



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

LITERACY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 3RD, 2018

ATTENDANCE – LITERACY COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		9-May-17	6-Jun-17	11-Jul-17	8-Aug-17	13-Sep-17	10-Oct-17	14-Nov-17	3-Jan-18	6-Feb-18	6-Mar-18	3-Apr-18
Brahl, Ken CHAIR	Ravitz Family Shoprites	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ	X	X		X		X					
Dann, Carol	Camden County College			X			X					
Del Vale, Jennifer	Hispanic Family Center						X					
Goodman, Steve	Volunteers of America			X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Hale, Dawn	The Arc of Camden County			X	X	X	X	X				
Kalitan, Marlyn	Kalitan Consulting	X	X		X		X		X	X	X	X
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services	X			X	X	X	X		X		
Maguire, Laurie	Camden County One-Stop, Workforce Learning Link	X				X				X	X	X
Lee, Mimi MLIS	NJ State Library										X	
Lisa, David	Camden County Library System										X	X
Martinez, Dr. Marilyn	Intrum Dean, CCC									X	X	X
Mintz, Jackie	CCC											X
Mitchell, Danielle	RobinsNest Inc											X
Page-Soncrant, Jeanne	Business Service Rep, LWD									X		
Peters, Annie	Sambulance							X				
Pryor, Regina	DOL-Employment and Training		X		X	X	X					
Rimby, Donna	Clementon Memorial Library					X	X					
Strobl, Holly	Council Women, Clementon Borough			X	X		X				X	
Young, Jennifer	Verizon		X									X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB, Executive Director	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB, Admin Assistant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie J	WDB, Comptroller											
Robert Weil	WDB Chairman										X	

WELCOME

Ken Brahl, Literacy Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:33 am, welcomed attendees and asked for round table introductions. He welcomed Danielle Mitchell, Program Director, Family Success Center, Robin’s Nest Inc. and Jackie Mintz, Camden County College, former WDB Board Member.

Ken gave a recap of the current efforts by the Literacy Committee based on a Literacy Needs Assessment, prepared by the committee that showed literacy concerns in outlining areas of the County. We have Literacy Services in Camden but there are other areas in the County that could benefit by some additional services.

Ken said we began by partnering with the Clementon Memorial Library to host a Family Literacy Day last October which we hope to repeat again this year. Mayor Thomas Weaver, Clementon Borough, attended a WDB Quarterly meeting and was interested in getting involved with the cause for Literacy and hoped to increase use of their library in the process. We worked in association with Mayor Weaver, the Clementon Library and the Fire Department that was adjacent to the Library. Ken gave a brief explanation of the Family Literacy Day for guests of the meeting. It was decided, by the committee to create a family friendly event that would bring children and parents together with the idea that reading to a child can help increase literacy skills.

Each child receives one or more free books and activities while the parents are given information about job readiness and literacy help that are offered in the local area. The Camden County One-Stop Career Center and Consortium partners were present at the event including Camden County College, Hispanic Family Services as well as other volunteer organizations such as “Bags of Books” Pizza Hut and Res-Care, Clementon. The event was well attended because we partnered with Fire Prevention Day.

Ken said we are hoping to pick another underserved Library in the County to host the same type of event. He asked Danielle Mitchell to speak about the Family Success Center and give the Committee an overview how it serves the Community. Danielle said Family Success Centers are a one-stop source of social services information, referrals and services to assist individuals and families in setting goals, learning skills, and accessing the services they need to build a stronger, healthier and self-sufficient family unit. We host Yoga classes, parent-child cooking classes, reading nights, budgeting 101 and other life skills programs. Winslow Township is a large area where the Center is located. We have done some Literacy events as funds are made available to us. We received a grant from CPAC last year to host a book give-away. We share information with the Winslow Library but we have not done many formal programs with them. Ken presented the maps shown in the Literacy Needs Assessment that showed a definite need in that area. He explained the indicators researched in the LNA as being household poverty rates, English as a second language, public school graduation rates and population without a high school diploma. The data was researched, scored and summarized visually in the maps and written findings of the LNA.

Ken said we will be planning the Clementon event around this year’s Fire Prevention Day and we would like discuss how we can help in the Winslow Library branch as well as enhance the services at that local Family Success Center. David Lisa, Associate Director, Camden County Library System, said there is a County Branch directly across from the elementary and middle schools. It is called the Winslow Twp. South County Regional Branch Library, 35 Cooper Folly Road, Atco, NJ 08004. The Committee discussed ways to bring the Success Center together with the Library. Dr. Marilyn Martinez, Interim Dean Camden County College Adult Basic Skills Consortium, spoke about the Century 21 Grant. The program aims to assist students in attaining the skills necessary to meet New Jersey’s Core Curriculum Content Standards. Therefore, all 21st CCLC programs must provide participating students with academic enrichment opportunities that complement the regular school day. These high quality out-of-school time programs, delivered through community learning centers, provide services not just to the child but to the entire family unit. She said it is a Community Center or Beacon Light program. Danielle said the Library and the Center are not very close in proximity. She said the schools do run afterschool programs for students but not necessarily for adults.

Ken said our ultimate goal is to help young adults and adults increase their skills in order to obtain jobs. He said that if he was out of work he would think of the Library as being the first place to go. Most people readily gravitate toward the library for computer use and job seeking help. He asked Laurie to speak more about how we could connect One-Stop services with the Library. Laurie Maguire, Learning Link Manager, said that she had an idea about how to connect the Learning Link and the library as a satellite location. She said that once Learning Link participants are enrolled they can work remotely. Each participant is assigned a designated user name and password. There is an afternoon shift, 12pm-4pm that is not very well attended at the One-Stop. This is a period of time when instructors could be monitoring remote classes. A specific schedule of classes could be

arranged so that the county library system could offer these remote classes divided into alternate days on a rotating basis. We would have to establish a policy and plan for this type of remote learning. Participants would have to report back after so many learning link hours for retesting. The Committee discussed the idea and how it could be implemented and scheduled in the libraries during certain days, and hours of the week. Dr. Martinez suggested a special kiosk at each location. She also said there are policies in place that could be adapted to encompass this program.

David said that on-line services are a growing trend within the library system. The Committee agreed they have all taken advantage of the library's on-line services. He said a lot more people are coming in to get connected or access WIFI signals using their phone and I-pads as well. Ken said that there is less of a perceived stigma visiting a library for job seeking or literacy services than visiting a job center. It's a safe place for an individual looking for information. Dr. Martinez said the Library is redefining itself as a multi-purpose or Community, Cultural Center. It's also a way of looking at Literacy through a diverse lens. People should know that there are multiple ways of engaging with Literacy Services. Steve Goodman, VOA, said the Library is the Beacon. Marlyn Kalitan, Consulting Services, said that she is very connected with the Library in Cherry Hill. She can definitely visualize the use of its computer lab for the Learning Link program. Jackie Mintz, CCC, said the usual problem for programs such as this is having the staff to follow up. Being able to monitor the program remotely is a key element that makes the Learning Link a viable solution to providing this type of service. Marlyn suggested that promoting these kind of diverse services as an outreach of the One-Stop is a way to dispel the perception that it is only an Unemployment Office. Dr. Martinez said the One-Stop could be known as the "first stop" to an array of services happening around the county.

Ken asked the Committee if we should shift our focus from running a one-day Family Literacy Day event to launching a Learning Link pilot program with a satellite location in Clementon and another connected with the Winslow Township Library and Success Center. Marlyn suggested we still do an event that launches the pilot program. Kathleen said the promotion of the Learning Link and Career Connections features such as resume building fits a unified model for serving residents around the County. It may help to cut Library costs associated with hosting other online tutoring programs. There are many features built in to the Career Connections website that are state funded and helpful to the job seeker as well as the employer. There are a lot of services connected with the Learning Link that could be connected to the Library. Jackie explained more about Literacy Volunteers and how an initiative throughout the Library system, especially in under-utilized branches would help the cause for Literacy. She said the Camden County College might be able to pick up some level of Literacy to younger participants going for their high school diploma. All partners in this effort need to be aware of what each agency can specifically offer in the way of Literacy help. We are still seeing individuals who are unable to read their medical prescription labels. They may not even be looking for work.

To summarize, Ken said we will go forward with planning a Family Literacy Day in Clementon, around the Fire Prevention Day schedule that also promotes that Library as a Learning Link satellite location. We will also plan an event at the Atco Library Branch in Winslow Township that ties in that Library and the Family Success Center as Learning Link satellite locations. We would like to schedule a Committee meeting at the Atco Location so that we can look over the facility and plan the logistics of the event. We would like to set the dates

for both events at our May meeting. One of our main objectives will be to expand our partnership with the County Library System.

HIRE-ONE RE-ENTRY EVENT

Ken Brahl said he met with Jeanne Page-Soncraut, Camden County Business Services Rep. She is working with Nidia Sinclair, Director, CCOS Career Center, to target a population of ex-offenders and help them get jobs. They are taking time to plan an event in a way that better meets employer expectations. There is a grant that will incentivize an Employer to offer on-the-job training to these individuals. These individuals are monitored along the way of the program. Many Employers are not aware of the supportive services that may accompany these individuals. Employers also do not know about the Bonding Program. The State will bond an employee before they are hired. It only takes a day or two notice to receive a bond. The bond is an insurance policy that protects an Employer from liability due to an act of the Employee. The Employer is covered for a year or more with this bond. Jeanne has commitments from State Representatives who are willing to explain the bonding program and other benefits to Employers. We also discussed the possibility of a reverse job fair for a cohort of individuals who were previously incarcerated that have been coached, trained and prepared with job boards showing their skill sets ready to attending Employers. He said that we will be looking at the Hire-One Program as well to find ways to update that program. The idea of Hire-One has been encourage Employers to take a chance and hire just one individual that was previously incarcerated, a person with a disability or a returning Veteran. We want to reach Employers wherever there is a captive audience and present a brief package of information. Steve said that Volunteers of America (VOA) spoke to Jeanne as well. It is one of the goals of VOA to host an event this year. He said that he has an extensive list of Employers that might attend but he is also in favor of using the Job Coaches to knock on the doors of local businesses to offer that same kind of package of incentive/resources. Marlyn suggested that if each Committee member could think of one business organization they are involved with, that we could stand up and give a brief presentation or ask if we could bring in a speaker on the subject. We could reach a lot more Employers than planning an event and hoping they will show up. She is involved with a Human Resource group called Tri State. Every one of their meetings draw at least one hundred people. She thinks these types of organizations will welcome the information. Jennifer Young, Government Affairs, Verizon, said that she belongs to a group in Gloucester/Salem. We should be reaching into neighboring Counties with the same message. The issues are the same. Once the details finalized, Ken said that he will bring it back to the Literacy Committee. We are making great connections. He thanked the guests and invited them to continue to attend the Literacy Committee meetings.

Kathleen reminded the Committee about Literacy Volunteers, Spring Tutor Training 2018. When: Thursday Evenings *May 10, 17, 24, 2018. Time: 6:30-8:30 Pm Where: Voorhees Library, 3rd Floor, Room C *All Prospective Tutors Must Register In Advance.

NEXT MEETING: The Literacy Committee will meet on Tuesday, May 1st, 2018 at 8:30am the WDB office.

Submitted by

Kathleen Varallo,

Administrative Assistant