State Performance Plan Indicator 14 Report: Texas' Post-School Outcomes Survey

Prepared for:
The Texas Education Agency

Survey of Students
Exiting School Year 2021-22

Reported in the
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Submitted By:
Gibson Consulting Group, Inc.
P.O. Box 300816
Austin, Texas 78703
512.328.0884
www.gibsonconsult.com

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Acknowledgements

Background and Project Context

As part of the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 2004, the United States Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (USDE OSEP) requires that states monitor various aspects of the programs and services provided to students with disabilities. Through required annual reports (the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report), states monitor and measure approximately 30 different performance areas. State Performance Plan Indicator (SPPI) 14, also known as the post-school outcomes indicator, follows up with students who had an individualized education program (IEP) while in high school by providing them with a survey one year following their exit from public school. SPPI 14 has three parts:

- SPPI 14A – the percentage of students who are enrolled in higher education
- SPPI 14B – the percentage of students who are included in SPPI 14A or are competitively employed
- SPPI 14C – the percentage of students who are included in SPPI 14A or SPPI 14B or are enrolled in another type of postsecondary education or other employment setting.

Each annual cohort of exited students (grades 9-12 who graduated, dropped out, or met specific criteria for exit from public school) is surveyed one year after the end of their last school year of record. For example, 2020-21 exited students were surveyed in the summer of 2022 for the 2022 SPPI 14.

This 2024 SPPI 14 report includes data from the students who had IEPs in place at the time they exited during the 2021-2022 school year. This group of students, or cohort, formed the target group for the 2023 survey conducted one year after they exited.

States use various strategies for estimating SPPI 14, including accessing workforce and postsecondary records, identifying a sample of exited students for interviews, or surveying either a sample or the population of exited students. Texas uses survey methods, contacting approximately 36,000 exited students each year[1] using student and parent or family contact information provided by more than 1,200 local education agencies (LEAs).

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has partnered with Sam Houston State University's Garrett Center on Transition and Disability Services (the Garrett Center) to annually disseminate and collect responses to a post-school outcomes survey (PSOS) used for reporting SPPI 14. Beginning in 2021, the Garrett Center contracted with Gibson Consulting Group (Gibson) to support the SPPI 14 data collection, analysis, and reporting needs for the State of Texas. This report summarizes the Texas approach to administering the PSOS, including survey design, data collection, response rates, and SPPI 14 results. This report also details results from the survey questions not used in the SPPI 14 calculations, but which are intended to gather additional feedback for LEAs to use to make targeted, informed improvements.

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[1] Prior to 2020-21, Texas surveyed a sample of approximately 10,000 to 15,000 exited students.

Survey Design

The PSOS itself has remained mostly unchanged over the past several years, though methods of outreach have shifted modestly given changes in technology. For the 2021 survey administration for the 2019-20 cohort of exiting students, the project team reviewed Texas' historic SPPI 14 survey, federal requirements, and other states' survey instruments and made a few small improvements to the questions. These improvements included refining question wording, improving programmable skip logic, deleting some questions, and adding some that might benefit LEAs above and beyond SPPI 14. For the 2023 administration, the research team refined answer options for questions based on 2022 responses and clarified non-indicator questions about high school services. A copy of the complete 2023 SPPI 14 survey is included in Appendix A.

Survey Administration

Identifying the Population

TEA provided contact information for the state's more than 36,000 exited students who were in grades 9-12 during the 2021-22 school year, had an IEP, and who exited the public school system during the 2021-22 school year and did not return (to the same or different Texas public school) during the same year. The contact information database was populated by LEAs during the fall of 2021 and contained an email address, phone number, and home address for the student and at least one parent/guardian.

Each exiting student potentially had up to nine distinct contact methods (phone number, email address, and mailing address for the student, a parent, and another contact). However, these elements were often missing, duplicated, or otherwise unusable. For example, most student email addresses (77%) were LEA-issued,[2] which were likely to be discontinued or unused as students had exited the LEA over one year prior. It was also the case that phone numbers were duplicated across the contact people provided, as 60% of exited students had a phone number which was the same as the parent phone number provided by LEAs.

Table 1. Contact Records

Contact Person	Phone Numbers	Email Addresses	Mailing Addresses
Student	9,171	32,006	4,219
Parent or family member	35,512	28,432	36,621
Other	10,247	7,885	4,485
Total	**54,930**	**68,323**	**45,325**

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[2] The research team categorized emails as "LEA-issued" if domain names included the name of the independent school district (ISD), "student," or "school" in the domain (e.g., studentname@student.aisd.net).

Data Collection Methods

The research team assigned a unique personal identification number (PIN) to every student in the database to help ensure non-duplicate submissions. If a participant responded to a hyperlink in an email, hyperlinks were embedded with the PIN. Participants who responded to text messages or postcards used the provided PIN to access the survey. If a participant responded over the phone, the interviewer recorded the PIN from the database after identifying the individual respondent. If a participant responded to the general-use website (www.TxExit.com) – being directed there by their school, hearing about the survey through word of mouth, seeing a social media post, or receiving a postcard – they were directed to contact the support line to obtain a PIN code.

Researchers ultimately emailed and sent text message invitations to tens of thousands of contacts, sent postcards to the addresses on file, and conducted outgoing calling to complete the survey. Emails and text messages included the initial invitation and multiple reminders. Additional information about the scale and reach of these efforts is included in Table 2, which shows the unique number of contacts, the total number of contact attempts, and the total number of exited students represented for each method. Across all contact methods, including reminders, the research team made almost 745,000 attempts to invite or remind survey participants, an average of 20.3 attempts per exited student.

Table 2. Survey Invitation Method and Reach

Outreach Method	Distinct Contacts Across all Exited Students	Total Contact Attempts	Exited Students Represented
Email	67,018	402,249	36,000
Text Message	53,299	272,120	36,665
Post Cards	33,329	33,698	29,568
Phone Call	35,915	36,632	36,632

Data Analysis

Data Preparation

The research team conducted a rigorous cleaning and diagnostics of submitted survey data before beginning analysis. A first check identified whether multiple surveys were submitted for the same student (e.g., if both a student and a parent completed a survey representing the same student). In cases where there were multiple responses for a given student, the analyst retained the most complete version. Data cleaning included checking skip patterns and using survey metadata to ascertain whether responses for multiple exited students were completed by the same device, presumably by the same person. The research team also closely reviewed and coded "other" response options, recoding available categories when appropriate.

Response Rates

The research team invited responses from 36,761 exited students across the state. These exited students were distributed unevenly across 1,000+ LEAs, with 20 of the state's largest LEAs accounting for more than one-quarter (29%) of exited students. In contrast, 747 of the state's smaller LEAs[3] accounted for just 13% of exited students.

A total of 9,340 out of 36,761 students in the exited student dataset submitted a survey response for a statewide response rate of 25.4%. This represents an increase of one and a half percentage point from the 2022 survey administration (23.9%). Across LEAs, response rates ranged from 0% (20 LEAs) to 100% (45 LEAs). Texas' LEAs are divided into 20 regions that are supported by education service centers (ESCs), and response rates by ESC ranged from a low of 19.6% to a high of 28.4%.

The research team examined response rate data by outreach modality to explore the effectiveness of various methods to inform future survey data collections. The research team used the respondents' answer to a question asking what prompted them to complete the survey (from Table 2). For those who did not answer that question, the research team used metadata captured by the survey platform to categorize a response as coming via email, text message, or phone call. Table 3 displays the total number of surveys completed, the proportion of total responses accounted for, and a response rate calculation for each modality. It is important to note that respondents could indicate that multiple modalities prompted their response to the survey. This is likely due to overlapping outreach, since an individual may have been contacted in various ways (e.g. text, email, phone, and mail). Email was the most effective contact modality followed by text message; phone calls and postcards were considerably less effective methods of yielding survey responses.

Table 3. Response Rate by Modality

Outreach Modality				
Text Message	4,146	44.4%	34,330	12.1%
Email	4,459	47.7%	36,000	12.4%
Phone Call	1,010	10.8%	28,673	3.5%
Postcard	416	4.5%	36,632	1.1%
Other/Unknown	243	2.6%	N/A	N/A
Word of Mouth	26	0.3%	N/A	N/A
Former School	23	0.2%	N/A	N/A
Social Media	17	0.2%	N/A	N/A

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[3] Smaller LEAs were categorized as those with 20 or fewer exited students.

Over three-quarters of survey respondents (79%) identified themselves as the parent or family member of the exited student and 21% identified as the student.

Representativeness of Responding Sample

Prior to examining results, it is first important to consider the composition of the group of respondents who are contributing data to the resulting estimates. It is possible that the responding group is not representative of the population, and therefore the resulting estimate might be biased in one direction or another. For example, if only female exited students responded but made up 36% of the population or only exited students with learning disabilities responded while making up 45% of the population, the results based on the responding group may not be representative of the population. It is important to interpret results carefully, paying attention to the composition of the respondents that contributed to the final results.[4] Such understanding can also inform future year outreach to attempt to obtain the most representative responding sample possible and to reach out to groups that may be less likely to respond. It is only possible to examine representativeness for known characteristics, which in this case includes gender, race/ethnicity, and primary disability.

Table 4 presents the representativeness of the responding group compared to the population of exited students in the 2021-22 school year. The respondent group was largely proportionate to all exited students, with some disproportionalities.. By race/ethnicity, the responding sample was under-representative of Hispanic exited students (by 6.3 percentage points) and over-representative of White exited students (by 5.3 percentage points). All other race/ethnicities were represented within one percentage point of their prevalence in the population of exited students. Most disability categories were represented in the respondent sample at similar rates of their prevalence in the population, with two exceptions: exited students with autism were over-represented in the survey sample (by 5.4 percentage points) and exited students with a learning disability were under-represented in the survey sample (by 6.7 percentage points).

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[4] Statistical re-weighting strategies can be used to adjust for non-representativeness on observed variables but are not applied here.

Table 4. Representativeness of Responding Sample, by Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic			
Female	34.6%	36.0%	-1.5 pp
Male	65.4%	64.0%	+1.5 pp
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.3%	<1 pp
Asian	1.5%	2.5%	+1 pp
Black or African American	19.1%	19.0%	<1 pp
Hispanic	49.8%	43.5%	-6.3 pp
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	0.2%	0.1%	<1 pp
White	24.5%	29.7%	+5.3 pp
Two or more races	4.6%	4.8%	<1 pp
Auditory Impairment	1.4%	1.6%	<1 pp
Autism	12.3%	17.7%	+5.4 pp
Deaf-Blind	0.1%	0.1%	<1 pp
Emotional Disturbance	9.6%	9.1%	<1 pp
Intellectual Disability	12.6%	12.2%	<1 pp
Learning Disability	45.3%	38.5%	-6.7 pp
Orthopedic Impairment	0.6%	0.7%	<1 pp
Other Health Impairment	16.3%	17.8%	+1.5 pp
Speech Impairment	0.9%	1.0%	<1 pp
Traumatic Brain Injury	0.4%	0.4%	--
Visual Impairment	0.7%	0.8%	< 1 pp

Note. Differences were calculated prior to rounding. Consequently, the difference column may show a different value than subtracting the rounded population column from the rounded responding sample column.

Calculations and Descriptive Analyses

To calculate SPPI 14, the research team first categorized respondents into mutually exclusive groups based on their answers to a combination of survey questions. These groupings were then used to calculate each of the SPPI 14 measures A through C. The exclusive categories are defined below.

- Category 1 (Higher Education): A student was assigned to Category 1 if they responded that over the past year they were enrolled in a two-year or four-year college or university for at least one complete term. A complete term can be any length such as a quarter, a semester, inter-session, summer session, or program.

- Category 2 (Competitively Employed): A student was assigned to Category 2 if they were *not* in Category 1 but over the past year:
  - they worked for a minimum of three months for 20 hours or more per week,
  - were paid at least minimum wage, and
  - their employer was a company or business with people with and without disabilities,
    - or they were in the military,
    - or in supported employment.

- Category 3 (Other Education): A student was assigned to Category 3 if they were *not* in Categories 1 or 2, but they were enrolled in school, job training, or continuing education that was not a two-year or four-year college or university, and completed at least one term including:
  - a high school completion program,
  - a short-term education program,
  - a vocational technical school,
  - a religious or church mission, or
  - a volunteer or community service training program.

- Category 4 (Other Employment): An exited student was assigned to Category 4 if they were not in Categories 1 through 3, but
  - they worked for at least three months in:
    - sheltered employment,
    - a family business,
    - self-employment,
    - employment while in jail or prison.
  - Exited students were also assigned to Category 4 is they fit the definition of Category 2 but they:
    - worked fewer than 20 hours per week, or
    - were paid less than minimum wage.

- Category 5: Any respondent who did not fit into one of the four above categories was placed in Category 5.

The three SPPI 14 measures are cumulative (Figure 1): SPPI 14A is the percentage of respondents who are enrolled in higher education (number in Category 1/total respondents). SPPI 14B is the percentage of

respondents who are in higher education *or* competitively employed ([Category 1 + Category 2]/total respondents). SPPI 14C is the percentage of respondents who are enrolled in higher education or competitively employed or in the other education or other employment groups ([Category 1 + Category 2 + Category 3 + Category 4]/total respondents).

For the remaining questions not used in SPPI reporting, we present the frequency of each response category across all respondents and disaggregated by student characteristics of interest.

Results

State Performance Plan Indicator 14

Among responding exited students (those who were last enrolled in a Texas public school and had an IEP in place during the 2021-22 school year), 28% were enrolled in higher education (SPPI 14A), 59% were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed (SPPI 14B), and 70% were either enrolled in higher education, enrolled in some other education program for at least three months, competitively employed, or identified by another employment category one year later (SPPI 14C; Figure 1).
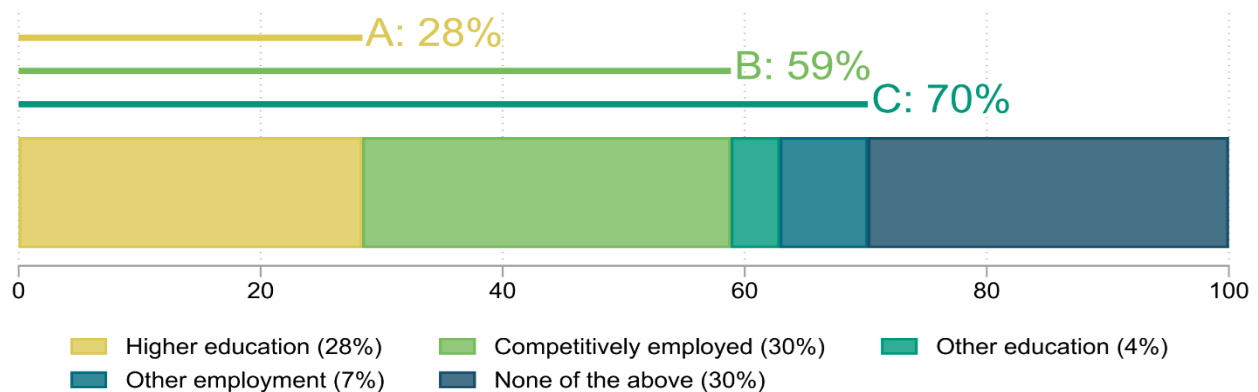
Figure 1. SPPI 14 Results for 2023

Table 5 shows SPPI 14 results from 2023 along with results from the past two years. All SPPI 14 measures have grown over the last three years, with the highest results reported in 2023. Each measure was approximately one percentage point higher in 2023 than 2022. This follows from increases between three and five percentage points for each measure between 2022 and 2021.

Table 5. SPPI 14 Results for Last Three Survey Years

Survey Year	Measure 14A	Measure 14B	Measure 14C
2023	28%	59%	70%
2022	27%	58%	69%
2021	24%	53%	65%

Additional Survey Questions

The following sections present descriptive statistics from questions in the survey that may be particularly useful for LEAs to make data-informed decisions, target improvement efforts, or share successes, but that are not required for SPPI 14.

Continuity of Services

If exited students reported that they were enrolled in a two-year or four-year college or university during the last year, the survey questioned if they had contacted an Office for Disability Services (ODS), and if so, what supports or accommodations they received during the year. Of the 3,236 exited students who reported that they were enrolled in a two-year or four-year college or university at some time over the past year (34% of the total responding sample), 1,363 (43%) reported contacting an ODS, which is similar to the previous year.[5]

Across 2,702 students who exited high school with an IEP in place and who were enrolled in a two-year or four-year college one year later, slightly more than one-third (36%) received a service from an ODS. Table 6 (Column A) shows the percentage of those who reached out to an ODS and who reported receiving any of the presented accommodations or supports during the year.

Table 6. Disability Services Received Among Exited Students Enrolled in a Two-Year or Four-Year College

	(A) Respondents who contacted an ODS (n = 1,363)	(B) Respondents regardless of whether contacted ODS (n = 3,236)
Additional time for assignments	61%	26%
Access to class notes, note-taker	47%	20%
Test accommodations	45%	19%
Tutoring	32%	13%
Preferential seating	20%	9%
Assistive technology	16%	7%
No supports or accommodations received	16%	7%
Support for registration; services; personal assistant	15%	6%
Recorded lecture	13%	5%

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[5] This percentage does not include the 59 respondents who reported attending a two- or four-year college but did not answer the question about contacting an ODS.

|	(A) Respondents who contacted an ODS (n = 1,363)	(B) Respondents regardless of whether contacted ODS (n = 3,236)
Audio textbooks	8%	3%
Adaptive equipment	4%	2%
Large print or braille	2%	<1%
Orientation and mobility services for students with visual impairments	2%	<1%
Sign language interpreter	2%	<1%

When considering the same services across all exited students who attended a two-year or four-year college and not just those who reached out to the ODS, the percentage of exited students who received any service at all was substantially lower (Table 6, Column B). For example, while 61% of respondents who contacted the ODS reported receiving additional time for assignments (Column A), only 26% of all responding exited students attending these institutions reported receiving additional time for assignments (Column B).

While the descriptive statistics presented in Table 6 are informative about the overall frequency with which students who leave high school with an IEP receive accommodations or other services in postsecondary institutions, a more nuanced picture considers the student's primary disability – as not all services are needed or appropriate for all exited students. This is useful when trying to understand whether exited students with specific needs are having those needs met or for better understanding which exited students are accessing the services they need at higher numbers.

For example, the final column in Figure 2 shows the frequency of each service received only for exited students with visual impairment. Cells are shaded darker orange as the frequency increases, and darker blue as the frequency decreases. Among the 38 respondents who reported being enrolled in a two-year or four-year college and whose primary disability on their IEP was visual impairment, more than half (55%) reported receiving additional time for assignments (darkest orange) while 24% reported receiving support for registration. About one-third received large print or braille materials or assistive technology. In contrast, none of these exited students reported receiving sign language interpretation, which is not a typical accommodation for students with visual impairment.

Exited students with autism, orthopedic impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment reported receiving various services at greater rates than those identified by other primary disabilities in their IEP. While on average 26% of respondents reported receiving additional time for assignments, the percentage was higher for respondents in these four categories, and much lower for respondents with other primary disabilities, such as speech impairment and learning disabilities.

Figure 2. Accommodations by Primary Disability Category
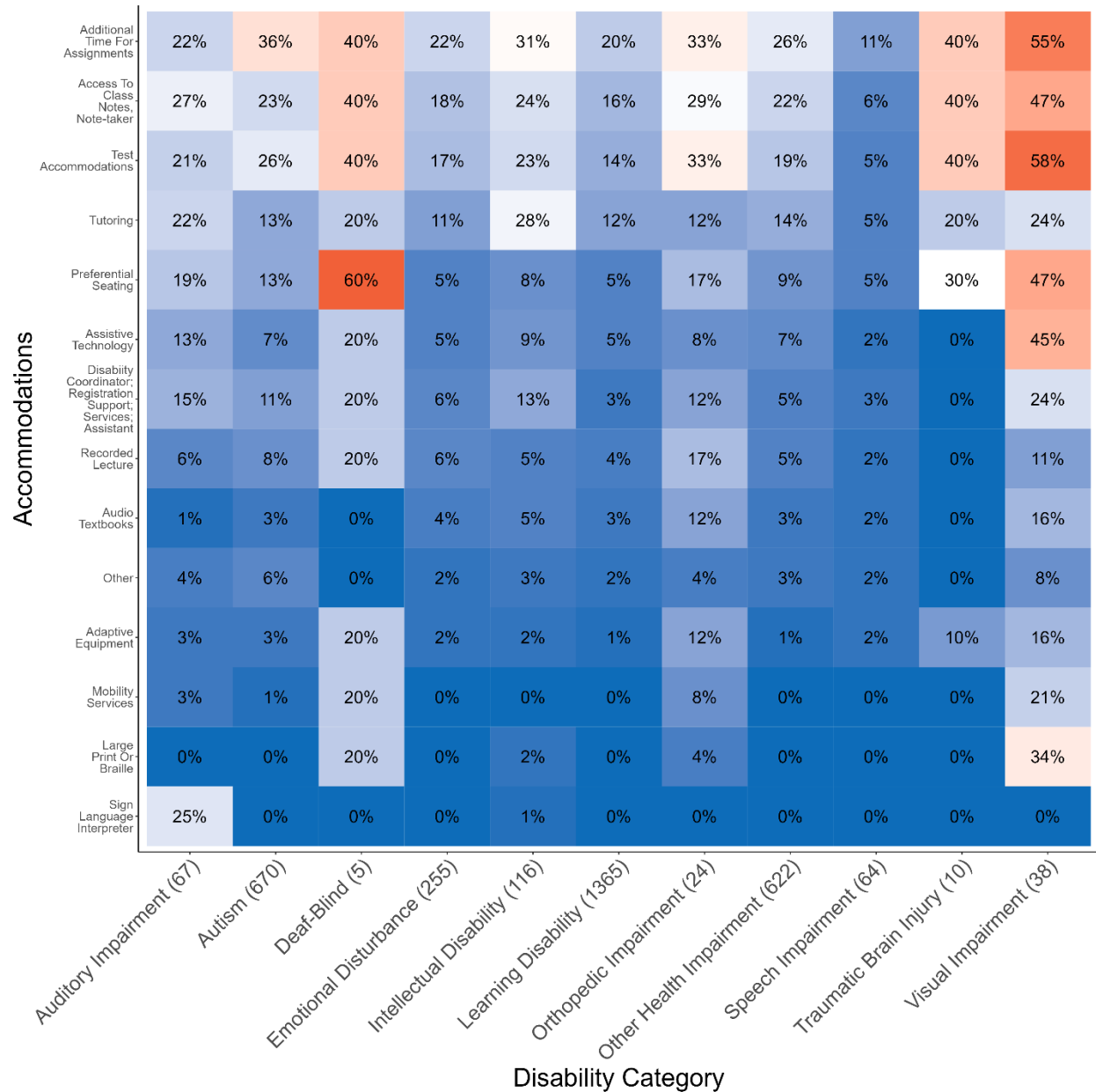
Quality of Supports and Services

If exited students reported that they worked since leaving high school (for any length of time, at any rate of pay), we asked whether any individuals or organizations helped them obtain that job. Response options presented included their former school, a family member (e.g., parent, sibling), a friend, a state agency, a community organization, or none of the above. Respondents could only select one answer. Of the 5,816 exited students reporting that they had a job in the past year and who answered the question, two in five (39%) responded that no individual or organization helped them get their job (Table 7). Fewer respondents reported assistance from state agencies, their former school, or community organizations

(Table 7). There was little meaningful variation in responses when examined by the respondents' primary disability or other student-level characteristics.

Table 7. Support Obtaining Job

	Percent of total with a job (n = 5,816)
None – I got the job myself	39%
Parent, sibling, or other family member	35%
Friend	11%
State agency (e.g., Texas Workforce Commission [TWC], Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce Solutions)	6%
Former school or LEA	6%
Military recruiter	2%
Other	1%
Temp agency	<1%
Community organization (such as Goodwill, Catholic Charities)	<1%

Respondents also reported which aspects of the high school experience they participated in and were most helpful in preparing them for employment after high school. For each aspect, which included academic classes, career and technical education (CTE) classes, and volunteer work, respondents selected whether they did not participate, participated but did not find helpful, or participated and found it helpful. Table 8 displays the frequency with which respondents reported these aspects of high school being helpful. The element that was helpful for most exited students was assistance from a specific individual at the school (53%). Experiences in admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) meetings (52%) and academic classes (48%) – courses such as math, English language arts, and science – followed as the next most helpful as reported by respondents. About one third of respondents indicated that extracurricular activities and CTE classes were helpful. While other aspects, such as volunteer work, paid work experience, and work-based learning were selected as helpful for fewer exited students, few exited students who participated in these activities found them unhelpful.

Table 8. Helpful High School Experiences in Preparing for Employment After High School

Question	Did not participate	Participated but did not find helpful	Participated and found helpful
Specific individual(s) at the school	37%	11%	53%
Experiences participating in ARD meetings	24%	23%	52%
Academic classes	29%	23%	48%
Extracurricular activities	56%	11%	33%
CTE classes	60%	11%	30%
Volunteer work	69%	5%	26%
Paid work experience	72%	4%	25%
Work-based learning	76%	5%	19%
Something else	86%	3%	10%

Figure 3 on the following page displays the percentage of exited students who participated in each experience that found it helpful, by primary disability. Across disability categories and high school experiences, 50% or more of exited students who participated in an activity found it helpful, across all experiences and disability categories. Across disability categories, paid work experience was found helpful by the highest proportion of respondents, with the lowest percentage being those who were deaf-blind while participation in ARD meetings and academic classes had lower percentages across groups, though these activities had the fewest respondents who indicated that they did not participate in them. Exited students with a learning disability, the most populous group among survey respondents, found paid work experience, volunteer experience, and specific individuals at the school most helpful of the activities they participated in.

Figure 3. Helpful High School Experience by Disability Type
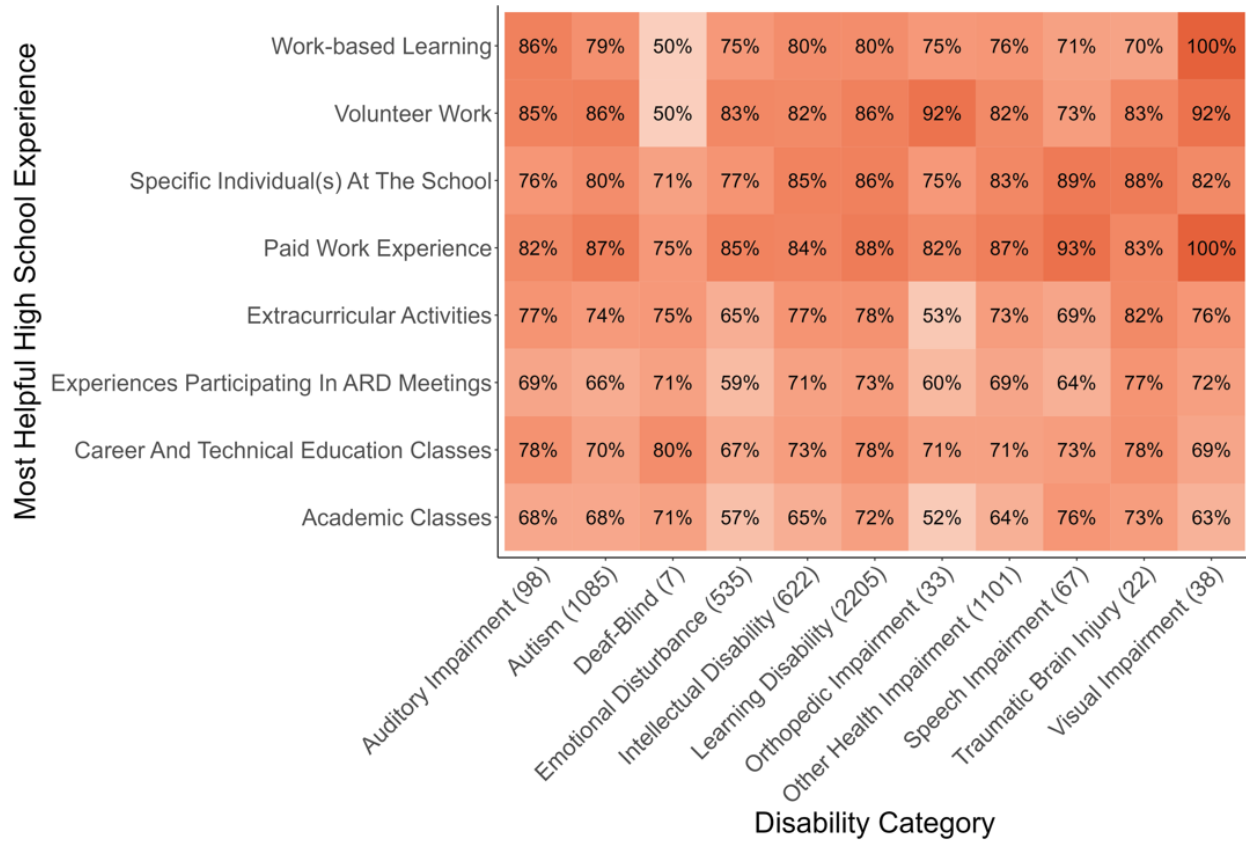
Respondents also answered whether their high school connected them to any agencies during or after high school. About two in five of respondents (39%) were connected with at least one agency, the most common being the TWC (30%).[6]

Table 9. Connections Between Exited Students and Agencies Providing Supports

Agency	Percent of respondents connected with agency
Texas Workforce Commission	30%
Mental health services	5%
Social Security Administration	5%
Health services	3%
Community care services	3%
Local intellectual and developmental disabilities authority (LIDDA)	2%
Deaf and hard of hearing services	2%

[6] Exited students could be connected with more than one service and therefore the percentages in the table do not sum to the total percentage of exited students who were connected with at least one service.

Agency	Percent of respondents connected with agency
Blind and visually impaired services	2%
Adult protective services	1%

Note. These calculations are based on responses from 8,054 respondents who viewed the survey question.

These results varied considerably when disaggregated by the respondent's disability type. Table 10 presents the percentage of respondents with each type of disability that indicated they were connected with the TWC.[7]

Table 10. Connections Between Exited Students and TWC, by Disability Type

	Percent of respondents connected with TWC*
Deaf-blind (n = 11)	73%
Visual impairment (n = 66)	70%
Auditory impairment (n = 126)	48%
Traumatic brain injury (n = 28)	46%
Autism (n = 1,461)	45%
Orthopedic impairment (n = 60)	45%
Intellectual disability (n = 959)	43%
Other health impairment (n = 1, 473)	27%
Emotional disturbance (n = 735)	25%
Learning disability (n = 3,053)	20%
Speech impairment (n = 65)	6%

Note. *These calculations are based on responses from 8,054 respondents who viewed the survey question.

Discussion and Suggestions for Future Years

Key Results and Recommendations

Over the last three years there has been a consistent increase in the number of responding exited students who reported being enrolled in higher education, increasing from 24% in 2021 to 28% in 2023. Those competitively employed increased from 53% in 2021 to 59% in 2023. Among this group of exited students enrolled in postsecondary education, the percent who contacted an ODS to receive

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[7] Students were not connected with other agencies frequently enough for disaggregation to be informative.

accommodations increased from 2021 (39%) to 2022 (43%) but remained stable in 2023 (43%). Recommendations suggested by the data analysis follow.

Increase marketing and avenues for accessing services through the ODS.

Despite the increase in the percentage of respondents attending higher education and contacting the ODS, a substantial number of exited students who had an IEP in high school still are not utilizing resources offered by the ODS when they enroll in college or university. Over half of exiting students (57%) who reported attending higher education did not contact the ODS, and over one-third reported they did not know about it (36%). Since exited students need to work with an ODS to receive accommodations, these high percentages suggest a valuable resource is being under-utilized by students who might benefit.

There is room to better advertise and utilize the ODS. Increased information provided during high school along with increased marketing during college visits, orientation, etc. may increase the likelihood of exited students being aware of the services. Additionally, some exited students may choose not to reach out to the ODS due to fear of stigma or confusion regarding requirements and documentation for attaining services and accommodations.[8] High schools can consider additional methods to inform exited students of the process and procedures for maximizing the ODS while they are attending institutes of higher education.

Provide more experiences to students in high school.

Exited students who participated in various experiences in high school, such as paid work experience, extra-curricular activities, and volunteer work, among others, found those experiences helpful for employment after high school. No fewer than 50% of exited students who participated in any listed experience found them helpful, across all disability categories. However, aside from academic classes, participation in ARD meetings, and assistance from specific individuals, fewer than 50% of exited students indicated that they did participate in the presented options. Approximately one in four exited students participated in paid work experience (28%) or work-based learning (24%). About one in three exited students participated in volunteer work (31%), and 44% of exited students participated in extracurricular activities. Exited students generally found all high school experiences helpful, but the lower percentages of exited students participating in some experiences suggest they may not be available to or sufficiently promoted for all students. Providing more opportunities or promoting any of these experiences (e.g. paid work experience, volunteer experience) could increase exited students' success in finding employment after leaving high school.

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[8] Grimes, Susan, Erica Southgate, Jill Scevak, and Rachel Buchanan. "University Student Experiences of Disability and the Influence of Stigma on Institutional Non-Disclosure and Learning." *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability* 33, no. 1 (2020): 23-37.

Marshak, Laura, Todd Van Wieren, Dianne Raeke Ferrell, Lindsay Swiss, and Catherine Dugan. "Exploring barriers to college student use of disability services and accommodations." *Journal of Postsecondary Education and disability* 22, no. 3 (2010): 151-165.

Facilitate connections between students and agencies.

Approximately 39% of respondents indicated that their high school put them in touch with an agency that could provide services beyond high school (e.g., Community Care Services, Health Services, Social Security Administration), and most of these were references to the TWC (30%). The proportion of exited students directed to the TWC varied considerably by a student's type of disability, ranging from 6% (speech impairment) to 73% (deaf-blind). While these differences likely reflect differential need on the part of students, there is likely room to increase the proportion of exited students who are connected to agencies to help them beyond high school.

Schools should consider providing greater support and guidance during high school to connect students with external agencies that can support them after graduation. A primary goal of K-12 education is to provide students with the tools and resources they need to be successful as adults. Public schools are required by federal and state statutes to connect exiting students with disabilities to governmental agencies for services or public benefits. By supporting students in building connections, familiarity, and comfort with external agencies and services, high schools can help students be successful in the long term.

Recommendations for Survey Administration

Although this year's survey administration saw an increased response rate, there are always potential improvements to the survey administration process. There are many challenges to successfully administering statewide, post-school surveys, and particularly related to attaining high response rates. Challenges included poor quality or out-of-date contact information for exited students, lack of awareness of the survey among families, lack of trust in the source of the survey invitation, and lack of integration with other extant data sources (e.g., postsecondary enrollment, workforce records) to track exited students' postsecondary outcomes outside of a survey response.

The quality of contact information did not meaningfully improve between the 2022 and 2023 surveys. Emails were unable to be delivered, or "bounced," at higher rates than typically observed, most student email addresses were LEA-assigned, 60% of student phone numbers that were provided by LEAs were the same as the parent phone number provided, and initial return rates were lower than on comparable surveys that the Gibson research team administers in Texas. Though the team sent postcards to close to 36,000 addresses, only five percent of respondents indicated that the postcard motivated them to complete a survey. In sum, the target population for the survey remains difficult to reach. Given these challenges, the research team expended much effort to obtain the response rate observed and reported above. Repeated reminders may have frustrated some in the targeted population; contacts for close to 9,000 exited students clicked on the "opt-out" option in an email or text message or declined to complete a survey when reached over the phone.

One key strategy for improving the quality of contact information is educating the target population about the surveys' existence *before they leave school.* If high school students and their families are educated about the upcoming survey, how it will be administered, and the importance of the survey, that may make them more likely to participate. Any efforts that can be made to ensure accurate contact information and a more informed audience will likely increase the response rate and in turn the usefulness of this report.

While the current response rate is more than adequate for statewide estimates, not all LEAs receive a sufficient number of responses to provide reliable estimates.

Appendix A. Texas Post-School Outcomes Survey

Can you believe it's already been a year since you left high school? The Texas Education Agency is asking for your help. They want to learn about what you are doing now, and about how well you think high school prepared you for what you are doing now.

If you are a parent of a student who has received this survey, you may help your child complete it or fill it out on their behalf.

Please click the button below to begin the survey.

PART A: CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Q1. At any time since leaving high school, have you ever enrolled in any school, job training, or education program?
- Yes
- No

Display q1a-q1b if Q1 = yes

q1a Describe the kind of school, job training, or education program you attended? *(Select all that apply)*

- A 2-year community college
- A 4-year college or university
- A high school completion program (such as a GED or Adult Basic Education program)
- A short-term education or employment training program (such Job Corps or an apprenticeship)
- A vocational technical school (such as barber/cosmetology school, a trade school, etc.)
- A religious or church sponsored mission
- Military training
- Volunteer/community service training (such as The Peace Corps, Vista, AmeriCorps)
- Other (include name or description) _____

q1b Did you complete a full term (the term can be any length such as a quarter, a semester, inter-session, summer session, or program)?

- Yes
- No

Display This Question if q1a = 2-year community college or 4-year college or university:

q1c Did you contact an Office of Disability Services at your 2- or 4 -year college or university?

- No - I did not know about an office like this

- No - I knew about an office like this, but did not contact them
- Yes - I did contact an office like this

q1d What supports or accommodations did you receive through this office? (select all that apply)

- Access to class notes, note-taker, or note-taking assistance
- Adaptive equipment (such as a wheelchair, walker, or communication device)
- Additional time for assignments
- Assistive technology (such as speech-to-text or text-to speech applications, calculator, CART services)
- Preferential seating
- Large print or braille
- Orientation and mobility services for students with visual impairments
- Sign language interpreter
- Disability coordinator, support for accessing services, finding a personal assistant, registration/scheduling
- Recorded lecture
- Audio textbooks
- Test accommodations (such as oral tests, extended time to complete test, use of testing center)
- Tutoring
- Other (please specify)_____
- No supports or accommodations received

PART B: EMPLOYMENT

Q2. At any time since leaving high school, have you ever worked?

- Yes
- No

q2a Did you work for at least a total of 3 months (about 90 days)? (NOTE: This does not need to be 90 days in a row.)

- Yes
- No

q2b Did you work an average of 20 or more hours per week (or at least half time of a 40 hour week)? (NOTE: It is okay if the hours varied from week to week)

- Yes
- No

q2c Were you paid at least minimum wage? (NOTE: Minimum wage in Texas is currently $7.25 per hour)

- Yes
- No

q2d Select the job that describes where you spent the most time*:*

- In a company, business, or service with people with and without disabilities (e.g., restaurant, retail store, childcare, construction, Amazon, supermarket, professional office, etc.)
- In the military
- In supported employment (paid work with services and wage support to the employer)
- Self-employed
- In a family business (e.g., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering)
- In sheltered employment (where most workers have disabilities)
- Employed while in jail or prison.
- None of the above (Please describe your job):

  _____

q2e Which of the following helped you get your current or most recent job, if any? *(Select only one.)*

- Former school or LEA (e.g., a former teacher or school leader, job coach, counselor, case manager, etc.)
- Mother/Father, aunt/uncle, sibling, or other family member
- Friend
- State agency (such as the Texas Workforce Commission, Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce Solutions, etc.)
- Community organization (such as Goodwill, Catholic Charities)
- Military recruiter
- Temp agency
- None - I got the job myself
- Other (please describe) _____

PART C: OTHER INFORMATION

Q3. What parts of your high school experience were most helpful in preparing you for **employment** after high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

	I did not participate in this experience.	I participated in this experience and it **was not** helpful.	I participated in this experience and it **was** helpful.
Academic classes (core content areas like math, science, English) (1)	○	○	○
Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes, such as agriculture, computers, welding, EMT training, JROTC, etc. (2)	○	○	○
Work-based learning (such as job shadowing, internships, service learning) (4)	○	○	○
Volunteer work (6)	○	○	○
Extracurricular activities (such as sports, band, clubs, FFA, leadership) (5)	○	○	○
Students' experiences participating in ARD meetings (3)	○	○	○
Specific individual(s) at the school (like a mentor, coach, relationship with a particular teacher, etc.) (10)	○	○	○
Paid work experience (7)	○	○	○
Something else (please describe) (9)	○	○	○

Q8 Did your high school connect you to any of the following agencies for support (while in high school or afterwards)? (Select all that apply.)

- Texas Workforce Commission (a.k.a. Texas Workforce Commission) - Vocational and Rehabilitative services (TWC - VR)
- Blind and Visually Impaired services
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing services
- Mental Health services
- Local IDD Authorities
- Adult Protective Services
- Community Care Services
- Health services
- Social Security Administration
- None of the above
- Other (please specify):

Q6. Which of the following best describes the person filling out this survey:

- I am the student who was sent the survey
- I am a family member of the student who was sent the survey

Q7. Which of the following motivated you to complete this survey:

- Email
- Text message
- Postcard
- Someone from my former school
- Word of mouth
- Phone call
- Social media
- Other (describe) _____