

Protecting Your Program and Students;

Understanding How to Influence & Educate State Legislators and Policymakers

COABE

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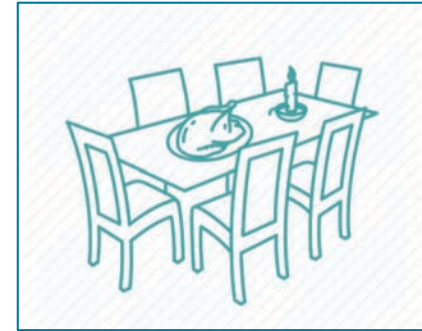
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Agenda

- Introductions
- Why education and advocacy is important
- Why you should care & be involved
- Understanding the process
- Examining a recent example in Arizona
- How to get started
- Resources and additional info

Why Education & Advocacy Is Important

**If you're not at the table...
you can easily end up on the menu**



- Protecting your work & funding
 - External competition – adult charters, etc. that could syphon precious state resources, while they don't have to abide by the same rules AE does
 - Damaging rules and legislation that hurt your programs or students

Why Education & Advocacy Is Important

On the more positive side...

- Forge New Relationships
- Identify New Opportunities – more allies, potential new funding streams, new partnerships
- Enhance Your Program's Reputation and Visibility
- Enhance the reputation of GED/HSE Grads & Adult Ed.

Two Recent Examples – Arizona & Texas

Arizona

- Two bills in the legislature
- Both could syphon funding for AE
- Rules would allow charters more latitude, more funding vs. AE programs
- Lobbyists & backers shared negative information casting a poor light on AE/GED programs and GED grads

Texas

- Some C.C.s wanted to utilize ACE CREDIT GED CR/CR+ levels, but state law didn't allow
- GEDTS/ Adult Ed/ Public Policy Groups coordinated, communicated with legislators, committee and state agencies to advocate for acceptance
- Passed and was signed into law – now in data gathering/planning phase with TX Higher Ed Coord. Board

Why You? Why Your Students?

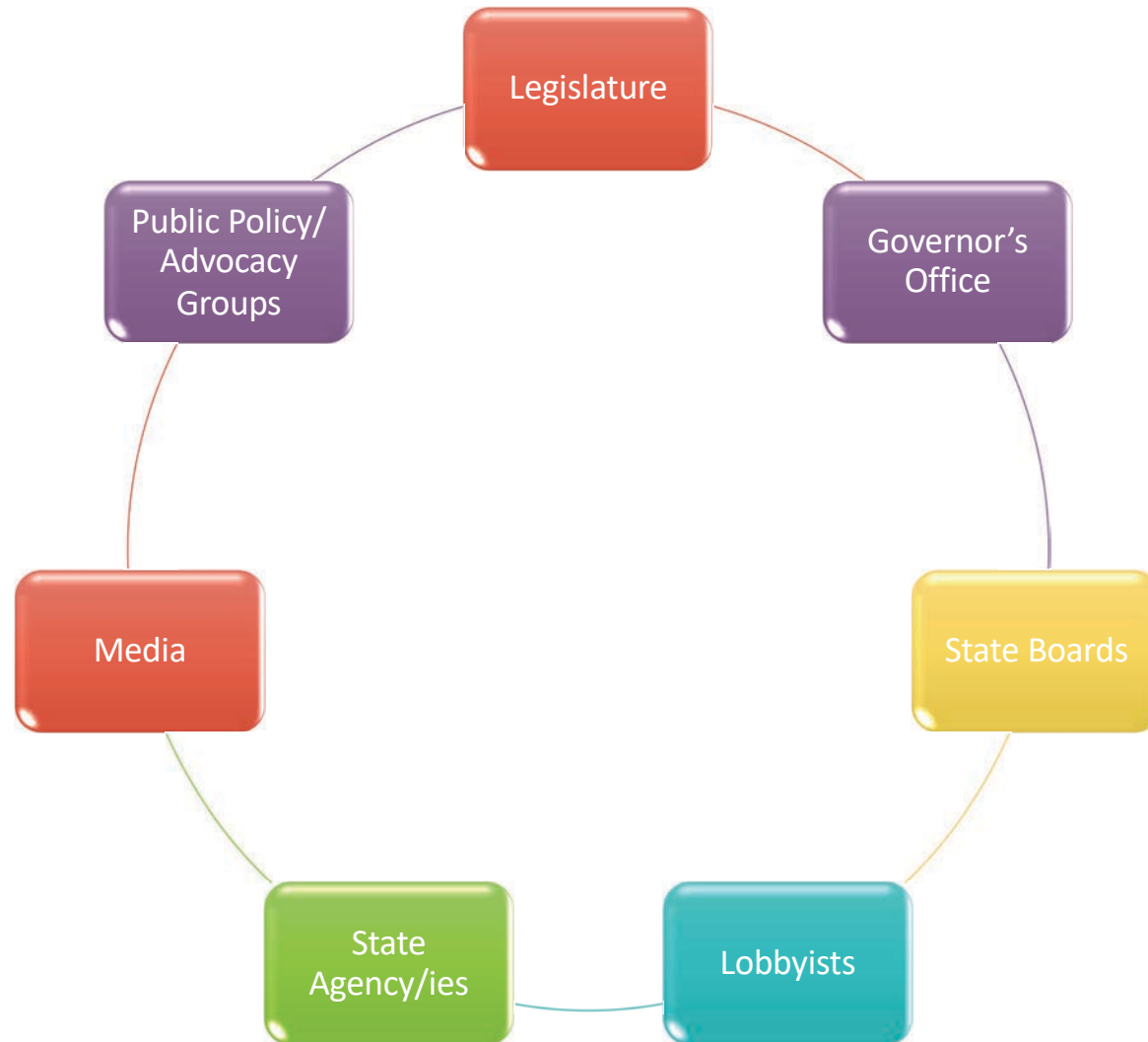
- You are constituents!
- Perceptions are different as you/your students are not lobbyists, interested organizations, nor bureaucrats
- You have first-hand, deep knowledge of AE issues, and know what your students face every day
- You may be the only input/ voice they heard from AE
 - Your agency may not be permitted to, or may choose not to provide context, input or opinions on legislation
 - Groups championing the legislation will show up to advocate



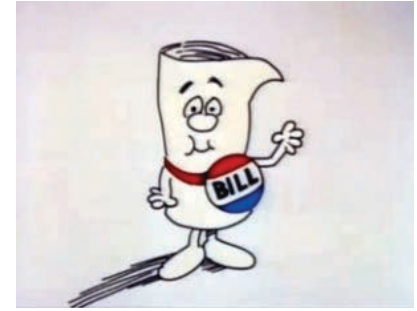
Understanding The Process & Players

The First Step in Your Journey

The Players: Policymakers & Influencers by Grouping



Focus: How A Bill Becomes a Law



House Committee (Ed)

Senate Committee (Ed)

Full House Vote

Full Senate Vote

Governor's Signature or Veto

Sometimes bills are heard by a subcommittee, and if approved they are moved to the full committee

This Seems Complicated. What Are a Few Essentials For Me to Understand?


- First, start with your local legislators (Rep./s & Senator)
- Second, focus on the Education Committee
 - Why?
 - Start with the House/Assembly committee
 - Understand who the committee chairs/co-chairs are, what party they are from, and what their agendas typically are
- Understand that the legislative agenda is set at the very beginning of the session, so....
 - Educate lawmakers, introduce ideas, push back on bad ideas before the session starts or at the beginning of the session
 - It is usually beneficial/easier to connect with your local legislators over breaks when they are in their home districts

Understanding the Process

- Bills typically must be read/heard twice in public committee meetings before a vote, and allow for public comment
 - This is the time for you and/or your students to educate lawmakers
 - Once a bill passes one chamber ed committee, it moves to the other chamber (except in NE - unicameral state)
 - You have a second opportunity to educate in the second chamber
 - Legislatures are often visceral, driven by political winds and agendas – find a way to fit into
- *Trying to amend or change support for/against a bill after passing committees is VERY difficult*

Tips for Talking With Legislators & Non-AE-Educated Policymakers

- Plan for conveying your points in 2-3 minutes and 10-12 minute versions. 20-30 minutes or more is a luxury.
- Have talking points & practice with your talking points
- Keep it high level!
- AE is rich with depth/breadth of programs, but most know very little
 - GED/HSE is about the only touchstone for all them, so it is often important to focus on moving students to grad status and moving them into the workforce/jobs
 - Most don't expect adults to be in programs for a long time
- Cut the jargon and avoid acronyms!
 - ABE, AE, Measurable Skill Gain, NRS, ESL, Voc. Rehab, WIOA, Out-of-school youth



A State Example: Arizona

State Example: Arizona

- **Context**

- Adult Ed level-funded since 1997
- Fiscally conservative legislature
- Strong state association for Adult Education (AALL)
- Governor proposed Adult Ed funding increase, not mirrored in Legislative budget

- **Problem**

- Two vendor bills offering to educate adults
- Bills seeking more funding than total state allocation for Adult Ed
- Lobbyists discrediting AZ Adult Ed system
- Many legislators unaware of Adult Ed successes and relationship with workforce system

State Example: Arizona

- **Strategy: Educate and Build Awareness**

- Successful Adult Ed system in AZ
- High level of accountability in Adult Ed system
- Adult Ed system integration into Workforce System
- Level funding for more than 20 years

- **Raising Awareness**

- Ensure system leaders and partners are aware of Adult Ed in general and the possible threat to Adult Ed
 - State office
 - Local and state workforce boards
 - Higher Ed
 - K-12 system
- Targeted meetings with state legislators
 - Committee members: Education, Appropriations, and Higher Ed and Workforce
 - Friends and champions
- Request to speak system
 - Register as for or against
 - Comment at committee hearings
- Media/ Op-Ed where legislators would see it

State Example: Arizona

- **Lessons Learned**

- Many legislators do not know about the great work Adult Ed is doing
 - Connection to the workforce system is important to highlight
 - State Department of Ed can be resource for state-level data
- Monitor the state legislative process
 - Track important bills weekly
 - Work with your institution's public / government relations team
 - Legislative friends can help
- Find your champions and keep them informed
 - Find your partners – who else might be impacted?
 - Friend and follow your legislators on social media
 - Stay in touch with governor's office
- When it comes to awareness building, early and ongoing is better

How to Get Started

How To Get Started

- Look up your local legislators
- Regularly collect/compile information – heart and head
 - Student stories, successes, grad stories
 - Program stats, state/national stats
- Be a Lurker! Follow a bill and watch the committee process, watch/listen to a committee meeting
- Look for info on state initiatives around workforce, unemployment, in-demand industries
- Start looking for, following, getting to know groups who weigh in on policy (e.g. local chamber of commerce, education standards groups, advocacy groups for low SES/underrepresented groups, etc.)
- Understand the role and position of your reporting agency
 - Are they allowed to educate and take positions on legislation?
 - Who the G.R. staffer is at the agency
- If you work at a community college – get to know your public information officer (PIO)/ Media office rep.

Ways to Raise Awareness

- **Build Relationships**

- Invite your local legislators to visit your program
- Send data and stories about your program
- Blast out graduation announcements, stories, good news, good stats

- **Develop Student Voice**

- Document student stories and successes
- Train student leaders to be [Student Ambassadors](#)
- Educate students in civic engagement
- Schedule capitol hill day visits with students

- **Know (and share) the Data**

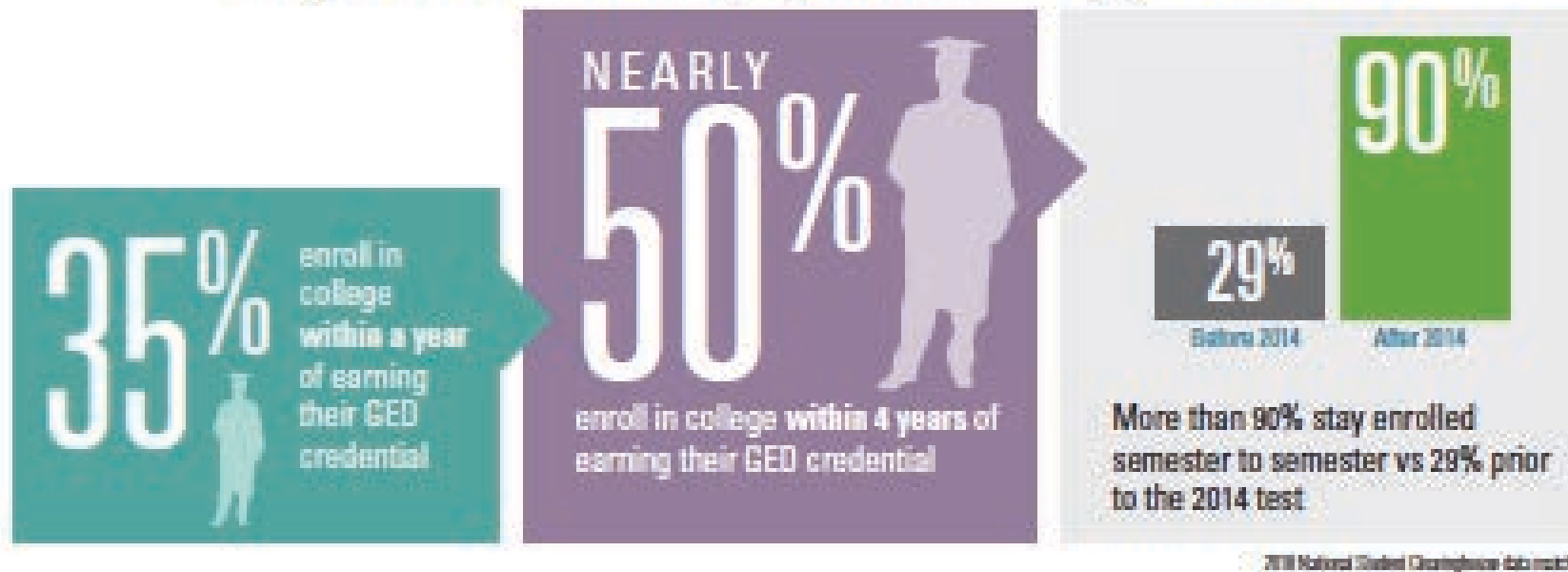
- Know the data
 - Your program's demographic and outcome data
 - National Adult Ed performance data including GED outcome/ transition data
 - PIAAC data about need in your county, state
- Leverage Educate & Elevate "[Take Action](#)" tool to communicate with elected officials


Know Your Starting Point With Legislators: They May Not Know Much About AE

- Legislators may not know:
 - Why a learner might need to get a GED
 - Who AE students are or how many there are
 - How programs are connected with workforce development, employers, training programs, colleges
 - About WIOA or state and local WDBs/WIBs
 - That AE has connections to career training and certificate programs
 - How many GED grads go on to attend college programs, and how prepared they are now to do so
 - That AE programs in many places have supports beyond the classroom

Know National Outcomes Data: State/Local If You Have It

GED graduates are more prepared for college than ever!





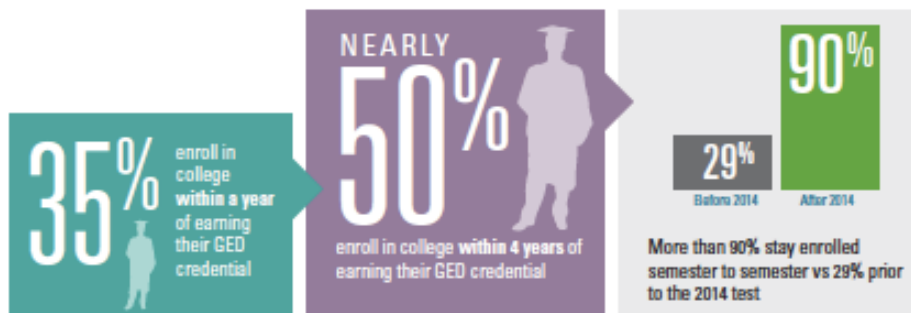
Resources & Additional Information

Types of Collateral Suited to Most Lawmaker Meetings

- GED Grad Outcomes/ Life After The GED Test One-Pager
- Educate & Elevate Fact Sheet
- Local AE program update
- One-pagers with infographics/graphics
- Usually, nothing more than one-page front/back
- You can provide more, but if it isn't viewed when talking to them, it probably will go in a pile or the circular bin
- Follow up with a thank you email with links to key info!

BEYOND THE GED[®] → TEST

GED graduates are more prepared for college than ever!



2018 National Student Changeover data match

GED College Ready scores improve the chances for college success.

145



GED Passing Score

To pass the GED test, students need a score of 145 on all four subjects.

165 – 174



GED College Ready

At 165 or higher, students may qualify to bypass placement testing and remedial (non-credit) courses in college.

175 – 200



GED College Ready + Credit

At 175 or higher, students may qualify for up to 10 college credit hours at participating colleges.

Learn more at GED.com/collegeready



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College Ready (CR) GED Graduates ARE USING THEIR SCORES TO EXCEL

56%

of CR GED graduates are currently enrolled in a college degree or certificate program.

63%

of CR GED graduates say the GED test program prepared them well for their current college degree program.

71%

of CR GED graduates are currently employed.

Data collected from 2018 survey of GED graduates earning a College Ready score



OVER
225
COLLEGES

accept the GED College Ready recommendations

Jordan earned her GED credential in October 2016 in Virginia meeting the College Ready score levels in RLA, Math and Science. She earned College Ready + Credit in Social Studies.

"I knew about it (the College Ready score levels) before taking the GED, I think it put extra pressure on me to get College Ready scores when I took the test but I was confident that I could get them."

She wanted to pursue a degree related to digital arts and the College Ready scores gave her an extra boost of confidence about her academic and career goals. Jordan completed her general education requirements at a local community college and is now enrolled in Longwood University as a Graphic and Animation Design major.



Jordan W.
GED College Ready Graduate, Longwood University Student

Learn more at GED.com/collegeready



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Session length, prefile, and carryover?

<https://www.lexisnexis.com/en-us/products/state-net/ctr/state-legislative-session-calendar.page>

	Prefile	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Convenes	Adjourns	Carry-over	Est. Bill Volume
Alabama	Y						◀ 5/29							2/4/20	5/19/20	NO	2,000
Alaska	Y						◀ 6/18							1/21/20	5/26/20	19 - 20	450
Arizona	Y						◀ 5/7							1/13/20	4/25/20	NO	1,500
Arkansas	Y				◀ 4/13									2/10/20	3/20/20	NO	400
California	N										◀ 9/30			1/6/20	11/30/20	19 - 20	2,500
Colorado	Y*						◀ 6/6							1/8/20	5/7/20	NO	800
Connecticut	Y						◀ 6/15							2/5/20	5/6/20	NO	1,500
Delaware	Y												1/23/21 ▶	1/14/20	1/12/21	19 - 20	550
Florida	Y				◀ 4/13									1/14/20	3/13/20	NO	1,800
Georgia	Y				◀ 4/17									1/13/20	3/27/20	19 - 20	2,300
Hawaii	Y							◀ 7/8						1/15/20	5/1/20	19 - 20	3,100
Idaho	N				◀ 4/10									1/13/20	3/27/20	NO	650
Illinois	Y												4/12/21 ▶	1/8/20	1/12/21	19 - 20	5,500
Indiana	Y				◀ 3/27									11/19/19	3/13/20	NO	1,200
Iowa	Y						◀ 5/22							1/13/20	4/22/20	19 - 20	1,400
Kansas	Y						◀ 5/21							1/13/20	5/11/20	19 - 20	700
Kentucky	Y																1,600
Louisiana	Y													3/9/20	6/1/20	20 - 21	2,800
Maine	Y						◀ 4/27							1/8/20	4/15/20	19 - 20	300

2020 STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS CALENDAR

Full-time or part-time legislature?

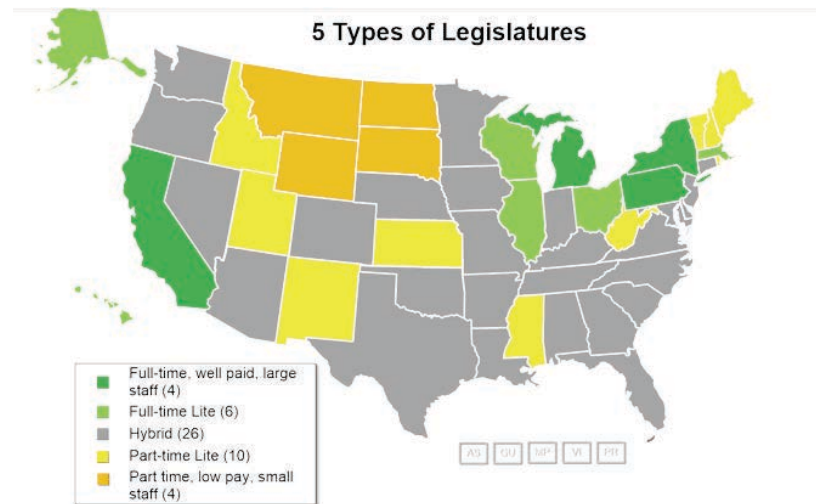


Table 1. Green, Gray and Gold Legislatures

Green	Green Lite	Gray	Gold Lite	Gold
California	Alaska	Alabama	Idaho	Montana
Michigan	Hawaii	Arizona	Kansas	North Dakota
New York	Illinois	Arkansas	Maine	South Dakota
Pennsylvania	Massachusetts	Colorado	Mississippi	Wyoming
	Ohio	Connecticut	Nevada	New
	Wisconsin	Delaware	New	Hampshire
		Florida	New Jersey	New Mexico
		Georgia	North Carolina	Rhode Island
		Indiana	Oklahoma	
		Iowa	Oregon	Utah
		Kentucky	South Carolina	Vermont
		Louisiana	Tennessee	
		Maryland	Texas	West Virginia
			Virginia	
			Washington	

<http://www.ncsl.org/research/about-state-legislatures/full-and-part-time-legislatures.aspx>

Deadlines and Crossover Dates

- Some states have deadlines on when bills can be introduced
- Some states have deadlines on when a bill needs to "crossover" out of one chamber and to the other
- Does your state have a crossover date?
- <http://statescape.com/resources/legislative/bill-crossover-deadlines.aspx>

When a bill must cross a chamber.

A "crossover" deadline is the last day for a bill to pass out of the move forward for consideration in the opposite chamber. Knowing which chamber gives you an early indication of the bill's viability, as a bill faces a crossover deadline commonly faces high procedural hurdles to be considered. Note that there may be exceptions to these deadlines. Calling the sponsor of a particular bill is of special significance to your organization.

State	House / Assembly Crossover
Alabama	26th legislative day
Alaska	NONE
Arizona	02/22/19
Arkansas	NONE
California	05/31/19
Colorado	02/22/19
Connecticut	NONE
Delaware	NONE
District of Columbia	N/A
Florida	NONE



We Need Your Help

People are showing their love for adult education through our 3 Quick Clicks effort, with more state associations using this tool to submit a letter of advocacy to congressional members, governors, and mayors. To use this time-saving tool, visit the [3 Quick Clicks webpage](#) and select the "Take Action" option that applies to you.

Teachers, administrators, and friends of Adult Education send an email supporting adult education by clicking the "Take Action" button below. Enter your contact information and click "SUBMIT" to preview the editable letter we will send on your behalf to Congress, Governors, and Mayors.



Take Action



U.S. Skills Map: State and County Indicators of Adult Literacy and Numeracy

Map of Percentage At or Below Level 1 Literacy

