Letter from the President

Hello everyone,

Happy Fall! It’s hard to believe the cooler weather is here again, and the holidays are around the corner. It was wonderful to see so many of you at our Fall Awards Conference on Friday, October 25 at the beautiful El Rio Learning Center in Tucson, AZ. We were very pleased to receive a lot of very positive feedback about the conference. For those of you who were not able to attend, I hope we’ll see you at our next conference! The highlight of our Awards Conference each year is the opportunity to recognize and celebrate our fellow Adult Educators for their outstanding service to the field. Each year, we recognize Adult Educators in the categories of Educator of the Year, Rookie of the Year, Support Staff of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, and Student of the Year, in addition to awards for Excellence, Lifetime Achievement and Lifelong Learning Advocate. This year’s award winners are highlighted later in this issue.

As many of you have heard, the results of PIAAC (Program for International Assessment of Adult Competencies), an international survey that assessed the level of basic skills in literacy and numeracy in adults from 24 countries, was released on October 8. The results show that low basic skills in literacy and numeracy are more common in the US than on average across participating countries. According to the report, one in six adults in the US have low literacy skills and nearly one third have weak numeracy skills. Adults in the US fared less well with "problem-solving in technology-rich environments" than the cross-country average. This report underscores the importance of investing in Adult Education, and the importance of the work we do. As Marty Finsterbusch, a former adult education student and president of the National Coalition for Literacy and Executive Director of VALUEUSA, states, "Local adult education programs across the US report waiting lists. We must address the shortage of available resources to meet the instructional needs of these adults. In the meantime, the National Coalition for Literacy and the US Adult Education and Literacy field eagerly await the release of the US Country Report containing more specific analysis of the skills of adults in the US.” AALL will also be watching for the release of the U.S. Country Report, and will pass along information to you in the field as we receive it. You can read more about the PIAAC report in this newsletter and also here: http://www.oecd.org/site/piaac/. You can also find the National Coalition for Literacy’s press release on the report here: http://www.national-coalition-literacy.org/press.html.

Do you know about all of the benefits of your AALL membership? In addition to being able to take advantage of the professional development opportunities offered by AALL throughout the year at the member rate, did you know that your AALL membership also gets you membership in MPAEA (Mountain Plains Adult Education Association) and COABE (Commission on Adult Basic Education)? These regional and national organizations offer a variety of excellent opportunities for professional development, scholarships, networking, and engagement. Another benefit of AALL membership is the ability to apply for an AALL scholarship. You can apply for up to $500, which can go towards travel or registration expenses for any professional development event that relates to the field of Adult Education.

As President, I would like to hear from you about your ideas, suggestions, and questions for AALL. Soon, AALL will be sending a survey to our membership asking about where you see gaps, and where you feel your program could use additional assistance. Please respond to this survey when you receive it. The more feedback we can get from the field, the better we are able to advocate for you and represent your needs. I hope to hear from as many of you as possible.

Sincerely,

Anne Petti
President, Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning
Teaching, we know, is a profoundly difficult juggling act. As educators, we want to create a meaningful dialogue in the classroom; allow students to both learn and try out new ideas—while not promoting the false notion that all ideas are equally valid; avoid disenfranchising students or consigning to the margins those students who are most often silenced by imbalanced power dynamics. Perhaps never have I more understood the importance of all these elements then when sitting in a Brookfield workshop.

At this point in the semester, I have taken two workshop classes with Stephen Brookfield, a professor at the University of St. Thomas and leader in the field of adult education. Each semester, Brookfield travels to the Teachers College at Columbia to teach a variety of workshops. This fall, he taught ‘Discussion as a Way of Teaching’ and ‘Helping Adults Learn’—both two-day, 16-hour workshops. Each student receives a booklet of materials for the class during the first day which details a variety of classroom activities. Throughout the two-day class, the class will practice many (though not all) of the different activities described within the booklet. All these activities can also be found on Stephen Brookfield’s website (www.stephenbrookfield.com).

Perhaps the most interesting component about each of these workshops is the way Brookfield fosters both dialogue and participation unique and democratic manners.

It is his ideas on participation that are the best reason to attend a Brookfield workshop; all the activities are thoughtfully designed to foster discussion within the classroom so that each student can participate in the way that best suits their learning style. This open approach to both discussion and class participation allows the seemingly specific idea of “participation” to happen in very different forms. Participation can often be conceptualized in a very narrow form, creating a danger of only recognizing one kind of student. As Katherine Schultz points out in her study on silence in the classroom: “In general, the first student to raise his or her hand or the student with loudest and most insistent voice is the student who gains access to the floor. When classrooms are dominated by a rapid call and response style, students who think quickly and immediately formulate their ideas into articulate responses are often recognized before those who take longer to formulate a response. Second language learners and students who are reflective or take more time to put together a response often lose the opportunity to participate in classroom discussions.” (Teachers College Record, 2010, 2845).

The activities Brookfield teaches allow for a wider definition of participation. These discussion activities allow for not just the first and most persistent students to be heard, but for all students to voice their thoughts. One of the most interesting examples of such an activity is “chalk talk.” When used in our class, students were able to participate in a discussion without one spoken word. Used in both Brookfield workshops, each time the participation rate of the students appeared to be above 70% of the class.

“Chalk talk” begins with the instructor writing a central question or idea on a large chalkboard or whiteboard. Students can then write/draw whatever ideas, reactions, statements or questions come to mind as they process this central question. During the ‘Discussion as a Way of Teaching’ course, the question posed was: when a discussion goes well, what does it look, feel, sound like? Because the focus of this particular class is how to use discussion to teach, the question was deliberately framed around the subject material. This activity, though, could easily be used within a writing (What does a good essay do? Why is it important to know how to write?); reading (What defines a hero? What makes a good plot?); or even a math class (When do we use numbers in the “real world?” What do we know about fractions? Or percents? Or algebra?)

For both the workshops’ chalk talks, we students put our thoughts on the board. They could be single words, phrases, sentences, questions or images. Those items that were connected, whether similar, opposites or linked in some fashion, were connected with lines. The end result was a giant mind-map detailing the ways that 30+ students perceive good discussions. I particularly valued this activity as it allows students to participate in a non-traditional manner. There were usually several people at the board at one time, so the focus was never completely directed at a single student. It also allows students to participate in ways that engage different talents, like allowing the student to draw an image or picture to answer the question. The open-ended questions allowed for a variety of interpretations, meaning there was no real right or wrong answer. For the student that is shy about
talking in class, afraid to say the wrong answer or just hesitant in general to be the focus of the class, this activity allows them to participate without the stress that comes from a large-group discussion.

This single activity is a good illustration of the atmosphere created in a Brookfield classroom—as well as a portrait of the types of activities he uses to engage different students in different ways, especially recognizing the distinct characters of adult learners. Adult learners, he points out, are often self-motivated, application-oriented, appreciate self-direction and desire the recognition and integration of past experiences with new knowledge. Educational programs truly focused on adults must be cognizant of all these distinctions of adults as learners.

These ideas were expanded in the second class, Discussion as a Way of Teaching. There was some discussion of the theoretical works laying the foundations for the discussion activities practiced during the two-day class. Foremost of these were Foucault’s writing on power and Herbert Marcuse’s work on repressive tolerance. During the second day of the ‘Discussion’ class, small groups debated the ideas of Marcuse as presented by an excerpt from Brookfield’s article in Studies in Continuing Education. Central to repressive tolerance is examining the manifestation of power. Alternative ideas may be presented to a larger group but they are inevitably presented in a manner that ensures their continued marginalization: “repressive tolerance ensures the continuation of the system by allowing just enough challenge to the system to convince people that they live in a truly open society while still maintaining the system’s structural inequity” (Brookfield, 2005).

Key to developing true discussion within the classroom is the ability to frame discussion questions and activities to break down typical, imbalanced models of power. Brookfield’s work champions adaptable activities that allow for just such dynamics in the classroom.

Activities such as chalk talk or ‘circle of voices’ (a small group activity where all students take turns voicing their own opinions or views and must also react to the views expressed by others) seek to allow all students to exercise their voices. By allowing all thoughts to be heard, ‘circle of voices’ fosters a true dialogue that forces students to listen to the thoughts and ideas of others and re-act to them. This space for reaction also serves to limit the danger of Marcuse’s false dialogue—that is the tendency to validate all ideas as equal, even those that are based on false information. Giving students the ability to react to the thoughts of others can help avoid a discussion free-for- all—though certainly the instructor provides a safeguard for this as well. It also helps students develop critical and active listening skills.

Keeping all the elements of a good, egalitarian classroom discussion in balance is a difficult task. Teaching, after all, never has been for the faint of heart. The true benefit of a class with Stephen Brookfield, however, is that it both reminds you of the important elements involved in classroom magic, while also making such alchemy seem distinctly possible.

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**And the Beat Goes On: a Review of Literacy Level Surveys**

*by Blair Liddicoat, Rio Salado*

It is no secret that educational outcomes in the United States at all levels have been a source of concern for many years. Similarly, calls to improve those results have been common. It is with this background in mind that there was great anticipation of the release of the Survey of Adult Skills undertaken by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).

Before summarizing those results, let’s step back and review similar previous surveys. In 1992, the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) was done; involving interviews with nearly 13,600 individuals aged 16 and older who had been randomly selected to represent the adult population in this country. Nearly 1,150 inmates from 87 state and federal prisons were interviewed to gather information on the literacy of the prison population.

The aim of this survey was to profile the English literacy of adults in the United States based on their performance across a wide variety array of tasks that were representative of the kinds of materials and demands they encountered in their daily lives. The results were not pretty.

21%-23% of the 191,000,000 adults in this country demonstrated skills in the lowest level (Level1) of prose, document, and quantitative proficiencies. 25%-28% fell into the next higher level of proficiency (Level 2). Nearly one-third of the survey participants demonstrated performance in Level 3 on each of the literacy scales. Finally, 18%-21% of the respondents performed in the two highest levels (Levels 4 and 5) of prose, document, and quantitative literacy.

Of note was the fact that so many of the adults...
placed into the in the lowest two levels of prose, document, and quantitative literacy. These individuals were much less likely to respond correctly to the more challenging literacy tasks in the assessment; those requiring higher level reading and problem-solving skills. At the time, some people had argued that lower literacy skills resulted in a lower quality of life and more limited employment opportunities. The data from NALS seemed to support those opinions.

For each of the literacy scales, adults whose proficiencies were within the two lowest levels were far more likely to receive food stamps and to be in poverty. Moreover, they were far less likely than their more literate peers to be employed full-time, to earn high wages, to rely on print sources (such as newspapers and magazines) for information about current events, public affairs, and government, and far less likely to vote.

Fast forward to 2003, and time for another survey. The 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) measured how adults used printed and written information to adequately function “at home, in the workplace, and in the community”. Ah yes, how could we ever forget those buzz words?

Similarly to NALS, the NAAL measured three types of literacy; prose, document, and quantitative, and reported a separate scale score for each of these three areas. Over 19,000 adults participated in the national and state-level assessments, representing the entire population of U.S. adults who were age 16 and older, most in their homes and some in prisons from the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Approximately 1,200 inmates of federal and state prisons were assessed in order to provide separate estimates of literacy for the incarcerated population. This widely anticipated survey would provide the first indicator in a decade of the nation’s progress in adult literacy.

And the envelope please. When measured by average score, there was no significant change in prose and document literacy between 1992 and 2003, while showing an increase of 5% in quantitative literacy.

NAAL measured results at four levels of proficiency; below basic, basic, intermediate, and proficient. When comparing the two surveys by literacy level, it found there were fewer adults with Below Basic (Level 1) document and quantitative literacy in 2003 than in 1992. At the same time, fewer adults scored into the Proficient level (highest level) for prose and document literacy in 2003 than in 1992.

That brings us to 2013 and the results of the Survey of Adult Skills. This survey provides data on adults’ proficiency in literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology-rich environments, all considered to be key information-processing skills for 21st-century economies. It differed from NALS and NAAL in that it compared the literacy levels of adults in twenty-three countries. The Survey of Adult Skills shows that despite having higher than average levels of educational attainment, adults in the United States have below average basic literacy and numeracy skills.

One in six adults in the U.S. scored below level two of five total levels for literacy skills, while about 12 percent scored at the highest level. In numeracy, nearly one in three adults scored at low proficiency levels and about 8 percent had a high proficiency level. About one in three adults scored at the lowest level of proficiency for problem solving in technology-rich environments, and about the same percent of adults scored in the second level of proficiency.

How did we do compared to the others? The U.S. ranked 16th out of 23 countries in literacy proficiency, 21st in numeracy proficiency, and 14th in problem solving in technology-rich environments.

The report found that socioeconomic background has a stronger impact on proficiency levels in the U.S. than in other countries.

So what does it all mean? A central theme from this new survey is that what people know and what they do with what they know has a major impact on their life. The median hourly wage of workers who can make complex inferences and evaluate arguments in written texts is more than 60% higher than for workers who can, at best, read relatively short texts to locate a single piece of information. Those with low literacy skills are also more than twice as likely to be unemployed. The survey also shows that how literacy skills are distributed across a population has significant implications on how economic and social outcomes are distributed within the society. If many adults have low reading and numeracy skills, introducing and disseminating productivity-improving technologies and work-organization practices can be difficult. But the impact of skills goes far beyond earnings and employment. In all countries, individuals with lower proficiency in literacy are more likely to report poor health, to believe that they have little impact on political processes, and to not participate in volunteer activities. In most countries, they are also less likely to trust others.
Rio Hosts Visit from US Department of Education

by Blair Liddicoat, Rio Salado

On September 12, 2013 Rio Salado College was proud to welcome Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Vocational and Adult Education to the Rio-Northern location. Her visit was part of the 2013 “Strong Start, Bright Future” Back to School bus tour conducted by US Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan. Dr. Dann-Messier had read about Rio’s STAR-PATH model on the internet and wanted to visit see how the college readied students for the transition to college and careers. During her observation of a Student Success Seminar class she actively engaged the students, asking them about their college and career plans.

Rio also organized a Round Table Discussion attended by over twenty individuals, including students, government leaders, and members of Rio’s College Bridge Pathways team. Dr. Dann-Messier allowed each participant to speak to the issue of post-secondary transition, but again was very interested in the students’ perspectives, not surprising considering her background as the president of a community-based adult education agency in Rhode Island. Phoenix Vice Mayor, Bill Gates, and Dale Frost, Education Policy Advisor for Governor Brewer provided important external feedback during the discussion.

Opening Doors, by Lee Lambert, Pima Community College Chancellor

Not too long ago, Laura and her husband had big dreams for their family, dreams they felt would never be realized because of a lack of education. Then she discovered the Family Literacy Program at Pima Community College Adult Education (PCCAE). That inspired her to join AmeriCorps, whose volunteers support PCCAE through tutoring and other services. Then she earned a GED.

Fast-forward to today. Laura, who graduated with a master’s degree from the University of Arizona in Tucson, teaches mathematics to sixth-graders in a bilingual setting. Her husband also attended college. One daughter works in private industry as an engineer. Another is on track to graduate from UA’s prestigious Eller College of Management. For one family, within the span of a generation, it has been an incredible transformation through education – a transformation that began with Adult Ed. “Adult Education opened doors for us,” Laura says.

Stories such as Laura’s were echoed by numerous PCCAE students who participated in a roundtable discussion led by U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education Brenda Dann-Messier on Sept. 11. Dr. Dann-Messier’s visit to our El Pueblo Liberty Adult Learning Center took place during the Tucson stop of Education Secretary Arne Duncan’s “Strong Start, Bright Future” bus tour throughout the Southwest.

It was an honor to meet Secretary Duncan earlier that same day at Dodge Middle School. From his thoughtful interaction with students, it’s clear he cares deeply about the future of education in our country. Dr. Dann-Messier is equally passionate about adult education.

Prior to the roundtable at El Pueblo Liberty, Dr. Dann-Messier visited the Ocotillo Early Learning Center in the Sunnyside Unified School District, and spent some time getting to know the students and hearing about the center’s unique mission. PCC has had a relationship with Ocotillo since 1991, helping people of all ages realize their dreams by advancing their education. The Adult Education students and alumni who spoke at the El Pueblo Liberty roundtable had much in common
“Opening Doors,” Cont. from page 5

They all loved their superb teachers for their compassion and competence. But what resonated most was their desire to achieve academically in order to be role models for their own children, whether their kids are toddlers or teen-agers. Joy was among the students who shared their stories with Dr. Dann-Messier. She recounted how she and her son made a pact that each would get a GED. Joy earned hers, and is now closing in on a credential in forensic technology. It was hard not to come away inspired by her determination.

Each year, PCCAEGhelps people like Laura and Joy and some 6,000 others take important steps toward achieving their goals through Family Literacy, Adult Basic Education, GED preparation, Civics and Refugee Education, and English Language Acquisition for Adults. (It should be noted that 70 percent of our students are between ages 16-49 – a crucial part of a competitive workforce.) As chancellor of PCC, I’m of course proud of their accomplishments, and well aware that PCC cannot keep achieving them without ongoing support at the local, state and national levels.

We’re grateful for the contributions of the Pima County Board of Supervisors, for the resumption of Adult Education funding by the Arizona Legislature, and for ongoing support from U.S. Reps. Raúl Grijalva and Ron Barber. Our partnerships with the Pima County Public Library and Literacy Connects, as well as businesses, and faith-based and community organizations, are invaluable. When all the gears are meshing, we are capable of great things.

And it is crucial that all the gears do in fact synchronize. The need for seamlessness between K-12, community colleges and four-year institutions is critical. Students must be able to map out clear roads leading to whatever their education goal might be. That point was emphasized by Dr. Dann-Messier, who recognizes as I do that it is essential for Adult Education and community colleges to partner to provide clear articulation paths, and for Adult Education courses to prepare students for college or careers without the need for remediation.

PCC’s leadership is cognizant of challenges and opportunities on the horizon, and is committed to initiatives that lead to career as well as academic advancement. For me this is personal, too. When my mom came to the U.S. from South Korea, she couldn’t speak English well. The extensive opportunities available today through programs such as PCCAEG didn’t exist. But her deepest wish – one shared by so many of our PCCAEG students – was for a better life for her children. That came true, thanks to the power of education.

2013 AALL AWARDS

AALL was pleased to present the 2013 adult education awards at their Annual Fall Awards Conference on Friday, October 25th in Tucson, Arizona. Hosted by the Pima Community College Adult Education Program, the awards luncheon and conference were a great success!

AALL would like to thank those in the field who recognized the excellence of their colleagues by nominating teachers, administrators, staff, volunteers and students for AALL awards this year. Congratulations to those who were nominated, and to those who were award recipients. It was a great honor to celebrate your achievements.

2013 AALL Award Recipients:

Award of Excellence in Honor of Gary P. Tang
Sunnyside Unified School District

Lifelong Learning Advocate Award in Honor of Francis E. Blake
Philip Suriano

Lifetime Achievement Award in Honor of Gary A. Eyre
Christine Niven

AALL Educator of the Year Award
Tony Trujillo

AALL Rookie of the Year Award
Kevin Myers

AALL Support Staff of the Year Award
Gloria Durazo

AALL Volunteer of the Year Award
Jasper Melton

AALL Student of the Year Award
Catalina Llamas
Literacy in the 50 States


ALABAMA ranks 37th in the country for literacy rates as of 2009; they are 42nd in the country in the nation for graduation rates. Only 60% of Alabama students finish high school.

11% of adults in ALASKA have the lowest levels of literacy (read at or below the fifth grade). 43% of these individuals live below the poverty line.

Of ARIZONA citizens aged 16 and older, 825,000 of them do not have a high school diploma or GED. This group represents almost $8 billion in lost annual taxable income. Low-literacy rates in the state cost Arizona $3.5 billion annually in welfare, crime and Medicaid. One-third of students who start high school in Arizona will drop out without a diploma.

More than 20% of people residing in ARKANSAS read at or below the fifth grade level.

CALIFORNIA had a 30% statewide drop out rate in 2008-2009. It is 27% for Hispanic students, and close to 37% for African American students.

10% of those living in COLORADO lack basic literacy prose skills. Only 1 out of 10 people need literacy services in the state receives it.

9%, or approximately 240,000 people, of CONNECTICUT lack basic prose literacy skills (function above the fifth grade level for reading and writing.

Every year, about 2,000 students in the DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (D.C.) drop out of high school before graduation.

11% of DELAWARE adults lack basic prose literacy skills. Those with a high school diploma will have a lifetime earnings of $379,573 more than people without a diploma.

Statewide, 20% of adults in FLORIDA lack basic literacy skills, though several counties in the state have much higher percentages, including 42% in Henry County and 52% in Miami-Date County.

The 17% of GEORGIA adults without basic literacy skills means more than 1.6 million individuals are functioning as low-literacy or illiterate adults.

16% of adults in HAWAII lack basic literacy skills. 36% of students in high school drop out each year.

Almost 5,800 students dropped out of IDAHO high schools in 2010. This amounts to more than $1.5 billion in lost lifetime earnings.

Almost 6% of adults in ILLINOIS have less than a 9th grade education. Roughly 2.3 million adults are in need of literacy services.

Of the approximately one million adults in need of literacy programs in INDIANA, only 8% of them have access to such programs.

There are more than 280,000 adults in IOWA without a high school diploma.

8% of adults living in KANSAS lack basic literacy skills.

12% of all KENTUCKY adults lack basic literacy. Almost one-third of adults possess only low-level literacy.

Survey studies show that 25% of adults in LOUISIANA fall in the lowest literacy level. 39% of adults in the New Orleans area read below the 5th grade level. Increasing average education levels by one year would reduce arrest rates by 11%.

93,043 residents in MAINE need adult literacy services.

14% of adults in MARYLAND lack basic literacy skills. 43% of these adults live below the poverty line.

664,614 adults in MASSACHUSETTS, or approximately 10% of the population, need literacy services.

One in three adults in MICHIGAN reads below the 6th grade level.

92% of adults in MINNESOTA have at least a high school diploma. This is the highest percentage in the country.

Almost 600,000 (or 20%) adults in MISSISSIPPI need literacy services. 43% of these low-literacy adults live in poverty.

7% of adults in MISSOURI lack basic literacy skills.

Approximately 9% of MONTANA adults lack basic literacy skills. A GED or high school diploma increases the earning potential of a worker in the state by $6,261 a year.

Almost 23% of low-income families in NEBRASKA have a parent without a high school diploma or GED.
Literacy in the 50 States (cont.)

NEW HAMPSHIRE, along with North Dakota and Minnesota has the highest literacy rate in the country.

15% of adults in NEVADA function at the lowest level of literacy. 22% of the adult population has less than a high school diploma.

About 1,506,980 adults in NEW JERSEY are in need of literacy services. There is currently only space and support for 60,000 students in programs statewide.

16% of adults in NEW MEXICO lack basic literacy skills. 46% of these adults are functionally illiterate.

22% of adults, statewide, in NEW YORK, lack basic literacy skills, with several counties much higher: Bronx county 41%; Queens County, 46%. 37% of inmates in the state lack a high school diploma.

There are more than 1 million adults in NORTH CAROLINA who experience reading and writing difficulties on a daily basis that seriously affects their lives.

Approximately 800 students in NORTH DAKOTA drop out of high school each year.

The adult education programs in OHIO are ranked highly in the nation: 2nd for employment, 7th for GED completion.

12%, or 457,778 adults, of OKLAHOMA lack basic literacy skills.

In PENNSYLVANIA, 13% of adults lack basic literacy skills. In a statewide survey, 19% of the respondents surveyed reported they had not read a book in the past year.

In 2012, only 68% of high school students in OREGON graduated on time. Oregon has the 4th lowest graduation rate in the country.

At least 84,023 adults in RHODE ISLAND need literacy services. The state only has yearly funding for 7,000 adult learners. There are nearly 2,000 students on a waiting list.

15% of adults in SOUTH CAROLINA lack a high school diploma. 20% of working adults read below the 5th grade level.

7% of SOUTH DAKOTA adults lack basic literacy skills. 11% of adults did not finish high school; 74% of adults do not hold a bachelor’s degree or higher.

There are 3.8 million adults in TEXAS needing the services of an adult education program. Only 100,000 of these adults are currently being served. Texas ranks last in the nation for percent of adults with a high school diploma or GED.

13% of adults in TENNESSEE cannot read or write above a fifth grade level.

7% of VERMONT’s adults need literacy services. 90% of adults incarcerated are high school drop outs.

12% of adults in VIRGINIA lack basic literacy skills. There are more than 1,500 students on wait list for adult education services.

9% of UTAH adults lack basic literacy skills (reading and writing below a fifth grade level). Close to 10% of the population over the age 25 did not finish high school.

26% of high school students in WASHINGTON will not graduate on time. 571,000 adults over the age of 16 do not have a high school diploma or GED.

13% of adults in WEST VIRGINIA lack basic literacy skills. 17% of adults in the state did not finish high school. Almost 18% of the state lives below the poverty line.

7% of WISCONSIN adults lack basic literacy skills. 47% of the incarcerated adults in the state lack either a high school diploma or GED.

9% of adults in WYOMING did not finish high school. 76% of adults in the state do not hold a bachelor’s degree or higher.