



National Coalition for Literacy

Board Meeting

November 13, 2024

10:00-11:30 AM EST

Attending: Todd Evans, Jamie Harris, Chrissie Klinger, Kevin Maher, Tom Nash, Eric Nesheim, Christy Rhodes, Gwenn Weaver

Absent: Jody Angeline, Cynthia Bell, Rachel DeVaughan, Randy Tillery

Ex officio: Jeff Fantine (*executive director*), Deborah Kennedy (*senior consultant*)

Note taker: Michele Diecuch

MINUTES

1. Meeting Business

- Minutes of the October meeting - motion made by Jamie to approve the minutes; seconded by Gwenn; approved unanimously

2. Executive Director's report

- Transition process and activities

Jeff is working with Deborah on the transition process. He mentioned that his schedule at the end of this year is crazy, but calms down after January 1. Right now, Jeff and Deborah are meeting weekly. Deborah is connecting Jeff with hill staff, OCTAE staff, NCL members he doesn't know, board members, etc. Jeff had two meetings with Eric and COABE to discuss partnership with them. They also met with ALL IN to get Jeff up to speed and discuss the partnership agreement.

- Plans for 2025: Strategic Planning

Jeff would like NCL to do strategic planning in the coming year. He has a contact with expertise in strategic planning/facilitating who could provide pro bono help with the process. Jeff plans to invite NCL members to be involved. He asked for thoughts from the board about how the strategic planning should be conducted. Eric thinks there has to be something at the beginning where the NCL board brainstorms first. After that, there could be some structured dialogue with members and others. It will be a positive having a facilitator who is independent. Jeff agrees with the idea of starting with the board first to build a framework. The facilitator has some knowledge of adult ed, but doesn't work within the field - Jeff will provide background and

current landscape of adult ed. Deborah also raised the idea of including someone in planning that has knowledge about the history of NCL (Peter Waite, Marsha Tait, Jackie Taylor).

3. Relationship with ALL IN (Eric and Jeff)

- Status of Participation Agreement
- NCL representation

Jeff sent a link with info about where the participation agreement currently stands. Jeff and Eric met with Sarah Cacicio. A number of ALL IN partner orgs have the same concerns and challenges with the agreement. ALL IN is flexible in how they will work with partners going forward (hours requirements, reporting). While this is understood, for a legal contract with specific accountability, this is a challenge for NCL. It was noted that work done by Jeff and NCL members will be counted towards required hours. Jamie asked about ALL IN “taking credit for” NCL’s work, in a way. ALL IN does similar work as NCL – such as bringing together the big players in the field. Does it diminish the work and power of NCL? Deborah noted that advocacy is one thing NCL does that ALL IN cannot do. There appears to be confusion in the field about the difference between what ALL IN is doing (seemingly advocacy-related work) and what NCL does. Deborah mentioned that the Senate Caucus is a sticky point because ALL IN started it. Jeb Bush has made it clear that the BBF cannot do any advocacy work at the federal level.

Related to the contract, related to “staff” work/hours, ALL IN has expanded this to include board, contractors, etc. which makes it more flexible.

There is a quarterly report required for all ALL IN partners – Jeff will list work NCL does for ALL IN with an estimation of hours (Sarah C. said this is fine). There was discussion about how this would be enforced, as there is likely nobody closely tracking hours spent by partners, and unlikely ALL IN would remove NCL as a member. The legal aspect of the agreement is problematic for a lot of ALL IN partners.

The overall reasoning for ALL IN to require these agreements is to ensure participation. The board discussed that NCL could do what Literacy Houston did, which is to state we will be involved but not sign the agreement (due to NCL being a different type of org).

A motion was made by Todd to convey to ALL IN that NCL is happy to be a partner with ALL IN and contribute, but that we cannot sign the contract; seconded by Kevin seconded; all in favor. Eric will let Sarah C. know our decision.

Eric, Deborah, and Jeff will plan to discuss participation with the Coordinating Council and related committees.

NOTE: at this point in the meeting, there was no longer a quorum. The meeting was continued with Todd, as an officer, facilitating the meeting.

4. Finance and development report (Todd)

- Statement of Financial Position and Budget v. Actuals
- Plan for building relationships with private funders

Noted that there was a line item showing PNC money market funds (\$7,000) that were moved to general operating expenses to pay Deborah’s and Jeff’s compensation. That is not reflected in the budget vs. actual – Todd is going to check with our accountant about how this should be reflected. Compensation for December won’t be paid until January, so no additional money will be transferred at this time. Deborah’s compensation is being paid out of a different line than Jeff’s (ED line is overspent because Deborah’s compensation as a consultant is paid out of that line).

Budget development for 2025 begins in December (noted that the board terms start on October 1, but the NCL fiscal year is calendar). There is currently no travel budget. Jeff will bring this up in a later conversation.

Todd will work on a letter encouraging board members to get donations in by the end of the year. Chrissie suggested posting to social media about end-of-year giving/Giving Tuesday. Use hashtags that are appropriate and encourage others to repost.

5. Membership committee report

- Plan for 2025 membership renewals

Jeff will meet with Deborah, Jamie, and Rachel to discuss plan for moving forward. He hopes to have more info for the December meeting for the implementation plan for membership renewals.

6. Communications committee report

- Social media developments
- Blog series update
- “Sentenced” documentary

Kevin will send a link to the “Sentenced” documentary. Deborah followed up with the folks who produced the documentary to ask about using names/images of famous people who were part of it, but hasn’t heard back yet. Deborah will look into a way for others to share with their respective networks.

Note - FB – 2,828 followers. LI – 203 followers and it increases each week.

8. Other Business – none

9. Fall-winter 2024-2025 board meeting dates

- December 11
- January 15
- February 12
- March 12

10. Coming events

- NCFL Annual Conference, Nov 18-20, Louisville, KY
- TESOL International Convention, March 18-25, Long Beach, CA
- COABE National Conference, March 30-April 2, Dallas, TX
- ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition, June 26-30, 2025, Philadelphia, PA