



COUNTY OF MERCER
Workforce Investment Board
One-Stop Career Center
McDade Administration Building
P.O. Box 8068
Trenton, NJ 08650-0068
Phone: 609-989-6827
Fax: 609-989-6882
www.mercercounty.org/wib



Brian M. Hughes
County Executive

Andrew A. Mair
County Administrator

Kelvin S. Ganges

Literacy Committee
May 20, 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), Cheryl Kirton (Literacy Volunteers), Pat Andrews (People & Stories), Donald Generals (MCCC)

Staff: Beverly Mills

Literacy Chair Gay Egan opened the May 20, 2009 meeting. Introductions were made and minutes from the April 15, 2009 meeting were read and approved.

Mercer County Consortium:

Melinna Harris reported on behalf of the Consortium. The Consortium update for May 20, 2009 is as follows:

- Proposal for 2010 ABS funding was submitted -- \$630,000 to service 1,214 students (there is a significant shift of funding to IELCE which is a civics program) 656 ABE/ESL students and 557 IELCE students. Last year fewer civics students were served;
- 3rd quarter report – reached 78% of contracted enrollment (goal is 75%);
- 100% of staff was trained in LACES MIS – data entry successful;
- Reviewed FY 2009 progress and identified needs of Mercer County residents at meeting of partners on April 29, 2009;
- 41 participants in Adult Literacy Professional Development Conference on May 1, 2009 - “Cycle of Prejudice” presented by American Council on Diversity; representative from FDIC on financial education “Money Smart” and informational literacy by MCCC staff (internet search);
- Completed technology survey and professional development survey;
- A website was developed by Library staff the Consortium.

Gay inquired about the increase in the civics component of the grant. Melinna explained the most of the funding covers ABE and ESL and the civics portion must be included in the ESL curriculum so students can pass their citizenship exam. There is also a certain percentage involved in community service projects and benchmarks to move up to complete levels. MCCC has developed a curriculum for civics and will work with advanced ESL students. \$138,000 in the consortium grant has been earmarked for civics.

Peg Gould reported “*The Next Step*” transitioning to post-secondary opportunities event is scheduled for May 27, 2009 and will have eight schools participating.

Melinna clarified a question that was asked in past meetings; people 60 and over seeking instruction can be served but those with a high school diploma in need of a refresher cannot be served and are referred to the Learning Link. This population cannot be reported under this grant.

Melinna also mentioned that MCCC has increased the GED testing sessions – students have until December, 31, 2011 to pass all parts included in the GED. There is a need for GED examiners.

Early Mercer Reads:

Beverly Mills updated on behalf of Early Mercer Reads. Early Mercer Reads will be participating in Heritage Days and will read to the children and giveaway books like last year. Susan Sternberg said the Friends of the Library will participate also at their table. Shirley Tyler volunteered to assist from 4:00-5:00 (an update of volunteers and times will be e-mailed).

Trenton Public Library:

Susan Sternberg updated; no new budget at this time. Budgets have been prepared with a 10% cut and with a 12% cut. Plans are underway for the summer reading program although there are issues with the bathroom facilities. The theme is “*Be Creative at your Library.*” The library is looking for skilled volunteers (for one hour) to work with the kids doing some sort of activity. Melinna mentioned Susan should contact music students; Shirley Tyler volunteered to do jewelry making and/or gardening, Lynn Wise mentioned CWEP students could help with art and drawing, Bev Mills volunteered to do a cooking class. Lynn also volunteered to ask her daughter to help. The library *Summer Reading Program* starts June 22 through August 8th. On June 24th there is a youth orchestra recital at 10:00 AM in the main branch.

Literacy Resource Guide:

Any changes for the next edition should be submitted to Beverly; we should canvass clinics (Henry J. Austin), hospitals, churches and City Hall.

Literacy Fact Sheet Survey:

Survey information can be obtained from providers and other organizations providing literacy services for 10 or more people (focus on adult literacy); the purpose is to gather as much Mercer County literacy information as possible beyond the consortium. Survey participants may include libraries, churches, community agencies, senior citizen groups, volunteer organizations such as “Hands on Helpers,” State volunteers and any suggestions from NIFL.

The suggestion was made to contact Bonner Scholars from TCNJ to ask for assistance; Chandana volunteered to inquire.

Meeting adjourned. Next Literacy meeting will be held on June 17, 2009 (8:30 AM – 10:00 AM) and will not reconvene until September 16, 2009 (8:30 AM to 10:00 AM) at the MCCC James Kerney Campus, on North Broad & Academy Streets, Trenton, NJ.