



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

LITERACY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2020
ZOOM MEETING AT THE WDB OFFICE, 1111 MARKKRESS ROAD, CHERRY HILL, NJ

ATTENDANCE – LITERACY COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		5-May-20	2-Jun-20	7-Jul-20	1-Sep-20	6-Oct-20	10-Nov-20	1-Dec-20
Brahl, Ken CHAIR	Ravitz Family Shoprites	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Patti Beach	Learning Link, Camden County One-Stop Career Center	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cirii, Frank	Local Area Operations Director, Camden County					X	X	X
Dann, Carol	Hopeworks Camden	X			X	X		
Daunoras, Heidi	Pine Hill School District	X	X			X	X	X
De, Shyamoli	Camden County Library	X				X		
Druce, Jennifer	Camden County Library							X
Fugee, Antoinette	Center for Family Services, Inc.	X						
Hill, Lauren Dr.	Director, Adult Basic Skills, Camden County College					X	X	
Kalitan, Marlyn Vice Chair	Kalitan Consulting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services	X	X	X	X	X		X
Mitchell, Danielle	RobinsNest Inc	X				X	X	
Strobl, Holly	Council Women, Clementon Borough		X	X				
Young, Jennifer	Verizon	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB, Executive Director	X	X		X	X	X	X
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB, Administrative Assistant	X	X	X	X	X	X	

WELCOME

Ken Brahl, Literacy Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:40am. The Committee continued discussing personal challenges of adjusting to remote learning and hybrid schedules at local schools and how new Covid-19 protocols had been implemented. The meeting served as a recap of the committee’s activities in 2020.

ONE-STOP & LEARNING LINK UPDATES

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director, WDB gave an update on the local area receiving its WorkFirst funding. He said the funding will allow us to start a new program year that will run from October 1, 2020-June 30, 2021. Vendor Services providers received their contracts. Jeff added that attendance to committee meetings has improved due to virtual access.

Frank Cirii, Local Area Operations Director, One-Stop, updated the committee on the One-Stop moving forward to provide all services virtually and by-appointment only. All testing is being conducted in person by appointment. Ken asked if the Unemployment Division (UI) opened again. Jeff said that UI is not seeing customers in person. All customers are still being directed to web and call center access. This is still a concern because customers are continuing to contact or show up in person at the One-Stop for help. All other One-Stop services can be accessed virtually. Counselors are available to meet with customers by appointment on a case-

by-case basis. Most One-Stop referrals come through the Board of Social Services. This has been a challenge due to state waivers being extended and the Board customers are not being required to participate in work activities due to the current state of emergency remaining in place.

Follow this link to the Camden County One-Stop Career Center -Virtual Services Directory:

<https://www.camdencounty.com/service/employment/job-training-placement/>

LITERACY SHARING & BOOK DRIVE UPDATES

The committee continued discussing ideas for 2021 including the pop-up libraries and book distribution via the Booksmiles organization.

Heidi Daunoras, Director Curriculum, Pine Hill Schools, updated on Pine Hill's success with the Booksmiles initiative. Heidi was happy to report her son has continued his involvement with the program. She said her son sponsored a book bin in Berlin Borough and as a result, 2000 books were collected as well as other donations. Total collections over the summer were over 2500 books. Heidi said the next steps of the plan is to get smaller book libraries distributed to local apartment complexes where the highest concentration of families who do not have access to books and may still be on full remote learning. Ken appreciated Heidi's efforts and said it was a phenomenal program. She also noted that several other young people stepped up to help and it is not just adults helping during this crisis.

The committee will continue in 2021 to work with Letters of Love. The program includes a handwritten note to the receiver and are packaged along with instructions about how to creatively play a game with the alphabet cards also included. These packages have been given away at the Literacy Committee's outreach at library events and National Night Outs. Ken was happy that the committee could help in the community despite outreach events being cancelled during COVID response efforts.

Frank said that the Virtual Services Directory was handed out every Friday at the food distribution events sponsored by the County at various locations around the County. The directory had also been distributed at County Drive-through Immunization sites.

Frank reported for Patti Beach, Counselor-Workforce Learning Link, that the advance systems in the Learning Link are moving forward. Customers are seen digitally first and scheduled for testing appointments in person. Staff continues to follow all social distancing and safety measures including temperature screening at the entrance. Most all services are being handled remotely first and then by appointment as needed for processing documents, onboarding, and eligibility. The safety plan is working well, and staff is looking forward to more referrals. Customers will be able to gain a credential with the assistance of Learning Link services and that is a win-win for the customer and can be counted toward One-Stop performance measures.

FINANCIAL LITERACY UPDATES

Financial Literacy was mandated, in 2019, by the State, to be taught in the High Schools. The Literacy Committee took on the effort to make sure it is promoting career readiness and soft skills to be included in the curriculum. The Committee continues to share curriculum whenever possible with area schools. There are also teachers serving on other WDB committees and some that contact the WDB for data requests and information. Things like reading a contract, virtual resumes and resume writing are important tools for students entering the workforce. Follow this link for more information <https://www.vaprojectlife.org/for-professionals/youth-skills-for-life-curriculum-3/>

Kathleen has continued posting the achievements and outreach efforts of the WDB Committees on all social media platforms to create awareness to the public that they are active and assisting in the community even though they are not meeting in person. She encouraged everyone to follow the links she will include in the minutes to like and share posts for the Camden County Workforce Development Board.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ccwib>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/camden-county-workforce-development-board-800681156/>

Ken thanked the committee for the great attendance and all they do to promote literacy in the community. He says that 2020 was an unprecedented year no one could have predicted, but the efforts of the committee have not been lost. Ken concluded that he is looking forward to 2021 and hopes the committee will meet in person again in the future.

NEXT MEETING: The next Literacy Committee Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 5, 2020 at 8:30am. The WDB will send out meeting materials and Zoom conferencing information prior to the meeting.

Submitted by

Alex Levitt,

Administrative Assistant