



## Joint Newark and Essex County

### Literacy Committee/ Workforce Investment Board November 21, 2016

<i>Barcelos, Cristhian</i>	NCC, NJALL, LVA	<i>Melendez, Wendy</i>	La Casa de Don Pedro
<i>Beckford, Jasmyne</i>	NWDB	<i>Mirda, Betty</i>	DEDTE
<i>Fisher, Nancy</i>	Retired JVS, NJALL	<i>Schaeffer, Janine</i>	Essex WDB
<i>Fuller, Nicki</i>	Counselor	<i>Sternstein, Lynn</i>	JVS
<i>Lane, Davetta</i>	NWDB	<i>Weiss, Howard</i>	ECWDB
		<i>Wright, Tanya</i>	ECC

#### Welcome

Lynn Sternstein opened the meeting with introductions.

Minutes from the September meeting was approved

#### WIOA Update

Howard clarified remarks made at a meeting with Howard Miller that recipients can be involved in the formation of the local plan but they cannot influence the plan in order to include specialty service that only they can provide because that would be a clear conflict of interest. Wendy stated that she was told that as providers they cannot be part of the development of the local plan. She stated she would need something in writing.

Davetta stated that Newark's plan is up on the website.

There was discussion about there being two different local plans one for Newark and one for Essex County.

Christhian stated that there are two states that are requiring social security numbers. He stated that it could decimate the programs in Newark and the libraries have a large percentage of people that are undocumented. Christhian stated that they need to put together a package where people understand their rights. Wendy stated that is why we see a lot of college protesting because many of the kids are undocumented meaning they could have been here since they were babies and speak English.

The benefit of registering is that they are able to stay legally in this country temporarily. The DOCKA population, is the students young kids raised here and some didn't know they were undocumented. Illegal immigrants pay out of county fee at colleges.

Betty stated that when you register to take the test you need to enter a passport number into the system.

#### WIOA Update

Co-enrollment has started already and next year welfare clients will be enrolled in WIOA as well. Howard isn't sure if literacy programs will have people co-enrolled. The state is making a case to lower the expectations of the rates. MIS people are concerned because there will be a huge amount of people that need to be entered into the program. Also the physical files need to be kept in WIOA offices. Howard is making the pitch that the physical files should be kept in the partner agency that is servicing them. The regular WIOA people won't be servicing these clients.

A primary reason for this co-enrollment is to say that we are servicing a lot more individuals.

Howard discussed that the One Stop is now going out for bid. Howard stated the WDB will be involved in the selection of the consortium. Howard stated that they were never involved in the process of the selection of the consortium. The NGO comes out in January and it is an open bid so it could be one agency or many. Howard stated it seemed that they want a recommendation on the selection of the consortium. Nancy stated that it will likely be “does the consortium want to stay together?” Wendy stated that there is a lot of language that needs to be updated in the proposal.

### **Consortium update**

Lynn stated that they are working on the MOU between the Consortium & the County.

The state hired four (4) education people who will be making site visits to all lead agencies as well as the partners. Marabella Sevedo is the person for our area and she will be at JVS tomorrow and ECC November 29<sup>th</sup>. The state has not been providing professional development and they should then be making recommendations on professional development. The requirements have recently been changed to eight (8) hours of professional development six (6) of which need to be provided by the State.

Julius requested that we get a list together of other agencies that provide literacy services beyond the consortia. Howard stated Ben Amos will be helping out with this. Lynn stated that it seemed that there weren't enough spaces for the TANF population. Lynn suggested that maybe he meet with Literacy providers first, Howard stated it is a separate issue but that we should have a list of literacy providers outside of the consortium. Betty stated that they are cracking down on making sure participants are in an activity. All SNAP recipients must now be in a work activity, which could be adding to the issues. They are requiring daily attendance to go into AOSOS to continue receiving SNAP benefits and the results are a lot of people are dropping out now.

Wendy stated that historically a provider was automatically put onto the ETPL. To a certain extent that will continue to happen but now everyone has been given a template and need to put the programs into the template. So the state is working is with them to make sure all partner agencies will be automatically put into ETPL.

### **HSE update**

Betty Mirda stated that the new test has come out on the new platform and people don't think it's any harder and the navigation is better. The registration is better and she found out they will be converting the TABE 9/10 to the new platform in April/May. They submitted 11/12 for approval but they don't know when that will come out.

They have been giving TANF clients the HSE test with all the supports that they needed and she said the majority of them have passed everything but the math. They go into the Learning Link so they get the lesson plan based on their deficiencies and get enrolled for twenty six (26) weeks. She has not been requiring a TABE test and it has not been a reliable indicator of a person's ability to pass the HSE.

Generally you need to score at 5<sup>th</sup> grade to get into the Learning Link, there was an exception for the recent TANF population.

### **SCALES Update**

Nancy stated that they are putting together new definitions of literacy.

### **NJALL Update**

Nancy stated a NJALL statement went out and it should be distributed to everyone concerning the disenfranchised after the election. “ The NJ Association for Life Long Learning wants to make clear that we stand by our brothers and sisters that are facing the brunt of the racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, Islamaphobia, xenophobia, homophobia, and transphobia that mark the post election period. As an organization, we denounce such behavior as at odds with our standing concerns regarding health, safety and happiness of our diverse

society. Adult education has a long history of fighting for social justice and this moment calls for a renewed commitment to the fields' democratic and egalitarian values. To honor the heritage of the brave learners and teachers that came before us we must stand up to bigotry and work together to make our community safe and welcoming. As you are aware, there have been alarming number of reports of violence and intimidation targeting selected communities throughout the country. We have heard about countless public acts and about more personal forms of aggression carried out by roommates and classmates. It seems that no place has been spared overt and inflammatory acts of bigotry. African Americans have been hung in effigy been called racial slurs to their faces, and had their property defaced with racist graffiti, people have been to "get ready to start picking cotton again" and to" move to the back of the bus". Students in Pennsylvania walked down the halls with a Trump sign shouting "white power". This is not an isolated act, as assertions of white power and white supremacy litter social media. The KKK has already announced a victory parade. In addition to anger and bigotry aimed at African Americans, immigrants and US citizens alike have been told to go back to their country. Children as young as kindergarten have been heard chanting "build the wall" at classmates who appear to be immigrants. Muslims and individuals bigots assume to be Muslim have been physically attacked and threatened with additional violence. Incidents of anti-Semitism have also been reported with swastikas painted on store fronts and some Nazi flags have been seen flying. Women have been groped and now told it's legal to sexually harass them. You can even buy hats that repeat Trump's infamous words about grabbing women by their genitalia. In addition, gay , lesbian and transgender people have also been the target of hateful language and threats. Rainbow flags have been set alight, while still attached to homes and cars have been destroyed in order to send a message that the LGBTQ community is not welcome and cannot feel safe. None of this bigotry is new, but the sheer amount and intensity of expressions of this hate has fundamentally changed the country. Almost immediately millions of our fellow Americans have started to feel increasingly afraid and vulnerable Now is the time for all of us to stand up to bigotry, intimidation and violence. Please contact NJALL if you have any information you would like to share. If you have ideas for actions that we can take to move forward or if you simply need a place to connect with others to share your concerns."

Nancy stated that out of this came the conversation about developing resources for those who feel threatened in any way. Some colleges are putting together sanctuary policies. The American Civil Liberties Union has come out with a comprehensive list of resources for effected individuals. We can let people know that they have rights and that there are resources available.

### **Announcements**

JVS is moving to the lower level, at 7 Glenwood Ave., East Orange.

The meeting dates for 2017 are: Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>, Mar 13<sup>th</sup>, May 15<sup>th</sup>, July 10<sup>th</sup>, Sept 11<sup>th</sup>, Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business the Literacy meeting was adjourned at 12:00

*Respectfully submitted by*

Janine Schaeffer

**Next Meeting Date January 23rd, 2016**