



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Post-School Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

2017

Authorizing legislation: RCW 28A.155.220

(<http://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.155.220>)

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Executive Summary

The Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS) reports on 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) that aligns with RCW 28A.155.220.

Results from 2014–15 show:

- Percentage enrolled in higher education for at least one full term decreased by 0.2 percentage points.
- Percentage enrolled in other postsecondary education or training increased by 0.1 percentage point.
- Percentage competitively employed increased by 2.5 percentage points.
- Percentage engaged in some other employment increased by 0.6 percentage points.

Some of the data the legislature asks for are not collected by OSPI. These data include:

- How employment affects state and federal benefits for individuals with disabilities.
- Information about the types of places former students are living.
- Indicators of improved economic status and self-sufficiency.
- Information about young people who continue their education or get a job more than one year after leaving school.

Introduction

This report analyzes data for secondary students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) who left high school during the 2014–15 school year. These data were collected by the state starting on June 1, 2016 from all 253 districts with high schools (i.e., 251 districts and two state schools).

Definitions

Competitive employment: A youth who has worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others without disabilities 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 who 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 who 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).

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).

Engagement: A youth meeting above criteria for competitive employment, higher education, some other employment, or other postsecondary education or training.

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, called the Leavers Post School Outcomes Phone Survey, to collect post-school outcome data from all 2014–15 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 7,609 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 CCTS to conduct and record results in the secure, online data collection system. The districts attempted to contact all 7,609 leavers using 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 (e.g., parent or grandparent).

Response Rate

The overall response rate was 80.9 percent (n=6,154) (see Table 1). This means that of the 7,609 students who left school last year, 19.1 percent are missing post-school outcome information (n = 1,455). The staff contacting students reported that invalid contact information was the reason they were unable to reach 36 percent of the youth. Attempts were made to contact the 714 leavers whose numbers were either disconnected, incorrect, not answered, or a message was left but there was no return call to complete the survey. An additional 139 students or family members were contacted but declined to be interviewed.

Table 1: Response Rate Calculation

| | |
|---|--------|
| Number of leavers in the state | 7,621 |
| - subtract the number of youth ineligible (those who had returned to school or were deceased) | -12 |
| Number of eligible leavers (7,621-12) | 7,609 |
| - subtract the number of leavers with missing data (disconnected or incorrect numbers, no answer, or no returned call (-1,239), "other" selected (-72), declined to be interviewed (-139), incomplete surveys (-5)) | -1,455 |
| Number of completed surveys ("respondents") | 6,154 |
| Response rate: (6,154/7,609)*100 | 80.9% |

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). Of the 1,455 youth not responding to the survey, the majority were white (53.7 percent), males (64.9 percent), had a specific learning disability (51.6 percent) or had another health impairment (25.4 percent). Most leavers who did not respond to the survey reside in the western or central part of the state.

Representativeness

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 to, or different from, the total population of young adults with an IEP in Washington state who exited school in 2014–15 (See Table 2).

Table 2: NPSO Response Calculator: Representativeness

| | Overall | LD | ED | ID | AO | Female | Minority | EL | Dropout |
|-------------------------------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|------|---------------|
| Target Leaver Totals | 7,609 | 3,823 | 411 | 393 | 2,982 | 2,755 | 3,111 | 0 | 1,581 |
| Response Totals | 6,154 | 3,072 | 295 | 330 | 2,457 | 2,245 | 2,439 | 0 | 1,057 |
| Target Leaver Representation | | 50.24% | 5.40% | 5.16% | 39.19% | 36.21% | 40.89% | 0.0% | 20.78% |
| Respondent Representation | | 49.92% | 4.79% | 5.36% | 39.93% | 36.48% | 39.63% | 0.0% | 17.18% |
| Difference | | -0.32% | -0.61% | +0.20% | +0.74% | +0.27% | -1.26% | 0.0% | -3.60% |

Notes on Table 2 from the National Post-School Outcomes Center:

Positive difference indicates overrepresentation; negative difference indicates underrepresentation. 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.](#)

LD = Specific Learning Disability, ED = Emotional/Behavioral Disability; ID = Intellectual Disability; AO = All Other; EL = English Learners. Data were not disaggregated by EL leavers.

According to the NPSO Response Calculator, differences between the Respondent Group and the Target Leaver Group of ± 3 percent are relevant. 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 ± 3 percent interval.

As shown in Table 2, Washington was able to gather data from a representative group of students leaving school for key demographic factors, including disability category, gender and race/ethnicity. Differences slightly exceeded the ± 3 percent interval (-3.6%); however, for students who dropped out of school. This indicates that leavers who dropped out were under-represented in this survey, as compared to the total population of leavers in the state. As such, this survey cannot be assumed to be representative of the outcomes of students who dropped out of school.

Washington 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., Specific Learning Disability, Emotional/Behavioral Disability, Intellectual Disability, and All Other). The lack of representativeness in the dropout category of the respondents and continues 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 continuing need. Strategies that proved effective will continue to be implemented in future data collections to ensure representation of all groups of leavers. In addition, targeted on-site and online trainings have increased and are being held at the Educational Service Districts (ESDs), concentrated in areas where there is a high dropout rate.

Overview of Findings:

As seen in Figure 1, Post-School Outcomes for the 2014–15 Leavers, baseline data for the three measures A, B, and C are as follows:

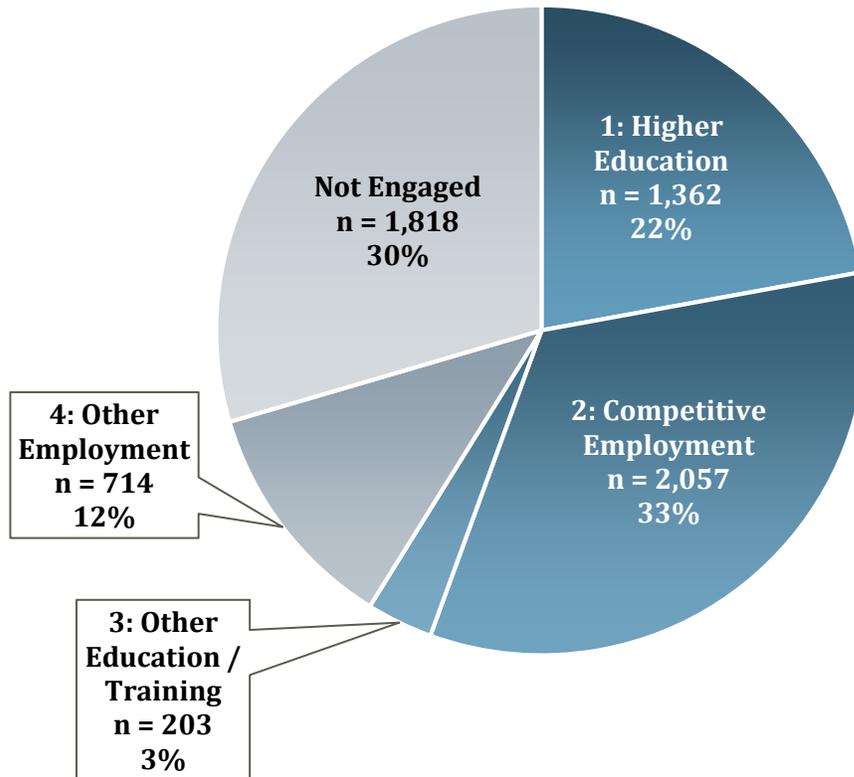
A = 22.1 percent of respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school

B = 55.5 percent of respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.

C = 70.4 percent 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](#).

Figure 1: Post-School Outcomes for 2014–15 Leavers



Employment

There were 4,236 respondents reporting that they were employed within one year of leaving school. Of these 4,236 respondents, 776 or 18.3 percent were enrolled in higher education and worked at least 90 days. Of the students both enrolled in higher education and working, 70.4 percent were employed for at least 20 hours per week and making at least minimum wage.

Competitive Employment: The competitive employment numbers in Figure 1 show 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 33.4 percent of respondents.

Some Other Employment: There were 714 respondents employed for at least 90 days but who did not meet all of the above criteria for competitive employment. Figures 2 and 3 show the percentage of these respondents and their reported average weekly hours and wages.

Figure 2. Some Other Employment Average Hours per week

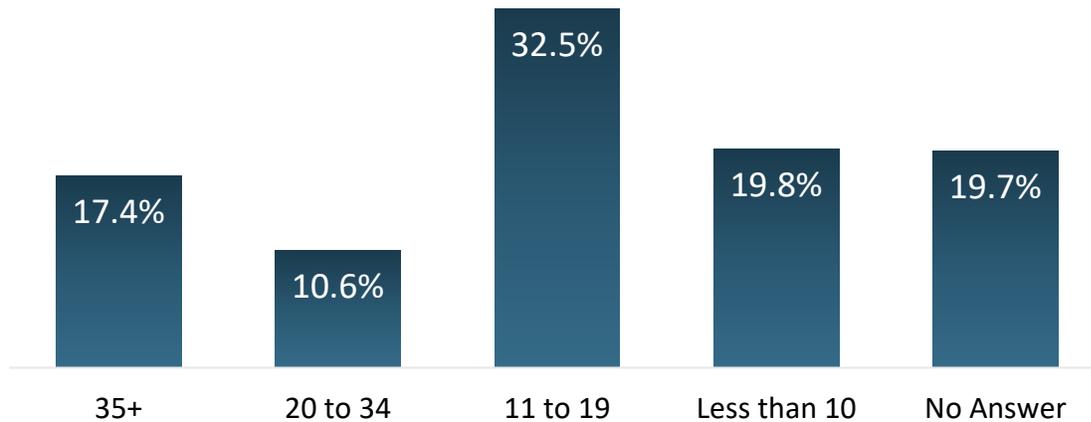
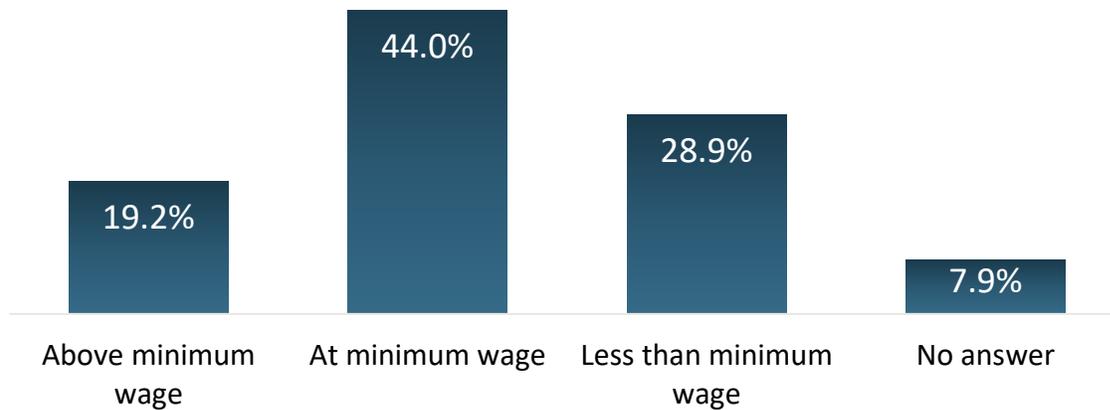


Figure 3. Some Other Employment Average Wages per Hour



The state showed an increase of 0.6 percentage points in some other employment from the past year. The competitive employment rate increased by 2.5 percentage points from 30.9 percent in 2013–14 to 33.4 percent in 2014–15.

Postsecondary Education or Training

As seen in Figure 1, Post-School Outcomes for 2014–15 leavers, 1,362 (22.1 percent) of Washington respondents were enrolled in higher education for at least one full term, a decrease of 0.2 percentage points. The percent of respondents enrolled in other postsecondary education or training increased by 0.1 percentage points.

Higher Education: Of the 1,362 respondents enrolled in Higher Education, 66.0 percent of them reported enrolling in a community college while an additional 14.9 percent enrolled in a vocational/ technical college. All of the students completed one term and approximately 73.3 percent of them were enrolled as full-time students.

Other Education or Training Programs: There were 203 respondents 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, and a few online programs.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The percent of respondents enrolled in higher education decreased by 0.2 percentage points. There was a small increase in the percent who enrolled in other postsecondary education or training.

Decreases were balanced by an increase of 2.5 percentage points in competitive employment. There was also an increase of 0.6 percentage points in other employment. This resulted in an increase in engagement over the past two years (67.4 percent in 2013–14 and 70.5 percent in 2014–15).

Overall engagement targets set by the state performance plan stakeholder group in 2014–15 were met (see Table 3), with the exception of target 14-A (percent enrolled in higher education). We continue to work towards increasing overall engagement rates, as well as specifically focusing on increasing enrollment in higher education.

Table 3: 2016 Performance Indicators: Target and Actual

| Indicator | Target | Actual |
|--|--------|--------|
| 14-A: Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school | 25.90% | 22.1% |
| 14-B: Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school | 49.55% | 55.5% |
| 14-C: Enrolled in higher education or some other postsecondary education training program or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school | 67.33% | 70.5% |

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