



# INTEGRATED BASIC EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING

**Workers need both literacy and job specific skills to get a good job today and the opportunity to continue their education to advance in their careers tomorrow. Washington's community and technical colleges provide that opportunity for adults across the state, while helping local employers find skilled workers to boost the state's economy.**



**I-BEST students earn 5 times more college credits, and are 15 times more likely to complete workforce training than traditional ESL students.**



**I-BEST moves students more quickly to the economic "tipping point," earning up to \$8,500 more per year.**



**I-BEST is expanding from a 10 college demonstration project to a system-wide approach for all 34 community and technical colleges.**

## What is I-BEST?

Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) pairs adult basic education or English as a Second Language (ESL) with workforce training. It provides students with the opportunity to learn literacy and workplace skills at the same time.

## Why I-BEST?

Employers need skilled workers in order to stay competitive. Finding those workers is growing more difficult.

The influx of non-English speakers, combined with the number of adults that lack a high school diploma, creates a higher demand for adult literacy and occupational skills training.

New research from the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges identifies an economic tipping point for adult students. When they gain basic skills, complete one year of college level classes and receive a vocational certificate or two-year degree, they are able to earn a living wage for themselves and their families.

## What's different about I-BEST programs?

Adult literacy and vocational instructors work together to develop and deliver instruction.

Students spend less time in school, demonstrate more skills gains, and have clear pathways from entry-level jobs to higher skilled and better paying employment.

Colleges provide higher levels of support and student services to address the needs of non-traditional students.

## What is the future of I-BEST?

Ten colleges piloted I-BEST programs that prepared students for jobs in nursing and allied health care, commercial truck driving, industrial maintenance, automotive, computers and early childhood education.

Based on their success, the State Board is expanding its support for all colleges to include professional development, technical assistance, and an enhanced funding model. The Ford Foundation, through its Bridges to Opportunity program that addresses the needs of low-income students, is also supporting project leadership.

**For more information about the I-BEST program, please contact:**

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