



INTEGRATED DIGITAL ENGLISH ACCELERATION (I-DEA)

FEBRUARY 2020

"This one student would rush after class to a friend's house to get help looking for jobs and filling out applications online. After she finished the module about job skills and work readiness, she came to me and said, 'I don't have to ask my friend anymore. The other day I used the I-DEA laptop to find myself a job!' She gave me back the laptop and started working."

Julie Drews, English as a Second Language-International Education instructor, Edmonds Community College

▶ Watch our I-DEA video <https://bit.ly/2m676ED>

A Better Idea for Adult English Language Learners



A student works with Marcos Valle, English as a Second Language instructor at Edmonds Community College

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 knowledge 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 2016, immigrants made up 17.7 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 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

I-DEA started in 2013 as a three-year pilot program with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The program features:

- **Modularized instruction:** Students participate in 31, 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" or web-enhanced classes:** In the pilot phase, all I-DEA classes were "flipped" — meaning, students would learn content and concepts at home and then come to class to practice and apply the concepts with the instructor and fellow classmates. Students received computers and 24/7 access to complete coursework.

Now, students learn either in flipped classes or through computer enhanced instruction in which the flip is simulated in the classroom. In all cases, students have access to computers, either their own or loaned from the college.

- **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

I-DEA continues to show great promise. Overall, student learning gains are 9 to 12 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 9 to 12 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. 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: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/workforce/WA>
3. Program year 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19 annual data, SBCTC, per I-DEA Program Administrator Jodi Ruback