

## **Executive Summary – Year 2**

### **Wisconsin Statewide Post High School Outcomes Survey of Individuals with Disabilities**

#### ***A Status Report of Students with Disabilities Who Exited High School Between December 2000 and December 2001***

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is committed to identifying and responding to the needs of students with disabilities. To that end, it is necessary to document the post high school outcomes of students with disabilities and to subsequently use that information to make programming and planning decisions that will improve education and transition services for students, and ultimately improve post high school outcomes. This report is the second of several planned statewide transition studies, and summarizes the results of locally collected district data on individuals with disabilities who received special education and related services and have exited their high school education setting.

Between December 2000 and December 2001, 520 students with disabilities exited high school from local educational agencies in Wisconsin participating in this study. This report provides a brief summary of the post high school outcomes of a sample of these students by specifically addressing their participation in postsecondary education, current employment, and several aspects of independent living one year after exiting their secondary education.

Results are analyzed by gender, ethnicity and disability. Some comparisons are made to the outcomes reported in the December 1999 to December 2000 state study (Year 1). Some Year 1 data is included in this report when more current data is unavailable, and sometimes for comparative purposes. The Wisconsin Statewide Post High School Outcomes Survey also assesses several areas related to the implementation of the federal transition requirements, including student participation in their own Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings, inclusion of the student's interests and preferences in the IEP, course of study, needed transition services, content items and outside agency participation.

A full text report of this study is available on the DPI's web site. The first state transition study summarizes the results of a representative sample of students in the state who exited their education between December 1999 to December 2000, and can be found at: Executive Summary <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/een/doc/phsosumm.doc> and Final Report (56-page full text report) <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/een/doc/phsorept.doc>.

### **METHOD**

For purposes of this study, *local educational agency (LEA)* includes 32 public schools in Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. *Exit* means the student exited their high school or alternative education setting with a regular diploma, with a certificate of attendance, or reached the maximum age of eligibility (21 years old) for special education and related services.

#### ***Procedures***

During the 2001-02 school year, 32 LEAs and the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI) applied for and received state mini-grants to replicate the procedures implemented during the first year of the state outcomes project in their local districts. Cooperative Educational Services Agency (CESA) # 6 applied for and conducted the study on behalf of the 18 LEAs within their cooperative agency. Unlike the Year 1 statewide study, which utilized a 20% stratified random sample of 5239 students (sampling with error) who exited their secondary education the preceding year, the LEAs included in this study surveyed their entire population that exited between December 2000 and December 2001 (sampling without error).

Districts identified their population of exiters and collected three main pieces of information: *demographic information, IEP data, and an interview with the former student*. CESA #11 provided training to mini-grant participants on the survey process, interviewing, data entry, and data analysis. The districts collected their own data, interviewed their exiters, and reviewed their data. The districts were required to summarize their survey results and included them in their district's annual Special Education Plan (SEP).

### ***Study Participants***

For this study, students with disabilities in the identified LEAs and WCBVI who successfully exited their high school education between December 2000 and December 2001 were included in the population. Districts are geographically distributed around the state, and include small, medium and large districts. Because CESA #6 applied for the mini-grant to conduct the study for the LEAs located in their region, there is a concentration of districts in the east-central part of the state.

The districts were able to contact 70% (365) of the 520 former students in the population. Eleven of the 365 contacts are not included here due to lack of data following the contact. WCBVI was able to contact 88% of their identified exiters. Results from the WCBVI are not included in the respondent summary. It was the intention of WCBVI to assess the outcomes of all blind or visually impaired (primary or secondary disability) exiters in the state to specifically assess the outcomes of this unique population. The WCBVI returned the results to the students' home district. Those results are reported within the home district's outcomes and are included within this report.

For portions of this report, ethnic categories of Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/Not Hispanic, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaskan Native were combined and grouped "Minority". Similarly, the disability areas of hearing impaired (HI), visually impaired (VI), speech and language impaired (S/L), autism (Autism), deaf/blind (D/B), other health impaired (OHI), orthopedically impaired (OI) and traumatic brain injury (TBI), were grouped as "Low Incidence" (LI). This was done because many of the data points had fewer than five responses when analyzed by gender, ethnicity and disability.

The following is a trends analysis when comparing the two data collection years. Only two data points have been collected (Year 1 and Year 2 surveys), so trends should be interpreted cautiously. Please refer to the full text for details and full analysis.

### **Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 Independent Living Results**

Only two data points have been collected (Year 1 and Year 2 surveys), so trends should be interpreted cautiously. Below are noted trends between survey years:

- Fewer students continue to live with their parents (76% to 64%), and more report living with a roommate or spouse (10% to 21%).
- More students have obtained a driver's license (69% to 72%) and conversely fewer indicate getting a ride to a social activity is a barrier (15% to 12%).
- More outside agencies attended IEP meetings (51% to 67%).
- Need for outside agencies and statement of responsibilities or needed linkages declined (44% to 36% and 29% to 23%, respectively).
- Fewer students report using a one-on-one personal care assistant (12% to 5%), counselor/social worker (14% to 11%), and DVR counselor (22% to 18%).

### **Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 Postsecondary Education Results**

Only two data points have been collected (Year 1 and Year 2 surveys), so trends should be interpreted cautiously. Below are noted trends between survey years:

- Nearly the same percentage of former students are participating in some type of postsecondary education (47% to 45%), but many more students report discontinuing a program they began (2% to 14%).
- Students continue to enroll in postsecondary vocational training programs (18%) at nearly the same rate as they participated in high school vocational education classes (15%).
- Fewer students are attending technical training programs (28% to 18%) or participating in job training programs (24% to 5%) this year.
- Fewer students are disclosing their disability status to disability specialists and teachers (60% to 50%).
- Fewer students had the primary IEP goal of postsecondary education (84% to 74%).
- Fewer students participated in postsecondary education programs when participation was not a planned part of the IEP process (15% to 8%).

**Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 Employment Results**

Only two data points have been collected (Year 1 and Year 2 surveys), so trends should be interpreted cautiously. Below are noted trends between survey years:

- Slightly fewer youth are employed (80% to 76%).
- Employment rates for white, male and learning disabled youth have dropped, and are now similar to rates of employment of minority youth, and those with CD and EBD.
- Most former students were employed in business/sales (24% to 24%) and factory/production or construction (18% to 20%).
- The majority in all groups, with the exception of males, now make less than \$8.00/hr (38%), compared to 57% who made less than \$7.00/ hr. as reported in Year 1 of the study.
- Fewer students are earning a wage above DVR poverty figures (38% to 22%).
- Fewer students view DVR as an agency they would talk to about securing employment (27% to 8%)

**SUMMARY**

Table 1 reviews the major post high school outcomes for youth exiting high school. Independent living is defined as living with a spouse or roommate, another family member, alone, or in the military. Postsecondary education reflects the percentage of study participants who attended some type of postsecondary training. Paid employment is working for pay. Trends indicate that a higher percentage of students are living independently (fewer are living with their parents and almost twice as many report living with a spouse or roommate), nearly the same percentages are attending postsecondary training, and slightly fewer students are employed.

**Table 1 - Percentage View of Former Students Who Have Paid Employment, Attend Postsecondary Education and Live Independently**

	<b>Living Independently</b>	<b>Attend Postsecondary</b>	<b>Paid Employment</b>
<b>Year 2</b>	33	45	76
<b>Year 1</b>	21	47	80

**Other Key Trends Between Year 1 and Year 2** (Year 1 data is in parentheses):

- ❖ 64% (76%) of the students in the study continue to live at home with their parents.
- ❖ 76% (80%) of the students in the study are employed.
- ❖ 45% (47%) of the students in the study participate in postsecondary education.
- ❖ 54% (64%) of employed youth in the study work more than 37 hours per week.
- ❖ 38% (57%) of employed youth in the study earn at least \$8.00 (\$7.00) per hour.
- ❖ 60% (50%) of employed youth in the study earn between \$5.75 and \$10.00 per hour.
- ❖ 12% (12%) of youth in the study are neither employed nor attend postsecondary education.

***Possible Areas District Staff Might Consider when Reviewing these Data***

- ❖ More outside agencies attended students' IEP meetings, however, fewer IEPs indicated a need for outside agencies or contained a statement of needed agency services, and, fewer students report they are utilizing adult services agencies. Districts may wish to consider additional methods of developing relationships with outside agencies that nurture a transition relationship so young adults can benefit from available services.
- ❖ Since a very high percentage of students do not disclose their disability status to any one in their place of postsecondary education, districts may wish to consider student self-advocacy and self-determination as an important part of transition instruction. Making connections with postsecondary institutions and potential employers is something former students report they want more of to better prepare them for the transition to adult living.
- ❖ Since few youth discuss needed employment options with the agencies that can assist them in finding jobs, districts may wish to familiarize students with these agencies as part of the student's transition plan.
- ❖ Since post high school outcomes are not as positive for minority youth and those with cognitive disabilities as for white youth or youth with other disabilities, districts may wish to focus their time and resources on minority youth and youth with cognitive disabilities.
- ❖ Review the suggestions youth have for their former place of high school education; they are rich with good ideas.

**Mini-Grant Participant Districts**

Amery	Horicon	Menasha	Shiocton
Berlin	Hortonville	Menomonie	Slinger
Campbellsport	Hustisford	North Fond du Lac	Waupun
Crivitz	Janesville	Oakfield	Waterloo
Dodgeland	Lormira	Oconomowoc	West Bend
Freedom	Ripon	Park Falls	Westby
Green Bay	Markesan	Plymouth	Winneconne
Green Lake	Mayville	Rosendale-Brandon	Wisconsin Rapids
Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI)			

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