

## Post School Outcomes 2011 Follow Up Interviews with Special Education Students One Year Out



States are required to report on post school education and employment outcomes for students leaving school on an IEP on the Annual Performance Reports for the State Performance Plan. Oregon districts reported 4,435 youth ages 14 to 21 left special education during the 2009-2010 school year that did not return for services the following year. Of these, 2,909 were included in the sample selected for a follow-up interview one year after leaving using a stratified sample process. Interviews were completed in 2011 with 1,989 youth or their family members for a response rate of 71%. Within one year of leaving school:

1. 503 respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education. (25.3%)
2. 579 respondent leavers were engaged in competitive employment (and not counted in 1 above). (28.9%)
3. 127 respondent leavers were enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training (and not counted in 1 or 2 above). (6.4%)
4. 143 respondent leavers were engaged in some other employment (and not counted in 1, 2, or 3 above). (7.2%)
5. 651 were not in any of the above groups – not engaged by the Federal definition.

Federal reporting requires the number and percents for three measurements:

- A. 25.3% = 503 youth enrolled in higher education at least 1 term divided by the 1,989 of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school
- B. 54.2% = 1,077 youth enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school divided by the 1,989 of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school
- C. 67.0% = 1,347 youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment divided by the 1,989 of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school

Measureable and rigorous targets have been established for the state and districts based on the three measurements. For 2011 follow up interviews, the measurable and rigorous state targets are A = 25%, B=51%, and C= 67%. For the districts, C, the overall engagement rate, is the key focus, as either higher education or competitive employment outcomes can be influenced strongly by the economy or family situation, however the overall 'engagement' during that first year out of school is a goal for the districts preparation of students.

The following sections summarize the demographics of the students, the procedures used in collecting the data, and results for the measurements. For Federal reporting requirements, some categories are collapsed (i.e. all non-white students are summarized into a 'minority' category). However, for state reporting, if the number of responses is sufficient to protect confidentiality, data from more subgroups are provided for review.

### **What do these numbers mean? Are they representative?**

Since not all of the 4,435 students leaving were contacted for interviews, the group that was interviewed is compared against the actual distribution of leavers in four areas: gender, primary disability, ethnicity, and method of leaving. Oregon reported that the sampled group of interviewed students matched the population of all leavers in all comparison areas except the method of exit. While 348 students who had dropped out of school were interviewed, the dropout group was 6% less than the actual population (18% rather than 24%). A  $\pm$  3% difference is considered representative. Students who drop out often leave without providing contact information, and may not choose to complete the follow-up interview when contacted in a larger proportion than other groups. Districts and the state continue to work on strategies to reach as many of these students as they can each year for the follow up interview. For all other comparison groups, the results obtained from the interviewed sample are representative, and can be used to describe the statewide population.

## Demographics and procedure

Federally identified demographic variables Of the 1,989 student interviews completed in 2011, 67% were male students, and 33% were female, the same percentages found in the overall population of leavers in 2009-2010. The number of interviews completed by students who dropped out (18%) was balanced by an 8% over representation of students leaving with a regular diploma (58%). Students finishing with a modified diploma made up 15% of the students interviewed and the population of leavers. Students exiting at maximum age, or receiving an alternate certificate made up 10% of the respondents and the population. The ethnic participation included 3% Asian, 4% Black, 5% Native American, 12% Hispanic, and 78% Caucasian. The participation for the disability groups included 3% low incidence disabilities, 3% communication disorders, 9% Emotional Disturbance, 8% each Intellectual Disabilities Autism, 17% students identified as Other Health Impaired, and 52% with Specific Learning Disabilities. Both of these distributions were very similar to the population of leavers.

Other demographic characteristics of the population of leavers. The follow-up interview process includes students aged 14-21 on the special education Child Count in the year before they exit. The 2009-10 leavers included 9% who were 14-16 on that Child Count, 71% who were 17-18, and 20% who were 19-21. The grade level for the interviewed students showed 12% left during grades 8-11, where as 88% had attended one or more years of 12<sup>th</sup> grade. At the time of exit, 923% were in public school, the remainder in private or charter schools, were district transfers, or home schooled with an IEP. The placement category reported included 69% in regular class 80% or more, 15% in a regular class 40-79% of their time, 9% in a regular class less than 40%, and the other 7% were homebound, in a separate or private school, or correction facility.

Procedures Districts were asked to make at least six attempts to complete the interview. However, 68% were completed in one or two attempts, an additional 22% in three or four attempts. Some districts kept trying, and made nine or more attempts to complete interviews. Districts could select the staff to make the calls and complete the interviews: statewide 39% were completed by teachers/specialists, 21% by Educational assistants or Paraprofessionals, 13% by Youth Transition Program personnel (YTP), 13% by clerical staff, 10% by Administrators and 3% by other staff. Interviews could be completed with the former students (50%) with a family member (41%) or other person who knew the situation for the student (7%). Districts have the option of completing an exit interview with students during their last year before exiting, asking about further education and employment plans: 991 of the 1989 students (50%) completed the exit interview.

Districts with 15 or fewer leavers were required to interview all their exited students. Districts with more than 15 leavers were provided with 15 students per building or program to interview. The following table presents information on the districts by size of leaver group.

District Size Information	District size				Total
	<i>Very Small</i>	<i>Small</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Large</i>	
<i>Leavers per district</i>	1-4	5-15	16-50	51-350	
<i>Number of districts</i>	32	41	48	18	139
<i>Total leavers</i>	112	438	1456	2460	4436
<i>Selected for interviews</i>	110	422	987	1260	2779
<i>Number interviewed</i>	73	259	758	899	1989
<i>Response rate</i>	66%	61%	77%	71%	72%
<i>Engagement Rate</i>	74%	71%	65%	68%	68%

## **What have we learned about Oregon's special education students one year after leaving?**

The current Measurement Table for this indicator looks first at higher education, then competitive employment, and finally other training or employment outcomes. Respondents are included in the highest category for which their experiences in the 12 months after leaving high school fit. If their education includes a 2 or 4 year higher education program with attendance of at least one complete term, they are not separately included in the competitive employment group even if they meet the definition of being competitively employed.

Higher Education Of the 1989 students, 503 were enrolled on a full- or part-time basis in a community college (two-year program), or college/university (four- or more year program) for at least one complete term, at any time in the year since leaving high school. This has been broken down by the size of the district providing services. For those districts with 1-4 total leavers, 33% were in this group. For districts with 5-15 leavers, 25% went on to higher education. For districts with 16-50 leavers, 24% were in the higher education group, and for the largest districts with 50-350 leavers, 26% were reported in the higher education group.

Competitive Employment Of the 1486 students who were not in the higher education group, 574 met the federal definition of competitive employment: 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 cumulative days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military service. For those districts with 1-4 total leavers, 26% were in this group. For districts with 5-15 leavers, 36% were competitively employed. For both districts with 16-50 leavers and for district with 51 to 350 leavers, 28% were competitively employed.

While size of the leaver group for a district seems to have an effect on the selection of activity after leaving school, when the two measurements above are combined the overall participation rate levels out, with the very small groups reaching 59% involvement in higher education or competitive employment, the small districts reaching 60%, the medium districts at 62% and the large districts reaching 54% involvement. The actual answers to the individual questions are provided below.

The federal outcome definitions also include some other education or training and some other employment. Of the 912 students who were not in higher education or competitively employed, 270 were included in this measurement. The size of the district did not seem to matter as much for this outcome, with 15% of students in very small districts, 11% of small, 14% or medium size and large districts.

Not Engaged Federal reporting requirements do not include students who fail to qualify for the three outcome measurements. However the factors describing these 642 students are of great interest to the districts and to the state. For the 253 that completed exit interviews before they left high school, 55 included both education and employment in their student goals. An additional 72 mentioned going on to post secondary education, 88 to a job, and 38 were unsure of their plans.

Data from the 36 districts with one to four students exiting must be looked at with caution, due to the very small number of students for each district. However, for the very small districts, the overall engagement rate increased from 52% in 2010 to 74% in 2011, and the response rate of compete interviews increased from 46%% to 66%. The closer the districts come to interviewing 100% of their leavers, the more representative the results will be.

Three additional data pages are provided, summarizing the response and engagement rates for the four groups based on number of exited special education students ages 14-21. Additional details are provided by number and percent for different methods of exit, primary disability classifications, and race/ethnic groups. Results showing cell sizes less than three have been noted. These results are by individual question, not summed questions used for Federal definitions.

The following two tables present the responses to questions on the follow up survey for all students interview (1989) and the non-engaged students (642) by district size group. Not all students answered all questions.

All 1989 interviews	Percent answering question with Yes				
	Very small	Small	Medium	Large	All
Attend school during the 12 months? (% yes)	48%	43%	41%	47%	44%
Attend a 2-4 year college or university?	34%	28%	28%	30%	29%
Voc/tech school, mission, short term training	10%	10%	8%	9%	9%
High School completion document	1%	4%	5%	6%	5%
Completed entire term or semester?	44%	34%	32%	37%	35%
Ever worked during the 12 months?	67%	75%	58%	59%	61%
Competitive setting or military?	52%	53%	43%	48%	47%
Self employed or Family business	14%	14%	8%	5%	8%
Sheltered or Supported employment	1%	4%	5%	4%	5%
No answer, skipped or missing	33%	30%	43%	43%	41%
Work 90 cumulative days?	56%	58%	49%	50%	51%
Work at least half time?	48%	57%	44%	46%	47%
Receive same benefits as coworkers?	43%	49%	36%	40%	40%
Earn at least minimum wage?	59%	65%	51%	52%	54%
Why haven't you worked since high school?					
Don't want or need to work	11%	2%	4%	4%	4%
Baby/family	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Disability	1%	4%	5%	3%	4%
No drivers license	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Haven't found job	7%	6%	11%	14%	12%
Incarceration	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
No answer or other					
Have a driver's license? Learners permit?	56% + 3%	54% +8%	41% +6%	35% +8%	41% +7%
Where are you currently living?					
Family	53%	62%	67%	68%	66%
Campus or military base	4%	6%	4%	5%	5%
Independently or with friend	25%	21%	16%	18%	18%
Foster home, group home	0%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Homeless/ jail	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%
No answer/ other	18%	8%	9%	6%	8%

The following information reports on students who did not meet Federal definition of engagement: working at least half time for at least minimum wage for at least 90 cumulative days, or completing at least one term or semester of specific training or education. A total of 642 students were in this group, however not all students answered all questions.

	Percent answering question with Yes				
	Very small	Small	Medium	Large	All
Number of students	19	74	263	286	642
Attend school during the 12 months? (% yes)	5%	22%	17%	18%	18%
Attend a 2-4 year college or university?	0%	4%	7%	6%	6%
Voc/tech school, mission, short term training	0%	11%	4%	5%	5%
High School completion document	5%	4%	6%	5%	5%
Ever worked during the 12 months?	21%	41%	18%	19%	21%
Competitive setting or military?	16%	22%	11%	11%	12%
Self employed or Family business	5%	11%	4%	4%	5%
Sheltered or Supported employment	0%	0%	2%	2%	1%
Work at least half time?	0%	8%	7%	9%	8%
Receive same benefits as coworkers?	0%	22%	8%	9%	10%
Earn at least minimum wage?	0%	28%	14%	13%	15%
Why haven't you worked since high school?					
Don't want or need to work	11%	4%	8%	8%	8%
Baby/family	11%	10%	8%	6%	7%
No drivers license	5%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Haven't found job	21%	15%	23%	33%	27%
Incarceration	0%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Have a driver's license? Learners permit?	16% + 5%	32% + 4%	16% + 7%	14% +6%	17% +6%
Where are you currently living?					
Family	42%	57%	68%	69%	67%
Independently or with friend	16%	14%	10%	13%	12%
Foster home, group home	0%	4%	2%	2%	2%
Homeless/ jail	0%	5%	4%	3%	3%