

Changing the Odds: Informing Policy with Research on How Adult Learners Succeed

October 26, 2010

CALPRO Webinar

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Reflection Questions

If you could change one policy that impacts low-skilled adults, what would it be and why?

Type your answer into the chat window on the left.



Changing the Odds

- The idea was born during Steve Reder's Senate testimony earlier in 2009 which he concluded with a comment about "changing the odds" for adult learners.
- He and I had both been reading Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers* and we began to discuss what we could do.



Symposium was held Sept 16, 2009 with approx 75 people to share research and inform policy positions by advocacy groups.



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AGENDA

**Changing the Odds:
Informing Policy with Research on How Adult Learners Succeed
September 16, 2009 | Washington, DC**

- 8:15 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast
- 8:45 a.m. Welcome: Larry Condelli, Managing Director, AIR
Opening Remarks: Sol Pelavin, President and CEO, AIR
Overview: Heidi Silver-Paculla, Senior Research Analyst, AIR
- 9:00 a.m. Keynote Speaker: Stephen Reder, Professor, Portland State University
- 9:30 a.m. Panel Discussion: Achieving Postsecondary and Vocational Success
Moderator: Rita Kirshstein, Managing Director, AIR
Jonathan Guevara, CEO, Community College of the District of Columbia
Judy Taylor, Program Director, Jobs for the Future
- 10:10 a.m. Special Interest Group Discussions
- 10:30 a.m. Break
- 10:45 a.m. Roundtable Panel Response to Questions
- 11:00 a.m. Panel Discussion: Innovative Program Models for the 21st Century
Moderator: Hans Bos, Vice President, EHDW, AIR
Jane Oates, Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U. S. Department of Labor
Nancy Williams, Director, National Programs, Verizon Foundation
Amy Ellen Duke-Benfield, Senior Policy Analyst, Center for Law and Social Policy
- 11:40 a.m. Special Interest Group Discussions
- 12:10 p.m. Roundtable Panel Response to Questions
- 12:30 p.m. Networking Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. Panel Discussion: Changing Demographics and Changing Markets
Moderator: Heide Spruck Wrigley, Researcher, LiteracyWork International, Inc.
Michael Fix, Sr. Vice President & Director of Studies, Migration Policy Institute
Heidi Hartmann, President, Institute for Women's Policy Research
Harry Holzer, Professor, Georgetown University
- 2:10 p.m. Special Interest Group Discussions
- 2:40 p.m. Roundtable Panel Response to Questions
- 3:00 p.m. Wrap up, Mark Kutner, Vice President, EHDW, AIR

Symposium Participants' Responses

- *Integration of services across agencies*
- *Coordination of transitions between agencies and institutions*
- *Leveraging technology to scale up, reach out, and innovate delivery*
- *Revisions and updates to accountability systems and mechanisms*
- *Facilitating access to education, including building awareness, providing support services, and increasing financial aid*



Questions to Consider Today

- What is your vision for adult ed by the year 2015? What would it take to achieve that?
- What other entities should be caring about and involved in these issues?
- How will we know that we've changed the odds?



Paper written following the Symposium to capture major findings and create a compelling policy argument. See www.air.org.



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Changing the Odds:
*Informing Policy with Research
on How Adult Learners Succeed*

Authors:

*Larry Condelli
Rita Kirshstein
Heidi Silver-Pacuilla
American Institutes for Research*

*Stephen Reder
Portland State University*

*Heide Spruck Wrigley
LiteracyWork International, Inc.*



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Literacy and the Ladder of Opportunity

Rebuilding our “common good”

- The combination of things that make the great promise of America widely accessible
- *A ladder of opportunity*



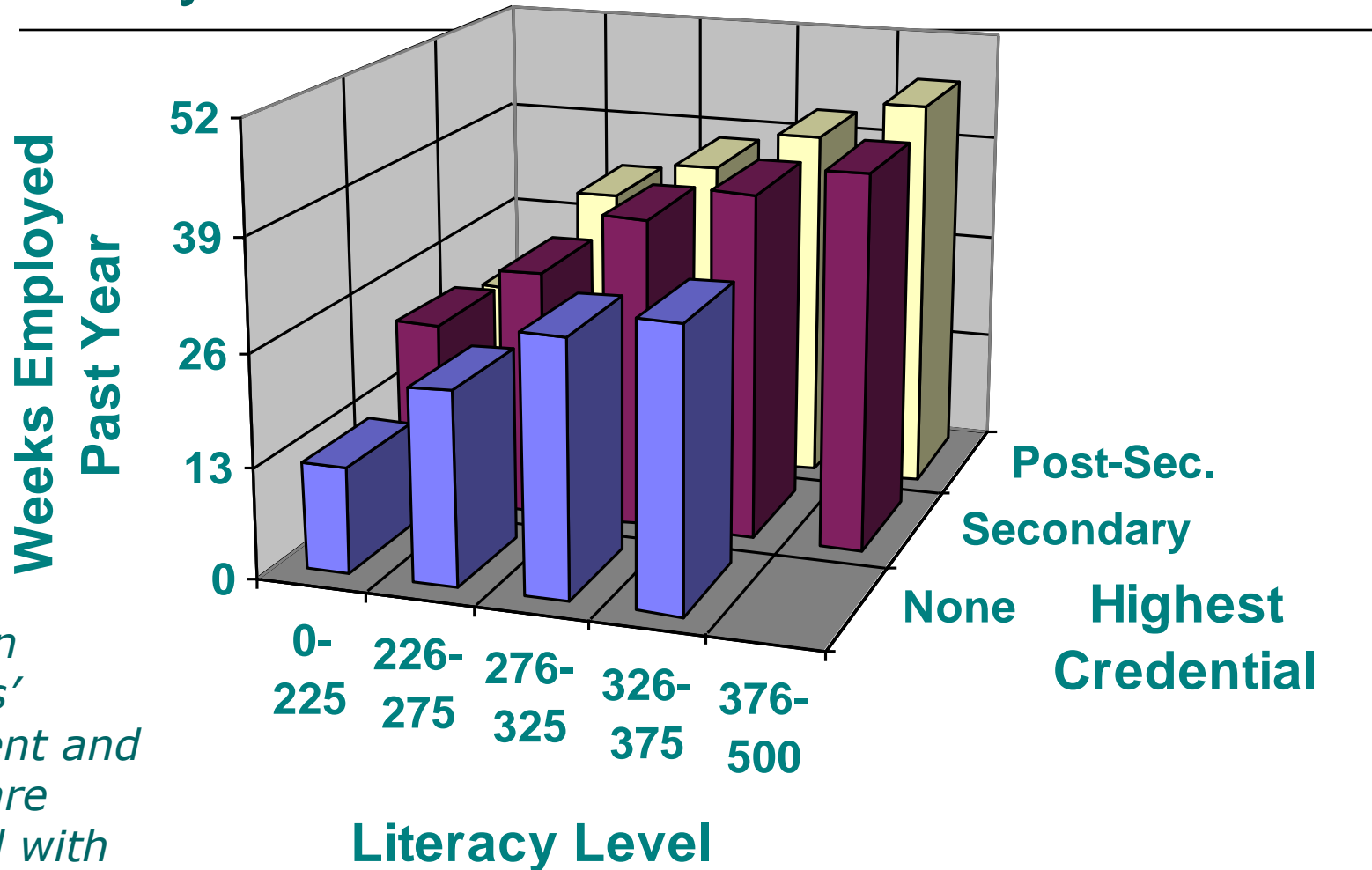
Literacy *is* a Policy Lever

As literacy rates rise, improvements are seen in:

- Employment & earnings
- Poverty
- Health care (health status, cost of care)
- Civic engagement (volunteerism, voting)
- Parenting (school involvement, care)
- Burden on society (crime, welfare)



Employment Varies with Education and Literacy 1992

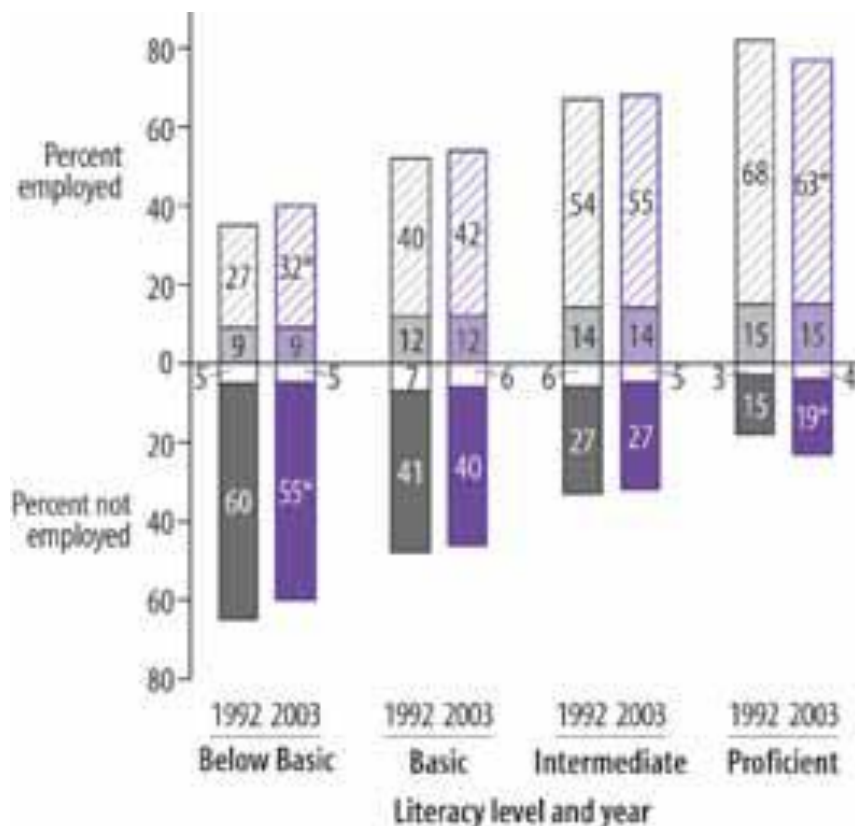


Changes in individuals' employment and earnings are associated with changes in their literacy.

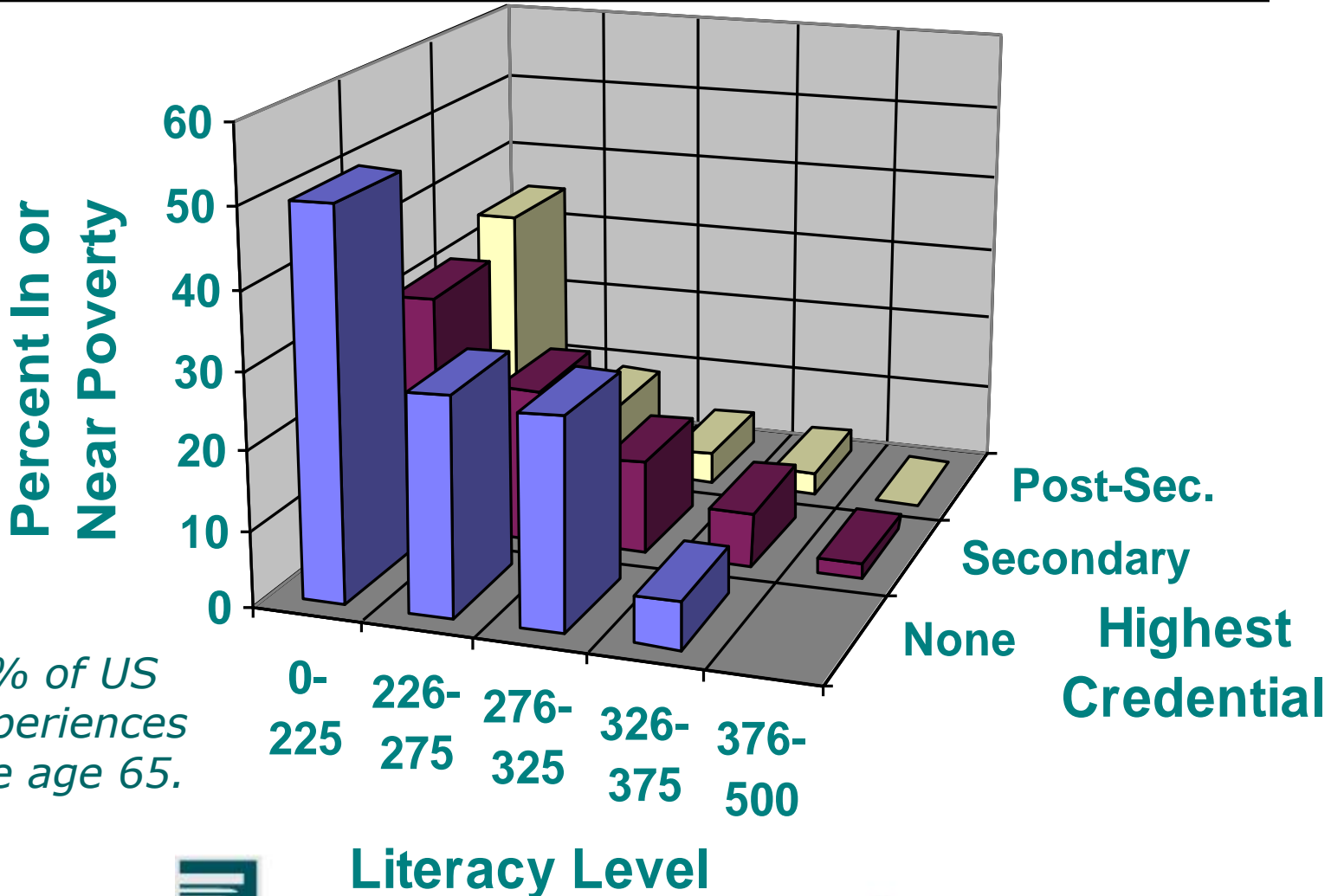


Employment Varies with Literacy in 2003

Percentage of adults in each employment status category, by document literacy level from 1992–2003.



Poverty Varies with Ed and Literacy 1992

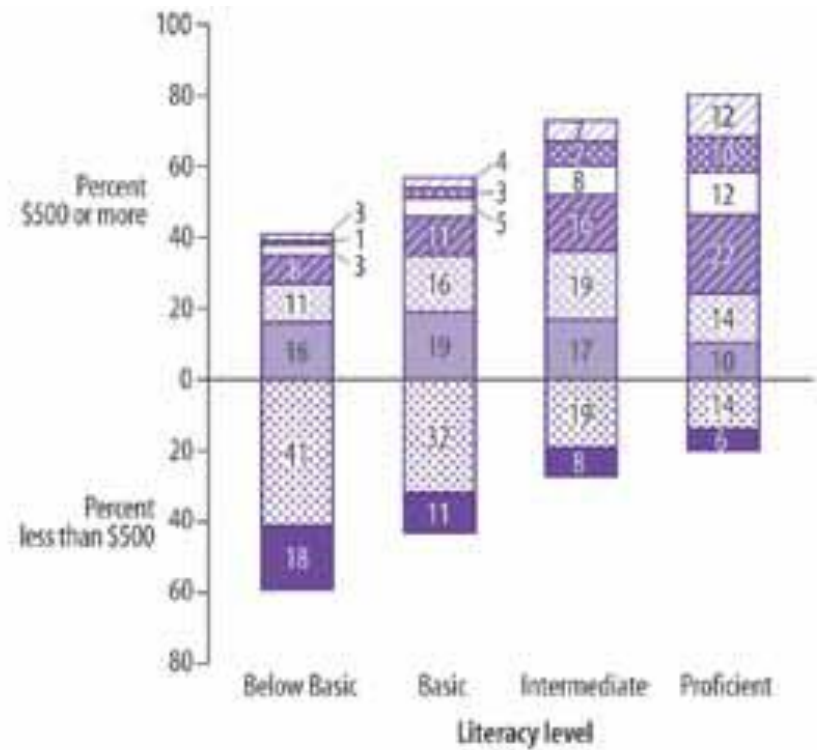


More than 50% of US population experiences poverty before age 65.

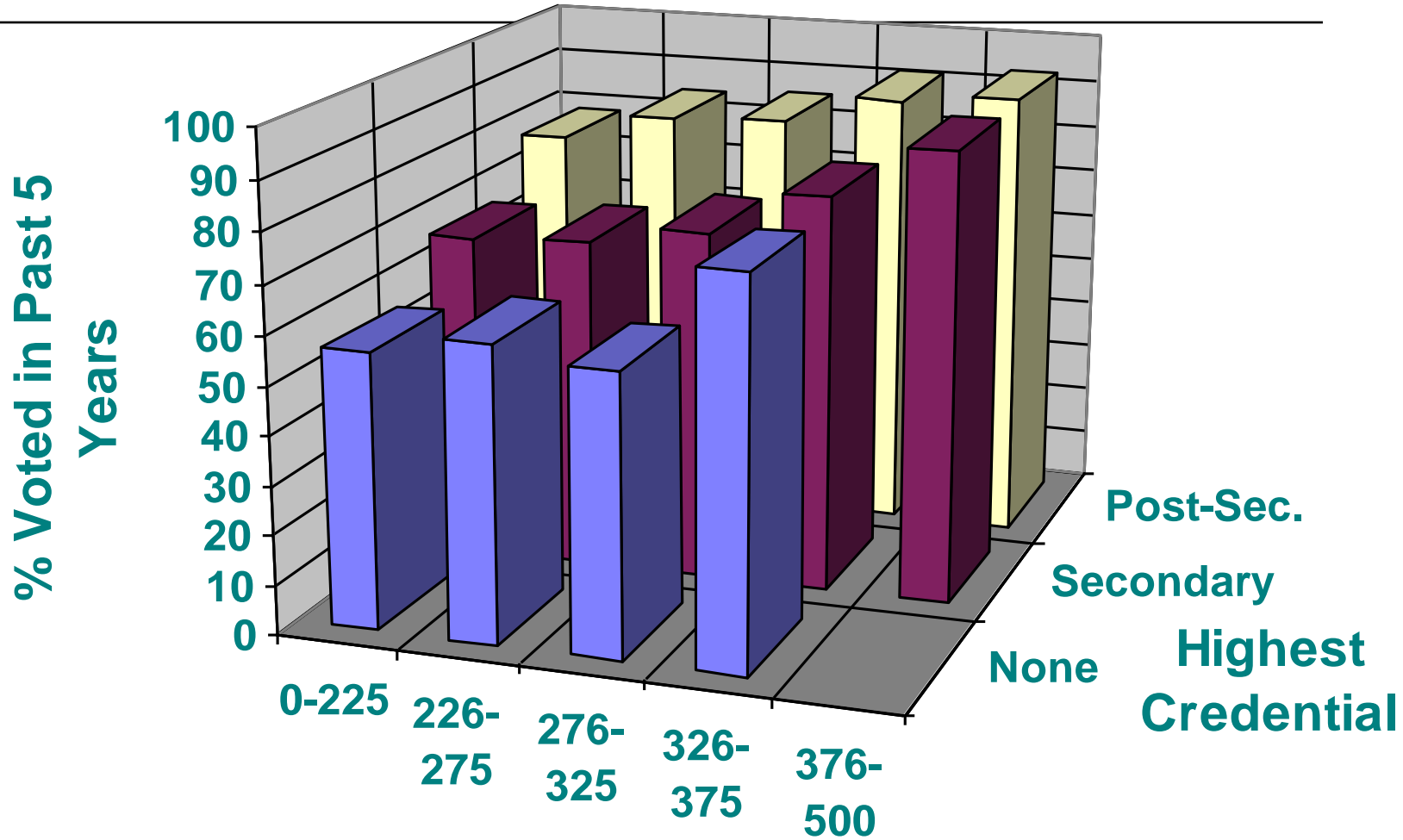


Employment Varies with Literacy in 2003

Percentage of adults in each income range, by document literacy level in 2003.

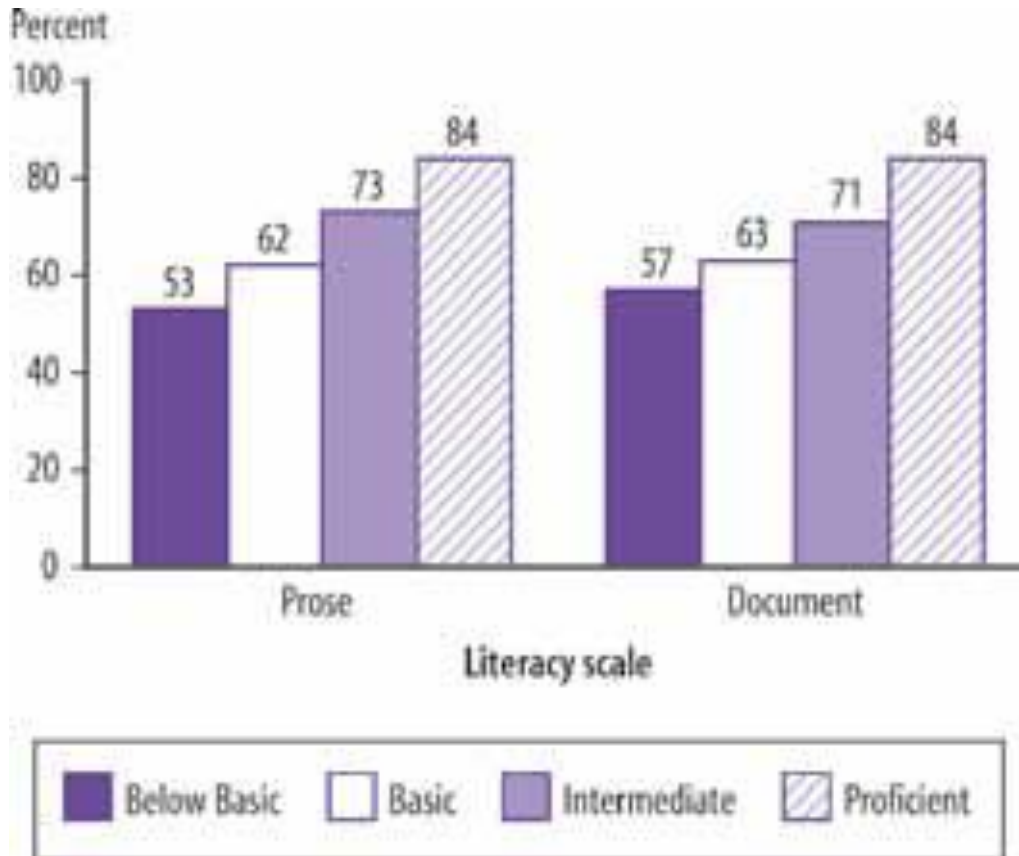


Voting Varies with Ed and Literacy 1992



Voting Varies with Literacy in 2003

Percentage of adult citizens of voting age who voted in the 2000 election, by prose and document literacy level in 2003.



Literacy and Health Status

- About 30% of Medicare & Medicaid recipients have “below basic” health literacy
- Health care costs are substantially higher for low-skilled adults
- Lower health status and higher mortality rates for older adults with poor literacy skills



Literacy Problems Are Not Going Away

- 3 sources of adults with basic skills needs
 - Continuing high rates of HS dropouts
 - Continuing immigration
 - Ageing Baby Boomers
- Changing economy and skill demands



Underprepared Adults and Youth

- Those w/o a HS diploma
 - Fully ¼ of U.S. youth do not finish HS
- Those w/o college-ready skills
 - 40% of all enrollees test into dev ed
 - Over 50% do not receive a degree
- Those w/o job-ready skills
 - Lack work experience
 - Lack strong literacy, numeracy, problem-solving skills and habits



Immigration Trends

- Immigration reform could add **6.4 million** language learners to adult ed ESL waiting lists
- Important sub-groups:
 - Limited native literacy
 - Higher education degrees
 - Youth and “generation 1.5”
 - Enrolling in postsec but not completing
 - Countries and alphabets of origin



New Approaches Suggested by Research & Experimentation

From NCSALL's *Longitudinal Study of Adult Learning & Persistence Study*

- Build persistence in adult learners
- Build accountability around longer-term outcomes
- Develop learning support systems
- Utilize technology to increase system capacity



Workforce Development Models

New ways to combine language, literacy and job skills training

- Differentiated instruction
- Contextualized instruction
- Long-term basic skills support, not just a pipeline “handoff” from adult ed programs
- Flexible career pathways models
- Private/public partnerships



Transition to Postsecondary

Extend postsecondary effectively to adult literacy students

- Bridge programs
- Dual enrollment programs
- Minimize need for remedial courses
- More flexible delivery models
 - Contextualization
 - Chunking & compressing
 - Blended learning

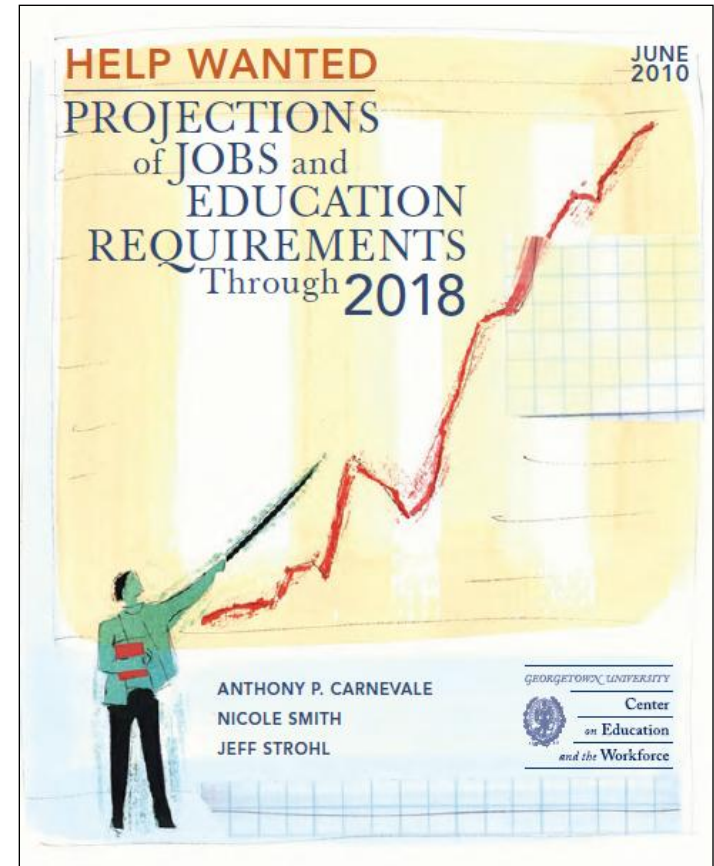
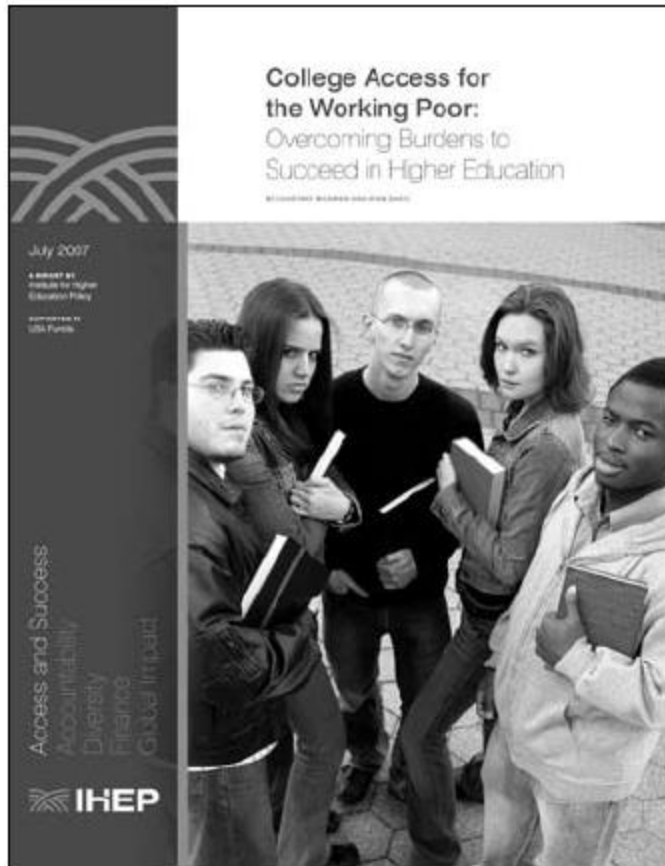


Innovative Models and Systems

- Learner-centered delivery
- Reaching low-skilled adults
- Case management
- Waivers and demonstration projects
- Professional development and professionalization
- Revising the NRS



Important Papers Pub'd in 2010



Discussion

- **What is your vision for adult ed by the year 2015? What would it take to achieve?**



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- **What other entities should be caring about and involved in these issues?**



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- **How will we know that we've changed the odds?**



How to Keep Up with Policy?

Participate in prof. organizations:

- National Coalition for Literacy
- National Council of Teacher of English
- Commission on Adult Basic Education
- CA Council for Adult Education





ADVOCACY

Advocacy Clearinghouse and Toolkit Blog

Advocating for public policies that support adult literacy

Sponsored by the National Coalition for Literacy

[About](#) [Blog Tour](#) [FAQs](#)

Category » Legislative Updates

Public Policy and Advocacy Update, September 2010

Date: September 30, 2010



By Jackie Taylor

Appropriations

Members of the Senate [voted 69-30 on Tuesday evening, September 28](#), to pass a Continuing Resolution (CR) to keep government operating until Dec. 3.

[The House passed a CR on Wednesday](#) and Congress is on recess until after the November 2 elections. They are expected to be back the week of November 15, then on recess for the week of November 22, and return the week of November 29 until the 111th Congress is done.

Congress passes a CR when appropriations bills are not passed by October 1,...

[\[Read More → \]](#)



Tags: [action alert](#), [Adult Education and Family Literacy Week](#), [AEFL Week](#), [appropriations](#), [NCL Update](#), [reauthorization](#), [WIA](#)

Adult Literacy Caucus: Update and Alert!

Date: September 21, 2010



The following Members have joined the House Adult Literacy Caucus to date:

- **Dan Maffei (D-NY), Co-Chair and Sponsor**
- **Phil Roe (R-TN), Co-Chair**
- Elijah Cummings (D-MD)
- Donna Edwards (D-MD)
- Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ)
- Alan Grayson (D-FL)
- Raul Grijalva (D-AZ)
- Rubén Hinojosa (D-TX)

Categories

- 📁 [Adult Education and Family Literacy Week](#)
- 📁 [Advocacy Workshops](#)
- 📁 [Legislative Updates](#)
- 📁 [NCL Update](#)
- 📁 [Reauthorizing the Workforce Investment Act](#)

Polls

What Are Your Top Three Priorities for WIA Reauthorization?

- Align Title I and II
- Use Consistent Definitions of Adult Ed and Allowable Activities in Title I/II
- Authorize Annual Appropriations for Adult Ed of \$1 Billion or More
- Authorize and Codify EL/Civics
- Establish Independent National Center for Adult Education, Literacy, and Workforce Skills
- Increase State Leadership from 12.5% to a Minimum of 15%
- Fund and Improve the Use of Technology for Teaching and

Policy Forum on the Economics of Literacy for Women

A Dec. 1st event in Washington, D.C. is **what's next**, being co-sponsored by the National Coalition for Literacy and the Institute for Women's Policy Research to continue the dialogue, share data, and promote advocacy.

