

Ability to Benefit

Dual Enrollment for Adults to Support a Post-Pandemic Recovery

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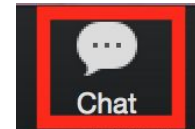
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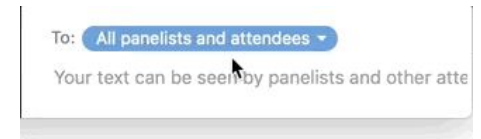
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Ability to Benefit

Dual Enrollment for Adults to Support a Post-Pandemic Recovery



Lauren Walizer, CLASP
Judy Mortrude, NCTN
June 2020 Webinar



Today's Discussion

- Building knowledge about Ability to Benefit (ATB) and how students can use it
- Framing about our project to expand ATB use
- Learning from state examples
- Q&A

Ability to Benefit (ATB)

- Removes the Higher Education Act's requirement that students must have their high school diploma or equivalent (e.g., GED) to access federal student aid.
 - Aid includes Pell Grants, work-study, and SEOG
- Students can use that aid to pay for college coursework and living expenses *so long as they meet unique eligibility criteria.*

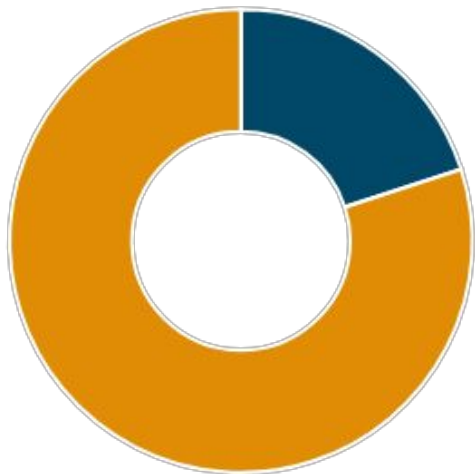
To be eligible, students must be both:

- Enrolled in a career pathway program
 - Combines rigorous and high quality education, training, and other services
 - Learning at the secondary and postsecondary levels
 - Federally defined in WIOA, HEA, and Perkins CTE
- Able to show they can benefit from education & training by:
 - Passing a US Department of Education-approved exam; or
 - Completing 6 college credits (or its equivalent); or
 - Completing a process defined by their state

Financial Aid Allows Students More Flexibility in How They Combine Work & School

Pell Grant = \$1,480 per semester if half-time,
equivalent to 8 hours/week at an \$11/hour job

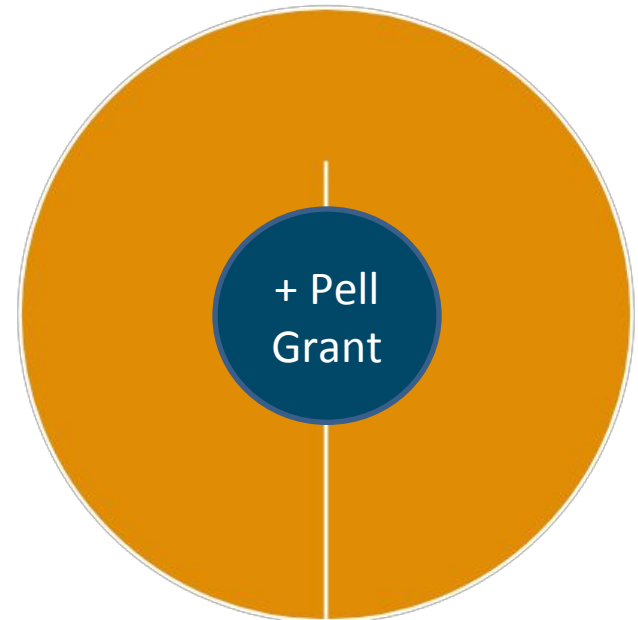
40 Hour Work Week



■ Pell Grant ■ Employment

or

40 Hour Work Week



■ Employment

ATB evolution - **confusion** - progress

1991
Non-high school
graduates allowed to
receive financial aid if
they pass an exam

1995
ED publishes
regulations on
state-defined
process

2012
ATB eliminated by
Congress to reduce
costs

2016
Career pathway
definition aligned
with WIOA

1992
New option for
student eligibility:
through a state-
defined process

2008
New option for
student eligibility:
completing 6
credits/equivalent

2015
ATB restored with
career pathway
program
requirement

2019
US ED hosts
national dialogue;
3 states submit
plans

Presentation template by [Slidesgo](#)
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Our Project

- College and state engagement on ATB has been slow
 - Multiple federal changes are partly to blame
- How do we increase people's knowledge about ATB and get it to be used more widely?
 - Prioritize work in places already thinking about career pathway models and/or intentionally serving adult learners: Louisiana, Mississippi, and Wisconsin

State Partners

Nikitna Barnes

Assistant Director for Adult Education Grants/Special Programs
Mississippi Community College Board

Amy Cable

Executive Director, Process Improvement
Louisiana Community & Technical College System

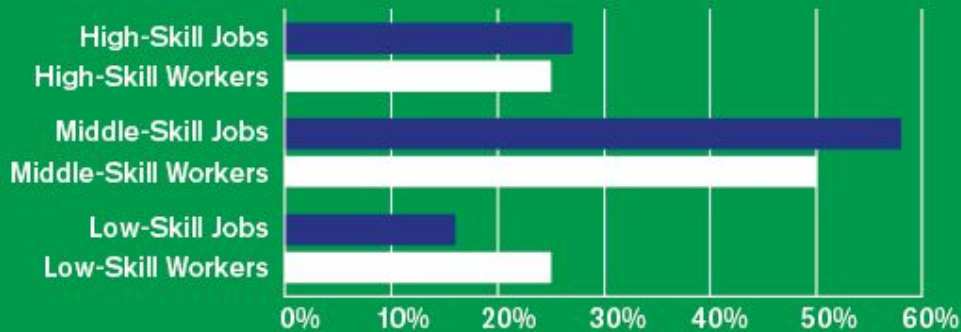
Scott DuBenske

Education Director - Career Transitions & Workforce Development
of Student Success
Wisconsin Technical College System

Office

MIBEST Connects Low-Skilled Adults to Economic Opportunity

Mississippi Has a Middle-Skill Jobs Gap



Source: National Skills Coalition analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics by State, May 2015



A Workforce Development Initiative

Increasing economic development and economic prosperity



Addressing the Dropout Crisis

No high school diploma, unemployed, underemployed



Through Evidence-Based Integrated Pathways

Building on best practices from initiatives across the country



On a Statewide Scale

Engaging all 15 community colleges

How MIBEST Works

STUDENTS ENGAGE IN

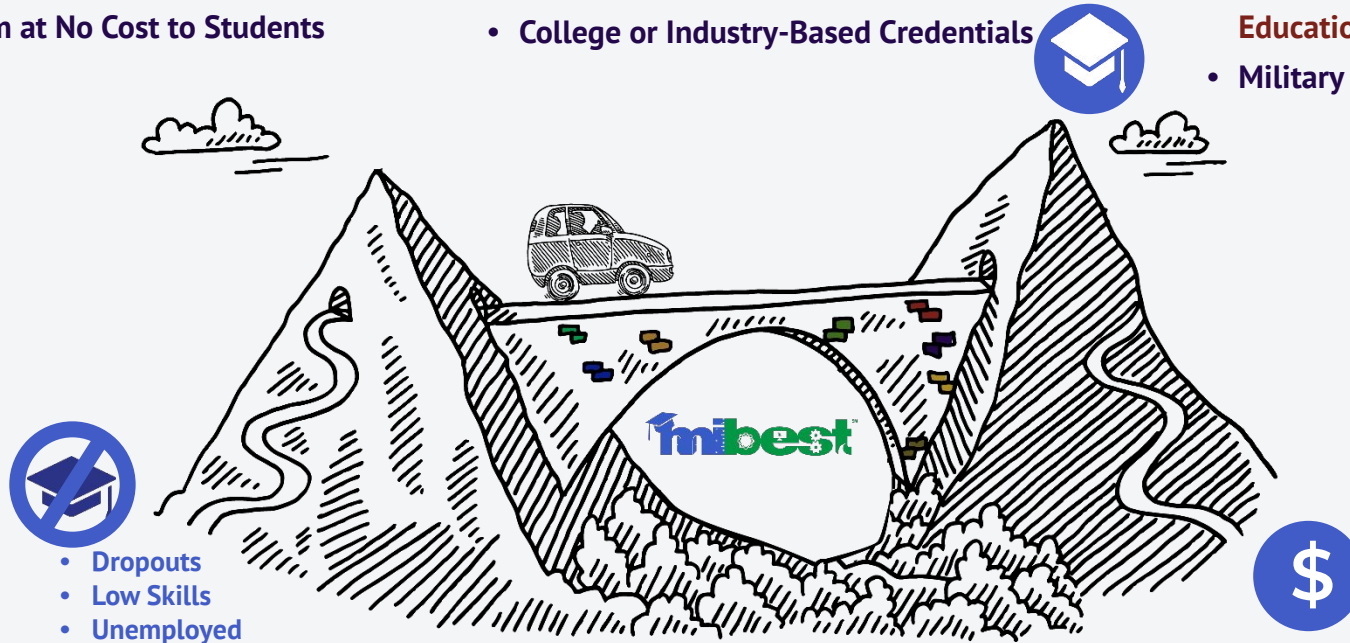
- Team Teaching
- Career Counseling and Advising
- Proactive Support Services
- Work-Based Learning Opportunities
- \$200 Completion Incentive
- Program at No Cost to Students

STUDENTS OBTAIN

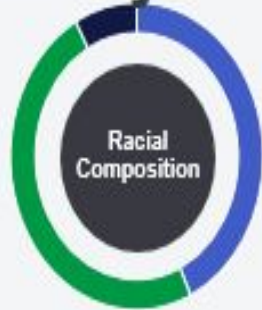
- High School Equivalency (HSE)
- Smart Start Work Readiness Skills
- National Career Readiness Credential (NCRC)
- At least 6 CTE Credits
- College or Industry-Based Credentials

RESULTING IN

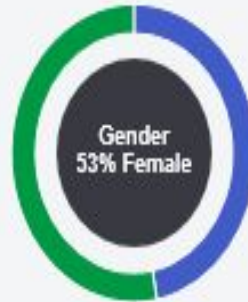
- Employment in Career Field or
- Registered Apprenticeship and/or
- Continuing in Higher Education or
- Military Enlistment



MIBEST “Caravan” to Economic Prosperity



■ Black ■ White ■ Other



■ Male ■ Female



■ Married ■ Single



■ 17-24 ■ 25-44 ■ 45+

39%

First Generation College Students

90%

Entered MIBEST Without a High School Credential

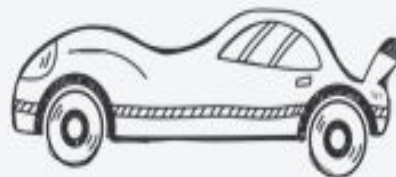
39%

Students with Children Under 18 years of age

1341

Children Under 18 Affected by MIBEST

N = 1743 Overall



MIBEST Is Demonstrating Positive Impact

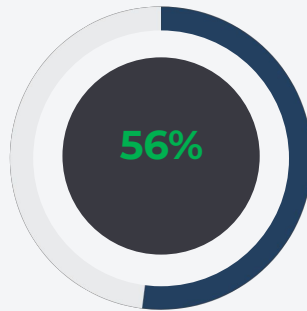
- **56%** of students have obtained a college-issued or industry-based occupational credential
- **21%** of MIBEST graduates have already attained higher-level certificates and Associate degrees

Outcomes As of Summer 2020; N=1745

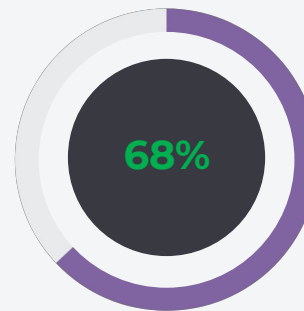
Over

1,700

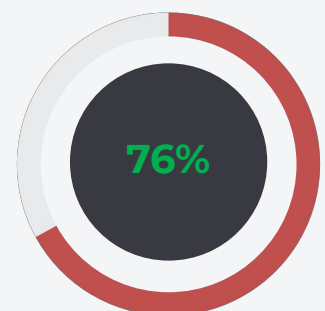
Students Have Enrolled in MIBEST Programs



Students Who Have Earned Their High School Equivalency



Students Who Earned the NCRC



Students Who are Already Employed in Their Career Field

- **Seventy percent (70%)** of MIBEST graduates are employed in their career fields or pursuing additional higher education leading to higher-paying jobs
- MIBEST completers **nearly double their average earnings** compared to what they earned before MIBEST.

MIBEST Ability-to-Benefit Processes

- **College Collaboration to Involve All Key Staff Members**
- **Student Intake Process**
- **Student Tracking and Documentation**
- **Intrusive Support Services to Support Retention and Student Success**

What We Have Learned

- **ATB Successes**

- * Colleges are using ATB to help engage and support more students
- * MIBEST students are having success with 6 credit hours

- **ATB Challenges**

- * Some programs are not structured to use ATB
- * Not all colleges understand how to utilize ATB

- **Next Phase of MIBEST**

- * Mandate use of ATB to scale up number of students served
- * Participating in CLASP ATB cohort to create a Mississippi State Defined Plan

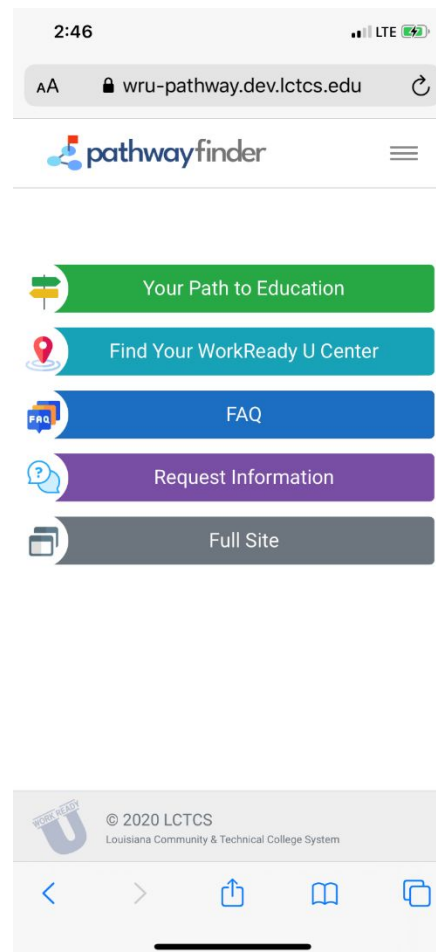
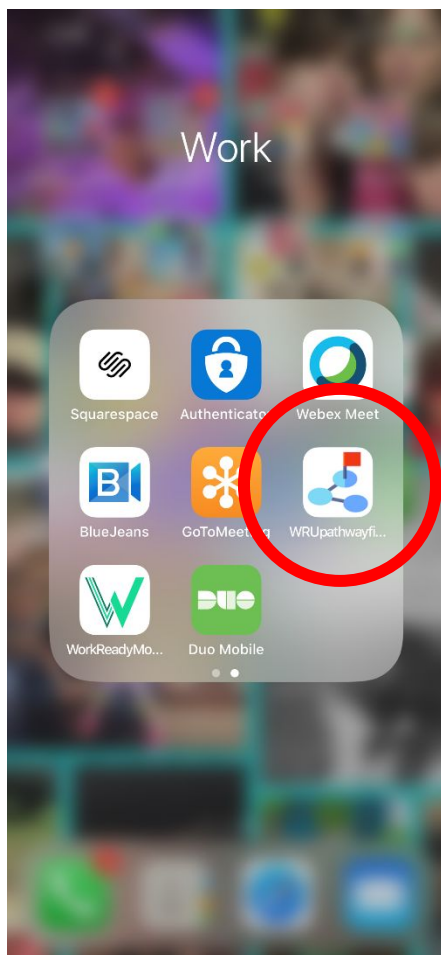
Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS)



LCTCS Comprehensive Focus

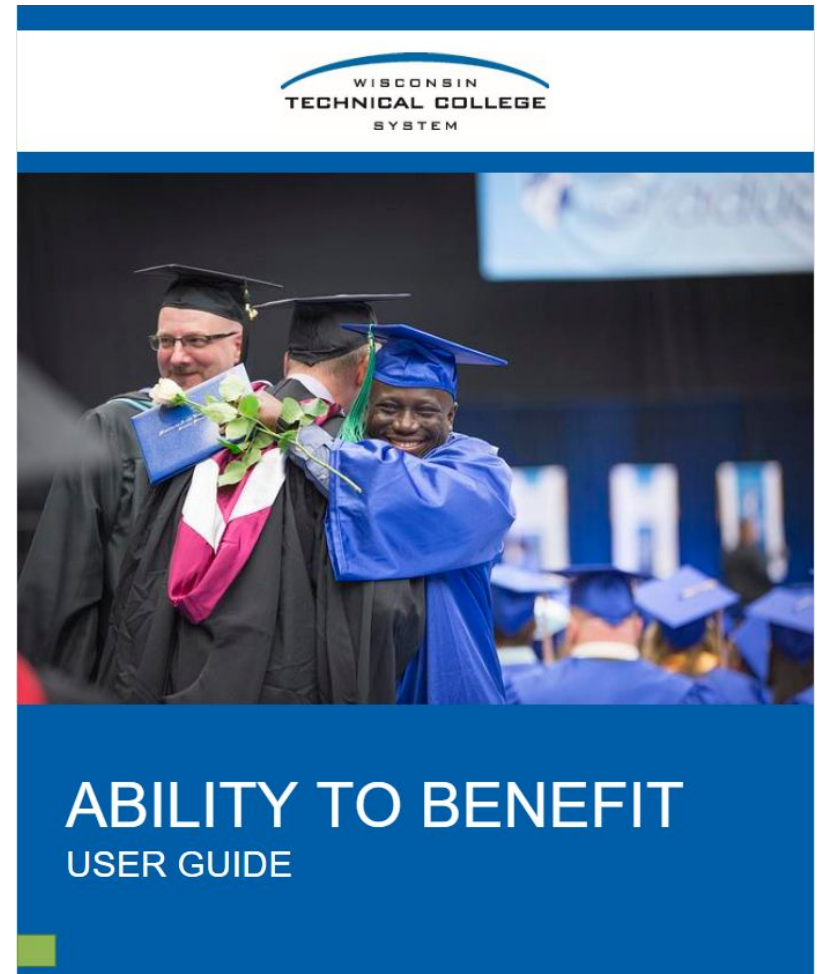
- “5 for Six” Scholarship
- Passage of LCTCS High School Equivalency Attainment Policy
- Creation of Web Application

pathwayfinder



Wisconsin Technical College System

- State-Defined Process
- Scale the use of ATB
 - System Workgroup
 - Regional Convenings
 - User Guide
 - Data



Wisconsin Technical College System

- Stakeholder Partners
- Promotion
- Awareness



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Thanks!

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