

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

February 18, 2025

Zoom Participants

Tom Bianco, Co-Chair

Christine Arpino, GC Probation

Andrea Guzman-Rivera, DVRS

Stephen Hart, DWD

Kimberly Quigley, St. John of God Community Svcs.

Theresa Rohlfing, Ctr. for Independent Living

Joe Spencer, RCSJ / Youth

Alicia Battaglia, Commissioner Aide

Allison Spinelli, WDB Staff

Bridget DiGiambattista, WDB Staff

Rudy Aikens, GC Human & Special Svcs.

Greg Davis, Consultant

Tania Darbouze, DVRS

Michelle Mullen, DWD

Jaime Ramanauskas, RCSJ/Ctr for People in Transition

Stacey Smith, DVRS

Daniel Sulpizio, Business

Alisha Thompson, DWD

Shannon O'Brien, WDB Staff

Tom opened the meeting at 2:00 pm.

A motion to approve minutes from December 10, 2024 meeting was made by K. Quigley, seconded by J. Spencer.

Status of Youth & Adult Literacy Programs

Joe reported that 205 students have enrolled in the Title II programs for the adult population, nearing the fiscal year goal of 213. An additional 77 students started in late January and early February, bringing the total to 282 and many are ESL students. Joe announced a new partnership with Rastelli Food Group to provide ESL program classes on-site at their Swedesboro location, this will begin in March. This initiative will include integrated education and training opportunities for food handling certification in ServSafe. There are 22 enrolled in this program which brings the total number of students for the fiscal year to be around 300.

Joseph reported that there are 23 students enrolled in the youth program for this fiscal year, with two individuals have been exited and one more to be exited due to poor attendance over last 90 days. They are also reaching out to two pending youth who did not show for their orientation, they will continue to reach out to them. Joseph highlighted that 12 students are in follow-up, they continue to reach out to engage them in their academic activities and career exploration.

Joe reported Dylan Coates has been hired as the new employment advisor, who will work with the youth population. Dylan will meet with students individually to determine the best career paths and align work experiences with their career assessments.

Old / New Business

WIOA Youth Technical Assistance Session – Allison and others participated in a WIOA Youth Technical Assistance session that included a PowerPoint presentation and other reference materials. The session received positive feedback, and the presentation will be offered statewide. A copy of the power point presentation is attached for review.

A motion for adjournment was made by D. Sulpizio, seconded by T. Rohlfing.

The next meeting will be May 20, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Bridget A. DiGiambattista, WDB Staff