

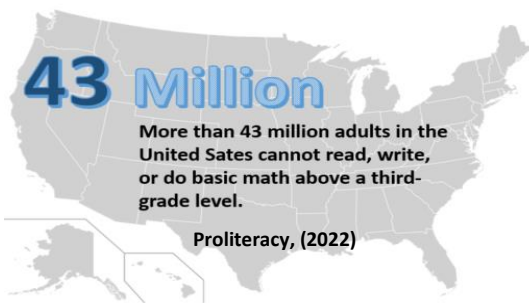
Chasing Literacy!



"I was terrified of failure, but my Adult Education instructor helped me every step of the way." Tonya Thomas enrolled in the high school equivalency program at Sheridan College in 2019. Since graduating from Adult Education, she has earned both an Associate's Degree and her Bachelor's in Psychology and is now employed in the Sheridan area as an Agent for Probation. "My life and my family's lives are completely different now. I have a career I love. We have a nice home and I feel I have set a good example for my kids. The encouragement and help from my family and my Adult Education instructor put me on a path to success and I couldn't be more thankful." Her advice for others in similar shoes is "You are never too old and no matter what you've been through in life it's not too late, go for it, you won't regret it. Chase your dreams!" (Sheridan College Foundation, 2022)

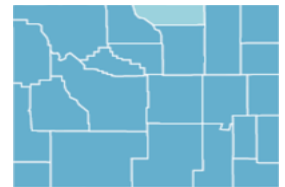
Literacy Facts

U.S. Facts



Wyoming Facts

- 78,717 people in Wyoming have low literacy skills
- 24,175 people do not have a high school diploma/equivalency
- 8,622 individuals do not speak English very well or at all



\$2.2 Trillion

Bringing all adults to the equivalent of a sixth grade reading level would generate an additional \$2.2 trillion in annual income for the country.



The Cost of Low Literacy \$106-238 Billion

It is estimated between \$106-238 billion in health care costs a year are linked to low adult literacy skills.

3X The Earnings

Workers who have less education than a high school diploma have the lowest median weekly earnings (\$592), three times less than the highest level of education.

Wyoming's Adult Education Programs Are Targeting Literacy Needs

Wyoming's Adult Education programs are now workforce centered and offer coursework that specifically targets literacy needs across a wide career pathways spectrum. Both the IET & IELCE provide education and training concurrently and contextually while Workplace literacy programs are designed to meet the literacy needs of individual employers. Bridge programs prepare learners for the rigors of postsecondary and the traditional HSE & ESL courses continue to be taught throughout each year but are now utilizing contextualized curricula for identified career pathways clusters. Integrated into all courses are essential workforce soft skills and digital and financial literacy.



The Growth & Nurturing of Partnerships Are the Critical Links to Successfully Addressing Literacy

Wyoming Dept. of Workforce Services (DWS) & the One-Stop

Adult Education's largest and most active partnership is with the WY Dept. of Workforce Services. Twenty-eight percent of enrolled Adult Education students are also co-enrolled with DWS for employment related services. According to the US Dept. of Labor & Education, Wyoming's WIOA core partners have the **highest** co-enrollment rates in the country.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Throughout the State, our VR partner addresses the needs of participants who have a disability. Meetings and co-enrollments with VR help to expand literacy services to this vulnerable population.

Community Service Providers

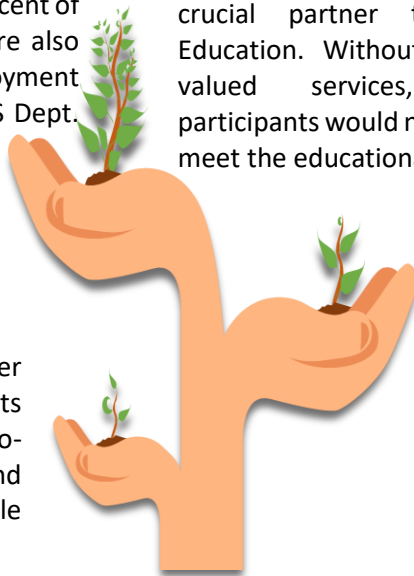
The service providers found in each area of the State are a crucial partner to Adult Education. Without their very valued services, enrolled participants would not be able to meet the educational goals.

The Colleges

Partnerships with local community colleges provide the critical link in the career pathways system to training programs for credential attainment.

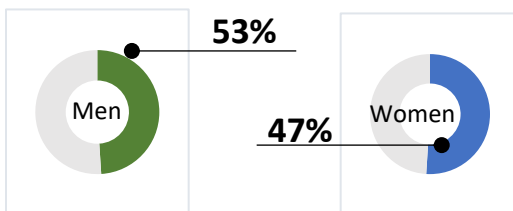
Next Generation Sector Partnerships

Regular meetings with local Next Gen teams provide Adult Education centers with vital information for the development of stackable credential pathways from high school/HSEC to two-year degree programs and beyond. Information received from these teams has also been used in planning for work based training programs such as IET's and pre-apprenticeships programs in manufacturing and in various health professions.



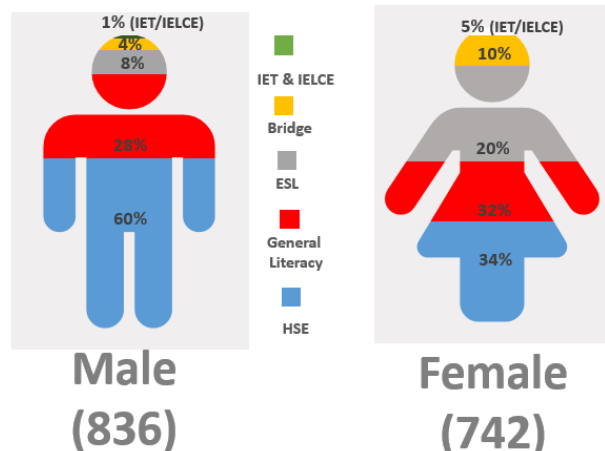
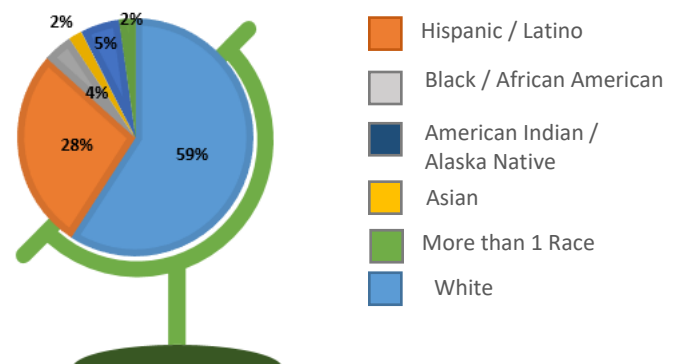
The 'Who' of Adult Education Literacy in Wyoming

Gender



The demographics of the Adult Education student population in Wyoming continues to be fairly similar to national averages with one notable difference being Wyoming's large representation of American Indian/Alaskan Native compared to Black/African American.

Ethnicity



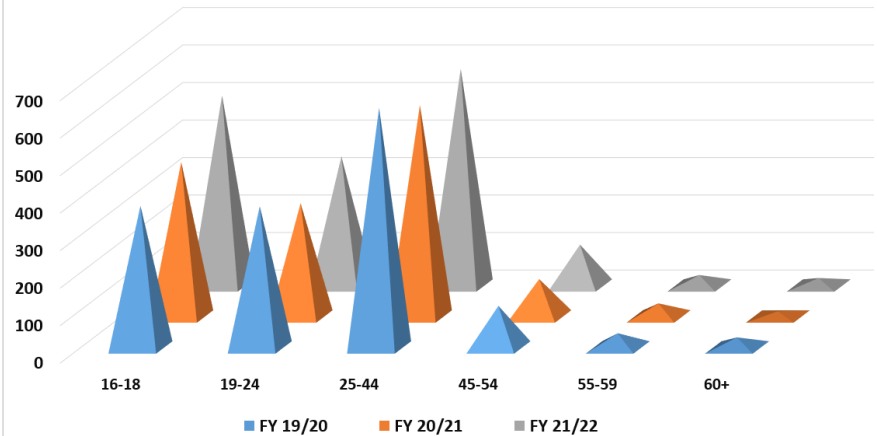
Literacy Enrollments by Gender

There is gender disparity in the type of enrollments participants are pursuing in Adult Education. Sixty percent of the men are enrolling to complete a high school equivalency and move on to work. For women this 60% is split into two primary categories: pursuing a high school equivalency and general literacy with increasing numbers of women pursuing postsecondary/training.

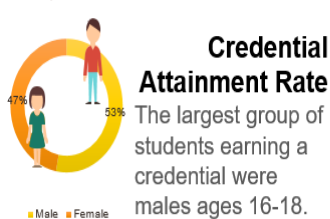
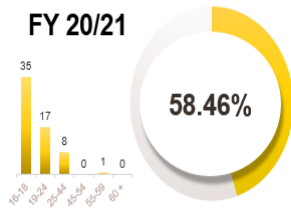
Trends for the ESL population are fairly similar. The lower enrollment for men could be suggestive that the State is experiencing higher employment rates for this population than for females. Adult Education is seeing increasing numbers of ESL females participate in training programs, such as the IELCE, particularly in health related careers.

Recovery from the pandemic has seen a 10% increase in Adult Education enrollments for our youngest learners as many students found themselves unable to complete traditional high school curricula and turned to adult education. Enrollments in multiple WIOA core programs also increased at the same time for individuals in both the 16-18 & 19-24 categories while diversification of program offerings expanded the ability of participants in the very rural sections of the state to enroll through the use of distance learning and/or hybrid classes.

Enrollment Trends by Age Grouping

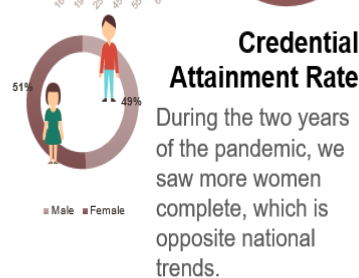
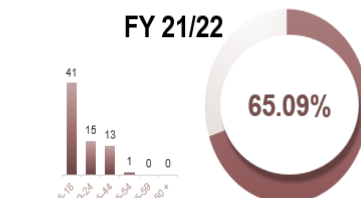


FY 20/21



Credential Attainment Rate
The largest group of students earning a credential were males ages 16-18.

FY 21/22



For the first time, Wyoming's credential attainment rate surpassed 60%! There are several reasons for this dramatic rise:

- Increased number of participants who completed their HSEC AND got a job or entered postsecondary/training within one year of exiting the Adult Education program.
- increased number of participants who earned an industry recognized credentials through IET programs and/or other workforce training programs.
- Better tracking and data match systems for recording credentials earned by Adult Education participants.

Wyoming's Adult Education Addresses Literacy and Outcome Measures at Top Notch Rates!

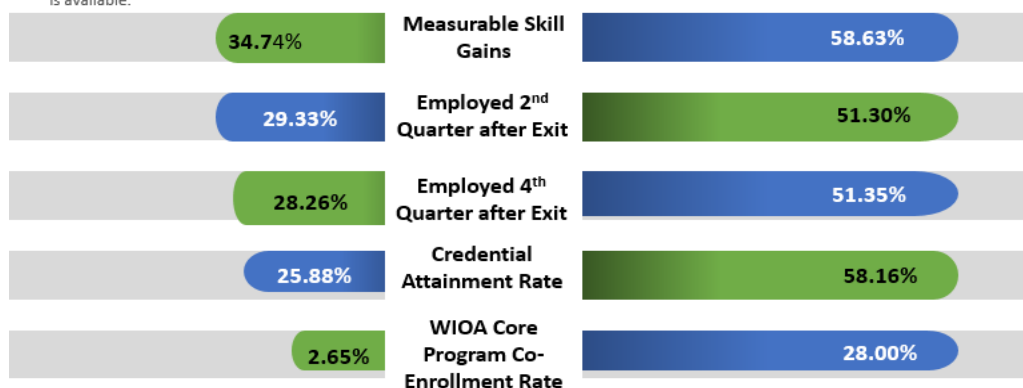
National Averages

Each of the federal reporting measures shown in this chart are for FY 20/21, the most recent year for which published data is available.

VS

Wyoming

Wyoming's Adult Education programs place within the top five in the nation for each category!



Through intensive professional development and training, Adult Education staff have learned how to effectively increase literacy levels in the State by utilizing evidence based research methodologies. As a result, Wyoming's national performance level rankings places us within the top six in nearly every category. In addition, our high co-enrollment rates demonstrate effective partnerships between the WIOA core partners!

In FY 21/22...

- 62.14% of qualified Adult Education students earned a credential and became employed!
-61.53% of enrolled students improved literacy levels in reading and writing.
-48.17% of enrolled students improved literacy levels in math.



-522 individuals completed an HSEC.
-an Adult Education student from Northwest College earned the highest HiSET score in the State.

Keys to Unlocking Challenges to Adult Education Literacy in Wyoming



Braided Funding

In order to sustain the Adult Education programs in Wyoming, each provider is utilizing braided funding streams to overcome budget shortfalls.



Access to Postsecondary / Training

Because most Adult Education students do not qualify for Federal Financial Aid, local community colleges are providing scholarships to help these students begin enrollment in higher education.



Diversification

In-demand industry requirements are the foundation for program diversification in Adult Education. Adult Education centers in Sweetwater and Uinta counties have modified existing curricula and programs of study in alignment to local industry needs, such as those identified by the Natrium project. Our centers in Laramie and Albany counties have targeted the manufacturing and health care industries while Natrona county has aligned programming to the health care industry.



High Quality Instructors

The challenge of nationwide shortages of qualified instructors has been felt by local centers as well. One program in Wyoming experienced what was locally referred to as 'the great quit' where all instructors resigned for other opportunities. To overcome these types of challenges, Wyoming's Adult Education centers are utilizing online instruction where instructors can teach virtually from any location in the United States. In addition, our centers have expanded distance learning opportunities and are making increased use of hyflex classes.

Innovations in Adult Education Opens the Door to Increasing Literacy Levels

Each of the Adult Education providers in Wyoming have implemented innovative strategies to address the literacy gaps in Wyoming. Providers have begun to combine academic programming with 'work experiences' to prepare participants for the intensive requirements of postsecondary and/or the workplace while expanding upon and/or formalizing partnerships. Other strategies have also been implemented to provide participants with expanded opportunities.

Increasing enrollments address.....

- the inadequate gaps between State literacy needs and enrollments in literacy programs
- goals established with the Unified State Plan and the Educational Attainment Initiative

01

Strategies Employed by Our Centers

- 1) advertising in movie theaters
- 2) MOU with tribal nations & other community service providers to deliver Adult Education services
- 3) Hybrid classes
- 4) Distance learning
- 5) Electronic intake

Workforce training.....

- allows for 'hands-on' learning
- develops employability skills
- leads to opportunities to meet local employers

02

Strategies Employed by Our Centers

- 1) Internships, pre-apprenticeships and other work experience programs
- 2) Integrated Education and Training programs
- 3) Training Tuesdays, Workforce Wednesdays
- 4) Networking Course

Post-secondary

- Adult Education is a pathway into postsecondary
- Concurrent/dual enrollments increase literacy levels at faster rates

03

Strategies Employed by Our Centers

- 1) WYDOC-Selected as experimental site for 2nd Chance Pell Grants
- 2) Concurrent/Dual Enrollments
- 3) 59% of Northwest College's Adult Education students transition into the college

Programs for out of school youth....

- Credential youth
- Provide training opportunities and other work experience
- Pay incentives for achievement of benchmarks
- Lead to high co-enrollment rates between WIOA core partners

04

Strategies Employed by Our Centers

- 1) All AE centers have partnered with WY Dept. of Workforce Services to offer this incentive based program to qualified out of school youth

The success of these efforts was demonstrated by a 54% enrollment of qualified Adult Education students into a program of study which placed them along an identified career pathways track and by year end many of these students had enrolled in postsecondary education and/or earned a credential. Efforts to increase literacy enrollments also included the expansion of hybrid classes, distance learning, creative advertising strategies, and formalizing partnerships through MOU's.