



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Adult Literacy Students Rally at City Hall

Manhattan, N.Y. –Students, volunteer tutors and administrators from adult literacy programs across New York City (NYC) will crowd the steps of City Hall to show their support and call on state lawmakers to restore funding to New York City’s Adult Literacy Education (ALE) program and NYC’s General Educational Development (GED) testing sites.

Details of the press conference are as follows:

Who: Literacy New York (LNY), and
New York Coalition for Adult Literacy (NYCAL)

Where: City Hall
New York, NY 10007

When: April 6, 2010
11:00 a.m.

The current state budget proposals would cut more than \$2 million – or about one-third of all state funding to literacy assistance programs across New York. This cut is in addition to a \$612,000 cut under the 2009-10 Deficit Reduction Plan (DRP). With last year’s DRP reduction of funding, literacy programs throughout the state are now faced with a nearly 40% potential cut from last year’s funding level.

In mid-March, the State Education Department also announced a \$1.15 million cut to GED testing sites in New York. All GED testing site contracts would be suspended as of July 1st, 2010 and the approved test centers will no longer receive \$20 per test reimbursement. If these cuts are implemented, GED test sites would be responsible for the full costs of personnel, postage, security, extended use permits, and other costs associated with administering the exam. Currently, the \$20 per head reimbursement from NYSED only partially offsets these costs. The proposed cuts will result in fewer New Yorkers taking and passing the GED test, weakening a critical stepping stone on the way to postsecondary education and career success.

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Since 1977, Literacy New York (LNY) has been a leading advocate for adult literacy in New York State and nationally. Literacy New York provides technical, program, and training assistance and workshops to a network of 37 local, community-based affiliates who annually provide over 400,000 hours of reading and basic skills instruction to adult learners.

The New York Coalition for Adult Literacy (NYCAL) is comprised of teachers, managers, students, and allies from community-based organizations, advocacy groups, public libraries, colleges in the City University of New York, and Department of Education adult literacy programs across New York City. NYCAL seeks to create an adult literacy system that provides quality, comprehensive, and accessible educational services to current students and other adults who require it. NYCAL believes that being able to read and write, learn English, obtain a GED, and enter training and post secondary education are the rights of every New Yorker and the cornerstone to an equitable and just society.