Post-School Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

2014

Authorizing legislation: RCW 28A.155.220

Special Education
Douglas Gill, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent

Prepared by:
- Cinda Johnson, Principal Investigator of the Center for Change in Transition Services (cinda@seattleu.edu, 206-296-5888)
- Sue Ann Bube, Director of the Center for Change in Transition Services (sbube@seattleu.edu, 206-296-2245)
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Executive Summary

The education data center monitors the outcomes for individualized education plan–eligible special education students after high school graduation. This report summarizes the data currently available to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and routinely collected that aligns with RCW 28A.155.220 (see Appendix A).

Data not currently collected by OSPI, but requested to the extent collected as part of the law include:

- 2(ii)(c) The impact of employment on any state and federal benefits for individuals with disabilities
- 2(ii)(d) Indicators of the types of settings in which students who previously received transition services primarily reside
- 2(ii)(e) Indicators of improved economic status and self-sufficiency
- 2(ii)(f) Data on those students for whom a postsecondary or integrated employment outcome does not occur within one year of graduation.
**Introduction**

This report includes an analysis of data for secondary students leaving school during the 2011–12 school year. These data were collected by the state starting on June 1, 2013, from all 231 districts with high schools: 228 districts, 2 state schools, and 1 educational service agency (a collection of 26 small districts operated by Educational Service District 112).

**Definitions**

**Competitive employment:** A youth that has worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.

**Higher education:** A youth that has enrolled on a full- or part-time basis in a community college (2-year program), or college/university (4 or more year program) for at least one complete term, at any time in the year since leaving high school.

**Some other employment:** A youth that has worked for pay or been self-employed for a period of at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes working in a family business (e.g., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering services, etc.).

**Other postsecondary education or training:** A youth enrolled on a full- or part-time basis for at least one complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school in an education or training program (e.g., Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, or vocational technical school, which is less than a 2-year program).

**Respondents:** Youth or their designated family member who respond to the survey.

**Leavers:** Youth who left school by graduating with a regular or modified diploma, aging out, leaving school early (i.e., dropping out), or who were expected to return and did not.

**Process**

**Sampling Selection:** Washington state conducted a census to collect post-school outcome survey data from all 2011–12 school-year leavers one year after they exited high school. Districts utilized administrative records to generate a list of all 6,970 leavers (who had not re-enrolled in school and were alive at the time of data collection). District staff viewed online training modules and used resources from the Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS) to conduct and record results of the 2011–2012 Leavers Post School Outcomes Phone Survey in the secure, online data collection system. The districts attempted to contact all 6,970 leavers using informal student exit survey information and student records.

**Response Rate:** The overall response rate was 70.6% (see Table 1). This means that of the 6,970 students who left school last year, 29.4% are missing post-school outcome information (n = 2,048). The staff contacting students reported that the contact information was not provided for 757 youth. Attempts were made to contact an additional 958 leavers whose numbers were either
disconnected, incorrect, there was no answer, or a message was left but there was no return call to complete the survey. An additional 203 students or family members were contacted but declined to be interviewed.

**Table 1: Response Rate Calculation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of leavers in the state</th>
<th>6,970</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- subtract the number of youth ineligible (those who had returned to school or were deceased)</td>
<td>-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of youth contacted</td>
<td>5,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of completed surveys</td>
<td>4,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate: (4,922/6,970)*100</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An analysis of the data was conducted to determine patterns of missing information (e.g., did missing data vary across districts and disability categories, etc.). Of the 2,048 youth not responding to the survey, the majority were white (60%), males (65%), with a specific learning disability (50%) or other health impairment (24%). Most leavers who did not respond to the survey reside in the western or central part of the state. Further analyses are necessary to identify root causes and develop effective improvement strategies.

**Representativeness:** After the census was conducted, the National Post-School Outcomes Center (NPSO) Response Calculator (see Table 2) was used to measure the representativeness of the respondent group. Calculations were made on the characteristics of disability type, ethnicity, gender, and exit status in order to determine whether the leavers who responded to the interviews were similar, or different from, the total population of young adults with an IEP who exited school in 2011–12.

**Table 2: NPSO Response Calculator**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Leaver Totals</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>LD</th>
<th>ED</th>
<th>MR</th>
<th>AO</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Minority</th>
<th>ELL</th>
<th>Dropout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target Leaver</td>
<td>6970</td>
<td>3506</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>2691</td>
<td>2458</td>
<td>2363</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Totals</td>
<td>4922</td>
<td>2473</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>1748</td>
<td>1562</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Leaver Representation</td>
<td>50.30%</td>
<td>5.05%</td>
<td>6.04%</td>
<td>38.61%</td>
<td>35.27%</td>
<td>33.90%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>22.40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Representation</td>
<td>50.24%</td>
<td>4.29%</td>
<td>5.95%</td>
<td>39.52%</td>
<td>35.41%</td>
<td>31.74%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>17.17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>-0.05%</td>
<td>-0.76%</td>
<td>0.09%</td>
<td>0.91%</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
<td>-2.17%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>-5.23%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: positive difference indicates over-representation, negative difference indicates under-representation. A difference of greater than +/-3% is highlighted in red. We encourage users to also read the Western/NPSO paper Post-School Outcomes: Response Rates and Non-response Bias, found on the NPSO website at http://www.psocenter.org/collection.html.*

**Notes.** LD = Specific Learning Disability; ED = Emotionally/Behaviorally Disabled; MR = Intellectual Disability; AO = All Other; ELL = English Language Learners.
According to the NPSO Response Calculator, differences between the Respondent Group and the Target Leaver Group of ±3% are important. Negative differences indicate an under-representativeness of the group and positive differences indicate over-representativeness.

Washington state was able to gather data from a representative group meeting the recommendations provided by NPSO for all groups excluding leavers who dropped out of school. The state made a 3% gain since 2009–10 in connecting with leavers who identified as part of a minority ethic/racial group as well as in three of the four disability categories. Non-graduates continue to be slightly under-represented in the current response group. The lack of representativeness in the dropout category of the respondents and the sample is addressed in the Statewide Technical Assistance and Guidance/ Improvement Strategies section of this indicator and continued to be a priority for the state regarding improvement efforts related to this indicator.

**Selection Bias:** The post-school outcome data collection continues to show representativeness in areas of disability, gender, and ethnicity. The under-representativeness of youth in the category of dropout may be attributed to the fact that this group of youth, in general, is a difficult population to reach. Reaching this student population is a continued need. Washington improved representation of this group of responders 2008–09 (with a 1.38% improvement in 2011–12). Strategies that proved effective will continue to be implemented in 2011–12 and future data collections to ensure representation of all groups of leavers. In addition, targeted onsite and on-line trainings have increased and are being held at the ESDs, concentrated in areas where there is a high dropout rate.

**Overview of Findings**

As seen in Figure 1, Post-School Outcomes for 2011–2012 Leavers, baseline data for measures A, B, and C are as follows:

- **A =** 25.0% of respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.
- **B =** 47.6% of respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
- **C =** 65.7% of respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

To better understand the post-school outcomes of Washington’s youth, three additional analyses were conducted: an examination of the outcomes by (a) graduation status, (b) gender, and (c) disability category. Detailed analysis that includes an examination of outcomes by graduation status, gender, and disability category can be found in the OSPI Annual Performance Report.
Competitive Employment

There were 2,929 leavers reporting that they were employed within one year of leaving school. Of the 2,929 leavers, 677 or (23.11%) enrolled in higher education and worked at least 90 days. Approximately half of the students both enrolled in higher education and working were employed for at least 20 hours per week and making at least minimum wage.

Competitive Employment: The competitive employment numbers in Figure 1 illustrate the number of students who were (a) not enrolled in higher education, (b) employed for at least 90 days, (c) for at least 20 hours per week, (e) making at least minimum wage, and (f) working in an integrated employment setting. This represents 22.6% of all leavers.

Some Other Employment: There were 656 leavers employed for at least 90 days but did not meet all the criteria for competitive employment. Figures 2 and 3 show the percentage of these leavers and their reported average weekly hours and wages.
The state also showed a 3.2% increase in some other employment from the past fiscal year. However, the competitive employment rate decreased by 3.1% from 25.7% in 2010–11 to 22.6% in 2011–12.

**Postsecondary Education or Training**
As seen in Figure 1, Post-School Outcomes for 2011–2012 Leavers, 1,229 (25.0%) of Washington leavers were enrolled in higher education for at least one full term, an increase of 1.5%. The percent
of leavers enrolled in other postsecondary education or training increased slightly (less than half of a percent) since 2010–11.

Higher Education: Of the 1,229 leavers enrolled in Higher Education, 69% of them reported enrolling in a local community college. All of the students completed one term and approximately 58% of them were enrolled as full-time students.

Other Education or Training Programs: There were 238 leavers enrolled in some other education and training programs after high school. These included certificate programs, apprenticeships, Job Corps, short-term education, and adult/continuing education options. The students were enrolled either part-time or full-time and completed at least one term. These programs were in local community colleges, private trade schools, and were local and online.

**Conclusion and Next Steps**

Results show that (25.0%) of Washington leavers from 2011–12 were enrolled in higher education for at least one full term, an increase of 1.5%. The state also demonstrates a 3.2% increase in some other employment. The percent of leavers enrolled in other postsecondary education or training increased slightly since 2010–11. However, the competitive employment rate decreased by 3.1% from 25.7% in 2010–11 to 22.6% in 2011–12 and the some other education category remained within half a percentage point. The overall increase in higher education and some other employment offset the decrease in competitive employment resulting in an overall increase in engagement from 63.9% in 2010–11 to 65.75% in 2011–12. The state will continue to implement program improvement efforts to meet the rigorous targets set for measurements A, B, and C in 2011–12.
APPENDICES

Appendix A: Legislation

RCW 28A.155.220

High school transition services — Interagency agreements — Education data center to monitor certain outcomes — Annual report by superintendent of public instruction.

(1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must establish interagency agreements with the department of social and health services, the department of services for the blind, and any other state agency that provides high school transition services for special education students. Such interagency agreements shall not interfere with existing individualized education programs, nor override any individualized education program team's decision-making power. The purpose of the interagency agreements is to foster effective collaboration among the multiple agencies providing transition services for individualized education plan eligible special education students from the beginning of transition planning through age twenty-one, or through high school graduation, whichever occurs first. Interagency agreements are also intended to streamline services and programs, promote efficiencies, and establish a uniform focus on improved outcomes related to self-sufficiency. This subsection does not require transition services plan development in addition to what exists on June 12, 2014.

(2) To the extent that data is available through data-sharing agreements established by the education data center under RCW 43.41.400, the education data center must monitor the following outcomes for individualized education plan eligible special education students after high school graduation:

(a) The number of students who, within one year of high school graduation:
   (i) Enter integrated employment paid at the greater of minimum wage or competitive wage for the type of employment, with access to related employment and health benefits; or
   (ii) Enter a postsecondary education or training program focused on leading to integrated employment;

(b) The wages and number of hours worked per pay period;

(c) The impact of employment on any state and federal benefits for individuals with disabilities;

(d) Indicators of the types of settings in which students who previously received transition services primarily reside;

(e) Indicators of improved economic status and self-sufficiency;

(f) Data on those students for whom a postsecondary or integrated employment outcome does not occur within one year of high school graduation, including:
   (i) Information on the reasons that the desired outcome has not occurred;
   (ii) The number of months the student has not achieved the desired outcome; and
   (iii) The efforts made to ensure the student achieves the desired outcome.

(3) To the extent that the data elements in subsection (2) of this section are available to the education data center through data-sharing agreements, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must prepare an annual report using existing resources and submit the report to the legislature.

[2014 c 47 § 1.]
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Randy I. Dorn • State Superintendent
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Old Capitol Building • P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200