

**Assembly Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 157**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Pacheco**

March 6, 2024

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 157—Relative to adult education.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 157, as introduced, Pacheco. Adult Education Week.

This measure would proclaim the week of April 7 through April 13, 2024, as Adult Education Week, and would salute the teachers, administrators, classified staff, and students of adult education programs statewide, honoring their efforts, persistence, and accomplishments.

Fiscal committee: no.

1     WHEREAS, The State of California will observe April 7 through  
2     April 13, 2024, as Adult Education Week, recognizing the unique  
3     accomplishments of California adult schools; and  
4     WHEREAS, The California State Legislature acknowledges  
5     that K–12-based adult schools offer quality programs to meet the  
6     ever-changing economic and workforce development and lifelong  
7     learning needs of our diverse state; and  
8     WHEREAS, The first recorded adult education class in  
9     California was held in the basement of St. Mary’s Cathedral in  
10    San Francisco in 1856. The class was authorized by the San  
11    Francisco Board of Education to teach English to Irish, Italian,  
12    and Chinese immigrants. John Swett, who was the first volunteer  
13    teacher for the class, later became a California State Superintendent  
14    of Public Instruction; and

1 WHEREAS, Most students served through adult education deal  
2 with illiteracy, poverty, and high unemployment, and are the most  
3 negatively impacted group when the state faces economic, social,  
4 and health challenges, most recently seen through the impact of  
5 the COVID-19 pandemic; and

6 WHEREAS, Adult schools have been used on numerous  
7 occasions to assist the state as it dealt with significant social,  
8 political, and economic issues through job training programs during  
9 World War II, immigration reform of the 1980s, and, most recently,  
10 the Great Recession; and

11 WHEREAS, Adult education in California overcame its biggest  
12 challenge as a result of the severe economic crisis facing both the  
13 state and the nation in 2008–09. Funding that was previously  
14 reserved for adult education was redistributed to other levels of  
15 education in the state, resulting in many adult schools decreasing  
16 in size and some closing; and

17 WHEREAS, Over 66 percent of adult learners enrolled in adult  
18 schools across California during the 2022–23 school year were  
19 between 25 and 54 years of age, making them very likely to have  
20 children in our public school system. The impact of adult education  
21 is felt across generations, particularly for early childhood learners  
22 who have been characterized as a priority of the Governor and the  
23 Legislature; and

24 WHEREAS, In the 2022–23 school year, adult education  
25 provided over 42,000,000 reportable hours of instruction to  
26 California’s adults; and

27 WHEREAS, Adult schools are a primary community resource  
28 for the teaching and instruction of adult literacy, working in  
29 collaboration with community colleges, community centers, and  
30 libraries; and

31 WHEREAS, In the 2022–23 school year, over 113,000 adult  
32 learners enrolled in high school diploma or equivalency classes  
33 and another 69,000 enrolled in adult basic education classes. Adult  
34 schools provide a way for adults to complete secondary studies  
35 and obtain a high school diploma or equivalency at their own pace,  
36 and to prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and  
37 career training; and

38 WHEREAS, Adult schools provide critical opportunities to  
39 bring recent school dropouts back to school; and

1 WHEREAS, In the 2022–23 school year, over 257,000 adult  
2 learners enrolled in English as a Second Language classes. Adult  
3 schools provide instruction to those in the state who need English  
4 as a Second Language and citizenship courses, and play a key role  
5 in immigrant integration and the path to United States citizenship,  
6 which is so important for our diverse communities and in this time  
7 of immigration reform; and

8 WHEREAS, Adult schools, recognizing that to break the cycle  
9 of illiteracy and to support educational equity for all our children  
10 we must focus on educating parents, provide programs in family  
11 literacy at elementary schools in conjunction with  
12 community-based organizations; and

13 WHEREAS, In the 2022–23 school year, nearly 110,000 adult  
14 learners enrolled in career training classes. Adult schools provide  
15 short-term career and technical training for adults seeking changes  
16 or enhancements in their career pathway, especially for highly  
17 educated immigrants from other countries to integrate and use their  
18 prior skills and experience; and

19 WHEREAS, In the 2022–23 school year, over 7,000 adults were  
20 served in programs designed for adults with intellectual or  
21 developmental disabilities; and

22 WHEREAS, Adult schools in California were saved from the  
23 brink of closure across the state as a result of the Legislature and  
24 administration establishing the California Adult Education Program  
25 in 2015 that is helping to restore access and programming for adult  
26 learners with planning and collaboration on a regional scale; and

27 WHEREAS, Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, adult schools  
28 continued to provide critical programming and services to adult  
29 education students and their families via literacy and basic skills  
30 to help ensure K–12 students were successful as they navigated  
31 the challenge of distance learning to finish the school year; and

32 WHEREAS, Amid the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing today,  
33 adult schools provide important short-term career training  
34 programs, including for critical health care positions, to address  
35 both the short- and long-term impacts of the pandemic and to  
36 respond to Governor Gavin Newsom’s charge to meet the moment  
37 and address the needs of our communities; and

38 WHEREAS, Adult schools in California are diverse places of  
39 learning for students safe from discrimination and bullying that

1 seek to support all students regardless of their ethnicity, race, faith,  
2 and orientation; and

3 WHEREAS, The California Adult Education Program celebrates  
4 its 10th anniversary this year, having been established in law in  
5 2014; now, therefore, be it

6 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
7 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature does hereby proclaim the  
8 week of April 7 through April 13, 2024, as Adult Education Week  
9 and salutes the teachers, administrators, classified staff, and  
10 students of adult education programs statewide, honoring their  
11 efforts, persistence, and accomplishments; and be it further

12 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
13 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.