



Mobilizing for Adult Education: Responding to the FY26 Budget Threat

May 9, 2025

Welcome

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The Voice Of Adult Education

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. What's in the FY26 Budget Proposal?
3. What's Really at Stake?
4. What is COABE Doing?
5. What Can YOU Do? Tools & Actions
6. Voices From the Field
7. Next Steps



What Does COABE Do?

- COABE has led sustained multi year advocacy efforts since 2017
 - Launched the six time award winning “Educate and Elevate” public awareness campaign that showcases student success stories, fact sheets, and videos.
 - Created an award winning State Advocates for Adult Education Fellowship (SAAEF) that teaches state leaders how to talk to mayors, governors, and members of congress
 - Led “Advocacy April” and national “Adult Education and Family Literacy Week”
 - Created the monthly Public Policy Pulse newsletter
 - Works with Congress regularly to revise the law, host legislative events, and ensure adult education is front and center
 - Creates an impact report that celebrates victories



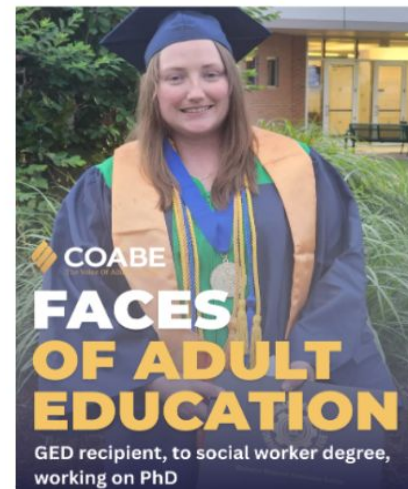
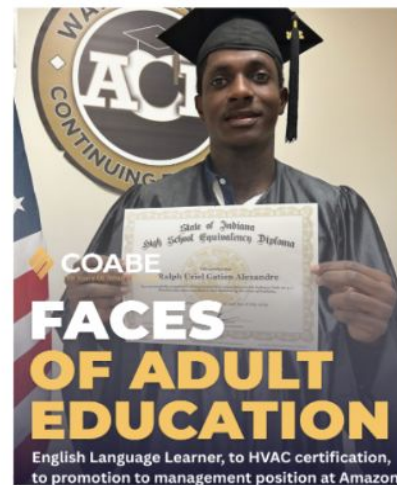
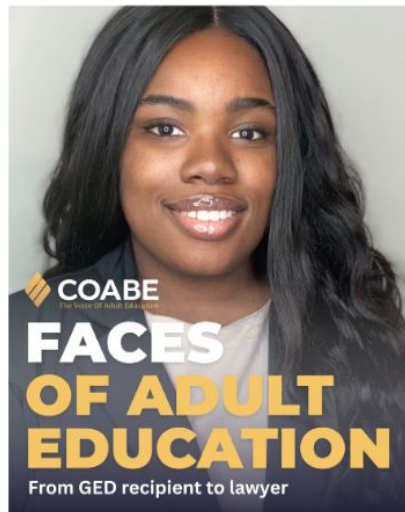
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Since Release of the “Skinny Budget”

- COABE has
 - Continued the advocacy efforts that have been taking place over many years
 - Held “scope of work” meetings with partners
 - Advocated in person in DC
 - Scheduled a webinar to address the field
 - Sent multiple eBlasts calling for all members to take action
 - Created email and phone templates to make advocacy a lighter lift
 - Created an Advocacy Toolkit
 - Launched LOCAL
 - Launched a social media campaign
 - Created “Faces of Adult Education” graphics



“Faces of Adult Education”



What's in the FY26 Budget Proposal?

- The President's "Skinny Budget" zeroes out the \$729 million in federal funding for Adult Education, broken down as follows:
 - \$715.455 million for Adult Education State Grants
 - \$13.712 million for Adult Education National Activities
- "K-12 outcomes will improve as education returns to the States, which would make remedial education for adults less necessary." (FY26 Budget)
- "The Budget redirects resources to programs that more directly prepare students for meaningful careers." (FY26 Budget)
- "[...] this program has dismal results—in the most recent reported year, only 43 percent of participants had any measurable skills gains." (FY26 Budget)
- "The Budget ends this \$729 million program that incentivizes illegal immigration by furnishing free education, workplace training, and assimilation guidance to aliens whose presence is unlawful." (Open Border Factsheet)

COABE Advocast

- Your resource on a variety of topics related to advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels
- This is a great alternative to visual materials for your commute.
- Fresh, relevant voices from the field.



LOCAL: Lifting Our Communities Through Advocacy and Leadership

- This is an opportunity for a local program representative to learn and engage in advocacy to support their program and act as a COABE liaison for their program staff and adult learners.
- We are looking for one representative per program.
- The program flow is:
 - [Register for and Attend Orientation](#)
 - Get invite link to join LOCAL Community
 - Work through core tasks:
 - Complete 1-3 Local Actions from the Menu
 - Submit Local Advocacy Plan
 - Share COABE-specific information with program
 - Take Action, Share Stories, Celebrate Wins
 - Earn the LOCAL Badge



What Can YOU Do? Tools & Actions

- VoterVoice (3 Clicks) Software Action Items
 - Emails
 - Phone scripts
 - Twitter/X Storm
- Educate & Elevate America Pledge
- Other state and program led outreach to Members of Congress to sign the Dear Colleague/Appropriations Letter
- Letter campaigns (especially with adult learners)
- Social media advocacy
- Call In events



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Voices from the Field

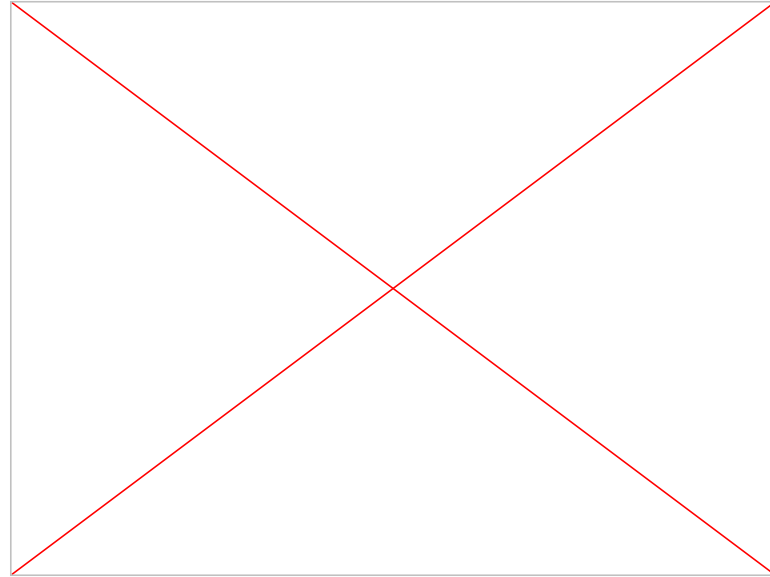


Scan this QR code to access
NMAEA's Advocacy Toolkit!

- State associations as support
 - Statewide webinars
 - Website pages/online resources (see www.nmadulted.org for our advocacy pages!)
 - Email templates
 - Tutorials
- Student ambassadors!
 - Local trainings
 - Email
ambassadorcoordinator@coabe.org



Voices from the Field: Student Ambassador Message



Mobilization

- We need to activate all possible advocates:
 - State association board & membership
 - Local programs
 - Adult Learners
 - All possible partners
- Share resources to make advocacy a lighter lift for new advocates.
- We need to all have a unified voice and one clear message.



The Message

We need Members of Congress to **sign the bipartisan Dear Colleague Letters** in support of adult education funding. These letters show strong backing for programs that help millions of adults earn credentials, improve literacy, and build better futures.

Signing the letter is one of the most impactful ways your representative can protect federal funding for adult education in the FY26 budget.



Next Steps



Today

- **Sign the Educate & Elevate America Pledge**
 - Takes 30 seconds. Add your name. Share the link.
 - Helps us show lawmakers the depth of support for adult education.
- **Send a Pre-Written Message to Your Members of Congress**
 - Use COABE's advocacy tool to personalize and send a message in under 2 minutes.
 - Challenge: Ask 3 colleagues, friends, or students to do the same.
- **Post on Social Media**
 - Use sample graphics and language from COABE's toolkit.
 - Use hashtags: **#SaveAdultEd #AdultEdAdvocacy #EducateElevate @COABE**

Next Steps



Next Week

- **Host a Mini Advocacy Huddle**
 - Gather your staff, students, or partners for a 15-minute check-in.
 - Share this call to action, review your advocacy options, and commit to 1-2 next steps together.
- **Lift Up Student Stories**
 - Help a student write a short quote or record a 1-minute video about how adult education has changed their life.
 - Share with your lawmakers, post on social, or send it to COABE.
- **Join Your State Association's Advocacy Network**
 - Get connected with your state's efforts through your state association.
 - COABE can help you get plugged in and informed.

Next Steps



Beyond

- **Stay Informed and Stay Visible**
 - Monitor all COABE communications as the federal budget develops.
 - Stay in regular contact with your representatives—even quick updates matter.
- **Raise Local Awareness**
 - Host a community forum, submit a letter to the editor, or invite a legislator to visit your program.
 - Use COABE templates and resources for support.
- **Become a Local Leader**
 - You don't need a title to lead
 - Host a conversation in your program or community about what's happening.
 - Be the person who shares updates, tools, and reminders in your network.

Resources



We offer many resources that help you engage in this vital work.



<https://coabe.org/faces-of-adult-education/>



COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Stay connected with other COABE members like you.
Join one of the Communities of Practice:

- Teacher
- Administrator
- Adult Learner

We are stronger together

Contact COABE if you need any help (advocacy@coabe.org).

