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**LITERACY COMMITTEE**

**February 17, 2016 ♦ 8:45 a.m.–10:00 a.m.**  
**MCCC Trenton Campus**

**Present:** Gay Egan (Mercer Street Friends), Peg Gould (MCCC), Beverly Mills (WIB), Jane Kleindienst (Lutheran Social Ministries), Heledona Katro (Princeton Y), Lynne Wise (Home Front), Nancy Thomson (Childcare Connection), Patricia Hall (Trenton Library), Althea Muse (Daylight Twilight)

The meeting was opened by Peg Gould, Co-Chair of the WIB Literacy Committee and introductions were made for the benefit of attending guests.

**Review and Approval of January 20, 2016 Minutes:**

- The committee reviewed the minutes from January 20, 2016. A motion to accept the minutes: *1st* Gay Egan; *2<sup>nd</sup>* Lynne Wise

**Directors Roundtable Update:**

Peg provided a short explanation of the Title II for the benefit of guests. Each consortium member received a grade. Peg reported there was a bit of a discrepancy regarding the contracted level of serve for the last fiscal year. The contracted level of service was 480 and through the LWD “filter” the LOS was a reported 473 instead of 480. The only way to track down the discrepancy is to go back into the database however this number still represents over 95%. All indicators, including the eleven benchmarks and the rest, achieved a “B” which is up from the “F” received last year. This was very exciting news! Howard Miller also said the goal for the Title II funding cycle was to go 3-5 years but that doesn’t seem likely so in May it will be the same one year contract.

Peg also reported there was more conversation about the Learning Links becoming a consortium partner also opposed to the current separate funding source. She also discussed recently reading about the percentage of low literacy adults remains 20%-23%. Although demographics have shifted the percentage remains the same nationally and worldwide.

## Mercer County Workforce Learning Link Performance Report

January, 2016 (reflects mid-year numbers)

### *Level of Service*

Annual Goal:	Enroll 79 students
YTD Goal:	Enroll 46 students (58% LOS)
Actual:	Enroll 46 students (58% LOS)

### *Outcomes*

Goal:	60% of exited students will enter employment, enroll in training or post-secondary education or obtain HSE
Actual:	14 out of 34 students (41%) who exited achieved a positive outcome (10- employed, 4- entered training, 0 obtained HSE)

### *Educational Gains*

Goal:	30% of exited students will achieve at least one educational gain
Actual:	44% of exited students achieved an educational gain (15 students)

Peg submitted the mid-year report from the Mercer Consortium and not many have met or exceeded goals. She reiterated the Consortium is a tightly woven unit of agencies. MCCC is serving 270 people which is more than four times more than other agencies so it's essential the partners keep doing their part to not push the numbers down. A consideration would be a smaller consortium comprised of higher performing partners but that would have an impact on our level of service. The level of funding will not change but the weight imposed on each partner would increase.

Committee discussed how a smaller consortium would affect their ability to accommodate through extra classes, staff, etc. The committee also discussed serving a smaller number of students very well is definitely advantageous than trying to accommodate a higher number of students.

Althea Muse discussed the Trenton District does not provide an ESL instructor for adults; they are on a trimester system of a 30 day cycle and the majority of non-English speaking students need referrals where they can be served. Many students start out well but don't end up staying. Peg inquired about if many were educated here or in the native country. Gay added the issue with ESL students is they must be fluent enough to take the TABE. Althea agreed that location is the key – enrollment is down in the adult program because they are coming from other part of Trenton to the West side. The day ESL students are coming with significant gaps in education plus they are anticipating an increase in March with the influx of the migrant worker population.

### Professional Development Day (March 18, 2016):

Gay has been able to secure Laurie Schlosser to speak on the topic of how trauma (particularly early childhood trauma) physiologically affects people and how it can impact learning. Peg has a Professor from Rutgers who works with adults on retention and motivational factors. There had also been a previous topic on volunteerism and effectively recruiting volunteers. Peg said she will reach out to colleagues in Essex County because of their high Consortium retention rate.

Jane mentioned the April 8<sup>th</sup> NJ ALL Conference. She also gave a brief description of Schoology and how it is being used at the Lutheran Social Ministry.

**WDB Literacy Mission Statement:**

Peg asked the Committee to review the Mission Statement, which is an estimated 8 years old, which reads:

*“The Literacy Committee supports the mission of the Workforce Investment Board by providing strategic direction in developing opportunities to increase the literacy of Mercer County residents and their families to make them job ready and prepared to advance in their employment. We work collaboratively with other county entities to build a system of support to deliver comprehensive literacy services to Mercer County residents in need.”*

After review and discussion the Committee has agreed on the following revised Workforce Development Board Mission Statement:

*“The Literacy Committee, along with other County entities, supports the mission of the Workforce Development Board by providing strategic direction in developing opportunities to increase the literacy of Mercer County residents and their families to make them employable and active participants in their communities.”*

**Trenton Public Library (Update):**

Patricia Hall, Interim Director, updated there has been increased community outreach and has hired a Community Outreach Librarian. The goal is to also have adult basic education classes at the library. The “Live, Work, Learn” initiative has been approved to allow the library to offer free library cards to include people who live, work or study in Trenton. This means non-Trenton residents who work in the city will no longer have to pay \$75 for a library card and non-residents enrolled in a Trenton-based academic program will no longer have to pay a one-time fee to use the library. Pat also mentioned the Trentoniana Room has been opened up and has been hosting class visits. Overall the message from the library was reconnecting to the community with many new programs to offer in the future.

The Library Board has hired a consultant to hire a new Director but Pat has also been asked to submit her resume.

**Meeting was adjourned.**

**Next Meeting – April 20, 2016 MCCC Trenton Campus (8:45 AM – 10:00 AM)**

**REMINDER: March’s meeting is the Professional Development Day on March 18, 2016**