

Integrated Basic Education Skills and Training (I-BEST)

Intervention Report Snapshot | Postsecondary Career and Technical Education

WHAT WORKS
CLEARINGHOUSE™

September 2020

WWC 2020-012
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Publication of the National Center for Education Evaluation at IES

Rising employer demand for skilled workers has driven efforts to better align occupational training programs to industry needs. Yet, even as the demand for skilled workers increases, less than half of students who enter occupational training programs receive a credential within six years. Community colleges are working to find faster and more effective ways to train those in need of basic skills instruction in math, reading, or job skills. Traditionally, basic skills courses are offered in a sequence that must be completed before students can begin college-level occupational training. However, most students referred to basic skills training never enroll in college-level courses. As its name implies, Washington State's *Integrated Basic Education Skills and Training (I-BEST)* provides integrated basic skills and occupational training that allows students to complete their training program faster, and provides supports designed to

ensure students stay engaged in training. Washington State's *I-BEST* program was developed by the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and was first implemented in the 2006-2007 school year.

This What Works Clearinghouse™ (WWC) report, part of the WWC's Postsecondary Career and Technical Education topic area, explores the effects of *I-BEST* on education and labor market outcomes. The WWC identified 12 studies of *I-BEST*. Three of these studies meet WWC standards.

Findings on *I-BEST* from three studies that meet WWC standards are shown below. The table reports an effectiveness rating, the improvement index, and the number of studies and students that contributed to the findings. The improvement index is a measure of the intervention's effect on an outcome.

What Happens When Students Participate in I-BEST?

The WWC found that implementing <i>I-BEST</i> :	Effectiveness rating	Study findings	Evidence meeting WWC standards (version 4.0)	
		Improvement index (percentile points)	Number of studies	Number of students
Is likely to increase industry-recognized credential, certificate, or license completion	Positive effects	+18	3	44,367
May increase short-term employment	Potentially positive effects	+10	1	2,064
May increase short-term earnings	Potentially positive effects	0	2	2,519
May result in little or no change in credit accumulation	No discernible effects	-1	1	42,894

Note: The improvement index can be interpreted as the expected change in percentile rank for an average comparison group student if that student had received the intervention. A positive improvement index does not necessarily mean the estimated effect is statistically significant.

FINDINGS ARE BASED ON:

3 studies with 45,413 postsecondary students in 9 states



STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS:

Gender: 57% female	Race: 40% minority	Ethnicity: 11% Hispanic
-----------------------	-----------------------	----------------------------

What Does I-BEST Cost?

The total cost of *I-BEST* was reported in a cost-benefit analysis to be \$2,417 in direct student costs and \$7,279 in state costs as of January 2013. Since its creation, *I-BEST* has been replicated in other locations, sometimes under different names. The total cost of *Accelerating Connections*

to *Employment (ACE)* as of May 2017 ranged from \$4,828 to \$13,033 per student across the nine sites. The total cost of *Accelerating Opportunity* as of November 2017 ranged from \$2,635 to \$7,128 per student across four states.

LEARN MORE



Read more about the *I-BEST* intervention and the studies that are summarized here in the [Intervention Report](#). Contact the [Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges](#) (SBCTC) for additional information on implementing *I-BEST*.