



Joint Newark and Essex County

Literacy Committee/ Workforce Investment Board May 15th, 2017

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| <i>Barcelos, Cristhian</i> | NCC, NJALL, LVA | <i>Lane, Davetta</i> | NWDB |
| <i>Celestin, Judy</i> | ECC | <i>Melendez, Wendy</i> | La Casa |
| <i>Chavarria, Ana</i> | FOCUS | <i>Mirda, Betty</i> | DEDETE |
| <i>Fisher, Nancy</i> | Ret. JVS | <i>Schaeffer, Janine</i> | Essex WDB |
| <i>Fuller, Mikki</i> | DVRS Newark | <i>Sternstein, Lynn</i> | JVS |
| <i>Gonzalez, Danny</i> | NHA | <i>Webb, Stephen</i> | FOHS EOB |
| <i>Harvest, Garrett</i> | DVRS Newark | <i>Weiss, Howard</i> | ECWDB |

Welcome

Lynn Sternstein opened the meeting with introductions.

Minutes from the March meeting were approved with the elimination of the sentence regarding Nancy's statement regarding Henry Plotkin.

Announcements

There are some changes regarding shifts in personnel. Anthony Munroe is the new president of Essex County College. Addy Bonet has now departed as Executive Director of JVS and Michael Andreas the CFO is now the acting CEO. The long time President and CEO of FOCUS has now left and Maritza Rouse is the new acting CEO. Wendy Cubano of Youth Build is no longer there. Vann Holland is no longer at Urban League and is now at the Financial Services Talent Network. Pat Sermon is now back at Urban League and is in the process of being put on the WDB.

WIOA Update

Howard stated that he will send a letter that the consortium proposal is in alignment to our local Essex County Plan. There was only one proposal for our local area. Nancy stated that there was one (1) local area that received multiple proposals.

Consortium update

Judy Celestin stated that the grant was submitted on April 21st. All the MOUs are signed and they are waiting for the approval from Essex County WDB. Howard stated that there is no conflict between the Plan and what was submitted. The program year starts July 1st and the contract will be for three (3) years, renewed annually. Lynn stated that the last two (2) years are "continuation" years with new budget and summaries required and will have to adjust accordingly any changes to the RFP.

Nancy stated her son was at a WIOA conference in Pennsylvania and he stated that in the next budget WIOA is slated to be cut. Howard stated that the only thing he has heard is that they intend to cut the Older Worker Program.

HSE update

Betty Mirda stated that she got an email from Larry and the pass rate for the TASC is down to fifty percent(50%) with the HSET only slightly higher and GED slightly lower. The people that failed math repeatedly will not be able to get their High School Equivalency. Christhian stated that there are many people that don't prepare for the test.

Betty stated that the Learning Link has been remediating them. Judy stated that there is an issue that a lot of students are failing by only one (1) point. Wendy stated that this past week there were problems with the system shutting down while students are in the middle of taking the test. Judy believes there is a correlation between the test shutting down and the students failing by one (1) point.

Betty also stated that there is little correlation between passing TASC math and passing TABE. They will be coming out with a new platform for the TABE but they haven't said whether it will be the old test on new platform or a new test. It's called tabetest.com if anyone would like to look at it. The new test has fill in the blanks, pop up calculators, highlighting features etc.

Wendy uses the TASC readiness to determine if a client is ready to take the TASC and they do not give the complete test. She also stated that it makes a difference when giving out the survey as opposed to the complete battery. When giving the student the pretest the students improved. Betty gives the survey and not the complete test. Wendy stated that it is very important to post test in the same manner that the client was pretested. Wendy also stated that over the course of many years everyone is testing differently and this committee should be standardizing the method of testing. Christian stated the full battery is 3 hours. Judy stated the locator should be given.

Betty stated that the locator is used for GA and WIOA clients, but not for TANF clients. Christian stated that for those that don't give the locator it could work but the students closest to the margins need to be retested because the test is invalid.

NJALL Update

Christian stated that the conference is Friday at Mercer Community College. They are planning on a visit to Trenton in September with students to visit some elected officials. They are still working on putting together a package in order to give them some talking points in case of an encounter with a representative. Nancy asked if everyone got the sample letters to send. The writing contest is over and winners have been selected

SCALES update

Patty Moran is now the new Assistant Commissioner. Howard Miller is the Director of Business Services and Outreach. Bob Grimme is now responsible for ETPL and Career Services and Joel Thomas is Special Programs & Populations, which includes Title II.

There is a new initiative sixty five (65) by twenty five (25) where 65% of people should have a credential by 2025.

There is a draft document regarding SCALES which seeks to emphasize co-planning, co-joining, and moving people between programs and have it all integrated. Howard stated he remembers talking about this fifteen (15) years ago and Nancy said but now they are talking about having the funding follow the student from program to program. Some of the problems are from the State of NJ and not in the actual law.

Howard stated that the funding streams are affecting choices you make programmatically. Welfare to Work only allows fifteen hours of instruction and the rest has to be work.

Wendy stated that she is a part of the Opportunity Youth Network, which also includes Youth Build which is opening a charter school for the disengaged youth at their location.

Wendy stated that it is getting increasingly difficult to serve clients because they really need everything instead of literacy remediation. Affordable housing is a huge issue, and she thinks a lot of people are moving out of state. Howard stated that the economy is pretty good, that people are working and he thinks there are many that are getting paid under the table.

Adjournment

There being no further business the Literacy meeting was adjourned at 11:35am.

Respectfully submitted by
Janine Schaeffer

Next Meeting Date September 11th, 2017