



NASDAE

National Association of State
Directors of Adult Education

Adult Education through History

A Movement, a System, a Legacy

Created by: Erin Landry, Dr. Christina Lorge, Wyvonne Stevens-Carter



When did adult
education efforts
begin in the U.S.?



The Roots of Adult Learning (1700s–1800s)

“Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.”

— *James Madison*

“If God speaks to us in the Scriptures, then we must learn to read, or we cannot hear Him.”

— *Martin Luther*



Passed in 1647, the Old Deluder Satan law required communities with 50 or more households to hire a schoolmaster, with wages paid by the children's parents or masters.

The ROYAL BATTLEDORE: Being the first Introductory Part of the
Circle of the Sciences, &c. Publish'd by the KING's AUTHORITY.
 London: Printed by J. Newbery, in St. Paul's Church-Yard, and B. Collins, in Sarum, Pr. 2d.
 Also the Royal Primer, or second Book for Children. Price 3d. bound, adorn'd with Cuts.

He that neer learns his ABC,

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o
 p q r s t u v w x y z.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N
 O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z.

α β γ δ ε ζ η θ ι κ λ μ ν ξ ο π ρ σ τ υ φ χ ψ ω

a e i o u y.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| ab | eb | ib | ob | ub | ba | be | bi | bo | bu |
| ac | ec | ic | oc | uc | ca | ce | ci | co | cu |
| ad | ed | id | od | ud | da | de | di | do | du |

IN the Name of the FA-ther, and of the
 Son, and of the HOLY GHOST. *A-men.*

I Pray God to bless my Fa-ther and Mo-
 ther, Bro-thers and Sisters, and all my good
 Friends, and my E-ne-mies. *A-men.*

OUR Father which art in Hea-
 ven, hal-low-ed be thy Name; thy
 King-dom come; thy Will be done on
 Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this
 Day our daily Bread; and forgive us our
 Tres-pases, as we for-give them that
 tres-pas a-gainst us; and lead us not in-
 to Tem-p-tation, but deliver us from
 Evil; for thine is the King-dom, the
 Power and the Glo-ry, for e-ver and
 e-ver. *A-men.* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0.

But he that learns these Letters fair,

For ever will a Blockhead be.



Shall have a Coach to take the Air

An eighteenth-century English primer for abecedarians memorizing their
 alphabet and learning their prayers

THE
American Instructor :

O R,

YOUNG MAN'S BEST COMPANION.

CONTAINING,

SPELLING, READING, WRITING and ARITHMETIC, in an easier Way than any yet published; and how to qualify any Person for Business, without the Help of a Master.

Instructions to write Variety of Hands, with Copies both in Prose and Verse. How to write Letters on Business or Friendship. Forms of Indentures, Bonds, Bills of Sale, Receipts, Wills, Leases, Releases, &c.

Also Merchant's Accounts, and a short and easy Method of Shop and Book-keeping; with a Description of the several American Colonies.

Together with the Carpenter's plain and exact Rule; shewing how to measure Carpenters, Joiners, Sawyers, Bricklayers, Plasterers, Plumbers, Masons, Glaziers, and Painter's Work. How to undertake such Work, and at what Price; the Rates of each Commodity, and the common Wages of Journeymen; with Gunter's Line, and Coggeshall's Description of the Sliding Rule.

Likewise the Practical Gauger made easy; the Art of Dialing, and how to erect and fix any Dial; with Instructions for Dying and Colouring, and making Colours.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

The POOR PLANTER'S PHYSICIAN.

With Instructions for Marking on Linen; how to Pickle and Preserve; to make divers Sorts of Wine; and many excellent Plasters and Medicines, necessary in all Families.

AND ALSO

Prudent Advice to young TRADESMEN and DEALERS.

The whole better adapted to these American Colonies, than any other Book of the like Kind.

By GEORGE FISHER, Accomptant.

The Fourteenth Edition, Revised and Corrected.

NEW-YORK:

Printed and sold by H. GAINES, at the Bible and Crown,
in Hammer-Square, M,DCC,LXX.

A 1770 primer on the three Rs, penmanship, bookkeeping, carpentry, and nostrums, "adapted to these American colonies"



State and Local Action Before Federal Support

“Once you learn to read, you will be forever free.”
— *Frederick Douglass*

“Education, then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is the great equalizer of the conditions of men—the balance-wheel of the social machinery.”
— *Horace Mann*



Old Saint Mary's Cathedral at the corner of California Street and Grant Avenue in San Francisco around 1866. Image courtesy of the Library of Congress, Lawrence & Houseworth Collection.



| STATE | | | 1850 Federal Census | | | | | | MICROFILM SERIES | | | | |
|------------------|--|---|---|-------------|------|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| COUNTY OR PARISH | | | TOWNSHIP/TOWN/ OR CITY | | | | DATE OF ENUMERATION | | | PAGE | | | |
| Line Number | Dwelling houses numbered in the order of visitation. | Family numbered in the order of visitation. | The name of every person whose usual place of abode on the 1st day of June, 1850, was in this family. | DESCRIPTION | | | Profession, occupation, or trade of each person over 15 years of age. | Value of real estate owned. | Place of Birth. Naming the State, Territory, or Country. | Married within the year. | At school within the last year. | Persons over 20 years of age who cannot read and write. | Deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict. |
| | | | | Age. | Sex. | Color. { White, Black, or Mulatto | | | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 1. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



Students and teachers outside the Freedmen's Bureau school on St. Helena's Island, South Carolina, 1866.



A photograph of a citizenship class held at Neighborhood House in Louisville, Kentucky, ca. 1930s.



YMCA secretaries attend a Chautauqua Institute gathering in Temescal Canyon. The Chautauqua movement originally began as an educational enrichment program for Methodist Sunday school teachers. Photograph courtesy of Pacific Palisades Historical Society Collection, Santa Monica Public Library



Which of the early roots of literacy most influenced your entry into the field?



What federal
program first
offered worker
education as a part
of its mission?



The New Deal to the War on Poverty (1930s-1960s)

“We must open the doors of opportunity. But we must also equip our people to walk through those doors.”

— Lyndon B. Johnson

“Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.”

— Malcolm X

FREE
NEIGHBORHOOD
CLASSES FOR
ADULTS



Enroll NOW

CLASSES IN READING •
WRITING • ARITHMETIC
Also ART • MUSIC • PSYCHOLOGY
LANGUAGE • SOCIAL STUDIES

THE ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM
of the CHICAGO BOARD OF EDUCATION
WITH THE COOPERATION *of the* WPA

**GET
A-HEAD!**

**FOR ADULTS
AT
NO CHARGE**



**ADULT EDUCATION
CLASSES**

MANY COURSES · · MANY PLACES

**INQUIRE : 1900 ST. CLAIR AVE.
TEL. CHERRY 6566**

WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION



Teacher and students in an adult literacy class sponsored by the WPA in Birmingham, Alabama. The age of the students ranges from 16 to 87. The woman to whom the teacher is speaking is 87-year-old Julia Wilson, who was taught to read and write through the WPA program.



An adult education program of the Works Progress Administration, c. 1930s.



President Lyndon B. Johnson holds up a copy of the Economic Opportunity Act after signing it into law in 1964.



The Birth of the GED & Evolution of HSE

“This examination is not designed to reward mere knowledge but to recognize learning, wherever it occurs.”

— American Council on Education, early GED guidance (1942)

“A diploma should stand for the possession of certain knowledge and abilities, not merely for the amount of time spent in school.”

— E.F. Lindquist, developer of Iowa Tests & the original GED exam



Winners of the Brain Derby contest on the steps of Old Capitol at the University of Iowa. Photo circa early 1930s. Photo courtesy: University of Iowa College of Education.

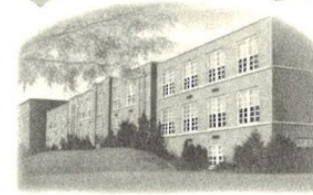


E.F. Lindquist. Photo courtesy: University of Iowa College of Education.



Don Kruse, from St. Louis Park, Minn., was drafted in 1945 at the end of his junior year in high school. He served in Wiesbaden, Germany, got his GED, went to college, and had a successful career in electronics.

St. Louis Park High School



This Certifies That

DONALD F. KRUSE

*having fulfilled the requirements prescribed by the Board of Education
is hereby awarded this*

High School Equivalence Certificate

*which entitles the holder to all the rights and privileges of a
high school diploma.*

*Given at St. Louis Park, Minnesota, this ninth day
of December nineteen hundred forty-nine.*

H. R. Gustafson
Superintendent

H. E. Whelan
President

E. J. Tolmer
Principal

V. L. Formo
Clerk

WELCH-CHICAGO

High School Equivalency certificate from 1949, awarded after Don Kruse took the GED.





How else has the
HSE evolved in
your state or
others?



The Rise of the Field (1970s-1990s)

“The ability to read is the ability to live more fully — to see farther, to feel more deeply, to understand more completely.”

— *Frank Laubach*

“One person can make a difference. I started in my home with a telephone, a desk, and a desire to help.”

— *Ruth Colvin*



Dr. Frank C. Laubach and interpreter teach Azira chart



Ruth Colvin Literacy Volunteers of America



Family Literacy Movement (1980s–1990s)



Workplace Literacy (1980s–1990s)



COABE (Founded 1999)



ProLiteracy (Formed 2002)





What was your first
professional
development
experience in adult
education?



Professionalism & Early Accountability

“The most valuable resource that all teachers have is each other.
Without collaboration, our growth is limited to our own perspectives.”
— *Robert John Meehan*

“Setting high standards and holding ourselves accountable is a form
of respect — for our students, for their families, and for our
communities.”
— *John King Jr.*







LINCS



ABE Teaching & Learning Advancement System



RHODE ISLAND
ADULT EDUCATION
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING



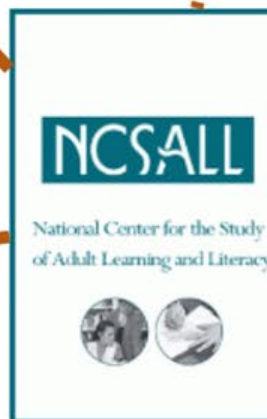
Minnesota
Adult Education
SUPPORT NETWORK

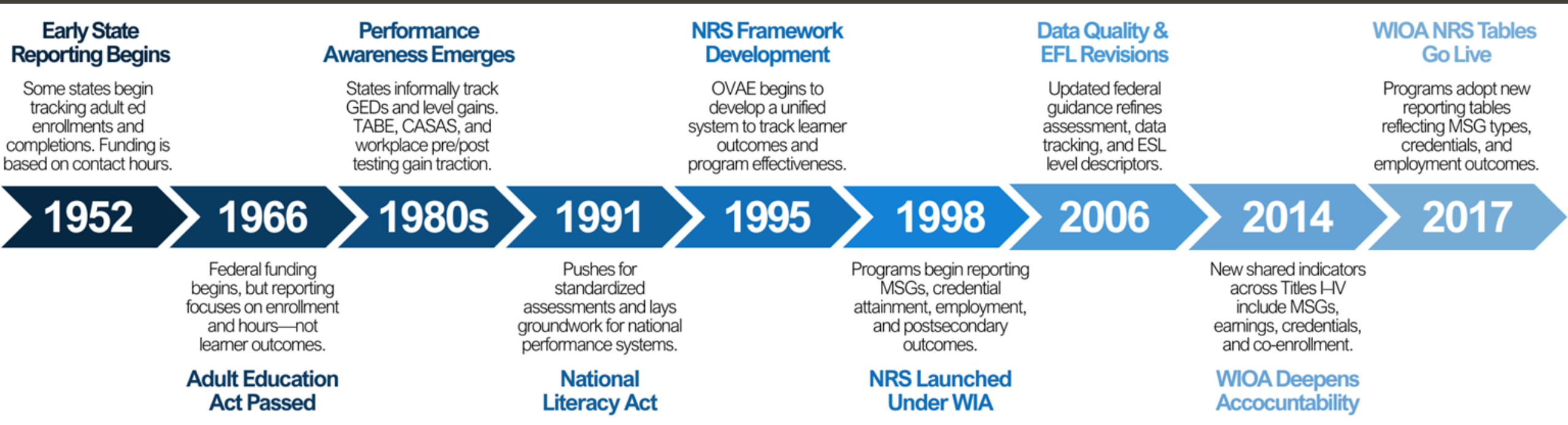


Professional
Development
Network

Professional
Development

KET adult
EDUCATION







Adult Education Enters the Workforce System

You can't have a competitive economy without a skilled workforce—
and you can't have a skilled workforce without adult education.”
— *Cheryl Keenan*

“In the 21st century, literacy is the new currency of the labor market.”
— *U.S. Department of Labor*



President Bill Clinton signs the Workforce Investment Act into law in 1998.

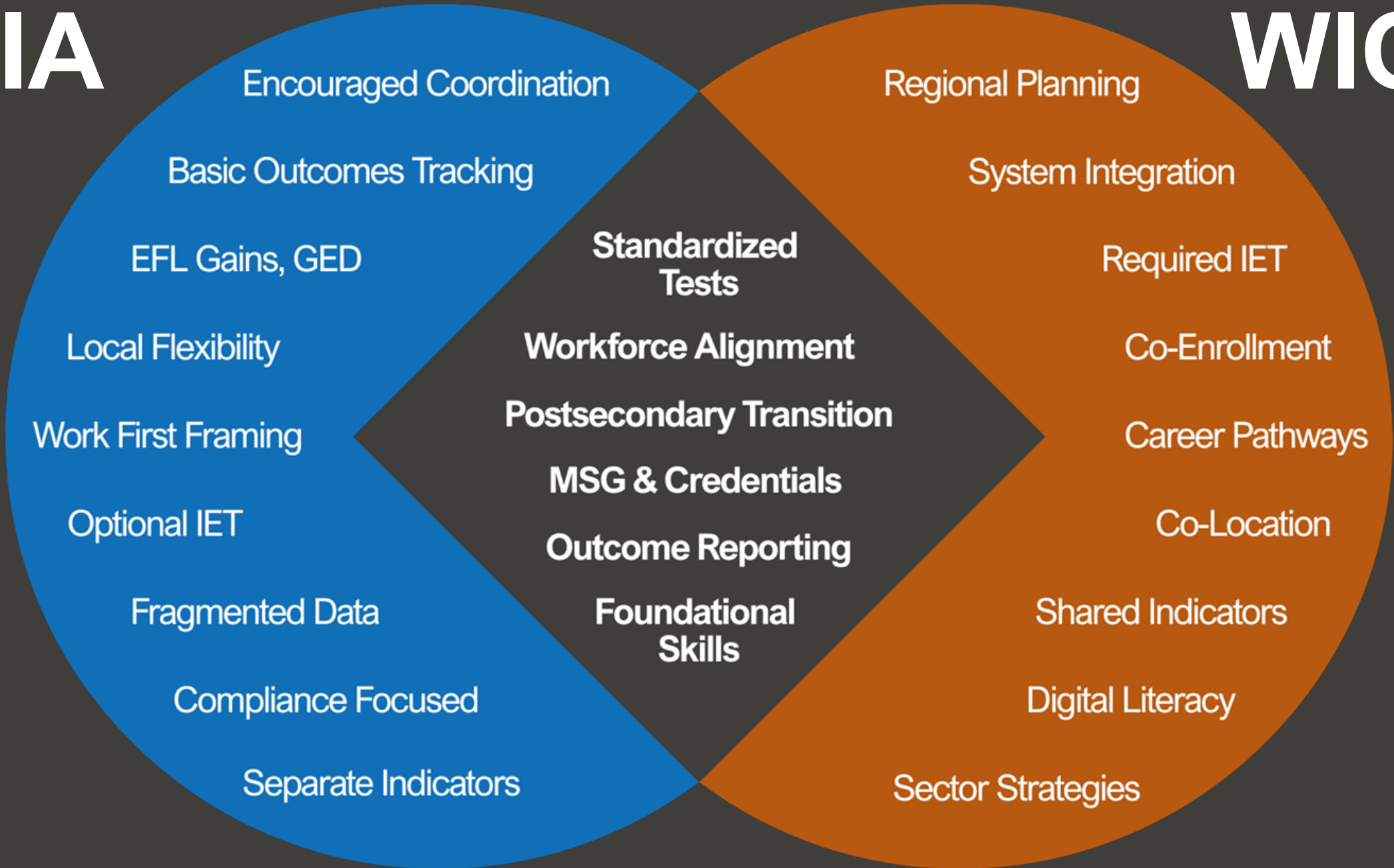


President Barack Obama signs the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act into law in 2014.



WIA

WIOA





What's one word
that describes your
experience
navigating WIA or
WIOA?



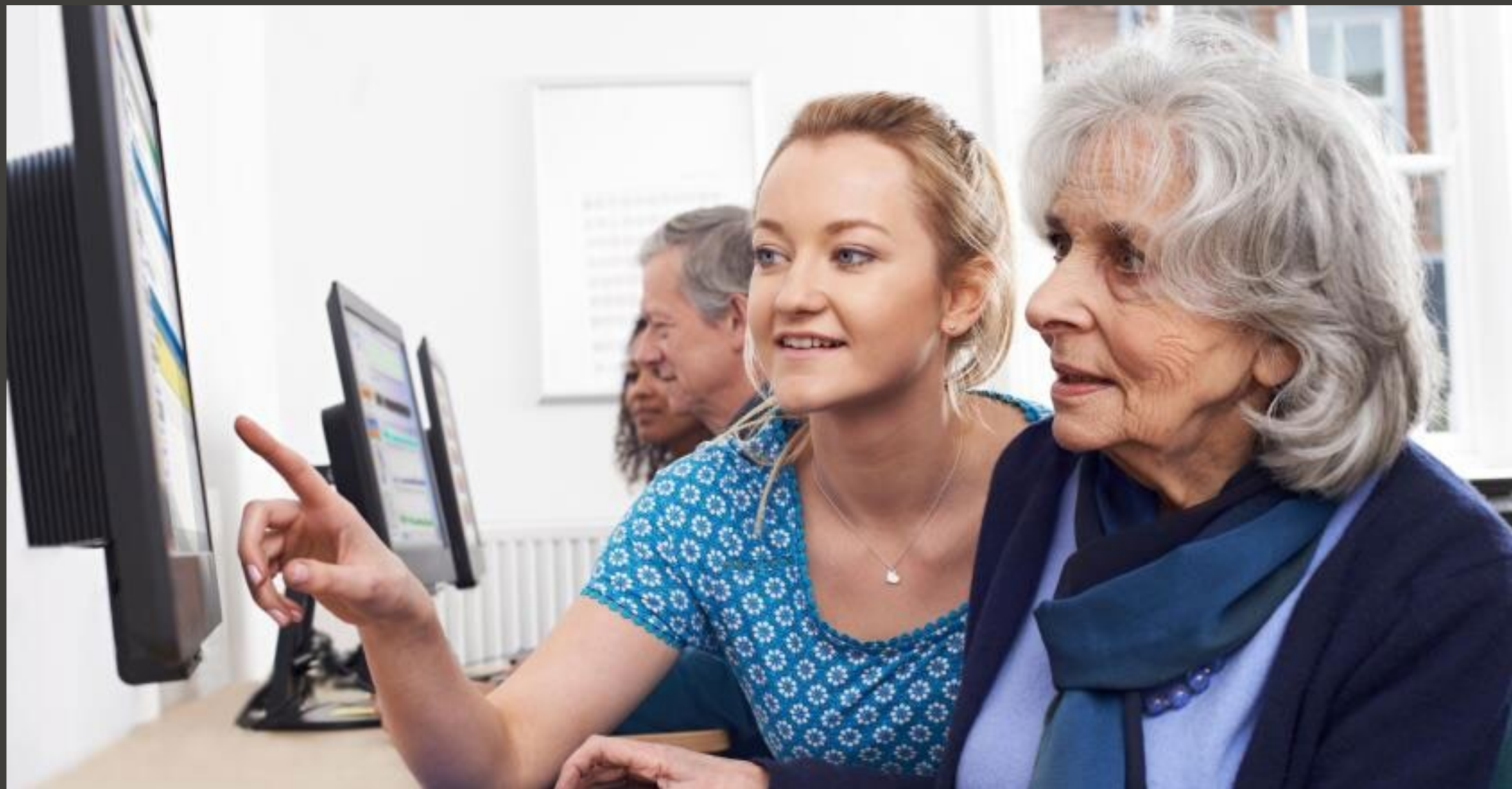
Outside the System – Grassroots Adult Education

“Literacy is the bridge from misery to hope... the road to human progress.”

— *Kofi Annan*

“Volunteers and civic leaders start these efforts not just to teach reading — they start them to strengthen their communities.”











Today's Field – Strengths, Struggles, & Next Steps

“The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see.”

— *Winston Churchill*

“In times of rapid change, learners inherit the earth; while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists.”

— *Eric Hoffer*



Let's Discuss



NASDAE

National Association of State
Directors of Adult Education

Legacy & Influence: How does your state's history with adult education shape its current identity?

Policy Echoes: What challenges today feel like echoes of past policy or funding shifts?

State Role: What do you think the role of state leadership should be during times of transition or threat?

Preserving Progress: What parts of adult education's history do we need to honor and preserve?

Future Directions: How can we use history to inspire innovation or protect the integrity of the field?