



COUNTY OF MERCER
Workforce Investment Board
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Brian M. Hughes
County Executive

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Literacy Committee
April 15, 2009 – 8:30 A.M.
Mercer County Community College, Kerney Campus

Present: Gay Egan (Mercer Street Friends), Shirley Tyler (retired), Lynne Wise (Home Front), Jane Kleindienst (Lutheran Social Ministries), Chandana Mahadeswaraswamy (YWCA Princeton), Melinna Harris (MCCC), Peg Gould (MCCC), Susan Sternberg (Trenton Public Library), Nancy Thomson, (Child Care Connection), Dora DeGeorge (One Stop Workforce Learning Link)

Staff: Beverly Mills

Literacy Chair Gay Egan opened the April 15, 2009 meeting. Introductions were made and minutes from the March 18, 2009 meeting were read and approved.

Building Skills 4 Work:

Heather McCay, Director of Sloan Center on Innovative Training and Workforce Development at Rutgers presented a 15 minute video synopsis of the *BuildingSkills4Work* website and answered questions.

The BuildingSkills4work site, designed to equip out-of-school adults and youth with work readiness skills is a self contained free website geared toward a 7th grade reading level. Through collaboration with the Center for Literacy Studies, this site will allow students to use web applications in formal instructional settings and on their own and learn workplace skills on an academic and interpersonal level. The lessons are designed to teach essential workplace skills—cooperate and negotiate conflict, solve problems and make decisions, reading in the workplace, math in the workplace, observe critically and listen actively. The website will be demo'd in May 2009 and officially launched in June, 2009.

Mercer County Consortium:

Melinna Harris reported on behalf of the Consortium. The Consortium update for April 15, 2009 is as follows:

- 3rd quarter report is due April 24, 2009 and there has been significant problems with data entry.
- (refresher training for LACES is scheduled for April 28, 2009)

- Preliminary reports show that MCCC has met 76% of their contracted goals; other partners have 75% or higher though there are some discrepancies in the numbers
- Consortium members will convene following this meeting to finalize plans to complete unfinished work for the year
- The Technical Assistance meeting in March for 2009-2010 ABS funds was cancelled – no application for the second year has been received yet
- Consortium members are booked for Professional Development Day on May 1, 2009

Early Childhood Literacy Committee:

Nancy Thomson presented on behalf of the Early Childhood Literacy Committee. The committee met on April 14, 2009 and discussed their upcoming plans:

- **June 6, 2009** Committee will participate in Heritage Day reading to the children and giving away books – this will be the kick-off to *Early Mercer Reads*;
- **June 12, 2009** at 10:00 *Early Mercer Reads*; invited participants will include childcare centers, libraries, public schools up through 3rd grade. Guest readers will be solicited to read for the event which will hopefully foster an ongoing relationship.
- Information about *Early Mercer Reads* will be placed on websites—the Committee will plan to have pictures at various locations for future marketing purposes
- Beverly Mills will request press/pictures from the Mercer County Administration Communications Department

Trenton Public Library:

Susan Sternberg updated on behalf of the Trenton Public Library. Hours and services have been decreased at all branches but patrons seemed to be coping with the change.

In July 2009 the library will be facing another 10-12% cut which will most likely mean the closing of some branches. Susan further mentioned while all branches remain open, the Briggs branch in East Trenton has excellent meeting space in the basement (enough to accommodate 50) as well as the teen room at the Academy branch. There is no fee to reserve to space; for reservations call Susan Sternberg at (609) 695-7048 x24.

The next meeting of the Library Board will be Tuesday, May 12, 2009 at 9:30 AM

May 1, 2009 Professional Development Seminar:

As of this meeting registration is continuing to come in for the May 1, 2009 Professional Development Seminar at MCCC Conference Center. Melinna Harris and Bev Mills will collaborate after the meeting on the number of attendees currently registered and whether we need to broaden the scope of invitees (60 maximum). Schedule for the day is as follows:

8:30 – 9:00	Registration
9:00-9:15	Welcome
9:15-10:30	Session I (Flex Room)
10:30-10:45	Break
10:45-12:00	Session II (Flex Room)
12:00-12:45	Lunch
12:45-2:00	Session III (Flex Room)

Demographics Report:

Gay Egan presented a draft the Literacy Committee could potentially use to capture demographic data on literacy levels and language backgrounds of Mercer County residents. As previously discussed, the purpose of this survey would be to act as a guide for the Committee in formulating future goals and objectives, to be able to examine data to have a picture of entry literacy levels of students seeking services and to eventually present a report to the WIB, the County Executive and State DOL.

The Committee discussed other questions they believed would be more relevant in conducting this type of survey and offered to review the draft and bring suggestions back to the next meeting. The Committee agreed that the final survey would be not limited to Consortium use only and have it available on line and hard copy to all providers.

Meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 20, 2009, 8:30-10:00 AM at the Mercer County Community College Kerney Campus, South Broad and Academy Streets, Trenton, NJ – 2nd floor main conference room.