



National Coalition For Literacy

ALERT

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Follow Live Coverage of Adult Education Policy Conference

WASHINGTON – Watch the National Coalition for Literacy (NCL) blog (<http://blog.ncladvocacy.org/>) and Twitter channel (<http://www.Twitter.com/NCLAdvocacy>) for live coverage from the COABE-ProLiteracy national conference in Chicago March 17–19, 2010. For COABE and ProLiteracy members, NCL will host a live webcast of the public policy debate (http://blog.ncladvocacy.org/2010/03/public_policy_debate/) on Tuesday, March 16, 2:45–5:00 pm CT. Watch for updates on **federal legislation** on Thursday, March 18, 1:45–2:45 pm CT, a session which will feature:

- **Brenda Dann-Messier**, Assistant Secretary, Office of Vocational and Adult Education
- **Cheryl Keenan**, Director of Adult Education and Literacy, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, and
- **David Harvey**, President and CEO, ProLiteracy

See other sessions of interest including two health literacy events which will discuss the importance of accessible and understandable health care language and services.

- **National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy**, Thursday, March 18, 4:15–5:15 pm CT
- **Critical Keys for Successful Health Literacy Partnerships**, Friday, March 19, 8:30–9:30 am CT

Health literacy is defined as the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions (<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople>). Unfortunately, as the nation debates health care, many citizens are unprepared to join the discussion. A national study of health literacy in adults found:

- 88% of adults aged 16 and older did not have proficient health literacy.
- 4 % of adults with an associate's or 2-year degree and 3 percent of adults with a 4-year college degree or graduate degree are estimated to have Below Basic health literacy.
- Adults who were ages 65 and older had lower average health literacy than adults in younger age groups.
- Of the adults who never attended or did not complete high school, nearly half (49%) had Below Basic health literacy. (See <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006483>.)

Join NCL in raising awareness of issues related to adult education and family literacy programs which serve adult learners who need to improve their basic literacy and math skills, improve their oral and written English, practice for the GED test to attain a high school equivalence degree, and prepare for community college or vocational training.

Find more literacy facts at <http://www.national-coalition-literacy.org/litfacts.html> and www.ncladvocacy.org. Check the advocacy blog about local events at <http://blog.ncladvocacy.org/>.

NCL (www.national-coalition-literacy.org) is a national adult education leadership organization comprised of member organizations and adult education professionals, committed to promoting adult education and literacy, family literacy, and English language development in the United States. NCL seeks to advance adult education, language, and literacy by fostering collaboration and advocacy at the national level among public and private organizations.

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