



Joint Newark and Essex County

Literacy Committee/ Workforce Investment Board ECC

May 14, 2018

<i>Barcelos, Christian</i>	LVA, NCC	<i>Mirda, Betty</i>	DEDTE-EC
<i>Diehl, Robert</i>	EC WDB	<i>Sternstein, Lynn</i>	JVS
<i>Fuller, Mikki</i>	DVRS	<i>Vera, Ana Lissett</i>	FOCUS
<i>Melendez, Wendy</i>	La Casa	<i>Weiss, Howard</i>	ECWDB

Welcome

Lynn Sternstein opened the meeting with introductions.

Minutes from the March meeting were approved with the change that she hopes there will be additional money provided in the grant and removal of a statement from Judy that they are only allowed to enter TABE results. Also, under One-Stop update we will include the point that companies are having trouble finding experienced workers.

Testing

There were calls made to Danielle Jubanik at the NJLWD and Judy Celestin had written a letter on behalf of the Consortium stating that there are a lot of issues with the new 11/12 TABE; that it is too long, too expensive etc. There was a state response which was to delay the new test until July 2019.

Betty Mirda stated that the clients that they see are at the lower end of the scale and they are not going right into training anyway because they aren't going to test at the level needed. She thinks a problem is the clients get frustrated with long reading passages.

Wendy stated that for her it is not about how much time on testing but the results at the end. Right now she is giving them the TASC readiness first. She also is required to give the TABE, so for her it almost equates to the TABE 11/12. With 11/12 she would be able to get rid of TASC readiness and be able to save money and time, which will then be invested in TABE 11/12.

Betty stated that there have been about fifteen people out of thousands that have come to get tested that could not figure out how to use a mouse. She thinks if the test is simple then most people could be tested on the computer. Lynn stated that people come to her for remediation when they scored low at the county and are given a paper test and do better, but then when they go back for a timed test on a computer it might not correlate. Howard stated that the goal is to get these people a job and if they can't use a computer they won't be able to get a job.

Wendy stated since she is an administrator these are the things that you have to worry about- having to use a calculator, how to read instructions. She stated transitioning from paper to computer is a process but in the long run it will pay off because it is a lot easier, faster and results are delivered quicker.

Wendy stated that one thing that has been bothering her is that the TASC and the TABE are the same company, DRC. The Representative from CASAS is having conversations with GED and HiSet but the people at TASC are not making it easy to have conversations. The majority of people in the state of NJ are using TASC. She thinks it's a fair question to know how CASAS compares to TASC. Wendy wants to not wait and begin pilot testing so they will know which way to go in January.

Betty stated that she went on DRC's web site and it clearly stated that the TABE 9/10 is not approved after Feb 2018. Wendy stated that she believes the state of NJ was able to get an extension from the Feds through July 1, 2019.

Consortium Update

Initially Essex County was given significantly less at \$1.5 million for Title II. Wendy stated that there was a formula which is census based and only takes into account people without a diploma. There is no account for ESL or low learners. There are fewer dropouts therefore less funding. Judy expressed concern to the state and it was brought to NJALL. So when they looked at the census data the numbers were flat and it didn't make sense. So NJALL will be looking into the formula. This formula is not used by all the states nor is the report card. Wendy also stated that there are counties that got an 'F' on the report card but still got an increase in funding. For example Monmouth County got a 26% increase in funding and received an 'F'.

There was a later second allocation which gave Essex County an increase compared to last year. Wendy stated that she ended up flat because most of her money is in EL Civics and not ABS.

Lynn stated that the updated RFP is due May 24th. It is part of a three (3) year grant, where info is needed to be provided for continuation.

Howard stated that we have not yet heard about our funding for WIOA.

Wendy stated that one thing that they should be doing every year is giving testers the announcements of the NJALL scholarships each year. Because the people that are eligible each year are those that are getting a high school equivalency diploma. They could get up to \$750 per semester if they have full credits and if they are part time it is prorated based on the number of credits. There are four (4) scholarships a year given out and Wendy says Judith's people always take advantage of it. The cutoff was April 30th but it is important to remember for next year. Every year they have an annual breakfast ceremony where the winners are announced.

One Stop Update

Howard Weiss stated that there is a real advantage to having people in Trenton that have worked in employment training.

Howard stated that he has had discussions with Joe Dombrowski to talk about the testing issue. Newark, which has been giving the paper test is going to have to change. Howard told Joe that Essex County will assist in that. Wendy stated that right now Newark is not doing the math correctly, because they are only giving the computation and not giving the applied math and everyone gets the 'M' test, which is not a proper assessment.

It was noted that no one from Newark was present to speak on their behalf. Christian stated that they use it more as an assessment and it reflects the grade level that they are looking for so if someone cannot pass it then they are not ready for training. There were questions raised on whether the testing was adequate for putting clients in training. Right now they are using Employment Service to do their testing and that will need to be looked at going forward. Howard stated that the vendors need to understand that there is new testing because a lot of things listed on the ETPL that requires certain grade levels are going to have to be analyzed to see if it needs to be changed based on the new test. Howard stated that vendors are going to need a training on the NRS revision because they need to understand the changes in testing levels in order to translate to the new test. Christian states that it should be simple and Wendy added that vendors only have to add that the students need to be at a certain grade level and it doesn't matter the assessment that they are using.

Wendy stated that there are two (2) action items 1) it is critical to notify the vendors on the ETPL that the assessments are changing and the second is for Howard to go back and talk to Sam and Julius about not having a sole 9th grade requirement for training, and to consider having a requirement based on the need of the training. Christian says that it should be left up to the school to tell you the grade level that is required to complete their training. So Howard stated that the problem was that the schools were lowering it in order to get more people. So Betty stated why can't we have a 9th grade reading requirement coupled with a 6th grade math requirement.

Wendy stated that she put about ten (10) clients through the Home Health Aid Training (does not require High School Diploma) with another grant but none of them would have been able to make it through the One-Stop requirements. It is a very short training and people are guaranteed jobs because the demand is so high. Betty concluded that there is a big disconnect and that the rules regarding giving training money are not necessarily appropriate for the type of training.

Adjournment

There being no further business the Literacy meeting was adjourned at 12:05 am.

Respectfully submitted by
Janine Schaeffer

Next Meeting Date: September 17th, 2018