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**Overview**

The Excel Center model is a first-of-its-kind adult high school which creates an opportunity for those who previously dropped out of high school to reengage in their education and earn a full, state-recognized high school diploma. The Excel Center was the first adult high school in Indiana and the first-of-its-kind in the nation. The Excel Center is a nationally proven school model founded by Goodwill Education Initiatives, Inc. (GEI) which has grown from 1 school in 2010 to 41 schools today.

The mission of The Excel Center is to provide adults the opportunity and support to earn a high school diploma and begin post-secondary education while developing career paths in sectors of the local economy that offer better-than-average employment and growth opportunities. The school will “meet students where they are” in their education by providing a flexible structure and supportive relationships to help them manage work, life, and family concerns as they achieve their educational goals.

The vision of The Excel Center, is to deliver on the mission of Goodwill: to change lives by empowering people to increase their independence and reach their potential through education, health, and employment. The Excel Center brings about hope and economic opportunity to communities, families, and individuals. Through the power of education, GEI’s goal is to set people on a pathway towards better career prospects that lead to economic self-sufficiency and breaking the cycle of poverty.

**School Model**

The success of The Excel Center can be directly attributed to the unique school model. The Excel Center “meets students where they are” in their education by providing a flexible structure and supportive relationships to help adults manage work, life, and family concerns as they achieve their educational goals. The Excel Center’s core model elements are further described below.

* **Barrier removal**: The Excel Center’s school model is built upon the foundation of helping students identify any of the academic as well as non-academic barriers that may stand in the way of them completing their education and may have led to students dropping out of school in the first place. Key barriers removals include:
	+ **Transportation assistance**. The Excel Center makes every reasonable effort to ensure that students have reliable access to the school facility, including providing free access to public transportation.
	+ **Childcare**. The Excel Center provides access to free childcare so that students may routinely attend class with the peace of mind that their children are safe and well-supervised.
* **Rigorous secondary education**: Students matriculate through The Excel Center and meet all credit, testing, and graduation requirements students would otherwise be required to meet in a traditional high school. Key school model elements of The Excel Center include:
	+ **Face-to-Face Instruction**. The majority of The Excel Center’s curriculum is delivered via face-to-face instruction in a brick and mortar school setting.
	+ **Accelerated schedule**. The academic calendar is structured to operate on five, eight-week terms, allowing students to earn high school credits and meet graduation requirements at an accelerated rate.
	+ **Course flexibility**. The majority of classes have an accelerated pace and many courses are “bundled,” allowing coursework to integrate various subjects and grant multiple credits in one class. The Excel Center also provides opportunities for credit recovery, avoiding course redundancy when appropriate.
	+ **Remediation**. Students who do not possess the skill levels needed to be successful in the program participate in high quality, deliberate instruction to build basic skills and prepare for secondary-level instruction.
* **Career pathways and college transition**: In addition to high school coursework, the school will provide significant support for students to establish (1) career pathways in growth industry sectors in the local region and (2) effective transitions into postsecondary education and credentialing opportunities.
* **Life coaching**: Each student is assigned a life coach who assists students addresses the life barriers and issues that prevent students from being successful. Coaches work with students to identify potential barriers to students’ continued education, whether short-term barriers (such as food assistance or transportation) or long-term challenges (including student self-efficacy and self-confidence).



**Outcomes**

The Excel Center has seen significantly positive measurable outcomes in its short history with over 9,500 graduates since its inception and a total of 98% of all graduates. University of Notre Dame found:

* 40% increase in employment for Excel Center graduates compared to before they enrolled and 20% greater workforce participation than their peers (ND/LEO, 2021)
* 39% increase in earnings for Excel Center graduates compared to those without a diploma (ND/LEO, 2021)

A third-party review[[1]](#footnote-1) of The Excel Center’s impact has demonstrated that students’ employment levels and earnings increase significantly as a result of attending. Graduating from The Excel Center confers a wage and re-employment effect premium of $9,828 per graduate. In addition, a graduate from The Excel Center utilizes significantly less money per year in public spending among public assistance programs, leading to an annual fiscal savings of $793.60 per year per student and a total of $1,898,291 in annual savings yielded by all graduates of The Excel Center in Indiana. Equally important to the employment rate of graduates, 38% of students who graduate from The Excel Center enroll in post-secondary education, and 76% have at least a two-year persistency rate.

Since Memphis opened The Excel Center in 2015, the school has had over 1,500 graduates. Additionally, 86% of Excel Center graduates are currently employed or enrolled in college compared to 42% at school intake.

1. Center for Evaluation & Education Policy (March 2017). “The Excel Center Research Report”. Indiana University. Bloomington, Indiana. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)