

# Tracking Education and Employment Outcomes For 2015-2016 Graduates of CTE Programs

Michael Frisone, Amber Goldberg, and Ted Wills, Office of Research and Evaluation

## BACKGROUND

Each year, as part of state requirements for Perkins funding, the District's Office of Career and Technical Education (CTE) is required to survey recent graduates of the District's 30+ CTE programs. Beginning in 2016, the CTE Office partnered with the Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) to administer the survey electronically. In 2017, efforts to improve response rates were furthered with the implementation of text message survey invites and reminders. In order to determine how text invites compared to email invites, a randomized experiment was conducted during the first day of the surveys distribution.

## OBJECTIVES

This study aims to determine whether text invites improve response rates for the CTE follow-up survey. Research Questions include:

1. Are CTE graduates more likely to respond to the follow up survey if invitations are sent through text, email, or when both distribution methods are implemented?
2. Is there a survey distribution option which has higher response rates for former CTE students who were enrolled in a four-year university and/or for former CTE students who were employed full-time when the follow-up survey was conducted?

## METHODS

- ORE built a panel of CTE graduates, their email addresses, and their phone numbers, which were provided voluntarily on the 2016 Senior Exit Survey.
- Students who provided both an email address and a phone number were randomly placed into one of three groups: A *cellphone-only* group, an *email-only* group, and a *cellphone and email* group.
- On the first day of the survey, notifications were sent to respondents based solely on which group they were in. Precisely 24 hours later the survey was distributed via the method they had not received the first day.

## FINDINGS

Figure 1. Students that Provided Both Email and Cellphone Contacts Were More Likely to Respond to Text Solicitations on Day 1

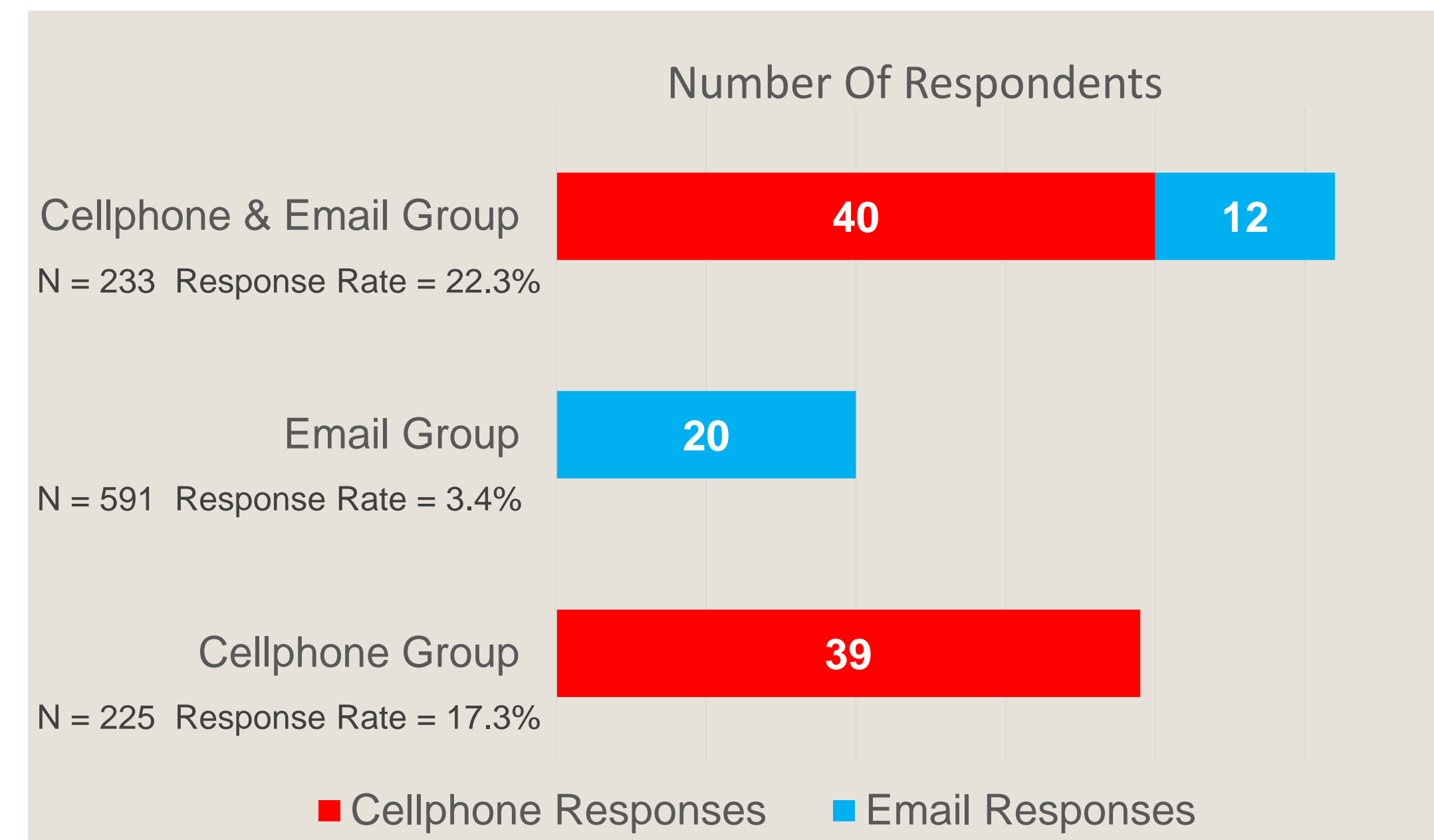
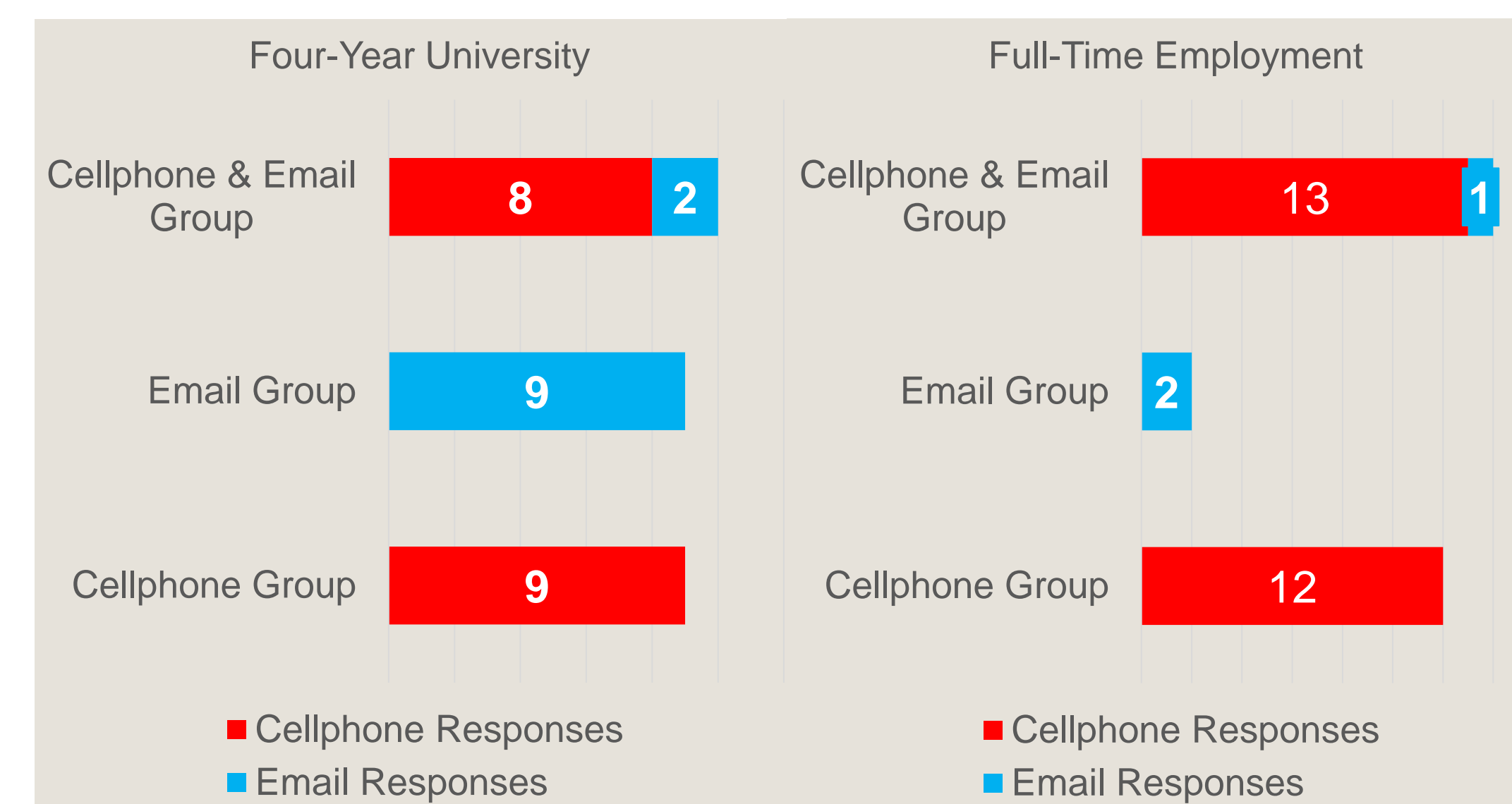


Figure 2. Students That Reported Being Employed Full-Time Rarely Responded to Email



- Of all students who responded on the first day, the majority responded through the text message service (N=79, 71%), rather than email (N=32, 29%).
- The cellphone-only group had nearly twice as many respondents as the email-only group. The cellphone and email group had the largest proportion of respondents on the first day.
- Nearly 80% of students in the cellphone/email group responded through the text message service.
- Graduates attending a four-year school and students who have full-time employment had disproportionate response patterns.
  - Students enrolled in universities responded in about the same frequency, regardless of which survey distribution tool was utilized. Though when given the option, these respondents tended toward text message services.
  - In contrast, very few CTE students who were employed when the survey was distributed responded to the email survey request. However, they did respond when the text message services was utilized and preferred this method when both distribution methods were employed.

## CONCLUSIONS

- Not surprisingly, the best practice is to use multiple methods of data collection as the *cellphone and email group* produced the most responses.
- Text messaging was a very successful method and should be considered for future survey efforts when possible.