

**Governor's Workforce Board RI
Adult Education & Literacy Committee Meeting
September 23, 2014**

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members present: Chair Robert Nangle, Mario Bueno, Robin Coia, Paul MacDonald, George Nee
Committee Members absent: Jim Purcell
RIDE Staff present: Dr. Philip Less, Kim Chouinard,
GWB Staff present: Dan Brown, Sherri Carello
Others Present: Jill Holloway, PDC; Sophie Tan, ILSR; Lisa DAgostino, DLT
Location: RIDLT Conference room 72-1

Call to Order

Chair Nangle called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Meeting Minutes

Chair Nangle asked for a review of the meeting minutes of June 5, 2014 Governor's Workforce Board (GWB) Adult Education & Literacy Committee meeting. Chair Nangle asked if there was a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

VOTE: Paul MacDonald moved to approve. Mario Bueno seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Impact of WIOA on Adult Education

Chair Nangle asked Dr. Philip Less to provide an update on the Impact of WIOA on Adult Education. Dr. Less referred the members to the 2 handouts, the Workforce innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Key statutorily - Required implementation dates for AEFLA and the U.S Department of Education the WIOA, Overview of Title II: Adult Education and Literacy. Dr. Less noted the original WIA was passed in 1998. This was mainly to create the one stop center system, and to help job seekers find a job, education and training opportunities. The new WIOA requires the four core partners to work together. It also requires partners to pay for infrastructure cost at the One Stop Centers. The State Workforce Board will oversee WIOA. Chair Nangle asked about the lease and utility. The rules and regulations have not yet been written. In January 2015 the Department of Education will submit these proposed rules. The next 12 months ongoing discussion will take place. Dr. Less spoke to David Tremblay and Sue Chomka on this issue. The guidance comes out in January. Dr. Less also mentioned that Title 1 & Title II look at the same outcomes. The only major change for AE is when someone receives a high school diploma. It will not count unless the person gets a job or enters post secondary education within one year of separation from the program.

Dr. Less pointed out the state will negotiate new performance indicators as part of the Unified State plan in March 2016. Paul McDonald asked about the WIOA reserves of 2 percent of AEFLA funds (not to exceed \$15 million) to carry out national leadership activities. Dr. Less remarked that those funds are to be used for national research activities and technical assistance programs.

Action Item: Chair Nangle would like to see WIOA on each Adult Education and Literacy Committee agenda going forward.

FY 2014 GWB Performance Report and UEP Adult Education

Annual FY2014 demographics from adult education

Dr. Philip Less provided demographic information from last year. Dr. Less noted that the 4th quarter results are in. AE programs spent down all the JDF funding. They didn't have a lot of students for the On-Ramps pilot project, but they have seen large increases since then. Dr. Less reported they saw fewer high school credentials, due to the change over to the new form of GED testing in January. Dr. Less also stated under Project Specific Goals that the AE data system does not capture outcomes until the students exit the program. No goals were set for FY-14, but they are in place for FY-15.

Revised FY2015 reporting forms and targets

Dr. Philip Less reported the goals for FY2015 program year are lower, due to receiving less funding: 8% reduction in JDF. Dr. Less noted that the Department of Education received JDF funding \$3.8 Million for FY14, and \$3.5 for FY15. George Nee commented on the reporting and target form that it is important to capture how many are employed in Adult Education. The Board thought the goals look good.

Action Item:

Sherri Carello will update the FY15 Outcome Target- Adult Education Investments sheet adding an employment status section (Employed, Unemployed, and Not in the Labor Force) and send back to Dr. Less.

High School Equivalency Testing Legislation

Dr. Philip Less provided an update on the recent GED changes and recent legislation. Dr. Less reported on the passage of RI Senate Bill S2182 Sub A. He discussed the two requirements: that the Board of Education shall consider all available high school equivalency tests that meet and adhere to Rhode Island Academic standards and shall give priority to those tests which are provided at the lowest cost; and that the Board shall provide waivers of the fees for individuals with limited income who can prove financial hardship.

He stated the current total wait list is more than 1,300. Dr. Less also noted the Senate Bill which would add \$2 million to RIDE to eliminate the wait list, but this bill did not pass. A House Bill with \$200,000 to provide GED waivers for individuals with limited income also did not pass, but was amended by the Senate. The Senate bill requiring waivers was passed, but there was no funding tied to it.

A request for proposals for high school equivalency tests will be put out by the Department of Education. Dr. Less noted the GED examiner group will review the best process to determine who is considered low income. At this time there is no funding to support the waiver process. The numbers of persons taking a High School equivalency test are down due to the current cost of taking the GED. Lisa DAgostino inquired if the burden was on the agency to validate an individual income to determine if cost of the GED was a hardship. If the agency is required there are mechanisms (MOA) that can be used between state agencies that would allow for the cross-matching of customer information data to determine if they are on programs receiving benefits. This would also take the burden from the individual to seek the forms and documents from the different agencies. The committee discussed the burden on the individual and thought the Department of Education should be responsible if someone asks for a waiver. Mario asked about the homeless population. Dr. Less said he would take a look into what exception can be made for people that are homeless and low income. Chair Nangle asked the question, should the GWB step up and provide the funding the \$75,000. George Nee suggested at the GWB retreat on Thursday, October 16, 2104 we could take a look at this issue.

Action Item:

Chair Nangle would like to have a discussion with Rick Brooks on where the \$75,000 is coming from to fund the GED testing. Chair Nangle recommendation is for Rick to also talk to the Board Chair Howes whether or not this can come from the Job Development Fund (JDF).

Providence Plan's Adult Education Data Story

Dr. Philip Less provided an Adult Education handout: Improving Rhode Island's Workforce. The data story hosted by the Providence Plan Data Hub examines the potential role of Adult Education in increasing the competitiveness of the workforce in RI, which continues to face one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation. Dr. Less noted that the data indicates there are more out of state people taking RI Jobs, mostly Massachusetts residents. George Nee asked what the 5 things are that we can take out of this data. George Nee also asked what types of jobs Rhode Island is losing to Massachusetts. Dr. Less noted that Rhode Island's graduate out of high school, very few earn a bachelor degree. In total, 74,069 RI Working age adults (18-64) did not graduate from high school and do not have a high school diploma. Lisa DAgostino asked who was the intended targeted audience for the data story and what is it trying to convey and for what purpose. Jill Holloway noted that the take away from Connecticut and Massachusetts is their students are doing much better. Jill thought Rhode Island students that enter Adult Education test more into the lower level. Mario Bruno noted that the serious problem with K-12 students is chronic absenteeism, due to needs at home.

Chair Nangle and George Nee were asked to serve on the RI Data Sharing Advisory Council. Dr. Less noted that one of the things they are looking at is how long it takes a student to get through each program. Chair Nangle asked the question, what is the quickest way for us to get people into jobs? If the answer is education, Dr Less noted that Rhode Island is up to 52% of AE students making significant educational gains of two grade levels. Dr. Less noted the average student studies for 120 hours at an average cost of \$1,500 per student. Six thousand students are served for \$9 million. Lisa DAgostino asked Dr. Less if the current waitlist of 1,300 adults had been assessed to determine their service needs and what would the cost be to provide the needed services. Chair Nangle ended by asking where the money is coming from.

Adjournment:

With no further business, Chair Nangle asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: R. Coia moved to approve. M. Bueno seconded the motion.
The motion was passed unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Brown