

ADULT EDUCATION & LITERACY NETWORK

April 2024





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**



Move all services under one umbrella & Consistency in age eligibility

H.874 repeals the High School Completion Program and moves those services under the Adult Education and Secondary Credential Program:

§ 945. ADULT EDUCATION AND SECONDARY CREDENTIAL PROGRAM

(a) The Secretary shall maintain an Adult Diploma Program (ADP), which shall be an assessment process administered by the Agency through which any Vermont resident who is at least **16 years of age**; who has not received a high school diploma; and who is not enrolled in a public or approved independent school, postsecondary institution, or home study program can receive a local high school diploma granted by one of the Program's participating high schools.

(b) The Secretary shall maintain a General Educational Development (GED) Program, which it shall administer jointly with the GED testing service and approved local testing centers and through which a Vermont resident who is at least **16 years of age**; who has not received a high school diploma; and who is not enrolled in public or approved independent school, postsecondary institution, or home study program can receive a secondary school equivalency certificate based on successful completion of the GED tests.



Eliminate the TABE testing as a funding mechanism

§ 945. ADULT EDUCATION AND SECONDARY CREDENTIAL PROGRAM

(d) The diagnostic portion of the Program referenced in subsection 4011(f) of this title shall be used as a tool to evaluate the educational needs of and skills gained by individual students, but shall not be used to exclude individuals from the Program or to condition payments to local education and literacy providers.

Honoring our funding mechanism – FY25 Budget

The FY25 Budget as passed by the House includes a total appropriation of **\$6,296,888** for Vermont's AEL providers:

- **\$3,778,133** from the General Fund (60% of total appropriation)
- **\$2,518,755** from the Education Fund (40% of total appropriation)

The total appropriation amount was calculated using the funding formula that has existed in statute but has not been implemented in practice (H.874):

(f) Annually, the Secretary shall pay to a local adult education and literacy provider, as defined in section 942 of this title, that provides an adult education and secondary credential program an amount equal to 26 percent of the base education amount for each student who completes the diagnostic portions of the program, based on an average of the previous two years.



FY25 General & Education Funds

- The 60-40% split represents the average percent of students (FY18-FY24) who are **earning a high school credential** v students who are utilizing other AEL services such as:
 - workforce development
 - English language learning
 - Basic skills
- The 60-40% split essentially follows the status quo for AEL funding. **HSCP students have always been funded out of the Ed Fund.**
 - The FY25 budget represents an increase in Ed Funds going to AEL providers over FY24, because funding from the HSCP has steadily declined due to testing requirements that created barriers to entry. Prior to the change in testing requirements in 2019, HSCP funding was at or above \$2.5M

Thank you!

We hope you will support the enactment of the report's recommendations in the FY25 budget and H.874.

