

A Closer Look at IACEA

The mission of IACEA is to provide leadership, representation and advocacy for adult education and literacy practitioners in order to advance, unify and professionalize the field.

This professional, not-for-profit corporation is governed by an [Executive Board](#) the [Organizational Structure](#) of which consists of the statewide officers and two directors from each of five geographic regions. The statewide officers are President-elect, President, Immediate Past-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-President for Regions, Vice-President for Divisions, and the Junior and Senior Chairs of the [Four Divisions](#) – Administration, Support Services, Instruction and Curriculum: Basic and Secondary, and Instruction and Curriculum: Directed Programs. The association has the following [Standing Committees](#): Membership, Nominations and Elections, Annual Conference, Public Relations and Publications, Legislative, Finance and Awards. Special committees are formed in response to association needs. At the current time we have several functioning [Special Committees](#). They are: Marketing, Constitution, GED Testing, Group Insurance, Scholarship, and Legislative Awareness Day.

IACEA History

Illinois Adult Education Association (IAEA)

The Illinois Adult Education Association originated in 1937 in staff meetings of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) education leaders. Two years later, representatives of local libraries, the State Library, University of Illinois, Chicago University, public school officials and other interested persons reorganized the association. The original purpose of the organization was to provide a medium for exchange of ideas of adult educators and to promote all sorts of educative devices for adults.

Throughout the 1950's and '60's the IAEA continued to function as a viable and meaningful organization. With the birth of the Public Adult and Continuing Educators Association of Illinois, many adult educators held membership in both organizations.

Public Adult and Continuing Educators Association of Illinois (PACE)

Increased interest and firm recognition of the need for strong leadership to develop new techniques in support of adult education programs throughout the state led to the formation of a new association of adult educators, PACE.

A steering committee of teachers and administrators from throughout the state first met in an open general meeting held at the University of Illinois Circle Campus. This committee worked on the constitution and by-laws for the organization. The first organizational meeting was April 24, 1969.

The PACE organization was strongly teacher oriented, but it attracted many administrators and counselors as well.

Membership in the two organizations grew quite rapidly in the 1970's, but these were years during which the field of adult education faced serious funding reductions on the national and state levels. Through the joint legislative efforts of IAEA and PACE, funding was restored. According to some observers, those experiences provided the foundation for the eventual merger of IAEA and PACE.

Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association, Incorporated (IACEA)

As joint activity expanded, the possibility of an actual merger of PACE and IAEA was discussed. The opening general session of the 1977 conference in Peoria attended by nearly 300 people, focused on the history of both organizations and looked at the experiences of Minnesota educators who recently effected a merger of their state organizations. A survey conducted at that time served as a mandate to the boards of PACE and IAEA to specifically explore merger possibilities.

A joint constitution committee made up of teachers and administrators in adult centers, public schools, community colleges and universities was established.

This committee wrote, revised and rewrote the proposed constitution. Every effort was made to build upon the current strengths of PACE and IAEA, to create opportunities for developing new strengths, and to avoid duplication of services and activities.

The new constitution was approved and the merger became a reality. Ninety-three per cent of those voting approved the merger. As of February 1, 1979, all members of the IAEA and PACE became members of the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association, Incorporated.

From its inception, IACEA has advocated the improvement of adult and continuing education standards in the state of Illinois; promoted the availability of adult and continuing education to all people; and stimulated the intellectual and professional growth of its membership including those who administer, teach, or provide support services in adult education programs. IACEA members come from such diverse providers as community colleges, school districts, regional offices of education, the Department of Corrections, and community-based organizations; however, all unite under IACEA's mission.