

A Reimagined Vision for Adult Education Services for the City of Philadelphia: Final Report and Recommendations

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Executive Summary

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This report synthesizes key findings and recommendations for the study, “A Reimagined Vision for Adult Education Services through the City of Philadelphia,” commissioned by Philadelphia’s Office for Children and Families (OCF). The city commissioned this study to identify service needs and gaps and to inform decisions about how it can support adult education in the future.

Recommendations outlined below were informed by three previous reports written for this study.

1. The first report analyzes the need for adult education in Philadelphia, identifies existing services, and pinpoints gaps between the need and supply. It draws on several data sources, including the PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Skills) small area estimates and the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 2014-2018 five-year estimates.
2. The second report describes the landscape of adult education services in Philadelphia. Using survey, interview, and focus group data, it examines adult education and non-adult education stakeholders’ perspectives on the status of adult education, their working relationships with the Office of Adult Education (OAE) before it was defunded, and their thoughts on how to re-envision city services.
3. The third report discusses promising models for city-wide adult education systems, as well as national best practices in adult education and city-wide system coordination. It draws on interviews with administrators of organizations that provide and/or play a coordinating role in city-wide adult education services and with national experts on adult education service provision and system coordination in other sectors.

Research Highlights

Philadelphia needs adult education programs to help address social, economic, and racial inequities and to increase access to multiple forms of social capital. Compared to other large cities, Philadelphia has a high poverty rate which is likely to increase as the COVID-19 pandemic causes unemployment rates to surge. Although there are multiple services to address the needs of adult learners throughout the city, data indicate gaps in services in some geographic areas. It is imperative to address the needs of Philadelphia residents with low educational attainment and limited English proficiency in order to ameliorate inequities in income and other indicators of socio-economic well-being.

Key stakeholders from a range of sectors indicate strong support for the city to play a meaningful role in adult education in Philadelphia and are appreciative of the former Office of Adult Education's (OAE) projects. They believe that a re-envisioned city-office could build on and strengthen what was already in place such as cross-system coordination, the referral system, and professional development. To help address service gaps, eliminate redundancies, and distinguish roles across systems, respondents suggested that the city work to more fully integrate and align adult education with other service domains (e.g., workforce development, the prison system, out-of-school youth) related to poverty reduction, improved employment, and increased social justice.

Interviews with leaders of other adult education city-wide offices, as well as national experts, had similar suggestions for the roles that city government could play to support adult education in Philadelphia. Ideas included developing a shared vision for the adult education system to guide planning, implementation, evaluation, and collaboration; advocating for and improving communication about adult education; providing services to build capacity and support providers; and coordinating and convening within adult education and across sectors.

Recommendations

The recommendations outlined in this report are intended to help the City of Philadelphia support a coherent, equitable, high-quality adult education system that can be sustained over time. A successful system would help adults meet their personal goals related to work, family, and community participation, and also address city priorities of reducing poverty and increasing social justice. The findings point to five key system elements that will contribute to these outcomes, and the recommendations are built upon them. These five elements are interdependent and overlapping:

- Understanding and valuing the role of adult education in meeting both individual resident and city-wide goals.
- Coordinating and collaborating within the adult education system.
- Collaborating and integrating across city service sector systems.

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- Building capacity for excellence, equity, and accountability.
- Taking explicit steps to ensure a sustained adult education system.

In addition, both a city office for adult education¹ and the broader city structures (e.g., City Council, Mayor's Office, other city offices) have distinct and intersecting roles to play to support and sustain a robust adult education system.

Recommendations include:

1. The city should create, fund, and support a city office for adult education.
2. A city office for adult education should work to ensure the participation of diverse voices and stakeholders from within and beyond the adult education sector in order to build knowledge, collaboration, partnerships, and better services.
3. A city office for adult education should lead a process to create a shared mission, vision, and goals for Philadelphia's adult education system.
4. A city office for adult education and the city need to work together to clarify and communicate the purposes and benefits of adult education.
5. A city office for adult education and other city agencies and leaders should work together to promote collaboration and integration across city sectors.
6. A city office for adult education should build on and strengthen existing successful aspects of system coordination and address challenges and gaps.
7. A city office for adult education should continue to build capacity across the adult education system by equitably providing high-quality technical assistance and professional development.
8. The city and a city office for adult education should both play a role in identifying and generating resources to meet the needs of learners and in addressing barriers to participation so that equitable services are provided and sustained across the adult education system.
9. An accountability framework that is based on a theory of change and outlines goals and outcome measurements for the adult education system is needed to guide the work of a city office for adult education specifically and the adult education system broadly.

Conclusion

Through this re-envisioning process, the city has an extraordinary opportunity to intentionally and strategically enhance and expand on the high-quality work that leaders in various versions of a city office of adult education have initiated and sustained over many years. This work needs to continue and expand with the goal of helping all individuals meet their educational goals and the city to address its priorities. However, in order to do so, the city must make a

¹ The City of Philadelphia uses "Office" to designate a particular level within city government. The use of the term office in this report does not refer to that specific organizational structure. Instead, it suggests the need for a unit within city government that has sufficient visibility and a distinct identity focused on adult education in order to carry out its support and coordination roles effectively.

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concrete commitment to adult education that is affirmed throughout city government and operationalized by a well-resourced office for adult education.

A Reimagined Vision for Adult Education Services for the City of Philadelphia: Final Report and Recommendations

This report synthesizes key findings from deliverables for the project, “A Reimagined Vision for Adult Education Services through the City of Philadelphia,” which was commissioned by Philadelphia’s Office for Children and Families (OCF). It builds on those findings and provides recommendations for roles the city can play and actions it can take to strengthen Philadelphia’s adult education system.

Philadelphia has a long history of coordinating adult education services in the city. In the 1980s, the city created the Mayor’s Commission on Literacy (MCOL). Since that time, educators from other cities have looked to Philadelphia’s city office of adult education and its programs as a model; although other cities have offices that support adult education services, very few are part of city government. The adult education coordinating body has had multiple locations within city government, including the Mayor’s Office, the Free Library of Philadelphia, and the Workforce Division of the Commerce Department. These changes, along with changes in mayoral administration, sometimes shifted the office’s agenda, roles, and visibility. As the office has evolved, the staff has continued to innovate and create new approaches to support adult education. Philadelphia’s most recent incarnation of a city office for adult education², the Office of Adult Education (OAE), was defunded in June 2020 in response to a budget shortfall related to the coronavirus pandemic. Since then, the city has reaffirmed the importance of adult education for Philadelphia residents by restoring some funding to support programming and reinstating some of OAE’s functions within OCF. The city also commissioned this study in order to identify service needs and gaps and to inform decisions about future structures and the roles that the city can play to support adult education in the future.

The discussion below provides highlights from the three previous reports written for this study.

- The first report analyzes the need for adult education in Philadelphia, identifies existing services, and pinpoints gaps between the need and supply. It draws on several data sources, including the PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Skills) small area estimates and the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 2014-2018 five-year estimates.
- The second report describes the landscape of adult education services in Philadelphia. Using survey and interview data, it examines stakeholders’ perspectives on the status of adult education, their working relationships with OAE before it was defunded, and their

² The City of Philadelphia uses “Office” to designate a particular level within city government. The use of the term office in this report does not refer to that specific organizational structure. Instead, it suggests the need for a unit within city government that has sufficient visibility and a distinct identity focused on adult education in order to carry out its support and coordination roles effectively.

thoughts on how to re-envision city services. The research team conducted surveys of Philadelphia adult education program administrators and practitioners and interviews with myPLACE campus staff and focus groups with myPLACE referral partners and key stakeholders from other related service sectors.

- The third report discusses promising models for city-wide adult education systems, as well as national best practices in adult education and city-wide system coordination. It draws on interviews with administrators of organizations that provide and/or play a coordinating role in city-wide adult education services and with national experts on adult education service provision and system coordination in other sectors.

This final report first synthesizes key findings from these reports in the Research Highlights section. This synthesis focuses on: (1) the need for and gaps in literacy services; (2) Philadelphia stakeholders' perspectives on adult education in their city; and (3) characteristics of city system coordination. The next section provides recommendations for the city's role in supporting and coordinating a strong, sustainable adult education system. Recommendations are organized in three sections: (1) strengthening the foundation of a city adult education system; (2) coordination, collaboration, and integration across city sectors; and (3) the functions of an office for adult education.

Research Highlights

The need for and gaps in literacy services

Philadelphia needs adult education programs to help mitigate social, economic, and racial inequities and to increase access to multiple forms of social capital. Approximately, 16% of Philadelphians age 25 or older lack a high school diploma or its equivalent. Moreover, 17% of residents age 25 or older were born outside of the U.S. and one-third speak English “not well” or “not at all.” Of this group, more than one-half lack secondary education. Of Philadelphians age 16-74, 70% are estimated to be at Level 2³ or below on the PIAAC literacy scale; and nearly 78% are estimated to be at Level 2 or below on PIAAC Numeracy. In addition, compared to other large cities, Philadelphia has a high poverty rate, which is likely to increase as the COVID-19 pandemic causes unemployment rates to surge and the economy to falter. By May 31, 2020, the unemployment rate had increased from 7% to 17% and nearly 68% of those who filed for unemployment lacked a high school education (Philadelphia Works, 2020). Overall, these data demonstrate a strong link between low skills, employment, and earnings.

Although there are multiple services to address the needs of adult learners throughout the city, data indicate gaps in services in some geographic areas. Some high-need areas lack myPLACE campuses and some regions lack convenient access to literacy programs at partner sites.

³ Ranging from 0 to 500, PIAAC literacy and numeracy scores correspond to five proficiency levels (Below Level 1 to Level 4/5). The average literacy and math scores for U.S. adults are 270 and 253, respectively (Level 2). At Level 2 or below, adults are believed to have difficulty understanding denser, more complicated types of print and performing more complex numeracy-related tasks. (For more information on PIAAC proficiency levels, see the National Center for Education Statistics, <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/measure.asp>).

Additionally, the number of myPLACE partner organizations and Community Schools is not necessarily well-matched with the needs of neighborhoods based on income, skill level, or immigrant population. The high number of unemployed residents without a high school degree or equivalent and the substantial number of adults with unmet literacy and numeracy needs point to the urgency of providing robust adult education services in Philadelphia. It is imperative to address the needs of Philadelphia residents with low educational attainment and limited English proficiency in order to ameliorate inequities in income and other indicators of socio-economic well-being.

Philadelphia stakeholders' perspectives on adult education in their city

Interviews with myPLACE campus staff, referral partners, and key stakeholders from a range of sectors indicate strong support for the city to play a meaningful role in adult education, appreciation of OAE's projects and initiatives, and ideas about how to further strengthen the city's role and that of a city office for adult education.

OAE successfully provided supportive technical assistance and fostered collaborative networks that enhanced the effectiveness of adult education services across the city. Survey and interview respondents agreed that the myPLACE network and referral processes helped to improve city adult education services. They also indicated that a new, re-envisioned city office should build on this success by enhancing and improving what was already in place. The relationships that OAE built across adult education programs were working well. Interviewees reported that OAE provided support and expertise for other sectors seeking to integrate adult education services into their work and also promoted improved cross-system coordination. Respondents believed these efforts should continue. One suggestion was to enhance understanding among providers about each other's services and programs. With this knowledge, they can make more effective referrals across the system. Interviewees advocated for improving services through short and long-term professional development offerings. They also expressed the need for an improved database that is more user-friendly, efficient, informative, and timely. In addition, respondents indicated that reliable internet access was a barrier for some learners and programs, both before and during the pandemic.

Respondents also suggested that the city could play a key role in expanding the networks that OAE had established by more fully integrating and aligning adult education with other service domains in the city, including those related to poverty reduction, improved employment, and increased social justice. Areas for collaboration include workforce development, the community college system, the prison system, and out-of-school youth. Such efforts would help address service gaps, eliminate redundancies, and clarify and distinguish roles across systems. The office, with help from the city, could also play a major role in convening stakeholders to identify and operationalize a shared vision of program quality.

City systems roles

Interviews with national representatives of adult education and non-adult education

systems revealed considerable overlap in roles played by city government agencies and non-profit organizations seeking to develop strong city systems. These key system roles include:

- ***Driving and coordinating a shared vision.*** For example, interviewees led visioning and planning processes in areas such as adult education, regional planning, and youth development.
- ***Communication and advocacy.*** These efforts included both external communications about an issue or available services through social media and other avenues and public policy advocacy.
- ***Service delivery.*** Although some adult education systems incorporate direct services such as offering specific classes, most do not.
- ***Capacity-building and supports for providers.*** This was a key responsibility for most organizations and focused on multiple areas:
 - Professional development.
 - Data collection and use.
 - Technology and digital access.
- ***Fiduciary services.*** Some organizations take on a fiduciary role, often by serving as a fiscal agent for grants shared by multiple organizations.
- ***Coordination and convening.*** Adult education and other city system leaders coordinate and convene, both within their specific area of focus and more broadly, with other partners and city agencies.

Recommendations

The goal of these recommendations is to help the City of Philadelphia support a coherent, equitable, high-quality adult education system that is sustained over time. A successful system would help adults meet their personal goals related to work, family, and community participation, and also address city priorities of reducing poverty and increasing social justice. The findings point to five key system elements that will contribute to these outcomes, and the recommendations are built upon them. These five elements are interdependent and overlapping:

- Understanding and valuing the role of adult education in meeting both individual resident and city-wide goals.
- Coordinating and collaborating within the adult education system.
- Collaborating and integrating across city service sector systems.
- Building capacity for excellence, equity, and accountability.
- Taking explicit steps to ensure a sustained adult education system.

Sustainability is both an outcome of the first four elements above and a distinct element that implies additional specific recommendations. Many of the recommendations below incorporate two or more of the key elements. In other words, substantive and successful operationalization

of one element can support or contribute to the effectiveness of others. The recommendations reflect the inter-related nature of these elements.

It is important to note that both a city office for adult education and the broader city structures (e.g., City Council, Mayor's Office, other city offices) have distinct and intersecting roles to play to support and sustain a robust adult education system. The recommendations are written to reflect this.

Recommendations are organized into three categories:

- (1) Strengthen the foundation of a city adult education system
- (2) Coordinate, collaborate, and integrate across city sectors
- (3) Enhance the functions of an office for adult education

Some recommendations are dependent on the effective implementation of others, and they can not necessarily be rolled out in a sequential way. We believe that each is important and interdependent with the others. Rather than prioritize one recommendation over another, we suggest setting priorities within each and then working across them in order to strengthen the city-wide adult education system.

Strengthen the foundation of a city adult education system

1. The city should create, fund, and support a city office for adult education.

Both local stakeholders and national experts affirmed the importance of a city-wide adult education office within city government, as well as the need for a broader city role to rally support for adult education and connect it to city priorities, agencies, and initiatives. Local stakeholders suggested that a renewed office could reinstitute the valuable programs once housed in OAE and also amplify, improve, and expand efforts to build a stronger system.

A city office could play a range of important roles, including:

- helping programs build capacity to improve the quality of both individual programs and the overall system
- building collaborative networks among adult education providers to support peer learning, program improvement, and cross-program coordination
- connecting learners with programs as they enter or need to make transitions within the adult education system or to other kinds of service providers when they are ready for next steps
- building bridges between the adult education system and other city agencies as well as the state Division of Adult Education
- working to ensure a system that keeps equity at the forefront, including seeking to serve the hardest-to-serve (e.g., low-skilled readers, English language learners who lack basic education in their country of origin), and bolstering the capacity of struggling programs

City government's resources (human, financial, political, administrative) uniquely position it to support effective adult education services and catalyze the office's ability to build a strong system. The city can mobilize and engage a range of stakeholders and sectors, both in and outside of government; raise the visibility of learner needs and provider initiatives; summon leaders to address pressing needs such as digital access; and integrate adult education with other city systems.

2. A city office for adult education should work to ensure the participation of diverse voices and stakeholders from within and beyond the adult education sector in order to build knowledge, collaboration, partnerships, and better services.

According to interview and survey respondents, OAE created effective collaborative networks within adult education (e.g., myPLACE campuses and referral partners, Keypots) and also worked with other sectors and organizations to improve cross-system coordination. However, both local and national stakeholders emphasized the need to engage diverse voices in collaboration, decision making, and policy discussion.

Whom to engage may be shaped by the overall purpose of specific initiatives, as well as by the goals of the office or the city. An adult education office could continue to review and refine engagement strategies over time and in response to evolving initiatives and priorities. Key stakeholders to consider engaging include those most affected by and engaged with adult education, including:

- current and prospective adult learners, instructional staff, and program administrators
- community members, especially from those communities with high unmet literacy needs
- other city agencies that may also serve adult learners before, during and/or after their participation in adult education, including departments focused on workforce, human services, refugees and immigrants, the prison system
- non-profits and other organizations that work with adult learners and their families
- the School District of Philadelphia
- institutions of higher education and other organizations engaged in post-secondary education and training
- the business community
- the philanthropic and foundation community

Intentional efforts to build relationships and trust within diverse groups can help create a foundation both for effective collaboration and for working through the inevitable tensions and conflicts.

The process of engaging a wide range of stakeholders must be driven by the goal of better meeting the diverse needs of adults across the city. Such engagement will also enable an office

to collaborate with a range of partner organizations to both build a stronger adult education system and meet a range of needs of potential, current, and past adult learners.

3. A city office for adult education should lead a process to create a shared mission, vision, and goals for Philadelphia's adult education system.

Local and national stakeholders agreed on the importance of using a collaborative process to develop a shared mission, vision, and goals for adult education in Philadelphia. They noted that a shared understanding of the mission and goals can help others see the importance of adult education and how it fits into and supports other city priorities as well as provide a roadmap for planning and subsequently evaluating the efforts to meet system goals. This visioning process is an example of the kind of “planning table” where an office for adult education should gather diverse stakeholders. It would be especially important to include learners, community members, and program instructors and administrators.

A broad vision for the entire adult education system can galvanize city-wide support and engagement and can help varied stakeholders and players more clearly see their roles in meeting adult education goals. The mission and goals can also inform other planning and documents that help translate the vision into action. The city office can do further work, again involving various stakeholders at key junctures, to plan backwards from the system goals to create an implementation plan to meet the goals. Tools like a theory of change and a strategic plan that indicate how to enact the theory of change could help delineate the office's activities, outputs and outcomes, as well as the resources needed to achieve the outcomes. These can also help the office develop appropriate accountability measures to assess both the office's progress towards its goals and the larger system's progress toward citywide goals.

4. A city office for adult education and the city need to work together to clarify and communicate the purposes and benefits of adult education.

Interviewees repeatedly stated that many potential and actual stakeholders, including city council members and leaders of city agencies, institutions of higher education, and the business sector, do not understand what adult education is and how it can help them meet their goals. They often have a narrow understanding of it as “the GED® program” or perhaps “the English program for immigrants” rather than a key service that can help address pressing city needs and goals and play a key role in alleviating poverty; addressing the needs of citizens returning from incarceration; and improving employment, housing security, and public health outcomes.

Key stakeholders and other city leaders need a deeper knowledge of adult education, adult education services, and the functions of an office for adult education. Along with that, the office functions and citywide adult education services must be communicated clearly and made more visible to all stakeholders. This could broaden and further commitment to adult education and help to ensure more sustained funding, engagement, collaboration, and integration across sectors. In support of this effort, clear, concise tools are needed to communicate the purposes of and processes for delivering adult education. Additionally, an office for adult education,

possibly working with the Philadelphia Adult Literacy Alliance, should cultivate “champions” who can advocate for and explain adult education and ensure that office leaders, adult education practitioners, and learners are called to the planning, funding, and implementation “tables” whenever possible.

Coordinate, collaborate, and integrate

5. A city office for adult education and other city agencies and leaders should work together to promote collaboration and integration across city service systems.

Respondents agreed that along with increased knowledge and diverse stakeholder engagement, another key to fostering sustained commitment to adult education in Philadelphia is to integrate it with other city services. For example, meaningful collaborations between adult education and the workforce system; immigrant and refugee services; and efforts to end homelessness, promote public health, meet the needs of out-of-school youth, and support re-entry of formerly incarcerated people should all be strengthened. Adults who seek services from these systems often have multiple challenges that more education and increased skills could help address. Rather than function separately, adult education should complement the services in these other sectors. Similarly, other sectors can help support adult education services. Ideally, adult education services could be located within other service sectors so that their priorities could be integrated. For example, adult literacy educators could support health literacy at public health centers, adult literacy programs could integrate health education and literacy into their instruction, and health centers could make referrals and share information about adult education services.

As integration of adult education and other service systems develops, there is the potential for:

- combined funding opportunities
- reduced service redundancies
- greater awareness of and ability to fill unmet needs and address service gaps
- clarifying roles and responsibilities across agencies and sectors
- shared resources (e.g., training, curriculum, digital tools)
- co-location of services

The potential to increase system integration depends on the previous recommendation--increasing understanding of what adult education is and how it can address diverse priorities across sectors. However, this is not a linear process. Integration will increase understanding just as increased understanding will support integration. An office for adult education can both promote the benefits of adult education across service sectors and provide expertise and support for other sectors seeking to integrate adult education services into their work. City leaders can play a role in facilitating collaborations across sectors by including adult education in these efforts.

In addition, given the tendency to work in silos, it may be important to consider what incentivizes stakeholders to collaborate. Some possibilities for encouraging collaboration are:

- creating opportunities to identify a shared approach for meeting the needs of adults seeking services across sectors
- identifying shared goals and creating structures for working together to meet those needs
- facilitating strategies to help each other meet goals and address priorities.
- instituting seed grants that reward collaboration across sectors
- providing meaningful opportunities for shared professional development and knowledge generation
- pooling resources

Enhance the functions of a city office for adult education

6. A city office for adult education should build on and strengthen existing successful aspects of system coordination and address challenges and gaps.

Research with Philadelphia stakeholders consistently revealed that the collaborative networks and technical assistance that OAE provided enhanced the effectiveness of adult education services across the city and that respondents want them to continue. (See Appendix 2 for more detail about this interview and survey research.) These efforts include the myPLACE campus system, which provides a referral system of intake campuses and partner programs, coordinates campus and partner meetings, facilitates collaborations, and provides professional development. Respondents also indicated that a new office for adult education should build on these successes by augmenting and improving what is already in place. One way that campus and partner meetings could be strengthened is to consistently rotate the meeting locations to more sites so partners can learn more about one another's services in order to provide more knowledgeable and effective hand-offs when referring learners.

Although respondents praised the OAE database and saw it as a key network resource, they also identified it as an area for improvement. The database is essential to operating a high-quality referral system and can also be used to inform decision making and monitor system quality. Reaching out to users to pinpoint the most important problems and challenges to address can help inform database revisions. Tasks could include:

- making the database more user-friendly, efficient, and informative
- conducting a "data review" to make sure that all data items the system requires are necessary and used
- creating a user manual to accompany the database
- providing more training on the database for providers, including developing an asynchronous webinar that is required for users (and new users)
- supporting a "help desk" to troubleshoot problems using the database

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- having each program using the database identify a contact who is responsible for data entry quality and routine data checking (may need to provide incentives to support this),
- supporting programs in consistently updating their information
- ensuring that the renewed OAE office has dedicated staff to make and maintain database improvements

Many respondents noted a significant lack of digital literacy, digital tools, and broadband access among programs, practitioners, and learners. An office for adult education should take a lead in ascertaining the needs of programs, practitioners, and learners; provide relevant professional development; and work with the city to marshal resources and develop plans for expanding digital skills and broadband access. In addition, although there are multiple services to address learners' needs, data from the American Community Survey indicate gaps in service in some areas (see Appendix 1). In particular, populations that need adult education services are more likely to be concentrated in Central, East, Southwest, West, North, and Northeast-West Philadelphia⁴. Central, East, and West Philadelphia have myPLACE campuses, but there is no myPLACE campus in North, Southwest, Northeast-West, or Northeast-East Philadelphia. The east side of Northeast Philadelphia has no myPLACE partners. Northeast-West and West Philadelphia do not have community schools. The city should consider providing support and resources to increase services in these areas.

7. A city office for adult education should continue to build capacity across the adult education system by equitably providing high-quality technical assistance and professional development.

Respondents reported that the former OAE provided valued supports and technical assistance that helped myPLACE campuses and partners improve program quality. Such efforts should continue through an office for adult education, but with more systematic attention to improving program quality and building the capacity of all organizations in the system to serve learners with diverse needs. This is especially important because some respondents expressed concern about referring learners to some partners due to perceived low program quality or inadequate ability to effectively provide services to learners who have special needs or low assessment scores.

In particular, capacity building should help all programs meeting the needs of the hardest-to-serve learners through engaging, motivating, and effective instruction, and helping them persist. This is sometimes more difficult for smaller providers and neighborhood programs who may have fewer resources and professionally trained staff. Therefore, special efforts should be made to provide professional development that is aimed at large, medium, and small providers and that use a range of approaches, including collaborative learning groups, expanded professional development workshop offerings, and a leadership academy. Topics could include emergent literacy, motivation, persistence, differentiated instruction, and collecting and using data to inform instructional and program decision-making.

⁴ Note: These geographic designations come from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey and may not align with how Philadelphia residents name neighborhoods.

A renewed office for adult education might consider creating a program quality template, implementing a non-threatening way to assess and build program quality (e.g., establish a community of practice for providers to work on program quality and diversifying services), and providing technical assistance and support to help programs improve where needed. The template could be adapted from the *Pennsylvania Department of Education Division of Adult Education Indicators of Program Quality* ([Indicators of Program Quality](#)). The template could also include a self-assessment and, along with guidance from office staff and a learning community, programs could self-assess strengths and gaps, develop a plan for improvement, and work on the plan with their colleagues. This process could also inform ongoing professional development opportunities available across the city's adult education system.

8. The city and a city office for adult education should both play a role in identifying and generating resources to meet the needs of learners and in addressing barriers to participation so that equitable services are provided and sustained across the adult education system.

Implementing the recommendations outlined throughout this report will require funding. Since city funding for adult education is limited, officials should creatively seek financial resources for adult education through new and innovative means to address learners' needs and barriers to participation. Most interviewees from other city adult education systems and national experts acknowledged that the city could play an important role in accessing external funding. For example, funding from public and non-governmental foundation entities could be used for adult education. Sources such as SNAP Employment and Training, Community Development Block Grant, Average Daily Attendance (ADA), TANF, and stimulus funding could possibly be used for some adult education services. Seeking these non-education funds is an example of cross-system collaboration and integration.

To identify and generate such resources, the city should consider dedicating a position (or part of one) to develop and implement plans and partnerships to creatively access and bundle public funds across sectors, as well as to raise awareness of and interest in adult education with foundations and corporate donors. This position could also involve working with corporations to make digital access more equitable citywide by helping to increase the availability of the internet and digital devices for programs, learners, and community members.

The city could play a role in addressing other barriers to participation such as lack of program space and transportation. First, the city may be able to make currently under-utilized space available at low or no cost for programs seeking to expand services or to meet needs in underserved areas. Opening up such spaces for adult education has multiple advantages. It can help programs reduce rental costs and find reliable and appropriate space. For learners it can reduce public transportation needs and costs and enable them to study in their own neighborhoods. If needed, the city office for adult education staff could also encourage public transportation officials to add bus routes at times that align with class scheduling.

9. An accountability framework that is based on a theory of change and outlines goals and outcome measurements for the adult education system is needed to guide the work of a city office for adult education specifically and the adult education system broadly.

Establishing an accountability framework for the adult education system in Philadelphia is critically important for the sustainability of the city office for several reasons. First, decision makers pay attention to program outcomes, and program outcomes can help the city track progress and achievements in the adult education system. Second, a city office will operate in an environment where multiple data systems with varying outcomes and measures are in place, and the city office will have little control over these or the organizations and programs that are responsible for achieving those outcomes. Therefore, it will be challenging for the city office to demonstrate results if it does not have its own accountability framework.

As the city office works towards a shared vision, mission, and goals for Philadelphia's adult education system, as described in Recommendation 3, it should also establish an accountability framework that includes both system-wide goals and city office goals. The office should work with stakeholders to identify the outcomes that will result from achieving those goals, the measures that will be used to determine how well the outcomes have been met, the data that will be collected, and how the data will be used to demonstrate accountability. Assuming a theory of change is developed, this framework should be aligned with it.

Conclusion

Through this re-envisioning process, the city has an extraordinary opportunity to intentionally and strategically enhance and expand on the high-quality work that leaders in previous versions of a city office of adult education have initiated and sustained over many years. This is a moment to build on strengths, understand gaps, and identify innovative responses to current realities.

The overall goal is the full realization of a city-wide adult education system that meets the needs of all individuals seeking to improve their literacy, numeracy, language, and workforce skills; prepares for transition to post-secondary education; and helps the city address its priorities. This goal can only be met if the city makes a concrete commitment to adult education that is affirmed throughout city government and operationalized by a well-resourced office for adult education. Commitment can be built through a purposeful goal-setting process and the development of an implementation plan. As part of this plan, metrics of effectiveness should be identified and ongoing cycles of evaluation and improvement should be implemented. It is important that diverse voices, experiences, and resources are brought together to participate. In addition, clear communication about goals and plans is needed, and this communication should reach every relevant service sector that could benefit from and help support a strong adult education system. Integrating adult education across city sectors should be encouraged by city leaders who have the clout to convene key players to identify opportunities for mutually strengthening efforts to serve the citizens of Philadelphia.

Placing city adult education staff in OCF is an important opportunity to begin this work. And, because OCF houses several complementary programs and departments, important synergies can be initiated within it that begin to integrate adult education with other service sectors in the city. However, within this large office there is also a risk that adult education could lose its distinct identity as a key contributing mechanism for reducing poverty, increasing social justice, and addressing many of the challenges the city and its residents face. City leaders, adult education champions, and OCF adult education staff should work together to enhance efforts to communicate the importance of adult education, build capacity among adult education programs, strengthen networks in the field, and seek meaningful ways to collaborate, coordinate, and integrate adult education with related sectors across the city.

Appendix 1: Landscape Analysis and Scope of Need for Adult Education in Philadelphia

Educational attainment, basic skills, and English language proficiency are crucial for labor market outcomes and national development (Coulombe, Tremblay & Marchand, 2004). Moreover, educational attainment is strongly linked to social capital and individual well-being (UNESCO, 2016). However, one in five U.S. adults (21%) do not have sufficient English literacy skills to complete tasks that require comparing and contrasting information, paraphrasing, or making low-level inferences (OECD, 2013). Consequently, it is vital for the U.S. to have strong adult basic education (ABE)⁵ programs that can help adult learners' build basic language, literacy, and numeracy skills. This need is particularly evident in large urban areas where high numbers of adults without basic skills and/or high school diplomas reside (Martin, 2004). Philadelphia is one such area.

Philadelphia is also a thriving and diverse city; however, many residents have low educational attainment and unmet literacy, numeracy, and English language needs. For example, in the American Community Survey (ACS) 2014-2018, Philadelphia has the lowest proportion of college graduates compared to similar-size U.S. cities such as Phoenix and Dallas. Further, the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) skills map (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2020) shows about 7 out of 10 adults in the city are likely to struggle with complex literacy or numeracy tasks. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated these needs: The unemployment rate increased from 7% to 17% and nearly 68% of those who filed for unemployment had less than a high school education (Philadelphia Works, 2020). Additionally, the pandemic struck a city already characterized by deep inequities. Although 26% percent of Philadelphia residents live below the federal poverty level, the local poverty rate varies greatly based on race: 19% for Whites, 27% for Blacks, 38% for Hispanics (The PEW Charitable Trusts, 2019).

Drawing primarily on the PIAAC small area estimates and ACS 2014-2018 five-year estimates, we explore the scope of the need for ABE services in Philadelphia by analyzing educational, socioeconomic, and language proficiency variables for Philadelphia residents ages 16 to 65.

This report consists of three sections. The first sketches the broad demographic landscape of Philadelphia in terms of population, economy, and education. The second examines the need for adult education in Philadelphia. The third provides an overview of adult education services available in Philadelphia and highlights gaps between the need and the supply.

⁵ For the purposes of this report, ABE includes literacy, numeracy, and English language education, high school equivalency preparation, and programs that support transitions to career and college.

The Current Demographic Landscape of Philadelphia

Population

- Philadelphia is the sixth-largest city in the U.S., with approximately 1.6 million residents.
- Philadelphia is a diverse city (Silver, 2015). Its residents are 43% Black, 35% White, 12% Hispanic, and 7% Asian. However, at the neighborhood level, Philadelphia is segregated.
- Foreign-born adults (immigrants) comprise 17% of the population, an increase from 9% in 2000.
- About one quarter (27%) of Philadelphians are young adults (ages 20 to 34), 36% are prime working-age adults (35 to 54), and 18% are older adults (55 to 65).

Economy

- In 2018, approximately 711,000 residents were in the labor force (Philadelphia Works, 2018). In ACS 2014-18, 67% of 25-to-65-year-olds (~600,000 residents) were employed, 7% were unemployed (~70,000).
- Median household income in 2014-2018 was approximately \$39,759.
 - Philadelphia's median household income is lower than the U.S. average and other metropolitan areas such as Phoenix, Chicago, Houston, Baltimore, and Pittsburgh (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2019).
 - Philadelphia has wide income inequalities across neighborhoods. As Figure 1 shows, the highest-earning neighborhoods are in Central City and Northwest Philadelphia. The lowest-earning areas are primarily in North, Southwest, Northeast, and Central Philadelphia (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2019).
- Labor force participation rate and median household income trail behind other large cities and the national average (The Pew Charitable Trust, 2019).

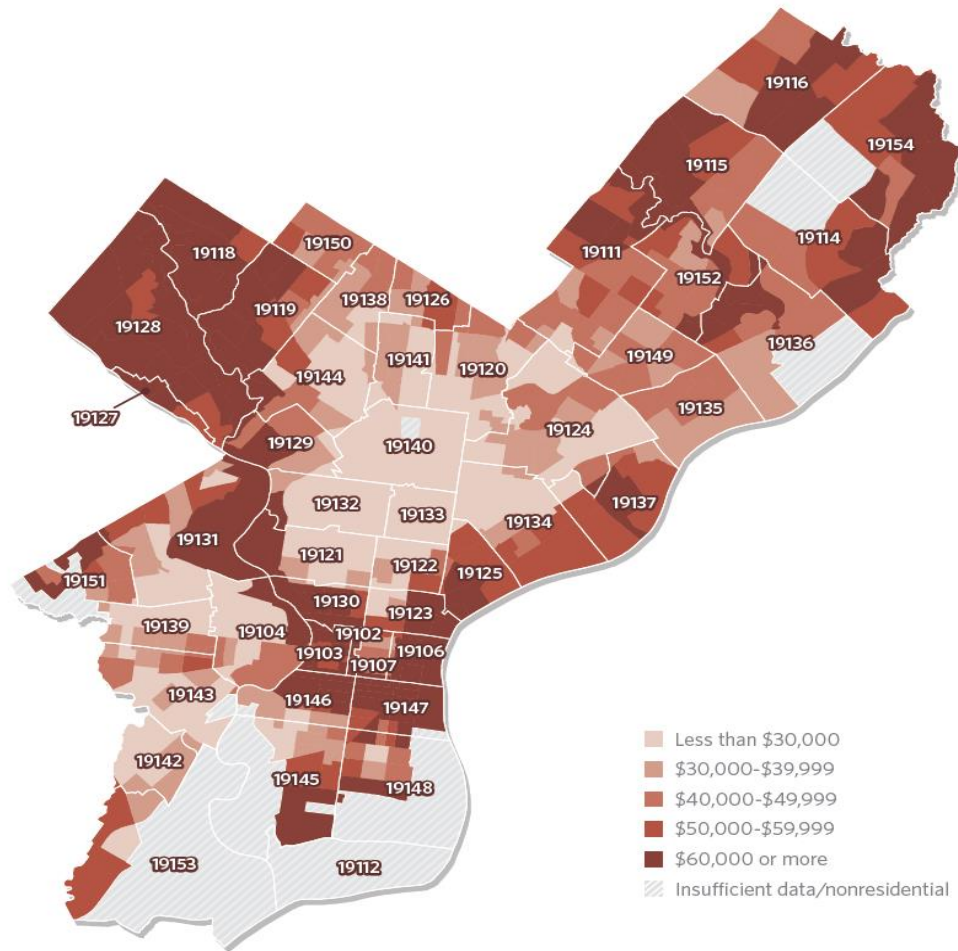


Figure 1. Median Household Income in Philadelphia

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2013-17 (as cited in The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2019, p.12)

Education

- The average educational attainment of Philadelphia adults (age 25+) is slightly lower than in other large cities (Figure 2).
- 49% of adults (age 25+) have no more than a high school equivalency or degree. The percentage of the population with low educational attainment (i.e., those with less than high school education or with only a high school equivalency or degree) is the highest among the 12 largest U.S. cities.
- The share of college-educated adults⁶ (51%) is the lowest among the 12 largest cities.

⁶ College-educated adults include people with some college experience, a two-year degree, a bachelor's degree, or higher.

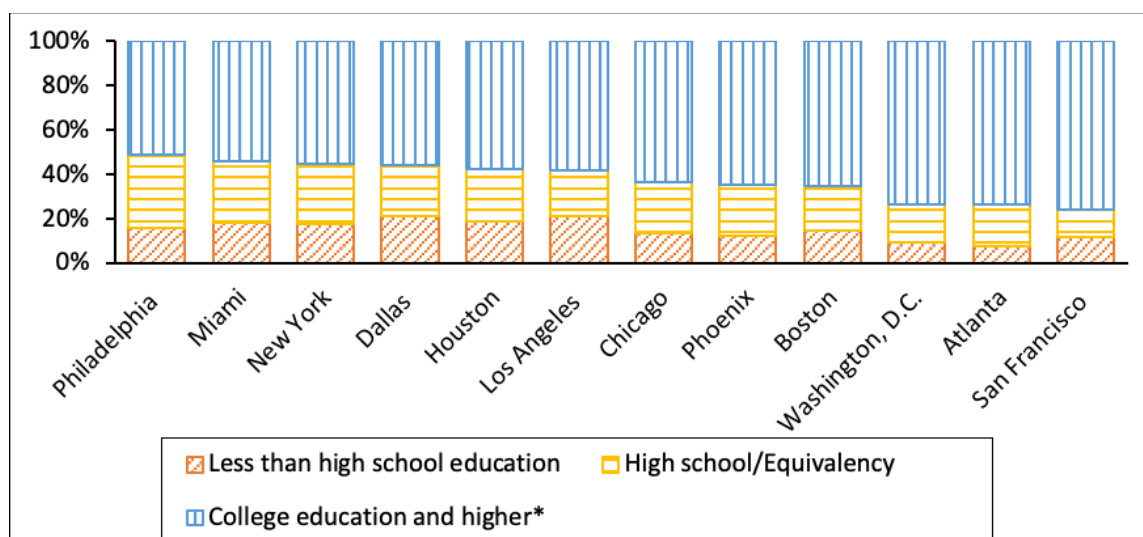


Figure 2. Educational attainment of U.S. cities

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2014-2018

* Includes some college, two-year degree, bachelor's degree, or higher.

The Need for Adult Education in Philadelphia

Adults with low-level literacy and numeracy skills

- The PIAAC skills map estimated that 70% of Philadelphians ages 16 to 74 (~810,000) score at Level 2 or below (basic or below basic level) on the PIAAC literacy scale, and 78% (~910,000) score at Level 2 or below on the numeracy scale⁷. Thus, about 7 out of 10 adults in Philadelphia are likely to struggle with complex literacy or numeracy tasks.
 - In particular, one in three adults (32%, ~370,000) is estimated to be at the lowest level on the literacy scale. They are likely to have difficulty reading lengthy texts or integrating two or more pieces of information within a text. One of every two adults (49%, ~570,000) at the lowest level on the numeracy scale may have difficulties performing tasks that require two or more steps involving calculation with whole numbers and percents (OECD, 2013).
- The percentage of adults scoring at or above Level 3 in Philadelphia is statistically lower than some U.S. cities (e.g., New York City, Boston, Chicago, Phoenix, Atlanta, Washington D.C., and San Francisco). (Figure 3).

⁷ Ranging from 0 to 500, PIAAC literacy and numeracy scores correspond to five proficiency levels (Below Level 1 to Level 4/5). The average literacy and math scores for U.S. adults are 270 and 253, respectively (Level 2). At Level 2 or below, adults are believed to have difficulty understanding denser, more complicated types of print and performing more complex numeracy-related tasks. (For more information on PIAAC proficiency levels, see the National Center for Education Statistics, <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/measure.asp>).

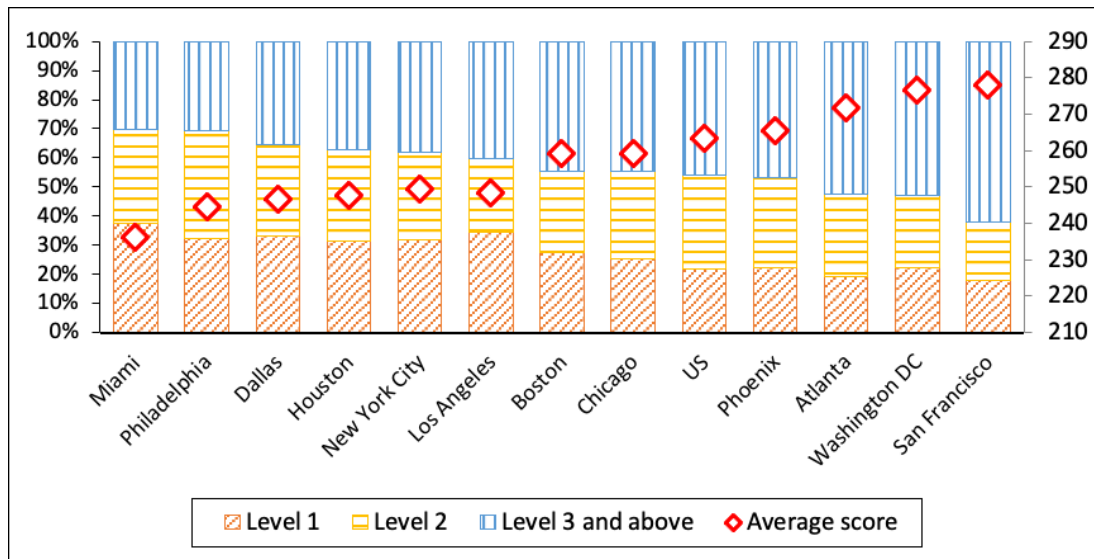


Figure 3. PIAAC literacy scores in U.S. cities

Source: NCES (2020). U.S. PIAAC Skills Map. <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/skillsmap>

- Expected impact of skills proficiency
 - Basic skills proficiency, particularly in literacy, is associated with significantly higher earnings, even after accounting for educational attainment (Kerckhoff, Raudenbush, & Glennie, 2001). For example, “in 2012-2014, monthly earnings were \$2,940 among those with literacy proficiency at or below level 1, rising to \$3,800 and \$5,070 per month for those in levels 2 and 3, respectively, with another sharp rise to \$6,700 per month for workers with scores that placed them in levels 4 and 5 combined” (Fogg, et al., 2018, p. 17). There is also a positive relationship between a population’s overall literacy skills and a country’s economic development at a macroeconomic level (Coulombe, Tremblay & Marchand, 2004).
 - There is a great need for basic skills instruction in Philadelphia; providing adult education services can help boost individual earnings and regional economic development.

High school attainment and links to employment

- 16% of Philadelphians age 25 or older (~140,000) do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- There are statistically significant differences between racial/ethnic groups in educational attainment. Figure 4 shows that among adults age 25 or older, Blacks have the highest proportion of those without a high school diploma or its equivalent (age 25+) while Hispanics have the second highest proportion.

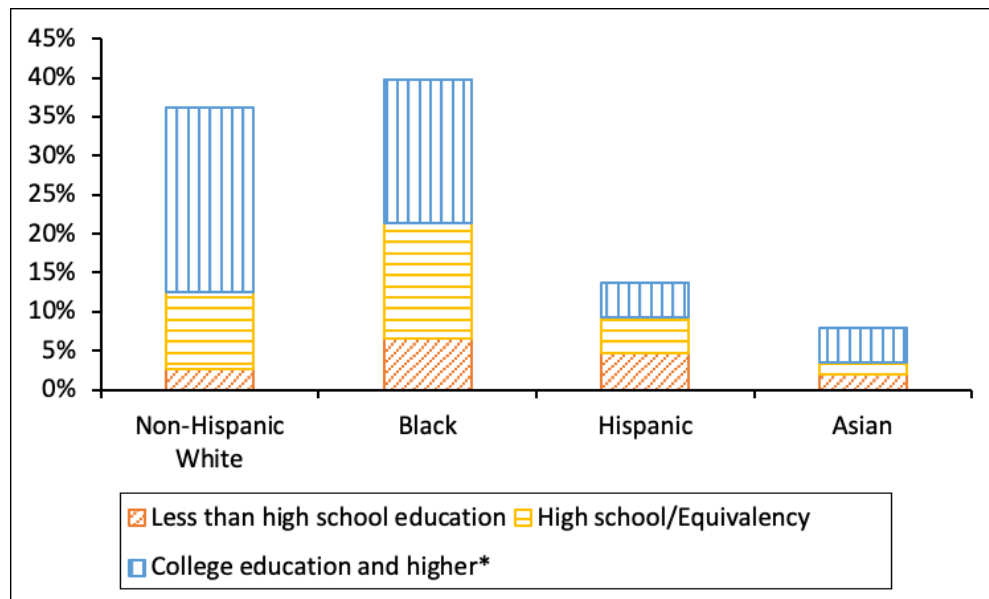


Figure 4. Educational attainments by race/ethnicity (age 25+)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2014-2018

* Includes some college, two-year degree, bachelor's degree, or higher.

- Adults without a high school diploma or its equivalent are concentrated in the following neighborhoods⁸: East, North, Northeast-West, Southwest, and Central Philadelphia.
- Adults without a high school diploma or its equivalent have disproportionately higher rates of unemployment and poverty (and these levels have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic).
 - Adults without a high school diploma or its equivalent are 12% more likely to live in poverty than high school graduates, after holding age, gender, and race constant.
 - With the outbreak of COVID-19 in March 2020, Philadelphia lost 71,480 jobs (7.7% of employment) in one month, and the unemployment rate increased from 7% to 17%. Nearly 68% of those who have filed an initial claim for unemployment compensation do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent (Philadelphia Works, 2020).
- To identify discrete groups of adults with a need for adult education, a latent class analysis (LCA)⁹ was conducted using ACS 2014-2018 data. Based on information on

⁸ The neighborhoods in this study follow the geographical units used in ACS: East (Kensington/Fishtown, Nicetown, North Philadelphia-East, Port Richmond); North (Logan, Wadsworth, Oak Lane, Olney); Northeast-East (Bridesburg, Frankford, Tacony); Southwest (Eastwick, South Philadelphia-West, Kingsessing, Paschall/Elmwood); Central Philadelphia (Fairmount North/Brewerytown, North Philadelphia-West, Yorktown).

⁹ A latent class analysis (LCA) is a statistical method used to categorize individuals into distinct groups where individuals within a group are similar to each other and different from individuals in other groups (McCutcheon, 2002). To determine the number of latent classes, the stability of models was examined (from 1 class to 3 classes). The three classes model with the smallest scores

educational attainment, employment status, total income, and living under poverty, three groups were identified as “high-need,” “medium-need,” and “low-need” groups for adult education¹⁰.

- Group 1, the high-need group (30%), includes those with the lowest education and employment, and the highest level of poverty. This is the group that can benefit most from adult education services to boost employment and income.
- Group 1 is concentrated in Central, East, North, Northeast and Southwest Philadelphia.

Table 1. Group 1 in neighborhood

Neighborhood	% within neighborhood*
Far Northeast	20 %
Northeast-West	33 %
Northeast-East	35 %
North	36 %
East	47 %
Northwest	21 %
Central	48 %
West	33 %
Central City	11 %
Southwest	34 %
Southeast	30 %
Total	30 %

*The percentage of Group 1 is shown on Figure 7.

- Expected impact of adult education
 - Adults without a high school diploma or its equivalent are approximately 45% less likely to be employed than high school graduates, after accounting for age, gender, and race/ethnicity (ACS, 2014-2018).
 - Earning a high school equivalency diploma should increase adults’ prospects of employment, compared to peers without a secondary diploma.

of Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) was selected (Lanza & Rhoades, 2011). This method is a tool for estimating the extent of the need and can be used to inform where services could be targeted; it is not meant to “label” needs.

¹⁰ Using the 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates for adults ages 25 or older and having total income reported size, three latent classes are identified as followings: Group 1 comprised 30% of the population, and its members tended to have the lowest levels of educational attainment, employment, and total income and the highest levels of living under the federal poverty level. Group 2 includes 39% of the population and was characterized with having medium levels of educational attainment (71% with college level education) and low levels of income. On the other hand, Group 3 (30%) comprised of individuals who tended to have the highest levels of educational attainment, employment, and income. No one in Group 3 lives under the poverty level (See Appendix 1A).

Immigrants with limited English-speaking proficiency¹¹

- In 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates, nearly 17% of Philadelphia residents aged 25 or older were immigrants (~190,000).
 - The greatest number of immigrants came from Asia and the Americas. Chinese immigrants, the largest group, account for approximately 11% of immigrants, followed by those from the Dominican Republic (The PEW Charitable Trust, 2018).
- The ACS 2014-2018 5-year estimates that:
 - 24% of immigrants do not have a secondary degree. It is significantly higher share than among U.S.-born residents (11%), which shows a wide gap in immigrants' educational attainment.
 - 28% of immigrants speak English "not well" or "not at all" (i.e., less than "well").
 - 51% of immigrants who speak English less than "well" do not have a secondary degree (~25,000). This population is likely to benefit from English literacy and language instruction and basic education.

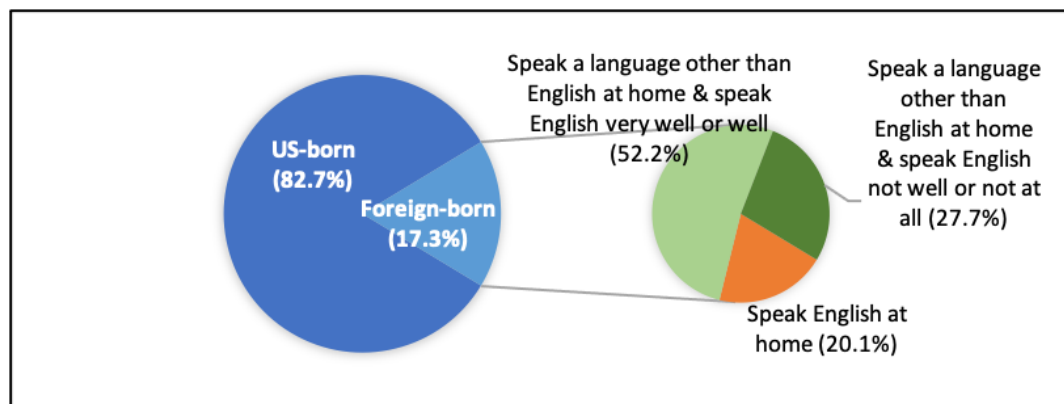


Figure 5. Foreign-born and English-speaking proficiency

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2014-2018

- Although Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, many of them also need ABE and adult ELL.
 - 33% of Puerto Ricans (age 25+) in Philadelphia lack a high school diploma or its equivalent (~21,500).
 - 10% of Puerto Ricans (age 25+) in Philadelphia speak English less than "well" (~9,500). Furthermore, more than one-half of this population does not have a high school diploma or its equivalent (~6,000).

¹¹ Immigrants with limited English-speaking proficiency are defined as foreign-born adults who speak a language other than English at home and speak English less than "well," (i.e., "not well" or "not at all").

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- As Figure 6 depicts, major immigrant groups are concentrated in different neighborhoods. Immigrants from the Americas mostly live in the Near Northeast, many Africans live in Southwest Philadelphia, and Asians have several sizable concentrations citywide (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2018).
- The ACS 2014-2018 estimates that immigrants who need English language skills are concentrated in North, Northeast, Far Northeast, and Southeast neighborhoods.

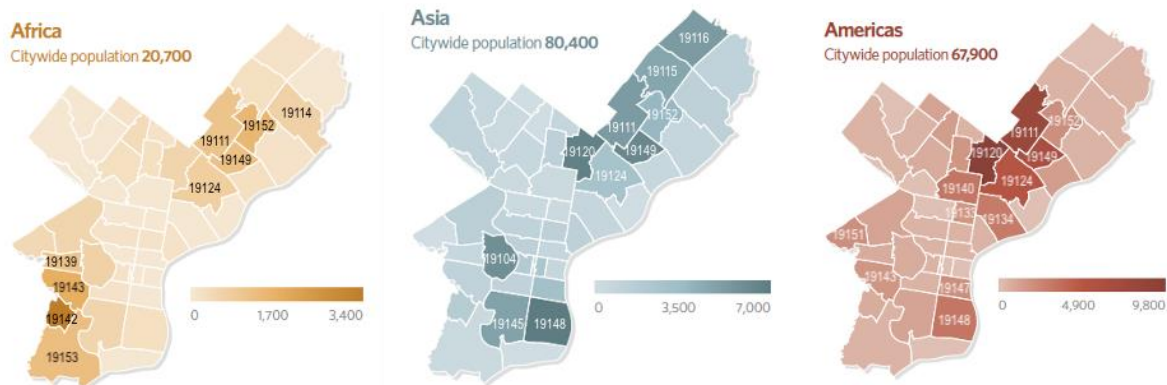


Figure 6. Concentration of immigrant groups in Philadelphia

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2012-16 (as cited in The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2018, p. 12)

Provision of Adult Education Services in Philadelphia

- Table 2 provides the number of myPLACE campuses, partners, and Community Schools across neighborhoods, the median income of each neighborhood, and the percentages of high-need (Group 1) and immigrant populations.

Table 2. Adult education and/or Family literacy programs in Philadelphia

Neighborhood	Median Income*	High Need %**	Immigrant %**	myPLACE		Community Schools
				Campus	Partner	
Far Northeast	\$57,239	20%	26%	1	3	1
Northeast-East	\$46,299	35%	16%			1
Northeast-West	\$51,187	33%	38%		4	
North	\$42,550	36%	17%		4	1
Northwest	\$73,804	21%	12%			
West	\$36,775	33%	7%	1***	2	
East	\$35,965	47%	6%	1	8	4
Central	\$30,555	48%	11%	2***	5	1
Central City	\$90,773	11%	16%	2	8	
Southwest	\$36,573	34%	17%		4	1
Southeast	\$58,253	30%	21%		2	2

Source: *Median household Income: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, five-year estimates, 2014-18

** High need and Immigration % mean the population percentage within each neighborhood.

***myPLACE campus with two locations are counted separately. For example, Community Learning Center has two locations in West and Central Philadelphia.

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- Figure 7 below shows the need for and supply of adult education services in Philadelphia using the above data points (median income, location of myPLACE and partner organizations), along with the proportion of the high-need (Group 1) on one map by neighborhood. Considering educational attainment, employment, poverty, median income, and the share of immigrants in each neighborhood, populations who need adult education services are more likely to be concentrated in Central, East, Southwest, West, North, and Northeast-West Philadelphia. Although Central, East and West Philadelphia have myPLACE campuses, there is no myPLACE campus in the North, Southwest, Northeast-West, or Northeast-East Philadelphia. The east side of Northeast Philadelphia does not have any myPLACE partners. Northeast-West and West Philadelphia do not have community schools.

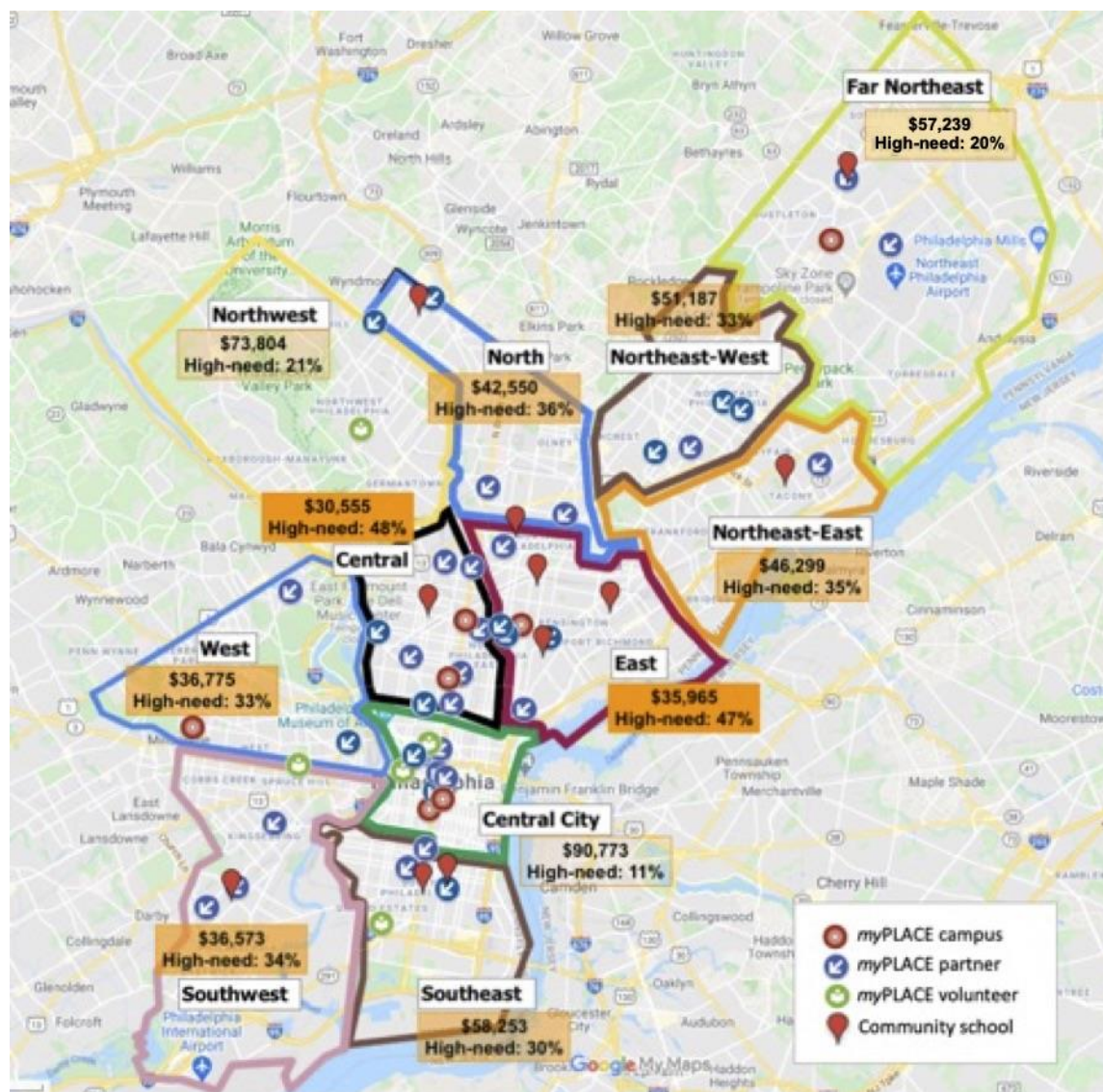


Figure 7. myPLACE organizations and community schools in Philadelphia

* These geographic designations come from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey and may not align with how Philadelphia residents name neighborhoods.

Key Takeaways

As this report highlights, the city is in serious need of ABE programs to help address social, economic, and racial inequities; and increase access to multiple forms of individual and social capital. Approximately, 140,000 Philadelphians age 25 or older (16%) lack a high school diploma or its equivalent; 810,000 (70%) are estimated to be at level 2 and below on PIAAC Literacy; and nearly 910,000 (78%) are estimated to be at Level 2 and below on PIAAC Numeracy. Moreover, of the nearly 190,000 residents age 25 or older (17%) born outside of the U.S., one-third speak English “not well” or “not at all.” Of this group, more than one-half who speak English “not well” or “not at all” lack secondary education. It is imperative to address the growing inequities that cause, and result from, low educational attainment and limited English proficiency for far too many Philadelphia residents.

This data also demonstrates a strong link between low skills, low employment levels, and earnings. In addition, compared to other large cities, Philadelphia has a high poverty rate which is likely to increase as the COVID-19 pandemic causes unemployment rates to surge and the economy to falter. The high number of unemployed residents without a high school equivalency degree and the substantial number of adults with unmet literacy and numeracy needs, points to the urgency of providing robust adult education services in Philadelphia.

Although there are multiple services to address the needs of adult learners throughout the city, data indicate gaps in services in some areas. Some high-need areas lack myPLACE campuses and some regions lack convenient access to literacy programs at partner sites. Additionally, the number of myPLACE partner organizations and Community Schools does not necessarily correlate with the needs of areas based on income. The map above provides a broad guidance for identifying and potentially addressing high-need areas.

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Appendix 1A. Demographic Background, Education Attainment, and Employment Status (%)

	High-need (Class 1)	Medium-need (Class 2)	Low-need (Class 3)
<i>% of total population</i>	30	39	30
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	54	55	46
Female	46	45	54
<i>Age</i>			
25-34	26	41	33
35-44	20	22	25
44-65	54	38	43
<i>Race/ethnicity</i>			
White	23	38	57
Black	47	41	27
Hispanic	20	12	7
Asian	7	7	7
Other	2	3	2
<i>Place of birth</i>			
US-born	81	80	85
Foreign-born	19	20	15
<i>% of foreign-born</i>			
Speaking another language	85	80	70
Speaking English	15	20	30
<i>% of speaking another language among the foreign-born</i>			
Speaking English well	46	71	85
Speaking English not well or not at all	54	29	15
<i>Education</i>			
No High school	30	6	3
High school diploma and its equivalent	55	22	18
Some college and two-year degree	11	38	20
Bachelor's degree and more	5	34	59
<i>Employment status</i>			
Employed	34	92	95
Unemployed	11	2	1
Not in the labor force	55	6	4
<i>Living under poverty</i>			
Living under poverty 200	86	21	0

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	High-need (Class 1)	Medium-need (Class 2)	Low-need (Class 3)
<i>Total Income</i>			
Mean (SE)**	13,445 (154.4)	28,687 (160.7)	95,330 (783.9)
<i>% of Neighborhood</i>			
Far Northeast	20	44	36
Near Northeast-West	33	43	24
Near Northeast-East	35	41	25
North	36	44	21
East	47	34	19
Northwest	21	37	42
Central	48	35	16
West	33	42	25
Central City	11	31	59
Southwest	34	45	21
Southeast	30	39	30
Unweighted N	6,361	8,417	7,834

Note: * All percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
 **For continuous variables, mean (standard error) is reported.

Appendix 2, Part 1: Philadelphia Stakeholders' Perspectives on Adult Education in Their City

This report is the second of four deliverables resulting from the project, “A Reimagined Vision for Adult Education Services through the City of Philadelphia,” which was commissioned by Philadelphia’s Office of Children and Families (OCF). It focuses on the landscape of adult education services in Philadelphia. Using survey and interview data, it provides insight into stakeholders’ perspectives on the status of adult education, their working relationships with the Office of Adult Education (OAE) before it was defunded, and their thoughts on how to re-envision city services.

This second deliverable initially comes in two parts, one drawing on interview data and a second on survey data from Philadelphia adult education program administrators and practitioners. A subsequent version of this deliverable will merge these two data sets. This report analyzes interview data from individual interviews with myPLACE campus staff (6 participants); focus group with myPLACE referral partners (7); and interviews with key stakeholders from other related service sectors, including workforce development, prison education, youth development, and higher education (6 participants in one focus group and one individual interview). Researchers also interviewed five City of Philadelphia staff members, largely from OCF. These staff member interviews provided insights into respondents’ perspectives on adult education in Philadelphia and the purpose of this research; this data provided context and background information and are not included in the analyses below.

Overall, interviewees strongly valued the OAE and the roles it played in the city. This report describes what stakeholders valued about OAE, as well as gaps and ideas for improvement. It also begins to address a reimagined OAE role in addressing city challenges and integrating with other systems. The third deliverable examines the roles other cities play in addressing adult education and national best practices in areas such as distance education, digital literacy access, and city-wide system coordination. A final, summary report synthesizes findings from the three previous deliverables and provides recommendations about how Philadelphia could move forward to strengthen its adult education system.

OAE Role in Adult Education

Interviewees agreed that OAE staff were helpful, knowledgeable about the field, and provided key supports which helped them improve program quality. One interviewee said, “They’re educators themselves. They know the problems of the communities they serve.” Staff from several myPLACE campuses described having strong communication with OAE. Stakeholders also viewed OAE as a connector, both within adult education and to other sectors and city government. One interviewee noted that OAE was plugged into the vision of each mayoral

administration and could translate that to the field and tell providers how they fit in. Interviewees described OAE as having a commitment to continuous improvement and ongoing reflection and refinement in order to strengthen systems and practices. For example, in the year before it was defunded, OAE worked to strengthen their relationships with partner sites and myPLACE campuses, along with improving connections and information-sharing between campuses and partners. This section describes interviewees' perspectives on the myPLACE system, one of OAE's signature initiatives.

The myPLACE System

The myPLACE system has served as a key mechanism for strengthening systems and practices. Respondents appreciated myPLACE's capacity to help them connect learners to a larger network of programs and enable them to find a program that would address their needs through the ASAP database. Before myPLACE, there was no database or directory of city programs available to help program staff make referrals. Additionally, they valued the ways in which the myPLACE system had helped them learn about and with other programs, which benefited their ability to serve learners effectively.

OAE created a collaborative and effective network among myPLACE campuses and referral partners to help improve city adult education services. The network was built and strengthened through the myPLACE campus structure, the campus and partner meetings, the referral system, and the ASAP database. Together, these functioned as mechanisms to help those in the myPLACE system function better and to give learners a more streamlined and efficient way to engage in adult education.

OAE coordinated regular meetings for myPLACE and referral partners to build knowledge, relationships, and collaboration. The partner network, which included bimonthly meetings, was praised by campuses and partners and by both small and large organizations. It created opportunities for sharing information, strategies, challenges and opportunities, which helped all members improve. The partner meetings helped build relationships among the myPLACE campuses and the referral partners. One myPLACE partner noted that the practice of rotating the meeting locations among different partner sites helped practitioners develop deeper knowledge about partner sites and enabled more effective hand-offs from myPLACE campuses to referral partners. One representative from a larger program said that hearing from other network members helped them identify where they should deliver services. Multiple interviewees said that the relationship-building which OAE facilitated through the myPLACE and referral partners system supported collaborative learning and program improvement":

I really liked the partnership aspect. We are a very small program and we're just in Center City, so being able to place students in the Northeast or South Philly or wherever was really, really helpful for my students. Just getting different ideas, the whole partnership part and the sharing was really helpful.

I always really enjoyed their workshops and gatherings of different providers from across the city. I love to be able to talk to other people in other programs. It really enables, from a ground floor perspective. It's easier to offer good programming to our own participants when there is a working framework from across the city. It helps guide us in our own program, what should we be pursuing and what not. It also helps us not step on each other's toes as well.

myPLACE campus staff also described their OAE-supported collaboration as very useful. In addition to participating in partner meetings, myPLACE campuses also met monthly with OAE staff. One interviewee described strong collaboration and support among the myPLACE campuses:

I would leave meetings feeling like I knew what most of the adult education programs were and I learned about programs I didn't know about before, and which would be a good fit for learners....everyone had really positive feelings about the team at OAE which is not an easy task when you are a city agency who is the funder!...They really created a sense of collaboration, which can be hard because we are all applying for the same funding....They did a great job of getting everyone to sit down and work together. Because OAE modeled that, it caused all campuses to model that.

Interviewees praised the referral process OAE developed and also identified several gaps. As one myPLACE campus staff said, "I think myPLACE is one of the most unique programs they have in any state - it's an integrated and coordinated program. It's a way for adult programs to come together and say this is what I have to offer. You can work with a group of providers to send learners to the right program that is a good fit for them." One interviewee praised OAE's efforts to create the database, "OAE did a fabulous job getting out there, finding out who these organizations were so they could build a database of where people could go. That was one of the biggest resources needed in the city. They made a way for everyone to look to find out what was available." In support of a coherent and unified referral process, OAE led a process to adopt CASAS as a common assessment across programs, and many interviewees heralded this as an important step forward. However, some smaller programs did not use CASAS. This necessitated myPLACE staff warning learners who were referred to such sites that they would be assessed again.

Despite the existence of a program database, it can still be challenging to find program openings and make referrals for some types of adult learners; this was a bigger problem in some parts of the city than in others. Interviewees identified gaps in services for adults who score on the lowest levels on standardized assessments and for clients with special needs. They also observed that there are not enough programs in Northeast Philadelphia. In addition, students who were assessed at times when few new classes were beginning, e.g., late fall or

late February, often faced delays in being matched with classes. Another interviewee expressed concern is that the referral system does not include information about program quality. One myPLACE campus staff person said they were reluctant to refer learners to some sites, because they felt they did not know whether that site provided effective services or had received negative feedback from learners they referred. To address this, the staff member wanted the city to invest more in evaluating, improving, and supporting partner providers.

Interviewees viewed the ASAP database, a part of the myPLACE system, as a key resource of the network. The ASAP database serves as a useful resource to support individual learners, programs, and the city as a whole. Interviewees reported that, in the most recent program year, OAE sought to improve access to and the quality of information available through the ASAP database, which provides a directory of partner programs and a tracking system for adult learners enrolling in adult education through a myPLACE campus. ASAP has the potential to track learners' needs and ongoing growth and to provide data that programs can use to help guide services to individual learners, especially when learners' transfer from one program to another. The database also can allow programs to look broadly across the learners they serve to identify patterns and challenges related to initial assessment, referrals, and growth, as well as the students that seem to be falling through the cracks. And the database offers the city the possibility to better understand the levels and needs of learners across the city. One interviewee called it "an undervalued tool for collecting data and providing workforce development to the city."

Despite both its accomplishments and its potential advantages, interviewees identified a number of challenges related to the ASAP data system. These included:

- It was not user-friendly. The system could be cumbersome to use. As one interviewee described, "Digital referral systems for programs that work with the city tend to... not be fluid. There is a lot of clicking to get to someone's name, to pull reports. Sometimes a student might be in the system 4 or 5 times; there was a lot of redundancy because of small errors in data entry."
- It was often incomplete or not up-to-date. All partners did not or could not keep their program information updated. Several interviewees said that the requirements can be hard for smaller programs to comply with. These programs did not have funding to keep the system up-to-date and didn't always see the benefits or have the capacity to do so. Some myPLACE campuses regularly called programs to make sure they had reliable information for making program referrals. Another myPLACE campus said that there was variation in how partners recorded data.
- More training on the database could be helpful. One interviewee said, "When you're holding contractors to a database, you need to train them in that database, you need to make sure you thoroughly train them and make sure you're an expert. When that is the only way to share data, It's imperative that the database is built out correctly.... It took a long time for us to know what we were doing in ASAP."

Another myPLACE staff said that OAE itself could have benefitted from greater in-house expertise about the database in order to better support providers.

Within a common framework, OAE allowed flexibility for myPLACE campuses to adapt processes and activities to their context or in order to fill service gaps. When OAE was defunded, the network had five funded myPLACE campuses. It also had additional campuses that joined the network in other ways, one via self-funding and another that described itself as an unadvertised partner that referred a lot of students through ASAP to partner programs. Several interviewees pointed out the benefits of this flexibility. While all myPLACE campuses assessed learners with the same tool, they designed their approaches differently, e.g., in terms of how to schedule the multiple assessment parts and how to manage the referral process. Some did group assessments and others used an individual approach; some did the entire assessment in one sitting, while others broke it up into two sessions. The self-funded site joined, in part, in order to expand opportunities for learners to get assessed, adding nights and weekends. One site focused its services on two potentially underserved populations, formerly incarcerated people and people with health issues. As one interviewee said, “All campuses acted similarly but they were not all the same.” Another called this “appropriate variability” in how sites worked.

Interviewees reported that OAE provided supports and technical assistance that helped programs and campuses improve program quality. One campus representative said that OAE had clear expectations and helped groups manage them and make sure they were striving towards monthly goals. Another partner described receiving helpful feedback on their challenges, as well as what they were doing well. A third reported that OAE listened carefully, created opportunities for idea exchange, and constantly looked for best practices and improvements which made them “outstanding partners to work with.” OAE also helped new programs and campuses get off the ground. One provider noted, “They [OAE] were really helpful with us launching [our campus]. They gave us a document about how to put together a program. The networking, professional development, and advising services were awesome.” A long-time adult education provider also praised their support, “Every time you had an issue, they are here to support you.” Respondents cited getting help with diverse issues, including advertising, referrals, and dealing with conflicts.

Promoting Cross-System Coordination

Key city stakeholders with a range of connections to adult learners and the adult education system viewed OAE as playing an important collaborator role in supporting cross-system coordination and program improvement

OAE provided expertise and support for other sectors seeking to integrate adult education services into their work. For example, they served as an advisor on how to rate proposal quality and on program design for Philadelphia Works when it sought to contextualize literacy

within a training program. OAE also took on a leadership role to help groups better coordinate when they served as a liaison between Title II organizations and Philadelphia Works. This included educating Philadelphia Works on what Title II adult education organizations could and could not do. They also trained the literacy liaisons at the Career Link sites about existing adult education services and how to connect people to them. According to one interviewee, “[The roles OAE played] took away so many barriers to forming relationships.”

OAE promoted improved cross-system coordination in a variety of ways in order to better integrate adult education into other systems and efforts. One effort involved helping to link adult literacy and vocational training for those returning from incarceration. One interviewee said, “Having a continuum of care and being able to bridge what happens inside to outside the walls is very important. OAE and myPLACE were essential to helping us bridge some of those challenges.” Another interviewee described working with OAE on continuity of services once incarcerated people are released.

OAE worked with workforce development leaders as a strategic partner to think about how to more closely link adult education with workforce training, especially in situations where low test scores posed a barrier for clients wanting to move into vocational training. Recent efforts along these lines prior to defunding included work to develop industry fundamental courses – upskilling courses contextualized within an industry and improving referral processes between the two systems. According to interviewees, collaboration with OAE created better cross-system coordination and integration: “In the past, there was a lot of crossing lanes. We would talk about each other's systems [but not involve each other]. Now we come together and have those conversations and put something out together. It’s easier to work together now.”

OAE also worked with other partners focused on young adults to improve system integration of services for that population. Goals included improving data collection and data sharing to understand how best to serve young people and to get them into the right programs and settings.

Differing data systems pose one challenge to cross-system coordination. Multiple and disconnected data systems across the adult education and workforce fields make it more difficult to show impact. The CareerLink has one system and OAE a different one; Title II programs must use a data reporting system mandated by their federal funding. These different accountability mechanisms across workforce (e.g., job placements) and adult education (e.g., skill gains), as well as the diverse goals they focus on, can also make collaboration more difficult.

Adult Education City Services Re-envisioned

In describing a re-envisioned “OAE” respondents felt that, given what OAE had already accomplished, the goal for the future should be to do “what we have done [but] better.” One

respondent said, the city would do “better to maintain and strengthen already innovative ideas versus starting with a whole new program and system.”

Creating a vision to drive cross-system integration

When envisioning the role of the city in adult education in the future, most respondents began by noting the need for a strong commitment to this sector at the Mayor and City Council levels. Several respondents noted that adult education is key to workforce development, reducing poverty and increasing social justice. For example, one respondent said, “Philly needs funding and support for adult education and workforce in the city to better deal with poverty, civil unrest, etc. that are happening currently. Considering adult education as a key element of workforce development and poverty alleviation must be recognized.” Some understood that without building a case in the eyes of funders and policymakers for this linkage, adult education is more vulnerable to the type of budget cut which defunded OAE in the Spring of 2020. Although there was recognition that investment in one sector alone will not address these challenges, they believe that a re-envisioned city office of adult education should take a strong hand in establishing the link between adult education, poverty reduction and increased social justice across city systems.

In order to build commitment and increase integration, coherence, and consistency across systems, some respondents suggested that there is a need to collaboratively create a shared “mission, vision, and core values” for adult education in Philadelphia. Respondents noted that adult education is either unfamiliar, misunderstood, or means different things to different people among key stakeholders to an integrated city system dedicated to reducing poverty and increasing social justice. There was a strong sense that many different types of stakeholders should be engaged in the process of developing a vision, mission, core values, and goals, including adult education practitioners and learners. Importantly, several people discussed the difficulty of communicating what adult education is and how it can benefit the city. Therefore, an important emphasis was placed on a description of what adult education is, why it is needed, and what its goals are in Philadelphia that is easily messaged. Although a complex and layered field of service, it needs an “elevator pitch” for funders and policy makers as well as potential partners. The benefits of such efforts would not only help “sell” the importance of adult education, therefore strengthening commitment to it, but would also help all stakeholders find their place in the system in a more efficient way. As one administrator stated, “I would love to see the office focus on building a local common policy agenda. That will make us all more effective advocates in our work. I do think clarifying which groups of people are doing what...trying to figure out the right working relationships and who can best serve that population would be helpful, to make it easier for participants to navigate the system better and also [better] utilize the existing infrastructure.”

A common vision can also help establish accountability procedures that, in turn, could make adult education funding more sustainable. In other words, [without proper funding], “you end up not getting to the goal you set. [So, you need to ask], What is your vision anyway? Set your bar. Find out who needs support. Check for impact. If you’re not meeting your goal, check for

who is doing what.” Appropriate funding is key to adult education meeting its goals; meeting its goals is key to sustained funding. As one respondent explained it, “You don’t under-resource a program that needs a certain level of resources for the problem you’re trying to address. Underfunding and over-expecting is a problem. Set your bar higher and then fund to the bar you set. “

Key roles for a city office of adult education

Given the interest in maintaining the general outlines of what OAE was already doing, it is unsurprising that respondents identified key roles that the city could play that echo and amplify what OAE was already doing. Respondents made clear that the city should not get involved in providing direct services. Interviewees identified four key roles the city should continue and expand. A re-envisioned OAE should: (1) Serve as a hub that centralizes information and technical supports for adult education providers but also function as a convener/collaborator bringing together programs and services within adult education and across related domains. (2) Function as a centralized communication system. (3) Play a role in increasing program quality. (4) Work in conjunction with other city agencies to decrease barriers to participation. In identifying these roles, respondents seemed to imply that adult education needs to be better integrated with other efforts to improve quality of life for its residents and one respondent suggested that it could be a “bully pulpit” for better policies and services that can help this to happen.

Respondents feel that a city office of adult education should be a hub that connects learners to programs, programs to each other within an adult education provider network, and acts as a convener to help connect adult education with other entities, including the workforce system. In playing this role, it could help promote a more uniform way to address the needs of adult learners and alleviate redundancies and fill gaps in services. As one program administrator explained:

I don’t think the city should move into direct services. But [rather it should] support those who do direct services...The city can be a supportive service. They have to stay on top of the politics, the resources available, keep adult ed providers connected. That’s the part I see them playing - building the collective and building the capacity for quality of adult ed. Otherwise it goes backward.

In addition to being an information hub for programs, respondents see myPLACE as playing an important connector role between learners seeking program services by functioning as an intake and referral system. By creating the myPLACE campuses and the partner system, it has also created a meaningful network among program providers that respondents feel should be continued.

In addition, working more closely with the PA Department of Education, the prison system, and the workforce system could create helpful alignments and collaborations across systems. By doing so, the city could make more informed decisions about adult education and could also help other systems learn more about the needs of urban, low literacy adults. In this way, it

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could influence policy and practices for the better. The city could also play a convening role to bring together stakeholders around a shared vision of adult education and its role in poverty reduction and increased social justice. For example, one respondent made a forceful case for the importance of alignment between adult education and workforce development that also includes employers:

If [the city is] trying to get people to a sustainable career pathway, then it has to work closely with the Office of Workforce Development and Philadelphia Works and all the stakeholders here. It's got to be able to share best practices, and resources, and tools to make that happen. We need to make literacy a component of everything we do. Those stakeholders need to include employers in Philadelphia and those who are placing people in jobs. We need to blend high school equivalency [preparation] into all workforce development we do because 60% of jobs will need high school education.

Another interviewee made a plug for integration with the re-entry population of adults leaving prisons:

We need to do a far better job [of] connecting people getting educated behind our walls to what's happening outside the walls. We need a better connection linking those people to supports. They need connection to be able to continue when they come home.

And a third made a case for the continued focus on tutor training and providing city-wide coordination across educational systems:

Tutor training is a major help. They connect to the educational institutions. They provided the platform for the tutor training and coordinated. They got experts from the state and universities to come together. They're the connector.

Finally, another respondent noted that if the city gets behind adult education as a major commitment, an office of adult education can play a major role in influencing service provision around the city:

There are places only they [the city] can play that we, none of us [individual programs] would be able to do, such as convening on a large scale, bringing everyone together, and using policy or bully pulpit to influence action.

A city office of adult education could play key communication roles that support a city-wide commitment to adult education, strengthen the adult education provider network and the quality of services, and benefit learners. Respondents observed that the lack of clear, concise, and compelling messaging about what adult education is and why it is needed may have undermined overall commitment to adult education. Although many seem to understand the value of education generally, “a lot of time, the conversation is about education vs. adult ed. specifically...[There is] not enough individual recognition and many don't know that adult ed exists in the city.” Following the collaborative development of a vision, mission, and goal

statement described above, a city office of adult education could play a key role in communicating it broadly within city systems, using this to strengthen or build connections between adult education and all other city services aimed at poverty reduction and increased social justice. Related to such a communication role, a city office of adult education should also communicate what adult education is accomplishing in Philadelphia. The role of communicator is more difficult without a clear definition of roles within a well-articulated framework designed to address a vision and mission for adult education along with specified goals is lacking. A key stakeholder explained, “The pathways of communication get muddy sometimes. Having strong defined roles would be awesome...OCF can model a strong communication framework with adult ed if they choose to do so.”

One important way that communication can be promoted to strengthen the adult education provider network is by providing a highly functional, well managed, user-friendly database. Such a system could have two functions: to describe programs in enough detail to help providers make informed and accurate referrals and to track student progress through and across programs. Learners could also benefit from access to the program descriptions database. Making this information available to them could reduce the number of barriers to participation for some learners. Another potential means of program-to-program communication could be some kind of regularly published e-newsletter.

Some interviewees acknowledged that it can be difficult to both measure and communicate outcomes. For one thing, the focus on quantifiable measures of success can obscure system successes. As one myPLACE staff person put it, “There’s such a focus on the numbers and spin. Even the reporting from OAE - 10,000 people served. What does that mean? That’s a lot of people touched but how deeply. [We should] steer away from the big numbers and look for depth of service.” She went on to add that sometimes progress to final goals can be slow, but important milestones are reached along the way and should be recognized. It will be important to find a way to measure and balance a variety of important participant outcomes.

The problem with a lot of programs, because we want outcomes, statistics, because we want people to take their GED, it’s hard showing a path from taking a class on social media and moving into adult education. It happens, but it’s hard to track that progress. Everyone wants that data. We don’t just want those feel good stories. Understanding the ways in which digital literacy education, adult education, and access to computers and internet are going to shape a path forward is going to be really valuable.

A city office of adult education can also play a role in improving the quality of adult education programs. Some interviewees suggested that a city office of adult education could set standards for and monitor program quality across the provider network. This information could be used within the myPLACE system to address the expressed desire from the myPLACE campus staff to be sure they were referring learners to effective programs. For those that do not attain quality standards, the city could play a role in their improvement. One person argued that addressing the substantial need for adult education [i.e., increasing the number served] should not be prioritized over providing high quality services. In the support of effective services, the

city could play a role of sharing and “uplifting best practices” and developing communities of practice dedicated to increasing excellence.

A city office of adult education should also play a role in decreasing barriers to participation by supporting increased digital access and by focusing on underserved populations.

Respondents identified a lack of access to broadband among the population most in need as a primary barrier to participation. Access would provide flexibility in adult education participation as well as prepare participants for 21st century workplaces. Many respondents focused on the importance of digital learning, not only because of COVID-19, but because of our increasingly online world. The importance of increasing digital access and the role of city government in doing so was an area of significant consensus among respondents. A sample of statements on this theme include:

I do think investing in technology and digital literacy for these adult learners is essential for adults to succeed in the classroom right now. I think we're going to be working remotely for some time. Even beyond the pandemic, offering things remotely is really important and offers more flexibility.

I think the internet needs to be a utility and it needs to be provided by the city. It shouldn't be controlled by corporations. When we made public school go online and then we said people had to buy this service, it was a huge barrier. That's [also] connected to adult education and digital literacy.

I would love to see more [digital] focus in the adult ed space [and] also around digital navigation. I will tell you that we have a lot of service providers with the best of intentions who don't know how to guide people through how to access an LMS in a way that is effective. We can set up lots of technologies, but teaching people, both from the staff and career seeker perspective, how to use those technologies is a huge lift.

The access point moving forward is we're going to have to have reliable, sustainable, usable internet for everyone in their own home. The city has to push to see it as a utility in order to move forward.

Some respondents reported that the system does not serve all adults equally well. Specifically singled out as having needs that are not being fully met are English language learners, those who have aged out of school but are still young (18-24 year olds), and those with the lowest literacy. Distributing the availability of services where needed was part of the equation to better meet this need. One respondent noted that while community schools have been effective in meeting the need in some neighborhoods, this is not a catch-all solution for all learners. She argued that it is important to continue to offer community-based sites for those who experienced trauma in school and would feel unwilling to return there as adults. Respondents believe that the city has unused spaces that can be utilized for adult education services (e.g., testing and classes). Using such spaces could help distribute services more

precisely where there is unmet need and stabilize access to spaces for programs that depend on borrowed space or decrease program costs where rent is paid.

Lastly, there was an acknowledgement that barriers to participation can be reduced through service integration across social service sectors that could take the form of wrap around services.

The problem is you have to meet adults where they are. They come for a wide variety of reasons. A lot of the barriers to adults learning are jobs, childcare, access to transportation. The barriers are different than for young people. We need to more holistically plan for adult learners. There is a lot of pressure put on the learner because they're adults and they're choosing this, that they should figure this stuff out. I wish there was more support and understanding for adults going back to school. We have to look at what they need to go back to school. How can we help them push through all their starts and stops? I don't know if that planning is always there. That makes it really hard. A lot of support and planning is needed to help all learners coming from every part of life (including coming out of incarceration).

The wraparound services that you would get in K-12...these adults need that. Mental health, etc. Only the city would have the capacity to provide that. Clearly, increasing access requires additional investments in adult education. Making the case for these investments...

Key Takeaways

Interviews with myPLACE campus staff, referral partners, and key stakeholders from a range of sectors indicate strong support for a robust role for the city in supporting adult education in Philadelphia, appreciation of OAE's projects and initiatives, and ideas about how to further strengthen the city's role and that of a possible future office of adult education.

OAE successfully established supportive technical assistance and collaborative networks that enhanced the overall effectiveness of adult education services across the city. Respondents indicated that a new, re-envisioned OAE should build on this success by enhancing and improving what is already in place. The relationships that OAE built across adult education programs were working well; efforts should continue seeking to enhance understanding across providers about programs best matched to learning needs and improving their services through a range of short and long-term professional development offerings. One important area for improvement that could strengthen the work of the network would be an improved database that is more user-friendly, efficient, informative, and timely.

The city could play a key role in expanding the networks that OAE had established by more fully integrating and aligning adult education with other service domains in the city related to poverty reduction, improved employment, and increased social justice (e.g., workforce

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development, the prison system, and out-of-school youth). Such efforts would help address service gaps, eliminate redundancies, and clarify and distinguish roles across systems. The OAE could also play a major role in convening stakeholders in identifying and operationalizing a shared vision of program quality.

Finally, a re-envisioned OAE could increase the visibility of adult education and knowledge about the purpose of adult education as well as available services, among diverse city stakeholders. As part of this effort, it could engage further in advocacy on behalf of the field such that systems across the city understand the value of adult education, those other systems and adult education interact in ways that are mutually supportive of each other's goals. Increased knowledge and better system integration could help sustain the city's role in overall support and coordination of adult education services.

Respondents enthusiastically look forward to the city rebuilding an office of adult education. They believe it can build and support needed collaborations. These collaborations can strengthen organizations' capacity to help adults in Philadelphia meet their educational goals and reap the benefits of doing so within their families, workplaces, and communities. A re-imagined OAE could also serve the city as a whole in countless ways.

Appendix 2, Part 2: Administrator Survey Results

The purpose of the administrator survey is: 1) to help the Office of Children and Families (OCF) understand the availability of adult education services in Philadelphia (before COVID-19 and currently); 2) to collect information about administrators' experiences working with the former OAE, and 3) to gather administrators' perspectives about the role that city government should play in supporting adult education in Philadelphia. The survey was emailed to 79 adult education organizations in Philadelphia, to be completed by one administrator from each. The list was generated by the Philadelphia Adult Literacy Alliance and the Office of Children and Families. There were 30 responses (38% response rate). Surveys were completed from November 3 to 23, 2020. The frequency and percentage of responses for each question and key findings are provided below. For questions rating respondents' experiences with services, the mean and standard deviation are also provided. If the number of responses are low, there are no percentages reported. In addition, some findings are based on analysis that does not appear in the tables.

Please note that less than 40% of the adult education administrators who received the survey responded to it; thus, this is not a representative sample and limits the generalizability of the results. Since the overall response rate is relatively low, these results offer a starting point for reflection and a resource to generate questions for further exploration, rather than a definitive report describing adult education services in Philadelphia and about the perspectives of Philadelphia's adult education program administrators.

Adult Education Program Information

Question 1: How would you classify your organization? (select one)

- 47% (n=14) of 30 organizations that participated in the survey are community-based organizations.
- 30% of organizations selected "other" which includes: adult literacy center, adult education organizations, adult education & workforce development organizations, non-profit 9-12 school, immigrant agency, health center, and universities.

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	N=30	(%)*
Community-based organization	14	47%
Other	9	30%
Workforce development organization	3	10%
Community college	1	3%
K-12 School	1	3%
Library	1	3%
School district	1	3%

*Note: all percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Questions 2 & 3:

How many total learners (unduplicated): were enrolled in your adult education services (e.g., ABE, HSE, Literacy, ELL) in the 2018-2019 program year?

How many total learners (unduplicated) have been enrolled in your adult education services (e.g., ABE, HSE, Literacy, ELL) since July 1, 2020?

- The majority of organizations (54%, n=16) had more than 100 enrolled students in 2018-2019. Nearly one-quarter each (23%, n=7) had fewer than 50 students and 50 to 100 students.
- In 2020, however, almost half of organizations (47%, n=14) have fewer than 50 enrolled students; and 36% (n=11) have more than 100 students.
- 67%, or 20 organizations, have had decreased enrollment in 2020; only two (7%) organizations reported an enrollment increase; and 27% (n=8) remained the same. However, programs completed the survey in November and had not completed the program year.

(Total N=30)

	2018-2019		since July 1, 2020	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
<50	7	23%	14	47%
51 - 100	7	23%	5	17%
101 - 200	3	10%	10	33%
201 - 400	5	17%	1	3%
401 - 600	5	17%	--	--
601 - 900	2	7%	--	--
901 – 1200	1	3%	--	--

Question 4: Types of classes or services offered in your adult education program (select all that apply)

- Adult basic education was the most common service (67%, n=20) offered before COVID-19. The other most common services were high school equivalency (HSE) preparation (63%, n=19), workforce preparation (63%, n=19), English language learning (57%, n=17), adult secondary education (53%, n=16), and digital literacy (53%, n=16). These services were offered in more than half of the 30 organizations.
- Currently¹², HSE preparation (53%, n=16) and workforce development (53%, n=16) are the most commonly offered services, followed by ABE (50%, n=15), adult secondary education (50%, n=15), and English language learning (50%, n=15). Programs currently continue to offer similar services to those offered before COVID, though the number of services offered has decreased.
- The “other” category includes re-entry services and connecting participants to food assistance such as food pantries.

(Total N=30)

	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Adult basic education (basic literacy and numeracy)	20	67%	15	50%
High school equivalency preparation	19	63%	16	53%
Workforce preparation	19	63%	16	53%
English language learning (e.g. ESOL, ESL)	17	57%	15	50%
Adult secondary education	16	53%	15	50%
Digital literacy	16	53%	14	47%
Functional literacy (e.g., financial, health)	10	33%	8	27%
Transition to post-secondary education	10	33%	10	33%
Civics education/prep for citizenship	9	30%	6	20%
Family literacy	4	13%	3	10%
Integrated Education and Training (IET)	3	10%	3	10%
Native language literacy (e.g., Spanish literacy)	2	7%	1	3%
Other	2	7%	2	7%

- Before COVID-19, 53.3% of organizations (n=16) offered at least 5 different classes/services. Currently, this number has decreased to 30% (n=9).
- Thirteen of 30 respondents (43%) noted that before the pandemic, their program offered at least five of the six most commonly offered services; only one organization offered all six of the most commonly offered services

¹² “Currently” is based on the date the respondents took the survey. For this report, “currently” includes dates from November 3 to November 23, 2020.

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(Total N=30)

Number of offered classes/services	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
1	1	3%	3	10%
2	2	7%	3	10%
3	2	7%	2	7%
3	5	17%	7	23%
4	4	13%	3	10%
5	4	13%	2	7%
6	6	20%	6	20%
7	1	3%	--	--
8	3	10%	2	7%
9	1	3%	1	3%
10	1	3%	1	3%

Question 5: Support services offered (select all that apply)

- Job search assistance (67%, n=20), employment coaching/counseling (60%, n=18), and tutoring or other academic support (60%, n=18) were the top three support services before COVID-19. These are also the top three support services currently: job search assistance (57%, n=17), employment coaching/counseling (57%, n=17), tutoring or other academic support (53%, n=16).
- These three support services were offered by more than half of the 30 organizations.
- The “other” category includes virtual childcare and connecting students to health services.

(Total N=30)

	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Job search assistance	20	67%	17	57%
Employment coaching/counseling	18	60%	17	57%
Tutoring or other academic support (e.g., study skills classes)	18	60%	16	53%
Case management	17	57%	14	47%
Career counseling or planning	14	47%	14	47%
Job PLACEment activities	14	47%	13	43%
College navigation support	12	40%	13	43%
Access to income supports (e.g., screening for public benefits eligibility)	11	37%	10	33%
Financial aid advising and application support	10	33%	11	37%
Financial coaching/counseling	10	33%	9	30%
Transportation assistance	9	30%	5	17%
Services for students with disabilities	8	27%	6	20%

(Total N=30)

	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Financial support provided by your organization (e.g., tuition assistance, emergency cash)	6	20%	8	27%
Childcare	2	7%	2	7%
Other	2	7%	3	10%

*Question 6: Number of staff working in your adult education programs and services (*If someone has both teaching and administrative responsibilities, include them in the category in which they have the most responsibilities)*

- Responses to this question were combined into four categories: none, 1-3 employees, 4-6 employees, and 7 or more employees.
- **Administrative staff:** 87% (n=26) of organization had full-time administrative staff positions before COVID-19. Most organizations (67%, n=20) had at least 1 to 3 full-time administrative staff positions. Currently, the number of organizations with full-time administrative staff has decreased slightly (pre-COVID) from 87% (n= 26) to 77% (n=23), and the percentage with no full-time administrative staff increased by 10 points (13% to 23%).
- **Teaching staff:** Before COVID-19 and currently, 47% (n=14) of organizations had at least one full-time teacher, and 53% (n=16) organizations had no full-time teachers (no change).
- **Case managers/counselors:** Before COVID, 33% (n=10) of organizations had at least one case manager/counselor; currently 30% (n=9) of the 30 organizations had at least one case manager/counselor.
- **Volunteer tutors:** Before COVID, 70% (n=20) had volunteer tutors, compared to 63% (n=13) currently.
- **“Other”** positions reported by respondents included librarian, employment and training specialist, and hospitality support.

(Total N=30)

Type of staffing position:		Before COVID-19		Currently	
		N	(%)	N	(%)
Full-time administrative staff	None	4	13%	7	23%
	1 to 3	20	67%	17	57%
	4 to 6	3	10%	5	17%
	7+	3	10%	1	3%
Part-time administrative staff	None	15	50%	19	63%
	1 to 3	14	47%	11	37%
	4 to 6	1	3%	--	--
	7+	--	--	--	--

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(Total N=30)

Type of staffing position:		Before COVID-19		Currently	
		N	(%)	N	(%)
Full-time teachers	None	16	53%	16	53%
	1 to 3	5	17%	7	23%
	4 to 6	6	20%	4	13%
	7+	3	10%	3	10%
Part-time teachers	None	13	43%	14	47%
	1 to 3	10	33%	11	37%
	4 to 6	3	10%	1	3%
	7+	4	13%	4	13%
Full-time case managers/counselors	None	20	67%	21	70%
	1 to 3	7	23%	7	23%
	4 to 6	3	10%	2	7%
	7+	--	--	--	--
Part-time case managers/counselors	None	24	80%	26	87%
	1 to 3	6	20%	4	13%
	4 to 6	--	--	--	--
	7+	--	--	--	--
Volunteer tutors	None	9	30%	13	43%
	1 to 3	3	10%	7	23%
	4 to 6	5	17%	3	10%
	7+	13	43%	7	12%
Non-instructional volunteers	None	21	70%	22	73%
	1 to 3	5	17%	4	13%
	4 to 6	--	--	--	--
	7+	4	13%	4	13%
Full-time other	None	27	90%	27	90%
	1 to 3	3	10%	2	7%
	4 to 6	--	--	1	3%
	7+	--	--	--	--
Part-time other	None	24	80%	25	83%
	1 to 3	5	17%	5	17%
	4 to 6	1	3%	--	--
	7+	--	--	--	--

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Question 7: Funding sources your organization is using to provide adult education programs and services (select all that apply)

- Donations (50%, n=15) and private foundations (40%, n=12) were the most common funding sources before COVID-19 and currently, with each at 40% (n=12).
- The total number of funding sources before COVID- 19 (n= 80) across programs has decreased by 23% (n=62).
- “Other” funding sources included Philadelphia School District operating funds Goodwill, Library Association, Presbytery of Philadelphia, Giving Tuesday, IHM Congregation, and a health center.

(Total N=30)

Funding sources:	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Donations	15	50%	12	40%
Private foundations	12	40%	12	40%
Fundraisers	11	37%	7	23%
Local government	10	33%	5	17%
Federal government (e.g., AEFLA, TANF, PERKINS V)	8	27%	7	23%
State government	7	23%	7	23%
Student tuition	7	23%	5	17%
Other	6	20%	5	17%
Employers	4	13%	2	7%

Question 8: Number of physical sites/locations where your adult education program and services are offered in Philadelphia

- Before COVID-19 (47%, n=14) and currently (50%, n=15,) a plurality of organizations offered adult education programs and services at 1 location. However, almost half the organizations have decreased the number of locations since the COVID pandemic.

(Total N=30)

Number of locations	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
0	--	--	6	20%
1	14	47%	15	50%
2	6	20%	4	13%
3	4	13%	1	3%
4 to 6	4	13%	--	--
7 to 10	--	--	--	--
11 or more	1	3%	--	--
No response	1	3%	4	13%

Question 9: List the ZIP code(s) of ALL locations where your organization provides adult education and/or family literacy classes/services

- Collectively, the 30 respondents provide adult education and/or family literacy programs in 110 locations. The highest number of programs are offered in Central (n=21) and East (n=20) Philadelphia. North and Northeast-west Philadelphia have 13 and 10 programs, respectively.

Neighborhood	Total # locations	ZIP code	Area	# locations
Far Northeast	7	19116	Northeast—Bustleton North/Somerton	2
		19115	Northeast—Bustleton South	1
		19136	Northeast—Holmesburg	1
		19154	Northeast—Torresdale North	1
		19114	Northeast—Torresdale South	2
Northeast-East	6	19137	Northeast—Bridesburg	--
		19124	Northeast—Frankford	5
		19135	Northeast—Tacony	1
Northeast-West	10	19111	Northeast—Fox Chase	6
		19149	Northeast—Mayfair/Oxford Circle	2
		19152	Northeast—Rhawnhurst	2
North	13	19141	Logan	5
		19150	Northwest—Wadsworth	4
		19126	Oak Lane	--
		19120	Olney	4
Northwest	5	19118	Chestnut Hill	--
		19129	East Falls	2
		19144	Germantown	2
		19138	Germantown East	1
		19127	Manayunk	--
		19119	Mount Airy	--
		19128	Roxborough	--
West	7	19151	Overbrook	1
		19104	West Philadelphia—University City	2
		19139	West Philadelphia—West Market	3
		19131	Wynnefield/West Park	1
East	20	19125	Kensington/Fishtown	3
		19140	Nicetown	6
		19133	North Philadelphia—East	8
		19134	Port Richmond	3
Central	21	19121	Fairmount North/Brewerytown	9
		19132	North Philadelphia—West	5

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Neighborhood	Total # locations	ZIP code	Area	# locations
		19122	North Philadelphia—Yorktown	7
Central City	8	19103	Center City West	1
		19102	Center City West	1
		19106	Center City—Society Hill	--
		19107	Center City—Washington Square West/Chinatown	2
		19130	Fairmount South	2
		19123	Northern Liberties/Spring Garden	2
Southwest	9	19153	Eastwick	--
		19145	South Philadelphia—West	2
		19143	Southwest Philadelphia—Kingsessing	4
		19142	Southwest Philadelphia—Paschall/Elmwood	3
Southeast	4	19147	South Philadelphia—Bella Vista	--
		19148	South Philadelphia—East	4
		19146	South Philadelphia—Schuylkill	--
Total	110			110

Question 10: Learner populations who participate in your adult education program and services (select all that apply)

- For both time periods (before COVID-19 and currently), the majority of learners who participated in adult education programs and services are unemployed (87% pre-COVID vs. 77% currently). The second-largest learner population is adults who struggle with basic skills (77% pre-COVID vs. 70% currently).
- The “other” category included people living with HIV/AIDS and serving adults of any age.

(Total N=30)

Learner populations	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Unemployed or underemployed individuals	26	87%	23	77%
Learners who struggle with basic skills (literacy and/or numeracy)	23	77%	21	70%
Immigrants/refugees/non-native English speakers	20	67%	17	57%
Out-of-school young adults (16 to 24 years old)	20	67%	18	60%
Previously incarcerated individuals	20	67%	16	53%
Homeless persons	17	57%	13	43%
Individuals with diagnosed disabilities	15	50%	11	37%

(Total N=30)

Learner populations	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Dislocated workers	14	47%	14	47%
Veterans	8	27%	7	23%
Individuals in correctional facilities	5	17%	5	17%
Other	2	7%	2	7%

Question 11: Learner outcomes your organization tracks (select all that apply)

- The most commonly tracked outcomes before COVID-19 and currently are completion of personal goals (67% pre-COVID vs. 57% currently), attainment of secondary diploma or equivalent (63% pre-COVID vs. 57% currently), and educational functioning level (EFL) gains (63% pre-COVID vs. 53% currently).
- At least half of the 30 organizations tracked the following learner outcomes: completion of personal goals, attainment of secondary school diploma, EFL gains, attainment of certificates or credentials, placement in employment, and enrollment in post-secondary education before COVID-19. Currently, these are the same outcomes tracked by half of the organizations, but slightly fewer organizations are tracking them.

(Total N=30)

Learner outcomes	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Completion of personal goals	20	67%	16	53%
Attainment of secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent	19	63%	17	57%
Educational functioning level (EFL) gains or gains on pre-post standardized assessments	19	63%	17	57%
Attainment of certificates or credentials	17	57%	14	47%
PLACEMENT in employment	17	57%	14	47%
Enrollment in post-secondary education	15	50%	12	40%
Voting registration	10	33%	9	30%
Retention in employment	9	30%	9	30%
Achieved citizenship skills	8	27%	7	23%
Changes in parents' interactions with their children's literacy-related activities	6	20%	5	17%
Changes in parents' involvement with their children's education	6	20%	5	17%
General involvement in community activities	6	20%	5	17%
Wage gains	6	20%	6	20%
Children's progress in school	5	17%	5	17%
None	1	3%	1	3%

Question 12: Assessments used in your organization (select all that apply)

- The most frequently used assessments before COVID-19 and currently are CASAS Reading (43% pre-COVID vs. 37% currently), CASAS Math (40% pre-COVID vs. 37% currently), and CASAS Life and Work (37% pre-COVID vs. 33% currently)
- Before COVID-19, 53% of the 30 organizations indicated that they used only one assessment, and 40% used more than one assessment. Currently, the number of the organizations that use at least one assessment decreased from 93% to 77%. Thus, 23% of organizations are not currently using any assessment.
- The “other” category included TABE 9/10, 10/11, STAR, Jordan Word Lists, ABeCeDarian placement tests, IXL learning software, BASI Test 4.9, Wonderlic, Accuplacer, and an ESL assessment developed by the organization.

(Total N=30)

Assessment type	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
CASAS Reading	13	43%	11	37%
CASAS Math	12	40%	11	37%
CASAS Life and Work	11	37%	10	33%
Other	9	30%	7	23%
TABE, Forms 11 and 12	6	20%	2	7%
Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Literacy	2	7%	--	--
None	2	7%	7	23%
BEST Plus	1	3%	--	--
TABE CLAS-E	1	3%	1	3%
BEST Plus 2 0	--	--	--	--
Massachusetts Adult Proficiency test (MAPT)	--	--	--	--

Question 13: Times that classes/services are provided in your organization (select all that apply)

- 60% of 30 organizations provided classes/services at various times during weekdays, e.g., morning/afternoon/ or evening. Some organizations with evening classes also offered classes/services on weekends.
- Morning was the most common time classes were offered pre-COVID-19 (77%, n=23) and currently (63%, n=19).
- 20% (n=6) of organizations provided asynchronous courses before COVID-19, and the number slightly increased to 30% (n=9) currently.

(Total N=30)

Class times	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Weekdays: Morning	23	77%	19	63%
Weekdays: Afternoon	19	63%	17	57%
Weekdays: Evening	20	67%	16	53%
Weekends	8	27%	7	23%
Asynchronous	6	20%	9	30%
Not applicable	1	3%	4	13%

Question 14: Technology tools your staff can access for adult program and/ services (select all that apply)

- Before COVID-19, access to reliable internet was the most common technology tool used by program staff (87%, n=26), followed by laptops (83%, n=25). Currently, the percent of staff with access to reliable internet has decreased to 70% (n=21) and laptops to 77% (n=23); laptops were the most common technology tool selected currently, followed by access to reliable internet.

(Total N=30)

Technology tools	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Access to reliable internet	26	86%	21	70%
Laptops	25	83%	23	77%
Desktop computers	22	73%	12	40%
Smartphones (with internet access)	14	47%	12	40%
Smartboards	9	30%	4	13%
Tablets	8	27%	9	30%
Mobile hotspots	3	10%	6	20%

Question 15: Instruction your organization provides (select all that apply):

- After the outbreak of COVID-19, in-person instruction decreased drastically from 90% (n=27) to 27% (n=8).
- Online synchronous group instruction (77%, n=23) and synchronous individual instruction (67%, n=20) has increased by 50 to 60% since COVID-19.
- Over 65% of organizations indicated that they currently provide synchronous instruction for individuals or for groups.
- Asynchronous online instruction also increased, almost doubling from before COVID-19 (23%, n=7) to currently (50%, n=15).

(Total N=30)

Instruction	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
In-person	27	90%	8	27%
Blended/hybrid Learning (a combination of in-person and online instruction)	8	27%	8	27%
Asynchronous online instruction with each learner working independently	7	23%	15	50%
Asynchronous non-digital, such as printed packets and books	7	23%	8	27%
Synchronous (real-time) individual instruction online or by phone	4	13%	20	67%
Synchronous (real-time) group instruction online or by phone	3	10%	23	77%
Asynchronous online instruction with a group of learners working as a cohort	3	10%	7	23%

Question 16: Technology tools used for instruction (select all that apply)

- Before COVID-19, browsing tools for internet searches (77%, n=23) and office applications (57%, n=17) were the two technologies most often used for instruction.
- Currently, the most common technology tools for instruction are communication technologies (87%, n=26) and browsing tools for internet searches (70%, n=21).
- The use of communication technologies changed from 27% (n=8) pre-COVID to 87% (n=26) currently; learning management systems changed from 33% (n=10) pre-COVID to 60% (n=18) currently.

(Total N=30)

Instructional technology	Before COVID-19		Currently	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Browsing tools for internet searches	23	77%	21	70%
Office applications (e.g., iWork, Microsoft Office, Google Suite)	17	57%	19	63%
Curated resources (open education resources found online)	16	53%	16	53%
Social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat)	11	37%	11	37%
Learning apps (e.g., Quizlet, Kahoot)	10	33%	15	50%
Learning management systems (e.g., Moodle, Canvas, Google Classroom, Schoology, Edmentum)	10	33%	18	60%
Video/audio recorders	10	33%	13	43%
Communication technologies (e.g., WhatsApp, Zoom, Google Chat)	8	27%	26	87%

Licensed online curricula (e.g., Burlington English, Learning Upgrade, GED Academy)	5	17%	10	33%
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Overview of OAE Services

The following section asked respondents about their organization's experiences with OAE, including how helpful and effective they were. Respondent organizations were asked if they were a myPLACE campus or partner. Eight of 30 organizations are myPLACE campus, 12 as myPLACE partner, and 10 as other organization. To clarify the results of this section, responses were disaggregated by organizational type: myPLACE Campus, myPLACE partner, or other. The total combined number of responses for each section was also calculated.

*Question 17: Which OAE programs/services has your organization used? (select all that apply) *For those not selected, questions will not be asked about this program service*

- myPLACE partner meetings (87%, n=26), professional development programs (83%, n=25), tutor/volunteer training and referral program (73%, n=22), and myPLACE campuses (70%, n=21) were used by the majority of respondents.

(Total N=30)

	myPLACE Campus (n=8)	myPLACE Partner (n=12)	Other organization (n=10)	N	(%)
myPLACE partner meetings	7	12	7	26	87%
Professional development	7	10	8	25	83%
Tutor/volunteer training and referral program	7	9	8	22	73%
myPLACE campuses	8	12	1	21	70%
KEYSPOT	6	5	2	13	43%
Community Schools	2	2	1	5	17%

The following questions (18-19) were asked of respondents who indicated that they were a myPlace Campus (n=8). Because of the small sample size, percentages are not included in this section's tables

Question 18: How helpful was the OAE for your program in running the myPLACE campus?

- The majority of organizations (6) responded OAE was either "extremely" or "very" helpful in supporting myPLACE campuses.
- On a five-point scale, ranging from "not at all" (1) to "extremely" (5), the average degree of helpfulness is 4.13 (standard deviation [SD]=.40).

Degree of helpfulness	N=8
Not at all	--
Slightly	1
Moderately	1
Very	2
Extremely	4
Don't know	--

Question 19: How effective was the OAE's communication with your program when running the myPLACE campus?

- The majority of organizations (6) responded that OAE was either “extremely” or “very” effective in supporting myPLACE campuses.
- The average degree of effectiveness is 3.75 (SD=1.48).

Degree of effectiveness	N=8
Not at all	1
Slightly	1
Moderately	--
Very	3
Extremely	3
Don't know	--

The following questions (20-25) were asked of respondents who indicated that they had worked with a myPLACE campus. Eight myPLACE campuses, 12 myPLACE partners and one organization worked with a myPLACE campus. Because of the small sample size, percentages are included for the total number of responses and not for the organizational types (myPLACE campus, myPLACE partner, or other) in this section's tables.

Question 20: Which myPLACE campus/campuses did your organization interact with? (select all that apply)

- Center for Literacy (71%. N=15), Congreso de Latinos Unidos (67%, n=14), Community Learning Center (67%, n=14), and 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund (62%, n=13) were the myPLACE campuses with the highest number of interactions.

(Total N=21)

	myPLACE Campus (n=8)	myPLACE Partner (n=12)	Other organization (n=1)	N	(%)
Center for Literacy	7	8	--	15	71%
Congreso de Latinos Unidos	5	8	1	14	67%
Community Learning Center	7	6	1	14	67%
1199C Training & Upgrading Fund	7	5	1	13	62%
Temple	5	6	--	11	52%
New World Association	6	2	--	8	38%
Philadelphia FIGHT	4	3	1	8	38%
Don't know	1	--	--	1	5%

Question 21: Estimate the percentage of learners in your organization that came from myPLACE campuses.

- The majority (n=9) of respondents indicated no more than one-quarter of learners enrolled at their organizations came from myPLACE campus referrals.

(Total N=21)

	myPLACE Campus (n=8)	myPLACE Partner (n=12)	Other organization (n=1)	N	(%)
0-25%	3	6	1	10	48%
26- 50%	--	5	--	5	24%
51-75%	3	1	--	4	19%
76-100%	2	--	--	2	10%

Question 22: Overall, how helpful were myPLACE campuses for learner placement and enrollment in your program?

- The majority of respondents indicated the myPLACE campuses were either “very” (n=8) or “extremely” (n=4) helpful for learner placement and enrollment in their programs. However, nearly half indicated that myPLACE campuses were only moderately, slightly, or not at all helpful in this area.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.42 (SD=1.28).

(Total N=21)

Degree of helpfulness	myPLACE Campus (n=8)	myPLACE Partner (n=12)	Other organization (n=1)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	1	1	3	14%
Slightly	--	1	--	1	5%
Moderately	1	4	--	5	24%

(Total N=21)

Degree of helpfulness	myPLACE Campus (n=8)	myPLACE Partner (n=12)	Other organization (n=1)	N	(%)
Very	5	3	--	8	38%
Extremely	1	3	--	4	19%
Don't know	--	--	--	--	--

Question 23: Overall, how effective was communication between myPLACE campuses and your program?

- The majority of respondents indicated the myPLACE campuses were either “very” (n=8) or “extremely” (n=4) effective in terms of communication. However, nearly half indicated that myPLACE campuses were only moderately, slightly, or not at all helpful in this area.
- The average degree of effectiveness is 3.57 (SD=1.02).

(Total N=21)

Degree of effectiveness	myPLACE Campus (n=8)	myPLACE Partner (n=12)	Other organization (n=1)	N	(%)
Not at all	0	1	--	1	5%
Slightly	1	1	--	2	10%
Moderately	2	3	--	5	24%
Very	4	5	1	10	48%
Extremely	1	2	--	3	14%
Don't know	--	--	--	--	--

Question 24: Overall, how effective was myPLACE in terms of an intake, assessment, and referral system?

- The majority of respondents indicated the myPLACE campuses were either “very” (n=9) or “extremely” (n=5) effective in terms of the intake, assessment, and referral system.
- The average degree of effectiveness is 3.61 (SD=1.24).

(Total N=21)

Degree of effectiveness	myPLACE Campus (n=8)	myPLACE Partner (n=12)	Other organization (n=1)	N	(%)
Not at all	--	1	1	2	10%
Slightly	1	1	--	2	10%
Moderately	--	3	--	3	14%
Very	2	7	--	9	43%
Extremely	5	--	--	5	24%

Don't know	--	--	--	--	--
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Question 25: Do you agree with the following statement? Our program would like to continue to use myPLACE campus services in the future.

- The majority of respondents (18) agreed that they would continue to use myPLACE campus services in the future.
- On a five-point scale ranging from *Strongly disagree* (1) to *Strongly agree* (5), the average degree of agreement is 4.43 (SD=1.20).

(Total N=21)

Degree of Agreement	myPLACE Campus (n=8)	myPLACE Partner (n=12)	Other organization (n=1)	N	(%)
Strongly disagree	--	--	1	1	5%
Somewhat disagree	1	1	--	2	10%
Neither agree or disagree	--	--	--	--	--
Somewhat agree	1	1	--	2	10%
Strongly agree	6	10	--	16	76%
Don't know	--	--	--	--	--

The following questions (26-28) were asked of respondents (n=26) who indicated that they had attended a myPLACE partner meeting. Seven myPLACE campuses, 12 myPLACE partners and seven organizations attended myPLACE partner meetings.

Question 26: How helpful were myPLACE partner meetings in facilitating networking for your organization?

- The majority of respondents indicated the partner meetings were “very” helpful (23%, n=6) or “extremely” helpful (38%, n=10) in facilitating networking.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.84 (SD=1.21).

(Total N=26)

Degree of helpfulness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=12)	Other Organization (n=7)	N	(%)
Not at all	--	--	1	1	4%
Slightly	1	1	1	3	12%
Moderately	1	2	2	5	19%
Very	--	6	--	6	23%
Extremely	5	2	3	10	38%
Don't know	--	1	--	1	4%

Question 27: How helpful were myPLACE partner meetings in providing professional development for your organization?

- The largest portion of respondents indicated the partner meetings were “very” helpful (42%, n=11) in providing professional development, followed by “moderately” (27%, n=7) and “extremely” (19%, n=5) helpful.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.61 (SD=1.09).

(Total N=26)

Degree of helpfulness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=12)	Other Organization (n=7)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	1	--	2	8%
Slightly	--	--	1	1	4%
Moderately	3	3	1	7	27%
Very	3	6	2	11	42%
Extremely	--	2	3	5	19%
Don't know	--	--	--	--	--

Question 28: How effectively were myPLACE partner meetings conducted (e.g., agenda items were relevant, important information was shared, participants had opportunities to contribute to decision making, etc.)?

- Similarly, respondents indicated that partner meetings were conducted “very” (42%, n=11) or “extremely” (35%, n=9) effectively.
- The average degree of effectiveness is 4.12 (SD=.83).

(Total N=26)

Degree of effectiveness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=12)	Other Organization (n=7)	N	(%)
Not at all	--	--	--	--	--
Slightly	1	--	--	1	4%
Moderately effective	1	3	--	4	15%
Very effective	2	4	5	11	42%
Extremely effective	3	4	2	9	35%
Don't know	--	1	--	1	4%

The following questions (29-30) asked about OAE’s professional development programming (n=25). Seven myPLACE campuses, 10 myPLACE partners, and eight other organizations used professional development programs. For several of the items listed below, the majority of “other organizations” did not respond to the question or rated it “not applicable.” Due to small sample sizes, percentages are only provided for the total number of responses.

- More than half of organizations participated in at least one professional development activity. Technology and Adult Education Conference (n=22), tutor training (n=20), and tutor institutes (n=20) were indicated by the most respondents.
- Most respondents found the professional development opportunities were helpful for their organizations.

Question 29: How helpful were the following professional development opportunities for your organization?

Tutor trainings

- 48% (n=12) of respondents indicated that the tutor trainings were “very” or “extremely” helpful.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.70 (SD=1.08).

(Total N=20)

Degree of helpfulness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=10)	Other Organization (n=8)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	--	--	1	5%
Slightly	1	--	--	1	5%
Moderately	2	2	2	6	30%
Very	1	4	2	7	35%
Extremely	2	2	1	5	25%

ESL Roundtables

- 44% (n=11) of respondents indicated the ESL Roundtables were “very” or “extremely” helpful.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.76 (SD=1.15).

(Total N=17)

Degree of helpfulness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=10)	Other Organization (n=8)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	--	--	1	6%
Slightly	--	--	1	1	6%
Moderately	2	1	1	4	24%
Very	2	3	1	6	35%
Extremely	1	2	2	5	29%

Technology and Adult Education Conference:

- 44% (n=11) of respondents indicated the Technology and Adult Education Conference was “very” or “extremely” helpful.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.50 (SD=1.05).

(Total N=22)

Degree of helpfulness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=10)	Other Organization (n=8)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	--	--	1	5%
Slightly	1	1	--	2	9%
Moderately	3	3	2	8	36%
Very	1	5	1	7	32%
Extremely	1	1	2	4	18%

*Tutor Institute**

- Twelve (48%) respondents indicated that the Tutor Institute was “very” or “extremely” helpful.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.40 (SD=1.14).

(Total N=20)

Degree of helpfulness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=10)	Other Organization (n=8)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	1	--	2	10%
Slightly	1	1	--	2	10%
Moderately	3	1	--	4	20%
Very	1	6	3	10	50%
Extremely	1	--	1	2	10%

Test prep trainings

- Ten (40%) respondents indicated that the Test prep trainings were “very” or “extremely” helpful.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.58 (SD=1.18).

(Total N=17)

Degree of helpfulness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=10)	Other Organization (n=8)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	--	--	1	6%
Slightly	--	1	1	2	12%
Moderately	2	1	1	4	24%
Very	3	3	--	6	35%
Extremely	1	2	1	4	24%

Supplemental distance learning trainings

- Ten (40%) respondents indicated that the supplemental distance learning trainings were “very” or “extremely” helpful.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.33 (SD=1.18).

(Total N=18)

Degree of helpfulness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=10)	Other Organization (n=8)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	1	--	2	11%
Slightly	1	--	1	2	11%
Moderately	2	2	--	4	22%
Very	2	4	2	8	44%
Extremely	--	1	1	2	11%

Citywide high school graduation

- Ten (40%) respondents indicated that the citywide high school graduation was “very” or “extremely” helpful.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.68 (SD=1.70).

(Total N=16)

Degree of helpfulness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=10)	Other Organization (n=8)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	1	1	3	12%
Slightly	1	--	1	2	8%
Moderately	--	1	--	1	4%
Very	--	1	--	1	4%
Extremely	4	5	--	9	36%

Question 30: How would you describe the overall quality of the professional development opportunities you participated in?

- The majority of respondents rated the quality of opportunities as “high” (48%, n=13) or “very high” (28%, n=7). However, nearly one-quarter rated them “moderate” or “low.”

(Total N=25)

	myPLACE Campus (n=6)	myPLACE Partner (n=5)	Other Organization (n=2)	N	(%)
Very low quality	--	--	--	--	--
Low quality	1	--	--	1	4%
Moderate quality	2	1	2	5	20%
High quality	3	6	3	12	48%
Very high quality	1	3	3	7	28%
Don't know	--	--	--	--	--

The following questions (31-33) ask about KEYSLOT sites (n=13). Because of the low number of respondents, percentages are not included in this section. Six myPLACE campuses, five myPLACE partners, and two other organizations reported they used KEYSLOT sites.

- Almost all respondents (85%, n=11) indicated that their learners used KEYSLOT services. 70% of organizations (n=9) reported that KEYSLOT services are either “extremely” (n=5) or “very” (n=4) accessible for their learners.
- Over half of respondents (54%, n=13) reported that they were KEYSLOT sites.

Question 31: Are you a KEYSLOT site?

(Total N=13)

	myPLACE Campus (n=6)	myPLACE Partner (n=5)	Other Organization (n=2)	N	(%)
Yes	2	3	2	7	54%
No	2	2	--	4	31%
Don't Know	2	--	--	2	15%

Question 32: Did the learners in your organization use KEYSLOT services?

(Total N=13)

	myPLACE Campus (n=6)	myPLACE Partner (n=5)	Other Organization (n=2)	N	(%)
Yes	6	4	1	11	85%
No	--	1	--	1	8%
Don't Know	--	--	1	1	8%

Question 33: How accessible were KEYSPOt services for your learners?

- On a five-point scale ranging from *Not at all* (1) to *Extremely* (5), the average degree of accessibility is 4.40 (SD=.69).

(Total N=11)

Degree of accessibility	myPLACE Campus (n=6)	myPLACE Partner (n=5)	Other Organization (n=2)	N	(%)
Not at all	--	--	--	--	
Slightly	--	--	--	--	
Moderately	1	--	--	1	9%
Very	2	1	1	4	36%
Extremely	2	3	--	5	45%
Don't know	1	--	--	1	9%

Questions (34-35) ask about the tutor and volunteer training and referral program (n=22). Seven myPLACE campuses, nine myPLACE partners and six other organizations used tutor and volunteer training and referral program.

Question 34: Did tutors/volunteers who were trained through the OAE training and referral program work in your program?

- Twenty-two of 30 respondents (73%) indicated that they used the tutor/volunteer training and referral program of OAE. 91% of 22 organizations (n=20) indicated that their tutors and volunteers were trained through OAE.

(Total N=22)

	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=9)	Other Organization (n=6)	N	(%)
Yes	6	8	6	20	91%
No	1	1	--	2	9%
Don't Know	--	--	--	--	--

Question 35: How effective were the following components of the tutor/volunteer program for your organization?

- Most organizations found all four services under the “tutor/volunteer training” category effective to varying degrees.

Tutor/volunteer training

- 9% (n=13) of respondents indicated that the tutor/volunteer training was “very” or “extremely” effective. However, 41% (n=13) found the training moderately, slightly, or not at all effective.
- On a five-point scale ranging from *Not at all* (1) to *Extremely* (5), the average degree of effectiveness is 3.63 (SD=1.09).

(Total N=22)

Degree of effectiveness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=9)	Other Organization (n=6)	N	(%)
Not at all	--	1	--	1	5%
Slightly	2	--	--	2	9%
Moderately	2	1	3	6	27%
Very	--	5	3	8	36%
Extremely	3	2	--	5	23%
Don't know	--	--	--	--	--

Tutor/volunteer referral and placement system

- 46% (n=10) of respondents indicated that the tutor/volunteer referral and placement program was “very” or “extremely” effective. However, 27% (n=6) indicated that it was only “slightly” or “not at all” very effective.
- The average degree of effectiveness is 3.13 (SD=1.08).

(Total N=22)

Degree of effectiveness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=9)	Other Organization (n=6)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	1	--	2	9%
Slightly	2	--	2	4	18%
Moderately	2	3	1	6	27%
Very	1	5	3	9	41%
Extremely	1	--	--	1	5%
Don't know	--	--	--	--	--

Tutors/volunteers supporting learners

- 63% (n= 14) of respondents indicated that the way tutors/volunteers supported learners was “very” or “extremely” effective.
- The average degree of effectiveness is 3.54 (SD=1.18).

(Total N=22)

Degree of effectiveness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=9)	Other Organization (n=6)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	1	--	2	9%
Slightly	1	--	1	2	9%
Moderately	2	1	1	4	18%
Very	2	5	3	10	45%
Extremely	1	2	1	4	18%
Don't know	--	--	--	--	--

Tutors/volunteers supporting instructors

- 53% (n=12) of respondents indicated that tutors/volunteers' support of instructors was "very" or "extremely" effective. However, 18% (n=4) reported that it was "not at all" effective.
- The average degree of effectiveness is 3.19 (SD=1.33).

(Total N=22)

Degree of effectiveness	myPLACE Campus (n=7)	myPLACE Partner (n=9)	Other Organization (n=6)	N	(%)
Not at all	1	3	--	4	18%
Slightly	1	--	1	2	9%
Moderately	2	--	1	3	13%
Very	2	5	3	10	45%
Extremely	1	1	--	2	9%
Don't know	--	--	1	1	5%

Questions (36-37) asked about the Community Schools (n=5). Because of the low number of respondents, percentages are not included in this section.

- Five organizations have used Community School services. All five respondents knew about the adult education services offered through Community Schools and have referred potential learners to these services at Community Schools.

Question 36: Did you know about the adult education services offered through the Community Schools?

(Total N=5)

	myPLACE Campus (n=2)	myPLACE Partner (n=2)	Other Organization (n=1)	N
Yes	2	2	1	5
No	--	--	--	--
Don't Know	--	--	--	--

Question 37: Did you refer potential learners to the adult education services at Community Schools?

(Total N=5)

	myPLACE Campus (n=2)	myPLACE Partner (n=2)	Other Organization (n=1)	N
Yes	2	2	1	5
No	--	--	--	--
Don't Know	--	--	--	--

The Role of the City

The third part of the survey asked about the role that the city should play in supporting adult education programs and services.

Question 38: How important is it that the City plays a role in supporting any of the following adult education programs and services?

- For all the programs and services below, a plurality of respondents reported that the city's support is "extremely important."
- 83% or more of respondents indicated that it was "extremely" or "very" important for the city to play a role in supporting all of the programs and services below.
- The four adult education programs and services that respondents viewed as "extremely" or "very" important for the city to support were English language learning (100%, n=30), ABE (96%, n=30), digital literacy (93%, n=30¹³); and high school equivalency preparation (93, n=30).

¹³ For a detailed table of percentages, see Appendix 2.2D.

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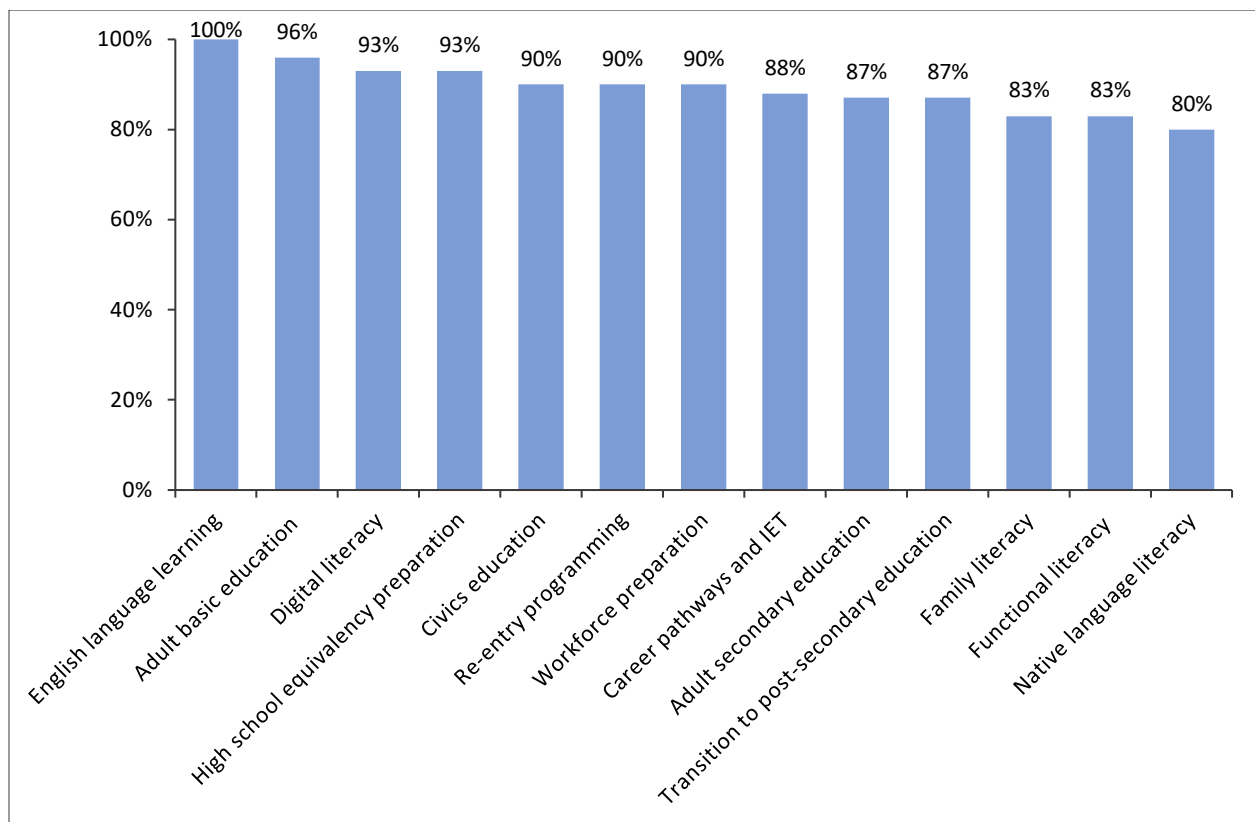


Figure 8. % of program and services rated “extremely” or “very” important

Question 39: Of the following adult education programs and services, which are the four most important for the City to play a supporting role in? (Select your four top choices.)

- 28 respondents answered this question.
- The 3 services with the highest number of respondents selecting them as one of the 4 services most important for the city to support were: ABE (67%), career pathways/IET (46%), and adult secondary education (44%).
- The most common 1st choice for respondents was ABE (39%), followed by career pathways/IET (11%), high school equivalency preparation (11%), and workforce preparation (11%).

(Total N=28)

	1 st Choice		2 nd Choice		3 rd Choice		4 th Choice		% selecting component as one of top choices
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Adult basic education	11	39%	6	21%	2	7%	--		67%
Career pathways/Integrated Education and Training	3	11%	1	4%	4	14%	2	7%	46%
Adult secondary education	2	7%	8	29%	1	4%	1	4%	44%
Re-entry programming	2	7%	2	7%	1	4%	7	25%	43%
Workforce preparation	3	11%	2	7%	3	11%	4	14%	43%
English language learning	2	7%	2	7%	6	21%	2	7%	42%
Digital literacy	--	--	1	4%	4	14%	6	21%	39%
High school equivalency preparation	3	11%	4	14%	4	14%	--	--	39%
College and career readiness, transition to post-secondary education	1	4%	--	--	1	4%	3	11%	19%
Civics education/prep for citizenship/immigrant integration	1	4%	--	--	1	4%	1	4%	12%
Family literacy	--	--	2	7%	--	--	1	4%	11%
Functional literacy	--	--	--	--	1	4%	1	4%	8%
Native language literacy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Open-Ended Questions

Practitioners were asked to respond to three open-ended questions on the role the city should play in supporting adult education programs and services and on OAE programs and services. The responses are summarized below. We report the number of times a response occurred; however, in several instances only two or three individuals made a particular response. We also provide the verbatim responses in Appendices.

Question 40: Is there anything else that you would like to share about the role the City should play in adult education programs and services?

Of the 30 participants who completed the survey, 15 responded to this question.¹⁴ The main foci of these responses included:

- **Funding:** Six responses addressed the need for further funding of ABE programs and services. Administrators noted that additional grant opportunities and further funding of resources (i.e., staff, technology, operating funds, testing) would greatly benefit both larger and smaller ABE programs throughout the city.
- **More comprehensive job and social services for learners:** Six respondents requested more extensive career and social services for learners, including access to social workers, career training for immigrants, and the hiring of qualified professionals who can support learners with real-world training for “blue-collar” jobs.
- **Additional training and programmatic support:** Four respondents requested additional training and support for programs providing ABE services (including database support, professional development opportunities, and myPLACE trainings).
- **Advocacy and social justice:** Four respondents noted the need for the city to take on a role as political and social advocate for ABE programs and learners.
- **Centralization of ABE services:** Three responses suggested the need for further centralization and coordination of ABE programs to provide more connectivity for learner and program support.

Question 41: Is there anything that you would like to share about the role the City should not play in adult education programs and services?

Of the 30 participants who completed the survey, 10 responded to this question.¹⁵ The main foci of these responses included:

- **Streamlining and quantity of assessments and benchmarks:** Three respondents thought that the volume of assessments, benchmarks, and data collection the city required was too time-consuming and burdensome.
- **Diverse offerings to meet ABE learners’ needs:** Three respondents noted that adult learners have diverse needs and ABE offerings should reflect these needs (e.g., not all learners want or need college preparation skills).
- **Defunding of ABE programs:** Two responses indicated funding; one respondent asked that the city not decrease funding further while the other respondent suggested that the city give funding to programs rather than to OAE.
- **Overcomplicating the systems:** Two respondents requested that systems used by OAE be simplified; one found myPLACE to be too complicated and the other found the ASAP database to be too complicated.

¹⁴ See Appendix 2.2A for verbatim responses to this question.

¹⁵ See Appendix 2.2B for verbatim responses to this question.

Question 42: Is there additional feedback you would like to give related to the programs and services offered by the Office of Adult Education (e.g., myPLACE campuses, myPLACE partner meetings, professional development, KEYSPOD, tutor/volunteer training and referral program, community schools)?

Of the 30 participants who completed the survey, 15 responded to this question.¹⁶ The main foci of these responses included:

- **Positive responses to OAE and myPLACE as a whole:** Eight respondents made positive comments regarding the role that OAE and myPLACE have played in adult education in the city and hoped that the services they offered would continue.
- **Additional services that should be offered/recommendations for change:** Four respondents suggested changes, including more access to tools and curricula, support for community partnerships, funding, and sites that teach ABE.
- **ASAP software burdens:** Two respondents noted that ASAP software was burdensome and asked for a more user-friendly system.
- **Tutor referral system suggestions:** Two respondents noted the strength of the tutor referral system but asked for more experienced teachers acting as tutors.

Key Takeaways

- In light of COVID, student enrollments have declined substantially. However, the program year is not complete, so we don't yet understand the full extent to which this is true, especially given that the COVID crisis has cut across two program years.
- Programs offer a diverse range of academic and support services and are trying to include many services with few staff, including many programs with no case managers/counselors. The types of services offered, however, have minimally changed from last year to currently.
- Most organizations use donations and private foundations as their main source of funding. Some administrators noted the need for further programmatic funding and more comprehensive job and social services for learners.
- Regarding OAE services, myPLACE campuses and partner services were found to be both helpful and effective overall. Regarding OAE, the myPLACE system is very well thought of and appreciated.

Professional development (PD) opportunities were also thought to be helpful, though some were perceived as more helpful than others. Moreover, some PD opportunities had lower

¹⁶ See Appendix 2.2C for verbatim responses to this question.

respondent attendance (e.g., ESL roundtables, test prep trainings, citywide high school graduation). This finding raises questions about resources and whether OAE focus efforts on activities that have greater participation.

- Regarding both KEYSLOT and tutor/volunteer training services, one-third of respondents used KEYSLOT services and found them to be accessible for learners, while 73% of used the tutor/volunteer training and referral program and found them effective to some degree.
- Only eight respondents (27%) were federally funded pre-COVID and 7 (23%) are currently, but there is also a small number of WIOA Title II-funded programs in the city. However, the latter programs serve a disproportionate number of students and employ the most staff. This raises a question about the data and the heavy emphasis on volunteer-oriented activities in the responses. And it also raises questions about where to allocate resources and how to best meet the needs of large and small programs with different priorities. However, if the city thinks of all programs as being a part of a system in which learners can expect more or less the same level of services wherever they go and there is an emphasis on “raising all boats,” then these questions become a little less important.

Appendix 2.2A: Survey Responses to Question 40, Administrator Survey Responses

Question 40: Is there anything else that you would like to share about the role the City should play in adult education programs and services?

15 Responses

Funding (Particularly to Smaller Programs)

- FUNDING. I should not have to spend 20% of my time on writing grants. Every licensed adult education program should receive a certain amount of operating funds per learner.
- It would help if you supported the organizations. Already having a small budget compared to other city offices, the first thing to go when the city is struggling financially is adult education. A lot of organizations need financial assistance too. The city barely provides any grant opportunities, and when they do, they go to the same organizations while smaller organizations struggle to find funding.
- Many small organizations serve as a backbone to adult education. Our size allows us to best serve specific communities, but we lack the resources of large organizations. The city should support small organizations as well as large ones by providing such resources (technology, financial support, outreach/connection with clients, PD opportunities).
- The City should provide enough funding & staffing to be able to effectively support the programs that are helping adults thrive
- Longer term Funding of testing and paid instructors among others.
- Providing more funding to support adult literacy programs

More Comprehensive Job and Social Services for Learners

- SOCIAL WORKERS. There should be somewhere for me to refer students who need help accessing city services.
- The city should support small organizations as well as large ones by providing such resources (technology, financial support, outreach/connection with clients, PD opportunities).
- The city should support adult basic education and equivalency programs to get those individuals educated and then into job training. These measures should help those individuals gain employment opportunities thus contributing to less dependency on public assistance etc.
- Advocating for better schools and providing training for blue-collar work with living wage salaries, such as the trades, CNA, etc. Encourage programs to hire professionals with real-world experience and who are representative of the clients they serve. Sometimes clients need case management, and sometimes what they really need is a qualified professional with proven experience.

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- Incentivize programming that offers career exploration and counseling and skills assessment so that adult learners cultivate interests and understand their own abilities.
- I would like to see real support for community-based organizations that are working with immigrants. They usually have no access to many of the programs or career training. I would like the immigrants to be able to obtain professional licenses without social security number requirement.

Additional Training and Programmatic Support

- Database support and translations
- Any supportive services will improve our programs
- The city should support small organizations as well as large ones by providing such resources (technology, financial support, outreach/connection with clients, PD opportunities).
- For the agencies that do not have the knowledge and/or capacity to provide effective services, but are eager to participate in the myPLACE network, then the City should provide the necessary training & support they need in order to be more successful.

Advocacy and Social Justice

- Approach ABE from a social justice/social impact perspective rather than charity or feeling sorry for other people.
- I would rather see OAE play a more political role and advocate the city for additional funding/services. The city needs to be more aware of adult education's importance in helping cut the income inequality gap.
- Philadelphia is the poorest big city in the country. Our people are desperate. We need to be providing all those areas of education.
- Advocating for better schools and providing training for blue-collar work with living wage salaries, such as the trades, CNA, etc.

Centralization of ABE Services

- The city should act as a landing ground for all types of adult ed programs. I see the city's role as a gatherer, an encyclopedia of the adult ed world in Philly. If someone is not sure where to go or how to get connected, the city should provide a blanket overview of the options and a doorway in.
- IT is imperative after COVID that the City provides a centralized place for people to access education and employment.
- City supports should be coordinated with community-based agencies and support those agencies

Appendix 2.2B: Survey Responses to Question 41, Administrator Survey Responses

Question 41: Is there anything that you would like to share about the role the City should not play in adult education programs and services?

10 Responses

Streamlining and Quantity of Assessments and Benchmarks

- I think the myPLACE testing is pretty useless. We have to do our own baseline assessment anyway.
- The city should not be a gatekeeper for education or mandate benchmarks and assessments that organizations/individuals need to reach to access city services. Such mandates (such as those from the state) are often well-meaning but unrealistic, forcing organizations to make quantitative rather than qualitative gains that do not take into account the diverse needs and backgrounds of their clients
- Sometimes the way in which data is collected and the volume of data requested can be overwhelming for agencies already struggling to provide services. Finding ways to collect data that is as least intrusive, disruptive and time consuming as possible is vital if the city wishes to continue to collect this information.

Broad Groupings of ABE Learners Needs

- The city should not develop a one pathway for all "cookie cutter" approach. Everyone should now be keenly aware of the diversity needed to deal with the citizenry and businesses in this country. Celebrate differences with inclusion and allow those differences to support the people who identify with them. Just as people have Personality Preferences, there are also life preferences. Help people meet their goals in a way they can take ownership and the city can benefit through the taxes and revenue generated.
- Less focus on college preparation. Many adults dropped out because it seemed like the only avenue after high school was college, and it's not something they wanted.
- Provide access to technology but do not take on digital literacy INSTRUCTION. So much of digital literacy is simply having access and then learning by doing which can occur in local programs.

Defunding of ABE Programs

- Should not decrease funding to programs and reducing educational services
- The city should not give money to an office for professional development of the community organizers and instead should give that money to the organizations.

Overcomplication of Systems

- The referral system through myPLACE is too complicated. I get that the city wants more uniformity across the board, but it seemed like the three or four organizations running the myPLACE were the only ones benefitting. Since the myPLACE campus came to exist, I think we have only had a handful of referrals.
- The city's aim should be to simplify this process as much as possible. The former ASAP system was confusing and added more work to providers.

Appendix 2.2C: Survey Responses to Question 42, Administrator Survey Responses

Question 42: Is there additional feedback you would like to give related to the programs and services offered by the Office of Adult Education (e.g., myPLACE campuses, myPLACE partner meetings, professional development, KEYSPOt, tutor/volunteer training and referral program, community schools)?

15 responses

Positive Responses to OAE and myPLACE As a Whole

- I am thrilled that you are "back in business". myPLACE was an invaluable help to me as a site director of an ESL program.
- Looking forward to future collaborations with myPlace.
- I am very glad to see the return of this as a city-wide networking tool for organizations and students. It is most helpful for my organization as a way to recruit students, refer students to other organizations that can meet their needs, network with other providers, and share information about/with the adult education community.
- Individuals who aren't eligible for my program are referred to OAE to get them connected to various educational services
- The Office also offered digital Literacy to adult learners to begin their ability to be successful in on line education. The introduction is important to ensure success. OAE was the foundation of adult literacy education success for the learners who were motivated and determined to succeed.
- Reconstitute OAE as it was a great service to Philadelphia
- I believe this office provided critical support for its partners
- The OAE has always been an instrumental resource for understanding cultural trends amongst Philly practitioners and organizations. It is the main unifying force for adult education in the city and is essential for providing quality, streamlined services across widely diverse populations, communities, and organizations.

Additional Services that Should be Offered/ Recommendations for Change

- We need access to material to use in our classrooms. Licenses for curriculum. We need access to tools for classroom management that does not necessarily required my place referral. We need support. I think the office just focus on doing numbers for themselves but not to support the community partners.
- While OAE provided many helpful resources to learners and organizations, it was an overly complex system that sometimes wasn't worth the energy to participate in. The myPLACE campus sounds great in theory, but it was confusing for everyone to maneuver. Really, instead of wasting money to try and set up a convoluted referral system, that money should have been going into paying organizations to conduct adult ed classes. There weren't enough classes happening city-wide, so people would go to Congresso for class and be

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referred across the city for a GED class. Instead, they should have had more classes happening at Congressso instead of paying the organizations to refer to learners elsewhere.

- There need to be many more sites teaching adult beginning reading. 12 hour/day, staffed computer centers are desperately needed.
- Lack of funding and not long term. Only for a year

ASAP Software Burdens

- ASAP is extremely difficult to use. I really like receiving learner referrals but ASAP was a burden.
- Please find a more user-friendly, easier to navigate and adjustable SIS than ASAP.

Tutor Referral System Suggestions

- I wish the tutor referrals included experienced teachers and not just helpful volunteers
- The volunteer tutor training was good, but my organization did not get many tutors from OAE. However, the tutors that we did get were really good.

Appendix 2.2D: Table Summarizing Responses to Question 38, Administrator Survey Responses

Question 38: How important is it that the City plays a role in supporting any of the following adult education programs and services?

(Total N=30)

	Importance										Don't know	
	Not at all		Slightly		Moderately		Very		Extremely			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Adult basic education	--	--	--	--	1	3%	4	13%	25	83%	--	--
Adult secondary education	--	--	1	3%	--	--	8	27%	18	60%	3	10%
Career pathways/Integrated Education and Training	--	--	1	3%	1	3%	3	10%	23	78%	2	7%
Civics education/prep for citizenship/immigrant integration	--	--	--	--	--	--	8	27%	19	63%	--	--
College and career readiness, transition to post-secondary education	--	--	--	--	3	10%	11	37%	15	50%	1	3%
Digital literacy	--	--	--	--	2	7%	7	23%	21	70%	--	--
English language learning	--	--	--	--	--	--	8	27%	22	73%	--	--
Family literacy	--	--	1	3%	2	7%	10	30%	16	53%	1	3%
Functional literacy	--	--	--	--	2	7%	10	30%	16	53%	2	7%
High school equivalency preparation	--	--	--	--	2	7%	6	20%	22	73%	--	--
Native language literacy	1	3%	2	7%	2	7%	11	37%	13	43%	1	3%
Re-entry programming	--	--	--	--	3	10%	5	17%	22	73%	--	--
Workforce preparation	--	--	--	--	2	7%	5	17%	22	73%	1	3%

Appendix 2, Part 3: Practitioner Survey Results

The purpose of the practitioner survey was: 1) to collect information about practitioners' experiences with the former Office of Adult Education (OAE), and 2) to gather practitioners' perspectives about the role that city government should play in supporting adult education in Philadelphia. The survey was emailed to 377 practitioners who are members of the Philadelphia Adult Literacy Alliance. There were 71 responses (19% response rate). Surveys were completed from November 3 to 23, 2020. Response frequencies and percentages for each question and key findings are below. When the number of responses is extremely low, percentages are not reported. For questions rating respondents' experiences with services, the mean and standard deviation are also provided. In addition, some findings are based on analysis that does not appear in the tables.

Two factors limit the generalizability of this survey. First, it had a relatively low (19%) response rate. Second, the Alliance list from which survey participants were drawn is broad and includes both service providers and other sectors (institutions of higher education, policy) not necessarily involved in service provision. Thus, the service providers responded to the survey may not be representative of the field as a whole. As such, these results offer a starting point for reflection and a resource to generate questions for further exploration, rather than a definitive report about the perspectives of Philadelphia's adult education community.

Adult Education Program Information

The first two questions asked about the type of organization the respondent worked in and the respondent's role. The third question asked what OAE services the respondent used or participated in.

Question 1: How would you classify your organization? (select one)

- Most (44%) respondents work at community-based organizations, 16% work at workforce development organizations, and 7% work at libraries.
- 25% of the respondents selected the "other" category, and indicated the following responses: technology consulting firm, public child welfare, testing organizations, healthcare center, higher education institutions' social services centers, the school district, and "privately". It is possible that some of these respondents work in organizations that do not provide direct services and may not have participated in OAE services.

	N=71	(%)*
Community-based organization	31	44%
Other	18	25%
Workforce development organization	11	16%
Library	5	7%
Community college	3	4%
K-12 school	1	1%
Regional education center	1	1%
Technical school	1	1%

*Note: all percentages are rounded to the nearest percent

Question 2: What is your role in the organization? (select one)

- 30% the respondents are instructors and 27% indicated they are administrators or managers.
- The “other” category included board member, consultant, and professional developer.

Role	N=71	(%)
Instructor	21	30%
Administrator/manager	19	27%
Volunteer	11	16%
Other	10	14%
Program Coordinator	6	9%
Case manager/counselor	2	3%
Data specialist	2	3%

Overview of OAE Services

The second part of the survey asked about respondents’ experiences with OAE services, including how helpful and effective the services were. Since not all respondents used all of the services, the number of responses varied for questions 3 to 21.

Question 3: Which OAE programs/services have you used or participated in? (select all that apply)

- Overall, 90% of respondents used at least one OAE service.
- 58% of the 71 respondents used 1 or 2 OAE programs and services and 32% used 3 or more. However, 10% of respondents (n=7) have never used any OAE programs/services.

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- The two most commonly used OAE services were tutor/volunteer training and referral programs (60%) and professional development (49%), followed by myPLACE partner meetings (32%) and myPLACE campus meetings (29%).
- “Other” programs and services included ESL teacher certification, HSE testing, program improvement, and leadership skill development.

OAE Program and Services	N=71	(%)
Tutor/volunteer training and referral program	43	60%
Professional development	35	49%
myPLACE partner meetings	23	32%
myPLACE campuses	21	29%
KEYSPOT	17	24%
Community Schools	13	18%
Other	3	4%

Questions about myPLACE Campuses: Questions 4-8, N=21

Question 4: Which myPLACE campus/campuses did you interact with? (select all that apply)

- Two campuses were used by at least half of the respondents. The two most commonly selected campuses were Center for Literacy (64%, n=14) and 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund (50%, n=11). Congreso de Latinos Unidos and Community Learning Center were each used by 46% (n=10) of respondents.

	N=21	(%)
Center for Literacy	14	64%
1199C Training and Upgrading Fund	11	50%
Congreso de Latinos Unidos	10	46%
Community Learning Center	10	46%
Temple	9	41%
Philadelphia FIGHT	7	32%
New World Association	3	14%

Question 5: Overall, how helpful were myPLACE campuses for learner placement and enrollment in your program?

- 76% (n=21) of respondents reported that myPLACE campuses were “extremely” (38%) or “very” (38%) helpful for learner placement and enrollment.
- On a five-point scale ranging from *Not at all* (1) to *Extremely* (5), the average degree of helpfulness is 4.1 (standard deviation [SD]=.97).

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Degree of helpfulness	N=21	(%)
Not at all	--	--
Slightly	2	10%
Moderately	2	10%
Very	8	38%
Extremely	8	38%
Don't know	1	5%

Question 6: Overall, how effective was communication between myPLACE campuses and your program?

- More than half (53%, n=11) of respondents rated communication with myPLACE campuses as “extremely” (29%) or “very” (24%) effective. Almost one-third rated it only moderately or slightly effective.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.72 (SD=1.22).

Degree of effectiveness	N=21	(%)
Not at all	1	5%
Slightly	2	10%
Moderately	4	19%
Very	5	24%
Extremely	6	29%
Don't know	3	14%

Question 7: Overall, how effective was myPLACE in terms of an intake, assessment, and referral system?

- 66% (n=14) of respondents thought myPLACE campuses were either “extremely” (33%) or “very” (33%) effective in terms of an intake, assessment, and referral system. One-quarter rated it only moderately or slightly effective.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.9 (SD=1.12).

Degree of effectiveness	N=21	(%)
Not at all	1	5%
Slightly	1	5%
Moderately	4	20%
Very	7	33%
Extremely	7	33%
Don't know	1	5%

Question 8: Do you agree with the following statement? Our program would like to continue to use myPLACE campus services in the future.

- Most respondents (71%, n=17) reported agreed somewhat agreed (14%) or strongly agreed (57%) that their program would like to continue to use myPLACE campus services in the future.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 4.26 (SD=1.19).

Degree of agreement	N=21	(%)
Strongly disagree	1	5%
Somewhat disagree	1	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	10%
Somewhat agree	3	14%
Strongly agree	12	57%
Don't know	2	10%

Questions about myPLACE partner meetings: Questions 9-11, N=23

Question 9: Overall, how helpful were myPLACE partner meetings in facilitating networking for you or your program?

- Almost three-quarters (74%, n=17) of respondents rated myPLACE partner meetings as either “extremely” (39%) or “very” (35%) helpful for program networking.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.91 (SD=1.23).

Degree of helpfulness	N=23	(%)
Not at all	2	9%
Slightly	1	4%
Moderately	3	13%
Very	8	35%
Extremely	9	39%
Don't know	--	--

Question 10: Overall, how helpful were myPLACE partner meetings in providing professional development for you or your program?

- 69% (n=16) of respondents indicated that professional development provided at myPLACE partner meetings was either “extremely” (43%) or “very” (26%) helpful.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 4 (SD=1.23).

Degree of helpfulness	N=23	(%)
Not at all	2	9%
Slightly	--	--
Moderately	4	17%
Very	6	26%
Extremely	10	43%
Don't know	1	4%

Question 11: Overall, how effectively were myPLACE partner meetings conducted (e.g., agenda items were relevant, important information was shared, participants had opportunities to contribute to decision making)?

- 74% (n=17) of respondents thought myPLACE partner meetings were conducted either “extremely” (43%) or “very” (33%) effectively. Nearly a quarter rated them only moderately or slightly effective.
- The average degree of helpfulness is 4.04 (SD=1.10).

Degree of effectiveness	N=23	(%)
Not at all	1	4%
Slightly	1	4%
Moderately	4	19%
Very	7	33%
Extremely	10	43%
Don't know	--	--

Questions about professional development: Question 13, N=35

Question 12: How helpful were the following professional development opportunities that you attended?

- The professional development opportunities with the highest participation by respondents were tutor training (n=24), the Technology in Adult Education conference (n=23), tutor institutes (n=23), and ESL Roundtables (n=17).
- Out of the four types of training with the most participation, each had “very helpful” or “extremely helpful” as the highest number of responses with the exception of the Technology in Adult Education conference, which had an equal number of “extremely helpful,” “very helpful,” and “moderately helpful” responses.
- The type of training with the lowest degree of helpfulness was the citywide high school graduation, with 5 respondents stating that it was “slightly” or “not at all” helpful.

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Tutor trainings

- On a five-point scale ranging from *Not at all* (1) to *Extremely* (5), the average degree of helpfulness is 3.75 (SD=1.22).

Degree of helpfulness	N=24	(%)
Not at all	2	8%
Slightly	2	8%
Moderately	3	13%
Very	10	42%
Extremely	7	29%

ESL Roundtables

- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.76 (SD=1.52).

Degree of helpfulness	N=17	(%)
Not at all	3	18%
Slightly	1	6%
Moderately	--	--
Very	6	35%
Extremely	7	41%

Technology and Adult Education Conference:

- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.78 (SD=1.08).

Degree of helpfulness	N=23	(%)
Not at all	1	4%
Slightly	1	4%
Moderately	7	30%
Very	7	30%
Extremely	7	30%

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Tutor Institute

- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.86 (SD=1.17).

Degree of helpfulness	N=23	(%)
Not at all	2	9%
Slightly	--	--
Moderately	5	22%
Very	8	35%
Extremely	8	35%

Test prep trainings

- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.71 (SD=1.32).

Degree of helpfulness	N=14	(%)
Not at all	2	14
Slightly	0	0
Moderately	2	14
Very	6	43
Extremely	4	29

Supplemental distance learning trainings

- The average degree of helpfulness is 3.45 (SD=1.36).

Degree of helpfulness	N=11	(%)
Not at all	2	18%
Slightly	--	--
Moderately	2	18%
Very	5	45%
Extremely	2	18%

Citywide high school graduation

- The average degree of helpfulness is 2.91 (SD=1.67).

Degree of helpfulness	N=12	(%)
Not at all	4	33%
Slightly	1	8%
Moderately	2	17%
Very	2	17%
Extremely	3	25%

Question 13: How would you describe the overall quality of the professional development opportunities you participated in?

- 83% (n=29) of 35 respondents found the overall quality of professional development to be “very high” (43%) or “high” (40%).

Degree of quality	N=35	(%)
Very low	0	--
Low	1	3%
Moderate	4	11%
High	14	40%
Very high	15	43%
Don't know	1	3%

Questions about KEYSLOT:

Question 14: Did the learners in your program use KEYSLOT services?

- 88% of respondents had learners in their program who used KEYSLOT services.

	N=17	(%)
Yes	15	88%
No	2	12%

Question 15: How accessible were KEYSLOT services for your learners?

- 53% (n=9) of respondents reported that KEYSLOT services were “extremely” (24%) or “very” (29%) accessible.
- On a five-point scale ranging from *Not at all* (1) to *Extremely* (5), the average degree of accessibility is 3.66 (SD=1.17).

Degree of accessibility	N=15	(%)
Not at all	1	6%
Slightly	1	6%
Moderately	4	24%
Very	5	29%
Extremely	4	24%
Don't know	--	--

Questions about tutor/volunteer training and referral program:

Question 16: Did tutors/volunteers who were trained through the OAE training and referral program work in your program?

- Of the 43 survey respondents who had used OAE’s tutor/volunteer training and referral program, 51% (n=22) reported that volunteers or tutors trained through OAE worked in their program.

	N=43	(%)
Yes	22	51%
No	8	19%
Don’t know	13	30%

Question 17: How effective were the following components of the tutor/volunteer program for your program?

- Most respondents found the four tutor/volunteer programming services (listed below) effective to some extent. Tutor/volunteer training (n=28) was the highest-rated activity, with 66% considering it “extremely” (33%) or “very” (33%) effective. This was followed by supporting learners (49%, n=19), with ratings of “extremely” (23%) or “very” (21%) effective.
- The highest number of responses to “moderately effective” were in the supporting learners (28%, n=12) and the supporting instructors (28%, n=12) categories.
- The reason for the high number of “don’t know” responses is unclear but might indicate that specific types of programming were not applicable to the respondent.

Tutor/volunteer training

- On a five-point scale ranging from *Not at all* (1) to *Extremely* (5), the average degree of effectiveness is 4.02 (SD=1.05).

Degree of effectiveness	N=42	(%)
Not at all	1	2%
Slightly	3	7%
Moderately	4	9%
Very	14	33%
Extremely	14	33%
Don’t know	6	14%

Tutor/volunteer referral and placement system

- On a five-point scale ranging from *Not at all* (1) to *Extremely* (5), the average degree of effectiveness is 3.6 (SD=1.19).

Degree of effectiveness	N=42	(%)
Not at all	1	2%
Slightly	5	12%
Moderately	8	19%
Very	7	16%
Extremely	9	21%
Don't know	12	28%

Tutors/volunteers supporting learners

- The average degree of effectiveness is 3.66 (SD=1.14).

Degree of effectiveness	N=43	(%)
Not at all	2	5%
Slightly	2	5%
Moderately	12	28%
Very	9	21%
Extremely	10	23%
Don't know	8	19%

Tutors/volunteers supporting instructors

- The average degree of effectiveness is 3.75 (SD=.87).

Degree of effectiveness	N=42	(%)
Not at all	--	--
Slightly	1	2%
Moderately	12	29%
Very	9	21%
Extremely	7	17%
Don't know	13	30%

Questions about community schools: Questions 18-19, N=13

Question 18: Did you know about the adult education services offered through the Community Schools?

- 85% (n=11) of respondents knew of the adult education services offered through the OAE's Community Schools program.

	N=13	(%)
Yes	11	85%
No	2	15%

Question 19: Did you refer potential learners to the adult education services at Community Schools?

- 54% (n=7) of respondents have referred potential learners to adult education services at Community Schools.

	N=13	(%)
Yes	7	54%
No	6	46%

Questions about other services: Questions 20-21, N=3

Question 20: What other OAE services did your program take part in?

- Only one respondent provided additional information on the "other" services used from OAE: "I just went to some meetings." The other two respondents wrote they were unsure of what services they had used.

Question 21: Overall, how beneficial were these additional services?

- The individual who attended meetings with OAE rated them "moderately beneficial."

The Role of the City

The third part of the survey asked about the role the city should play in supporting adult education programs and services.

Question 22: How important is it that the City plays a role in supporting any of the following adult education programs and services? (n=71)

- Over 85% of 71 respondents reported that the city plays a “very” or “extremely” important role in supporting various programs and services in the adult education field as listed in the table below.
- For *all* of the programs and services below, the largest portion of respondents reported that the city’s support is “extremely important.”
- The five adult education programs and services with the highest percentage of respondents indicating they were “extremely” or “very” important for the city to support were career pathways/Integrated Education and Training (98%, n=69); adult basic education (96%, n=68); workforce preparation (96%, n=68); digital literacy (94%, n=67); and English language learning (94%, n=66¹⁷). Five other programs had extremely/very important responses of 90% to 93%.

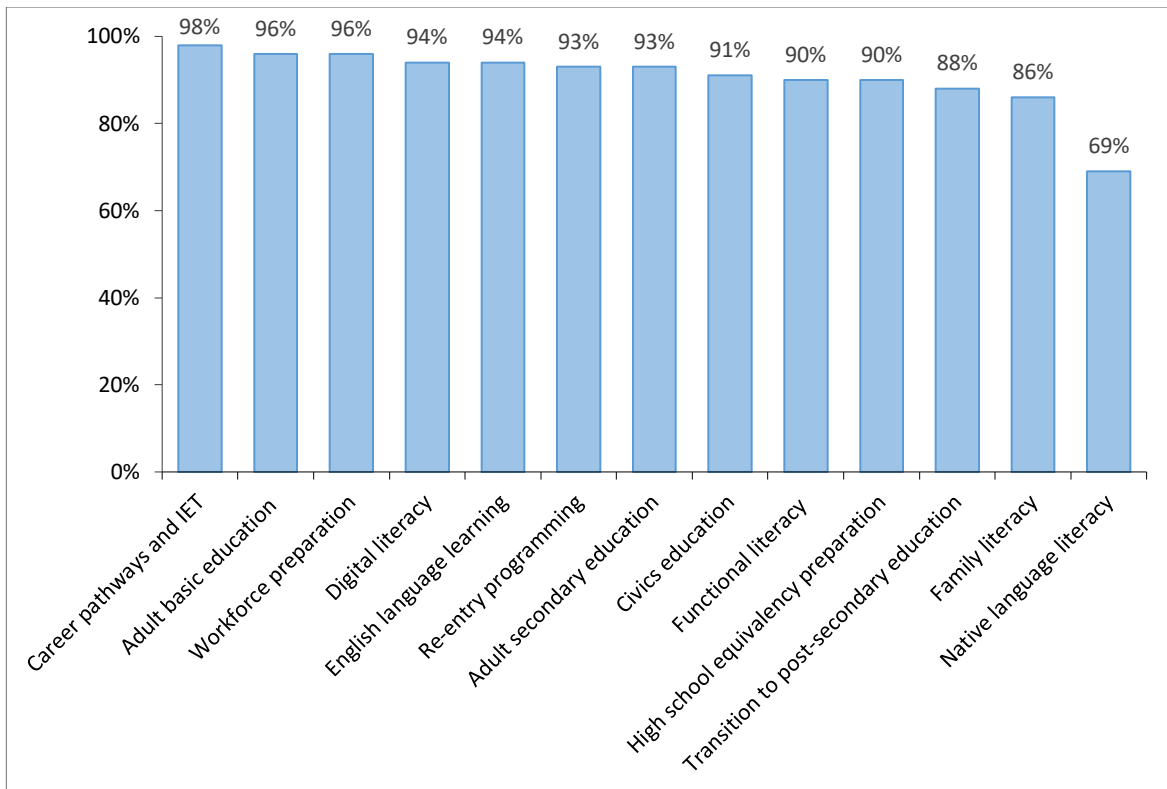


Figure 9. % of programs and services rated “extremely” or “very” important

¹⁷ For a detailed table of percentages, see Appendix 2.3D.

Question 23: Of the following adult education programs and services, which are the four most important for the City to play a supporting role in? (Select your four top choices using the dropdown menus)

- 67 respondents answered this question.
- The 4 services with the highest number of respondents selecting them as one of the four most important for the city to support were: Adult basic education (81%), Digital literacy (45%), Career pathways/IET (39%), and Re-entry programming (38%).
- The most common 1st choice for respondents was adult basic education (46%, n=31); followed by career pathways/IET (39%, n=8); re-entry programming (9%, n=6); and digital literacy (7%, n=5).

(N=67)

	1 st Choice		2 nd Choice		3 rd Choice		4 th Choice		% selecting component as one of top choices
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Adult basic education	31	46%	10	16%	8	12%	5	7%	81%
Digital literacy	5	7%	6	9%	9	13%	11	16%	45%
Career pathways/Integrated Education and Training	8	12%	7	10%	7	10%	5	7%	39%
Re-entry programming	6	9%	4	6%	5	7%	11	16%	38%
English language learning	4	6%	8	12%	4	6%	7	10%	34%
Functional literacy	2	3%	3	4%	5	7%	11	16%	30%
Workforce preparation	1	1%	6	9%	10	15%	3	4%	29%
High school equivalency preparation	4	6%	7	10%	4	6%	4	6%	28%
Family literacy	2	3%	6	9%	4	6%	3	4%	22%
Adult secondary education	4	6%	8	12%	1	1%	1	1%	20%
College and career readiness, transition to post-secondary education	--	--	2	3%	5	7%	4	6%	16%
Civics education/prep for citizenship/immigrant integration	--	--	--	--	5	7%	2	3%	10%
Native language literacy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Open Ended Questions

Practitioners were asked to respond to three open-ended questions about the role the city should play in supporting adult education programs and services and feedback on OAE programs and services. The responses are summarized below. We report the number of times a response occurred; however, in several instances only one or two individuals made a particular response. We also provide the verbatim responses in the appendices.

Question 24: Is there anything else that you would like to share about the role the City should play in adult education programs and services?

Of the 71 participants who completed the survey, 33 responded to Question 24¹⁸. The main foci of these responses included the following:

- **General supports beyond adult education:** Eight respondents suggested additional forms of general support for learners and families, including workforce preparation, diploma programs, individual and community health, citizenship preparation, assistance for low-income families, and free lunch.
- **Extensions of adult education programming:** Seven respondents suggested additional adult education services including more literacy centers, financial literacy classes, technology hardware and training, and digital access.
- **Program support services:** Six responses centered on the need for additional support of adult education programs. Respondents suggested that the city better facilitate collaboration of existing programs and systems, provide additional outreach to better advertise ABE services, and act as a funding intermediary for service providers.
- **Funding:** Five responses indicated a need for additional funding from the city to better support adult education programs.
- **Accessibility:** Three respondents suggested more focus on accessibility for diverse learners. For example, one suggested having more city-sponsored programs across neighborhoods to meet the needs of diverse learners, one suggested childcare for parents, and one suggested more accessibility to reentry initiatives for previously incarcerated individuals.
- **Networking and content sharing:** Two respondents identified the need for better networking and content sharing. One recommended an online space to make adult programming options more accessible for learners and other programs, while the other stressed the importance of making adult education services more widely known to providers such as counselors or school nurses.
- **Information gathering:** One respondent recommended that more data be collected by the city to learn audience size, need, and social and economic effects of education.

¹⁸ See Appendix 2.3A for verbatim responses to this question.

Question 25: Is there anything that you would like to share about the role the City should not play in adult education programs and services?

Of the 71 participants who completed the survey, 11 responded to Question 25¹⁹. The main foci of these responses included the following:

- **Oversight of programming:** Five respondents asked for less oversight over how programs are run, as well as more awareness of adult learners' diverse needs and how this connects to the diversity of assessments that can/should be used. In addition, a suggestion was made for the city to evaluate how social inequities among learners influence individual outcomes and how programs might contribute to these inequities.
- **Direct services:** Three responses made suggestions regarding direct services, including one suggestion that the city should not provide adult education services.
- **Need for more general (and financial) support:** Three respondents asked for more support in general, including a plea that the city not further cut funding for adult education.
- **Assessing social/programmatic inequities:** Two respondents suggested the city better assess the social inequities existing with adult education programs and create fairer proposal processes that lead to "real citywide results."
- **Community education:** One respondent asked the city to stop allowing the GED® Tests to be referred to as less than a high school diploma.

Question 26: Is there additional feedback you would like to give related to the programs and services offered by the Office of Adult Education (e.g., myPLACE campuses, myPLACE partner meetings, professional development, KEYSLOT, tutor/volunteer training and referral program, community schools)?

Of the 71 participants who completed the survey, 24 responded to Question 26²⁰. The main foci of these responses included the following:

- **General need:** Eight responses identified the continued need for OAE, including expansion of myPLACE campuses, funding for KEYSLOT sites, and other OAE services
- **Information sharing:** Five respondents suggested the need for professional development opportunities and program information sharing to support programs with online teaching and learning, referring learners to programs that are a better fit for their needs (e.g., targeted work training programs, extended literacy and numeracy practice post-graduation), and further exploring adult learner outcomes.
- **Tutor volunteer-related needs:** Three responses mentioned the need for more in-depth and organized tutor training options that further support tutors throughout their time working with learners.

¹⁹ See Appendix 2.3B for verbatim responses to this question.

²⁰ See Appendix 2.3C for verbatim responses to this question.

- **Outreach and coordination:** Three respondents asked for more promotion and marketing of adult education services and programs to support greater community knowledge of adult education offerings that could lead to further collaboration with other educational programming such as the Philadelphia Youth Network and its services for out-of-school youth or ABE opportunities in conjunction with the Workforce Development Board.
- **Services during COVID:** Two respondents requested more support for virtual/online teaching and learning tools.
- **Resuming/continuing services:** Two respondents focused on the need for services to continue, particularly for low-income learners and families who have been so negatively affected by the pandemic.
- **Learner assessments:** One respondent recommended better or more accurate assessments for learners and more thought about how and where assessments are given.

Key Takeaways

- Overall, respondents expressed a high degree of satisfaction with OAE services generally and with the existence of a city office of adult education. These results echo the views of interviewees. For example, about three-quarters of respondents reported that myPLACE was extremely or very helpful in supporting learner placement and enrollment, networking with partners, and conducting meetings effectively. Also, 83% reported that the quality of professional development was high or very high.
- Some aspects of OAE's services received lower scores. For example, just over half (53%) of respondents considered communication with myPLACE campuses to be extremely or very helpful. These findings point to possibilities for reflection and follow-up for OCF staff leading adult education efforts. They can pose questions such as: Do these ratings align with staff perceptions? How might they follow up with stakeholders to gather more information about what changes could be helpful?
- Respondents were eager for the city to play a strong role in supporting adult education. Eighty-five percent or more of respondents said that it was very or extremely important for the city to play a role in supporting almost all (12 of 13) of the listed services.
- More than three-quarters of respondents (81%) said that adult basic education was one of the top 4 areas for the city to support. The next top choice was digital literacy, with 45% of respondents saying that it was important for the city to support. Though digital literacy was important before COVID-19, it's possible that the pandemic made respondents prioritize city support for this area even more now. For the remaining areas, ranking of the top areas for city support was widely distributed. This indicates that respondents see the city playing a role in a wide range of services but are not unanimous on which services are the most important.

Appendix 2.3A Practitioner Responses to Question 24

Question 24: Is there anything else that you would like to share about the role the City should play in adult education programs and services?

31 responses

General Supports Beyond Adult Education

- I am helping a neighbor get his driver's license to improve his employment opportunities. In order to get it he needed to improve his digital skills and literacy as well as workforce preparation. He is marginally literate but getting a GED the traditional way would have been impossible. I think the city should support the diploma programs not GEDs. Too difficult am in many ways not necessary if someone had a vocational skill.
- Yes, there should be accountability.
- It is vital that the city stayed involved in adult education across the board - in many ways, the city owes a debt to adult learners, who were not served and supported during their initial schooling experiences in Philadelphia.
- Any kind of education to prep individuals for workforce!
- Continue to support all levels of literacy - early, family, adult. Not being able to read, function, or make choices about basic needs is a huge detriment to individual and community health.
- The city should offer more support for returning citizens in terms of educational opportunities
- If not the city then who? The city collects taxes and fees, right? The health and wellbeing of the city depends on residents' ability to contribute positively as a literate citizenry. Ignorance is hindrance to Progress for All, in part because it contributes to conflicts and divisions among the populace.
- Post-COVID hopes for return to the communities. For now, digital offerings will have to suffice.

Extensions of Adult Education Programming

- Program content:
 - Basic literacy offerings:
 - There are so many adults in Philadelphia who cannot read. The city needs to fund programs to help teach adults to read. The adult learners I work with are some of the hardest working students I have (I also teach college undergrads and grads.) But being able to read is also tied to a person's self-esteem, and my learners are so embarrassed that they cannot read.
 - In the past, the city ran Literacy Centers where a few paid staff and many volunteers helped with literacy. It would be good to have this happen again.
 - Financial literacy

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- Provide free lunch.
- Training and technological hardware: Partner with technology companies who offer free/grant funded courses and supplement with loaned hardware
- Comcast and Verizon could be more involved to provide the cable access for digital use of devices.
- Provide assistance to low-income family members to help them understand their child's school work.

Program Support Services

- Outreach:
 - Encouraging students to get a good education so they become able to seek and keep a job that will allow them to advance themselves.
 - City should use its bully pulpit to elevate importance and support fundraising efforts.
- Funding intermediary:
 - There needs to continue to be an intermediary to the services are streamlined and any funding that is available should be pushed back out to providers doing the work via RFP.
 - The role that OAE has historically played is sort of an unusual one, more as a broker and coordinator than anything else. There are some valuable aspects of this, to be sure, but I would consider looking to English for New Bostonians (formerly the Mayor's Office for New Bostonians) for other roles that the city might play. (Researcher note: English for New Bostonians describes themselves as "an activist grantmaking organization" that funds different ELL programs. [Visit their webpage here](#) for more details).
- Coordination:
 - More support for volunteer tutors especially in placing volunteers at sites.
 - I think the city can play a facilitator role for where there are already existing systems.

Funding

- I think the OAE is wonderful. They play an important role in the success of the City's adult education programs with surveys such as this one, trainings and program development. However, the City's help and assistance with finding additional funding for these programs would be great! These programs work miracles with the minimum amount of money they have to work with. The funding gets lower and lower each year while the learner population exceeds funding.
- I have only worked in a volunteer program at Paschalville. We constantly struggled to get resources for the program -- printing ink, paper, books, dry erase boards, enough appropriate physical space.
- More funding, more investment in adults (whether citizens or immigrants)
- More/additional financial support to programs and projects that yield performance rates/expected results based on proposed deliverables.

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- Make the links between high quality adult education and the economic strength, civic engagement, and cultural vibrancy of our city. Adult education is not an "add-on." It's critical not only to individuals who access it, but also to their families and communities. The City needs to be pushing that message forward AND backing it up by allocating resources to put Philadelphia at the forefront of adult education programming for literacy, ESL, GED, re-entry, career readiness, transition to post-secondary, AND civics education.

Networking and Content Sharing

- The city should offer a space where we can easily see what a wonderful array of programming options there are in Philly. This should allow for a searchable tool or interactive map so that there is a clear image of the wide range of program options we have.
- All school nurses and counselors should have information about where to refer families for literacy help. As well as PCCY who constantly supports families in so many things. PCCY should have a representative on the Literacy Task force-as should the School District of Philadelphia.

Information Gathering

- City should inform itself with data to learn audience size, need and social/economic effects of education.

Accessibility

- I give great credit to the city, its caring officials, the many workers and volunteers, and of course the students. I think it is doing all it can given the resources available and the unlimited need. It would be nice if RISE and similar initiatives, for reentry purposes, also allowed people with sex offenses to participate.
- There should be a program in the city that allows for mothers to attend programs while there is free childcare in a nearby facility.
- City sponsored programs could be accessible to all neighborhoods.

Appendix 2.3B: Practitioner Answers to Question 25

Question 25: Is there anything that you would like to share about the role the City should not play in adult education programs and services?

11 Responses

Direct Services

- It should not provide direct student services.
- No GED programs.
- myPlace is an interesting idea, but I am somewhat skeptical that it is the best use of the available resources.

Oversight of Programming

- Always allow the organization to manage its respective programs as they already have. In other words, minimum oversight!
- The city should not hold low-income people, hostage, by threatening to cancel their benefits if they do not attend and adult education program.
- The City should be careful not to dictate the content of adult learning. Right now, there are strong influences to make adult learning essentially equated with workforce development. Adult learning goes way beyond preparing people to enter and move up in the workforce. Adult learning is part of lifelong learning, and entering or navigating the workforce, while very important, only has as much value as the workplace can offer. At present, the current minimum wage and the quality of work life for many people is quite low. How we define adult education can really define how we think about ourselves as a city and about our culture. Learners are not just passive recipients of education. They have a wealth of life experience, knowledge, and sometimes education from abroad. Rather than dictate what adult learning comprises, the City needs to listen to learners and respond to the needs and interests that people have - and what they think will support them in their day-to-day lives and in the lives they want to live.

Need for More General (and Financial) Support

- The city should be investing more in adult education across the board, not cutting money, especially while the current mayoral administration has increased funding of the police by over 100 million dollars in the last five years.
- No involvement in closing down programs.
- n/a--we need more support .

Community Education

- Stop allowing a GED to be referred to as less than a 12-year graduation diploma.

Assessing Social/Programmatic Inequities

- Assessing existing programs for problems:

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- Favoritism, Racism, Colorism, Social and Economic Inequity.
- Stop trying to take on all of the city's academic and workforce challenges/much needed improvements. Begin to solicit new sub-contractors, new person's, new entities, to begin to work with the current academically challenged, unemployed, under-employed, and re-entry folks. Stop re-sub-contracting with those same agencies just because... Create a fair, honest, proposal process that leads to real citywide results...

Appendix 2.3C: Practitioner Answers to Question 26

Question 26: Is there any additional feedback you would like to give related to adult education programs and services offered by the OAE (e.g. myPLACE campuses, myPLACE partners and meetings, professional development, KEYSPOt, tutor and volunteer training and referral program, and Community Schools)?

25 Responses

General Need

- The programs and services provided by the OAE fill a gap not filled by state or program resources, because they can be tailored to the needs of teachers of city residents.
- I hope the virus ends soon and we can resume helping teach and learn those citizens who want and need it!
- I would like to see you work with the learners more in proving your servers. (Researcher note: unsure of the survey participant's meaning here)
- Expand opportunities for more community-based agencies to become myPLACE campuses to serve more vulnerable citizens.
- The value of the OAE was not only in its specific services, but also in its role as an information hub, convenor, advocate, and locus of support for adult education in our city. Because of the extensive need for adult education services in our city, Philadelphia could and should be setting a standard for high quality adult basic education. The OAE strengthened the network of educators and service providers, raised the standard of adult education provision, helped tutors and learners to find each other, and advocated for high quality adult ed citywide. I, in particular, valued the opportunity to connect with other instructors and education providers through OAE offerings, and the chance to grow as an educator through the OAE's professional development offerings.
- The Equity Project opened the first and only KEYSPOt in Kensington. We did not receive any funding. We lost our contract due to COvID-19 and are now opening a new space and seeking funding for our new KEYSPOt.
- pity the department has been diminished due to COVID cuts.
- It's highly needed and effective!

Outreach and Coordination

- Many people I encounter are not aware of the Adult Education programs that the OAE sponsors, which leads me to believe that the programs are not sufficiently promoted in our communities. In fact, your own data presented at a quarterly meeting some time ago indicated a skewed distribution of programs in city neighborhoods. Whereas some neighborhoods lack programs, other neighborhoods are well supplied.
- City needs marketing for volunteer tutors, professional development opportunities for non-state funded organizations in particular, support for adult education opportunities in conjunction with workforce board, collaboration with PYN in its services to 16-24 year

olds who are out of school, support for fundraising from private sources to expand services.

- I took several tutor tracings and looked forward to volunteering. Locating placements was a challenge and there was limited support to tutors once connected to a site. This was disheartening.

Tutor Volunteer-Related Needs

- For the programs I coordinate, we desperately need the new version of OAE to continue some version of the tutor training program. We are reliant on volunteers and don't have the capacity to take on this training without additional funding/staff. OAE brought the adult education community in Philadelphia together and it is really important to continue to have that coordinated approach, so we do not return to working in isolation, duplicating services, and struggling to support Philadelphia adults on our own. I would love to see a simplified version of myPLACE for programs that do not require CASAS testing, so that learners can be placed in programs without having to have so many points of contact.
- I took several tutor tracings and looked forward to volunteering. Locating placements was a challenge and there was limited support to tutors once connected to a site. This was disheartening. *(repeat comment)*
- "tutor and volunteer training and referral program" - started out as a good idea. However, once trained tutors were in the field there was no system for further coaching. The once-a-year tutor institute covered general issues but did not have room to discuss individual tutor/learner interactions or concerns. Moving training online may have been necessary to save money but lost a great deal in addressing the human interaction essential to the success of a tutor/learner partnership. Volunteers did not practice interviewing techniques, recognizing and handling the effects of trauma in a learner's life, responding to a learner's lack of follow-through on assignments, and other key elements of building trust between tutor and learner. Volunteers were sent into the field and effectively abandoned. If a volunteer was unable to match her/himself with a learner, the OAE did little to find out why there was no response from an agency that was listed as a partner that welcomed volunteer tutors. That's all for now.

Information Sharing

- At YouthBuild Philly, we are looking to network with other AE organizations to both refer young people who aren't a good fit for our program and to refer our graduates to spaces where they could get extended literacy and numeracy skill practice post-graduation.

Professional and Program Development

- One thing I would like to see is online professional development sessions offered more frequently but require less time at any individual session- like a one-hour targeted training program on some very specific aspect of teaching. I would also like to get voices from across the country to be facilitators.

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- Great programs but need to know more about outcomes so we can spread the word and grow these programs. Also, any thoughts about linking other programs/determinants that could be integral to success? This is the premise of the community schools which have health programs, etc.
- As a tutor, I was assigned to very low-level learners who showed little evidence/if any progress. I felt that I did not have the skills to work effectively with learners who had special needs. It would have helped to have had support from specialists or to have volunteers with the skill to work with these learners.
- We need more trainings on virtual learning for our adult learners.

Services During COVID

- Need more virtual teaching and learning tools for COVID 19 Safe environments
- The place where I volunteered -- Paschalville Library-- has not been available because of COVID. I have since switched to being a volunteer with the IHM Literacy Center -- tutoring one student over What's App.

Resuming/Continuing Services

- This year will be critical for so many students who may have become discouraged with the economic impact the pandemic has caused. Many do not do well with online education.
- They are needed amongst residents within the City; especially low income, participants in recovery houses, and under-employed persons.

Learner Assessments

- really enjoyed tutoring adult learners but wish the assessments were more accurate of the needs of the learners. Needs more structure and access to computers/ locations in which to meet. I have had 5 adult learners and I have had to scout around for a quiet place to meet with them. Felt bad for them after they have stepped up and asked for help only to have no resources.

Appendix 2.3D: Practitioner Answers to Question 22

Question 22: How important is it that the City plays a role in supporting any of the following adult education programs and services? (n=71)

	Importance										Don't know	
	Not at all Important		Slightly		Moderately		Very		Extremely			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Adult basic education	1	1%	1	1%	--	--	17	24%	51	72%	--	--
Adult secondary education	--	--	1	1%	2	3%	17	24%	49	69%	1	1%
Career pathways/Integrated Education and Training	--	--	--	--	1	1%	20	29%	49	69%	--	--
Civics education/prep for citizenship/immigrant integration	1	1%	--	--	5	7%	20	29%	44	62%	--	--
College and career readiness, transition to post-secondary education	--	--	1	1%	5	7%	20	29%	42	59%	1	1%
Digital literacy	1	1%	--	--	2	3%	13	18%	54	76%	--	--
English language learning	1	1%	--	--	3	4%	20	29%	46	65%	--	--
Family literacy	1	1%	2	3%	5	7%	18	25%	43	61%	1	1%
Functional literacy	1	1%	2	3%	3	4%	18	25%	46	65%	--	--
High school equivalency preparation	1	1%	1	1%	4	6%	12	17%	52	73%	1	1%
Native language literacy	5	7%	3	4%	9	13%	21	30%	28	39%	4	6%
Re-entry programming	--	--	--	--	3	4%	10	14%	56	79%	1	1%
Workforce preparation	--	--	1	1%	1	1%	17	24%	51	72%	--	--

Appendix 3: Overview of National Best Practice: Citywide Models of Adult Education Systems and Feedback from National Experts

This report is the third of four deliverables resulting from the project, “A Reimagined Vision for Adult Education Services through the City of Philadelphia,” which was commissioned by Philadelphia’s Office for Children and Families (OCF). The first deliverable explores the scope of need for adult education in Philadelphia, what services are available, and gaps between the need and supply. The second uses survey and interview data to synthesize stakeholders’ perspectives on the status of adult education in Philadelphia and the role the city could play in supporting the adult education system. A final, summary report synthesizes findings from the three previous deliverables and provides recommendations about how Philadelphia could move forward to strengthen its adult education system.

This report examines the roles other cities play in addressing adult education, as well as national best practices in areas such as distance education, digital literacy access, and city-wide system coordination. In addition, this report focuses on promising models for city-wide adult education systems and feedback from national experts on adult education service provision and system coordination in other sectors. It draws on interviews with (1) administrators of organizations that provide and/or play a coordinating role in city-wide adult education services in five U.S. cities: Chicago, IL; Houston, TX; Louisville, KY; New York, NY; and Seattle, WA; (2) four people with adult education expertise (e.g., ABE/GED, ESL, digital); and (3) three leaders with experience in city-wide system coordination in public health, services to children and youth, and regional planning.

First, the report provides an overview of key characteristics of the five adult education city systems and three other urban systems represented in the interview data. The next section examines what these data say about the roles cities can play to support strong systems and the elements needed to support robust system development. The report concludes with key takeaways.

Characteristics of City Systems

This section examines the characteristics of both the city-wide adult education and non-adult education systems that were part of this study. It provides insight into their goals and purpose, their relationship to and positioning within cities, their funding and their primary services and activities. Table 3 describes the five adult education organizations that participated in the interviews.

Table 3. City organizations' profile

Organization & Location	Description of Organization	Primary Services Provided
<p>Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition (CCLC)</p> <p>Chicago, IL</p> <p>chicagocitywideliteracy.org</p>	<p>General Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help Chicago's adult education organizations secure resources and training so that adult learners can become economically successful. • Reframe adult basic education as a critical public policy issue. <p>Relationship to City</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a part of city government; however, a person from City Colleges of Chicago serves on CCLC board. • Will start working on projects with the Office of Workforce Development as a One-Stop operator. • Beginning to connect more with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) as school leadership thinks about how to help parents build digital literacy skills. <p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local philanthropy and contracts (e.g., City Key, Chicago-Cook Workforce Partnership). • Hopes to obtain state contracts in the future. <p>Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 staff: executive director, communications and development associate, community engagement manager, technology project manager, 2 career pathways navigators, navigator coordinator, One-Stop operator manager. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee pass-through grants. • Involved in research projects. • Provide One-Stop services for American Job Centers in Chicago (Cook County). • Play a coordination and convening role in workforce education. • Provide technical assistance and coaching to educators who want to increase use of technology in their classrooms through the Illinois Digital Learning Lab. • Work with Chicago Connected on digital literacy, with the goal of enrolling 100,000 CPS students in broadband for 4 years.

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Organization & Location	Description of Organization	Primary Services Provided
<p>Mayor's Office for Adult Literacy (MOAL)</p> <p>Houston, TX</p> <p>houstontx.gov/adult-literacy/</p>	<p>General Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as a convener, advocate, facilitator, & cheerleader for adult literacy. • Professional development provider, resource and partnership broker, and technology planner. <p>Relationship to City</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of city government. • Director has a dual reporting relationship to the Executive Director of the library and to the Mayor's Deputy Chief of Staff. <p>Funding</p> <p>City general fund & corporate SEED grant.</p> <p>Staffing</p> <p>3 staff: director, manager, executive assistant. Plan to hire events coordinator.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene an advisory board for adult literacy. • Promote adult literacy through social media. • Support a network of 70 providers. • Develop common access ramp for the adult education system for intake, assessment, orientation, and goal setting. • Develop and adopt a common platform for students to access digital learning apps, assessments, & instructional support. • Plans for coordinating professional development, strategic planning, & wrap around services for adult learners & their families.
<p>Jefferson Skills U/Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS)</p> <p>Louisville, KY</p> <p>https://www.jefferson.kyschools.us/departments/adult-continuing-education</p>	<p>General Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide services based on their mission driven by 5 core values: accountability, collaboration, equity, learning, inclusion • Provide supports to help learners pursue their educational pathway. <p>Relationship to City</p> <p>Mainly connected to the city through their work with Kentuckiana Works, which is embedded in city government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a variety of adult education, ESL, family literacy, and remedial college classes. • Issue laptops to learners through grants. • Focus on reengagement & opportunity youth, including • through partnership with • Kentucky Youth Career Center. • Provide Educational Enrichment Services (EES). • Collaborate with Kentuckiana Works by supporting their manufacturing career center and main career center.

Organization & Location	Description of Organization	Primary Services Provided
Jefferson Skills (Cont.)	<p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIOA (Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act) Title I and Title II funding. • Federal & state fund • Some city funding <p>Staffing</p> <p>64 staff, including 48 ABE & ESL staff (instructors, coordinators, clerical staff). 25 full-time and 23 part-time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with Metropolitan Sewer District; JCPS manages registration for certifications required for certain permits. • Partnership with National Center for Families Learning to offer childcare, parenting classes, etc.
<p>Literacy Assistance Center (LAC)</p> <p>New York, NY www.lacnyc.org</p>	<p>General Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated to strengthening & expanding the adult education system and to advancing adult literacy as a core value in society & a foundation for equal opportunity & social justice. • Build the capacity and improve the quality of the basic education, high school equivalency, and English language programs that serve adults and out-of-school youth. <p>Relationship to City</p> <p>Receives a portion of funds from city.</p> <p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYC invests about \$15 million per year in city tax levy dollars, federal Community Service Block Grant funds, & National Development Agency funds in CBO-based adult literacy education, & the LAC receives a portion of those funds for the services they provide. • Receives some federal and state funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide professional development workshops, webinars, courses, and on-site technical assistance to adult literacy and out-of-school youth educators. • Provide technical support for ASISTS, an online adult student information system. • Advocacy work to advance adult literacy education as part of a broader vision for racial, social, & economic justice

Organization & Location	Description of Organization	Primary Services Provided
Literacy Assistance Center (LAC) (cont.)	Staffing 14-includes Executive & administrative staff, ASISTS/Data, services staff, & professional development staff	
Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs (OIRA) Seattle, WA www.seattle.gov/ia/ndraffairs	General Purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission is to improve the lives of Seattle’s immigrant and refugee communities by engaging them in decisions about the City of Seattle’s future & improving the City’s programs and services to meet the needs of all constituents. • Support the city’s mission & vision of providing multilingual language access in every department to ensure messages are linguistically accessible to all learners. Relationship to City <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OIRA is an office of the city government. • Works closely with the Office of Economic Development (city’s workforce development team) and the Seattle Jobs Initiative (funded by city and private sources). Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Seattle general funds. Legal assistance programs receive some state funding. • Two Ready to Work (RTW) classes are funded through Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). • Other classes are funded through general funds. RTW is transitioning from general funds to 100% CDBGs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide legal assistance, immigrant family institute (community-police relations), language access (ensuring that services are available in various languages), ethnic media, citizenship assistance, and Ready to Work (RTW). • Act as the contractor for RTW, which is implemented in community organizations. (RTW is a high-quality language acquisition educational program with 12+ weekly instructional hours [ELA, digital literacy, and employment], and case management.) • Offer 3 classes at CASAS level 3-4 and 1 class at levels 1-2. • Help learners identify a career pathway and work toward entering a community college. • Involved in digital equity conversations, providing funding for digital navigators.

Organization & Location	Description of Organization	Primary Services Provided
Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs (OIRA) (cont.)	Staffing Director, policy analyst, ethnic media communication specialist, language access specialist, 3 immigration lawyers, outreach specialist, finance and operations manager, administrative assistant.	

These five organizations interact differently with their respective city governments. Both the Mayor’s Office of Adult Literacy (MOAL) in Houston and the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) in Seattle are part of the city government. MOAL is a relatively new office (it was established about one year ago) that replaced the Mayor’s Commission on Adult Literacy (MCAL), which was created in the 1980s. Rather than offer adult education services that potentially compete with Houston’s adult education service providers as MCAL had, MOAL acts as an advocate and facilitator to promote adult literacy, while also helping to plan professional development opportunities, provide resources, and support technology use for adult education providers around the city. By supporting a network of over 70 providers, MOAL hopes to coordinate services for adult learners and their families so that even if a learner moves from one provider to another, there is alignment of services across programs.

OIRA, in Seattle, WA, is also located in city government and provides language access and support to immigrants and refugees. Although Seattle does not have an office of adult education, OIRA works closely with the Office of Economic Development (the city’s workforce development team) and the Seattle Jobs Initiative (funded by city and private sources) to provide job and legal support for immigrant and refugee communities. In addition, OIRA operates the Ready to Work program—a high-quality language acquisition educational program with 12+ hours of instruction (ELA, digital literacy, and employment) weekly and case management—for immigrants and refugees.

By contrast, Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition (CCLC), the Literacy Assistance Center (LAC) in New York City (NYC), and Jefferson Skills U in Louisville work closely with their city’s adult education providers but are not located within city government. CCLC is involved in research, advocacy, and coordination of adult education programming and recently became the One Stop operator for American Job Centers in Cook County, which includes Chicago. CCLC also oversees pass-through grants to adult education organizations to provide digital learning and health literacy services and operates the Illinois Digital Learning Lab for the state.

The LAC is an independent non-profit that provides professional development, technical assistance, programmatic resource development, and data management and analysis for NYC and NY state. Unlike other organizations interviewed, the LAC currently has little interaction with the Mayor’s Office of Workforce Development because, as its priorities have changed over

time, its focus on adult education gradually decreased to the point where it is now essentially non-existent. The LAC, however, is a key player in the city and maintains a strong presence there and within the state adult education system.

In Louisville, Jefferson Skills U is part of the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) and provides several types of adult education services. These include GED®, ESL, and family literacy classes, as well as remedial education classes through Jefferson County Technical College. Jefferson Skills U also partners with Kentuckiana Works, a career support program embedded in city government. For example, they worked with the Metropolitan Sewer District to help provide certifications for certain permits the district required.

Each of these organizations has a unique relationship with their city government, and thus, they all illustrate different kinds of collaborations between adult education services, other city services, and city government.

Overall, the five organizations played two distinct roles: supporting other adult education providers and providing direct services throughout the city. CCLC (Chicago), MOAL (Houston), and LAC (New York City) primarily play a supporting role to adult education organizations, while Jefferson Skills U in Louisville and OIRA in Seattle provide direct services. Although these differences are not completely distinct across these five examples, (e.g., CCLC, as a One-Stop operator, will provide services to job seekers and employers; through its Ready to Work (RTW) Program, OIRA provides English language and job skills classes), this variation in roles creates distinct challenges and ways of measuring success in each organization.

Table 4 below indicates the systems coordination roles played by non-adult education organization systems that were part of our study.

Table 4. Profiles of Non-Adult Education Systems Coordination Efforts

Organization & Location	Description of Organization	Primary Activities/Functions
<p>Our Community's Children (OCC)</p> <p>Grand Rapids MI</p> <p>https://ourcommunityschildren.com/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals: Provide young people with opportunities and programs to help prepare them for college, work, and life. Shared city and school district office, guided by joint MOU and a board with city and school district representatives • OCC focuses on public policy, working with partners, system building, and some service delivery. • OCC's roles include intermediary, fiduciary, and advocate for children and youth OCC seeks to make youth voice a component of all their work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many efforts start by bringing community partners and stakeholders together to develop a vision and strategic plan. • System-building example: Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) network identifies needs for services, sets goals for city services, and identifies needs for staff development and training. • Created data management platform. • Fiduciary role: Manage grants to support system-building work and support networks. • Advocacy examples: local, state federal, e.g., advocacy for state afterschool funding.
<p>Department of Public Health: Effort to help health systems connect patients to community resources</p> <p>Philadelphia, PA</p> <p>https://www.phila.gov/departments/department-of-public-health/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals: Identify common platform and create effective referral processes to reduce burden on community organizations that relate to multiple health systems. • Project coordination focused on health partnerships and community linkages. • Health systems began more systematically screening patients for social needs (e.g., employment, housing, food) and wanted to be able to connect patients to resources. • Coordinate and convene a task force for city health systems and health centers and eventually CBOs and other stakeholders. 	<p>Health department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates task force to explore tech platforms and strengthen referral processes • Engages other city departments in task force (e.g., Behavioral Health and Intellectual disability Services). • Coordinates with other city departments (e.g., Workforce) on shared tech platforms • Coordinates a learning collaborative for partners.

Organization & Location	Description of Organization	Primary Activities/Functions
Great Communities Collaborative (GCC), San Francisco, CA http://www.greatcommunities.org/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goals: Equitable and strong outcomes related to climate change and housing. Centering equity across the region, including a focus on who has a voice in what their communities look like. A regional collaborative created by foundations & regional non-profits to coordinate city planning efforts across the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GCC is a collaborative that provides backbone functions. Through grants, GCC provides funding to non-profits based on strategic priorities. GCC coordinates partnerships and work groups to address gaps and provide problem solving.

These three examples of city or region-wide organizations that play a coordinating role across a service sector are located in various parts of city ecosystems. The health department is a city government agency; OCC is a hybrid with shared city and school district governance; and GCC is a regional network, separate from any one city government, which works with cities across the region. Though diverse in many ways, collaboration is at the core of what all three do. Each organization guides networks and bring stakeholders together to work on common goals.

Looking across adult education and non-adult education systems

While significant differences exist both within the adult education systems and across the adult education and non-adult education systems outlined here, key themes emerged which can help the City of Philadelphia consider the range of roles it might play in supporting a robust adult education system. Some of the organizations profiled are part of city government, others are non-profits, and one is a hybrid (joint city/school district entity). Funding comes from a variety of sources, including federal, state and local government, and private philanthropy. Many of the organizations' roles contribute to systems-building, i.e., seeking to construct and support a robust system to support adult education or, in the case of the non-adult education systems, other key types of service provision. Key roles included:

- ***Driving and Coordinating a Shared Vision to Address Specific Problems.*** One organization convenes an adult literacy advisory board for the city. Another coordinates regional efforts and seeks to infuse equity into collaborative efforts. A third brings together community partners and stakeholders to develop a vision and corresponding

strategic plan.

- **Communication and Advocacy.** Some of the adult education organizations play the role of communicating the importance of adult education to the larger community. Approaches include promoting adult education on social media; framing ABE as a critical public policy issue; advancing adult education as a value-added and foundation for equal opportunity and social justice; and seeking to influence policy decisions. When organizations develop a vision or strategic plan, this can become a focus of communication and advocacy effects as well.
- **Service Delivery.** Although some organizations do not get involved with delivering direct services, for others, service delivery is a major focus.
- **Capacity-Building and Supports for Providers.** This is a core area of effort for most organizations and focuses on multiple areas:
 - Professional development. Organizations offer a wide variety of modes of professional development in a number of content areas with the goal of improving program quality.
 - Data collection and use. One organization works with stakeholders to increase their individual ability to collect and use data and also promotes a broader, cross-organization data system for broader, systems-level learning and assessment of progress. For this and other organizations, this process includes identifying and securing a data management system.
 - Technology and digital access. Organizations both provide technical assistance to programs to increase their ability to use digital tools, e.g., by providing coaching for educators who want to use more technology in instruction, and also seek to address broader issues of digital access and equity, e.g., through engagement at policy tables or working with a partner to enroll more students in broadband.
- **Fiduciary Services.** Some organizations take on a fiduciary role, often by serving as a pass through for grants.
- **Coordination and Convening.** Organizations' role in coordination and convening take place both within their area of focus, e.g., adult education, and more broadly in order to connect with other partners and city agencies. All city level departments and non-profits interviewed promote collaboration with other city agencies in order to enhance services. Some organizations convene stakeholders (e.g., adult education programs, ELO providers, health systems) to collaborate on shared tasks or problem-solve together. Adult education leaders often coordinate with workforce organizations both within and outside of city government.

The remainder of this brief integrates feedback from interviewees about the three city systems above, along with interviews located in national and state level literacy organizations or agencies.

Role of the City

All respondents agreed that city government can play an important role in supporting and coordinating adult education services. It can do this at three different levels. First it can provide or leverage access to material and financial resources that improve services and decrease barriers to participation for adult learners. Second it can play a convening and coordinating role across service sectors that includes and integrates adult education into city initiatives and priorities. Third, it can support an office of adult education that coordinates across providers to build capacity for effective services provision and builds connective tissue between adult education and next steps programs for adult learners.

Provide and leverage access to material and financial resources

Because of its clout in the community and its resources (human, financial, political), city government is uniquely situated to support effective adult education services. It can bring together players who might not normally coordinate, and it can look across the service system to identify additional strategies to increase access, decrease barriers, and improve learning opportunities for adult education participants.

As a large urban bureaucracy, city government can offer and marshal a number of resources that would help increase service provision and reduce barriers to participation.

It can draw on unused or underutilized funds and spaces, and city leaders can use their clout with corporate partners to extend additional opportunities to programs and learners.

Respondents suggested that the city should work to increase digital inclusion for adult learners. One keyway to do this may be to encourage corporate partners to provide broadband access and hardware. As a shift toward digital literacy becomes increasingly important, particularly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all five administrators noted the importance of support for digital literacy programs and digital access. As one administrator asserted, “If technology is the future, then providers need to be at the forefront for using technology.” Respondents suggested that city government can play a key role in facilitating this. One respondent asserted that “If a municipality can make it possible to view online use as a public utility, they need to do this.” Another urged the city to engage with corporate partners:

One of the roles that elected officials can play is lassoing corporate involvement. An elected official can lean on a big employer in a way that an adult ed program can't. Who has leverage to go after a big commitment from a Comcast? Say hey, we know you're doing Internet essentials nationwide, but not everyone is getting that. What can you do in Philadelphia to make sure everyone is getting broadband? Who can do that but an elected official?

Staff from other city adult education agencies reported that they are engaging in expanding and supporting digital access in a range of ways from offering professional

development to advocating for digital equity and providing “digital navigators” (volunteers or cross-trained community-based staff who assess and help individuals navigate online social safety net and other resources with an eye toward digital equity).

The city should use its resources to decrease participation barriers. Obviously, there are many kinds of barriers to participation, and city resources cannot be used to address them all. However, respondents shared a few key strategies related to space and transportation. For example, one person noted that the city may have available space through the housing authority or other public spaces that are “deeply embedded in neighborhoods.” Opening up such space for adult education has the dual advantage of cutting down on public transportation needs when students have to travel to different neighborhoods for classes and may make the learning more comfortable because learners can stay in their own neighborhoods. One national expert also suggested that the city could help alleviate transportation difficulties. She said, “They [the city] have access to changing transportation routes. e.g., ‘our class doesn’t get out until 8 pm, could we have one more bus?’ Cities have unique roles to play in dealing with participation barriers.”

Although the city may not be able to provide funding directly for adult education and adult education funding is limited, it could creatively seek out financial resources for adult education through new and different sources. Most interviewees from other city adult education systems emphasized that the city should play a part in providing adequate funding for adult education. National experts acknowledged that the city could play an important role, not just in direct funding, but in accessing outside funds. Some respondents noted that it is up to cities to identify funding sources that may be “on the table,” but not immediately obvious as usable for adult education and not necessarily directly accessible to providers. Creative partnerships based on integrating adult education with other service sectors in the city could help funds flow in mutually beneficial ways from public and non-governmental foundation sources. One interviewee explained how this might work:

The other piece of the puzzle is how creative is the city willing to be in thinking about pulling down adult education funding available from other sources. For example, SNAP, employment and training, 50/50 funds is a way to get more adult education federal funding into the city. If they can get a foundation to provide a match, it could mean a lot more money. But it has been left on the table. Most cities have left the money on the table...other funding sources could be considered, such as TANF, Cares, SNAP, E&T. They could be more creative and strategic about how to get new resources in the system and not rely solely on AFELA funding or the mayor’s line-item budget.

Another interviewee suggested the city could also help adult education providers “think creatively about drawing resources from the federal level and create visionary ideas that might interest...foundations”.

A national expert gave two examples of generating funds for adult education through non-adult education sources. Seattle used community services block grant money for a Ready-

to-Work program for low-literacy ESL learners. Washington D.C. is able to use charter school funds from the K-12 system for adult learners.

Play a convening and coordinating role across service sectors such that adult education is in support of city priorities

Most respondents agreed that adult education would be most sustainable and most effective if the city played a role in decreasing its siloing. Instead, the city should play a systems coordination role in which adult education becomes embedded in all relevant aspects of city services. Part of what would support the city taking on this role would be thinking broadly about how adult education is linked to and can contribute to other mayoral initiatives and city council priorities.

The city should increase coordination and collaboration across sectors through incentives such that it is in all stakeholders' best interests to work together to improve conditions for all Philadelphians. Interviewees suggested that city-level coordination and collaboration are necessary as a route toward integrating adult education and other service sectors. However, this does not happen easily or effectively unless all stakeholders feel there is something in it for them. One potential benefit is more effective advocacy which can be better accomplished by joining together than going it alone:

If a city were able to band together to do advocacy around how funding works, that would be an incentive to get involved... If you want a cohesive system you want to make sure people have reason to be there. Funding can serve that role...If you're able to offer that collaborative feel to that where programs can get and offer resources, there is incentive to be involved in a bigger picture thing.... You can't use a competitive system to encourage collaboration...Making this switch made the whole difference [for us].

Accruing information, assistance, and raising programmatic visibility can also serve as incentives for participating in collaborations. Obviously participating in collaborative efforts takes time, a commodity in short supply in many organizations. Maintaining momentum between meetings can also be difficult. Yet, one respondent observed that cross-sector collaboration yields learning and joint problem-solving for participants. She has found it important to ensure this by making meeting content as meaningful as possible. Then, the investment of time and energy can feel worthwhile. The benefits of participation can serve as another type of incentive.

In order to accomplish this, the right person to coordinate collaboration across sectors needs to be in place. As one interviewee stated, "The city [is well positioned] to bring people together if you have the right person doing it. The city's role carries weight, and with the right person who knows what they're doing, it can be highly effective." She also explained that this person needs to be well versed in all elements of the services system, what initiatives are happening where, and have a keen sense of what can effectively be connected.

Position adult education as a resource to meet needs in other sectors (e.g., to support digital inclusion in health, youth services, families, etc.). Adult education can help support other efforts to improve the lives of Philadelphia citizens, especially those living in poverty. The city can play a pivotal role in “selling” the benefits of adult education in other service sectors and in bringing those sectors to the table with adult education providers so that services can become better integrated. “Business leaders and politicians need to know how adult education could be used as a resource and enlist adult education to help. The Philly mayor’s office could do more to position adult education as a resource on digital literacy and get on that bandwagon.” Similarly, another respondent suggested that adult education can be a route to increased equity for both U.S. born citizens and immigrants.

Staff from other city adult education systems illustrated how adult education and other services sectors can collaborate for mutual benefit. For example, in Louisville, Jefferson Skills University’s strong relationships within the Jefferson County Public School (JCPS) district has helped the organization access technology support and use district building space. JCPS’s partnership with other networking organizations such as the Coalition for Supporting Young Adults has also helped in making connections with the Kentucky Community College system and supporting their work on re-engaging youth in education. CCLC’s partnerships with other advocacy groups, community colleges, libraries, and the Mayor’s office have been important because they have led to partners’ increased understanding of adult education as a conduit for city initiatives (e.g., public health). For OIRA’s Ready-to-Work program, staff have established partnerships with five community-based organizations, which enables them to work as a team and create strong alliances. This is vital because “even though it’s five different entities, decisions are made together.”

Support a city office that plays a coordinating and capacity building role for adult education providers

A city office centered on adult education can help programs operate more effectively and can build better connections between adult education and other service providers that serve as “next steps” for adult learners.

A city office of adult education can promote high quality services by equitably building capacity across the provider system. Respondents noted that the city can play an important role in strengthening programs but must do so in a way that is equitable, taking special care to help small and less effective programs improve rather than tending toward rewarding already strong programs with funding and other supports. As one interviewee noted, doing this can disadvantage small programs and more isolated neighborhoods. All capacity building efforts should seek to raise up program quality equitably across the city.

A national expert gave an example of such an effort in their city:

Many of the small programs would not have been prepared to manage the National

Reporting System. Some of them were volunteer led. They probably hadn't been keeping any numbers; they pieced together funding. Half of the members were in that situation.... We had to build them up to be quality providers. Some of them were barely keeping track of things. We had to get to a place where they could legitimately be part of a professional system. We spent a lot of time preparing for that, to upgrade everyone technologically, professional development.

In a non-adult education example of this, a city systems respondent explained that multiple programs in a non-adult education city system adopted common data bases and shared platforms. Because developing capacity to work with data could be a challenge for groups with limited resources, some networks assisted members in building capacity in this area. In some cases, metrics applied to the system as a whole, e.g., addressing the ways in which city-wide goals were being met. In other cases, systems helped programs develop their own capacity for data collection and use.

As the city builds equitable capacity, it should also encourage innovation and leadership development in programs so that they go beyond being “just compliant about WIOA rules. For example, the city office of adult education could help providers be visionary and aspirational leaders that others in the state are looking to for guidance.”

This office should ensure that the needs of the hardest-to-serve are met and that it is done in ways that are engaging and inviting. As part of capacity-building, a city office of adult education should ensure that programs are equipped to serve the hardest-to-serve in ways that are effective and can help them persist.

It's also hard to get a city to serve the hardest to serve, but [it is important] to figure out what would be the engaging, motivating, effective ways to get people in the adult education door. It is not to sit down, take the TABE test, tell someone “you read at the 4th grade level, and here are some workbooks.

Increased collaboration and cooperation from within adult education and across other kinds of providers is needed to improve the “connective tissue” throughout related city systems. Adults seeking educational services often have multiple needs. A city office of adult education can help provide “an on-ramp to the system” and it can play a pivotal role in helping adult education programs and agencies that learners may go to or come from to build smooth transitions and shared responsibility for keeping learners from slipping between the cracks as their needs for services change. As one interviewee explained, “If there isn't an adult education system that can provide a robust conveyor belt that can move people from adult education to industry-recognized career pathways, a lot of people are lost.”

As part of this process, service coordination was further described by an administrator who stated that the city “needs to understand what exists first and avoid duplicating.”

Elements of a Strong System/Lessons Learned for Effective Adult Education in Philadelphia

Drawing on their experience leading and working with city systems, respondents highlighted key roles for the city to play in order to strengthen Philadelphia's adult education system. They recognized that taking up these roles would be key to effectively raising the skill levels of Philadelphia adults in support of addressing many issues they face. Doing so would benefit both individuals and the city as a whole. Yet, respondents also recognized challenges and considerations that need to be addressed in taking on these roles; these can be described as "key elements" of a strong adult education system. These elements can be broadly understood as focusing on system integration, being strategic about sustainability, bringing diverse stakeholders to the table, building effective collaborations through mindful actions, and focusing on results and data.

Integrate adult education with other service sectors

Adult education should be comprehensively integrated with, and positioned as a resource to, other service sectors in the city. Many respondents discussed the importance of weaving together adult education with other services across the city such that their goals and strategies are integrated, and they function as resources to each other. Such efforts to break down silos can support a comprehensive, high quality, synergistic system that is better able to meet the diverse needs of adults across the city. Adult education can be sustainable as it becomes integrated and interdependent with other stable city services. As one interviewee observed, "If adult education is not embedded, the efforts can come and go. However, when they are, it is easier for city leaders to understand the purpose of adult education as broad and interconnected." Experts suggested that integration should not be limited to connections across just one or two service sectors because this would fail to address all the needs of adult learners; they need to be broad based. Adult education can gather the most momentum when it is attached to city priorities.

Where the mayor has signature initiatives already—e.g. re-entry, technology, public health, 2-gen strategy for families, parents and ECE, etc., adult education should be at the table for all these initiatives as a funded partner helping the City to achieve what it is trying to achieve...You need to weave adult education more intentionally as a partner at the municipal level to get better connections at the community level. When city partners are talking, they can identify synergies and opportunities for collaboration even if it is only warmer referrals at community level.

An adult education city system respondent illustrated the importance of vertical integration within education by "forming partnerships with other [education] providers to conceptualize our work as a continuum of literacy from early childhood to the elderly.... to

look at our efforts as one single issue with different types of interventions along a continuum.”

A national expert who focused her remarks primarily on immigrant services and the importance of integrating them with adult education observed that adult education does better when cities see it as integral to accomplishing other goals for residents. It could also be stated that cities do better at meeting their goals when adult education is an integrated part of the effort. When various service sectors are partners, a city systems staff person observed, “they look for a win-win. They ask, ‘How can we complement and leverage each other’s services in a way that helps the [target group]?’” These experts make clear how critical and beneficial it is to integrate services for adults.

Promote sustainability

Respondents identified several ways to approach sustainability, including cultivating champions and supporting increased knowledge of adult education and the role it can play.

Adult education leaders should actively cultivate champions within city government to promote the sustained support needed for an effective, well-coordinated adult education system that can be integrated with other city service sectors. Adult education national expert respondents understand that commitment to supporting and coordinating adult education systems are often vulnerable to budget cuts and other actions that can undermine its sustainability. This can be caused by changing priorities as elected leaders come and go as well as poor understanding of the role of adult education in forwarding city priorities.

As one respondent noted, the mayor’s backing and support from other city leaders is “more important than any other piece.” Such champions can help advance initiatives in a range of ways, including securing funding and communicating the importance of an initiative or issue to the community. One national expert explained that such efforts must be multi-pronged. For example:

If you are asking how do we help the office of adult education be more than a mayoral initiative and get the city council to take ownership of adult education, then a recipe is to have an inside/outside strategy, where both the inside folks working for government are making arguments for their adult education peers and people from the outside are pounding on the doors saying “Hey city council, you need to be paying attention to this” at city budget meetings.

City government can play a unique role in mobilizing organizations and sectors. As one respondent said, “There’s a real advantage to having the municipality behind you.... You have leadership behind you and people view city government differently than a nonprofit.”

An important threat to sustainability is that some city leaders may not fully understand the need to increase adult skill levels, adult education as a field of practice, or its potential to support a range of city priorities. City leaders and potential partners sometimes lack knowledge about adult education, the need for it, and the programming in place. As one respondent said, “In informing these potential stakeholders, key questions that should be addressed include: How many people in Philadelphia need services, how many are being served, and what is the system of providers that are serving those people right now? Then what are the funding levels for that system?”

A lack of knowledge means that stakeholders both in and outside of government may not be aware of how adult education can contribute toward a wide range of priorities and initiatives. As one administrator stated, “People don’t really know what adult education is. Sometimes people in the city don’t fully understand the whole range of services that adult education provides.” To overcome this, she advised, “You need to educate stakeholders and let them know what adult education is.”

City systems staff in other cities concurred. For example, one respondent elaborated that when adult education is seen merely as a subset of “workforce development,” it can narrow “the focus of the discourse, funding, and supports, and risks discounting the goals and leaving behind many of those who would seek basic literacy, HSE [high school equivalency], or English language classes for other purposes.” Another observed that “we’re in a different time with the employer piece; adult education is so much more than jobs. There aren’t going to be as many jobs as people need. So we need to ask, ‘How do we ensure that people can live vibrant lives when the reality of employment is pretty dismal?’ I don’t know that employers are really going to be the ones to save us at this point. We need to make sure people have the resources in their community to live their life.” Here she is pointing out that adult education must focus on education for a range of purposes including but not limited to employment.

Several organizations are trying to address this challenge by creating an active social media presence and continuously championing the field of adult literacy. One respondent further advocates for the importance of adult education and family literacy by sponsoring adult education and family literacy awareness weeks and putting on literacy rallies, among other activities. Another has reached out to local television stations and staff have been interviewed multiple times to publicize the importance of adult literacy.

It is important to have a clear understanding of the adult education landscape in a city. Four of the five of the administrators noted that cities need to have a clear understanding of the adult education programs and providers, services, and the goals of the system.

Bring diverse voices to the table to develop a shared vision to meet the needs of all groups.

According to respondents, the need to engage diverse stakeholders, including traditionally underrepresented groups and constituencies, applies to both collaborations within adult education and those involving adult education organizations with other stakeholders or agencies. Decisions about whom to engage in different types of planning and problem-solving activities or collaboratives may be shaped by the overall purpose of specific initiatives, as well as by the larger goals of the organization or the city as a whole. Key aspects of bringing together diverse voices include using a planning table to build a sense of shared mission, engaging those most directly impacted by adult education, and engaging stakeholders from outside the system.

Use collaborative workgroups to create a shared mission. Many respondents noted the importance of a shared mission articulated through a planning process. They suggested that these efforts be inclusive, "having all the crucial people at the table from the get-go," and transparent. One respondent noted that defining primary goals and purposes for a citywide system will shape all the next steps in terms of a city office of adult education's activities and priorities.

City government needs to start by first articulating the broad goals of adult education and then work back to identifying specific activities. For example, if the Philadelphia effort will be under the Office of Children and Families and supporting families and parents is a primary goal, their role would be different than if the goal is to get people entry-level jobs.

Interviewees also suggested thinking early about how to create a clear set of focused goals. One said:

Incorporate more of a results frame into the work. [Ask] what are the things we think we can accomplish and then really aim to do those, building in flexibility. You can't predict everything but having a sense of what you're driving for can really galvanize energy. When this is lacking is where I run into the most problems.

This systems leader advocated both backwards planning so that starting with the end goal can inform the steps needed to achieve it and the utility of a vision and outcomes to galvanize support and engagement. Respondents emphasized that including multiple voices and players in planning helps to ensure that the diverse needs of adults around the city are met at the same time that city priorities are addressed. Some respondents suggested that stakeholders should work to establish a set of shared priorities, timelines, and metrics for evaluating progress toward their goals. These metrics should be broader and more detailed than simply high school equivalency exam pass rates. In creating a shared vision, it will be important to find a balance between a unified approach and local control that acknowledges the unique characteristics of learners, programs, and

communities.

Engage those most directly impacted by adult education. Respondents emphasized the importance of listening to stakeholders, especially learners, community members, and program administrators and instructional staff. One respondent stressed the importance of starting off with peoples' needs by asking, "What do people want?" Listening to communities' voices will ensure that learners and providers are getting the support and services they need. This was similarly suggested when a respondent was asked what the city should *not* do. They stated:

Not listening from the beginning to stakeholders. You need to have a strong strategy for knowing what the community assets are from the outset. Don't just come at it from the top. Make sure everyone designing the initiative is aware of what's happening on the ground.

Including those most impacted by adult education will help city systems leaders to ground planning, decision-making, and supports for adult education in the local context:

City collaborations work well when the city is intentional about a place-based approach that really involves those who would be most impacted by whatever the issue is going to be. And that the process raises the voices of those who will be impacted by the issue. As well that the city is thoughtful about having players around the table that will give meaningful input.

Respondents noted that when organizations listen to stakeholders, important needs about adult education organizations and services are identified.

Engage stakeholders from outside the adult education system as well. Respondents from both adult education and non-adult education settings emphasized the importance of an intentional process to identify and invite broad and strategic participation in networks and collaboratives. They described this approach as important whether collaboratives focus within a field, such as adult education, or involve connecting adult education with other sectors. Interviewees noted that having a broader set of stakeholders at the table generate better ideas and implementation. One respondent said, "We've done well to seek out those not typically at the table," including a wide range of community stakeholders, constituents and potential clients of services, as well as businesses, the United Way, credit unions and banks, and higher education. For example, higher education representatives are often viewed as community leaders and their support provides credibility in the community and with funders. Several respondents emphasized that community members and others from outside of government bring creativity and innovative ideas. Engaging such stakeholders adds new perspectives and can further system integration, help with identifying additional resources, and seed the emergence of new champions for adult education.

Work mindfully to build successful collaborations within adult education, with partners, and across city government silos and agencies.

As described above, respondents emphasized that collaboration and engaging diverse voices are important strategies for improving services and building partnerships. However, respondents also suggested that collaborations require specific efforts in order to be fully functional and identified areas that can support their success. They emphasized the importance of building relationships and positive collaborative practices, as well as the need to address potential challenges such as meeting the needs of diverse stakeholders, finding time for collaboration, and maintaining the momentum of collaborative groups.

Focus on relationship building and positive collaborative practices in work groups and networks. Respondents emphasized that spending the necessary time to develop relationships and trust will build a foundation both for stronger collaboration and for working through tensions and conflicts. One adult education system leader described taking time after their hiring to meet with and get to know providers. Another respondent noted that consistent participation in network meetings can help to facilitate strong relationships, “Building trust is important. We had a rule of no rotating participation [within participating network members] to facilitate building trust and relationships.” Another noted that clear decision-making and communication about roles and processes facilitate both relationships and smooth working processes, “You need to have patience and a focus on relationship building and really clear decision making. Who gets to decide? What are people’s roles?” As one interviewee noted, ultimately, “people want to come together and talk and learn from each other,” but this is more likely to happen in meaningful ways when people develop shared relationships, knowledge, and goals over time.

Although respondents advocated for engaging differently positioned stakeholders, they also noted that facilitators need to be ready to address the ways that this can make group processes more challenging. When networks or collaborative groups include very differently positioned stakeholders and organizations, they may need to spend time addressing how to move forward in the face of different needs and priorities. For example, members may come from a range of contexts, work with different communities, have differing funding streams with differing demands and be in different stages of organizational development. One interviewee said, “When you have a wide set of partners, there can be tension in how progressive you land or how radical.”

One interviewee advocated not letting political considerations impact decisions about who participates but to remain committed to broad participation:

What often happens in cities is that people start getting political. They make decisions based on “I don’t want to hear that person” or whatever. I haven’t found a problem with involving as many people as possible. People appreciate being asked. They love being involved. When you are thoughtful about what the problem or issue is that needs to be addressed and how you need input into that process, it

works well. If you don't pay attention [to involving stakeholders], people get upset they are not involved.

This respondent noted that inclusion has many benefits, whereas exclusion can undermine the process and its outcome.

Collaboratives will likely include groups with different levels of resources, status and power within the city. One respondent described a successful approach to address power differentials:

The district understood that they needed to share power. We even set up that the school district should never chair the consortium. It's a model that worked. I think this was a rare thing to see groups give up power for a collaborative effort for the betterment of everybody. This had made programs stronger, bigger, and more advanced.... There were needy groups that were looking for help, and there were groups that were looking to make the system better. The latter also had in our minds that we were going to have to give up some power to do that.

In the example above, the collaborative intentionally created goals that all stakeholders committed to working towards. They also explicitly discussed power differences within the groups and created approaches to address the needs of all stakeholders that everyone bought into, including large organizations agreeing to give up some of their power. This group also brought in experts who could provide targeted supports for collaboration. “We had consultants come in to work with us. We had lots of strategic planning of what we wanted to do as a group. It made a big difference to have an outside person facilitate.” However, they noted that it was important to “bring in people that programs can relate to.”

Focus on results and data.

City adult education systems' approaches to measuring success are shaped by whether or not they provide direct services. Those who provide services usually collect data on learning outcomes, while those that play other roles often collect data on provider engagement in services and/or are in the process of identifying additional approaches to evaluation. For one agency providing direct services, success is tailored to the fulfillment of students' goals such as completing their educational plans, improving pre-post standardized tests and digital literacy assessments, and meeting employment outcomes. Another agency has some discrete projects that use pre/post assessments to measure differing learning components (e.g., comfort with technology). They also collect data on the number of participants involved in workforce education and development. Among agencies that don't provide direct services, one measures its success by its members' level of engagement, including, for example, how many participate in advocacy efforts or how many individuals connect to career resources. Another has not yet established formal measures of success. Creating outcomes and benchmarks for measuring success is more challenging for offices that do not provide direct services.

Key Takeaways

This report, based on interviews with national experts and leaders of city adult education systems and organizations that play a coordinating role in other sectors, points to the meaningful role that the city of Philadelphia can play in supporting and coordinating adult education efforts for the city. Although we found many models for what this can look like in other locales, there was significant convergence around a few key points.

Given the overall goal of effective adult education services that can significantly improve the lives of citizens, the first goal is that efforts must be sustained, avoiding rising and falling interest and attention driven by electoral politics, budget crunches, and other factors. Respondents made clear that sustainability comes from first developing and clearly communicating a broad-based understanding of what adult education is, why there is a need for it, how it can serve the priorities of social justice and equity, and what services are and are not available. Second, sustainability can be supported by integrating adult education with as many other related service sectors as possible with the understanding of mutually beneficial outcomes. Third, adult education needs champions who will advocate for adult education at every opportunity.

To put sustainability in motion, respondents demonstrated that cities can use their clout to bring diverse voices to the planning table to establish goals and processes for meeting and measuring progress towards them. In operationalizing them, partnerships across city service sectors are necessary, and mindful work must be undertaken to build relationships that can make them successful.

However, the work cannot take place only at the planning and partnering levels. The findings suggest that the city also needs an office that is charged with working directly on strengthening, coordinating, and innovating educational practices at the program level. This office should be the “arm” that operationalizes the goals for adult education. This can be done by providing professional development, technical assistance, and coordination within adult education and across city systems.

Finally, the findings indicate that cities can play a role in leveraging resources for adult education through direct funding, by creatively accessing and bundling public funds across sectors, and by raising awareness of and interest in adult education with foundations and corporate donors. Such efforts could not only fund direct services (including a city office for adult education), but also increase digital access and other important resources. Adult education can play an important role in addressing city priorities and goals, but it can only do so with appropriate support which involves commitment, integration, coordination, capacity building, and resources.