

# ADULT EDUCATION IS AN ECONOMIC CATALYST TO FILL JOBS THAT ARE NEEDED FOR TODAY

## We are

the adult education system of nearly 55,000 leaders, administrators, and educators preparing adults to succeed in a global culture and economy by delivering a world-class education.

## We champion

increased access and investment in adult education, leading to higher quality instruction and greater student outcomes. We employ **innovative and effective strategies** to reach more adults who struggle with literacy, numeracy, and problem solving.

## We lead

a results-driven adult education system that provides:

- Academic instruction aligned to **college and career-readiness** standards
- Preparation and coaching for next steps (i.e., college and career) for:
  - *Individuals without a high school diploma*
  - *Individuals with a high school diploma with emergent needs*
  - *English language learners (ELL) (literacy and civics)*
  - *Individuals participating in integrated education and training*
  - *Individuals in corrections facilities*

## We equip

adult educators with:

- High-quality professional development
- Innovative instructional strategies
- Research-based models
- Leadership development

## The Challenge...

Low-skilled adults are:

**2X** more likely to be unemployed

**3X** as likely to be in poverty

**4X** as likely to be in poor health

**8X** as likely to be incarcerated

**43**  
million

working age Americans lack the skills needed for many of the nation's fastest growing and highest paying jobs.

**7**  
million

job openings in American could be left unfilled due to a lack of skilled workers.

Low education and skill levels of adults are a fundamental barrier to every major challenge facing the United States, including early childhood education, education reform, economic development, and improving the health and well-being of the nation's families and communities.

## The Results...

**1.5M**

students are enrolled in adult education programs

**72%**

of adults participating in a federally-funded Adult Education program earned a high school diploma or recognized equivalent in 2017

A person with a high school diploma or equivalent earns an average of \$9,620 more per year than a non-graduate.

Go to [www.educateandelevate.org](http://www.educateandelevate.org) to learn more.

**COABE**

COALITION ON ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

educate &  
**elevate**

ADULT EDUCATION

An Investment in America's Future

# Adult Education Program Information

Compiled by the Coalition on Adult Basic Education



## Who We Are

The Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) represents the system of 55,000 adult educators, administrators and mentors working to improve educational outcomes for adults in the U.S. We work with the 43 million U.S. adults who possess low literacy skills<sup>i</sup>. Across the nation, COABE members work tirelessly to help these underserved adults master the skills they need to compete and build careers – and better futures for themselves, their families and their communities.

**We advocate for more services, more funding, and less waiting.** We promote student resources and the elimination of waiting lists that discourage and delay success. In every State, we support adult education programs that foster essential skills, family literacy and workforce development.

## Our Impact

**Adult Education programs work.** In 2017, 72 percent of adults participating in a federally-funded Adult Education program earned a high school diploma or recognized equivalent, up from 66 percent in 2015<sup>ii</sup>. With increased Adult Education funding and supports, even more adults can become educated and more quickly make progress in earning the skills needed to obtain jobs.

**Adult Education programs are cost-effective, smart investments.** COABE estimates that for every dollar invested in Adult Education, a community receives \$60 back in increased income, property taxes, and savings on welfare and legal system expenses.

**Without Adult Education, low-skilled adults are more likely to be unemployed, in poverty, in poor health or incarcerated.** Low-skilled adults are 2 times more likely to be unemployed; 3 times more likely to be in poverty; 4 times more likely to be in poor health and 8 times more likely to be incarcerated<sup>iii</sup>.

## Current Funding Levels

In FY2019, Adult Basic and Literacy Education State Grants, under Title II of WIOA, were funded at \$641.9 million, and Adult Education National Leadership Activities were funded at \$13.7 million for a total of \$655.6 million in funding for Adult Education. Appropriators in the House of Representatives in the FY2020 bill allocated \$672 million for Adult Basic and Literacy Education State Grants, which increases funding for the State grant program by \$30 million. The House level-funded Adult Education National Leadership Activities at \$13.7 million, for an Adult Education funding total of \$685.7 million.

**In the final FY2020 appropriations bill, we urge Congress to fund Adult Education at least at \$685.7 million.**

## The Need

**Current Adult Education funding falls far short of meeting the need.** Today, over 43 million people with low literacy levels could benefit from Adult Education and there are at least 3 million people on waiting lists for such services<sup>iv</sup>.

**Too many adults do not have the job and literacy skills needed to participate in today's workforce.** Over 43 million working age Americans lack the skills needed for many of the nation's fastest growing and highest paying jobs. Without increased funding for adult education, these Americans' will be left behind, while at the same time American businesses are struggling to fill over 7 million job openings<sup>v</sup>.

## References

<sup>i</sup>National Center for Education Statistics (2019). Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education. (2014). The impact of ABS program participation on long-term economic outcomes, U.S. Department of Education.

<sup>ii</sup>Congressional Justification (2019). Career, Technical, and Adult Education Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Request. U.S. Department of Education. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget20/justifications/m-ctae.pdf>

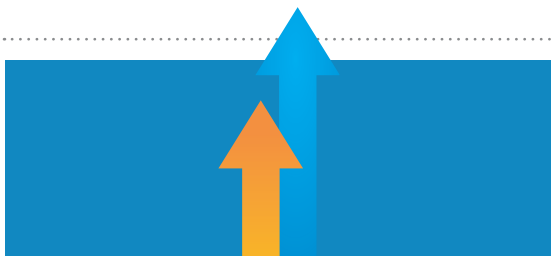
<sup>iii</sup>U.S. Census Bureau (2016). American Community Survey.

<sup>iv</sup>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2013). *Time for the U.S. to Reskill?: What the Survey of Adult Skills says. OECD Skills Studies. OECD Publishing.*

<sup>v</sup>Bureau of Labor Statistics (2019). Economic news release: Job openings and labor turnover summary.



**America is at a crossroads.**  
We need every person in our nation ready to contribute to America's competitiveness.



Our 55,000+ adult education leaders stand united in a national campaign to move learning opportunities forward for all Americans to achieve economic mobility. If we educate, then we elevate—our students, workers, businesses and our economic growth.

#### Investing in Adult Education is good for the economy.

It's an investment in America's economic engine - - we reach adults who struggle with literacy, numeracy, and problem solving getting them into the workforce pipeline so they can contribute to a company's bottom line.

Everyone needs a return on their investment. Whether it's the U.S. companies investing in their workforce, the workers investing their time and energy learning in-demand skills, or funders that want to ensure their investments are moving the economy forward.

Adult Education is a smart investment. We need all available workers ready to help our country compete.

#### How Adult Education is Uniquely Situated to Address the Needs of U.S. Employers

By 2020, the **American Action Forum** projects that the United States will be short an estimated 7.5 million private sector workers across all skill levels. Adult Education brings businesses options by preparing existing workers with families and competing life responsibilities with the skills that companies need through flexible classrooms and curriculum.

#### How Adult Education Addresses the Skills Gap

In a recent **Adecco State of The Economy survey**, 92% of business leaders thought that U.S. workers were not as skilled as they needed to be. And they are probably right. According to a report by **The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce**, by 2018, 63% of all U.S. jobs will require education beyond high school. Yet, nearly half of the U.S. workforce—**about 88 million of 188 million adults aged 18 to 64**—has only a high school education or less, and/or low English proficiency. Educating motivated students with the skills that companies need provides qualified candidates for hard to fill positions.



Learn more about how we're making investments that educate and elevate America with Adult Education.

[www.EducateandElevate.org](http://www.EducateandElevate.org)



# 7.5 million

By 2020, the American Action Forum projects that the United States will be short an estimated 7.5 million private sector workers across all skill levels.

[www.americanactionforum.org](http://www.americanactionforum.org)

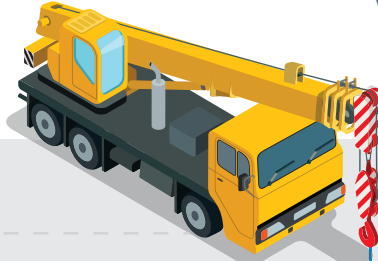


# 29%



Adult Education makes communities safer too. Inmate participation in adult education reduced recidivism by 29%.

[www.worlded.org/WEIInternet/us/adult-ed-facts.cfm#f20](http://www.worlded.org/WEIInternet/us/adult-ed-facts.cfm#f20)



# \$30,000

In contrast, adults with a high school degree were more likely to work full time and average 20% higher earnings (\$30,000) well above the poverty line for a family of 4.

<http://www.worlded.org/WEIInternet/us/adult-ed-facts.cfm>



# 63%

By 2018, 63% of all U.S. jobs will require education beyond high school.

<https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/help-wanted/>



# 92%

In a recent survey, 92% of business leaders thought that U.S. workers were not as skilled as they needed to be. Adult Education builds the skills of workers.

<https://www.adeccousa.com/employers/resources/skills-gap-in-the-american-workforce/>



# An Investment in America's future



## How Adult Education Increases Business Productivity

Our nation's competitiveness declines when talent shortages negatively impact businesses' productivity and innovation. Companies miss out on growth opportunities, product development suffers, and profits stagnate without a skilled national workforce. America needs an "all hands on deck" approach to bring every available worker to the labor pool.

## How Better Educated Populations Strengthen Communities

Educating adults creates stronger communities. Higher education levels are correlated with lower rates of chronic diseases like diabetes and asthma, and a mother's education level is the highest determinate of a child's academic success. Adult Education makes communities safer too. **Inmate participation in adult education reduced recidivism by 29.**

## How Adult Education Decreases Reliance On Government Support

The employment rate for young workers, as late as 2015, without a high school degree or equivalent stands in stark contrast to the national employment rate, with slightly less than half in full time employment. In contrast, adults with a high school degree were more likely to work full time and average **20% higher earnings (\$30,000)** well above the poverty line for a family of 4.



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National Association of State  
Directors of Adult Education

The award winning Educate & Elevate public awareness campaign is a joint initiative of COABE and NASDAE

Contact your legislator at <http://tinyurl.com/educateandelevateinfo>

### References

- » [http://www.worlded.org/Managed/docs/Adult%20Ed%20Facts\\_Mar2014.pdf](http://www.worlded.org/Managed/docs/Adult%20Ed%20Facts_Mar2014.pdf)
- » <http://www.worlded.org/WEIInternet/us/adult-ed-facts.cfm>
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