

**2019 Connecticut Post-School Outcomes Survey (PSOS)  
2017-2018 School Year Exiters of Special Education Services**

**Final Report**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Indicator 14 Criteria

In 2009, Indicator 14 (Post-School Outcomes) of the State Performance Plan (SPP) was revised at the federal level to reflect the critical importance of postsecondary education on student quality of life after leaving school. The indicator requires the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to collect data on three separate progressively inclusive percentages reflecting individuals who are no longer in secondary school but who had individualized education programs (IEPs) in effect at the time they left school (Exiters). These are the percentage of students who are:

- 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; or
- C.) Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

This report discusses the results of the 2019 CT Post-School Outcome Survey (PSOS) conducted by the University of Connecticut (UConn) under contract with the CSDE to determine 2017-2018 school year Exiter outcomes regarding Indicator 14 requirements. A description of the survey methods, results, and how percentages were calculated follows.

In the 2017-2018 school year, 5,236 students left special education services in Local Education Agencies (LEAs) across the State of Connecticut due to one of the following reasons: (a) graduation with a standard diploma, (b) obtaining a Certificate of

Completion, (c) reaching maximum age of eligibility for special education services, or (d) dropping out of school.

Starting on June 21, 2019, each Exiter was mailed a survey (see Appendix A) sponsored by the CSDE to obtain follow-up information on student post-school outcomes targeted for at least one year after exiting public school. In addition to a paper survey, Exiters were mailed information providing them the option of completing the survey online. The survey included items organized into three broad categories: 1) *Postsecondary Education and Training Status*; 2) *Employment Status*; and 3) *Additional Information*.

Survey data were collected via five methods: (1) a paper survey mailed to Exiters at three different time points in 2019 (June 21<sup>st</sup> and September 11<sup>th</sup>); (2) two waves of phone surveys administered by a team of four UConn Graduate Assistants (October 17<sup>th</sup> and October 18<sup>th</sup> between the hours of 4:30 pm and 8:00 pm); (3) an online survey that could be accessed using a link provided within the paper survey; (4) a link to an online survey that was sent via text to Exiters (June 27<sup>th</sup>, July 9<sup>th</sup>, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, August 20<sup>th</sup>, November 9<sup>th</sup>, November 16<sup>th</sup>); and (5) a link to an online survey that was sent via email to Exiters (June 27<sup>th</sup>, July 9<sup>th</sup>, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, August 20<sup>th</sup>, November 8<sup>th</sup>, November 16<sup>th</sup>). Regarding phone calls, the districts that had the lowest response rates at that time and had at least 10 Exiters were selected. The UConn team then used district/state provided phone numbers to contact these individuals in order to collect responses.

In total, 460 surveys were returned. Among these, 12 surveys were considered to be invalid (e.g., surveys were returned blank or partially completed), which brought the total of valid responses to 448. Additionally, a total of 769 unopened envelopes were

returned by the postal service as undeliverable due to incorrect or outdated address information. In adjusting for the returned incorrect addresses, the response rate is calculated to be 10.06% (5,236 total Exiters – 769 undeliverable surveys – 12 invalid responses = 4,455 adjusted Exiters; 448 responses / 4,455 x 100).

### **Respondent Characteristics**

Sixty-five percent of the respondents were males (65.4%). Approximately 67.9% were White, followed by 13.4% who were Hispanic/Latino of any race, and 10.7% who were Black or African American. The largest group of responders was comprised of those with Learning Disability and LD/Dyslexia (33.0%), OHI and OHI-ADD/ADHD (22.5%), Autism (17.0%), and Emotional Disturbance (12.3%). The vast majority of the respondents graduated with a diploma (94.9%), followed by those who dropped out of school (2.9%), those who reached the maximum age for services (1.1%), and those who received a certificate of completion (1.1%).

### **Indicator 14 Results**

#### ***A: Percent enrolled in higher education = 46.7%***

In accordance with federal guidelines, this percentage was calculated based on respondent results as follows: the number of individuals who are no longer in secondary school, who had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and who are/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 divided by the number of individuals who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, multiplied by 100.

***B: Percent enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school = 65.9%***

In accordance with federal guidelines, this percentage was calculated based on respondent results as follows: the number of individuals who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and who are/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 OR the number of individuals who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and are/have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of at least 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school minus the number of individuals who meet both of these criteria (in higher education and competitively employed) divided by the number of individuals who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, multiplied by 100.

***C: Percent enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment = 79.9%***

In accordance with federal guidelines, this percentage was calculated based on respondent results as follows: the number of individuals who are in higher education (see above) AND the number of individuals who are/have been enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis in an education or training program for at least one complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school AND the number of individuals who are competitively employed (see above) AND the number of individuals who are/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 minus the number of individuals who meet multiple criteria for these categories divided by the number of respondents who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, multiplied by 100.

## Methodology

### Survey Development

The survey was designed to gather information related to Indicator 14 (Post-School Outcomes) of the State Performance Plan (SPP) which specifically requests data from a population of individuals who are no longer in secondary school but who had IEPs in effect at the time they left school (Exiters). Primary data gathered include the percentage of individuals:

- 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; or
- C.) Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

Results and a description of how each of these percentages were calculated are presented below for the 2017-2018 school year Exiter data.

### Survey Instrument

The survey instrument used for the 2019 CT Post-School Outcome Survey (PSOS) is four pages long and consists of 12 items (see Appendix A). The 12 items on the instrument cover three main categories: (a) *Postsecondary Education* (2 questions); (b) *Employment Status* (3 questions); and (c) *Additional Information* (7 questions). Seven items contain a stem followed by a list of options from which the respondent can select either the most appropriate single response, or all responses that apply. One item is a 5-point Likert Scale item which asks individuals about their degree of life satisfaction since

leaving secondary school. Another item asks individuals to select from a list which skills that they learned during their time in school. The final three items on the survey are open-ended and offer the respondent an opportunity to provide feedback about the following questions: “What part of your high school education was most helpful in getting you ready for life after you left high school?”; “What could your high school have done differently to prepare you for life after school?”; and, “Was there anything confusing or unclear about this survey?”

A cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and inviting individuals to participate was drafted. This letter explained that the completed surveys would be sent to the Principal Investigator (PI), Dr. Allison Lombardi, at the University of Connecticut, for analysis. The letter also outlined the respondent’s rights and protections as a survey participant, and indicated that completion and return of the survey is an expression of consent to participate. The completed survey instrument and cover letter were submitted to the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) in the spring of 2019. A letter from the IRB approving the survey materials was received on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

### **Participants**

The participants for this survey consisted of 5,236 individuals who had exited special education from LEAs across the State of Connecticut during the 2017-2018 school year. Data reflecting responses from these individuals is reported in December of each year to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), Performance Office. The CSDE provided the name, address, gender, exceptionality, ethnicity, and reason for exit to the UConn team via a password protected file. It should be noted that this data set is the source of the demographic information described later in this report.

Each survey contained a unique respondent code and completed surveys could be linked to this code to allow demographic information and survey responses to be joined for the purposes of analysis. Although the two data sets could be linked, for the purposes of the CT Post-School Outcome Survey (PSOS), all data analyses were conducted in a summative manner at the group, rather than the individual level.

### **Data Collection**

Survey data was collected via five processes: paper surveys, online paper surveys, text messages, emails, and phone calls. The first paper mailing consisting of 4,908 surveys was sent on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to all Exiters who did not have a phone number or email listed in the data set. A second wave of paper mailings consisting of 4,458 surveys was sent on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to all Exiters who had not yet completed the survey. Each mailed paper survey also contained information regarding how individuals could complete the survey online if desired. This method was called “online paper survey.”

Exiters with a phone number listed in the data set (a total of 1,124 Exiters) were texted a link to the electronic survey on June 27<sup>th</sup>, July 9<sup>th</sup>, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, August 20<sup>th</sup>, November 9<sup>th</sup>, and November 16<sup>th</sup>. If Exiters completed the survey, they were not texted again in a following wave.

Exiters with an email listed in the data set (a total of 463 Exiters) were emailed a link to the electronic survey on June 27<sup>th</sup>, July 9<sup>th</sup>, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, August 20<sup>th</sup>, November 8<sup>th</sup>, and November 16<sup>th</sup>. If Exiters completed the survey, they were not emailed again in a following wave.

**UConn Call Team Procedures.** On October 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> between the hours of 4:30 pm and 8:00 pm, the UConn team made phone calls in an attempt to collect

survey responses. In total, the call team called 519 Exiters, and collected 27 complete surveys. The selected Exiters were from the districts with the lowest response rates, and with at least 10 total Exiters, as of October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Exiter phone numbers were often inaccurate, out of service, and/or the individual did not respond.

### **Completed Surveys by Method**

From the paper surveys, online paper surveys, texts, emails, and calls, a total of 460 surveys were returned. Among these, 12 surveys were deemed invalid (e.g., surveys were returned blank or partially completed), which brought the total of valid responses to 448. Additionally, a total of 769 unopened envelopes were returned by the postal service as undeliverable due to incorrect or outdated address information. In adjusting for the returned incorrect addresses, the response rate is calculated to be 10.06% (448 responses / 4,455 x 100).

The data collected via the paper survey (n=317) accounted for 70.8% of the overall response rate and 9.4% (n=42) of this portion of response was accounted for by the online paper surveys. The data collected via the text messages (n=41) accounted for 9.2% of the response rate, the data collected via email (n=21) accounted for 4.7% of the response rate, and the data collected via phone call (n=27) accounted for 6.0% of the response rate.

### **Data Analysis**

Frequency analyses were conducted on each item for all respondents collectively (see Tables 1-15 below). Because the majority of the data was categorical (i.e., Yes/No), selected variables were analyzed using chi-square analysis techniques. It should be noted that although several of the analyses yielded significant results, many had small effect

sizes or expected frequencies within cells that were so low as to raise concerns about the validity of the results. In some cases, cells were collapsed to allow comparisons. Only analyses that displayed effect sizes (as indicated by Cramér's V) approaching a medium level ( $> .20$ ) and that had sufficient cell sizes are presented in the following results.

## RESULTS

### Descriptive Information

**Disability type.** The most common exceptionalities of the respondents were as follows: Learning Disability and LD/Dyslexia (33.0%), OHI and OHI-ADD/ADHD (22.5%), Autism (17.0%), and Emotional Disturbance (12.3%). For additional information, see Table 1 below.

Table 1  
Disability Type

Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Learning Disability and LD/Dyslexia	148	33.0%
OHI and OHI-ADD/ADHD	101	22.5%
Autism	76	17.0%
Emotional Disturbance	55	12.3%
Intellectual Disability	24	5.4%
Speech/Language Impairment	10	2.2%
Other Disability (Multiple Disabilities, Hearing Impairment, TBI, Visual Impairment, Orthopedic Impairment, Deaf/Blindness)	34	7.6%
Total	448	100.0%

**Exit reason.** The largest group of respondents were those who graduated with a regular high school diploma (94.9%), followed by those who dropped out (2.9%). For additional information, see Table 2 below.

Table 2  
Reason for Exit

Year	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Graduated with Regular High School Diploma	425	94.9%
Dropped Out	13	2.9%
Reached Maximum Age of Eligibility	*	*
Certificate of Completion	*	*
Total	448	100.0%

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

**Ethnicity, gender.** Of the 448 respondents, the majority (67.9%) were “White”, followed by “Hispanic/Latino of any race” (13.4%) and “Black or African American” (10.7%). There were more male respondents (65.4%) than female respondents (34.6%). For additional information, see Tables 3 and 4 below.

Table 3  
Comparison of Respondents in Sample versus Total Exiters: Gender

Gender	Respondents		Total Exiters	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Male	293	65.4%	3454	66.0%
Female	155	34.6%	1782	34.0%
Total	448	100%	5236	100.0%

Table 4  
Comparison of Respondents in Sample versus Total Exiters: Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Respondents		Total Exiters	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
White	304	67.9%	2633	50.3%
Hispanic/Latino of any race	60	13.4%	1426	27.2%
Black or African American	48	10.7%	944	18.0%
Two or More Races	19	4.2%	106	2.0%
Asian	15	3.3%	98	1.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native	*	*	*	*
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*
Total	448	100.0%	5236	100.0%

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

### Postsecondary Education and Training

Question 2 on the survey asked respondents: “Since leaving high school, have you enrolled in any type of school for at least one term (including a quarter, semester, inter-session, summer or online)?” Four options were provided: (1) Yes, I am a full-time student (12 or more credits per semester); (2) Yes, I am a part-time student (less than 12 credits per semester); (3) No, I enrolled but I did not complete one full term, and; (4) No,



I have never enrolled in postsecondary education or in a training program. Respondents were instructed to select only one option. 38.8% reported being a full-time student and 18.1% reported being a part-time student. Additionally, 36.8% reported never having enrolled in postsecondary education or in a training program. For additional information, see Table 5 below.

Table 5

Question 2: *Since leaving high school, have you enrolled in any type of school for at least one term (including a quarter, semester, inter-session, summer or online)?*

Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes, I am a full-time student (12 or more credits per semester)	174	38.8%
Yes, I am a part-time student (less than 12 credits per semester)	81	18.1%
No, I enrolled but I did not complete one full term	*	*
No, I have never enrolled in postsecondary education or in a training program	165	36.8%
No Response	*	*
Total	448	100.0%

*Note:* Responders chose one answer for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

**Type of program attended.** Respondents who reported enrollment in a postsecondary or training program were asked to specify the type of program from a list of six options provided. There was also an “other” option, and respondents were asked to provide an open-ended response. Individuals were allowed to provide multiple responses to this item, thus the total number of responses (268) were greater than the total number of respondents (n=448). The response “Four-year college or university” (48.5%) and “Two-year community college” (29.9%) were most common, followed by “Vocational, Technical, or Trade school” (9.7%). For additional information, see Table 6 below.

Table 6

If yes to Question 2 (Table 5), answer Question 3: *What type of school did you attend?*  
(*Check all that apply*)

Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Four-year college or university	130	48.5%
Two-year community college	80	29.9%
Vocational, Technical, or Trade School	26	9.7%
Adult Education	10	3.7%
Postgraduate or College Prep Program	*	*
Short-term education or job training program	8	3.0%
Other	7	2.6%
No Response	*	*
Total	268	100.0%

*Note:* Responders were allowed to choose multiple answers for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

### **Level of Employment**

Question 4 of the survey asked the respondents “Since leaving high school, have you been employed for at least three months? (it does not have to be in a row)”.

Responders were asked to choose one option from a list of five options provided. 17.2% of individuals indicated that they had been employed full-time (thirty-five hours or more per week), 21.0% reported being employed part-time and working between twenty and thirty-four hours a week, and 20.8% responded that they worked part-time, but for less than twenty hours per week. 34.6% reported that they had never been employed since leaving high school. For additional information, see Table 7 below.

If the respondent indicated that they had been employed at some time since high school (on Question 4), they were asked to select the best description of their most recent job from a list of seven options. There was also an “other” option, and respondents were asked to provide an open-ended response. Individuals were allowed to provide multiple responses to this item, thus the total number of responses (280) were greater than the total number of respondents (n=448). For additional information, see Table 8 below.

Table 7

Question 4: *Since leaving high school, have you been employed for at least 3 months (it does not have to be in a row)?*

Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes, Full-time (average 35 hours or more per week)	77	17.2%
Yes, Part-Time (average 20 - 34 hours per week)	94	21.0%
Yes, Part-Time (less than an average of 20 hours per week)	93	20.8%
No, I have been employed, but for less than three months	*	*
No, I have not been employed	155	34.6%
No Response	*	*
Total	448	100.0%

*Note:* Responders chose one answer for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

Table 8

If yes to Question 4 (Table 7), answer Question 6: *Please select the best description of your most recent job. (Check all that apply)*

Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
For an employer (in a company with people with and without disabilities)	222	79.3%
In the military (e.g., Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard)	*	*
Self-employed	7	2.5%
In your family's business (e.g., a farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering)	13	4.6%
In supported employment (paid work with services and wage support to the employer)	9	3.2%
In sheltered employment (where most workers have disabilities)	10	3.6%
Employed while in jail or prison	*	*
Other	11	3.9%
No Response	*	*
Total	280	100.0%

*Note:* Responders were allowed to choose multiple answers for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

**Salary.** If the respondent indicated that they had been employed at some time since high school (on Question 4), they were also asked “How much did you earn at your most recent job?” This question was designed to capture the percentage of respondents who were competitively employed, as specified in Indicator 14. Responders were asked

to select one option from a list of three options provided. In total, 93.9% of the respondents selected earning at or above the minimum wage (\$10.10 per hour at the time of the survey administration). Of this group, 56.8% reported hourly earnings above minimum wage and 37.1% reported earning minimum wage. For additional information, see Table 9 below.

Table 9

If yes to Question 4 (Table 7), answer Question 5: *How much did you earn at your most recent job?*

Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Below minimum wage (less than \$10.10/hour)	*	*
Minimum wage (\$10.10/hour)	98	37.1%
Above minimum wage (greater than \$10.10/hour)	150	56.8%
No Response	*	*
Total	264	100.0%

*Note:* Responders chose one answer for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

### **Adult Participation**

To further assess engagement of young adults, the following question was asked: “Are you taking part in any of the following?” Four options, a choice of “none of the above”, and a choice of “other” were provided. If other was selected, responders were asked to provide an open ended response. Individuals were allowed to provide multiple response to this item, thus the total number of responses (470) were greater than the total number of respondents (n=448). 13.4% participated in volunteer work or community service, 6.4% participated in an adult day service program, 3.8% participated in an adult day vocational program, and 1.7% participated in an independent living skills program. For additional information, see Table 10 below.

Table 10

Question 8: *Are you taking part in any of the following? (Check all that apply)*

Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Adult day service programs	30	6.4%
Adult day vocational programs	18	3.8%
Independent living skills programs	8	1.7%
Volunteer work or community service	63	13.4%
None of the above	326	69.4%
Other	14	3.0%
No Response	11	2.3%
Total	470	100.0%

*Note:* Responders were allowed to choose multiple answers for this question.

### **Contact with Adult Agencies and Services**

The remaining questions that have been part of recent Connecticut post-school surveys go beyond the requirements of Indicator 14. The first question asks if the respondents received services through any of eight state-based adult agencies and/or through their college/university since high school. There was also an “other” option, and respondents were asked to provide an open-ended response. The respondents were allowed to select all choices that applied. If the respondents did not use any of the agencies listed, they could either select “No, services were not necessary,” “No, did not want to use any services,” or “No, did not know any services were available.”

The most commonly selected response was “Yes” (indicating services were received) (45.1%), followed by “No, services were not necessary” (29.0%), “No, did not know any services were available” (17.9%), and “No, did not want to use any services” (8.0%). The most commonly selected agencies of those who selected “Yes” were Services at my college or university (18.9%) and the Department of Developmental Services (18.9%), followed by the Social Security Administration (17.9%), Department

of Social Services (14.3%), and Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (13.1%). For additional information, see Table 11 below.

Table 11

Question 7: *Have you used any of these agencies since leaving high school?*

Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
<b>Yes (<i>check all that apply below</i>)</b>	202	45.1%
<i>Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB)</i>	*	*
<i>Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)</i>	43	13.1%
<i>Department of Developmental Services (DDS)</i>	62	18.9%
<i>Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)</i>	11	3.3%
<i>Department of Labor (DOL)</i>	12	3.7%
<i>Department of Public Health (DPH)</i>	*	*
<i>Department of Social Services (DSS)</i>	47	14.3%
<i>Social Security Administration (SSA)</i>	59	17.9%
<i>Services at my college or university</i>	62	18.9%
<i>Other</i>	21	6.4%
<i>Total</i>	329	100.0%
No; Services were not necessary	130	29.0%
No; Did not want to use any services	36	8.0%
No; Did not know any services were available	80	17.9%
No Response	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	448	100.0%

*Note:* Responders were allowed to choose multiple answers for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

### Perception of Life Satisfaction

The next question that goes beyond the Indicator 14 requirements asked respondents to select one option to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “I am satisfied with my life since leaving high school.” A five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Unsure; 4 = Disagree; 5 = Strongly Disagree) was utilized for this question. 67.2% of the respondents reported that they Strongly Agree or Agree that they are satisfied with their lives since leaving high school. For additional information, see Table 12 below.

Table 12

Question 1: *How much do you agree with this statement? “I am satisfied with my life since leaving high school.”*

Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Strongly Agree	124	27.7%
Agree	177	39.5%
Unsure	60	13.4%
Disagree	45	10.0%
Strongly Disagree	*	*
No Response	*	*
Total	448	100.0%

*Note:* Responders chose one answer for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

### **Skills Taught by High Schools**

The respondents were asked to indicate skill areas taught by their high school from a provided list. Eight choices were provided, along with a box marked “none” which allowed individuals to report that they did not learn any of the listed skills during high school. Individuals were also given the option to mark “other” and were provided with a space where they could write in other skill areas which they had been taught in high school. Individuals were allowed to provide multiple response to this item, thus the total number of responses (1569) were greater than the total number of respondents (n=448). The most commonly selected response was “Social skills” (15.6%) followed by “Self-advocacy” (14.5%), “Study skills/learning strategies” (14.2%), Technology skills (13.2%), and “Time management/organizational skills” (13.2%). For additional information, see Table 13 below.

Table 13

Question 9: *What skills did your high school teach you? (Check all that apply)*

Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Social skills	245	15.6%
Self-advocacy	227	14.5%
Independent living skills	122	7.8%
Technology skills	207	13.2%
Time management / Organizational skills	205	13.1%
Money management skills	119	7.6%
Study skills / Learning strategies	223	14.2%
Work experience	155	9.9%
None	41	2.6%
Other	10	0.6%
No Response	15	1.0%
Total	1569	100.0%

*Note:* Responders were allowed to choose multiple answers for this question.

### Open Ended Questions

Tables 14 and 15 contain responses from two open-ended questions that also go beyond Indicator 14 requirements. These include Question 10: “What part of your high school education was most helpful in getting you ready for life after you left high school?” and Question 11: “What could your high school have done differently to prepare you for life after school?”. These open-ended questions were intended to collect additional, qualitative information from respondents which may not have been captured through questions in the survey.

Qualitative responses to Questions 10 and 11 on the survey were categorized based on five guideposts described by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability (<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/guideposts>). An “other” category was also created for responses that did not fit into one of the five guideposts, a “no/none/unsure” category was created for responses that indicated respondents were unsure of how to respond, had nothing to respond, or who stated the opposite of what was asked, and an



“everything” category was created for responses that state “everything” without mentioning anything specific. Also, if a respondent stated a positive attribute about their school when asked what they were dissatisfied about, this response was classified within the “no/none/unsure” category. Individual responses were split across multiple categories, when appropriate. For additional information, see Tables 14 and 15 below.

Table 14

Question 10: *What part of your high school education was most helpful in getting you ready for life after you left high school?*

Guidepost Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
School-Based Preparatory Experiences	205	41.3%
Career Preparation and Work-Based Learning Experiences	83	16.7%
Youth Development and Leadership	111	22.4%
Connecting Activities	13	2.6%
Family Involvement and Supports	*	*
Other	*	*
None/Nothing/Unsure	75	15.1%
Everything	6	1.2%

*Note:* Percentage is calculated based on the total number of endorsements of each category rather than the total number of students within the sample. Individual responses were split across multiple categories when appropriate.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

Table 15

Question 11: *What could your high school have done differently to prepare you for life after school?*

Guidepost Category	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
School-Based Preparatory Experiences	195	36.9%
Career Preparation and Work-Based Learning Experiences	60	11.4%
Youth Development and Leadership	162	30.7%
Connecting Activities	18	3.4%
Family Involvement and Supports	6	1.1%
Other	9	1.7%
None/Nothing/Unsure	71	13.4%
Everything	7	1.3%

*Note:* Percentage is calculated based on the total number of endorsements of each category rather than the total number of students within the sample. Individual responses were split across multiple categories when appropriate.

### Summary and Comparison to Prior Years

The CT Post-School Outcome Survey (PSOS) was designed to gather information related to Indicator 14 (Post-School Outcomes) of the State Performance Plan (SPP).

Indicator 14 specifically requests that data reflecting a population of individuals who are no longer in secondary school but who had IEPs in effect at the time they left school (Exiters) be collected to determine the percentages of those who are/have:

- 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; or
- C.) Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

Analyses of the Indicator 14 data and a comparison between 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 School Year Exiters are presented below.

**Indicator 14.** As indicated previously, the revised requirements for Indicator 14 reflect the critical importance of postsecondary education on life after leaving school. Results of the indicator are based on three separate, but progressively inclusive percentages relative to individuals who are no longer in secondary school but who had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and fit into one of the following three categories (A, B, C). Category A, the percent of students enrolled in higher education is 46.7% (207 individuals enrolled divided by 443, the total number of valid responses X 100). Category B, the percent enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school is 65.9% (the number of individuals competitively employed within

one year of leaving high school (160) + the number of individuals enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school (207) – the number of individuals who meet both of these criteria (75)); (292 divided by 443 X 100). Category C, the percent of individuals enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed, or in some other employment, is 79.9% (the number of individuals enrolled in higher education (207), or in some other postsecondary education or training program (46); or competitively employed (160) or in some other employment (103) minus individuals who fall into multiple categories (162)); (352 divided by 443 X 100). The data also suggest that 19.9% (88/443 x 100) of respondents to the 2019 Post-School Outcome Survey (2017-2018 Exiters) are not participating in post-secondary education or are unemployed.

### **Comparison of 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 School Year Exiters**

Similarity between the 2017, 2018, and 2019 survey instruments, data collection procedures, and consecutive years of data collection allow for post-school experience comparison between groups (2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 Exiters).

**Response rate.** The response rate for the 2019 Post-School Outcome Survey data collection (10.1% for the 2017-2018 Exiters) is lower than both the 2018 PSOS data collection (14.6% for the 2016-2017 Exiters) and the 2017 PSOS data collection (16.7% for the 2015-2016 Exiters), displaying a decreasing trend over the past three years. For additional information regarding response rate comparison data by disability type, gender, and ethnicity, see Tables B1, B2, and B3 in Appendix B, respectively.

**Postsecondary Education and Training.** Data from 2017-2018 Exiters indicate that 56.9% of individuals enrolled as either full-time or part-time postsecondary students

while data from 2016-2017 Exiters indicate that 56.1% of individuals enrolled as either full-time or part-time postsecondary students. As such, this represents a slight increase (0.8%) in full-time or part-time enrollment from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018 Exiters. Data from 2017-2018 Exiters showed a 1.6% increase in part-time enrollment as compared to 2016-2017 Exiters, and a 1.2% increase as compared to 2015-2016 Exiters (16.9% of 2015-2016 Exiters; 16.5% of 2016-2017 Exiters; 18.1% of 2017-2018 Exiters). Full-time (more than 12 credits) enrollment showed a slight decrease as compared to previous years (43.3% of 2015-2016 Exiters; 39.6% of 2016-2017 Exiters; 38.8% of 2017-2018 Exiters). For additional information, see Table B4 in Appendix B.

2017-2018 Exiter enrollment in a community or two-year college decreased by 5.5% from 2015-2016 Exiters and 7.8% from 2016-2017 Exiters (35.4% of 2015-2016 Exiters; 37.7% of 2016-2017 Exiters; 29.9% of 2017-2018 Exiters). Enrollment in a four-year college or university by 2017-2018 Exiters decreased by 2.5% as compared to the 2015-2016 Exiters and increased by 3.2% as compared to the 2016-2017 Exiters (51.0% of the 2015-2016 Exiters; 45.3% of the 2016-2017 Exiters; 48.5% of the 2017-2018 Exiters). For additional information, see Table B5 in Appendix B.

**Employment.** Among the 2017-2018 Exiters, 59.0% reported some level of employment since exiting high school. This is a decrease of 0.7% from the 2016-2017 Exiters (59.7%) and an increase of 0.6% from the 2015-2016 Exiters (58.4%). Additionally, results related to earnings have increased from the 2016-2017 and 2015-2016 Exiters in regard to Exiters earning at or above minimum wage. Specifically, 93.9% of 2017-2018 Exiters reported making at least minimum wage while 92.0% of the 2016-

2017 Exiters and 88.9% of the 2015-2016 Exiters reported making at least minimum wage. For additional information, see Tables B6, B7, and B8 in Appendix B.

**Adult Participation.** See Table B9 in Appendix B.

**Contact with Adult Agencies and Services.** See Table B10 in Appendix B.

## Appendix A

### Survey Instrument

**IMPORTANT DOCUMENT!**

**Code Number** \_\_\_\_\_

Responses will NOT be linked to your name.

This is just so we don't send you another survey in the mail this year.

### 2019 Survey of Graduates or Exiters of Connecticut High Schools

(Students who left high school in the 2017-2018 school year)

Your voice matters! The CT State Department of Education needs your input! Please complete this brief survey to help Connecticut improve outcomes for students. This survey asks questions about your post high school activities (school/training/work). Your former school will NOT know the names of the students who respond. We will combine your answers with the answers from your classmates to let your school know how well they prepared you for your future. Your school will use this as a way to grade themselves on how well they are preparing students for life after high school.

**Please complete the survey by filling in the circle next to your answer. Please return your completed survey to us in the enclosed, pre-paid envelope.**

Someone who knows you well can help you complete this survey. There is an instructional video that goes through each question in the survey, which can be found at <http://s.uconn.edu/psos>. To complete the survey online, go to <http://s.uconn.edu/psos19>.

**1. How much do you agree with this: "I am satisfied with my life since leaving high school"**

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Unsure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

**2. Since leaving high school, have you enrolled in any type of school for at least one term (including a quarter, semester, inter-session, summer or online)?**

- No. [Skip question 3; Go to question 4.]
- No, I enrolled but I did not complete one full term. [Skip question 3; Go to question 4.]
- Yes, part-time student (less than 12 credits per semester)
- Yes, full-time student (12 or more credits per semester)



**3. What type of school did you attend?**

- 4-year college or university (for credit, non-credit, or remedial classes)
- 2-year community college (for credit, non-credit, or remedial classes)
- Vocational, Technical, or Trade School (less than a two-year program)
- Adult Education (e.g., GED, High School Completion Program)
- Postgraduate or College Prep Program
- Short-term education or job training program (e.g. Job Corps, Workforce Board Program)
- Other – Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Since leaving high school, have you been employed for at least 3 months?  
(it does not have to be in a row)**

- No, I have not been employed. **[Skip questions 5 & 6; Go to question 7.]**
- No. I have been employed, but for less than 3 months. **[Skip questions 5 & 6; Go to question 7.]**
- Yes, Part-time (less than an average of 20 hours per week)
- Yes, Part-time (average 20 - 34 hours per week)
- Yes, Full-time (average 35 hours or more, per week)

**5. How much did you earn at your most recent job?**

- Below minimum wage (less than \$10.10/hr.)
- Minimum wage (\$10.10/hr.)
- Above minimum wage (greater than \$10.10/hr.)

**6. Please select the best description of your most recent job (check all that apply).**

- For an employer (in a company with people with and without disabilities)
- In the military (e.g., Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard)
- Self-employed
- In your family's business (e.g., a farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering)
- In supported employment (paid work with wage support to the employer)
- In sheltered employment (where most workers have disabilities)
- Employed while in jail or prison
- Other – Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_



**7. Have you used any of these agencies since leaving high school?**

- Yes (*Please check all services that apply below*)
  - Board of Education/Services for the Blind (BESB)
  - Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)
  - Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
  - Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS)
  - Department of Labor One-Stop Centers (DOL)
  - Department of Public Health (DPH)
  - Department of Social Services (DSS)
  - Social Security Administration (SSA)
  - Services at my college or university for students with disabilities
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- No; Services were not necessary
- No; Did not want to use any services
- No; Did not know any services were available

**8. Are you taking part in any of the following?**

- Adult day service programs
- Adult day vocational programs
- Independent living skills programs
- Volunteer work or community service
- None of the above
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_





**9. What skills did your high school teach you? (Check all that apply)**

- Social Skills (getting along with others)
- Self-Advocacy (ability to know what you need and ask for it)
- Independent Living Skills (running a household, using transportation, taking care of your health and hygiene)
- Technology Skills (ability to use computers or other assistive tools)
- Time Management/Organizational Skills
- Money Management Skills
- Study Skills/Learning Strategies
- Work Experience
- None
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. What part of your high school education was most helpful in getting you ready for life after you left high school?**

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**11. What could your high school have done differently to prepare you for life after school?**

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**12. Was there anything confusing or unclear about this survey?**

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**Thank you very much for completing this survey!  
Please return in the enclosed, pre-paid reply envelope.**



## Appendix B

### Comparison of 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 School Year Exiters

Table B1  
Disability Type

Category	2015-2016 Exiters		2016-2017 Exiters		2017-2018 Exiters	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Learning Disability and LD/Dyslexia	216	<b>32.6</b>	209	<b>33.4</b>	148	<b>33.0</b>
OHI and OHI-ADD/ADHD	139	<b>21.0</b>	143	<b>22.8</b>	101	<b>22.5</b>
Autism	103	<b>15.5</b>	95	<b>15.2</b>	76	<b>17.0</b>
Emotional Disturbance	85	<b>12.8</b>	74	<b>11.8</b>	55	<b>12.3</b>
Intellectual Disability	40	<b>6.0</b>	39	<b>6.2</b>	24	<b>5.4</b>
Speech/Language Impairment	32	<b>4.8</b>	20	<b>3.2</b>	10	<b>2.2</b>
Other Disability (Multiple Disabilities, Hearing Impairment, TBI, Visual Impairment, Orthopedic Impairment, and Deaf/Blindness)	48	<b>7.2</b>	46	<b>7.3</b>	34	<b>7.6</b>
Total	663	<b>100.0</b>	626	<b>100.0</b>	448	<b>100.0</b>

Table B2  
Gender

Category	2015-2016 Exiters		2016-2017 Exiters		2017-2018 Exiters	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	432	<b>65.2</b>	407	<b>65.0</b>	293	<b>65.4</b>
Female	231	<b>34.8</b>	219	<b>35.0</b>	155	<b>34.6</b>
Total	663	<b>100.0</b>	626	<b>100.0</b>	448	<b>100.0</b>

Table B3  
Ethnicity

Category	2015-2016 Exiters		2016-2017 Exiters		2017-2018 Exiters	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
White	459	<b>69.2</b>	432	<b>69.0</b>	304	<b>67.9</b>
Hispanic/Latino of any race	88	<b>13.3</b>	96	<b>15.3</b>	60	<b>13.4</b>
Black or African American	17	<b>2.6</b>	65	<b>10.4</b>	48	<b>10.7</b>
Two or More Races	14	<b>2.1</b>	11	<b>1.8</b>	19	<b>4.2</b>
Asian	*	*	22	<b>3.5</b>	15	<b>3.3</b>
American Indian or Alaska Native	82	<b>12.4</b>	*	*	*	*
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total	663	<b>100.0</b>	626	<b>100.0</b>	448	<b>100.0</b>

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

Table B4

Question 2: *Since leaving high school, have you enrolled in any type of school for at least one term (including a quarter, semester, inter-session, summer or online)?*

Category	2015-2016 Exiters		2016-2017 Exiters		2017-2018 Exiters	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes, I am a full-time student (12 or more credits per semester)	287	<b>43.3</b>	248	<b>39.6</b>	174	<b>38.8</b>
Yes, I am a part-time student (less than 12 credits per semester)	112	<b>16.9</b>	103	<b>16.5</b>	81	<b>18.1</b>
No, I was enrolled but I did not complete one full term	*	*	35	<b>5.6</b>	*	*
No, I have never enrolled in postsecondary education or in a training program	237	<b>35.7</b>	233	<b>37.2</b>	165	<b>36.8</b>
No Response	*	*	7	<b>1.1</b>	*	*
Total	663	<b>100.0</b>	626	<b>100.0</b>	448	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Responders chose one answer for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

Table B5

If yes to Question 2 (Table B4), answer Question 3: *What type of school did you attend? (Check all that apply)*

Category	2015-2016 Exiters		2016-2017 Exiters		2017-2018 Exiters	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Four-year college or university	206	<b>51.0</b>	160	<b>45.3</b>	130	<b>48.5</b>
Two-year community college	143	<b>35.4</b>	133	<b>37.7</b>	80	<b>29.9</b>
Vocational, Technical, or Trade School	29	<b>7.0</b>	28	<b>7.9</b>	26	<b>9.7</b>
Adult Education	*	*	8	<b>2.3</b>	10	<b>3.7</b>
Postgraduate or College Prep Program	5	<b>1.2</b>	*	*	*	*
Short-term education or job training program	6	<b>1.5</b>	*	*	8	<b>3.0</b>
Other	11	<b>2.7</b>	18	<b>5.1</b>	7	<b>2.6</b>
No Response	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total	404	<b>100.0</b>	353	<b>100.0</b>	268	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Responders were allowed to choose multiple answers for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

Table B6

Question 4: *Since leaving high school, have you been employed for at least 3 months (it does not have to be in a row)?*

Category	2015-2016 Exiters		2016-2017 Exiters		2017-2018 Exiters	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes, Full-time (average 35 hours or more per week)	84	<b>12.7</b>	95	<b>15.2</b>	77	<b>17.2</b>
Yes, Part-time (average 20 - 34 hours per week)	153	<b>23.1</b>	141	<b>22.5</b>	94	<b>21.0</b>
Yes, Part-time (less than an average of 20 hours per week)	150	<b>22.6</b>	138	<b>22.0</b>	93	<b>20.8</b>
No, I have been employed, but for less than three months	*	*	*	*	*	*
No, I have not been employed	207	<b>31.2</b>	184	<b>29.4</b>	155	<b>34.6</b>
No Response	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total	663	<b>100.0</b>	626	<b>100.0</b>	448	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Responders chose one answer for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

Table B7

If yes to Question 4 (Table B6), answer Question 6: *Please select the best description of your most recent job. (Check all that apply)*

Category	2015-2016 Exitors		2016-2017 Exitors		2017-2018 Exitors	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
For an employer (in a company with people with and without disabilities)	307	<b>77.5</b>	315	<b>76.5</b>	222	<b>79.3</b>
In the military (e.g., Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard)	6	<b>1.5</b>	*	*	*	*
Self-employed	*	*	14	<b>3.4</b>	7	<b>2.5</b>
In your family's business (e.g., a farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering)	23	<b>5.8</b>	13	<b>3.2</b>	13	<b>4.6</b>
In supported employment (paid work with services and wage support to the employer)	20	<b>5.1</b>	23	<b>5.6</b>	9	<b>3.2</b>
In sheltered employment (where most workers have disabilities)	13	<b>3.3</b>	13	<b>3.2</b>	10	<b>3.6</b>
Employed while in jail or prison	*	*	*	*	*	*
Other	21	<b>5.3</b>	22	<b>5.3</b>	11	<b>3.9</b>
No Response	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total	396	<b>100.0</b>	412	<b>100.0</b>	280	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Responders were allowed to choose multiple answers for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

Table B8

If yes to Question 4 (Table B6), answer Question 5: *How much did you earn at your most recent job?*

Category	2015-2016 Exitors		2016-2017 Exitors		2017-2018 Exitors	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Below minimum wage (less than \$10.10/hour)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Minimum wage (\$10.10/hour)	172	<b>44.6</b>	163	<b>43.6</b>	98	<b>37.1</b>
Above minimum wage (greater than \$10.10/hour)	171	<b>44.3</b>	181	<b>48.4</b>	150	<b>56.8</b>
No Response	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total	386	<b>100.0</b>	374	<b>100.0</b>	264	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Responders chose one answer for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.

Table B9

Question 8: *Are you taking part in any of the following? (Check all that apply)*

Category	2015-2016 Exitors		2016-2017 Exitors		2017-2018 Exitors	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Adult day service programs	46	<b>6.6</b>	37	<b>5.6</b>	30	<b>6.4</b>
Adult day vocational programs	27	<b>3.9</b>	21	<b>3.2</b>	18	<b>3.8</b>
Independent living skills programs	17	<b>2.4</b>	18	<b>2.7</b>	8	<b>1.7</b>
Volunteer work or community service	83	<b>11.9</b>	91	<b>13.8</b>	63	<b>13.4</b>
None of the above	482	<b>69.2</b>	445	<b>70.0</b>	326	<b>69.4</b>
Other	20	<b>2.9</b>	26	<b>3.9</b>	14	<b>3.0</b>
No Response	22	<b>3.2</b>	22	<b>3.3</b>	11	<b>2.3</b>
Total	697	<b>100.0</b>	660	<b>100.0</b>	470	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Responders were allowed to choose multiple answers for this question.

Table B10  
Question 7: *Have you used any of these agencies since leaving high school?*

Category	2015-2016 Exitters		2016-2017 Exitters		2017-2018 Exitters	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
<b>Yes (<i>check all that apply below</i>)</b>	292	<b>44.0</b>	296	<b>47.3</b>	202	<b>45.1</b>
<i>Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB)</i>	6	1.3	6	1.3	*	*
<i>Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)</i>	90	19.1	86	18.4	43	13.1
<i>Department of Developmental Services (DDS)</i>	88	18.7	81	17.3	62	18.9
<i>Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)</i>	12	2.5	10	2.1	11	3.3
<i>Department of Labor (DOL)</i>	*	*	*	*	12	3.7
<i>Department of Public Health (DPH)</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Department of Social Services (DSS)</i>	68	14.4	62	13.3	47	14.3
<i>Social Security Administration (SSA)</i>	71	15.1	69	14.8	59	17.9
<i>Services at college or university</i>	110	23.4	109	23.3	62	18.9
<i>Other</i>	21	4.5	34	7.3	21	6.4
<i>Total</i>	471	100.0	467	100.0	329	100.0
No; Services were not necessary	200	30.1	162	25.9	130	29.0
No; Did not want to use any services	54	8.1	47	7.5	36	8.0
No; Did not know any services were available	102	15.4	115	18.4	80	17.9
No Response	16	2.4	6	1.0	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	664	<b>100.0</b>	626	<b>100.0</b>	448	<b>100</b>

Note: Responders were allowed to choose multiple answers for this question.

\* indicates use of data suppression to protect personally identifiable information.