

Matthew Bentley
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Hello,

My name is Matthew Bentley. I am the Regional Director for Vermont Adult Learning in Windham County, and I am here as a member of the Adult Education and Literacy Network.

Please provide an increase of \$500,000 in base funding to fill the gap from your original budget request and actual budget appropriation last session.

The Adult Education and Literacy Network changes peoples' lives and helps them to build assets for individual success. We know increasing literacy in reading, writing and math will open up opportunities for students; including better jobs, furthering their education or developing job skills, having a better family life, and being able to do basic tasks for themselves.

At our office in Brattleboro, we witness such great growth in the students we serve despite their barriers, of which there can be many. Aside from the disadvantages traditional students ages 16 to 60 can face from low income to physical, mental and emotional health concerns, to bullying and homelessness. We also provide services to the hundreds of New Americans that have come to our area. In Brattleboro alone our ELL for New Americans classes currently total 58 individuals for in person instruction, and we are expecting another 150 New Americans in the next year.

I ask again that you please provide an increase of \$500,000 in base funding to fill the gap from your original budget request and actual budget appropriation last session.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Matthew Bentley