

**Governor's Workforce Board RI
Adult Education & Literacy Committee Meeting
September 30, 2015**

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members present: Chair Susan Rittscher, Suzy Alba, Mario Bueno, Robin Coia, Paul MacDonald,

Other Board Members Present: Monica Dzialo, Constance Howes

RIDE Staff present: Dr. Philip Less
GWB Staff present: Rick Brooks, Dan Brown, Kristen McKenna, Nathan Sloan,
Others Present: Joe Agresti, Hector Riviera, Malcolm Baxter, BIS; Jill Holloway, PDC; Dr. Albert Alba, RIDOC; Brady Dunklee, ILSR; Karisa Tashjian, RIFLI, Sophia Tan, ILSR

Location: RIDLT Conference room 73-2

Call to Order

Chair Rittscher called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chair Rittscher had a brief introduction of all new committee members and welcomed them all.

Meeting Minutes

Chair Rittscher asked for a review of the meeting minutes of June 3, 2015 Governor's Workforce Board (GWB) Adult Education & Literacy Committee meeting. Chair Rittscher asked if there was a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

VOTE: Paul MacDonald moved to approve. George Nee seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Update on United Way Adult Education Project

Chair Rittscher asked Alexis Stern from the United Way RI to provide an update on the handout "Findings of the 2015 United Way of Rhode Island Convening project, Community recommendations for improving the equitable development of foundational skills in Rhode Island." Alexis noted this was a draft version of the project they were working on. The process involves United Way of RI convening with a different group of people. The report intent is to give credit to the people that are doing the work. Alexis noted that the Adult Basic Education Program participation on long term plans, as a state we cannot afford to deprive anyone of the opportunity to succeed in our society or economy. Alexis noted the community is eager to see the system continue to innovate and evolve, along with the changing conditions in the state

driven by the passage of WIOA, and the mapping of the workforce development system under CSIP. Rick Brooks noted this is good the state is involved with the CSIP. Chair Rittscher asked who we send recommendations to. Alexis would like them to be sent to her.

The United Way has bought together 300 learners, training providers, education professionals, state agency staff and others to create the recommendations. The report summarizes the key input recommendation and potential strategies developed by the group over several months. Alexis noted that the present report is therefore not intended as a final or static summary of the group's work. She hopes it will be a springboard for future action. Together, we can improve the United Way RI support of adult learners, employers and communities. Mario Bueno asked if this report will be available to read before the GWB Board Retreat.

Alexis noted that 3 working groups convened as part of this project and began their work by developing a common vision to form the basis for the recommendation and strategies. Rhode Island will actively facilitate the ongoing effort to develop strong, effective connections and collaborations among adult education community providers and partners.

Alexis noted, under recommendations and Strategies for policy makers, we recommend changes to the structures of leadership and governance for adult basic education in Rhode Island in order to reflect the importance of this work. The report proposes that the Governor's office include representation from adult education service providers and adult learners in future appointments to the RI Board of Education and the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. Alexis noted Quality improvement and Accountability, she recommended revisiting and reassessing quality improvement strategies, data use, and program standards and system-wide performance targets for foundational skills development providers to ensure that education and workforce development systems remain accountable to both learner goals and workforce needs. The report highlighted removing barriers and increasing capacity for the new high school equivalency assessment. Chair Rittscher thanked Alexis Stern on this report.

4th Quarter Outcome Targets for 2014 - 2015

Dr. Philip Less provided an update to the group on the \$3.5 million in JDF Funds that RIDE received for Adult Education services. The projected enrollment was 2500. This year it was down approximately 15% to 20%. Dr. Less stated this could be due to the economy and people finding jobs. Mario noted, at Progresso Latino the numbers has gone down as well. The hit was the winter of 2014. Dr. Less noted from the JDF participants in Adult Education program 2014 - 2015 that most of younger students are functioning below the 9th grade level. This is due to poor reading and math skills. This corresponds with the Providence Plan's Adult Education Data Story. Chair Rittscher asked Dr. Less if there is any reason why the expenditures report is not even from quarter to quarter. Dr. Less noted this is due to the various programs and when the school year starts, the first quarter's reimbursement requests for payment come in very slowly. Chair Rittscher also noted the difference in ratio between male and female students. Chair Rittscher asked Dr. Less how we set these targets. Dr. Less noted he is trying to find a base line target for the reporting.

RI High School Equivalency Program Regulations

Dr. Philip Less provided an update to the group. He stated Cranston Adult Education was the largest testing center. Paul MacDonald asked Dr. Less why Cranston Adult Education Testing

Center is doing so well. Dr. Less noted that they do offer a much wider range of time and availability for test takers, more than other testing centers. Dr. Less noted Cranston Adult Education is administering the most GED tests statewide. The testing centers are all the same basically, but people go to the centers that most fit their schedule and location. Dr. Less noted that 2/3 of the people taking GED tests are unemployed or working part time and not making more than \$20,000. Paul asked Dr. Less if RIDE plans on going back to the legislators to request \$75,000 to pay for test waivers, according to the legislation. Rick and Dr. Less will look at ways to report data in the future. Paul stated to D. Less he was very impressed with documentation handed out for this meeting.

WIOA Transition Plan for Adult Education Providers

Chair Rittscher asked Dr. Philip Less to provide an update on Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Dr. Less noted the WIOA program readiness self-assessment tool was originally developed for State offices by the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium. The Colorado Adult Education and Family Literacy office adapted the tool to help local programs prepare for and navigate the transition to WIOA, and the Colorado office has shared this tool with Rhode Island. Dr. Less noted he will be rating the programs' readiness on a 0 to 3 system, based on their level of preparation for WIOA. Suzy Alba asked Dr. Less if the assessment is taken at every site. Dr. Less noted yes. Dr. Less noted the WIOA RFP for Adult Education is planned to be out and ready for implementation by July 1, 2017.

Adjournment:

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

VOTE: Mario Bueno moved to approve. Suzy Alba seconded the motion.
The motion was passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Brown