EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following are the major findings of the evaluation of the Illinois Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) for FY 99.

- There were 28,206 students served in 78 projects in FY 99. Thirty-eight of these projects were local education agencies and 33 were Regional Offices of Education. The remaining nine projects were administered by community colleges.

- The majority of students served were White (53%). Other students served were African-American (32%), Hispanic (14%), and the remaining students were Asian/Pacific Islanders and American Indian and Alaskan natives.

- Over half (55%) of the students served were in high school and 43% of the students were in elementary grades, with the remaining students in ungraded programs.

- About 13% of the students served were retrieved dropouts and 36 % were chronic truants. Twenty-six percent were potential dropouts with low attendance and 25% were potential dropouts without low attendance.

- Over half (70%) of the students served achieved one or more of the objectives stated in their individual optional education plan. The most frequent objectives were: 1) meet an attendance rate target (60.04% met), 2) get promoted to the next grade (66.2% met), 3) improve test scores (33.9% met).

- More than 88% of the students achieved positive outcomes. Overall, the most frequent positive outcome was meeting or exceeding attendance rate targets (45%), followed by being promoted to the next grade (30%).

- Among **retrieved dropouts**, academic counseling was the service most frequently provided (79%), followed by academic instruction (55%), and GED instruction (36%). Over 54% of retrieved dropouts met one or more objectives and more than 87% had positive outcomes.

- Among **chronic truants**, personal counseling was the service most frequently provided (64%), followed by case management (51%), and academic counseling (30%). Over 68% of chronic truants met one or more objectives and more than 87% had positive outcomes.

- Among **potential dropouts with low attendance**, low achievement was the most frequently cited referral criterion (16%), followed by low income (15%), and high failure rate (11%). For these students, personal counseling was the service most frequently provided (65%), followed by case management (40%), and academic counseling (35%). Over 76% of potential dropouts with low attendance met one or more objectives and 90% had positive outcomes.

- Among **potential dropouts without low attendance**, low achievement was the most frequently cited referral criterion (34%), followed by high failure rate (26%), and low income (23%). For these students, tutoring was the service most frequently provided (50%), followed by academic counseling (39%), and personal counseling (36%). Over 77% of these students met one or more objectives and 89% had positive outcomes.

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INTRODUCTION

This report describes the characteristics and outcomes of the students served by the Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program (TAOEP) in FY 99. It also describes the programs which received grant funds and the types of services provided.

Background

Legislation requires the establishment of truants' alternative and optional education programs to provide educational services to chronic truants, potential dropouts, and dropouts up to 21 years of age (Section 2-3.66 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/2-3.66]). TAOEP programs offer modified instructional services on either a full- or part-time basis to help prevent students from dropping out of school. The immediate goal of the program is to reduce student truancy and dropouts, while the long-term goal is to have all students served receive a high school diploma.

The students eligible to receive services include dropouts, chronic truants, and potential dropouts. Dropouts are students at any grade level whose names have been removed from a district's roster for any reason other than graduation, transfer, extended illness, or death. Chronic truants are students subject to compulsory school attendance who have been absent without valid cause for 10% or more of the previous 180 regular school days. Potential dropouts are students subject to compulsory attendance who have been identified by the school district as such based upon criteria other than chronic truancy. These criteria include low achievement, academic failure, low attendance, discipline problems, high school credit deficiencies, low-income backgrounds, parenthood, or drug/alcohol problems.

Program services include prevention/intervention and support services as well as alternative education services designed to prevent students from dropping out of school. The prevention and intervention services include academic counseling, tutoring, mentoring, personal counseling, referral services and follow-up, drug/alcohol referral, and case management. Support services, such as parenting courses, job placement, day care services, vocational training, career counseling and guidance, career education, work experience, college counseling, and cultural programs, are also offered. In addition, alternative education services are provided through GED courses, summer school, weekend school, evening school, community college courses, and traditional academic instruction.

TAOEP program funds are awarded to education agencies through a competitive grant process. The education agencies that receive TAOEP funds include local education agencies, community colleges, and Regional Offices of Education.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation addresses the following questions:

1) How many students received services, and what were their characteristics?

2) What were the bases for referring students to the program?

3) What were the participation objectives for the students that were served in the program?

4) What services did the students receive?

5) What were the outcomes for the students that participated in the program?

6) To what extent were the students' participation objectives achieved?

7) Which education agencies offered program services?

8) What types of staff participated in offering services?

9) How were program funds allocated for services?

10) What were the student characteristics, program services, and student outcomes for the individual education agencies that offered program services?

Data Sources

The data presented in this report were collected from grant recipients using ISBE Form 41-72A (Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program End-of-Year Report) and ISBE Form 41-72B (Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program Student Data Sheet).

Student Characteristics

There were 29,875 students served by the TAOEP in FY 99. Table 1 shows that, among those students whose basis for referral and grade were reported, over 51% were potential dropouts. About 36% were chronic truants and the remaining 13% were retrieved dropouts. In FY 99, the proportion of potential dropouts was the same as reported in FY 98 (51%). Fifty-one percent of the potential dropouts had low attendance as a basis of referral, while the remaining 49% of the potential dropouts served did not have either truancy or attendance problems. Approximately 17% of the TAOEP students served in FY 99 were within the age of compulsory attendance and did not have low attendance or truancy reported as a basis for referral into the program. This proportion is up slightly from the 15.2% share reported in FY 98.

Table 1. Students by Grade Level and Type, FY 99

Grade	Retrieved Dropouts	Chronic Truants	Potential Dropouts with Low Attendance	Potential Dropouts w/o Low Attendance	Total
Pre-Kindergarten	0	0	0	0	0
Kindergarten	0	216	196	308	720
1	0	584	376	458	1,418
2	0	455	342	589	1,386
3	3	369	347	588	1,307
4	4	339	348	406	1,097
5	4	436	336	353	1,129
6	0	497	394	401	1,292
7	5	886	583	592	2,066
8	28	1,103	654	611	2,396
9	470	2,475	1,693	754	5,392
10	795	1,619	1,204	723	4,341
11	944	981	742	789	3,456
12	1,097	573	573	904	3,147
Ungraded	578	78	33	24	713
Missing Data	6	3	1	5	15
Total	**3,934**	**10,614**	**7,822**	**7,505**	**29,875**

Table 2 shows that the majority (53%) of the students served were White, 32% were African-American, and 14% were Hispanic. Compared to FY 98, the percentages of students served who were White and African-American stayed the same, while the percentage of Hispanic students increased slightly from 12% to 14%. More than half the total served were male, which is consistent with previous years' data.

Table 2. Students Participating in TAOEP by Ethnicity and Gender, FY 99

	GENDER		
ETHNICITY	Female Number	Male Number	Total Number
White Non-Hispanic	7,426	8,414	15,840
African-American Non-Hispanic	4,823	4,605	9,428
American Indian/Alaskan Native	36	46	82
Asian/Pacific Islander	76	126	202
Hispanic	1,993	2,164	4,157
Other	66	72	138
Missing Data	15	13	28
Total	**14,435**	**15,440**	**29,875**

As stated earlier, students may be referred to the program as potential dropouts based upon criteria other than chronic truancy. Table 3 shows the number of referrals to the program for each of the criterion used to identify potential dropouts. Students may be referred to the program for more than one criterion. For this reason, the total number of referral criteria listed in this table exceeds the number of potential dropouts receiving services. The most frequent referral criterion was low attendance, followed by low achievement and low income. The basis for referral data presented in Table 3 is displayed by grade to highlight the leading basis for referral for each grade level.

Table 3. Basis for Referral for Potential Dropouts by Grade Level, FY 99

BASIS FOR REFERRAL	GRADE LEVELS													
	Kind.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Ungraded
Low Achievement	110	185	247	264	247	226	212	387	386	724	422	219	172	2
Low Attendance	196	376	342	347	348	336	394	583	654	1,693	1,204	742	573	33
High Failure Rate	8	44	101	101	103	99	186	291	277	544	457	346	245	1
Parenthood	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	9	67	84	122	123	1
Credit Deficiencies	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	14	23	349	517	631	709	1
Discipline Referrals	60	95	110	122	65	57	48	120	156	283	243	134	96	9
Low Income	234	339	343	333	142	116	94	162	203	487	251	86	51	19
Drug/Alcohol Problems	0	3	2	0	1	2	0	4	8	16	30	21	23	1
Health-Related Problems	18	42	39	47	25	22	19	31	31	76	49	43	38	7
Other	27	41	45	41	29	30	20	43	43	173	144	78	71	13

Missing Data = 15

Participation Objectives

Each student served in the TAOEP program is required to have an Individual Optional Education Program (IOEP), which includes (among other things) one or more objectives that the student is expected to achieve during the upcoming year. Table 4 presents the data on the participation objectives for students served in the program during FY 99. Since students may have more than one objective, the total number of objectives shown in the table will exceed the number of students served.

The most frequently listed student objective is to meet an attendance target, followed by improving test scores, and getting promoted to the next grade.

Table 4. Participation Objectives by Type of TAOEP Student, FY 99

Objective	Retrieved Dropouts	Chronic Truants	Potential Dropouts With Low Attendance	Potential Dropouts w/o Low Attendance	Total
Meet attendance target	1,038	10,188	7,333	2,412	18,559
Improve test scores	991	3,670	2,973	3,959	7,634
Get promoted to the next grade	380	3,243	2,912	3,687	6,535
Meet credits earned target	1,701	1,287	1,704	1,854	4,692
Reduce discipline referrals	78	2,225	959	700	3,262
Earn high school diploma	1,056	532	511	972	3,071
Earn a target grade for a class (or classes)	194	1,158	971	2,920	2,323
Return to regular school	338	689	483	309	1,510
Pass pre-GED test	830	6	9	5	845
Earn a GED	662	9	6	12	677
Meet requirements of a work program	207	209	85	279	501
Obtain admission to college	180	40	77	87	297
Complete a program of training or services	85	18	29	106	132
Obtain employment	98	4	16	17	118

Program Services

Table 5 shows that in FY 99, a range of 22 different services were provided by the TAOEP. All students participating in the program received at least one of these services, and most students received more than one service.

Overall, personal counseling was the most frequently offered service, followed by academic counseling, and case management. For retrieved dropouts, academic counseling was the most common service, followed by academic instruction, and GED instruction. Among chronic truants, personal counseling was offered most frequently, followed by case management, and academic counseling. For potential dropouts with low attendance, personal counseling was the most common service, followed by academic counseling, and mentoring. Among potential dropouts without low attendance, tutoring was offered most frequently followed by academic counseling, and personal counseling.

Table 5. Program Services by Type of TAOEP Student, FY 99

Service	Retrieved Dropouts	Chronic Truants	Potential Dropouts w/o Low Attendance	Potential Dropouts w/o Low Attendance	Total
Academic Counseling	3,113	3,140	2,705	2,938	11,896
Academic Instruction	2,182	1,239	1,350	2,515	7,286
College Counseling	928	82	295	329	1,634
Community College Course	821	6	9	70	906
Evening School	473	381	581	815	2,250
Summer School	373	114	620	657	1,764
Weekend School	2	47	2	170	221
GED Instruction	1,397	12	9	19	1,437
Tutoring	758	1,430	1,600	3,754	7,542
Mentoring	397	1,436	1,670	1,985	5,488
Personal Counseling	1,151	6,812	5,051	2,716	15,730
Drug/Alcohol Referral	19	122	47	47	235
Case Management	753	5,398	3,151	1,459	10.761
Parenting Course	248	479	129	540	1,396
Referral Services and Follow-Up	306	1,994	1,152	239	3,691
Job Placement	356	155	64	156	731
Vocational Training	304	221	186	227	938
Career Counseling/Guidance	888	424	423	455	2,190
Career Education	199	113	118	183	613
Work Experience	184	118	46	258	606
Day Care Service	29	3	14	2	48
Cultural Programs	110	272	81	206	669

Table 6 on the following page shows the services associated with the participation objectives. Academic counseling and personal counseling were among the most frequently listed services for each of the objectives, except for meeting the requirements of a work program. For that objective, the most common services were vocational training, career counseling, and guidance. In general, Table 6 shows that individual services (counseling, case management, tutoring) appear to be the ones most frequently offered regardless of the participation objective.

Table 6. Program Services Received by Participation Objectives, FY 99

	Academic Counseling	Academic Instruction	College Counseling	Community College Course	Evening School	Summer School	Weekend School	GED Instruction	Tutoring	Mentoring	Personal Counseling
Earn high school diploma	2,298	1,816	494	122	677	188	4	45	978	853	1,820
Earn a GED	624	77	180	153	23	37	0	605	152	55	362
Return to regular school	1,188	938	101	89	294	174	1	3	600	674	770
Complete a program of training or services	1,599	88	48	1	24	21	0	28	180	138	157
Earn a target grade for a class(es)	2,324	1,450	254	46	204	516	211	54	2,947	1,536	2,547
Get promoted to the next grade	4,531	2,903	449	13	396	412	211	134	3,839	2,391	4,424
Improve test scores	5,629	3,540	622	56	473	506	215	476	4,303	2,585	5,061
Meet attendance target	6,958	4,078	732	107	1,218	1,018	214	164	3,772	3,819	12,740
Meet credits earned target	5,256	4,143	740	370	1,648	1,023	6	51	2,324	1,845	3,632
Meet requirements of a work pgm	660	399	52	4	276	69	2	2	167	122	298
Reduce discipline referrals	1,695	1,110	85	5	732	522	87	11	874	935	2,902
Obtain admission to college	118	28	93	42	13	34	0	75	29	22	106
Pass pre-GED test	825	88	177	391	15	53	0	786	91	15	333
Obtain employment	367	86	133	38	93	107	2	143	165	150	285

Table 6. Program Services Received by Participation Objectives, FY 99 (cont.)

	Drug/ Alcohol Referral	Case Management	Parenting Course	Referral Services & Follow-Up	Job Placement	Vocational Training	Career Counseling & Guidance	Career Education	Work Experience	Day Care Service	Cultural Programs
Earn high school diploma	78	404	242	101	265	411	531	249	254	19	47
Earn a GED	1	277	73	111	110	31	228	46	1	10	26
Return to regular school	72	125	53	404	20	118	69	29	70	19	39
Complete a training program	4	153	19	37	55	10	68	15	2	2	18
Earn a target grade for a class(es)	93	1,139	311	386	221	175	405	208	163	0	113
Get promoted to the next grade	118	4,337	520	1,465	139	331	751	228	169	18	250
Improve test scores	125	4,649	660	1,698	475	560	1,225	467	331	27	333
Meet attendance target	210	9,199	973	3,218	391	597	1,210	378	278	22	486
Meet credits earned target	97	1,258	460	310	410	701	1,100	373	379	22	64
Meet requirements of a work pgm	6	179	122	13	288	466	441	262	388	2	11
Reduce discipline referrals	87	825	135	188	49	136	162	44	92	0	124
Obtain admission to college	1	52	11	6	40	4	81	31	2	0	0
Pass pre-GED test	0	272	72	116	93	9	215	48	0	10	51
Obtain employment	16	215	21	62	140	22	213	39	11	7	37

Student outcomes data are presented in Table 7. These data show that approximately 88% of the students achieved one or more positive outcomes (received high school diploma, received GED, returned to regular school and no longer receiving TAOEP services, continued regular school and no longer receiving TAOEP services, improved academic performance, met or exceeded attendance target, completed program of training or services, reduced discipline referrals, obtained admission to college, passed pre-GED test or course, obtained employment, remained in school, promoted to next grade, transferred to other program).

Among retrieved dropouts, over 25% received either a high school diploma or GED. Another 33% had improved academic performance and 25% remained in school. 58% of chronic truants met or exceeded their attendance target and 26% were promoted to the next grade. Among potential dropouts with attendance problems, 62% met or exceeded their attendance target and 37% were promoted to the next grade. Over 46% of the potential dropouts without low attendance had improved academic performance and about 38% were promoted to the next grade.

Table 7. TAOEP Students by Outcome and Basis for Referral, FY 99

OUTCOME	BASIS FOR REFERRAL				
	Retrieved Dropouts Number	**Chronic Truants Number**	**Potential Dropout with Low Attendance**	**Potential Dropout w/o Low Attendance**	**Total**
Received HS diploma	592	250	276	566	1,684
Received GED	411	5	6	48	470
Returned to regular school and no longer receiving TAOEP services	170	207	172	374	923
Continued regular school and no longer receiving TAOEP services	27	1,609	1,238	471	3,345
Improved academic performance	1,289	1,365	1,393	3,469	7,516
Met or exceeded attendance target	470	6,144	4,816	1,940	13,370
Completed program of training or services	366	181	535	820	1,902
Returned to regular school and receiving TAOEP services	24	702	193	641	1,560
Reduced discipline referrals	121	1,582	913	530	3,146
Obtained admission to college	245	170	142	259	816
Passed pre-GED test or course	441	75	17	69	602
Obtained employment	231	132	90	107	560
Remained in school	969	1,869	1,246	853	4,937
Promoted to next grade	324	2,778	2,884	2,866	8,852
Transferred to other program	220	901	532	319	1,972
Continued regular school and receiving TAOEP services	53	1,583	1,264	1,356	4,256
Discontinued program	82	311	177	217	787
Moved out of district or other involuntary discontinuation	183	540	251	155	1,129
Dropped out of school	300	327	248	138	1,013
Expelled or suspended from school	78	145	75	19	317

Table 8 shows the extent to which individual student objectives were actually accomplished. While it is desirable for TAOEP students to achieve positive outcomes while being served in the TAOEP program, it is more important that they achieve those individual objectives that have been set out in their individual optional education plans. This is because individual objectives are based upon the needs of the student and the overall goals of the local program and are also linked to the services that were provided.

The data in Table 8 show that the objectives of completing a program of training or services, returning to regular school, earning target grades for a class (or classes), getting promoted to the next grade, meeting attendance targets, and obtaining employment were actually accomplished in more than 50% of the cases. The remaining objectives were met in less than 50% of the cases. When the data on all reported student objectives combined is compared to the data on the combined number of objectives that were met, it shows that slightly more than half (52%) of all reported objectives were met. This finding is tempered somewhat by the fact that the objectives and outcomes data also show that 70% of the students served achieved one or more of their objectives. As measures of the overall success of the program, both are considerably less than the 88% reported as the proportion of the students who achieved a positive outcome.

In preparing the data from Tables 7 and 8, some interesting findings emerge. Among the 1684 students reported as receiving high school diplomas, 339 of them did not list the objective of receiving a high school diploma. Similarly, 157 of the 470 students who received GEDs did not show the objective of receiving a GED. These statistics point to the need for more care and attention to be applied to the process of setting individual student objectives. The high school diploma and GED outcomes represent the two best outcomes resulting from being in the TAOEP program and obviously within the reach of a substantial number of students who achieved one or the other of them. Unfortunately, the IOEP's for these students omitted either the diploma or the GED as an objective.

Table 8. TAOEP Students Accomplishment of Objectives, FY 99

Objective	Number of students who had that objective	Number of students who Met that objective	Percent of students who met that objective
Earn high school diploma	3,071	1,345	43.80
Earn a GED	689	313	45.43
Return to regular school	1,819	957	52.61
Complete a program of training or services	238	160	67.23
Earn a target grade for a class(es)	5,243	3,288	62.71
Get promoted to the next grade	10,222	6,770	66.23
Improve test scores	11,593	3,924	33.85
Meet attendance target	20,971	12,593	60.05
Meet credits earned target	6,546	2,793	42.67
Meet requirements of a work program	780	314	40.26
Reduce discipline referrals	3,962	1,854	46.79
Obtain admission to college	135	54	40.00
Pass pre-GED test	850	299	35.18
Obtain employment	384	201	52.34

Table 9. TAOEP Education Agencies and Students Served, FY 99

Type of Education Agency	Number	Number of Student Served
Local Education Agency	38	13,290
Regional Office of Education	33	13,100
Community College	9	3,485

In FY 99, 80 education agencies participated in the TAOEP. Thirty-eight were local education agencies, 33 were Regional Offices of Education, and nine were community colleges. As shown in Table 9, the number of students served by local education agencies was slightly higher than the number served by ROE's. Approximately 12% of the students served were in programs conducted by community colleges.

Table 10. Types of Programs Offered by TAOEP Education Agencies, FY 99

Types of Programs	Local Education Agencies	Regional Offices of Education	Community Colleges
Alternative Education	21	15	5
Optional Education	20	16	8
Truants' Retrieval	21	23	2
Dropout Prevention	26	23	3
Dropout Retrieval	14	12	5

TAOEP projects offer five different types of programs. These are: 1) alternative education, which is a non-traditional education program offered to students of compulsory attendance age, 2) optional education, which is a non-traditional education program offered to students beyond compulsory attendance age, 3) truants retrieval, which are services for chronic truants, 4) drop-out prevention, and 5) dropout retrieval. Projects may offer more than one type of program, depending upon local needs and resources available. Table 10 shows that among local education agencies dropout prevention was the leading program offered followed by alternative education and truants retrieval. Truants' retrieval and dropout prevention were the leading programs offered by ROE's, and optional education, dropout retrieval, and alternative education programs were offered most frequently by community colleges.

TAOEP projects require a wide range of personnel in order to provide program services. Table 11 shows the various types of personnel engaged by education agencies in providing these services.

Table 11. Types of Staff Provided by TAOEP Program Funds, FY 99

Staff Type	Local Education Agencies	Regional Offices of Education	Community Colleges
High School Teachers	119.8	79.7	94.7
Elementary Teachers	53.9	12.5	11
College Instructors	0	2.5	3.6
Aides	37.6	20	18
Caseworkers	6.2	77	3.7
Counselors	14.8	10.9	23.4
Nurses	3.4	5.2	0
Administrators	20.3	18.5	25.8
Social Workers	15	9	2.8
Psychologists	2	0	0
Tutors	14	178.6	138.8
Mentors	4.8	101.4	11
Others	38.3	16.7	9.6

Among local education agencies, high school teachers are the leading type of staff utilized followed by elementary teachers. Among ROE's, tutors and mentors are the primary staff categories, while tutors and high school teachers are the most common TAOEP staff for community colleges.

The amount expended by education agencies when providing TAOEP services are shown in Table 12. In every case, academic instruction was the leading area of expenditure. For local education agencies, academic counseling and tutoring were also major areas of expenditures. For ROE's, a substantial amount was spent for case management. Among community colleges, academic counseling and personal counseling were major areas of expenditure. Aside from academic instruction, the leading areas for service expenditures (counseling and tutoring) appear to be those that provide for individualized service.

Table 12. Funds Expended by Type of Service, FY 99

Service	Local Education Agencies			Regional Offices of Education			Community Colleges		
	TAOEP Funds	All Other Funds	Total	TAOEP Funds	All Other Funds	Total	TAOEP Funds	All Other Funds	Total
Academic Counseling	310,115	399,574	709,689	317,587	62,208	379,795	303,502	225,239	528,741
Academic Instruction	2,456,718	3,234,268	5,690,986	1,585,757	1,211,547	2,797,304	1,557,399	850,163	2,407,562
College Counseling	164,259	23,014	187,273	9,296	1,090	10,386	41,661	26,547	68,208
Community College Course	0	0	0	715	0	715	12,447	9,708	22,155
Evening School	195,664	274,285	469,949	48,071	10,857	58,928	31,040	4,370	35,410
Summer School	59,139	170,644	229,783	28,994	73,050	102,044	6,704	68,863	75,567
Weekend School	0	0	0	143	0	143	0	0	0
GED Instruction	6,452	56,577	63,029	32,512	185,230	217,742	58,792	166,617	225,409
Tutoring	378,558	203,422	581,980	261,722	48,738	310,460	200,361	85,303	285,664
Mentoring	230,106	42,605	272,711	85,641	13,668	99,309	35,151	3,829	38,980
Personal Counseling	1,050,101	151,622	1,201,723	408,305	119,837	528,142	166,726	76,662	243,388
Drug/Alcohol Referral	4,483	12,210	16,693	6,692	1,000	7,692	3,246	2,000	5,246
Case Management	2,212,368	97,968	2,310,336	1,757,952	167,448	1,925,400	62,481	48,783	111,264
Parenting Course	121,652	5,878	127,530	69,546	37,200	106,746	4,300	24,000	28,300
Referral Services and Follow-Up	46,347	43,029	89,376	214,274	40,900	255,174	5,383	12,675	18,058
Job Placement	2,512	0	2,512	9,746	0	9,746	3,287	19,500	22,787
Vocational Training	2,976	76,084	79,060	9,557	108,029	117,586	1,586	7,082	8,668
Career Counseling/Guidance	52,445	37,310	89,755	76,926	65,663	142,589	37,832	39,182	77,014
Career Education	5,728	49,813	55,541	15,368	15,757	31,125	35,102	39,880	74,982
Work Experience	8,058	38,450	46,508	24,973	53,850	78,823	3,403	15,175	18,578
Day Care Service	135,000	38,000	173,000	0	0	0	53,104	41,352	94,456
Cultural Programs	6,838	1,485	8,323	25,436	0	25,436	22,315	43,601	65,916

TAOEP projects require a wide range of personnel in order to provide program services. Table 12 shows the funds expended by education agencies when providing TAOEP services. In every case, academic instruction was the leading area of expenditure. For local education agencies, personal counseling and case management were also major areas for expenditures. For ROE's, a substantial amount was spent for case management. Among community colleges, academic counseling and tutoring were major areas of expenditure. Aside from academic instruction, the leading areas for service expenditures (counseling, case management, and tutoring) appear to be those that provide for individualized service.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In general, the program appears to be reasonably effective in meeting the needs of the students served. Although 52% of all individual student objectives were met, well over half (70%) of the students served achieved one or more of the objectives set forth in their Individual Optional Education Plans. In addition, 88% of the students served achieved one or more positive outcomes in the course of participating in the TAOEP program. The proportion of students who achieve their objectives could rise if the projects would more carefully specify objectives based on a case-by-case consideration of individual circumstances. As reported earlier, 351 of the 1,684 students who earned high school diplomas did <u>not</u> have earning the diploma as an objective. In addition, 157 of the 470 GED earners did <u>not</u> have earning a GED as an objective. These two statistics suggest that projects need to give careful individual attention to the objectives of each student and include all objectives that students might reasonably achieve in the course of participating in the TAOEP program.

As noted in last year's evaluation report, the TAOEP program serves substantial numbers of students who: a) are within the limit of compulsory attendance, and b) do not have either attendance or truancy problems reported.

In all, 17% of the students served in the FY 99 TAOEP program were in these two categories. Serving these students in the TAOEP program is questionable, especially since the program served 3,934 dropouts when the statewide total number of dropouts increased by over 42,000 during FY 99. In addition, there were 10,614 chronic truants served in the TAOEP program while the statewide total number of chronic truants was over 46,000. Clearly, the TAOEP program has not yet absorbed a substantial portion of either of these eligible populations. Given the fact that the TAOEP program represents a "last chance" for many dropouts and truants to succeed in school, the program ought to redirect its focus to serving more dropouts and chronic truants.