Bottom Line

Intervention Snapshot | Transition to College Topic Area

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Enrolling in college and completing a degree or certificate is one of the primary pathways to economic success. In 2018, median weekly earnings of full-time workers with a bachelor's degree were 57 percent higher than full-time workers with a high school diploma only. Despite the economic advantages of educational attainment, only 33 percent of students enrolled in two-year institutions complete their programs within three years and 62 percent of students enrolled in four-year institutions complete their programs within six years. Several programs have been designed to support college enrollment and retention among college students. One example is *Bottom Line*. *Bottom Line* provides intensive advising for low-income high school students, most of whom are the first in their family to go to college. The advising is designed to help students apply for college and financial aid and select a high-quality, affordable

institution. For students who attend one of *Bottom Line's* target colleges, which they identified as providing a high-quality education at an affordable price, *Bottom Line* continues to provide regular support to students on campus for up to six years.

This What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) report, part of the WWC's Transition to College topic area, explores the effects of *Bottom Line* on enrolling and progressing in college. The WWC identified two studies of *Bottom Line*, one of which meets WWC standards. The evidence presented in this report is from one study of the impact of *Bottom Line* on high school and college students–including African-American, Hispanic, and Asian students–based in Boston, New York City, and Worcester, Massachusetts.

What Happens When Students Participate in *Bottom Line*?

The WWC found that implementing *Bottom Line*:	Effectiveness rating	Average performance (study findings)		Evidence meeting WWC standards (version 4.0)	
		Intervention group	Comparison group	Number of studies	Number of students
May increase college enrollment	Potentially positive effects	81% enrolled	70% enrolled	1	2,422
May increase progression in college	Potentially positive effects	80% progressing	71% progressing	1	1,429

Note: Average performance values (study findings) are generated by one analysis conducted for each outcome, as reported by Barr & Castleman (2017). The college enrollment outcome reported in this study represents enrollment in a 4-year college. The progressing in college outcome reported in this study represents being enrolled in college for three or more semesters after high school.

FINDINGS ARE BASED ON:

1 study with 2,422 students in at least 3 districts

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS:

| Gender: 70% female | Race: 56% minority | Ethnicity: 32% Hispanic |

What Does *Bottom Line* Cost?

Bottom Line is staffed by full-time advisors with college degrees who provide direct services to high school and college students. Facilities costs include space for administrative staff and for providing services. *Bottom Line* has offices in each of the communities served where high school students meet with their advisors and in each target college they work with where college students can meet

with their advisors. *Bottom Line* is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is nearly fully privately funded by private and corporate donors and foundations. The total cost per student receiving intensive advising through the *Bottom Line Access* and *Bottom Line Success* programs is approximately $6,000 over a five- to six-year period. These costs are paid for by *Bottom Line*, and the target colleges provide access to their facilities. Students and families incur no costs.

LEARN MORE

Read more about the *Bottom Line* intervention and the study that is summarized here in the Intervention Report. Contact Bottom Line (bottomline.org) for additional information on implementing *Bottom Line*.