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Richard A. Lipsey
Edward D. Markle
Roy O. Martin III
Joseph C. Wiley

Brooksie L. Bonvillain, Student

BOARD OF REGENTS
P. O. Box 3677
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3677
Phone (225) 342-4253, FAX (225) 342-9318
www.regents.state.la.us

AGENDA

PLANNING, RESEARCH AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, April 23, 2014
1:00 p.m.

Louisiana Purchase Room • Claiborne Building • Baton Rouge, Louisiana

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Consent Agenda
 - A. R.S. 17:1808 (Licensure)
 1. Initial Licenses
 - a. Palmer College of Chiropractic
 - b. University of Florida
 2. License Renewals
 - a. Central Texas College
 - b. Liberty University
 - c. Walden University
- IV. Board of Regents' 2014 TOPS Report
- V. Board of Regents' eLearning Task Force Annual Update
- VI. GRAD Act Requests for Data Re-submission
- VII. Other Business
- VIII. Adjournment

Committee Members: Joseph Wiley, Chair; Joel Dupré, Vice Chair; Mark Abraham, Pamela Egan, Joseph Farr, William Fenstermaker, Robert Levy, Richard Lipsey, Roy Martin III.

Agenda Item III.A.1.a.

Palmer College of Chiropractic Davenport, Iowa

BACKGROUND

Palmer College of Chiropractic (Palmer) is not incorporated in the state of Louisiana. The private chiropractic college is located in Davenport, Iowa. Dating its formation to the Palmer School and Cure in 1897, Palmer received its current designation in 1961. The institution currently has campuses in Iowa, Florida and California. Palmer is accredited by the Higher Learning Accrediting Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Palmer offers the Doctor of Chiropractic Degree at its home campus and is proposing to make the required preceptorship under the direction of a Doctor of Chiropractic available to Louisiana residents. The availability of the required preceptorship in Louisiana necessitates licensure.

FACULTY

Palmer employs three faculty to support the required preceptorship in the Doctor of Chiropractic program. The three faculty are employed full-time and hold Doctor of Chiropractic degrees.

FACILITIES

Since the proposed program is offered on the home campus in Davenport, there will be no need for physical facilities in Louisiana. Preceptorship experiences will be held in a variety of healthcare settings throughout Louisiana.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Given the credentials of the college's faculty, its campus and program accreditation, and the general oversight by the home campus, the senior staff recommends that the Board of Regents approve an initial operating license for the preceptorship operations of Palmer College of Chiropractic, located in Davenport, Iowa.

Agenda Item III.A.1.b.

University of Florida Gainesville, Florida

BACKGROUND

The University of Florida (UF) is not incorporated in the State of Louisiana. The institution is a publically-supported research university of approximately 50,000 students in sixteen colleges. UF traces its roots to East Florida Seminary located in Ocala in 1853 and relocated to Gainesville in 1866. UF is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

UF is proposing to make available to Louisiana residents a variety of online programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Typically, the online nature of the delivery system would not require licensure. However, since pharmacy doctorate, the BS in sports management and the BS in health education programs require internship/practicum experiences, licensure is necessary.

FACULTY

UF employs 86 faculty in support of its online programs that trigger physical presence in Louisiana, 39 of which are employed full-time and all trained at the doctoral level.

FACILITIES

Since UF operates its program online with administrative and academic support in Gainesville, Florida, there are no physical facilities in Louisiana. Students will complete internship/practicum experiences at various locations within Louisiana.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Given the credentials of its faculty, the institution's and academic programs' accreditation, and the general oversight by the home campus, the senior staff recommends that the Board of Regents issue an initial operating license to the University of Florida, located in Gainesville, Florida.

Agenda Item III.A.2.a.

Central Texas College Killeen, Texas

BACKGROUND

Central Texas College is not incorporated in Louisiana. Central Texas College was first licensed by the Board of Regents in 1993. The institution is headquartered in Killeen, Texas and provides educational services to military personnel worldwide. Central Texas College is accredited at the associate-degree level by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Central Texas College currently offers nineteen associate degree and two certificate programs at Fort Polk. Admission is selective in that enrollment is limited to active duty soldiers and their dependents. Students receive instruction in a lecture and laboratory format which is structured around military schedules and activities.

FACULTY AND STUDENTS

Thirty faculty teach at the Fort Polk site, six on a full-time basis. Three faculty members hold doctoral degrees; and twenty hold masters degrees. All faculty are recruited, screened, and employed through the central campus in Killeen. The institution reported a total unduplicated enrollment of 351 students in fall 2013.

FACILITIES

Facilities include numerous classrooms, an administrative office, computer laboratory, and a base library which offers students access to library resources housed at Central Texas College in Killeen.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Given the credentials of its faculty, the institution's commitment to providing students with access to appropriate library resources, its regional accreditation, and the oversight provided by the main campus, senior staff recommends that the Board of Regents approve Central Texas College's application for license renewal.

Agenda Item III.A.2.b.

Liberty University Lynchburg, Virginia

BACKGROUND

Liberty University (Liberty) is not incorporated in the state of Louisiana. The college is a private institution, located in Lynchburg, Virginia and received its initial license in 2011. Liberty is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Liberty offers a variety of online undergraduate and graduate programs. Typically, the online nature of the delivery system would not require licensure. However, since some of the programs (education, RN to BSN, public health, aeronautics) require clinical rotations or field experiences, licensure is necessary.

FACULTY

Liberty University employs over 1300 faculty to support its online offerings. Since many of the faculty teach on campus as well as in the online program, the university was unable to provide faculty data specifically for those programs it offers to Louisiana residents. Approximately two-thirds of the faculty are employed on a part-time basis.

FACILITIES

Since Liberty operates its programs online with administrative and academic support in Lynchburg, there are no physical facilities in Louisiana. Students will complete clinical experiences at various locations within the state.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Given the scope of programs available to Louisiana residents, the credentials of its faculty, the college's campus and program accreditation, and the general oversight by the home campus, the senior staff recommends that the Board of Regents approve license renewal for Liberty University, located in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Agenda Item III.A.2.c.

Walden University Minneapolis, MN

BACKGROUND

Walden University (Walden) is not incorporated in Louisiana. The university is a private, for-profit university located in Minneapolis, Minnesota, accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and was first licensed by the Board of Regents in 2006.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Walden offers various academic programs at the bachelors, masters and doctoral levels through its schools of management, psychology, education, and health and human resources. Admission to programs is selective, depending on the level and discipline of the program. As a virtual online university, Walden is not physically operating or functioning in Louisiana. However, since a few of the programs in the education and health-related fields require internships or practicum, institutional licensure is necessary.

FACULTY AND STUDENTS

The courses and programs offered in Louisiana by Walden are online. All faculty meet accreditation requirements to teach at the appropriate level of instruction. Walden faculty have teaching responsibilities for students who may reside in any of the fifty states and elsewhere. The university currently enrolls over 13,000 students.

FACILITIES

Since Walden operates its programs online with administrative and academic support in Minneapolis, there are no out-of-state physical facilities in Louisiana. Students will complete clinical experiences at various locations within the state.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Given the credentials of its faculty, its history of providing online education, and its regional and programmatic accreditation, senior staff recommends that the Board of Regents approve license renewal for Walden University, located in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Agenda Item IV.

Executive Summary

The Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) was created via ACT 1375 during the 1997 Regular Legislative Session. The first college freshman class to receive TOPS awards entered postsecondary education in the fall of 1998. ACT 1202 of the 2001 Regular Legislative Session requires the Louisiana Board of Regents (BoR) to prepare a report to analyze various aspects of the TOPS program. The most recent Regents' TOPS report was prepared in 2012.

In accordance with ACT 1202, the attached report includes:

- An analysis of the relationship between the high school courses taken and the student's score on the American College Test (ACT);
- The number of high school graduates who are eligible for TOPS and subsequently enroll in college;
- Persistence rates of TOPS students;
- Retention rates of TOPS awards, including numbers of and reasons for students losing award eligibility; and
- Graduation data, including rates.

The data in the report include current and historical data on TOPS students (students receiving an *Opportunity, Performance, or Honors* award) and non-TOPS students, to allow for comparison.

Generally, the findings included:

- In regards to the relationship between the high school courses taken and students' score on the ACT, indications are that completion of the *TOPS Core* improves students' score on the ACT.
- In terms of keeping Louisiana's "best and brightest" high school graduates in the state to pursue postsecondary educational opportunities, data indicate that since the program's inception, 90% of students deemed eligible for a TOPS award have accepted the award and subsequently enrolled in a postsecondary education institution in Louisiana.
- In regards to persistence, data indicate that students who begin college with a TOPS award persist in postsecondary education in subsequent years at a higher rate than non-TOPS students.
- Data reveal that students who begin a baccalaureate degree or an associate degree with TOPS graduate within 150% and 200% of time at much higher rates than do students without a TOPS award.



TOPS Report:
Analysis of the TOPS Program from 2004-2013

Louisiana Board of Regents

April, 2014



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- A. Analysis of TOPS Tech Program
- B. The TOPS Core Curriculum
- C. Act 1202

Executive Summary

The Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS), Louisiana's merit-based student aid program, was created via Act 1375 during the 1997 Regular Legislative Session. The first college freshman class to receive TOPS awards entered postsecondary education in the fall of 1998.

Act 1202 of the 2001 Regular Legislative Session requires the Louisiana Board of Regents (BoR) to prepare a report to analyze various aspects of the TOPS program. In accordance with Act 1202, this report includes:

- An analysis of the relationship between the high school courses taken and the student's score on the American College Test (ACT);
- The number of high school graduates who are eligible for TOPS and subsequently enroll in college;
- Persistence rates of TOPS students;
- Retention rates of TOPS awards, including numbers of and reasons for students losing award eligibility; and
- Graduation data, including rates.

The data in this report include current and historical data on TOPS students (students receiving an *Opportunity, Performance, or Honors* award) and non-TOPS students, to allow for comparison.

All indications are that the TOPS eligibility requirements do induce students to take a more rigorous high school curriculum, which in turn better prepares them for the ACT and for success in postsecondary education. As the key component for eligibility for a TOPS award, the *TOPS Core Curriculum* encourages students to take high school courses that will prepare them for success after high school, particularly in postsecondary education. Of the 2003-04 graduating high school class, 59.5% had completed the *TOPS Core Curriculum*. Ten years later, 69.5% of the 2012-13 high school graduating class had done so. Indications are that completion of the *TOPS Core* improves students' scores on the ACT. According to ACT, of the 2011-2012 high school graduating class, 22,033 students (approximately 49%) took the ACT and attended a public postsecondary education institution in Louisiana the following fall. Of these students, the average ACT composite for those who completed the *TOPS Core* was 21.4. The average ACT composite for those who did not complete the *TOPS Core* was 16.7. In addition, data indicate that taking a rigorous high school curriculum decreases the likelihood of having to take developmental coursework in college. Of the 2011-2012 entering freshmen cohort, 43% of those that had completed the Louisiana Board of Regents recommended college preparatory coursework [*closely aligned with the TOPS Core*] in high school were required to take developmental coursework upon entry into college. Of those that did not complete the same

rigorous curriculum while in high school, 89% were required to take developmental coursework.

One of the generally accepted purposes of TOPS is to keep Louisiana high school graduates in the State to pursue postsecondary educational opportunities. The TOPS program specifically seeks to entice Louisiana's best and brightest high school graduates (as determined by completion of the *TOPS Core Curriculum*, a minimum high school GPA and a minimum score on the ACT) to remain in the state for postsecondary education. To that end, since the program's inception in fall 1998, 256,923 students have met the eligibility requirements for an *Opportunity, Performance or Honors TOPS* award. Of those, 230,985, or 90%, have accepted an *Opportunity, Performance or Honors TOPS* award and enrolled in a postsecondary education institution in Louisiana.

In regards to persistence, aggregate data indicate that students who begin college with a TOPS award return to postsecondary education in subsequent years at a higher rate than non-TOPS students. TOPS awards are cancelled when students fail to maintain full-time and continuous enrollment, earn the required 24 hours of credit per academic year, or raise their GPA to the required minimum. Between 2004 and 2013, approximately 33% of TOPS recipients had their TOPS award cancelled at some point during their postsecondary academic career, and may or may not have earned the award back. Based upon data from the 2012-13 entering freshmen cohort of TOPS recipients, approximately 11% had their awards cancelled during or immediately following their first year of postsecondary education. Data indicate that of those awards which are cancelled, the majority are cancelled due to students' failure to earn 24 hours of college credit during an academic year.

In regards to graduation rates, data indicate that students who begin a baccalaureate or an associate degree program with TOPS graduate within 150% and 200% of time at much higher rates than do students without a TOPS award. Approximately 3 out of 5 TOPS recipients complete a baccalaureate degree within 150% of time, compared with 1 out of 4 non-TOPS students who do so within the same time frame.

Finally, it should be noted that since the program's inception, the State has made a significant and growing investment in TOPS. In total, the State has spent approximately \$1.9 billion on the TOPS program. Between the 1999 and 2014 fiscal years, total expenditures on the TOPS program increased 307%. In 1998-1999 the average TOPS award amount was \$2,288 (including *TOPS Tech*). In 2012-2013, the average TOPS award amount had increased 80% to \$4,122 (including *TOPS Tech*).

Brief History of the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS)

The Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS), Louisiana's merit-based student aid program, was created via Act 1375 during the 1997 Regular Legislative Session. The first freshman class to receive TOPS awards entered postsecondary education in the fall of 1998. Although the founding legislation does not directly document the goals of the program, four generally accepted purposes of TOPS are:

- To promote academic success by requiring completion of a rigorous high school core curriculum;
- To provide financial incentives as a reward for good academic performance;
- To keep Louisiana's best and brightest in the state to pursue postsecondary educational opportunities; and
- To promote access to and success in postsecondary education.

Eligibility Criteria, Levels of Award, Renewal Requirements, Distribution of Awards

There are four levels of TOPS awards available to students enrolling at Louisiana's colleges and universities: *TOPS Tech*, *Opportunity*, *Performance*, and *Honors*. Due to historical underutilization of the *TOPS Tech* award, this report will focus only on those students receiving an *Opportunity*, *Performance* or *Honors* award (some limited statistical analysis on the *TOPS Tech* award can be found in Appendix A).

The criteria for eligibility for the *Opportunity*, *Performance* and *Honors* awards include completion of a defined high school core curriculum, with a minimum grade point average in core courses, and a minimum ACT composite score. Table 1 lists current criteria and awards.

Table 1: TOPS Eligibility Criteria and Award Specifics, 2013

Award	Core	Core GPA	ACT Composite	Award Specifics	Duration
<i>Opportunity</i>	17.5 Units	2.50	20	Full-Time Tuition & Certain fees	4 years, or 8 semesters
<i>Performance</i>	17.5 Units	3.00	23	Full-Time Tuition & Certain fees + \$400/year	4 years, or 8 semesters
<i>Honors</i>	17.5 Units	3.00	27	Full-Time Tuition & Certain fees + \$800/year	4 years, or 8 semesters

Source: LOSFA website- TOPS Informational Brochures and Flyers

Currently, the *TOPS Core Curriculum* consists of 17.5 units. The *TOPS Core Curriculum* will increase to 19 units beginning with the 2013-2014 high school graduating class (the specific course requirements of the *TOPS Core Curriculum* are contained in Appendix B).

Administration of TOPS is statutorily assigned to the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA). Initial student eligibility is determined using a combination of: the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or TOPS On-Line Application; the high school transcript from the Department of Education’s Student Transcript System (STS); and official ACT scores.

To maintain eligibility, TOPS recipients must be continuously enrolled as full-time students, earn at least 24 semester hours equivalent of credit each academic year (fall, spring and summer), and maintain academic progress as demonstrated by the cumulative grade point average. Table 2 lists the minimum renewal requirements for each award.

Table 2: Renewal Requirements, 2013

Award	Hrs. Earned/Academic Year	Cum. GPA Each Academic Yr. (2.0 each semester/term)	Award Reinstated (Upon recovery of req. GPA)
		2.30- first year;	
<i>Opportunity</i>	24	2.50- subsequent years	Yes
<i>Performance</i>	24	3.00	Yes, as <i>Opportunity</i>
<i>Honors</i>	24	3.00	Yes, as <i>Opportunity</i>

Source: LOSFA website- TOPS Informational Brochures and Flyers

Continuing eligibility is determined by LOSFA based on data received from the postsecondary institution in which the student is enrolled.

In fall 2013, the majority (53.3%) of all TOPS awards went to students attending a UL System campus. The majority (52.5%) of students with TOPS awards had an *Opportunity* award. Approximately forty-eight percent (47.5%) of students with the highest level of award, the *Honor* award, attended an LSU System campus. Table 3 illustrates the distribution of TOPS awards received for the fall 2013 semester.

Table 3: Distribution of Award Types across System, Fall 2013

Award	LSU System	Southern System	UL System	LCTC System	Private Institutions	Proprietary Schools	% of all awards
<i>Opportunity</i>	27.4%	2.0%	57.5%	6.4%	6.3%	0.3%	52.5%
<i>Performance</i>	35.1%	0.8%	55.8%	2.2%	6.1%	0.1%	26.2%
<i>Honors</i>	47.5%	0.2%	39.8%	0.3%	12.1%	0.0%	21.3%
% of all awards	33.7%	1.3%	53.3%	4.0%	7.5%	0.2%	

Source: LOSFA- TOPS Payment Summary by Award Level for Academic Year 2013-2014

Act 1202 of 2001

Act 1202 of the 2001 Regular Legislative Session charged the Board of Regents (BoR) with developing a uniform TOPS reporting system for the purposes of policy analysis and program evaluation, and to provide accurate data and statistics relative to the program’s impact on the State and on students. In addition to the development of a TOPS reporting system, Act 1202 also required the BoR to prepare a report to analyze various aspects of the TOPS program (Act 1202 is included in Appendix C). To satisfy the reporting requirements, Regents’ staff developed interfaces between the major systems needed to identify and track TOPS students as they move through the postsecondary education enrollment cycle. According to Act 1202, the “TOPS report” should include:

- An analysis of the relationship between the high school courses taken and the student’s score on the American College Test (ACT);
- The number of high school graduates who are eligible for TOPS and subsequently enroll in college;
- Persistence rates of TOPS students;
- Retention rates of TOPS students, including numbers of and reasons for students losing award eligibility; and
- Graduation data, including rates.

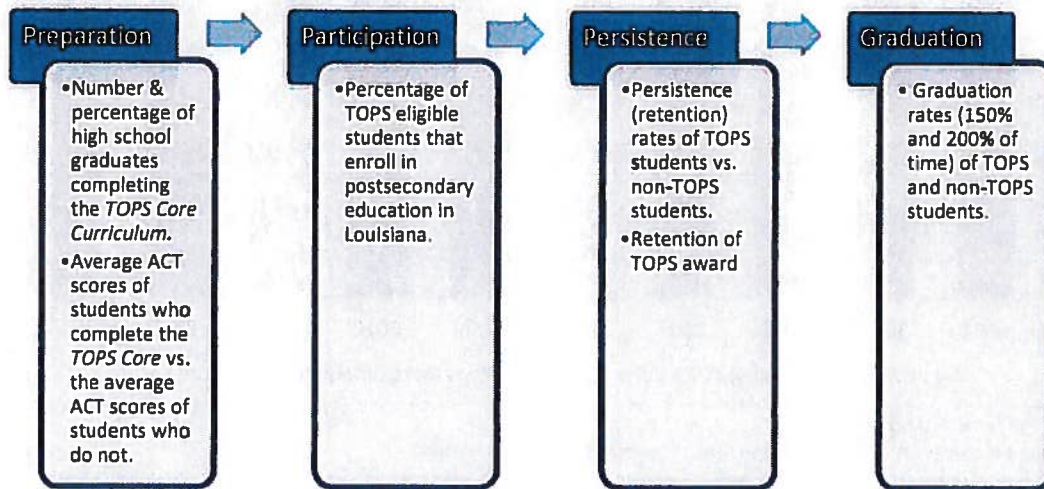
This report includes analyses of the five reporting specifications listed above.

TOPS Report: Historical Analysis of the TOPS Program, 2004-2013

Overview of Report

The data in this report include current and historical data on TOPS students (students receiving an *Opportunity, Performance, or Honors* award) and non-TOPS students, to allow for comparison. As illustrated in Figure A, the report is presented in an order that follows the students' progression through the postsecondary enrollment process; from preparation, to participation in postsecondary education, to persistence, to graduation.

Figure A: Graphical Overview of Report



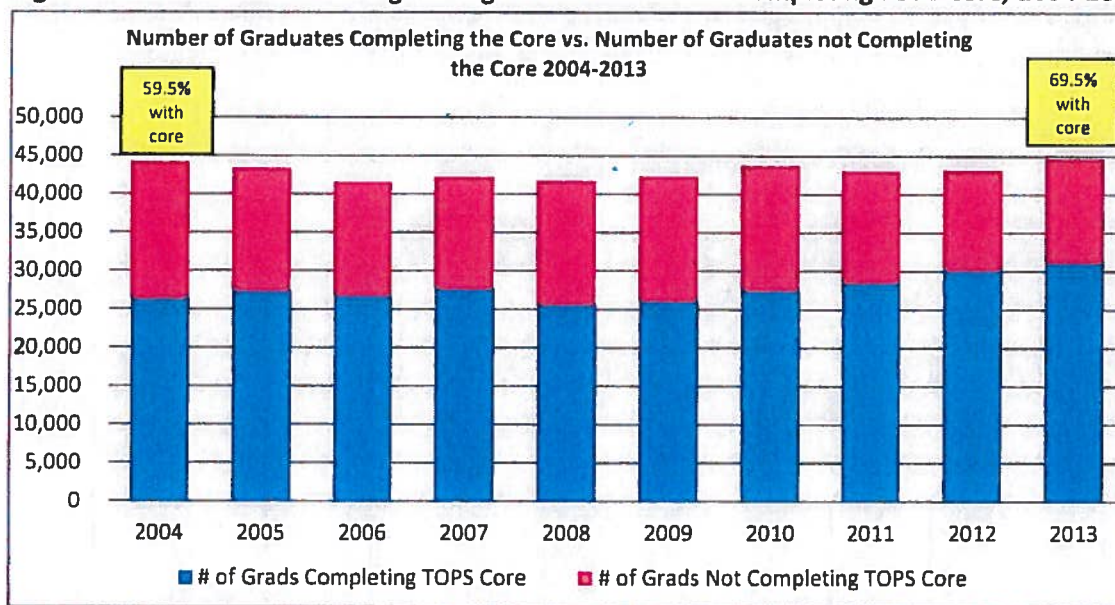
It should be noted that some of the data provided in the "Preparation" section, and all of the data provided in the "Participation," "Persistence" and "Graduation" sections of this report do not include private postsecondary institutions since those institutions do not currently participate in Regents' reporting systems.

Preparation

TOPS eligibility requirements require students to take high school courses that will prepare them for success after high school, particularly in postsecondary education. The *TOPS Core Curriculum* is the key component for eligibility for a TOPS award. With the 2001 Master Plan, the BoR adopted the *TOPS Core* as the *Regents' Core*, the most important element of the minimum standards established for admissions to the state's public four-year universities. With this change, students had a double incentive to complete the college-preparatory curriculum. In 2008 the Regents adopted as its core the *Core 4*, an even more demanding college-preparatory curriculum. The *TOPS Core* is a subset of the *Core 4*.

As shown in Figure B, the number and percentage of high school graduates completing the *TOPS Core Curriculum* has increased from 59.5% in 2004 to 69.5% in 2013, despite a decrease in the total number of high school graduates (a result of demographic changes in the early 1990's which led to a decrease in the number of school-age children in Louisiana).

Figure B: Number and Percentage of High School Graduates Completing *TOPS Core*, 2004-2013



Source: LOSFA Internal data files.

The *TOPS Core* was changed in 2008. An additional Math or Science requirement was added.

Indications are that completion of the *TOPS Core* improves students' scores on the ACT. The latest data available from ACT indicate that, "On average, students who complete the Louisiana Board of Regents recommended college preparatory coursework [*closely aligned with the TOPS Core*] in high school earn higher ACT composite scores." According to ACT, of the 2011-2012 high school graduating class, 22,033 students (approximately 49%) took the ACT and attended a *public* postsecondary education institution in Louisiana the following fall. Of these students, the average ACT composite for those who completed the *TOPS Core* was 21.4. The average ACT composite for those who did not complete the *TOPS Core* was 16.7.¹

In addition, data indicate that taking a rigorous high school curriculum decreases the likelihood of having to take developmental coursework in college. Of the 2011-2012 entering freshman cohort, 43% of those that had completed the Louisiana Board of Regents recommended college preparatory coursework [*closely aligned with the TOPS Core*] in high school were required to take developmental coursework upon entry into college. Of those that did not complete the

¹ "The ACT High School-to-College Success Report: 2011-2012 Freshmen"

same rigorous curriculum while in high school, 89% were required to take developmental coursework.²

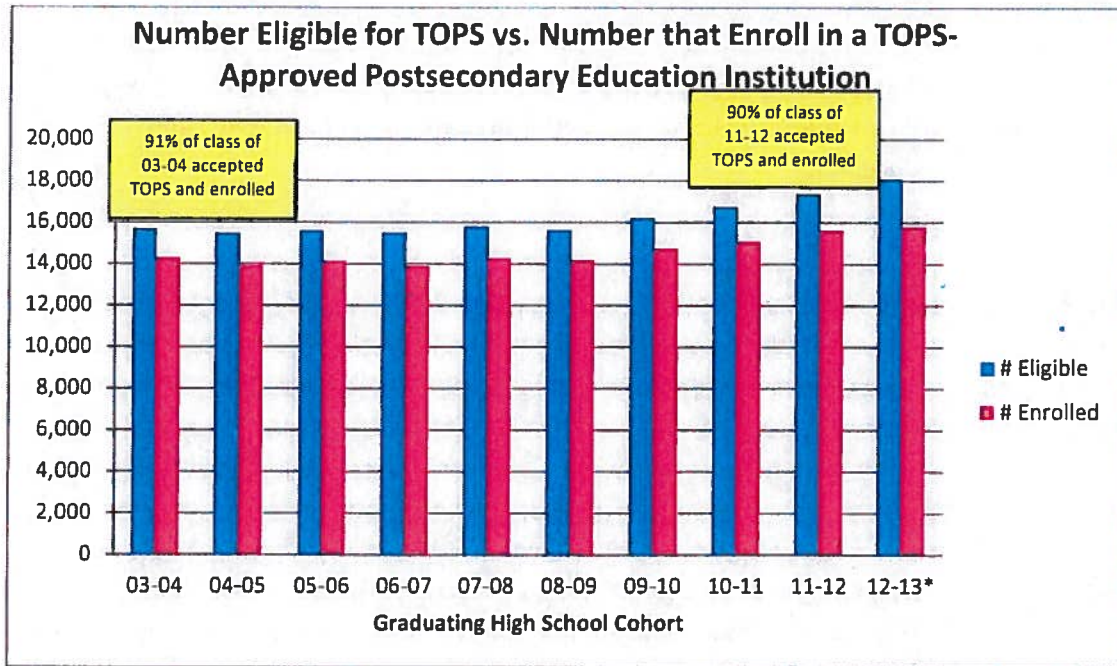
All indications are that the TOPS eligibility requirements induce students to take a more rigorous high school curriculum, which in turn better prepares them for the ACT and for success in postsecondary education.

Participation

One of the generally accepted purposes of TOPS is to keep Louisiana high school graduates in the State to pursue postsecondary educational opportunities. The TOPS program specifically seeks to entice Louisiana's best and brightest high school graduates (as defined by completion of the *TOPS Core Curriculum*, a minimum high school GPA and a minimum score on the ACT) to remain in the state for postsecondary education. To that end, since the program's inception in fall 1998, 256,923 students have been deemed eligible for an *Opportunity, Performance or Honors TOPS* award. Of those, 230,985, or 90%, have accepted an *Opportunity, Performance or Honors TOPS* award and enrolled in a postsecondary education institution in Louisiana. Therefore, the TOPS program has succeeded in keeping Louisiana's high school graduates in the State to pursue postsecondary education.

² "The ACT High School-to-College Success Report: 2011-2012 Freshmen"

Figure C: Number Eligible for TOPS vs. Number that Enroll by Graduating High School Class



Source: LOSFA internal data files.

*Students have until the first college semester following the first anniversary of the date they graduate from high school to accept a TOPS award. Therefore, the data reported in Figure C above for the class of 12-13 represent only those students in the 12-13 high school graduating cohort who accepted a TOPS award by the fall 2013 semester. The remaining cohort of eligible students has until the fall 2014 semester to accept a TOPS award.

Persistence

Persistence in postsecondary education is usually measured by the rate at which first time, full-time, degree-seeking students are retained to (or return for) their second year. As illustrated in Tables 4 and 5, students who begin college with a TOPS award return to postsecondary education in subsequent years at a higher rate than non-TOPS students.

Table 4 compares the overall retention rate (retention at any public postsecondary institution, not necessarily the institution in which the student started) to the second, third and fourth year (if available) of students who began at a four-year institution with TOPS verses those who began without TOPS (i.e., non-TOPS students).

Table 4: Statewide Retention Rates of TOPS vs. Non-TOPS Students Who Began at a Four-Year Institution

Fall Semester Entering Class	2 nd Yr. Retention		3 rd Yr. Retention		4 th Yr. Retention	
	TOPS	Non-TOPS	TOPS	Non-TOPS	TOPS	Non-TOPS
	2004	85%	62%	82%	54%	77%
2005	88%	68%	81%	56%	76%	49%
2006	88%	68%	82%	58%	78%	52%
2007	89%	69%	83%	59%	78%	53%
2008	90%	70%	83%	58%	79%	53%
2009	89%	71%	82%	60%	77%	52%
2010	89%	72%	82%	61%	71%	54%
2011	88%	71%	81%	59%	N/A	N/A
2012	87%	71%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: BoR internal data files. TOPS Tech award recipients are considered non-TOPS for purposes of this analysis.

Table 5 compares the overall retention rate to the second and third year (if available) of students who began at a two-year institution with TOPS versus those who began without TOPS (i.e., non-TOPS students).

Table 5: Statewide Retention Rates of TOPS vs. Non-TOPS Students Who Began at a Two-Year Institution

Fall Semester Entering Class	2 nd Yr. Retention		3 rd Yr. Retention	
	TOPS	Non-TOPS	TOPS	Non-TOPS
	2004	69%	36%	66%
2005	76%	54%	65%	38%
2006	74%	57%	63%	39%
2007	78%	57%	66%	44%
2008	81%	59%	69%	41%
2009	78%	53%	64%	35%
2010	77%	54%	60%	34%
2011	72%	53%	55%	33%
2012	74%	52%	N/A	N/A

Source: BoR internal data files. TOPS Tech award recipients are considered non-TOPS for purposes of this analysis.

Students who receive a TOPS award must maintain minimum academic criteria to retain their award (see Table 2). The award is cancelled when students fail to maintain full-time and

continuous enrollment, earn the required 24 hours of credit per academic year, or raise their GPA to the required minimum. Based upon data from the 2012-13 entering freshmen cohort of TOPS recipients, approximately 11% had their awards cancelled during or immediately following their first year of postsecondary education.

As Table 6 illustrates, between 2004 and 2013, 136,616 students received TOPS awards. Of these TOPS award recipients, 45,654 (33%) had their TOPS award cancelled at some point during their postsecondary academic career, and may or may not have earned the award back. Of the 45,654 awards which were cancelled, 28,880 (63%) were cancelled due to students' failure to earn 24 hours of college credit during an academic year.

Table 6: Percentage of TOPS Awards Cancelled by Cohort

Entering Cohort	Total # of Awards	Total # of Awards Cancelled*	Cancelled: 24 Hr. Requirement	Cancelled: GPA Requirement	Cancelled: Non-Continuous Enrollment	Cancelled: Student Resignation
2004-05	14,620	6,050 (41%)	3,424 (23%)	354 (2%)	2,272 (16%)	729 (5%)
2005-06	14,443	6,111 (42%)	3,146 (22%)	357 (2%)	2,608 (18%)	699 (5%)
2006-07	14,667	6,090 (42%)	3,818 (26%)	358 (2%)	1,914 (13%)	727 (5%)
2007-08	14,227	5,779 (41%)	3,666 (26%)	497 (3%)	1,616 (11%)	656 (5%)
2008-09	14,920	5,949 (40%)	3,796 (25%)	586 (4%)	1,567 (11%)	603 (4%)
2009-10	15,297	5,640 (37%)	3,593 (23%)	582 (4%)	1,465 (10%)	567 (4%)
2010-11	15,576	4,708 (30%)	3,059 (20%)	441 (3%)	1,208 (8%)	635 (4%)
2011-12	16,042	3,397 (21%)	2,487 (16%)	155 (1%)	755 (5%)	545 (3%)
2012-13	16,824	1,930 (11%)	1,891 (11%)	8 (0%)	31 (0%)	459 (3%)
Total	136,616	45,654	28,880	3,338	13,436	5,620

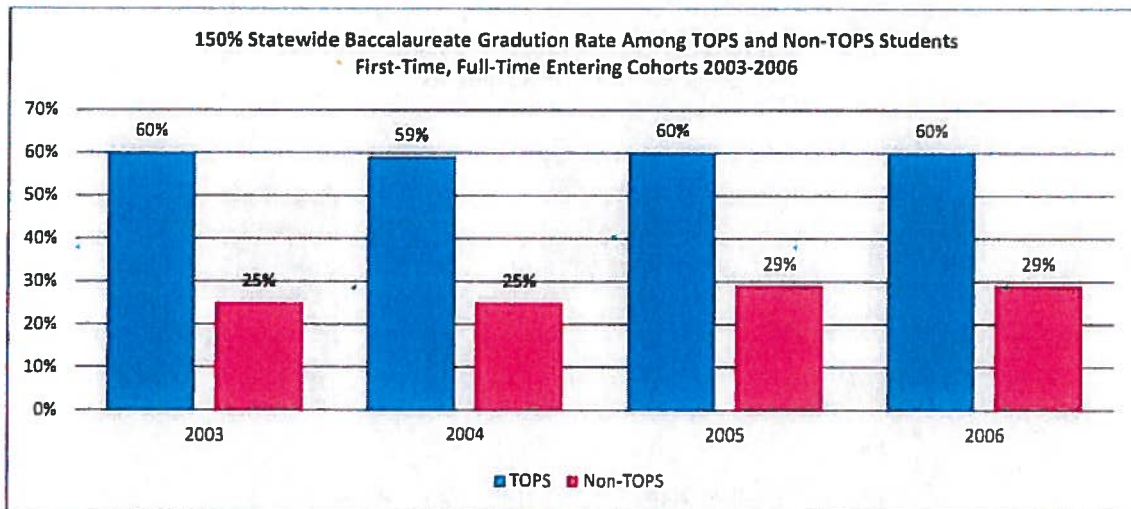
*Does not include those cancelled due to resignation.

Source: LOSFA internal data files. TOPS Tech award recipients not included.

Graduation

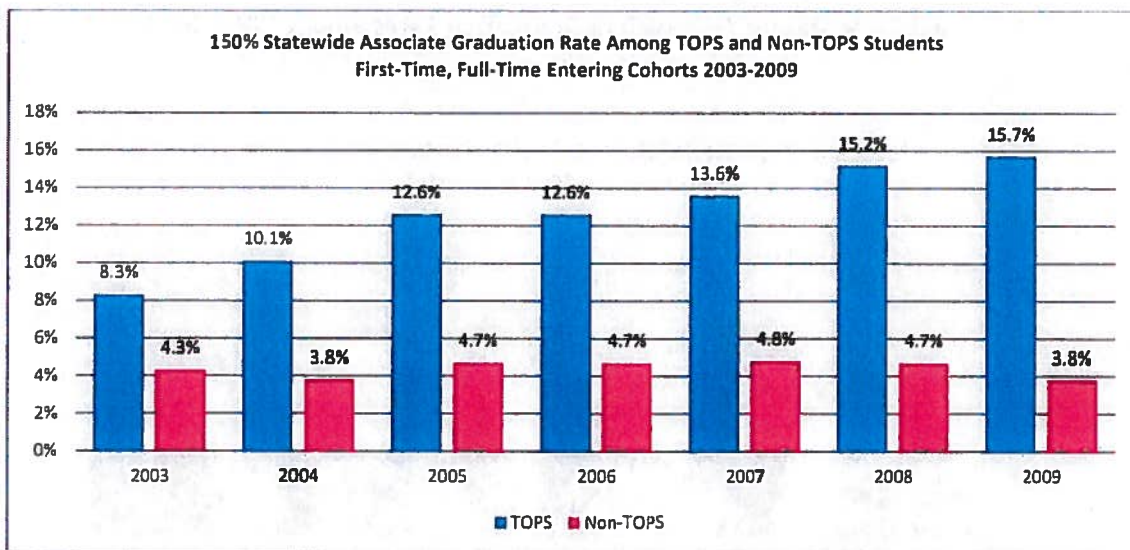
Graduation is typically measured by calculating the rate at which first-time, full-time degree seeking students earn their academic degrees within 150% of the time required (i.e., within six years for baccalaureate degrees and within three years for associate degrees). This 150% protocol was adopted by the federal government and has become the standard followed by the states. As Figures D and E both illustrate, students who begin a baccalaureate degree program or an associate degree program with TOPS graduate within 150% of time at much higher rates than do students without a TOPS award. As Figure D illustrates, approximately 3 out of 5 TOPS recipients complete a baccalaureate degree within 150% of time, compared with 1 out of 4 non-TOPS students who do so within the same time frame.

Figure D: 150% Statewide Baccalaureate Graduation Rate among TOPS and Non-TOPS Students



Source: BoR internal data files. TOPS Tech award recipients are considered non-TOPS for purposes of this analysis.

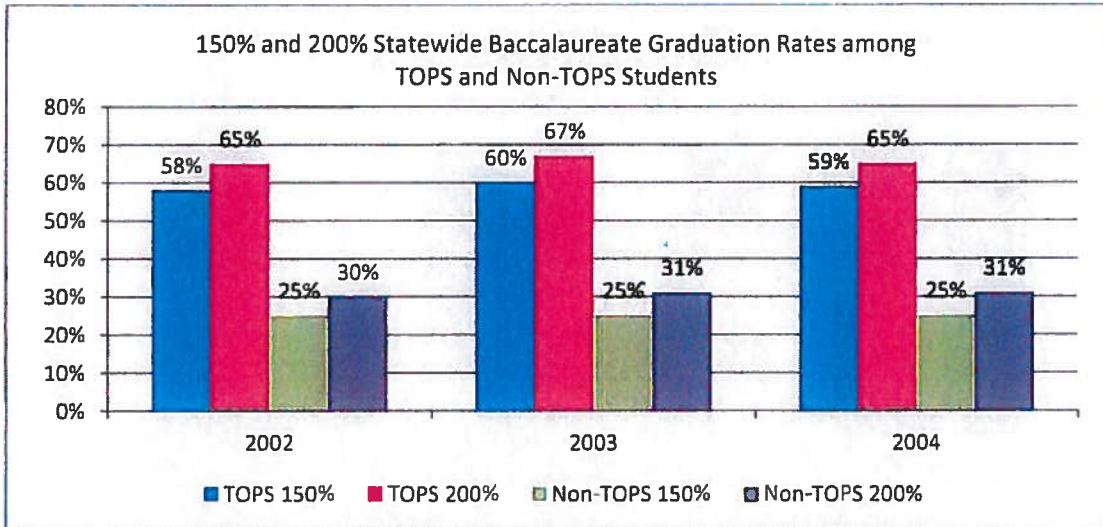
Figure E: 150% Statewide Associate Graduation Rate among TOPS and Non-TOPS Students



Source: BoR internal data files. TOPS Tech award recipients are considered non-TOPS for purposes of this analysis.

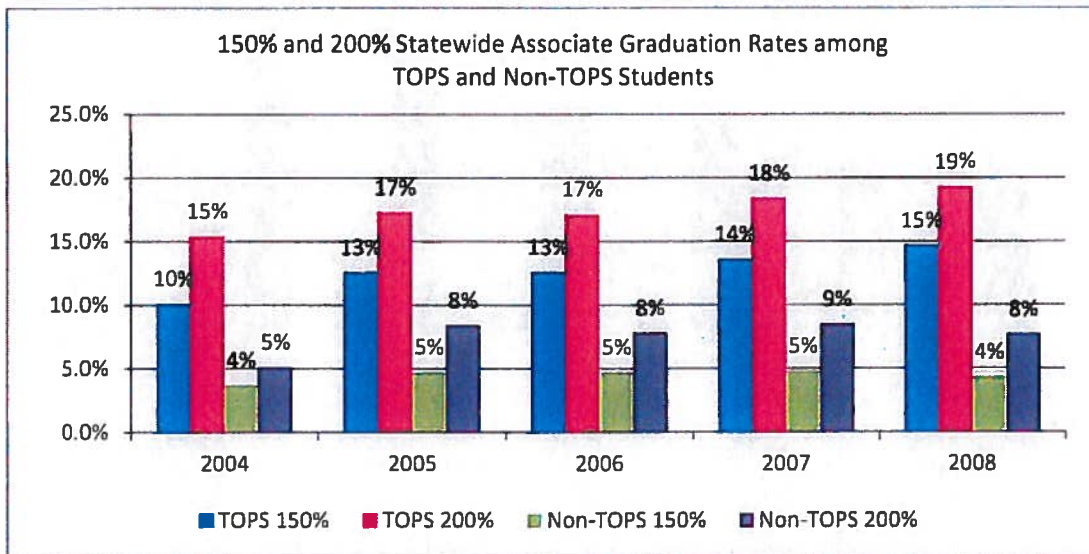
Figures F & G display the comparisons between the standard federally-accepted 150% graduation rates versus a 200% graduation rate. Again, TOPS recipients graduate at a higher rate than non-TOPS students.

Figure F: 150% and 200% Statewide Baccalaureate Graduation Rates among TOPS and Non-TOPS Students



Source: BoR Internal data files. TOPS Tech award recipients are considered non-TOPS for purposes of this analysis.

Figure G: 150% and 200% Statewide Associate Graduation Rates among TOPS and Non-TOPS Students

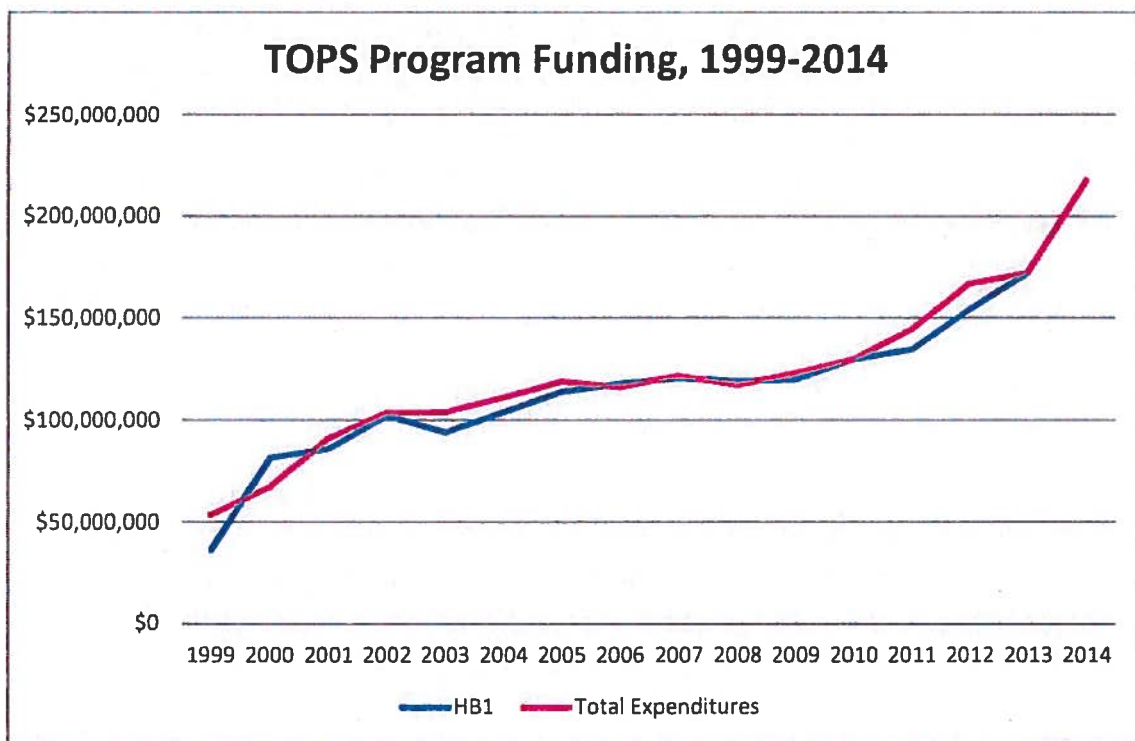


Source: BoR internal data files. TOPS Tech award recipients are considered non-TOPS for purposes of this analysis.

Funding TOPS

From 1999 to 2012 the State spent approximately \$1.9 billion funding the TOPS program. During that same time period, total expenditures on the TOPS program increased 307%. In 1998-1999 the average TOPS award amount was \$2,288 (including *TOPS Tech*). In 2012-2013, the average TOPS award amount had increased 80% to \$4,122 (including *TOPS Tech*). As Figure H illustrates, there has been a disparity between HB1 appropriations and total expenditures in several fiscal years. As a result, more recently, supplemental funding has been required to fully fund the TOPS program.

Figure H: TOPS Program Funding, 1999-2014



Source: LOSFA internal data files.

Conclusions

In accordance with Act 1202 of the 2001 Regular Legislative Session, this report has analyzed:

- The relationship between the high school courses taken and the student's score on the American College Test (ACT);
- The number of high school graduates who are eligible for TOPS and subsequently enroll in college;
- The persistence rates of TOPS students;

- Retention rates of TOPS awards, including numbers of and reasons for students losing award eligibility; and
- Graduation data, including rates, of TOPS students.

In regards to the relationship between the high school courses taken and students' score on the ACT, indications are that completion of the *TOPS Core* improves students' score on the ACT.

In regards to keeping Louisiana's "best and brightest" high school graduates in the state to pursue postsecondary educational opportunities, data indicate that since the program's inception, 90% of students deemed eligible for a TOPS award have accepted the award and subsequently enrolled in a postsecondary education institution in Louisiana.

In regards to persistence, data indicate that students who begin college with a TOPS award return to postsecondary education in subsequent years at a higher rate than non-TOPS students.

In regards to retention of TOPS awards, between 2004 and 2013, about 33% of students with TOPS awards had their award cancelled at some point during their postsecondary academic career. Data from the 2012-13 entering freshmen cohort of TOPS recipients indicate that approximately 11% had their award cancelled during or immediately following their first year of postsecondary education. Data also reveal that the majority (63%) of awards that are cancelled, whether cancelled during the first year of college or at any point thereafter, are cancelled due to students' failure to earn 24 hours of college credit during an academic year.

In regards to graduation rates, students who begin a baccalaureate degree program or an associate degree program with TOPS graduate within 150% and 200% of time at much higher rates than do students without a TOPS award. More specifically, approximately 3 out of 5 TOPS recipients complete a baccalaureate degree within 150% of time, compared with 1 out of 4 non-TOPS students who do so within the same time frame.

Considerations for Future Analysis

In addition to the analyses provided above, Board of Regents' staff, in future iterations of the "TOPS Report," anticipates conducting analyses and reporting significant findings on the following:

- A longitudinal analysis of the percentage of the high school graduating class who are deemed eligible for a TOPS award;
- Characteristics (especially ACT composite scores and high school GPA) of those students who are eligible for a TOPS award but do not accept the award or enroll in postsecondary education in the State of Louisiana;

- Graduation rates of those students who lost their TOPS award at any point; and
- Average time-to-degree of TOPS recipients verses Non-TOPS students

**Appendix A
Analysis of TOPS Tech Program**

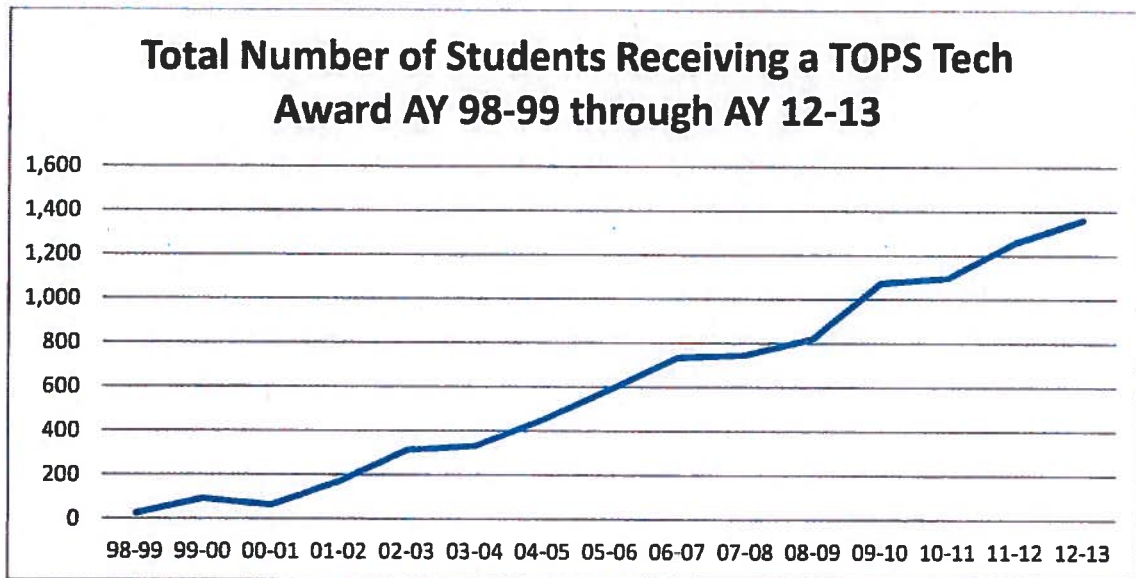
The *TOPS Tech* award may be utilized at any Louisiana Technical College and other public postsecondary school or at any member school of the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (LAICU) that provides skill or occupational training, and certain cosmetology and proprietary schools. The criteria for eligibility for the *TOPS Tech* award includes completion of a defined high school core curriculum, with a minimum grade point average in core courses, and a minimum ACT composite score or minimum level score on the assessments of the ACT WorkKeys system.

TOPS Tech Eligibility Criteria and Award Specifics, 2013

	TOPS Tech Option 1	TOPS Tech Option 2
Core	17 Units	19 Units
Core GPA	2.50	2.50
ACT Composite or ACT WorkKeys	17 or Silver Level	17 or Silver Level
Max Award at Public Schools that do not offer a baccalaureate degree	Tuition	Tuition
Max Award at Public Schools that offer baccalaureate degrees and at LAICU institutions and certain cosmetology and proprietary schools	The average TOPS Tech payments paid to students attending public schools that do not offer a baccalaureate degree	The average TOPS Tech payments paid to students attending public schools that do not offer a baccalaureate degree
Duration	2 years	2 years

Source: LOSFA website- TOPS Informational Brochures and Flyers

The *TOPS Tech* award has historically been underutilized. Since the program's inception in fall 1998 through fall 2013, approximately 47,971 students have been deemed eligible for a *TOPS Tech* award. Of those, approximately 9,133, or 19%, have utilized the award and enrolled full-time in a TOPS-approved Louisiana postsecondary education institution.



LOSFA



APPENDIX B

TOPS Core Curriculum

For the Opportunity, Performance, and Honors Awards

For High School graduates of 2014 through 2017.

For High School graduates of 2018 and thereafter [click here](#)

Units	Courses ¹
ENGLISH = 4 Units	
4 units	English I, II, III, & IV
MATH = 4 Units	
1 unit	Algebra I, or Integrated Mathematics I, or Applied Algebra I or Algebra I - Parts 1 & 2 (two units) or Applied Mathematics I & II (two units) or Applied Algebra 1A and 1B (two units)
1 unit	Algebra II or Integrated Mathematics II
2 units	Geometry, Pre-Calculus, Advanced Math-Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Advanced Math-Functions and Statistics, Probability and Statistics, Discrete Mathematics, Applied Mathematics III, Integrated Mathematics III, or Algebra III
SCIENCE = 4 Units	
1 unit	Biology I or II
1 unit	Chemistry I or II, or Chemistry Com
2 units	Earth Science, Physical Science, Environmental Science, Integrated Science, Biology II, Chemistry II, Physics, Physics II, Physics for Technology I or II, or Anatomy and Physiology or both Agriscience I & II (both for 1 unit)
SOCIAL STUDIES = 4 Units	
1 unit	United States History
1 unit	Civics and Free Enterprise (1 unit, combined), ² Civics (1 year), or AP Government and Politics: United States
2 units	World History, Western Civilization, World Geography, European History, History of Religion or AP Human Geography
FOREIGN LANGUAGE = 2 Units	
2 units	Foreign Language (2 units in the same language)
FINE ARTS = 1 Unit	
1 unit	Fine Arts Survey or 1 unit of a performance course in music, or dance, or theater or 1 unit of studio art or 1 unit of visual art or both Speech III & IV (both for 1 unit)
TOTAL = 19 Units	

¹ Advanced Placement (AP) courses and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses with the same name as a course listed in the TOPS Core Curriculum may be substituted.

² Can be used only by students who entered the 9th grade before July 1, 2011. (See R.S. 17:274.1)



This core curriculum is accurate as of the date of publication and includes courses listed in TOPS statute and those determined to be equivalent by the La. Board of Regents and BESE.

(800) 259-5626

custserv@la.gov

www.osfa.la.gov

P.O. Box 91202. Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9202

Updated : 08/15/2013

APPENDIX C

ENROLLED

ACT No. 1202

Regular Session, 2001

HOUSE BILL NO. 2012

BY REPRESENTATIVE DANIEL

AN ACT

To enact R.S. 17:3048.3 and 3048.4, relative to the Tuition Opportunity Program for Students; to provide for the establishment and implementation of a uniform information reporting system; to provide for applicability; to provide relative to compliance with reporting system requirements by colleges and universities, including requiring compliance as a condition of eligibility to receive certain payments by the state; to require that the reporting system include certain components; to provide for certain notifications to parents and others about program availability; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 17:3048.3 and 3048.4 are hereby enacted to read as follows:

~~§3048.3. Program information reporting system; implementation;~~

~~requirements; applicability; participation by eligible institutions~~

~~and others~~

A.(1) The Board of Regents shall formulate, develop, establish, and implement a uniform Tuition Opportunity Program for Students information reporting system for the purposes of policy analysis and program evaluation and for providing accurate data and statistics to the legislature, the governor and appropriate executive branch agencies.

~~and the public relative to the program's impact on the state and on students.~~

~~(2) In formulating and developing the information reporting system, the Board of Regents shall consult with and seek written recommendations from the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission, each college or university eligible for participation in the Tuition Opportunity Program for Students, each of the public postsecondary education management boards, the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, legislators, and knowledgeable others as determined appropriate by the Board of Regents.~~

~~(3) It is the intention of the legislature that the reporting system provided by this Section and the requirements thereof shall be applicable to all Tuition Opportunity Program for Students applicants, all award recipients regardless of eligible college or university attended, and all such eligible colleges and universities. Effective for the 2002-2003 award year and thereafter, compliance with the requirements of the Tuition Opportunity Program for Students information reporting system shall be a condition for an eligible college or university to remain eligible to receive payments from the state on behalf of an award recipient. Compliance determinations shall be made annually by the Board of Regents.~~

~~B. The Tuition Opportunity Program for Students information reporting system shall include but not be limited to the following:~~

~~(1) A report prepared as of the end of the Fall semester and again as of the end of the Spring semester or equivalent periods of time during each academic year relative to the rate of retention of program~~

awards by students as they progress from semester to semester or other equivalent periods of time as may be applicable once enrolled at an eligible college or university. The data shall be reported by institution attended, by the two digit classification of instructional program, and by program award category and shall include the percent of students losing program eligibility due to not earning the minimum number of credit hours, the percent of students losing program eligibility due to not having the required cumulative grade point average, and the percent of students losing program eligibility for failing to make steady academic progress.

(2) The persistence rates at colleges and universities of freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior students receiving a program award reported by award category and by award year.

(3) The graduation rates or rates of completion of the chosen postsecondary education program if otherwise applicable for students receiving a program award, reported by award category and award year, including for those graduating with an academic degree at the baccalaureate level the rate for persons graduating within four years, within five years, and within six years, respectively.

(4) The mean length of time required for a student receiving a program award to graduate with an academic degree at the baccalaureate level or to complete the chosen postsecondary education program if otherwise applicable with such information being reported by award category and by award year.

(5) An annual report on the number of applicants as well as the percent of high school graduates by high school and by parish who

~~apply for a program award, by award category, and the percent of those students who subsequently enroll in a college or university.~~

~~(6) Statistical studies on the relationship between the courses taken and grades earned by a high school student and the student's score on the American College Test or the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Relative to public high schools, such statistical studies shall use student course and grade data that is otherwise available from the schools and such studies shall be conducted at no additional cost to the governing authority of any public high school.~~

~~C. When necessary due to limitations in existing secondary data sources and systems, the Board of Regents, consistent with the general provisions of this Section, may modify any specific requirement of this Section. However, prior to making any such modifications the board shall report in writing to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education on the proposed action and the board shall have received approval from each committee relative to the proposed action.~~

§3048.4. Notice to students and parents

The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall require that the governing authority of every public secondary school include as a component of a student's Five Year Educational Plan as required by R.S. 17:183.2 comprehensive information relative to the Tuition Opportunity Program for Students and program eligibility requirements for each of the awards. Additionally, the parent or other person responsible for the student's school attendance at the ninth grade level shall be required to return to the school at the start of the student's ninth grade year a signed notice that the program information and

eligibility requirements have been reviewed by the parent or other responsible person and by the student and that, for informational and data collection purposes only, expresses the intent of the parent or other responsible person as to whether or not the student will be pursuing the necessary program of studies to be eligible for a Tuition Opportunity Program for Students award.

Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature by the governor, as provided in Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become effective on the day following such approval.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____

Agenda Item V.

Executive Summary

The Board of Regents established the Electronic Learning Strategic Planning Task Force (eLearning Task Force) primarily to assist the Board in developing and promoting eLearning as an avenue to a postsecondary credential, especially for those Louisiana adult residents unable or unwilling to travel to campuses. At the Planning, Research and Performance Committee meeting, Dr. Tremblay and Dr. Darlene Williams, chair of the eLearning Task Force, will be presenting the annual update of the Task Force's work, including the official launch and demonstration of Louisiana Online.

Agenda Item VI.

Executive Summary

The GRAD Act required the Board of Regents to compile increasing amounts of data and to design and implement data systems for campus use in preparing GRAD Act annual reports to the Board. These same systems are utilized by Regents' staff in grading the annual reports. As expected, the potential impacts of passing/failing GRAD Act have elevated the importance of accurate data reporting. Since the inception of GRAD Act reporting, the number of requests for data corrections/resubmissions has accelerated.

Unfortunately, every time there is such a request for resubmission, multiple Regents' systems are impacted and depending on the nature of the request, the Board's IT staff must devote days/weeks to rebuild the respective files and recompile the various data and reports. This not only impacts the campus making the requests, but all campuses as they await receipt of Regents' reports to prepare GRAD Act annual reports.

During the first two years of GRAD Act, primarily due to the potential impacts of failing to pass GRAD Act, campuses made a variety of requests to resubmit data files, some covering multiple years. This made it most difficult to meet the deadlines established either in the GRAD Act Agreements or the GRAD Act law. In response to these issues, the Board's staff established a March 15th deadline for data corrections/resubmissions related to GRAD Act. Any request made after the deadline would have to be brought to the Board. This practice was implemented in part to relay to the campuses and systems the importance of meeting the deadlines so that the necessary GRAD Act data would be available in a timely fashion for campus and Board use.

In spite of its efforts to complete corrections to all campus data files prior to the March 15th deadline, the LCTCS was unable to complete the process in a timely manner for Northwest Louisiana Technical College and Baton Rouge Community College and the Southern University System was unable to complete the process in a timely manner for Southern University A&M College. In order to remain faithful to the policy and to encourage all campuses to complete data submissions in a more timely fashion, LCTCS and Southern University have been invited to appear before the Planning, Research and Performance Committee to explain to the Committee the background of the data issues at the respective campuses, steps taken to address the issues and, most importantly, plans going forward to minimize such occurrences in the future.