



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

LITERACY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2019  
MEETING AT CAMDEN COUNTY COLLEGE CITY CAMPUS CTC ROOM 201

ATTENDANCE – LITERACY COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		4-Dec-18	8-Jan-19	5-Feb-19	5-Mar-19	2-Apr-19	7-May-19	2-Jul-19	3-Sep-19	1-Oct-19	3-Dec-19
<b>Brahl, Ken CHAIR</b>	Ravitz Family Shoprites	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Grii, Frank	Local Area Operations Director, Camden County		X		X		X	X		X	
Dann, Carol	Hopeworks Camden	X	X	X		X	X	X			X
Daunoras, Heidi	Pine Hill School District	X					X				X
De, Shyamoli	Camden County Library		X					X		X	
Hill, Lauren Dr.	Camden County Youth One Stop	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
<b>Kalitan, Marlyn Vice Chair</b>	Kalitan Consulting		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Kinzy, Joanne	CCC	X									
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services			X		X	X		X		X
Lisa, David	Camden County Library System	X		X							
Mitchell, Danielle	RobinsNest Inc			X		X	X			X	
Sayles, Keith	Camden City College								X	X	X
Strobl, Holly	Council Women, Clementon Borough							X		X	
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB, Executive Director	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB, Admin Assistant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

WELCOME

Ken Brahl, Literacy Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:34am, welcomed attendees and asked for round table introductions. Ken thanked the committee for attending and he thanked Keith Sayles, Camden County College for hosting the meeting at the Camden City Campus.

LEARNING LINK PILOT PROGRAM.

This online pilot program is an attempt to extend skills training into other parts of the County. The satellite program allows participants to register with the One-Stop Career Center upon meeting with a Counselor by appointment at the Winslow Township Library. They may be in need of brushing up on math and reading skills. The individual is tested with the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) to establish their reading and math grade level. Once levels are established, the Counselor works with each individual to create a plan that can be implemented using the computers at the library. The Counselor can monitor the progress of the individual online and plan in-person check points along the way. This service is especially good for an individual preparing to qualify for a training program or GED High Set test.

Dr. Lauren Hill, Acting Manager, Learning Link, made committee members aware of the One-Stop Career Center’s move to the new location at 101 Woodcrest Road, Suite 127, Cherry Hill, NJ. She said there has been no change to the activity at the Winslow Township Library. Some calls for Learning Link service have been answered but upon further inquiry, the calls were coming from other referral sources such as the county

probation office. The One-Stop will continue to promote the location as an option for services. She said, in the meantime, staff thought they might experience a drop in requests for services as a result of the move but that has not been the case. The Learning Link is having some good outcomes. Carol Dann, Hopeworks, asked if the Literacy Committee's visit to the Family Success Center in that area produced any referrals. Lauren said it did not. One-Stop staff have been using the flyer which includes the Winslow location at outreach events. Carol suggested the possibility of having a staff member do some outreach at the Winslow location in the evening. She said that some individuals might find interest in the option of being able to take advantage of learning link services during evening hours after work. Dr. Hill said it would be very difficult to staff any outreach efforts in the evenings since services must be covered during the regular customer service hours at the One-Stop from 8:30am-4:30pm. The One-Stop is scheduling staff to attend probation hearings as part of another initiative. Afterhours scheduling of staff is challenging and restrictive. It includes a request for comp-time exchange and that challenges daytime scheduling. She suggested that the location might not be ideal for the program and a family success center in the area might be a better location to explore. The criteria for services and logistics of accessibility are a challenge at the library location. The Committee discussed challenges with the library such as transportation, evening access, and overall demand or inquiry about the program. Ken said the first concern is that there have been no inquiries for Learning Link services at the Winslow Library. Carol Dann, Hopeworks suggested the high school might be a consideration. Jeff said security and entrance at any school might prohibit public access. Marlyn Kalitan, Vice Chair, Literacy, said that general public transportation access is a challenge in that area. Jeff said he liked the idea of hosting services at the local family success center as an alternate or second site in the area. The Committee agreed to approach the Orchards Family Success Center, Sicklerville, about hosting an information event to promote learning link services at that location in order to gauge general interest. If there is interest, the One-Stop can provide the necessary software and forms. Lauren said the committee has to be mindful of current staff demands. Only qualified learning link staff can administer and monitor participants and offsite staffing will be a challenge especially in the coming months ahead. She will look at the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was created to address the library pilot program. Carol suggested offering the information session in both English and Spanish. She felt there might be more of a demand for English as a Second Language (ESL) classes in that area. Heidi Daunoras, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Pine Hill Public Schools, said the major barriers to offering services in the area are awareness and transportation. Residents simply do not know about supportive services like the Learning Link Program. The Community also faces approval and sustainability challenges even at the school level. Dick Knopf, Business Consultants, said the other big challenge is that Winslow Township covers such a large geographical area that it is hard to meet the accessibility needs of everyone in that local area.

Carol suggested that the committee review the Literacy Needs Assessment (LNA) and include some type of additional document that addresses barriers to service in the lower parts of the county. She directed the committee's attention to the LNA. She said the considerations used to establish the need did not include barriers that are being discussed today at this meeting. Heidi said that Homelessness and English Language Learner (ELL) barriers have greatly increased in the last few years. The lunch assistance program has greatly increased. We are also struggling to meet the other needs factors that have increased in the local area such justice involved youth and adults, domestic violence, recovery and re-entry. The school district and local officials are closely monitoring the data and trying to address these types of needs. Ken summarized by making it a goal in the coming year to approach the family success center and help drive resources to the southern part

of the county. The 2020 census information may not be summarized for more than a year. In the meantime, as we await the results of the census, the committee can be looking for more ways to provide ELL and Literacy Services especially in the Clementon, Pine Hill and Lindenwold local areas. Keith Sayles, Dean, Camden County College, Camden City Campus, said the college is able to participate in more outreach and is available to bring services to organizations in the county. Heidi said that Adult Basic Skills (ABS), ESL and ELL are definitely areas of consideration for more supportive services. She reviewed ways the school is helping parents of the children they serve. The school also spends time connecting parents to transportation and translators to help them get to services at the school and library. The Clementon, Pine Hill boroughs are smaller and more accessible so it is a bit easier to connect parents with some services. Pine Hill does work with some community partners. Parents are also surveyed when they register. There is also an issue of homelessness in the community. Some adults are dealing with some sort of trauma associated with their homelessness which makes them cautious about getting involved with public programs. They do not have a high level of trust. We are working hard on building trusting relationships with these individuals in order to connect them with the services they need. There is a lot of hard work and cultivating that goes on that cannot be publicized. The local Hope Chapel has opened their doors to many homeless families. Simple child activities such as dance, music and art lessons could be made assessable to families at a free or very minimal cost. Many children associated with homelessness or extreme poverty have more life skills as a result of their family situations. They deserve a chance at these personal development activities. The Committee discussed concerns regarding the development of children especially in the area of teaching resiliency in a positive way. They also discussed their individual passions for helping families get connected to supportive services by serving on committees such as the WDB literacy and others.

### LITERACY OUTREACH & FAMILY LITERACY DAY RECAP

EVENT: FAMILY LITERACY DAY, CLEMENTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY 195 GIBBSBORO RD, CLEMENTON, NJ, Saturday, October 12, 2019, 11:00am-1:00pm.

Ken asked the committee for thoughts and input about the Literacy Family Day. He said the event was much slower than the past previous years. Dick said the participation of the fire department is crucial to the success of the event. Jeff said that some schools did not get the flyer distributed in time. Heidi said the Pine Hill School did an email blast. Jeff also said that other sporting and political events may have conflicted with the event. He suggested doing the event again but starting the planning much earlier and approaching the fire department to get involved with an earlier notice. Those that attended got a great selection of free books and adults did receive a bag full of information about literacy services in the county, the College ABS program and One-Stop Career Center. The Committee agreed that contacting the fire department and asking them for their participation was important. Carol suggested that computers be made available during the event. She said that libraries around the county are seeing more customers that are there to use the computers for job seeking. Marlyn said that there is a computer station upstairs at the Clementon Library.

Jeff also said that Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB, also did make contact with Brenda Roach, Manager, Lindenwold Public Library, 310 East Linden Ave., Lindenwold. That library is willing to open its doors for WDB activities. The WDB hosted an information session for the Atlantic City Electric Training Initiative on Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup>. Marlyn also reminded the committee about contacting Larry Abrams,

BookSmiles. Ken said that the committee could connect with the BookSmiles and the Lindenwold Library in January. For more information about BookSmiles, follow the link [www.booksmiles.org](http://www.booksmiles.org)

### GOALS 2020

Ken said he took some notes during the meeting and recapped some of the goals for 2020 based on the committee's conversations. He presented the following ideas:

- Partner more the Family Success Centers
- Investigate more ways the Literacy Committee can help its partner organizations (this includes Pine Hill schools, the Clementon library, the One-Stop Learning Link)
- Identify Barriers that residents face in getting literacy and language or supportive services.
- Addendum to the Literacy Needs Assessment
- Review Outreach efforts such as National Night Out and Family Literacy Day
- Work with the BookSmiles Organization
- Focus on Financial Literacy

Ken expressed a desire for the Literacy Committee to focus on Financial Literacy during this coming year. The Committee discussed Financial Literacy and how interesting it is that many individuals are being hired who do not fully understand banking and checking. Jeff said that middle and high schools are now required by the State to teach a Financial Literacy class. Heidi discussed the challenges to getting some of these programs started in the schools. Committee members shared their own personal early experiences learning about financial literacy.

### LITERACY NEEDS ASSESSMENT (LNA) UPDATE

The Committee also discussed the Literacy Needs Assessment (LNA) update. This update would be added as an addendum to the LNA. Ken said that the committee would focus on the power point that Kathleen put together in January. The update will show lessons learned by community efforts, action items and achievements made as a result of LNA findings. Carol Dann suggested that the committee look into possibly getting a grant to work with a geographical information system that could provide more detailed data for the next update. Dick asked if there was any immediate need to focus on the Census. Jeff said the county considers the Census a very important function and has been hosting many recruitments to hire census takers. He said the best thing the literacy committee can do is to promote the Census where ever possible. The Committee discussed different types of data and asset mapping projects going on around the county. The Committee adjourned the meeting and followed Keith Sayles on a tour of the Camden City Campus.

NEXT MEETING: The Literacy Committee will meet on Tuesday, January 7, 2019 at 8:30am at the WDB Office, 1111 Marlkrass Road, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003.

Submitted by

*Kathleen Varallo,*

Administrative Assistant