

ADULT EDUCATION & LITERACY NETWORK

February 2024





Our work changes lives.

Adult Education and Literacy services help people build the assets they need to move out of poverty, as well as the confidence to continue to move toward success throughout their lives.

We help students to identify concrete goals and then break those goals down into steps.

Our students set goals in the domains of:

- Family and life
- Academics
- Career and college readiness

Our services include:

- Literacy Education: Reading, Writing, Math including computer and financial literacy education
- English Language Learning and US Citizenship preparation
- High School Diploma and GED Credentialing
- Career and College Readiness





ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROVIDERS OFFER A BROAD RANGE OF SERVICES THAT ARE TARGETED, TAILORED AND RELEVANT TO EACH STUDENT'S GOALS AND NEEDS.

With additional investments in the Adult Education & Literacy providers, Vermont could extend regional workforce expansion and paid work-based learning and training with a population that is already here.

AELN'S ROLE IN CTE

AELN is a key part of Vermont's statewide workforce development system, and any conversation around strengthening Vermont's CTE system should also consider the needs of Vermont's Adult Basic Education system as the "on-ramp-to-CTE" piece of the pipeline.

The AELN serves a different population than CTE Centers - our students are often not yet eligible or ready for CTE. Our students may come to us directly after dropping out of high school, or much later on in life, and they often lack the basic skills to participate successfully in tech ed programs, free college programs or workforce training.

Our ELL students must first learn English before moving through the workforce development pipeline.

We are the very first stop for Vermont's most vulnerable populations.

Investing in AEL services upstream supports and increases the success of money invested further downstream in workforce development initiatives such as CTE.

Vermont Adult Learning Energy Works Program

VAL is Vermont's largest AEL provider, serving 6 counties across the state.

VAL's Energy Works program is an IET for weatherization and heat pump installation workforce needs.

The program has trained **117 Vermonters** to date, **83** of which have gone on to earn industry certifications (13 Building Science, 39 First Aid/CPR/AED, 38 OSHA 10, 63 EPA 608)



"Learning about Weatherization wasn't my first idea for a career. Gaining this education persuaded my thoughts and gave me confidence that I am a great candidate for this career!"

-Christine Johnson,
Vermont Adult Learning
Energy Works
Weatherization Training

High School Completion

AEL providers administer the High School Completion Program (HSCP) for the State.

AEL providers give students the opportunity to include career training as part of their high school completion requirements, allowing students to obtain their Diploma while participating in CTE programs.

The **Adult Education and Literacy HSCP Student Access Study Committee** published a report with recommendations to the General Assembly for increasing access and equity in the HSCP and identifying long-term funding solutions for Adult Basic Education programs generally. We are working on implementing these recommendations in the **FY25 budget process**.

HSCP Student Access Study Recommendations

- **Move all services under one umbrella:** Retire the High School Completion Program (HSCP) described in 16 V.S.A. §943 and revitalize the Adult Diploma Program (ADP) described in 16 V.S.A. §945 to become the Adult Education and Secondary Credential Program.
- **Consistency in age eligibility:** Make modifications to the Adult Diploma Program (ADP) described in 16 V.S.A. §945 to make the eligible age of a student consistent across all sections of the legislation, and to have that age be 16 years or older.
- **Honor our funding mechanism:** Our governing statute currently says that AEL providers shall be paid “an amount equal to 26 percent of the base education amount for each student who completed the diagnostic portion of the program*, based on an average of the previous two years.”
- **Eliminate the TABE testing as a funding mechanism**

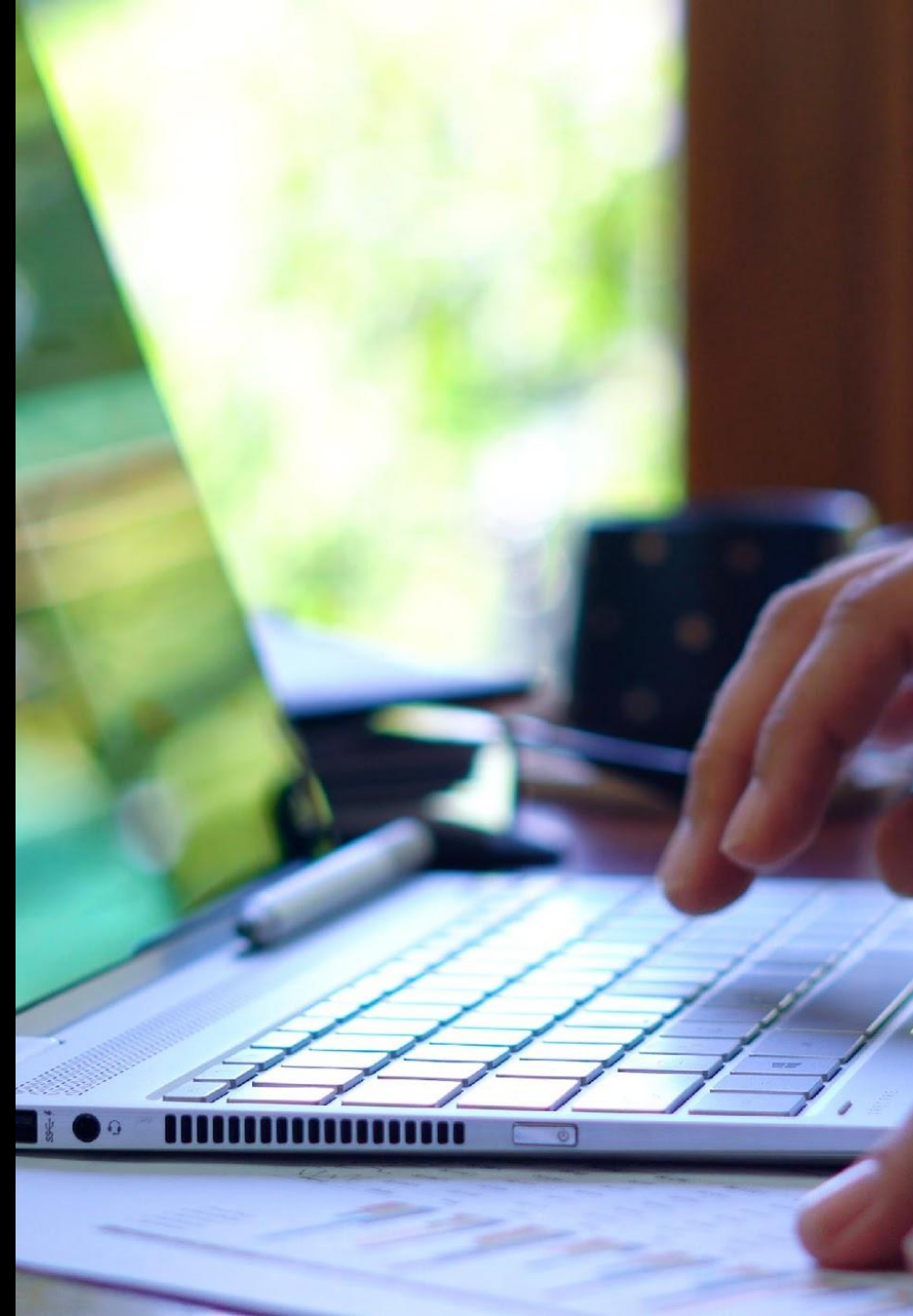
THE NEED

Each year as a Network of four AEL providers, we employ approximately 132 educators and support staff to provide educational and career readiness services to about 2,000 students from every city and town in the State.

Our operating costs have risen sharply while revenue streams from the State have declined, and we face budget and staffing shortfalls.

All 4 AEL providers in Vermont have seen a significant increase in student numbers in recent years, most notable among English Language Learners (**40% increase** in ELL students statewide from FY21 to FY23).

Your support will ensure that our students can be successful both now and in the future.



FY22 & FY23 Student Numbers

| | High School Completion Program | English Language Learning | Adult Basic Education |
|------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Fiscal Year 2022 | 384 | 390 | 925 |
| Fiscal Year 2023 | 407 | 547 | 941 |

Common outcomes for our students include:

- Attaining specific skills to get a job or a better job
- Earning a high school diploma or GED
- Achieving a certification or other credential for a job
- Deciding to attend college or other educational & career development opportunities
- Improving their English language abilities to apply their skills and education to careers here in Vermont

The AELN served approximately 1,837 students in FY2023. Over the last 5 years, the average cost per student served by the AEL providers was \$3,124.



Thank you!

We hope you will support the enactment of the report's recommendations in the FY25 budget.