
https://www.opressrc.org/content/beyond-ged-promising-models-moving-high-school-dropouts-college

In this literature review, the authors described adult education reforms that showed positive results in dropouts obtaining a GED or high school diploma and successfully transitioning to college. The report places the promising reforms in three main categories: (a) efforts focused on adult education instruction improvements and more rigorous standards for obtaining a high school diploma; (b) GED-to-college “bridge” programs; and (c) interventions that allow students to simultaneously enroll in college and study for a high school credential. The authors based their findings largely on quasi-experimental and experimental research and acknowledged the research is limited.


https://www.opressrc.org/content/does-prison-based-adult-basic-education-improve-postrelease-outcomes-male-prisoners-florida

This article examined post-release outcomes for males who participated in an adult basic education (ABE) program at a Florida prison. The authors noted that research on prison-based ABE programs is less robust than research on prison-based GED programs, despite that a significant number of prisoners have literacy levels below the ninth-grade level. Using administrative data from various State sources, the authors compared outcomes for the program’s completers, participants, and involuntary noncompleters (i.e., prisoners who were transferred to another facility or released before completion) as well as nonparticipants. ABE completers and participants had no significant difference in labor market outcomes. These two groups experienced a positive effect on employment and earnings compared to involuntary noncompleters; however, there was a negative effect compared to
nonparticipants.


This final evaluation report described results from the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) model’s implementation in Washington State. The authors conducted site visits to 16 I-BEST programs at eight community colleges. They found that important program aspects included providing (a) post-program pathways designed to keep students on track to higher credentials, (b) technical skills content combined with contextualized basic skills instruction, and (c) planning time for administrators and instructors. The evaluation’s cost-benefit analysis found benefit-cost ratios between 0.82 and 1.05.


This final evaluation report described Shifting Gears, an initiative designed to promote economic growth in six Midwestern States through innovative strategies that connected each State’s adult basic education system with its community and technical college system to provide lower-skilled adults with more seamless pathways to postsecondary credentials and to good jobs. The report identified four core activities as critical to States’ initial successes and readiness to take the innovations to scale: (a) strengthening collaboration across the adult education, workforce, and community and technical college systems; (b) achieving senior State leadership buy-in and commitment; (c) making changes to certain State-level policies and regulations that aided local programs’ ability to implement the chosen strategy; and (d) repeatedly engaging local practitioners and administrators to create local champions.


In this article, the authors used a policy ecology framework to analyze how welfare reforms impacted the delivery of ABE programs in Pennsylvania. They focused on two particular post-reform changes: (a) a transition in ABE funding from Federal to State dollars; and (b) the cessation of counting adult education as a “work activity” for welfare recipients over 22 years old. Based on interviews with family literacy program directors, the authors found that these changes affected enrollment levels, eligibility criteria, service
delivery, inter-organizational partnerships, and student retention. One of the few benefits identified by program directors was a shift to more distance education.


[https://www.opressrc.org/content/using-distance-learning-increase-literacy-among-tanf-participants](https://www.opressrc.org/content/using-distance-learning-increase-literacy-among-tanf-participants)

This study examined TANF recipients’ experiences in a Philadelphia-area program called Project TECH, designed to address job retention and advancement barriers stemming from deficiencies in literacy and computer skills. Participants who completed an orientation training received a personal computer, printer, and six months of dial-up Internet service at their homes. During that period, they were to complete additional distance learning training in computer basics, software, and Internet access to learn basic skills (i.e., reading, English, math, and critical thinking) and more advanced computer skills. Participants reported a variety of benefits, such as ability to practice typing skills, improve literacy, and conduct job searches.


[https://www.opressrc.org/content/transitioning-adults-college-adult-basic-education-program-models](https://www.opressrc.org/content/transitioning-adults-college-adult-basic-education-program-models)

This paper described strengths and limitations of 23 non-profit ABE-to-college transition programs, which the authors categorized into five models: Advising, GED-Plus, ESOL, Career Pathways, and College Preparatory. In reviewing the programs, the authors considered such factors as coordinator caseload, flexibility to student schedule, time commitment, and cost. The authors also examined four State-level (Connecticut, Kentucky, Maine, and Oregon) ABE-to-college transition initiatives to better understand system-level considerations for model development. They concluded with recommendations for the Federal, State, and program levels, including (a) collecting and sharing outcome data on students in adult and postsecondary education; (b) conducting a cost-benefit analysis of public investment in robust transition programs; and (c) aligning the goals of the adult education, postsecondary education, and workforce development systems.

https://www.opressrc.org/content/using-cash-incentives-encourage-progress-welfare-recipients-adult-basic-education

This study examined whether a “completion bonus” (i.e., cash bonus) would incentivize welfare participants to complete ABE classes. The Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS) offered the completion bonus to welfare participants for achieving specific milestones on the path to self-sufficiency; it was instituted as part of the State’s welfare reforms in 2000. The study compared welfare participants’ ABE completion rates before DHS offered the completion bonus to the rates after offering the completion bonus, and found that the completion bonus positively influenced academic progress. The number of participants who (a) achieved a sixth-grade skills level increased by 115%; (b) achieved a ninth-grade skills level increased by 356%; and (c) earned a GED increased by 133%. Student records and the ABE educators’ perceptions both supported the conclusion that participants who received the completion bonus were more likely to stay in the ABE program despite barriers challenging their participation (e.g., competing demands on their time, lack of child care).