



DEI Committee

Meeting Minutes

July 20, 2023, 2:00 pm

Meeting called to order at 2:03 pm by chair

Present: Robert James, Chair (Nash CC); Elizabeth Baker, Secretary (Carteret CC); Liza Palmer (library advocate); Barbara Bera (Central Carolina CC); Don Michael (Central Piedmont CC); BJ Thompson (Central Carolina CC); Colleen Kehoe-Robinson (James Sprunt CC); Nathan Stancil (Johnston CC); Touger Vang (Montgomery CC).

Absent: all members present

Agenda:

- Changes to agenda
- News to share
- Review/approval of minutes June 15, 2023
- DEI survey update
- DEI webinar update
- Grants for digital literacy
- Freedom to Learn Movement
- Other business

Discussion Items:

- Changes to agenda
 - No changes were proposed.
 - Touger made a motion to accept the agenda. Barbara seconded the motion.
- **News to Share**
 - Touger shared that Montgomery CC was preparing for their 10-year SACSCOC accreditation.
 - Elizabeth shared that the library building at Carteret CC is getting a new roof. There is a lot of dirt and dust from this construction.
 - Nathan shared that Johnston CC was undergoing construction, too. There is a new building on campus, and the President is "sprucing up" the campus in general. Nathan mentioned two new Starbucks kiosks on campus, with one outside the library. The library has a new director, Dr. Cara McConnell.
 - Don shared that he is serving on the search committee to replace Garrison Libby at Central Piedmont CC. He is serving as a coach for digital equity for the American Association of Colleges and Universities. He is serving as a panelist at the Mountain Connect Conference in Denver, Colorado, and will be speaking on digital equity in higher education.
 - Robert shared that Nash CC hosted President Joe Biden and First Lady Dr. Jill Biden in for a tour of the Advanced Manufacturing Institute on his campus. This historical event may be the first time that a sitting US President and First Lady visited a North Carolina Community College.

- **Minutes** from June 15, 2023
 - Robert pointed out that DEI was not capitalized in one place in the minutes. He stated that Don suggested partnering with the State Library, not the LSTA grant. Liza pointed out that there was an extra “2” in the date and that a “C” was missing in “NCCCLA Conference.” Elizabeth will correct these mistakes.
 - Touger made a motion to approve the minutes with the corrections. Liza seconded the motion.
 - The minutes were approved.

- **DEI Survey Update**
 - Robert shared that the Belk Center for Community College Leadership at North Carolina State University agreed to host, distribute, and analyze the data from the survey. They agreed to waive the fee since the committee is a non-profit entity.
 - The Belk Center suggested breaking the survey into 3 parts because of its length. They suggested moving many of its open-ended questions into Likert-scale questions.
 - The schedule for conducting the survey is:
 - Part 1—October 2023
 - Part 2—March 2024
 - Part 3—June 2024
 - Final report—August 2024
 - Zoom presentation to the DEI Committee—September 2024
 - Presentation at NCCCLA Conference—October 2024

- **DEI Webinar Update**
 - Robert said that this agenda item serves as a placeholder.
 - There is new legislation passed by the North Carolina General Assembly that may impact DEI training programs in the community colleges. The law will be effective December 1, 2023.
 - The legislation specifically addresses two areas:
 - Applications for employment. Applicants cannot be forced to support DEI statements as part of the employment process.
 - Professional development/training. Employees cannot be forced into training that promotes DEI issues or ideology in the workplace.
 - A list of words or concepts that would be prohibited with the new legislation was shared with the committee members.
 - The legislation could impact the training that community college employees are allowed to design and attend, such as the DEI webinars proposed by the committee or sessions at professional conferences.
 - Robert asked if there is a DEI statement on the NCCCS (North Carolina Community College System) website. He couldn't find a DEI statement.

- **Grants for Digital Literacy**
 - Robert mentioned several sources for grants.
 - Division of Broadband and Digital Equity funding programs-- <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/funding-programs>
 - Digital Equity Grant-- <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/funding-programs/digital-equity-grant>
 - LSTA Grants through SLNC (State Library of North Carolina)-- <https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/services-libraries/grants-libraries>
 - Digital Champion Grant Program-- https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/State_and_NTIA_Update_-_Denny.pdf
 - There was discussion of LSTA grants through SLNC. Catherine Prince is the contact person for questions and clarification. As for the question raised in the last meeting whether colleges or associations can apply for these grants, it was shared that the grants cannot be used to fund non-profit entities. Therefore, we cannot apply for a grant as an association. Several colleges could form a partnership to apply for the grant; however, one college would need

to take the lead in the process. The Evergreen consortium applying for an open source LMs was used as an example. (Cleveland CC was the main college in the grant application).

- **The Freedom to Learn Movement**

- Robert shared information about a movement opposing the attacks on education (and educators) from politicians who are passing laws and policies that strive to dismantle DEI programs.
- More information can be found at
 - <https://freedomtolearn.net/>
 - <https://www.freedom-to-learn.net/>
 - <https://www.dcareeducators4socialjustice.org/events/freedom-to-learn-dc-rally>
 - <https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/racial-social-justice/tools-justice/freedom-learn#:~:text=Protecting%20the%20right%20to%20an,we%20can%20make%20that%20happen.>
 - <https://www.historians.org/news-and-advocacy/teaching-history-with-integrity/freedom-to-learn>
 - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/03/organizational-letter-endorsing-freedom-learn-campaign>

- **Other Business**

- There was no other business.

Action items:

- Robert will send the link for the next meeting in August.
- Elizabeth will share the meeting minutes.
- Robert will share the digital literacy grant idea with the NCCCLA Executive Board.

Next meeting: September 21, 2023, 2pm

Meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm by chair.

Notes recorded by: Elizabeth.