

INTEGRATED BASIC EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING (I-BEST)

“The results were staggering, with students enrolled in I-BEST outperforming students who enrolled in the traditional, consecutive course structure of completing basic skills before enrolling in their career training program.”
– “Washington I-BEST Program” by the national initiative “Getting Past Go,” Jan. 28, 2010

Building skills, prosperity

Washington's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program (I-BEST) quickly teaches students literacy, work, and college-readiness skills so they can move through school and into living wage jobs faster.

Pioneered by Washington's community and technical colleges, I-BEST uses a team-teaching approach to combine college-readiness classes with regular, credit-bearing job training or academic classes.

I-BEST challenges the traditional notion that students must move through a set sequence of basic education or pre-college (remedial) courses before they can start working on certificates or degrees. The combined teaching method allows students to work on college-level studies right away, clearing multiple levels with one leap.

I-BEST was named a Bright Idea by Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 2011 and has been designated by the U.S. Department of Education as one of the most significant, national innovations.¹ I-BEST is being replicated and implemented across the country.

Economic strength

By 2019, two-thirds of all new jobs in Washington State will require at least one year of college education², yet an estimated one million Washingtonians lack the basic math, reading, or English-language skills to succeed in work or college.³

I-BEST equips students with skills and training to move ahead in college, land family-wage jobs and grow our economy.



I-BEST automotive student at Shoreline Community College.

Dramatic results

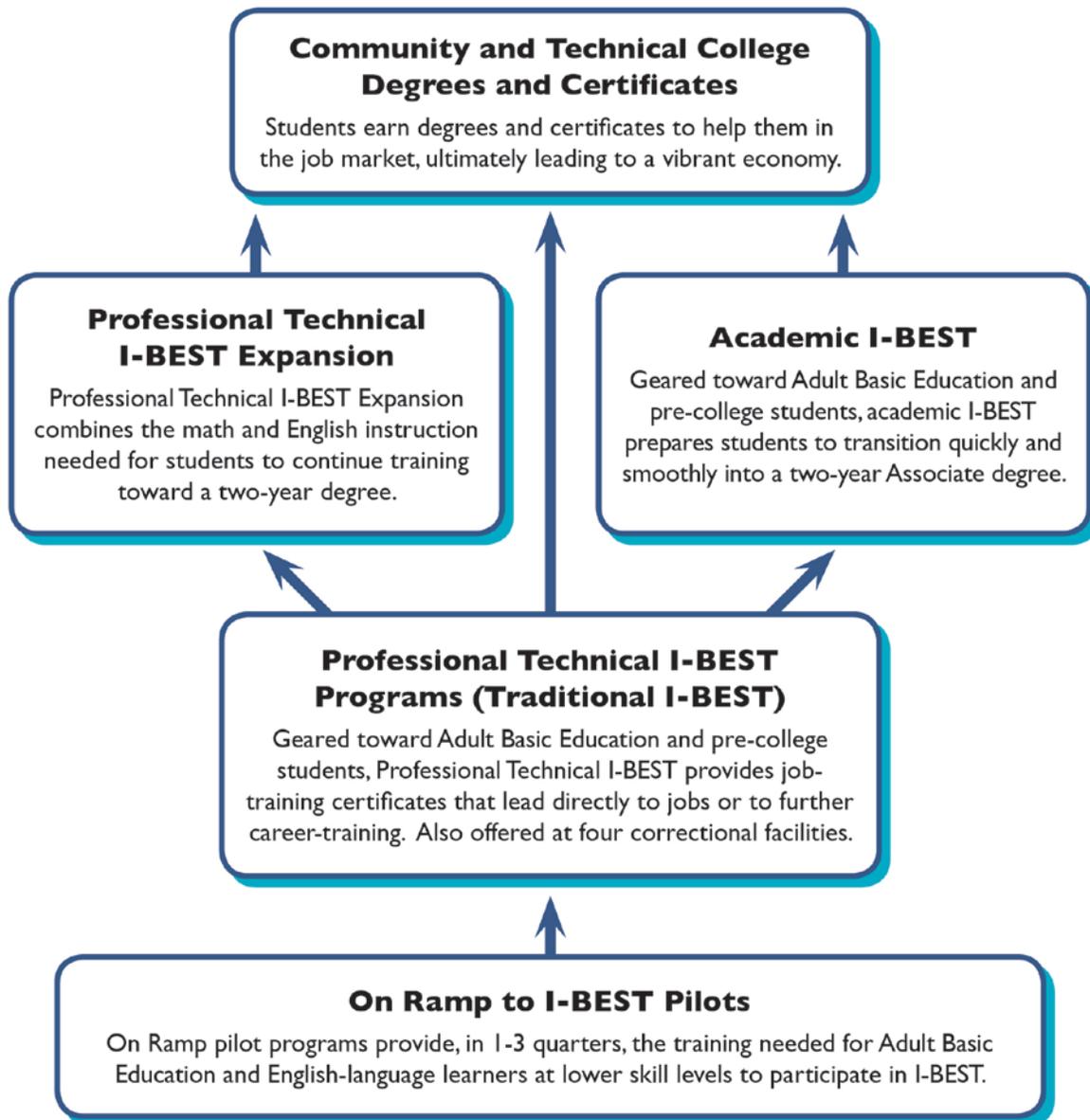
About 3,600 students are enrolled in a wide range of I-BEST programs,⁴ including healthcare, early childhood education, automotive, transportation, aeronautics, manufacturing and office technology.

I-BEST students are:

- Three times more likely to earn college credits and nine times more likely to earn a workforce credential than are students in traditional adult basic education programs who must complete basic skills first, before training for a job.⁵
- Earn an average of \$2,645 more per year and receive twice the work hours per week (35 hours versus 15 hours) than similar adults who do not receive basic skills training in any form.⁶

According to a December 2012 report by the Community College Research Center, I-BEST programs produce benefits that are worth the cost of providing the programs.⁷

Comprehensive I-BEST Pathway



1. Martha J. Kanter, U.S. Undersecretary of Education, opinion editorial, "American Higher Education: 'First in the World'" featured in May-June 2011 Change magazine.

2. A Skilled and Educated Workforce, 2011 Update by Higher Education Coordinating Board, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

3. Estimate based on US Census, 2011 American Community Survey, total of those with limited English language skills and adults lacking a high school diploma.

4. 3,623 students per SBCTC 2012-2013 Academic Year Report.

5. SBCTC research calculations from "Educational Outcomes of I-BEST, WA State Community and Technical College System's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program," May 2009 by Community College Research Center, Columbia University.

6. 2014 Workforce Training Results, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

7. Community College Research Center report, "Learning from Washington State's I-BEST Program," December 2012.