



LITERACY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 8, 2016
9:30 a.m.
550 Jersey Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Attendance

Present: Gloria Aftanski, Baden Almonor, Ana Class-Rivera, Jessica Tomkins, Jonathan Cohen, Ricardo Valera, and Wanda Segarra-Cruz

Staff & Guests: Julie Piano and Elizabeth Acosta

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:38 am. Julie Piano welcomed all to the Literacy Committee Meeting and initiated roundtable introductions.

Review of Minutes from December 8, 2015 Meeting

The committee members had no corrections or additions to the minutes from the December, 2015 meeting. Jessica Tomkins made a motion to approve the minutes and Wanda Segarra-Cruz seconded the motion. The minutes are to be filed as is.

Open Discussion on the SETC Approved Resolutions

Handouts were distributed on the NJ State Employment and Training Commission's (SETC) Approved Resolutions. Focus of discussions were on two resolutions that are of specific interest to literacy matters.

- A. Policy Resolution: SETC # 2016-05
College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education

The NJ SETC approved the resolution recommended by the State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) establishing the College and Career Readiness Standards as the standards for New Jersey's Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) System. Equipped for the Future (EFF) standards are currently the recognized standards for New Jersey's Adult Literacy system.

Ms. Tomkins noted that she has no issue with the standards but there should be funding and commitment for Professional Development and Curriculum Development.

Ms. Aftanski indicated that there was a survey from the Department of Labor asking for Professional Development needs. This was sent to Patti Moran and Howard Miller to be forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner of labor.

Mr. Cohen stated that with the many changes happening in Washington it is uncertain how funding will be – that it may possibly be less.

B. Policy Resolution: SETC #2016-06
New Jersey's Definition for Employment First

“Competitive integrated employment will be seen as the first and primary option for all individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD), who apply through informed choice for workforce services.”

There was consensus from the group on the need for additional literacy services but no funding streams to align to them.

Other Business

Mr. Cohen distributed copies and discussed briefly the reports for the Middlesex County Literacy consortium.

The Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development received reduced funding for the Workforce Learning Link (WLL) this program year. This resulted in cutting one class and laying off one instructor. It was stated that customers assigned to the WLL should at least be functional at a fifth (5th) grade level where the objective is to attain goals within a three (3) to six (6) month timeframe.

The final regulations for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is still not out. In the interim, the Middlesex County local area have initiated some operational changes to align practices with tenets of the WIOA legislation. The WIOA legislation emphasizes “strong, high quality partnerships with employers’ and developing Career Pathways in New Jersey.

Middlesex County is designated part of the Central Region together with Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean.

Old Business

- A. Available Literacy Programs in Middlesex County – A list of Literacy Programs was handed out for corrections or additions. The final list will be added as a link on the Middlesex County web resource directory.
- B. Resource Directory of the Middlesex County One Stop Partners – Hard copy was distributed to members.
- C. Wanda Segarra- Cruz mentioned that she has several websites that is provided as resources for her students that she will email to Ms. Piano. This will be shared with the members of the committee.

Adjournment

The committee was requested to email topics that they would like to be discussed at the Literacy meetings to Julie Piano at julie.piano@dol.nj.gov .

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00am. The next meeting will be Tuesday, June 14, 2016 at 9:30am at 550 Jersey Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901.