

# College Reach-Out Program 1997-1998 Highlights

January 2000

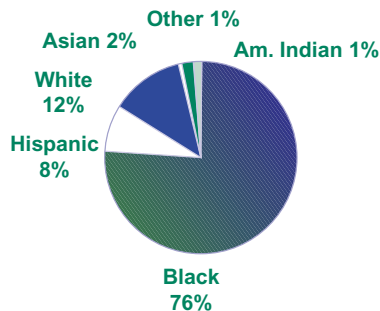
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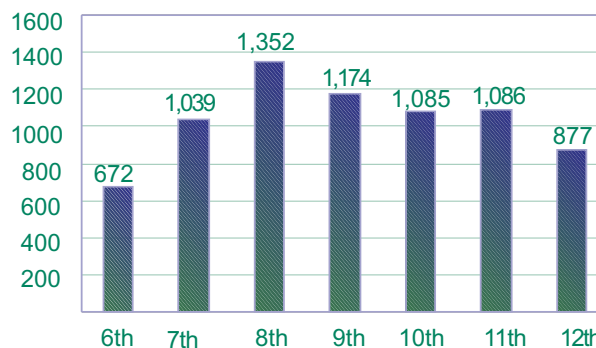
The College Reach-Out Program (CROP) is a statewide program designed to increase the number of students successfully completing a postsecondary education. The primary objective of the Reach-Out Program is to strengthen the educational motivation and preparation of low-income and educationally disadvantaged students in grades 6-12 who “otherwise would be unlikely to seek admission to a community college, state university or independent postsecondary institution without special support and recruitment efforts.” (Section 240.61 (1) Florida Statutes) This evaluation was based on the 1997-98 Reach-Out cohort, comprised of 7,285 program participants and 8,000 students drawn from a random sample stratified on the basis of race and income. This is the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission’s eighth annual statewide evaluation of the program but the first time that the random cohort has been drawn from a stratified sample. All comparisons are based on the stratified sample with the exception of the college readiness data that is based on statewide data. Evaluation activities for this report included a review of interim and final project and consortium reports, analyses of information retrieved from several databases, and site visits to selected programs in 1999. A summary of key findings is given below.

*CROP serves a diverse student population.*

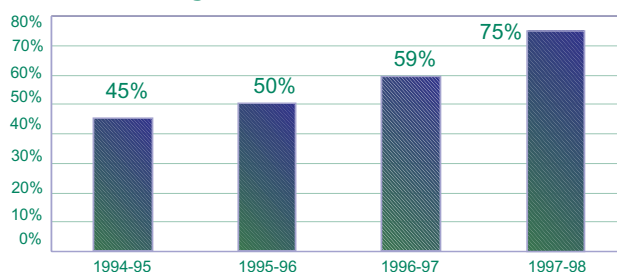
**1997-98 CROP Racial and Ethnic Characteristics**



**1997-98 CROP Grade Level Distribution**



**Percentage of Eligible Students Returning to College Reach-Out 1994-95 to 1997-98**

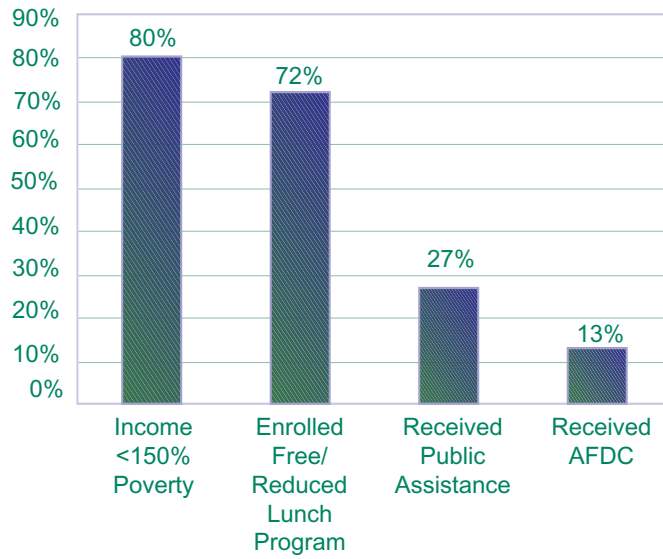


*Three quarters of all eligible students returned to a CROP project in 1997-98.*

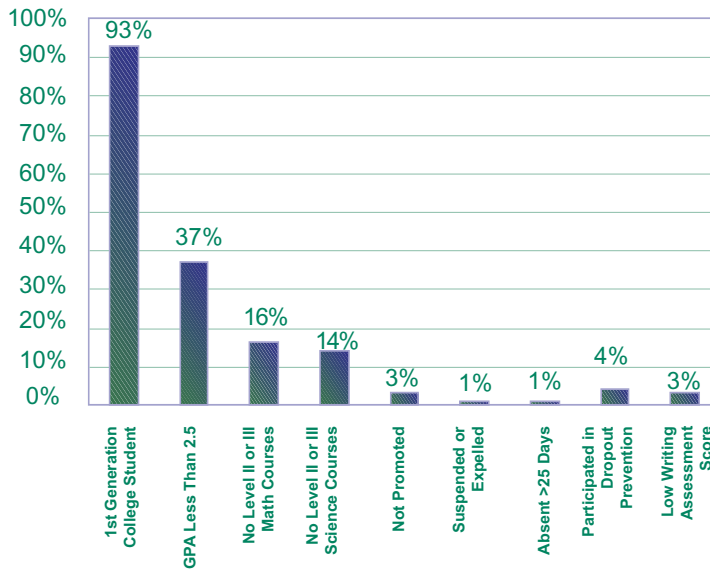
Source: College Reach-Out Annual Reports, 1994-95 to 1997-98.

# CROP Eligibility Requirements

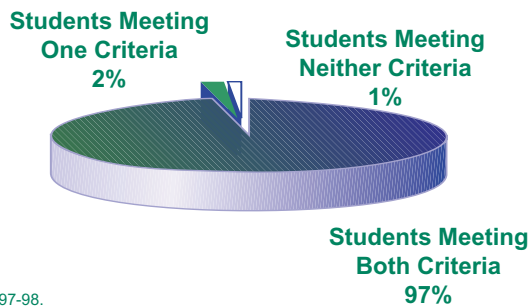
## Students Meeting Economic Criteria, 1997-98 Cohort



## Students Meeting Academic Criteria



## Economic and Academic Criteria, 1997-98 Cohort



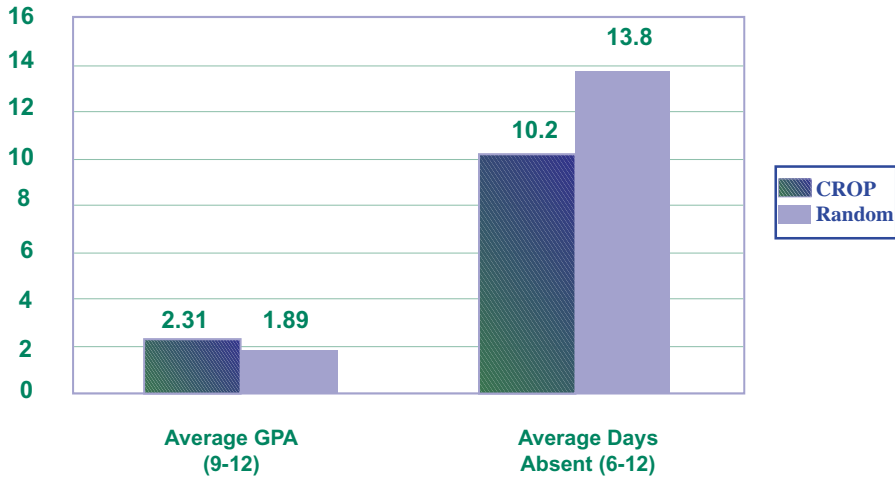
Source: College Reach-Out Annual Report, 1997-98.

CROP participants must meet both economic and academic criteria.

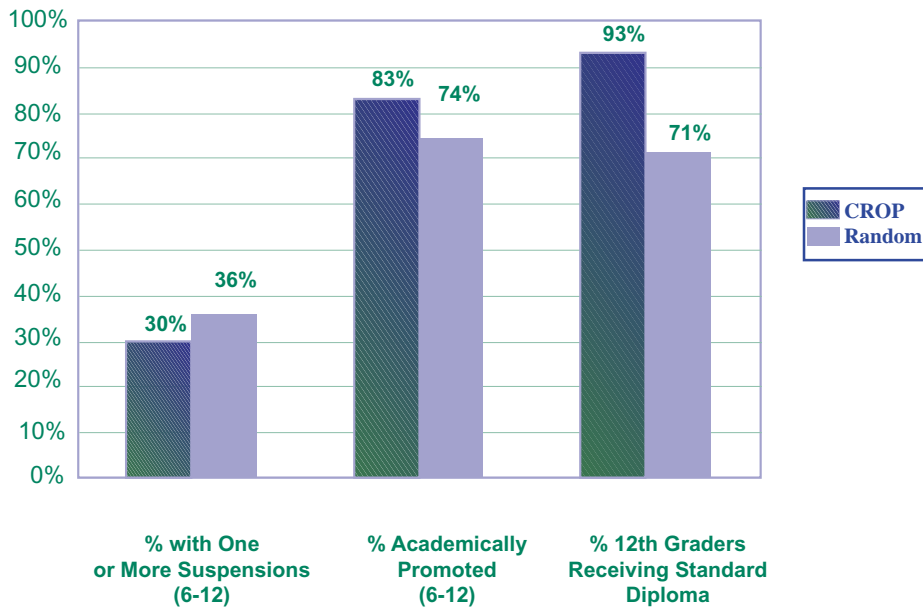
Ninety-three percent of CROP students were 1st generation in college.

# 1997-98 Performance Outcomes

## Secondary Performance Measures

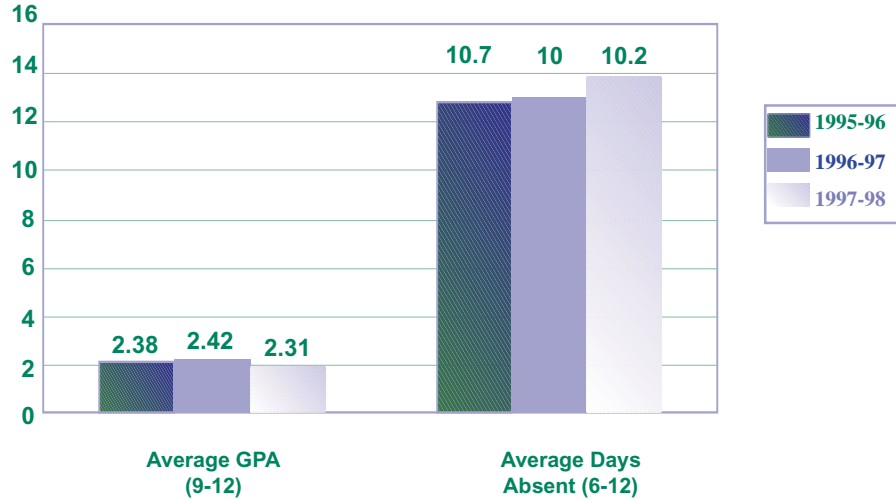


*CROP participants out performed non-program participants on all secondary outcome measures.*

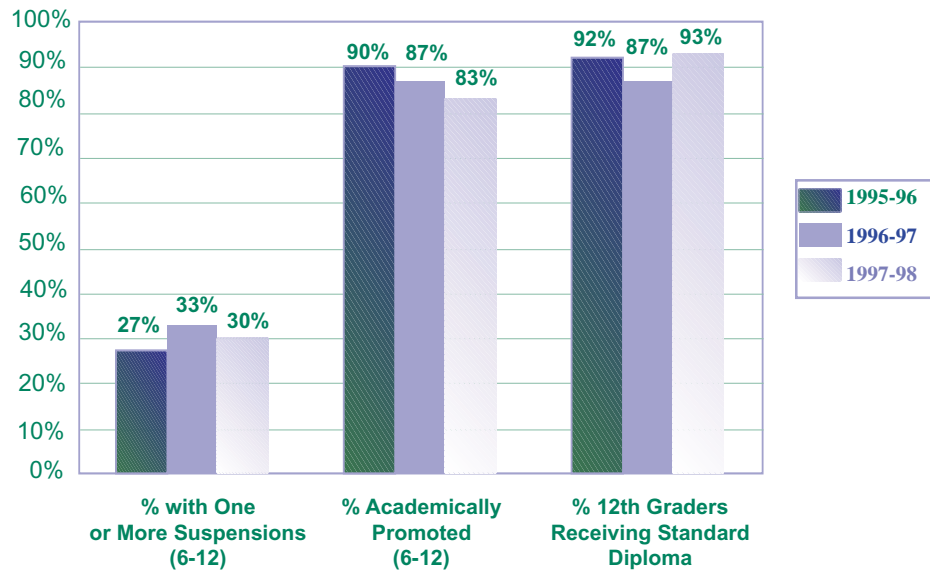


# Historical Analysis of Performance Outcomes (1995-96 through 1997-98)

## CROP Cohort



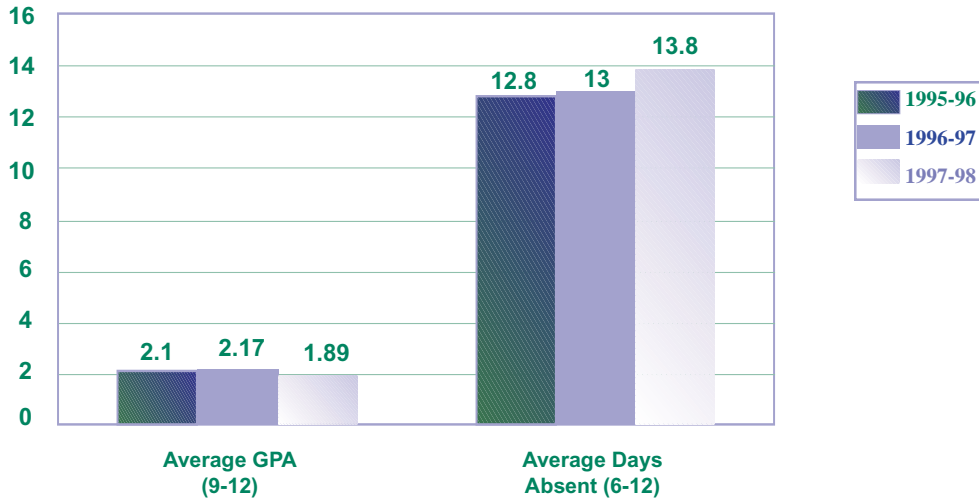
The successful academic performance of CROP participants is a continuing trend in grades 6-12.



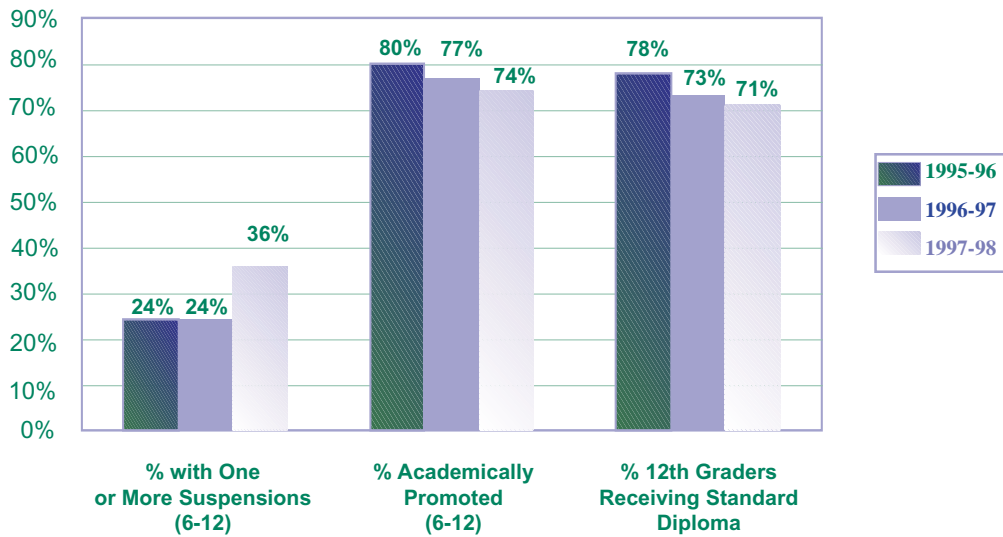
Source: Division of Public Schools.

# Historical Analysis of Performance Outcomes (1995-96 through 1997-98), continued...

## Random Cohort



*The 1997-98 random cohort stratified by race and income, performed at lower levels than did previous random cohorts that were not stratified.*

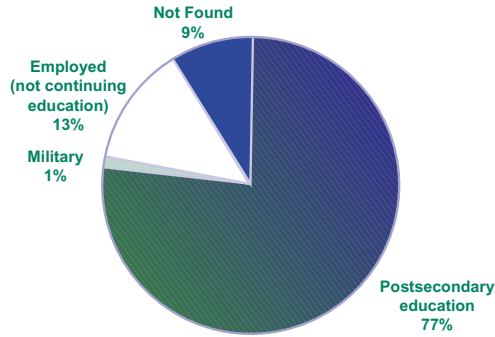


Source: Division of Public Schools.

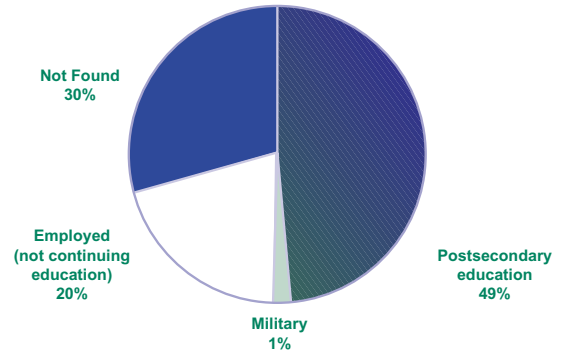
# Comparative Analysis of Postsecondary Outcomes (1995-96 through 1997-98)

Historically, and particularly in 1997-98, CROP high school graduates were more likely to enroll in postsecondary education than non-program participants.

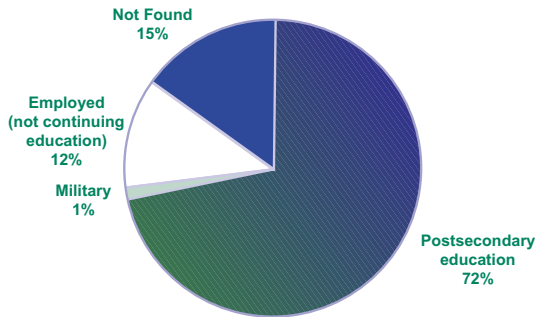
1997-98 CROP (N=877)



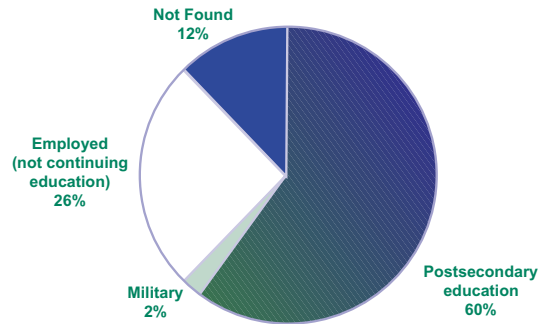
1997-98 Random (N=549)



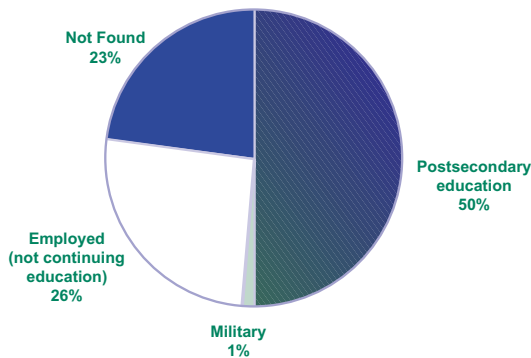
1996-97 CROP (N=841)



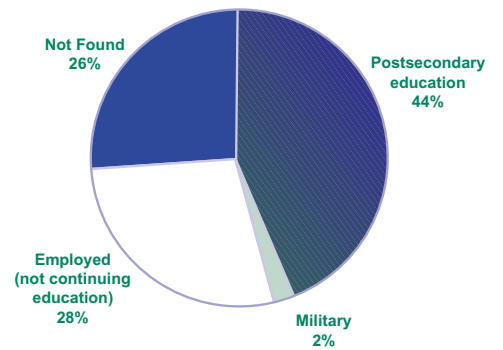
1996-97 Random (N=889)



1995-96 CROP (N=687)

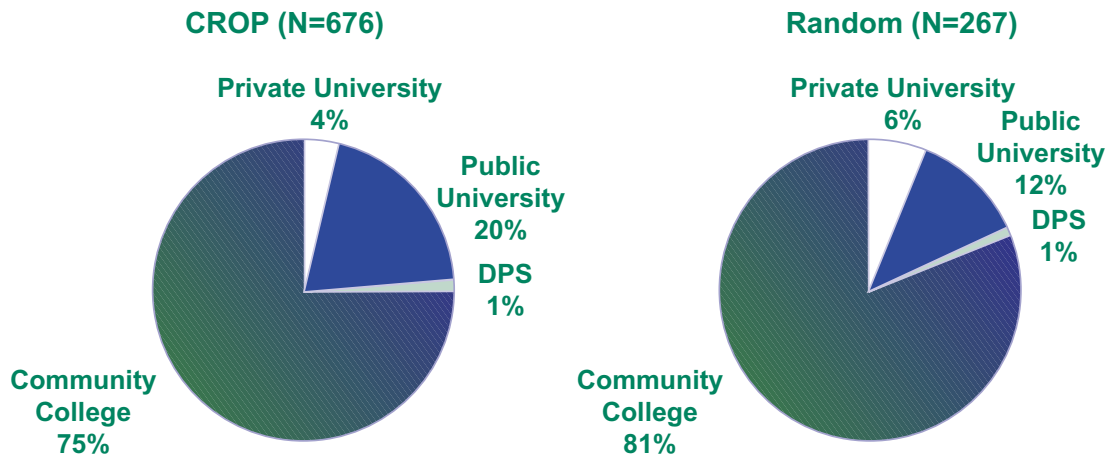


1995-96 Random (N=669)



Source: Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program.

# Continuing Education of 1997-98 Cohort

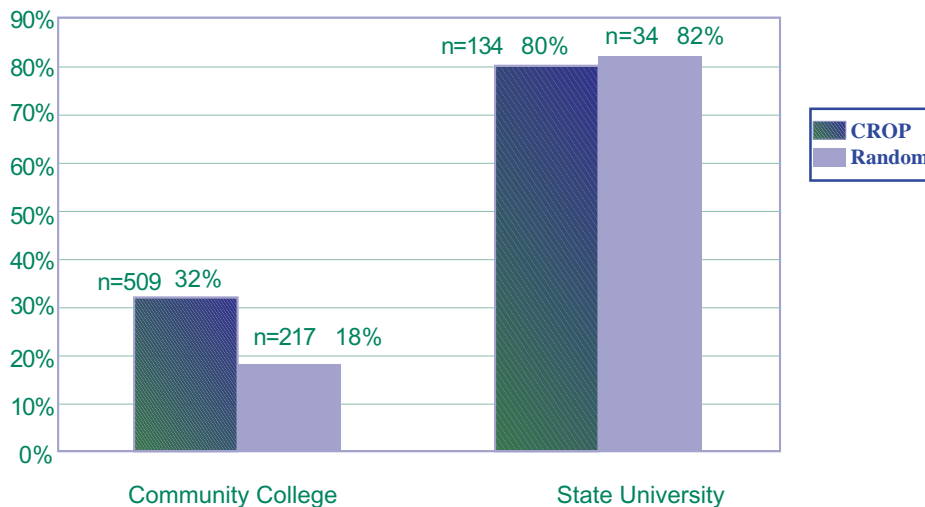


Seventy-five percent of CROP students who went on to postsecondary education enrolled at a community college. Twenty percent enrolled in the SUS.

Source: Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program.

## Postsecondary Performance

Students with GPA of 2.0 or Higher in Postsecondary Education, 1997-98

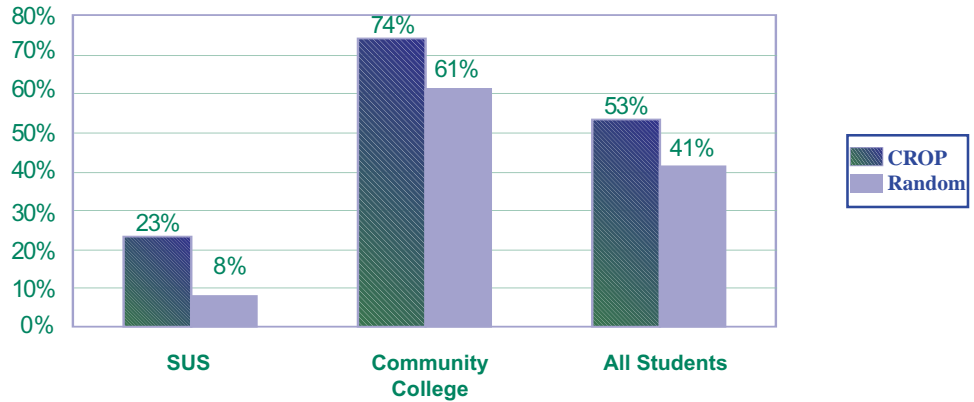


Eighty percent of Reach-Out graduates enrolled in the SUS had a GPA of 2.0 or higher.

Source: State Board of Community Colleges and Board of Regents.

# College Readiness

## Students Requiring Remediation in Postsecondary Education, 1997-98

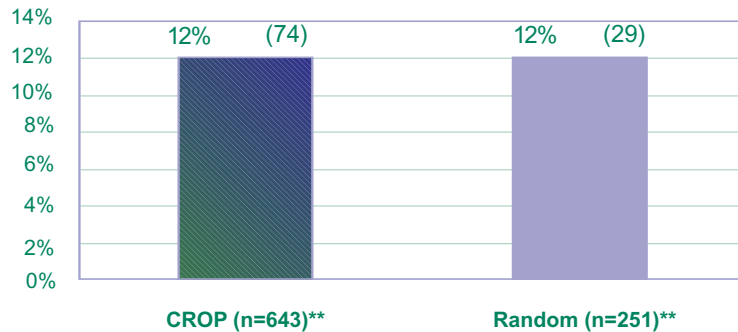


Source: Florida Department of Education, Readiness Report, 1997-98.

# Financial Aid

## Merit-Based Financial Aid

### Students in Postsecondary Education Who Received Merit Based Financial Aid, 1997-98\*

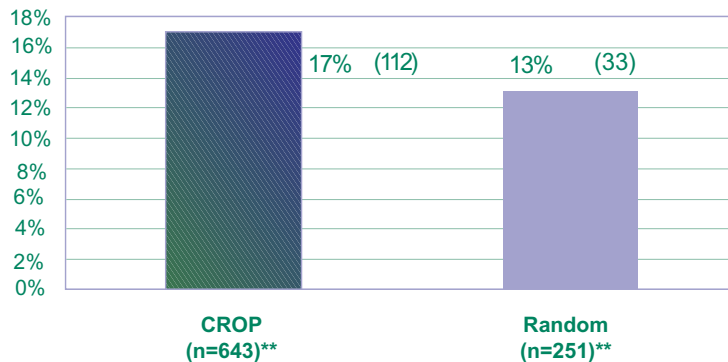


\*Includes Bright Future Awards.

\*\*Number of 1997-98 12th graders who enrolled in Community College or SUS.

## Need-Based Financial Aid

### Students in Postsecondary Education Who Received Need-Based Financial Aid, 1997-98\*



\*Includes Florida Student Assistance Grant.

\*\*Number of 1997-98 12th graders who enrolled in Community College or SUS.

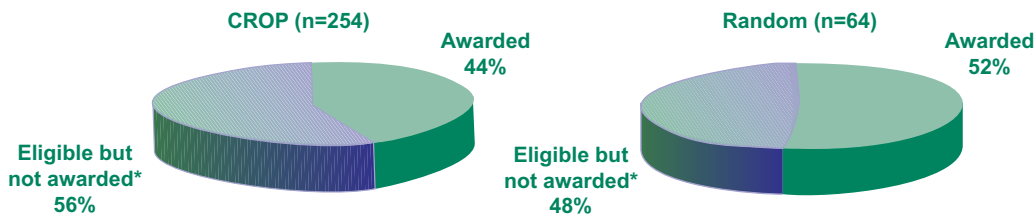
Fifty-three percent of all CROP students tested required remediation, while forty-one percent of all students tested statewide required remedial coursework.

Twelve percent of CROP and Random students received merit based financial aid.



## Need-Based Financial Aid Applicants and Recipients

### 1997-98 Students Who Applied for the Florida Student Assistance Grant

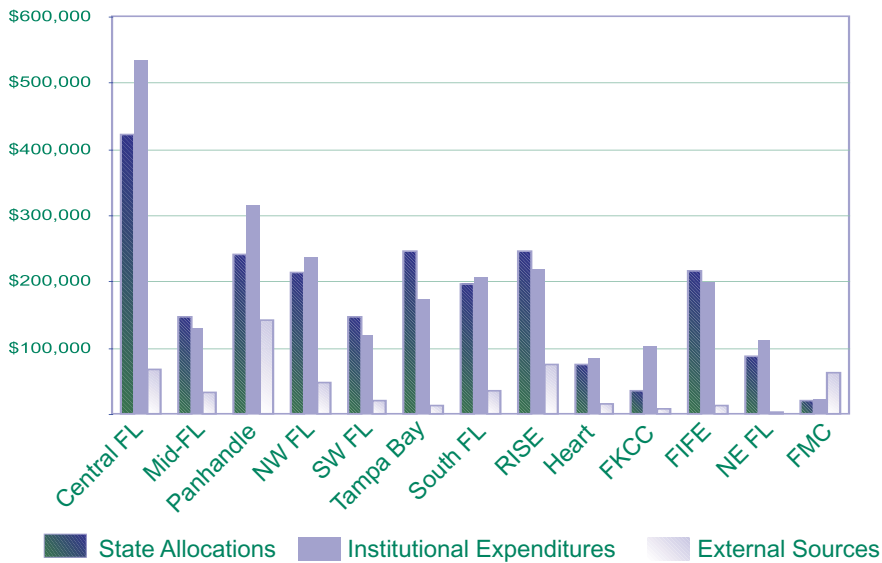


\*Due to a failure to meet institutional requirements, students with financial need did not receive funds.

Source: Office of Student Financial Assistance.

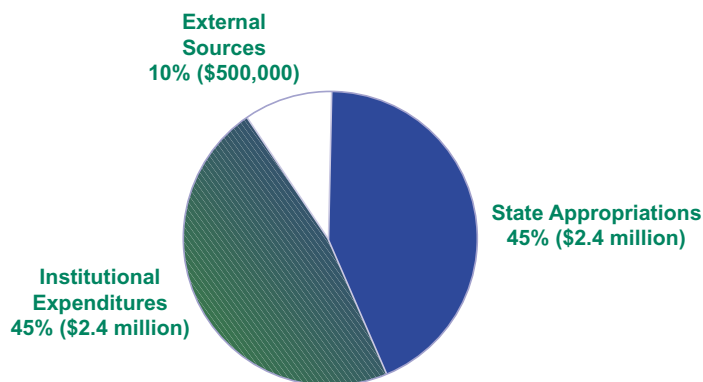
## Expenditures

### Expenditures Analysis by Consortium, 1997-98



The proportion of institutional and external sources expended by CROP projects varies by consortia.

### Expenditures for the College Reach-Out Program, 1997-98



Source: College Reach-Out Final Reports 1997-98.

Expenditures totaled are over \$5 million for 38 CROP projects in 13 consortia.

# 1997-98 College Reach-Out Program Evaluation

## Parental involvement is crucial to the success of CROP programs

Parental involvement in CROP projects is a key factor influencing not only the success of the program but also the success of individual participants. The level of parental participation varies among consortia, but remains a major concern in every project, even among those projects that “mandate” parental participation and/or require parents to sign their child’s CROP application. To counter the barriers to parental involvement, most projects have adopted innovative means to interest parents in CROP and to reinforce the importance of higher education for their children. At a minimum, projects routinely contact parents by mail and telephone to inform them of upcoming CROP activities. Many sites have begun to hold “parents’ retreats” in an effort to stimulate interest in CROP projects. Other sites have been successful increasing parental involvement by recruiting parents as chaperones for CROP activities, by directly involving parents in the actual planning of CROP activities, and by establishing parental advisory boards. Projects that report the highest parental involvement routinely provide information on how parents themselves can complete their secondary or postsecondary education. Other successful strategies include offering parents’ nights in conjunction with meetings of the homework club or related participant activities. However, many parents cannot participate in CROP activities because of a lack of transportation and child care for younger siblings. According to several program directors, parents show the greatest interest in the CROP project when their children are honored for a specific achievement. Opportunities for student achievement and recognition should be year-round when possible.

## Continuous contact/numerous activities

Continuous contact and varied activities for participants are crucial to the success of any CROP project. However, most sites report that a number of CROP students, (especially older students) have numerous schedule conflicts—including extracurricular sports and activities, employment, and family responsibilities—which make it difficult for them to participate in many of the activities. Narrative reports for the 1997-98 year revealed a general decline in student participation in many CROP activities. Several directors noted that students who have been in CROP for several years tire of the same type of activity or program format year after year. In such cases, it is imperative that CROP directors revamp or revitalize program activities and services to ensure full participation and continuous contact at each grade level. Cultural and social activities appear to stimulate student interest and

*The level of parental participation varies among consortia.*

*Narrative reports revealed a general decline in student participation in CROP activities.*

# 1997-98 College Reach-Out Program Evaluation, continued

enthusiasm and serve as a means of keeping participants active in CROP. Visits to college campuses, on the rise throughout the consortia, are excellent ways to expose CROP participants to college life and keep up interest in the program. Several sites report that “in-school” contact has been an excellent way to maintain continual contact with CROP students. In-school visits by CROP staff allow students to interact with staff and catch-up on CROP activities without having to give up any additional time. After-school activities such as “Homework Clubs” and tutorial sessions also seem to have higher participation rates than those held on Saturday, because the students are already at school which helps alleviate scheduling and transportation problems. Evaluative reports indicate many sites have found ways of successfully increasing both interest and motivation to participate in CROP such as brain bowls, cultural celebrations, workshops and recreational and academic competitions.

## Community Involvement

CROP directors reported in 1997-98 that some of their projects’ most successful activities included those that exposed students to their wider community while broadening their interests and expanding their horizons. College exploration days, career fairs, cultural field trips and festivals, community service projects, and visits to local businesses and governmental agencies, were among the most productive outreach activities. At the same time, local organizations provide College Reach-Out projects with scholarships, cash donations, transportation, mentors, speakers, tutors, and a variety of additional support. It is imperative that older, more established CROP programs provide guidance to newer projects in the important area of community relations and that all projects continue to investigate new partnerships with local entities while strengthening existing ties.

**Tutors.** CROP directors report an increase in the number of tutors, homework clubs, after-school and in school academic enhancement strategies to provide on-going, intensive, hands-on scholastic help to students at all grade levels. Many projects report that parents, teachers, former CROP participants, college students, community leaders and mentors all serve as tutors to CROP students at a variety of times and in diverse settings. The secondary and postsecondary outcomes of the 1997-98 Reach-Out participants prove that these strategies are working to improve CROP student performance.

**Summer Programs and Field Trips.** The summer residential component of CROP is a popular activity that offers both educational and personal enrichment and generates considerable student interest. Each

*Successful activities include ones that expose students to their wider community.*

*The Summer Residential component is integral to program success.*

## 1997-98 College Reach-Out Program Evaluation, continued

*Postsecondary  
scholarships are  
a great incentive  
for student  
participation in  
CROP.*

year, the evaluative report indicates successful outcomes from summer programs. Again in 1997-98 however, CROP directors noted a decrease in the number of older high school children who attended the residential programs because of work and family responsibilities. On the other hand, middle school children who are able to attend the two-week programs are, in the words of some directors, “too immature” to benefit from the extended academic and personal enrichment programs. Project directors, as well as the state CROP staff and Advisory Council, must consider ways to revamp the summer programs to incorporate the needs and levels of all students. Opportunities should be available for participants to attend summer residential programs outside of their own project areas. Best practices and ideas for maximizing funds and opportunities for student growth might emerge through the regional CROP workshops held each Spring throughout the State.

**Tuition Scholarships.** Postsecondary tuition scholarships continue to be a great incentive for student participation in CROP. Many participating institutions now provide prepaid scholarships to CROP students and/or work with state, federal and private organizations and programs that provide matching funds for need-based and merit scholarships. Many financial barriers to postsecondary education can be alleviated through careful preparation and planning by CROP students, parents and directors.

**Transportation.** Transporting students to CROP activities continues to be a problem particularly in large consortiums or those in rural areas. Some projects report a decrease in student attendance at after school activities because of a lack of transportation. The costs of hiring drivers or leasing vehicles is a deterrent to program participation as is, in some consortia, the inability or refusal of parents to provide transportation to after-school services and activities. Transportation has a direct effect on attendance rates which were down, particularly among high school students, during 1997-98. Lack of transportation also negatively affects joint consortium projects and activities as well as parental participation.

**Financial Aid.** Despite the availability of state funded need-based financial aid programs, only 40 percent of CROP graduates who attended a postsecondary institution in Florida applied for need-based financial aid. Of that number, all were determined to be financially eligible for aid. However, only 44 percent of those eligible were actually awarded financial aid due to students' failure to meet a variety of institutional requirements.

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