

State of the State



**Public Adult
Education of MA**

LIVE TO LEARN



**Adult and Community
Learning Services**

Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS)

The Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) unit, part of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, is dedicated to offering high-quality foundational education at no cost to Massachusetts residents aged 16 and older. Collaborating with providers and partners, ACLS oversees a public adult education system that provides free quality instruction, advising, job training, and career pathways to all adult students in Massachusetts.

Our public adult education programs are designed to be accessible at no charge to Massachusetts residents. We emphasize that these programs are not simply "free" but represent valuable professional opportunities. At ACLS, we are committed to cultivating an inclusive, supportive, and dynamic learning environment. Through our comprehensive programs, we strive to empower adult learners to establish a foundation for personal and professional growth, positively contributing to their lives and the broader community.

Public Adult Education Services

Serving
Approximately
25,000
Adults Annually

74

Community Core Service*
Providers

11

College Transitions Providers

7

Correctional Core Service
Providers

5

Training to Employment Providers – Pay
for Performance

22

Statewide MassSTEP agencies
providing foundational and
industry skills concurrently

1

Online Virtual Academy - MassLINKS
Primary Instruction by Volunteer Tutors – 13
Communities
Workplace Education Partnership



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- **Outstationed Staff Support:** ACLS allocates funds to designated CALC programs, facilitating the provision of outstationed staff in MassHire Career Centers. These staff members assist with customer intake, assessment, and referrals for Adult Education (AE) classes.
- **Virtual Education Hub – MassLINKS:** ACLS initiated MassLINKS, a statewide virtual adult education academy offering online High School Equivalency and English for Speakers of Other Languages classes. The academy serves around 500 students throughout the academic year.
- **Credential-Oriented Programs: MassSTEP:** ACLS funds 22 programs that collectively offer 28 integrated education programs. These programs conclude with students obtaining industry-recognized credentials, paving the way for entry into their chosen fields of study.
- **Financial Barrier Elimination:** ACLS is committed to enhancing access to high school credentials for all Massachusetts students. As part of this commitment, the state now covers fees for GED and HiSET tests, ensuring that financial obstacles do not hinder students from pursuing educational advancement.

Theory of Action: Priorities FY 24-28

Using our levers of change (i.e., providing high-quality, professional development, providing indicators of program quality and policies, and conducting program quality reviews), our aim is to professionalize the field of adult education while creating a more equitable adult education system by:

1. Improving access to full-time positions: ESOL certification path pilot, minimum salary increase
2. Promoting educational leadership, stability, and learning: sustaining ADEI through effective leadership, program quality reviews focused on educational leadership IPQ
3. Focusing on curriculum support and incentives: ACLS/SABES Mini-landscape scan curriculum/instruction
4. Reviewing and analyzing existing data: data audit pilot, accurate waitlist

In doing so, we will generate a higher-quality educator workforce as well as higher-quality programs, which will result in improved student outcomes.