Get Involved!
Adult Education and Family Literacy Week, Sept. 19-25
International Literacy Day, Sept. 8

Each year during AEFL Week, NCL and its member organizations encourage students, teachers, and administrators in adult basic education, ESOL, and family literacy programs nationwide to raise awareness of the transformational power of adult education. This is a great opportunity to contact decision makers at local, state, and national levels to promote policies that support adult learning. NCL provides social media messaging and links to resources, and works with Congressional leaders to have AEFL Week recognized through resolutions in the Senate and the House of Representatives every year. How will you advocate during AEFL Week?

International Literacy Day is observed on September 8 each year as a way of raising and maintaining support for the foundational skills that underlie full participation in community life. The theme for International Literacy Day 2021 is “Literacy for a human-centered recovery: Narrowing the digital divide.” International Literacy Day is an initiative of UNESCO. How will you observe International Literacy Day?
Adult Education in Federal Budget Reconciliation

The American Jobs Plan calls for $100 billion for workforce skills development, including "expanded career services and the Title II adult literacy program." In addition, the American Families Plan promotes access to higher education through reduced or free tuition and increased funding for Pell grants. Now, the House Education & Labor Committee and the Senate HELP Committee are working to determine how much funding to allocate to those priorities as part of the reconciliation package. The House committee will be making its detailed recommendations on September 9. Read a blog post from NCL and view a video from the National Skills Coalition to learn how the process works and why advocacy is essential to be sure ALL priorities - education and skills training -- are supported.

Digital Equity in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (H.R. 3684) was passed by the U.S. Senate on August 10, and is now waiting for a vote in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Act as passed by the Senate includes the text of the Digital Equity Act of 2021 (S. 2018), which was introduced by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) on June 10 with co-sponsors Senators Rob Portman (R-OH) and Angus King (I-ME). This Act would provide state formula funds for a range of digital inclusion activities, as well as competitive grants for digital inclusion projects. The infrastructure legislation includes $2.75 billion over five years for the Digital Equity Act and substantial funding for other aspects of digital inclusion. For details, read a blog post from the National Digital Inclusion Alliance.

Public Charge Rules and Immigration Policy

On February 2, 2021, President Biden signed an executive order directing the heads of relevant federal agencies to review all agency public charge policies and their effects on immigrant communities. The Department of Homeland

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act

Each year as part of the annual appropriations process Congress allocates funding for AEFLA, Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. [Note that the annual appropriations process is separate from the budget reconciliation]
Security has now initiated its review by issuing its Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) on the public charge issue. DHS will be accepting written comments until October 22, and will also hold listening sessions on September 14 (for the general public) and October 5 (for granting agencies and nonprofit organizations). Visit Protecting Immigrant Families to learn more about public charge.

With input from NCL and COABE, Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and several colleagues have introduced an initiative to double AEFLA funding over the next five years, beginning with an appropriation of $810 million for FY 22 (the appropriation for FY 21 was $689 million). COABE’s Educate & Elevate feature provides an easy way to contact your Members of Congress to support this request.

The National Digital Inclusion Alliance is partnering with Consumer Reports on the Let’s Broadband Together initiative. The initiative is collecting data on internet availability and use directly from consumers. The resulting data will help NDIA advocate for more affordable and faster internet options. The project runs through mid-September.

The Census Bureau has released individual data profiles for all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. Each profile provides key demographic characteristics of each state and county on one page, including population, housing, race, ethnicity, diversity and age data. The data will affect Congressional representation and government funding for the next decade.

Advocacy Resources

ProLiteracy Advocacy Toolkit
NCL Summary and Links on Adult Literacy in the United States
American Library Association Literacy Programs
NCL Nexus is a quarterly e-newsletter that provides information on advocacy needs and opportunities for supporters of adult education and family literacy. It is produced and distributed by the National Coalition for Literacy. Subscriptions are free and available to all interested persons. Feel free to forward to interested colleagues.

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