



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

LITERACY COMMITTEE
 MEETING MINUTES
 TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2020
 MEETING AT THE WDB OFFICE, 1111 MARLKRESS ROAD, CHERRY HILL, NJ

ATTENDANCE – LITERACY COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		7-May-19	2-Jul-19	3-Sep-19	1-Oct-19	3-Dec-19	7-Jan-20	4-Feb-20	3-Mar-20	7-Apr-20
Brahl, Ken CHAIR	Ravitz Family Shoprites	X	X	X	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	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	X	X
De, Shyamoli	Director, Volunteers of America		X		X		X	X	X	
Hill, Lauren Dr.	Director, ABS, Camden County College		X		X	X		X		
Kalitan, Marlyn Vice Chair	Kalitan Consulting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services	X		X		X		X		
Lisa, David	Camden County Library System									
Mitchell, Danielle	RobinsNest Inc	X			X		X			
Petteyford, Shawnee	Hopeworks						X			
Sayles, Keith	Camden County College, Camden City Campus			X	X	X	X		X	x
Strobl, Holly	Council Women, Clementon Borough		X		X		X			X
Young, Jennifer	Verizon						X			
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB, Executive Director	X	X			X		X	X	X
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB, Administrative Assistant	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X

WELCOME

Ken Brahl, Literacy Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:03am, welcomed attendees and asked for round table introductions. Ken suggested that the committee plan on conducting the April meeting via conference call due to COVID-19 response efforts. The Committee discussed and agreed. A notice will be sent out with the dial in information. They also discussed possible school, business and program closings.

LITERACY NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE.

Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB, reported that she made the requested edits to the Literacy Needs Assessment (LNA) Update. The update includes actions taken by the committee as a result of the findings in the original LNA. The update includes meetings, events, outreach and presentation made by the Committee in the community. Shyamoli De, Director, Literacy Volunteers of America, Camden County, asked if the committee member titles were updated properly in the LNA update. Kathleen said she checked all the names and added the correct job titles.

Kathleen also reported that she drafted a letter to the mayors of Lindenwold, Pine Hill, and Clementon. The three mayors were invited to meet with the Literacy Committee at an informal spaghetti dinner and discussion on March 12, 2019. The letter will serve as an update to actions that were taken by the committee to further

create the awareness and development of literacy programs in their local municipalities. She will send the letter to the mayors along with the update and a One-Stop Workflow Report that shows residents of their local area are being served by the One-Stop now that it is located closer to the southern part of the county.

Ken said he liked the idea of inviting the mayors to another spaghetti dinner as discussed at the February meeting. Ken asked if the May 5th date was cleared at the Clementon Fire Hall. Kathleen contacted Holly Strobl and cleared the date. She said it was also discussed that we invite representatives from the schools and from the libraries. Ken said the meeting will serve to update the mayors on the new location and find more ways the WDB can help connect residents to the One-Stop Career Center and other literacy services. He said the Mayors were very receptive at the last dinner. Ken also suggested that he and Jeff contact the Mayors Association to get another opportunity to present to them again about the committee's outreach efforts. He will want to make sure to coordinate with Mayor Tom Weaver, Clementon Borough, to accompany them to that meeting. He also encouraged all committee members to attend this upcoming dinner. Jeff agreed the dinner was well received by the Mayors and it will be a good idea to present to the Mayor's Association.

US CENSUS 2020 UPDATES

Ken asked Kathleen to update the committee about the Census 2020 hiring efforts in the county. Kathleen reported the County Board of Freeholders are very focused on hiring enough Census Takers to cover the outlying areas in the city and in all of Camden County. There were areas in the county that were underrepresented, especially young children, in the last Census. The County is offering a \$20.00 per hour wage increase for these positions. The One-Stop has hosted several hiring information and recruitment sessions. Donald Norcross, US Congressman, hosted a recruitment, with the help of the One-Stop, at the Pennsauken Public Library on Friday, February 14th. Jeff attended that recruitment. The County will also be setting up safe sites around the county where residents can get help filling out the Census form. Kathleen also said she contacted Danielle Mitchell, Program Director, Orchards Family Success Center, about making the Success Centers a place where residents could get help filling out the form. Danielle is going to contact the county to see about setting up a training for the five centers. Kathleen said this is the first year that the Census can be filled out online. Ken asked when the form is usually mailed out. Jeff said it is due to be mailed out mid-March. Frank Cirii, Local Area Operation Director, said the Census Takers will start shortly after to follow up with a list of residents that have not responded. The County is encouraging all public service organizations to promote the Census 2020. He said the overall counts can affect future State and Federal funding.

LEARNING LINK PILOT PROGRAM

This online pilot program is an attempt to extend skills training for residents in Camden County. The program allows participants to register with the One-Stop Career Center upon meeting with a One-Stop Counselor that 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 online practice tools. 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.

There was no new update reported about this program. Frank said counselors are being cross trained to administer the CASAS test. The One-Stop is experiencing an surge in Learning Link customers.

BOOKSMILES BOOK DRIVE

Ken reported that Ravitz Family Markets held a book drive for the BookSmiles organization during the month of January, at various Ravitz Family Market, Shoprite locations. All together they collected 16 large banana boxes full on books. He said each banana box held approximately 50 books. The book drive was easy to organize so it will be considered for an annual project. The books had to be sorted by category to take out adult romance novels. Those books will be donated to another source. The children's books will be donated to BookSmiles. Ken said it was a very nice effort.

Ken said that the National Nights out will take place in early August again this year. Last year, the committee was able to attend the Pine Hill and Clementon events. This year, if the committee can commit, we can cover more local areas. It seems to be a good way to reach more residents than our planned literacy days. The National nights out are usually hosted on the same night so in order to expand our reach, we will have to spread ourselves thinner at each event or maybe two committee members at each event. Ken said the Family Success Center in Sicklerville wants to plan an information session and they also host a community night on a different date than the national night out. Kathleen said that Danielle Mitchell sent us an email after their conversation with some ideas about how the WDB can work with the center in an outreach effort. Jeff said he enjoyed attending the NNO and it reinforced our commitment to the southern part of the county. The numbers of residents we interacted with was much greater than our planned event at the library. We gave out the PNC books, the literacy services guide, One-Stop flyers and information about the Atlantic City Electric Training Initiative. Kathleen read the email sent by Danielle Mitchell. She is currently working on a date to host their annual "Back to School" night. They host it in the parking area outside the center. Danielle told her they give away back to school items for local area children.

Jeff referred to the Workflow Report generated by the One-Stop on a weekly basis. The report tracks the zip codes of customer traffic. It is showing that the One-Stop is consistently seeing about 10 percent of customers coming in from Clementon area zip codes. He said he did not think the One-stop was seeing that many customers from those local areas when it was located in Camden. Ken asked if the population was representative of the ratio of residents in the entire county. Frank said we are not seeing as many residents from the Cherry Hill area. Ken said that it seems to represent a percentage of a population that is in need of services. This confirms what was discovered in the Literacy Needs Assessment. Jeff also attributed the efforts of the committee to promote the services of the One-Stop to residents in the southern part of the county. Kathleen said that it will be important to promote the additional service partners, housed at the One-Stop, including 55 Plus, the Board of Social Services, DVRS, Camden County College, LVA and the Learning Link. She said we listed the eight partners in the letter that is being sent to the Mayors. The partners have always been a part of One-Stop services but many people, from the southern part of the county, may not be aware of this and still think the One-Stop is just an unemployment office. Now that all the services are located under one roof, customers can check in and be referred to the different services during one visit. Jeff said he attended a meeting yesterday, at the state, with Hugh Bailey, Assistant Commissioner, LWD. The Commissioner was very

impressed with the Workflow Report and wants to use it as model for other One-Stops throughout the state. The data collected give us tools to make better decisions.

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Ken directed the committee's attention to a lesson plan on making money, a teacher's guide and teen lessons, sent to the WDB by Patti Beach, Learning Link Counselor, One-Stop. Kathleen said that Patti mentioned that when she was in California, she was teaching a successful program for high school students about Financial Literacy. The program received very good feedback from the students, and it includes some work – readiness curriculum and career exploration. Since the State of New Jersey is now mandated to teach Financial Literacy, the WDB set the goal of bringing that career readiness piece into this type of class. Patti sent the WDB a link to a lesson plan she found while teaching in California. Lesson two includes all the items we discussed as being essential to students for obtaining a job. The lesson plan includes subjects such as resume writing, filling out a job application and reading a paycheck. Ken was impressed that the lesson included explanations about payroll taxes. Kathleen said it was interesting that youth enrolled in the WDB's Summer Youth Employment Program, had very little knowledge of this type of information. Dr. Lauren Hill, former youth manager, created a four-hour career readiness orientation that fascinated the youth participants. We got such good feedback from the youth about hearing information they were never exposed to prior to the orientation. Jeff said many of the youth never had a bank account. The WDB set up youth participants with a direct deposit bank account for their summer job. Jeff asked Patti if the curriculum was proprietary or could it be incorporated at the Youth One-Stop and shared with local area schools. Patti said in her case, a bank was brought in to teach the program and the students showed some resistance to it. She brought the lessons to a level the students could better understand and found more success with the program. Keith Sayles, Dean, Camden County College, Camden City Campus, has been working on providing this type of course at the college's Adult Basic Skills Consortium. He was impressed with the lesson plan and asked the WDB to send the link to the Committee. Kathleen said there is a lot of additional lessons in the program. She will send the program link to the committee. Keith said that he wants to include Financial Literacy for students as well as open it up to the community. Kathleen said its great curriculum that can be shared with the schools because some of them are just beginning to teach the program. The state mandate was just introduced to be implemented in the 2019-2020 school year. Jeff asked Heidi Daunras, Curriculum Coordinator, Pine Hill Schools, if her schools were teaching Financial Literacy. Heidi said in some cases, it's a stand-alone half year course and in some cases, it is incorporated into a Social Studies class. She said the middle schools, in her local area, are also incorporating Financial Literacy into the required curriculum. They deliver those standards through a tech class that includes a career studies component. Heidi explained how the lessons meet the standards and are imbedded into different classes. There is smaller targeted program for students that includes such subjects as stock trading. The school includes as many lessons as it takes to meet the standards. She will also be interested to review the curriculum presented at this committee meeting.

Marlyn Kalitan, Vice Chair Literacy Committee, Career Coach, said her granddaughter is participating in a DECA leadership program currently being hosted in Atlantic County. The participants are required to dress for success. She had to take her shopping to look at the type of wardrobe an executive position would require. Heidi said DECA is a national organization that prepares youth emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management in high schools and colleges around the globe. (More

information can be found at the following link: <https://www.deca.org/about/>) She said it is a phenomenal program that requires all participants to act in adult business leadership roles. The Committee discussed more elements of Financial Literacy in the schools.

Ken said the conversation is great and Financial Literacy is a subject the committee will keep on its agenda. Ken closed the meeting with a discussion about the possible unemployment concerns coming as a result of businesses closing due to social distancing regulations. Frank said there was a seasonal surge in layoffs, but the One-Stop has not yet seen an influx of unemployment claims. He is in close contact with local and state officials about compliance and contingency plans for response efforts. Marlyn said that business has been about the same for her business. There were some seasonal layoffs, but the good news is individuals are landing jobs. She said that businesses are changing so while it appears, they are downsizing, it's more about changing the way they do business, this is creating different types of jobs, and they are good jobs. Heidi said there is a shift for the consumer in how they are presented with on-line options and even when entering a store. The stores are stocked in different ways. She also announced her son just got a job as a commentator for video games. Ken said there is a new arena for those types of online gaming. Heidi said her school started a video game club, after school program, as part of their intervention practices. The club includes come counseling and youth services. It has expanded into the school's teacher's lounge. Once teachers are done for the day, students move into that room. The exchange agreement included leaving some of the game systems in the room. Keith said the college is looking at the CCC, Cherry Hill Campus, as being a focus for gaming career training because of such growing popularity in these types of career paths. Marlyn said that Cherry Hill is a building a horse racing off-track betting facility. The Committee discussed new trends in employment opportunities such as gaming and sports betting.

Kathleen also reported that the WDB was invited to attend a Perkins Presentation at the Camden County College, Blackwood Campus, on Thursday, January 23rd. All Perkins Grants must have a WDB component. The current grant establishes a needs assessment to make sure programs are meeting the needs of employment opportunities.

Note: The next Quarterly Board of Trustees Meeting scheduled on Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at Camden County College, may be canceled due to COVID-19 response efforts. The business portion of the meeting will be conducted by electronic vote.

NEXT MEETING: The Literacy Committee will meet on Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at 8:30am at the WDB Office, 1111 MarlKress Road, Suite 101, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003. Ken reminded the committee the meeting will probably be conducted via conference call. The WDB will send out meeting materials and dial-in information prior to the meeting

Submitted by

Kathleen Varallo,

Administrative Assistant