

DC Alumni Early Career Outcomes Survey: Alumni perspectives on college and career preparation programming

To understand DC alumni experiences, ETEP conducted the Alumni Early Career Outcomes Survey, which asked questions about education, employment, and quality-of-life outcomes. This work is part of a national survey focused on alumni who graduated 5 - 7 years ago from the classes of 2017 - 2019¹.



Nearly 500 DC alumni participated thanks to collaboration with schools, agencies, and community partners. Participants were also given a \$15 gift card incentive.



ETEP reached out to both DCPS and PCS alumni, but DCPS alumni accounted for 82% of respondents.



Black, Hispanic, and Latino alumni were underrepresented, while white alumni were overrepresented among survey respondents².

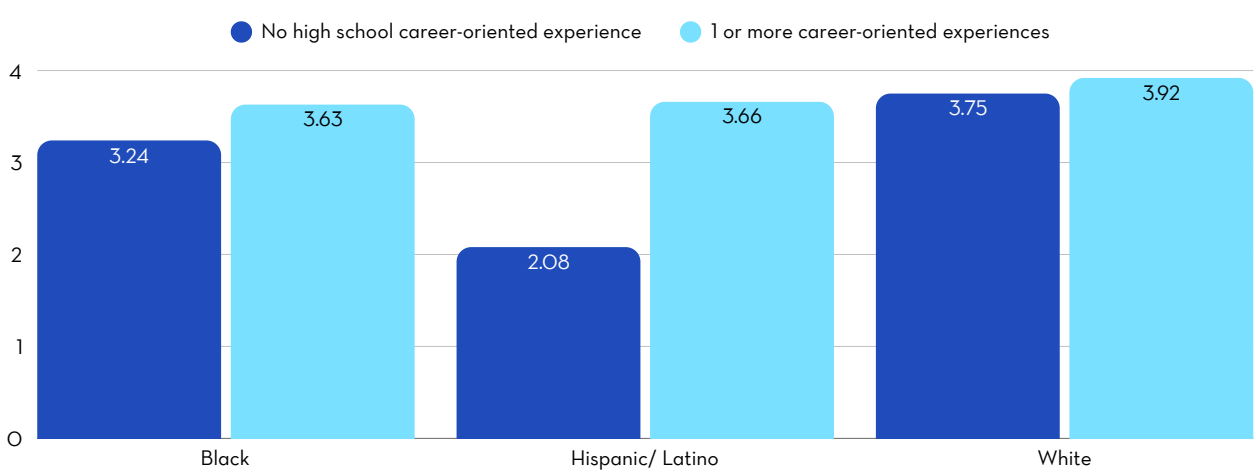


Although 41% of the graduating classes of 2017 - 2019 pursued post-secondary degrees, alumni with a 2-year or 4-year degree accounted for 75% of respondents².

Key Findings:

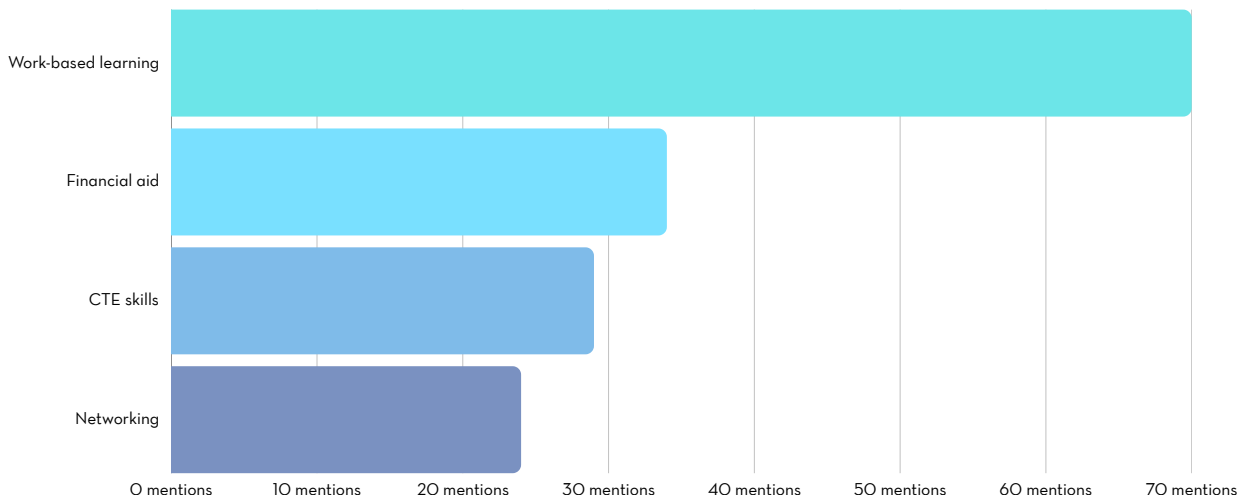
Theme #1: Alumni who participated in career-oriented experiences in high school were significantly more likely to report feeling well-prepared for career. This impact was particularly significant among Black and Hispanic/Latino alumni respondents.

Average alumni response on a scale from 1 - 5, by race, on whether they agree that their high school helped them understand careers and job opportunities they could pursue



Theme #2: Alumni reported that work-based learning and financial aid were the most impactful experiences and supports they received during high school. When asked what they wished they had access to, work-based learning was also the most cited experience, closely followed by financial literacy.

Most frequently mentioned experiences during high school that alumni identified as impactful



Implications & Next Steps

These findings highlight opportunities to continue expanding support for students by:

- Offering multiple, layered career-oriented experiences in high school to support students in learning about career pathways that align with their interests. This includes targeted support for Black and Hispanic/Latino students in particular, to drive success in navigating post-secondary planning.
- Working closely with agencies and community partners to enhance accessibility to opportunities that youth and alumni express strong interest in, such as work-based learning and financial literacy.
- Leveraging insights, along with future data on student and graduate outcomes, to provide schools, agencies, and community partners with the information they need to best serve students and families on their pathways to economic mobility and prosperity.

ETEP will leverage findings from this research to:

Engage with students, families, schools, and community partners to increase access to information.

Work with agency partners to track progress toward addressing system gaps.

Develop policies and practices that address disparities shaping post-secondary and employment outcomes.

To stay up to date on ETEP research projects, visit our [research and publications page at dme.dc.gov/etep](https://dme.dc.gov/etep).

Sources: ¹Bain and Company, 2024 Alumni Early Career Outcomes Fact Base.

²Office of the State Superintendent of Education. Public SY16-17,17-18, and 18-19 Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates. Retrieved from [High School Graduation Rates | osse](https://www.osse.edu/High-School-Graduation-Rates).