



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Carl A. Donato Jr., Board

LITERACY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JULY 11, 2023
ZOOM MEETING

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE							
NAME	ORGANIZATION	TRUSTEE MEMBER					
			7-Mar-23	4-Apr-23	2-May-23	6-Jun-23	11-Jul-23
Kalitan, Marlyn Chair	Kalitan Consulting	X	X	X	X	X	X
Abrams, Larry	BookSmiles		X		X		X
Beach, Patti	Goodwill		X		X		X
Chisolm, Victoria	Literacy Volunteers of America		X				
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One Stop	X			X		X
Dann, Carol	HopeWorks Camden		X				
Daunoras, Heidi	Pine Hill School District		X		X		X
Druce, Jennifer	Camden County Library						
Egrie, Gabrielle	Watermark Communities			X	X		
Fithian, Danielle	Goodwill						
Fugee, Antoinette	Cooper Healthcare		X				
Hill, Lauren Dr.	Camden County College		X			X	X
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services			X	X	X	X
Mauro, Jennifer	Goodwill		X				X
McKelvey, Christopher	Councilman, Clementon Borough		X	X	X	X	
Norman, Tahja	Orchards Family Success Center						
Page-Soncrant, Jeanne	Dept. of Labor			X			
Petty-Ford, Shawnee	HopeWorks Camden						X
Rutzler, Eugene	Literacy Needs Assessment Intern						
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County One-Stop			X			
Soira, Lizette	Orchards Family Success Center						
Strobl, Holly	Councilwoman, Clementon Borough						
Young, Jennifer	Verizon		X				
Willmann, Michael	WMSH		X	X	X		X
Levitt, Alex	WDB		X	X	X	X	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB		X	X	X	X	X
Vaughn, Debra	WDB		X	X	X	X	X

WELCOME

In Marlyn Kalitan’s absence, Jeffrey Swartz greeted the attendees and opened the meeting at 8:31 am. He asked attendees to introduce themselves, after which, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 6, 2023 meeting. Motion was made Dr. Lauren Hill, seconded by Michael Willman. By majority vote to the affirmative, the motion was carried, and the minutes for June 6, 2023 were approved.

ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER

Frank Cirii, Local Area Director

- The new check-in system at the One-Stop has been launched. The volume of walk-in customers is increasing.
- Problems persist in the implementation of GED testing at the One-Stop. While the local area network has been set up, the protocol and a password for GED are the current problems to be resolved. GED testing is expected to be on track by the end of July. All other testing continues in the Learning Link.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

- Larry Abrams, BookSmiles
 - BookSmiles distributed 86,000 books in Philadelphia and NJ in the month of May. The new BookSmiles warehouse in Trenton will be operational by the end of August.

- Dick Knopf revisited his comments in the previous meeting about inviting a speaker to the committee meeting and holding an event at the South County Library branch (Winslow).
 - Jeff responded that the South County Branch Library was used for an event pre-Covid. It can be considered for a future event if the committee decides to hold another literacy event there, and that a speaker for a committee would also be arranged if the committee chooses to have one.
 - Heidi Daunoras commented that Pine Hill Middle School will reopen its library for community use. A media specialist will oversee its operation. To start, the library will be open Monday evenings, with daytime hours on Tuesday through Thursday during the Summer. Jeff commented that the media specialist is welcome to attend a committee meeting.
- Heidi Daunoras, Pine Hill School District
 - Heidi commented that AI has firmly taken root in education and a large part of a discussion in how it can be best used in schools. She stressed early literacy is critical and the need for parents to be educated on its value for babies and toddlers and importance of the use of baby board books and reading to children. Full day preschool is now available.
 - Larry Abrams mentioned FathersRead365, an organization that has been instrumental in supporting early literacy at day care centers in Philadelphia as well as South Jersey. He suggested inviting Brent Johnstone of FathersRead365 to a committee meeting. Larry shared the organization's contact information in the meeting chat (<https://nff.org/story/fathersread365>). Heidi commented that she would love to have FathersRead365 at the next Parent Night.
 - Pine Hill will hold its National Night Out event on Tuesday, August 1st. Heidi will share the event information to meeting attendees.
- Dick Knopf asked Michael Willman to share his STARR program idea with him. After Michael explained his idea, Heidi Danouras commented on how hard it is to pinpoint the programs that volunteers and children will respond to, but he should implement his idea.
 - Dick commented on the difficulty of people dealing with literacy having issues with access to transportation to get literacy services.
 - Jeff responded that transportation and childcare remain the top barriers to services and employment. Camden City has just established a transportation service for city residents to get to jobs in other parts of the city. Members of the Camden Community Partnership (formerly Coopers Ferry) have been invited to the next Business Services Outreach Team meeting to talk about the new transportation service.
 - Frank Cirii noted that the One-Stop does offer Chromebooks for loan to SNAP/TANFF customers for remote learning and job searches.
- Alex conveyed Marlyn's message that the Literacy Committee needs a Vice Chair. Interested parties should reach out to him or Marlyn.

Goodwill

Jen Mauro

- The Helms Academy has successfully expanded its free adult education program to include English as a Second Language (ESL). At this point, approximately 80 people are enrolled in the ESL Program. Tomorrow, Helms Academy will hold its annual graduation ceremony for the adult education program. About 85 individuals earned their earned high school diplomas last year, 35 of whom will attend the graduation ceremony. Helms Academy also works closely with Camden County College and provides dual enrollment into college credit courses, which are funded by Goodwill. If a student earns 30 college credits, the credits can be submitted to the Department of Education for receipt of a high school diploma.

Hopeworks

Shawnee Petty-Ford

- Hopeworks is still preparing for the GED testing.

- Jeff spoke about the EMT Program starting on July 17th. The program is the result of the combined efforts of Hopeworks and Cooper Hospital. In a time of a national shortage of EMT's, the program also serves as a pathway to a career in other areas in healthcare.

Camden County College/Adult Basic Skills

Dr. Lauren Hill

- The continued delay implementing GED testing is a potential problem for the online application process of the upcoming term. The application submission deadline is August 14th and assessments are available for the term beginning on August 29th.
- Dr. Hill expressed her pride in the recent graduation ceremony of the Adult Basic Skills class, the result of a successful partnership with the One-Stop. She congratulated Jen Mauro and Patty Beach on their graduation and the expansion of the Helms Academy's curriculum to include ESL.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Jeff Swartz, Executive Director

- Garden State Employment and Training Association (GSETA) will hold its in-person conference in Atlantic City on October 17th and 18th at the Hard Rock Hotel. Accommodations are available at a special rate for conference attendees, including programming and activities. The event offers national and regional presenters, during two full days of workforce learning and networking opportunities. Online registration is available at www.gseta.org.

ADJOURNMENT

Jeff asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Dick Knopf and seconded by Heidi Daunoras. By majority vote to the affirmative, the motion was carried, and the meeting adjourned at 9:20 am.

NEXT MEETING

The next Literacy Committee meeting will be held Tuesday, August 1, 2023, at 8:30 am via Zoom. Meeting materials and Zoom conferencing information will be distributed prior to the meeting.

Submitted by:

Debra Vaughn,

Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director