

Unit Strategic Plan

2015-2017

Every two years, during spring semester, programs/departments/service units are asked to develop Unit Strategic Plans. These plans need to be closely aligned with the Institutional Action Priorities, the College's Long Range Goals, and the College's five year strategic plan. The Strategic Plans incorporate and reflect the operation of that unit at all campuses and instructional sites. Each unit's budget needs to reflect the fiscal implications associated with the unit's identified goals and objectives.

Name of Program: Educational Talent Search

Mission Statement:

The Educational Talent Search program seeks to provide assistance and guidance to low income and potential first generation students in the target areas of Birmingham City, Jefferson County, and Tarrant City. Educational Talent Search works with students and families providing services to increase students' secondary completion and postsecondary matriculation and graduation. Educational Talent Search assists and guides students in grades 6 through 12 by providing academic, career, college, financial aid, and economic literacy advising and counseling, as well as providing access to programs and/or services related to secondary completion and postsecondary enrollment.

Summary of Access, Productivity and Effectiveness:

Educational Talent Search is one of the three TRIO Programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education and was initially authorized in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 reauthorized TRIO programs, including Educational Talent Search. The TRIO Programs are Student Support Services, Upward Bound, and Educational Talent Search.

The Educational Talent Search Program seeks to identify and assist students from disadvantaged populations who have the potential for postsecondary enrollment. Educational Talent Search provides academic, career, and financial aid counseling, as well as assisting disadvantaged youth with completing secondary schools and matriculating into postsecondary institutions.

The Educational Talent Search Program has been at Jefferson State Community College since 2002. Educational Talent Search (ETS) has been awarded funding three cycles since its establishment at Jefferson State Community College. The initial grant application for the Educational Talent Search Program was approved and initiated in 2002. The next grant cycle began in 2006. The most recently approved grant application and cycle started on September 1, 2012. The current grant will end on August 31, 2016. ETS will participate in the upcoming Request for Proposals for Educational Talent

Search Programs, pursuing funding to continue into the next grant cycle. The application process has not been announced but is expected in late December/early January.

Educational Talent Search strives to be accessible to our target population and target schools located within the Birmingham City, Jefferson County, and Tarrant City schools systems. A minimum of 2/3 or approximately 400 of Educational Talent Search participants must be low income and potential first generation college students. The target areas and schools identified in the ETS grant application are primarily in low income, high crime areas and in single parent households. The Jefferson campus of Jefferson State Community College is centrally located amid Birmingham City, Jefferson County, and Tarrant City Schools, making it the most assessable campus to target areas and schools identified in the grant application.

A component of the ETS grant states that ETS will provide access or connections to high quality tutoring services for program participants. The ETS budget includes funds to pay for Tutor Coordinators and Tutor Aides to work onsite at target schools, making tutoring accessible to program participants. Tutoring is also offered at the Jefferson campus for students who do not attend target schools but reside in target areas. Educational Talent Search Tutor Coordinators are all certified teachers or retired certified teachers. ETS Tutor Aides are college graduates or current college students with an A or B in their core courses and/or high school students with the potential for postsecondary matriculation.

Educational Talent Search offers participants and their families access to computers, the Internet, and printing. ETS has use of a fully functional and up to date computer lab at Jefferson State Community College's Jefferson Campus. ETS students and parents may utilize the lab for educational, career, financial planning, financial literacy, and financial aid purposes. Students also receive computer-based tutorials utilizing Plato software as purchased by Jefferson State Community College, for core courses and ACT Preparation as supervised by ETS staff.

ETS utilizes Blumen Database by Compansol for data management. Blumen provides ongoing technical support which can be accessed in the software, via email, and/or via telephone. In August 2015, ETS upgraded to the online software version. This now allows ETS staff access to the database at off-site locations. Furthermore, this enhancement greatly decreases the access issues experienced by staff due to the program's location on the Jefferson State servers. Staff training for Blumen is available from the development company, Compansol. The Blumen Database is also linked to the Annual Performance Report that Educational Talent Search submits each calendar year. This allows for the uploading of all entered data supporting achievement of programmatic goals without manual entry or interpretation of data.

In ongoing efforts to ensure staff productivity, ETS full-time staff attends at least one TRIO training during each grant cycle. There are five priorities for Educational Talent Search and all TRIO full-time staff, per the U.S. Department of Education, are required to attend training based on mandated priorities. All five priorities apply to the program Director and other full-time staff who attend

priorities specific to their job functions. The five priorities are: 1) Training to improve record keeping: reporting of student and project performance: and the rigorous evaluation of project performance in order to design and operate a model TRIO project; 2) Training on: budget management and the legislative and regulatory requirements for the operation of the Federal Trio Programs; 3) Training on: assessment of student needs, proven record retention and graduation strategies, and the use of educational technology in order to design and operate a model TRIO project; 4) Training on: student financial aid, college and university admission policies and procedures, and proven strategies to improve the financial literacy and economic literacy of students, include basic personal income, household money management, financial planning skills, and basic economic decision making skills; 5) Training on: proven strategies for recruiting and service hard to reach populations-including students who are limited English proficient, students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, students who are individuals with disabilities, students who are homeless children and youths, students who are foster care youth, or other disconnected students.

Part-time Educational Talent Search employees receive at least two professional development workshops during each fiscal year of the grant cycle. This training prepares them to address needs of disadvantaged populations and students served by the ETS program. It also familiarizes them with the Program's mission and objectives, supervision of program participants, and any related College and/or federal training guidelines.

Educational Talent Search has regularly met and exceeded the five objectives set forth in the Educational Talent Search grant application. Each Educational Talent Search Program has five goals. While the goals are outlined in the grant application, each Educational Talent Search Program in the grant submission assigns percentages to each objective. Each program aims to meet the percentages as defined in their grant application submission. Jefferson State Community College's Educational Talent Search Program is ambitious in our percentages. The objectives and percentages are listed below.

A. Secondary School Persistence: 85 % of non-senior participants served each project year will complete the current academic year and continue in school for the next academic year, at the next grade level.

B. Secondary School Graduation (regular secondary school diploma): 80 % of seniors served during the project year will graduate during the project year with a regular secondary school diploma within the standard number of years.

C. Secondary School Graduation (rigorous secondary school program of study): 80 % of seniors served during the project year will complete a rigorous secondary school program of study and will graduate during the project year with a regular secondary school diploma within the standard number of years.

D. Postsecondary Education Enrollment: 70 % of participants, who have graduated with a regular secondary school diploma, during the project year, will enroll in an institution of higher education by the fall term immediately following high school graduation or will have received notification, by the fall term immediately following high school, from an institution of higher education, of acceptance but deferred enrollment until the next academic term (e.g., spring term).

E. Postsecondary Attainment: 70 % of participants served during the project year, who enrolled in an institution of higher education, by the fall term immediately following high school graduation or by the next academic term (e.g., spring term) as a result of acceptance but deferred enrollment will, complete a program of postsecondary education within six years.

Internal Conditions

Office Space

Educational Talent Search offices are in Lurleen Wallace Hall in suites 247 A and B. Each full-time Educational Talent Search staff member has an office equipped by the College with desks, chairs, filing cabinets and other furnishings making offices fully functional and accessible to program staff and participants. ETS has a separate office to house current and prior year participant files, as well as a closet to store program supplies. ETS staff also has computers and printers which were furnished by the College. The exception is the computer in the Director's office, a color printer in Office Manager's office, and three scanners for use by full time staff. All were purchased with program funds and are allowable expenses. The color printer in the Director's office is a contribution from the College's Upward Bound Program (upon its closure).

Budget

	Federal Budget
2013 – 2014	\$217,971
2014-2015	\$230,000
2015-2016	\$230,000

Staffing

Jefferson Campus

Educational Talent Search has to define target area and target schools in each grant application. The Jefferson campus is centrally located amid Birmingham City, Jefferson County, and Tarrant City which are both the target areas and names of associated target school systems.

Educational Talent Search has three full-time staff members who work a 40 work week as required by Jefferson State Community College from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Full time ETS staff include a Director, Counselor, and Office Manager. Hours are adjusted as necessary to meet the commitments to target schools.

Part-time Employees

Part-time Educational Talent Search staff members, Tutor Coordinators and Tutor Aides, are on-site at the Jefferson Campus from 4-6PM, Monday through Thursday. There are presently four Tutor Coordinators for middle school students in grades 6 through 8 and four Tutor Coordinators for high school students in grades 9 through 12. Tutor Coordinators are also on-site at select target schools from 3:00 PM-6:00 p.m.

Educational Talent Search also has an Administrative Supervisor, Dr. Linda Hooton who spends 10% of her time supporting Talent Search grant initiatives.

Enrollment

Educational Talent Search serves eligible students in grades 6 through 12. There are 300 students in grades 6 through 8 and 300 in grades 9 through 12 that are served each year. At least 400 must be low income and potential first generation students. The focus is on students within the target area and target schools, however, other students may apply. There were 600 students served in both 2012-2013 and 2014-2015. Currently, the program is recruiting participants for the 600 students to be served in 2015-2016. The target date for full enrollment is October 2015.

Facilities

Jefferson Campus

Educational Talent Search has only one location at the Jefferson Campus of Jefferson State Community College. Program staff travel and provide services to students but only at target schools and within target areas as identified in the Educational Talent Search grant application.

Equipment

The U.S. Department of Education defines equipment by the cost associated with its purchase. The cost of Equipment is \$5000 or more. Educational Talent Search has not purchased any equipment.

External Conditions

The Educational Talent Search Program adheres to all established policies and procedures of Jefferson State Community College.

Grant Renewal

The Educational Talent Search Program is funded through a federal grant provided by the United States Department of Education. Grants are awarded for a five year period. The Educational Talent Search Program is currently operating under the grant awarded for the period of September 1, 2011 through August 31, 2016. Continued funding past August 2016 will be contingent upon the submission of a grant application in fall of 2015 and successful funding in 2016.

2013-2014 Accomplishments

1. Successful recruitment of 600 program participants, 300 in grades 6 through 8 and 300 in grades 9 through 12.
2. All ETS full time staff, Director, Counselor, and Office Manager attended TRIO training focused on one or more of the program training initiatives.
3. ETS Director conducted two professional development trainings with part-time program staff, Tutor Coordinators and Tutor Aides.

2014-2015 Accomplishments

1. Successful recruitment of 600 program participants, 300 in grades 6 through 8 and 300 in grades 9 through 12.
2. The Director and Counselor attended TRIO training focused on one or more of the program training initiatives.
3. ETS Director conducted two professional development trainings with part-time program staff, Tutor Coordinators and Tutor Aides.
4. All 600 participants received the required number of program services.

Considerations for Development of Unit Strategic Plans:

What can be done to improve the operation of the unit?

Educational Talent Search will periodically mail flyers to remind parents and participants about tutoring services and information on tutoring services offered in surrounding areas.

The ETS Director will review budget and utilize funds to hire new Tutor Coordinators to provide onsite tutoring services for ETS participants at target schools. Consideration is given to expand tutoring at 2 off-campus target schools, due to the transportation issues experienced by students at respective schools in traveling to the Jefferson campus.

Educational Talent Search staff will provide counseling sessions and workshops to foster participants and families' knowledge of postsecondary schools, majors, and available financial aid options.

The ETS staff will consider implementation of email and social media as an opportunity to better inform ETS participants of the availability of services and other pertinent information (scholarship opportunities, important dates regarding college admissions and college entrance exams).

The ETS staff (Director and Counselor) will develop resource materials (presentations and handouts) that address key concepts mandated by the grant to be posted on the program's webpage.

What are the desired Service Unit Outcomes for the unit?

Successful recruitment of 300 students in grades 6 through 8 and 300 students in grades 9 through 12 each year of grant cycle.

Required percentage of participants will be promoted to the next grade level and requisite percentage of college ready participants will graduate from secondary school in a standard number of years.

Students' needs for assistance, guidance, and counseling fostering application and matriculation to postsecondary schools will be met with required percentage applying to postsecondary schools.

Required percentage of college ready participants will enroll and successfully graduate from postsecondary schools within six years of their initial enrollment in postsecondary schools.

What equipment/resources are needed to accomplish the unit's goals and objectives?

Contact school counselors and/or administrators to schedule recruitment days at target schools beginning September 1 of each grant year.

Coordination with target school administrators to identify certified teachers and/or retired teachers to provide onsite tutoring after school at target schools.

Employ certified teachers and/or honors high school or college students to provide onsite tutoring at Jefferson Campus for program participants in grades 6 through 12.

Develop effective working relationship with schools so program can obtain student records verifying promotion to next grade level and high school graduation of college ready participants.

Coordinate with postsecondary four year institutions to arrange campus visitations.

Coordinate with cultural vendors to arrange visitations.

Coordinate with Director of Student Services to access online Clearinghouse to gather data on students' postsecondary enrollment and graduation.

Are there any goals or objectives that were not completed from previous year that should be included in new plan?

All goals were completed. However, tracking postsecondary graduation six years from initial matriculation is a new goal as established in the 2011-12 grant application.

Can the performance of the unit be addressed by professional development?

Yes. Continuous professional development is essential to the success of the Educational Talent Search Program and the program's ability to meet its objectives as defined in the grant application. The three full-time staff members commit to attend TRIO training focused on one or more of the program training initiatives. Additionally, one local professional development session will be held each year.

Unit Goals 2015-2016

Mission Statement:

The Educational Talent Search program seeks to provide assistance and guidance to low income and potential first generation students in the target areas of Birmingham City, Jefferson County, and Tarrant City. Educational Talent Search works with students and families providing services to increase students' secondary completion and postsecondary matriculation and graduation. Educational Talent Search assists and guides students in grades 6 through 12 by providing academic, career, college, financial aid, and economic literacy advising and counseling, as well as providing access to programs and/or services related to secondary completion and postsecondary enrollment.

Goal 1: Educational Talent Search will identify and recruit eligible students for participation in the Educational Talent Search Program.

Measurable Objective 1: 300 middle school and 300 high school participants will be recruited during Educational Talent Search visits to target schools and through counselor, school, and/or community referrals. .

Strategies: Educational Talent Search Director, Counselor, and Office Manager will contact target schools personnel to arrange recruitment days, including during school hours, at PTO/PTA meetings, and/or community meetings.

Method of Assessment: ETS Office Manager will maintain program applications and supporting documentation for 600 ETS participants for current year and prior year grant cycle. Incomplete applications and complete but wait listed applications will be stored in ETS offices.

Resources Needed: None

Estimated Cost: None

Goal 2: Educational Talent Search will work to promote secondary school completion.

Measure Objective 1: Participants will have access to quality tutoring at Jefferson Campus of Jefferson State Community College and onsite at target schools and/or be provided with contact information for additional tutoring services.

Strategies: ETS staff will mail out fall and spring newsletter highlighting available tutoring options at Jefferson State Community College ETS office and at select target schools. ETS conduct test taking/study skills workshops and will maintain a list of additional tutoring services and document when information is given to participants, schools, and/or families.

Method of Assessment: ETS will obtain and file copies of students' transcripts or report cards which reflect that at least 85% of non seniors are promoted and 80% of seniors graduate from secondary schools. This information will be input into Blumen, our computerized tracking system and our Annual Performance Report, as required by the U.S. Department of Education, to document students' graduation percentage.

Resources Needed: None

Estimated Cost: None

Goal 3: ETS will work to assist students and families with understanding and applying for financial aid.

Measurable Objective 1: ETS will work to ensure that graduating seniors complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Strategies: ETS will assist and guide students by holding individual sessions and workshops on completing the FAFSA, State, and institutional financial aid forms.

Method of Assessment: ETS will utilize FAFSA site to print out FAFSA verification for all seniors and maintain sign in logs for all seniors and/or families assisted with the FAFSA.

Resources Needed:	None
Estimated Cost:	None
Measurable Objective 2:	At least 70% of graduating seniors will enroll in postsecondary schools at least by spring semester after graduating from high school.
Strategies:	ETS will assist students with applying for postsecondary schools, selecting college majors, and registering for ACT/SAT and document service and any payments to testing organizations and/or schools on students' behalf.
Method of Assessment:	ETS will utilize National Student Clearinghouse verify graduating seniors' postsecondary enrollment.
Resources Needed:	None
Estimated Cost:	None

Unit Goals 2016-2017

Mission Statement:

The Educational Talent Search program seeks to provide assistance and guidance to low income and potential first generation students in the target areas of Birmingham City, Jefferson County, and Tarrant City. Educational Talent Search works with students and families providing services to increase students' secondary completion and postsecondary matriculation and graduation. Educational Talent Search assists and guides students in grades 6 through 12 by providing academic, career, college, financial aid, and economic literacy advising and counseling, as well as providing access to programs and/or services related to secondary completion and postsecondary enrollment.

Goal 1: Educational Talent Search will identify and recruit eligible students for participation in the Educational Talent Search Program.

Measurable Objective 1:	300 middle school and 300 high school participants will be recruited during the program year through visits to target schools and through counselor, school, and/or community referrals.
Strategies:	The Educational Talent Search Director, Counselor, and Office Manager will contact target schools personnel to arrange recruitment days, including during school hours, at PTO/PTA meetings, and/or community meetings.

Method of Assessment: The ETS Office Manager will maintain program applications and supporting documentation for 600 ETS participants for current year and prior year grant cycle. Incomplete applications and complete but wait listed applications will be stored in ETS offices.

Resources Needed: None

Estimated Cost: None

Goal 2: Educational Talent Search will work to promote secondary school completion.

Measure Objective 1: Participants will have access to quality tutoring at the Jefferson Campus of Jefferson State Community College and onsite at target schools and/or be provided with contact information for additional tutoring services.

Strategies: The ETS staff will mail out two newsletters highlighting available tutoring options at Jefferson State Community College through ETS and at select target schools. The Program will conduct test taking/study skills workshops and will maintain a list of additional tutoring services and document when information is given to participants, schools, and/or families.

Method of Assessment: The ETS Program will obtain and file copies of students' transcripts or report cards which reflect that at least 85% of non-seniors are promoted and 80% of seniors graduate from secondary schools. This information will be entered into the Blumen database, our computerized tracking system and our Annual Performance Report, as required by the U.S. Department of Education, to document students' graduation percentage.

Resources Needed: None

Estimated Cost: None

Goal 3: The ETS Program will work to assist students and families with understanding and applying for financial aid.

Measurable Objective 1: The ETS Program will work to ensure that graduating seniors complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Strategies: The ETS Program will assist and guide students by holding individual sessions and workshops on completing the FAFSA, State, and institutional financial aid forms.

Method of Assessment: The ETS Program will utilize FAFSA site to print out FAFSA verification for all seniors and maintain sign in logs for all seniors and/or families assisted with the FAFSA.

Resources Needed:	None
Estimated Cost:	None
Measurable Objective 2:	At least 70% of graduating seniors will enroll in postsecondary schools at least by spring semester after graduating from high school.
Strategies:	The ETS Program will assist students with the application process for postsecondary schools, selection of college majors, and registration for ACT/SAT college entrance exams and document service and any payments to testing organizations and/or schools on students' behalf.
Method of Assessment:	ETS will utilize the National Student Clearinghouse to verify graduating seniors' postsecondary enrollment.
Resources Needed:	None
Estimated Cost:	None