



**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

*Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce*

*Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director*

*Carl A. Donato Jr., Chair*

**LITERACY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025  
ZOOM MEETING**

**ATTENDANCE**

<b>COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE</b>				
<b>NAME</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>TRUSTEE</b>	<b>1/7/25</b>	
Kalitan, Marlyn Chair	Kalitan Consulting	X	X	
Abrams, Larry	BookSmiles			
Willmann, Michael, Vice Chair	WMSH	X	X	
Allen, Mikala	One-Stop			
Beach, Patti	Goodwill			
Chisolm, Victoria	Literacy Volunteers of America		X	
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One Stop	X		
Clark, Justin	Office of Adult Literacy (NJDOE)		X	
D'amato, Greg	Pine Hill School District			
Dann, Carol	HopeWorks Camden			
Dauroras, Heidi	Pine Hill School District		X	
Deprey, Brynn	NTIA			
Fithian, Danielle	Goodwill			
Floyd, Kwame			X	
Fugee, Antoinette	Cooper Healthcare			
Green, Aurella	Camden County College			
Jenkins, Timothy	Camden Board of Education			
Johnstone, Brent	Fathers365			
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services			
Mauro, Jennifer	Goodwill	X	X	
McKelvey, Christopher	Councilman, Clementon Borough		X	
Petty-Ford, Shawneeq	HopeWorks Camden			
Robinson, Terrenny	Net America			
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County One-Stop			
Staples, Akeiff	Fathers365			
Stewart, Queen	Volunteer UP			
Strobl, Holly	Councilwoman, Clementon Borough			
Randall, Angela	Camden County OEO		X	
Thompson, Ryan	Truist Bank	X		
Michelle Rohan	WDB		X	
Richelle Harbinson	WDB			
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB		X	
Williams, Leslie	WDB			
Vaughn, Debra	WDB			

**WELCOME & APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Marlyn Kalitan, Literacy Chair, opened the meeting at 8:34am. She asked for a motion to approve the December 3, 2024, meeting minutes. The motion was made by Chris McKelvey and seconded by Michael Willmann. By majority vote to the affirmative, the motion carried, and the minutes for December 3, 2024, were approved.

**Quick recap**

The Literacy Committee discussed potential grants from various foundations to support their initiatives, particularly focusing on the Clementon Library, and considered a pilot program to improve literacy in the southern part of the county. They also explored potential name changes for the committee. Lastly, they planned a book giveaway event at the Clementon Library in



## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

*Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce*

---

*Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director*

*Carl A. Donato Jr., Chair*

early March to celebrate Read Across America Week and discussed the importance of AI literacy and digital literacy resources.

### **Next steps**

Michelle to send out the list of potential new committee names to all committee members for feedback.

Chris to mention the possibility of using the Clementon Library on March 1st for a Read Across America event at the council meeting.

Michelle to research the Carnegie Corporation grant for ESL and youth programs at public libraries.

Michelle to research the Dollar General Foundation grants for adult and youth literacy programs. Heidi to reach out to Larry about providing books for the Read Across America event.

Jeff to contact Ryan Thompson from Mid Penn Jersey Bank about providing financial literacy resources for the Read Across America event.

Justin to provide more information on the North Star digital literacy program to the committee.

Marlyn to discuss the literacy webinar with Carl and coordinate with Michael's planned webinar.

Jenn to send Heidi information about the GII/Google AI skilling initiative grant.

Michael to prepare a discussion on establishing objective metrics for the committee's activities for a future meeting.

### **Summary**

#### **Literacy Grants and Pilot Programs**

The Literacy Committee discussed potential grants from the Dollar General Foundation. Michelle informed the team that the Dollar General Foundation offers grants for adult, family, and youth literacy programs, with applications due on February 15, 2025 and the winners announced on May 16, 2025. The grants allow for the purchase of innovative technology equipment to support literacy initiatives. The team considered applying for these grants to support their initiatives, particularly focusing on the Clementon Library. Michael suggested a pilot program to put a book in the hands of every child in Camden County, while Jeffrey proposed starting small with the Clementon Library and expanding if successful. The team agreed to focus on a specific plan before applying for grants. Michelle was tasked with researching the Carnegie Corporation's grant for public libraries, which supports ESL and youth programs.

#### **Pilot Program for Southern Literacy**

The meeting discussed the potential for a pilot program to improve literacy in the southern part of the county, with a focus on Clementon and Winslow Township. The idea of providing books to every 1st grader in the area was proposed, along with the possibility of using the Dollar General Foundation's grants for this purpose. The group also discussed the possibility of partnering with organizations that offer literacy services. Heidi suggested placing bookshelves in accessible locations for children to access books, rather than relying on transportation. The group also discussed a series of needs assessment sessions, with Heidi and Aurelia Green set to co-facilitate the literacy session on January 29th.

#### **Literacy Committee Name Discussion**

The team discussed potential names for their literacy committee, aiming for a more positive and inclusive title. The consensus was that the word "literacy" must be included in the name, and they debated the addition of words like "empowerment," "enrichment," and "progress." The team also discussed the importance of



**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

*Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce*

---

*Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director*

*Carl A. Donato Jr., Chair*

the committee's role in workforce development and the need to keep a connection to the larger entity they are part of.

**Book Giveaway for Read Across America**

The team discussed the idea of organizing a book giveaway event at the Clementon Library in early March to celebrate Read Across America Week. The event would serve as a kickoff for the week-long celebration of reading, with the aim of promoting literacy and financial literacy among children and parents. The team agreed to reach out to Larry for book donations and to Christopher to confirm the library's availability on March 1st. They also considered involving financial literacy experts from Mid Penn Jersey Bank and Fulton for the event. The team agreed to create awareness about the event throughout the week at the library.

**AI Literacy and Training Opportunities**

Heidi mentioned that the New Jersey Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development is focusing on AI literacy this year, which includes understanding the benefits and risks of AI for those with low literacy levels. Justin shared resources on digital and financial literacy from the Department of Labor, including the NorthStar Digital Literacy platform used by adult education providers. Jenn informed the committee about a small Google AI skills training grant opportunity that may be of interest. Michael suggested establishing metrics to measure the committee's impact at the end of the year.

**Adjournment**

Marlyn asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Michael Willmann, seconded by Chris McKelvey. By majority vote of the affirmative, the motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 9:33 a.m.

**Next Meeting**

The next Literacy Committee meeting will be held Tuesday, February 4, 2025, at 8:30am via Zoom. Meeting materials and Zoom conferencing information will be distributed prior to the meeting.

Submitted by:

Michelle Rohan, Committee Coordinator