

# Coalition Of Lifelong Learning Organizations

May 7, 2007

1:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time

Telephone number 402.472.0060

Present: Marcie Boucouvalas, Marjean Buckner, Phil Greasley, Tom Kowalik, Mary Beth Lakin, Janet Poley, Michele Shin, Amy Rose.

## Purpose of Meeting

1. Discussion of COLLO action agenda.
  - a. Report status of COLLO incorporation process.
  - b. Discuss statement involving major thrusts proposed for a COLLO/national plan.
  - c. Discuss status of contacts with adult and CE organizations to determine priority issues for adult and lifelong learning students.
  - d. Report and discuss status of contacts with possible funding agencies to support COLLO initiatives.

## Reports/Discussions

M. Buckner reported that she had distributed draft Bylaws to the Executive Committee for their review. She modified the document and will forward a copy to the entire membership (See Actions/Decisions below). Her work with the CPA revealed that the Federal ID number in the COLLO records cannot be found. The CPA recommended establishing a new corporation and suggested working with M. Buckner to establish the Articles of Incorporation. To date this work has been completed at no cost to COLLO. (See Actions/Decisions below.)

M. B. Lakin reviewed the statement previously distributed to members proposing thrusts for COLLO's agenda. P. Greasley mentioned that during discussions at the last meeting we also mentioned issues of Access, Affordability, and Fairness in support of adult learners. Considerable discussion was held and consensus appeared from around the concept of determining a focus and purpose for COLLO that would add value to member groups. One idea was to select a target issue and/or subpopulation of adult learners; another idea was to re-establish COLLO's historical role as convener while looking for common ground among all adult education groups that would pull together a movement that is very fragmented. Issues that were identified during this discussion included the need to offer financial support for adult education, especially for literacy and GED efforts, and to determine the adult education/funding agenda among individuals running for election this year. M. Shinn suggested reviewing the priority issues identified by COLLO members in 2005 to determine relevance and to help guide the selection of the issue COLLO might choose to pursue over the next 12 months. Sub-populations identified included returning soldiers and adult immigrants. J. Poley suggested we work with member organizations to determine what they want from COLLO. T. Kowalik summarized by suggesting an agenda that suggested action be taken in three initiatives simultaneously, i.e., moving forward with incorporation, approaching member organizations about how COLLO might assist them, and establishing a pilot program or demonstration project dealing with one issue in adult education. (See Actions/Decisions below.) P. Greasley suggested that the agenda include a timeline by which members should provide responses from their organizations indicating how they perceive COLLO might add value to their efforts.

J. Poley indicated that she would be willing to help match funding foundations with COLLO programs, issues, and selected subpopulation initiatives once we achieved some clarity. Several others agreed that with a clearer agenda they would be willing to assist in attempting to secure funding.

### Actions/Decisions

- M. Buckner is to distribute the latest draft copy of COLLO Bylaws to members.
- M. Buckner is to ask the CPA she has been working with about the cost to continue working on behalf of COLLO to complete the incorporation process.
- T. Kowalik is to draft meeting notes to include action agenda.
  - Moving forward with incorporation
    - Create and submit articles of Incorporation
    - Submit Bylaws with Incorporation
    - Submit paperwork for Incorporation
  - Approaching member organizations about how COLLO might assist them
    - COLLO members take document framing COLLO's role (including M.B. Lakin's statement) in the larger field of adult education asking two or three questions, e.g., how might COLLO assist your organization and its social/political agendas?
    - Members seek written response from their organizations
  - Establishing a pilot program or demonstration project dealing with one issue in adult education
    - Identify an issue
    - Research positions of member organizations on the issue
    - Research positions of people running for office this year
    - Draft COLLO position (link position to selected subpopulations, e.g., soldiers, adult immigrants)
- M. Shinn is to send the web link to ACHE site providing the list of issues previously prioritized by COLLO members.
- M. Boucouvalas is to send the Learning legislation documents of 1976 and the iterations through which it navigated to becoming Public Law.
- Next meeting
  - Washington DC
  - August 27, 2007 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM
    - Tentative Agenda
      - Incorporation status
      - Feedback from member organizations
      - A COLLO/national plan or pilot activity

Previously prioritized issues (from COLLO September 2005 meeting notes)

1. Program Funding (Local/State/Federal Sources) (Grant/Contract Opportunities)
2. Advocacy (Policy Development)(Legislative/Regulatory Review)(Position Papers)
3. Best Practices (Practitioner-Based)(Research/Evidence-Based)
4. Job Training Improvement Act (Workforce Development)(Upward Bound)
5. Research Priorities (Program Effectiveness)(Innovation)(New Directions)
6. Enhancing the Profession (Image)(Profession Building)(The Continuum)
7. Technology (Integration)(Cost/E-Rate)
8. Special Populations (Minorities)(Disabled)(Special Education)
9. Higher Education Act (Teacher Preparation)(Program Enhancement)(Accountability)
10. Professional Standards (State Uniformity)(National Model)
11. Adult Education (Basic Education/Literacy)(Postsecondary)(Transition Skills)
12. CEU (Relevancy)(Paperwork/Records Management)
13. Certification (Requirements)(Re-certification)(Alternative Certification)
14. Supplemental Services (Remedial Courses)(Interventions)
15. NCLB Ramifications (IDEA)(ATA)

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Draft document to use by COLLO members seeking feedback from their organizations and for soliciting feedback from other groups supporting adult learning initiatives.

In the fragmented world of adult and continuing education programs, organizations and agencies have coalesced around adult learner sub-populations and/or specific, narrowly defined issues. In 1976, many of these groups forged a coalition to further their individual social, political, service and learning agendas. This group was initially known as the Coalition of Adult Education Organizations. The Coalition later became known as the Coalition of Lifelong Learning Organizations (COLLO).

During the 1990's, amid the fracturing of the field into subgroups, each of which became more vulnerable, those that remained found themselves competing for a diminished piece of the remaining funding pie, and the relevance and need for COLLO seemed to wane.

Many factors now suggest the need for opportunities for leaders representing adult and continuing education constituencies to come together. The current U.S. demographics and economy make clear the critical need for adult education, adult literacy, GED, workforce development, continuing education and other facets of the adult learning as necessary preconditions of local, state, and national competitiveness and economic development. The return to the U.S. of members of the military unable to pursue their former livelihoods due to physical and/or emotional disability has added significance to meeting their education and training. The rising cost of education and the disadvantage that adults face in seeking financial aid has raised another issue critically important to the nation and our constituents. The influx of large numbers of immigrant populations has simultaneously brought attention to issues relating to English language skills and literacy. And government policies, like the Spellings Report, require understandings that span a now fragmented field in asserting the need for adult and continuing education. As we approach a time of significant change in governmental leadership, adult and continuing educators need to be at the table and speak with a common voice for adult learners and their needs. In short, we believe that by convening the leaderships of leading adult and continuing education organizations, COLLO can assist in empowering all, creating greater and more common understanding of the issues, opportunities, and threats, and helping them to act more effectively for those whose well-beings we shape. We believe that coalitions of leaders from adult and continuing education organizations able to discuss and consider issues and needs, seek common ground to benefit our constituents and pull-together the otherwise fragmented movement and field of adult and continuing education, can significantly influence national and state political and social agendas to better serve adult learners. COLLO's goal is to potentiate adult and continuing education organizations, convening leaders of major adult and CE organizations, and provide a basis by which adult and CE leaders can work collectively to identify and advocate for promising policies and practices that enhance postsecondary access and success for specific adult learner groups. To that effort, we ask you to provide feedback through you organization's representative to the COLLO board of directors by August 1, 2007. Specifically:

1. What is the highest priority issue your organization hopes to address/influence in the next 12-18 months?
2. How might COLLO assist your organization and your efforts to advance those who rely on you for education and training? Your social/political agenda?