



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, DECEMBER 3, 2024
ZOOM MEETING**

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE							
NAME	ORGANIZATION	TRUSTEE MEMBER	6-Aug-24	3-Sep-24	2-Oct-24	12-Nov-24	3-Dec-24
Kalitan, Marlyn Chair	Kalitan Consulting	x	X	X		X	X
Willmann, Michael, Vice Chair	WMSH	x		X	X	X	X
Allen, Mikala	One-Stop						
Beach, Patti	Goodwill						
Chisolm, Victoria	Literacy Volunteers of America						
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One Stop	x				X	X
Clark, Justin	Office of Adult Literacy (NJCOL)			X	X		X
Dann, Carol	HopeWorks Camden		X	X			
Daunoras, Heidi	Pine Hill School District		X	X			
Deprey, Brynn	NTIA		X	X			
Fithian, Danielle	Goodwill						X
Green, Aurella	Camden County College		X	X		X	X
Jenkins, Timothy	Camden Board of Education						
Johnstone, Brent	Fathers365						X
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services				X		
Mauro, Jennifer	Goodwill	x			X		X
McKelvey, Christopher	Councilman, Clementon Borough		X		X	X	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						
Thompson, Ryan	Truist Bank	x					
Michelle Rohan	WDB		X			X	X
Richelle Harbinson	WDB					X	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB		X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie	WDB				X		
Vaughn, Debra	WDB			X	X	X	X

WELCOME & APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Marlyn Kalitan, Literacy Chair, opened the meeting at 8:32a.m. She asked for a motion to approve the November 12, 2024, meeting minutes. The motion was made by Chris McKelvey and seconded by Jennifer Mauro. By majority vote to the affirmative with Dick Knopf abstaining, the motion carried, and the minutes for November 12, 2024, were approved.

Quick recap

The committee discussed the challenges faced by their adult literacy program, the potential for hosting webinars, and the idea of organizing events and partnerships to promote literacy in the community. Lastly, they discussed the need for a refresh in the committee's approach, the importance of engagement from committee members, and the upcoming operations meeting.



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Next steps

Here are the key action items from the meeting:

Michelle to send out Michael Willman's contact information to committee members.

Jeff to reach out to Heidi Daunoras about rejoining the committee.

Committee members to brainstorm ideas for renaming/reframing "literacy" to reduce stigma.

Jeff to call Michael Willman to discuss further plans for the NPDC literacy event.

Committee to plan a literacy event at Clementon Library in spring, potentially around Dr. Seuss Day/Read Across America Day.

Committee members to respond to Jeff about attending the December 18th quarterly board meeting.

Frank to coordinate with new literacy grant recipient (Burlington County) on continuing services.

Committee to explore partnering with libraries for future literacy events.

Summary

One Stop & Webinar Discussion: The team then discussed various topics, including updates from Frank on the One Stop and Jeff's discussion about the Workforce Development Board. They also considered the idea of hosting webinars, with Jeff suggesting a future webinar to assess literacy.

Addressing Adult Literacy Program Challenges: Frank discussed the challenges faced by their adult literacy program due to the loss of a grant. Frank also mentioned that they are exploring alternative funding sources and partnerships with other organizations to continue providing services. Richard asked about the budget shortfall, to which Frank responded that they had planned for around \$200,000 for the 20-month program. Frank also mentioned that they are still averaging around 35 to 40 tests a month for the GED program at their facility. Marlyn expressed trust in Frank and his staff to find solutions for the program's challenges.

Library Reopening and Partnership Ideas: The meeting discussed the upcoming reopening of the library and potential partnerships for events. Christopher mentioned that the library is set to open a room for literacy programs at no charge and that the building is expected to be cleaned out by the end of December. Jeff suggested the possibility of a grand reopening event in the spring, possibly in partnership with the Nonprofit Association. Michael proposed a webinar to promote literacy and other services, with the idea of inviting experts to lead discussions. The team agreed to work on a concept and theme for the webinar, with the possibility of involving tech-savvy members to assist with the technical aspects.

Webinar Series Progress and Collaboration: In the meeting, Michael discussed the progress of their webinar series, which is region-wide and focuses on literacy for both children and adults. He expressed interest in having someone moderate these sessions, potentially a subject matter expert. Jeffrey suggested that they could partner with Michael's group, but they would need an expert to facilitate the program. Marlyn proposed a vote in the chat to decide whether to focus on Camden County or a wider region. The majority voted for a region-wide focus. Michael expressed openness to collaboration and suggested that their efforts could inform what the committee might decide to do more specifically for Camden County.



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Promoting Literacy in Camden County: The committee discussed the need to promote literacy throughout Camden County, not just in urban areas. They agreed on the importance of educating the community about the widespread nature of literacy needs. The idea of organizing a book giveaway and reading event at the library in Clementon was proposed, with the possibility of involving a storyteller. The committee also considered the idea of putting a book in the hands of every child in Camden County as a gift and a touchstone for literacy. The concept of a region-wide literacy event was also discussed, with the possibility of making it an annual event. The committee agreed to explore these ideas further and to consider other projects to promote literacy in the community

Exploring Partnerships and Reading Events: The committee considered partnering with libraries for reading events, particularly around holidays like Mother's Day and Martin Luther King Day. The idea of organizing an event around Easter was also proposed, with a focus on planning and preparation. The team also discussed the possibility of inviting Heidi, a retired school official, back to the committee for her resourcefulness and connections. Lastly, they discussed the idea of hosting a National Read Across America event on January 29th, with the aim of discussing and planning various literacy initiatives.

South Jersey Literacy Expert Discussion: In the meeting, Michael expressed his openness to suggestions for identifying literacy experts in South Jersey. A suggestion was made to consider a panel discussion or a different name for the literacy subject matter. The idea of changing the name to something less stigmatizing was also discussed. The group also discussed the upcoming National Read Across America Day on March 2nd and the possibility of participating in it. Michael shared his contact information for further discussions. The next committee meeting was scheduled for January 7th

Adjournment

Marilyn asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Dick Knopf, seconded by Frank Cirii. 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, January 7, 2025, 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