



National Coalition for Literacy

Board Meeting

January 15, 2025

Attendees: Rachel DeVaughan, Jamie Harris (Vice President), Chrissie Klinger, Kevin Maher (Secretary), Tom Nash, Eric Nesheim (President), Gwenn Weaver

(Marcella Movit for beginning of meeting – see minutes)

Absent: Jody Angelone, Cynthia Bell, Todd Evans, Christy Rhodes, Randy Tillery

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

Note-taker: Michele Diecuch

MINUTES

1. Meeting Business

Marcella Movit attended the beginning of the meeting to introduce herself as the new director of ISAL at Goodling Institute (replacing Carol Clymer who is retiring).

- **Approval of the minutes of the December 11 meeting** – a motion was made by Rachel; seconded by Gwenn; minutes approved unanimously.

2. Executive Director Report

- **Review of 2024 Annual Report**

Jeff sent a draft of the annual report with the meeting materials. The format is the same as has been used for several years – it updates members on the important work done by NCL over the past year (this year includes news release about PIAAC). The intent is to send this report with the membership renewal materials, which Jeff hopes to get out by the end of January. Jeff asked for feedback about the draft annual report by the end of this week.

- **Monthly ED Report**

- o **WIOA Reauthorization Update**

Reauthorization was originally added to the latest CR. However, it was then removed from the CR. Jeff reached out to contacts on the Hill to ask about possibilities for action in the coming session. The general feeling is that if it doesn't happen early into the new administration, it is less likely. There may be an attempt to get WIOA reauthorization attached to a CR in early March. Jeff asked all to reach out to elected officials to garner support.

- o **Preparing for New Congress/Administration**

Jeff has been reaching out to the Senate HELP Committee and House Workforce and Education Committee. Senator Cassidy and Representative Walberg are chairs (Walberg replaced Rep. Foxx). Sen. Cassidy has deep interest in education (has children with dyslexia). He was a member when the Senate Caucus started. Jeff reached out to Rep. Walberg to reinforce info about adult education. Senate committees have been confirmed. House committees are still being formed. Jeff will send lists once finalized.

- o **Literacy Caucus – Policy Recommendations**

All IN is drafting a recommendation document for new senate members to join the Senate

Caucus. Jeff will share the draft. All IN convened a group including Jeff F., TESOL, COABE, and ProLiteracy. Jeff asked for thoughts on policy recommendations for senators – focus on digital literacy, a push so that funding already designated gets sent to the right places, access to resources for providers. Gwenn noted that access is key - access to info, to learning, to tools to support. Suggestion was made to organize the policy recommendations around ways adult education matters to people (ex: healthcare) with specific policy recommendations. Suggestions need to be specific as it relates to about how money should be spent. Deborah noted that WIOA originally asked for \$1 billion over five years. That time has now passed. With this congress, there is little way to ask for more funding than previously requested unless we are specific about how it will be spent. ALL IN is aiming to have this recommendation document sent by mid-February.

o All IN Partnership Agreement Signed

Eric signed the partnership agreement.

o CEF Membership Renewal

We received a renewal notice for NCL. Dues are a line item in the budget. Deborah noted that NCL can go ahead and renew and make a note when the 2025 budget is approved that the dues have been sent. Deborah will renew the membership. Jeff would like to review the working relationship with CEF for the next year.

o Strategic Planning

Jeff is meeting with the facilitator (Kristin) on Thursday. He will begin building steps and get a process out to everyone over the next month. Jeff asked for input from the board for what should be included in the process. Eric suggested the facilitator meet with representatives from national orgs independently of NCL board meetings to determine what work NCL should be doing. Jeff will talk with Kristin about how much time may be needed from her once he gets input from the NCL board. Process should include surveys and conversations with NCL member orgs to solicit input. Jeff would like to have a draft for the May members' meeting and aim for a final plan by the fall meeting (he will ask Kristin if this is feasible). Group mentioned SWOT, gap analysis. May be good to have in-person meetings – could some be accomplished at the COABE conference when several are together? Deborah suggested a conversation about the meaning of "advocacy" because the meaning has transformed over the last few years. Jeff will work with Kristin to map out a plan and send it to the board.

o Upcoming Activities

Jeff has done a lot of work around WIOA reauthorization and will continue to do so in the coming weeks. He will be in D.C. next week to meet with OCTAE staff. There are several new people there. Jeff also has various meetings with Hill staff.

Jeff and Deborah met yesterday to pick dates for the spring and fall member meetings. Jeff asked to change the dates due to a previous commitment. The May meeting will be moved up one week - May 14 board meeting and May 15 members' meeting. Kevin will check on availability of ALA office.

3. Finance and Development Report

- **Statement of Financial Position and Budget v. Actuals**
- **Review of Draft 2025 Budget**
- **Other updates**

Eric reviewed Todd's report – deficit is slightly less than anticipated. Revenue projections are on target for 2025. A goal of \$3,000 was set for foundation funding – NCL board needs to have a conversation about this because it was not achieved. There is no travel budget, which also needs discussion.

Expenses – all are pretty standard expenses consistent with the past few years. Deborah suggested

using these as a basis for the 2025 budget. In Professional Fees, accounting fees may not be needed. The senior consultant line is in the budget for six months.

NCL received a membership application from Rowan County Literacy Council. NCL was also awarded \$500 from the Foundation for the Carolinas. Todd suggested that he, Eric, and Jeff meet to discuss the 2025 budget. Jeff mentioned that fundraising needs to be a priority given the deficit and future plans.

4. Membership Committee Report

- **Plan for 2025 membership renewals**
- **Review Draft Membership Renewal Form**

Jamie, Jeff, Deborah, and Rachel met to discuss membership. They have a draft membership form ready. Jeff would like to move towards having individual membership on the form with all categories. Budget includes individual nonmembers and individual members. Difference between them is that members can attend member meetings and policy calls. Noted that NCL may want to consider changing the amount or adding a tiered system. Jeff thinks individuals should be listed on the website (as a membership benefit). Noted that the website does have info about individual donations. NCL receives approximately \$1,000 in individual donations each year. A way to grow funding may be through the membership solicitations. Jamie added a space on the membership form where orgs can list contacts who should receive communications via the listserv.

5. Communications Committee Report

- **Social media updates**

Kevin mentioned that ALA has been shifting to Blue Sky (social media platform) and asked opinions about it. It can be used professionally and personally. Similar to Twitter/X. Chrissie noted that most NCL partners still use LinkedIn. Deborah said that LinkedIn and Facebook have been highly effective for NCL. An issue may be bandwidth for three social media accounts to be managed if others, such as Blue Sky, were added. These can be discussed as part of strategic planning.

6. Upcoming Board and Member Meeting Dates

- Board Meeting - February 12 (10-11:30 a.m. EST)
- Board Meeting - March 12 (10-11:30 a.m. EST)
- Board Meeting - April 9 (10-11:30 a.m. EST)
- Board Meeting – May 14 (2-4:00 p.m. EST) (date changed in January meeting)
- Member Meeting – May 15 (9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. EST) (date changed in January meeting)

7. 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 (Deborah reminded folks about thinking about having a presence there – even if combining resources among national orgs).
- June 26-30, 2025, Philadelphia, PA
- 2025 AEFL Week – September 14-20, 2025