

# Building career assets for lifelong success

*A landscape of opportunities that connect D.C.'s high school-aged youth to college and work-based learning*



**D.C. POLICY CENTER**

Education Policy Initiative





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## Other reports in this series

[\*Measuring early career outcomes in D.C.\*](#)

[\*D.C. high school alumni reflections on their early career outcomes\*](#)

[\*The case for creating a local talent pipeline in the District of Columbia\*](#)

[\*Transition to college or career for the District’s high school students\*](#)



## Executive summary

Data on early career outcomes for D.C.'s high school alumni reveal significant disparities in earnings and employment when compared to similarly aged youth who move to D.C. later in life (an estimated gap of \$37,000). Findings from a previous survey show that D.C.'s alumni experienced an income boost if they had acquired **career assets**, or the tools, skills, experiences, and competencies that helped them effectively navigate post-high school life, including college and career.

A lot of **career asset building opportunities** exist for D.C.'s high school-aged youth, but little has been publicly reported about the opportunities offered across the many providers. This Building career assets for lifelong success report provides a high-level landscape to better understand what career asset building opportunities are available to high school-aged youth as a starting point to understanding quality, equity, and gaps in offerings. Ultimately, a better understanding of these opportunities can help better prepare D.C.'s alumni for their early careers.

This executive summary includes key findings, common challenges, and recommendations. The full report follows.

**NEED: Many of D.C.’s public high school alumni are not ready for college or career, demonstrating the need for stronger connections to college and work-based learning.**

- 20 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders met or exceeded the SAT College and Career Ready Benchmark in school year 2022-23.
- 53 percent of high school graduates in school year 2021-22 enrolled in postsecondary education within 6 months of graduation.
- On the statewide learning assessment, 34 percent of high school students met or exceeded expectations in English Language Arts (ELA), and 12 percent did so in math.

**PROVIDERS: D.C. government agencies are the main providers of career asset building opportunities, accounting for 90 percent of participation.**

- Across the 49 different career asset building opportunities identified through questionnaire responses, D.C. government agencies (especially DOES and OSSE) are the main providers, accounting for 90 percent of participation.
- Nonprofits and Local Education Agencies (LEAs), or schools, tend to offer opportunities on a smaller scale than D.C. government agencies.<sup>1</sup>
- Most work-based learning opportunities are offered through programs that require an in-person component.

**PARTICIPATION: Most of the career asset building opportunities are intensive in nature. Capacity in intensive summer opportunities can only serve 67 percent of high school students, and capacity during the school year can only serve 41 percent.**

- Out of all D.C. high school-aged youth participating in school year 2022-23, 58 percent of the participation was reported in intensive career asset building opportunities that occurred more than twice a week.
- Assuming each high school student should have access to intensive opportunities that provide more regular engagement, there is a gap of 59 percent needed to serve all high school students for long and intensive opportunities that typically take place during the school year and a gap of 33 percent needed to serve all high school students for short and intensive opportunities (mostly during the summer).
- Older students tend to participate in these opportunities, which means less time for career asset building as the experiences are closer to high school graduation.

**PROGRAM FOCUS: There are relatively few career asset building opportunities that focus on career launch, access to college during high school, or college matriculation.**

- Career asset building opportunities tend to have a blended focus on work-based learning and college connections instead of focusing on one or the other.
- Out of the 35 opportunities that include work-based learning, activities during these opportunities are more likely to allow young people to explore careers or prepare for careers instead of to launch them.
- Out of the 40 opportunities that include connections to college, the activities are more likely to include multiple ways to explore college, and less likely to provide direct access to college content during high school or to support matriculation.

Career asset building opportunities offering at least one:	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Career exploration activity	✓				
Career preparation activity	✓				
Career launch activity		✓			
College exploration activity	✓				
College access		✓			
College matriculation		✓			

**ACCESS: Important barriers exist to student participation in career asset building opportunities, including lack of awareness, time in schedule, and a successful academic record.**

- Providers report the most common barriers to participation include lack of awareness of existing college and work-based learning opportunities and lack of time in young people’s schedules, including during the school day.
- In addition to having enough time in a schedule, the most common eligibility requirements are being on track to graduate, which can limit participation for students who are behind academically.
- To ease these barriers, some of the career asset building opportunities allow young people to earn either high school or college credit. Additionally, most work-based learning opportunities provide some kind compensation.
- Recruitment mainly occurs through word of mouth and school promotions, which can make it difficult to learn about activities outside one’s existing network.

**GOALS FOR PROVIDERS: Across all career asset building opportunities, the most common goal is to prepare a postsecondary plan, which is an important intermediate step toward a successful early career.**

- In addition to a postsecondary plan, other common goals include professional development and exposure to new industries.
- Some providers offer some level of support after participation, including mentorship or career coaching, professional development sessions, financial support for tuition, and resources for undocumented students.

**MEASURING SUCCESS: There is opportunity for improvement in tracking outcomes of career asset building opportunities, as participant surveys are currently the most common way to measure success.**

- At the close of participation, some providers measure success through participant surveys, or outcomes such as college credits earned, course grades, employment in a good job, or attainment of industry-recognized credentials or certifications.
- Over the long term, some providers use surveys to measure longitudinal outcomes, but only a few connect to existing databases (such as the National Student Clearinghouse for matriculation in college), and there is interest in better methods to measure long-term success.

**COMMON CHALLENGES:**

- Some eligibility requirements and lack of awareness of existing programs means that these opportunities are probably not reaching the students most in need of supports.
- Little is known about the outcomes for these opportunities.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Create a system of career asset building opportunities**

- Establish alignment on available career asset building opportunities with common definitions and outcomes, to help participants understand what is offered and how these different opportunities can help them build career assets.
- Create a robust system for adults to support young people with navigating these opportunities, such as a resource bank owned by D.C. government as the main providers, with information on access and programming and ensure that there are college and career counselors at schools and across agencies who can help young people and their families to learn about available options.
- In addition to the framework of work-based learning (see Appendix D) developed by CityWorks DC and strategic partners, it would be beneficial to map available postsecondary degree opportunities to a continuum of activities and identify gaps in how providers connect young people to college.

**Track outcomes to inform program design**

- Improve the measurement of long-term outcomes by building databases such as the Education Through Employment Data System, rather than solely relying on surveys, which can be burdensome and have limitations due to self-reporting.
- Enhance tracking of participation and student-level attendance in different opportunities to better identify who is most likely to participate and which approaches are most successful.

**Increase access to students who have barriers to participation**

- Leverage opportunities to assist students who aren't performing well academically or who are disengaged, as academic success is often an eligibility requirement.
- To address the barrier of scheduling constraints, ensure the new high school graduation requirements do not limit access to career asset building opportunities that are shown to improve early career outcomes.

**Conduct additional research to answer key questions, such as:**

- What skills are young people gaining?
- Which approaches, including dosage, frequency, length, location, and others are most effective in terms of outcomes, including around quality and equity?
- To what extent do these opportunities keep young people at risk of dropping out connected to school?
- What is working for employers to successfully engage young people in the workplace?



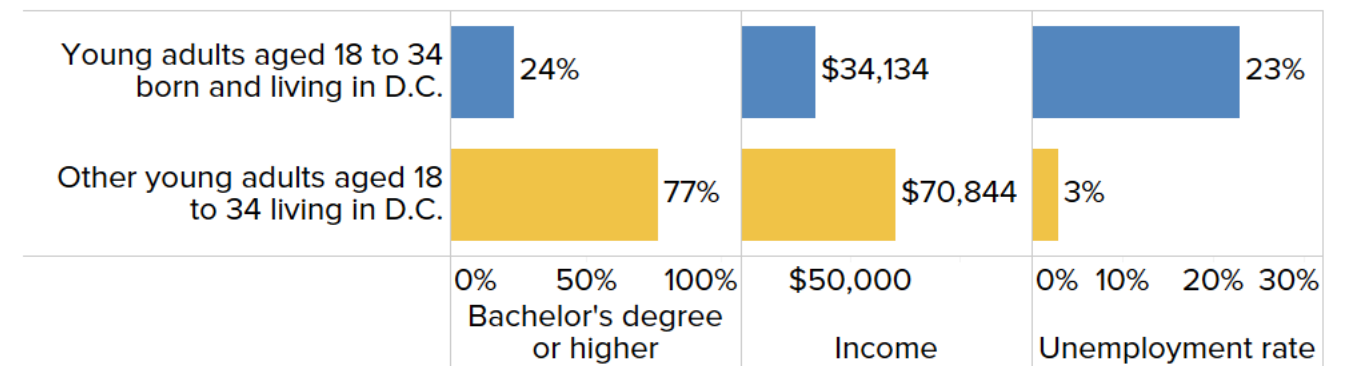
# Introduction

Data on early career outcomes for D.C.'s high school alumni reveal significant disparities in earnings and employment when compared to similarly aged youth who move to D.C. later in life. According to the American Community Survey (ACS), young adults aged 18 to 34 who were born and still reside in D.C. earn an average of \$34,134 annually. This is \$36,710 less than the average earnings for similarly aged young adults who were not born in D.C. but moved to the city later in their lives. Moreover, the unemployment rate for these young D.C. natives is 23 percent, 20 percentage points higher than similarly aged non-native residents.<sup>2</sup> These gaps are in part due to 24 percent of

young adults born and living in D.C. having a bachelor's degree (53 percentage points lower than their peers), in a city where 47 percent of jobs require a bachelor's degree.<sup>3</sup>

These disparities make it crucial to understand what can move the needle on improving early career outcomes for D.C.'s high school alumni and how they can be ready to better connect to college and career after high school. While academic achievement is an important predictor of job market success, another important factor is acquiring **career assets**, or the tools, skills, experiences, and competencies to help effectively

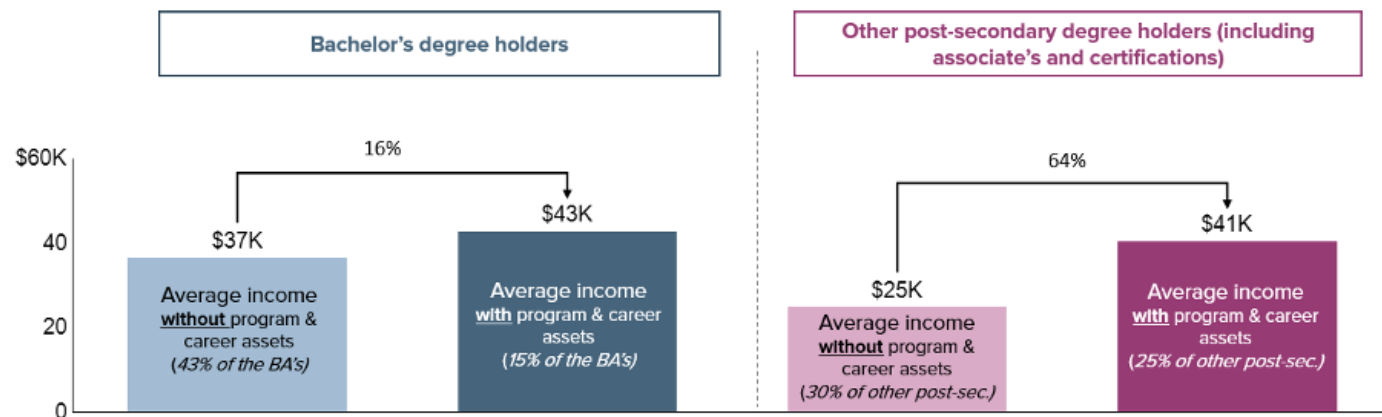
**Early career outcomes for longtime D.C. residents and peers who moved here after birth as young adults**



Source: IPUMS USA. 2023. 2018-2022 ACS 5-year estimates. Retrieved from <https://usa.ipums.org/usa/>



### Access to career assets improve the incomes of multiple post-secondary degree holders



Source: Bain & Company Early Career Outcomes Survey March 2021 (N=1199); estimates represented for alumni employed full-time or part-time (who completed a BA N=448) and who completed Other post-secondary programs and had complete data (n=130).

navigate post-high school life, including college and careers.

A 2021 survey conducted by CityWorks DC and Bain & Company of over a thousand alumni of District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter schools in D.C. provides some evidence that attaining career assets during high school can improve early career outcomes, regardless of a student's educational attainment level. In this survey, students were considered to have acquired career assets if they had participated in multiple skill-building opportunities, including volunteer positions, work experience, apprenticeships, internships, exposure to career options, career counseling, mentorship, and postsecondary planning.<sup>4</sup>

Analysis of the survey responses showed that having career assets was correlated with certain program components and higher post-tax yearly incomes, making career assets essential to attain before high school graduation. Among participants with a bachelor's degree, average post-tax income of young people with career assets was 16 percent higher than those without career assets. The career asset premium was even higher, at 64 percent, among other

post-secondary degree holders (including associate's and certifications).<sup>5</sup>

Even with this potential to improve early career outcomes, little has been publicly reported about how D.C.'s high school-aged youth can build career assets before graduation, although a lot of **career asset building opportunities** do exist. This report looks at opportunities across four types of providers: D.C. government agencies, nonprofits, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) serving high school students, and LEAs serving adult and alternative learners with a majority under age 25.

D.C. government agencies, including the Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE) and the Department of Employment Services (DOES), tend to offer larger scale opportunities (like the Mayor Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program) that are available to high school-aged youth citywide. LEAs serving high school students often have their own in-house opportunities (such as college visits or postsecondary planning) and connect students to systems programs (like OSSE's Dual Enrollment or Career and Technical Education, CTE) or nonprofits (including Urban Alliance and others). D.C. also has adult and alternative schools,

which are nontraditional settings where students can earn a high school degree, gain English language skills, or enroll in workforce programs—and a small number of these enroll a majority of learners under the age of 25. Finally, nonprofits like Genesys Works or On Ramps to Careers offer additional initiatives, typically on a smaller scale. Examples of opportunities by provider type are presented in the figure below. Having many providers makes it challenging to take stock of which opportunities are available and to understand how these opportunities work together to help D.C.'s high school-aged youth build career assets.

Understanding the landscape of college and work-based learning opportunities for D.C.'s high school students is an essential step to identify persistent challenges, successful strategies, and areas where D.C. can better support program implementation. This report is the first step in describing the ecosystem for building career assets in D.C. to better identify key aspects of programming that are most effective and impactful for students' futures. The report highlights program characteristics including how long and intensely young people participate and program settings. Recognizing the poten-

tial for career assets to improve outcomes, this knowledge will help prepare students for successful careers in the long run. It will also contribute to closing the economic opportunity gap between D.C.'s public high school alumni and young adults new to D.C.

This report provides a high-level landscape to help better understand what career asset building opportunities are available to high school-aged youth as a starting point to understanding quality, equity, and gaps in offerings. The analysis begins with an overview of high school students and postsecondary outcomes. It continues with a baseline look at how students connect to college and work-based learning, including program descriptions, program access, and methods that program providers use for measuring and ensuring success. The landscape is based on self-reported responses to a provider survey, or their view of their offerings. It does not look at the quality of these opportunities or which approaches are most effective, which could be a topic for further study as new data become available. The report concludes with an analysis of strengths and gaps in the existing opportunities to build career assets, key research questions, and next steps.

## Key definitions:

**Career assets** are the tools, skills, experiences, and competencies that a high school student acquires that can help them successfully navigate post-high school life, including college and careers.

**Career asset building opportunities** are programs, courses, or experiences that help youth build career assets. They include **connections to college**, which are programs, courses, and experiences that help students improve their postsecondary degree outcomes (for the most part including bachelor's and associate's degrees unless otherwise specified), and **connections to work-based learning**, which give youth the opportunity to practice the development of career-ready competencies in a real-world setting.

<b>Examples of government agency providers</b>	
<b>Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OSSE DC College Application and Exploration Month (DC CAEM)</li> <li>OSSE Career Ready Internship Program</li> <li>OSSE FAFSA Assistance and Support</li> <li>OSSE FAFSA Assistance and Support</li> <li>OSSE College Conversations</li> <li>OSSE Re-engagement Center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OSSE Advanced Internship Program</li> <li>OSSE College Rising Mentorship Grant</li> <li>OSSE SAT School Day</li> <li>OSSE Advanced Technical Center (ATC)</li> <li>OSSE DC College Application and Exploration Month (DC CAEM)</li> <li>OSSE Scholars Enrichment Program</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Employment Services (DOES)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DOES Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program</li> <li>DOES Out-of-School Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DOES Marion Barry Youth Leadership Institute (MBYLI)</li> <li>DOES School Year Internship Program</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DYRS College and Career Postsecondary</li> <li>DYRS Volt Academy</li> </ul>	
<b>Examples of nonprofit providers</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DC Students Construction Trades Foundation</li> <li>Communities in Schools</li> <li>Latin American Youth Center</li> <li>UPO</li> <li>CityWorks DC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genesys Works</li> <li>On-Ramps to Careers</li> <li>Urban Alliance</li> <li>College Bound</li> </ul>
<b>Examples of LEAs serving high school students</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BASIS DC PCS</li> <li>District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)</li> <li>Kingsman Academy PCS</li> <li>The Sojourner Truth School PCS</li> <li>Capital City PCS - High School</li> <li>E.L. Haynes PCS</li> <li>KIPP DC PCS</li> <li>Thurgood Marshall Academy PCS</li> <li>Cesar Chavez Public Charter Schools for Public Policy</li> <li>Friendship PCS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul PCS</li> <li>Washington Latin PCS</li> <li>Digital Pioneers Academy PCS</li> <li>Girls Global Academy PCS</li> <li>Richard Wright PCS for Journalism and Media Arts</li> <li>Washington Leadership Academy PCS</li> <li>District of Columbia International School</li> <li>IDEA PCS</li> <li>The SEED PCS of Washington DC</li> </ul>
<b>Examples of adult or alternative LEAs</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academy of Hope PCS</li> <li>Community College Preparatory Academy PCS</li> <li>LAYC Career Academy PCS</li> <li>The Next Step PCS</li> <li>Briya PCS District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maya Angelou PCS</li> <li>YouthBuild PCS</li> <li>Carlos Rosario International PCS</li> <li>Goodwill Excel</li> <li>The Family Place PCS</li> </ul>





# Part 1: High school students in D.C.

In school year 2023-24, there were 20,071 high school students in D.C.<sup>6</sup> attending one of 39 DCPS or public charter schools. This public high school population, which is an estimated 81 percent of D.C.'s high school students, is the focus of this report (an estimated 19 percent of D.C.'s high school students attend private schools).<sup>7</sup>

## High school enrollment, demographics, and school overview

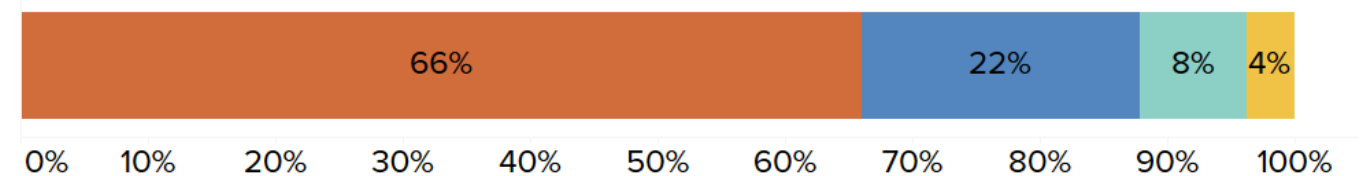
Most of D.C.'s high school students identify as students of color: 66 percent of D.C. public high school students identify as Black, 22 percent identify as Latino, 8 percent identify as white, and 4 percent identify as two or more races or other races in school year 2023-24.<sup>8</sup>

Wards 7 and 8 are home to higher shares of high school students than other wards: 20 percent of high school students live in Ward 7 and 21 percent live in Ward 8—and the majority of these students leave their ward for school—meaning that opportunities should be accessible from these wards or at the schools that students attend.<sup>9</sup> In addition, looking at the cohort who graduated in school year 2022-23, 51 percent were economically disadvantaged, 12 percent were English Learners, and 18 percent were

students with disabilities, which can lead to additional barriers for participating in opportunities to build career assets (data are not available for these special populations for students in all high school grades (just graduates)).<sup>10</sup>

For context, most of D.C.'s public high school students choose to attend a school aside from their in-boundary school. In school year 2023-24, 38 percent of high school students attended a public charter school, 21 percent attended a DCPS application high school, 20 percent attended a DCPS school as an out-of-boundary student, and 20 percent attended their DCPS in-boundary school.<sup>11,12</sup> This may mean that some students are selected their high school based on a particular program offering, like engineering or journalism. It also suggests that commutes can take up a large part of a student's day and potentially displace other activities: The average distance to school for high school students in school year 2023-24 was 3.2 miles (for context, a 2018 study estimated that the median 9<sup>th</sup> grader in D.C. had a 27 minute commute on public transit).<sup>13,14</sup>

## High school student race and ethnicity in D.C.'s public schools, school year 2023-24

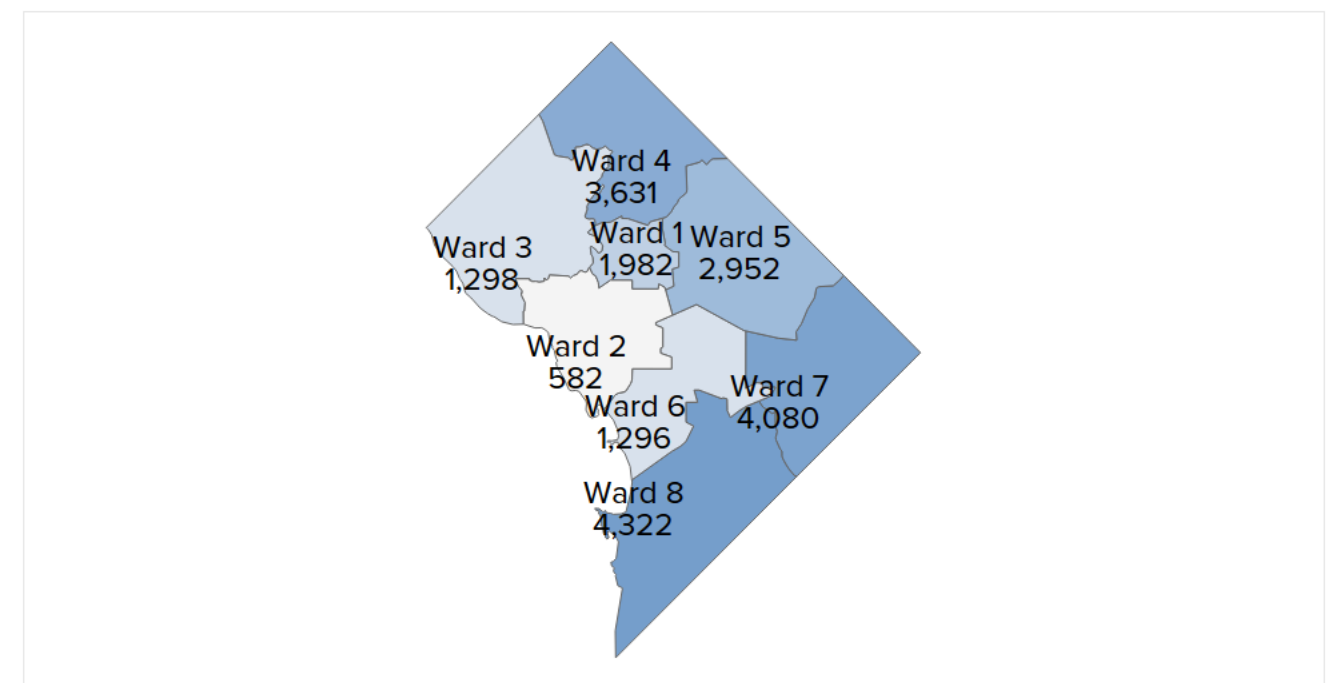


**Source:** Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education. 2024. Public school enrollment by race and ethnicity. Retrieved from <https://edscape.dc.gov/page/pop-and-students-public-school-enrollment-by-race-and-ethnicity>

■ Other/Two or more races  
■ White  
■ Latino  
■ Black



## High school students in D.C. and ward of residence, school year 2023-24



**Source:** Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME). 2024. EdScape: Student Commute Patterns. Retrieved from <https://edscape.dc.gov/page/student-commute-patterns>



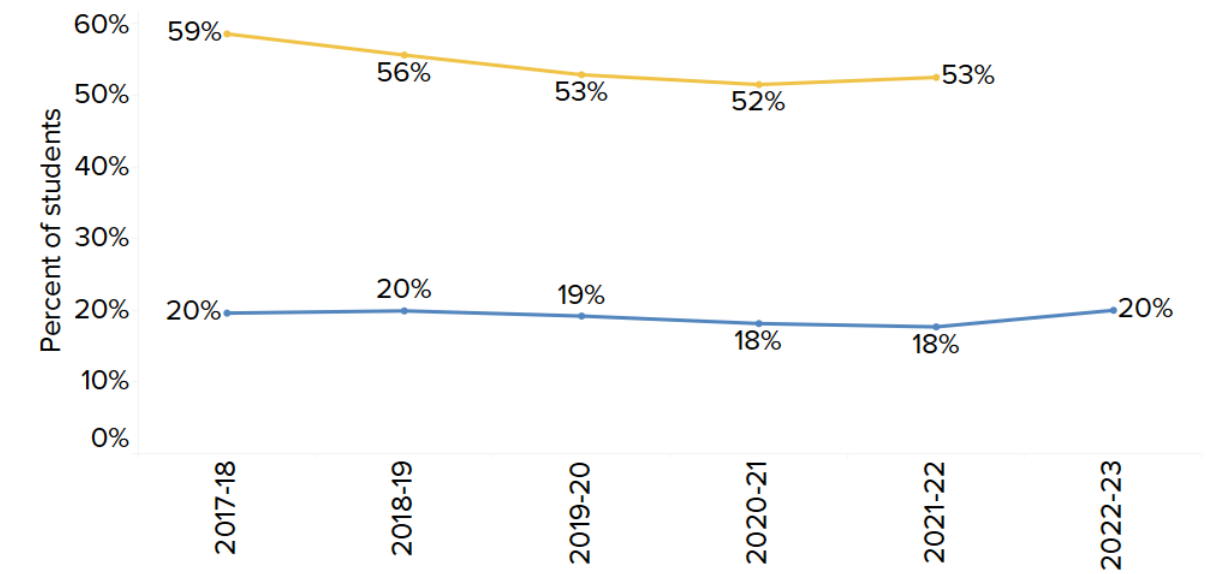
## Spotlight on adult and alternative schools

In addition to high schools, D.C. is unique in that the city provides publicly funded adult public charter schools where learners can earn a high school degree, gain English language skills, and enroll in workforce programs.<sup>31</sup> In school year 2023-24, there were 10 adult public charter schools enrolling 5,680 students. Adult public charter schools typically offer both academic supports and workforce development programs. At these schools, students are more likely to be Black and Latino and to reside in Wards 4 and 8. About half focus on youth ages 16 to 24. For the other half, students who are 25 or older comprise at least 80 percent of the school's total enrollment.<sup>32</sup>

Aside from adult public charter schools, DPCS offers three opportunity academies<sup>33</sup> that serve adults ages 16 to 22 allowing them to earn their high school diploma, participate in career and technical education, and prepare for postsecondary success.<sup>34</sup>

Goodwill Excel Center (GEC) PCS presents an innovative model that offers learners classes in all high school content areas to work towards obtaining their high school diploma (not a GED) at two sites in D.C.

## College and career readiness for D.C.'s high school students



■ 6-month postsecondary enrollment for high school graduates  
■ Meeting SAT College and Career Ready Benchmark for 12th graders

**Source:** Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). DC School Report Card. OSSE. Retrieved from <https://osse.dc.gov/page/dc-school-report-card-resource-library>

**Note:** Data on 6-month postsecondary enrollment are not yet available for the class of 2022-23. Postsecondary enrollment includes bachelor's and associate's degrees.

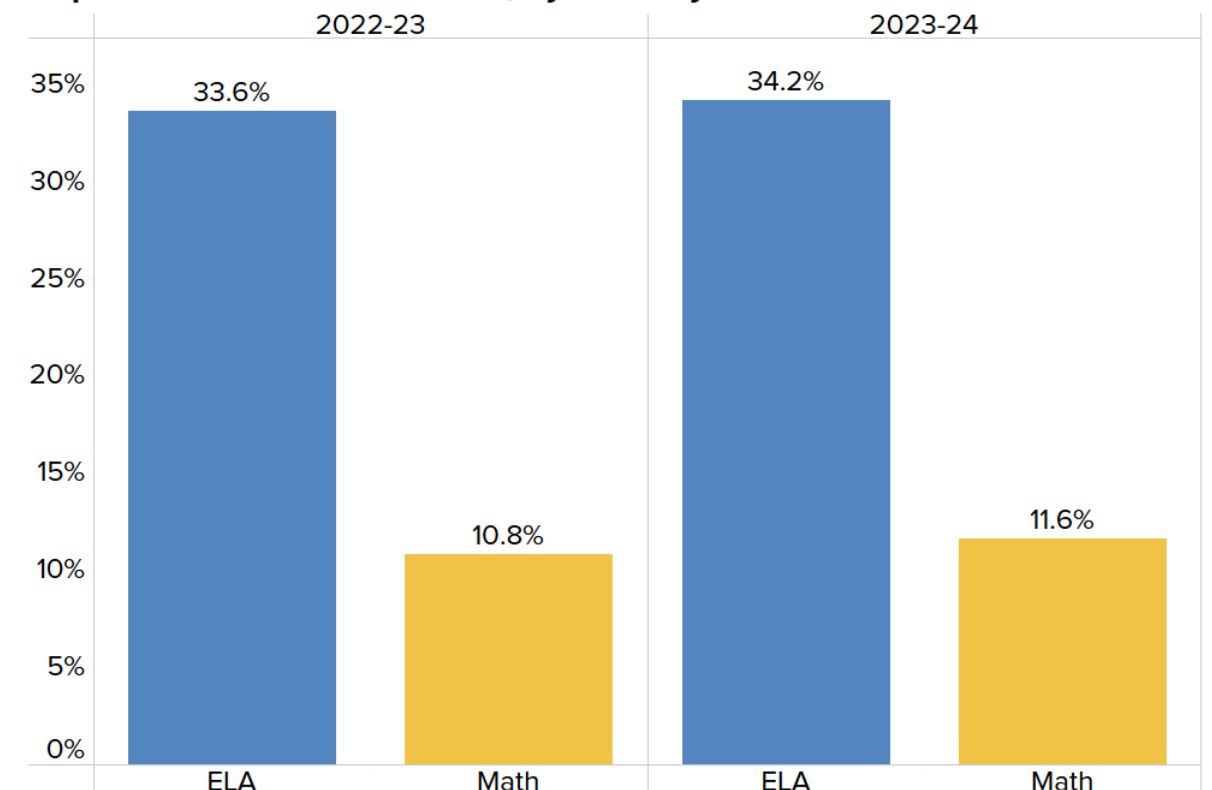


### NEED: Postsecondary outcomes for high school students show challenges and the need for building career assets.

Measures of college and career readiness indicate that the transition after high school to postsecondary could be a challenge for D.C.'s high school students. On the SAT, 20 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders met or exceeded the College Ready Benchmark in school year 2022-23,<sup>15</sup> which is below the national average of 40 percent.<sup>16</sup> Black and economically disadvantaged students have lower SAT benchmark scores at 11 percent and 5 percent, respectively.<sup>17</sup> As a preview of early career outcomes, within six months after graduation, 53 percent of graduates enroll in postsecondary education.<sup>18</sup> This is lower than the national average in 2022, when 60 percent of high school graduates enrolled in college by the fall.<sup>19</sup>

In recent years, high school graduation rates have improved, but learning outcomes for high school students have remained close to or below pre-pandemic levels. In school year 2022-23, 76 percent of high school students graduated in four years, an 8-percentage point increase from 68 percent in the pre-pandemic school year 2018-19.<sup>20</sup> However, in school year 2023-24, 34 percent of high school students met or exceeded expectations on the English Language Arts (ELA) CAPE statewide assessment and 11.6 percent did so in math. Outcomes in both subjects represent small improvements of less than a percentage point over the previous year.

## Share of D.C.'s public high school students meeting or exceeding expectations in ELA and math, by school year



**Source:** Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). 2024..





## Part 2: Opportunities for building career assets in D.C.

The D.C. Policy Center fielded a questionnaire in May, June, and July of 2024 to learn more about **career asset building opportunities**, or the programs, courses, or experiences that help youth build career assets. These opportunities included **connections to college**, which are programs, courses, and experiences that help students improve their postsecondary outcomes, and **connections to work-based learning**, which support young people more immediately with their careers. The questionnaire targeted government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) serving high school-aged students (the team reached out to adult and alternative schools in addition to high schools, but the responses for LEAs mostly represent high schools). The responses to the D.C. Policy Center questionnaire paint a landscape of programs that offer college and work-based learning opportunities, including the type of programs, access to programs, and how providers measure and ensure success.

The questionnaire for government agencies and nonprofit organizations included 29 core questions about career asset build-

ing opportunities, including their program descriptions, access, participation, and how success is measured. LEAs were sent a separate questionnaire that first asked about their participation in citywide opportunities offered by the D.C. government or nonprofits and then asked the same set of 29 core questions about their own programs (see Appendix A for the full set of questions). The D.C. Policy Center received responses from almost all government and nonprofit providers that serve the largest numbers of participants, based on a review of publicly available information. In addition, the LEAs that responded collectively serve 91 percent of high school students (see Appendix B for the list of providers targeted to receive the questionnaire).

To supplement analysis of the questionnaire responses, the D.C. Policy Center conducted listening sessions with students as well as interviews with school leaders, teachers, and employers (see Appendix C for more information on listening sessions and interviews). Quotes and main themes from these conversations appear throughout the report.

The main findings are presented below by category, including identifying the main providers, a sense of scale, the focus of programs, barriers to access, common goals, and how providers measure success. This overview is important as a starting point to show how these opportunities are connected, and where the gaps may lie. The report does not include measures of quality, precise distributions of opportunities, or which opportunities are most effective in the long run. It will be important to build on these findings with more detail and available data in future research.

Most findings are qualitative in nature and described on a scale based on the frequency of each response option. The scales below refer to the number of respondents per question and are not weighted by participation numbers. Responses are self-reported and do not measure implementation. Some findings about capacity are weighted by participation numbers to give a sense of scale. These are reported as numbers or percentages.

**“We should be preparing kids for the future, whether it’s college, career, or other paths. Schools must equip students with the skills they need to succeed.”** - D.C. teacher

Description of scale	Percentage of respondents
All or almost all providers	90% or more
Most providers	60-89%
Some providers	30-59%
Few providers	1-29%
No providers	0%

**PROVIDERS: High school-aged youth have multiple access points to build career assets.**

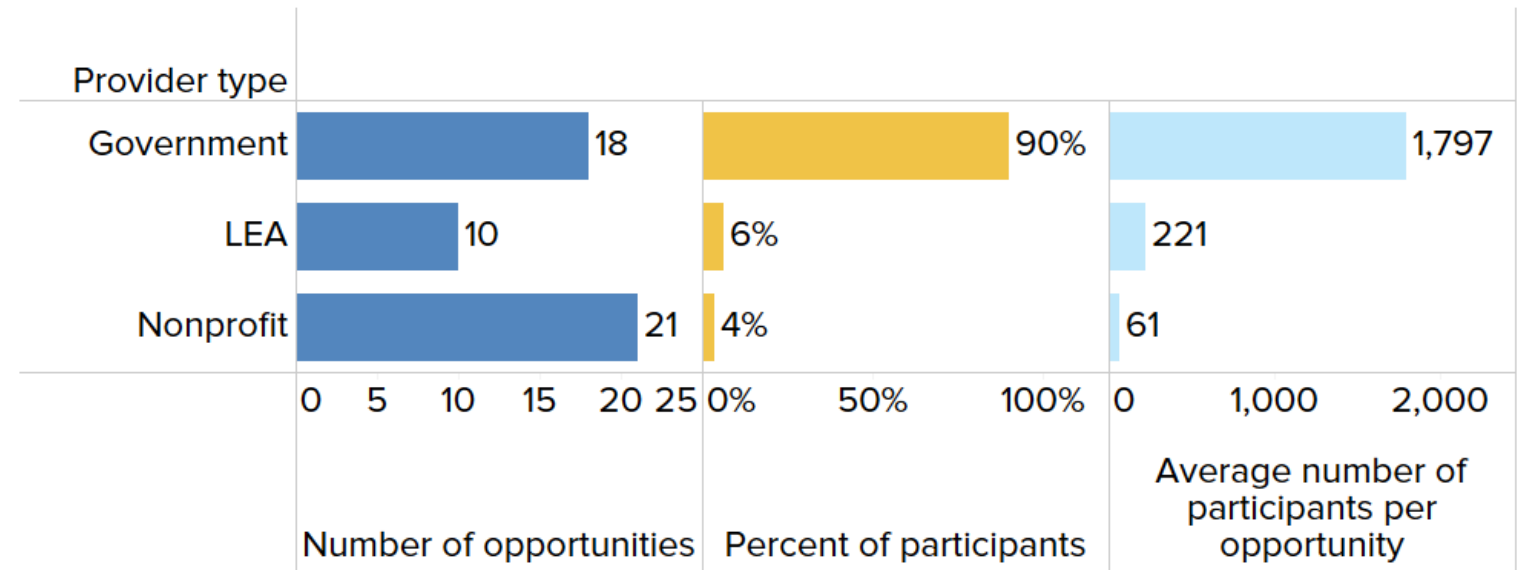
Young people can access career asset building opportunities through various channels, with government agencies being the largest providers. Out of the 49 programs that offer career asset building opportunities, government agencies provide 18 of them, but account for 90 percent of participants.<sup>21</sup> This means that opportunities provided by government agencies tend to be larger scale, each serving an average of 1,797 students each year, than LEA or non-profit opportunities.

**Location**

Most career asset building opportunities are either hybrid or entirely in-person. A few are

completely virtual. Travel to a third location during the school day could be a hindrance for some students: The average high school student traveled 3.2 miles to school in school year 2023-24, and students in Wards 7 and 8 traveled farther, at 3.9 miles and 4.4 miles, respectively.<sup>22</sup> Providers mentioned in interviews that barriers such as location and generational poverty have proven tough to overcome—this limits participation of additional students and makes it harder for current students to thrive. Responses in the questionnaire to location by ward were not specific enough to adjust for the size of programs. Although providers reported that career asset building opportunities are available throughout the city, further research is necessary to determine where young people are accessing them.

**Providers of career and college connections for high school-aged youth in D.C.**



Source: D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Asset questionnaire responses.



**“Our career clusters require some specialized classrooms, but we need to make it accessible at locations where all students can come.”** - Nonprofit provider

## Spotlight on ATC

The Advanced Technical Center (ATC) is an example of a citywide opportunity for accessing Career and Technical (CTE) courses available to District high school students across the city to prepare them for high-wage, high-skill careers. The ATC is currently located in Ward 5 but is open to students from all wards in the city, with transportation provided. A second location will open in Ward 8.<sup>35</sup> The ATC offers courses in cybersecurity, health information technology, and general nursing.<sup>36</sup>

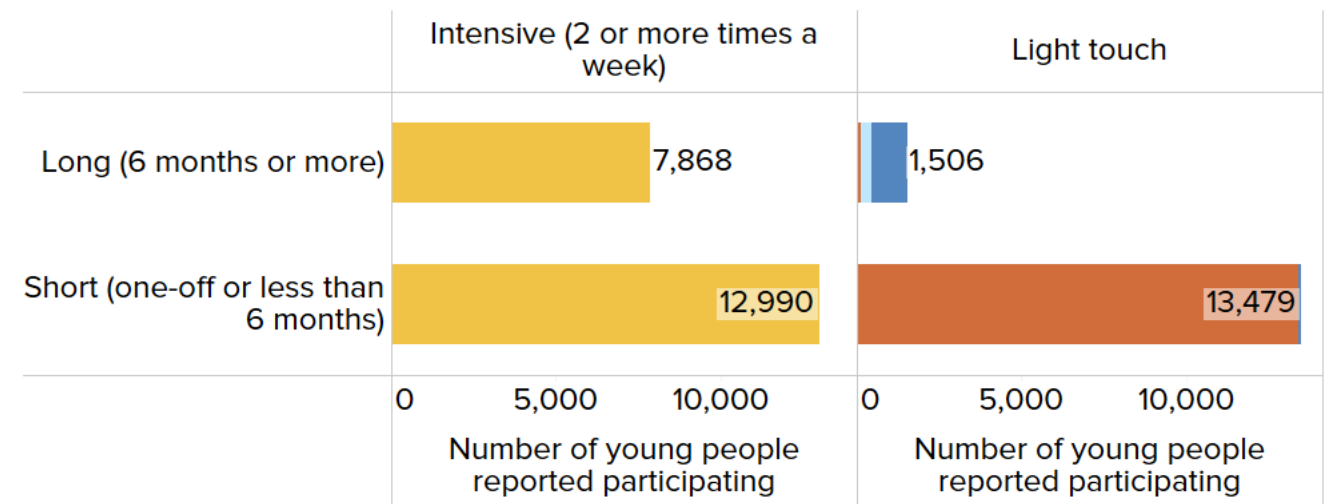
### Format of career asset building opportunities, according to providers

Format	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Hybrid			✓		
All in-person			✓		
All virtual				✓	
Other				✓	

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

### Duration and frequency of career asset building opportunities for high school-aged youth in D.C.



- 2 or more times a week
- Once per month
- Once per week
- One-off events or irregular frequency

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire responses.

**Note:** Participation numbers were reported for 39 out of 47 opportunities.



**PARTICIPATION: Most of the career asset building opportunities are intensive in nature, and gaps exist if every high school student should participate in one during the summer and school year.**

Responses to the questionnaire indicated that D.C. high school-aged youth were engaged at least 35,483 times in career asset building opportunities during school year 2022-23, including the summer of 2022, across 40 opportunities (9 did not provide participation information). For reference, 19,271 students were enrolled in D.C.’s public high school grades in the same school year, but no information is available on how participation is distributed across young people. And if every student participated in one activity, it may be that every student needs to participate in multiple activities to truly build career assets. No data are available for previous years, but in listening ses-

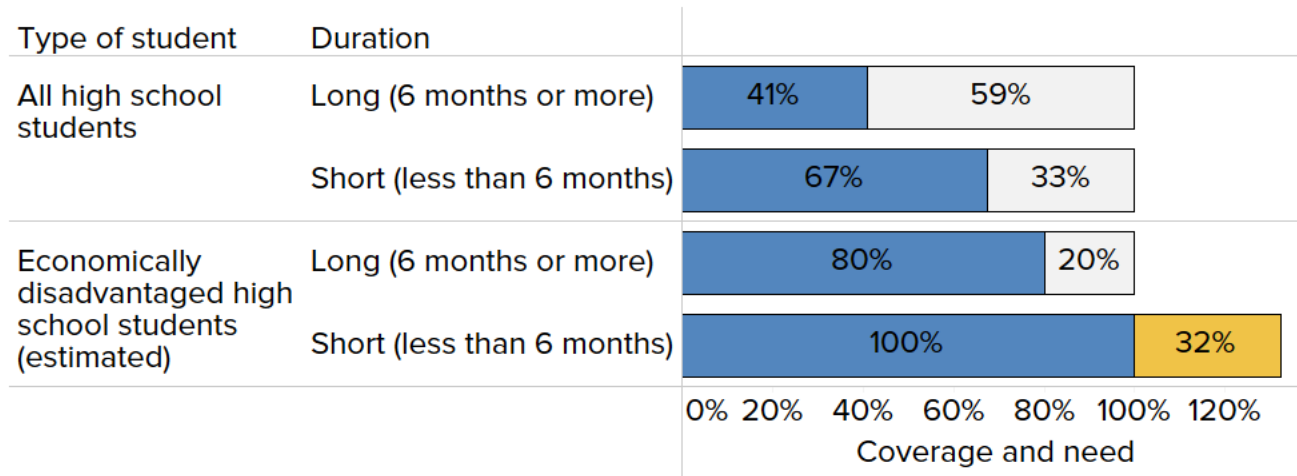
sions, high school students felt there was an increase in internships, scholarships, and college or career programs this past year.

#### Duration and frequency

Career asset building opportunities most commonly take place two or more times a week, indicating that many of these opportunities involve substantial engagement. About a third of the career asset building opportunities are offered through multi-year programs, a format more common at LEAs or nonprofits than in government programs. Around a third are considered to be light touch, or one-off events up to once per month.

Respondents indicated that the frequency of the programs they offer varied based on grant requirements, seasonal programming, the school calendar, or a specified num-

## Need for intensive building career asset opportunities in D.C.



- Surplus
- Gap
- Coverage

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire responses and Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)'s enrollment audits.

**Note:** Coverage was calculated as the number of participants in school year 2022-23 divided by the number of high school students in 2022-23, and gap was calculated as number of remaining spaces it would take to reach all high school students. Economically disadvantaged students are estimated to be 51% of high school students in this year, based on data for the graduating cohort.



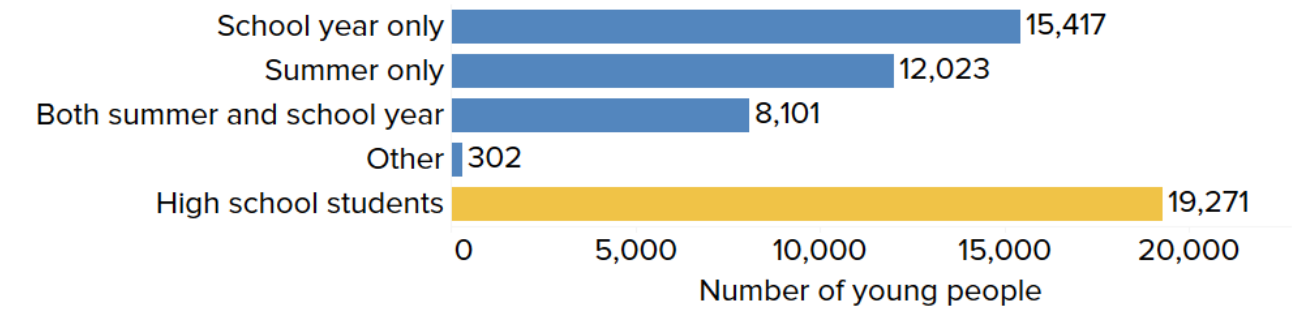
ber of hours rather than a set number of sessions. A few others mentioned that the frequency of engagement in these opportunities can depend on the participant, for example, on their pace moving through a program. Among the 41 opportunities for which providers reported total number of program hours, the range spanned from 1 hour to 4,000 hours, with a median of 100 hours. LEAs and nonprofits tend to offer programs with more hours on average compared to government opportunities.

There is no recommended dosage yet for building career asset opportunities, but one way to assess need is to assume that each high school student should have access to at least one intensive opportunity that occurs more than twice a week and provides more regular engagement. Light touch opportunities are also important but may be more useful to evaluate the need by each

program, such as SAT School Day. These intensive opportunities are available in both long durations (6 months or more) that tend to take place at least in part during the school year, and short durations (less than 6 months), which tend to take place during the summer (about half are 1 to 3 months in duration, and about half are between 3 to 6 months).

For long and intensive opportunities, there is a gap of 59 percent needed to serve all high school students and a gap of 20 percent if the opportunities only targeted economically disadvantaged students. For short and intensive opportunities, there is a gap of 33 percent needed to reach all high school students and a surplus of 32 percent if the opportunities only targeted economically disadvantaged students.

## Participation in career and college connections by time of year, school year 2022-23



**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire responses.

**Note:** Some providers described other timing, such as being flexible based on student needs.



## Age of D.C. youth participating in career asset building opportunities, according to providers

Providers serving each age of high school students	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
14 years old			✓		
15 years old		✓			
16 years old		✓			
17 years old	✓				
18 years old		✓			

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

### Timing

Approximately 36 percent of young people participated in programs offered only during the summer, 43 percent participated in programs offered only during the school year, and 23 percent participated in programs offered throughout the entire year. The largest program that offers opportunities to build career assets is the publicly funded Mayor Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP), which offers D.C.'s high school students (and some older youth) various employment opportunities for

a period of six weeks.<sup>23</sup>

### Age

As high school-aged youth get older, they are more likely to participate in career asset building opportunities. This could be because older youth are more likely to have the necessary experiences, have more time available in their school schedule, or be nearing college application deadlines. Almost all providers reported serving 17-year-olds, and some serve 14-year-olds.

## Spotlight on select middle school college and career connections

In addition to opportunities targeting high school-aged youth, D.C. has a growing interest in connections to building career assets beginning in middle school, including Gear Up and Career Ready Early Scholars Program.

### Gear Up

In 2023, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) announced that the District received a six-year, \$21 million Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant from the Department of Education. This grant will expand programs to encourage middle school students to persist through secondary school and graduate high school with a plan to be successful in college and careers. This grant will allow OSSE and the D.C. College Access Program (DC-CAP) to offer up to 650 middle school students in Wards 7 and 8 workshops, coaching, college visits, networking opportunities and an \$11,000 scholarship per year over their first two years of postsecondary education.<sup>37</sup>

### DOES – Career Ready Early Scholars Program

The DOES Career Ready Early Scholars Program (CRESP), previously known as the Middle School Program, is open to all middle school students who reside in the District to engage in comprehensive career exploration. In 2023, the program expanded to youth ages 9 to 13. This program provides a diverse hands-on experience for all participants in the areas of athletics, business, law and world/global affairs, culinary arts, agricultural sciences, engineering and design, language arts, STEM, social science and culture/humanities, visual and performance arts, and public speaking.<sup>38</sup>

**PROGRAM FOCUS:** There are relatively fewer career asset building opportunities that focus on career launch or access to college during high school.

Students can build career assets in various ways, and questionnaire responses indicated that most opportunities connect young people to college, through programs, courses, and experiences that help students improve their postsecondary outcomes, and to work-based learning, which supports young people more immediately with their careers. Providers are more likely to focus on both, especially nonprofits. LEAs are likely to have opportunities that only focus on college, and government agencies are more likely to focus on college or blend both.

During interviews, providers spoke of how their programs integrate college and career preparation. High –school-aged youth typically come into their programs inexperienced and showing students how post-secondary opportunities work in tandem

with different careers allows them to gain foundational skills needed to pursue the pathway of their choosing.

**“We don’t see college and career as separate. They are very much interconnected, and we promote that through our curriculum.”**

- Nonprofit provider

Connections to college and work-based learning, according to providers

Type of connection	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Both college and work-based learning			✓		
College only				✓	
Work-based learning				✓	
Other				✓	

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

## Spotlight on Postsecondary Success Collaborative

Partly in recognition of this blended focus, the D.C. Postsecondary Success Collaborative was established following the D.C. Postsecondary Success Summit, a one-day conference that hosted practitioners, researchers, and more to collaborate on building a better future for D.C. youth. The Collaborative is bringing together professionals and advocates with a common goal of increasing access to and success in postsecondary pathways for students and residents in D.C. The Collaborative's work is important, not as a provider of career asset building opportunities, but as an effort to build expertise and capacity among adults who are supporting postsecondary pathways for young people. It brings together multiple stakeholders in the college and career field to focus on systems level practices that impact students and residents as well as learn from those working directly in the field and those supporting outside of it.<sup>39</sup>

## Spotlight on Pathways Vision

The Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) is in the beginning stages of developing a Pathways Blueprint for DC to reflect and guide the work of government, nonprofit, education, and industry partners engaged in our collective work to ensure that D.C. public school students are prepared for college, careers, economic prosperity and fulfilling lives in the District of Columbia and beyond. The D.C. Pathways Blueprint, spearheaded by the DME, seeks to accomplish these goals through expanded student access to dual enrollment, work-based learning, and career and technical education on pathways to degrees, credentials, and good jobs. DME will be reaching out to collect feedback on the draft D.C. Pathways Blueprint, with the goal of a launch in late 2024. In addition, through the Education Through Employment Data System, D.C. will have new capacity to measure progress toward goals to put all students on a pathway to economic mobility and prosperity.

### Work-based learning: Exploration, preparation, launch activities

In the questionnaire, respondents provided details about work-based learning activities, which were categorized into three stages of Exploration, Preparation, and Launch. The questionnaire connected activities in each category to those described in the High-Quality Work-Based Learning Rubric, a companion to the Framework (see Appendix D for more information).<sup>24</sup> These categories align with DC Work-Based Learning Framework developed by CityWorks DC and strategic partners:<sup>25</sup>

1. Career exploration involves brief opportunities for young people to learn about various professions, fields, companies, and postsecondary interests.

2. Career preparation includes short-term work experiences to build knowledge and employability skills in a specific profession at a specific company; and
3. Career launch entails deep work experience and training combined with classroom learning to fully prepare youth for entry-level full-time positions.

Out of the 35 work-based learning opportunities, exploration and preparation activities are more prevalent than preparation or launch activities. Every opportunity includes at least one exploration activity, most commonly guest speakers, postsecondary plan development, field trips, and surveys of skills, competencies, or postsecondary interests.

### Career exploration, according to providers

Career exploration activities	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Career fairs			✓		
Company tours			✓		
Job shadowing			✓		
Field trips			✓		
Surveys (skills, etc.)		✓			
Postsecondary plan (career)		✓			
Guest speakers		✓			
Opportunities offering at least one	✓				

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.



### Career preparation, according to providers

Career preparation activities	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Other coursework			✓		
Pre-apprenticeships			✓		
CTE coursework			✓		
Internships			✓		
Opportunities offering at least one	✓				

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

### Career launch activities, according to providers

Career launch activities	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Unregistered apprenticeships				✓	
Registered apprenticeships				✓	
Other paid, on the job training			✓		
Attaining industry-recognized credentials or certifications			✓		
Opportunities offering at least one		✓			

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

Preparation activities are included in almost all opportunities, with internships being the most common, followed by some providers offering CTE or other coursework and pre-apprenticeships.

Launch activities are part of most opportunities, but less common than exploration and preparation activities, with some or a few offering each activity. Providers tend to focus on just one activity within preparation and launch stages, whereas most opportunities combine at least five different exploration activities.

## Spotlight on employer interviews

D.C. alumni can be an important group for local recruitment, especially for employers that are required to hire a certain percentage of D.C. residents. In interviews, employers spoke to some success stories when alumni were given extensive support and resources to be successful in their role, including mentorship, flexibility in their job schedule, and working in geographical areas reflecting their diverse backgrounds. In one case, a D.C. alum who struggled in a new role at first was given an adjustment plan and has been succeeding ever since, including returning to their alma mater to give advice to upcoming graduates.

**“DC hires is an important metric that we track. On the other hand, we’re not looking to just meet numbers—we’re looking for quality.”**

- D.C. employer

## Spotlight on CTE landscape

Career and Technical Education (CTE) is a key example of work-based learning across the continuum of exploration, preparation, and launch, in D.C.’s public schools. The District has invested over \$100 million dollars to reimagine high school which includes CTE programming to allow students to engage in specialized college and career experiences and increase skills toward family-sustaining careers.<sup>40</sup>

Students can access CTE programs by attending 27 schools that offer CTE courses or participating in the Advanced Technical Center (ATC). As of school year 2021-22, 18 percent of students (4,445 students) were enrolled in CTE programs. Students who earn at least three credits are referred to as concentrators, and 3 percent of students were concentrators in school year 2021-22.

Most schools that provide CTE programming offer courses associated with occupations that fall within a median salary range of \$100,000 to \$125,000. This is nearly double the living wage for D.C. residents without dependents, which is \$56,000.<sup>41</sup>

**“We had a student who learned about civil engineering through our program and received a college scholarship in civil engineering and an internship with a construction partner.”**

- D.C. employer

## College exploration activities, according to providers

College exploration activities	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
College fairs			✓		
Guest speakers			✓		
College visits			✓		
Postsecondary plan development with college options		✓			
Opportunities offering at least one in exploration	✓				

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

### College: Exploration, access, enrollment activities

In addition to work-based learning opportunities, the questionnaire asked about connections to college to get a full picture of the ways that young people can build career assets toward a successful early career. Providers shared information about college activities along a continuum categorized into three stages: Exploration, Access, and Matriculation. Although no specific college framework was available, the D.C. Policy Center mapped parallel activities reviewed by external stakeholders before the questionnaire was distributed. The categories include:

- College exploration activities help young people learn more about college options and what attending college would mean for them.
- College access involves exposing young people to college-level courses while still in high school.

- College matriculation focuses on directly supporting students in enrolling in a higher education institution.

Among the 40 opportunities that connect young people to college (including both college and work-based learning, and one “other” area that included a General Education Diploma, or GED, for example), almost all opportunities having at least one activity in the college exploration stage. Most opportunities offer exploration activities of postsecondary plan development with college options and college visits (including some overnight stays).

Most opportunities also offer college matriculation activities. In addition, some support FAFSA preparation, college applications, or summer bridge programs. Providers mentioned other methods of connecting students to college, including consultations, coaching, and webinars.

Most opportunities offer some form of college access to high school-aged youth, with dual enrollment being the most common. Unlike exploration and matriculation, where multiple activities are often available, most programs offer just one college access activity. Some measures show improvements in outcomes for access: In school year 2022-23 for example, 44.5 percent of students who took at least one AP or IB course passed at least one test, which is a 6-percentage point increase from school year 2018-19.<sup>43</sup>

Most opportunities also offer college matriculation activities. In addition, some support FAFSA preparation, college applications, or summer bridge programs. Providers mentioned other methods of connecting students to college, including consultations, coaching, and webinars.

## College access activities, according to providers

College access activities	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
International Baccalaureate courses				✓	
Early college high school				✓	
Funding for entrance exams (SAT/ACT)				✓	
Advanced Placement courses				✓	
Preparation for entrance exams (SAT/ACT)				✓	
Other coursework				✓	
Dual enrollment			✓		
Opportunities offering at least one in access		✓			

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

### College matriculation activities, according to providers

College matriculation activities	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Summer bridge programs			✓		
Support with FAFSA preparation			✓		
Support with college applications			✓		
Opportunities offering at least one in matriculation		✓			

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

## Spotlight on Secondary transition plans for students with IEPs

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are entitled to access to specific transition services through a secondary transition plan as they prepare for and enter their postsecondary lives.<sup>44</sup> Secondary transition planning is designed to assist parents, students, educators and community service providers in helping students identify, prepare for, and achieve their postsecondary goals.<sup>45</sup> To support this process, OSSE provides a resource hub centered around five key strategies: evidence-based practices, family partnerships, professional learning, self-determination, and strategic collaboration.<sup>46</sup> This hub offers key information on developing postsecondary transition plans for students with IEPs. OSSE additionally provides information in the OSSE Special Education Process Handbook on secondary transition, including how this work fits into IEP team decision-making.<sup>47</sup>

### ACCESS: Important barriers exist to student participation in career asset building opportunities, including lack of awareness, time in schedule, and a successful academic record.

Providers report the most common barriers to participation include lack of awareness of existing college and work-based learning opportunities and lack of time in young people’s schedules, including during the school day. In listening sessions, students agreed that awareness of these opportunities can be inconsistent across schools. Some students felt their schools were not providing enough guidance for college and career readiness, while others credit their schools and counselors for strong support. Others felt that the overwhelming workload, especially around college applications and senior projects, reflects a need for better time management support and guidance from the school—related to having enough time in the schedule.

For work-based learning opportunities, travel difficulties and lack of employer interest were more frequently cited barriers. Travel difficulties, especially when most work-based learning opportunities require at least a partial in-person component and occur at least twice a week, can be a significant barrier—and lack of employer interest can limit the supply of common work-based learning activities such as internships or pre-apprenticeships. In addition to the categories in the chart below, respondents noted other challenges such as lack of interest from young people, difficulty attracting high-value employers, language barriers, and learning disabilities.

#### Eligibility requirements

Most opportunities have some kind of eligibility requirements, with the most common being having enough time in a schedule to participate and being on track to graduate. Time in the schedule can be a limitation for students, especially for opportunities that occur during the school day or require trav-

el. D.C. is revising its high school graduation requirements and developing a DC-wide Graduate Profile as envisioned by OSSE’s 2023-25 Strategic Plan. Currently, students must complete 100 hours of community service and earn 24 Carnegie Units in specific subjects to graduate.<sup>26</sup> OSSE is now seeking public feedback on D.C.’s existing high school graduation requirements to gather input on essential content, important skills, and changes or additions to existing requirements.<sup>27,28</sup>

Requiring participants to be on track to graduate means that youth with better academic outcomes are more likely to be able to participate. Importantly, a few opportunities require that participants are authorized to work in the United States, which can restrict access for young people who are unauthorized to work (unauthorized immigrants comprised an estimated 3.6 percent of D.C.’s population as of 2022).<sup>29</sup>

**“Transportation is a problem. Daycare is a problem for those with young children, and some managers are supportive, but some aren’t.”**

- D.C. employer

## Reported participation barriers for career asset building opportunities in D.C., according to providers

Barriers	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
There is not enough capacity at institutions of higher education.					✓
There is a lack of steady funding for institutions of higher education.				✓	
There are not enough support staff at partner organizations.				✓	
There are not enough work-based learning opportunities for non-CTE students.				✓	
There is not enough interest from institutions of higher education.				✓	
There is a lack of steady funding for intermediaries, work-based learning providers.				✓	
There is not enough employer interest.				✓	
There is not enough employer capacity.				✓	
Young people cannot successfully complete the application process independently.				✓	
Young people can't easily travel to the opportunity.				✓	
Young people don't have enough time in their schedules.			✓		
Young people are not aware of the opportunity			✓		

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.



## Eligibility requirements to participate in career asset building opportunities

Eligibility requirements	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Authorized to work in the United States				✓	
Letter of recommendation				✓	
Attendance status				✓	
GPA minimum				✓	
On track to graduate			✓		
Requisite time in their schedule to participate			✓		
At least one eligibility requirement		✓			

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

To ease these barriers, some of the career asset building opportunities allow young people to earn either high school or college credit, which can help free up time in schedules.

And for work-based learning opportunities, most provide a stipend or wage, or a combination of the two, depending on the youth's work authorization status.

### Possibility of receiving course credit, according to providers

Possibility of receiving course credit	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
No		✓			
Yes, college credit				✓	
Yes, high school credit				✓	

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

### Option to be paid for work-based learning opportunities, according to providers

Option to be paid for work-based learning opportunities	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Other (such as depends on need)				✓	
Yes, a stipend				✓	
Yes, a wage			✓		
Any compensation		✓			

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

### How career asset building opportunities recruit participants, according to providers

Recruitment methods	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
None				✓	
Promotion through school	✓				
Word of mouth	✓				
Emails		✓			
Flyers		✓			
Website information		✓			
Social media		✓			
Career or college fairs			✓		
Parent networks, including PTOs			✓		

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

#### Recruitment

To recruit participants, almost all opportunities rely on word of mouth and school-based promotion. This may make it difficult for young people to learn about opportunities outside their networks. Emails and flyers are also commonly used for promotion. DCPS Career Ready is one resource that supports broader recruitment with career preparation materials for students. The Career Ready website contains search tools for career opportunities that can be filtered by pay, industry, pathway, and more; guidance on work-based learning opportunities; resources for educators; and the different pathways students can complete for their postsecondary education.<sup>30</sup>

#### GOALS FOR PROVIDERS: Across all career asset building opportunities, the most common goal is to prepare a postsecondary plan, which is an important intermediate step toward a successful early career.

All opportunities reported having goals at the close of participation, with most aiming to have participants develop a postsecondary plan (this was the most common, and it is inclusive of college and work-based learning), continue their professional development, and be exposed to new industries. There is notable variation in goals depending on whether an opportunity connects to college, work-based learning, or both. Goals such as building foundational job skills, acquiring technical skills, gaining exposure to new industries, and securing employment were only reported by work-based learning opportunities.

## Goals for D.C. aged youth at the close of participating in career asset building opportunities

Goals	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Postsecondary plan (inclusive of college and career as relevant)		✓			
Professional development		✓			
Exposure to new industries		✓			
Foundational job skills			✓		
Resume development			✓		
Mentorship			✓		
Employment			✓		
Credentials or certifications			✓		
Technical skills			✓		
Academic credits			✓		

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

In two student listening sessions at the end of school year 2023-24 hosted by the D.C. Policy Center to find out more about work-based learning and other topics, students spoke about their motivations and how they define success. Many students mentioned that they are driven by their family’s sacrifices and desire to achieve what their parents could not, especially in terms of education. For example, students want to be the first in their families to graduate from high school and college. Students described strong future aspirations, focusing on attending college, securing better job opportunities, and overcoming barriers. Some students view education as a means to avoid negative life outcomes, such as jail or unemployment.

**“Being financially stable, and you don’t have to worry about paying your bills. This would help my mental health.”** - D.C. student

## Spotlight on Grad Profiles

For the first time, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) has developed a DC-wide Graduate Profile. The DC-wide Graduate Profile outlines the vision for the college and career skills students should attain before graduation, and it will be used to reimagine how D.C. students are prepared to face a rapidly changing and interconnected world.<sup>48</sup> The new graduate profile focuses on the key competencies and characteristics that will equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to lead fulfilling lives and thrive. These competencies include critical thinking and problem solving, foundational knowledge and skills, information, media, and technology literacy, communication and collaboration, learner agency, global and local citizenship, and social, emotional, and physical well-being.<sup>49</sup> It provides an opportunity to connect to career asset building opportunities and outline any connections to competencies in the Profile.

## Spotlight on DCPS’ strategic plan

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)’s 2023-2028 strategic plan focuses on improving college and career outcomes for students.<sup>50</sup> One of the key priorities of the plan is to ensure students are “prepared for what’s next”. DCPS aims to achieve this goal by having 85 percent of students graduate on time and doubling the number of graduates who enroll in and successfully complete an internship, apprenticeship, CTE pathway, or dual enrollment course, or earn an industry recognized credential.

To meet these goals, DCPS is designing and implementing systems that can: (i) help students to create interactive and personalized postsecondary plans; (ii) expand access to and enrollment in dual enrollment and CTE programs, internships, and apprenticeships, (iii) create an inclusive support network for all DCPS graduates; (iv) enable sharing school and district level challenges successes, practices, and effective practices to support long-term sustainability, among other things.<sup>51</sup>

**Support available for D.C. aged youth after participating in career asset building opportunities, according to providers**

Type of support	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Mentorship or career coaches			✓		
Professional development sessions			✓		
Financial support for tuition			✓		
Resources for undocumented students			✓		
Financial support aside from tuition				✓	
Resources for unhoused or foster youth				✓	
Academic support				✓	
Any type of support		✓			

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

**Ensuring success**

Most opportunities provide some kind of support after participation, with mentorship or career coaches being the most common type, followed by professional development sessions, financial support for tuition, and resources for undocumented students. In interviews, providers mentioned they view success as youth immediately entering college or work after leaving these programs and as having the freedom to choose an option that works for them. Providers also spoke to the idea that plans around college retention and support programs also contribute to future success.

**How career asset building opportunities measure success at the close of participation, according to providers**

Way to measure success	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Employment in a good job			✓		
Participant satisfaction survey			✓		
College credits earned			✓		
Course grade			✓		
Attainment of industry recognized credentials or certifications			✓		
Employer satisfaction survey				✓	
Employment in any job				✓	
Participant competency evaluation				✓	

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

**MEASURING SUCCESS:** There is opportunity for improvement in tracking outcomes of career asset building opportunities, as participant surveys are currently the most common way to measure success.

Program success is primarily measured by participant satisfaction surveys, followed by some using college credits earned, course grades, employment in a good job, and attainment of industry-recognized credentials. Opportunities that include a work-based learning component are more likely to measure success through employer surveys or by assessing job quality, whereas college-focused opportunities are more likely to use academic metrics such as earned credits or course grade to measure success.

**“The thing you want to see with young people after school, especially in D.C., is some movement whether it’s college or it’s work.”** - Nonprofit provider

**How providers *currently* measure longitudinal outcomes for D.C. aged youth participating in career asset building opportunities, according to providers**

Ways to measure longitudinal outcomes	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Surveys			✓		
National Student Clearinghouse for enrollment in associate's and bachelor's degree programs				✓	
Statewide longitudinal data systems				✓	
Unemployment insurance wage data				✓	
None			✓		

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

**How providers *would like to* measure longitudinal outcomes for D.C. aged youth participating in career asset building opportunities, according to providers**

Potential ways to measure longitudinal outcomes	All or almost all (90% or more)	Most (60 to 90%)	Some (30-59%)	Few (1-29%)	None (0%)
Surveys		✓			
National student clearinghouse			✓		
Statewide longitudinal data systems			✓		
Unemployment insurance wage data				✓	
None				✓	

**Source:** D.C. Policy Center analysis of Building Career Assets questionnaire.

**Note:** The percentage is based on the number of providers who responded, not the number of young people whom they serve.

**Tracking longitudinal outcomes**

Some opportunities use surveys to measure longitudinal outcomes, and some do not measure these outcomes at all. A few providers use databases such as the National Student Clearinghouse, statewide longitudinal data systems, and administrative employment and wage data reported for unemployment insurance purposes.

Many providers want to strengthen their measurement of longitudinal outcomes. In addition, a large share are interested in using databases such as the National Student Clearinghouse, statewide longitudinal data systems or unemployment insurance wage data.

In D.C. Policy Center listening sessions, students overwhelmingly associated success with financial stability, being debt-free

from college, and having the ability to pay bills without stress, as they believe this would also support their mental health. Many students see owning a house, buying a car, and achieving financial independence as key indicators of success. Renting or owning their own space is a recurring theme, as was being able to support their immediate families, especially their mothers and siblings. Personal happiness is also seen as an important part of success, with students mentioning taking vacations, having flexible work hours, and enjoying hobbies like travel. Achieving a good work-life balance came through as a priority, too. Many students viewed this success as tied to continuing their education, with many envisioning themselves in college, pursuing graduate programs, or working in their desired fields such as medicine, psychology, technology, writing, or screenwriting.

**Spotlight on the Office of Education Through Employment Pathways**

To improve the information D.C. has about alumni, the DME has established the Office of Education Through Employment Pathways (ETEP) to support D.C. residents access good jobs and achieve economic mobility through education and workforce programs.<sup>52</sup> To accomplish this, ETEP will develop an education through employment data system to collect, analyze, and report data on the progress of D.C. residents in education, workforce training, and employment.<sup>53</sup> In its first year, an advisory board of students, families, educators, and other community partners has been convened to provide input to shape the creation of the data system and create effective public engagement strategies.<sup>54</sup> This has the potential to support how providers track success, and save time while providing more accuracy. One of ETEP's initial projects is aligning Career and Technical Education (CTE) to high-wage careers, and improving access for D.C.'s high school students.<sup>55</sup>

**Spotlight on Thurgood Marshall Academy PCS**

Thurgood Marshall Academy PCS tracks college persistence and completion for every graduating class by staying in touch with their alumni. The school employs a full-time alumni coordinator now in hopes of strengthening the data they can gather from their alumni. In addition, the school has some data on career participation and is looking to increase responses in this area as well.



# Conclusion and recommendations

Building career assets is an important part of a successful early career, especially as it has been shown to potentially increase earnings for D.C.'s high school alumni in a city where there are stark differences in income between longtime residents and newcomers when they are young adults. To meet this need, there are many providers of career asset opportunities in D.C., including government agencies, nonprofits, and schools. This report brings together a high-level landscape of these opportunities, establishing a foundation for further research and collaboration.

## Key findings

- Most indicators show low levels of college and career readiness for D.C.'s high school students, demonstrating the need for stronger connections to college and work-based learning.
- D.C. government agencies are the main providers of career asset building opportunities, accounting for 90 percent of participation across 49 opportunities.
- Most of the career asset building opportunities are intensive in nature (more than twice a week).
- There is a need for more capacity if every high school student should participate in one throughout the year, including during the summer (gap of 33 percent) and school year (gap of 59 percent).
- There are relatively fewer career asset building opportunities that focus on career launch, access to college during high school, or matriculation in college.
- Important barriers exist to student participation in career asset building

opportunities, including lack of awareness, time in schedule, and a successful academic record.

- Across all career asset building opportunities, the most common goal is to prepare a postsecondary plan, which is an important intermediate step toward a successful early career.
- There is opportunity for improvement in tracking outcomes of career asset building opportunities, as participant surveys are currently the most common way to measure success, and providers are interested in other methods.

## Common challenges

**First, some eligibility requirements and awareness of existing programs mean these opportunities are probably not currently reaching the students most in need of supports.** After time in the schedule, maintaining a minimum GPA and being on track to graduate are the most common eligibility requirements. This can make it more difficult for a young person who is not currently successful academically or has disengaged from high school to participate. Providers mentioned that lack of awareness was a top barrier to participation, and as the most common recruitment methods are word of mouth and school promotions, this can make it more difficult to learn about activities outside one's existing network.

**Second, there is little known about the outcomes for these opportunities.** What data are available from the Census show that young adults who move to D.C. after birth have higher incomes than young adults who grew up here. One of the reasons for this income gap could be low levels of college and career readiness, as shown by low levels of SAT scores and

postsecondary enrollment for high school students. Finding out more about the extent to which career asset building opportunities are effective to close this gap is crucial. Surveys are the most common way to track outcomes, but these can be burdensome for both participants and providers and can rely on self-reporting of outcomes.

## Recommendations

*Based on these findings and discussions with stakeholders, the District should consider the following recommendations: to strengthen career asset building opportunities for high-school aged youth:*

### Create a system of career asset building opportunities

- Establish alignment on available career asset building opportunities with common definitions and outcomes, to help participants understand what is offered and how these different opportunities can help them build career assets.
- Create a robust system for adults to support young people with navigating these opportunities, such as a resource bank owned by D.C. government as the main providers, with information on access and programming and ensure that there are college and career counselors at schools and across agencies who can help young people and their families to learn about available options. As a next step toward bringing organizations in this space together, the team is sharing a list of available opportunities with important characteristics in Appendix E.
- In addition to the framework of work-based learning (see Appendix D) developed by CityWorks DC and strategic partners, it would be beneficial to map available postsecondary degree opportunities

to a continuum of activities and identify gaps in how providers connect young people to college.

### Track outcomes to inform program design

- Improve the measurement of long-term outcomes by building databases such as the Education Through Employment Data System, rather than solely relying on surveys, which can be burdensome and have limitations due to self-reporting.
- Enhance tracking of participation and student-level attendance in different opportunities to better identify who is most likely to participate and which approaches are most successful.

### Increase access to students who have barriers to participation

- Leverage opportunities to assist students who aren't performing well academically or are disengaged as being academically successful is often an eligibility requirement.
- To address the barrier of scheduling constraints, ensure that the new high school graduation requirements do not limit access to career asset building opportunities that are proven to improve early career outcomes.

### Conduct additional research to answer key questions, such as:

- What skills are young people gaining?
- Which approaches, including dosage, frequency, length, location, and others are most effective in terms of outcomes, including around quality and equity?
- To what extent do these opportunities keep young people at risk of dropping out connected to school?
- What is working for employers to successfully engage young people in the workplace?



# Appendix A: Building Career Assets questionnaire

To gather information on existing ways that high school-aged youth connect to opportunities to ensure success in college and career, the D.C. Policy Center reached out to providers, schools, and education agencies to inform a 2024 report on Building Career Assets. This follows up on the D.C. Policy Center's report, [Measuring early career outcomes in D.C.](#), and analysis to [identify the ways that youth in D.C. acquire career assets](#), or the set of tools, skills, experiences, and competencies that an individual has acquired. Career assets can help successfully navigate the workforce and increase early career earnings.

This questionnaire requested information around program design, enrollment, participation, and measuring success for opportunities available to high school-aged youth in D.C. (around age 14 to 18), although the opportunities can also be available to younger or older ages or in other geographies. Respondents were asked the following questions:

- 1) Name of the opportunity described in these responses.
- 2) What is the age of the youth served by this opportunity?
- 3) Does this opportunity connect young people to career, college, or something else? Please select all that apply.
- 4) How does this opportunity allow young people to **explore** careers?
- 5) How does this opportunity allow young people to **prepare** for careers?
- 6) How does this opportunity allow young people to **launch** careers?
- 7) Are participants paid for their time in this opportunity?
- 8) Does your opportunity focus on any industry in particular?
- 9) How does this opportunity allow young people to **explore** college options?
- 10) How does this opportunity allow young people to **access** college?
- 11) How does this opportunity enable young people to **enroll** in college?
- 12) What are the eligibility requirements for your opportunity?
- 13) During the 2022-23 school year (including summer of 2022), was this opportunity offered?
- 14) What was the capacity, or total number of spots available, in school year 2022-23 (include the summer of 2022)?

- 15) During the 2022-23 school year, how many participants were enrolled in this opportunity (including summer of 2022)?
- 16) What types of recruitment strategies do you use to allow students to learn more about your opportunity?
- 17) What barriers exist to implement your opportunity with young people aged 14 to 18?
- 18) What is the duration of your opportunity?
- 19) How often does a participant take part in your opportunity?
- 20) How many estimated hours do participants spend in total in the opportunity across all components?
- 21) When does your opportunity take place?
- 22) What is the format of your opportunity?
- 23) If hybrid or in-person, in which wards is the opportunity located?
- 24) Does your opportunity offer academic credit to students?
- 25) Do participants continue to receive any support after high school?
- 26) What is the goal for participants to achieve through your opportunity?
- 27) How do you measure success for participants at the close of the opportunity?
- 28) Does your opportunity measure any longitudinal outcomes after completion of the opportunity? If yes, how does your opportunity gather this information?
- 29) How would your opportunity like to measure any longitudinal outcomes after completion of the opportunity?

# Appendix B: List of providers targeted for the questionnaire

The D.C. Policy Center developed this list of D.C. providers of career asset building opportunities for high school-aged youth based on a public review of information. High schools, nonprofits, government agencies, and adult and alternative schools are included on the list.

Opportunity Name	Provider Name	Organization type (non-profit, government agency, school)
DCHR In-School Youth Leadership Program	D.C. Department of Human Resources (DCHR)	Government agency
DOES Out-of-School Program	Department of Employment Services (DOES)	Government agency
DOES School Year Internship Program	Department of Employment Services (DOES)	Government agency
DOES Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program	Department of Employment Services (DOES)	Government agency
DOES Marion Barry Youth Leadership Institute (MBYLI)	Department of Employment Services (DOES)	Government agency
DHS Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment (SNAP)	Department of Human Services (DHS)	Government agency
DHS TANF Education & Employment Program	Department of Human Services (DHS)	Government agency
DYRS College and Career Postsecondary	Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS)	Government agency
DYRS Volt Academy	Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS)	Government agency
OSSE Advanced Internship Program	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
OSSE Advanced Technical Center (ATC)	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency

OSSE Career Ready Internship Program	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
OSSE College Conversations	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
OSSE College Rising Mentorship Grant	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
OSSE DC College Application and Exploration Month (DC CAEM)	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
OSSE FAFSA Assistance and Support	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
OSSE Approved LEA CTE Programs	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
OSSE Dual Enrollment Opportunities	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
OSSE Scholars Enrichment Program	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
OSSE Re-engagement Center	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
OSSE SAT School Day	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
DC College Application and Exploration Month (DC CAEM)	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
FAFSA Assistance and Support	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	Government agency
DC Students Construction Trades Foundation	Academy of Construction & Design: DC Apprenticeship Academy	Nonprofit
Aon	Aon	Nonprofit
BuildWithin	BuildWithin	Nonprofit
Career Path DC	Career Path DC	Nonprofit
CityKids	CityKids	Nonprofit
CityWorks DC	CityWorks DC	Nonprofit
College Bound	College Bound	Nonprofit
CollegeTrack	CollegeTrack	Nonprofit
Communities in Schools	Communities in Schools	Nonprofit
Genesys Works	Genesys Works	Nonprofit
Global Kids	Global Kids	Nonprofit

Latin American Youth Center	Latin American Youth Center (+Career Academy)	Nonprofit
On Ramps to Careers	On Ramps to Careers	Nonprofit
The Knowledge House	The Knowledge House	Nonprofit
The Opportunity Network	The Opportunity Network	Nonprofit
UPO	UPO	Nonprofit
Urban Alliance	Urban Alliance	Nonprofit
Job Corps	Washington DC Job Corps Outreach and Admissions	Nonprofit
YWCA National Capital Area	YWCA National Capital Area	Nonprofit
BASIS DC PCS	BASIS DC PCS	LEA serving high school students
Capital City PCS	Capital City PCS - High School	LEA serving high school students
Cesar Chavez PCS	Cesar Chavez Public Charter Schools for Public Policy	LEA serving high school students
DCI PCS	District of Columbia International School	LEA serving high school students
Digital Pioneers Academy PCS	Digital Pioneers Academy PCS - Capitol Hill	LEA serving high school students
District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)	DCPS high schools	LEA serving high school students
E.L. Haynes PCS	E.L. Haynes PCS - High School	LEA serving high school students
Friendship PCS	Friendship PCS - Collegiate Academy; Friendship PCS - Technology Preparatory High School	LEA serving high school students
Girls Global Academy PCS	Girls Global Academy PCS	LEA serving high school students
IDEA PCS	IDEA PCS	LEA serving high school students
Kingsman Academy PCS	Kingsman Academy PCS	LEA serving high school students
KIPP DC PCS	KIPP DC - College Preparatory PCS; KIPP DC PCS - Legacy College Preparatory PCS	LEA serving high school students
Paul PCS	Paul PCS - International High School	LEA serving high school students

# Appendix C: Listening sessions and stakeholder interviews

The D.C. Policy Center used interviews and listening sessions with key stakeholders to showcase lived experiences related to this report. The D.C. Policy Center conducted interviews on the topic of postsecondary and career programming with three DCPS and public charter high school leaders. Schools were chosen based on improved chronic absenteeism and serving higher than the city’s average of at-risk students. In addition, the D.C. Policy Center heard from 20 students during two listening sessions, with 50 percent of participants living in Wards 7 and 8. To complement the student feedback, three teachers across both DCPS and public charter schools participated in structured interviews regarding college and career readiness for students. The team also interviewed three employers in the D.C. sector and two non-profit providers of college and work-based learning opportunities.

Richard Wright PCS	Richard Wright PCS for Journalism and Media Arts	LEA serving high school students
SEED PCS	The SEED PCS of Washington DC	LEA serving high school students
The Sojourner Truth School PCS	The Sojourner Truth School PCS	LEA serving high school students
Thurgood Marshall Academy PCS	Thurgood Marshall Academy PCS	LEA serving high school students
Washington Latin PCS	Washington Latin PCS - Upper School	LEA serving high school students
Washington Leadership Academy PCS	Washington Leadership Academy PCS	LEA serving high school students
Academy of Hope PCS	Academy of Hope PCS	Adult or alternative school
Briya PCS	Briya PCS	Adult or alternative school
Carlos Rosario International PCS	Carlos Rosario International PCS	Adult or alternative school
Community College Preparatory Academy PCS	Community College Preparatory Academy PCS	Adult or alternative school
Goodwill Excel	Goodwill Excel	Adult or alternative school
LAYC Career Academy PCS	LAYC Career Academy PCS	Adult or alternative school
Maya Angelou PCS	Maya Angelou PCS	Adult or alternative school
The Family Place PCS	The Family Place PCS	Adult or alternative school
The Next Step PCS	The Next Step PCS	Adult or alternative school
YouthBuild PCS	YouthBuild PCS	Adult or alternative school
District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)	DCPS STAY and Opportunity Academies	Adult or alternative school

# Appendix D: Work-based learning: Exploration, preparation, launch activities

CityWorks DC, in collaboration with strategic partners, has developed a work-based learning framework for D.C. For more information and an accompanying call to action for employers, visit <https://www.cityworksdc.org/toolkit>.

# Appendix D (cont.)



## DC's Work-Based Learning Framework

The Work-Based Learning (WBL) Framework illustrates the value of high-quality WBL, the important distinctions between types of WBL, and examples of each. Educators, service providers, and partners can use the framework to align key concepts and language, effectively support youth in navigating the complex career-connected opportunities available in DC, determine the best fit, and understand what excellence looks like. More resources can be found at [www.cityworksdc.org/toolkit](http://www.cityworksdc.org/toolkit)



Brief opportunities (usually 1-4 hours) for young people to learn about various professions, fields, companies, and postsecondary interests.

**TARGET PARTICIPANTS:**  
Youth aged 11+

**ESSENTIALS OF EXCELLENCE:**

- Meets Good Job criteria in associated industry<sup>1</sup>.
- Provides insight into careers/sectors and associated skills and competencies.
- Includes postsecondary planning/interest inventory activities.
- [Aligned to Level I & II CTE course standards.](#)

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**

Participants know more about career sectors, Good Jobs, and are better equipped to develop postsecondary plans and pursue postsecondary interests.

**MEASURED BY:**

- Youth surveys on postsecondary interests ([example](#)).
- Completion of CTE courses (Level I & II).
- Postsecondary plan completion ([example](#)).

**EXAMPLES:**  
Guest speakers, job shadowing, field trip, company tour, career fair.

Opportunities for youth that are short-term (usually 1 month-1 year, and about 400 hrs) work experiences to build knowledge and employability skills in an identified profession and company.

**TARGET PARTICIPANTS:**  
Youth aged 14+

**ESSENTIALS OF EXCELLENCE:**

- Meets Good Job criteria in associated industry (definition in footnote).
- Provides paid, on-the-job learning.
- Provides mentorship by a host employer
- Builds [employability skills](#).
- Includes postsecondary planning/wrap-around support.
- [Aligned to Level III & IV CTE course standards.](#)

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**

Participants demonstrate growth in employability skills, further explore interests and refine postsecondary plans.

**MEASURED BY:**

- Internship and/or pre-apprenticeship completion.
- Participant satisfaction and competency evaluation ([example](#)).
- Employer satisfaction and competency evaluation ([example](#)).
- Completion of CTE courses (Level III & IV)
- Youth surveys demonstrating clarity on postsecondary plans.

**EXAMPLES:**  
Internships, pre-apprenticeships.

Deep work experience and training (usually 2-3 years and 2,000 hours) with aligned classroom experience for youth to become fully prepared with relevant expertise, experience, and postsecondary credentials and certifications, making them competitive for an entry-level full-time position.

**TARGET PARTICIPANTS:**  
Youth aged 17+

**ESSENTIALS OF EXCELLENCE:**

- Meets Good Job criteria in associated industry (definition in footnote).
- Provides paid, on-the-job learning.
- Provides formal oversight by a hiring employer.
- Includes ongoing assessment against established skills and competency standards
- Includes postsecondary planning/job transition support.
- Aligned to related classroom-based instruction.

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**

Culmination in a portable, industry-recognized credential and/or postsecondary credit that leads to a full-time job.

**MEASURED BY:**

- Completion of apprenticeship program, DOL certificate attainment.
- Attainment of portable industry-recognized credentials and/or postsecondary credits.
- Participant satisfaction and competency evaluation.
- Employer satisfaction and competency evaluation.
- Employment in a Good Job.

**EXAMPLES:**  
Apprenticeships, Training to Job programs.

<sup>1</sup> A Good Job is a full-time role which 1) is in a high-demand, high-growth sector, 2) provides opportunities for skills and career advancement, and 3) provides a living wage that provides family-sustaining income and benefits (~\$46K<sup>1</sup> for one adult in DC). [Contact us with questions or feedback.](#) Note a [Glossary of Key Work-Based Learning Terms](#) can be found [here](#).

# Appendix E: Resource bank brainstorm

The team suggests including the following information if a resource bank moves forward:

- Opportunity name
- Provider name
- Contact information
- Types of work-based learning or college connection activities (internship, dual enrollment, for example)
- Timing (school year or summer)
- Timing during the school day, after school, on the weekend, or during school breaks
- Duration and frequency
- Eligibility requirements
- Goals of program
- Participation expectations/requirements
- Location, e.g. work site, school site, non-profit site
- Primary learning mode, e.g. the percentage of time learning at work or learning in a classroom
- Compensation for participants
- Requirement for participants to travel

## Endnotes

- 1** A list of these opportunities can be found in the Appendix section of this report.
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- 10** Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). 2024. “Four-Year High School Graduation Rate.” OSSE. Retrieved from <https://osse.dc.gov/page/data-and-reports-0>
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- 12** In addition, 0.8 percent of high school students attended a DCPS alternative or citywide school.
- 13** Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME). 2024. “Trends in Distance to School by Grade Band.” EdScape. Retrieved from <https://edscape.dc.gov/page/enrollment-patterns-trends-distance-school-grade-band>

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