

# WorkFirst Accountability Report



For information about this report, contact:  
Christina Carey, Policy Research Associate  
Phone: 360-704-4325 | email: [ccarey@sbctc.edu](mailto:ccarey@sbctc.edu)  
TDD 800-833-6388

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## Introduction

WorkFirst is Washington State's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, which is designed to help parents get what they need to prepare for and go to work – with an emphasis on helping clients achieve permanent economic self-sufficiency. The WorkFirst program is managed by the Department of Social and Health Services. It works with other agencies including the Office of Financial Management, Employment Security Department, the Department of Commerce, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), and the Department of Early Learning. The Community and Technical Colleges (CTC), along with community-based organizations and private career schools, provide education, training and support services for WorkFirst students through WorkFirst Delivery Agreements with SBCTC.

WorkFirst students enrolled in WorkFirst education and training activities for academic years 2012-2016 are the subject of this report. In addition to annual enrollments and progress during this period, the report describes completions and employment outcomes for students who left college in 2012-2015 and went to work in 2013-2016.

## Overall Findings

### Program Results for Students Who Finished Training in 2012-2015 and Started Employment in 2013-2016 and Job Retention

Caseload reductions have affected the number of WorkFirst participants in education and training activities. Vocational training completion offered better outcomes for employment, job retention, wages, and earnings.

- There were 1,354 TANF students employed after training in 2016. Since 2012, over 15,400 WorkFirst students gained employment after training.
- In 2016, initial employment was 48 percent for degree and certificate completers and 43 percent for all non-completers.
- Sixty-three percent of students who completed degrees and certificates longer than one year were still employed 2 years after they left.
- I-BEST students who earned degrees and certificates had the highest wages and earnings following training. In 2016, those students started employment at \$12.28/hour with median quarterly earnings of \$4,511.
- There were 5,861 students (2,823 FTES) enrolled in vocational training activities including Customized Job Skills Training (CJST), Vocational Education (VE), and Job Skills Training and Basic Education.
- The completion rate of degrees and certificates for vocational training participants was 29 percent.
- More students enrolled in vocational education than in other education activities.
- Numbers declined in all activities. The steepest decline was in CJST, at 41 percent, in part due to reduced offerings by colleges.

## WorkFirst Student Enrollments in 2016

- Forty-five percent of WorkFirst students had less than 12 years of education. Nearly 70 percent had never attended college prior to this occurrence.
- Approximately, two thousand (926 FTES) of those students enrolled received basic or developmental education. Thirty-three percent of the total FTES for WorkFirst students were in these activities.

## Student Progress While Enrolled

- Over one in four students (29 percent) made college level achievement gains in 2016. Another 20 percent made pre-college gains for basic and developmental education.
- Over half (51 percent) of WorkFirst students made no achievement gains. Fifty percent of those making no gains were in short term activities, such as CJST or Life Skills. Placement into short term activities is due to the directions in the Individual Responsibility Plans (IRP).

## College Support Services and Targeted Programs

- Opportunity Grants, Work Study, Pell, and State Need Grant programs have demonstrated success in helping students succeed. Four percent of WorkFirst students participated in Opportunity Grant, five percent in work study and 31 percent participated in Pell/State Need Grant.
- I-BEST had a 40 percent completion rate, but continues to reach a very small portion of students who could potentially benefit.

## Next Steps

The shift in recent years has moved towards supporting WorkFirst participants to access and complete longer term training. The participants who completed longer term training had higher wages and better employment retention. As stated above, 51 percent of those making no achievement gains were in short term activities per a student's IRP. The findings in this report highlight the benefit of partners working together to identify and use career pathways to develop both short and long term education and training plans for WorkFirst students. Where possible, developing educational activity plans that are aligned with a pathway, such as I-BEST programs, will help move students further and faster along a pathway and provide better structure. Forty-five percent of the students have 12 years of education or less. Students whose entering skill level is adult basic education level 4 are the most likely to benefit from I-BEST and they are also the largest group of WorkFirst students in basic education (59 percent). I-BEST will grow further overall, with an infusion of state funds in the 17-19 biennium.

Intentionally designing activities to coordinate the utilization of part-time education with part-time employment not only provides skill acquisition, but demonstrates recent attachment to the labor force, which is desirable to employers. Other strategies to assist students are program supports, education navigation and transition to other resources such as Pell, State Need Grant, Opportunity Grant, and WorkFirst work study. The additional supports, which assist in skill attainment and completion, are particularly needed by WorkFirst students.

## Section I: WorkFirst Students, Activities, and Supports

The community and technical colleges, along with community-based organizations and a private career school, have provided WorkFirst training and support services to 29,605 TANF parents between 2012 and 2016.

### WorkFirst Student Headcount

The number of WorkFirst students served is provided in Table 1. This number grew annually between 2006 and 2010, but began to decrease in 2010-11 due to statewide caseload reductions. In 2015-16 of the 5,861 WorkFirst participants served, 5,584 came to the CTC system for training, with the remainder receiving training from community based organizations. This was the lowest annual number served in the past five years and a 13 percent decline over the previous year.

**Table 1: Number of WorkFirst students**

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
WorkFirst Students	12,025	10,363	8,657	6,739	5,861
Change over previous year		-1,662	-1,706	-1,918	-878
% increase/decrease over previous year		-14%	-16%	-22%	-13%

The annual WorkFirst enrollments by SBCTC and community-based providers are listed in Table 2. Students may be duplicated as each student is counted based upon the first time they are in each WorkFirst activity in year. However, the duplication is minor as most participated in just one activity.

**Table 2. WorkFirst providers**

Provider	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Bates	291	220	282	198	165
Bellevue	199	171	133	80	63
Bellingham	202	117	94	51	61
Big Bend	205	129	96	63	59
Centralia	247	319	361	202	177
Clark	668	594	484	225	147
Clover Park	596	457	311	247	185
Columbia Basin	206	252	156	108	93
Edmonds	244	317	338	387	299

Provider	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Everett	651	481	372	282	243
Grays Harbor	224	156	173	165	151
Green River	619	438	386	336	284
Highline	883	732	622	522	467
Lake Washington	83	78	56	33	29
Lower Columbia	578	486	420	355	263
Olympic	548	471	490	351	305
Peninsula	217	319	143	101	99
Pierce FT Steilacoom	204	168	153	108	68
Pierce Puyallup	112	90	99	71	53
Renton	376	289	206	177	152
Seattle Central <sup>1</sup>	381	290	233	153	134
Seattle North	224	161	135	119	86
Seattle South	236	177	188	162	138
Shoreline	207	136	115	102	80
Skagit Valley	349	208	220	201	170
South Puget Sound	235	275	216	155	156
Spokane	434	326	322	522	627
Spokane Falls	935	745	547	132	77
Tacoma	328	345	302	290	188
Walla Walla	217	201	148	123	117
Wenatchee Valley	224	176	118	86	89
Whatcom	131	135	74	46	52

<sup>1</sup>Seattle Central and Seattle Vocational Institute are combined.

Provider	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Yakima Valley	640	695	514	398	418
Driver Training & Solutions, LLC	31	36	33	28	28
Literacy Source	59	27	12	34	44
Northwest Indian College	31	28	10	0	0
Refugee Women's Alliance	61	68	55	37	42
Sound Vocational Institute	46	38	20	0	0
Tacoma Community House	127	180	195	206	163
Total	12,636	10,821	9,065	7,009	6,111

### WorkFirst CTC Student Characteristics

The typical WorkFirst student was female, age 30 years old, where the overall workforce education population was 28 years old and the system median age was 26 years old<sup>2</sup>. Forty-five percent had twelve years of education or less (including those with a high school equivalent).

**Table 3. WorkFirst student characteristics**

Characteristics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Female	76%	78%	78%	78%	76%
Single parent with children or other dependents	52%	53%	53%	53%	50%
Couples with children or other dependents	27%	26%	25%	26%	25%
12 years education or less (includes those with a high school equivalent)	52%	54%	51%	49%	45%
Students of color	39%	39%	39%	41%	41%
Students with disabilities	6%	6%	7%	7%	6%
Limited English	10%	10%	9%	11%	11%

<sup>2</sup> Source: SBCTC Fall Quarter Enrollment and Staffing Report



Characteristics	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Median age (years)	28.8	28.5	28.8	29.4	30.4

### WorkFirst Student Headcounts by Race and Ethnicity

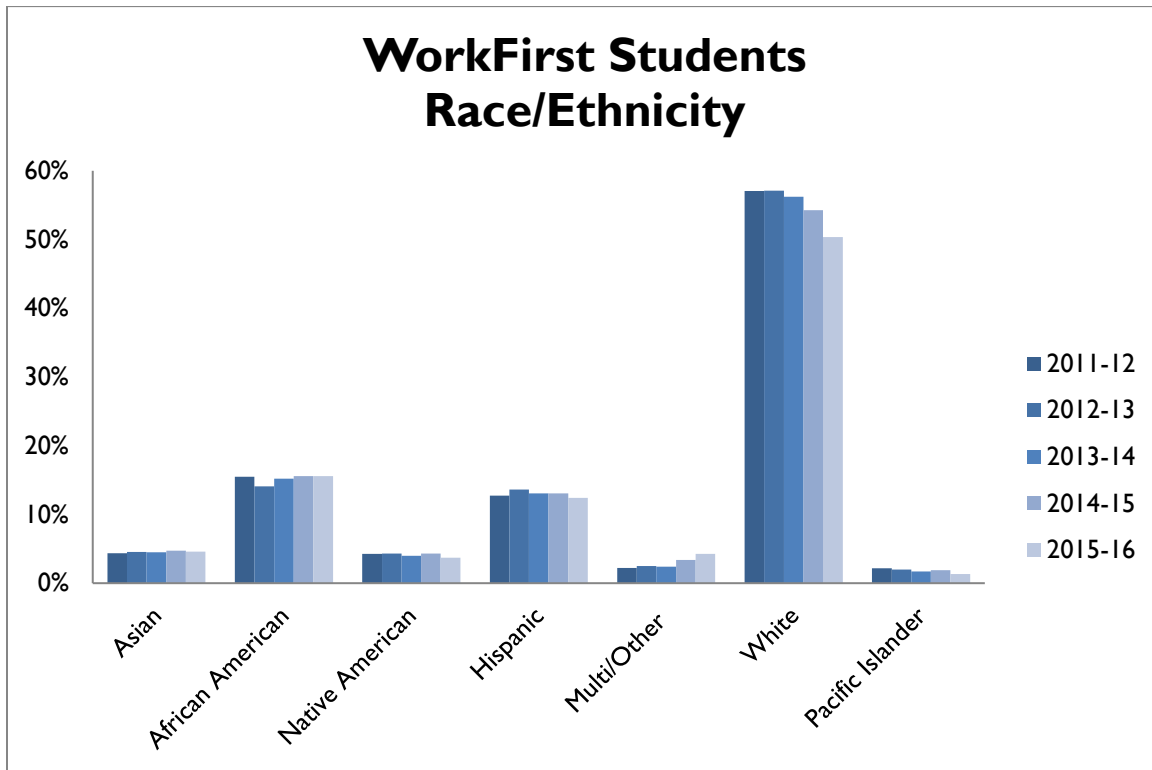
CTC students overall are increasingly more racially and ethnically diverse<sup>3</sup>. The percent of WorkFirst students of color (42 percent) served is slightly lower than the overall system rate of 43 percent.

**Table 4. Race/ethnicity**

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	% Change from 2011
Asian	525	468	391	318	263	-50%
African American/Black	1,858	1,455	1,322	1,072	895	-52%
Native American	510	446	346	292	214	-58%
Hispanic	1,531	1,409	1,135	882	714	-53%
Multi/Other	266	257	209	229	246	-8%
White	6,850	5,897	4,884	3,665	2,895	-58%
Pacific Islander	261	204	148	129	77	-70%
Not Reported	468	398	397	298	446	-5%
Students of Color	4,951	4,239	3,551	2,922	2,409	-51%
Total	16,959	14,569	12,235	9,678	8,082	-52%
% of Total	41%	41%	41%	43%	42%	

<sup>3</sup> Source: SBCTC Fall Quarter Enrollment and Staffing Report

Figure 1.



### WorkFirst Student Full-Time Status

Students are more likely to be full-time (54 percent) than part-time (46 percent). This percent of students attending full-time has dropped slightly since 2011-12.

Table 5. Full-time/part-time status

Full/Part Time Start	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Full-time	56%	56%	53%	57%	54%
Part-time	44%	44%	47%	43%	46%

### WorkFirst Student Enrollments by Activity

There are a number of allowable activities under the WorkFirst program. Basic Education includes High School Equivalency, High School Completion and English as a Second Language options. Vocational Training options include Job Skills Training, Vocational Education, High Wage High Demand, Degree Completion, and Customized Job Skills Training options. Each of these activities is described below.

#### Basic Education

**High School Equivalency (GE)** classes help parents earn a high school equivalency certificate by preparing them for the high school equivalency (HSE) exam.

**High School Completion (HS)** coursework prepares a student to earn a high school diploma, either through a high school completion program or the new High School 21+ program.

High school completion programs are for adult students at least 16 years old. The college will evaluate high school transcripts and advise on the classes needed to complete a diploma at the college. A high school release form is required for students who are 16 to 18 years old.

High School 21+ is a competency-based program for students who are at least 21 years old. This program turns life experience into high school credits. The student can demonstrate their knowledge in several ways, including work, life and military experience. Then, the student takes courses to fill in the gaps and earn a high school diploma.

**English as a Second Language (ES)** courses assist non-native English speakers increase English language skills.

## Vocational Education

**Job Skills Training (JT)** enhances a person's employability by providing specific skills that are marketable to employers. JT activities are not time-limited; however, they are non-core activities in WorkFirst and require the student to be in an additional core-work activity of at least 20 hours per week. JT courses include:

- Vocational education courses (outside of the 12 month limit);
- Prerequisites and developmental education required for entry into a Vocational Education program; or
- Continuing education courses (self-support) that are job skills related. They do not cost more than the amount of full-time resident tuition for one year.

The remaining five vocational education activities below (LS, VE, HW, DC, and PE) are considered core work activities within WorkFirst. Students are not required to engage in additional work activities if they are participating for at least 32 hours per week. However, they are not permitted to be in any of these activities combined for more than 12 months in the student's lifetime.

**Life Skills (LS)** is designed for individuals with the skills to meet the demands of everyday life and employment.

**Vocational Education (VE)** includes training that leads to a certificate or degree in a specific occupation (including I-BEST).

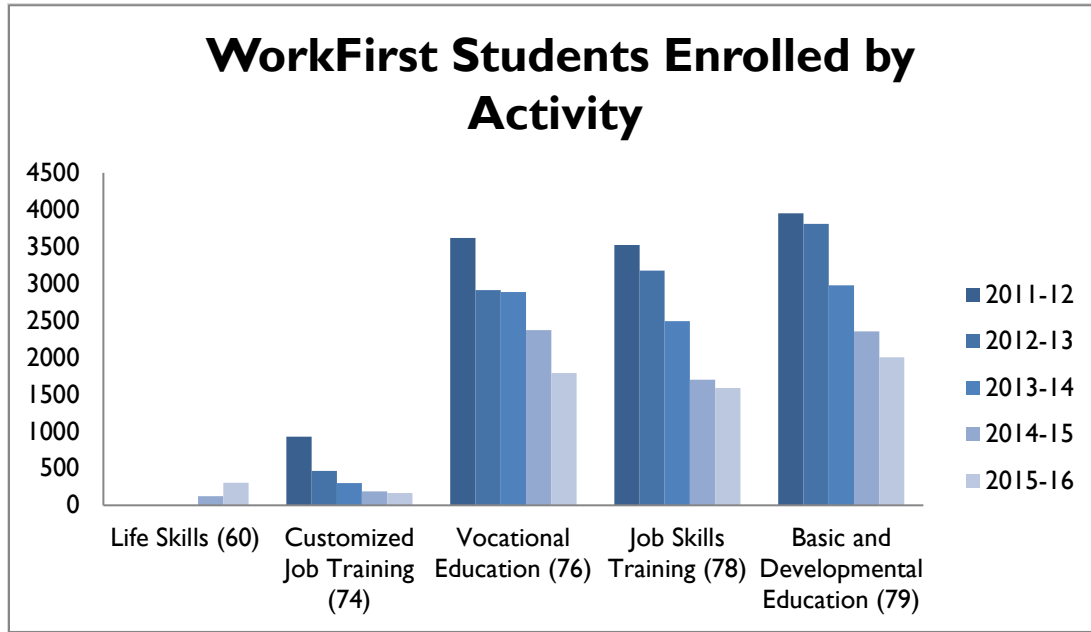
**High Wage High Demand (HW)** is a descriptor for vocational education courses or programs that lead to a career in a high wage and high demand occupation (including I-BEST).

**Degree Completion (DC)** is permitted for the last two years of a vocational education program, up to a 4-year degree, that lead to a career in a high wage and high demand occupation

**Customized Job Skills Training (CJST) (PE)** is an 8-22 week training program customized for specific employers or tied to a specific industry. CJSTs must include industry-specific technical training, be tied to jobs with good labor market demand, and target fields with better than average entry-level wages for the local area.

Figure 2 shows the number of students enrolled by activity. The largest activity by share of students was basic education. This represented 34 percent of all WorkFirst participants attending community and technical colleges in 2015-16. Enrollments in JT decreased 7 percent over the previous year. Enrollments in CJST declined 12 percent from the prior year.

**Figure 2.**



### WorkFirst Student Enrollments by Full-time Equivalent (FTES)

College capacity is measured by FTES. Total instructional activity FTES were 2,823 (from all funds) in 2015-16. This was a decrease of 548 FTES or 16 percent over the previous year. Instructional activity is classified into four types: basic education, developmental education (instruction just below college level readiness), workforce and related instruction academics. Each annual full-time equivalent student is equal to 45 FTES.

Thirty-one percent of the courses that WorkFirst students enrolled in were basic education and developmental education (pre-college). Preparation for college level work is a major part of WorkFirst education and training programs. College vocational and related instruction made up 57 percent of the courses.

**Table 6. FTES by instructional activity type**

Courses	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Related instruction	4,188	3,350	2,982	2,414	1,856
Basic education	5,619	5,080	3,955	2,796	2,610
Pre-college	340	168	211	168	93
Community service	2,604	2,240	2,157	1,463	1,098
Workforce	6,277	5,350	4,523	3,540	3,154
Total	19,028	16,188	13,828	10,381	8,811

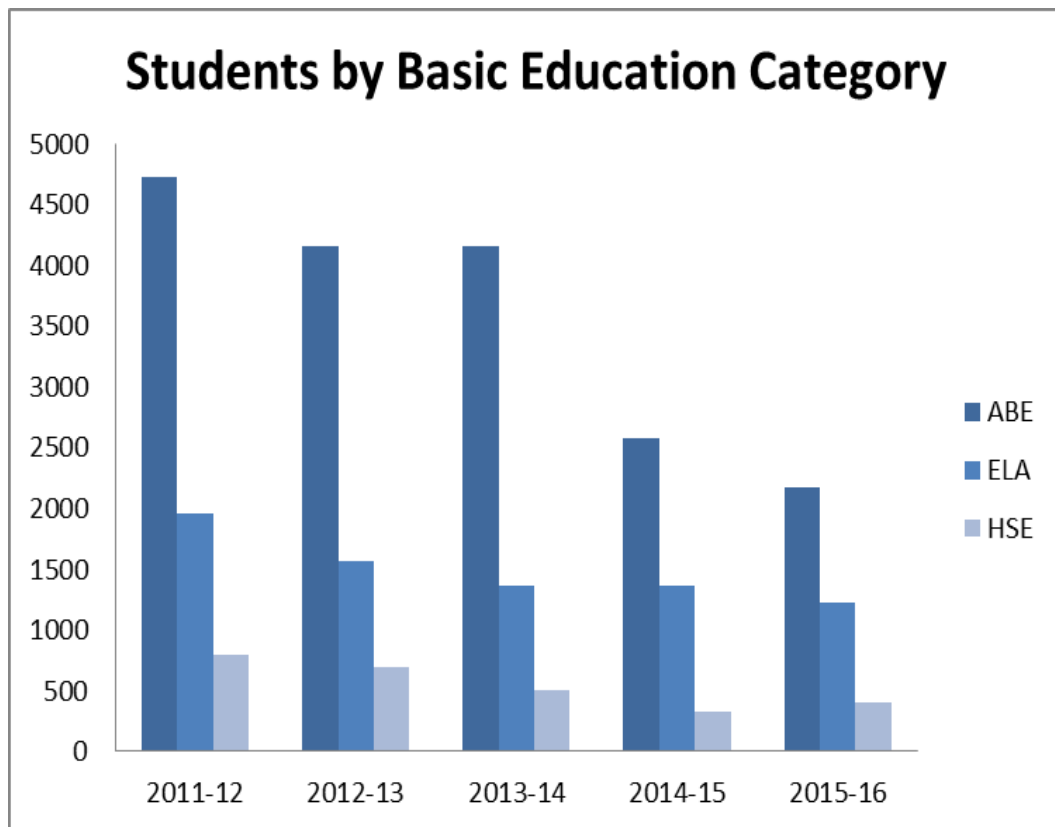
### Pre-College Education Needs of WorkFirst Students

With 45 percent of WorkFirst coming to the colleges with less than 12 years education (including those with GED), there is a significant number of students in pre-college programs. Adult basic education (ABE) and English language learner (ELA) students are shown by their starting levels in Table 7. Most students are in ABE/GED. ELA is offered on a separate track outside of the WorkFirst block grant. ABE level 4 is typically the major feeder into I-BEST programs. Level 4 made up 49 percent of the ABE WorkFirst students in 2015-16 (Table 7).

**Table 7. Basic education for adult levels**

Basic Skills Level	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
ABE 1	131	2%	119	2%	119	3%	74	3%	46	2%
ABE 2	805	15%	608	13%	608	13%	326	11%	289	11%
ABE 3	1315	24%	1135	23%	1135	24%	701	24%	567	22%
ABE 4	2484	45%	2296	47%	2296	49%	1476	51%	1272	49%
ABE 5	674	12%	582	12%	437	9%	254	9%	293	11%
ABE 6	125	2%	107	2%	62	1%	76	3%	105	4%
<b>Total ABE</b>	<b>5534</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4847</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4657</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2907</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2572</b>	<b>100%</b>
ESL 1	282	14%	148	9%	111	8%	111	8%	189	15%
ESL 2	249	13%	195	12%	137	10%	137	10%	202	16%
ESL 3	374	19%	334	21%	283	21%	283	21%	264	22%
ESL 4	464	24%	425	27%	372	27%	372	27%	273	22%
ESL 5	380	19%	286	18%	271	20%	271	20%	194	16%
ESL 6	207	11%	178	11%	189	14%	189	14%	105	9%
<b>Total ESL</b>	<b>1956</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1566</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1363</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1363</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1227</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total Basic Skills</b>	<b>7490</b>		<b>6413</b>		<b>6020</b>		<b>4270</b>		<b>3799</b>	

**Figure 3.**



## Student Support Services

**WorkFirst Tuition and Textbook Assistance:** WorkFirst can provide assistance with tuition, fees and required textbooks for basic education or vocational education programs.

**WorkFirst Work Study:** WorkFirst students are eligible for up to 19 hours per week of paid work study at on- or off-campus locations.

**Work-Based Learning (WE):** Unpaid work-based learning activities such as internships, externships, clinicals, practicums, work experiences, job shadowing activities, service learning experiences, and other unpaid work activities, during which an instructor is not present at the work site, are to be considered as Work Experience.

**Life Skills Courses:** Training programs designed to prepare individuals with the skills to meet the demands of everyday life and employment.

**Worker Retraining:** The Worker Retraining program helps pay for training expenses at Washington state's community and technical colleges and selected licensed private schools for those who have lost their jobs due to economic changes and for those receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits.

**Pell and State Need Grants (SNG):** These programs help the state's lowest-income undergraduate students pursue degrees, improve skills, or train for new careers.

**I-BEST:** I-BEST provides educational access and support for adult basic education (ABE)/English Language Acquisition (ELA) and developmental education students to progress further and faster along career pathways. ABE, ELA and developmental education students and programs are often referred to as "Pre-college." I-BEST pairs pre-college and professional-technical instructors in the classroom concurrently to advance student gains in pre-college and professional-technical skills. Classes must be in programs that build toward degrees and/or certificates and prepare students for employment.

**Opportunity Grants:** The goal of Opportunity Grants is to help low-income adults complete at least 45 credits and earn a credential in an educational program leading to careers in high-demand fields. Eligible students pursuing approved programs leading to career-path employment can receive funds to cover tuition and mandatory fees for up to 45 credits, and up to \$1,000 for books and supplies per academic year. Individualized student support services are an important part of the program and may include personalized counseling, one-on-one tutoring, career advising, college success classes, emergency child care, and emergency transportation.

## Performance Impacts of Support Services

In 2015-16, thirty-nine percent of students receiving certificates and degrees were on Pell or SNG (Table 9). The numbers of WorkFirst Students participating in Opportunity Grant and WorkFirst Work Study is relatively low. Forty-five percent of students receiving an Opportunity Grant received a certificate or degree. Thirty-eight percent of students on WorkFirst Work Study received a certificate or degree. Students may have received more than one type of program/service.

**Table 8. WorkFirst students served by supports**

Students by service*	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Pell	4,585	3,729	3,423	2,708	2,106
State need grant	2,755	2,119	1,959	1,648	964
Work Study (Fed & State)	566	473	389	372	304
Opportunity grant	634	535	488	375	257
WorkFirst work study	328	308	320	521	448

\*Students may be in more than one service

**Table 9. Financial award categories**

Financial aid	Description	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Pell Grant	Left, no award	857	746	736	530	340
	45+ Credits and 2.0 GPA	337	221	211	180	130
	Certificate	338	244	199	171	122
	Degree	298	251	202	231	171
	Short certificate			1	21	37
State Need Grant	Left, no award	389	325	330	257	130
	45+ Credits and 2.0 GPA	243	161	149	127	74
	Certificate	219	155	120	120	68
	Degree	199	161	141	159	110
	Short certificate				13	20
Awards		1054	811	662	681	471
% Awards		37%	36%	32%	38%	39%
Total		2880	2264	2089	1809	1202

## Section II: Student Achievement

### Education and Skills Prior to WorkFirst

The Student Achievement Initiative is a performance funding system the CTC system uses to measure students for their increased educational attainment. Over 70 percent of WorkFirst students have not earned prior achievement points. Approximately 30 percent had earned some prior achievement points.



**Table 10. Prior college achievement**

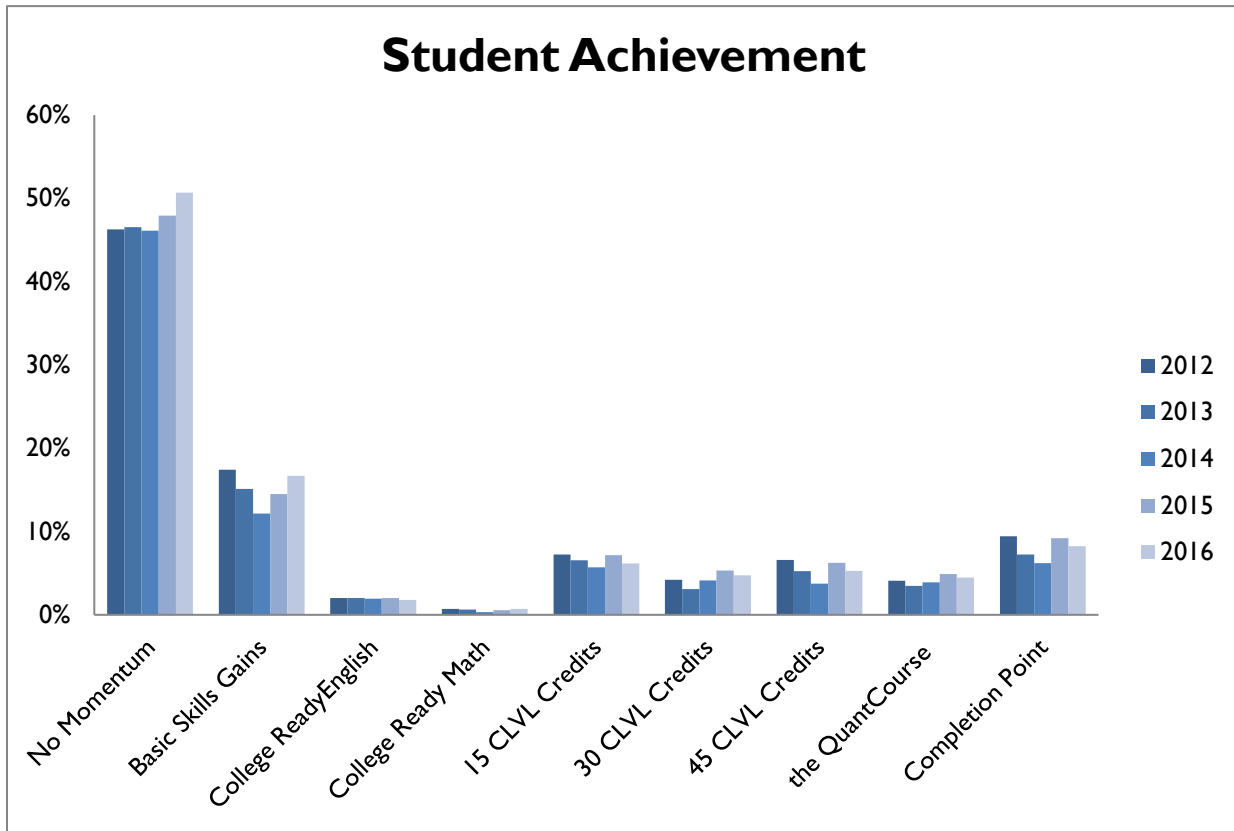
Prior College Achievement	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No prior achievement	69%	73%	73%	69%	73%
Basic education gains	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Precollege English	8%	7%	8%	7%	6%
Precollege math	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
15 college credits	8%	6%	6%	7%	6%
30 college credits	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%
45 college credits	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%
Quantitative course	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%
Completion	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

### **WorkFirst Student Achievement**

The Student Achievement Initiative measures achievement gains during the year to account for the annual progress students made. Just under half of WorkFirst students made at least one achievement gain. In 2016, five percent of WorkFirst students reached the 45 college credit point. Fourteen percent reached critical college milestones. Another 20 percent made some improvements getting ready for college or increasing their basic education. Eight percent earned the completion point. Fifty-one percent of the students made no achievement. This is in part because they are either time limited in programs such as CJST or in life skills, which is not designed to meet achievement points.

The percent of students making no achievement gains in a year has gone up substantially since 2012. The number of students reaching 15 credits has decreased over time, as has those earning precollege English. There has been a slight increase in the number earning the quantitative course point.

**Figure 4.**



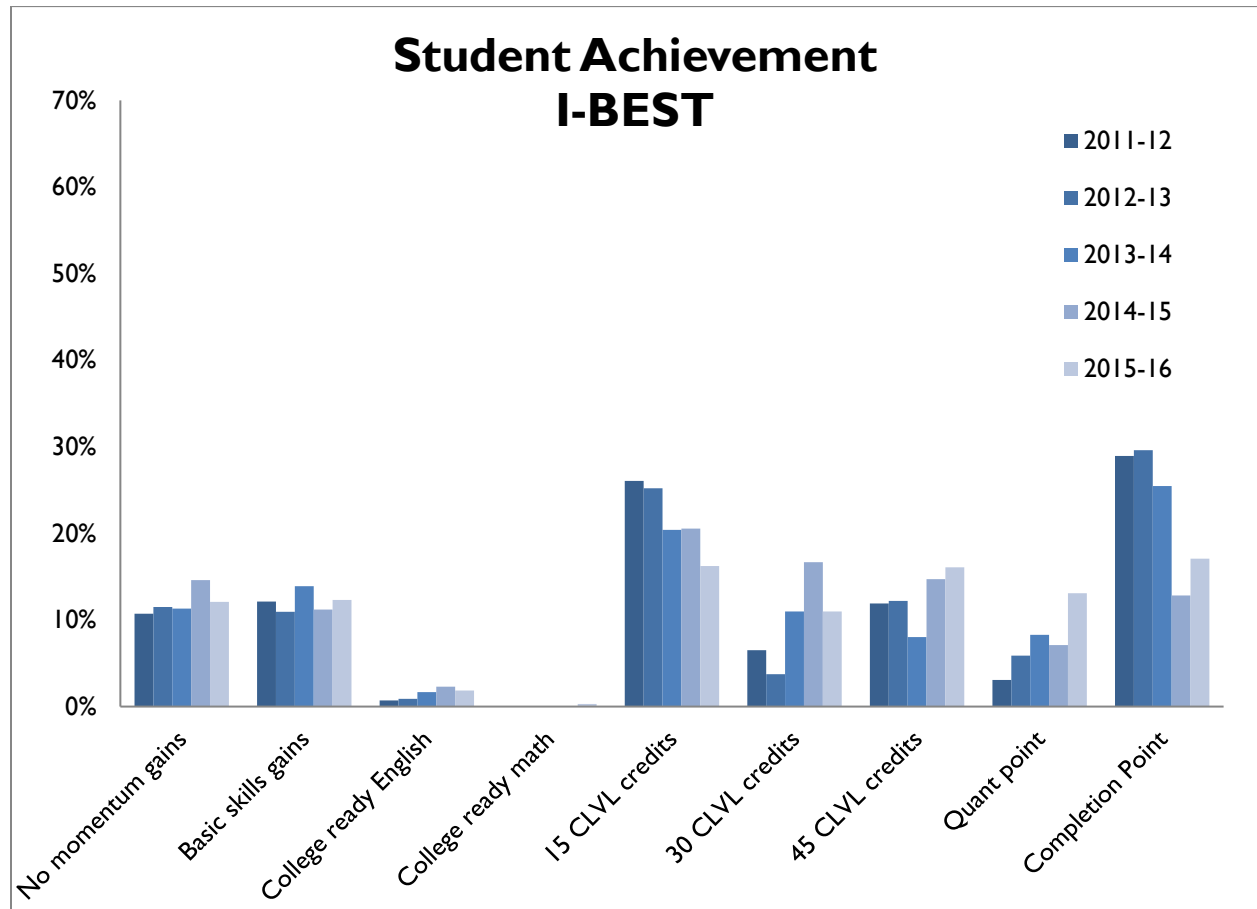
**WorkFirst Student Achievement with HS21+**

The High School 21+ (HS 21+) program expands the high school completion options for adults 21-years-old and older by offering a comprehensive, competency-based approach tailored to adult learning styles. HS 21+ gives adults a new opportunity to earn a diploma at Washington’s community and technical colleges and move forward. This is important since the majority of jobs in Washington state require at least a high school diploma and one year of college. HS 21+ is designed for adults who have gained knowledge, skills, and abilities from life and work experience. With HS 21+, students follow a customized educational plan and move ahead as competencies are met.

**WorkFirst Student Achievement with I-BEST**

WorkFirst students in I-BEST have better achievement outcomes than WorkFirst Students overall as shown in figure 4. In 2015-16, only 12 percent had no achievement. Seventeen percent earned a completion point, 16 percent reached the 45 college-level credit point, 40 percent reached critical college milestones, and 14 percent made some improvements getting ready for college or increasing their basic education.

Figure 5.

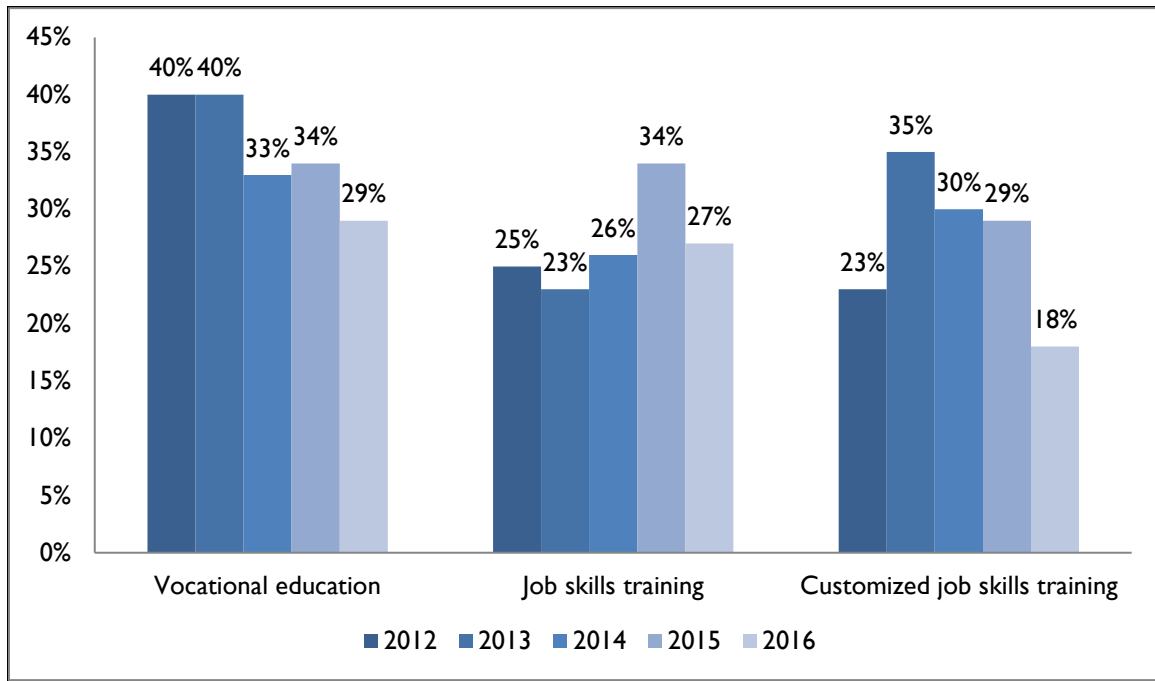


### Section III: Vocational Training Completion & Skills Gains

This section describes the completion rates for vocational training and attainment levels for students who left training from 2012 to 2016. A total of 21,432 TANF adults left training in those years. A “leaver” is defined as a student who has exited college for one full year. Completion status is measured from the last year and quarter they were enrolled. It is based upon their last WorkFirst activity. Figure 6 shows the completion rate by activity by year for the full-time period of the study.

In 2016, students in vocational education were the most likely to complete at a rate of 29 percent. Job skills training students had a 27 percent completion rate. Customized job skills training students are only allowed 8-12 weeks of education. However, 18 percent earned a completion point. Thirty-two percent of vocational education and twenty-four percent of job skills training students left within two quarters.

**Figure 6.**



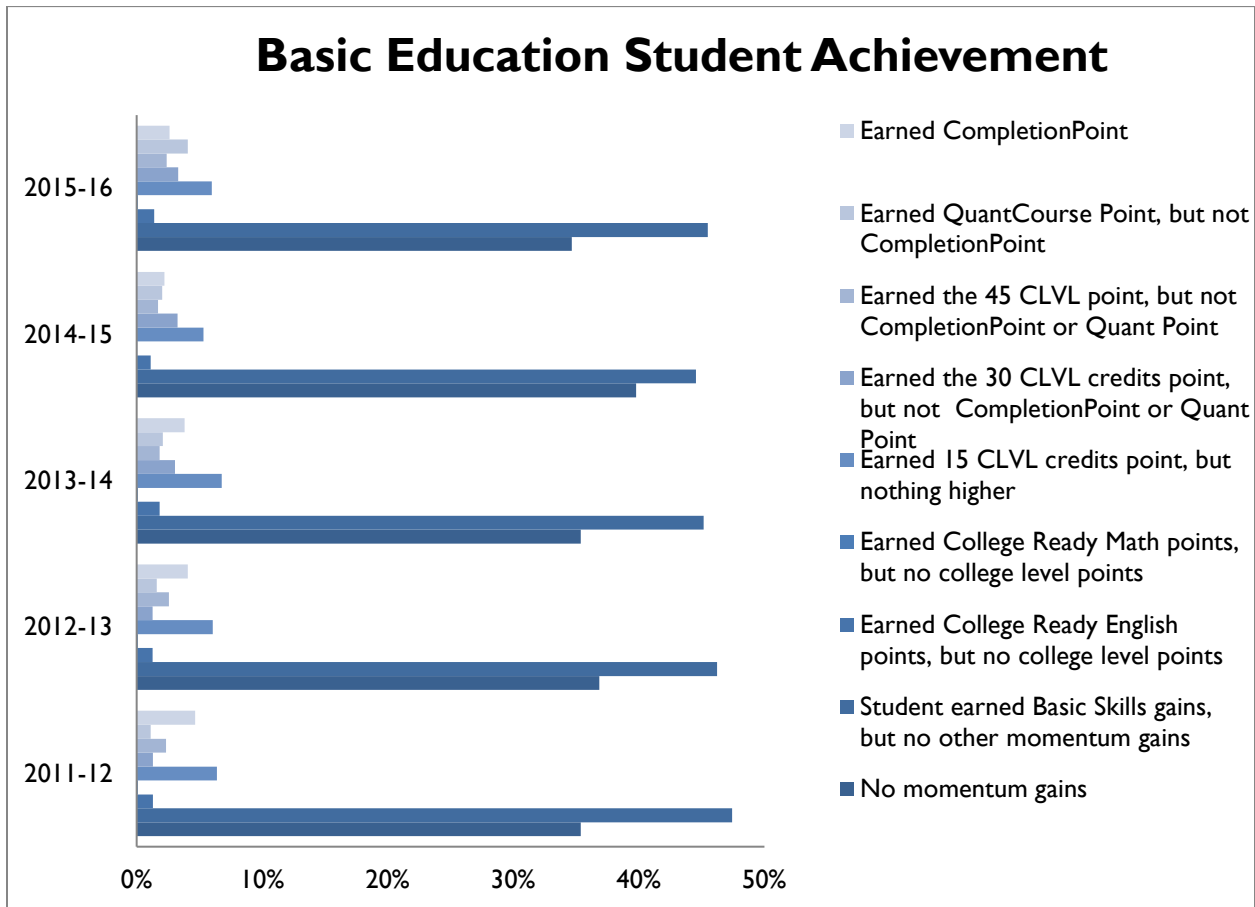
## Section IV: Basic Education Skills Gains

Fifty-five percent of the WorkFirst students in basic education left after two quarters. Additionally, of these students:

- 33 percent left after the first quarter.
- 67 percent left after the second quarter.

In 2015-16, sixty-three percent of basic education students earned achievement points (figure 7). Forty-five percent earned basic education gains and eighteen percent earned achievement points in developmental education and above. Thirty-six percent did not earn achievement points.

Figure 7.



## Section V: Employment and Transition Outcomes

### Short-term Employment Outcomes

This section describes short-term employment results for 2015 for participants who left college training and went to work in 2016. The results are for the third employment quarter after exiting college. All results are in inflation adjusted dollars. Results are disaggregated for training activity and completion status. As shown in Table 11, completion of training has a positive impact on both employment rate and earnings.

All WorkFirst students were matched with unemployment insurance (UI) for hourly wages and quarterly earnings in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter after leaving. Table 11 is at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter employment data.

**Table 11. Five year student employment, wages, and earnings**

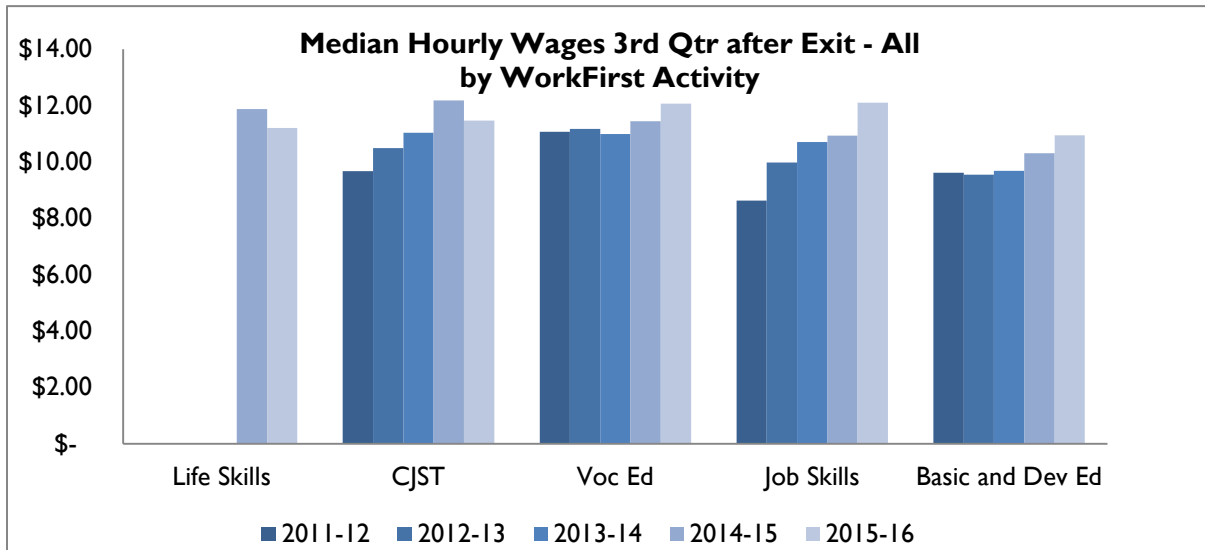
Year	Students	Employed	% Employed	Median hourly wage	Median quarterly earnings
2011-12	5128	2437	48%	\$ 9.60	\$ 4,302
2012-13	5158	2487	48%	\$ 9.66	\$ 4,090
2013-14	4878	2550	52%	\$ 9.83	\$ 4,336
2014-15	3970	2204	56%	\$ 10.39	\$ 4,231
2015-16	3745	1674	45%	\$ 11.10	\$ 3,631

**Table 12. Employment and earnings by completion type for students going to work in 2016**

	Leavers (did not complete)	Completers (less than one year of college)	Completers (1 year of college and a credential)	Total
Students	2,333	536	876	3745
% of Students	62%	14%	23%	
Employed	1,001	283	390	1674
Employment Rate	43%	53%	45%	
Hourly Wage	\$ 10.44	\$ 11.50	\$ 12.11	
Quarterly Earnings	\$ 3,171	\$ 4,572	\$ 4,228	

As shown in Figure 8, WorkFirst students who were in Job Skills had the highest median wage per hour at \$12.10. Vocational education students made \$12.07 per hour, CJST students made \$11.47, students in life skills made \$11.21 and students in basic education made \$10.95 per hour. Wages increased in all programs between 2011-12 and 2015-16. Vocational education and CJST saw the highest increases at 40 and 19 percent, respectively. Job skills and basic education had much smaller increases at 9 and 14 percent, respectively.

**Figure 8.**



The median quarterly wages, in the third quarter after exit, had \$1,734 separating the highest - CJST from the lowest Job Skills, as shown in Figure 9. This is a thirty percent that can make a real difference at this level of income. Life Skills and Basic Education are not included (below), as most of the students do not have a clear completion point.

**Figure 9.**

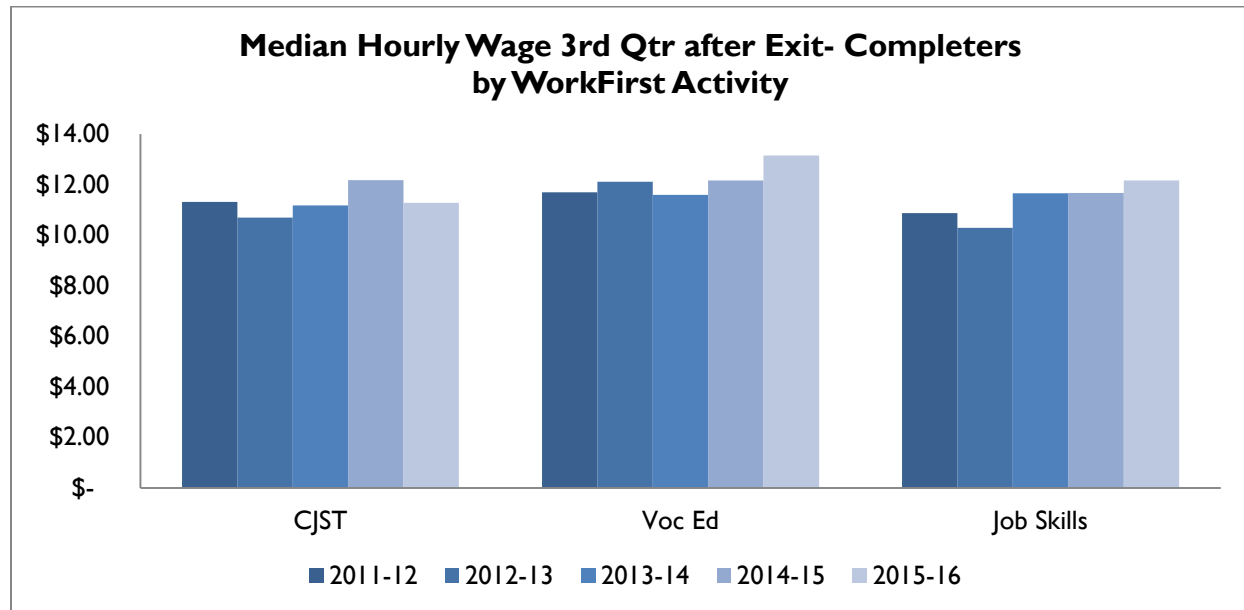
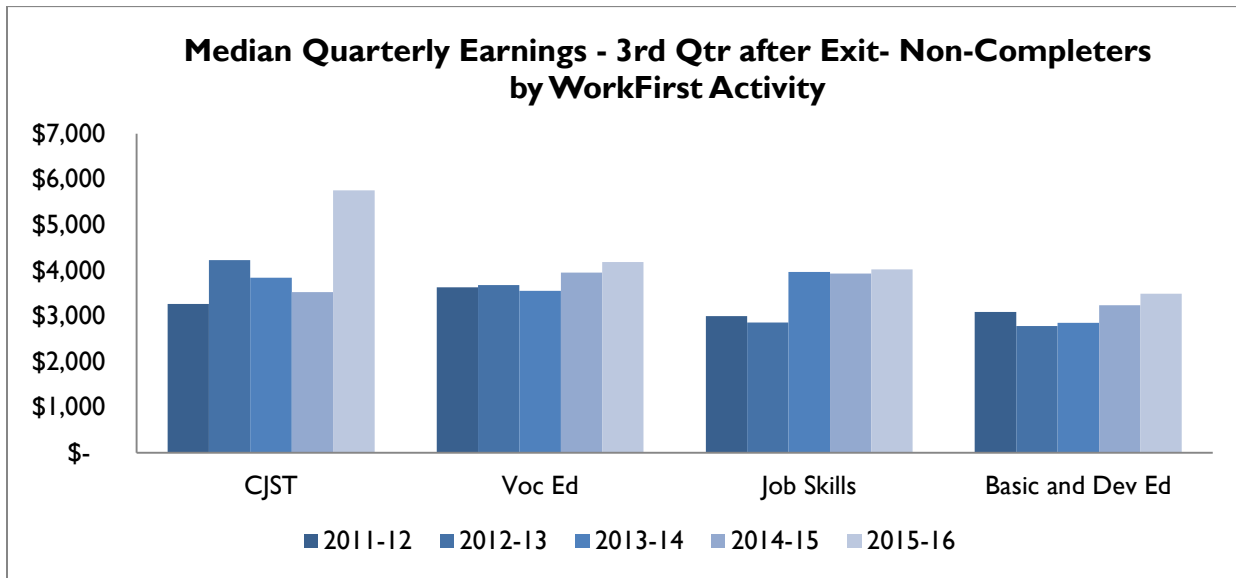


Figure 10.



### Longer-Term Employment Outcomes

This section describes employment in the seventh quarter (2<sup>nd</sup> year after exiting training). This includes employment through 2016. Results were analyzed for job retention, wage progression and earnings gains. For all completers who were employed in the third quarter after training, their seventh quarter retention rate was 58 percent. The employment retention rate for those reaching completion points of more than one year was 68 percent. Their median quarterly earnings were \$478 higher than the median of all leavers.

Table 13. All WorkFirst leavers

Year	Students	Employed 3 quarters after	% Employed	Median Hourly Wage	Median Quarterly Earnings	Employment Retention 7qtrs	% Retained 7 qtrs	Median Hourly Wage 7th Qtr	Median Quarterly Earnings - 7th
2011-12	6109	2437	40%	\$9.60	\$3,245	1791	73%	\$ 9.77	\$ 3,621
2012-13	6057	2487	41%	\$9.66	\$3,091	1858	75%	\$ 9.81	\$ 3,474
2013-14	5718	2550	45%	\$9.42	\$3,186	1924	75%	\$ 10.05	\$ 3,624
2014-15	4674	2204	47%	\$10.39	\$3,457	1286	58%	\$ 10.43	\$ 3,855
2015-16	4657	1674	36%	\$10.87	\$3,631				

Table 14. Degree and certificate earners

Year	Students	Employed 3 quarters after	% Employed	Median Hourly Wage	Median Quarterly Earnings	Employment Retention 7qtrs	% Retained 7 qtrs	Median Hourly Wage 7th Qtr	Median Quarterly Earnings - 7th
2011-12	1069	553	52%	\$11.15	\$4,117	452	82%	\$ 11.41	\$4,567
2012-13	1125	604	54%	\$11.12	\$4,135	488	81%	\$ 11.32	\$4,413
2013-14	1123	621	55%	\$11.02	\$4,032	516	83%	\$ 11.26	\$4,302
2014-15	1035	560	54%	\$11.54	\$4,260	378	68%	\$ 11.52	\$4,333
2015-16	876	390	45%	\$12.11	\$4,228				



**Table 15. Completers (less than one year)**

Year	Students	Employed 3 quarters after	% Employed	Median Hourly Wage	Median Quarterly Earnings	Employment Retention 7qtrs	% Retained 7 qtrs	Median Hourly Wage 7th Qtr	Median Quarterly Earnings - 7th
2011-12	353	186	53%	\$9.58	\$3,346	143	77%	\$ 9.57	\$3,397
2012-13	370	205	55%	\$10.43	\$3,462	160	78%	\$ 10.51	\$3,659
2013-14	416	216	52%	\$10.43	\$3,602	174	81%	\$ 10.66	\$4,294
2014-15	480	301	63%	\$10.75	\$4,010	162	54%	\$ 10.57	\$4,227
2015-16	536	283	53%	\$11.50	\$4,572				

**Table 16. Early leavers**

Year	Students	Employed 3 quarters after	% Employed	Median Hourly Wage	Median Quarterly Earnings	Employment Retention 7qtrs	% Retained 7 qtrs	Median Hourly Wage 7th Qtr	Median Quarterly Earnings - 7th
2011-12	3706	1698	51%	\$9.41	\$2,975	1196	70%	\$ 9.47	\$3,357
2012-13	3663	1678	46%	\$9.32	\$2,762	1210	72%	\$ 9.39	\$3,086
2013-14	3339	1713	51%	\$9.49	\$2,918	1234	72%	\$ 9.67	\$3,333
2014-15	2455	1343	55%	\$10.01	\$3,010	746	56%	\$ 10.03	\$3,516
2015-16	2333	1001	43%	\$10.44	\$3,171				

**I-BEST**

WorkFirst students in I-BEST have better long term employment outcomes than WorkFirst Students overall as shown in Table 13. Students earned \$3,303 quarterly in 2016. Earnings for degree and certificate earners made \$12.28 per hour and earned \$1,208 more in the third quarter. I-BEST students who earned certificates and degrees earned 62 percent more in the seventh quarter than I-BEST leavers overall. They also earned \$901 more per quarter in the seventh quarter after exit in 2014-15. I-BEST leavers earned more overall than other WorkFirst students. I-Best students who completed degrees and certificates and who left in 2014-15 earned \$1,359 more than all WorkFirst students who completed a degree or certificate.

**Table 17. I-BEST leavers (all)**

Year	Students	Employed 3 quarters after	% Employed	Median Hourly Wage	Median Quarterly Earnings	Employment Retention 7qtrs	% Retained 7 Qtrs	Median Hourly Wage 7th Qtr	Median Quarterly Earnings 7th
2011-12	232	118	51%	\$9.70	\$3,132	89	75%	\$10.26	\$4,288
2012-13	297	175	59%	\$9.87	\$3,030	123	70%	\$10.42	\$4,441
2013-14	330	184	56%	\$9.65	\$3,323	147	80%	\$10.76	\$4,709
2014-15	319	195	61%	\$10.48	\$3,191	118	61%	\$11.54	\$4,791
2015-16	265	130	49%	\$10.73	\$3,303				

**Table 18. I-BEST degree and certificate earners**

Year	Students	Employed 3 quarters after	% Employed	Median Hourly Wage	Median Quarterly Earnings	Employment Retention 7qtrs	% Retained 7 Qtrs	Median Hourly Wage 7th Qtr	Median Quarterly Earnings 7th
2011-12	49	48	98%	\$9.70	\$4,051	40	83%	\$10.36	\$4,559
2012-13	107	101	94%	\$10.34	\$3,730	77	76%	\$10.86	\$4,574
2013-14	110	99	90%	\$10.07	\$3,576	85	86%	\$11.13	\$4,853
2014-15	137	107	78%	\$10.92	\$4,295	72	67%	\$11.54	\$5,692
2015-16	81	52	64%	\$12.28	\$4,511				