

# Delaware Pathways Student Outcome Study

Findings for 2022 and  
2023 (preliminary) graduates

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<https://delawarepathways.org/the-delaware-pathways-student-outcomes-study/>



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# About the study

The Delaware Pathways Student Outcomes Study is a longitudinal study of high school graduates focusing on pathways in:

- Health sciences
- Information technology
- Education & training
- Manufacturing
- Architecture & construction

## Objectives...

SUPPORT PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS

DOCUMENT PROGRAM OUTCOMES

MEET LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

An annual study of high school student outcomes is required by the Delaware Code [Title 14, Chapter 1, Subchapter III, Section 156](#)

# What is included in a career pathway?

- ✓ **a sequence of courses**
- ✓ **an opportunity for earning college credits and credentials**
- ✓ **work-based learning**  
This report focuses on immersive experiences, such as internships or co-ops, that range from a few hours per week to full time, typically over weeks or months.
- ✓ **offered in most Delaware public high schools**

For more information, visit:  
<https://delawarepathways.org/pathways-programs/>

# An overview of our DATA COLLECTION PROCESS



High schools collected contact information from the graduating classes of 2022 and 2023



Students graduated



Graduates entered higher education and employment



Study team contacted graduates for a follow-up survey and interviews



Survey data were matched to student record data



Study team analyzed data and interviews a subset of graduates

For more information, visit:

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# Delaware Department of Labor (DDOL) data

## Coverage

- Data cover from 10 to 30% of high school pathway graduates
- *Excludes* graduates working out of state, self-employed, or employed by the federal government (including in the military)

## Data

- Wages are reported as total quarterly earnings and do not indicate whether the work is part or full-time
- Delaware Pathways are aligned with high demand, high wage *occupations*. The DDOL collects the industries of graduates' employers, limiting analyses of the relationship between graduates' high school pathway participation and job

# 2023 Pathways Conference:

## **Audience contributions**

- If not working: Add "I have family obligations" as one of the options.
- What are some of the functions of your job?
- Did students who earned dual credit use the credits for their college program?
- Did mentors or network connections from high school help after?
- Are they still in touch with any HS mentors or support (either at school or outside of school)?
- If they said their high school pathway was connected to their career, in what ways were they connected?
- Do you feel your pathway program helped improve your opportunities in employment, even if you changed career paths?



# Survey:

## 2023 pathway graduate data collection

- **BASELINE SURVEY (spring 2023)**
  - 2,619 grade 12 students in 10 school districts, who completed pathway programs primarily in fields aligned to high-demand occupations in Delaware
- **FOLLOW-UP SURVEY (January-March 2024)**
  - 1,790 (about 68% of baseline survey respondents)
  - The Delaware Department of Education will match these to data on each graduates found in:
    - High school transcript
    - Delaware Department of Labor
    - National Student Clearinghouse



# Survey: 2023 participation

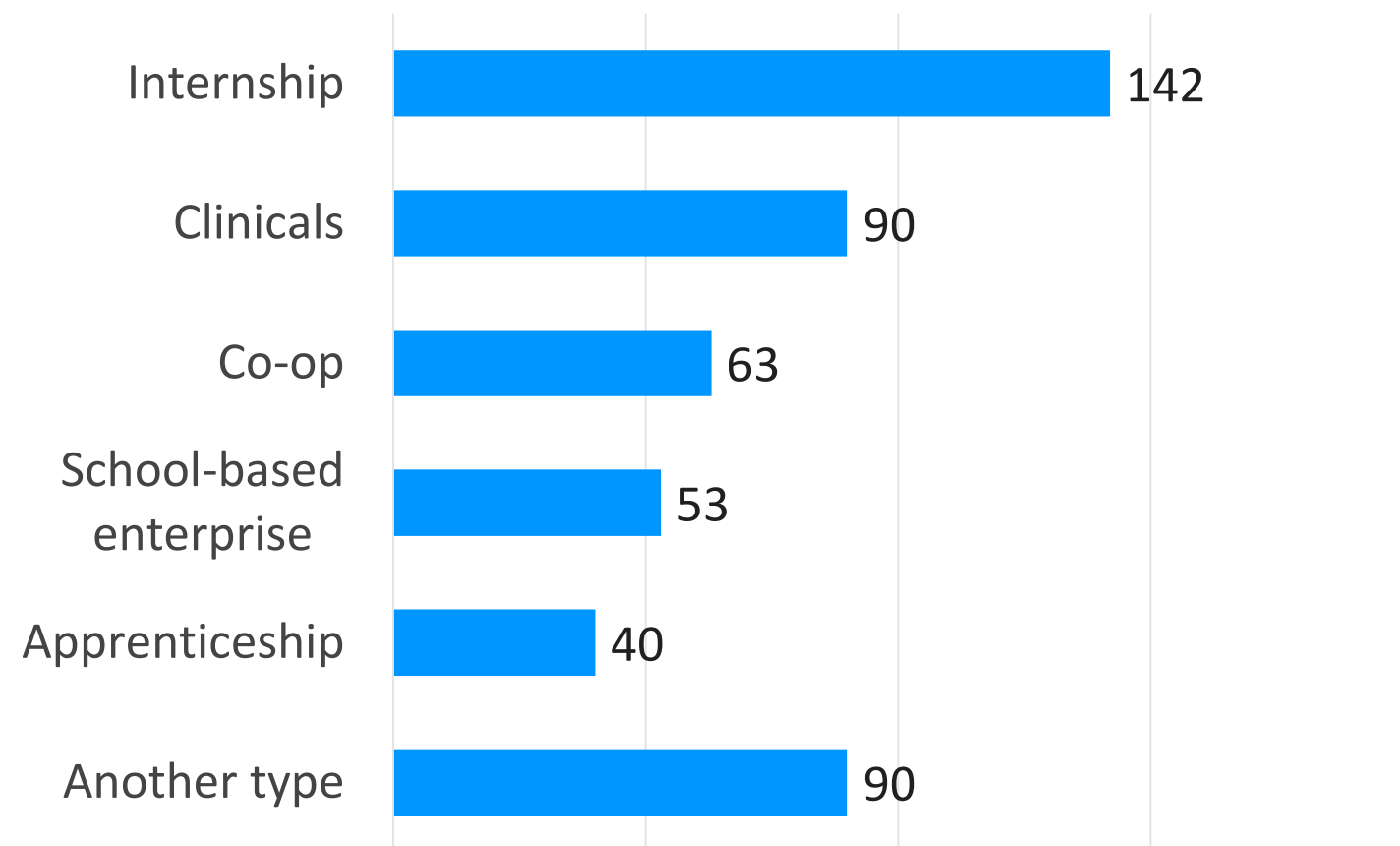
District	Baseline	Follow-up
Appoquinimink	330	236
Brandywine	212	169
Cape Henlopen	127	66
Capital	230	150
Colonial	13	13
Indian River	186	128
Milford	235	151
NCCVT	1,001	673
POLYTECH	155	120
Red Clay	130	84
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,619</b>	<b>1,790</b>

# High school experiences: **Work-based learning**

**51%** of graduates surveyed reported participating in one or more immersive work-based learning (WBL) experiences.

- 76% of vo-tech high school graduates
- 30% of comprehensive high school graduates

Types of WBL experiences among comprehensive high school graduates

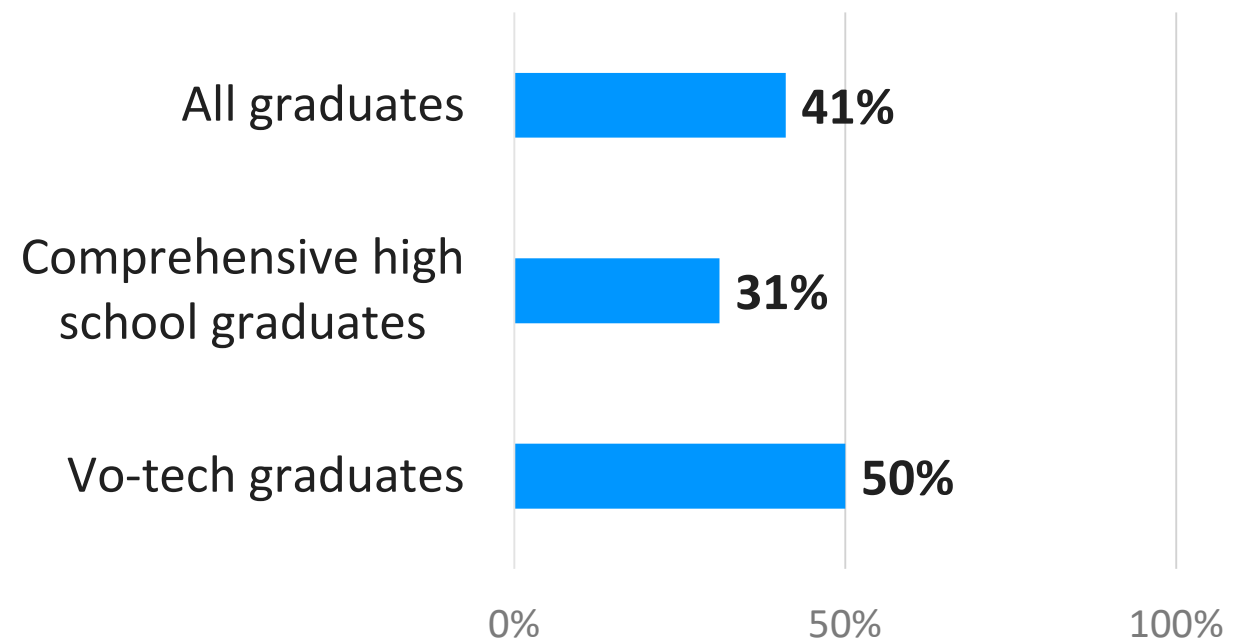


*n=420*

Source: Delaware Pathways Student Outcomes Study

# High school experiences: **Industry-recognized credentials**

Graduates reported whether they earned an industry recognized credential (IRC) in high school.

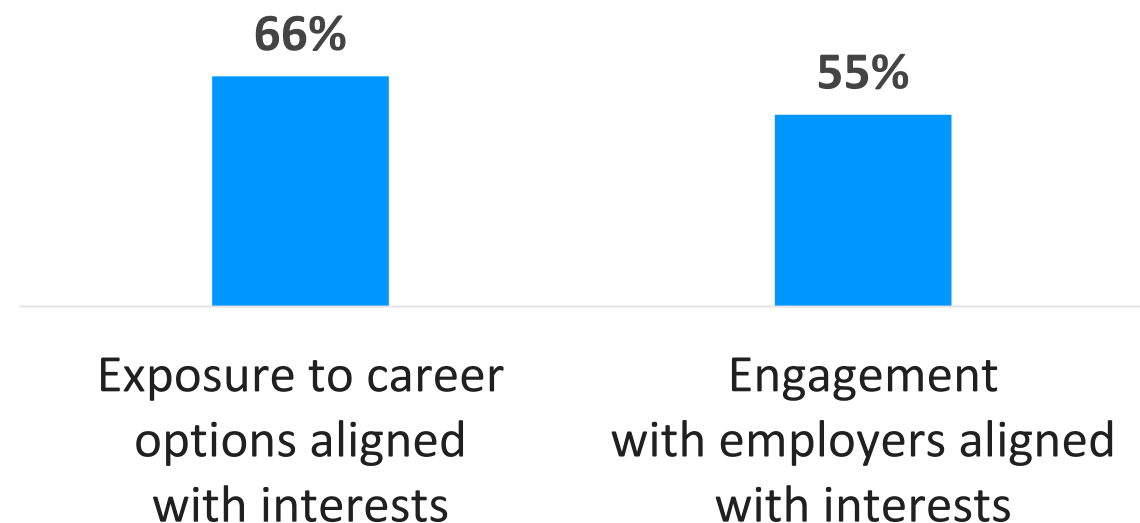


*n=1656*

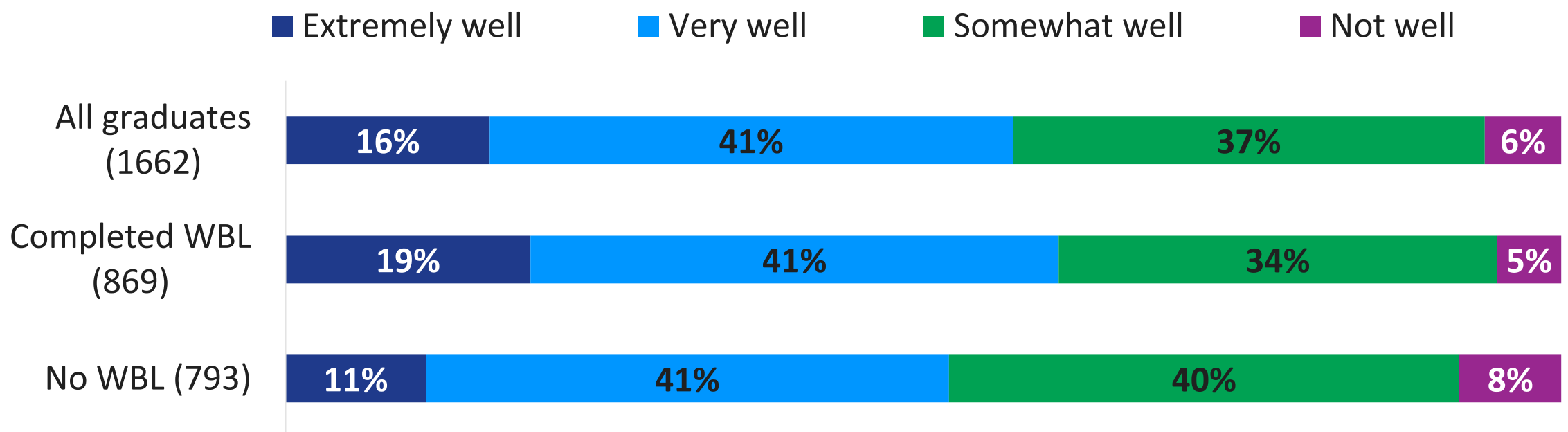
65% of graduates who earned an IRC expect to use the credential in their career.

# Preparation for life after high school

Most graduates agreed or highly agreed that they had career exposure and exploration activities during high school.

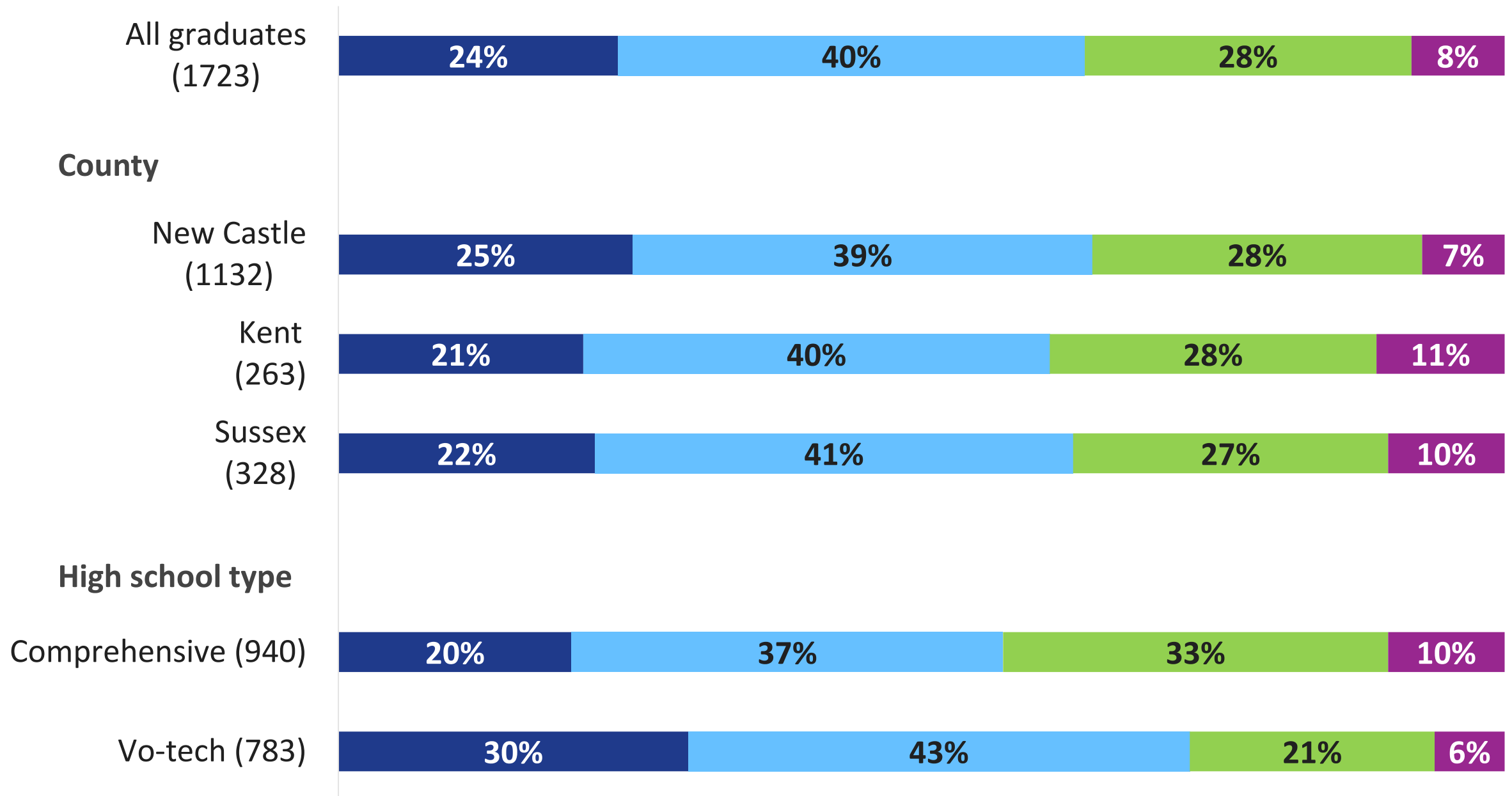


Graduates indicated how well their high school prepared them for life after graduation.



# Post-graduation experiences: **Work and further education**

- Employed, not enrolled
- Employed and enrolled
- Enrolled, not employed
- Not employed or enrolled



*n=1607*

Source: Delaware Pathways Student Outcomes Study

# Post-graduation experiences:

## Education

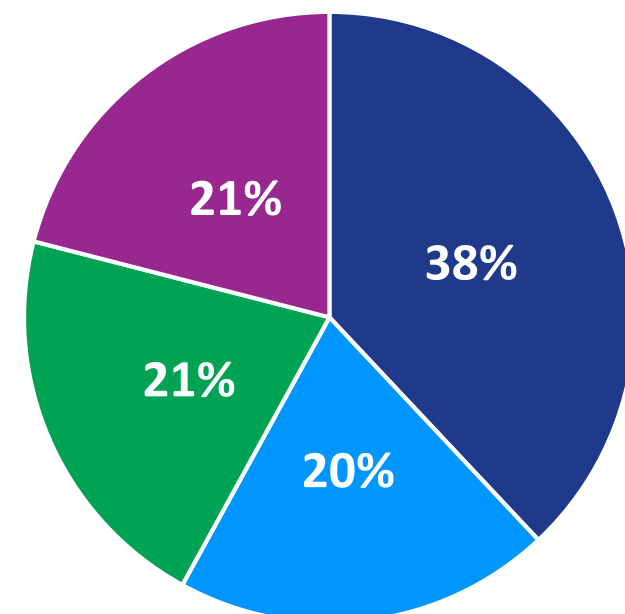
**68%** of graduates reported postsecondary enrollment.

The most common fields of study were:

- Health Sciences (nursing, medical assisting, dental) (33%)
- Business (finance, management, marketing) (14%)
- Engineering (12%)
- Education (11%)
- Computer Science (10%)
- Psychology (8%)
- Biology (7%)

Among enrolled graduates who earned college credits in high school, **79%** plan to use the credits in college.

- Toward major
- For major and electives
- Toward electives
- No plan to use credits



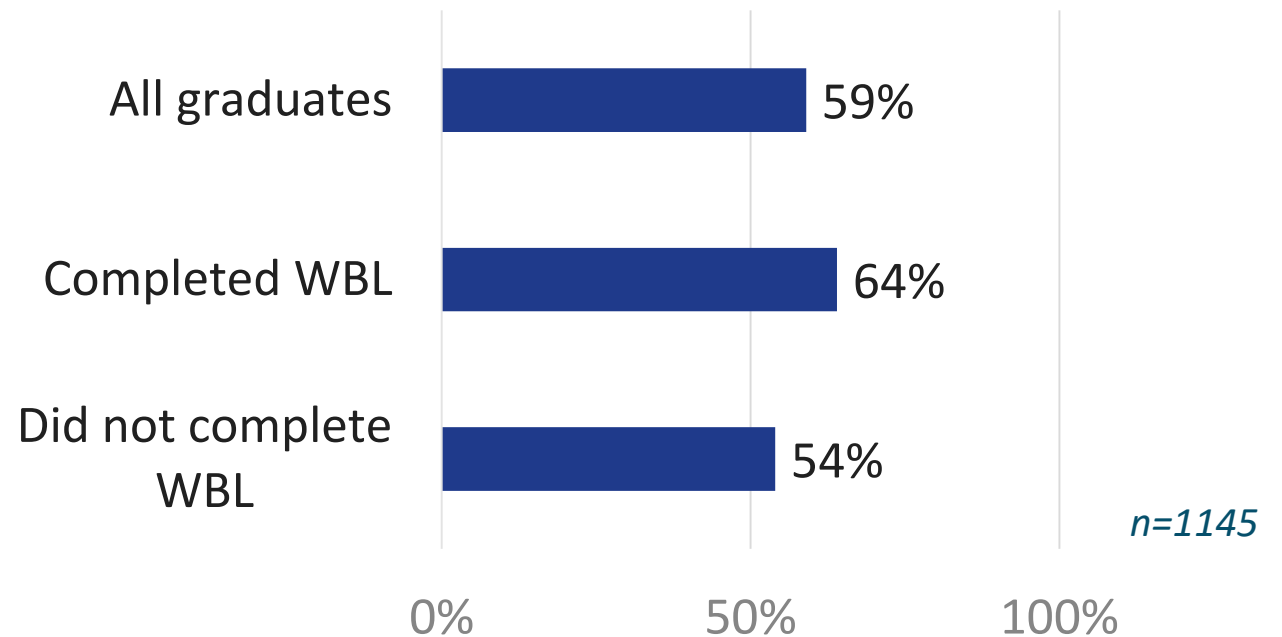
*n=825*



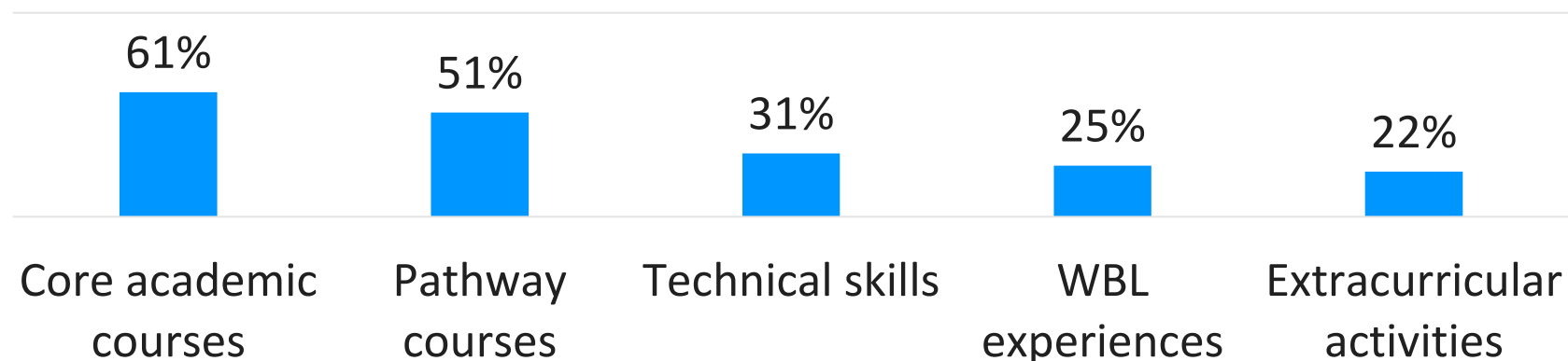
# Post-graduation experiences:

## Education

Most pathway graduates who were enrolled felt that their college major is related to their high school pathway.



Graduates indicated the aspects of high school that have been helpful in postsecondary education



n=1135

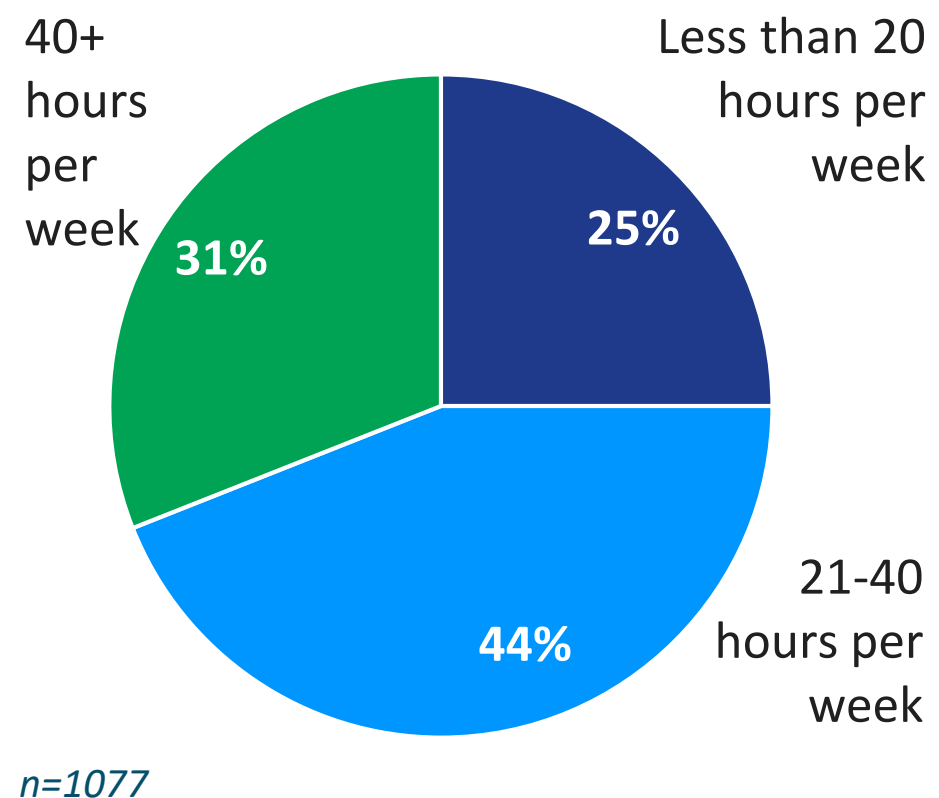
# Post-graduation experiences:

## Work

### Most graduates work in:

- Food service & hospitality (26%)
- Retail (19%)
- Healthcare & social assistance (14%)

Six-months post-graduation, **64%** of graduates were working for pay.



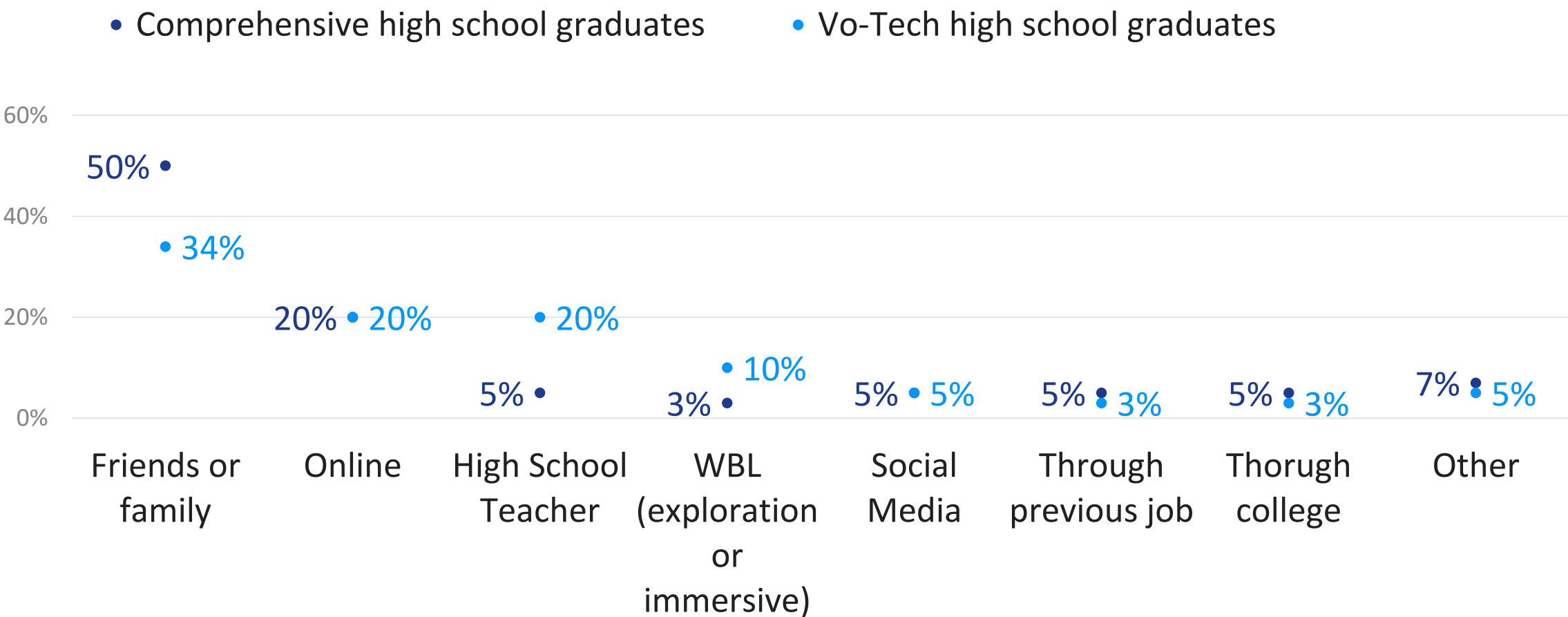
- 85% of employed graduates work in Delaware.
- The median annual wage was:
  - \$37,440 for full time employment
  - \$16,224 for part time employment

# Post-graduation experiences:

## Work

- 19% of work-based learning (WBL) participants were hired by their WBL employer
- 23% applied for a job at their WBL organization or asked their WBL supervisor for a job reference or career advice or

Employed graduates reported how they found their current job.



n=1005

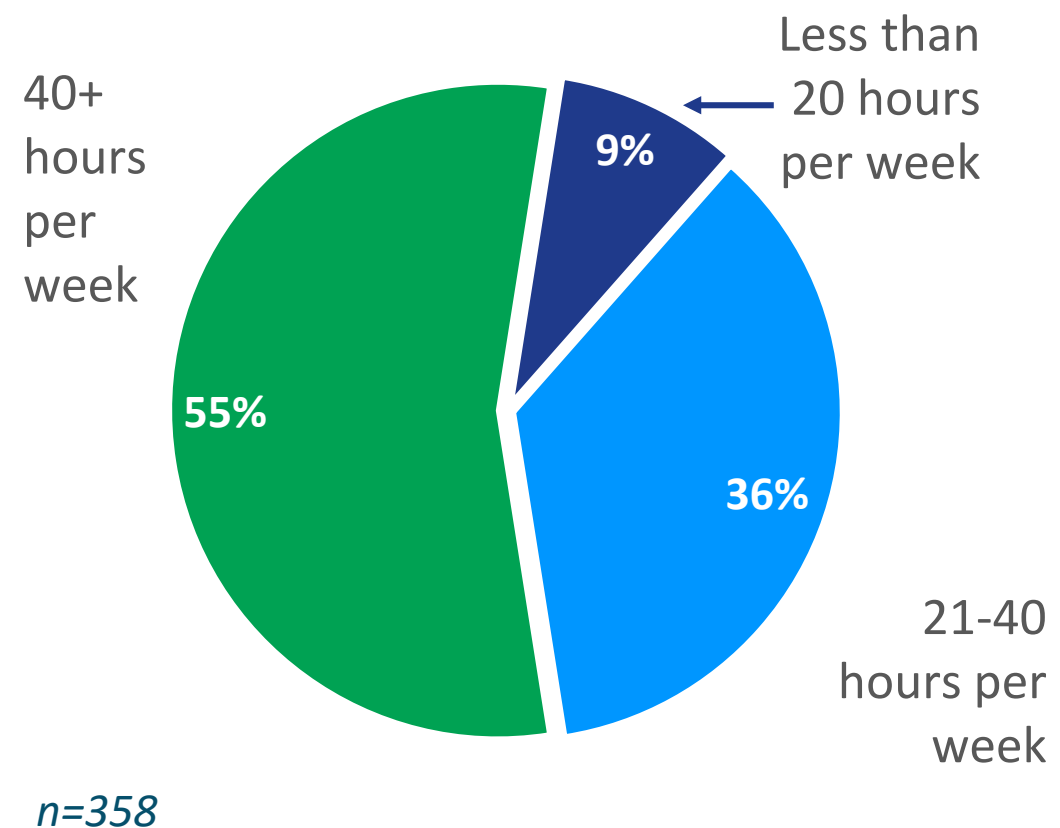
Source: Delaware Pathways Student Outcomes Study

# Post-graduation experiences:

## Work

**24%** of graduates were working for pay and not enrolled in further education

Among graduates working for pay and not enrolled:



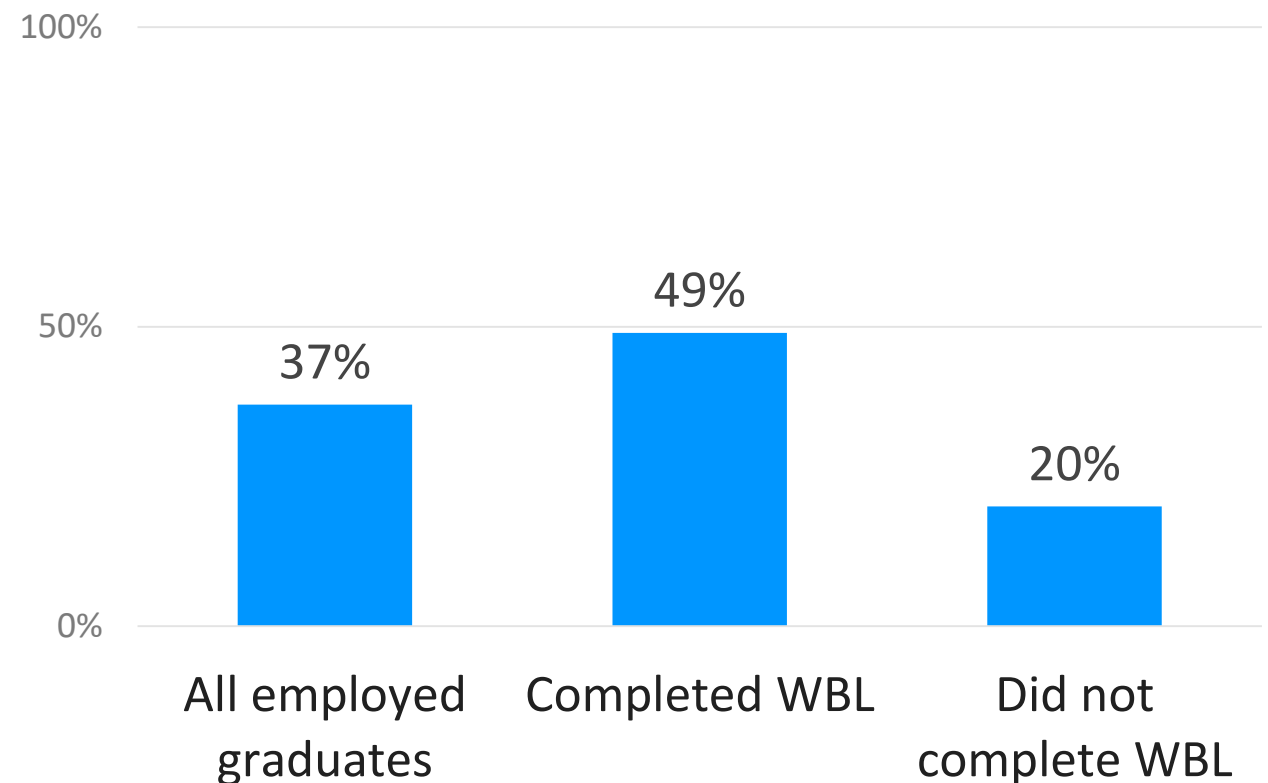
The median annual wage for these graduates was:

- \$37,482 for full-time employment
- \$29,670 for part-time employment

# Post-graduation experiences:

## Work

Among employed graduates, **37%** of all pathway graduates and **49%** of work-based learning (WBL) completers reported that their current job is aligned with their pathway.

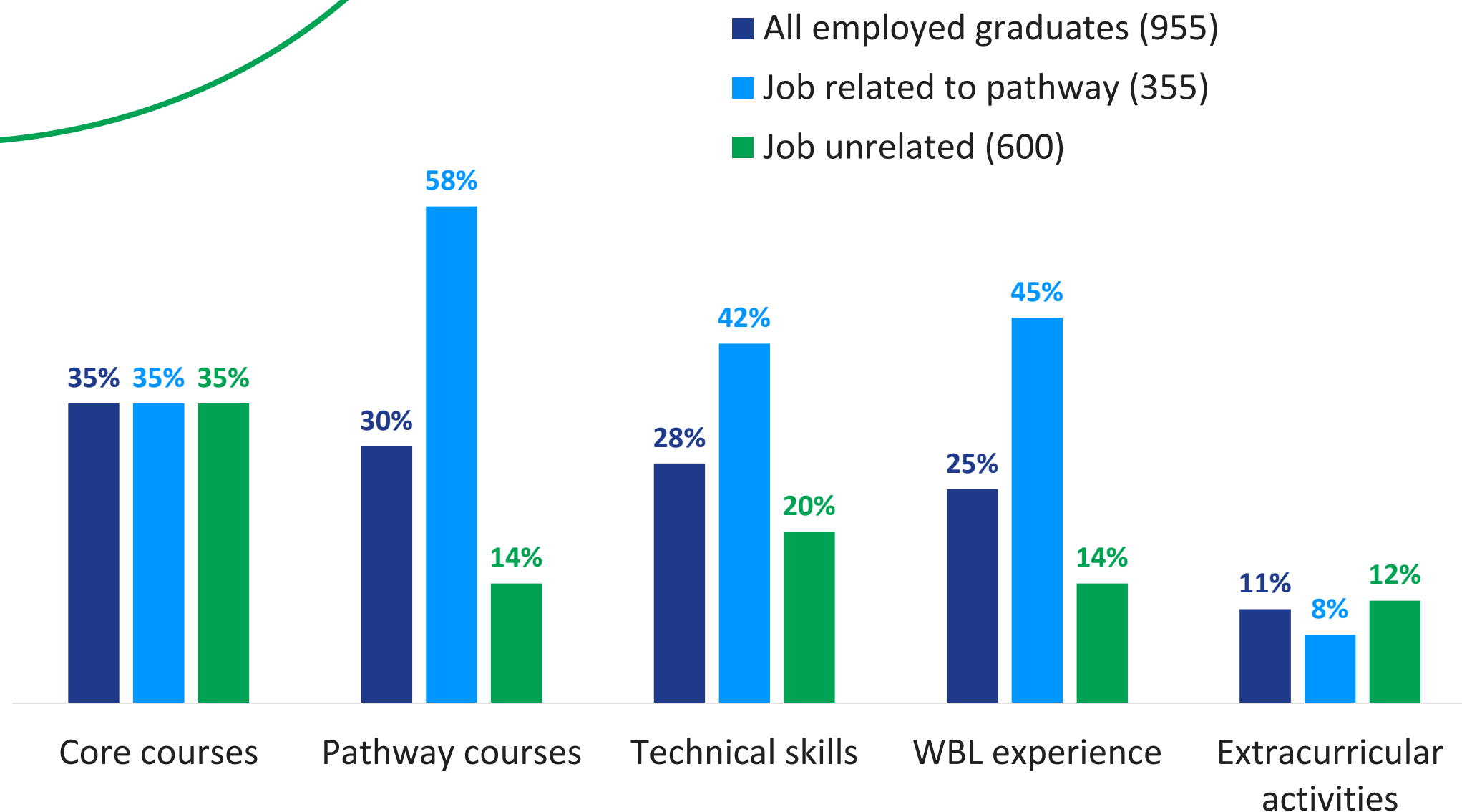


*n=1057*

# Post-graduation experiences:

## Work

Employed graduates selected the aspects of their high school experience that have been most helpful in their current job.



*n=1053*



# Interviews:

## Pathways and post-high school choices

About a year after 2022 high school graduation, the research team interviewed 20 of the pathway graduates who responded to the follow-up survey about their **post-high school activities**.



# Graduate profile:

**Tyler**



Family members working in the medical field inspired Tyler to pursue a **nursing technology pathway** in high school.

He learned more about the field from his pathway teachers, some of whom were registered nurses, and from people working in the field during his co-op with a home health care company.

He continued his work for company during the summer and shadowed a physical therapy doctor at the local hospital.

In college, Tyler is majoring in kinesiology and hopes to eventually work in a hospital.

# Graduate profile: **Amira**



Amira selected the **early childhood education** pathway because she enjoyed being in the preschool environment.

When she completed high school, she planned to pursue a college degree in elementary education, but enlisting in the military changed her mind.

She is now enrolled in an economics degree program at the University of Delaware, a set on her path to career in supply chain logistics in the military.

Amira feels that her pathway experiences and co-op helped her to identify her job preferences, which include working with people and being helpful, lessons that have guided her career planning decisions post-high school.



# Takeaways:

## The role of pathways and work-based learning in graduates' experiences & outcomes

Career pathways are a college pathway that connects students to the world of work

- Most pathway graduates enroll in higher education
- Most graduates enrolled in further education feel that their field of study is related to their high school pathway

Immersive work-based learning operates as a boost for college and career readiness

- The proportion of graduate who see a connection between their high school pathway and their post-graduation experiences is higher among WBL participants
- Influences employment options
- Provides connections to the world of work that go beyond a specific field

## Call to action: We need champions for cohort 3!

- There's still time to participate!
- If you work for or with a school or district that might be interested in participating, get in touch!





# Thank you!

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