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## Literacy Cooperative issues report on benefits of improving adults' basic education skills

By JAY MILLER  
12:00 pm, October 25, 2011

It may not take more money to improve the earnings of undereducated, low-skilled adults in Cuyahoga County. Instead, says a briefing released today by the Cleveland-based Literacy Cooperative, "Reevaluating and possibly redirecting current available resources could prove quite effective."



The four-page document, "The Economic Case for Literacy," argues that improving basic education skills of the 127,000 adults in Cuyahoga County with less than a high school diploma and the 270,000 adults without any education beyond high school graduation could raise income levels in the county by \$2.9 billion and generate \$637 million in federal, state and local taxes.

The Literacy Cooperative study also uses national public policy research to argue that low literacy is costing public agencies in Cuyahoga County \$706 million in higher

costs for health care, public assistance, education and corrections.

The report contends that better coordinated adult learning and worker training programs could improve education levels and reduce social service costs without increasing the cost of those programs.

"It's my experience that (literacy programs) are not well integrated with work force training," said Robert Paponetti, the organization's executive director. He added that improving adult education and work force programs can help colleges avoid their current heavy investment in remedial English and mathematics programs.

The state in fiscal 2012 is administering the spending of about \$287 million in state and federal funds on adult basic literacy and work force education programs.

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