



Goodwill of Colorado is well known for its retail stores but also has a longstanding history of implementing workforce development solutions in our community, along with wide-ranging life-improvement opportunities for over 100,000 Coloradans in need each year. Utilizing customized education, training and empowerment programs, Goodwill fosters economic independence by helping individuals navigate a career pathway rather than just finding a job. Founded in 1918 in Colorado, Goodwill has been serving unemployed and underemployed individuals and families, under-resourced youth, seniors, military veterans and adults with developmental disabilities throughout the state for more than a century.

As a nationally recognized nonprofit organization and recipient of GuideStar's Platinum Seal, Goodwill is uniquely positioned to help transform Coloradans' lives, strengthen families, grow the economic vitality of local communities and preserve our planet. Driven by its founding mission to help individuals achieve greater independence, Goodwill of Colorado constantly seeks proven models to replicate in our own state, and the Excel Center is an exemplary model that Goodwill is profoundly qualified to operate and hopeful to launch as a local effort.

The Excel Center model was started in 2010 by Goodwill Education Initiatives in Indiana (Goodwill of Central and Southern Indiana) to provide adults the opportunity to attain a high school diploma and receive job skills training, along with wrap-around services such as on-site childcare and transportation. The curriculum is designed to specifically prepare adult students with the employability and study skills they need to be successful in careers and or college. Excel Center schools currently are in Arizona, Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee and Washington, D.C., with Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Georgia, Maryland, New York, South Carolina, and Virginia actively pursuing avenues to opening schools.

The Excel Center provides adults over the age of 21 who do not have a state certified high school diploma the opportunity to earn their diploma, industry- recognized certifications and dual college credits at no cost. The school operates year-round and utilizes a balanced calendar with multiple terms. To support students in reaching their goals, the Excel Center provides free, onsite, drop-in childcare, along with transportation support. Additionally, life coaches are available to help graduates identify employment opportunities, enter the workforce, and prepare for post-secondary education advancement.

In 2021, Goodwill of Colorado initiated a feasibility process to determine the viability of the Excel Center in Colorado. During its research, Goodwill learned there are approximately 300,000 Coloradans 25 years of age and older without high school diplomas. Goodwill believes the best way to end the cycle of poverty is to provide these individuals with educational opportunities so they may increase their earning potential and strengthen their families.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, adults without a high school diploma earn on average \$606 per week, compared to \$749 for an adult who graduated from high school (no college) and \$1,559 for an advanced degree holder.

It is evident there is a high need for workforce development programs such as The Excel Center to help job seekers gain marketable skills needed to secure and sustain employment. Earning such skills and industry certifications is a driving principle of The Excel Center model.

EXCEL CENTER IMPACTS

Impact on the Graduate:

- Nationally, 9,541 students graduated from September 2010 to January 2021*
- Nationally, 70% of graduates earned an industry certification or college credit in the 2020-21 school year*
- Nationally, graduates increased their earnings by 39% compared to their peers five years after graduating**

*The Excel Center National Network

**Lab for Economic Opportunity at Notre Dame

Impact on the Family:

The impact of graduating from The Excel Center is not just realized by the student but often his or her entire family. Sixty-eight percent of students also are parents who have seen significant dual generational improvements—including 78% of students with school-age children who reported an increase in their child’s academic achievements.

- Over 750 children have watched his or her parent graduate from The Excel Center and witnessed firsthand their parent break the cycle of high school dropout-ism within their family.

ESTIMATED FISCAL EFFECTS OF THE EXCEL CENTER (All students in Indiana 2010-2022)

Public Assistance Program	Eligibility Change	Annual Savings Per Student Served ¹	Total Annual Savings ²
Medicaid	3.3%	\$60.22	\$2,038,447
Healthy Indiana Plan*	31.4%	\$540.83	\$18,307,095.50
SNAP	31.4%	\$110.31	\$3,733,993.50
Earned Income Tax Credit (Indiana)	25%	\$16.56	\$560,556.00
Earned Income Tax Credit (Federal)	25%	\$124.20	\$4,204,170.00
TOTAL STATE		\$299.08	\$10,123,858.00
TOTAL FEDERAL		\$517.03	\$17,501,465.50

*The Healthy Indiana Plan is a health-insurance program for qualified adults offered by the State of Indiana. It pays medical costs for members—including vision and dental coverage.

¹Per student calculation is using pre-COVID-19 calculations, therefore increases in pandemic-related public assistance are not inflating the savings amounts.

²Total calculation uses all students of The Excel Center in Indiana as of the 2020-2021 school year.

Our opportunity to create significant outcomes is illustrated by the following demographics:

- 42% of Excel Center graduates are first-generation
- 51% of Excel Center students have school-age children

Ethnicity of those Served by existing Excel Centers:

- 32% Caucasian
- 40% African American
- 20% Hispanic
- 8% Other

For more than a decade, Excel Centers have consistently achieved measurable impacts in the communities they serve, and Goodwill of Colorado expects to focus on the demographics listed above and replicate the referenced outcomes. Goodwill of Colorado’s feasibility study has identified two sites and is excited about a potential program launch in 2024.

*Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *The Economics Daily*, Median weekly earnings \$606 for high school dropouts, \$1,559 for advanced degree holders at <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2019/median-weekly-earnings-606-for-high-school-dropouts-1559-for-advanced-degree-holders.htm> (visited June 15, 2022).