



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

LITERACY COMMITTEE
 MEETING MINUTES
 TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021
 ZOOM MEETING AT THE WDB OFFICE, 1111 MARKKRESS ROAD, CHERRY HILL, NJ

ATTENDANCE – LITERACY COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		6-Oct-20	10-Nov-20	1-Dec-20	5-Jan-21	2-Feb-21	2-Mar-21
Brahl, Ken CHAIR	Ravitz Family Shoprites	X	X	X	X	X	X
Patti Beach	Learning Link, Camden County One-Stop Career Center	X	X		X		X
Cirii, Frank	Local Area Operations Director, Camden County One Stop	X	X	X			X
Dann, Carol	Hopeworks Camden	X					
Daunoras, Heidi	Pine Hill School District	X	X	X	X	X	x
De, Shyamoli	Literacy Volunteers of America	X			X		X
Druce, Jennifer	Camden County Library			X			X
Fugee, Antoinette	Center for Family Services, Inc.						X
Hill, Lauren Dr.	Camden County College	X	X		X		X
Kalitan, Marlyn Vice Chair	Kalitan Consulting	X	X	X	X	X	X
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services	X		X	X	X	
Mitchell, Danielle	RobinsNest Inc	X	X		X		
Strobl, Holly	Council Women, Clementon Borough						
Young, Jennifer	Verizon	X	X	X			
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB	X	X	X	X	X	X
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB	X	X		X	X	X

WELCOME

Ken Brahl, Literacy Chair, officially called the meeting to order at 8:38am. He welcomed attendees and thanked them for calling in to the Zoom meeting. He welcomed Jennifer Druce, in her new position as Associate Director, Camden County Library System. Ken asked the committee to review the minutes from Tuesday, February 2nd and asked if there were any corrections or additions. He noted that he sent two minor spelling corrections via email. Hearing no further comments, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Heidi D Daunoras made the first motion; Dr. Lauren Hill made the second motion. By a unanimous vote to the affirmative, the motion was carried and the meeting minutes, February 2nd, 2021, were approved.

ONE-STOP & LEARNING LINK UPDATES

Patty Beach, Counselor Learning Link, reported for the One-Stop, and Learning Link. She and a team including Dr. Lauren Hill, Director, Adult Basic Skills, Camden County College, Makaila Allen, Instructor, Learning Link, and Nidia Sinclair, Director, Resource Center, are in the process of reviewing the application to approve the One-Stop to serve as a testing site for the HighSet, GED, High School Equivalency. She said there has been an increase in referrals to the Learning Link lately. Patty said the group of referrals is comprised of customers who want to get their GED and customers who have completed work in Learning Link and are ready to go for

training. Antoinette M. Fugee, Center for Family Services, asked Patty who is the best person to contact with referrals. She said Center for Family Services is participating in several grant programs that include enrollment in such services as the Learning Link. She has customers that need to be tested and will be sending them to the One-Stop. Shyamoli De, Director, Literacy Volunteers of America—Camden County, said she is getting some referrals from the One-Stop. The Committee discussed that partners are working more closely together, and customer flow is moving in a more positive direction. Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director, WDB, noted that the Board of Social Services organized a voluntary outreach team to call clients and explain all the services and work activities available to them. This initiative is producing some referrals. Ken thanked the committee for such a great turn out at these meetings and commended everyone for their dedication.

LITERACY SHARING & BOOK DRIVE UPDATES

Heidi Daunoras, Director, Curriculum, Pine Hill Schools, reported the Book Smiles Organization book collection has been successful in the Pine Hill area. She was happy to report that her son Jake's level of commitment and book collection gained him the attention of Larry Abrams, Founder/Executive Director, who asked him to serve as an Ambassador to the BookSmiles Organization. She encouraged the committee to visit the Booksmiles website to understand what an honor it is for her son who alone has collected over 5000 books. Heidi shared some personal stories about her joining her son's efforts. She also told the committee about the benefit she has seen to youth who've participated in the program during the pandemic, what it does for the community and from a mental health perspective. Visit <https://www.booksmiles.org/> for more information. As for distribution, Heidi reported that over 500,000 books have been distributed to families at various food distribution and locations around the county. Local area educators are distributing books to students attending school and to those learning remotely. Ken wished congratulations to Jake, for his efforts, and to Heidi as his proud mother. Ken asked if any other members in the committee were participating in any types of book distribution. Jennifer Druce said while book donations were restricted during the pandemic, there were many books in quarantine that were collected before the pandemic. She said four library branches in the county system are distributing meals through the Food Bank of South Jersey and some books are being given out with the meals. Marlyn Kalitan, Career Consultant, Vice Chair Literacy, reported that the Cherry Hill Library posted a date they will begin collecting books again and appointments for library use are being scheduled.

LITERACY LIBRARY RESOURCE GUIDE

Ken said everyone received the latest copy of the Library Resource Guide draft with meeting materials. He said Marlyn Kalitan did a very good job editing the document with some redlined items. Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, said she applied the edits and sent the revised document again with today's meeting materials. Marlyn commended the work Kathleen put into creating the guide. She made some cuts because it seemed to be too much information for the reader. She streamlined some of the language and suggested deleting some of the unnecessary information. Ken said the guide came together much sooner that he expected. He was hoping to include a clickable map that would take the reader to the location point of the Library. Marlyn said the hyper-link to each library is listed so it may not be necessary. Heidi said she sits on another committee that is using HopeWorks Camden to complete an asset mapping project which may be somehow included in the guide. Jeff said the Committee could use the maps in the Literacy Needs Assessment to identify library locations in its next update. The Committee agreed that Library locations could be incorporated in the next LNA. Jennifer pointed out that the guide is missing some township libraries that are in the County. She said

she would send a list of those missing libraries. She also noted that information in the guide about the dedicated library tax might be unnecessary to county residents. Library law is confusing, but it is explained on the County Library website, so it does not need to be listed in the guide. Jennifer also noted the county is currently offering library cards for digital services to anyone who lives in the county. This will remain in effect at least through the end of the pandemic. Jennifer also noted the Voorhees county store does not need to be listed in the guide.

Ken asked that the guide be laid out in a three-fold piece with a cover or four sides that could be folded in half (11 by 17). He would like to give the guide out to residents once in-person outreach was possible. Kathleen brought the committee's attention a link at the bottom of the guide. She said the link does open to a clickable map. The confusion with the link is that it shows every book source in the county including school and college libraries and research libraries as well. She also included a link to the state library. She asked the committee to look at the link to see if it may be too confusing or use it for now until a better option is developed. Kathleen said it took a lot of research to find every library in the county as they are not all listed on the county or the state library website.

Shyamoli De asked if Literacy Volunteers of Camden County could be listed in the resource guide because it is a vital service that county residents should be aware of. The Committee discussed the benefits of working with the Library system and agreed all literacy services to school students as well as adult can be listed in the guide. Heidi noted that having the ability for students to expand beyond the school resources has been a great asset during this period of remote learning and beyond. Information is shared regularly that encourages families to engage in the services of the library, from field trips to resources, and all the free digital offerings. She is grateful for the incredible number of services that expands the offerings of the school system. All agreed.

Ken asked if there were any other projects the committee would want to undertake while waiting for in-person gathering to resume. Ken said the committee has discussed financial literacy in the past and he would like to see more of a focus on sharing more youth friendly information with the school and community. The Committee discussed ideas and thoughts about savings and personal finance.

Jeff reminded the committee about the upcoming WDB Quarterly Board of Trustees Meeting scheduled via Zoom on Wednesday, March 24th. Kris Kolluri, Chief Executive Officer, Cooper Ferry Partnership, will speak about Camden Works. He also said the One-Stop has been serving customers virtually and by-appointment. Jeff said the One-Stop also launched the QLess scheduling system which will make it easier for customers to make appointments for virtual resource center and learning link services. He said most One-Stop services can be accessed virtually. Counselors are available to meet with customers by appointment on a case-by-case basis. Follow this link to the Camden County One-Stop Career Center -Virtual Services Directory:
<https://www.camdencounty.com/service/employment/job-training-placement/>

NEXT MEETING: The next Literacy Committee Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at 8:30am. The WDB will send out meeting materials and Zoom conferencing information prior to the meeting.

Submitted by *Kathleen Varallo*, Administrative Assistant