



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Matthew Verney, Board Chair

LITERACY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2022
ZOOM MEETING

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE								
NAME	ORGANIZATION	TRUSTEE MEMBER						
			3-Aug-21	14-Sep-21	5-Oct-21	7-Dec-21	4-Jan-22	1-Feb-22
Brahl, Ken CHAIR	Ravitz Family ShopRites	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Beach, Patti	Goodwill							X
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One Stop	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dann, Carol	HopeWorks Camden		X	X		X		X
Daunoras, Heidi	Pine Hill School District		X	X		X		X
Druce, Jennifer	Camden County Library							
Fithian, Danielle	Goodwill							X
Fugee, Antoinette	Center for Family Services, Inc.				X		X	
Hill, Lauren Dr.	Camden County College		X	X	X		X	X
Kalitan, Marilyn Vice Chair	Kalitan Consulting	X	X			X		X
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services			X	X	X	X	X
McKelvey, Christopher	Councilman, Clementon Borough							X
Mitchell, Danielle	RobinsNest Inc							
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County One-Stop							
Soira, Lizette	Orchards Family Success Center							X
Strobl, Holly	Councilwoman, Clementon Borough		X					
Young, Jennifer	Verizon			X		X	X	X
Levitt, Alex	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X
Vaughn, Debra	WDB							X

WELCOME

Ken Brahl, Chair, greeted the committee and guest attendees, Danielle Fithian, Jennifer Young, Lizette Soira and Christopher McKelvey, Councilman for the Borough of Clementon and Chairperson of Clementon Library. Ken called the meeting to order at 8:40am. Ken asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the January 4th meeting. Dick Knopf, made the motion, seconded by Heidi Daunoras. Heidi later abstained because of her absence from the meeting, so the motion was seconded by Dr. Lauren Hill. By unanimous vote to the affirmative, the motion carried, and the minutes approved.

Frank Cirii, Local Area Operations Director

ONE-STOP & LEARNING LINK UPDATES

- Frank commended Patti Beach, Dr. Hill and Nidia for their hard work in earning One-Stop’s new certification as a GED and Hi-Set testing site.
- The One-Stop continues to provide in-person services safely to the public. The virtual site can be used in Spanish and English, and technology is in place using Zoom, e-mail, and Docu-Sign to meet the needs of customer remotely.
- The Health Department inspections have been passed with flying colors and safety protocols such as distanced work areas, plexi-glass shields and required masks for staff and customers have been highly effective.

- Walk-ins have been the result of word-of-mouth communication, through other promotions, and events such as food give-aways. Hopefully, there will be more referrals through the Board of Social Services and other entities.
- Nidia provided an update on the Learning Link. Adjustments are being made to fill Patti's absence. Customers are coming in with interest in raising their reading and math scores to seek training or sit for their diploma. A vendor for the GED program has expressed interest in participating. A Goodwill employee is on site daily, providing additional support with maintaining cleanliness of high touch areas for safety in the One-Stop work environment.

LITERACY NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2022

Ken Brahl reviewed the Literacy Needs Assessment (LNA). Additional areas of need were identified as Clementon, Winslow, Pine Hill, and Lindenwold. Christopher Mc Kelvey, Clementon Councilman and Clementon Library Chairperson commented that the library is in a central location with NJ transit access, and he will discuss forming a partnership agreement with the Clementon Library trustees. Carol Dann stated that the National Center of Educational Statistics has recently released an interactive map of the entire nation illustrating the literacy and numeracy components. By selecting a county on the map, the literacy percentile, and along with state and national statistics in comparison, will be displayed. (<https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/skillsmap>). For example, Level 1 is one-step problem-solving arithmetic. For Camden County and the State of NJ, 22% of adults are at Level 1. Heidi Daunoras confirmed that Pine Hill School District has experienced exponential growth in the population of non-English speaking students. She stated that these students face challenges beyond COVID, such as having a safe environment and conditions for learning. The conditions for their learning are affected by food insecurity, safety in the home, and interaction, which all have an impact on the brain's readiness to learn. Carol Dann commented the people served by HopeWorks are being impacted by barrier issues to learning such as housing problems and the lack of accessible transportation. Ken Brahl commented that these issues will hopefully be clearly documented in the Literacy Needs Assessment when the data is compiled. Jeff mentioned that Cheryl Hallman at Rutgers, who oversees the graduate internships program, suggested that it may be easier to fill the intern position with an offer of a stipend and he is open to offering the stipend with funds budgeted for a consultant.

Goodwill

- Danielle Fithian, Director of Mission Services
Goodwill offers programs to advocate literacy. Helms Academy serves individuals 18 and older (exceptions are made following certain protocols). Danielle noted that ESL is now offered and foundational to advanced digital skills literacies are also provided at Helms Academy. There are 5 locations in NJ and Philadelphia, with the Stratford site serving Camden County. Danielle welcomed Patti Beach on board. Patti stated that she has approximately 5 youth, of the 23 people in her classroom, which would benefit from added assistance from the Youth One-Stop. She will speak with Nidia further about what is available. Danielle stated that the academy is a state-approved Hi-Set and GED testing

center and offered to assist the One-Stop with questions that may arise related to their new certification.

- Nidia commented that they have worked with Goodwill in the past and are reconnecting with them as a CWEP site. Jennifer is assigned the CWEP contract.

DISCUSSION/UPDATES

Ken mentioned that he would like to review the literacy map information mentioned by Carol Dann and discuss it at the next committee meeting. (<https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/skillsmap>)

Jeff Swartz, Executive Director, WDB

- Summer Youth Employment Program Grant
WDB is applying for a summer youth employment program grant from the State. Leslie is completing the RFP and it will be submitted before it is due on February 4th. The goal is to place about 45 youth and employer participants are being sought. Given the transportation barrier to the southern part of the county, employer participants from the southern part of the county would be welcomed.
- ACE Initiative
Jeff stated the information sessions are scheduled for February, virtually on the 12th and 19th, and in-person on the 20th. Camden County College will deliver the curriculum. Classes are scheduled to start in April and complete in mid to late May. The Line School program is expected to start in mid-April at the "Tony" Canale Training Center in Egg Harbor Township. Close to 28 participants are ready to start training and the equipment has been delivered. The program is supported by a multi-year grant.

Dick Knopf, Marketing Professional Services

- Dick raised the question of whether any additional information has been received regarding the number of Afghan refugees relocated to Camden County and suggested that perhaps that information may be included in the Literacy Needs Assessment data. Jeff suggested Catholic Charities may have information and that Nidia may have the contact information needed to research the information. Dick commented that as many as 2 million workers have left the workforce for non-Covid reasons. Ken noted that job fairs are utilized to fill positions.

ADJOURNMENT

Ken asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Lauren Hill made the motion, seconded by Heidi Daunoras. By unanimous vote to the affirmative, the motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 9:45am.

NEXT MEETING: The next Literacy Committee Meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 1, 2022, at 8:30am.** The WDB will send out meeting materials and Zoom conferencing information prior to the meeting.

Submitted by:

Debra Vaughn

Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director