

Trends in Tech Prep Implementation and Student Participation for the State of Illinois for FY03

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Executive Summary

This document presents findings for Tech Prep consortia in Illinois for fiscal year 2002-03 (FY03), including results from each Chicago consortium. Throughout this report, comparisons of FY03 results are made to earlier years. Major results depict information provided by all 41 consortia in areas such as student participation, remediation rates, program elements, and staff involvement including professional development.

Results of the Final Tech Prep Report forms for FY03 suggest numerous areas of Tech Prep implementation were stable over the past four years. This does not imply that absolutely no change was occurring or that change, when observed, was always small. Indeed, important changes were observed in implementation in some consortia. Overall, however, statewide progress on Tech Prep implementation seemed to have continued on the plateau it had reached in previous years.

Listed below are aspects of Tech Prep reported in FY03 that show modest change over the previous two or more years:

- The number of secondary Tech Prep programs offered by consortia showed a slight increase from FY02 with an average of 29.1 and a median of 22 programs per consortium.
- For all consortia other than Chicago, the mean percentage of secondary students who were identified as Tech Prep graduates remained virtually the same over the 4-year period.
- The remediation rate for matriculating high school Tech Prep students continues to demonstrate stability and was estimated, according to consortium directors in FY03, at 35%, the same estimate as reported in FY02.
- The retention rate for postsecondary Tech Prep students from first to second year remains consistently high, at about 60%, the same as reported in FY02.
- FY03 results showed an overall increase in the percent of business representative participation in professional development activities over time. Other institution type participation remained the same, with secondary personnel comprising three-fourths of total attendance over the five years data were collected.
- Postsecondary vocational-technical instructors continued to surpass academic instructors' involvement at Tech Prep funded activities in FY03. At the secondary level, the two instructor types demonstrate more equal participation, similar to previous years.
- In FY03, three barriers were rated at a high level of importance; they were the same three that consortium directors reported over the previous two years. The three barriers receiving consistently high ratings dealt with difficulties with joint planning time, paperwork, and lack of substitute teachers.

Areas where significant change, both positive and negative, was noted over the past two years or more follow:

- The percentage of secondary Tech Prep students in FY03 increased to comprise 11 % of all students in Illinois, up from 10% in FY01 and 02.
- State mean and median enrollment of first-year postsecondary Tech Prep students increased dramatically from FY02 to FY03. The mean rose from 67.2 to 92.9, and the median rose from 50 to 69.

- The mean percentage of consortia having Tech Prep students with credits in escrow, dual credit, or other college credit options increased dramatically over the past four years, from 45% in FY00 to 68% in FY03.
- FY03 results continue to show a decline in the mean number of paid cooperative education programs offered by local consortia, from 8 in FY00 to 5.2 in FY03.

Though these changes are important to understand, concerns about misunderstanding and error in reporting suggest caution in interpretation. Whereas many results are undoubtedly an accurate reflection of implementation practices, some appear to reflect questionable reporting on the Final Report form. Even so, cautious interpretation leads us to surmise that numerous activities have reached a plateau. Based on this conclusion, we offer the following recommendations:

- New ideas need to be infused into implementation activities to enhance the essential elements of the reform and create additional positive change. Strategies that stand out as potential candidates include the creation of new articulated course sequences and dissemination of new Tech Prep pathways.
- Continued effort should be made to improve data collection related to Tech Prep implementation, both in enhancing reporting to the state via the Final Tech Prep Report form and in supporting improvements in evaluation at the local level. These efforts should begin by conducting an annual training session with consortium leaders that focuses on how to provide accurate information on the report form, with periodic training and communication to support a more systematic evaluation effort.
- The state should aggressively pursue linkages between the Final Tech Prep Report form and other evaluation tools, including the cross-case analysis reports from on-site reviews and various datasets maintained by the ICCB and ISBE. Monitoring results on implementation and student enrollment across multiple data sources would increase confidence in statewide results.

Introduction

At the end of each fiscal year, Tech Prep consortium directors in Illinois complete the *Final Tech Prep Report* form to describe Tech Prep implementation on the local level, including accomplishments, barriers, and technical assistance needs. Student participation at the secondary and postsecondary levels is also reported. Each consortium director submits a completed form to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). Subsequently, the ICCB, along with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), reviews the consortium reports to document implementation and develop plans to support local consortium efforts across the state.

Beginning in 1999, the Office of Community College Research and Leadership (OCCRL) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) began working with state staff to compile results of the *Final Tech Prep Report* to provide a comprehensive, annual description of Tech Prep implementation by local consortia within the state. By compiling information on an annual basis and comparing the current year to previous years, patterns and trends can be observed over time, assisting state officials to use the information to enhance Tech Prep efforts.

This year's report is posted on the OCCRL website homepage, under "Highlights," and at http://occr.ed.uiuc.edu/Projects/tech_prep/evaluation.asp, along with those from previous years allowing local consortium directors to have a full picture of how Tech Prep is implemented statewide. By distributing this report via the web, local educators gain valuable information about local consortium implementation activities, and they can monitor student participation within their consortia relative to aggregate participation levels for the rest of the state.

Organization of the Report

This report presents findings for 41 Tech Prep consortia in Illinois for 2002-03 (FY03)). Most results show a mean or median for all 41 consortia; although, some selected results are presented separately for Chicago because of the unique way in which the Chicago consortia were configured (i.e., separate consortia for secondary and postsecondary levels) and because of a large fluctuation in results regarding student participation between FY00 and FY02.

Results are reported according to the following categories:

- Student participation (secondary and postsecondary)
- Program elements (staff involvement, professional development, curriculum reform, business partner involvement)
- Major accomplishments
- Barriers
- Technical assistance needs.

To supplement this report, readers can find additional tables on the OCCRL website at <http://occr.ed.uiuc.edu>.

School and Student Involvement

This section discusses results pertaining to secondary school involvement, secondary student participation, and postsecondary student participation.

Secondary School Involvement

Local consortia indicated a gradual increase in the total and mean number of Tech Prep programs in secondary schools participating in Tech Prep over the past four years. Results show a total of 1,136 Tech Prep programs offered in secondary schools, with an average of 29.1 and a median of 22 programs per consortium. These figures show a slight increase in the number of Tech Prep programs in secondary schools in Illinois, when compared to FY02. Of the 38 consortia* reporting Tech Prep programs in both years (FY02, FY03), 14 increased, 20 remained the same, and only 4 decreased in the number of programs offered over the two-year period.

Figure 1 shows the increase in the average number of Tech Prep programs offered from FY00 to FY03 by Illinois consortia. The median, indicating the midpoint of the distribution, varied over the four years, dropping from 20 to 16 programs between FY00 and FY02, but rising to 22 in FY03.

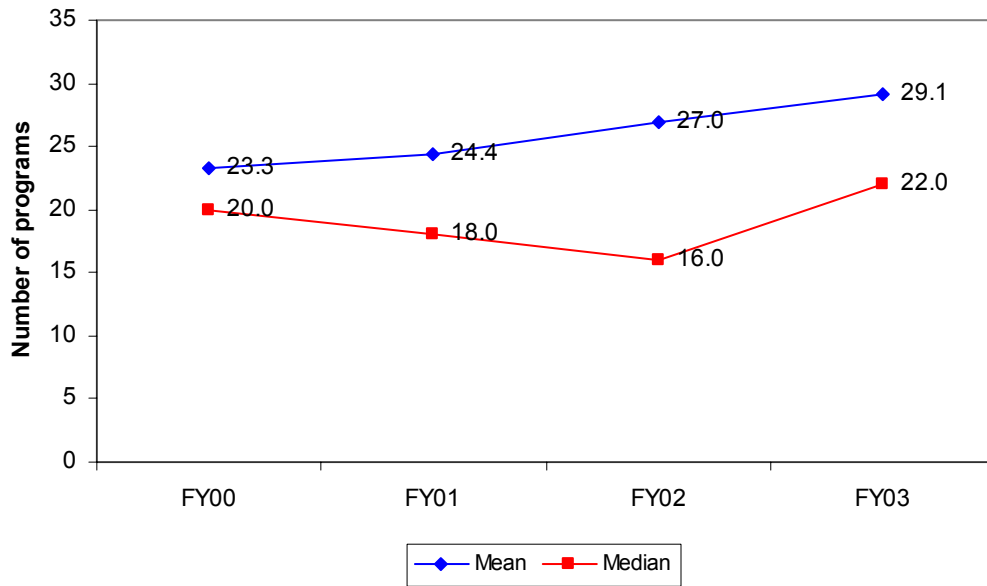


Figure 1. Mean and median number of Tech Prep programs offered from FY00 to FY03.

*Note: Two consortia were excluded because of numbers falling substantially out of range in relation to the rest of the state.

All 41 local consortia reported collectively that 601 secondary schools in Illinois received Tech Prep funds during FY03. This number reflects a gradual increase in the total number of secondary schools receiving Tech Prep funds over the 4-year period for which data have been gathered.

According to results reported in the *Final Tech Prep Report*, a total of 594 secondary schools reported Tech Prep students in the Illinois Student Information System (ISIS) dataset. This total is based on responses from all but 3 consortia in the state that failed to provide information on Tech Prep student enrollments to the ISIS system. The percentage of consortia reporting that 100% of their secondary schools were reporting Tech Prep students in ISIS increased slightly over the 4 years considered here, from 93% in FY99 to 95% in FY02. A slight decrease was observed in FY03 when consortia indicated that 100% of their schools received Tech Prep funds and reported Tech Prep students in ISIS. (A complete list of high schools that reported receiving Tech Prep funds and that reported students in ISIS, organized by consortium, is available at www.occrl.uiuc.edu.)

Secondary Student Participation

The past 4 years has seen a slight increase in the total number, mean, and median of students participating in Tech Prep on the consortium level, resulting in an overall increase in student enrollment statewide. Of the 38 consortia reporting enrollment figures for both FY02 and FY03, 22 consortia increased the number of Tech Prep students, 3 remained the same, and 13 decreased. Figure 2 shows the trend in the median number of Tech Prep students and graduates per consortium, with over 1,200 students and over 370 graduates reported per consortium in FY03.

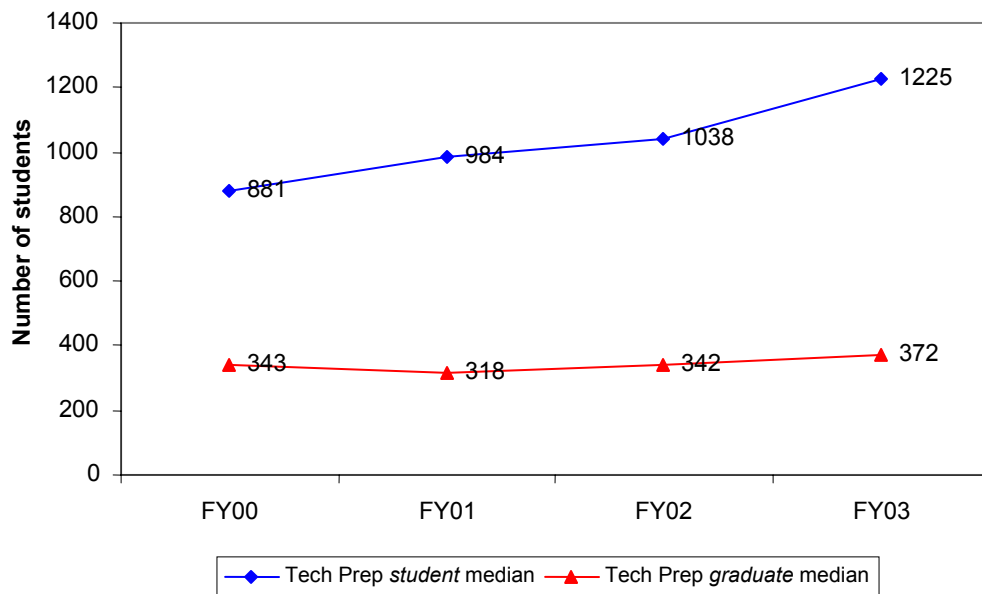


Figure 2. Consortium median number of Tech Prep students and graduates, excluding Chicago consortia.

Of the 38 consortia reporting on student participation in Tech Prep, the total number of secondary student participants reached slightly over 66,700 statewide in FY03. This is a substantial increase from the two previous years in which the same number of consortia reported 58,345 students participating in FY01 and 59,141 in FY02. As a percentage of the total secondary student population in Illinois, Tech Prep students accounted for 11% in FY 03, an increase from 10% in both FY01 and FY02.

For all consortia other than Chicago, the mean percentage of secondary students who were identified as Tech Prep graduates (meaning the proportion of all high school Tech Prep students who had completed a secondary Tech Prep program of study) fluctuated only a small amount over the 4-year period. In FY00 the mean percentage of secondary Tech Prep students who were also secondary Tech Prep graduates was 33% and in FY03 this mean percentage increased to 37%. Over each of the past four years roughly one-third of all secondary students participating in a Tech Prep program were identified as graduates.

Student Participation in Tech Prep in Chicago

Due to their size and distinct funding pattern wherein the secondary and postsecondary levels were funded separately in Chicago, we looked at the two Chicago consortia separately from the rest of the state. In this analysis, we observed a dramatic decline in the total number of Tech Prep students and graduates by the Chicago public school district consortia from FY00 to FY02. There was further decline, though much less sizeable, between FY02 and FY03 (see Figure 3). Over the same period, the number of Tech Prep students affiliated with the City Colleges of Chicago increased over five fold, from 3,028 in FY00 to 17,750 in FY01 but then dropped sharply to 2,307 in FY02. Another decline in student participation was observed in FY03 to 1,653. Except for FY01, the total numbers of Tech Prep students in FY00, FY02, and FY03 are relatively comparable to each other, suggesting the enrollment level reported for FY01 may be due to a difference in how student enrollments were reported in that particular year.

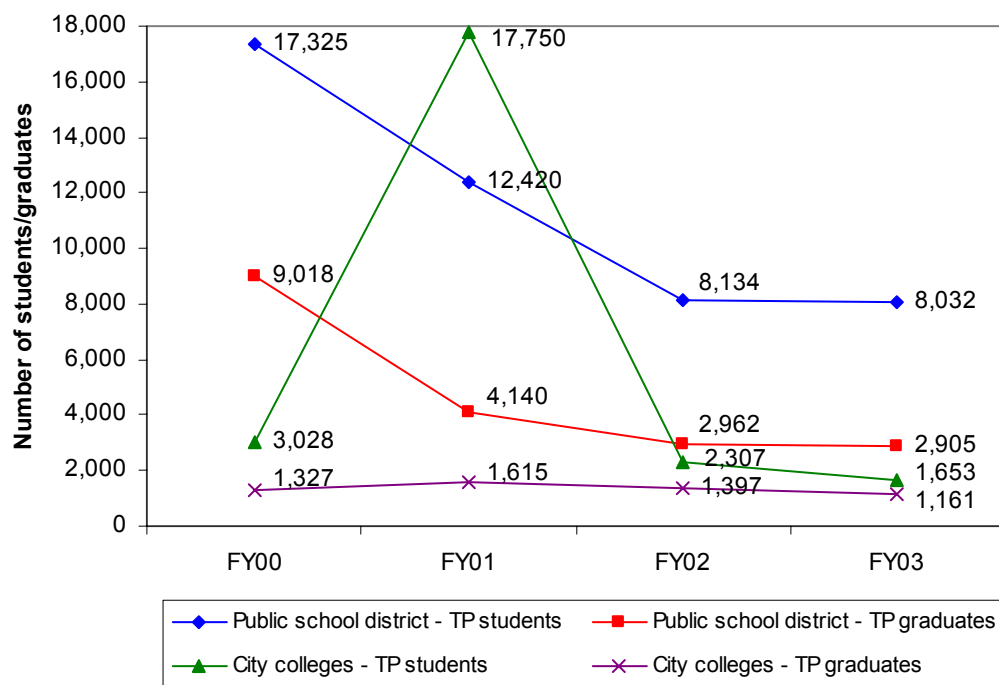


Figure 3. Chicago consortium number of Tech Prep students and Tech Prep graduates.

Over the 4-year period from FY00 to FY03, the number of Tech Prep graduates reported by City Colleges increased from 1,327 in FY00 to 1,615 in FY01, and then declined to 1,397 in FY02 and 1,161 in FY03. These results, along with student enrollment results over the same time period, provide further evidence that the number of Tech Prep student participants reported in FY01 may be unreliable.

First-Year Postsecondary Student Participation

In FY03, a total of 3,065 students were reported by all Illinois consortia to have enrolled in a Tech Prep program at the postsecondary level after finishing a sequence of secondary Tech Prep courses during the preceding year. Statewide, the average number of first-year postsecondary students who enrolled in secondary-level Tech Prep course sequences was about 93 per consortium, with an estimated median of 69. Three consortia (John A. Logan College, City Colleges of Chicago, and Lincoln Land College) reported serving over 300 first-year postsecondary Tech Prep students, a much higher number of first-year postsecondary Tech Prep students than other consortia in the state.

For the past 4 years, the state total, mean, and median of first-year postsecondary enrollment decreased gradually from FY00 to FY02, and then increased substantially in FY03. Specifically, the mean increased from 67 in FY02 to 93 in FY03, and the median increased from 50 in FY02 to 69 in FY03. Among 32 consortia reporting first-year postsecondary enrollments for both FY02 and FY03, 17 increased enrollments, 4 reported the same number, and 11 decreased enrollments (see Figure 4).

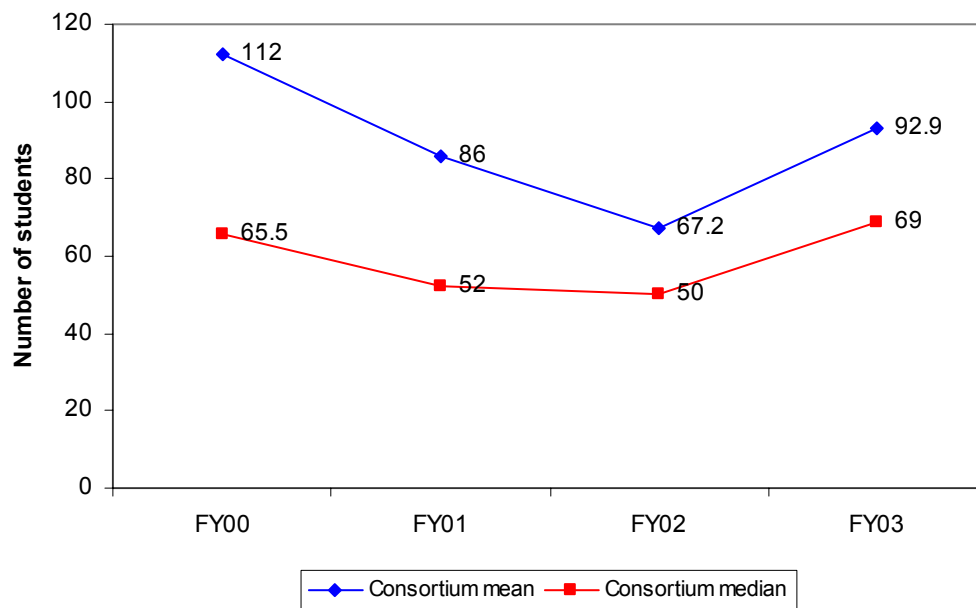


Figure 4. Consortium mean and median number of first-year postsecondary students enrolled in Tech Prep programs.

Tech Prep Program Implementation

Local Tech Prep programs are characterized by a number of core elements, including remediation, articulated curriculum, courses offered in high school for college credit (dual credit) or credits in escrow, academic course taking, work-based learning, and curriculum reform. This section provides a description of the implementation of these various core elements by Illinois Tech Prep consortia.

Remediation of First-year Students

Figure 5 shows consortium directors' *estimates** of the percentage of first-year students needing remediation/developmental education when transitioning from high school to the community college. Specifically, 35% of first-year students were thought by consortium directors to need remediation in FY03 as compared to 35% in FY02, 40% in FY01, and 37% in FY00. These results show a great deal of stability in the estimate of remediation/developmental education needed by first-year Tech Prep students over time.

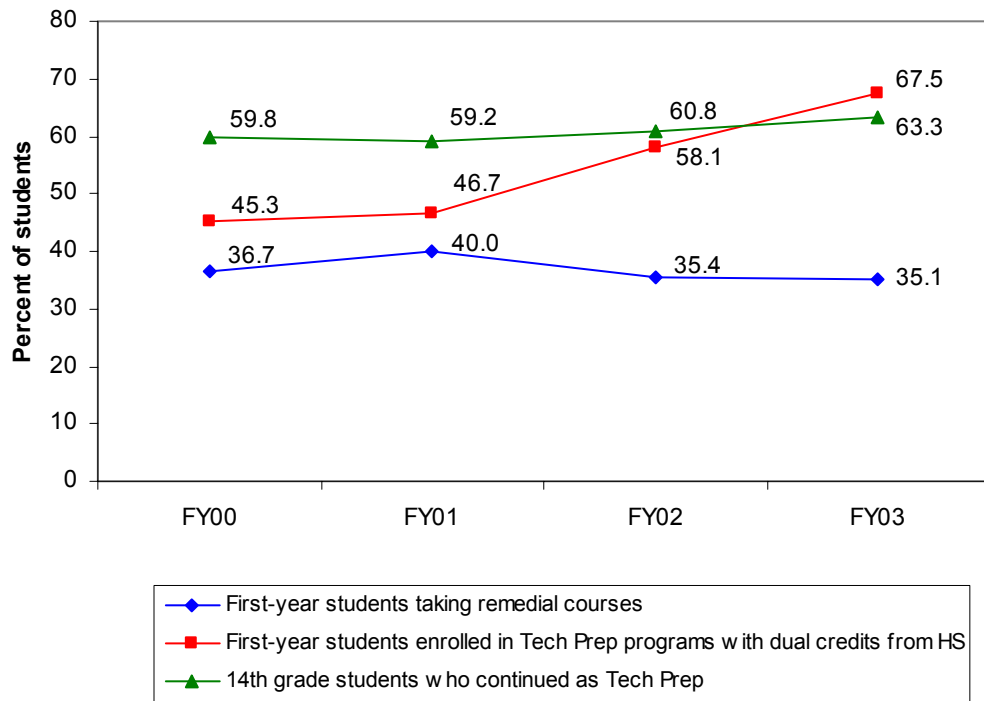


Figure 5. Consortium mean percent *estimate* of Tech Prep students in postsecondary programs from FY00 to FY03.

*Note: These results need to be interpreted cautiously because they reflect consortium directors' *estimates* of first year post-secondary students taking remedial courses.

College Credits in High School

Referring again to Figure 5, we see the mean percentage estimate of local consortia having Tech Prep students with credits in escrow, dual credit, or other college credit options has increased over time. Specifically, results show an increase in the estimated percentage of local consortia offering college credit options to high school students over the past four years, from 45% in FY00 to 68% in FY03. The median number of Tech Prep students per consortium taking college credits during high school remained stable at 25 from FY00 to FY02, then increased to 38 in FY03. These results suggest growth in participation of high school students in college level courses receiving articulated or dual credits; this finding is consistent with results of other reports on dual credit for the state of Illinois [see, for example, Barnett, Gardner, & Bragg (2004)].

Figure 5 also shows the stability of the continuation of Tech Prep students from 13th to 14th grade. Over the past several years, about 60% of Tech Prep 13th grade students have continued to the 14th grade.

Articulated Program/Course Sequences

For FY03, a total of 39 consortia reported offering articulated secondary-to-postsecondary program/course sequences. The total number of Tech Prep programs offered by the community colleges was 827, with a mean of 21 and a median of 20 programs per consortium. These results suggest the total, mean, and median numbers of Tech Prep programs were stable. Over the past three years FY02 and FY03 showed almost the same levels, with the median only slightly larger than the mean.

It is useful to note that the number of program/course sequences offered by community colleges is comparable to the overall Tech Prep program offerings reported by consortium coordinators, corroborating previous information on the number of Tech Prep programs offered by consortia (see again Figure 1).

Academic Course-Taking

Each consortium was asked to provide a conservative estimate of the percentage of Tech Prep students who had taken three years or more of high school-level mathematics, social studies, and science at the basic/regular and advanced levels. For mathematics, courses less than Algebra II were considered basic/regular and those at Algebra II or above and honors/Advanced Placement (AP) were considered advanced. For social studies, honors/AP courses were considered advanced and all others were considered basic/regular. For science, courses below chemistry were considered basic/regular and courses at chemistry and above or honors/AP were categorized as advanced. Over the 4-year period, Tech Prep coordinators *estimate that, on average, more than half of Tech Prep students took three years or more of mathematics, social studies, and science courses.

*Note: These results need to be interpreted cautiously because they reflect consortium director estimates and not actual course-taking. Also, standard deviations are high, suggesting the estimates vary considerably from one consortium to another.

Work-Based Learning

Figure 6 (next page) shows the mean number of work-based learning* (WBL) programs per consortium by type over the four years. All but one consortium provided information regarding WBL programs offered in conjunction with postsecondary Tech Prep programs, showing an average of almost 18 programs per consortium. Results show the mean number of postsecondary WBL programs remained relatively stable from FY01 to FY03, ranging from a mean of 16.5 to 17.7, after a substantial increase from a mean of 14 programs in FY00. In FY03, a total of 691 Tech Prep programs offered WBL opportunities statewide.

Results also reveal differences in the types of WBL that local consortia offer, with minimal change from FY01 to FY03. In FY03, 37% of consortia reported offering 11 or more postsecondary Tech Prep programs with unpaid internships/clinical experiences and 29% with paid internships/clinical experiences whereas only 11% offered paid cooperative education, 10% had community/service learning, and 3% provided youth apprenticeship opportunities. The mean percentage of unpaid internships increased from 8 in FY00 to 11 in FY01, then remained stable at about 11 through FY03. A relatively stable pattern was also observed in the percentage of paid internships over the past 4 fiscal years, fluctuating from about 9 in FY00 to almost 10 in FY01, then declining to about 9 in FY02 and increasing slightly to about 11 in FY03.

Looking at the number of WBL programs offered by type on a statewide level, a total of 417 paid internships/clinical experiences and 414 unpaid internships/clinical experiences were offered in association with Tech Prep programs as compared to only 76 apprenticeship programs. Of all community colleges offering WBL, over 89% reported providing unpaid internships/clinicals, and over 61% offering paid internships/clinicals over the 4-year period. Apprenticeships, community/service learning, and paid cooperative education were offered less frequently.

Of all findings shown in Figure 6 the most outstanding is the steady decline in the mean number of paid cooperative education programs offered by local consortia, dropping from 8 in FY00 to 4.6 in FY02 and showing a very slight increase to 5.2 in FY03. Another interesting finding is the increase in community/service learning from FY01 to FY03, from 3.6 to 4.9, while, over the same period of time, apprenticeship experiences remained minimal (ranging from 2 to 2.5 per consortium).

*Note: It is important to note that secondary student participation in WBL is omitted from the *Tech Prep Final Report* due to the fact that it is reported to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) via ISIS. (For figures on secondary Tech Prep student participation in WBL, readers should contact ISBE.)

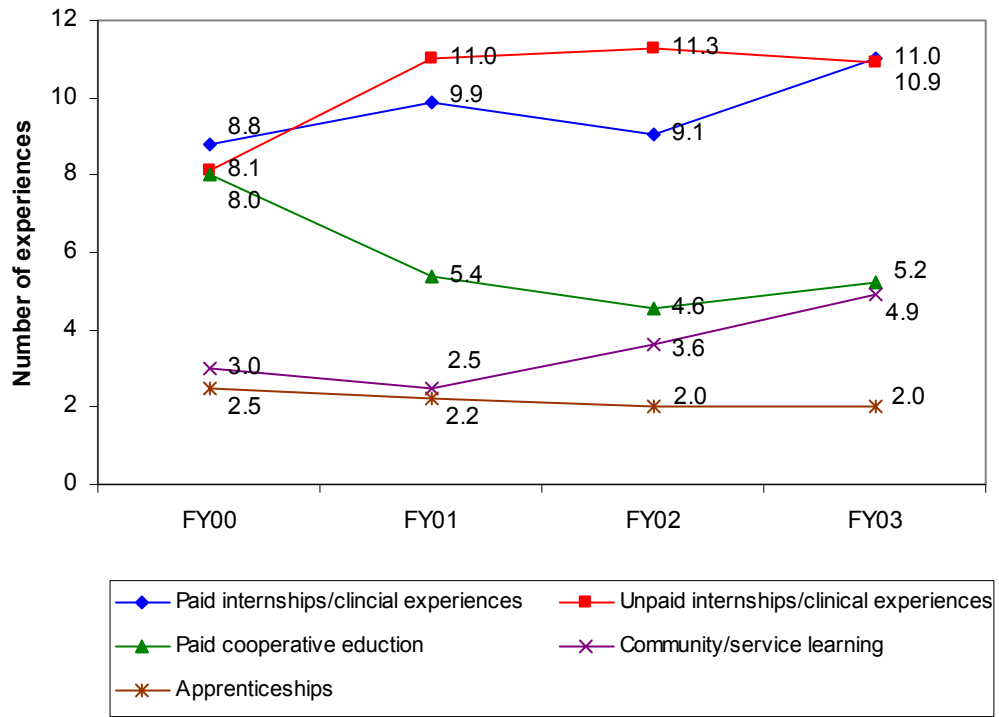


Figure 6. Consortium mean number of Tech Prep/WBL programs, FY00 to FY03.

Staff Involvement

Consortium leaders were asked to indicate the types of workshops, conferences and other professional development activities offered during FY03 using state or federal Tech Prep funds. For each type of activity, coordinators were asked to indicate the number of persons participating of the following types: administrator, faculty, counselor, and business/industry representative. Respondents were also asked to indicate the number of persons attending from the secondary and postsecondary levels according to these categories.

Figure 7 shows the median number of high school and college faculty and administrators per consortium for the five-year period of FY99 to FY03. The level of involvement of high school faculty showed a dramatic increase from FY00 to FY01, then dropped to 163 per consortium in FY03. The other three groups (high school administrators, college administrators, and college faculty) showed more modest involvement over the 5-year period for which data were collected. A small increase was observed in the involvement of high school administrators in FY02, but the level of involvement of college administrators and college faculty remained relatively stable over time.

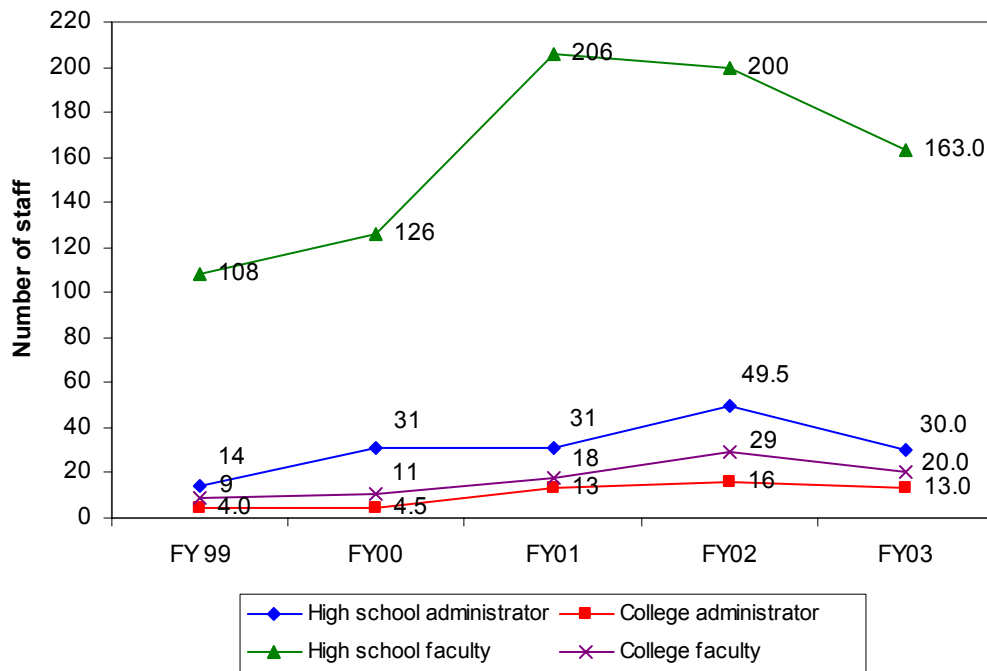


Figure 7. Consortium median attendance in professional development activities by job type.

Figure 8 shows the consortium percentage of total attendance in professional development by secondary, postsecondary, and business personnel from FY99 to FY03. High school personnel attendance accounted for three-fourths or more of total attendance in FY03, and this level of involvement is very consistent over the 5 years.

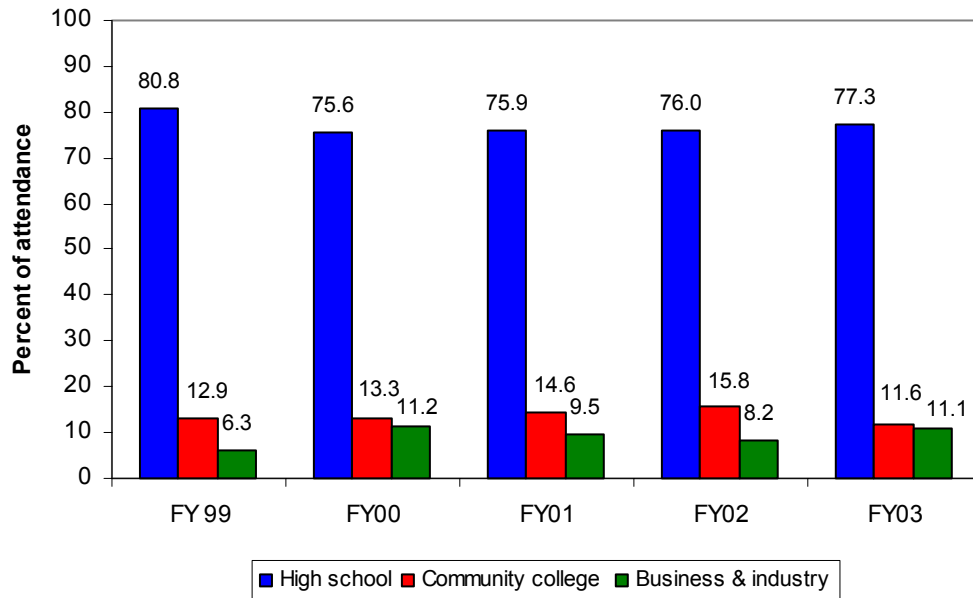


Figure 8. Consortium percentage of total attendance in professional development activities by institution type.

In addition to examining percentages, the Final Tech Prep Report form also asked about the number of business representatives involved in Tech Prep. Looking at this number, the involvement of business representatives increased from an average of 41.5 (FY02) to 54.4 (FY03) and a median of 12 (FY02) to 24 (FY03) per consortium. Among 34 consortia reporting this information in both FY02 and FY03, 17 reported increases, 13 reported decreases, and 4 remained the same, indicating an overall increase in business representative participation in professional development per consortium over time.

Staff Involvement by Type of Professional Development

Local consortia reported the number of staff who attended different types of professional development, including one-time conferences, workshops, and in-service activities; a series of related in-service events or workshops; on-going interdisciplinary team/committee meetings; employer-sponsored site visits; formal graduate study; and other professional development activities. Over the past three years, the two most heavily attended activities were one-time conferences, workshops or in-services, and on-going team/committee meetings (see Figure 9). An increase was observed in employer-sponsored site visits, workshops or internships, and other professional development activities.

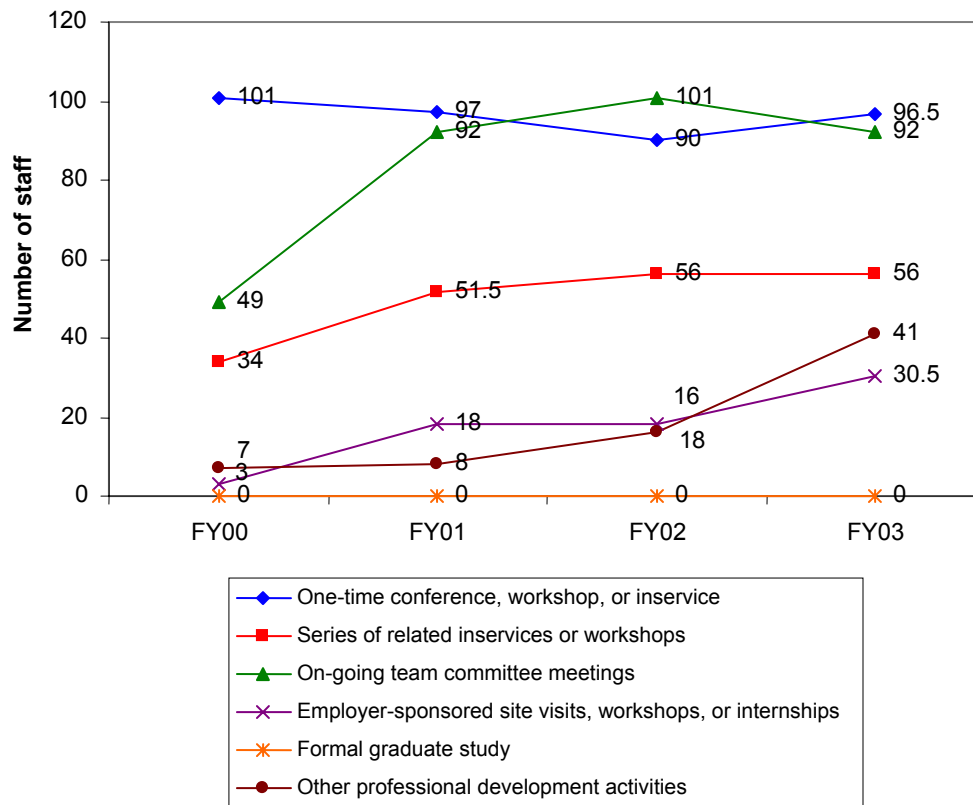


Figure 9. Consortium median number of staff involved by professional activity from FY00 to FY03.

It is noteworthy that in FY03, about 60% of local consortia reported no staff members involved in “formal graduate study associated with Tech Prep,” that 27% reported no staff involved in “employer-sponsored site visits, workshops, or internships associated with Tech Prep other than AIP & VIP,” and about 28% indicated no staff involvement in “other professional development activities associated with Tech Prep.”

Secondary Instructor Involvement in Tech Prep-Funded Activities

Local consortium leaders were asked to collect information from their secondary schools regarding types of faculty involvement in interdisciplinary teams, in-services, and curriculum development, taking into account whether teachers were in academic or vocational-technical fields.

Two consortia were excluded from this analysis because they reported an extremely high number of academic instructors involved in in-services funded with Tech Prep dollars; leaving these two consortia in the calculations would have dramatically skewed the results.

In total, nearly 11,000 secondary instructors (academic and vocational) were reported as being involved in some form of Tech Prep-funded activity. Results indicate that a larger number of secondary academic and vocational instructors were involved in interdisciplinary teams than in in-service activities funded with Tech Prep monies. Also, fewer secondary instructors participated in curriculum development than in either interdisciplinary teams or in-services.

Involvement in these various activities was fairly similar among academic and vocational instructors over the past four years. For example, in FY03 a median of 33 academic and 36 vocational instructors were engaged in interdisciplinary teams per consortium; 22 academic and 28 vocational instructors were involved in Tech Prep in-services per consortium; and 17 academic and 18 vocational instructors participated in curriculum development per consortium.

Results also show greater comparability in the number of secondary academic and vocational instructors involved in Tech Prep funded activities over time (see Figure 10). In FY00 and FY02, about 56% of all teachers involved were academic instructors and 44% were vocational instructors as compared to the nearly 50/50 split between academic and vocational instructors in FY03. (In FY01, the distribution was skewed even more toward academic than vocational-technical instructors, 59% vs. 41%, respectfully.)

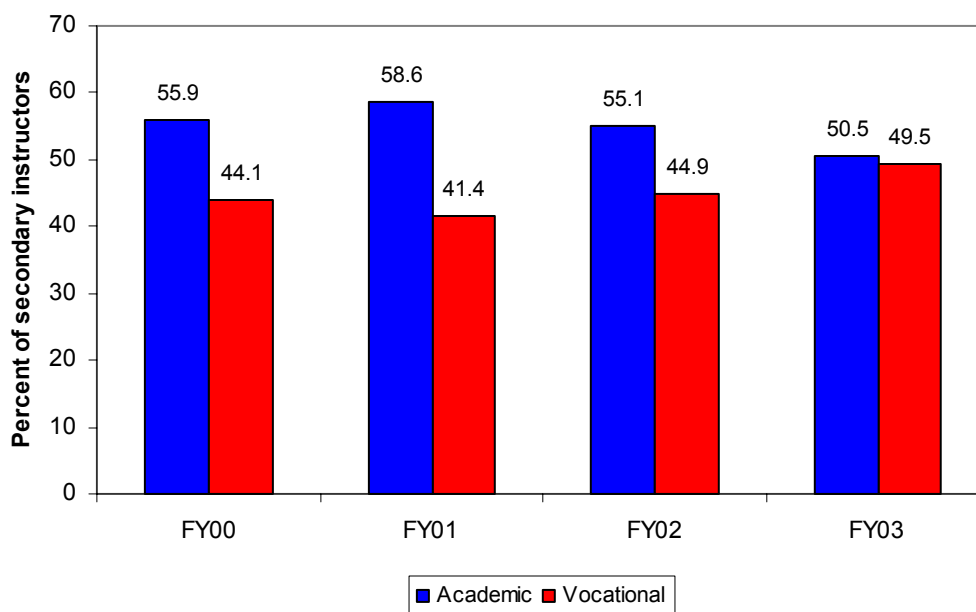


Figure 10. Consortium percentage of total secondary instructors involved in Tech Prep by instructor type.

Postsecondary Instructor Involvement in Tech Prep-Funded Activities

Consortium leaders were asked to collect information from community colleges on type of involvement by type of instructor: academic or vocational-technical. In contrast to the secondary level, involvement by postsecondary vocational-technical instructors consistently exceeded postsecondary academic instructors. Similar to the secondary level, both academic and vocational postsecondary instructors were more likely to be involved in interdisciplinary teams or in-service training than curriculum development.

Figure 11 compares postsecondary vocational-technical and academic instructor involvement, showing that the percentage of total instructor involvement was consistently greater for vocational-technical than academic instructors. The relative percentage of academic vs. vocational-technical instructors was nearly identical in FY02 and FY03, and this percentage distribution was comparable to FY00. In FY01, the distribution between academic and vocational-technical instructors was skewed even more dramatically toward vocational-technical instructors (67% vocational-technical vs. 33% academic) than in the other years.

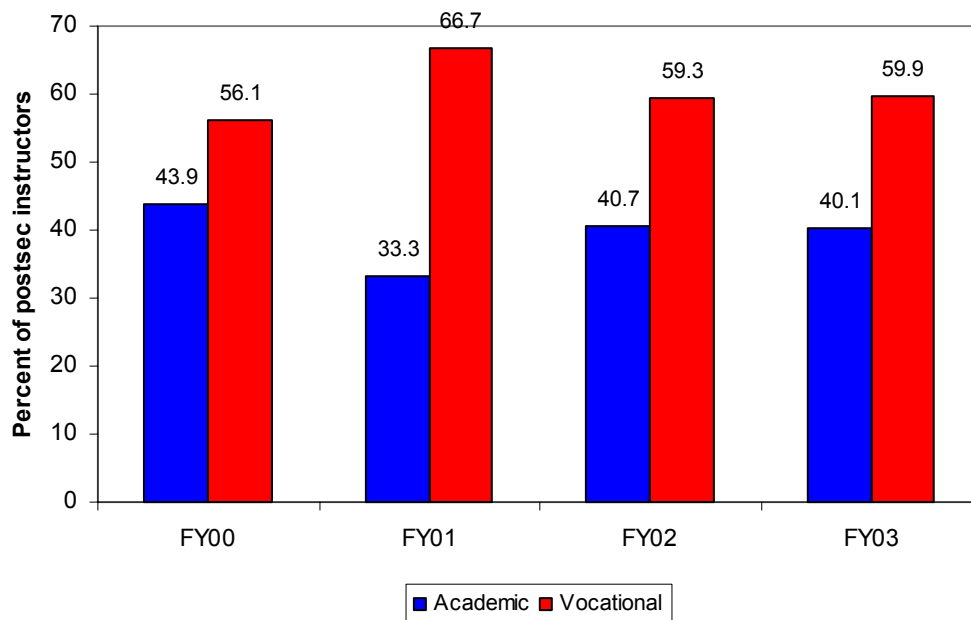


Figure 11. Consortium percentage of total postsecondary instructors involved in Tech Prep by instructor type.

A comparison of Figures 10 and 11 shows involvement by academic and vocational-technical instructors at the secondary and postsecondary levels, revealing greater involvement by academic instructors at the secondary level than the postsecondary level and the tendency for more involvement by vocational-technical instructors than academic instructors at the postsecondary level. This finding suggests faculty involvement in Tech Prep implementation differs considerably at the two levels.

Curriculum Reform

Local consortium directors were asked to indicate the focus of curriculum reform efforts that occurred in secondary schools and postsecondary institutions in their region by indicating “yes” or “no” to eight categories. Consortia were asked in FY00 and thereafter to provide estimates of the number of secondary and postsecondary schools involved in various types of curriculum reform. Over the past five years these data were reported, an overall increase in the percentage of secondary schools and postsecondary institutions undertaking curriculum reform was found, although it was not dramatic. Even so, a gradual increase in involvement in various curriculum reforms by secondary and postsecondary institutions suggests a growing commitment to Tech Prep implementation statewide.

Figures 12 through 19 show the percentage of consortia reporting involvement by institutions at the secondary and postsecondary levels in eight different types of curriculum reform. Most evident among the eight reforms over the 5-year period data were reported, 100% of consortia reported that high schools and 95% reported that community colleges were supplementing existing vocational-technical courses with academic content in FY03. Also, over 85% of consortia reported that curriculum associated with Tech Prep was organized around career clusters at both the secondary and postsecondary levels in FY03. This percentage increased only slightly over the 5-year period, particularly for the postsecondary level.

Results show that several curriculum reforms increased between FY99 and FY03 at the secondary and postsecondary levels, including:

- supplementing existing academic courses with vocational-technical content,
- replacing parts of the existing curriculum with applied academics courses,
- coordinating academic and vocational-technical courses by sequencing and reinforcing related content, and
- offering interdisciplinary courses combining vocational-technical content and academic content.

Also, the percentage of consortia reported the presence of academies at the secondary level that were combining courses from vocational-technical areas and math, science, communication, and other academic areas, increased by 13%, from 60% in FY99 to 73% in FY03.

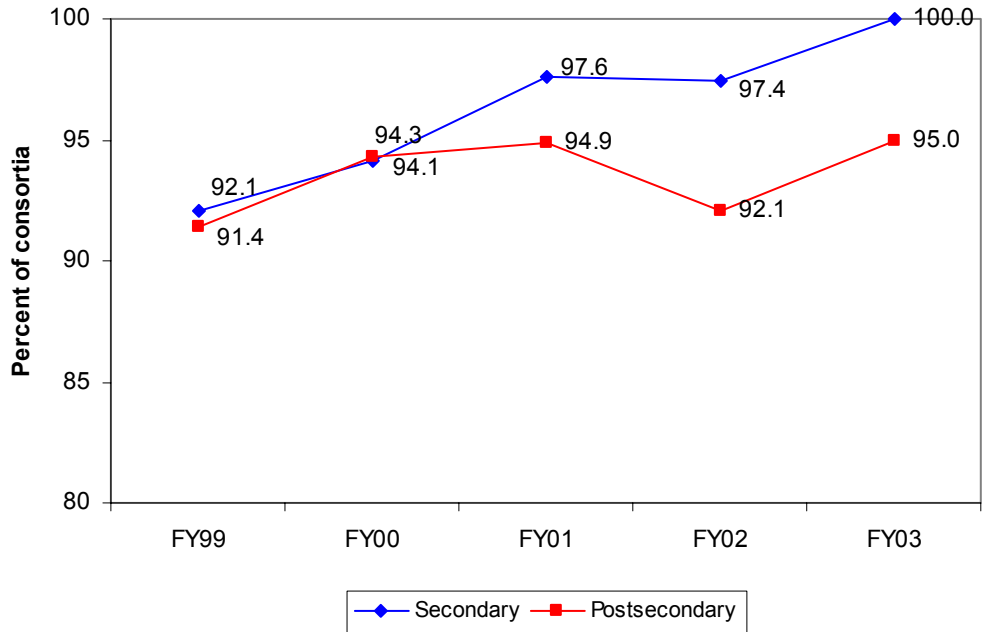


Figure 12. Percentage of consortia supplementing existing vocational technical courses with academic content.

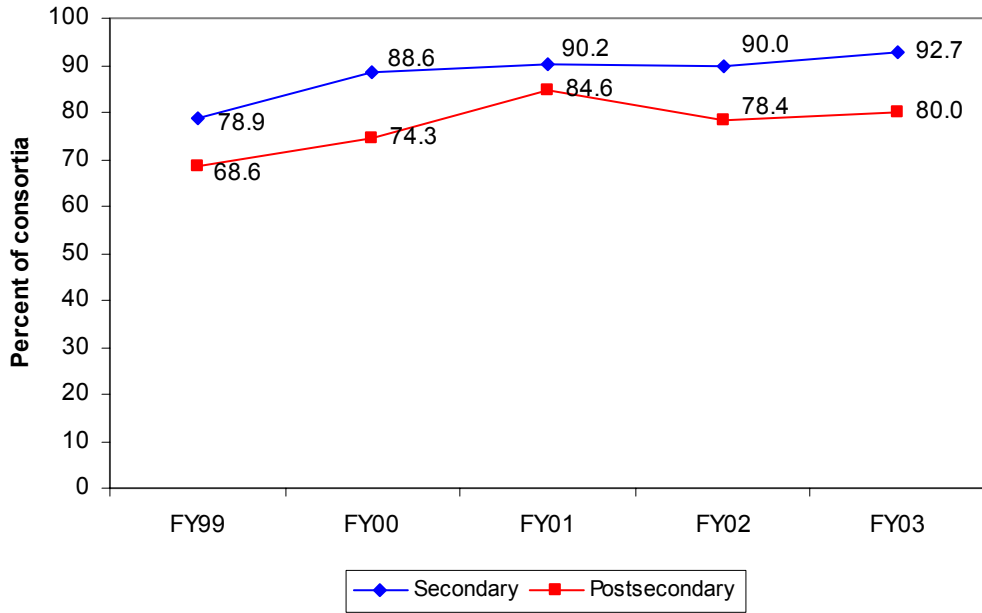


Figure 13. Percentage of consortia supplementing existing academic courses with vocational-technical content.

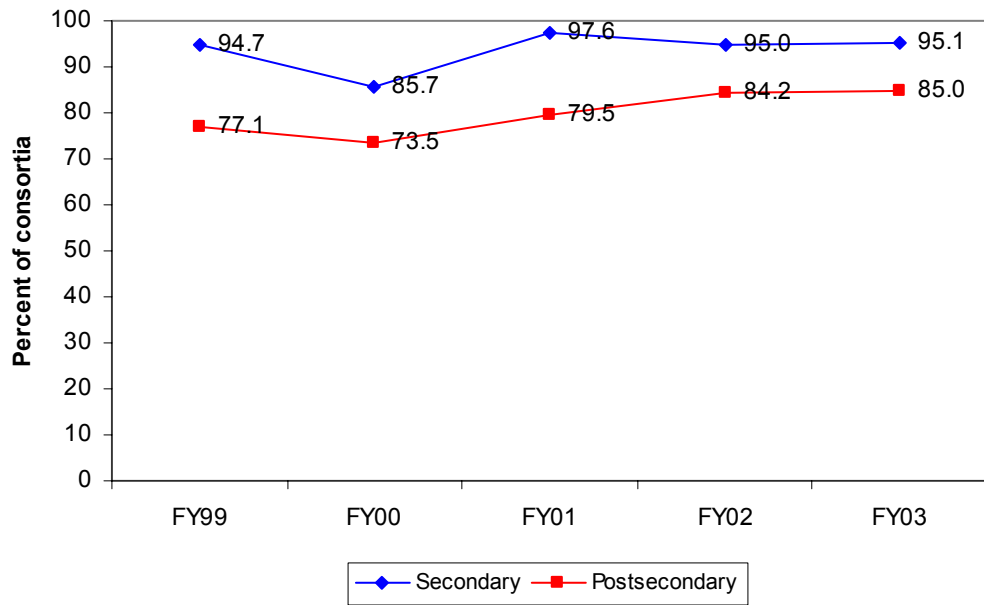


Figure 14. Percentage of consortia adding applied curriculum to the existing curriculum.

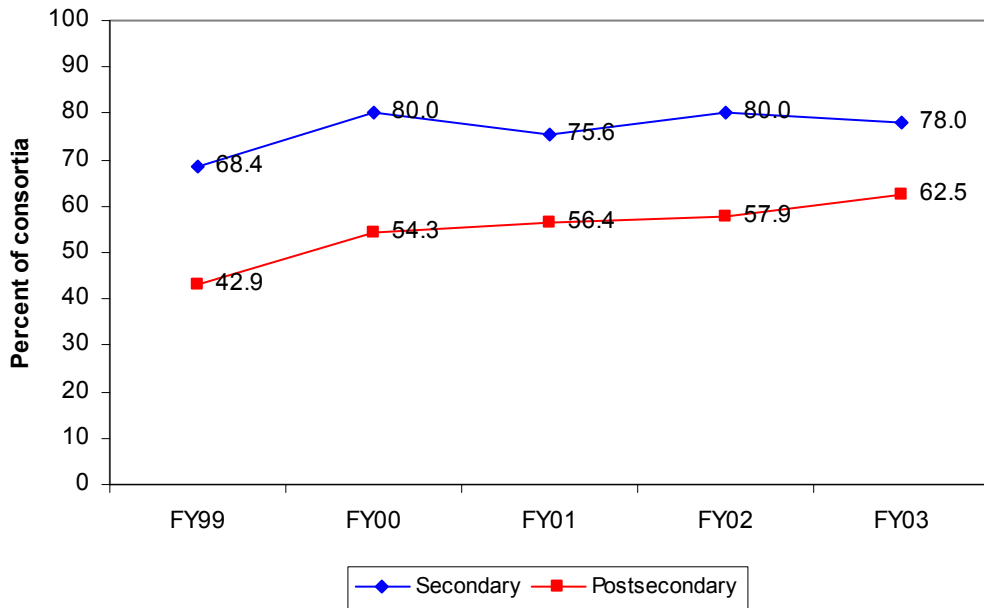


Figure 15. Percentage of consortia replacing parts of the existing curriculum with applied academic courses.

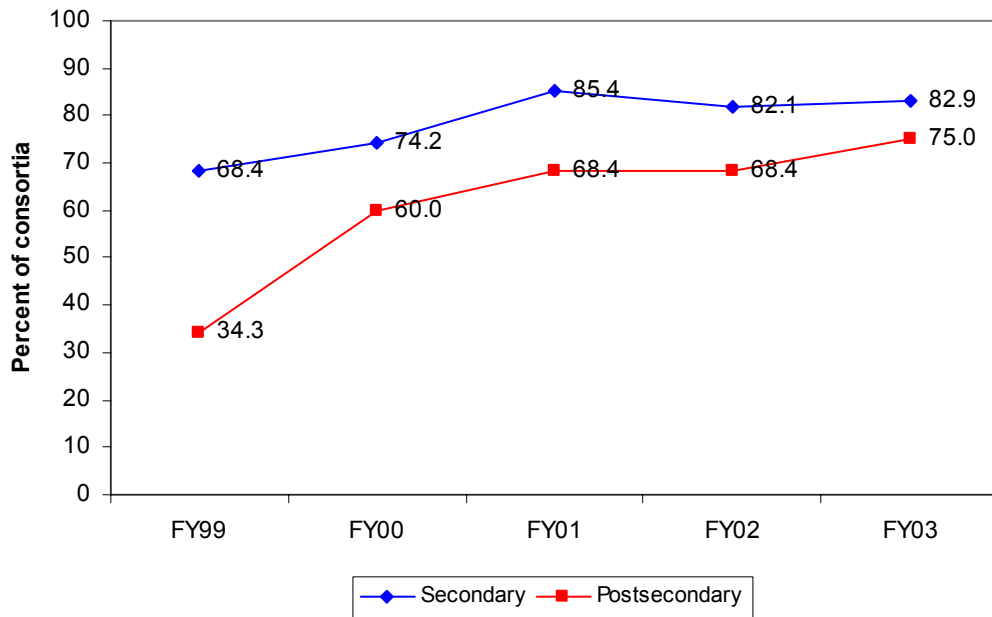


Figure 16. Percentage of consortia coordinating academic and vocational-technical courses by sequencing and reinforcing related content.

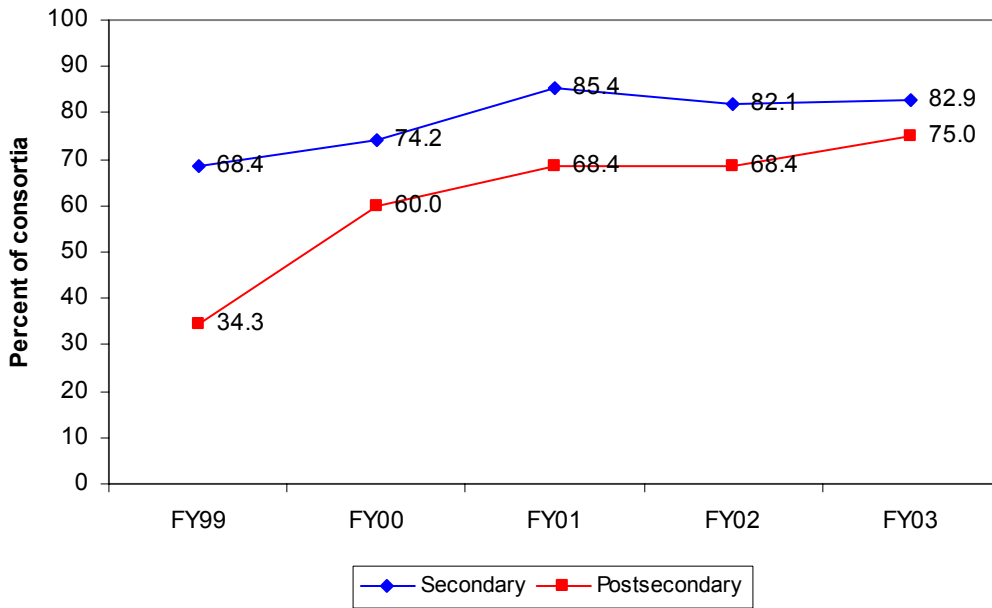


Figure 17. Percentage of consortia providing interdisciplinary courses combining vocational-technical content and academic content.

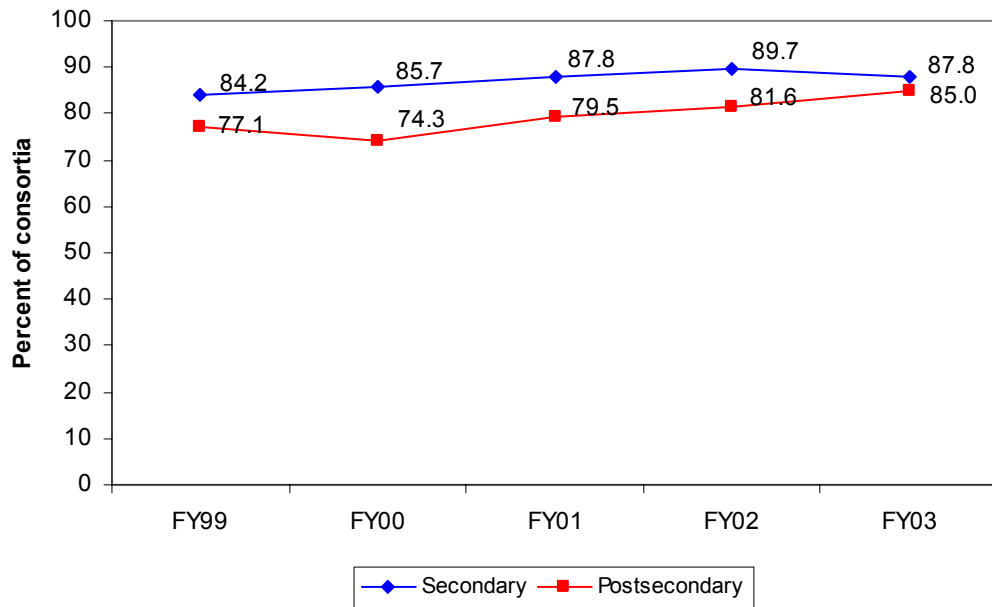


Figure 18. Percentage of consortia organizing academic and vocational-technical courses around occupational/career clusters.

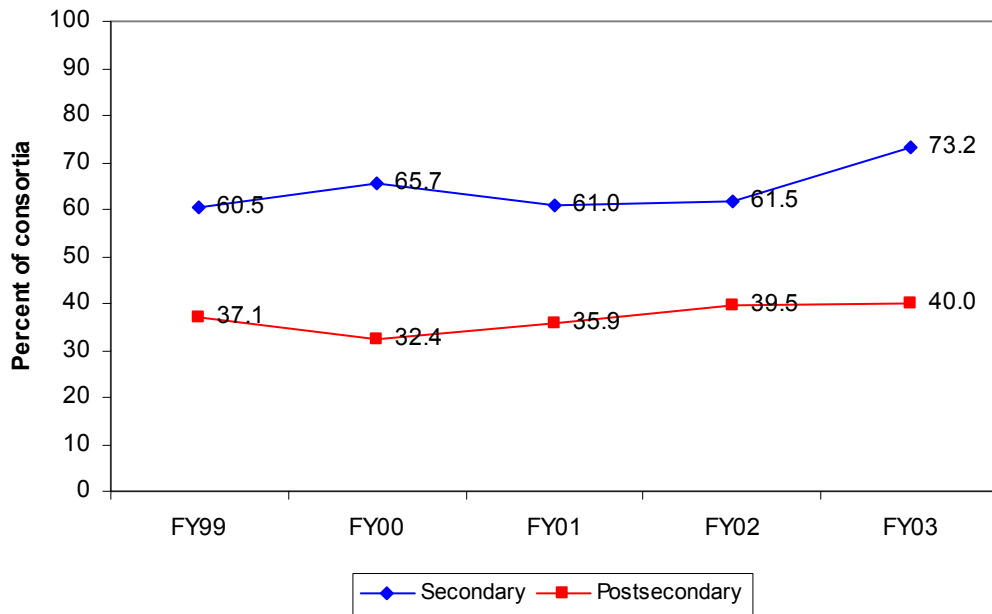


Figure 19. Percentage of consortia providing "academies" combining courses from vocational-technical areas and math, science, communication, and other academic areas.

Business Partner Involvement

Each consortium was asked to provide a conservative estimate of the number of business partners (employers) involved in Tech Prep activities for FY03. The types of business involvement included curriculum development/revision and AIP/VIP placements for teachers, among others. The *Tech Prep Final Report* form also asked consortia to report the number of organized labor partners participating in Tech Prep. Two consortia were excluded because they reported extremely large numbers compared to other consortia in the state. For this same reason, one consortium was excluded from the item dealing with “organized labor partners participating in Tech Prep Consortium.”

Figure 20 shows the consortium mean and median for four types of business involvement, revealing a dramatic decline in both business involvement in AIP/VIP placement of teachers, dropping from a median of 31 to 6 from FY99 to FY03 and in AIP/VIP placements provided by business partners, declining from a median of 47 to 6 for the same period. This substantial decrease is explained by the state’s decision to stop funding AIP/VIP in FY 2002. Over the same period, an increase was noted in the median number of organized labor partners, from a median of 3 to 7 per consortium between FY99 and FY03.

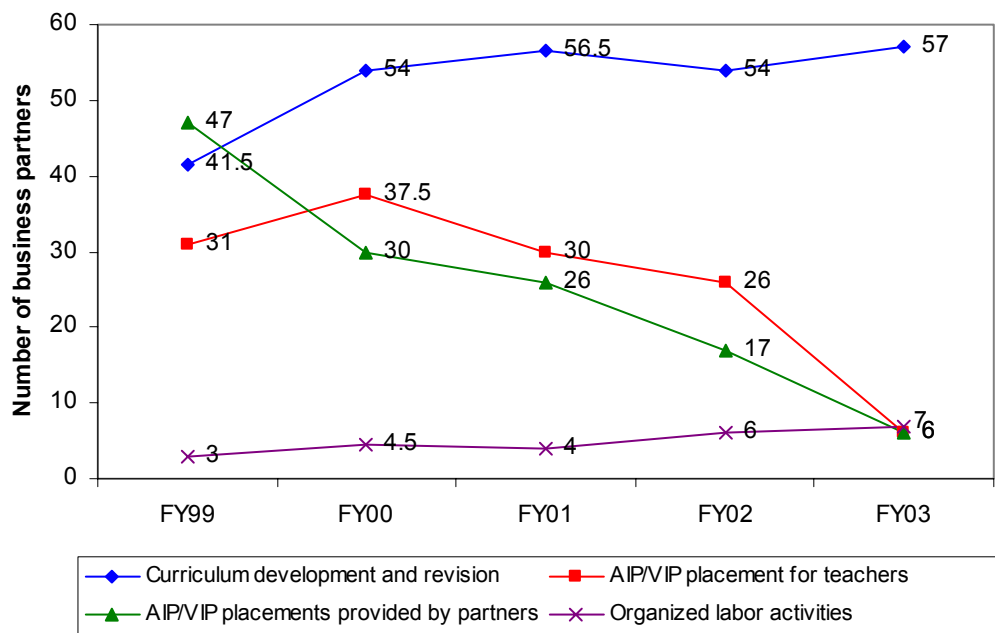


Figure 20. Consortium median number of business partners involved in Tech Prep activities

Barriers to Tech Prep Implementation

Local consortium directors were asked to indicate the level of impact of 24 barriers on implementation of Tech Prep using a scale of 1 (none) to 6 (very major). Results for all 24 barriers were compared for the three fiscal years of FY01 to FY03 using means and standard deviations, and a table displaying these results appears on the OCCRL website.

In FY03, three barriers showed a high level of importance to consortium directors based on a rating of 5 (major impact) or 6 (very major impact) by more than 20% of local consortium directors. It is noteworthy these same three barriers were rated consistently high over the years of FY01 to FY03, though the percentage declined over that time period. Specifically, results are:

- 32% of local consortium directors indicated “Little time designated for joint planning by academic and vocational or secondary and postsecondary faculty” at the major/very major level in FY03, compared to 39% in FY02 and 46% in FY01.
- 29% of local consortium directors rated “Too much paperwork associated with the administration of Tech Prep” at the major/very major level in FY03, compared to 29% in FY02 and 41% in FY01.
- Likewise, 29% of directors rated “Lack of substitute teachers to fill in for regular teachers during professional development activities” at the major/very major level in FY03, compared to 29% in FY02 and 41% in FY01.

Just as important to note were the barriers NOT considered to present great difficulties. Included among the twelve are:

- Unclear definitions associated with Tech Prep
- Lack of interest in Tech Prep among high schools in the region
- Difficulties incorporating curriculum changes into existing programs
- Lack of commitment from community colleges to create articulation agreements
- Reluctance of business and industry to create WBL opportunities for students under age 18
- Poor access to business/industry sites for WBL
- Too few students to fill WBL slots offered by local businesses.

Other Barriers Reported

In response to the statement “Identify any other barriers that you have experienced in coordinating Tech Prep within your consortium during FY03,” the most common barriers reported by consortium directors were: 1) lack of funding, 2) lack of time, 3) reluctance of parents to permit students to enroll, 4) frequent turnover among faculty, and 5) stereotypes about Tech Prep as meant for less academically and socially proficient students which seems to be linked to the public image of Tech Prep. These findings strongly parallel and reinforce the results obtained from the closed-ended items reported above.

Major Accomplishments

Each year consortium directors are given the opportunity to share their major accomplishments. Data from these open-ended questions are recorded and synthesized over five fiscal years (FY99-FY03) for all 41 consortia in the state.

Categories of major accomplishments identified by local consortium directors include professional development, curriculum development, articulation, work-based learning, Tech Prep marketing, partnerships with businesses and the community, and student career development. Many consortia developed new programs and updated existing ones.

Under the category of professional development, the most often cited consortium accomplishment was the implementation of a variety of workshops, in-services, and meetings for faculty, administrators, and counselors. FY03 also saw a large number of consortia developing, reviewing, or expanding articulation agreements. Accomplishments associated with work based learning involved an increase in the number of relationships between school sites and the work sites. Several of these partnerships involved job shadowing, apprenticeships, internships, and mentoring. Several consortia also reported improvements in marketing of Tech Prep, including career fairs and the development of new brochures and posters. These activities were generally identified as targeting students to increase their involvement in Tech Prep.

For a complete listing of consortium accomplishments as described in the final reports, go to the www.occr1.ed.uiuc.edu/.

Technical Assistance Needs

The Tech Prep Final Report form asked consortia to “please identify any technical assistance needs you feel would improve the effectiveness of your Tech Prep program.” The most often identified need was assistance with identifying and tracking Tech Prep students. Also mentioned were assistance in developing better marketing plans, activities, materials, and supplies; inspiring student and parent interest statewide; and helping with developing a statewide Tech Prep student identification and tracking process or mechanism.

For a complete list of technical assistance needs identified in the final reports, go to www.occr1.ed.uiuc.edu/.

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- Andrews, H., & Barnett, E. (2002, Summer). Dual credit/enrollment in Illinois: A status report in *OCCRL In Brief*. Champaign, IL: Office of Community College Research and Leadership, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
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- University of Illinois Tech Prep Online Courses. On Website at <http://ocrl.ed.uiuc.edu/TechPrep/default.asp>.