

A Profile of the Talent Search Program: 1999-2000

**U.S. Department of Education
Office of Postsecondary Education
Office of Federal TRIO Programs**

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A Profile of the Talent Search Program: 1999-2000

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U.S. Department of Education
Office of Postsecondary Education
Office of Federal TRIO Programs

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FOREWORD

To help ensure the full success of President Bush’s education initiative, “No Child Left Behind,” high-quality postsecondary educational opportunities must be available to all students. In keeping with this goal, the Federal TRIO Programs provide outreach and support programs to help low-income, first-generation college students progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to postbaccalaureate programs.

On behalf of the Office of Federal TRIO Programs, I am pleased to present this report, *A Profile of the Talent Search Program: 1999-2000*. The Talent Search Program identifies and assists youth (between 11 and 27 years of age) from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career, and financial aid counseling, tutoring, exposure to college campuses, and assistance in preparing for college entrance examinations and in completing college admission and financial aid applications. The goal of the program is to increase the number of disadvantaged youth who graduate from high school and continue on to postsecondary institutions of their choice.

This report is the second in a series of reports that present a national profile of the Talent Search Program. Individual project reports, under separate cover, summarize specific information submitted by each Talent Search project and provide aggregate information on other Talent Search projects in the same federal region, the same institutional sector, and the nation. The 1999-2000 performance report, submitted by the Talent Search projects, was the primary data source for both the national profile and individual project reports.

The Office of Federal TRIO Programs is proud to share with you national information on the Talent Search Program. It is our hope that the collection and dissemination of this information will foster communication aimed at assessing our mission and implementing measures to see how well we are doing. We look forward to this collaborative relationship as we work together to improve program services and postsecondary enrollment rates for low-income, potential first-generation college students.

Larry Oxendine
Acting Director
Office of Federal TRIO Programs

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Publishing this report was a team effort and we appreciate the support of all who contributed. First, we thank the project staff members of the Talent Search projects who reported the data upon which the report is based. Computer Business Methods Inc. processed the data files. The Office of Federal TRIO Programs sponsored the report and Frances Bergeron of the Office of Federal TRIO Programs coordinated the reporting process. Mary Fran Miklitsch designed this report.

HIGHLIGHTS

This report provides a comprehensive profile of the Talent Search Program using the 1999-2000 performance report data. Complete performance reports were submitted by 359 of 361 projects (99 percent) serving a total of 328,070 participants. This report is intended to serve as a resource for the improvement of Talent Search services.

Below are highlights from the following sections: demographics of project participants and target schools, services and activities, and performance outcomes.

Demographics of Project Participants and Target Schools

- Fifty-nine percent of Talent Search participants continued from a previous year and 41 percent were new to the program.
- Seventy-four percent of participants met both the low-income and first generation college eligibility requirements.
- Thirty-five percent of participants were black or African American, 32 percent were white, 23 percent were Hispanic or Latino, and 10 percent were of other racial or ethnic backgrounds.
- Thirty percent of all Talent Search participants were attending middle school, 65 percent were attending high school, and 5 percent had graduated from high school or dropped out of high school or college.
- Five percent of participants had limited English proficiency.
- A typical project served about 14 target schools, and 40 percent of the students within Talent Search target schools qualified for the federal free lunch program.

Services and Activities

- College orientation activities, test-taking and study skills development, counseling, and academic advising and course selection were the services most commonly offered to participants.
- Seventy-seven percent of participants received counseling and 64 percent received services related to academic advising and course selection.
- Fifty-seven percent of participants took part in college orientation activities, 34 percent participated in cultural activities, and 20 percent received tutoring services.

Performance Outcomes

- Ninety-seven percent of middle school participants and 95 percent of high school participants remained in school.
- Ninety-six percent of participants who began the performance period as 12th graders graduated by the end of the period.
- Seventy-three percent of college-ready participants were admitted to, or enrolled in, a program of postsecondary education.
- Among those participants who went on to postsecondary education, 42 percent attended public 4-year schools, 39 percent attended public 2-year schools, 14 percent attended private 2- and 4-year schools, and 5 percent attended other types of schools.

I. INTRODUCTION

This report is the second in a series addressing Talent Search projects. The report is presented in two documents. This first piece, the national report, provides feedback from Talent Search projects on the status of Talent Search performance reporting and gives the overall results from all projects reporting. A second, companion document provides individual reports, which summarize data from each project.

The purpose of the reports is to share feedback and other information from the performance reports that Talent Search projects prepare each year. It is our hope that Talent Search projects can use this information to plan and improve their own services, which will increase educational opportunities for low-income and potential first-generation college students.

In both the national and individual project reports, we look at the data by type of host institution—public 4-year, private 4-year, and 2-year postsecondary institutions; and community organizations. In Appendix A, we also present some data by federal region.

Although Talent Search and Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) projects have similar performance report forms, these programs have different missions, participant characteristics, and services. To gather and present performance report information more fully for each of these programs, we have prepared separate but similar reports for each program.

A. Background

Talent Search projects identify and assist individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career, and financial aid counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to the postsecondary school of their choice. Talent Search also serves high school dropouts by encouraging them to reenter the educational system and complete their education.

The U.S. Department of Education funded 361 Talent Search projects in the 1999-2000 program year. Talent Search projects are operated by 2- or 4-year colleges, public or private nonprofit agencies or organizations, or combinations of these sponsors. In each project, at least two-thirds of the participants must be both low-income and potential first-generation college students. Talent Search participants must also be 11 to 27 years of age¹ or have completed the fifth grade. Services provided by Talent Search projects include: academic, financial, career, and personal counseling; career exploration and aptitude assessment; tutoring; information on postsecondary education; exposure to college campuses; information on financial aid; assistance in

¹ Projects may serve clients age 28 or older if no Educational Opportunity Center is available to serve them and doing so will not dilute the services they provide to the main target group.

completing college admissions and financial aid applications; preparation for college entrance exams; mentoring; and workshops for participants' parents.

It is helpful to place Talent Search in the context of the other direct service TRIO Programs—Upward Bound (UB), Upward Bound Math Science (UBMS), Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC), Student Support Services (SSS), and Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program (McNair). Table 1 gives the funding information and participant numbers for each of the direct service TRIO Programs in 2000-2001 (FY 2000). As shown, and in contrast to the very intensive and costly services provided by some of the other TRIO Programs, the Talent Search Program served the largest number of persons (320,854) of any of the TRIO Programs at an average cost of \$313 per person in 2000-2001.

Table 2 gives TRIO funding levels in constant 2000 dollars. One can see from this table that Talent Search funding has increased about tenfold in constant dollars since its inception.

Table 1. TRIO funding, number of grants, number served, average grant award, amount per person served, and average number served: 2000

TRIO program	Program funding	Number of grants	Number served	Average grant award	Amount per person served	Average number served
Talent Search	\$100,545,000	360	320,854	\$279,292	\$313	891
Educational Opportunity Centers	\$30,505,000	82	160,836	\$372,012	\$190	1,961
McNair	\$34,859,000	156	3,774	\$223,455	\$9,237	24
Student Support Services	\$183,300,000	795	176,614	\$230,566	\$1,038	222
Upward Bound	\$241,941,000	772	56,564	\$313,395	\$4,277	73
Upward Bound Math Science	\$30,074,000	123	6,093	\$244,504	\$4,936	50

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, 2001.

Table 2. TRIO funding levels in constant 2000 dollars (millions)

	Talent Search	Upward Bound	Student Support Services	EOC	McNair	Upward Bound Math Science
1967	\$9.5	\$123.2	—	—	—	—
1970	\$16.7	\$124.2	\$41.7	—	—	—
1975	\$18.4	\$117.5	\$70.6	\$9.2	—	—
1980	\$32.0	\$127.6	\$115.1	\$13.2	—	—
1985	\$28.5	\$113.4	\$107.2	\$13.0	—	—
1990	\$34.5	\$121.2	\$114.1	\$15.4	\$2.0	\$2.5
1995	\$84.1	\$204.3	\$153.9	\$26.4	\$20.5	\$20.4
2000	\$100.5	\$241.9	\$183.3	\$30.5	\$34.9	\$30.1

SOURCE: Calculated from information provided by U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs and the Consumer Price Index.

B. Performance report response

This report covers the 1999-2000 reporting period. This was the second year that Talent Search projects used the new performance report form approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in 1998. For 1999-2000, aggregate performance reports covering Sections I-V on the performance report form were submitted by 99 percent of the projects in operation at the time (Table 3). These records covered 328,070 participants in the reference year.

Table 3. Number of Talent Search projects and projects reporting performance information, by type of host institution: 1999-2000

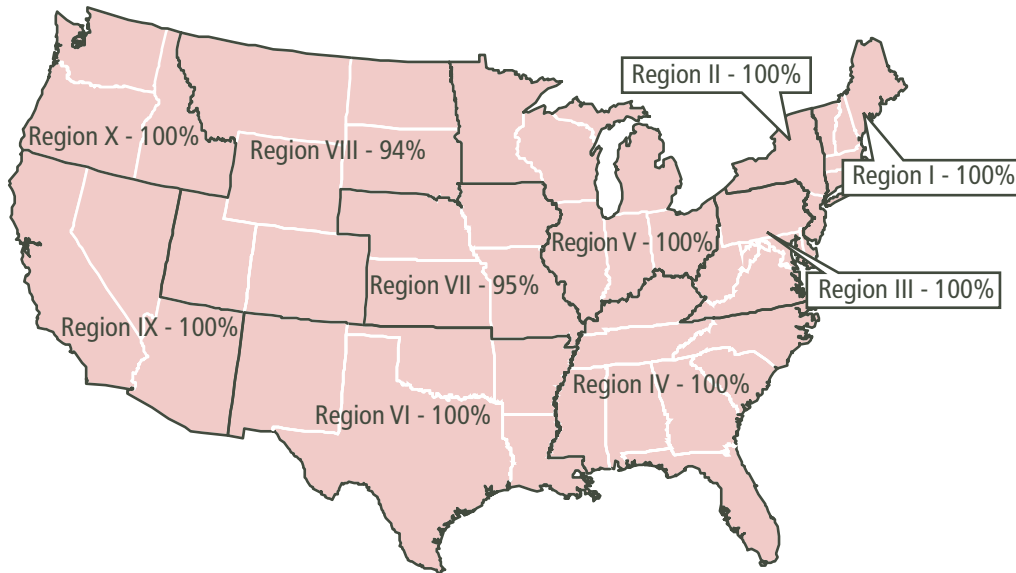
Sector	Total projects in 1999	Percentage of total TS projects	Project response rate	Number of participants reported	Percent distribution
Public 4-year	121	34%	100%	108,106	33%
Private 4-year	48	13%	100%	39,954	12%
2-year	124	34%	98%	96,516	29%
Community organizations	68	19%	100%	83,494	25%
All projects	361	100%	99%	328,070	100%

Totals do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Figure 1 and Table 4 show the percentage of projects reporting by region. The percentage reporting ranged from 94 percent in Region VIII and 95 percent in Region VII to 100 percent in all other regions.

Figure 1. Performance report response rates by region: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Table 4. Number of Talent Search projects and participants and percentage reporting performance information, by federal region: 1999-2000

Federal region	Total projects in 1999	Project distribution	Number of participants	Number of projects reporting	Response rate
Region I (Boston)	14	4%	12,255	14	100%
Region II (New York)	33	9%	32,114	33	100%
Region III (Philadelphia)	35	10%	43,521	35	100%
Region IV (Atlanta)	88	24%	74,486	88	100%
Region V (Chicago)	55	15%	42,556	55	100%
Region VI (Dallas)	48	13%	44,650	48	100%
Region VII (Kansas City)	20	6%	15,940	19	95%
Region VIII (Denver)	18	5%	15,156	17	94%
Region IX (San Francisco)	38	11%	38,956	38	100%
Region X (Seattle)	12	3%	8,436	12	100%
Total for nation	361	100%	328,070	359	99%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

C. Comparison of response rates: 1998-99 and 1999-2000

For the 1999-2000 project year, all but two Talent Search projects (99 percent) submitted performance reports using the new OMB approved form. For 1998-99, six Talent Search projects did not submit a performance report and another six used a previous version of the report form. Complete demographic data were provided on 307,451 participants in 1998-99 and 328,070 in 1999-2000.

D. Structure of the report

The rest of this report is organized according to the structure of the performance report. Chapter II presents a demographic profile of Talent Search participants and target schools. Chapter III discusses the provision of project services. Chapter IV provides an analysis of performance outcomes, and Chapter V discusses data issues as well as plans for future years.

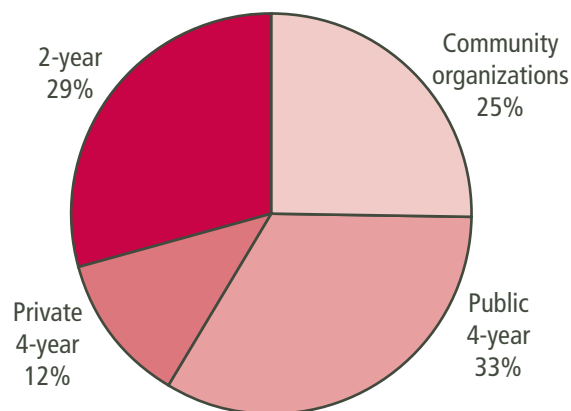
II. DEMOGRAPHICS

This section summarizes the demographic information that was reported on the 1999-2000 Talent Search performance reports. Statistics are given for Talent Search projects as a whole, as well as projects grouped by type of host institution, defined as 4-year public colleges and universities, 4-year private colleges and universities, 2-year colleges, and community organizations.

A. Number of participants assisted

A total of 359 Talent Search projects reported serving 328,070 participants overall, or an average of 914 participants per project. As Figure 2 shows, 33 percent of participants were served by projects based in public 4-year colleges and universities and 12 percent in private 4-year colleges and universities. Two-year institutions served 29 percent of participants and community organizations hosted 25 percent of all participants.

Figure 2. Participant distribution by type of host institution: 1999-2000



Totals do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

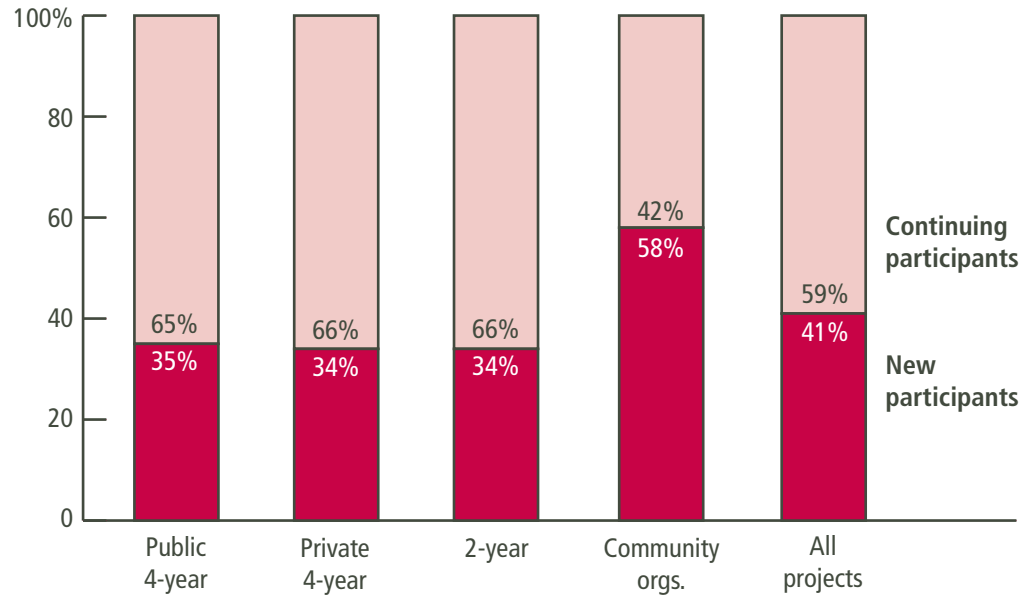
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Fifty-nine percent of all participants in 1999-2000 continued from a previous year, and 41 percent joined Talent Search for the first time (Figure 3). According to the instructions accompanying the performance report, a new participant is one served by the project for the first time during the current reporting period. A continuing participant is one who was served by the project for the first time in another reporting period and who received project services during this reporting period.

Community organizations had a much higher proportion of new participants (58 percent) than did public 4-year institutions (35 percent), private 4-year institutions (34 percent), or 2-year institutions (34 percent).

Overall, the 1999-2000 program year data present a shift from the 1998-99 program year, when there was a fairly even split between new and continuing participants (52 percent and 48 percent, respectively).

Figure 3. Participant distribution by status and type of host institution: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, *Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000*.

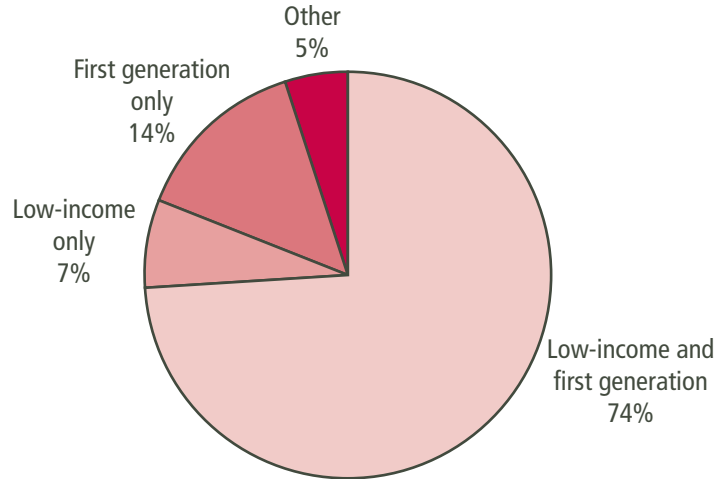
B. Participant distribution by eligibility

Talent Search projects overall exceeded the requirement that two-thirds of their participants be both low-income² and potential first-generation college students.³ Seventy-four percent of the participants during the 1999-2000 reporting period met both criteria (Figure 4). Twenty-one percent were either low-income or potential first-generation students. Five percent had other needs. The distributions of participants by eligibility status were consistent across the four sectors (Table 5).

² A low-income participant is one whose family's taxable income was less than 150 percent of the poverty level amount. The U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, sets guidelines to determine the definition of poverty level.

³ A potential first-generation college student is one whose parents or guardians did not receive a baccalaureate degree.

Figure 4. Participant distribution by eligibility status: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Table 5. Participant distribution by eligibility status and type of host institution: 1999-2000

Sector	Low-income and first generation	Low-income only	First generation only	Other
Public 4-year	75%	7%	13%	5%
Private 4-year	73%	7%	15%	5%
2-year	73%	5%	16%	5%
Community organizations	73%	8%	13%	6%
All projects	74%	7%	14%	5%

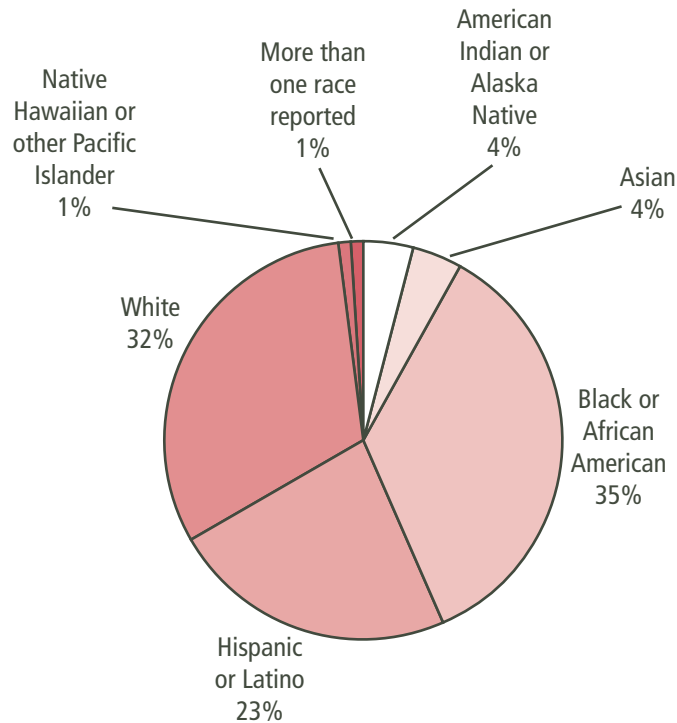
Totals do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

C. Participant distribution by race and ethnicity

Thirty-five percent of all Talent Search participants were black or African American, 32 percent were white, and 23 percent were Hispanic or Latino. Asians and American Indians/Alaska Natives each made up 4 percent of the Talent Search participant population. One percent of participants were natives of Hawaii or other Pacific islands and another 1 percent were from a multi-ethnic background (Figure 5). The 1999-2000 distribution is almost identical to the racial and ethnic composition of participants from the 1998-99 program year.

Figure 5. Participant distribution by race and ethnicity: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

The racial and ethnic composition of projects in program year 1999-2000 differed somewhat among the four sectors. For example, a higher proportion of black or African American participants (46 percent) were served by projects hosted by private 4-year colleges than by projects overall (35 percent). In contrast, a higher proportion of Hispanic or Latino participants (38 percent) were served by projects hosted by community organizations than by projects overall (23 percent). This distribution among sectors is similar to the 1998-99 distribution. Complete results are provided in Table 6.

Table 6. Participant distribution by race and ethnicity and type of host institution: 1999-2000

Sector	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	White	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	More than one race reported
Public 4-year	4%	3%	37%	20%	32%	1%	2%
Private 4-year	1%	2%	46%	20%	29%	0%	1%
2-year	4%	3%	33%	13%	44%	2%	1%
Community organizations	5%	6%	30%	38%	18%	1%	2%
All projects	4%	4%	35%	23%	32%	1%	1%

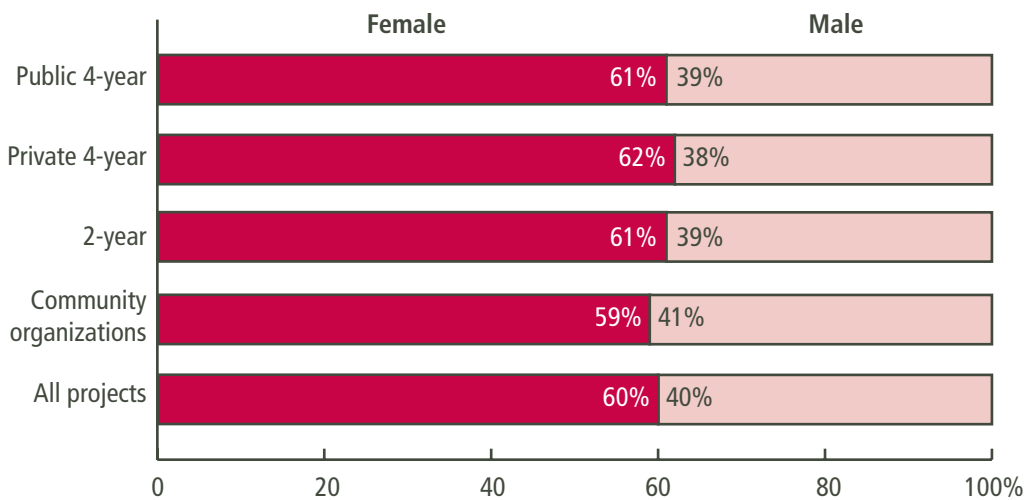
Totals do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

D. Participant distribution by gender

Consistent with the pattern for other TRIO Programs, Talent Search served more women than men. Sixty percent of Talent Search participants in 1999-2000 were female and 40 percent were male. As Figure 6 shows, the proportions varied little across the sectors.

Figure 6. Participant distribution by gender and type of host institution: 1999-2000

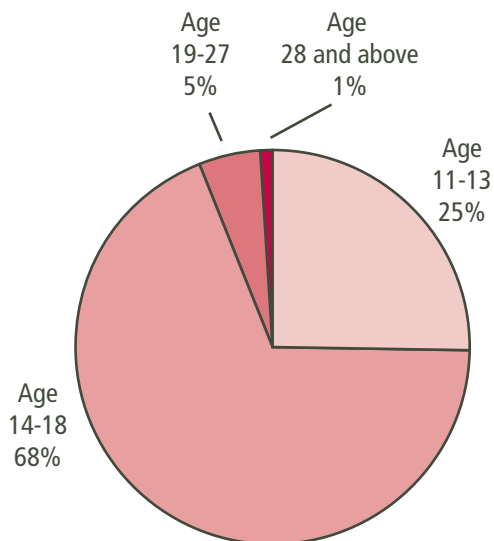


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

E. Participant distribution by age

Sixty-eight percent of Talent Search participants in program year 1999-2000 were 14-18 years of age (Figure 7). While recent years have seen increased program development for middle school students, almost three-fourths of Talent Search participants remain in the age groups over 14, the same proportion as in 1998-99. The same trend emerges when percentages are broken down by sector (Table 7).

Figure 7. Participant distribution by age: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Table 7. Participant distribution by age and type of host institution: 1999-2000

Sector	11-13	14-18	19-27	28 and above
Public 4-year	25%	70%	4%	1%
Private 4-year	33%	65%	2%	0%
2-year	28%	68%	3%	1%
Community organizations	20%	69%	10%	1%
All projects	25%	68%	5%	1%

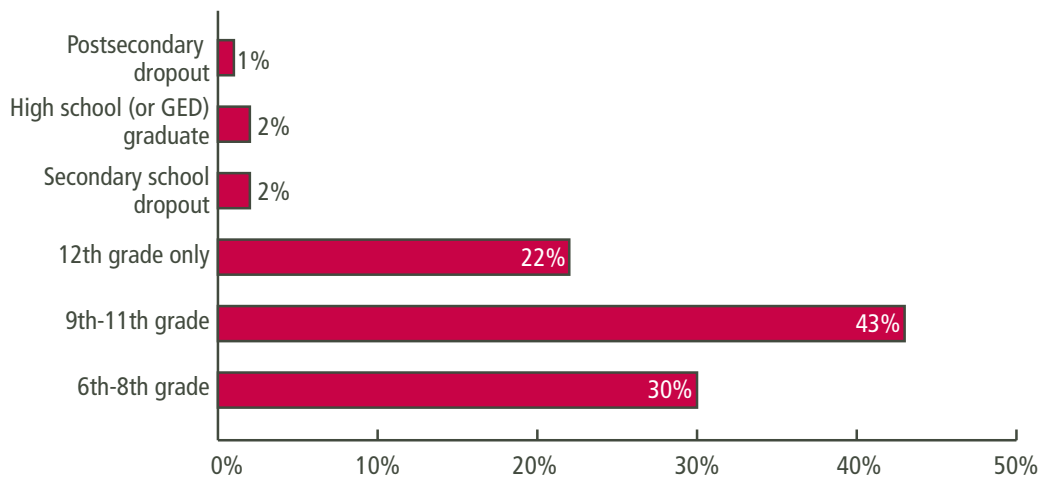
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

F. Participant distribution by grade level

Sixty-five percent of Talent Search participants were in grades 9-12 at the beginning of the 1999-2000 reporting period and 30 percent of participants were in grades 6-8 (Figure 8). Two percent had dropped out of high school, 2 percent had graduated or received the GED, and 1 percent had dropped out of postsecondary school.

The distribution across grades was similar for projects hosted by 4-year and 2-year institutions. However, community organizations less frequently served middle school participants and more frequently served 12th graders (Table 8).

Figure 8. Participant distribution by grade level: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, *Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000*

Table 8. Participant distribution by grade level and type of host institution: 1999-2000

Sector	6th-8th grades	9th-11th grades	12th grade only	Secondary school dropout	High school (GED) graduate	Post-secondary dropout
Public 4-year	30%	46%	20%	2%	2%	1%
Private 4-year	37%	43%	17%	2%	1%	0%
2-year	33%	46%	17%	2%	1%	0%
Community organizations	22%	38%	32%	2%	4%	1%
All projects	30%	43%	22%	2%	2%	1%

Totals do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, *Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000*.

G. Veterans served

In 1999-2000, the percentage of Talent Search participants who were veterans was very small, less than 1 percent (not shown in tables). Slightly more than 100 veterans participated in Talent Search.

H. Participants of limited English proficiency

Five percent of Talent Search participants had limited English proficiency (not shown in tables). A person of limited English proficiency is defined as one whose native language is not English and who has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English to prevent that person from learning successfully in classrooms in which English is the language of instruction. In 1999-2000, 6 percent of the students served by projects based in 4-year public schools had limited English proficiency. Five percent of students served by 4-year private schools, 6 percent of students served by 2-year schools, and 4 percent of students served by community organizations had limited English proficiency.

I. Target schools

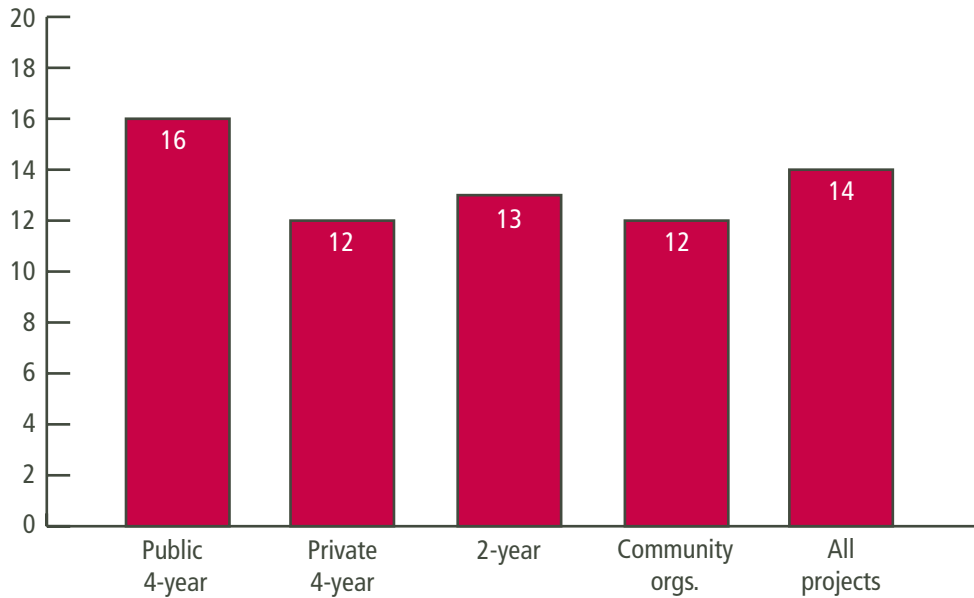
Talent Search projects served, on average,⁴ 14 target schools. Target schools, by definition, are secondary schools (middle and high schools) designated by the grantee as a focus of project services. Projects based in public 4-year institutions generally served the largest number of target schools, 16 schools per project (Figure 9). Projects based in 2-year institutions served 13 target schools and those based in private 4-year institutions and community organizations served 12 target schools.

Of the 361 Talent Search projects funded in 1999-2000, 322 submitted a list of target schools (89 percent) compared to 341 projects (94 percent) submitting a list of target schools for 1998-99 program year. These projects reported serving a total of 5,032 schools in 1999-2000 compared to 5,105 target schools in 1998-99.

The only information obtained from the performance report data about a target school is its name and location (city, state, and zip code). In an effort to obtain more in-depth knowledge of the characteristics of Talent Search target schools, we merged the target school names from the performance reports with school names in the Common Core of Data (CCD). The CCD is a comprehensive database of elementary and secondary schools across the nation. The data are collected by the U.S. Department of Education, updated on an annual basis, and provide basic descriptive information about public schools in the United States. Data are provided at both the school and district levels.

⁴ The average refers to the median in this case. The mean number of target schools served was 16.

Figure 9. Number of target schools per project by type of host institution: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Matches to the CCD were found for 95 percent of the 5,032 target schools listed in the performance report. Errors in the names or locations of schools as provided in the performance reports may have contributed to the lack of a match for some schools.

One issue that the merge with the CCD allowed us to examine was the extent to which eligible students in the target schools were served by the Talent Search Program. A proxy measure of the number eligible for Talent Search is the number eligible for the federal free lunch program. This measure is not the same as the Talent Search eligibility criterion, but it does give an indication of the proportion of economically disadvantaged students who were served. To be eligible for the free lunch program, family income must not exceed 130 percent of the poverty level. Overall estimates show that in 1999-2000 Talent Search served about 24 percent of the estimated number of students eligible for the free lunch program in the target schools.⁵ State-by-state results, provided in Table 9, also show that this estimate varied a great

⁵ The percentages were calculated by dividing the total number of participants in Talent Search in a given state by the total number of students eligible for the free lunch program in the target schools in that state. Although all participants in Talent Search may not be eligible for free lunch, the calculation includes all Talent Search secondary school participants.

deal across states. Wisconsin, for example, served 14 percent of the “eligible population” while North Dakota served over 100 percent.⁶

Table 9 also presents the number of secondary school students⁷ served by Talent Search as a percentage of free-lunch-eligible students in all secondary schools, not just the target schools. Secondary schools were defined as schools serving students in grade 7 or higher.⁸ We limited our analysis to secondary schools because the Talent Search Program regulations require participants to be in grade 6 or higher. Overall, Talent Search projects served 4.9 percent of the students eligible for the free lunch program in secondary schools in the U.S. and outlying areas.

The second issue we considered was the difference in demographic characteristics between target schools and all other schools. We selected two variables from the CCD for this analysis: the percentage of free-lunch-eligible students in a given school and the ratio of pupils to full-time-equivalent teachers, or the pupil-teacher ratio. In Table 10, we present the data on free lunch status. The second column indicates the average percentage of free-lunch-eligible students for the Talent Search target schools in that state.⁹ The third column provides the percentage of free-lunch-eligible students for all other secondary schools in that state.¹⁰ The fourth column is the difference between the percentages for Talent Search target schools and for all other secondary schools.¹¹ The last column provides the percentages for all secondary

⁶ There are several possible reasons why some states exceeded 100 percent (i.e. the number of participants served was greater than the number of free-lunch-eligible students). First, the income guidelines for participation in Talent Search and participation in the federal free lunch program differ somewhat. For Talent Search, a participant’s household income must not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level. To qualify for the free lunch program, income must not exceed 130 percent. In addition, Talent Search requires that only two-thirds of the participants meet both the low-income and first generation eligibility requirements. The remaining one-third need not meet either of those criteria.

⁷ Only secondary school students in states with free lunch data were included.

⁸ Schools that served grades 5 and 6 only were also included.

⁹ Percentages were calculated by dividing the total number of students eligible for free lunch in target schools by the total enrollment in target schools.

¹⁰ Percentages were calculated by dividing the number of students eligible for free lunch in all secondary schools that were not targeted by Talent Search by the total enrollment in those schools.

¹¹ To calculate the difference, we subtracted the value in column 3 (percentages of free-lunch-eligible students in all other schools) from the value in column 2 (percentages of free-lunch-eligible students in the target schools).

Table 9. Estimate of eligible students served by Talent Search, by state: 1999-2000

State	Number of secondary students served by Talent Search	Number eligible for free lunch program in target schools	Number eligible for free lunch program in all secondary schools	Number served as percentage of number eligible for free lunch program in target schools	Number served as percentage of number eligible for free lunch program in all secondary schools
Alabama	19,349	54,599	115,376	35.4%	16.8%
Alaska	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Arizona	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Arkansas	7,433	15,849	67,623	46.9%	11.0%
California	29,039	179,454	933,821	16.2%	3.1%
Colorado	4,907	17,032	63,035	28.8%	7.8%
Connecticut	2,241	12,794	41,551	17.5%	5.4%
Delaware	1,311	5,641	13,688	23.2%	9.6%
District of Columbia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Florida	5,722	41,963	351,475	13.6%	1.6%
Georgia	9,107	29,324	209,264	31.1%	4.4%
Hawaii	1,939	8,320	24,472	23.3%	7.9%
Idaho	2,616	8,489	24,387	30.8%	10.7%
Illinois	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Indiana	5,266	17,100	84,039	30.8%	6.3%
Iowa	6,873	10,729	41,340	64.1%	16.6%
Kansas	4,679	17,409	47,074	26.9%	9.9%
Kentucky	8,106	41,835	100,596	19.4%	8.1%
Louisiana	10,320	72,458	156,660	14.2%	6.6%
Maine	914	1,808	21,057	50.5%	4.3%
Maryland	3,536	15,754	79,455	22.4%	4.5%
Massachusetts	5,492	19,771	82,549	27.8%	6.7%
Michigan	4,006	23,410	160,400	17.1%	2.5%
Minnesota	5,592	8,573	68,705	65.2%	8.1%
Mississippi	5,137	25,827	123,635	19.9%	4.2%
Missouri	2,143	4,191	101,857	51.1%	2.1%
Montana	563	708	15,999	79.6%	3.5%
Nebraska	1,426	9,161	25,081	15.6%	5.7%
Nevada	1,203	3,819	25,560	31.5%	4.7%
New Hampshire	1,159	3,468	10,623	33.4%	10.9%
New Jersey	5,823	15,459	110,109	37.7%	5.3%
New Mexico	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
New York	14,545	50,634	404,321	28.7%	3.6%
North Carolina	8,502	42,127	161,613	20.2%	5.3%
North Dakota	2,153	1,380	10,797	156.0%	19.9%
Ohio	8,332	36,035	155,071	23.1%	5.4%
Oklahoma	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Oregon	2,510	10,004	61,036	25.1%	4.1%
Pennsylvania	12,110	46,865	175,869	25.8%	6.9%
Rhode Island	851	6,068	18,514	14.0%	4.6%
South Carolina	8,245	28,348	110,594	29.1%	7.5%
South Dakota	849	1,907	11,925	44.5%	7.1%
Tennessee	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Texas	14,341	71,860	603,190	20.0%	2.4%
Utah	4,966	6,355	35,389	78.1%	14.0%
Virginia	1,222	3,339	7,879	36.6%	15.5%
Vermont	6,564	22,708	106,591	28.9%	6.2%
Washington	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wisconsin	2,231	15,976	50,164	14.0%	4.4%
West Virginia	3,879	16,132	78,902	24.0%	4.9%
Wyoming	675	2,793	7,267	24.2%	9.3%
Outlying areas	10,909	33,306	207,638	32.8%	5.3%
Overall	258,786	1,060,783	5,306,187	24.4%	4.9%

N/a refers to states in which free lunch program data were not available.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000; National Center for Education Statistics, Elementary/Secondary and Libraries Studies Division, Common Core of Data, 1999-2000.

Table 10. Percentage of students eligible for the federal free lunch program in Talent Search target schools, all other secondary schools, and all secondary schools, by state: 1999-2000

State	Talent Search target schools	All other secondary schools	Difference	All secondary schools
Alabama	42.8%	29.0%	13.8%	32.5%
Alaska	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Arizona	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Arkansas	34.7%	29.5%	5.3%	30.5%
California	46.8%	32.1%	14.6%	33.7%
Colorado	32.9%	16.1%	16.8%	18.3%
Connecticut	68.4%	13.0%	55.4%	15.6%
Delaware	25.2%	24.2%	0.9%	24.6%
District of Columbia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Florida	29.5%	31.1%	-1.6%	30.9%
Georgia	46.1%	29.3%	16.9%	30.9%
Hawaii	34.6%	27.5%	7.2%	29.4%
Idaho	18.3%	21.0%	-2.7%	19.9%
Illinois	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Indiana	29.4%	15.8%	13.5%	17.4%
Iowa	20.7%	15.5%	5.1%	16.5%
Kansas	35.8%	15.9%	19.9%	19.9%
Kentucky	36.9%	29.6%	7.3%	32.2%
Louisiana	55.8%	40.3%	15.4%	44.5%
Maine	27.5%	19.2%	8.3%	19.7%
Maryland	24.9%	18.3%	6.5%	19.3%
Massachusetts	43.7%	15.1%	28.5%	17.7%
Michigan	51.9%	17.7%	34.2%	19.6%
Minnesota	32.4%	14.7%	17.7%	15.8%
Mississippi	67.6%	50.7%	16.8%	53.5%
Missouri	48.6%	22.3%	26.3%	22.8%
Montana	37.9%	19.4%	18.5%	19.8%
Nebraska	32.3%	14.6%	17.7%	18.2%
Nevada	23.4%	15.8%	7.6%	16.6%
New Hampshire	10.5%	9.7%	0.8%	9.9%
New Jersey	55.8%	17.9%	37.9%	19.3%
New Mexico	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
New York	52.1%	30.0%	22.1%	31.4%
North Carolina	36.1%	24.2%	12.0%	26.2%
North Dakota	26.5%	17.8%	8.7%	18.6%
Ohio	33.9%	14.3%	19.7%	16.4%
Oklahoma	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Oregon	34.7%	20.7%	14.0%	22.2%
Pennsylvania	43.1%	16.4%	26.7%	19.3%
Rhode Island	53.2%	19.8%	33.4%	25.0%
South Carolina	32.3%	35.1%	-2.8%	34.3%
South Dakota	16.8%	17.6%	-0.8%	17.4%
Tennessee	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Texas	45.2%	31.0%	14.3%	32.1%
Utah	22.7%	14.8%	7.8%	15.8%
Virginia	13.1%	16.9%	-3.8%	15.1%
Vermont	26.4%	18.0%	8.4%	19.3%
Washington	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wisconsin	40.3%	32.2%	8.1%	34.3%
West Virginia	55.2%	14.7%	40.5%	17.3%
Wyoming	17.1%	14.1%	3.0%	15.0%
Outlying areas	56.7%	71.2%	-14.5%	68.4%
Overall	39.5%	25.0%	14.5%	26.7%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000; National Center for Education Statistics, Elementary/Secondary and Libraries Studies Division, Common Core of Data, 1999-2000.

schools, regardless of whether or not they are Talent Search target schools.¹² Table 11 provides information in a similar manner for the pupil-teacher ratio.

Forty percent of students in grades 6 to 12 in the Talent Search target schools were eligible to receive free lunch. This is about 15 percentage points higher than for all other secondary schools. Pupil-teacher ratios, however, differed very little between target schools and all other schools when averaged across the U.S. and outlying areas. The average class size in a Talent Search target school was about 16 students.

¹² Percentages were calculated by dividing the total number of secondary school students eligible for free lunch in a given state by total enrollment in secondary schools in that state.

Table 11. Average pupil-teacher ratios for Talent Search target schools, all other secondary schools, and all secondary schools, by state: 1999-2000

State	Talent Search target schools	All other secondary schools	Difference	All secondary schools
Alabama	16.2	15.5	0.7	15.7
Alaska	17.5	17.1	0.4	17.1
Arizona	18.0	18.0	0.0	18.0
Arkansas	12.0	13.4	-1.4	13.0
California	22.5	21.3	1.1	21.4
Colorado	15.6	17.3	-1.7	17.0
Connecticut	14.2	13.4	0.8	13.4
Delaware	15.3	14.0	1.3	14.4
District of Columbia	14.0	14.2	-0.2	13.9
Florida	18.3	17.3	1.0	17.4
Georgia	16.2	16.5	-0.3	16.5
Hawaii	16.4	16.6	-0.3	16.5
Idaho	17.0	14.5	2.5	15.1
Illinois	16.2	15.8	0.4	15.8
Indiana	17.2	16.7	0.5	16.8
Iowa	14.1	13.5	0.6	13.6
Kansas	14.1	13.1	1.0	13.2
Kentucky	16.0	17.8	-1.8	17.2
Louisiana	15.6	14.7	0.9	14.8
Maine	14.2	13.4	0.8	13.4
Maryland	17.3	15.8	1.5	16.0
Massachusetts	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Michigan	16.2	18.0	-1.7	17.9
Minnesota	14.2	15.4	-1.1	15.3
Mississippi	16.4	16.4	0.0	16.4
Missouri	11.9	13.5	-1.6	13.5
Montana	13.3	12.0	1.4	12.0
Nebraska	14.0	11.6	2.4	11.7
Nevada	21.7	20.0	1.7	20.1
New Hampshire	13.6	13.8	-0.2	13.8
New Mexico	15.1	15.2	-0.1	15.1
New York	16.9	15.2	1.7	15.3
North Carolina	14.4	13.6	0.8	13.7
North Dakota	10.4	12.6	-2.2	12.4
Ohio	16.4	17.3	-0.9	17.2
Oklahoma	13.4	14.4	-1.0	14.2
Oregon	18.7	18.1	0.6	18.1
Pennsylvania	17.0	16.6	0.5	16.6
Rhode Island	13.8	13.3	0.5	13.4
South Carolina	14.8	15.7	-0.9	15.5
South Dakota	16.2	12.1	4.1	12.2
Tennessee	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Texas	13.6	13.3	0.3	13.3
Utah	17.8	19.1	-1.3	18.9
Virginia	12.3	12.5	-0.2	12.4
Vermont	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Washington	19.6	20.1	-0.6	20.1
Wisconsin	14.2	14.0	0.2	14.0
West Virginia	16.3	15.2	1.1	15.2
Wyoming	13.7	11.4	2.3	11.7
Outlying areas	17.9	19.6	-1.7	19.2
Overall	16.2	15.5	0.7	15.7

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000; National Center for Education Statistics, Elementary/Secondary and Libraries Studies Division, Common Core of Data, 1999-2000.

III. PROJECT SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

This section provides an overview of the types of services and activities that Talent Search projects provide to their participants. The performance reports asked projects to list the number of activity sessions and the number of participants who attended each of 10 activities over the 1999-2000 program year. Staff reported participants by age group—middle school, high school, and adult. Middle school participants were those in grades 6 to 8 and high school participants were those in grades 9 to 12 or who had dropped out of high school. Any participant who had completed high school or earned a GED was considered an adult.

Table 12 presents the percentage of projects that provided each service, broken down by education level. For example, the first row indicates that 77 percent of Talent Search projects provided tutoring to middle school students, 73 percent provided tutoring to high school students, 11 percent provided tutoring to adults, and 83 percent provided tutoring to participants overall. College orientation activities, test-taking and study skills development, counseling, and academic advising/course selection were the services most commonly offered overall. As expected, the data show that Talent Search services are geared more toward students in middle and high schools than toward adults.

The percentage of projects providing each service increased for each of the 10 services between the 1998-99 and 1999-2000 program years (Table 13). The largest increases were in family activities (8 percentage point increase) and assisted computer labs (7 percentage point increase).

Table 12. Percentage of projects offering services to participants, by grade level: 1999-2000

Service	Middle school	High school	Adult	Overall
Tutoring	77%	73%	11%	83%
Assisted (computer) labs	55%	62%	16%	70%
Test-taking & study skills development	91%	95%	23%	97%
Counseling	91%	95%	45%	96%
Academic advising/course selection	87%	95%	41%	96%
Mentoring	54%	56%	12%	64%
Cultural activities	91%	87%	15%	94%
College orientation activities	87%	97%	42%	99%
Family activities	80%	86%	22%	92%
Referrals	40%	62%	31%	70%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, *Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000*.

Table 13. Comparison of percentage of projects offering different types of services to participants: 1998-99 and 1999-2000

Service	1998-99	1999-2000	Increase
Tutoring	80%	83%	3%
Assisted (computer) labs	63%	70%	7%
Test-taking & study skills development	92%	97%	5%
Counseling	92%	96%	4%
Academic advising/course selection	91%	96%	5%
Mentoring	58%	64%	6%
Cultural activities	90%	94%	4%
College orientation activities	95%	99%	4%
Family activities	84%	92%	8%
Referrals	68%	70%	2%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

For the 1999-2000 program year, projects also varied in the number of types of services they offered to Talent Search participants. Overall, projects were more likely to offer a wide range of services rather than only one or two. For example, 60 percent of Talent Search projects offered nine or 10 types of services, while fewer than 2 percent offered four or fewer services (Table 14).

Projects were more likely to provide a range of services to their high school participants than to their adult participants. While 70 percent of projects offered seven or more types of services to high school students, only 6 percent offered that many services to their adult participants.

Table 14. Percentage of projects offering multiple services to participants, by grade level: 1999-2000

Total services offered	Middle School	High School	Adult	Overall
9 or 10 of above services	15%	23%	2%	61%
7 or 8 of above services	46%	47%	4%	28%
5 or 6 of above services	28%	24%	13%	10%
3 or 4 of above services	8%	4%	21%	1%
1 or 2 of above services	2%	2%	16%	<.5%
None of above services	1%	0%	43%	0%

Totals do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

A. Academic support services

The following four services, grouped as academic support services, were defined in the performance report as follows:

- Tutoring—individual or small-group tutoring provided by professional staff or students who are either part-time paid staff, volunteers, or internship-for-credit students.
- Assisted (computer) labs—academic support or tutoring provided through a learning or computer center, which may include computer-assisted instruction.
- Test-taking and study skills development—workshops, tutoring, or individual assistance specifically designed to help students develop the skills necessary to do any of the following: 1) succeed in academic programs, 2) meet scoring requirements on national or state standardized tests for admission into a post-secondary educational institution, or 3) pass a high school equivalency exam.
- Academic advising/course selection—assisting students in making education plans, selecting appropriate courses, meeting academic requirements, planning for high school graduation, and gaining admission to a postsecondary educational institution.

Three different measures were used to look at the extent to which services were offered to participants. The first measure indicated the percentage of all Talent Search participants who received a service. The second measure was the average number of sessions per project (for only those projects that undertook that service). The third measure looked at the average number of sessions per participant (for those participants engaged in that service). Projects differed in the manner in which they counted sessions, but we included these data here as an indicator of intensity rather than a measure of the number of participant contacts. This measure underestimates the actual sessions per participant. When a project provided services to a group of five people, for example, the project was instructed to count the session as one rather than five sessions.

Overall, 20 percent of participants received tutoring, 15 percent attended assisted (computer) labs, 46 percent attended test-taking and study skill development sessions, and 64 percent were advised on academic matters (Table 15). The average number of tutoring sessions per participant over this period was about two and the average for other academic support services was approximately one.

Projects typically provided 493 tutoring sessions, 169 assisted (computer) labs, 313 test-taking and study development sessions, and 747 sessions related to academic advising/course selection over the 1999-2000 program year. This is an increase from the 1998-99 program year when projects provided an average of 149 assisted (computer) lab sessions per project, 265 test-taking and study skills development sessions, and 673 academic advising sessions. The average number of tutoring sessions per project, however, dropped from 574 sessions per project in 1998-99.

Table 15. Percentage of participants receiving academic support services, average number of sessions per project, and average number of sessions per participant for participants overall: 1999-2000

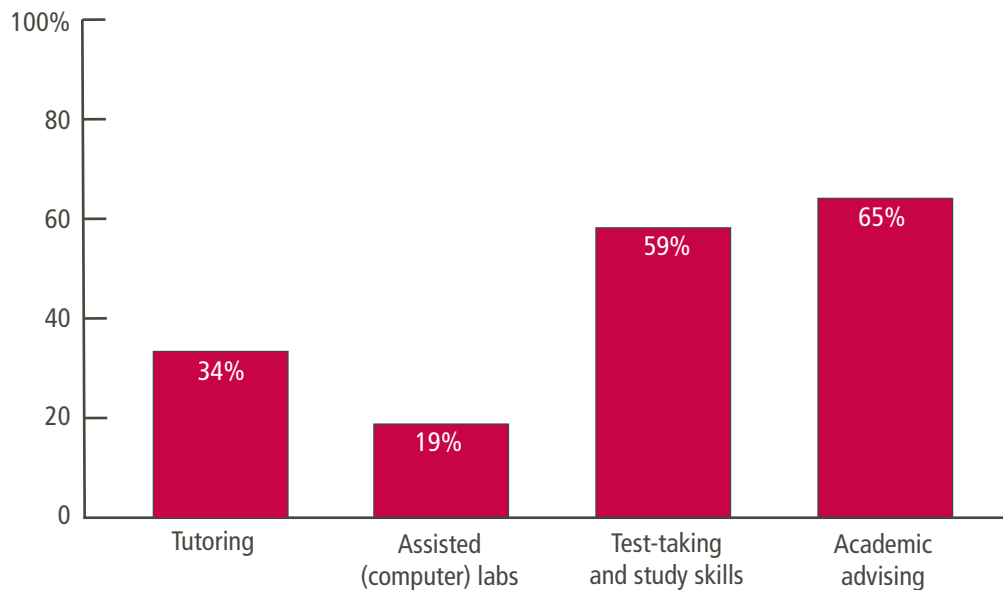
Service	Percentage of participants receiving service	Average number of sessions per project	Average number of sessions per participant
Tutoring	20%	493	2.3
Assisted (computer) labs	15%	169	0.9
Test-taking & study skills development	46%	313	0.7
Academic advising/course selection	64%	747	1.2

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, *Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000*.

1. Middle school participants

As chapter II highlights, about 30 percent of the participants in Talent Search were in middle school (grades 6-8). Figure 10 shows that more than half of the participants in this group received academic advising (65 percent) and participated in activities designed to enhance test-taking and study skills (59 percent). Other forms of academic support were less common. Thirty-four percent were tutored and 19 percent were assisted through the use of an assisted (computer) lab.

Figure 10. Percentage of middle school participants receiving academic support services: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, *Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000*.

Each project provided to its middle school participants an average of 344 tutoring sessions, 90 labs, 139 test-taking and study skill development sessions, and 218 academic advising/course selection sessions (Table 16). The average number of tutoring sessions per participant was nearly 3, which was 2 sessions more than for assisted (computer) labs, test-taking and study skills development sessions, and academic advising/course selection sessions.

Table 16. Average number of sessions per project and average number of sessions per participant for middle school participants: 1999-2000

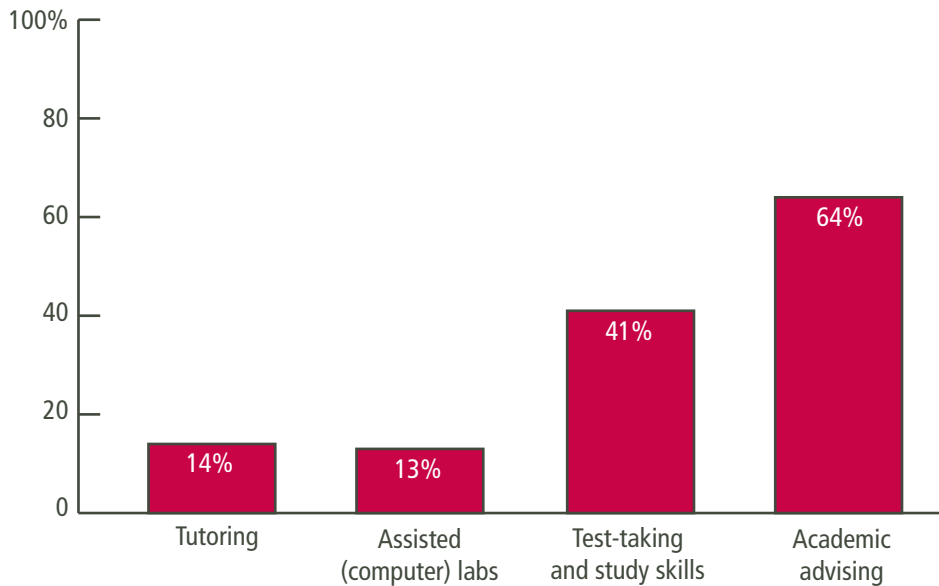
Service	Average number of sessions per project	Average number of sessions per participant
Tutoring	344	2.9
Assisted (computer) labs	90	1.0
Test-taking & study skills development	139	0.8
Academic advising/course selection	218	1.1

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

2. High school participants

Sixty-four percent of high school participants attended academic advising and course selection sessions (Figure 11). Forty-one percent were involved in test-taking and

Figure 11. Percentage of high school participants receiving academic support services: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

study skill development activities, 14 percent received tutoring services through Talent Search, and another 13 percent attended assisted (computer) labs.

Academic advising and course selection activities were the predominant means by which high school students received academic support. As shown in Figure 11, the participation level for this activity was higher than for other academic support services. In addition, the average number of academic advising sessions was 542 (Table 17), higher than for any other academic support service and an increase of 80 sessions per project over the 1998-99 program year.

Table 17. Average number of sessions per project and average number of sessions per participant for high school participants: 1999-2000

Service	Average number of sessions per project	Average number of sessions per participant
Tutoring	196	1.6
Assisted (computer) labs	108	0.8
Test-taking & study skills development	181	0.7
Academic advising/course selection	542	1.3

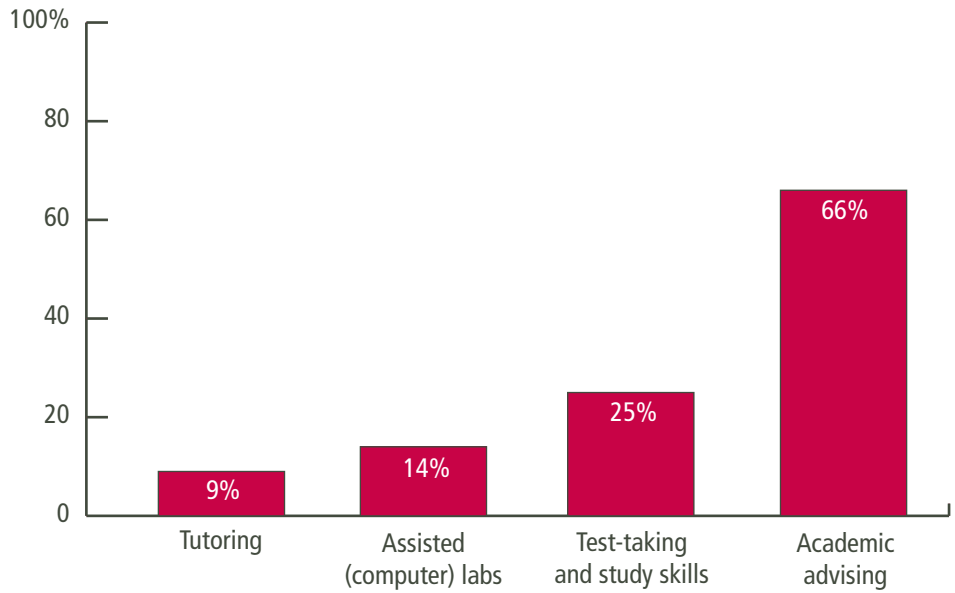
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

3. Adult participants

Sixty-six percent of the adult participants in Talent Search received academic advising/course selection assistance (Figure 12). Fewer participated in tutoring, assisted (computer) labs, or test-taking and study skills development sessions. Since adult participants are less likely to be enrolled in school upon entering Talent Search, services such as tutoring or assisted (computer) labs may be less applicable.

Academic support services for adults were less frequent than those provided to middle and high school participants. The average number of sessions per project ranged from 24 for assisted (computer) labs to 50 for tutoring (Table 18). The average number of sessions per participant ranged from about 1 for most academic support services to over 2 for tutoring.

Figure 12. Percentage of adult participants receiving academic support services: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Table 18. Average number of sessions per project and average number of sessions per participant for adult participants: 1999-2000

Service	Average number of sessions per project	Average number of sessions per participant
Tutoring	50	2.1
Assisted (computer) labs	24	0.9
Test-taking & study skills development	35	1.1
Academic advising/course selection	42	0.9

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

B. Personal and career development services

Additional services and activities were grouped into a single category, comprising activities designed to enhance the personal and career development of Talent Search participants. These services, such as counseling and mentoring, often had a much broader function, involving help with academic decisions in addition to personal and career-related matters. The six activities were defined in the performance report as follows:

- Counseling—assistance with personal, educational, and career decision-making.
- Mentoring—a variety of personal or academic support activities provided by other students or professionals and designed to expose project participants to careers and other educational opportunities available to them.
- Cultural activities—any project-sponsored activities, such as field trips, special lectures, and symposiums, that are intended to enrich the academic progress and personal development of project participants.
- College orientation activities—workshops, college fairs, or project-sponsored trips to other postsecondary institutions to acquaint students with a variety of postsecondary educational opportunities.
- Family activities—events, workshops, meetings, and counseling designed to provide families with information on postsecondary educational opportunities and financial aid available and to involve them in the educational decisions of their children.
- Referrals to other service providers—the formal and informal network of social service programs and community organizations, including other TRIO Programs, available to help project participants.

As in the 1998-99 program year, counseling was the service provided to the largest number of participants overall in 1999-2000 (77 percent). Fifty-seven percent participated in college orientation, 34 percent in cultural activities, 30 percent in family activities, and 18 percent in mentoring. Nine percent of participants received referrals to outside service providers (Table 19).

Counseling was also provided more frequently than other personal and career development services, with an average of 1,302 counseling sessions per project during the 1999-2000 program year. Each project also provided an average of 342 college orientation activities, 206 mentoring sessions, 154 family activities, 81 cultural activities, and 32 referrals to external service providers.

Table 19. Percentage of participants receiving personal and career development services for participants overall: 1999-2000

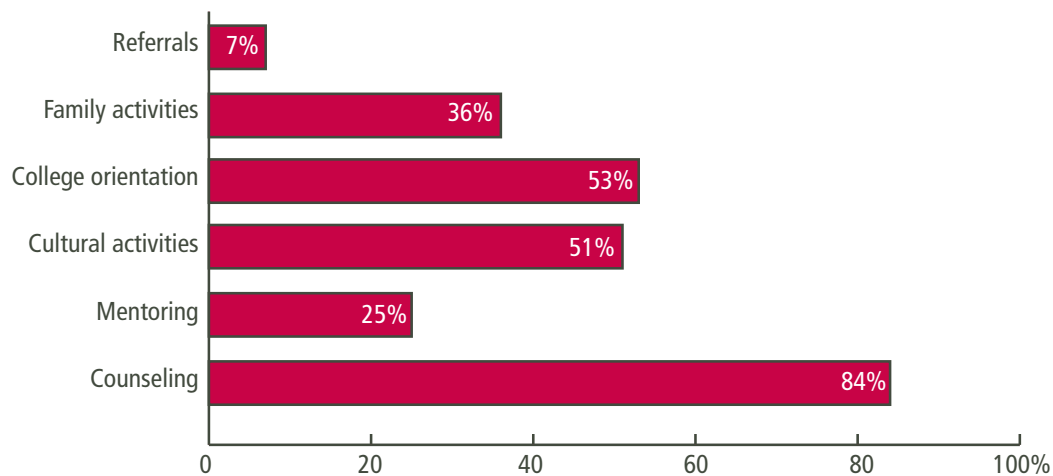
Service	Percentage of participants receiving service	Average number of sessions per project
Counseling	77%	1,302
Mentoring	18%	206
Cultural activities	34%	81
College orientation activities	57%	342
Family activities	30%	154
Referrals	9%	32

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

1. Middle school participants

Counseling is the most common personal and career development service for middle school students, with 84 percent of participants receiving these services (Figure 13). More than half of middle school students also participated in college orientation (53 percent) and cultural activities (51 percent). Thirty-six percent of these participants engaged in family activities and 25 percent in mentoring activities. These proportions are similar to the percentage of middle school participants engaged in personal and career development services in 1998-99.

Figure 13. Percentage of middle school participants receiving personal and career development services: 1999-2000

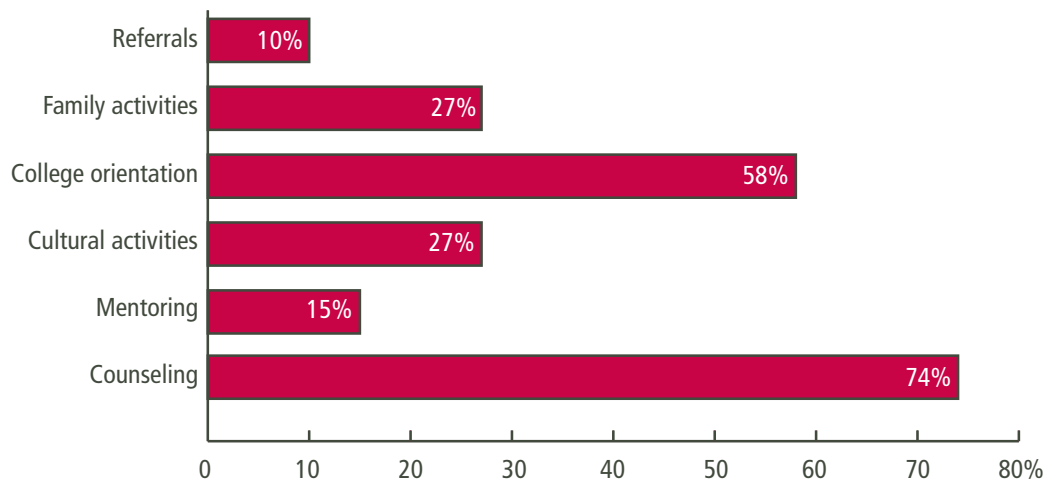


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

2. High school participants

As with middle school participants, counseling was the most highly used activity of high school participants. Nearly three quarters of high school participants (74 percent) received counseling in 1999-2000 (Figure 14). Fifty-eight percent received college orientation and 27 percent participated in family and cultural activities. Fifteen percent of students received mentoring, and 10 percent received referrals to service providers other than Talent Search. These percentages vary little from the proportion of high school students engaged in personal and career development services in 1998-99.

Figure 14. Percentage of high school participants receiving personal and career development services: 1999-2000

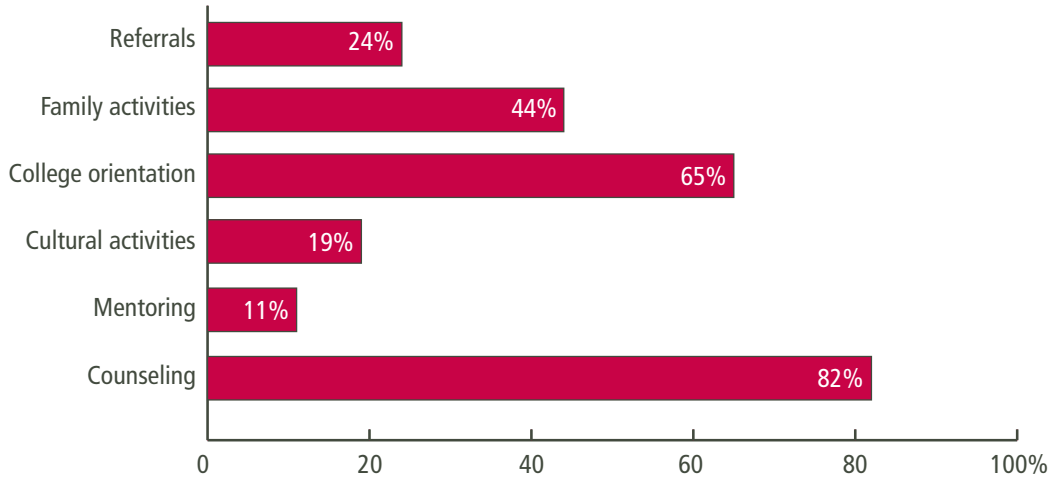


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

3. Adult participants

The percentage of adults receiving personal and career services increased in all categories except cultural activities between 1998-99 and 1999-2000. Eighty-two percent of adult participants received counseling and 65 percent participated in college orientation activities (Figure 15). This represents an increase of 9 and 16 percentage points from 1998-99, respectively. Forty-four percent participated in family activities and 24 percent received referrals to other service providers, an increase from the previous year of 5 percentage points and a decrease of 8 percentage points, respectively.

Figure 15. Percentage of adult participants receiving personal and career development services: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

C. Historical perspective on service provision

Relatively little information is available on how the Talent Search Program and its services have evolved since the program first began. A report by Elizabeth Eisner, however, provides one slice of the program's lengthy history by analyzing performance report data from the 1990-91 program year (Eisner 1992). Of the 177 projects in operation in 1990-91, 162 submitted performance reports.

The performance report in 1990-91 differed somewhat from the current version of the report. Thus, direct comparisons between the 1990-91 data and the 1998-99 and 1999-2000 data are not possible for all of the service dimensions. In addition, definitions were not given for each of the services listed, providing no parameters for categorizing services. There were, however, five general areas of overlap in the performance report items: tutoring, development of study skills, counseling, cultural activities, and college orientation. In counseling, the overall participation rate was one percentage point lower in 1999-2000 than in 1990-91. In tutoring, study skills, cultural activities, and college orientation, the 1998-99 and 1999-2000 levels exceeded those reported by Eisner for 1990-91 (Table 20). This information indicates an increased focus on academic services in Talent Search in the 1990s.

Table 20. Percentage of participants receiving each type of service, comparing performance report data from 1990-91, 1998-99, and 1999-2000

Service	1990-91	1998-99	1999-2000
Tutoring	8%	21%	20%
Study skills	5%	47%	46%
Counseling	78%	77%	77%
Cultural activities	9%	33%	34%
College orientation	19%	54%	57%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1998-99 and 1999-2000 and Eisner, "Analysis of Talent Search Performance Reports, 1986-87 and 1990-91."

IV. PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

In the fourth section of the performance report, grantees were asked to report on their progress in meeting their approved objectives. These objectives were outlined in a project's grant proposal and needed to relate to the goals of the Talent Search Program as well as respond to the prior experience criteria as described in the program regulations. The outcomes addressed secondary school progression, retention, graduation, and reentry. The outcomes also included admissions and financial aid for postsecondary education for college-ready participants. College-ready participants include adults, 12th grade high school students, and high school or high school equivalency graduates.

Only Talent Search projects with the following types of data were included in the objective and outcome calculations: 1) the applicable population (i.e., high school participants); 2) objective data; and 3) outcome data. Projects missing any of these three data types were not included in the calculations. In addition, some projects reported higher numbers in the outcomes than in the applicable population counts (i.e., more students graduating high school than 12th grade participants). Thus, we capped the outcomes at the number reported in the population so no calculation was over 100 percent.

A. Secondary school retention, graduation, and reentry

Secondary school retention, graduation, and reentry were defined as follows in the instructions provided to projects with the performance report form:

- Secondary school retention—all middle and high school students who will continue in secondary school for the next academic term.
- Secondary school graduation—all high school seniors (and GED or alternative education students) who received a high school diploma or completed a high school equivalency program during the reporting period.
- Secondary school reentry—all secondary school dropouts who reentered high school or enrolled in a high school equivalency program during the reporting period.

As in 1998-99, projects had little difficulty meeting retention and graduation objectives. In 1999-2000 Talent Search projects expected 88 percent of middle school and high school participants to stay in school. Ninety-seven percent of middle school participants and 95 percent of high school participants did so.

Ninety-six percent of high school participants who were in the 12th grade at the beginning of the reporting period (September 1, 1999) had graduated by the end of

the reporting period (August 31, 2000)—nine percentage points higher than the approved objective. In addition, 50 percent of those participants who were reported as having dropped out of high school at the beginning of the reporting period had returned to school by the end of the reporting period (Table 21).

For the 1999-2000 program year, graduation rates among 12th graders were almost equal among the four sectors (not shown in table). Ninety-seven percent of these participants graduated from projects hosted by private 4-year institutions compared with 96 percent at 2-year institutions and 95 percent at both public 4-year institutions and community organizations.

Table 21. Comparison of approved objectives and actual achievements for secondary school outcomes: 1999-2000

Outcome	Approved objective	Actual
Retention		
Middle school	88%	97%
High school	88%	95%
Graduation		
Middle school	*	*
High school	87%	96%
Re-entry		
Middle school	63%	**
High school	63%	50%

**Not applicable for middle school participants. Although promotion from middle to high school was not included among the approved objectives, projects were asked to provide the number of middle school students who went on to high school. Projects reported 40,266 participants, or 41 percent of all middle school participants, were promoted from middle to high school. Performance report data on the number of middle school students eligible to be promoted were not available, so we were not able to determine the percentage of eligible students promoted.*

***The performance report did not ask projects to provide the number of participants who were middle school dropouts at the beginning of the reporting period. As a result, we were not able to determine the percentage of middle school dropouts that re-entered middle school. Projects reported that 1,210 participants re-entered middle school during the 1999-2000 program year.*

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

B. Admissions and financial aid assistance

One of the aims of the Talent Search Program is to assist participants with the process of applying to college and obtaining financial aid, thus helping to overcome some of the barriers that economically disadvantaged students often face when pursuing post-secondary education. Program staff can offer assistance at various stages of the college application process—selecting schools to apply to, choosing appropriate courses, completing the application, and finding ways to finance a college education. Talent

Search Program staff were asked to provide the following information to assess the extent to which participants were receiving these services:

- Applied for postsecondary admission—number of participants who received help with college entrance applications and the number who applied for postsecondary admission.
- Applied for student financial aid—number of participants who received help completing financial aid forms, including scholarship applications, U.S. Department of Education federal student financial aid forms, and state applications for financial aid and the number who applied for financial aid.

Eighty-four percent of high school seniors and graduates applied to a post-secondary institution and 82 percent applied for financial aid in 1999-2000 (Table 22). Overall, projects had expected to assist 89 percent of their participants with applications for postsecondary admissions and for student financial aid. Among the four sectors, community organizations had the highest percentage of students apply for both postsecondary admission (86 percent) and for financial aid (85 percent).

Table 22. Comparison of approved objectives and actual achievements for assistance in applying for postsecondary admissions and financial aid: 1999-2000

Outcome	Approved objective	Actual
Assistance in applying for postsecondary admissions		
Overall	89%	84%
Public 4-year	88%	82%
Private 4-year	91%	85%
2-year	90%	82%
Community organizations	89%	86%
Assistance in applying for student financial aid		
Overall	89%	82%
Public 4-year	88%	80%
Private 4-year	91%	84%
2-year	91%	80%
Community organizations	88%	85%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, *Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000*.

C. Postsecondary admissions and reentry

Postsecondary enrollment numbers were divided into the following two groups:

- Postsecondary admissions—number of high school graduates and participants who have completed requirements to obtain a high school equivalency degree, as well as other eligible individuals who have enrolled in programs of postsecondary education for the first time during this reporting period or for the fall term.
- Postsecondary reentry—number of participants who were previously dismissed or had halted their educational progress toward a postsecondary degree, but who reenrolled in a program of postsecondary education during the reporting period or for the fall term.

Overall, Talent Search projects expected 74 percent of eligible participants to enroll in college and 64 percent of participants who had previously dropped out of college to re-enroll. In fact, projects reported that 73 percent of participants enrolled for the first time and that 76 percent of the participants in the program who had dropped out re-entered (Table 23).

When examining the data by sector, projects hosted at community organizations had the highest percentage of their college-ready participants admitted to a postsecondary institution (76 percent) and projects hosted at 2-year colleges had the highest percentage of their postsecondary dropouts re-enroll (86 percent).

Table 23. Comparison of approved objectives and actual achievements for postsecondary outcomes: 1999-2000

Outcome	Approved objective	Actual
Postsecondary admissions		
Overall	74%	73%
Public 4-year	73%	71%
Private 4-year	76%	72%
2-year	73%	72%
Community organizations	75%	76%
Postsecondary reentry		
Overall	64%	76%
Public 4-year	60%	79%
Private 4-year	60%	60%
2-year	67%	86%
Community organizations	67%	73%

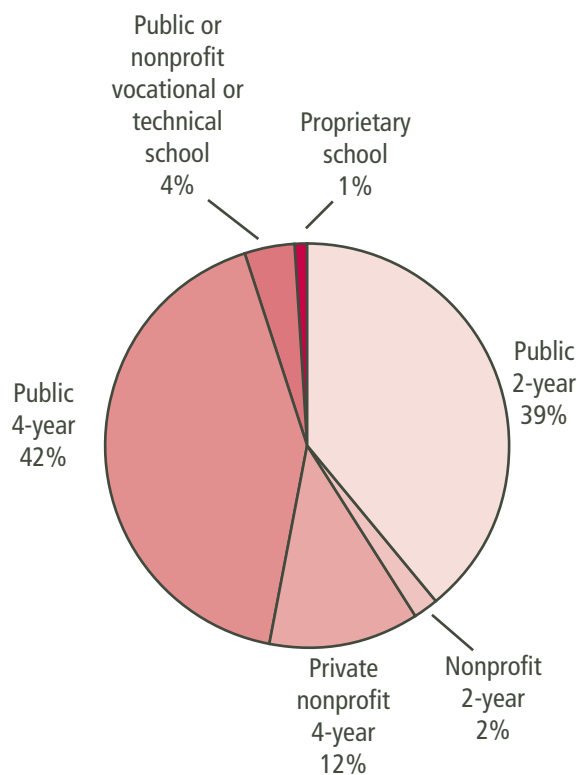
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, *Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000*.

D. Postsecondary placement

In addition to the number of participants who enrolled or re-enrolled in college, projects provided information on the types of colleges those participants chose to attend. For the Talent Search Program as a whole in 1999-2000, 81 percent of participants who went on to college attended a 2-year or 4-year public institution (Figure 16). Forty-two percent attended a public 4-year school and 39 percent attended a public 2-year school. Another 12 percent enrolled in a private 4-year school. The remaining students chose to attend a vocational or technical school, proprietary school, or a 2-year non-profit school.

Among Talent Search projects based in postsecondary institutions, it was common for participants to attend college at an institution of the same type as the program's host institution. For example, students from programs based in public 4-year schools attended a public 4-year college or university at a rate of 49 percent, which is higher than attendance rates at public 4-year colleges from any other sector (Table 24). Seventeen percent of students from projects based in private 4-year schools also attended a private 4-year college or university, and 53 percent of students from projects at 2-year schools attended a 2-year college.

Figure 16. Postsecondary placement of Talent Search participants overall: 1999-2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, *Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000*.

Table 24. Postsecondary placement of participants by sector: 1999-2000

Sector	Percentage admitted to public 4-year institutions	Percentage admitted to private 4-year institutions	Percentage admitted to 2-year institutions*	Percentage admitted to other types of institutions**
Public 4-year	49%	10%	34%	7%
Private 4-year	44%	17%	34%	5%
2-year	33%	8%	53%	5%
Community organizations	41%	14%	41%	5%
All projects	42%	12%	41%	5%

*Includes 2-year public and non-profit schools.

**Includes vocational or technical schools and proprietary schools.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

V. DATA ISSUES AND FUTURE PLANS

The following section highlights data issues, response rates, and possible future modifications to the Talent Search performance report. The rates of completion for individual data items and sections on the performance report were uniformly high, ranging from 86 percent to 100 percent (Table 25).

All items related to demographics, with the exception of target schools (90 percent), had response rates of 100 percent. All items in the performance outcomes section, with the exception of the percentage of participants reentering middle school, had response rates of 90 percent or higher. The response rates for items in the services section could not be determined from the given data. In this particular section, projects were given a list of 10 services to report on. They were asked to list the number of sessions they provided during the performance period and the number of participants served through each activity. Because not all projects provided all 10 services, it was not possible to determine whether a field was left blank because that particular service was never provided or because the project did not have the information on hand.

An additional difficulty in interpreting the services data was the lack of clarity about how the numbers of sessions and participants for a given service were calculated. The instructions on the performance report stated that “the number of sessions, activities, events, and organizations categories should reflect the total number of these provided. For example, the project may have conducted 50 tutoring sessions for 15 adults. Thus, under the ‘Tutoring’ column, the project should indicate No. of Sessions—50, No. of Participants—15.” In the given example, it is not clear whether each of the 15 participants attended 50 group sessions, or whether 50 individual sessions were held and split among 15 students.

There were also some data inconsistencies in Sections III and IV of the performance report. In Section III, some projects claimed to provide services to more participants than were included in Section II. For example, 22 projects (6 percent) reported that they provided tutoring activities to more middle school students than were listed as participants in the demographics section. In addition, some of the outcome data provided in Section IV were inconsistent with demographic data in Section II. In some cases, projects stated that they had more participants in an outcome than was feasible. For example, 59 Talent Search projects (16 percent) claimed to have more high school students re-enroll in high school than they had secondary school drop-outs.

The U.S. Department of Education has added edit checks to the Web-based application that will correct both of these issues. It will require that the totals in each part of Section III and Section IV cannot be larger than the totals in Section II. In addition, the Department has added edits to Section III that require a numeric value for each service or activity field to ensure complete reporting. Those projects not providing the

service or activity must enter a zero in the field. The results of this change should be immediately apparent in the 2000-01 performance data. The Department will continue to clarify the directions for completing the reports and to make revisions based on feedback from the project staff concerning the report form and instructions.

Table 25. Section and item response rates: 1999-2000

Section and item	Response rate
Number of participants assisted	100%
Participant distribution by eligibility	100%
Participant distribution by ethnic background	100%
Participant distribution by gender	100%
Participant distribution by age	100%
Veterans served	100%
Participants of limited English proficiency	100%
Target schools	90%
Approved objectives:	
Secondary school retention	100%
Secondary school graduation	100%
Secondary school reentry	94%
Assistance in applying for postsecondary admissions	98%
Assistance in applying for student financial aid	99%
Postsecondary admissions	99%
Postsecondary reentry	91%
Participant status at the end of the reporting period:	
Continued in middle school	99%
Promoted from middle school to high school	99%
Continued in high school	99%
Re-entered middle school	86%
Re-entered high school	90%
Received high school diploma	99%
Obtained a GED/high school equivalency degree	90%
Applied for admission to programs of postsecondary education	99%
Applied for student financial aid for postsecondary education	99%
Admitted to (or enrolled in) a program of postsecondary education	99%
Re-enrolled in a program of postsecondary education	91%
Dropped out of middle school	94%
Dropped out of high school	97%
Other	96%
Unknown	100%
Postsecondary placements (types of institutions)	91%-100%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, *Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000*.

APPENDIX A: TABLES

Table A1. Number of Talent Search projects and participants and percentage reporting performance information, by federal region: 1999-2000

Federal region	Total projects in 1999	Project distribution	Number of participants	Number of projects reporting	Response rate
Region I (Boston)	14	4%	12,255	14	100%
Region II (New York)	33	9%	32,114	33	100%
Region III (Philadelphia)	35	10%	43,521	35	100%
Region IV (Atlanta)	88	24%	74,486	88	100%
Region V (Chicago)	55	15%	42,556	55	100%
Region VI (Dallas)	48	13%	44,650	48	100%
Region VII (Kansas City)	20	6%	15,940	19	95%
Region VIII (Denver)	18	5%	15,156	17	94%
Region IX (San Francisco)	38	11%	38,956	38	100%
Region X (Seattle)	12	3%	8,436	12	100%
Total for nation	361	100%	328,070	359	99%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Table A2. Participant distribution by eligibility status and federal region: 1999-2000

Federal Region	Low-income and first generation	Low-income only	First generation only	Other needs
Region I (Boston)	72%	9%	15%	4%
Region II (New York)	78%	9%	8%	6%
Region III (Philadelphia)	74%	6%	16%	5%
Region IV (Atlanta)	72%	5%	16%	7%
Region V (Chicago)	71%	8%	16%	5%
Region VI (Dallas)	75%	6%	13%	5%
Region VII (Kansas City)	73%	7%	17%	3%
Region VIII (Denver)	73%	9%	12%	6%
Region IX (San Francisco)	76%	5%	14%	5%
Region X (Seattle)	72%	6%	18%	4%
Percent for nation	74%	7%	14%	5%

Totals do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Table A3. Participant distribution by race and ethnicity and federal region: 1999-2000

Federal Region	Am. Indian/ Al. Nat.	Asian	Black or African Am.	Hisp. or Latino	White	Haw. or other Pac Is.	Multi-racial	Unk.
Region I (Boston)	1%	6%	20%	30%	38%	0%	3%	2%
Region II (New York)	1%	3%	34%	53%	8%	0%	2%	0%
Region III (Philadelphia)	0%	2%	31%	34%	32%	0%	1%	0%
Region IV (Atlanta)	2%	1%	57%	2%	37%	0%	0%	1%
Region V (Chicago)	4%	4%	48%	9%	33%	0%	2%	0%
Region VI (Dallas)	6%	2%	34%	24%	32%	0%	1%	0%
Region VII (Kansas City)	2%	3%	26%	7%	60%	0%	2%	0%
Region VIII (Denver)	28%	1%	1%	22%	48%	0%	0%	0%
Region IX (San Francisco)	3%	15%	15%	44%	11%	9%	3%	0%
Region X (Seattle)	12%	6%	6%	16%	56%	1%	3%	0%
Percent for nation	4%	4%	35%	23%	31%	1%	1%	< .5%

Table A3 includes "Unknown" response option so data do not match totals in Figure 5.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Table A4. Participant distribution by grade level and federal region: 1999-2000

Federal Region	Middle school	High school	Secondary school dropout	High school (GED) graduate	Post secondary dropout	Post secondary student
Region I (Boston)	34%	63%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Region II (New York)	25%	67%	3%	4%	1%	0%
Region III (Philadelphia)	27%	67%	2%	2%	2%	0%
Region IV (Atlanta)	34%	62%	2%	1%	0%	0%
Region V (Chicago)	31%	60%	2%	6%	1%	0%
Region VI (Dallas)	29%	69%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Region VII (Kansas City)	32%	63%	3%	2%	1%	0%
Region VIII (Denver)	32%	61%	3%	2%	2%	0%
Region IX (San Francisco)	24%	72%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Region X (Seattle)	35%	62%	1%	2%	0%	0%
Percent for nation	30%	65%	2%	2%	1%	<0.5%

Totals do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Table A5. Percentage of projects providing academic support services, by federal region: 1999-2000

Federal Region	Tutoring	Assisted (computer) labs	Test-taking and study skills	Academic advising
Region I (Boston)	100%	79%	100%	100%
Region II (New York)	91%	76%	94%	94%
Region III (Philadelphia)	71%	77%	97%	97%
Region IV (Atlanta)	84%	69%	99%	98%
Region V (Chicago)	80%	71%	98%	98%
Region VI (Dallas)	81%	69%	98%	98%
Region VII (Kansas City)	89%	79%	95%	95%
Region VIII (Denver)	76%	65%	100%	82%
Region IX (San Francisco)	87%	58%	95%	95%
Region X (Seattle)	83%	75%	92%	100%
Percent for nation	83%	70%	97%	96%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

Table A6. Percentage of projects providing personal and career development services, by federal region: 1999-2000

Federal Region	Counseling	Mentoring	Cultural activities	College orientation	Family activities	Referrals
Region I (Boston)	100%	79%	93%	100%	93%	93%
Region II (New York)	97%	58%	94%	97%	88%	55%
Region III (Philadelphia)	100%	69%	97%	97%	94%	60%
Region IV (Atlanta)	98%	59%	94%	100%	91%	68%
Region V (Chicago)	91%	60%	93%	100%	91%	71%
Region VI (Dallas)	98%	75%	96%	98%	98%	77%
Region VII (Kansas City)	100%	68%	100%	100%	89%	63%
Region VIII (Denver)	100%	59%	100%	100%	82%	65%
Region IX (San Francisco)	92%	58%	84%	95%	92%	79%
Region X (Seattle)	92%	92%	100%	100%	100%	75%
Percent for nation	96%	64%	94%	99%	92%	70%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search Performance Reports, 1999-2000.

REFERENCES

Eisner, Elizabeth. "Analysis of Talent Search Performance Reports, 1986-87 and 1990-91." Paper included in the report from the Design Conference for the Evaluation of the Talent Search Program, hosted by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Policy and Planning, September 30, 1992.



**No Child
LEFT BEHIND**