

ADULT EDUCATION

A GOOD INVESTMENT IN COLORADO



Nearly ONE MILLION Colorado adults require Adult Education training to support themselves or a family and achieve sustainable employment in Colorado's 21st century economy

WHAT IS ADULT EDUCATION?

Adult education programs serve individuals, 17 years of age and older, who are improving their literacy, mathematics, and English proficiency to achieve their goals: obtain or advance in a job; exit public assistance and achieve a family-sustaining income; complete high school or obtain a GED; transfer to a community college or training program; help their children be successful in school; manage their family's healthcare; and/or learn English, understand U.S. culture, and be an informed citizen.¹

COLORADO ADULT EDUCATION FACTS

Nearly 400,000 Coloradans lack a high school diploma or GED² – 14% of Colorado's total workforce³

- 14% unemployment rate for this group (compared to 8% with an Associate degree or some college)⁴
- Each non-graduate costs Colorado \$524,000 (lifetime average) in lower taxable income and increased expenses for social services⁵

Cost to Colorado: More than \$200 billion over the lifetime of current non-graduates

Almost 300,000 adult immigrants have insufficient English skills for meaningful integration⁶

- 34% of Colorado's children in non-English speaking immigrant families live in poverty and 11% suffer extreme poverty⁷
- Low functional literacy results in additional health care expenditure of 3 to 6%⁸

Cost to Colorado: Medicaid finances 47% of the additional healthcare expenditures that are due to low functional literacy⁹

18,000 Coloradans with high school diplomas had to delay post-secondary education or career training to enroll in remedial (basic skills) courses¹⁰

- 43% of Colorado's job openings through 2019 will require a middle-skill credential (more than high school but less than a 4-year degree), but 29% of Colorado's workforce will require career training to qualify for those job openings¹¹
- Economic self-sufficiency (\$50k/family of 3) is out of reach for 14% of Colorado's current workforce, causing almost 750,000 Coloradans to turn to safety-net services (Medicaid, food stamps, and TANF) to get by in an average month in 2010¹²

Cost to Colorado: Slightly more than \$22 million estimated state burden for remedial education in 2010-2011 alone¹³

An average 20,000 people are incarcerated daily in Colorado state and community corrections facilities¹⁴

- Those without a high school diploma or GED are eight times more likely to become incarcerated and 77% are more likely to return to prison when no credential is achieved¹⁵
- \$30,375 – Average cost of incarcerating one inmate for one year in the Colorado Department of Corrections¹⁶

Cost to Colorado: \$606 million – Total yearly cost to incarcerate the average daily population

SO WHY DO ONLY 4%...1 IN 25...OF ADULTS WHO REQUIRE TRAINING ENROLL IN AN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM?

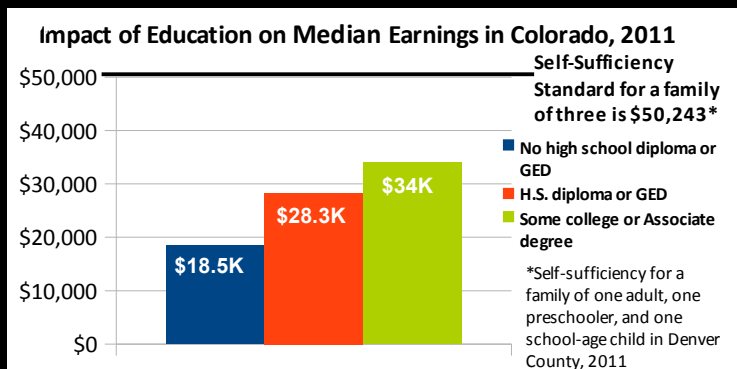
- Colorado does not set aside *any* state dollars for Adult Education (47 other states do!), leaving programs with only limited federal funding to provide adequate, quality services (federal funding comes from the Workforce Investment Act [WIA], Title II)
- Programs receiving federal Adult Education and literacy dollars must independently match 40% of their grant with private sources and in-kind donations

Closing the wage gap between current wages and self-sufficiency requires raising incomes by enhancing skills and improving access to jobs that pay self-sufficiency wages and have career potential.

-The Self-Sufficiency Standard For Colorado 2011¹⁷

ADULT EDUCATION GOALS:

- ✓ Expand educational offerings and recapture dropout population
- ✓ Align with workforce and increase employability
- ✓ Promote integration and parent engagement
- ✓ Support self-sufficiency through health and financial literacy programs



ADULT EDUCATION IS A GOOD INVESTMENT IN COLORADO

10,693 adults passed the GED test in Colorado in 2011¹⁸

Economic benefit to Colorado:

- Over **\$5.5 billion** (lifetime average) in higher income from taxes and decreased expenses for social services, such as health care and the criminal justice system¹⁹
- Greater business productivity, increased consumption, and increased workforce flexibility

Social benefit to Colorado:²⁰

- Reduced crime rates
- Increased charitable giving
- Increased quality of civic life

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS ARE COST EFFECTIVE

- **14,298 adults obtained education and training** in 2010 with **\$5.2 million** in grant funds from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Adult and Vocational Education (WIA, Title II) – a yearly average cost of only **\$364 per student**
*It costs Colorado **80x more** to incarcerate than to educate an adult!*
- **69% of adults gained an academic level** in 2010 due to the work of only 167 full-time and 570 part-time personnel, and 606 unpaid volunteers²¹

CAEPA STATEMENT:

The goals of Colorado's early literacy initiatives or economic development strategic initiatives CANNOT be fully realized without a meaningful commitment to expanding accessibility to Adult Education programs for those who would benefit.

How You

CAN HELP

- Talk to federal and state representatives about the important role of Adult Education in Colorado
- Volunteer in a program to help an adult reach her or his educational and employment goals
- Encourage a local or national business to sponsor Adult Education programming or advocacy efforts
- Join the conversation by joining CAEPA and attending CAEPA's annual conference

THE COLORADO ADULT EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION (CAEPA) provides leadership to the field of Adult Education and family literacy by offering opportunities for professional development, advocacy, and resource sharing to improve the quality of life for every Coloradan.

Links to sources online at: <https://www.caepa.org/?page=tools>



CAEPA
Colorado Adult Education Professional Association

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