



Please support the Governor's recommended FY25 Budget Adjustment amount of \$506,061 for Vermont's four Adult Education and Literacy providers in the Agency of Education's Adult Education and Literacy Department's budget.

Last year, the General Assembly enacted policy changes around adult education as recommended in the [Adult Education and Literacy \(AEL\) HSCP Student Access Report](#). These changes were intended to reduce barriers to entry for adult students looking to earn their high school diploma, and to stabilize funding for Vermont's Adult Education and Literacy providers. While the transition from the High School Completion Program (HSCP) to a revised Adult Diploma Program (ADP) is still underway, **the recommendation in the report regarding our statutory funding formula has been successfully implemented, which now requires a budget adjustment of \$506,061 based on final student numbers for fiscal year 2024.**

BACKGROUND CONTEXT: The AEL Student Access Report proposed to honor the statutory language that has existed for years regarding funding for AEL providers. Our governing statute 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." Unfortunately, this had not been happening in practice prior to the attention given to this issue last year. Therefore, the report calls to actually implement this funding mechanism for determining AEL appropriations. This has been accomplished. However, the student numbers used to build the FY25 Budget were estimates, and the Agency of Education and the Adult Education and Literacy Network (AELN) now have final student numbers in our database for FY24, which is the basis for the Agency of Education's budget adjustment request of \$506,061 for AEL.

For more complete background and information regarding the AEL-HSCP Student Access Report, please see our original [AELN Memo regarding the report](#). Since the new Adult Diploma Program has not yet been implemented, many of the concerns in this original memo remain serious concerns of AEL providers until the new program is rolled out.

ABOUT THE ADULT EDUCATION & LITERACY NETWORK

Our Work Changes Lives. Vermont's four non-profit Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) service providers offer a broad range of services that build assets and change people's lives. Our students are at the center of our work, and we know that success looks different for every student, which is why our programming and activities are specifically tailored to each student's unique needs and goals. Vermont's AEL students are often the most vulnerable and underserved of our communities. The majority of our students live in poverty, have a disability, identify as a person of color, and/or experience homelessness or unemployment. Many AEL students are parents and have school-age children and lack the technology, skills or resources to work or learn remotely. We also serve a large number of English Language Learners, who must first learn English before integrating into our communities. **We 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.**

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

AEL service providers have a **statutory role under Title 16** in providing adult education and a path to a high school diploma or GED for Vermonters. There is no other program in Vermont that offers a free path to a high school credential for all people 16 and up not in the public school system. We are also the State's service providers for WIOA Title II and IELCE federal funds and programs, which means we play a critical role in the State's workforce development for Critical Occupations.