

#AEFLWEEK100 | #EDUCATEANDELEVATE

ADULT EDUCATION & FAMILY LITERACY WEEK

MAYORS LEAD THE WAY!

COABE
COALITION ON ADULT BASIC EDUCATION



Toolkit for National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week

Our advocacy efforts are generously sponsored by Essential Education, our long-time partner!



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Mayors have a unique opportunity to champion Adult Education and Family Literacy (AEFL) Week, driving economic development, community well-being, and social equity in their cities. By supporting this initiative, you can enhance workforce skills, reduce unemployment, and attract businesses, fueling economic growth. Additionally, improved adult education leads to healthier, safer communities and supports family stability through better job opportunities. This week also helps reduce social inequalities and empowers citizens to engage more fully in civic life. Embrace this cause and participate to demonstrate your commitment to creating a prosperous, inclusive, and resilient city.

- Take a moment to [learn about COABE](#) and how we support the field of adult education.
- Get involved in Adult Education and Family Literacy (AEFL) Week! We have created an [information sheet](#) to guide you.
- Review the list of Mayoral Champions [here](#). Thank you to the mayors who supported adult education in 2023!

Adult Education's Effect on Communities

Impact

- Adult education provides numeracy, literacy, English language skills, digital literacy, work readiness, soft skills, high school equivalency, and numerous wrap-around services to millions of adult learners nationwide
- Recent Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data shows that job growth is about zero or negative for those with no college education. Low-income students are 2.4 times more likely to drop out of school as middle-income students and 10 times more likely to drop out than students from higher income families.

- Today, [43 million adults](#) are low-skilled in literacy and [62.7 million](#) adults are low-skilled in numeracy.
- Adult education can be the solution to the skills gap between employers and workers, if funding meets demand.
- Adult education programs provide an economic boost to participants, employers and communities. In terms of participants, according to a recent Economic Mobility Corporation study, “unemployed residents with prior US work experience who enrolled in an employment-focused English course boosted their earnings by an average of more than \$7,100 annually two years after starting the program, compared with unemployed non-English speakers who weren’t in the program.”
- As for employers, they see benefits in finding workers who can bridge the skills gap mismatch that persists in many fields. Employers also partner with adult education programs to develop courses that provide learners the skills and knowledge that local employers need.
- According to COABE estimates, for every dollar invested in adult education, the surrounding community receives \$60 back in increased income and property taxes and savings on legal system and welfare expenses.

Legislative Priorities for Adult Education

Funding Request

- Demand for adult education programs is high because of the economic boost programs provide to participants, employers, and communities.
- Adult education programs enable learners to gain the skills necessary to succeed in the workforce, allowing them to earn wages that support their families. At the same time, adult education programs provide employers with a pool of skilled workers to fill in-demand jobs. Our request is for \$810 million for the Adult Education State Grants program in FY 2025. With an increase in funding, local programs will be able to build capacity to serve more learners, hire more full-time teachers and increase retention, thereby boosting the ability of adult education to continue to serve as a critical component of our nation’s workforce development system, supporting employers and individuals in our State

Policy Requests

Adult Education WORKS Act

- We appreciate that Congress has started the process to reauthorize the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as it provides a significant opportunity to improve adult education (authorized under Title II of WIOA).
- In April, the House of Representatives passed a bipartisan WIOA reauthorization bill, [H.R. 6655, A Stronger Workforce for America Act](#), on a vote of 378-26. This bill includes several provisions stemming from the bipartisan Adult Education WORKS Act ([S. 3075/H.R. 5987](#)) that COABE worked to secure, such as:
 - Promoting the use of integrated education and training programs (IETs);
 - Providing opportunities to professionalize the adult educator field;
 - Recognizing that adult learners need to gain digital literacy skills;
 - Ensuring additional resources are devoted to professional development for practitioners; and
 - Requiring the Department of Education to disseminate effective practices used by States to use administrative data to determine program performance
- We were excited to also see some of our priorities reflected in the WIOA discussion draft released by the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee in June.
- Both bills, however, fall short by not including key provisions from the bipartisan Adult Education WORKS Act that COABE believes are critical to updating and strengthening adult education.
- In a final WIOA reauthorization bill, we urge Congress to incorporate the rest of COABE's priorities, including:
 - Improving collaboration and coordination between Title I and II programs by adding adult education representation on the state workforce development board;
 - Ensuring workers learn the digital literacy and information literacy skills that are in-demand by employers;
 - Promoting integrated education and training programs so learners gain skills and training concurrently with education services;
 - Allowing innovation within the performance accountability system to better measure student and program success; and
 - Ensuring college and career preparation activities are provided by skilled professionals such as college and career navigators.

Strengthening Research in Adult Education Act

- To understand how to best educate and upskill our nation's 43 million adults who are low-skilled in literacy, it is critical that the work of practitioners, stakeholder and policymakers be informed by relevant, actionable and recent research in adult literacy.
- That is why COABE is advocating for legislation to improve research in adult education.
- The bipartisan Strengthening Research in Adult Education Act ([S. 1268](#) in 118th Congress) introduced by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Todd Young (R-IN) would direct the National Center on Education Research (NCER) to collect data and carry out research on successful state and local adult education and literacy activities that result in increased literacy and numeracy and educational attainment for adult learners, the characteristics and academic achievements of adult learners and access to, and opportunity for, adult education, all while requiring NCER to draw on the expertise of adult educators when developing policies and priorities related to adult education.

Issue a Proclamation

You can show their support for Adult Education by issuing a Proclamation recognizing national Adult Education and Family Literacy Week.

1. Complete the proclamation template ([here](#)). Be sure to update the date.
2. If possible, take a picture with community members who have been impacted by adult education services and share on social media.
3. Let the COABE office know when you issue the proclamation by sending an email to advocacy@coabe.org. The COABE office will publicly recognize each Mayor or city official who issues a Proclamation.

Visit a Local Program

Local programs provide a variety of services to adult education learners beyond educational services. The best way to learn about the impact that these programs have on your city is to visit them and speak with staff and students.

COABE makes it easy to locate local adult education providers using our [Move Ahead With Adult Ed](#) website. Use the [map tool](#) to locate your nearest programs, identify a point of contact, and see a sample of services that are offered.

Share photos from the visit with advocacy@coabe.org to be featured in our social media reaching a national audience of over 40,000 monthly views.

Sign the Pledge

Why This Matters

Adult education transforms lives, strengthens communities, and boosts our economy. By signing the Educate & Elevate America Pledge, you are taking a stand for millions of adults who seek to improve their literacy and numeracy, gain new skills, and achieve their educational goals.

Our Goal

We aim to collect 1 million signatures on this pledge. With your help, we can show our legislators that adult education is a cause that matters deeply to their constituents.

Take Action

By taking the pledge, you are making a powerful statement about the need for strong support and funding for adult education programs. Every signature counts, and together, we can make a significant impact.

1. Sign the Educate & Elevate America Pledge [here](#).
2. Share with your network.

Share on Social Media

COABE makes it easy to launch an AEFL Week social media campaign. We offer the use of [eye popping graphics](#) and ready-made social media posts that you can copy and paste.

Do you want to further tailor these posts for your city? Contact advocacy@coabe.org for specialized support with posts that will speak to your community.

X (Twitter)

- 28 million adults lack basic digital skills and yet most are using computers every day. We need funding for #wifi and #devices for adult learners that want to #reskill and #upskill for the #workforce. #COABE #AdultEdLiteracyWeek

- Adult Education promotes #racialequity as 78% of our #AdultLearners are people of color. Adult Education provides a hand up and out of #poverty and into #family sustaining wages. #COABE #AdultEdLiteracyWeek
- 79,000 educators in 2,000+ local programs work with millions of #AdultLearners nationwide providing #numeracy, #literacy, #digital literacy, #workforce readiness, and high school diplomas! #FundUs #COABE #AdultEdLiteracyWeek
- 73% of learners entering our federally funded #AdultEducation programs with the goal of getting their diploma received their diplomas and met their goals! #ROI #COABE #AdultEdLiteracyWeek
- In five years or less, nearly 80 percent of all job openings will require more than a high school degree. Adult education provides a significant opportunity to bridge the workforce supply-and-demand gap. #COABE #AdultEdLiteracyWeek
- Adult ed #HSE graduates typically earn close to \$10,000 more per year once they get their diplomas! #ROI #equity #COABE #AdultEdLiteracyWeek
- For every 400,000 adults who earn a high school diploma, the economy gains \$2.5 billion back in tax revenue and reduced expenses. That's \$6,250 per person! The estimated value to our economy in reduced costs for public support programs for low skilled, low literate adults is \$200 billion annually. #EconomicCatalyst #ROI #COABE #AdultEdLiteracyWeek
- Low-skilled adults are 2x more likely to be unemployed; 3x more likely to be in poverty; 4x more likely to be in poor health; and 8x more likely to be incarcerated. Educating adults helps families break out of intergenerational poverty and creates stronger communities. #ROI #COABE #AdultEdLiteracyWeek

Contact advocacy@coabe.org for assistance tailoring your AEFL Week social media campaign to your city and community.

LinkedIn & Facebook

- Adult education provides essential skills such as numeracy, literacy, English language proficiency, digital literacy, work readiness, soft skills, high school equivalency, and numerous wrap-around services to millions of adult learners nationwide. #COABE #AdultEducation #LifelongLearning #SkillsDevelopment #Literacy #DigitalLiteracy #WorkReadiness
- Recent Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data reveals that job growth is about zero or negative for those with no college education. Low-income students are 2.4 times more likely to drop out of school compared to middle-income students and 10 times more likely

to drop out than students from higher income families. #COABE #EducationEquity #JobGrowth #EconomicDisparity #StudentRetention

- Today, 43 million adults are low-skilled in literacy and 62.7 million adults are low-skilled in numeracy. #COABE #LiteracyMatters #NumeracySkills #AdultEducation #EducationForAll #SkillDevelopment #LifelongLearning

Contact advocacy@coabe.org for assistance tailoring your AEFL Week social media campaign to your city and community.

Resources

[COABE Informational Flyer](#)

Learn about who we are and how we impact the field of adult education.

[AEFL Week Flyer](#)

Read about the purpose of AEFL Week and how you can engage.

[Proclamation Template](#)

COABE's proclamation template makes it easy to show your support for adult education.

[Mayoral Legislative Champions](#)

Every September, COABE honors key individuals who have made an impact in the field of adult education by engaging in outreach and elevating the field. These are our 2023 Mayoral Champions.

[National Adult Education and Family LiteracyWeek](#)

Learn about what COABE has scheduled for virtual events during AEFL Week.

[Virtual background for legislative meetings](#)

Every year in September, we launch a virtual background. Update your virtual background in celebration of AEFL Week 2024! Consider recording a short video expressing your support of adult education using this virtual background.

[Eye popping graphics](#)

COABE makes social media simple with eye-popping graphics that you can use on any platform.

[Twitter \(X\) storm link](#) for all members and state leaders

Reach all of your legislators on Twitter (X) with a few easy clicks. Our software will link to your Twitter account, post about AEFL Week, and tag your legislators. *It posts once and does not continue posting on your behalf.

[Link to share with your network](#)

Want to make it easy for your network to engage in impactful AEFL Week activities? Share the link to COABE's Action Items.

[Newsletter Article](#)

You can use this ready-made newsletter article to include in your newsletters.

[Sample Press Release](#)

Share this Press Release to your local newspapers, Chambers, and other partners with marketing reach to share information about AEFL Week.

[Download State Fact Sheets](#)

Learn more about adult education in your state.

[Download or share the National Data Sheet](#)

Share information about adult education beyond state lines with the national data sheet.

[2024 Padlet](#)

See the impact of advocacy as it happens. COABE's Padlet highlights events, proclamations, and advocacy across the nation. Once you send your completed proclamation to advocacy@coabe.org, you will automatically be added to the Padlet. To include additional events like visiting programs, email info@coabe.org.

Customized Collateral: logo, web banner, and web slider featuring your city's leadership in national Adult Education and Family Literacy Week - contact advocacy@coabe.org

Connect with COABE

For further support on how to celebrate AEFL Week in your town, city, or municipality, please reach out to COABE. We can provide individualized support as you become a champion for adult education.

Contact advocacy@coabe.org to be connected with an experienced advocate.

Sign Up Your City

**[Sign your city up](#) to participate in
National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week 2024.**

Contact advocacy@coabe.org with questions.