



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Post-School Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

2016

Authorizing legislation: RCW 28A.155.220

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Executive Summary

The education data center reports on outcomes for special education students after they leave high school.

Results from 2013–14 show:

- Percentage enrolled in higher education for at least one full term decreased by 1.4 percent.
- Percentage enrolled in other postsecondary education or training decreased by 0.1 percent.
- Percentage competitively employed increased by 2.5 percent.
- Percentage engaged in some other employment increased by 1.3 percent.

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

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

Introduction

This report analyzes data for secondary special education students who left high school during the 2013–14 school year. These data were collected by the state starting on June 1, 2015, from all 233 districts with high schools: 230 districts, two state schools, and one educational service agency (a collection of 27 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 2013–14 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 7,274 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 2013–2014 Leavers Post School Outcomes Phone Survey in the secure, online data collection system. The districts attempted to contact all 7,274 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 78.6 percent (see Table 1). This means that of the 7,274 students who left school last year, 21.4 percent are missing post-school outcome information ($n = 1,557$). The staff contacting students reported that invalid contact information was a problem for 34 percent of the youth they were not able to reach. Attempts were made to contact the 1,301 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 175 students or family members were contacted but declined to be interviewed.

Table 1: Response Rate Calculation

Number of leavers in the state	7,274
- subtract the number of youth ineligible (those who had returned to school or were deceased) (7,274 - 9)	-9
- subtract the number of leavers with missing data (disconnected or incorrect numbers, no answer, or no returned call (-1,301), "other" selected (-72),	-1,382
Number of youth contacted (7265 - 1,382)	5,892
- subtract leavers or families that were contacted but declined to be interviewed	-175
Number of completed surveys (7265 - 175)	5,708
Response rate: $(5,708/7,265)*100$	78.6%

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 1,548 youth not responding to the survey, the majority were white (54 percent), males (66 percent), with a specific learning disability (55 percent) or other health impairment (25 percent). Most leavers who did not respond to the survey reside in the western or central part of the state.

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 2013–14 (See Table 2).

Table 2: NPSO Response Calculator: Representativeness

	Overall	LD	ED	ID	AO	Female	Minority	ELL	Dropout
Target Leaver Totals	7,265	3,653	320	394	2,898	2,565	1,498	0	1,492
Response Totals	5,708	2,805	230	328	2,345	2,040	1,126	0	985
Target Leaver Representation		50.28%	4.40%	5.42%	39.89%	35.31%	20.62%	0.0%	20.54%
Respondent Representation		49.14%	4.03%	5.75%	41.08%	35.74%	19.73%	0.0%	17.26%
Difference		-1.14%	-0.38%	0.32%	1.19%	0.43%	-0.89%	0.0%	-3.28%

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.](#)

LD = Specific Learning Disability, ED = Emotionally/Behaviorally Disabled; ID = 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 ± 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 ± 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, ID, 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 continuing need. Washington improved representation of this group of responders since 2008–09 (with a 1.45 percent improvement in 2013–14). 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 2013–14 State Data, baseline data for the three measures A, B, and C are as follows:

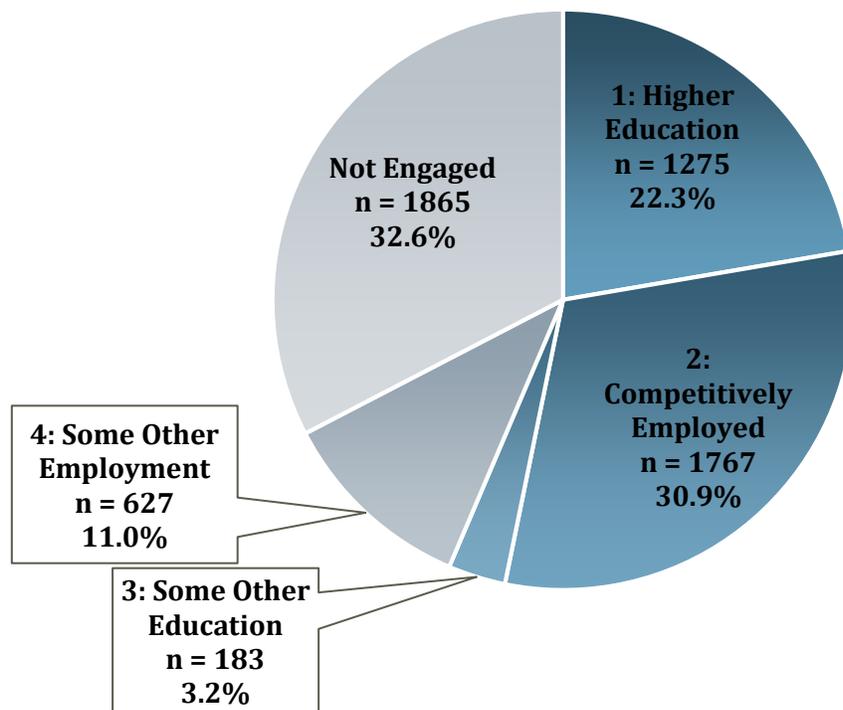
A = 22.3 percent of respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school

B = 53.2 percent of respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.

C = 67.4 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 2013–14 Leavers



Employment

There were 3,773 leavers reporting that they were employed within one year of leaving school. Of the 3,773 leavers, 638 or 16.9 percent enrolled in higher education and worked at least 90 days. Approximately 70 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 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 30.9 percent of all leavers.

Some Other Employment: There were 627 leavers employed for at least 90 days but did not meet all of the criteria for competitive employment. Figures 2 and 3 show the percentage of these leavers and their reported average weekly hours and wages.

Figure 2. Some Other Employment Average Hours per week

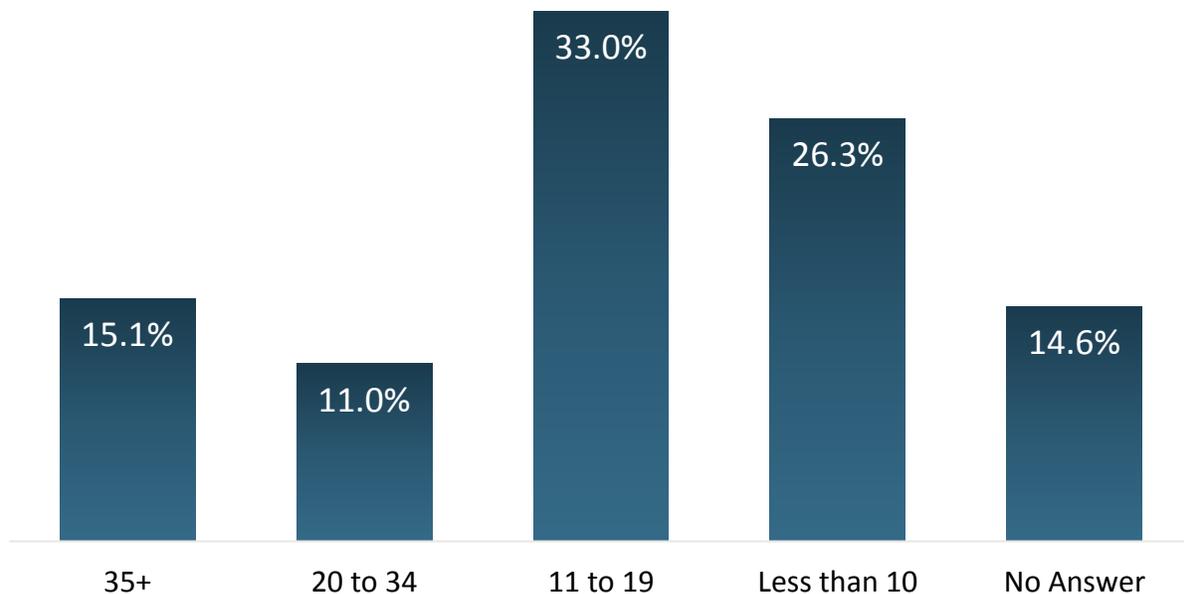
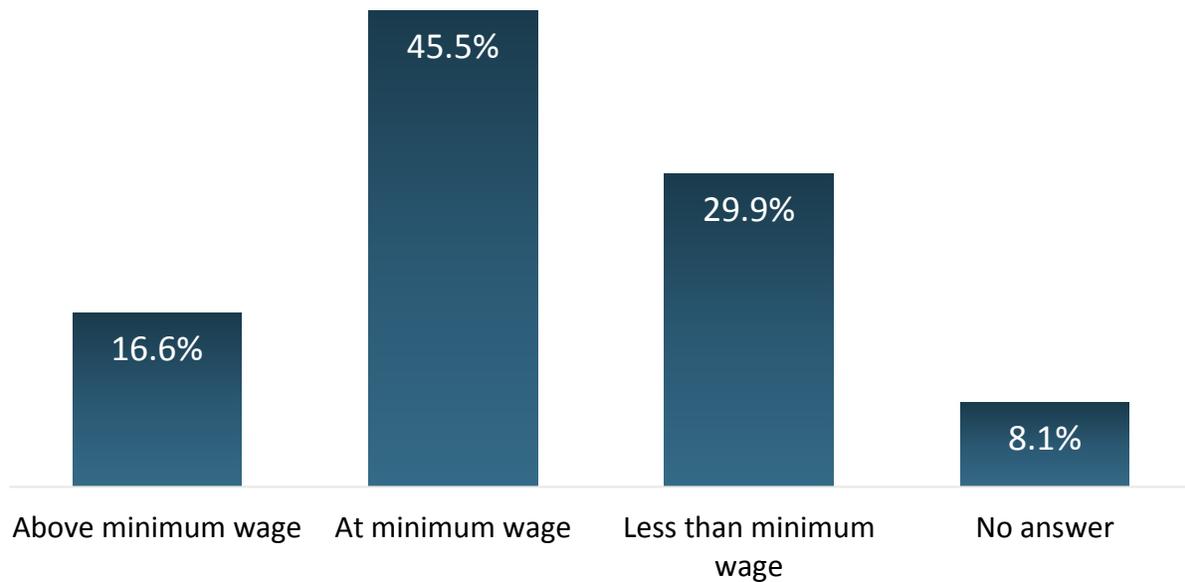


Figure 3. Some Other Employment Average Wages per Hour



The state showed a 1.3 percent increase in some other employment from the past year. The competitive employment rate increased by 2.5 percent from 28.4 percent in 2012–13 to 30.9 percent in 2013–14.

Postsecondary Education or Training

As seen in Figure 1, Post-School Outcomes for 2013–2014 Leavers, 1,275 (22.3 percent) of Washington leavers were enrolled in higher education for at least one full term, a decrease of 1.4 percent. The percent of leavers enrolled in other postsecondary education or training decreased by 0.1 percent.

Higher Education: Of the 1,275 leavers enrolled in Higher Education, 66 percent of them reported enrolling in a community college while an additional 15 percent enrolled in a vocational/ technical college. All of the students completed one term and approximately 71 percent of them were enrolled as full-time students.

Other Education or Training Programs: There were 183 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

The percent of leavers enrolled in higher education decreased 1.4 percent. There was also a small decrease in the percent who enrolled in other postsecondary education or training.

Decreases were balanced by a 2.5 percent increase in competitive employment. There was also a 1.3 percent increase in other employment. This resulted in consistent engagement for the past two years (65.1 percent in 2012–13 and 67.4 percent in 2013–14).

OSPI will continue to improve the program. Improvements will help us meet the target set by the state performance plan stakeholder group in 2013–14.

This target is to increase the percent of students who, within one year of leaving school, are either:

- Enrolled in higher education or other postsecondary training, or
- Employed, competitively or otherwise.

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