



National Coalition for Literacy

Board Meeting August 13, 2025

Attendees: Cynthia Bell, Todd Evans (Treasurer), Chrissie Klinger, Eric Nesheim (President), Kevin Maher (Secretary), Meghan McBride, Tom Nash, Gwenn Weaver
Absent: Rachel DeVaughan, Jamie Harris, Christy Rhodes
Ex officio: Jeff Fantine (Executive Director)
Note-taker: Michele Diecuch

MINUTES

1. Meeting Business

- Approval of the minutes of the June 11 meeting
Motion made by Kevin to approve the minutes; seconded by Eric; approved unanimously.

2. Executive Director Report - Jeff

- Federal Funding/Policy Updates

FY25 funding, which funds adult ed programs July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026, which was previously held, was released a couple of weeks ago in total (approved levels). IELCE funds were released also. All states have received their allocation letters.

FY26 appropriations: The President recommended AE funding be eliminated. There was a House appropriations bill passed last week that does fund (and actually increases AE. They also put safeguards in the bill to prevent potential issues from the current administration such as OMB withholding funds unless they have cause. The bill also keeps adult ed in the DOE. This bill will likely have Senate support. It's unclear what the House will do. Word is that the House will follow the President's lead and cut as much as possible. It is possible it could be a CR, as Congress has been off for a month, and it's not likely a new bill could be passed quickly, especially with the House and Senate needing to reconcile their respective bills. Jeff is cautiously optimistic – the potential issues NCL feared are likely not going to happen based on how the legislation is being written – such as moving adult ed to the DOL and withholding funds.

- Hill Visits on August 11

Jeff went to the hill with a few NCL members (TESOL, NSC, ProLiteracy) to advocate, mainly with Republican offices. Regularly, they heard that while there are rules and protocols to prevent some things the President is trying, the administration is still trying to push these. Many actions, by law, need congressional approval (such as abolishing the DOE). There are multiple arguments related to these actions currently within the legal process. Congress is starting to pass bills to try to prevent certain actions. Congress is on recess; however, the group visited several offices to target key Republican legislators who may be persuadable.

Question arose about the House Caucus. There is only a Senate Caucus led by senators Collins and Reed. There were attempts to reestablish the House Caucus in the spring, but the potential of funding cuts, funds being withheld, and the FY26 budget took precedence. Rep. McBath (D) along with Rep. ?? (Jeff insert name here) are leading efforts to revive the House Caucus.

WIOA reauthorization is also on hold. The administration wants a new version related to the President's executive order. Legislation like this takes years to get consensus; word is that Republicans do not want to take at amount of time, so reauthorization may be a focus next year.

Rescission packages – hill legislators that Jeff visited indicated that they are not going to force a rescission package and will likely let funding bills pass.

- Board Member Nominating Committee / Election

In the September meetings, officers and board members need to be elected. Terms are up for Rachel, Tom, Chrissie, and Meghan. Tom and Meghan can be re-elected for a second term. Will need replacements for Chrissie and Rachel. Marcela Movit, the new ED of ISAL, was suggested by Chrissie as a possible replacement for herself.

Jeff Arnott and Kay Sharbono have indicated interest in being on the board. Jeff F. would like them to join as members and get involved first. The LA state association plans to join NCL next year. Jake Hofstetter from MPI has indicated interest also.

Jeff F. would like a few board members involved in nominations. Eric and Cynthia offered to help. The committee should look at NCL demographics and representation to determine new members. Chrissie mentioned that there isn't representation for corrections/re-entry. Jeff said that membership info on the website is updated. Jeff will also share a one-pager he has developed. Chrissie made a motion to create a committee to work on putting forth a slate for the September meeting; Kevin seconded; approved unanimously.

Lauren O. will be replacing Todd as ProLiteracy NCL representative and treasurer. Jeff will include this change when presenting the slate in September. Jeff mentioned the need to have some redundancy and someone else connected to the NCL QB accounts.

- September Board and Member Meetings

Jeff thinks it may be time to try something different with the Member meeting, such as a specific topic speaker, a session on advocacy, or time for Hill networking. Tom mentioned that it was a successful effort spending time on the Hill last meeting. Jeff is meeting with Nick Moore on Monday to see if he has any info on a DOL/adult ed partnership. Nick did a blog post about skills currency. Are there other guests NCL should invite who are outside of Title II, such as workforce development (like NAWB), the Governor's Association, (focus on state advocacy), corporate investors/philanthropists? Jeff will draft an agenda and share with the board. Tom suggested asking the membership for suggestions, and offered to post it to the discussion list.

- AEFL Week

September 14-20 – Member meetings/board meeting held that week.

- Strategic Planning

November 20, 3:00-5:00, will be a session to continue talking about strategic planning.

- ALL IN

The Barbara Bush Foundation contacted CoCo to inform everyone that they are eliminating their programming and going back to what BBF did previously - mostly funding adult literacy. As a result, ALL IN has been eliminated. Several conversations have been around ALL IN needing to continue, but that it needs to happen someplace other than BBF and with a different structure. Sarah C. suggested ALL IN and NCL merging. All of ALL IN members are also members of NCL. Eric attended a meeting about this - seemed that BBF wants ALL IN work to continue but do not want to manage it. There has been overlap between what NCL and ALL IN were doing. It has been a controversial issue because it seems like partners are looking to take sides for keeping it/eliminating it.

3. Finance and Development Report

- Review Monthly Financial Statements

Nothing new or unexpected at about 2/3 through the fiscal year. Expenses and revenue are on track. Todd encouraged board members to make donations.

NCL received the grant from Ingram-White Castle Foundation in July. The check was sent to the NCL D.C. post office box, which can't be accessed right now. The p.o. box cannot be moved out of D.C., so a solution is needed. For immediate needs, Jeff will connect Kevin with Deborah to find a way to get existing mail. The grant will cover the losses in the budget (within ~\$2,000). Jeff submitted a proposal with Northwest Bank Shares in June – won't know until late August whether NCL is a finalist. If received, funding would start next calendar year.

4. Membership Committee Report

- 2025 Membership Update

Jeff sent the latest member list to everyone. Only change since Monday is Kay Sharbono whom is now an individual member. Individual membership has grown, which was a goal.

5. Communications Committee Report

- LinkedIn and FB

Huge growth in two months for LinkedIn. Seeing a lot more connections and activity related to our social media.

6. Upcoming Board and Member Meeting Dates

- September Board and Member Mtgs during AEFL week
- **Board Meeting – September 17 (1-3:00 p.m. EST) in-person and virtual**
- **Member Meeting – September 18 (9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. EST) in-person and virtual**
- October 8 (10-11:30 a.m. EST)
- November 12 (10-11:30 a.m. EST)
- December 10 (10-11:30 a.m. EST)

7. Coming events

- **2025 AEFL Week – September 14-20, 2025**
- AAACE Conference – October 6-10, Cincinnati, OH
- MAEA Conference – October 16-17, Bangor, ME
- National Center for Families Learning Conference – November 2-5, 2025 – Charlotte, NC
- CAEL Conference – November 11-14, Memphis, TN