



Western Carolina University
Assessment Summary Form
Student Affairs Division

Name of Unit/Area: Talent Search

Name of Person(s) Conducting Assessment Activity: Todd Murdock

Other Partners Involved in Activity (e.g., faculty, staff, alumni, other departments, community, etc.):

Counselors, teachers, principals and other school personnel

Semester & Year of Assessment Activity: Summer/fall 2006

Objectives for Assessment Activity:

To improve the quality of services for services offered by the project

Nature of Assessment Activity (e.g., survey, focus group, pre/post-test, etc; instruments used to be attached):

Web based survey

Highlights of Significant Findings from Assessment and Comparison to Criteria for Success Established by Area:

92.3 % said ETS was very effective

100% felt ETS counselors were knowledgeable, approachable, helpful, cooperative, effective with students, has positive attitude.

Program Improvements: Specific Use of Findings in Area(s) and Key Changes Made in Area(s):

- We have narrowed the number of schools we serve so numbers of students served at specific schools should increase slightly. Counselor's time available at school should also increase slightly.
- We will try to increase awareness of our college trip programs and financial aid programs.

Assessment Results of 2006 evaluation data Educational Talent Search

Debrief of the Group Challenge Courses:

This program continues to improve and reap great praise and benefits from participants and teachers.

Did Well (changes implemented as a result of last years feedback):

- Provided all 7th grade programs on site at school instead of transporting students to activity sites
- Added notches to the bases of support boards for less slipping
- Offered low element program to Blue Ridge 8th graders to get them started
- Purchased some new boards to replace ones broken and splintered
- Worked in pairs to break groups into smaller more manageable sizes
- Debriefed in smaller groups at the end of the program each day
- Provided lunch for Cherokee students
- Brought jackets and coat box and left in the suburban for the cold days
- Brought hot choch and lunch fixings for cold days and for students who forgot their lunch
- Use of the suburban made things much easier

Specific program changes and issues for consideration and improvement next year:

- Todd not get hurt next year
- Upgrade some of the other portable elements
- Upgrade the games box

Senior Exit Survey: (see results attached file; Senior Exit survey evals 2006)

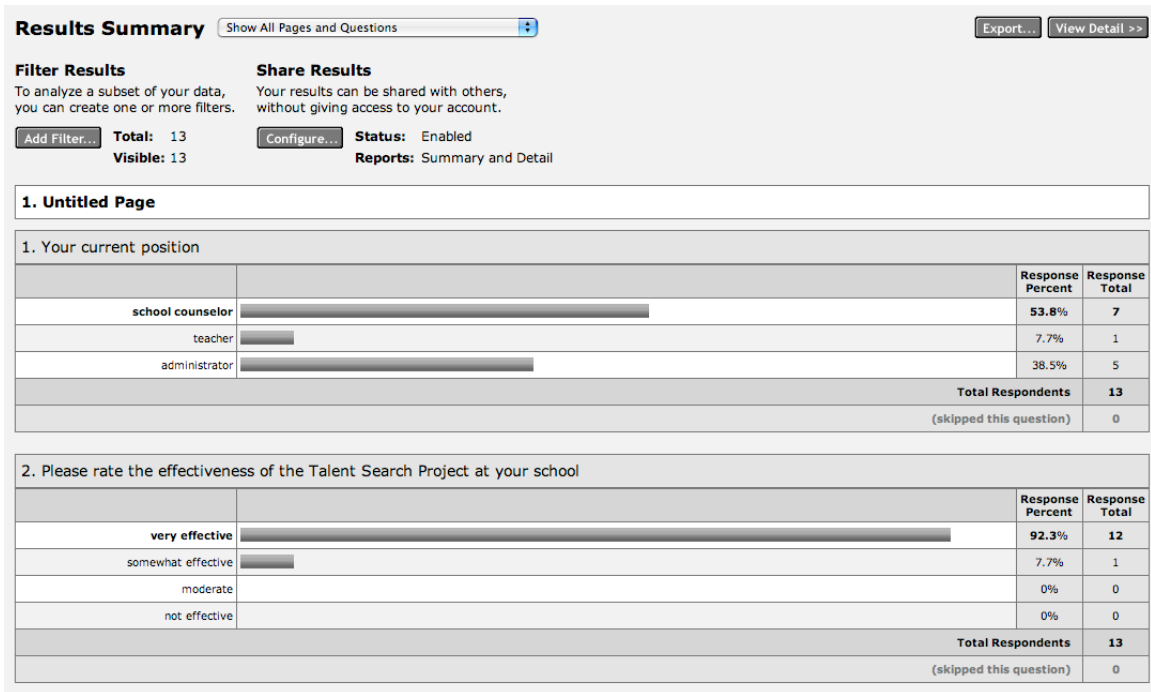
Specific program changes and issues for consideration and improvement next year:

The seniors made the following suggestions to improve the program:

- more meetings
- provide more assistance with the FAFSA
- take more trips
- spend more time with students
- more individual or one-on-one time
- more help during senior year
- more college visits

- We will increase the awareness of our college visits and other trips as well as increase the capacity on those trips.
- FAFSA nights will be conducted at every target high school and Nantahala School

Teacher/Counselor Evaluations, Survey Results:



What are Talent Search's major limitations or weaknesses?	
1.	I wish they could spend more time at our high school.
2.	None noted
3.	Not being at the school more hours per week
4.	Without programs such as Talent Search, our students would not be able to enhance their educational, cultural, athletic, and social educations. I appreciate this program tremendously for it is very effective in not only the enhancement of our students' total educational activities, but it enables students to work on college preparation, group work and cooperation, the REAL GAME, ropes courses, the outdoor classroom, and many other workshops that teach students how to live in the real world as they look at themselves and their relationships to careers, the ever-changing world, and their abilities to change with their surroundings. Our students NEED programs such as these; without Talent Search, our students would suffer a great loss of identification, personal success, and mentors whom the students can rely and trust!
5.	No weaknesses, these guys are great!
6.	needs to be open to more students
7.	We don't get to see Todd enough.
8.	N/A
9.	I cannot think of any limitations or weaknesses regarding the Talent Search representative at our school
10.	This is a great program. The limitations are that it serves a small population of our school, when all would benefit from all that is provided by talent search.

What major strengths does Talent Search bring to your school?	
1.	Knowledge of the college, scholarship and financial aid application process.
2.	A Resource to assist students in career/college planning.
3.	Extra time and counseling for needy students
4.	Talent Search helps our students understand that they can go to college. Talent Search works with parents through FAFSA workshops to guide them through the applications process. Talent Search has worked with me in administering Learning Style assessments, interest inventories, and career/college decision making. Their work with our rural population helps students go beyond the town limits.
5.	Willingness to work at school with student
6.	ability to connect with my students
7.	talent search staff has great repore' with our school staff and with our students
8.	Great leader in Todd Murdock. He has a great relationship with students.
9.	Professionalism, enthusiasm, and motivation for attending college.
10.	Very willing to work with students in any way needed, very accessible. Goes the extra step to help the students and the counselor
11.	For starters: Maggie Donahue. Our kids care for her and trust her. She is always helpful and positive. As a "new" counselor, she has been a great help to me as well. College access may be the most important aspect. Just getting kids out of Graham County is a HUGE factor. Cooperation is also excellent. We have been allowed to intergate non talent search students and pay these fees with grant money from another source.
12.	The knowledge and experience to help high schoolers be prepared for college.

What needs does your school have with which Talent Search might be able to assist?	
1.	Continue classroom sessions as in previous years.
2.	career counseling for 9-12th grade students
3.	Parent Workshops College Trips Cultural Events FAFSA Information College Application/Admission Process Interest Inventories Learning Style Assessments
4.	We would like to keep the same programs we have had from year to year which includes a list beginning with the 7th grade. One thing we have missed due to lack of monies available are the Talent Search tutoring, The "Real Game" endorsed by the NC State Dept. of Ed., and the consistent meetings with our junior high students that we did not get to do this spring.
5.	We continue to have a lot of students who have single parent families. Some boys who live with mom seem to struggle more during middle school years. Any help with these guys would be greatly appreciated.
6.	I like the current way, that is working with the group of students by grades. Continue to assist with SAT/ACT and college application process.
7.	We have lost an 8K grant that allowed up to do things with non talent search students. If there is a way to increase the number of student you can serve this would be excellent.
8.	More college visits.

3. The Talent Search Counselor is					
	excellent	somewhat	moderate	poor	Response Total
knowledgeable	100% (13)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	13
approachable	100% (13)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	13
helpful	100% (13)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	13
cooperative	100% (13)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	13
effective with students	100% (13)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	13
has a positive attitude	100% (13)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	13
Total Respondents					13
(skipped this question)					0

4. What are Talent Search's major limitations or weaknesses?		
View	Total Respondents	11
(skipped this question)		2

5. What major strengths does Talent Search bring to your school?		
View	Total Respondents	12
(skipped this question)		1

6. Your school agreed to allow Talent Search access to students during school hours. What is the best way for this access to occur in your particular situation?				
	best	no preference	worst	Respondent Total
seeing TS students in small groups or individually during school	73% (8)	27% (3)	0% (0)	11
seeing TS students as a part of broader classroom guidance workshops	60% (6)	40% (4)	0% (0)	10
Total Respondents				13
(skipped this question)				0

7. What needs does your school have with which Talent Search might be able to assist?		
View	Total Respondents	8
(skipped this question)		5

Specific program changes and issues for consideration and improvement next year:

- We have narrowed the number of schools we serve so numbers of students served at specific schools should increase slightly. Counselor's time available at school should also increase slightly.
- We will try to increase awareness of our college trip programs and financial aid programs.

Evaluation of Educational Talent Search Senior Exit Surveys

At the end of their senior year, Educational Talent Search students are given a survey about their experience with the program and about their future plans. The following information was compiled from their responses.

1) Of the 25 seniors surveyed:

- 1 was in the program for three years
- 3 were in the program for four years
- 3 were in the program for five years
- 18 were in the program for six years

2) Of the twenty-five seniors surveyed, all of them recorded that the program was “helpful to them in (their) middle and high school years”.

When asked what their favorite things about Talent Search were, they provided the following responses:

- college visits
- the helpful and engaged staff
- opportunities to interact with students from other schools
- ropes courses
- Outdoor classroom
- the guidance and advice
- assistance with applications
- the education provided
- the cultural experiences
- the Lewis and Clark bike trip.

3) The seniors made the following suggestions to improve the program:

- more meetings
- provide more assistance with the FAFSA
- take more trips
- spend more time with students
- more individual or one-on-one time
- more help during senior year
- more college visits

4) When asked if the students would recommend the program to middle school students they know: 22 replied yes, 1 replied no, and 3 had no response.

The seniors provided the following responses to explain why they would recommend the program:

- the college visits are helpful
- accentuates a smooth high school experience
- allows for the exploration of career choices
- fun
- learning experiences are helpful
- services are helpful

- unique and valuable experiences
- provide financial support (such as lap-tops and trips)
- learn life skills

5) Of the 25 seniors surveyed

- 2 responded that they will work this year
- 8 responded that they will attend a four-year college/university
- 13 responded that they will attend a two-year college/ technical school
- 2 responded that they will join the military

6) The seniors who were surveyed applied to the following schools:

Western Carolina University (5), UNC-Chapel Hill (4), Nascar Tech Institute (3), Haywood Community College (3), Tri-County Community College (3), Southwestern Community College (3), North Carolina State University, UNC-Asheville, Appalachian State University, Musicians Institute of Hollywood, Kennesaw State University, Appalachia Tech, Spartan School of Aeronautics, Central Florida Community College, Marine Mechanics Institute, and Lee University

Of the schools listed, students plan to attend the following schools:

Western Carolina University (4), UNC-Chapel Hill (3), Haywood Community College, Nascar Tech Institute, and Lee University

7) The surveys indicated that 15 of the seniors had applied for financial aid. Of those 15, 10 had received financial aid.

8) Some additional information that the students responded might be helpful, would be:

- information/trips to UNC-Charlotte
- information on courses required for post-secondary programs
- visits to more colleges
- more financial aid information
- more career information
- personalized information about educational requirements per student

9) On a scale of one to five (one being poor and five being excellent), of the twenty-five seniors surveyed: 21 of the students rated their overall experience with a rate of five and 4 students rated their overall experience with a rate of four.

Section V: Other Project Accomplishments

- **All objectives have been achieved or exceeded!**

OBJECTIVE 4: POST SECONDARY ENROLLMENT (approved to read):

At least 70% of all participants who are graduating seniors will have enrolled in post-secondary educational programs by September 30 of the following school year.

For this year #86 or 71.6% of our high school graduates enrolled in a program of postsecondary education.

***This objective was achieved and exceeded!**

OBJECTIVE 5:
COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

At least 100 students will participate in hands-on computer training “Navigating the world wide web” during each project year. By the Project’s end (4 years), 400 or (44%) of the Project’s students will have received this training.

OUTCOME

190 (#) students were served this year for a total of 854 students in this Project Period. With four years of programming we have reached 854 students with this service.

<u>Project Year</u>	<u>02-03</u>	<u>03-04</u>	<u>04-05</u>	<u>05-06</u>	<u>Total</u>
Funded to Serve	100	100	100	100	400
Actually Served	171	173	320	190	854

***This objective was achieved and exceeded!**

OBJECTIVE 6:
FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

This project will involve and educate parents on the increasing need for post secondary education by providing the following parental involvement programs each year.

OUTCOME

154 (#) attended the 13 family involvement programs offered this year.

<u>Project Year</u>	<u>02-03</u>	<u>03-04</u>	<u>04-05</u>	<u>05-06</u>	<u>Total</u>
# Parents	314	422	384	154	1,274
# Sessions	15	21	16	13	65

***This objective was achieved and exceeded!**

UNANTICIPATED OUTCOMES: Our chief unanticipated outcome has been that so many parents actually attended our programs! Over the course of this project we have had 1,274 parents attend our sessions! Strong community support for Talent Search has been a direct result with many parent volunteers to assist on our programs. Parents have been chaperones on our college trips, helped with the outdoor classroom programs and prepared food for meetings.

OBJECTIVE 8:
PROJECT PUBLICITY

This Project will inform residents, schools, and community organizations in the target area of program goals, objectives, services and eligibility requirements.

OUTCOME

The many newspaper articles demonstrate the great support we have received from our local news media. We have also benefited from cable television ads and radio announcements of our Parent Night programs and Financial Aid Evenings and SAT prep workshops after school. "The Asheville Citizen Times," article has featured us in an article on National TRIO Day for the preceding four years. Our Lewis and Clark Expedition of Rediscovery also garnered us much positive publicity with numerous articles through out our region as well as the Adventure Cycling web site. Our student's participation in Western Carolina's Undergraduate Expo has also showcased our program to the campus community for the past 3 years. We also advertised on the sports schedule poster for Cherokee athletics and in our high schools yearbooks.

***This objective was achieved and exceeded!**

UNANTICIPATED OUTCOMES: Our website and weblog continue to attract queries from all over the country allowing us to forward referrals to other TRIO programs. We've stepped up student participation on the website with a weblog. (Check it out: www.wcu.edu/talentsearch)

Also the Lewis and Clark Expedition of Rediscovery has garnished news articles in other areas of the country such as the Adventure Cycling publications, and local news media were certainly unanticipated and much appreciated. Our students were featured in the Ashville Citizen Times, our regional paper covering all of western North Carolina and other smaller local papers such as the Cherokee Scout, the One Feather, Smoky Mountain Times, Graham County Star and other local papers.

OBJECTIVE 9:
SERVICE TO DROPOUTS

During the project period, this Project will recruit, enroll and serve up to 50 students who have not completed education programs at the secondary or post secondary level, but

who have the ability to do so. The Project will enroll or reenroll 50% of these persons in the appropriate educational program by September 30 of the following school year.

OUTCOME

4 (#) students in this classification were served. Two of them or 50% not only reenrolled in an appropriate program of education but also obtained their GED.

Project Year	<u>02-03</u>	<u>03-04</u>	<u>04-05</u>	<u>05-06</u>	<u>Total</u>
# served	1	4	4	4	9
% reenrolled	100%	50%	50%	50%	53.8%

*This objective was achieved!

PROJECT PERFORMANCE FOR 2006-2007: (3 months)

A total of 900 students have been identified, selected and are currently being served by this Project for the 2006-2007 year. All services are on schedule and all staff are in place.

New Initiatives:

- ❖ We will continue to pursue the Cherokee Elder Council project now named Tsaligi Uगतolvs (The Cherokee Experience) which blends project services by involving respected community members with Cherokee students in an attempt to better serve our indigenous students. This is a very powerful program that has earned much praise in the community.
- ❖ We will continue to expand our middle school service-learning program to involve up to 45 participants this summer for the 4 days on campus at Western Carolina University.
- ❖ Cultural exchange program: A High School version of the Service Learning program will begin this year by combining a cultural experience with a service learning project. It will run one week and involve approx. 20 students. We will exchange with students of indigenous origin at the Talent Search project in Polson, Montana.
- ❖ No carry over funds are expected.