



Adult Education workers are leaving the field because they can't afford to work in it anymore.

In 2022, Literacy Works collected stories and insights from Adult Education workers about their experience in the field. Many are leaving Adult Education, while many are struggling to stay in it. Both cite low wages and the prevalence of part-time work as their reason for the dissatisfaction they have for their jobs.

"There are few opportunities [in Adult Education] in general, and even fewer that pay a living wage. We want that for our students, we should want that for our staff, too."

WHAT ADULT EDUCATION WORKERS ARE SAYING

The majority of respondents shared that **they love their work but that they need more pay and more full-time opportunities**. Many shared stories about working two or three jobs to supplement the low wages they earn in Adult Education.

Overall, Adult Education workers are dissatisfied with the working conditions in their field. They recognize that **fundors are distancing themselves from the marginalized populations served by adult educators**. One teacher stated plainly, "I think we're paid less because our skills and the people we teach are not valued."

Funders must recognize that **investment in Adult Education staff is crucial to sustaining this field**. Sustainable wages and full-time positions are possible through more funding. For its part, **the State of Illinois can demonstrate its dedication to adult learners by improving working conditions for their educators**.

"I love teaching in Adult Education, and I've spent many years developing my craft. The only way for me to make a sustainable wage that will support my family is to leave teaching. It's not right."

