

# College Reach-Out Program

## *Annual Evaluation: 2003-04 Cohort with 2004-05 Postsecondary Outcomes*

June 2006

Volume 08

OFFICE OF  
EQUITY AND  
ACCESS

### 2003-04 HIGHLIGHTS

During the 2003-04 project year, 8,286 students were enrolled in the College Reach-Out Program (CROP). The racial/ethnic composition of the 2003-04 CROP cohort was as follows: 72 percent African American, 12 percent White, 12 percent Hispanic, 1 percent Asian, less than 1 percent American Indian, and other ethnicities, 2 percent.

The following table compares select academic performance outcomes of CROP students with a random sample of non-CROP students, stratified by income and race.

| <b>Performance Outcome</b>              | <b>CROP Students</b> | <b>Random Sample</b> |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| Academically Promoted (6th - 11th)      | 86%                  | 76%                  |
| 12th Graders Received Standard Diplomas | 78%                  | 62%                  |
| Graduates Enrolled in Higher Education  | 70 %                 | 61%                  |
| Comm. College Students w/ GPA above 2.0 | 65 %                 | 62%                  |
| SUS Students w/ GPA above 2.0           | 83%                  | 78%                  |

- \* Seventy-eight percent of eligible students returned to a CROP project from the previous year.
- \* The average GPA for CROP students was 2.4 compared to 2.1 for the Random Cohort.
- \* The average Days Absent for CROP students was 8.9 compared to 10.2 for the Random Cohort.
- \* Seventy percent of CROP High School graduates were enrolled in postsecondary education, compared to sixty-one percent of the random cohort.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION  
JOHN L. WINN  
COMMISSIONER

The College Reach-Out Program has served 96,686 students from 1990 through 2003-04.

## INTRODUCTION

The College Reach-Out Program (CROP) is a statewide program that was created in 1983 by the Florida Legislature under Florida Statute 1007.34. The statute was designed to further the Legislature's intent of increasing the number of students successfully completing a postsecondary education. The primary objective of the CROP program is to strengthen the educational motivation and prepare students to attend and complete their postsecondary education. The program recruits students and provides them with academic enrichment activities as well as career and personal counseling.

Since 1990, 43,771 individual students have joined CROP and, overall, CROP has served a total of 96,686 students in grades 6-12. In 2003-04, 2,471 new students joined CROP and a total of 8,286 students were served by the CROP program. In 1991 the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission (PEPC) was asked by the College Reach-Out Program Advisory Council to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the program. Through legislation approved during the 1994 legislative session, the Commission became statutorily responsible for annually evaluating the effectiveness of the program. In early 2002 PEPC evolved into the Council for Educational Policy, Research and Improvement (CEPRI) and relinquished responsibility for the evaluation. In fall 2002 the K-20 Office of Equity and Access (OEA) in the Florida Department of Education was created to ensure equity and assist in Florida's effort to increase quality educational opportunities for all students. In this role, the OEA assumed responsibility for the administration and evaluation of CROP.

The success of the CROP program is based on providing students with a wide range of activities that include positive role models, rigorous and challenging coursework, up-to-date training materials and CROP Directors and Coordinators hiring board certified instructors. The CROP tutoring sessions with increased rigor will better prepare students for postsecondary education.

### *Report Methodology and Format*

This evaluation is based on the 2003-04 CROP cohort comprised of 8,286 program participants and 10,160 public school students drawn from a random sample stratified on the basis of race and income. All comparisons are based on the stratified sample, with additional comparisons to all test takers of the statewide Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) and the College Placement Test (CPT).

To extract information for this report, data matches were performed against databases in the the K-20 Office of Equity and Access, the Division of K-12 Public Schools (DPS), the Florida Community College System (FCCS), the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP), the K-20 Education Data Warehouse (EDW), and the State University System (SUS). Narrative reports submitted by the projects provided a descriptive analysis of program activities and student participation.

# CROP Institutions by County

## Alachua County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **372**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **10 / 7**  
 University of Florida  
 Santa Fe Community College

## Bay County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **150**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **5 / 4**  
 Gulf Coast Community College

## Brevard County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **96**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **8 / 4**  
 Brevard Community College

## Broward County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **200**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **16 / 27**  
 Broward Community College

## Dade County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **764**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **10 / 7**  
 Miami Dade College  
 Florida Memorial College  
 Florida International University  
 Barry University

## Duval County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **501**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **22 / 17**  
 Jacksonville University  
 Florida Community College at Jacksonville

## Escambia County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **399**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **9 / 6**  
 University of West Florida  
 Pensacola Junior College

## Highlands County

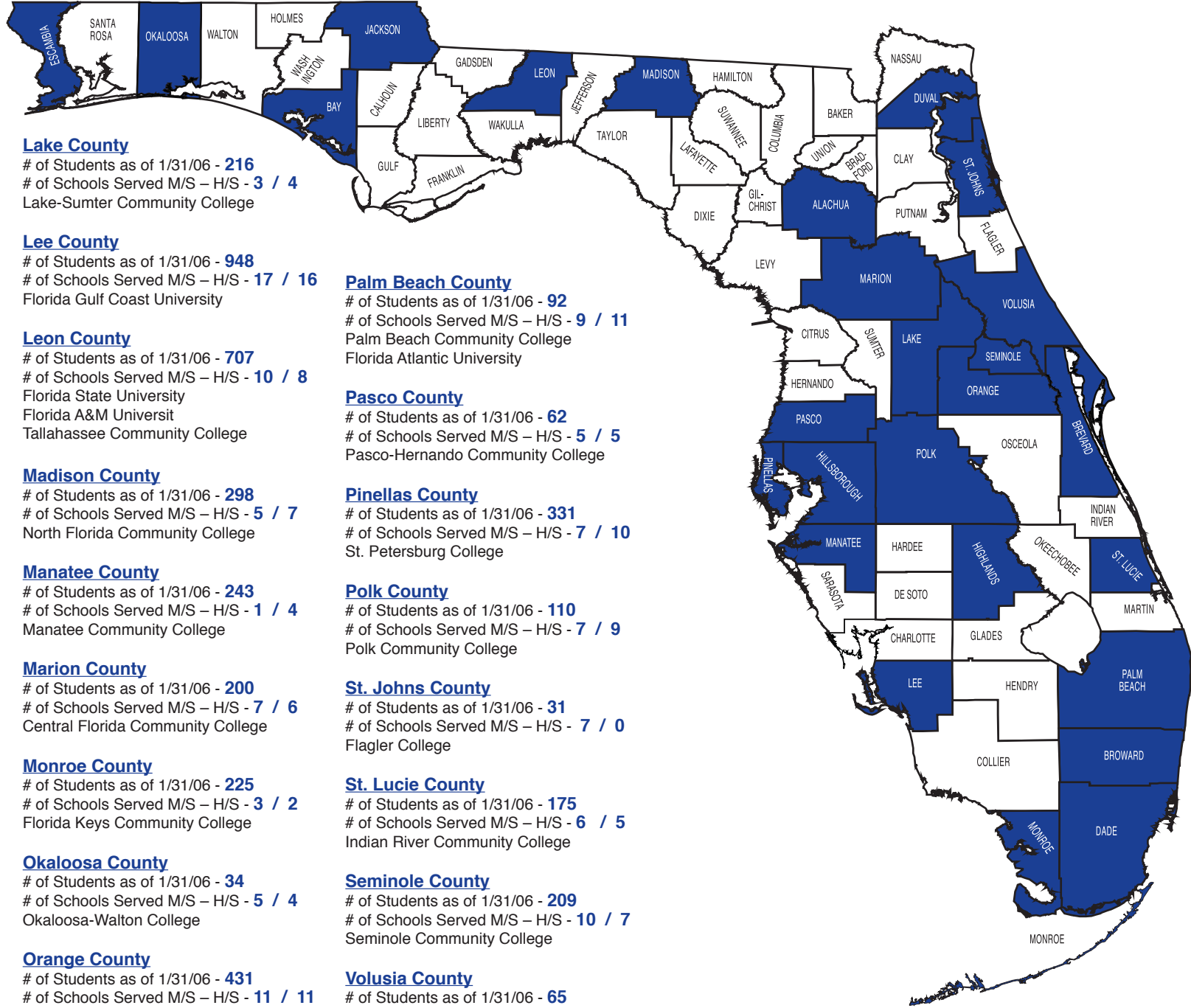
# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **125**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **10 / 7**  
 South Florida Community College

## Hillsborough County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **372**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **6 / 5**  
 Hillsborough Community College  
 University of South Florida

## Jackson County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **361**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **1 / 0**  
 Chipola College



## Lake County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **216**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **3 / 4**  
 Lake-Sumter Community College

## Lee County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **948**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **17 / 16**  
 Florida Gulf Coast University

## Leon County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **707**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **10 / 8**  
 Florida State University  
 Florida A&M University  
 Tallahassee Community College

## Madison County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **298**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **5 / 7**  
 North Florida Community College

## Manatee County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **243**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **1 / 4**  
 Manatee Community College

## Marion County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **200**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **7 / 6**  
 Central Florida Community College

## Monroe County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **225**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **3 / 2**  
 Florida Keys Community College

## Okaloosa County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **34**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **5 / 4**  
 Okaloosa-Walton College

## Orange County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **431**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **11 / 11**  
 University of Central Florida  
 Valencia Community College

## Palm Beach County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **92**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **9 / 11**  
 Palm Beach Community College  
 Florida Atlantic University

## Pasco County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **62**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **5 / 5**  
 Pasco-Hernando Community College

## Pinellas County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **331**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **7 / 10**  
 St. Petersburg College

## Polk County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **110**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **7 / 9**  
 Polk Community College

## St. Johns County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **31**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **7 / 0**  
 Flagler College

## St. Lucie County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **175**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **6 / 5**  
 Indian River Community College

## Seminole County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **209**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **10 / 7**  
 Seminole Community College

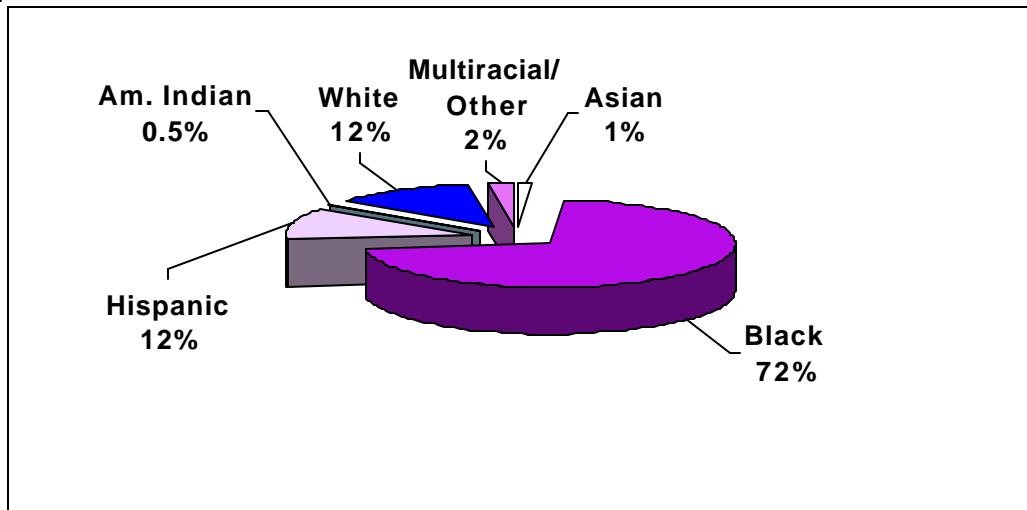
## Volusia County

# of Students as of 1/31/06 - **65**  
 # of Schools Served M/S – H/S - **2 / 1**  
 Daytona Beach Community College

CROP serves a diverse student population.

- Blacks accounted for 72 percent of participants in 2003-04 (a percentage point increase from 2002-03), whites comprised 12 percent (compared to 13 percent in 2002-03), Hispanics, 12 percent, Asians, one percent, American Indians, less than one percent, and other racial/ethnic groups accounted for two percent, compared to three percent in 2002-03 (Figure 1).

**Figure 1**  
**Racial/Ethnic Characteristics 2003-04 CROP Cohort**

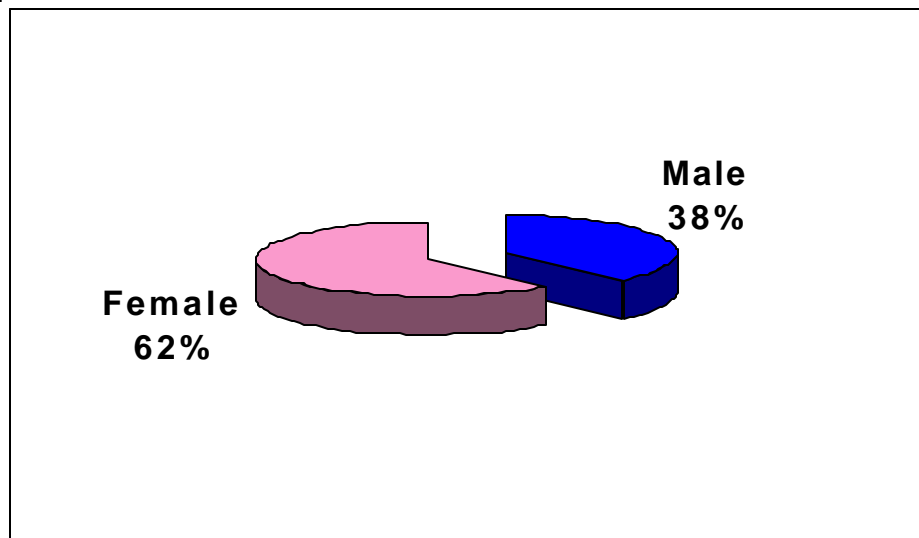


**Source:** College Reach-Out Program

Note: Percents may not total 100% due to rounding

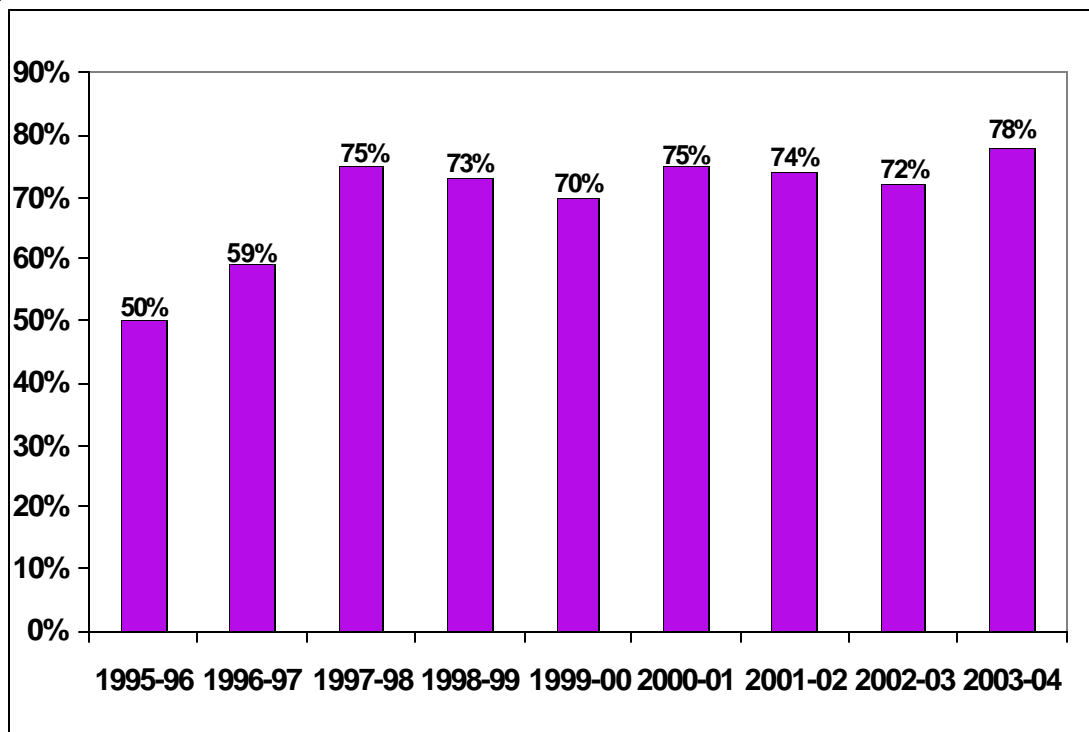
- In 2003-04, 62 percent of all CROP participants were female (Figure 2). A renewed emphasis (i.e., enlisting coaches of sports teams to encourage athletes to participate, using more male role models and using a flexible schedule to allow students to attend) has been placed on recruiting more males into the program to balance the ratio of male and female students in CROP.

**Figure 2**  
**CROP Students by Gender, 2003-04**



**Source:** College Reach-Out Program

**Figure 3**  
**Percentage of Eligible Students Returning**  
**to a College Reach-Out Program (1995-96 - 2003-04)**



In 2003-04, seventy-eight percent of eligible students returned to a CROP project.

***Comparative Analysis: College Reach-Out Program and Stratified Random Sample (Grades 6-12 Outcome Measures)***

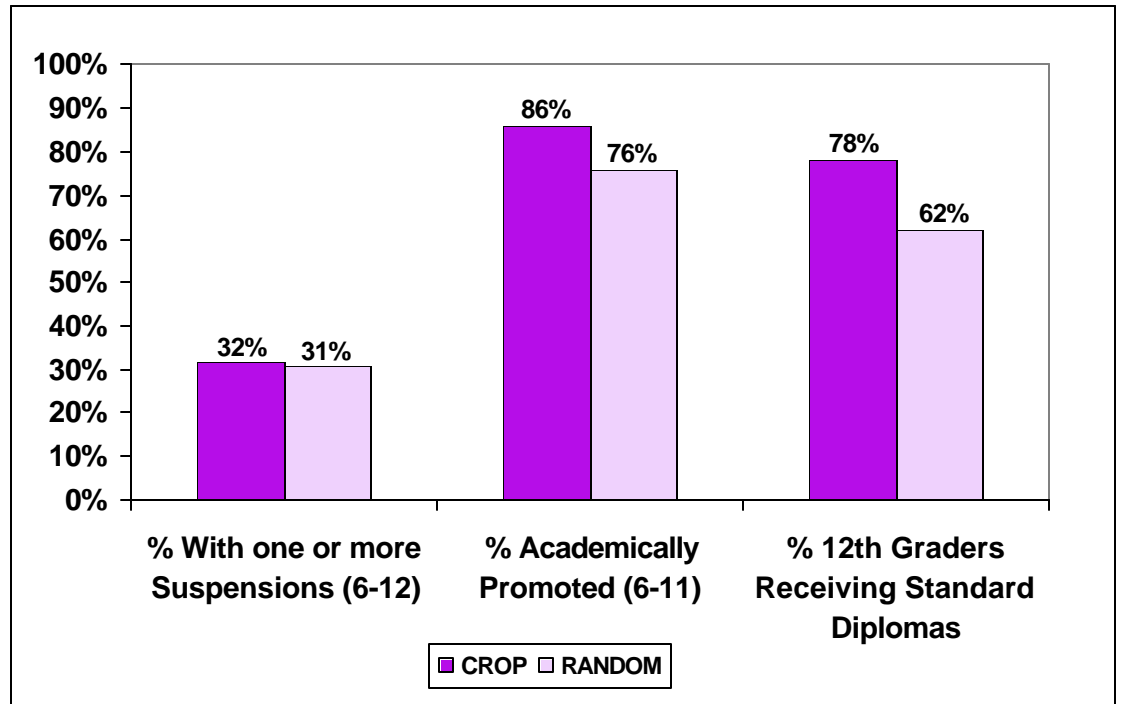
The performance of CROP participants was compared to a stratified random sample of 6th through 12th grade students in the public school population, during academic year 2003-04. The random sample was stratified by income and race to reflect demographic characteristics similar to those of the pool of CROP participants.

- In 2003-04 eighty-six percent of CROP students in grades 6-11 were academically promoted to the next grade, compared to seventy-six percent of the random cohort. Seventy-eight percent of CROP 12th graders and 62 percent of the random cohort received a standard diploma in 2003-04. At the same time, CROP students were slightly more likely to be suspended from school than students in the random cohort (Figure 4). Counseling students on anger management and stressing the importance of being in school and attending classes are some of the strategies that are being employed to continue to decrease CROP student suspensions.

In 2003-04 CROP students continued to receive standard diplomas and promotions to the next grade at significantly higher rates than students in the random cohort.

CROP students had a higher GPA than the random cohort.

**Figure 4**  
**CROP Secondary Performance Measures, 2003-04**  
**Suspension, Promotion and Graduation**



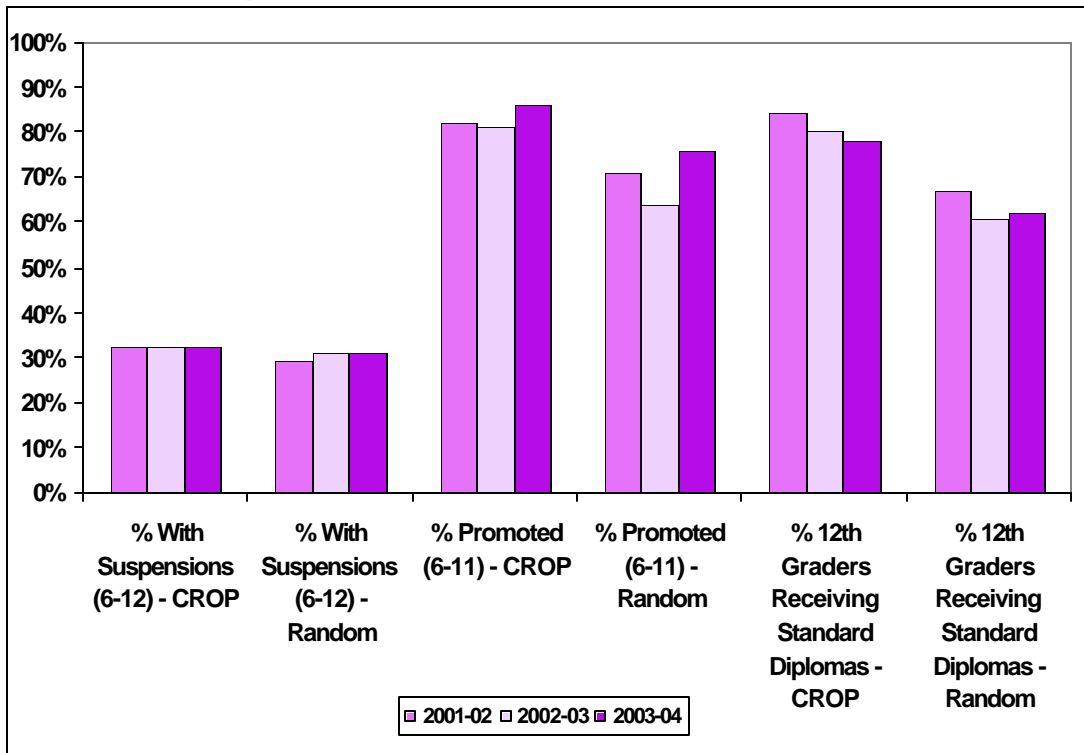
Source: College Reach-Out

- CROP students in grades 9-12 had a higher Grade Point Average (GPA) than those in the stratified random cohort (2.39 versus 2.10). Compared to 2002-03, the GPA increased slightly for the CROP cohort (from 2.38) and decreased for the random sample (from 2.13). CROP students in grades 6-12 were absent fewer days in 2003-04 than students in the random cohort (8.9 versus 10.2). Compared to the previous year, both the CROP and random cohorts saw a decrease in absences (from 9.4 and 10.9, respectively).

***Historical Trends in Secondary Performance Outcomes***  
***(2001-02 through 2003-04)***

The following chart reflects a continuing propensity for CROP students to receive standard diplomas and promotions at higher rates than students in the random cohort (Figure 5).

**Figure 5**  
**CROP versus Random Cohort**  
**Suspensions, Promotions and Graduations**



Source: DPS, EDW

**Performance of CROP students on the FCAT**

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) measures student performance on specific benchmarks in reading, mathematics, and writing defined by the Sunshine State Standards. Students' proficiency in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 10, are reported in terms of five achievement levels. Performance at Level 1 indicates that the student has little success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards, whereas Level 5 indicates that the student has success with the most challenging content. A student receiving a score equivalent to Level 3 or above has achieved success at grade level.

CROP students, whose enrollment in the program is based, in part, on low academic performance, consistently perform as well as or better than the random stratified sample on the FCAT, but not as well as all test takers statewide.

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

**CROP  
students'  
FCAT  
scores  
increased  
from  
2002-03.**

- Although CROP students' FCAT scores are higher than the random cohort scores, the goal is for all CROP students to pass the FCAT by encouraging more rigorous tutoring sessions for the CROP students.
- Since 1998-99, both CROP eighth graders and the random cohorts realized gains in average scores on the FCAT writing examinations. In 2003-04, CROP eighth graders scored an average of 3.8, compared to a 3.6 among the random cohort and a 3.9 among all eighth grade test takers in the state. A 3.5 is a passing score on the FCAT writing examination, with a 6.0 being a perfect score.
- CROP eighth graders scored an average of 281 on the 2003-04 FCAT reading examination, compared to 274 for the random cohort and 295 among all eighth grade test takers statewide. On the FCAT math examination, CROP eighth graders scored an average of 297, compared to 289 among the random cohort and 311 among all eighth grade test takers in the state.
- CROP tenth graders scored an average of 282 on the 2003-04 FCAT reading examination, compared to 274 for the random cohort and 300 among all tenth grade test takers. On the FCAT math examination, CROP tenth graders scored an average of 298, compared to 301 among the random cohort and 323 among all tenth grade test takers in the state.
- CROP tenth graders scored an average of 3.7 on the 2003-04 FCAT writing examination, compared to a 3.6 among the random cohort and a 3.8 among all tenth grade test takers in the state.
- In 2003-04, CROP eighth and tenth graders took the FCAT science examination. While the CROP students outscored the stratified random sample, they performed below the statewide averages for both grade levels.
- Although, many 10th grade CROP students do not pass the FCAT initially, they continue to pass the FCAT before graduating high school. In addition, a smaller percentage obtain a high school equivalency diploma or find alternate ways to enter a postsecondary institution.

## Comparative Analysis: College Reach-Out Program and Stratified Random Sample (Postsecondary Outcome Measures)

The goal of the College Reach-Out Program is to motivate and prepare academically and economically disadvantaged students to enter and complete postsecondary education. Therefore, data were collected on indicators related to postsecondary education for twelfth graders who graduated in 2004. Analyses of these variables include the following:

- **Performance on the CPT.** Degree-seeking freshmen in a public community college or university in Florida must demonstrate certain basic skills before beginning college-level courses. Students who achieve minimum scores on the College Placement Test (CPT) may enroll in college-level math, reading, and writing courses. CROP students' test results were compared to those of the stratified random sample and all test takers statewide.
- In 2003-04, almost 45% of the CROP students achieved a passing score on the math subtest, and a majority passed the reading and writing subtests.
- 32% scored above the minimum on all three subtests.
- A comparison to 2002-03 data revealed a 3 percentage point increase.
- The CROP students, who were selected on the basis of low income and low academic performance, passed each subtest at a rate lower than that of the random cohort and students statewide.

However, even though a majority of CROP graduates have varying levels of readiness to take college level courses in all three subject areas when admitted to a postsecondary institution, they do continue to pursue higher education. In addition, a majority of students maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher in their freshman year.

- Factors contributing to their continued success include the various academic support activities delivered in a consistent manner.
- Qualified staff throughout a student's CROP experience.
- The opportunities offered to eligible CROP participants prior to their freshman year in college, college scholarships, and summer bridge programs.

The data revealed that CROP students scored lower in all subject areas than overall students statewide. However, CROP students continue to enter and graduate from postsecondary institutions at a high rate. Their perseverance is rewarded after taking remedial classes in college and continuing on to receive their degree.

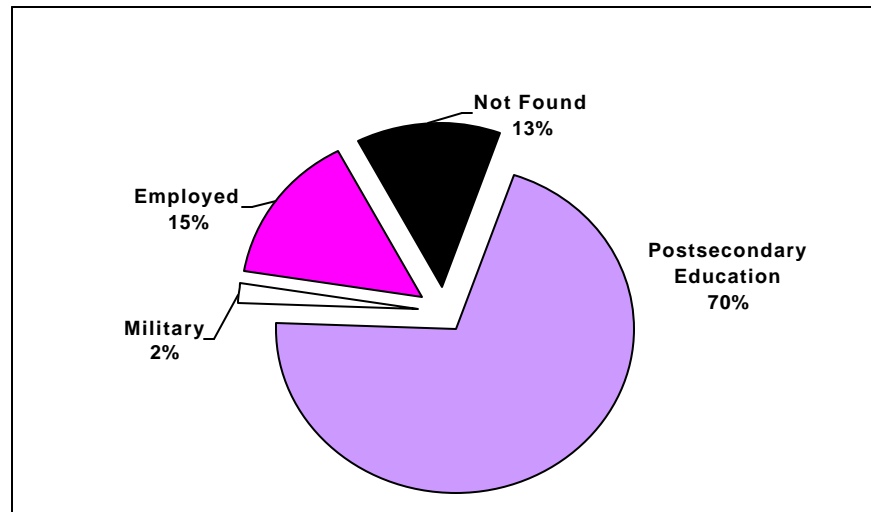
Although approximately one-third of the CROP students pass all three of the CPT subtests, they continue to enter and complete their postsecondary education.

Seventy percent of CROP graduates were enrolled in postsecondary education, compared to 61 percent of the random sample.

- **Postsecondary outcomes.** Postsecondary follow-up data on employment and continuing education reveal that 70 percent of 2003-04 CROP high school graduates with a standard diploma were enrolled in the Florida higher education system in 2004-05, compared with 61 percent of the stratified random sample (Figures 6 and 7).

**Figure 6**

**2003-04 CROP High School Graduates (N=785)**

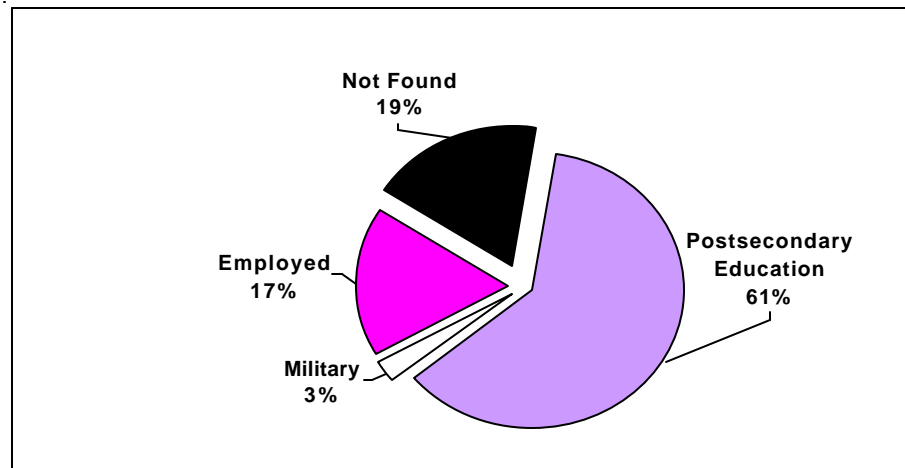


Source: FETPIP, FCCS, EDW

- Eighty-seven percent of CROP graduates were found to be either enrolled in postsecondary education, employed full-time, or in the military, compared to 81 percent of the random sample. In 2002-03 the comparable figures were 99 percent and 73 percent, respectively. CROP graduates whereabouts were accounted for eighty-seven percent of the time, with only 13 percent of CROP students' whereabouts being unknown. For the Random Cohort whereabouts, eighty-one percent were accounted for where 19 percent of the Random Cohorts whereabouts are unknown.

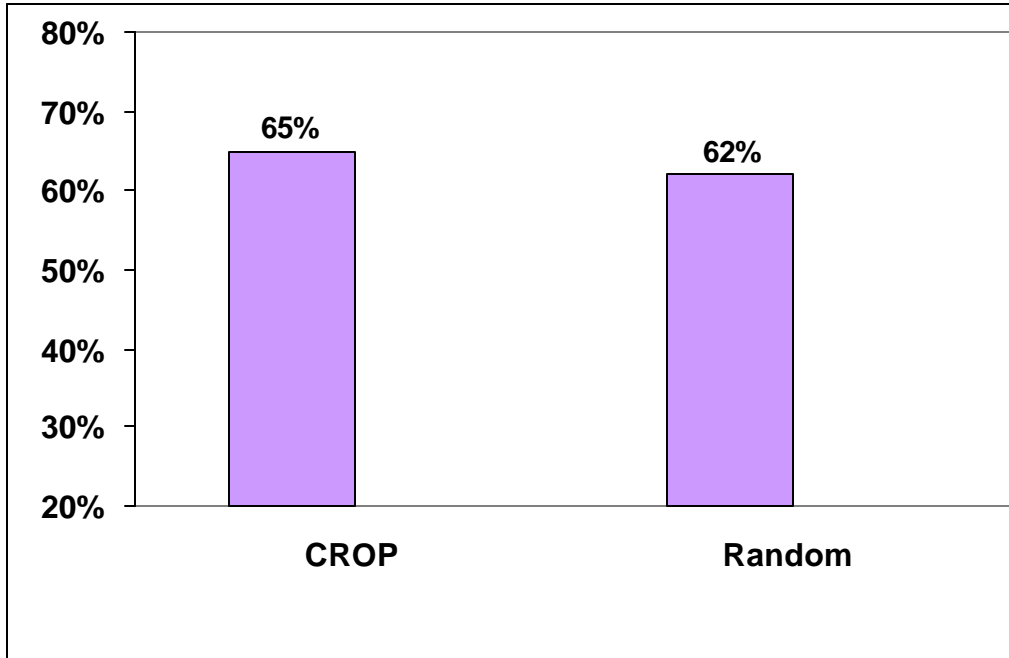
**Figure 7**

**2003-04 Random High School Graduates (N=616)**



Source: FETPIP, FCCS, EDW

**Figure 8**  
**Students with a GPA of 2.0 or Higher in**  
**Community Colleges, 2003-04 CROP and Random Cohorts**

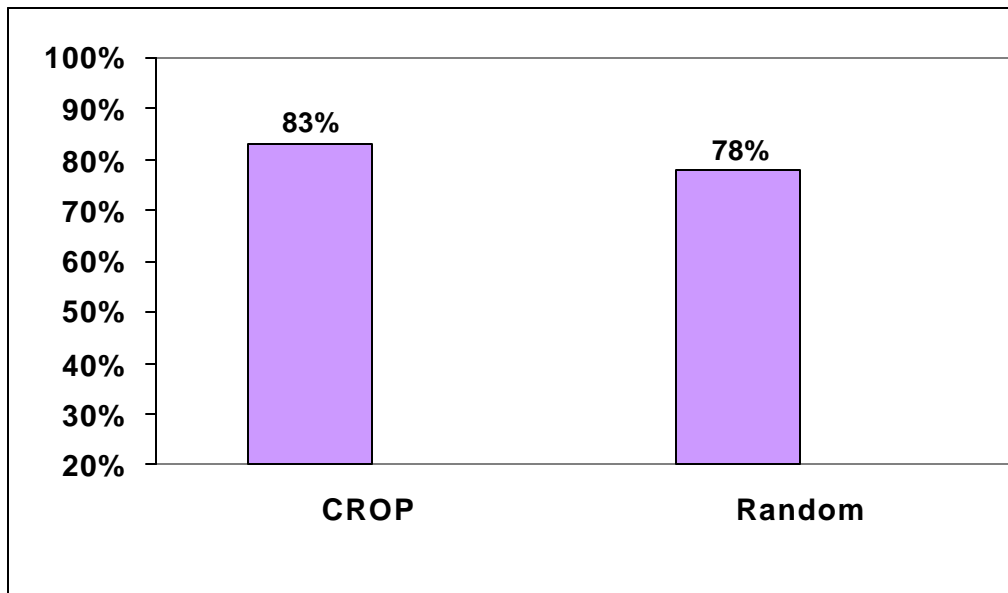


Source: Florida Community College System

Over 65 percent of CROP students maintain a GPA of at least 2.0 in the Community College and State University Systems.

- Eighty-three percent of CROP students and seventy-eight percent of the random cohort who enrolled in the SUS in 2004-05 had a GPA of 2.0 or higher during their freshman year (Figure 9).

**Figure 9**  
**Students with a GPA of 2.0 or Higher in**  
**State Universities, 2003-04 CROP and Random Cohorts**



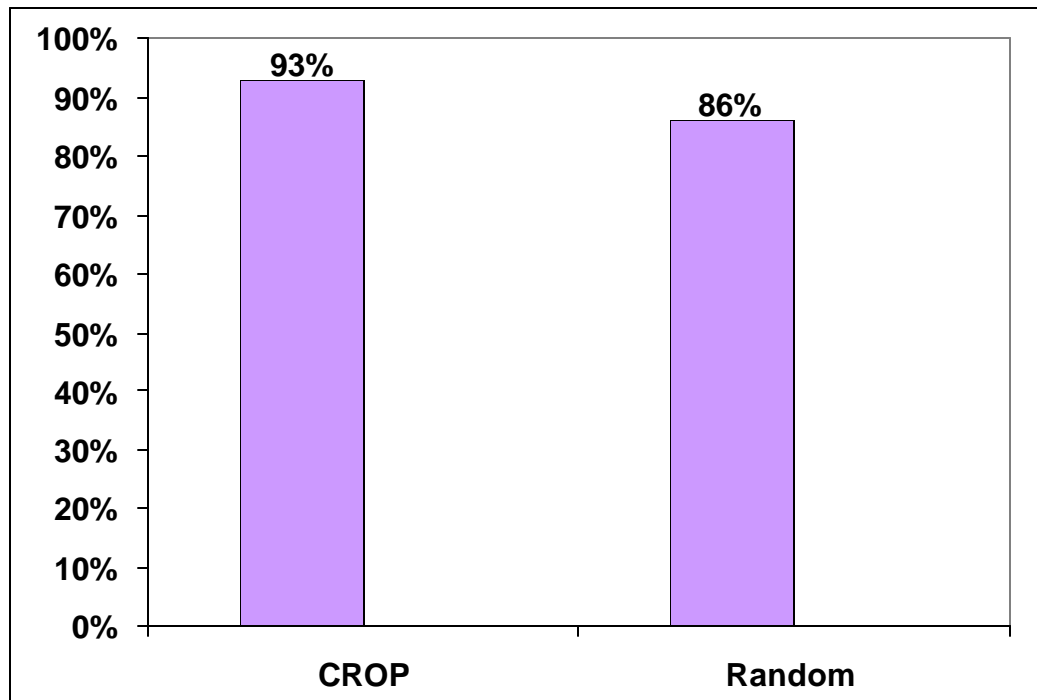
Source: K-20 Education Data Warehouse

Ninety-three percent of 2003-04 CROP high school graduates who enrolled in a public or private postsecondary institution and applied for financial aid received FSAG awards.

**Financial Aid.** Considering the economic criteria for participation in CROP, financial aid is critical for student enrollment and retention in postsecondary education. CROP projects assist students in applying for financial aid to facilitate college attendance. The Florida Student Assistance Grant (FSAG) is the state's largest need-based aid program.

- In 2004-05, of the CROP seniors who applied for FSAG, 93 percent were awarded funds.
- No repayment of the FSAG award is necessary.
- Many of the CROP institutions provide scholarships to the students that are in the program and complete the requirements of the institution.

**Figure 10**  
**Students Who Received Need-Based Financial Aid (FSAG), 2003-04**



*Source: K-20 Education Data Warehouse  
In academic year following high school graduation.*

- Of the stratified random cohort who attended a public community college or a public or private university and who applied for an FSAG award, eighty-six percent were awarded funds.

## Supplemental Information, Best Practices, and Recommendations

While quantifying data are an essential part of any evaluation process, qualitative information is useful in identifying factors that influence program effectiveness. As part of their annual report to the State, CROP project directors submit a narrative description of their projects' activities and explanations of specific challenges and accomplishments. The CROP Advisory Council and staff from the K-20 Office of Equity and Access will conduct on-site reviews to ensure that projects are in compliance with the statute (1007.34). Also, the CROP Advisory Council will meet twice a year with CROP directors at statewide workshops to share information about program successes and challenges and discuss proposal guidelines.

### • CROP Related Activities

CROP offers many activities to prepare students for postsecondary education. Listed below are some of the programs:

- Reading Programs - Some CROP programs established reading clubs to increase student reading skills.
- Homework Clubs - CROP mentors and tutors assist CROP students in completing their homework assignments.
- Tutoring and Group Learning Sessions - Groups are established to assist CROP students in specific academic areas that require additional attention. The extra tutoring and group learning sessions also help prepare the students for a variety of tests (i.e., FCAT, CPT, PSAT, SAT, ACT)
- College Tours - CROP projects arrange College Bus Tours for CROP students to visit postsecondary institutions throughout the state. The purpose is to make the students aware of the many institutions that are available and the different career paths that they can take.
- Shadow a (College) Mentor Day - CROP programs allow the students to shadow a college student during a normal day, which includes attending classes, eating in the cafeteria, studying and spending time with their mentors' friends.
- Summer Residency Program - CROP students spend a week to two weeks on a college campus, living in the dorms, attending classes, and interacting with college students and faculty.
- Workshops - Many CROP projects provide workshops to prepare students for postsecondary education by instructing them in writing resumes, budgeting, saving for college, and assisting them in filling out financial aid forms and applying for scholarships.
- Academic Enrichment and Cultural Field Trips - Academic enrichment activities as well as social and cultural field trips reinforce academics and appropriate behaviors and assist in motivating students toward a pattern of life-long learning.

Some projects allow high school students to participate in volunteer community service by serving as tutors for middle school students. Through volunteering, students experience increased responsibility and an opportunity to serve as role models for younger struggling students. They accrue the volunteer hours needed to graduate and apply for specific scholarships.

**CROP tenth graders scored higher on the FCAT examinations than those in the random cohort .**

**CROP offers a variety of programs and activities to prepare students for post-secondary education.**

- **Future Steps/Actions**

Since female participants outnumber males by a ratio of 3:2, there has been an increased focus on attracting more male students to the program. Suggested strategies include working closely with guidance counselors to identify and recruit eligible males; recruiting volunteers belonging to fraternities; and the use of sports, such as incorporating free time in the gym into the programs and having athletes speak on the value of education and the need for strong, solid academic outcomes in order to participate in college level sports.

Supplementing budgets through grants or private donations and combining resources through other programs or organizations such as Take Stock in Children, Talent Search, Upward Bound, the Governor's Mentoring Initiative, and the Florida Association of Partners in Education, assists CROP projects in expanding and diversifying the activities offered.

### **ACTIVITIES OF THE OFFICE OF EQUITY AND ACCESS TO SUPPORT CROP PROJECTS**

The Office of Equity and Access assumed a leadership role in identifying resources and partnership opportunities for CROP projects. It began the development of the Florida College Access Network (FCAN) in 2004 and had its first annual conference in April 2005. The FCAN has assisted in connecting CROP projects with other access and readiness programs around the state to improve services and academic outcomes for participants. By reviewing reports, talking to other CROP Coordinators and attending conferences, CROP projects can identify best practices in other programs and foster partnerships with other state, federal, community, and faith-based organizations through the FCAN website.

The Office is identifying and providing professional development activities and relevant presentations for CROP projects in collaboration with colleges, universities, districts, the Florida Education Fund, the College Board and other resources. Specific information will continue to be shared at CROP workshops and other venues, through email and the FCAN website.

The OEA continues to seek increased legislative funding for the program. Dissemination of the CROP evaluation information and other marketing strategies (i.e., advertising in DOE's Product Catalog, speaking at community gatherings and sending CROP related data to DOE's Connections magazine) are employed to gain support for the continuation and expansion of CROP funding. The OEA also forwards CROP success stories to the Department of Education's Communication and External Affairs Departments for increased exposure of CROP. Success stories are also shared throughout the state by the Statewide CROP Directors and other staff members at seminars, meetings and other events. CROP project directors also are encouraged to strengthen public information about the program and to market program successes in their local areas.

For CROP participants, academic readiness for college is of primary importance. Although CROP students are enrolling and persisting at postsecondary institutions, their eventual success will be greatly enhanced if they are better prepared academically.

The data show that CROP students continue to complete high school with academic deficiencies in reading, writing, and mathematics. The OEA will continue to monitor progress in remediation where needed, and will work to close the performance gaps between better prepared students who enter postsecondary that are not low-income and educationally disadvantaged.

### Next Steps

Future goals of the CROP program are to continue to:

- Increase participation of AP and Dual Enrollment
- Improve FCAT scores of CROP students
- Utilize the Florida Virtual School and other on-line services that are available in after school and weekend sessions.

Another goal is to expand the CROP program to ensure participation reflective of Florida's changing demographics.

Participants in CROP need rigorous educational experiences to prepare them for the rigor of postsecondary education. In addition to directing CROP administrators to encourage parents to ensure that their students take AP, Honors, Dual Enrollment, and Level III academic courses, the OEA staff will explore and continue to emphasize extracurricular options for increasing academic performance. Examples of reported effective alternatives include partnering with the Florida Education Fund (FEF) and the College Board. The OEA has also invited innovative speakers to the OEA/CROP Conferences to introduce new and proven methods to teaching such as "The Math Party" kit to enhance CROP students' math skills.

### **CONCLUSION**

The annual evaluation of the College Reach-Out Program for 2003-04 demonstrates that CROP students perform as well as or better than the cohort. CROP serves its participants while assisting the state in achieving a higher level of postsecondary education rates among low-income, underrepresented and educationally disadvantaged students. CROP has proven to be an effective component in support of Florida's efforts to provide equity and access to higher education.

**OEA  
provides  
oversight  
for the  
CROP  
program.**