



County of Mercer Workforce Development Board

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Virgen Velez
Acting Director

Brian M. Hughes
County Executive

Keith Secrest
Chairperson

WDB Literacy Committee ♦ Chairperson: Margaret (Peg) Gould

October 5, 2022 ♦ 9:30 a.m. (Zoom) ♦ Meeting Minutes

In Attendance

Peg Gould (MCCC), **Edward Bullock** (Trenton Literacy Movement), **Lori Johansson** (Center for Community Engagement), **Nate Philips** (LALDEF), **Keith Secrest** (WDB Chair), **Nancy Thomson** (Child Care Connection), **Dr. Charles Wallace** (Homefront), **Wanda Webster Stansbury** (Center for Child and Family Achievement),

WDB /One Stop Staff: Virgen Velez, Kassia Bukosky

Welcome & Introductions

Peg Gould opened the meeting and welcomed the group. Introductions were made.

Review and Approval of August 3, 2022 Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 3rd meeting was made by Lori Johansson, seconded by Keith Secrest. The minutes were approved.

Programs Update

WLL (Workforce Learning Link)

- Efforts will be geared toward promoting services available in the WLL to increase attendance
- Services include assistance with increasing reading/math levels, ESL component, basic Microsoft Skills Office Suite training
- Approximately 20 customers were served in PY '20 & '21

Title II Consortium

- MCCC is the Project Lead for the Consortium in Mercer County
 - Title II Funds received through NJ Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development for Adult Basic Skills
 - Literacy Providers provide ESL, ABE, HSE, Integrated Education & Training, and Integrated Education & Civics
- Classes provided at MCCC (Trenton Campus) are 100% in-person

- ESL classes provide instruction to 200-300 students every 3 months;
- Integrated Education & Training options: Health Care Careers Prep, Culinary, and Step-Up to Green
- A rapid funding stream was received for Innovations in Teaching and Learning

Announcements/Events

One Stop Job and Career Fair (In-Person)

- October 26th at the Cure Arena (3:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.)
- Full, Part-time & Seasonal positions
- Representatives from the Trades will be in attendance; invitation was extended to MCCC
- Informational flyers regarding the Job/Career Fair will be sent to all partners

Virgen suggested that students completing an Integrated Education & Training option at MCCC be referred to the One Stop for potential internship and employment opportunities.

TANF and GA programs commenced on October 1st (PY '22). Peg was asked to make a presentation at a future vendor meeting regarding the training options at MCCC.

Nate Phillips shared information regarding LALDEF services

- ESL program is year-round classes; three semesters annually (60-80 students)
- Services provided by Volunteers
- HSE program (in English) is offered, but LOS is small
- ESL with a CWEP component is being funded by WFNJ through the One Stop
- Legal services are available (immigration); two Paralegals are on-site, one of which received a DOJ accreditation
- Advocacy services include health fairs and vaccine drives; housing needs also addressed
- They recently received a grant to assist with the citizenship naturalization process
- Community IDs offered to individuals – not governmental issued, but offers photo verification (for use at libraries for example)

SkillUp Mercer is offered to all TANF and GA vendors. More marketing on a periodic basis will occur.

Trenton Literacy Movement is launching the next phase of its reading program in all 13 Trenton elementary schools.

- Teachers, Monitors and Parent Liaisons are being trained
- Approximately 400 children will be attending after-school programs
- The Superintendent participated in a read-aloud
- A Partnership grant was received from Reading is Fundamental, in which 5,000 books will be distributed to the elementary schools – volunteers may be sought to assist with this effort
- For testing purposes, the primary target population are children in the 2nd grade children; the 1st and 3rd grade students can participate based on need
- Monitors are hired to visit schools to determine best practices and make recommendations; Parent Liaisons are also an integral part because they ensure parents are aware of the program – incentives (computers through the Trenton Digital Initiative) were made available in some instances

Homefront provides the following industry recognized training programs:

- SORA (security guard), SERV Safe (General and Managerial), and Forklift Operator

- Some components of the programs are done virtually

TCNJ is hosting a Play Day on Oct. 25th (1 p.m. – 3 p.m.) for groups of elementary children – music, read aloud, games.

WDB members will be sent a copy of the Soft Skills referendum in preparation for the upcoming Board Meeting.

Meeting Adjournment

- Nancy Thomson made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Charles Wallace
- Meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

PY '22 Meeting Dates: 1st Wednesday bi-monthly ♦ 9:30 a.m.

December 1, 2022

February 1, 2023

April 5, 2023

June 1, 2023