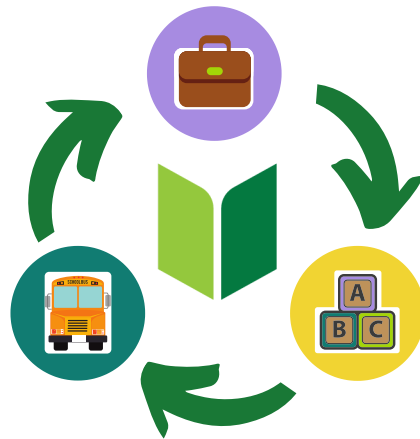




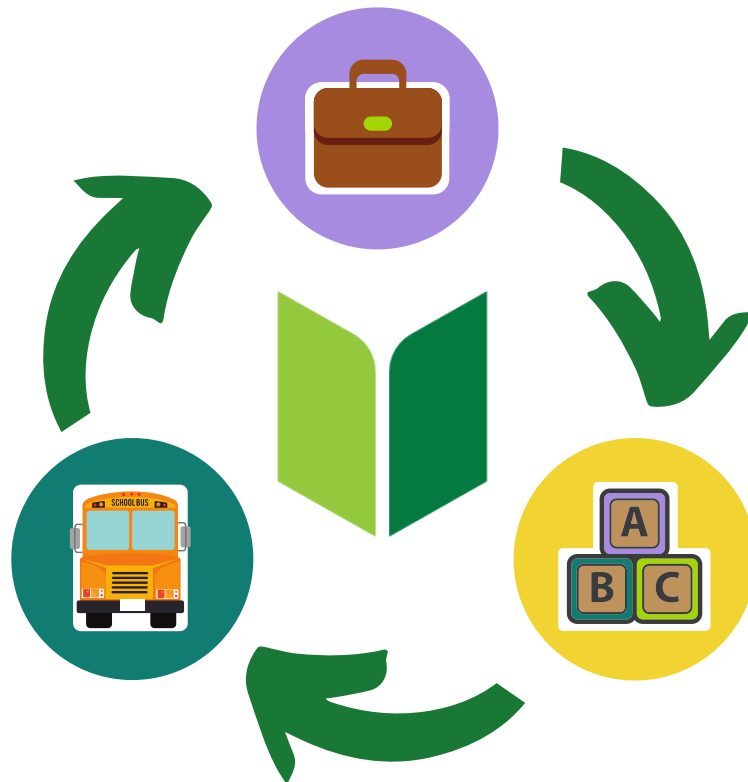
# 2020 LITERACY STATUS REPORT

*"Literacy is a tool and does not belong in any one social issue area, but in all! Literacy must become an integrated part of the community's economic development strategy."*



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**OKC Metro Literacy Coalition** promotes awareness of literacy issues from birth to adult, connects learners to services, and supports direct-service literacy providers.



OKC Metro Literacy Coalition (OKCMLC) is an organization formed by community stakeholders who met for a year to address low literacy levels. Its purpose is to unite and support the providers working in all areas of literacy.

## VISION



Metropolitan  
Oklahoma City is  
a fully literate  
community.

## GOALS



- Ensure that anyone who wants literacy services can access them
- Ensure that literacy providers have the resources needed to provide the best possible services to learners
- Bring the community together in order to present a united voice for literacy



*Building a  
stronger OKC  
through literacy*



# INTRODUCTION



*The term 'literacy' means an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society."*

*--Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), U.S. Congress, 2014*

The Oklahoma City Literacy Status Report is an update of a 2008 report titled The Status of Literacy in Oklahoma City and the Community Plan to Raise Literacy Levels. This report reviews indicators that compare data from 2007 and 2017.

Improved literacy rates are key to ending the cycle of generational poverty. By gathering birth to adult literacy data for the OKC metro area in one place, the OKC Metro Literacy Coalition facilitates strategic planning to reach educational goals set at the local and state levels.

**\$238 billion**

ADDED IN COSTS TO THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM EVERY YEAR BY LOW LITERACY ADULTS IN THE UNITED STATES<sup>1</sup>

**75%**

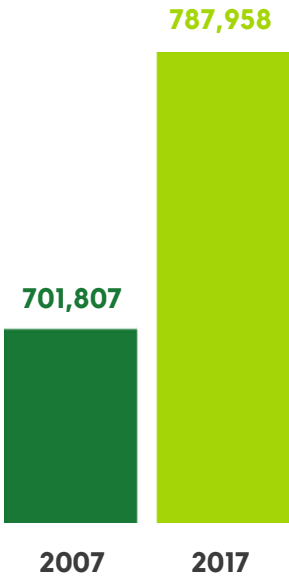
OF STATE PRISON INMATES DID NOT COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL OR CAN BE CLASSIFIED AS LOW LITERATE<sup>2</sup>



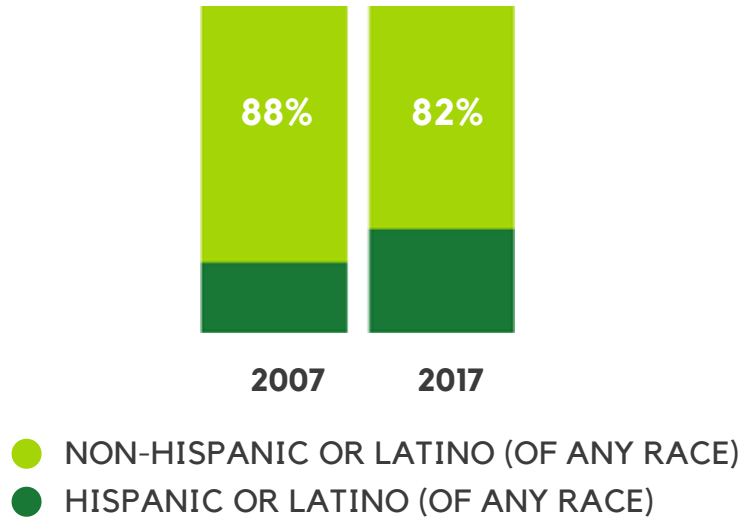
# OKLAHOMA COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

With Metropolitan Area Projects (MAPS) improvements and general trends of more people moving to urban areas, Oklahoma County saw a **population increase of 12 percent** between 2007 and 2017.<sup>3</sup>

## TOTAL POPULATION<sup>3</sup>



## POPULATION BY ETHNICITY<sup>3</sup>



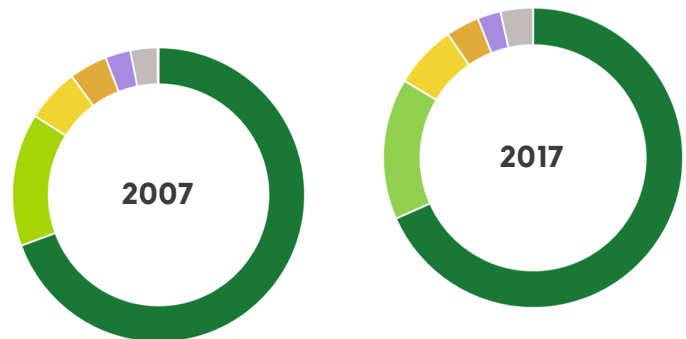
**17%**

OK COUNTY HOUSEHOLDS

ENGLISH IS NOT SPOKEN AS THE PRIMARY LANGUAGE<sup>3</sup>

## POPULATION BY RACE<sup>3</sup>

	2007	2017
WHITE	69%	68%
BLACK	15%	15%
TWO OR MORE RACES	6%	7%
SOME OTHER RACE	4%	4%
AMERICAN INDIAN & NATIVE ALASKAN	3%	3%
ASIAN	3%	4%





# EARLY CHILDHOOD LITERACY

The early childhood period is defined as birth to age eight.

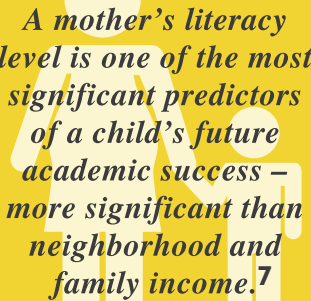
Studies show that children who attend high-quality early childcare programs (rated 3 stars on a scale of 1 to 3) are more prepared for kindergarten with the highest risk children showing the greatest educational gains.

### To improve literacy rates among these children:

- Support and equip primary caregivers as children's first and best teachers
- Fund early identification of reading issues and intervention
- Implement and support parent education
- Fund parent-child learning activities

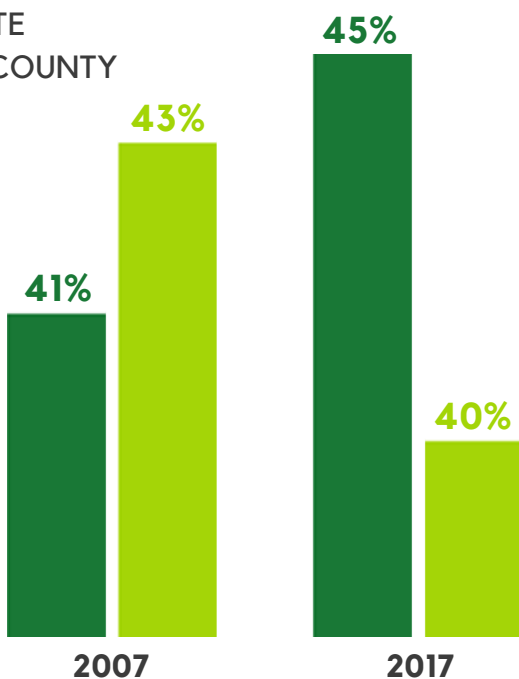
Students are expected to **learn to read** in grades K to 3 and then **read to learn** in grade 4. Students who struggle with reading after 3rd grade often fall behind and are at risk for behavioral issues and negative attitudes toward school.

*A mother's literacy level is one of the most significant predictors of a child's future academic success – more significant than neighborhood and family income.<sup>7</sup>*

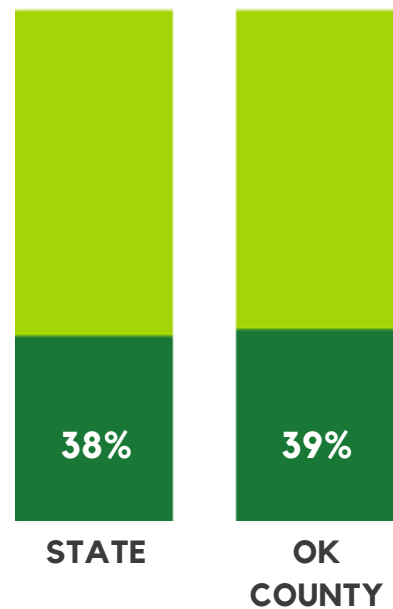


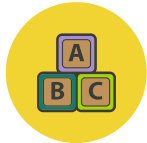
## PERCENT OF 3- AND 4-YEAR-OLDS ENROLLED IN PUBLIC PRESCHOOL <sup>5</sup>

- STATE
- OK COUNTY



## PERCENT OF K-3RD GRADERS RECEIVING READING REMEDIATION - 2017 <sup>6</sup>





# EARLY CHILDHOOD LITERACY



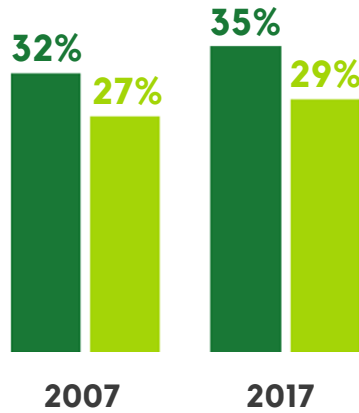
**1 IN 6**

CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT READING PROFICIENTLY BY FOURTH GRADE **DO NOT GRADUATE** HIGH SCHOOL ON TIME<sup>9</sup>

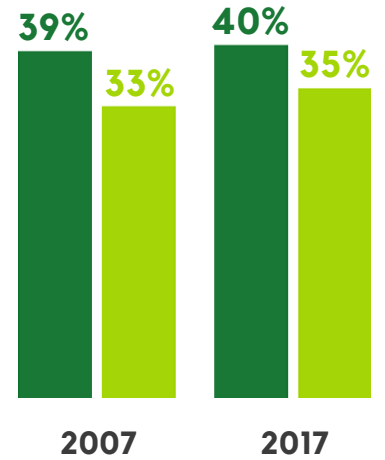
PERCENT OF FOURTH GRADERS<sup>8</sup> SCORING PROFICIENT OR ABOVE

● NATIONAL  
● STATE

## READING

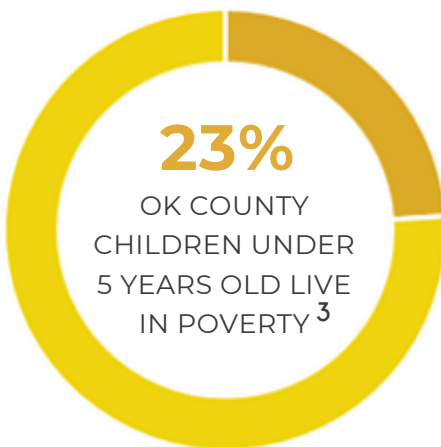


## MATH



## SCORE GAPS FOR STUDENT GROUPS - 4TH GRADE READING - 2017<sup>8</sup>

- Black students had an average score **18 points lower** than White students.
- Hispanic students had an average score **12 points lower** than White students.
- Native American students had an average score **12 points lower** than White students.
- Female students had an average score **8 points higher** than male students.
- Students who were eligible for free/reduced-priced school lunches, an indicator of family income, had an average score **23 points lower** than that of ineligible students.



The total number of children living in poverty increased **13 percent**—a rate higher than the total population increase.<sup>3</sup> Research shows children who live in poverty for at least one year and are not reading proficiently by fourth grade have a **1 in 4** chance of not graduating high school. This rises to **1 in 3** for poor Black and Hispanic students.<sup>9</sup>





# YOUTH LITERACY

For 5th through 12th graders who have not mastered the foundations of reading, school becomes even more difficult. At the same time, resources for remediation become scarce.

Oklahoma children have the eighth worst ranking in the nation due to economic hardship, experiences undermining children's health, and lack of high-quality education for all students, including English Language Learners.

**3,038**  
EMERGENCY  
CERTIFIED TEACHERS  
IN OKLAHOMA  
2018-19<sup>11</sup>

Child well-being is a composite score across four domains:<sup>10</sup>

## Economic well-being

**10<sup>th</sup>**  
MOST FOOD  
INSECURE STATE<sup>13</sup>




## Family and community

**2,821**  
CONFIRMED CASES  
OF CHILD ABUSE  
AND/OR NEGLECT IN  
OK COUNTY 2018<sup>12</sup>



**83,000**  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
DO NOT HAVE  
HEALTH INSURANCE<sup>3</sup>



## Health

**44<sup>th</sup>**  
CHILD  
WELL-BEING<sup>10</sup>



## Education



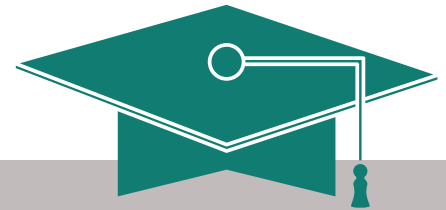
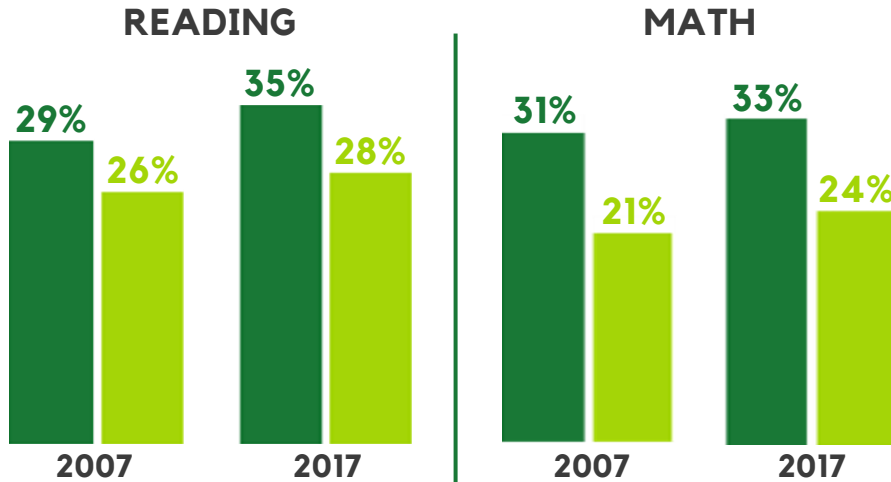




# YOUTH LITERACY

## PERCENT OF EIGHTH GRADERS SCORING PROFICIENT OR ABOVE <sup>8</sup>

● NATIONAL  
● STATE



# 19.7

AVERAGE ACT COMPOSITE SCORE IN OK COUNTY CLASS OF 2017.<sup>16b</sup>

REGENTS' STANDARDS FOR MINIMUM PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION OF FIRST-TIME-ENTERING COLLEGE STUDENTS IS 22.<sup>17</sup>

## SCORE GAPS FOR STUDENT GROUPS - 8TH GRADE READING - 2017 <sup>8</sup>

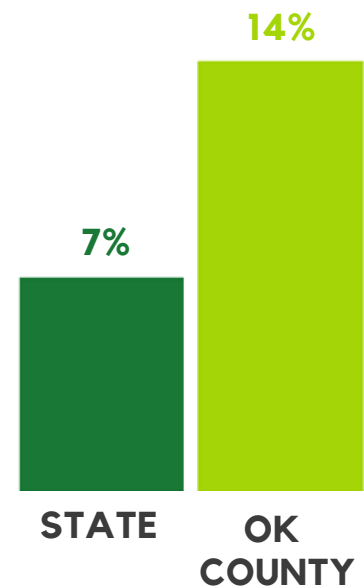
- Black students had an average score **26 points lower** than White students.
- Hispanic students had an average score **14 points lower** than White students.
- Native American students had an average score **12 points lower** than White students.
- Female students had an average score **3 points higher** than male students.
- Students who were eligible for free/reduced-priced school lunches, an indicator of family income, had an average score **18 points lower** than that for students who were not eligible.

Oklahoma City Public Schools report that **12%** of 4th grade students read at a proficient level. (Oklahoma State Testing Program)

"According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress 2019, Oklahoma student scores declined in fourth and eighth grade reading. Oklahoma remains well below the national average in all NAEP subjects. Results on the ACT exam tell a similar story. Oklahoma high school graduates' scores declined in every subject this year, and 46% of students failed to meet ACT college-readiness benchmarks in any of the subjects tested."

JONATHAN SMALL  
PRESIDENT  
OKLAHOMA COUNCIL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

## PERCENT OF STUDENTS AS ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS - 2017 <sup>14</sup>



# 37%

OF FIRST-TIME IN-STATE COLLEGE FRESHMEN TOOK AT LEAST ONE REMEDIAL COURSE DURING THE 2016-17 ACADEMIC YEAR <sup>16a</sup>

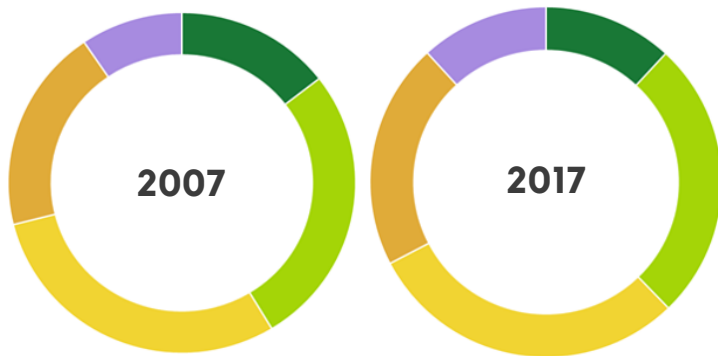




# ADULT LITERACY

Adults at any time are the workers, citizens, tax-payers, parents, and communities of today! Their needs must also be met. According to United Way Common Good Forecaster, if everyone in Oklahoma County had at least a high school diploma, the poverty rate would go from 13 to 11.5 percent for that percent of the population ages 25 and above (2016 figures).

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ADULT POPULATION IN OK COUNTY <sup>3</sup>



	2007	2017
● NO HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENCY	15%	12%
● HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR EQUIVALENCY	27%	26%
● SOME COLLEGE, ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	30%	30%
● BACHELOR'S DEGREE	19%	20%
● GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	10%	12%

# 60,355

OK COUNTY ADULTS DO NOT HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE OR EQUIVALENT <sup>3</sup>

# 2,920

OK COUNTY ADULTS RECEIVED GED/HISET SERVICES FROM PRIMARY PROVIDERS IN 2018 <sup>19</sup>

# 77%

NEW JOBS IN OKLAHOMA EXPECTED TO REQUIRE POST- SECONDARY EDUCATION, CREDENTIAL, OR CERTIFICATE BY 2025 <sup>18</sup>



# \$10,000/yr

AVERAGE INCREASE THAT OKLAHOMANS WITH A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENCY EARN THAN THOSE WITHOUT <sup>15</sup>

*"Swedish aerospace company SAAB passed on building its new jet engine in Oklahoma due to concerns about local workforce."*

THE OKLAHOMAN <sup>4</sup>  
OCTOBER 7, 2019



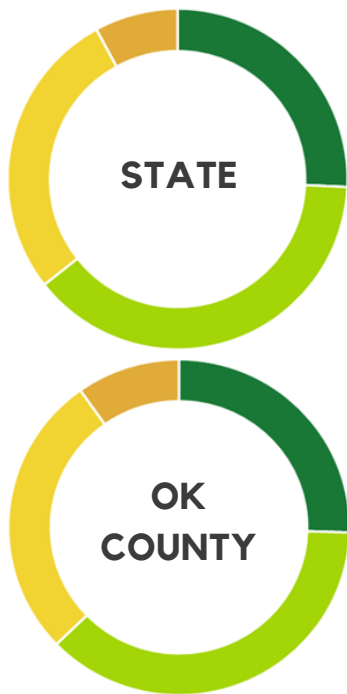


# ADULT LITERACY

Adult literacy is difficult to measure since adults are not required to take regular standardized tests. While having a high school diploma functions as an indicator of adult literacy, that does not mean that everyone with a high school diploma has the literacy skills needed for daily life and sustainable employment.

*"The doors that opened for me since getting my HiSet diploma are employment, and I can go to college. First of all, I'm working."*

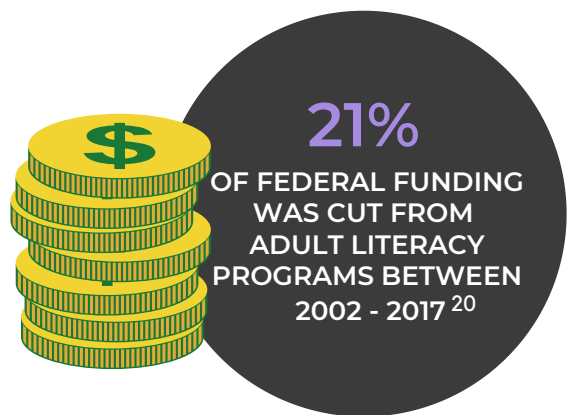
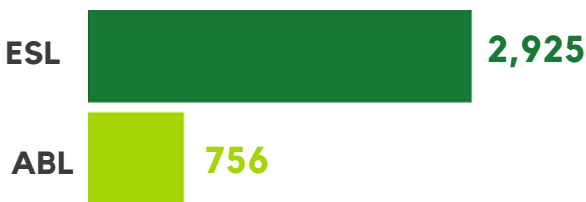
OKLAHOMA OUTSTANDING ADULT LEARNER OF THE YEAR (OCCC) AND RECIPIENT OF THE NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AWARD (COALITION ON ADULT BASIC EDUCATION)



## PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT - 2017<sup>3</sup>

	STATE	OK COUNTY
NO HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENCY	26%	26%
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR EQUIVALENCY	39%	38%
SOME COLLEGE, ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	28%	28%
BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER	8%	10%

## ADULT LITERACY SERVICES PROVIDED IN OKC - 2018<sup>19</sup>



ESL - English as a Second Language  
ABL - Adult Basic Literacy



# CONCLUSIONS

In the current knowledge economy, a person has more options if he or she can read and write proficiently in English. Prevention, early intervention, and targeted remediation are necessary to tackle the literacy needs of the Oklahoma City metropolitan area.

---

## PREVENTION

- Encourage parents and caregivers to read, talk, and sing to babies and young children
- Offer educational opportunities for parents
- Address the stresses of poor health, housing, and neglect on developing young children

## EARLY INTERVENTION

- Require highly qualified instructors for detecting early signs of learning issues
- Support intensive reading and phonics instruction
- Add qualified reading specialists in early grades

## TARGETED REMEDIATION

- Make reading specialists available to all students who are not reading at grade level, including adults in literacy classes
- Support and fund resources for free adult classes to improve reading skills
- Maintain free English classes for speakers of other languages
- Support and fund childcare for adult classes

---

**When ALL in Oklahoma City can read, ALL benefit.**



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[www.okcreads.org](http://www.okcreads.org)

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# CONTRIBUTORS

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*OKC Metro Literacy Coalition*

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*Oklahoma City Public Schools Student Support Services*

*Oklahoma City University TESOL Program*

*Oklahoma Department of Libraries Literacy Resource Office*

*Oklahoma Literacy Coalition*

*Payne Education Center*

*Smart Start Central Oklahoma*

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