



Report Highlights

Taylor Opportunity Program for Students

Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance

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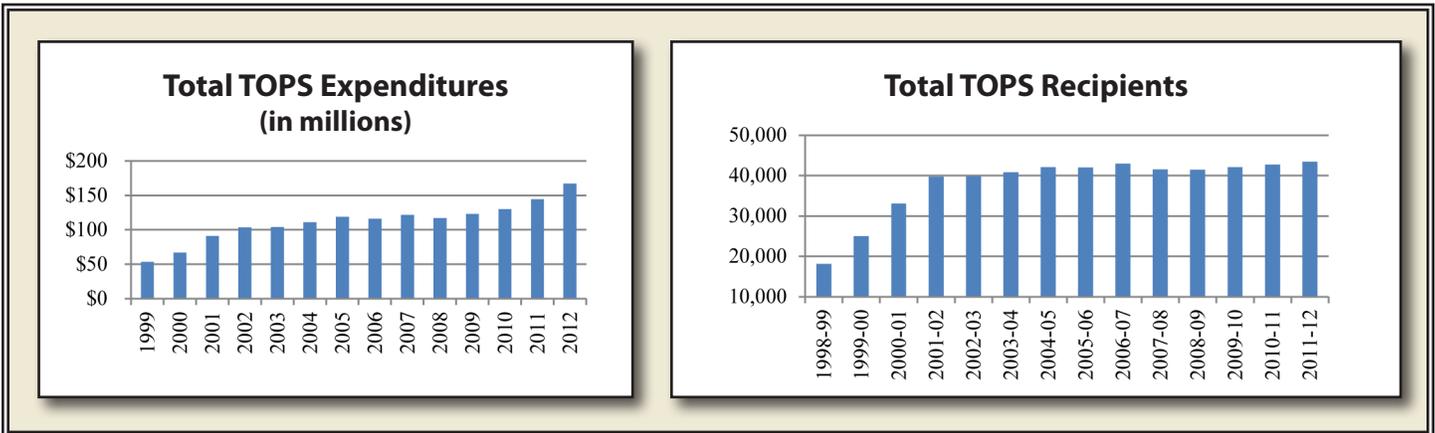
Audit Control # 40120012
Performance Audit Services • May 2013

Why We Conducted This Review

We conducted this review to provide information on program expenditures, the number of students served, award retention, and graduation status of the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) administered by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA).

What We Found

Louisiana has spent approximately \$1.57 billion on the TOPS program from fiscal years 1999 through 2012. The program served 223,691 students at 123 postsecondary education institutions including eligible cosmetology and proprietary schools (e.g., truck driving academies, court reporting schools, and medical training colleges). TOPS annual expenditures have increased by approximately 213% from \$53.4 million in fiscal year 1999 to \$166.9 million in fiscal year 2012.



- Of the 95,413 students who received their first TOPS award payment in the Fall term from academic years 2002-03 through 2008-09, 51,661 (54.1%) received the award for the maximum time allowed and 42,301 (44.3%) had their TOPS award cancelled. Another 1,451 (1.6%) students are currently receiving or still eligible to use TOPS from that period. Louisiana spent approximately \$830 million on awards for these students.
- Louisiana spent approximately \$165 million on TOPS awards for the 42,301 students who subsequently had their award cancelled from academic years 2002-03 through 2008-09. Of those students, 23,676 (56%) had their award cancelled in the first year of postsecondary education. Students receiving the TOPS Opportunity Award, which has the lowest eligibility requirements, had a higher rate of cancellation (53%) than those receiving a Performance Award (25%) or Honors Award (14%).
- Of the 62,504 students who started school at a public institution and received their first TOPS award payment in the Fall term from academic years 2002-03 through 2006-07, 43,053 (69%) graduated from a Louisiana public institution. Of those that graduated, 10,683 (25%) did so after their TOPS award had been cancelled. These graduation rates do not include students who may have started in or graduated from a private or out-of-state institution as the Board of Regents does not collect this information.