

# Tuition Opportunity for Students

Louisiana's Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) is a comprehensive program of state scholarships. TOPS has four award components: the Opportunity Award; the Performance Award; the Honors Award; and the Teacher Award. Each component has specific eligibility criteria, award amounts and continuation criteria. Parents and students must make sure that the correct classes are taken so that qualifications are met. See your counselor for additional information. To the right you will find a checklist of the courses that are required for the TOPS program. Effective for graduates of 2003, GPA is computed on core courses only. Other requirements are as follows:

<b>Opportunity Award</b>	
GPA	2.50
ACT	currently 20
Max. Award	LA tuition & certain fees.
<b>Performance Award</b>	
GPA	3.50
ACT	23
Max. Award	Tuition & certain fees + \$400
<b>Honors Award</b>	
GPA	3.5
ACT	27
Max. Award	Tuition & certain fees + \$800
<b>Teacher Award</b>	
GPA	3.25
ACT	23
Max. Award	\$4000 Loan for Education
<b>Majors</b>	\$6000 Loan for Math & Chem. Majors

To be eligible to receive any of the tuition awards, students must take 18 specific courses. Below is a checklist that can be used to determine which courses are still needed to help your child qualify.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. English I
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. English II
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. English III
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. English IV
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Algebra I (one unit) or Applied Algebra 1A and `1B (two units)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Algebra II
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Geometry, trigonometry, calculus, or advanced math
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Biology I
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Chemistry I
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Earth Science, Environmental Science, Physical Science, Biology II, Chemistry II, Physics
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. American History
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. World History, Western Civilization, or World Geography
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Foreign Language I
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Foreign Language II (must be the same language)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Civics (1/2 unit)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Free Enterprise (1/2 unit)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Fine Arts Survey ( or sub. 2 units of performance courses in music, dance, and/or theater; or 2 units of visual art; or substitute 2 units of studio art; or substitute 1 unit of an elective from among the other subjects listed in this core curriculum)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Computer Science, Computer Literacy, or Business Computer Applications

## How and When to Apply for TOPS

To apply for all TOPS awards (except the Teacher Award) you must submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the academic year following the year you graduated from high school. For example, if you will graduate from high school in school year 2002 – 2003, submit the 2003 – 2004 version of the FAFSA. You must enter the name of a Louisiana postsecondary school on the FAFSA for your application to be considered. The FAFSA may be filed after January 1<sup>st</sup> and before April 15<sup>th</sup> for priority consideration and must be received by the final state deadline of July 1<sup>st</sup>. A FAFSA may be obtained from your high school guidance counselor or college financial aid office or by calling the Office of Student Financial Assistance at (800)259-5626 or you may apply over the Internet at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).