

# Post School Outcomes 2014 Follow Up Interviews with Special Education Students One Year Out



States are required to annually report post school education and employment outcomes for students who are on an IEP when leaving school. Oregon districts reported 4,480 youth ages 14 to 21 left special education during the 2012-13 school year who did not return for services the following year. Of these, 2,851 were selected for a follow-up interview one year after leaving (using a stratified sample process). In 2014, interviews were completed with 2,255 youth (or family members) for a **response rate of 79%**.

Within one year of leaving school:

1. 541 respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education. (24%)
2. 675 respondent leavers were engaged in competitive employment (and not counted in 1 above). (30%)
3. 132 respondent leavers were enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training (and not counted in 1 or 2 above). (6%)
4. 224 respondent leavers were engaged in some other employment (and not counted in 1, 2, or 3 above). (10%)
5. 683 were not counted in any of the above outcome groups (30%) and are considered 'not engaged'

Federal reporting requires that the number and percent for three measurements be submitted annually:

- A.  $23.99\% = 541$  youth enrolled in higher education at least one term divided by the 2,255 of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school
- B.  $53.9\% = 1,216$  youth enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school divided by the 2,255 respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school
- C.  $69.71\% = 1,572$  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 2,255 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 2014 follow up interviews, the state targets are A = 27%, B=53%, and C= 69%. The last of these, outcome C shows the overall percentage of students engaged in some form of additional training for at least one term/semester, and/or working for at least 90 days. Whereas variation in the education outcome group or the employment outcome group can be reflective of economic influences, the overall 'engagement' during that first year out of school serves districts as a measure of the success students are having the first year after leaving school.

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 4,480 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 416 students who had dropped out of school were interviewed, the dropout group was 7.9% less than the actual population (18.4% rather than 26.3%). A ± 3% difference or less 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 are working with the National Post School Outcome Center to learn strategies to involve these hard-to-find students in the Post School Outcome Collection. 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 2,255 student interviews completed in 2014, 66% were male students, and 34% were female, the overall percentage of leavers in 2012-2013 showed 67% male and 33% female students. The number of interviews completed by students who dropped out (18%) was 7.9% less than the actual population, while the percentage of students interviewed that left with a regular diploma was 6% higher than the actual population of leavers (44% of actual, 50% of interviewed students). Students finishing with a modified diploma made up 18% of the students interviewed and 17% the population of leavers. Students exiting at maximum age, or receiving an alternate certificate made up 13% of the respondents and the population. The ethnic participation included 1% Asian, 4% Black, 4% Native American, 15% Hispanic, and 72% Caucasian. The participation for the disability groups included 3% Low Incidence Disabilities, 4% Communication Disorders, 8% Emotional Disturbance, 9% Intellectual Disabilities, 11% Autism, 16% students identified as Other Health Impaired, and 48% with Specific Learning Disabilities. These distributions were similar to the actual 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 2012-13 leavers included 7% who were 14-16 on that Child Count, 69% who were 17-18, and 23% who were ages 19-21.

Procedures 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. Districts were asked to make at least six attempts to complete the interview. Overall, 66% were completed in one or two attempts, an additional 23% required 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 28% were completed by teachers/specialists, 25% by Educational assistants or Paraprofessionals, 15% by Youth Transition Program personnel (YTP), 21% by clerical staff, 6% by Administrators, and 5% by other staff. Interviews could be completed with the former students (47%) with a family member (45%) 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: 724 of the 2,255 students (32%) completed the exit interview.

The following table presents information on the districts by size of leaver group. The size group comparison information is useful for districts in evaluating their PSO response rate and engagement outcomes.

District Size Information	District size				
	Very Small	Small	Medium	Large	
<i>Leavers per district</i>	1-4	5-15	16-50	51-355	
<i>Number of districts</i>	48	48	46	21	166
<i>Total leavers</i>	101	424	1,269	2,647	4441*
<i>Selected for interviews</i>	101	424	918	1,408	2,851
<i>Number interviewed</i>	66	263	761	1165	2,255
<i>Response rate</i>	65%	62%	83%	83%	79%
<i>Engagement Rate</i>	82%	68%	70%	69%	70%
• An additional 39 leavers were from non-district agencies					
<i>Percent of Leavers</i>	2%	9%	29%	59%	100%
<i>Percent of completed interviews</i>	3%	12%	34%	52%	100%

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

The federal reporting requirements for post-secondary outcomes look 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 them. 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 2,255 students, 541 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/semester, at any time in the year since leaving high school. For the very small districts in Oregon with 1-4 total leavers, 27% went on to higher education, and the small districts with 5-15 leavers, 16% went on to higher ed. For medium sized districts with 16-50 leavers, 22% were in the higher education group, and for the largest districts with 50-350 leavers, 27% were reported in the higher education group.

Competitive Employment Of the 1,714 students who were not in the higher education group, 675 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, 38% were in this group. For districts with 5-15 leavers, 37% were competitively employed. For districts with 16-50 leavers 29% of their students were in this group, and for districts with 51 to 350 leavers, 28% were competitively employed.

For this year's outcome collection, when the two measurements above are combined, the overall participation rate was greatest for the students from the smallest districts, with 65% in higher education or competitively employed. For the small districts 53% of students met this level. For medium size districts 51% were in higher education or competitively employed and 55% met this level for the large districts.

The federal outcome definitions also include other education or training (i.e., Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, or vocational technical school which is less than a 2-year program) and some other employment (i.e., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering services, etc.). To be included the experience needed to be 90 days (work) or one complete term (school). Of the 1,039 students who were not in higher education or competitively employed, 356 were included in this outcome group. 17% of students in very small districts were in other education or other work category. 15% of small district students, 18% of medium district students, and 14% of large district students were in other work or other school/training.

Not Engaged Federal reporting requirements do not include students who fail to qualify for the three outcome measurements. However, the factors describing these 683 students (30% of all interviews) are of great interest to the districts and to the state. The following page contains a table summarizing the answers to the Follow Up questionnaire for the students who report no activity, or less than a 90 days experience in work or school activities, which results in their outcome group.

Trends Data from the districts with one to four students exiting must be viewed with caution, due to the very small number of students for each district. However, for the very small districts, the overall engagement rate HAS increased from 52% in 2010, 74% in 2011, 71% in 2012, to 80% in 2013 to 82% in 2014. The closer the districts come to interviewing 100% of their leavers, the more representative the results will be. The small districts showed a response rate of 62% in 2014, medium and the large districts interviewed 83% of their required number of leavers. The engagement rate for the small districts was 68%, 70% for medium districts, and 69% for the large districts.

The tables on the next page summarize the answers to some of the questions on the follow up data collection questionnaire for the four district size groups and the state totals. These results are by individual question and do not reflect the combined questions used for Federal Reporting.

The following two tables present the responses to questions on the follow up survey for all students interview (2,255) and the non-engaged students (683) by district size group. Not all students answered all questions.

All interviews (n = 2,255)	Percent answering question with Yes				
	Very small	Small	Medium	Large	All
Attend school during the 12 months? (% yes)	55%	37%	42%	47%	44%
Attend a 2-4 year college or university?	56%	52%	59%	64%	61%
Voc/tech school, mission, short term training	32%	30%	23%	17%	21%
High School completion document	8%	4%	9%	11%	10%
Completed entire term or semester?	39%	28%	33%	38%	35%
Ever worked during the 12 months? (% yes)	82%	71%	66%	61%	65%
Competitive setting or military?	72%	81%	81%	83%	81%
Self employed or Family business	21%	11%	11%	9%	10%
Sheltered or Supported employment	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%
No answer, skipped or missing	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Work 90 cumulative days?	73%	57%	58%	53%	55%
Work at least half time?	68%	53%	50%	48%	50%
Receive same benefits as coworkers?	59%	49%	47%	39%	43%
Earn at least minimum wage?	73%	64%	58%	55%	58%
Why haven't you worked since high school?					
Haven't found job	25%	9%	19%	18%	18%
Don't want or need to work	8%	9%	8%	6%	7%
Disability	17%	16%	20%	13%	15%
Baby/family	8%	5%	5%	6%	6%
medical	8%	1%	8%	5%	6%
Need skills/help	0%	7%	4%	7%	6%
All others or No answer	33%	51%	38%	44%	43%
Have a driver's license? Learners permit?	56% +0%	49% +3%	37% +2%	38% +2%	40% +2%
Where are you currently living?					
Family	59%	71%	67%	70%	69%
Campus or military base	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%
Independently or with friend	36%	19%	20%	18%	20%
Foster home, group home	0%	1%	3%	2%	2%
Homeless/ jail	0%	1%	2%	1%	2%
No answer/ other/missing	2%	5%	3%	3%	3%

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. Not all students answered all questions.

Interviews with 'Not Engaged' outcome (n=683)	Percent answering question with Yes				
	Very Small	Small	Medium	Large	All
Number of students	12	83	232	356	683
Attend school during the 12 months? (% yes)	8%	13%	17%	18%	17%
Attend a 2-4 year college or university?	0%	18%	29%	27%	26%
Voc/tech school, mission, short term training	0%	36%	23%	19%	22%
High School completion document	100%	0%	13%	16%	14%
Ever worked during the 12 months?	33%	35%	20%	24%	24%
Competitive setting or military?	50%	66%	64%	64%	64%
Self-employed or Family business	25%	13%	8%	10%	11%
Sheltered or Supported employment	0%	10%	6%	8%	7%
Work at least half time?	17%	19%	8%	11%	11%
Receive same benefits as coworkers?	17%	23%	9%	9%	11%
Earn at least minimum wage?	33%	25%	13%	18%	18%
Why haven't you worked since high school?					
Don't want or need to work	13%	14%	9%	9%	10%
Baby/family	3%	8%	7%	10%	9%
In school	0%	8%	4%	10%	7%
Haven't found job	25%	12%	21%	21%	20%
Incarceration	0%	8%	1%	1%	2%
Have a driver's license? Learners permit?	50%+ 25%	75%+ 0%	75%+ 6%	78%+ 7%	76% + 6%
Where are you currently living?					
Family	67%	71%	71%	71%	71%
Independently or with friend	25%	16%	16%	12%	14%
Foster home, group home	0%	1%	3%	5%	4%
Homeless/ jail	0%	5%	3%	3%	3%