



# Post-School Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

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## Executive Summary

The education data center monitors outcomes for special education students after they leave high school. 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).

Results show:

- Percentage of leavers enrolled in higher education for at least one full term decreased by 1.3 percent.
- Percentage of leavers enrolled in other postsecondary education or training decreased by 1.5 percent.
- Percentage of leavers competitive employed increased by 5.8 percent.

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 analyzes data for secondary special education students who left high school during the 2012–13 school year. These data were collected by the state starting on June 1, 2014, 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 conducted a census to collect post-school outcome data from all 2012–13 school-year leavers who had received special education services one year after they left high school. Districts used administrative records to generate a list of all 7,165 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 2012–2013 Leavers Post-School Outcomes Phone Survey in the secure, online data collection system. Districts attempted to contact all 7,165 leavers using informal student exit survey information and student records. Districts recorded at least three attempts to contact each of their leavers

and reported any reason for being unable to conduct the survey with each former student or their family member (i.e., parent or grandparent).

## Response Rate

The overall response rate was 74.7 percent (see Table 1). This means that of the 7,165 students who left school last year, 25.3 percent are missing post-school outcome information ( $n = 1,811$ ). The staff contacting students reported that invalid contact information was a problem for 40 percent of the youth they were not able to reach. Attempts were made to contact the 834 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 174 students or family members were contacted but declined to be interviewed.

**Table 1: Response Rate Calculation**

Number of leavers in the state	7,165
- subtract the number of youth ineligible (those who had returned to school or were deceased)	-0
Number of youth contacted	5,528
Number of completed surveys	5,354
Response rate: $(5,354/7,165)*100$	74.7%

An analysis of the data was conducted to determine patterns of missing information (e.g., did missing data vary across educational service districts and disability categories, etc.). Of the 1,811 youth not responding to the survey, the majority were white (57 percent), males (67 percent), with a specific learning disability (57 percent) or other health impairment (26 percent). 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 2012–13 (See Table 2).

**Table 2: NPSO Response Calculator: Representativeness**

	Overall	LD	ED	MR	AO	Female	Minority	ELL	Dropout
<b>Target Leaver Totals</b>	7,165	3,658	336	380	2,791	2,519	1,388	0	1,722
<b>Response Totals</b>	5,354	2,674	233	305	2,142	1,922	966	0	1,034
<b>Target Leaver Representation</b>		51.0%	4.7%	5.3%	38.9%	35.2%	19.3%	0.0%	24.0%
<b>Respondent Representation</b>		49.9%	4.4%	5.7%	40.0%	35.9%	18.0%	0.0%	19.3%
<b>Difference</b>		-1.1%	-0.3%	0.4%	1.1%	0.7%	-1.3%	0.0%	<b>-4.7%</b>

Notes on Table 2 from the National Post-School Outcomes Center: 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 Westat/NPSO paper Post-School Outcomes: Response Rates and Non-response Bias, found on the NPSO website at <http://www.psocenter.org/collecting.html>. LD = Specific Learning Disability, ED = Emotionally/Behaviorally Disabled; MR = Intellectual Disability; AO = All Other; ELL = English Language Learners. Data were not disaggregated by ELL leavers.

According to the NPSO Response Calculator, differences between the Respondent Group and the Target Leaver Group of  $\pm 3$  percent are important. Negative differences indicate an under-representativeness of the group and positive differences indicate over-representativeness. In the Response Calculator, **red** is used to indicate a difference exceeding the  $\pm 3$  percent interval.

As shown in Table 2, 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 has made significant gains in connecting with leavers who identified as part of a minority ethnic/racial group as well as in all four of the disability categories (i.e., LD, ED, MR, and AO). Non-graduates continue to be 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 since 2008–09 (with a 1.89 percent improvement in 2012–13). Strategies that proved effective will continue to be

implemented in future data collections to ensure representation of all groups of leavers. In addition, targeted onsite and online 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, baseline data for the three measures A, B, and C are as follows:

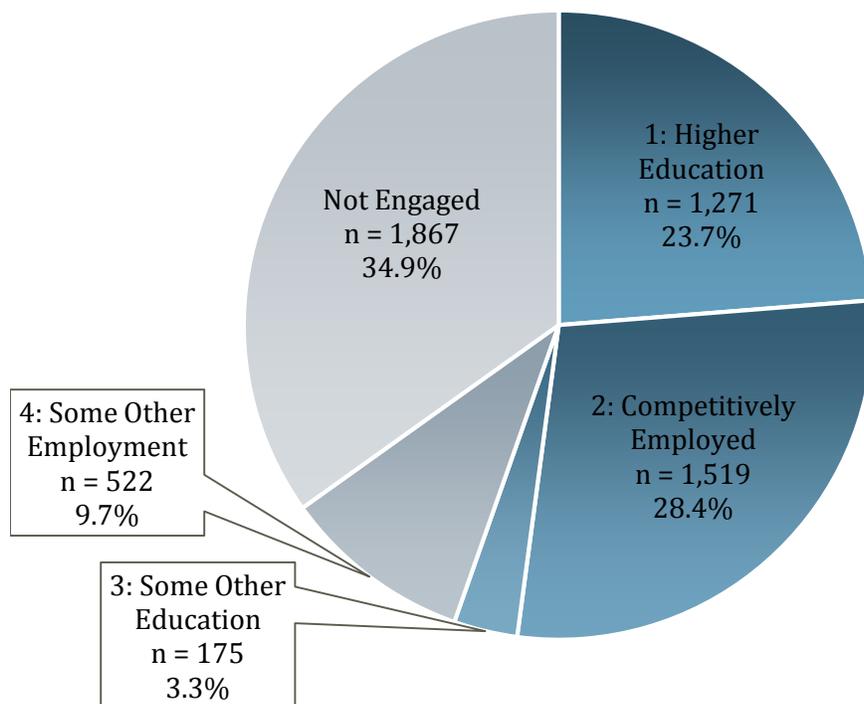
A = 23.7 percent of respondent leavers were enrolled in (1) higher education within one year of leaving high school.

B = 52.1 percent of respondent leavers were enrolled in (1) higher education or (2) competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.

C = 65.1 percent of respondent leavers were enrolled in (1) higher education or in (4) some other postsecondary education or training program; or (2) competitively employed or in (3) 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.

**Figure 1: Post-School Outcomes for 2012–13 Leavers**



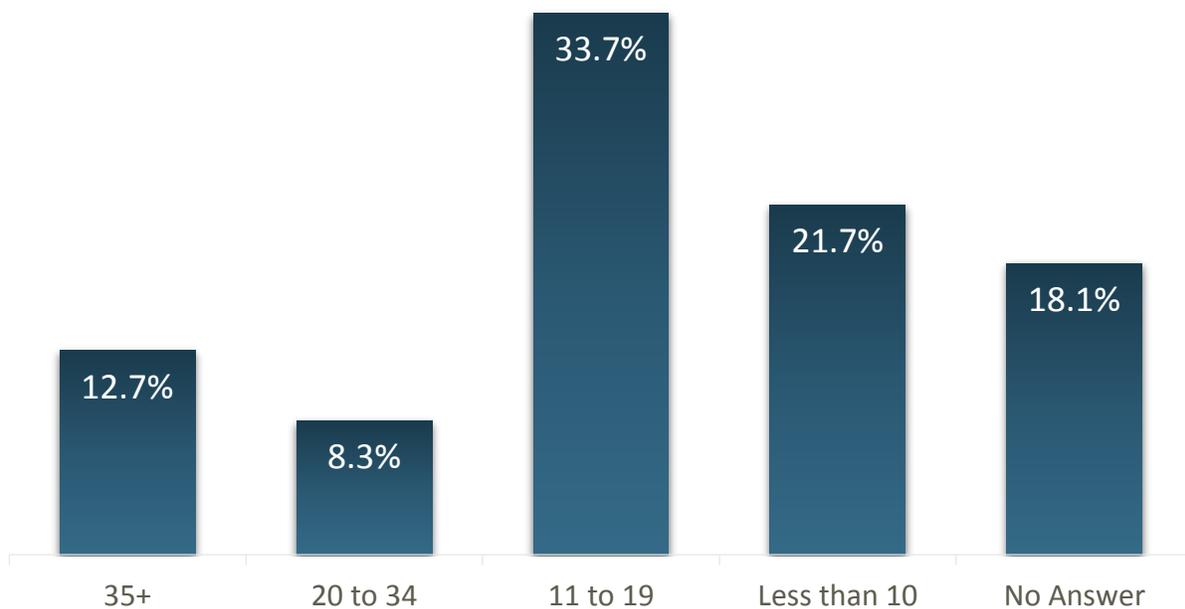
## Employment

There were 3,320 leavers reporting that they were employed within one year of leaving school. Of the 3,320 leavers, 650 or 19.6 percent enrolled in higher education and worked at least 90 days. Approximately 75.0 percent 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.

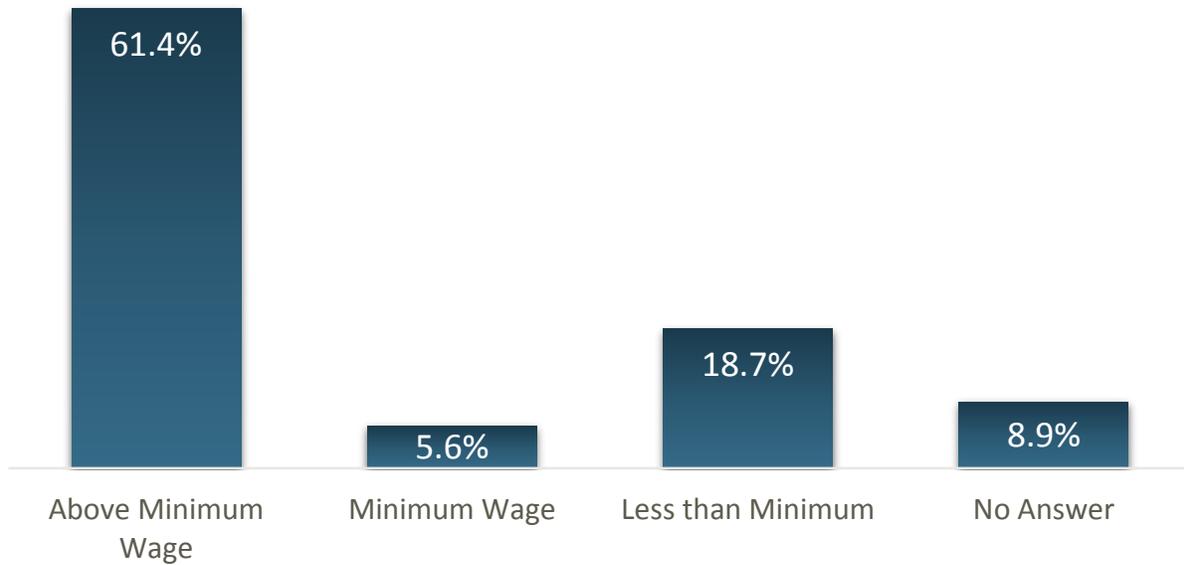
**Competitive Employment:** The competitive employment numbers in Figure 1 illustrate the number of students who were (a) not enrolled in higher education, (b) employed for at least 90 days, (c) for at least 20 hours per week, (d) making at least minimum wage, and (e) working in an integrated employment setting. This represents 28.4 percent of all leavers.

**Some Other Employment:** There were 522 leavers employed for at least 90 days but did not meet all of the criteria for competitive employment. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the percentage of these leavers and their reported average weekly hours and wages.

**Figure 2: Some Other Employment Average Hours per Week**



**Figure 3: Some Other Employment Average Wages per Hour**



The state showed a 3.6 percent decrease in some other employment from the past fiscal year. However, the competitive employment rate increased by 5.8 percent from 22.6 percent in 2011–12 to 28.4 percent in 2012–13.

### **Postsecondary Education or Training**

As seen in Figure 1, Post-School Outcomes for 2012–13 Leavers, 1,271 (23.7 percent) of Washington leavers were enrolled in higher education for at least one full term, a decrease of 1.3 percent. The percent of leavers enrolled in other postsecondary education or training decreased by 1.5 percent.

**Higher Education:** Of the 1,271 leavers enrolled in Higher Education, 67.0 percent of them reported enrolling in a community college while an additional 17.0 percent enrolled in a vocational/ technical college. All of the students completed one term and approximately 71.0 percent of them were enrolled as full-time students.

**Other Education or Training Programs:** There were 175 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 mostly in-state community colleges, private trade schools, as well as a few online programs.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

Results show that 23.7 percent of Washington leavers from 2012–13 were enrolled in higher education for at least one full term. This is a decrease of 1.3 percent from last year. The percent of leavers enrolled in other postsecondary education or training also decreased 1.5 percent since 2011–12. However, the competitive employment rate increased by 5.8 percent from 22.6 percent in 2011–12 to 28.4 percent in 2012–13. This was coupled with a 3.6 percent decrease in some other employment.

The overall increase in competitive employment offset decreases in all other areas resulting in consistent engagement for the past two years (65.7 percent in 2011–12 and 65.1 percent in 2012–13). The state will continue to implement program improvement efforts to meet the rigorous targets set in 2012–13 for measurements:

- A: leavers enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.
- B: leavers enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
- C: leavers 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.

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