

ADULT EDUCATION & LITERACY NETWORK

Fiscal Year 2024 Request for Additional Funding

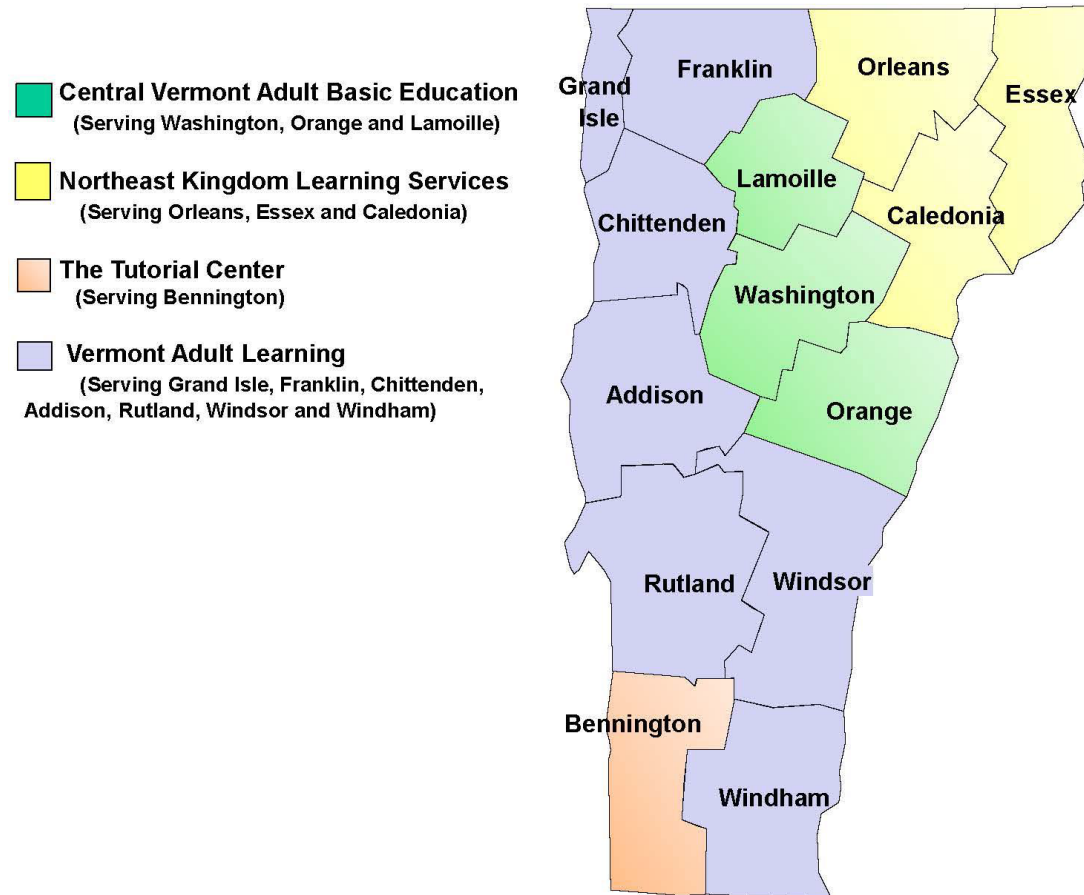


OUR REQUEST: AN INCREASE IN BASE FUNDING OF \$1.5M FOR FY2024 TO ADDRESS SYSTEMIC UNDERFUNDING FOR THE STATE'S FOUR AEL PROVIDERS

Categories of Funding for \$1.5million FY24 budget request:

- Staffing salary & benefits
- Technology needs & software upgrades
- Hardware (textbooks, supplies & other instructional materials)
- Outreach/Recruitment

Vermont's Four Adult Education and Literacy Providers Help Achieve State Goals



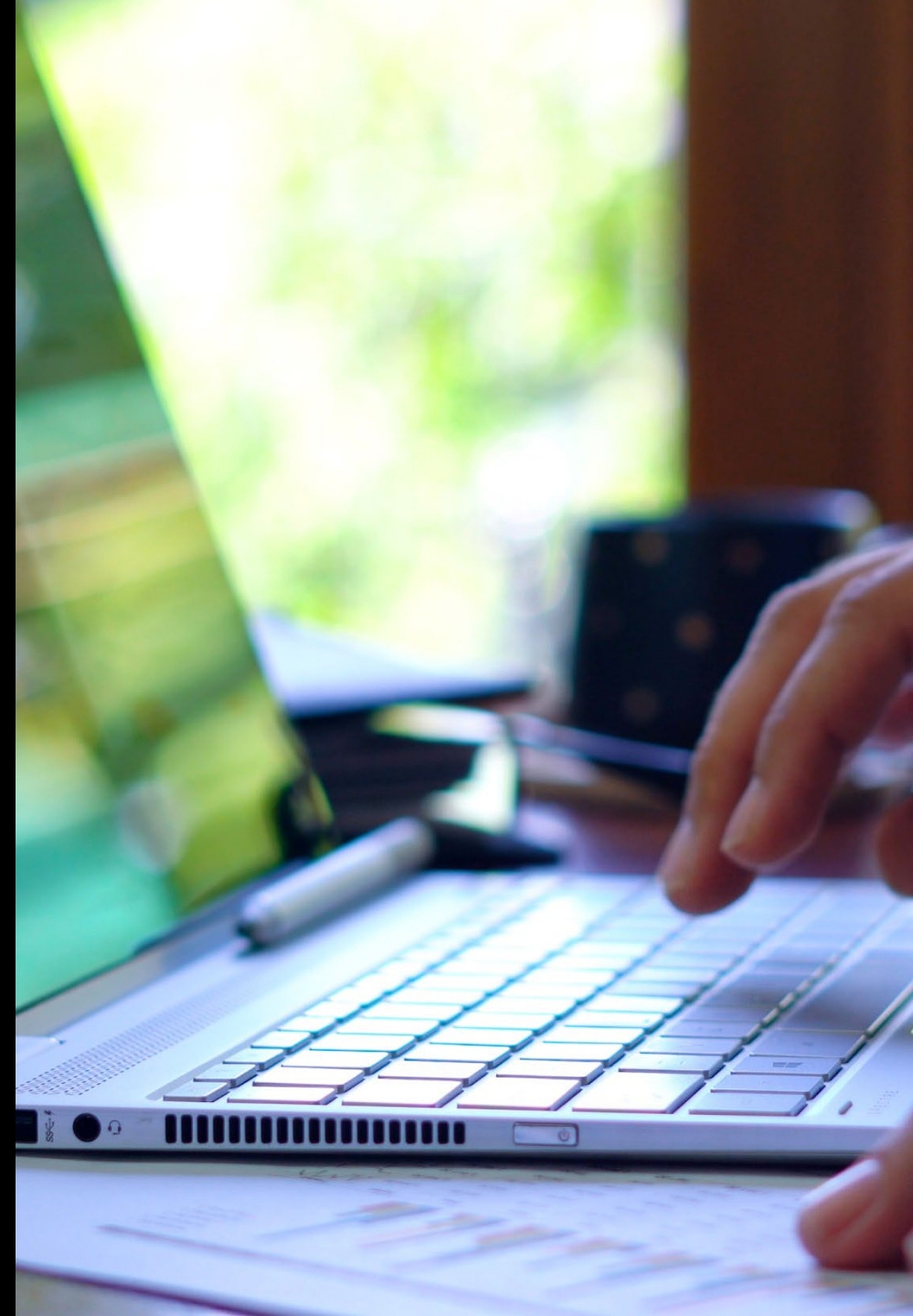
THE NEED

Vermont's four Adult Education & Literacy Providers were grappling with systemic underfunding prior to the pandemic, and now face increased costs, as well increased need.

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

Our operating costs have risen sharply, and like all organizations and employers, we face budget and staffing shortfalls.

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



FY23 STATE APPROPRIATIONS

The Vermont Legislature appropriated \$350,000 in one-time funding to the Adult Education and Literacy Network in the FY22 Budget Adjustment Act, as well as another \$700,000 in one-time state general funds in the FY23 state budget.

All 4 AEL providers in Vermont have seen a significant increase in student numbers in FY23, most notable among English Language Learners. The additional one-time funding from last year helped manage this increased student population, but there is still significant need.

Last year's appropriations helped AEL providers to provide a much needed cost of living increase for staff, greatly helping to reduce the high rate of staff turnover and fill positions that had been vacant. It also helped to expand and improve our offerings, increase outreach, reduce deficits, and make classroom upgrades.

Because increased funding from the state was one-time only, action is required just to maintain the current level of services that we offer.

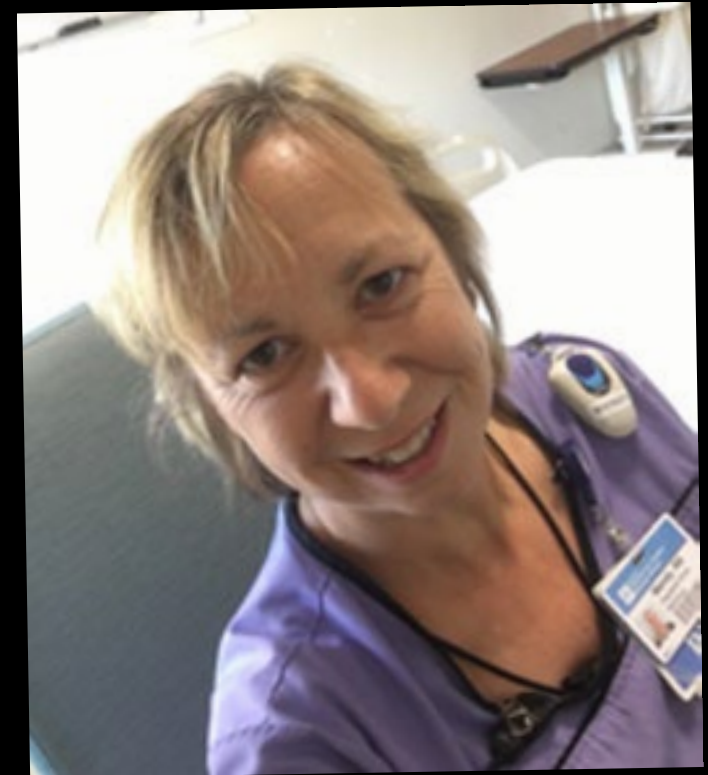
AEL FINDINGS LANGUAGE IN ACT 183 OF 2022

Sec. 41. ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY; FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds:

- (1) Adult education and literacy services are a key piece of the workforce development system and serve as the entryway into career readiness and workforce development for tens of thousands of our most vulnerable Vermonters, those with low literacy, under-education, or those simply in need of increased skills so that they can succeed.
- (2) 36,000 adults in Vermont do not have a high school credential, and tens of thousands more lack the skills to matriculate into and be successful in college, in career training programs, or both. Adult education and literacy providers are the first stop on the path to the transformative opportunities that Vermont is offering for these individuals
- (3) Adult education and literacy services help people build the assets they need to move out of poverty successfully, as well as the confidence to continue to move toward success throughout their lives. Students are supported to identify concrete goals and then break those goals down into steps. Students set goals in the domains of:
 - (1) family and life;
 - (2) academics; and
 - (3) career and college readiness

- According to the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), full-time workers age 25 and older without high school diplomas earn about \$140 **less per week** than those with high school diplomas. Many students who earn their high school diploma through the AELN go on to attend college in Vermont. Workers with a bachelor's degree (and no additional degree) have median weekly earnings that are more than double the average weekly earnings of workers the same age without a high school diploma.
- As the providers for one prong of state Integrated Education and Training (IET programs), all AEL providers work directly with their local workforce development teams to address critical occupation needs in their region.





Our work changes lives.

Adult Education and Literacy services help people build the assets they need to move out of poverty successfully, 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:

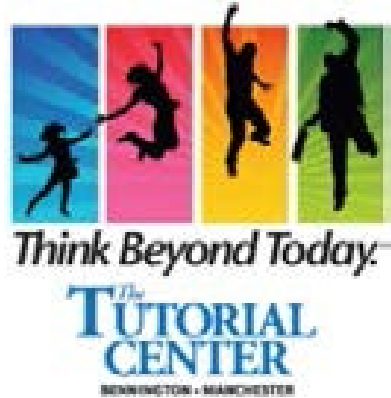
- Literacy Education: Reading, Writing, Math including computer and financial literacy education
- English Language Learning and US Citizenship preparation
- High School Diploma and GED Credentialing
- Career and College Readiness





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, and that the State is already investing in through social support programs such as Reach-Up, CTE, free tuition.



VERMONT'S ADULT EDUCATION & LITERACY PROVIDERS HELP TO ACHIEVE VERMONT STATE GOALS.

By investing in the Adult Education & Literacy providers, the State would support the population level outcomes in statute. Vermont's population-level quality of life outcomes are intended to reflect the well-being of all Vermonters, and indicators reported to measure the extent to which outcomes are achieved are intended to represent the experience of all Vermonters, including and especially Vermonters who are members of marginalized groups. Investing in AEL will specifically support the following outcomes:


- Vermont has a prosperous economy.
- Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable, and supported.
- Vermont's children and young people achieve their potential.

BETWEEN 2018 AND 2022, AEL PROVIDERS SERVED OVER 10,000 STUDENTS

These students had many kinds of success:

- Attained specific skills to get a job or a better job
- Earned a high school diploma or GED
- Achieved a certification or other credential for a job
- Decided to attend college or other educational & career development opportunities
- Improved their English language abilities to apply their skills and education to careers here in Vermont

Over those 5 years, the average cost per student served by the AEL providers was \$3,124.



Thank you! We hope you will support our request for an increase in base funding of \$1.5m for the 4 AEL providers to help address systemic funding and support operational costs.