



LEAD THE WAY

A Call to Action for State & Local Leaders on Adult Education

Across your city, county, or state, adults are working hard to build better futures—learning English, earning high school credentials, developing digital skills, and preparing for in-demand jobs. These are your constituents.

As a leader, you face pressing challenges:

- workforce shortages
- economic disparities and
- the need to strengthen communities.

Adult education is **a powerful tool** at your fingertips to meet your community's challenges.

National Adult Education and Family Literacy (AEFL) Week, Sept. 14–20, 2025, is your moment to:

- highlight solutions
- take visible action and
- demonstrate your commitment to economic growth and educational opportunity.

This guide gives you clear and achievable ways to lead the way.



The Value of Adult Education

Workforce Development

- Fills gaps in skilled labor pipelines
- Supports career and technical education (CTE) pathways
- Increases credential attainment and job readiness

Economic Growth

- Every dollar invested returns \$60 to the local economy
- Reduces reliance on public assistance and improves tax revenue

Community Impact

- Reduces intergenerational poverty
- Improves health, safety, and civic engagement

For detailed data and sources to support these points, please visit our [2025 Legislative Talking Points](#) document.



Curated Content

We have identified ways in which you can lead the way for adult education given your position. If you need additional resources or materials, please contact advocacy@coabe.org.

[For Governors: Champion a Statewide Vision](#)

[For State Legislators: Expand Opportunity in Every District](#)

[For Chambers of Commerce: Build a Stronger Workforce](#)

[For Workforce Development Boards: Strengthen Your Impact](#)

[For Mayors and Local Officials: Empower Your Community](#)

[Communications & Visibility: Use Your Voice](#)

[Resources for Leaders Like You](#)

[Join the Movement](#)



For Governors:

Champion a Statewide Vision

Your Role

As Governor, your leadership defines state workforce priorities and investment strategies. Adult education can help you build a competitive economy, reduce inequities, and expand opportunity for all.

Lead the Way:

- Proclaim AEFL Week across the state to raise awareness and momentum
- Include adult education in your budget and workforce development plan
- Convene a Governor's Workforce Roundtable with adult learners and business leaders
- Use your platform—speeches, op-eds, social media—to spotlight adult learner success stories

For State Legislators:

Expand Opportunity in Every District

Your Role

Your decisions on funding, policy, and oversight shape the future of adult education in your state. You have the power to make opportunity more accessible to the people you represent.

Lead the Way:

- Support increased state and federal funding for adult education programs
- Sponsor or co-sponsor a resolution recognizing AEFL Week
- Visit a local adult education site and talk with learners, teachers, and employers
- Invite adult learners to testify on workforce or education bills



For Chambers of Commerce:

Build a Stronger Workforce

Your Role

Your members rely on a dependable, skilled workforce. Adult education helps workers develop essential literacy, digital, and soft skills needed for today's jobs.

Lead the Way:

- Promote AEFL Week as a business and workforce opportunity
- Host an “Adult Education + Industry” roundtable or virtual event
- Collaborate with adult education providers to develop sector-specific training
- Feature an employer and adult learner success story in your newsletter

For Workforce Development Boards:

Strengthen Your Impact

Your Role

As a WIOA partner, you are uniquely positioned to support Integrated Education and Training (IET) models that combine education and workforce preparation.

Lead the Way:

- Include adult education leaders on your board to ensure strong alignment
- Invest in IET programs tied to high-demand sectors
- Share data that reflects adult education's contributions to workforce success
- Co-host a stakeholder event during AEFL Week to highlight cross-sector collaboration



For Mayors and Local Officials:

Empower Your Community

Your Role

You know your community best. Adult education helps residents gain employment, raise families, and contribute to a more vibrant, safe, and healthy city.

Lead the Way:

- Issue a proclamation recognizing AEFL Week (template available)
- Tour a local adult education program and meet with learners
- Celebrate local success stories on your social media platforms
- Invite learners to share their stories during a city council meeting or town hall



Communications & Visibility:

Use Your Voice

Make AEFL Week part of your communications strategy. Your voice adds credibility and visibility to the adult education movement.

Here's how:

Use COABE's eye-catching social media graphics

Share a state and local fact sheets showing impact

Record a short video of support using our virtual background

Tag @COABEHQ and use hashtags:
-#AdultEd
-#AEFLWeek
#LeadTheWay



Resources for Leaders Like You

State Fact
Sheets and
National Data
Sheet

AEFL Week
Proclamation
Template

Learner and
Employer
Success
Stories

Advocacy
Tools and
Policy Briefs

Need help customizing any of these? Contact us at advocacy@coabe.org.

Join the Movement

Your leadership matters. Whether you're shaping policy, driving workforce innovation, or building stronger communities, adult education can help you reach your goals.

Now is the time to lead.

[Sign the Educate & Elevate America Pledge](#)

Let's lead the way—together.

