



National Coalition for Literacy

Board Meeting

December 11, 2024

Attendees: Board Members: Jody Angelone, Cynthia Bell, Rachel DeVaughan, Todd Evans (Treasurer), Jamie Harris (Vice President), Kevin Maher (Secretary), Tom Nash, Eric Nesheim (President), Christy Rhodes, Gwenn Weaver
Absent: Chrissie Klinger, Randy Tillery
Ex officio: Jeff Fantine (*executive director*), Deborah Kennedy (*senior consultant*)
Note-taker: Michele Diecuch

MINUTES

1. Meeting Business

- Approval of the minutes of the November 13 meeting – one correction needed – in section 3, change reference to Houston Literacy to Houston Mayor's Office on Adult Literacy. With this change, Jamie made a motion to approve; Gwenn seconded; approved unanimously

2. Executive Director's report

- Transition Activities

Jeff and Deborah have been meeting weekly to get Jeff acclimated. Jeff thanked Deborah for the support. Their weekly meetings will continue through December.

- PIAAC Cycle 2 Release

Data was released yesterday. As expected, results are worse than the last PIAAC study. NCL has been working with ProLiteracy on a press release (to be sent today). Jeff will share the press release along with a link sharing the full data. Deborah posted direct links on social media. (Link shared later in the meeting: <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2024/12/11/2995557/0/en/US-Adults-Need-Stronger-Skills-to-Thrive-in-a-Changing-World.html>)

- WIOA Reauthorization Update

The four corners have been working to reconcile the House's version. Jeff met with them last week to talk about Title II. The bill is being routed through Congress to get approval. Jeff heard that it is still in process. The intent is to attach WIOA reauthorization to the CR. Senator Bob Casey (PA) is holding it up because there is a special education bill that he would like to be considered alongside WIOA. If anyone on the NCL board has a connection in PA, it would be good to reach out to encourage support. Deborah suggested Jeff Hutchinson, JoAnn Weinberger (possibly). Jeff will reach out. The National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) is not showing public support of this WIOA bill because of training requirements in Title I. NAWB wants more flexibility in the requirements related to local training.

Jeff mentioned that there is a lot in the Title II side that is favorable for adult ed. He noted that if WIOA doesn't get reauthorized now, it is very uncertain what the new admin would do. There are indications that programs that are not authorized are on the chopping block before others that have been authorized. Jeff will share the press release with rationale about why NAWB isn't supporting the bill. Jeff sent a reauthorization letter of support to Senate HELP committee members. Deborah mentioned that JFF has publicly supported the bill. Question about whether there are other workforce development orgs that have publicly support (NSC, etc.). Kevin noted that ALA has supported.

Jeff provided some background about how he became aware of NAWB's lack of support. Pat Tyler sent a message to COABE and ProLiteracy that she had gotten an anonymous message that some workforce development boards were not in support. Jeff reached out to connections at the House and Senate adult ed committees to get clarification about the hesitancy. A member of NAWB asked NCL to pull its support of WIOA. Going forward, Jeff will direct folks to NAWB's press release for questions.

<https://www.nawb.org/nawb-issues-statement-on-wioa-reauthorization>

Despite the slight holdup with Senator Casey, WIOA reauthorization is still on the table to be passed. Jeff will send an update message to all NCL members.

- Upcoming Activities

Strategic planning – the person who Jeff asked to help facilitate is not available until February, so that is when the process will start.

Jeff will be visiting D.C. to meet with folks, including OCTAE staff.

3. ALL IN Partnership Agreement Status

Jeff and Eric recapped the NCL board discussion and the decision not to sign the contract. Sarah Cacicio wants NCL to continue to partner. Jeff and Eric had another conversation with Sarah where she reiterated that they do not plan to scrutinize hours dedicated to ALL IN, but that they just need to know partners are committed. Sarah offered to come to an NCL board meeting to talk through issues. ALL IN really wants all orgs participating to sign this agreement. Sarah shared the template of what will be used for member orgs to track and report activity. Sarah seems very willing to work NCL on how it can track/report. They just really want the contract signed. Jeff and Eric brought up double counting hours, which wasn't a concern to Sarah. There was a lot of discussion about why there is a need for the contract if they aren't overly concerned with the contract content (formally called a partnership agreement). Sarah shared that the funder is requiring the partnership agreements. ALL IN also likes being able to show the number of hours that are being contributed to the project. Data will be aggregated when reported to the funder. The NCL board agreed to sign the contract and continue to work with ALL IN about how to collaborate going forward. The agreement is a one-year agreement – Oct. 1, 2024 – Sept. 30, 2026. A motion was made by Todd to sign the partnership agreement with ALL IN with the understanding that NCL will continue to have discussions with them about the structure of partnerships and collaborations going forward. Motion seconded by Tom; all in favor other than one abstention by Gwenn.

4. Finance and development report

- Statement of Financial Position and Budget v. Actuals, Other updates

Not a lot of change since the November meeting. Board donations are \$560, which is an increase from last month. Jeff's and Deborah's final salary payments will happen in December. These are on track – no surprises. Todd, Jeff, and Eric will be working on a 2025 budget in anticipation of the January meeting.

Jeff suggested that NCL participate in Giving Tuesday next year. Deborah suggested that messages should go out early in the calendar year and throughout the year because people make decisions earlier in the year. Jeff suggested adding to a strategic plan.

5. Membership committee report

- Plan for 2025 membership renewals

Jeff and Jamie met this week to discuss what they have from Rachel. The membership renewal process will launch in late January once the annual report is finalized. Jeff's assistant will help with the administrative process. Until then, Jamie and Jeff are working on the membership letter and form. Jeff mentioned including a conversation within the strategic planning process to discuss bringing in new members (and possibly new types of members).

6. Communications committee report

- Social media updates, "Sentenced" documentary

Kevin asked if board members watched the "Sentenced" documentary and reactions. Deborah is posting to social media for Jeff.

7. Fall-winter 2024-2025 board meeting dates

- January 15
- February 12
- March 12
- April 9

8. Coming events

- Mountain Plains Adult Education Association Conference, February 18-20, Albuquerque, NM
- 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

Deborah made a suggestion that a few NCL member orgs get together and buy a table to showcase published materials.