

# **State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services**

## Meeting Minutes

May 24, 2012 (10:00 AM-12:00 Noon)  
Burlington County College

### **Welcome and Approval of Minutes – Lansing Davis, State Employment & Training Commission**

Lansing Davis welcomed the attendees and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He noted that Chairperson Robert Santare was not able to attend the meeting, but would be briefed about the input received on the literacy report.

Members were asked to review the February 14, 2012 minutes. A motion to accept the minutes was made and approved by all members who attended.

### **Discussion of the Literacy Report and Recommendations – Lansing Davis, State Employment & Training Commission**

Mr. Davis briefly reviewed the rationale for the literacy study and the statement of work from the Memorandum of Understanding between the SETC and Montclair State University before opening the floor up to discussion of the draft literacy report and recommendations.

The comments during the ensuing discussion included the following:

The report should include an executive summary which highlights the key findings and recommendations. Not all stakeholders will want to read the entire report, but will be interested in the findings and recommendations.

Timelines should be established that indicate who will do what and by when. This should either be included in the report or in an action plan to move forward.

The adult literacy service delivery system is broader than the programs operated through the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. For example, many adults rely on library services to enhance their literacy skills. These programs should be engage as we move forward to building a more structured connected system that reaches more learners and serves them better.

County colleges play a significant role in adult literacy education and they should be connected to the literacy system and part of state and local literacy planning process. Their literacy course offerings range from ABE (Adult Basic Education), GED (General Education Development), and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) to basic skills/developmental courses for students who need to improve their college readiness skills.

Some states and regional areas have been successful in getting foundation support for educational reform. For example, the Joyce Foundation, which focuses on the Great Lakes region not only supports K-12 reform, but also supports initiatives to develop and strengthen transition and skill building programs for low-income adult workers. A consortium of New England States is also working with a foundation to improve postsecondary transitions. New Jersey should identify foundations that would be willing to support adult education reform initiatives, particularly those that focus on transitions to postsecondary education, skill development, and credential attainment.

At this point, it doesn't appear that New Jersey will participate in the GED online pilot. Therefore, reference to that should be deleted from the report. The increased cost of the GED 2014 test and the move to an online format remains a concern for New Jersey as well. The State continues to explore additional options for assessing high school skill competency. Computer-based GED testing will pose a problem for correctional institutions, but these issues probably can be resolved.

New Jersey is a member of the multistate Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC), which is developing K-12 assessments in language arts and math aligned to Common Core Standards. When completed, the PARCC assessment will take the place of HESPA.

### **School Approval - Sandy Fountain, Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Lansing Davis, State Employment & Training Commission**

Sandy Fountain and Lansing Davis indicated that at the February 14, 2012 SCALES meeting the Council had agreed to assist the School Approval Unit in revising standards and the process for reviewing and approving literacy curricula/programs offered by Private Vocational Schools and Training Providers (formerly known as Chapter. 531 providers. As a result, SCALES formed a subcommittee which was asked to assist the School Approval unit with the following:

- Developing appropriate pre-requisites, pre and post-testing guidelines, grading, evaluation tools and guidelines for instructor credentials;
- Developing a process for the evaluation and approval of literacy programs submitted to LWD's School Approval Unit; and,
- Helping the unit eliminate the back-log of literacy programs awaiting approval.

The subcommittee has reviewed the current school approval application and has suggested that the section that addresses curriculum standards make reference to Equipped for the Future and possibly the State Core Standards. The subcommittee has also begun to outline a process for approving school applications and has suggested that the Department of Education be a partner in the process.

## **Updates**

The New Jersey Health Literacy Summit is being held on Friday, September 21, 2012. Registration starts in about two weeks. You can register from website at [www.nj.health.literacy.org](http://www.nj.health.literacy.org)

With support from the BTOP grant, the state's libraries have served over 8000 New Jersey residents. Through Project Compass, librarians are being trained to support local community economic recovery, including assisting job seekers and those looking to improve their literacy skills to enhance their employability. The State Library has also purchased GED online (a GED prep program) as a resource for local libraries to provide literacy services to their customers.

LWD will be issuing the NGO for the WIA Title II Grant in the very near future.

The meeting was adjourned as 11:20 a.m.

## **Attendance**

### **Members and Alternates:**

Hal Beder  
Norma Blake  
Larry Breeden  
Lansing Davis  
Hugh DeHaven  
Elissa Director  
Elease Green-Smith  
Terri Hughes

### **Guest**

Sandy Fountain