



Kentucky Post School Outcomes Center



2017
Annual Report



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Introduction

The Kentucky Post School Outcomes Center (KyPSO) is the Kentucky Department of Education's contractor for the collection of postschool outcome data. This includes the federal requirement for indicator 14 under IDEA as well as other postschool outcome data that are necessary and appropriate to improve transition services for youth with disabilities throughout the state of Kentucky. Data are collected through the Youth One Year Out (YOYO) former student interview developed by KyPSO and administered by district level personnel who are trained by KyPSO. The YOYO is pre-populated with demographic information provided by the state and asks a series of questions related to postschool employment and education, factors contributing to a student's personal experiences, involvement with agencies, living arrangements, community engagement, and general feedback regarding how their high school prepared them for adult life. All former students who exited public high schools in Kentucky during the 2016-17 school year and had IEP's in place at the time of exit were attempted to be interviewed. Because the YOYO includes student identification numbers KyPSO is able to link findings from the YOYO to other databases to identify malleable factors related to post school success.

Response Rate and Representativeness

The response rate for the 2017 YOYO was 57%. Previous administrations of the YOYO have had response rates between 58% and 60%. We believe that response rates in this range are good for a telephone interview given to young adults, and that our rates are favorable when compared with other states. KyPSO has worked in the past year with the Department of Education as well as school districts to stress the importance of collecting more accurate and up-to-date contact information for exiting students. Doing so will help in alleviating what interviewers report is the leading cause of not being able to conduct interviews, which is not being able to contact students.

KyPSO tracks representativeness of the YOYO by comparing our target population (all eligible former students) to those that responded to the interview. The following table displays how close these two groups were for several important subpopulations. Respondents were fairly representative of the population in terms of gender and disability type, however African-Americans and dropouts were underrepresented. Contacting dropouts has consistently been a problem when collecting postschool outcome data. Because the interview is voluntary for former students there is no way to compel dropouts to respond. Improving contact information will be one potential way of improving responses on dropouts, however it is likely that persons who exited high school by dropping out are less willing to be contacted by their former school district to complete an interview. Recent changes in the state's law which prohibit students from dropping out of school before the age of 18 will likely decrease the number of dropouts in our population. Still, it is important when reviewing YOYO data to keep in

mind that dropouts were underrepresented and therefore the data presented is representative of a sample that is likely to have better outcomes than the overall outcomes of the full population. We also examined geographic representativeness by comparing response rates to population rates in each of the state's nine educational cooperative regions. Seven regions had response rates within three percentage points of their population. One urban region was under-represented by 6.1%, and one mostly rural region was over-represented by 3.5%. This pattern of urban under-representation is not consistent with other urban regions in the state and is related to a single district.

Kentucky YOYO 2017	Target Group	Respondents	difference from target
Female	30.8%	31.1%	0.3%
African-American	15.1%	12.2%	-2.9%
Dropped Out	12.3%	5.2%	-7.2%
Mild / Functional Mental Disability	26.7%	26.6%	-0.1%
Emotional-Behavioral Disability	8.2%	5.8%	-2.4%
Specific Learning Disability	26.8%	28.0%	1.2%

Indicator 14

Federal data collection requirements mandate that states report the “percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEP’s in effect at the time they left school, and were:

- A. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.
- B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
- C. 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” (20 U.S.C. 1416(a) (3) (B).

Definitions

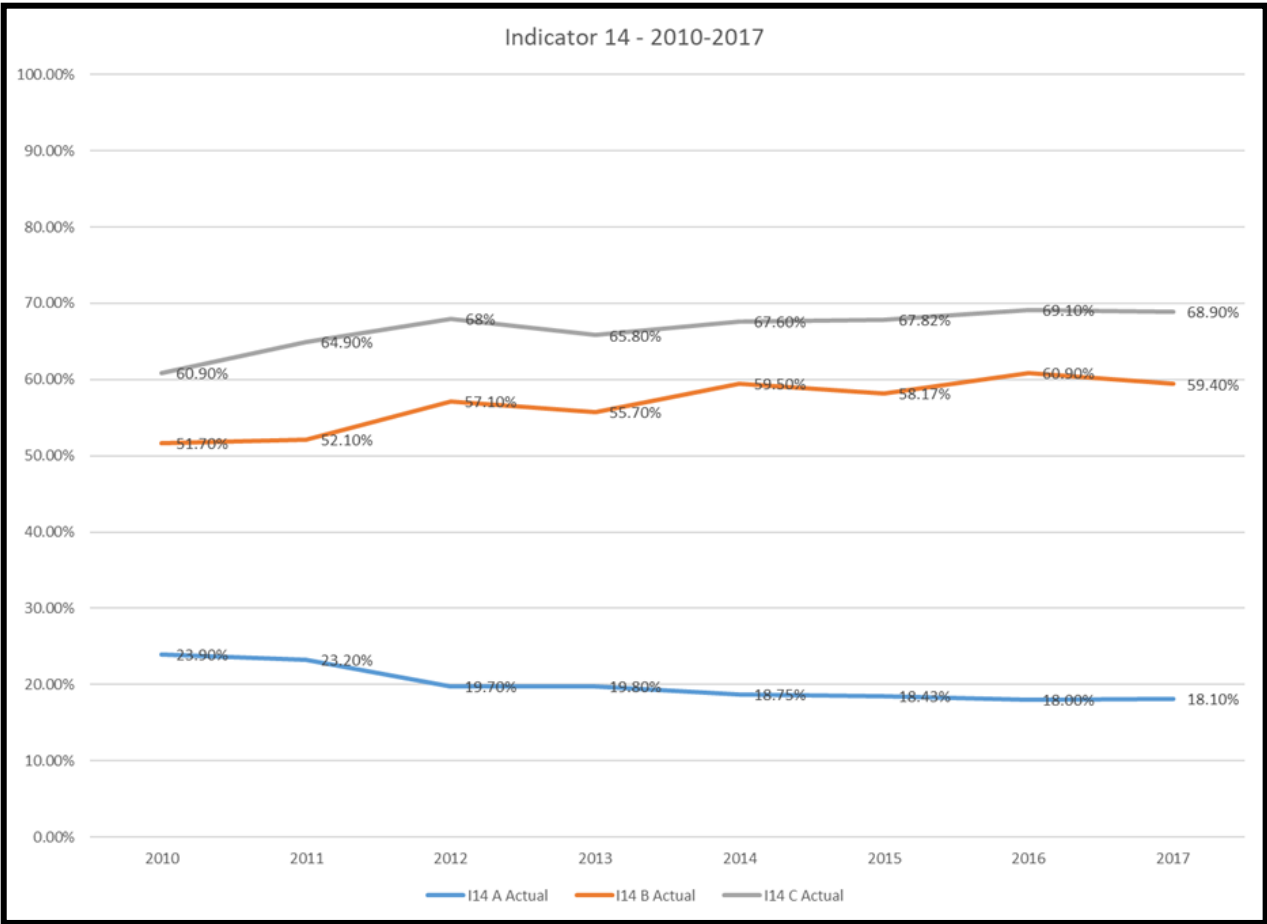
- A. *Enrolled in higher education* means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis in a community college (2-year program) or college/university (4- or more year program) for at least one complete term, at any time in the year since leaving high school.
- B. *Competitive employment* means that youth have 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.
- C. *Enrolled in other postsecondary education or training* means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis for at least 1 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, vocational technical school which is less than a 2-year program).

Some other employment means youth have 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.)

"Former students who received special education" are defined as those students, with IEPs, who exited school one year prior with a standard diploma, a certificate of attainment or alternate diploma, dropping out, or aging out.

2017 YOYO data, based on 2438 respondents show a rate of 18.1% for Indicator 14A, 59.4% for 14B, and 68.9% for 14C. The following chart shows how Indicator 14 data have changed since 2010. 14A, which is solely higher education has seen a slow but steady decrease over this time but remained virtually even in the past year. 14B, which includes competitive employment has improved over this time period, but dropped a bit in the most recent year. 14C has remained consistently between eight and 10 points higher than 14B, which indicates that approximately 10% of former students with IEP’s go on to noncompetitive employment or

postsecondary education that is not a two or four-year college or university within one year of leaving high school. Over 30% of former students report being unengaged in any postschool outcome related to education or employment.



KyPSO believes that it is important to examine the intersection of these two important dimensions of postschool success. The chart below shows how education and employment outcomes intersect. One can see again that 18.1% of former students went on to higher education, but also that many (201) were at the same time competitively employed. Adding in those who were employed non-competitively (63) one can see that over half of those former students who have gone on to higher education are employed in some manner. This number has risen somewhat in the past year. Alternatively, we can see that the majority of those who are competitively employed are not in any school or training program. The implications for this are clear: if a young person is planning on furthering their education after leaving high school, instructional personnel should bear in mind that they will likely be working in some capacity as well. For those with employment as their primary postschool goal it is more likely that they will not additionally be pursuing education after high school.

KENTUCKY 2017	Competitive Employment	Other Employment	No Employment	<i>Education Totals</i>
Higher Education	201 (8.2%)	63 (2.6%)	177 (7.3%)	441 (18.1%)
Other Education	84 (3.4%)	17 (0.7%)	77 (3.2%)	178 (7.3%)
No Post-Secondary Education	923 (37.9%)	137 (5.6%)	759 (31.1%)	1819 (74.6%)
<i>Employment Totals</i>	1208 (49.5%)	217 (8.9%)	1013 (41.6%)	2438 (100.0%)

Disaggregated Outcomes

Whenever possible KyPSO aggregates findings by demographics of interest. The following table considers five non-mutually exclusive outcomes: higher education, other education, competitive employment, other employment and nonengagement. A respondent can, and often does, get counted in both an educational and employment outcome. When examining outcomes by gender we can see that females fare about 5% better than males in terms of educational outcomes while males fare considerably better in terms of employment outcomes. Largely driven by the differences in employment outcomes, females are 9% more likely to be not engaged one year after exiting high school. We cannot tell from our data whether differences and employment outcomes are related to the types of jobs that are available, the type of training that young persons are receiving or some other set of factors. Over two thirds of the former students in our population are male. White students fared better in terms of competitive employment than Black students this year, a trend that has not been seen in our data previously. African American students were more likely to be non-competitively employed than were White students. Hispanic students had far better competitive employment outcomes (nearly 70%) than any other sub-group we examined. Although this was not the case last year, Hispanic students have tended to have more positive outcomes in other years. African-American students continue to outperform White students in enrollment in higher education, while Hispanic students had poorer outcomes in educational categories. The small number of Hispanic respondents (53) allows for greater variability in these rates, and combined with their exceptional employment outcomes should not be cause for alarm. Higher

education rates for African-Americans have exceeded those of Whites for students with IEP's exiting in Kentucky ever since the YOYO first began. KyPSO staff have attempted to isolate the cause for this and have not yet been able to do so. One potential hypothesis is that African-American students are over identified for special education and thus have outcomes more representative of students without IEP's. However, our attempts to analyze this have not shown a correlation between identification rates at the district level and outcomes. Further, the phenomenon seems to be specific to higher education as employment levels have historically been very similar. Not surprisingly, nonengagement rates for whites are the highest (32%) while rates for African-Americans are 29% and the rate for Hispanics is the lowest at 17%. There were not enough former students of other ethnicities to be included in this table.

Differences in outcomes based on a former student's primary disability classification are striking. Due to space limitations we have only included four disability types in the table below. Students with Specific Learning Disabilities fare better in terms of both higher education and competitive employment, and are the least likely to be not engaged. Students with Functional Mental Disabilities fare poorly in both higher education and competitive employment. They are however the most likely to engage in "other employment" which is often based in a segregated setting. Almost three-fourths of students with FMD are not engaged in any educational or employment outcome. Although the numbers for students with FMD enrolled in higher education are discouragingly low it is important to note that there are some students with this disability that have managed to enroll in higher education. Perhaps the most interesting disability is autism. In terms of higher education persons with autism have among the best outcomes (23.83%). However, rates for competitive employment among respondents with autism are among the worst at 16.9%. For most disability types these two outcomes are positively correlated with each other, for persons with autism the opposite is true. Persons with orthopedic impairments follow a similar pattern with 45% going on to higher education while none went on to competitive employment this year. Persons classified as having multiple disabilities have poor outcomes on both dimensions (5% higher education, 17.5% competitive employment). Respondents classified as having "Other Health Impairments" have generally positive outcomes (22.2% higher education, 58% competitive employment). Most other disability types have too few respondents in order to make meaningful inferences about their outcomes.

A final way in which KyPSO disaggregated outcomes is based on manner of exit. Because students who exited by aging out and those who exited by receiving alternate diplomas are indistinguishable based on our data we combine them into a single category. It is fair to assume that all members of this group are on the alternate diploma track. It is not surprising that those who graduated with a regular diploma have the best outcomes. Students who exited high school by dropping out are obviously very unlikely to enroll in higher education, but have considerably higher competitive employment rates than those who exited from the alternate diploma track. More than two-thirds of students on the alternate diploma track are unengaged a year after exiting high school. These trends have remained in place for several years.

Outcome	Higher Ed	Other Ed	Competitively Employed	Other Employed	Not Engaged	Total
<i>Gender</i>						
Male	16.6%	6.9%	54.1%	8.2%	28.3%	1679
Female	21.5%	8.2%	39.4%	10.5%	37.4%	759
<i>Race /ethnicity</i>						
White	17.9%	7.7%	49.9%	8.3%	31.6%	2024
African American / Black	20.5%	5.0%	46.0%	13.4%	28.9%	298
Hispanic	17.0%	1.9%	69.8%	7.5%	17.0%	53
<i>Disability Category</i>						
SLD	24.3%	7.2%	66.5%	7.2%	16.5%	683
EBD	13.5%	4.3%	48.9%	7.1%	37.6%	141
MMD	8.0%	6.8%	46.6%	8.0%	37.8%	498
FMD	0.7%	5.3%	6.0%	15.9%	72.2%	151
Autism	23.8%	8.1%	16.9%	13.1%	47.5%	160
<i>Manner of Exit</i>						
Regular Diploma	21.30%	7.50%	55.3%	8.4%	24.8%	2061
Alt. Diploma / Aged Out	0.10%	6.3%	9.2%	12.7%	72.1%	251
Dropped Out	0	6.3%	36.5%	8.7%	52.4%	126

Follow-Up Questions Related to Employment and Unemployment

One of the strengths of the YOYO is that it allows us to probe deeper into a young person's outcomes. We recognize that according to the federal definition a person could be considered employed (either competitively or noncompetitively) if they worked for 90 days since leaving high school even if they did not remain employed until the time of the interview. For those respondents who indicated that they had been employed since leaving high school we asked if they were still working. 82% of those who responded that they had been working since high school were still employed at the time of interview, meaning that 54% overall were working for pay at that time.

Much of a young person with a disability's ability to find and maintain a job can be dependent upon employment supports. We asked respondents who indicated that they have been employed since leaving high school whether or not they received any of the following support/accommodations at their job: Job Coach; Personal Assistant; Special Equipment; or other accommodations. 13% of the respondents who had been employed indicated that they had used a job coach. Very few indicated the use of a personal assistant or special equipment.

We also asked respondents who had been employed how interesting they found their job. 62% indicated that they found it very or somewhat interesting, while only 10% indicated that they found it not very interesting or not interesting at all.

Students who reported that they had not been employed since exiting high school, we asked them an additional question: What is the main reason you are not working or not working more hours? Fifteen percent of the respondents stated that they are going to school, 12% stated that they are looking for a job or they have not been able to find a job, 9% reported severity of their disability as the reason, and 7% reported that they are pregnant, taking care of their child, or taking care of a family member. Other respondents mentioned reasons that included joining the military, lack of transportation, receiving disability benefits, attending adult day training programs, not interested in working, not ready for work yet, and taking a break before enrolling in college. A large number of respondents indicated severity of disability as a reason for not working, which suggests that parents and students may not be aware of employment possibilities for individuals with

disabilities. They may not have the resources and supports for accommodations needed to work as a valuable member of their community. Further education and supports may be needed at the secondary education level to encourage parents and young people with disabilities to transition to employment after graduation.

Another question we asked was whether respondents contacted the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation since leaving high school. For respondents who contacted OVR, we asked what kind of help they were getting. The majority of respondents who contacted OVR reported receiving assistance with finances (17%) and pre-employment services (30%) such as career counseling, job search, and job placement. Other assistance received from OVR included: job coaching, job training, supported employment, assistance with postsecondary education, and accommodations. Results indicated that only 16% of respondents had contact with OVR. Given that a significant number of respondents indicated that they could benefit from resources and supports (e.g., assistance with job search, job coaching) that would have made it possible for them to work, it is unclear why they have not accessed these services from OVR. More education and communication about OVR with students and parents may improve utilization of OVR services.

Follow-Up Questions Related to Postsecondary Education

For respondents who indicated that they had gone on to some form of postsecondary education we ask them what type of school or training program they had enrolled in. The highest number (42%) indicated that they had enrolled in a two-year college. Another 23% indicated a four-year college. 15% indicated enrollment in a Vocational School. 12% indicated that they were enrolled in some type of short-term program, while 3% indicated that they were pursuing some form of adult education or GED.

We also asked what degree they expected to get when they were finished with school. 29% indicated a Bachelor's degree and 25% indicated that they were pursuing an Associate's degree. 21% indicated that they were in a certificate program, while 12% indicated that they were not degree seeking, including those who were auditing classes.

To understand experiences of students who were attending postsecondary education we asked additional questions. When asked what, if any, problems they have faced in their postsecondary school/training

program, 39% of students reported that they did not experience any problems. However, 10% of respondents stated that they had academic problems (e.g., difficulties with coursework), 8% reported that they had difficulty accessing needed supports (e.g., transportation, financial aid, accommodations), and 6% reported having difficulty adjusting to college life (e.g., lack of social support, work-school balance). Other problems they experienced included becoming a parent, not being able to get services from OVR, mental or medical problems, difficulty coordinating services, difficulty with choosing a major, large class sizes, and the pace of lectures.

These difficulties may have been mitigated by supports from disability services coordinators. Yet, only 44% of those who are going on to postsecondary education had contacted their Disability Services Coordinator. This number has been going down slightly over the years that we have been measuring it, and we believe it is an important indicator for educators to be aware of. There are obvious incentives for a young person to not disclose their disability on a college campus, however it is important to realize the services and accommodations that may not be available to someone who chooses not to do so. We also asked young people who are enrolled in postsecondary education where they live when their school is in session. 65% indicated that they live with their family. While it is tempting to believe that “going to college” involves a residential experience whereby young persons may learn valuable social skills including independent living while in a relatively safe environment, educators should be aware that for two thirds of this population their residence is likely the same as it was while they were in high school.

For students who did not go on to postsecondary education we followed up by asking the reasons for not continuing their education. Twenty-five percent of the respondents stated that they did not want to go to school, while another 25% said that they needed to work. Some respondents explained that they wanted to work and save money to go back to school later. Many respondents reported that they wanted to work to take a break from school, but they planned to go back to school later. Other reasons for not enrolling in postsecondary education included: medical problems, severity of their disability, not having a high school diploma, not having financial assistance or affordability of school, joining the military, taking a break from school and work, pregnancy or caring for child or other family members, incarceration, social anxiety, not interested in moving away from family, and not having assistance from OVR. A number of students reported

that their parent or guardian did not want them to go to school, while a few respondent said that they are “not smart enough for school.” Similar to employment options, more accommodations and supports may be needed to increase enrollment in postsecondary education. Additionally, mentorship and encouragement from teachers and counselors during high school may improve self-efficacy and increase young people’s interest in pursuing higher education. Parents may need to be educated on the availability of accommodations, support services, and the importance of integrating their child into the larger community so that they can be a productive member of the society.

For respondents who indicated that they left high school, we asked them to share the reasons they left high school without graduating. Some respondents said that they had low motivation or did not like going to school (26%), missed too many school days (7%), and were behind in classes (14%). Others reported having health (mental, behavioral, physical) problems (19%) and personal or family related issues that led to their drop out (16%).

Community Participation

KyPSO has long wanted to be able to get a firm grasp on a young person’s level of community participation. Two items that we think are relevant are whether or not a young person has a driver’s license, and whether they are registered to vote. 52% of our respondents indicated that they did have a driver’s license (up 1% from last year), while 59% indicated that they were registered to vote. Although the national trend for young persons with driver’s licenses has been dropping for years, the rate of our respondents is well below the overall national average (with and without disabilities) of 69% (Sievak and Schoettle, 2016). Our population may be ahead of the general population in terms of voter registration however, as Kentucky’s general population of 18-24 year-olds report a 42% registration rate (US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey 2014). This also represents a substantial increase from last year’s figure of voter registration. While our population may be less engaged than their non-disabled peers, our data suggest that they are not less interested. We also asked respondents where they lived for most of the past year. The vast majority (78%) indicated that they live with their family. 6% indicated that they live with a spouse or partner. 5% indicated that they live with friends, while another 4% indicated that they live alone. 6% indicated that they lived most of the previous year in a

college dormitory or military housing. Roughly 1% indicated that they lived in a foster/group home, a shelter/correctional facility, or had unknown whereabouts.

A surprisingly low number (16%) indicated that they worked with someone from an employment agency such as OVR. It may be the case the young persons simply do not know who it is that they are working with, but this low number suggests that exiting students would benefit from increased level of involvement with support personnel.

The YOYO also included a question about life after high school. Students were asked to state the most important thing from high school that helped with their life after high school. The majority of students reported that the help and encouragement they received from teachers and other staff (e.g., coaches, guidance counselors, speech therapists, principals) were most helpful. They reportedly benefited greatly from many of their classes, particularly math, English, agriculture, welding, and other trade school classes where they had the opportunity for hands-on learning. Students also highlighted the benefits of the social aspect of high school including support from friends, social interactions, and involvement in extracurricular activities. Others stated that they liked the smaller classes, accommodations, getting extra support from teachers and support staff, social skills training, having a schedule, and earning their high school diploma.

Part of the YOYO involves the interviewer having the opportunity to share information with the respondent. We ask that interviewers note at the end of the interview what it is that they have shared. 46% indicate that they have shared information about Vocational Rehabilitation. This is encouraging, not only because it is hopeful that these young persons will then get the supports that they may be lacking, but because it indicates that school systems and their personnel are still invested in their former students with disabilities. Another 20% of interviews ended with the interviewer giving information about their special education transition consultant, which KyPSO recommends is the go to resource when an interviewer is unsure where to direct a respondent. 14% of interviews provided information about employment, and 17% gave information about higher education. Smaller numbers gave information about the Michelle P waiver or Medicare/Medicaid. 19% voluntarily gave the respondent their own information to be used if they needed a resource.

Several quotes from respondents provided additional insight into the transition experience of youth with disabilities are presented below:

When asked to name the most important thing during high school that helped them, one respondent stated “my teacher, Mrs. Megan for having faith in me and not giving up on me when I made big mistakes.”

Another respondent said that he left high school without graduating because he “fell so far behind, [he] felt that there was no alternative.”

One student said the main reason she is not working or not working more hours is that she takes care of [her] little brother so my mom can work.”

“Students not bullying him” would have helped one respondent stay in school.

When asked if they faced any problems in their post-secondary school or training program, one person said it is “hard to find time to study and work.”

For one respondent, the main reason they did not go on to post-secondary education is “I don't have the money or transportation to go anywhere.”

ILP Data

Because we were able to link YOYO data to the ILP Senior survey we were able to examine in school factors which were correlated with positive postschool outcomes for students with IEP's. While many factors were found to be positively correlated with outcomes (self-determination, planning for postschool education or employment, feelings of readiness in specific subjects), others were not (finding classes to be challenging, feeling engaged, courses related to practical living, science and arts and humanities). Currently working while in high school was the strongest positive predictor of postschool competitive employment. Feeling ready to go on to college, and having access to advanced coursework were the two strongest predictors of enrollment in higher education.

Access to these data also allows us to draw comparisons between students with and without IEP's. Students with IEP's reported being significantly more likely to indicate that a process exists to assist in postsecondary planning. However, students with IEP's were only half as likely to plan to go to a four-year college but more likely to plan to go to two-year colleges, community colleges and directly enter the workforce than students without IEP's. Students with IEP's were lower and measures of self-determination, such as feeling less in control of their lives in being less able to make decisions about their lives, than students without IEP's.

Conclusion

Given the number of years for which we have consistent data we are able to speak with greater certainty

about developing trends. The findings from this year's analysis might best be viewed as a correction, or normalization in patterns established from previous years. Prior to this year, the trend seemed to be that young persons are more and more likely to go on to competitive employment outcomes while they are somewhat less likely to go onto education outcomes. This year we saw a very slight improvement in education outcomes and a decrease in employment outcomes. While it is still the case that students with IEP's enroll in postsecondary education initially at levels of less than a four-year college or university, it appears that more are expecting to eventually obtain a four-year degree. The decrease in employment outcomes seems to be related to competitive employment, while noncompetitive employment has remained steady and among some subgroups (particularly African-Americans) has increased. Disparities exist in many outcomes related to gender and disability type as well and we are hopeful that this report highlights some of these and will allow educators to make informed decisions to help students succeed. KyPSO staff are available to work with districts, co-ops and the state to identify best practices based on data.

We are hopeful that improved contact information will increase both our response rate and the ability to be representative of our population. We must recognize however that we are all limited by the quality of contact information that districts collect. We also recognize that many students do change contact information and often simply do not wish to be contacted by their former school. Encouraging district personnel to make an effort to get the most appropriate contact information, including information from emergency contacts can only help to increase the interviewer's ability to successfully complete an interview. KyPSO has dramatically changed its reporting system this year in ways that we believe will help both educators and related service providers greater access to data from which to make decisions upon. Statewide data which show the intersection of education and employment outcomes are publicly available from our website (kypso.org). These data are able to be disaggregated by gender, race/ethnicity, disability category and manner of exit. For those educators who have created accounts with our system and are eligible to view more granular data, we have made reports available at the district and coop levels which include a detailed analysis of the items in this report. This reporting system is new and is still in its final stages of development. Our staff have been working with districts to show them how to use this reporting system and together feedback on ways to make it more useful for them.

The possibility of greater in-school data collection is promising. KyPSO it is well situated to coordinate such collection and offer technical assistance to districts for the purposes of data based transition planning.

Although our data are unique to the state of Kentucky many of the best practices related to secondary transitions hold true throughout the United States and elsewhere. We have been praised by our national partners as being among the most innovative in terms of data collection and reporting. We rely heavily on the National Technical Assistance Center for Transition (NT ACT) for our knowledge regarding best practices. We have a great deal of expertise both within KyPSO and HDI at working with schools and school systems, as well as other stakeholders and hope that we will continue to have opportunities to work at all levels to improve transition outcomes for students exiting high school with disabilities.