

Year in Review

September 2025 – August 2026

Journeys, not just numbers

Adult Education School (AES)
16 Dundonald Street, Hamilton, Bermuda
info@aes.edu.bm

IF YOU READ NOTHING ELSE

Three things to know

1 AES works

16 learners earned their GED in 2026, **56** since our 2022 relaunch, and **32** have gone on to Bermuda College. More than half had never considered college when they first came through our doors.

2 The need is growing

45% of our 97 learners are aged 16 to 18. Educators report rising disengagement and exam anxiety, and partners such as the Family Centre, the Bermuda Hospitals Board and the Ministry of National Security keep referring young people to us.

3 Income is the limit

AES is tuition-free, at a cost of **$7,200** per learner a year. Our income decides how many learners we enrol and how many tutor hours we schedule. Tutor pay is well below market and our building needs repairs.

97 current enrolees, by age

45% are aged 16 to 18



44 aged 16–18 **24** aged 19–24 **25** aged 25–64 **4** seniors

How you can help

Give · Share this report · Tell us how your charitable funding works · Bring SAAS to your team

WELCOME

Dear Adult Education School friends and family,

AES is Bermuda's leading tuition-free school for learners over 16, bridging the gaps between high-school completion, college preparation and job applications. "Adult" is something of a misnomer: 45% of our learners are aged 16 to 18.

Most are academically capable but slipped through the cracks of traditional and even alternative classrooms, often through a lack of confidence and focus. Our individualised attention and safe space help them build resilience and the "adulting" strategies to weather learning, family or social challenges.

OUR VISION

Transforming lives, enhancing communities.

OUR MISSION

Providing learners with a range of educational opportunities and life skills that enable them to participate fully in the economic, social and civic life of the community.

How we teach

Seven part-time Master Tutors, each experienced at more than one educational level, quickly pinpoint where a learner has struggled, address it, and fold it back into ongoing lessons, tailoring the approach to each learner. As one Tutor puts it, "One-on-one is hard — you can't just 'talk and chalk' — you have to be 100% focused on the learner."

The Director of Programming and two Pathway Coordinators tackle non-academic barriers such as transportation, childcare, housing and grief, and help learners plan for further study or work.

Sharing Our Journeys

Our "Sharing Our Journeys" and "Behind the Scenes – How Bermy Works" sessions show learners that success is attainable despite hard beginnings. Thank you to our Saturday Pizza presenters: Frankco Harris on his journey to an Oxford doctorate in criminology; Board member Aaron Crichlow on community service through Bermuda Is Love; and Myles Darrell of the National Trust on his story and the environment. On 30 May, our Graduation Rally featured Dr. Michael Bradshaw and a tour of Hamilton's historic lodges led by Rashida Godwin of Titan Tours.

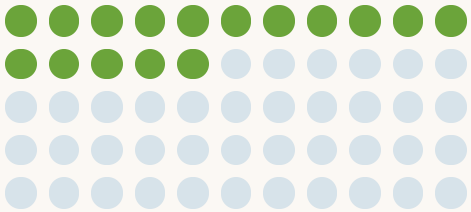
> **"Our task is not merely to serve academic needs but — persistently, and perhaps more critically — to unearth academic trauma and instil confidence."**

A CANDID LOOK

When the numbers wobbled

We rallied – learners, tutors and volunteers alike

By April we were concerned that too many of the 55 learners we had identified as capable of graduating by mid-July might not make it, so we organised the Graduation Rally. An emergency maths tutor, joined by a volunteer mental health professional experienced in youth anxiety, helped four learners over the line.



16 graduated **39** not yet

55 LEARNERS IDENTIFIED AS READY

16 passed all four GED finals: Maths, English, Science and Social Studies.

What our 16 graduates shared

- Very strong family support, in regular contact with the school
- Resilience, goal-setting and perseverance

What held the 39 back

All passed practice tests but not finals; half had only maths left.

- Two learners have passed since graduation; half re-engaged by end of September
- Two left Bermuda; we speak weekly with the rest

A rising tide

Private and public school educators report the same rising tide of disengagement, exam anxiety, and struggles with motivation and resilience.

While we have no national data, one long-tail effect of the pandemic appears to be that large classrooms are more unnerving than ever, even for academically capable learners. The need for AES's individualised tutoring and pathway coordination is likely to grow. We will share deeper analysis in November's 'Mission Moments'.

NUMBERS SNAPSHOT

16
GED graduates in 2026

56
graduates since our post-pandemic relaunch

32
enrolled at Bermuda College (more than half had never considered it when they first came through our doors)

GRADUATION · 16 JULY 2026, BERMUDA COLLEGE

The story of AES is best told by journeys, not numbers.

Our Graduates' stories of perseverance and pride will amaze and inspire you. It was a glorious ceremony, cheered on by families, staff and supporters:

- The Hon. Ryan Robinson Perinchief, the new Minister of National Security, came despite a scheduling conflict to commend Graduates for taking charge of their lives.
- Bermuda icon Clyde Best congratulated their "unbelievable achievement…now let's move forward with the next rung".
- Keynote Speaker The Hon. Mr. Justice Juan Wolffe, Puisne Judge, urged them to lead by example and uplift the community.
- Dr. David Sam, President of the Bermuda College, welcomed the eight Graduates who completed our Placement Test preparation program. Thank you, Bermuda College, for hosting us again.

HEAR IT FROM OUR GRADUATES

Video 1
Scan or tap to watch on YouTube

Video 2
Scan or tap to watch on YouTube

COMMUNITY

Partners, families and a wider circle of support

Referrals and partnerships are growing with the Family Centre, the Bermuda Hospitals Board and the Ministry of National Security (Gang Violence Reduction Taskforce), who say our individualised approach has greatly helped their at-risk clients. We will keep building these partnerships and combining our expertise.

We involve families at every step of the GED journey, from the first intake meeting. Where support at home is lacking, we seek it from aunts, uncles, family friends, social workers or employers.

Guided by the Nonprofit Alliance's PROPEL program, we upgraded our documentation, including our Theory of Change, policies, and strategic and action plans.

Thank you to an anonymous donor for solar panels through Be Solar, to Kaissa Ltd. (roof cleaning) and LEGGO Ltd. (scaffolding), and to the Ministry of National Security for critical security upgrades. We hope charities relying on solar savings can secure exemption from the increased flat electricity rates for solar facilities.

INAUGURAL FINANCIAL LITERACY SERIES

Reclaiming our identity as a community school

Designed by volunteer Patrice Minors, our first Financial Literacy Series was so well conceived that we opened it to the wider community. Thank you to HSBC for funding it and to Vision Bermuda for its new accessible hall.

6
sessions, the last Wednesday of each month, January to June

40
average attendance per session

30%
of attendees were AES learners

Presenters included economist Craig Simmons ("What is Money"); former Premier and Finance Minister the Hon. Paula Cox, whose budget insights sent several Learners to a Senate Budget debate; HSBC's Selita Daniels (banking basics) and Nicola Bromby (investing); Colina Outerbridge of the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation; Financial Advisors Michelle Khaldun and Angela Joell; Sloane Johnson on consumer awareness; Det. Insp. Crai-Che Hall and Det. Const. Randy Alexander of the Bermuda Police Service; and Rickai Binns on investing. Thanks also to Nekesha Holdipp, Ministry of Education, and Kimberley Tucker's Digital Video Production students at Cedarbridge Academy.

A learner who rarely speaks in groups asked about home budgeting. A grandmother who attended with her grandson has now enrolled to earn her own GED. Two learners who helped at each session learned to submit invoices for a small stipend, sparking talk of entrepreneurship.

> **"The most important thing I learned was how small daily spending adds up over time and how budgeting gives you more control over your future."**

> **"I didn't realize how sneaky thieves can be on the internet. I just got my own debit card – I'm going to be way more careful with how I use it to buy things online!"**

BUILDING A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

From CSEAS to SAAS — and into Ignite

AES was selected for the 11th cohort of Ignite, the accelerator helping us consolidate and market our proprietary assessment service.

Early guidance from Ignite: because "CSEAS" undersold it, the service is now being tested as the Self-Awareness Assessment Service (SAAS), for anyone navigating change: students and interns, but also entrepreneurs and retirees. It evaluates identity, values and career personality, combining online tools with AES's own interpretation framework to turn results into practical next steps for individuals and teams.

~50
individuals piloted since late 2024

2
organisations piloted

$6,000
earned in 2025–2026

Participants said the results matched their own sense of self, while surfacing perspectives they had never considered.

> "Each of our sons recognized themselves in the reports… understanding their own personalities, their strengths and suggested areas of professions were really very helpful. So much so, that when my husband and I went through the reports with our sons we thought it might be quite helpful to benefit from the assessments ourselves!"
>
> — A parent whose two sons took part in the pilot

> **"Our staff loved the workshop — they discussed their reports and the experience for the rest of the day!"**
>
> — A participating organisation

LOOKING AHEAD

Key data for the year ended 31 August 2026

Financial

Unaudited; Deloitte audit to be completed early 2027

Donations and Income	$612,000
Expenses	$600,000
Surplus for the year	$12,000

Average annual cost per learner **$7,200**

Governance

Core policies: Anti-Money Laundering; Anti-Bribery; Financial Management; Gift and Anti-Diversion; Conflict of Interest; Confidentiality; Vulnerable Persons.

Operational

- Open year-round except a small Christmas break and a slower August, so learners keep momentum.
- Flexible hours, not 8:30 to 3:30, so learners can carry on with work and life.

The final year of our 2024–2027 Strategic Plan

OPPORTUNITIES

Thank you to the donors who invited us to present and made multi-year pledges. Join us to plan our 70th Anniversary in 2028.

Alumni, please update your contact information!

CHALLENGES

- Income limits how many learners we enrol and tutor hours we schedule; SAAS will grow but cannot sustain us yet
- Tutor pay is well below market rate
- Our aging building needs water tank repairs, a filtration system and other upgrades



Our home at 16 Dundonald Street, with the solar panels donated through Be Solar.

WITH THANKS

The people behind the journeys

BOARD

Dr. Ernest Peets (Chair)

Roderick Gray (Treasurer)

Oscar Andrade

Aaron Crichlow

Charles Jeffers II

Chen Foley

Marina Mello

PROGRAMME LEADERSHIP

Thaao Dill (Director of Programming)

Tim Smith (Lead Pathway Coordinator)

TUTORS & PCS

Keva Carter

Daniel Hill

Matthew Johnston

Keilyn Lightbourne

Alex Lugo

Branwen Smith-King (PC)

Nkenge Swan

VOLUNTEERS

Karen Ergus

Maxine Esdaille

Patrice Minors

Marianne Penner

Carol Pitt

Sonya Stowe

HOW YOU CAN HELP

AES remains tuition-free for learners aged 16 and over. Three ways to help:

1. **Share our story**
   Circulate this Year in Review. Someone in your network may know a learner who needs a second chance, or a volunteer ready to help one.

2. **Tell us how your charitable giving works**
   Share your application process, timelines and forms so we can apply in good time.

3. **Sponsor someone, or bring SAAS to your organisation**
   A gift keeps AES tuition-free. SAAS assessments help scholarship awardees, interns and newly promoted staff; a SAAS workshop gives your team insights they will rely on.

Every success this year was made possible by you. Thank you for your generosity and belief in our mission.

We appreciate your encouragement!

Arlene Brock
Managing Director, on behalf of the AES Board and Team

Royal Gazette
AES Graduation, 17 July 2026

The Bermudian
Financial Literacy, 17 July 2026