be required to provide a plan for preventing such circumstances from interfering with their ability to attend school in the future.

#### **LOSFA Advisory Board Recommendation**

**The LOSFA Advisory Board recommends that the Louisiana Board of Regents authorize the Executive Director of LOSFA to publish the final rule to make these rules permanent.**

## **Agenda Item III.B**

### **Consent Agenda: TOPS Home Study Exceptions**

Requests for exception to the TOPS statutory provision that requires a student to begin a home study program no later than the conclusion of the tenth-grade year

#### **Background:**

The TOPS statute requires that a student begin a home study program no later than the conclusion of the tenth-grade year. Act 95 of the 2021 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature implemented a provision which allows the administering agency to grant exceptions to this requirement when a student provides documentation that the transfer to a home study program later than the statutorily provided timeframe was beyond the student's control.

Two requests for exception to the deadline to begin a home study program were reviewed and approved by the LOSFA Advisory Board at its meeting on January 29, 2025. The students have presented facts and documentation that they believe justify the granting of an exception as an exceptional circumstance.

#### **LOSFA Advisory Board Recommendation**

**The LOSFA Advisory Board recommends approval of the requests for exception to the deadline to begin a home study program no later than the conclusion of the tenth-grade year.**

## **Agenda Item III.C**

### **Consent Agenda: TOPS Exceptions**

Requests for exception to the TOPS regulatory provisions that require students to remain continuously enrolled and to earn the annual credit hours required during the academic year

#### **Background:**

Sections 705.A.6 and 7 of the TOPS administrative rules require TOPS recipients to continue to enroll full-time for the fall and spring semesters of each academic year, to remain enrolled throughout the semester, and to earn a minimum number of credit hours by the end of the academic year. Section 2103.E authorizes the governing body to grant an exception to the full-time, continuous enrollment and the annual earned-hour requirements when the “student/recipient has exceptional circumstances that are beyond his immediate control and that necessitate full or partial withdrawal from or non-enrollment in an eligible postsecondary institution.”

Ten requests for exception to the TOPS requirements were reviewed and approved by the LOSFA Advisory Board at its meeting on January 29, 2025. The students have presented facts and circumstances that the students believe justify the granting of an exception as an exceptional circumstance.

#### **LOSFA Advisory Board Recommendation**

**The LOSFA Advisory Board recommends approval of the requests for exception to the TOPS regulatory provisions that require students to remain continuously enrolled and to earn the annual credit hours required during the academic year.**