

INTEGRATED DIGITAL ENGLISH ACCELERATION (I-DEA)



A better idea for Adult English Language Learners

As the world shrinks and global competition grows, the places that attract a world population have a distinct advantage. People born in other countries add a wealth of talent and diverse thinking to the workforce, along with the ability to work with other cultures and countries.¹

Washington state is one of those places. Our state has a large and rapidly growing foreign-born population. In 2013, immigrants made up 17.2 percent of Washington's civilian employed workforce, up from 7.1 percent in 1990.²

These new arrivals create jobs by forming businesses, spending income in local economies and raising employers' productivity.

Thanks to project I-DEA (Integrated Digital English Acceleration), adult English language learners who face the largest language gaps are learning English while gaining skills for college and careers.

How it works

Funded with a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, I-DEA features:

- **Community-based hubs:** Groups of 25 adults learn at local “hubs,” partnerships between community and technical colleges and community-based organizations. Students participate in 33, week-long instructional modules that blend English language instruction with college and career skills. Topics range from navigating your community and information literacy, to professional communication, job exploration and interview skills.
- **Integrated learning:** Unlike traditional approaches — in which learners are expected to learn English before pursuing job-training — I-DEA teaches English in tandem with college and career skills. Students quickly learn skills relevant to their lives and careers.
- **“Flipped” classes:** Students complete online modules to learn, practice and develop knowledge of concepts before coming to class. They then use classroom time to apply and practice what they've learned. In-class instructors and peer support guide and enhance skill acquisition.
- **Computer access:** Students receive computers and 24-7 internet access to complete coursework that prepares them for college and family-wage jobs.
- **Transition to I-BEST:** I-DEA is based on Washington's I-BEST program, which integrates instruction using team-teaching to combine college-readiness classes with job training. I-DEA connects to I-BEST and other programs that lead to certificates, degrees and family-wage jobs. (I-BEST stands for Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training.)

Results that count

Now in the third year of the pilot, I-DEA continues to show great promise. Outcomes from the second year of instruction show student learning gains that are 9 percent to 10 percent higher than the gains of English language learners in traditional programs.

Additionally, the number of I-DEA students generating student achievement points — academic momentum points tracked by the community and technical college system — was 16 percent higher than the number of students in traditional English as a Second Language classes.³

Topics taught

- Technology Skills Pre-Assessment (given at the beginning of each quarter)
- Introduction to I-DEA (beginning of each quarter)
- Computer Skills
- Study Skills
- The American Education System
- Libraries and Library Resources
- Navigating Your Community
- Health and Wellness
- Stress Management
- Money Management
- Time Management
- Personal Inventory
- Career Exploration
- Math Basics
- Budgeting and Consumer Economics
- Cross Cultural Communications
- Contemporary World Problems
- Creating Powerful Presentations
- Writing Basics
- Washington State History
- U.S. History and Citizenship
- Interpersonal Communications
- Job Search and Interviewing
- Work Readiness
- Environmental Issues
- Effective Presentations
- Internet Basics
- Information Literacy
- Business Websites
- Team Collaboration
- End of Quarter Presentations (given at the end of each quarter)
- Technology Skills Post-Assessment (given at the end of each quarter)

Laying the groundwork for the American journey

Community and technical colleges provide the bulk of English-language instruction in Washington. Project I-DEA is transforming instruction statewide. In doing so, it is helping English Language learners pursue their dreams and bring their talents to our communities and economy. This broadens the view along our shared American journey.

Sources:

1. Adapted from “The Importance of Immigration” by Steven Cohen, HuffPost Politics blog, Jan. 28, 2013.
2. Migration Policy Institute’s Data Hub. See <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/workforce/WA>.
3. Program year 2014-15 annual data, SBCTC, per I-DEA Program Administrator Jodi Ruback.



INTEGRATED DIGITAL ENGLISH ACCELERATION (I-DEA) PARTNERSHIPS

Colleges and community-based organizations that partner on the I-DEA program

- Bates Technical College
Tacoma Community House
- Bellevue College
King Country Library
- Bellingham Technical College
Whatcom Literacy Council
- Big Bend Community College
Inspire Development Center (Washington Migrant Council)
- Cascadia College
Hopelink
- Centralia College
Our Literacy Council
- Clark College
Student Learning Center
- Clover Park Technical College
Tacoma Community House
- Columbia Basin College
First Fruits
- Edmonds Community College
Latino Education Training Institute
- Everett Community College
Take the Next Step
- Grays Harbor College
Grays Harbor College Foundation
- Green River College
Seattle Education Access
- Lake Washington Institute of Technology
Hopelink
- Lower Columbia College
Longview Public Library
- North Seattle College
Seattle Goodwill
- Olympic College
Kitsap Adult Center for Education
- Peninsula College
First Step Family Support Center
- Pierce College Fort Steilacoom
Linc NW
- Pierce College Puyallup
Linc NW
- Renton Technical College
YWCA Works
- Seattle Central College
Seattle Education Access
- Shoreline Community College
Seattle Education Access
- Skagit Valley College
Skagit Community Action
- Community Colleges of Spokane
Workforce Development Council
- South Puget Sound Community College
Sound Learning
- South Seattle College
Sound Learning
- Tacoma Community College
Tacoma Community House
- Walla Walla Community College
St. Patrick Catholic Church
- Wenatchee Valley College
SkillSource
Worksource Wenatchee Affiliate
- Whatcom
Whatcom Literacy Council
- Yakima
People for People