

1. Do you believe adult basic education is a right or a privilege? Should we have a social contract for adult basic education the way we do for K-12 education?

I believe that adult basic education is a right. Especially during these difficult economic times, we need to provide educational opportunities to people in the Commonwealth. Specifically, we need to work toward providing programs to people who are unemployed or who are employed but looking to make themselves more marketable in order to give them an opportunity to learn new skills.

2. Currently our state has many residents who lack access to adult basic education services either because there is no program in their area, the programs in their area have long waiting lists, or there are scheduling, transportation or child-care barriers. What steps would you take to correct this lack of access?

Logistical hurdles should never be a reason to keep someone from furthering their education. Although not all residents have computer access, I believe that it is imperative that the Commonwealth work to provide as many opportunities for adult education in an online setting in order to help alleviate many of these issues. Additionally, I believe that programs should be developed that can travel to different sites to provide people access in different areas. Finally, where possible, childcare should be provided on-site.

3. What steps would you take to maximize the percent of adult basic education dollars that support activities leading to qualify instruction without sacrificing accountability?

Clearly, our Commonwealth is facing an incredibly difficult economic time. As a result, more than ever, we need to complete a clear analysis of how our state spends money. As a selectman in Westborough, I fought to include a pie chart in all tax bills to detail town expenses. We need to review the Commonwealth's adult education programs in a similar way and to prioritize the programs and their financial support. I would support investigating dedicated revenue streams so that programs can be guaranteed with financial support.

4. What do you believe should be the vision and purpose for the adult basic education system, in good economic times and bad?

In good economic times and bad, we should promote the concept of life-long learning. People should feel that they have opportunities throughout their life to continue to learn in both formal and informal settings and to have the opportunities to further their careers as well as their own personal interests.