Participant Survey Methodology

August 2026

Washington Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board

The mission of the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board is to ensure a successful business climate and livable-wage jobs for all.

State statute directs the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) to survey workforce system participants in order to evaluate their experiences, outcomes and satisfaction with workforce programs within Washington. By capturing the lived experiences of program participants, the Workforce Board can support data-informed decision-making, improve accountability, and help ensure that Washington's workforce system is equitable, effective, and responsive to both workers and the economy.

The research objectives of the survey are to:

- Identify the motivations for enrolling in participant's education or training program.
- Assess participant needs and services received.
- Measure participant satisfaction
- Evaluate training content and effectiveness
- Measure outcomes and identify barriers to employment

Insights from this survey will help policymakers and program administrators improve the design and delivery of workforce training programs to better support participant success and meet labor market demands. The results are used to improve training offerings, better align services with participant needs, enhance employment outcomes, and support continuous improvement of workforce development systems.

Participant Survey: Methodology

The survey was administered via mail, telephone, and online among a randomly selected sample of Washington Workforce System participants. A sample chosen from exiters of nine workforce programs across the state.

- Apprentice
- Community and Technical College Programs
    - Professional Technical
    - Worker Retraining
    - BEdA
    - I-BEST
- Title 1 – Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

    - WIOA Adult
    - WIOA Dislocated Worker
    - WIOA Youth
- Private Vocational School

Completions rates ranged from 13% to 29% depending on program. In total 2,132 surveys were received for an overall completion rate of 20%. For more information on methodology please see Appendix A.

The Washington State Workforce Board Participant Satisfaction Survey aims to collect information from participants and students from 9 workforce related programs, including programs related to apprenticeships, Community and Technical College, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, or Private Vocational Schools. The main purpose of this study is to gather feedback about how well the needs of participants are being met. The Workforce Board will learn what is important to participants. The survey results will help the Workforce Board evaluate individuals' experiences.

Abstract: The Social and Economic Sciences Research Center (SESRC) worked collaboratively with the Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (hereinafter referred to as the Workforce Board) to conduct the Washington State Workforce Board Participant Satisfaction Survey 2024. The participants and students participated between and July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022 with data collection in 2024. The information collected in the survey will help the Workforce Board improve programs and their services. The following methodology section was provided by SESRC.

Methods: The SESRC used a mixed-mode survey design with a randomly selected sample of 11,425 participants across 9 workforce training groups. The contact strategy started with a postal mailing of an invitation letter and personalized email with the online survey link and unique access code, followed by telephone calls and a series of email reminders. The Workforce Board provided an oversampled list of 12,718 to account for the removal of duplicate cases. After removing cases in the deduplication procedure checking across and within groups, the SESRC selected a maximum of 1,300 cases from each group. If the participant was in more than one group, they were selected for contacting only once for a particular group. The hierarchy of the groups was Apprenticeship, CTC (I-BEST, WR, Prof-Tech, BEdA), PVS, WIOA (Youth, DW, Adult). After removing 72 cases in the deduplication procedure checking across and within groups, the SESRC selected all 1,025 cases from the WIOA – Youth group and 1,300 cases from each of the other 8 groups. The final sample count was 11,425. Due to the large sample size, it was split into smaller groups, or random waves, so phone calls would occur closer to when the letter was mailed. The data collection period lasted 4.5 months (20 weeks). Calling ended on February 4, 2024, and the last completed web survey occurred on February 18, 2024. The response rate is 19.7% (1,741 completes + 391 partial completes / 10,846 eligible sample).

Sampling Frame. The sample frame is the list of those that participated in one of the following nine groups: Apprenticeship; Professional, technical, or vocational education program (Prof-Tech); Worker retraining program (WR); Basic Education for Adults program (BEdA); Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training program (I-BEST); education or training program through a WorkSource Center or

the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (Adult, Dislocated worker (DW), Youth); Private vocational school program (PVS).

The following table shows the number of the initial sample, the deduplicated sample, and the final contacted sample in each group.

Table 1 | Participant Group	Initial sample	Deduplicated sample	Selected sample
Apprenticeship	1,409	1,409	1,300
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (CTC)			
CTC Prof-Tech Ed	1,429	1,427	1,300
CTC Worker Retraining	1,461	1,458	1,300
CTC Basic Ed	1,475	1,470	1,300
CTC I-BEST	1,480	1,478	1,300
Title 1 – Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act			
WIOA-Adult	1,477	1,464	1,300
WIOA-DW	1,462	1,426	1,300
WIOA-Youth	1,031	1,025	1,025
Private Vocational Schools	1,494	1,489	1,300
Total	**12,718**	**12,646**	**11,425**

Respondents received one postal letter, up to 5 phone calls, and 7 emails (1 invitation email and up to 6 reminder emails) to ask for their help in completing the Washington State Workforce Board Participant Survey via web or phone interviews. The data collection period spanned from September 28, 2023, to February 19, 2024. Due to the large number of cases in the sample, it was separated randomly into two waves of approximately 5,700 or one-half of the total sample. The timing was such that the postal letter and first email would be sent close to the time phone calls started for the wave. Table 2 details the specific dates for each initial contact attempt by mode for each wave. The subsequent tables and figures show the specific contacts and cumulative completes for the separate waves.

The initial question in the survey determined the respondent's eligibility for the survey: Did you participate in {program}? If the respondent indicated they did not participate, they were not asked any more questions and were removed from the list for future contacts.

Table 2 | Contact	Date
Invitation letter wave 1 (n=5,824)	9/28/2023
Invitation email wave 1	10/2/2023
Phone calls start wave 1	10/5/2023
Invitation letter wave 2 (n=5,575)	10/12/2023
Invitation email wave 2	10/16/2023
Phone calls start wave 2	12/18/2023
Data collection closed	2/19/2024

Invitation and Reminder Emails. The initial contact to those with a mailing address in the sample was a postal letter introducing the potential respondent to the survey and requesting they complete it on the web. The invitation email was sent to the respondents with an email address 4 days after the postal mailing to enhance participation in the web survey. Up to 6 reminder emails were sent to non-respondents to remind and encourage participation in the survey. The letter and all the emails were in English and Spanish.

Telephone contacts. Approximately one week after the postal mailing was sent, those who still had not completed the survey on the web were contacted by telephone. Up to five attempts were made on all cases.

Mixed Mode Strategy. Respondents who are reached by telephone will be asked to complete the telephone survey. If the respondent does not want to complete the telephone survey, they will be offered the survey URL and unique access code as the way to complete the survey. An email message with the URL and access code will be sent at the time of the phone call to those respondents opting for the internet. Respondents who indicate they will complete the online version may be re-contacted by telephone if their completed online survey is not received within 1-2 weeks after it was offered. Any respondents who complete the survey online in response to the letter, emails, or phone calls will be removed from the calling pool and mailing list.

Monetary incentive. Respondents were offered a post-survey incentive if they completed the survey. At the end of the survey, respondents were offered the chance to enter a drawing for one of 10 $50 gift cards. If the respondent indicated they wanted to be included in the drawing, they were added to the pool to select from. After indicating the desire to participate in the drawing, the respondent was asked to provide the best name and address to send the gift card should their name be selected. If the respondent did not provide any contact information, they were removed from the selection pool. For this survey 1,317 cases indicated they wanted to be in the drawing and provided contact information. From the pool, 10 winners and 10 alternates were selected. The selection process started with putting the pool into access code order. Then each case was given a random number between 0 and 1. The

cases were then sorted by this random number. The first 10 cases in this new, random order were the winners, and the second 10 were the alternates. This list of 20 respondents was sent to the Workforce Board with only the contact information (name and address) and an indicator of whether they were the winner or alternate. Two project managers from the SESRC were present during the selection process to prevent any biased selection.

Cooperation Rate

Table 3	Complete	Partial	Refusal	Non-Interview	Ineligible	Response rate	Cooperation rate
Apprentice	193	51	91	948	17	19.0%	72.8%
Professional Technical	233	56	77	913	21	22.6%	79.0%
Worker Retraining	305	50	56	835	54	28.5%	86.4%
BEdA	178	43	55	959	65	17.9%	80.1%
I-BEST	261	64	56	855	64	26.3%	85.3%
WIOA-Adult	128	28	87	927	130	13.3%	64.2%
WIOA-Dislocated Worker	203	39	72	851	135	20.8%	77.1%
WIOA-Youth	99	29	59	774	64	13.3%	68.4%
Private Vocational School	141	31	63	1036	29	13.5%	73.2%
Overall	**1741**	**391**	**616**	**8098**	**579**	**19.7%**	**77.6%**

Sampling error is a measure of the extent to which a randomly selected sample of respondents represents the population. Sampling error is also the basis upon which tests of significance are calculated. One formula for calculating an estimate of the sampling error for a proportion at the 95 percent confidence level is presented below, and this can be used to calculate the sampling error for survey results in this report.

Where: SE= sample error

$$SE = 2\sqrt{\frac{pq}{(n-1)}\left(\frac{N-n}{N}\right)}$$

p = Expected proportion of "yes" responses for a specific question = 0.50

q = Expected proportion of "no" responses for a specific question = 0.50

n = Sample size = number of completed surveys for a specific question

N = Population size for the survey

Because the population size for the survey is unknown, calculating a precise sample error is not possible. For that reason, we provide the likely sample error based on the information that is known.

Table 4	Population	Sampling Frame	Completes + Partial Completes	Sample Error is at most or better
Apprentice	unknown	1,283	244	6%
Professional Technical	unknown	1,279	289	5%
Worker Retraining	unknown	1,246	355	5%
BEdA	unknown	1,235	221	6%
I-BEST	unknown	1,236	325	5%
WIOA-Adult	unknown	1,170	156	7%
WIOA-Dislocated Worker	unknown	1,165	242	6%
WIOA-Youth	unknown	961	128	8%
Private Vocational School	unknown	1,271	172	7%
Overall	unknown	10,846	2,132	2%