



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, OCTOBER 1, 2024
ZOOM MEETING**

ATTENDANCE

NAME	ORGANIZATION	TRUSTEE MEMBER	6-Feb-24	5-Mar-24	2-Apr-24	7-May-24	3-Jun-24	6-Aug-24	3-Sep-24	2-Oct-24
Kalitan, Marlyn Chair	Kalitan Consulting	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Willmann, Michael, Vice Chair	WMSH	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Allen, Mikala	One-Stop					x				
Beach, Patti	Goodwill		x	x	x	x	x			
Chisolm, Victoria	Literacy Volunteers of America			x						
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One Stop	x	x	x	x					
Clark, Justin	Office of Adult Literacy (NJDOLE)								x	x
Dann, Carol	HopeWorks Camden		x	x	x	x		x	x	
Daunoras, Heidi	Pine Hill School District			x	x	x	x	x	x	
Deprey, Brynn	NTIA					x	x	x	x	
Druce, Jennifer	Camden County Library									
Egrie, Gabrielle	Watermark Communities									
Fithian, Danielle	Goodwill					x				
Green, Aurella	Camden County College		x	x		x	x	x	x	
Hill, Dr. Lauren	Camden County College		x							
Jenkins, Timothy	Camden Board of Education									
Johnstone, Brent	Fathers365									
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services		x	x	x					x
Mauro, Jennifer	Goodwill	x	x	x	x	x				x
McKelvey, Christopher	Councilman, Clementon Borough		x		x	x		x		x
Norman, Tahja	Orchards Family Success Center									
Page-Soncrant, Jeanne	Dept. of Labor									
Petty-Ford, Shawneeq	HopeWorks Camden									
Robinson, Terrenny	Net America									
Rutzler, Eugene	Literacy Needs Assessment Intern									
Ryan, Danny	Citizens Bank									
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County One-Stop									
Soira, Lizette	Orchards Family Success Center									
Staples, Akeiff	Fathers365									
Stewart, Queen	Volunteer UP		x							
Strobl, Holly	Councilwoman, Clementon Borough									
Randall, Angela	Camden County OEO								x	
Thompson, Ryan	Truist Bank	x	x				x			
Young, Jennifer	Verizon		x		x	x	x			
Michelle Rohan	WDB		x	x	x	x	x	x		
Richelle Harbinson	WDB									
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB			x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Williams, Leslie	WDB									x
Vaughn, Debra	WDB		x	x	x	x	x		x	x

WELCOME & APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Michael Willmann, Vice-Chair, opened the meeting at 8:35a.m. He asked for a motion to approve the September 3, 2024 meeting minutes. The motion was made by Richard Knopf and seconded by Christopher McKelvey. By majority vote to the affirmative, the motion carried, and the minutes for September 3, 2024 were approved.

Michael opened the meeting with a question for every committee member; “if you were in charge of the literacy effort in Camden County, what would you do?”

ONE-STOP UPDATE

Jeffrey Swartz, Executive Director of the WDB, provided a brief update in the absence of the One-Stop Operator, Frank Cirii.

- One-Stop Check-in system shows uptick in people visiting the facility.
- As mentioned in the July committee meeting, the State has recently changed its policy by



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putting out competitive bids for Learning Link funding. It released a Literacy Innovations Notice of Grant Opportunity on August 30, 2024.

- The grant program will run Nov. 1, 2024 to September 30, 2026.
- The application was completed and submitted September 30, 2024 it included ideas to implement digital literacy and family literacy.
- The grant package will go out to the committee electronically.
- Notification of recipients will be received in 2-3 weeks.
- Should the WDB receive the grant, the One Stop will be open to residents in counties that did not apply (Burlington and Gloucester residents).

Jeffrey Swartz, Camden County Workforce Development Board

Jeffrey Swartz, Executive Director of the WDB, provided more in-depth discussion of the Literacy Innovative Initiative grant.

- Literacy is the keystone to what the WDB does.
- The State is looking for innovative ideas.
 - HELPP (Hub for Education, Literacy and Personal Progress) is a program with the grant application submitted.
 - The grant was predicated on hiring a consultant.
 - A Request for Proposal (RFP) for a consultant will go out when the WDB receives notification, to move forward immediately.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The committee held a lengthy discussion regarding new ideas to improve literacy in the county including outreach for private funding, improvements with committee involvement and new test programs. Some of the ideas for further discussion include:

- A best practice zoom meeting with other Literacy committees in the state to share ideas.
- Researching outreach for private funding.
 - Foundations that focus on literacy (ex: Dollar General).
- Matching Grant monies for a broader reach of services.
- Creating a pilot program to deliver books to students focusing on communities identified in the Literacy Needs Assessment (LNA):
 - Utilizing Clementon Library as a venue to promote program.
 - Partnering with Larry Abrams of Book Smiles.
 - Targeting Gibbsboro as the next area for the committee's literacy efforts.
- Identifying the need for reading and digital literacy within the communities and discussed challenges.
 - Breaking the myth that an employer is going to fire you because you do not speak English or have a 9th grade reading level.
 - Incumbent Worker Training programs that have or had success: Goodwill, ShopRite, and Bancroft.

Committee Update

Christopher McKelvey, Councilman, Clementon Borough



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Chris reported that the Clementon library is in transition. The trustees are stepping down. The building is owned by the town, and they are seeking partners to provide literacy needs.

Richelle Harbinson, WDB Program Evaluator

Jeffrey Swartz, Executive Director introduced Richelle to the committee.

Justin Clark, Department of Labor, Office of Adult Literacy, Title 2 Area Coordinator

Justin explained to the committee that there is a small panel reviewing the Literacy Innovation Initiative Grant and asked for patience. He will send contact information to the committee regarding the person at the DOL who works in the Library Systems Department to invite to a future meeting.

Jennifer Mauro, Goodwill

Goodwill is contracted with Camden County to provide ESL, adult basic education and GED services combined with Community Work Experience Program (CWEP) services at the Stratford location. There is an increase in the need for virtual services and ESL programs. Goodwill has 8 literacy locations of services throughout South Jersey and Philadelphia.

Michael Willmann, WMSH

The Non-Profit Development Center of Southern New Jersey is looking to establish a literacy committee. He welcomes suggestions from this committee for a potential chairperson.

Adjournment

The meeting ended at 9:46 a.m.

Next Meeting

The next Literacy Committee meeting will be held Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 8:30a.m. via Zoom. Meeting materials and Zoom conferencing information will be distributed prior to the meeting.

Submitted by:

Michelle Rohan, Committee Coordinator