

Talent Search (TS) Program Instructions for Completing the Annual Performance Report for Program Year 2025-26

1. WHAT IS THIS PACKAGE?

This package contains the instructions needed to prepare the annual performance report for the Talent Search (TS) program. The Department of Education uses the information provided in the performance report to assess a grantee's progress in meeting its approved goals and objectives. The Department also aggregates grantees' data to report on the program as a whole, in particular to respond to the *Government Performance and Results Act*.

2. WHAT ARE THE LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY AUTHORITIES TO COLLECT THIS INFORMATION?

- The *Higher Education Act of 1965*, as amended, Subpart 2, Division 1, Sections 402A and 402B (Public Law 102-325 as amended by Public Law 110-315);
- Program regulations in 34 CFR Part 643; and
- Sections 75.591 and 75.720 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR)

3. WHO MUST FILE THIS REPORT?

All grantees funded under the TS program must submit annual performance reports as a condition of their grant award.

4. WHAT PERIOD OF TIME IS COVERED IN THE REPORT?

The report covers the 12-month budget period. This information can be found in Block 6 of your Grant Award Notification.

5. WHAT INFORMATION MUST BE SUBMITTED?

The report consists of four sections. Section I requests basic identifying information about the project, while Section II covers demographic information and target schools. Sections III and IV reflect the standard objectives found on the Program Profile page of the 2021 application package for TS. Section III requests the educational status of different groups of participants at the time of first service in the reporting period; these groups allow grantees to report on sets of participants specified in the objectives. Section IV asks grantees to report on the educational status of participants at the end of the reporting period and to show the extent to which the project succeeded in meeting its objectives.

6. WHEN SHOULD THE REPORT BE FILED?

The annual performance report should be submitted electronically via the Web within 90 days after the end of each 12-month budget period.

7. HOW MAY THE REPORT BE SUBMITTED?

The entire report should be submitted via the World Wide Web.

Beginning in reporting period 2023-24, all grantees were required to provide an electronic signature for both the project director and certifying official attesting that the TS Annual Performance Report (APR) data that was submitted is accurate, complete, and verifiable. The same process for digitally certifying the APR data that was in place in 2023-24 will apply to the 2024-25 APR reporting period. Therefore, the project director and certifying official must login to the TRIO Web Portal in order to electronically sign the annual performance report data. The TS APR submission is not complete until the project director and the certifying official have certified the data. **The project has two (2) business days after the APR data submission or by the deadline date, whichever occurs first, to certify the data.**

To enable the certifying official to electronically certify that the APR information submitted is accurate, complete, and verifiable, the Project Director will need to grant user access to the certifying official. [Click here](#) to access the Digital Signature User Guide which contains detail instructions on how to provide the required digital signatures.

To enable the certifying official to electronically sign the APR data, the following steps need to be completed by the certifying official:

- If they have a Login.gov account, they must login via the [TRIO Web Portal](#) and certify the APR data. **For instructions on how to access the TRIO Web Portal and provide an electronic signature, please [click here](#)** and download the APR Digital Signature Guide.
- If the certifying official does not have a Login.gov account, they must create an account at [Login.gov](#) to access the TRIO Web Portal. For additional information regarding how to create a Login.gov account please [click here](#) and download either the detailed or quick guide for Login.Gov.

*****Important:** An account in Login.gov must be created using the Institution's email, that is, the same email address submitted by the Project Director. In addition, the TRIO Web Portal does not allow multiple emails in one Login.gov account; therefore, please ensure that only one email address is in your Login.gov account. If you have multiple email addresses, please delete the email that you will be using to access the TRIO Web Portal (i.e., your email address assigned by your institution), then create a Login.Gov account using this email address.***

If you need any assistance, please contact the Helpdesk by either telephone at (703) 885-8008 or via email at TRIO@helpdesk.thetactilegroup.com.

The Web application will be available as of [insert date] on the TRIO Web Portal at:

<https://trio.ed.gov>

The Web site contains the forms and instructions needed to prepare and submit online the annual performance report for the TS program. The Web application that TS grantees will use to submit the annual performance report has the following features:

- Instructions for using the Web site, an introduction to the data collection, and Online Help;
- A Web form for completing all sections online;
- Edit checks to help increase accuracy in reporting;
- A print button to make a hard copy of the information entered;
- A submit button to send the entire report to the Department of Education; and
- An e-mail confirmation that the report has been submitted and next steps for completing the submission.

The **deadline** for submitting your APR data will be **December 18, 2025**.

8. WHO MAY BE CONTACTED FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING THE SUBMISSION OF THE PERFORMANCE REPORT?

Please contact your program specialist directly if you have questions regarding the performance report requirements or if you need to revise the performance report submission. A state listing of program specialists' names, telephone numbers, and email addresses is available at the Web address provided above.

If you have technical problems accessing the Web site or using the Web application, please contact the Help Desk by either telephone at (703) 885-8008 or via email at Trio.Helpdesk@thetactilegroup.com.

Specific Instructions for Completing the Performance Report

Section I: Project Identification, Certification, and Warning

A. Identification

1. To begin completing this report online, from the Department's Web page you will need to click on <https://trio.ed.gov/>, the TRIO Web Portal hosted by our contractor to support submittal of annual performance reports for the TRIO programs.
2. Once you access the system, the PR/Award number will be pre-populated in line 1 of Section I of the report form.
3. The name of the organization awarded the grant funds will be pre-populated in line 2.
4. The address of the grantee organization will be pre-populated in line 3. If changes are needed, please correct the data.
5. The name of the project director will be pre-populated in line 4. If there has been a change in the project director, please contact your program specialist immediately to notify him or her of the change. The APR is not a vehicle for obtaining approval for any project director changes.
6. The current telephone number, fax number, and electronic mailing address for the project director will be pre-populated in line 5. If changes are needed, please correct the data.
7. The budget period covered by this report will be pre-populated in line 6. These dates should correspond to the budget period found in block 6 of the Grant Award Notification.
8. In line 7, provide the name, telephone number, and electronic mailing address for the data entry person who has completed the online form. If you need to grant access to the data entry person, please click on the link "Request User Access" located on the top right-hand side and complete the information requested. **Reminder:** A person accessing the TRIO Web Portal will need a Login.gov account.

B. Certification (Electronic-Signature)

The project director is the person responsible for administering the project in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant.

The certifying official is the individual (or successor or designee) who signed the grant application on behalf of the institution or agency.

For additional information regarding the electronic signature, please see item #7 under "**HOW MAY THE REPORT BE SUBMITTED?**" above.

C. Warnings

Any person who knowingly makes a false statement or misrepresentation on this report is subject to penalties which may include fines, imprisonment, or both, under the United States Criminal Code and 20 U.S.C. 1097. Further Federal funds or other benefits may be withheld under these programs unless this report is completed and filed as required by existing law (20 U.S.C. 1231a) and regulations (34 CFR 75.591 and 75.720).

Section II: Demographic Profile of Project Participants and Listing of Target Schools

Number of Participants Funded to Serve

The Department will pre-populate this field with the number of participants the grant was funded to serve each year, based on information provided in the project's approved application. Grantees will not be able to make changes to this number on the form. If the pre-populated number reflects a data entry error, the project must contact the assigned program specialist to resolve the problem.

A. Number of Participants Assisted

In completing this section of the report, please keep in mind the following definition of a project participant provided in the program regulations in 34 CFR 643.7.

A TS participant means an individual who: (1) is determined to be eligible to participate in the project under section 643.3; and (2) receives project services designed for his or her age or grade.

Only those individuals who meet the definition of participant should be counted in this section of the report. Participants need not have been enrolled in the program at the beginning of the reporting period to be counted. Report only on students served in 2024-25; do not provide information on students last served in 2023-24 or any earlier year.

Please provide the number of new participants served in A1 and continuing participants in A2. The number of new participants provided in A1 and the number of continuing participants provided in A2 must equal the total number of participants in A3. A new participant is one served by the project for the first time during this reporting period. A continuing participant is one who was served by the project for the first time in another reporting period (this includes a reporting period under a previous grant) and who received project services during this reporting period.

A3 should be the total of A1 and A2, if applicable, and should be the number of participants served by the project during the reporting period.

B. Participant Distribution by Eligibility

The regulations governing the TS program (see 34 CFR 643.11(a)) require that at least two-thirds of the individuals a project serves must be low-income individuals who are potential first-generation college students (these terms are defined below). The remaining participants can be low-income individuals, potential first-generation college students, or any individuals in need of

services. Students may be counted only once in this breakout. The total reported must agree with the number in A3 above.

Low-income individual means an individual whose family's taxable income did not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level amount in the calendar year preceding the year in which the individual initially participated in the project. The poverty level amount is determined using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The 2025 low-income levels can be found on the TRIO Web site at:

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/incomelevels.html>

Potential first generation college student means: (1) an individual neither of whose natural or adoptive parents received a baccalaureate degree; or (2) an individual who, prior to the age of 18, regularly resided with and received support from only one parent and whose supporting parent did not receive a baccalaureate degree; or (3) an individual who, prior to the age of 18, did not regularly reside with or receive support from a natural or adoptive parent.

In the Other category (B4), count those project participants who are neither low-income nor potential first-generation college students. The total should agree with the number in A3.

C. Participant Distribution by Race and Ethnicity

On October 19, 2007, the Department released revised, Department-wide guidance on collecting and reporting data on race and ethnicity:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2007-10-19/pdf/E7-20613.pdf>

All grantees of the Department were required to implement the revised guidance as of fall 2010 for the 2010-11 school year and thereafter.

While the 2007 guidance was largely consistent with the reporting categories for race and ethnicity that TS grantees had used prior to 2007 in APR reporting, the guidance specified data collection, reporting, and maintenance procedures that grantees may or may not have followed in the past, but that were required for full implementation as of fall 2010. These procedures, designed to ensure data quality, include these points:

- Grantees need to collect racial and ethnic data on all participants using a two-part question: first, the grantee asks the respondent--typically a parent or guardian if the participant is at the elementary or secondary level, or the participant himself or herself if older--whether the participant is Hispanic/Latino; second, the grantee asks the respondent to select one or more races from the five racial groups listed. (Instead of asking the respondent, grantees may use school records to determine a participant's race and ethnicity, but only if the school has implemented the Department's 2007 guidance.)
- If the respondent identifies the participant as Hispanic/Latino, that is the one category the grantee should use in reporting to the Department on that participant, regardless of other racial information the respondent may provide. Grantees must, however, keep in their files the original responses on race and ethnicity of *all* participants using the two-part question.

- If a respondent belongs in more than one racial group, the grantee should report the respondent as belonging to two or more races.
- “Unknown” should not appear on forms grantees use to collect data, though grantees may report a participant’s race/ethnicity as “Unknown” if necessary.
- The guidance encourages grantees to have respondents themselves identify the category to which they belong, rather than for the grantee to use observation to select a category.

The points above are highlights only; grantees are responsible for implementing *all* relevant aspects of the guidance.

In Section II C, grantees are to report aggregated data on participants' race and ethnicity. As noted above, all students identified as Hispanic or Latino should be included *only* in the count for C1. Non-Hispanic/Latino participants identified as one race should be shown in lines C2, C3, C4, C5, or C6. Non-Hispanic/Latino participants identified as two or more races should be counted in C7. Participants for whom race and ethnicity is unknown should be included in the count for C8. The total, C9, should equal the number in Section II, A3. As indicated above, the original responses from Hispanic/Latino students or their parents (and indeed all participants) provided on their race and ethnicity should be retained in grantees' files.

Definitions for the ethnic and racial categories

Hispanic or Latino: A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

American Indian or Alaska Native: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains a tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. This area includes, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Black or African American: A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.

White: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii or other Pacific islands such as Samoa and Guam.

Two or more races: A person of a multi-racial background.

D. Participant Distribution by Gender

Though these data are not mandatory, they are helpful to the Department in reporting on the gender representation of project participants. If addressed, the total should agree with the number in A3.

E. Participant Distribution by Age

The data requested here represent age ranges most consistent with age groups targeted for services by the TS program statute and regulations. Given the permissible exceptions provided by statute, this information aids the Department in validating the numbers of middle school students, high school students, youth, and adults served by each project. The total should agree with the number in A3. The data reported here should reflect the age of project participants **at the time of first service in the reporting period**. Item E1 has been changed to include participants who meet the eligibility requirements but who are younger than 11 years old.

F. Veterans Served

TS projects may serve veterans regardless of age. If applicable for your project, please provide the number of veterans served.

Veteran means a person who—(1) Served on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States for a period of more than 180 days and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable; (2) Served on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States and was discharged or released because of a service-connected disability; (3) Was a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States and was called to active duty for a period of more than 30 days; or (4) Was a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States who served on active duty in support of a contingency operation (as that term is defined in section 101(a)(13) of title 10, United States Code) on or after September 11, 2001.

G. Participants with Limited English Proficiency

TS projects *may* adapt project services to meet the needs of students with limited English proficiency. If applicable for your project, please provide the number of project participants with limited English proficiency.

Limited English proficiency, with reference to an individual, means a person whose native language is other than English and who has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to deny that individual the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms in which English is the language of instruction.

H. Participants who are in a dual enrollment program

The Department aims to collect information on TS participants that are enrolled in dual enrollment programs. If applicable for your project, please enter the number of project participants that participate in dual enrollment programs. Report the total number of TS participants who participated in a dual enrollment program by taking one or more college level

courses during the reporting year, **not** the total number of courses taken by TS participants during the reporting year.

For the purpose of completing the TS APR, the Department defines a dual enrollment program as a collaborative effort between high schools and colleges that allow high school students to enroll in college-level courses and earn credit toward a high school diploma and a college degree (college credit dual enrollment) or a career preparation certificate (career dual enrollment) .¹ In the count of the number of participants in dual enrollment programs, include those students who earn college credit as well as those that did not earn college credit because they did not complete all the course requirements or did not (or could not afford to) pay the required fees .

I. Participants enrolled in rigorous courses that are not offered at target schools

The Department aims to collect specific information on TS participants that enroll in rigorous courses outside of the target schools, with particular focus on sources of funding. Please enter the number of participants in your project that are enrolled in *at least* one rigorous course outside of their target schools by type of funding source, if applicable, for each of the subfields listed. Include both seniors and non-seniors in these fields.

J. TS participants also served during reporting year by another federally funded program (see 34 CFR 643.32(c)(5))

Please provide the total number of participants in your TS project that are simultaneously enrolled in one or more federally funded program. Furthermore, please provide the number of participants that, in addition to TS, also participated in Upward Bound (UB), Upward Bound Math-Science (UBMS), Veterans Upward Bound (VUB), GEAR UP, another federally- funded program; or two or more federally funded programs.

K. TS participants completing the FAFSA

Report in this section the number of participants (seniors, individuals in an alternative education program who are at an academic level of a high school senior, and other individuals interested in enrolling in a program of postsecondary education [e.g., individuals in a GED program]) who applied for **federal** financial aid through the use of the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) during the reporting year, but did not enroll in a postsecondary education during the reporting year. Report the number of these participants who used the FAFSA to apply for financial aid and then enrolled in a program of postsecondary education during the reporting year, by the fall term immediately following the reporting year, or the next academic term (e.g., spring term) if the institution deferred the participant's enrollment. Also, report the number of participants that did not apply for federal financial aid during the reporting year and/ or the number of participants whose application for federal financial aid during the reporting year could not be confirmed.

¹ Dual enrollment does NOT count as enrollment in postsecondary education for the purpose of calculating the postsecondary enrollment objective. This will be discussed further below in Section IV.

Among the services Talent Search must provide is assistance to participants in completing financial aid applications, including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). (See 34 CFR 643.4(4)(ii)). In addition, the financial aid application rate is one of the *Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)* performance measures for the Talent Search program. Therefore, it is important that you provide accurate and complete data on the number of seniors who complete the FAFSA and enroll in postsecondary education. The total, K4, should equal the number in Section III, A5 + A8.

L. Competitive Preference Priorities

In the FY 2021 TS grant competition, applicants could choose to respond to three competitive preference priorities (CPP). For this data collection, projects will be required to provide information for the following two CPPs: (1) activities projects engaged in to foster knowledge and promote the development of skills that prepare students to be informed, thoughtful, and productive individuals and citizens; and (2) activities projects engaged in to promote Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Education with particular focus on Computer Science. In this section, report the number of participants that engaged in activities that fostered knowledge and promoted the development of skills that prepare students to be informed, thoughtful, and productive individuals and citizens; and the number of participants that engaged in activities that promote STEM. If the project did not address the CPPs at all, or if none of the project's students participated in CPP activities that the project offered, the **total number** of students served should appear in II.L.4 ("Participants who did not engage in either of the CPP activities").

M. Target Schools

This section is pre-populated with the list of target schools the grantee provided in the previous year's Annual Performance Report (APR). If there are any changes to the pre-populated information, please update or correct the data. To assist you in locating the NCES school identification numbers for your target schools (i.e., if needed), a Web link to the CCD data is provided here (for [public schools click here](#) and for [private schools click here](#)) and in the Web application. Please include only those students who attended a target school.

If a public target school does not have an NCES School ID, use 555555555555. If a private or parochial target school, does not have an NCES School ID, enter 666666666666 and 777777777777, respectively; otherwise, enter the ID as reported in the private school CCD data base.

For the number of students in a dual enrollment program, we are requesting the number of participants who are enrolled in established dual enrollment programs, not the number of participants who are taking college courses on their own. Note: The total number of participants in the dual enrollment program should equal II. H.

Projects should discuss any changes in target schools with their program/grants specialist before submitting the APR. Projects may not add or drop target schools without written approval from the program/grants specialist. The APR is not a vehicle for obtaining approval of changes in your target schools. If a project is phasing out a school (i.e., continuing to serve students in a school previously served by the TS project but not adding new students), the project should include the school in the list as they would any others; the list in Section II should

include all approved schools that the project served in 2024-25. If a project did not provide services to students in a school in 2024-25, that school should be dropped from the list.

Also in the table, grantees will be required to provide information on dual enrollment program participation within each target school. Grantees will report on the following: whether the given target school has a dual enrollment program; and the number of participants in the target school who are enrolled in the dual enrollment program in the reporting period. In the latter field, enter only 0, a whole number, or, for schools not participating in a dual enrollment program, 9999 for “not applicable.” Use 9999 (not applicable) for all schools coded “No” or “Unknown.”

Definitions that Apply to Sections III and IV

Please note the definitions of the following terms that are used frequently in the remainder of the document.

Graduation within the standard number of years: the attainment of a regular secondary school diploma at the conclusion of, before the conclusion of, or during the summer immediately following a participant’s fourth year of high school, unless a high school begins after ninth grade, in which case the standard number of years is the number of grades in the school. If a student is enrolled in a dual enrollment program that entails a fifth year, five years will be considered to be standard.

Regular secondary school diploma: a level attained by individuals who meet or exceed the coursework and performance standards for high school completion established by the individual’s state.

Alternative awards, including a GED or a certificate of attendance, are **not** considered *regular secondary school diplomas* under this definition, an interpretation that is consistent with the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations in section 200.19(b)(1)(iv). The term *regular secondary school diploma* does, however, include a “higher diploma” awarded to students who complete requirements above and beyond what is required for a regular diploma. A diploma awarded by an *alternative school* would be acceptable, as long as it falls under the definition for *regular secondary school diploma* and is not, in fact, an alternative credential.

Rigorous secondary school program of study: a program of study that is--

- (1) Established by a state educational agency (SEA) or local educational agency (LEA) and recognized as a rigorous secondary school program of study by the Secretary through the process described in 34 CFR 691.16(a) through 691.16(c) for the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) Program; or
- (2) An advanced or honors secondary school program established by States and in existence for the 2004-2005 school year or later school years; or
- (3) Any secondary school program in which a student successfully completes at a minimum the following courses:
 - (i) Four years of English
 - (ii) Three years of mathematics, including algebra I and a higher-level class such as algebra II, geometry, or data analysis and statistics
 - (iii) Three years of science, including one year each of at least two of the following courses: biology, chemistry, and physics
 - (iv) Three years of social studies

- (v) One year of a language other than English; or
- (4) A secondary school program identified by a State-level partnership that is recognized by the State Scholars Initiative of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), Boulder, Colorado; or
- (5) Any secondary school program for a student who completes at least two courses from an International Baccalaureate Diploma Program sponsored by the International Baccalaureate Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, and receives a score of a “4” or higher on the examinations for at least two of those courses; or
- (6) Any secondary school program for a student who completes at least two Advanced Placement courses and receives a score of “3” or higher on the College Board’s Advanced Placement Program Exams for at least two of those courses.

Institution of higher education: an educational institution as defined in sections 101 and 102 of the *Higher Education Act*.

Enrolled in postsecondary education: a participant who has completed the registration requirements (except for the payment of tuition and fees) at the institution that he or she is attending.

Program of postsecondary education: a formal instructional program whose curriculum is designed primarily for students who are beyond the compulsory age for high school. This includes programs whose purpose is academic or vocational and excludes avocational and adult basic education.

Acceptance but deferred enrollment: a participant has received an acceptance letter from the institution that he or she will attend, but cannot enroll in the fall semester immediately following high school graduation for reasons determined by the institution. The institution defers enrollment until the next semester.

Postsecondary attainment: completion of a program of postsecondary education that has led to a certificate, associate degree or baccalaureate degree.

Standard number of years: could include five years of high school if the student is enrolled in a dual enrollment program that entails a fifth year of high school.

Section III: Educational Status of Participants (at time of first service in reporting year)

Section III requests data on the educational status of participants *at time of first service in the reporting period*. For example, if a participant was a secondary school dropout when first served in October 2024 he or she should be counted in Section III as such, even if the participant reenrolled over the course of the reporting period.

A. Educational Status of Participants

A1. Middle school -- Report in the number of participants in grades six, seven, and eight at the time of first service in the reporting period.

A2. Freshman in high school (9th grade only) -- Report in the number of participants in the 9th grade at the time of first service in the reporting year.

A3. Sophomore in high school (10th grade only) -- Report the number of participants in the 10th grade at the time of first service in the reporting year.

A4. Junior high school (11th grade only) -- Report the number of participants in 11th grade at the time of first service in the reporting year.

A5. High school senior (12th grade only) -- Report the number of participants who were high school seniors at the time of first service in the reporting period. Include individuals enrolled in alternative education programs that are organized by grade who are at an academic level of a high school senior at the time of first service in reporting year.

A6. Alternative education student -- Report the number of participants enrolled in a high school equivalency program (e.g., GED) or other alternative education program that is not organized by grade or age of the student.

A7. 4th year high school student in a five-year dual enrollment program -- Report the number of participants in their fourth year of high school in a five-year dual enrollment program at the time of first service in the reporting year.

A8. 5th year high school student in a five-year dual enrollment program -- Report the number of participants in their fifth year of high school in a five-year dual enrollment program at the time of first service in the reporting year.

A9. Secondary school dropout—Report participants that were secondary school dropouts at the time of first service in the reporting year.

A10. Other-- Report here participants that do not belong in any other categories in this section; examples include (but are not limited to) a GED graduate not already enrolled in a program of postsecondary education.

Note: If the number of “Other participants” is larger than 10 percent of total participants, you will be asked to provide an explanation before you can move to the next section of the APR.

A11. Unknown -- Report here the number of participants whose educational status at time of first service in the reporting period is either unknown or unconfirmed.

A12. Total -- The total should equal Section II, A3.

Section IV: Educational Status of Participants (at the end of the reporting period or for fall term 2024) and Postsecondary Placements by type and control of the postsecondary institutions

This section of the annual report is your opportunity to report on your project's progress in meeting its approved objectives (Parts A, B, and C). In addition, Part D of this section collects information on the postsecondary placements of participants by type and control of the postsecondary institutions.

The APR Web application will list each of the standard objectives and will be pre-populated with the approved targets (percentages) for your project derived from the Program Profile sheet submitted with

your approved FY 2021 grant application or subsequently amended. Should you discover a data entry error in these percentages, please contact your program/grants specialist.

Note that each objective refers to a certain group of participants that forms the denominator for the percentage of students who met the objective. For the first objective (secondary school persistence), for example, the denominator is participants who were middle school and non-senior high school students (including fourth-year students in a five-year dual enrollment program), minus participants who died during the reporting year. **Consider only the students included in the denominator in entering values in the data fields following each objective.**

Please enter a positive numeric value in each field; for those not applicable to your project, enter zero (0). If more than one response is possible for a given participant, choose the most recent status.

Note that some individuals counted in Section III are not included in any of the standard objectives (for example, Section III, A5).

A. Objective: Secondary School Persistence

___% 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.

For this objective, the denominator is students reported in Section III, A1 A2, A3, A4 and A7. Secondary school-age students who at the time of first service in the reporting period were dropouts are not included in the objective, and thus their educational status should not be reported in Section IV, A.

A1. Report the number of participants who at time of first service in the reporting period were middle school students or non-senior high school students (including fourth-year students in a five-year dual enrollment program) (sum of Section III, A1, A2, A3, A4 and A7) who continued in school for the next academic year, at the **next** grade level (e.g., 8th grade in 2024-25 academic year; 9th grade in 2025-26 academic year).

You may also include here any student who was not classified as a senior at the beginning of the reporting year (e.g., junior) who earned a sufficient number of credits to graduate high school by the end of the reporting period. Since these individuals were not seniors when first served in the reporting period, these individuals will count toward your secondary school persistence objective but not toward your secondary school graduation or postsecondary enrollment objectives.

A2. Report the number of participants who at time of first service in the reporting year were middle school students or non-senior high school students (including fourth-year students in a five year dual enrollment program) (sum of Section III, A1, A2, A3, A4 and A7) who continued in school for the next academic year, at the **same** grade level (e.g., 10th grade in 2024-25 academic year and 10th grade at the beginning of the 2025-26 academic year).

A3. Report the number of participants who at time of first service in the reporting year were middle school students or non-senior high school students (including fourth-year students in a five year dual enrollment program) (sum of Section III, A1, A2, A3, A4 and A7) who dropped out of school during the 2024-25 academic year or before the 2025-26 academic year.

A4. Deceased -- Report on the number of participants who, at time of first service in the reporting year, were middle school students or non-senior high school students (including fourth-year students in a five-year dual enrollment program) (sum of Section III, A1, A2, A3, A4 and A7) who died during the reporting year.

A5. Other -- Report here the number of middle school students or non-senior high school students (including fourth-year students in a five-year dual enrollment program) (Section III, A1, A2, A3, A4 and A7) whose known educational status does not fit under the three categories listed above.

A6. Unknown -- Report here the number of middle school students or non-senior high school students (including fourth-year students in a five-year dual enrollment program) (Section III, A1, A2, A3, A4 and A7) whose educational status is either unknown or unconfirmed.

A7. Total -- The total should equal the sum of Section III, A1, A2, A3, A4 and A7.

B. Objective: Secondary School Graduation

i. Secondary School Graduation (regular secondary school diploma)

____% 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.

ii. Secondary School Graduation (rigorous program of study)

____% 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.

Notes: Graduation within the standard number of years means the attainment of a regular secondary school diploma (see definition on pages 10 and 11 of these instructions) at the conclusion of, before the conclusion of, or during the summer immediately following a participant's fourth year of high school, unless a high school begins after ninth grade, in which case the standard number of years is the number of grades in the school. If a student is enrolled in a dual enrollment program that entails a fifth year, five years will be considered to be standard.

The term *regular secondary school diploma* includes a "higher diploma" awarded to students who complete requirements above and beyond what is required for a regular diploma.

For these objectives, the denominator is students who at the time of first service were high school seniors (Section III, A5).

B1. Report the number of seniors who graduated from high school during the reporting period with a regular secondary school diploma within the standard number of years who did not complete a rigorous program of study.

B2. Report the number of seniors who graduated from high school during the reporting period with a regular secondary school diploma AND who completed a rigorous program of study within the standard number of years.

B3. Report the number of seniors who graduated from high school with a regular high school diploma but not in the standard number of years.

B4. Report the number of seniors who received an alternative award by the end of the reporting period (e.g., received certificate of attendance).

B5. Report on the number of high school seniors who neither graduated high school nor received an alternative award by the end of the reporting period.

B6. Deceased -- Report on the number of high school seniors served during the reporting year who died during the reporting year.

B7. Other -- Report here the number of seniors whose known educational status at the end of the reporting period does not fall within the first five categories of this section.

B8. Unknown -- Report here the number of seniors whose educational status at the end of the reporting period is either unknown or unconfirmed.

B9. Total -- The total should equal the sum of Section III, A5.

B10. Report here the number of participants in Section III, A9 and A10 that completed secondary education by the end of the reporting period.

C. Objective: Postsecondary Education Enrollment

____% 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).

In this section, we are asking that you report on the postsecondary enrollment status of participants who enrolled in postsecondary education by the fall term immediately following high school graduation or by the next academic term if the institution deferred the participant's enrollment. The section provides an opportunity to report not only on participants who constitute the denominator for the postsecondary enrollment objective, but also on other participants as well.

To determine if your project met its postsecondary enrollment objective, we would only include in the denominator (and thus in the calculation) all participants that graduated with a regular secondary school diploma during the project year, which includes both those who did complete a rigorous program of study, and those who did not (Section IV, B1 and B2). The numerator will be the sum of the number of such participants that enrolled in an institution of higher education by the fall term immediately following high school graduation and the number of such participants that received a notification from the institution that enrollment had been deferred until the next academic term (Section IV, C1 and C2 below).

Notes: The Program Profile page from the FY 2021 competition defines an enrolled participant as one who has completed the registration requirements (except for the payment of tuition and fees) at the institution that he or she is attending. Grantees may consider a participant who completed the registration requirements to be enrolled even if the project is aware that the student did not subsequently attend class.

Taking postsecondary courses while still in high school (e.g., dual enrollment) does NOT constitute enrollment in a program of postsecondary education. However, participants who were classified as dual enrolled during the reporting period, completed high school or received a high school equivalency certificate during the reporting year, and enrolled in an institution of higher education by the fall term immediately following high school graduation or who 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, may be counted in the number of postsecondary enrollees. Also, **joining the military does not constitute postsecondary education** (unless, of course, a participant enrolls in a postsecondary military school, e.g., the U.S. Coast Guard Academy).

Use row 1 to report participants' enrollment or deferred enrollment within the timeframe of the objective. Use row 2 to report students for whom you have no evidence of enrollment or deferred enrollment, and students whose status is unknown to you. The types of high school credentials to which the columns refer are these:

IV.C1 (column b): Received regular diploma within standard number of years, and *did not complete* a rigorous program of study

IV.C2 (column c): Received regular diploma within standard number of years, and completed a rigorous program of study

IV.C3 (column e): Received a regular diploma but not within the standard number of years

IV.C4 (column f): Received an alternative credential (e.g., certificate of attendance or high school equivalency certificate)

IV.C5 (column g): Neither graduated high school nor received an alternative credential; or was included in IV.B7, "Other."

D. Postsecondary Placements: Types of Institutions

For participants enrolled in a program of postsecondary education, as reported in Section IV, C above, indicate the number of students enrolled in postsecondary education by type of postsecondary institution. Projects are asked to disaggregate each type of postsecondary placement into the same five categories as were used in IV C:

IV.C1 (column b): Received regular diploma within standard number of years, and *did not complete* a rigorous program of study

IV.C2 (column c): Received regular diploma within standard number of years, and completed a rigorous program of study

IV.C3 (column e): Received a regular diploma but not within the standard number of years

IV.C4 (column f): Received an alternative credential (e.g., certificate of attendance or high school equivalency certificate)

IV.C5 (column g): Neither graduated high school nor received an alternative credential; or was included in IV.B7, "Other."

The grand total in cell 8(i) should equal the sum of those listed as enrolled in IV, C, cell 1(i).

For definitions of the types of postsecondary institutions, please see language concerning Title IV programs in sections 101 and 102 of Title I of the 1998 Amendments to the *Higher Education Act of 1965* (P.L. 105-244) (<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/statute-trio-gu.pdf>)

E. Objective: Postsecondary Attainment

____% 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.

In order to calculate postsecondary attainment, certain participants are grouped into **postsecondary enrollment cohorts**, based on their high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment dates. For example, the 2024-25 postsecondary enrollment cohort comprises participants who were served in the Talent Search program's 2024-25 project year, who graduated from high school in that year, and who enrolled in postsecondary by fall term 2025. A student can also be included in the 2024-25 cohort if he or she graduated high school in the 2024-25 project year and was accepted for enrollment but deferred by the institution until the next academic term. Each year's APR establishes a specific cohort; no students can be added to that cohort in an earlier or subsequent APR.

The Postsecondary Attainment section of the APR has two functions: first, in subsection 1 it allows grantees to report the participants who belong in the cohort established in the project year. Second, when completing this year's APR, subsection 2 will allow grantees funded in the previous grant cycle to report on the postsecondary attainment of participants in the cohort established six years earlier. Projects will report on the postsecondary attainment of the 2018-19 cohort—that is, those who were served in the 2018-19 project year, who graduated from high school in that year, and who enrolled in postsecondary by fall term 2019, or were accepted but deferred until the next academic semester.

Subsection 1: Establishing Cohorts of Participants for the Denominator of the Postsecondary Attainment Calculation

Please note that the option selected in the year of the current grant cycle you were first funded for the postsecondary attainment objective will be pre-populated. **As noted in the APR instructions, the interpretation selected cannot be changed for the remainder of the current grant cycle to maintain consistent PE calculations across all PE assessment years.**

Interpretation of the objective's denominator:

- ☐ The target population, or denominator, of this objective would include postsecondary enrollees that: (1) received regular high school diplomas without completing a rigorous program of study; (2) received regular high school diplomas and completed a rigorous program of study; and (3) received a regular secondary school diploma but not within standard number of years (the sum of the number of students in Section IV.C, cells 1[d] +1[e]), **OR**
- ☐ The target population, or denominator, of this objective would include postsecondary enrollees that: (1) received regular high school diplomas without completing a rigorous program of study; (2) received regular high school diplomas and completed a rigorous program of study; (3) received a regular secondary school diploma but not within standard number of years; **and** (4) received an alternative credential (e.g., certificate of attendance or high school equivalency certificate). This second interpretation uses the sum of the number of students in Section IV.C, cells 1(d) + 1(e) + 1(f).

Depending on which interpretation is followed, the cohorts on which grantees will report will contain both postsecondary enrollees that received high school equivalency credentials AND regular high school diplomas (the second interpretation), or only postsecondary enrollees that received regular high school diplomas (the first interpretation).

Tracking all postsecondary enrollees or a random sample:

Please note that the option selected in the year of the current grant cycle you were first funded for the postsecondary attainment objective will be pre-populated. **As noted in the APR instructions, the interpretation selected cannot be changed for the remainder of the current grant cycle to maintain consistent PE calculations across all PE assessment years.**

- ☐ My project will be tracking the postsecondary attainment status of **ALL** postsecondary enrollees for the entirety of the grant cycle.
- ☐ My project will be tracking the postsecondary attainment status of **a random sample** of postsecondary enrollees using the methodology stated in the APR instructions for the entirety of the grant cycle.

Establishing a cohort for certain participants in the project year: To help projects keep track of the students' progression to postsecondary attainment, all projects are required to report the first and last names of the students in the 2024-25 cohort—that is, those who enrolled in postsecondary education by the fall 2025 term immediately following high school graduation in the 2024-25 project year, or by the next academic term (e.g., spring term 2026) as a result of acceptance but deferred enrollment. So that projects need not manually enter the names of each postsecondary enrollee, the online Web application is designed to allow a project to upload an Excel file with the list of postsecondary enrollees. The Excel file must include the first and last name of each enrollee; the spreadsheet must also include a column providing information on the random sample option. Additional requirements for the Excel file are found under "Section IV Upload" in the online APR Web application.

Subsection 2: Calculating Postsecondary Attainment for the 2018-19 Cohort

Grantees that were funded during the 2016–21 grant cycle will be reporting on postsecondary attainment of cohorts in this year’s APR; on the other hand, due to the six-year point of measurement for this objective, grantees first funded in the 2021–26 cycle will not be able to report on attainment during this period. The first year of measurement for this objective for projects initially funded in the 2021–26 cycle will not occur until the 2027–28 APR, six years after the first year of the grant cycle. Consequently, the Department will not begin to calculate prior experience (PE) points for this objective for projects first funded in the 2021–26 cycle until 2027–28. The table below shows the years in which postsecondary attainment will be calculated for cohorts first established in the 2016–17 grant cycle.

Project year in which high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment were reported	Associated 6-year postsecondary attainment year (and the year of assessment calculation for postsecondary attainment)
2016-17 (1 st year of 2016–21 grant cycle)	2022-23
2017-18 (2 nd year of 2016–21 grant cycle)	2023-24
2018-19 (3 rd year of 2016–21 grant cycle)	2024-25
2019-20 (4 th year of 2016–21 grant cycle)	2025-26
2020-21 (5 th year of 2016–21 grant cycle)	2026-27
2021-22 (1 st year of 2021–26 grant cycle)	2027-28
2022-23 (2 nd year of 2021–26 grant cycle)	2028-29
2023-24 (3 rd year of 2021–26 grant cycle)	2029-30
2024-25 (4 th year of 2021–26 grant cycle)	2030-31
2025-26 (5 th year of 2021–26 grant cycle)	2031-32

As indicated above, projects are to report on the postsecondary attainment of cohort members six years after the cohort year. For the 2024-25 reporting period, the cohort that will be used to determine postsecondary attainment was established during the 2018-19 reporting period. Therefore, if a project was continuously funded and submitted an APR between the 2018-19 and 2024-25 and established a cohort in 2018-19, prior experience points will be assessed.

To help grantees prepare for the 2024-25 APR, the Department provided Excel data for the 2018-19 postsecondary enrollment cohort on the page following the submission page of the 2023-24 APR Web application. **For your convenience, the Department is again making available the 2018-19 cohort data via the button/link provided on the “Cohort Download” tab.** Your postsecondary attainment data for the participants in the 2018-19 cohort file will appear in the PDF that grantees will be able to download when you submit your APR.

In this year’s APR, grantees must report on all of the participants on the Excel file, and may not add any other participants to the cohort. The total number of 2018-19 cohort members will be prepopulated in the Web application. In the APR, projects must provide separate counts for participants who attained a certificate, an associate degree, a bachelor’s degree, or more than one credential within the six years following graduation from high school. These credentials must have been earned by August 31, 2025, if the participant is to count towards the objective. The APR also asks for the number of participants who the project knows have not earned a postsecondary credential, or for whom the project has no information. While projects need provide only summary information in the APR, grantees must retain thorough documentation on postsecondary attainment of each participant.

Appendix: Guidance on Determining Appropriate Sample Size and Random Sampling to Track Students for Postsecondary Attainment Objective

Section 402A(f)(3)(A)(vi) of the *Higher Education Act*, as amended in 2008 by section 403(a)(5) of the *Higher Education Opportunity Act*, requires the Department to use postsecondary education completion, if practicable, to assess the success of a Talent Search (TS) project. To implement this statutory requirement, §643.22(d)(6) of the TS program regulations states that an “applicant may determine success in meeting the objective by using a randomly selected sample of participants in accordance with the parameters established by the Secretary in the *Federal Register* notice inviting applications or other published application materials for the competition.”

The following guidelines provide the procedure to: (1) determine the appropriate sample size based on a project’s number of postsecondary enrollees; and (2) form a random sample equal to the appropriate sample size. Note that this procedure is to reduce, not increase, the burden on grantees by making allowances to only track a portion of postsecondary enrollees. Projects may follow the sampling guidelines discussed below or choose to track all postsecondary enrollees.

1. Determining Appropriate Sample Size

A project’s appropriate sample size is primarily determined by the number of postsecondary enrollees in a given project year, or the population of interest. Note that the number of postsecondary enrollees in a given project year is the denominator of the postsecondary attainment objective. (Projects need to be mindful of the interpretation of the postsecondary attainment they chose in Section IV, E in determining the number of participants from which the appropriate sample size is determined.) Under a random sampling procedure, a project will only need to track a portion of all postsecondary enrollees, or the appropriate sample size.

To determine the appropriate sample size, go to <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>.

On the Web site, the only number a project needs to input is the population size (the third field), which is the number of postsecondary enrollees in a given project year (depending on which interpretation was chosen in Section IV.E, this would be the sum of Section IV.C, cells 1(d) + 1(e), **OR** the sum of Section IV.C, cells 1(d) + 1(e) + 1(f)). Keep the margin of error at 5 percent, confidence level at 95 percent, and response distribution at 50 percent.

For example, Project X has 30 postsecondary enrollees in the 2023-24 reporting period. Raosoft determined that the appropriate sample size is 28 postsecondary enrollees. This means that under random sampling, Project X will only track 28 out of 30 postsecondary enrollees for their postsecondary attainment status for six years. See screenshot below.

Note: As a project’s number of postsecondary enrollees gets larger, the number of students it needs to track proportionally decreases.

What margin of error can you accept? 5% is a common choice	5 %
What confidence level do you need? Typical choices are 90%, 95%, or 99%	95 %
What is the population size? If you don't know, use 20000	30
What is the response distribution? Leave this as 50%	50 %
Your recommended sample size is	28

Once a project has determined the appropriate sample size, it needs to establish a process for randomly choosing the participants that constitute the sample. Continuing with the example above, each of the 30 students must have an equal chance of being chosen to be in the random sample of 28 students under random sampling. Project X will need to randomly choose 28 postsecondary enrollees to track out of its “pool” of 30 postsecondary enrollees.

2. Postsecondary Enrollee List Randomization

Before forming the random sample, a project first needs to have a randomized list of all its postsecondary enrollees, meaning that this list cannot be in any sort of particular order, e.g., alphabetical, from which to draw the random sample. In order to form a random sample successfully, the list from which the sample is formed **must** be in random order. A project can randomize its list of students by using <https://www.random.org/lists/>.

On the Home page of this Web site, enter the postsecondary enrollees’ names, with each name on one line. Continuing with the example, Project X wishes to randomize the list of 30 enrollees as its database has these participants in alphabetical order. On the Web site, Project X will enter:

Part 1: Enter List Items

Enter your items in the field below, each on a separate line. Items can be numbers, names, email addresses, etc. A maximum of 10,000 items are allowed. Please don't enter anything you would consider confidential ([here's why](#)).

```
Student 1's name
Student 2's name
Student 3's name
Student 4's name
Student 5's name
Student 6's name
Student 7's name
Student 8's name
Student 9's name
Student 10's name
Student 11's name
Student 12's name
Student 13's name
Student 14's name
Student 15's name
Student 16's name
Student 17's name
Student 18's name
Student 19's name
Student 20's name
Student 21's name
Student 22's name
Student 23's name
Student 24's name
Student 25's name
Student 26's name
Student 27's name
Student 28's name
Student 29's name
Student 30's name
```

(you're viewing this form [securely](#))

Part 2: Go!

Be patient! It may take a little while to randomize your list...

Randomize

Reset Form

Switch to Advanced Mode

(Note: The site can be viewed securely by selecting "secure view" underneath the empty field in Part 1. This is highly suggested. For security reasons, do NOT use SSNs or birthdates to randomize the list of students.)

After entering all of the students' names, click on "Randomize" for the system to randomize the list of students.

The next screen shows the system's generation of the random list of student names:

List Randomizer

There were 30 items in your list. Here they are in random order:

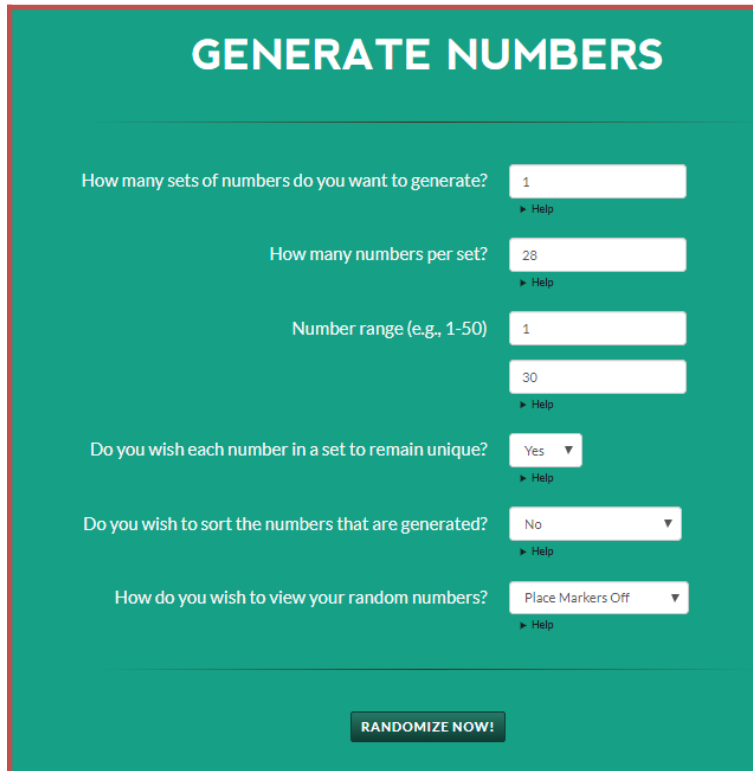
1. Student 23's name
2. Student 15's name
3. Student 19's name
4. Student 30's name
5. Student 14's name
6. Student 3's name
7. Student 9's name
8. Student 28's name
9. Student 10's name
10. Student 7's name
11. Student 13's name
12. Student 22's name
13. Student 18's name
14. Student 21's name
15. Student 1's name
16. Student 24's name
17. Student 29's name
18. Student 12's name
19. Student 11's name
20. Student 6's name
21. Student 5's name
22. Student 8's name
23. Student 20's name
24. Student 4's name
25. Student 2's name
26. Student 25's name
27. Student 26's name
28. Student 27's name
29. Student 17's name
30. Student 16's name

Not only has the system provided a random list of student names, but it has also assigned each student a number, which will be highly useful in the final step, as outlined below.

3. Determining the Random Sample

With the randomly generated list of student names with assigned numbers from random.org, a project will use the Research Randomizer on <https://www.randomizer.org/> to finally form a random sample of postsecondary enrollees to track through postsecondary attainment. After inputting the necessary parameters, Research Randomizer will generate a random list of 28 numbers for Project X. Each of these 28 numbers will correspond to a specific student in the list generated above by random.org. These 28 students will form the random sample Project X will track their postsecondary attainment status for six years.

Project X will enter the following information on Research Randomizer:

The image shows a teal-colored web form titled "GENERATE NUMBERS" in white capital letters. The form contains six input fields, each with a "Help" link below it. The first field is "How many sets of numbers do you want to generate?" with the value "1". The second is "How many numbers per set?" with the value "28". The third is "Number range (e.g., 1-50)" with two input boxes: the first contains "1" and the second contains "30". The fourth is "Do you wish each number in a set to remain unique?" with a dropdown menu showing "Yes". The fifth is "Do you wish to sort the numbers that are generated?" with a dropdown menu showing "No". The sixth is "How do you wish to view your random numbers?" with a dropdown menu showing "Place Markers Off". At the bottom of the form is a dark green button with the text "RANDOMIZE NOW!" in white capital letters.

How many sets of numbers do you want to generate? Projects will only want to generate one set of numbers, as only one random sample is needed.

How many numbers per set? This refers to the appropriate sample size determined in step 2. For Project X, it is 28. This means that the system will only generate 28 random numbers.

Number range refers to total range of possibilities. Looking at the random list generated by random.org, the range will be from 1 to 30, as there are 30 postsecondary enrollees for Project X. In this context, the number range essentially refers to the number of postsecondary enrollees.

Do you wish each number in a set to remain unique? Always select "Yes." This basically means that once a number is randomly chosen, it cannot be chosen again. For example, looking at Project X's list, this means that number 21, or Student 8, cannot be included in the random sample twice.

(A short tutorial is available here: <https://www.randomizer.org/tutorial/>)

After clicking on “Randomize Now!,” the following screen appears with a randomly generated list of numbers:

RESULTS

[PRINT](#)[DOWNLOAD](#)[CLOSE](#)

1 Set of 28 Unique Numbers
Range: From 1 to 30

Set #1

17, 18, 9, 4, 16, 7, 6, 11, 26, 2, 23, 8, 20, 14, 12, 28, 21, 25, 24, 1, 27, 22, 10, 15, 19, 3, 13, 29

This means that the students corresponding to the above numbers in the list generated by random.org form Project X's random sample. Looking at the random list of numbers generated, 5 and 30 are not present, meaning Students 14 and 16 (the students corresponding to 5 and 30 in the list) will not be part of the random sample, and thus not tracked.