



NYCCAL FY2016 State Budget Priorities

- **Recommendation: \$10m investment (\$3.7m expansion) in Adult Literacy Education (ALE) to create 3,000+ new classroom seats.**

Agudath Israel of America
Bronx Works
Catholic Charities
Chinatown Manpower Project
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
Community Service Society
Cypress Hills Local Dev Corporation
Doe Fund
Edith & Carl Marks Jewish Community
House of Bensonhurst
FEGS Health and Human Services
Fifth Avenue Committee
Fortune Society
HANAC
Highbridge Community Life Center
International Center New York (ICNY) at
Catholic Charities
Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement House
Jewish Community Council of
Greater Coney Island
Jewish Community Center of Staten Island
LaGuardia Community College Center for
Immigrant Education and Training
Lehman College Adult Learning Center
Literacy Assistance Center
Literacy Partners
Lutheran Family Health Centers Adult and Family
Education
Make the Road New York
Maukra Clarke-Ita Ford (MCIF) Center
Neighborhood Family Services Coalition
New York Immigration Coalition
Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation
NYC College of Technology Adult Learning Center
Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow
Phipps Community Development Corporation
Project Reach Youth
Queens Community House
Riverside Language Program
Shorefront YM-YWHA
Turning Point
UAW Region 9A Education Fund
Union Settlement Association, Inc.
United Jewish Appeal - Federation of New York
United Neighborhood Houses
University Settlement Adult Literacy Program
YMCA of Greater NY

The New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy (NYCCAL) is comprised of teachers, managers, students, and allies from community-based organizations, advocacy groups, public libraries, and colleges in the City University of New York. NYCCAL advocates for an adult literacy system that provides quality, comprehensive, and accessible educational services to current students and other adults who require it. NYCCAL believes that being able to read and write, learn English, obtain a High School Equivalency diploma, and enter training and post secondary education are the rights of every New Yorker and the cornerstone to an equitable and just society. www.nyccaliteracy.org

Economic Benefits of Literacy

Despite the significant cost to New York's economy of having a large section of the workforce without English proficiency (Spanish-speaking adults with limited English proficiency lose approximately \$3,000/year in earnings as compared to their peers), investments in improving the literacy and high school credential attainment among this population have been flat or only seen nominal growth. Only an estimated 4% of the 1.7 million New Yorkers lacking English proficiency are able to access state-funded ESOL classes.

When investments are made in this population however, the returns are tremendous: for every NYC resident that earns a high school diploma or its equivalent (HSE), there is a net benefit to the City of \$324,000 over their lifetime in terms of increased tax contributions and decreased public benefit utilization.

Given that New York subsidizes the exam cost for every HSE test-taker, and pass rates are 23% higher for those in preparation programs versus walk-in testers, it is in the state's interest to ensure ESOL and HSE preparation classes are available to all eligible adults.

- **Recommendation: \$5m investment in a new High School Equivalency (HSE) Transition Fund to support professional development and computer technology.**

Challenge of Common Core

In January 2014, New York took a historic step in being among the first states in the nation to phase out the GED® and replace it with a new and more rigorous examination aligned to the Common Core known as the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC™). While we support raising the standards for high school equivalency attainment, there have been no resources dedicated towards ensuring the success of the transition.

In order for students to succeed in this new environment, it is critical that their instructors have access to professional development opportunities to increase their own subject-area knowledge, as well as effective instructional methodologies. The State Education Department (SED) estimates that 1,200 teachers across the state are in need of enhanced professional development, and supporting each of these teachers is an investment that will yield student success and achievement.

In addition, as the testing system increasingly moves away from paper and pencil testing toward computer based testing, it is imperative that students build their computer literacy skills to ensure that their success on exams is not limited by a lack of computer literacy. Investing resources for the purchase, and installation of computers, as well as technical support for adult education programs across the state will not only allow students to build essential 21st century technology skills and prepare them for success on computer based tests, but it will increase capacity of the State to actually administer HSE examinations.