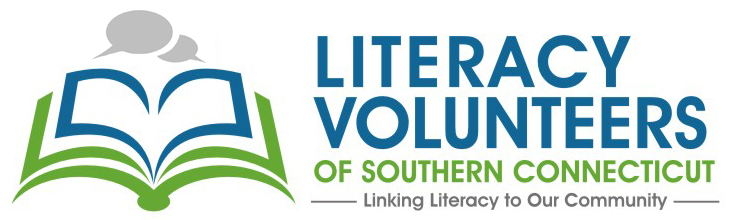
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##### **Board Handbook**

##### **Macintosh HD:Users:tamijacksonn:Dropbox:Office Shared (1):Programs:ESL:Pictures:John Scalici:2013.JPG**

##### **(Updated 11-1-17)**

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**LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF SOUTHERN CT**

BOARD APPLICATION FORM

**Occupation:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Employer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Organizations to which you belong: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Source/ How did you hear about the Literacy Center?**

( ) TV/Radio; ( ) Friend/Family; ( ) Employer;

( ) Library; ( ) Special Event; ( ) Poster

( ) Newspaper; ( ) Web Site; ( ) Telephone Book;

( ) Volunteer ; ( ) Other Agency/other Lit. ( ) Other;

**Financial commitment-**

\_\_\_ $100 Annual Board Member Donation ($8.00 a month) with additional fundraising commitment of $100.

\_\_\_ $75 Annual Board Member donation.

\_\_\_ $50 Annual Board Member donation.

\_\_\_ Other

TJ 2018

**Committee Interest-**

\_\_ Fundraisers

\_\_ Communications/PR

\_\_ Education/Programming

\_\_ Grants/Development

\_\_ Membership/Outreach

\_\_ Marketing

\_\_ Other

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_ I would like to serve on the Board of Directors**

**\_\_ I would like to serve on the Literacy Council**

**\_\_ I would like to serve on a committee**

**First Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Last Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**City/State/Zip:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Phone: Day:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Evening:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Cell: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Sex:** ( ) Male ( ) Female

**Birthdate- \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Education:**

( ) High School ( ) Undergrad ( ) Grad ( ) Other

( ) Not available

Notes:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**OUR CORE BELIEFS**

**Literacy Volunteers Vision:**

Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut envisions an environment in which we teach basic reading, writing and math skills regardless of race, gender, or creed and where all people can attain their educational and life goals, and become functioning and contributing members of the Greater Milford and Stratford Area and society.

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**OUR MISSION**

The mission of the Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut is to provide services at no cost to any individual who wishes to learn the English language or enhance their reading, writing, speaking and math skills necessary to lead productive lives in our community.

**Literacy Volunteers of Southern CT Quick Facts**

**HISTORICAL RECORD**

Like most organizational beginnings, the Center started out small – as a committee-run satellite office of the Literacy Volunteers of New Haven with funding from the Junior Women’s Club of Milford. The charity later became the sole task of Frances O’Neill, its first Executive Director. She ran the program out of her home until 1992 when the City of Milford provided office space at the Margaret Egan Center. In 1994, Ms. O’Neill turned over the reins to Joy Stonier and Karen O’Neill, who were instrumental in forming the non-profit, community-based literacy agency known as The Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut, Inc. Through corporate sponsorships, donations, and specialized staffing, the organization sprouted. In 1995, the Center was relocated to the Fannie Beach Center, its current headquarters. In 2016 the Literacy Center changed its name to Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut.

###### **ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS**

The Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. The mission of the LVSCT is to provide services at no cost to any individual who wishes to learn the English language or enhance their reading, writing, speaking and math skills necessary to lead productive lives in our community.

We assess the needs of this population through the strategic school profile from 2012-2013 created by the Milford and Stratford School District. The report states there is a need for adults to achieve their GED and improve their English skills. There are roughly 15,000 adults who meet the criteria.

LVSCT serves over 100 adult students annually through our English as a Second Language, basic skills and GED programs through one-on-one tutoring and classroom instruction. There are roughly 2,000 adults who meet this criteria.

The success of our students is based on student achievements and the fulfillment of their individual goals as required by our association with ProLiteracy. These outcomes include obtaining a driver’s license, getting a job or a better job, becoming a US citizen, and moving on to higher education. These are the indicators of success, which are most important to the individual student.

The second measurement comprises change from baseline in the number of chapters/books completed in the Challenger series. The eight Challenger books, which run from true beginner through 12th grade, measures competencies attained with each unit’s completion. For example, with the completion of chapter 19 in Book 5, the student adds the following competencies: identify common food items; identify information needed to solve a given problem; determine appropriate operation to apply to a given problem; apply a percent in a context not involving money; interpret data given in a circle graph, compute averages, medians or modes. Therefore, every step accomplishes or reinforces a new set of skills. Transitions from one book to the next gives even more solid evidence of student progress.

The Challenger series meets all the principles of language assessment, being, practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity, and wash back. In addition, there are published correlations between Challenger and other Standardized ESL scales, such as CASAS.

The target population is anyone in the greater Milford/Stratford area who needs instruction in learning the English language or improving skills in reading, writing, speaking, or math. We have students from Milford, Stratford, Bridgeport, West Haven, Orange, and Woodbridge.

In 2015, we served 108 adults in ESL, GED preparation, and basic skills. The majority of students (71%) are women from countries other than the United States between the ages of 25-45. Our students received 2,398.14 volunteer tutoring hours plus over 2,000 volunteer hours supporting the Center.

By providing educational opportunities for ESL and GED students, they improve their communication skills with employers, coworkers, physicians, teachers, and many other groups so necessary for a strong place in the community. Being able to communicate well increases the students’ feelings of belonging. To that end, the LVSCT concentrates on the direct needs of every student: foreign-born students who are mothers can help their children with homework and attend school functions, sit for the citizenship exam, or obtain a driver’s license; all students can participate more fully in our community’s political and social life as well as gain working access to services such as the Milford Public Library. Data gathered supports the LVSCT’s claim that students achieve new jobs and promotions, as well as develop relationships that create a sense of well-being and happiness.

In 2016 LVSCT opened a satellite office at the Milford Public Library and the Stratford Public Library. This allows tutors and students to find us in another location that is more central in the communities. The LVSCT works with Meadowside School in coordinating an ESL class on Tuesday nights, and provides childcare for the parents of the school so they can attend. In addition, the LVSCT provides pre-school readers for 200 children at Milford Pre School, Milford/Orange YMCA, TEAM, Headstart, and Good Shepherd Child Development Center. We also donate books to newborn babies at Milford Pediatrics for the Books for Babies and Toddler program. The Books for Birthdays program has expanded to children at Boys and Girls Club of Milford, Boys and Girls Village, Milford Resource Center, Ready to Learn, West Haven Resource Center, West Haven Community Center and Stratford Community Center in the South end. Over 700 children received books last year. An after school reading program for children at West Shore Middle School had also been an endeavor and we help coordinate Family Literacy Nights at WSMS and Harborside MS.

In addition to one-on-one tutoring, the LVSCT offers four classes from beginner level to advanced level in ESL. Tutors also meet with students at Orchid, a workplace literacy program. We also offer computer classes twice a year.

LVSCT adheres to the ProLiteracy of America ideal: that all students are individual, and meeting their individual needs through one-on-one tutoring is essential. For example, if a student wants to learn nail colors because she is a nail technician, then the tutor teaches colors; the student wants to communicate better with her customers and earn a decent living. If we have a foreign-born student in college who has a very strong accent, the tutor works on phonics, pronunciation and communication skills to improve the student’s interaction in the classroom with his professor and peers. This individual focus is not attainable in a large classroom situation. Students have come to us from Adult Education because they need to have their communication needs met before they need their grammar to be perfect.

We train our own tutors and all tutoring is FREE.

To date, there have been more than 53 countries represented by our ESL students and we support students from 10 neighboring communities.

We sponsor a student-writing project sponsored by the Junior Woman’s Club of Milford. Multicultural Night- a Celebration of Accomplishments is held in April at a local hall, English language learners have an opportunity to read their stories. For some it will be the first time reading English in public. We also recognize tutors and our volunteers for their accomplishments. April is Volunteer appreciation month. Annually we choose a teacher from the Milford school system to receive the Callahan Holzwarth Award to purchase books for their classroom library.

We maintain a stable number of 50 tutors. A five week training course is required for new tutors. A paid Executive Director along with 5 volunteers staff the office, which is open 4 days a week from 9 to 3.

Facts in Milford and Stratford:

More than 14,000 adults do not have HS diploma.

More than 2,000 adults do not speak fluent English

There are 53 non-English home languages.

**Children’s Literacy Programs**

The **Books for Babies** program was created in 1997 with the help of Milford Hospital. Books for Toddlers followed in 1999. Statistics prove that low literacy results in poor paying jobs and poor quality of life. By reading to children from infancy, books provide the key to education. 50% of a child’s intellectual development occurs between birth and four years of age. Parents are a child’s first teacher and there is nothing more important that an adult can do for a child than read to him or her.

Every newborn baby that comes to Milford Pediatrics received a book. The Literacy Volunteers of Southern CT and Barnes and Noble fund the program. Since the close of the maternity wing at Milford Hospital, Milford Pediatrics has taken charge of the book distribution in 2015 and hand out book packets to new mothers, continuing the Books for Baby program.

**Books for Birthdays**- LVSCT has partnered with the Boys and Girls Club of Milford, Boys and Girls Village, Milford Resource Center, West Haven Community Center and WH Head Start to launch this program.  Following the Center's successful Books for Babies and Books for Toddlers programs, Books for Birthdays was the next logical step.  With all of these programs, the importance of reading is highlighted as a fundamental necessity of personal development and future achievement.  By making books available in the home, needy youth are given access to a significant societal equalizer - literacy.

We also have **Books for School** program where we do book distributions to Stratford and Bridgeport schools for children who may not have a home library

Our newest project is a **Family Literacy** program at West Shore Middle School in collaboration with Bridges. We will be offering after school tutoring to students and an interactive activity on Fridays. Several times a year we will bring family interactive literacy nights.

We are a member of Pro Literacy America and an agency of United Way of Milford.

Programs

Adult Literacy:

ESL, GED, NEDP

Basic Skills, Math

Computer Classes

Children Literacy:

Books for Babies

Books for Birthdays

Books for Schools

Pre School Literacy

Middle School Literacy

Family Literacy Nights

Book Donations

###### **GOVERNANCE GUIDELINES**

The Board of Directors is the active governing body of the organization and is responsible to the corporate body. It is composed of an average of 14 members. Each year in January officers are elected. The governing body meets regularly the second Tuesday of every other month at 6:00 pm, at the Center, unless otherwise notified. The annual meeting is held in February. A quorum consists of 2/3 of the board. Regular meetings start promptly at the designated hour and unless some unusual business requires more time, they are adjourned promptly at 8:00 pm.

1. How elected (see Article VI of LVSCT By By-laws)

2. Re-elections (see Article VI of LVSCT By By-laws)

3. Duties (see Article V and VII of LVSCT By By-laws)

4. Meetings (see Article VIII of LVSCT By By-laws)

**ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

As of this date, the organization owns equipment, valued at $20,000 and has $29,000 in a Mutual fund. The present annual operating budget is $122,661.00. All funding comes from 24% contributions, 35% special events, and 40% grants.

**MEMBERSHIP AND OPERATIONAL INFORMATION**

Literacy Volunteers of Southern CT main office is located at 16 Dixon St., in the Woodmont section of Milford, CT. The telephone number for the Center is (203) 878-4800.

Hours are 9:00 – 3:00 Monday – Thursday.

Milford Library Satellite Office is open Monday 10:00 - 12:00 and 3:00 - 5:00.  
Stratford Library is open Monday 10:00 - 12:00 and Wednesday 10:00 - 12:00.

The Center tutors an average yearly of 100 adult students.

The services are FREE.

We operate one service site under the leadership of 1 part-time staff and 5 office volunteers.

**Organizational Chart**

**Board of Directors**

**Executive Director**

Tami Jackson

**Computer**

**Tutor Trainer**

**Volunteer Office Staff**

**Children’s Literacy-**

**Pre School Readers**

**Books for Birthdays/Babies**

**Students**

**Tutors**

**Students**

**What Makes Literacy Volunteers of Southern CT UNIQUE?**

The Center’s adult literacy programs are designed to help English language learners (ELL) with one on one tutoring. We also have small class groups. We offer tutoring for the GED (General Education Development) exam, tutoring to attain US Citizenship, as well as to develop basic skills in English or math in order to become functioning members of society. In 2014, the Center expanded its curriculum to include a hands-on, basic computer education program so that students can become comfortable with computing.

The Center also provides an expanding literacy program designed for children, from babies and toddlers to middle-school-age kids. It holds weekly story hours, book give-a-ways, individual reading sessions, and family-based literacy programs at the local middle school. In 2016, our volunteer readers logged over 200 hours in our children reading programs, and donated 2,300 books to local children.

**IT IS FOR ALL ADULTS.** Adults of all races, religions and ethnic cultures are eligible to become students.

**IT REQUIRES NO PROOF OF CITIZENSHIP.**

**IT IS STUDENT CENTERED**. Tutoring focuses on a learner focused curriculum.

**IT IS NON-SECTARIAN.**

**Board Structure**

##### **OFFICERS**

The Literacy Volunteers board is led by a team of officers that includes a president, vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer. These officers are elected to a three-year term in January at the new calendar year. Board of directors and may be eligible for re-election. The duties of each officer are as follows:

* President: Leads the board by inviting participation of board members; facilitating communication among the board and between board and staff; guiding evaluations of the Center, and the board; delegating authority; raising funds and supporting resource development efforts; maintaining visibility in the community; and supporting the LVSCT Program.
* Vice President: Assists and supports the President by stepping in when necessary, providing leadership and guidance to designated committees; maintaining visibility in the community; and supporting the LVSCT Program.
* Secretary: Guards the Center’s institutional memory by assuring the preparation, accuracy and timeliness of meeting minutes; communicating with board members and Trustees about meetings, attendance, and terms; and serving as a signatory on official documents.
* Treasurer: Protects the Center’s financial resources by assuring proper maintenance of financial records; overseeing the integrity of financial control systems; providing for an annual external audit; and working closely with committee and staff members on fiscal matters.

# COMMITTEES AND THEIR FUNCTIONS

Committees are created by the board to accomplish the work needed to be done between meetings. The majority of the board’s work takes place in committees. The effective use of committees distributes and expedites the work of the board so it will not be individually burdensome. It also removes long discussions and routine tasks from the usually crowded board meeting agenda, thus freeing the board to consider overall program, major policies and key issues.

Each committee is made up of Board Members and community members on a volunteer basis.

To ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of committee work, board and committee members should define the size of each committee, designate staff support (if any), establish membership criteria (not all committee members need to be board members), determine the duration of the committee, clarify the committee’s charge, and assign committee chairs.

Literacy Volunteer of Southern CT’s committees include:

* Education/Programs Committee
* Marketing Committee
* Finance, Development, Events Committee
* Board Governance Committee

It is mandatory, for every board member serve on one or more committee. The special talents, abilities and interests of each board member should be considered in joining committees. **Individuals in the community who are not members of the board of directors may serve on committees as well.**

# Education/Programs Committee

The Education Committee consists of the officers of the board of directors, Executive Director, and Tutor Trainer, elected in the fall and such other members of the corporation as deemed advisable.

The committee meets on the first Thursday of each month to prepare such duties and powers as delegated by the board. It formulates recommendations for board action.

The Education Committee:

• Reviews Tutor and Student information;

* Develops strategies for reaching new tutors and students;

• Reviews the organization’s program annually and determines, with board approval, the direction of upcoming classes/programs;

* Reviews program strategic goals and calls for a program strategic planning process when needed;

The Education Committee works closely with other board committees and makes periodic progress reports to the board of directors.

**The Marketing Committee**

The Marketing Committee develops and carries out a year-round marketing program that interprets the programs, purpose and needs of LVSCT and makes use of all available media – speakers, exhibits, press, radio and television.

It cultivates the interest and support of all local newspapers, radio and television stations, invites their representatives to public events of LVSCT and supplies news items and articles to magazines and other publications. The committee works with the Executive Director and the development and marketing staff in preparing news releases, the annual report, pamphlets, flyers and other publicity material.

The committee obtains biographical information on all board members from the board development committee and utilizes the news value of activities performed by board and staff members.

The committee cooperates with the United Way on publicity and provides speakers and programs on LVSCT topics for civic, service, labor and groups. The committee helps establish contacts to promote and generate support for the organization.

Ad hoc committees or task forces are often used to lead specific aspects of annual fundraisers, (e.g., run, leap, multicultural night, Chips, etc.)

**Finance, Development, Events Committee**

The Finance, Development and Events committee works with the Treasurer and Executive Director in preparing the annual budget. Once the committee determines that the proposed budget is sufficient to provide for the operating needs of the organization it presents the budget to the Board of Directors for approval. In cooperation with the Treasurer, who chairs the committee, it recommends periodic budget adjustments as needed.

The Finance committee:

• meets at least twice a year to review the financial condition of Literacy Volunteers and the effectiveness of investments;

• studies and approves annual audit;

• selects an audit firm each year and reviews audit plan.

The Finance, Development, Events Committeeis responsible for planning and leading the organization’s annual campaign. The annual campaign plan should be comprehensive, assuring a diversity of income sources and maximum involvement by all members of the Board of Directors.

The Finance, Development, Events Committeeprovides for the establishment and implementation of a well-planned and aggressively promoted planned giving program. The Resource Development & Marketing Committee recommends plans and strategies for capital campaigns to the Board of Directors for approval and implementation.

The Finance, Development and Events Committee supports fundraising efforts with planning and executing each event.

# Board Governance Committee

The Board Governance Committee is responsible for the identification, recruitment, nomination, orientation, ongoing education, evaluation and recognition of board members. Based upon criteria it has established, the committee develops an organizational needs-driven list of potential board members and determines the degree of interest and commitment from those on this list. From among these prospects, it submits a list of nominees to the board of directors at least 72 hours prior to the meeting at which elections will be held. It also presents a slate of officers for election at the fall meeting and candidates to fill expiring terms of officers and board members. The Board Governance Committee follows the approved board development process for all potential candidates. The Board Governance Committee evaluates each board member annually in relation to minimum standards of performance that it has developed, and which has been approved by the board of directors. It should contact board members who are not meeting their obligations to determine their interest in continuing to serve on the board.

**Board Roles and Competencies**

**The Role Of The Board – General Areas Of Responsibilities**

The importance of Literacy Volunteers leadership cannot be overstated. Across America, volunteer leaders represent the strength and diversity of local Literacy boards. They are a reflection of the communities in which they live and work. Their depth of understanding about Center is crucial to their power as advocates and to educating lives.

The board of directors serves four primary roles:

* Trusteeship: The board is the active governing body of LVSCT. Above all else, it is solely responsible for all LVSCT actions, from protecting the mission to ensuring public accountability. It serves as the public face and persona of the Center.
* Planning: Working in partnership with the Executive Director as the leadership of the Center, the board must carefully set direction and plan for the future.
* Policy and Evaluation: The board is responsible for establishing policies that will govern the Center’s daily operations and ongoing activities, from programs to human resources.
* Resource Development and Oversight: The board must not only exercise fiduciary oversight to protect the Club’s resources, it must also assist in raising money for the Center.

# Board Competencies – Specific Functions Of The Board

While working in these four primary roles, a successful board develops a number of key competencies. The real value of the board is delivered through these competencies. By participating in, actively supporting and collectively overseeing the Center in all of the following areas, a board fulfills its role.

#### I. Trusteeship

• Identifying the organization's mission and purpose: The board is responsible for creating the mission statement and reviewing it periodically for accuracy and validity.

• Ensuring legal and ethical integrity and maintaining accountability: The board is ultimately responsible for ensuring adherence to legal standards and ethical norms, as well as for adherence to the provisions of the Center’s constitution and bylaws.

• Enhancing the organization's public standing: The board should interpret the Center's mission, accomplishments and goals to the public, as well as garner support from important members of the community.

• Board composition and development: Board excellence has everything to do with the composition of the board — members understanding their role, their inspiration to action, and self-inspection against standards of excellence.

#### II. Planning – A Strategic Perspective

* Ensuring effective organizational planning: The board is responsible for insuring a process by which an organization thinks through and determines what it is going to do in the future and when and how it is going to do it.

Strategic planning is a systematic, organized, dynamic process used by an organization to:

* involve board and community leadership in the LVSCT mission;
* determine what the Center wants to be like at a given point (e.g., three, five, eight years) in the future;
* establish specific goals, objectives and measures for the plan;
* implement management techniques and controls to assure the organization that its plan is being followed and achieved;
* evaluate and guide the impact of the organization on community needs.

1. **Policy and Evaluation**

Boards have many jobs to do, but fundamental to them all is the role of quality assurance. To ensure that the Center has the infrastructure in place to deliver on its mission, the board establishes policies and procedures for the following:

• Compensation and performance management: Boards must undertake a clear plan to attract and retain the most qualified individuals for employment in their organization. Ensuring high performance and professional leadership is one, if not the most, important responsibility of a board of directors. This includes policies that provide competitive, market-driven salaries and benefits as well as periodic performance reviews based upon accountability standards.

• Monitoring and strengthening the Center's programs and services strategy: Pro Literacy has developed online tools for guiding the Center’s programs, and overall effectiveness.

* Evaluation of the board and board members. On a regular basis, board members need to take time out for introspection about their individual contribution to the Center and the board’s collective performance. Annually, each individual should consider how well he or she has fulfilled his or her commitment to the Center. Every three to five years, the board should reflect on how well it is meeting its responsibilities.

#### Resource Development and Oversight

# • Ensuring adequate resources: One of the board's foremost responsibilities is to assure that the Center has adequate resources to fulfill its mission. The board should work in partnership with the ED, to raise funds from the community.

Board members have two general areas of responsibility in terms of resource development: understanding and overseeing the fundraising process, and giving and asking for support for the Center.

• Managing resources effectively: In order for the Center to remain accountable to its donors, the public, and to safeguard its tax-exempt status, the board must develop the annual budget and ensure that proper financial controls are in place. Board members act as trustees of the Center’s assets and must exercise due diligence to see that the Center is well-managed and that its financial situation remains sound.

Not every board member can be a financial wizard. However, every board member needs to be a financial inquisitor. It is essential to understand basic terminology, be able to read financial statements, judge the Center’s stability, and have the capacity to recognize warning signs that might indicate a change in the overall health of the Center. If board members do not understand something, they must be willing to find out the answer.

## Effect on End Results

1. A well-respected community image.
2. A well-managed and highly effective organization providing programs to meet the needs of immigrants and other adults.
3. Demonstrated achievement of the organization’s goals and objectives.
4. An organization that has 100% of its financial needs met through board giving and influence.
5. A diverse, competent staff and a quality program based on the principles of adult learning.

### BOARD MEMBER JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Board Member

**Accountability:** Board of Directors

**General Function**: To participate as a member of the Board of Directors whose duties are to manage the business, property and affairs of the corporation with the responsibility and authority to determine operating policies and practices.

## Know-How

1. Has achieved recognition and status within the community.
2. Is knowledgeable about the immigration concerns of the community.
3. Has the resources (personal and/or corporate) to apply to the needs of LVSCT.

##### **Key Role**

* Friend of Literacy: Responsible for all Centers actions, from protecting the mission to ensuring public accountability.
* Planning: In partnership with the Director participate in setting direction for the future.
* Policy and Evaluation: Policies that govern the Center’s daily operations, from programs to human resources.
* Resource Development: Assist in raising and contributing money for the Center.

##### **Competencies**

* Ensure and safeguard the organization's mission and purpose
* Ensuring legal and ethical integrity and maintaining accountability
* Enhancing the organization's public standing
* Ensuring that high quality professional leadership is employed
* Ensuring a diverse and high performance board composition and ongoing development
* Ensuring that a strategic plan is developed and used
* Establish operating policies
* Monitoring and strengthening the Center’s programs and service strategy
* Evaluation of the board and board member effectiveness
* Ensuring adequate resources
* Managing resources effectively

## Duties

1. Complete the orientation session for new board members
2. Serve as an active member of at least one standing committee
3. Serve as advocate and spokesperson for LVSCT in your formal and informal networks
4. Assist in financial development for the organization by making a personal financial contribution
5. Assist in financial development for the organization
6. Solicit financial contributions totaling a minimum of $500 in unrestricted funding

* Attend and participate in 75% of board meetings

1. Participate in the development of and approve the organization’s strategic plan
2. Participate in board leadership and development activities conducted or sponsored by the local organization and community
3. Perform all other duties that may be necessary to carry out the purpose of the organization

**Board Relationships**

The board of directors represents the Literacy Volunteers of Southern CT in all aspects and, therefore, must be concerned about relationships with various individuals, organizations, governmental agencies and groups. The most important of these relationships involve the President, LVSCT staff, the United Way, social and civil networks and adult groups related to the Center.

**Relationship to Social and Civic Networks**

The board of directors should have representation in its community’s social planning networks. No organization can be isolated in a community and remain effective. It should be aware of the programs and priorities of other agencies. It should also be willing to meet with other human-care agencies for interchange of ideas and mutual assistance. It is necessary that the LVSCT program and philosophy be interpreted to other agency representatives so they can appreciate the function of the Center. A voice in the civic and social planning network will help ensure that the Center has an active role in future community planning.

**Relationship to the Philanthropic Community**

One of the key roles of a board is to assist in raising and contributing money to the Center. The board, both collectively and individually, must maintain positive relationships with current funding sources as well as potential donors. These relationships, when nurtured, create the bond that ensures future funding for the organization.

**Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut**

**BY-LAWS**

REVISED March 2016

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME**

The name of this organization shall be Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut, Inc. The incorporation date of this organization is July 19, 1994.

**ARTICLE II**

**MISSION**

The mission of Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut is to provide services at no cost to any individual who wishes to learn the English language or enhance their reading, writing, speaking and math skills necessary to lead productive lives in our community.

**ARTICLE III**

**PURPOSE**

Section 1

The purpose of Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut is to provide an environment in which to teach basic reading, writing and math skills regardless of race, gender, or creed.

Section 2

The organization shall be non-sectarian, non-partisan, and non-profit. This organization is exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization which operates exclusively for educational purposes in accordance with the regulations and prohibitions described in Section 501(c) (3) of the Code.

**ARTICLE IV**

**MEMBERS**

The organization shall consist of a Board of Directors and an Executive Director.

Section 1

Ad Hoc or Special Committees

Ad hoc or special committees may be formed by the President, or the Executive Director in consultation with the President, who for each committee shall appoint a chair, determine its size, and appoint persons to it. At the next Board of Directors meeting following the formation of such a committee, the President shall advise the Board of the formation of the committee, its task and the names of its chair and members.

**ARTICLE V**

**OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Section l

The Board of Directors of Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut shall consist of no more than fourteen (14) members. Four (4) members of the Board shall also serve as officers. The officers of the organization are the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The immediate Past President will serve as an ex-officio officer for the term of one year.

Section 2

Required Duties – Full Board

.Establish policy

. Hire and fire the Executive Director and any other paid employees who may work for the organization from time to time

. Annually review the performance of the Executive Director

. Set rates of compensation and benefits for the Executive Director and any other paid employees of the organization

. Assist in securing adequate funding for the organization

. Be responsible for and monitor finances

. Select the organization’s officers

. Adopt key operating policies and procedures

. Approve contracts as appropriate

. Review at least annually, with the Executive Director, the long-range plan of the organization.

Required Duties – Individual Board Members

. Attend and actively participate in Board meetings and in fundraising and other promotional events.

. Become knowledgeable about the organization

. Contribute to meetings by expressing your point of view, making constructive suggestions and helping the Board make decisions that benefit those the organization serves

. Serve on fundraisers as a committee member or a chair

. Serve on any special committees or subcommittees as need by the organization

. Solicit participation by other community members in fundraising and other promotional events

. Assume leadership roles when asked

. Promote the LVSCT to the community, residents and other organizations to increase public awareness of the organization and its mission and programs

. Keep the Executive Director informed about the needs and concerns of the community regarding literacy

. Commit to an annual financial contribution to the organization of an amount commensurate with the member’s financial ability

**ARTICLE VI**

**NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

Section 1

Elections of Board members and officers shall be held as needed, as vacancies arise.

Section 2

Nominating Committee

The President shall appoint a nominating Committee consisting of three (3) Board members and designate one to serve as chair. It will be the duty of this Committee to consider candidates for all vacant and expiring positions and to present candidates to the Board, as needed, at the next available meeting, whether a regular meeting or special meeting. Members of the Nominating Committee shall not be barred from nomination to an office, including self-nomination, as those positions become available. Nominations may also be made from the floor at any meeting at any time a vacancy needs to be filled. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it shall be the responsibility of the nominating Committee to properly investigate all candidates and nominees by acquiring and distributing to the Board the candidate’s and nominee’s curriculum vitae or resume as well as a written acknowledgment signed by the candidate or nominee that they have read and agree to adhere to these bylaws. The nominating Committee shall distribute the CV/resume and written acknowledgement via email to all Board members at least 72 hours prior to the meeting at which the candidate or nominee potential election is to be voted on by the Board.

Section 3

Terms of Office

Directors

Each Director shall be elected to a three (3) year term. The terms (classes) shall be staggered so that substantially one-third of the Directors shall be elected every year. To accomplish this result, the President shall have authority to assign Directors to classes which will result in a term or terms of no more than three (3) years. There shall be no limit on the number of consecutive terms that each Director may serve. Despite the expiration of a Director’s term, the Director continues to serve until the Director’s successor is elected, absent resignation, removal or other provision by the Board of Directors.

Officers

Each Officer shall be elected to a two (2) year term. Officers may be re-elected for no more than one (1) succeeding two (2) year term. Despite the expiration of an Officer’s term, the Officer continues to serve until the Officer’s successor is elected, absent resignation, removal or other provision by the Board of Directors.

Section 4

Resignation

Resignations must be submitted in writing to the President who shall immediately notify the chairperson of the nominating Committee of the vacancy.

Section 5

Voting

All current members of the Board are eligible to vote in elections. A simple majority of a quorum of members of the Board shall determine the winner. In the event of multiple candidates for a position, there shall be a written vote taken. The vote shall be open unless a majority of a quorum of the members present elects to have a secret ballot. The President shall appoint two Board members to serve as tellers to distribute, collect and count the votes. The President will verify and announce the results of any secret ballot.

**ARTICLE VII**

**DUTIES**

Section 1

President

The President shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Board of Directors. The President shall be an *ex offico* member of all committees except the Nominating Committee. The President shall have the authority to call special meetings of the Board and shall determine the order of business. The President shall work with the Treasurer and the Executive Director in establishing and reviewing the annual budget. The President shall perform other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the most current revised edition of *Roberts Rules of Order.*

Vice President

The Vice President shall preside and perform the President’s duties during the President’s temporary absences. The Vice President shall review and maintain accurate copies of the current By Laws and shall compile and distribute an updated Board Manual to all board members at the beginning of their terms. The Vice President shall perform other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the most current revised edition of *Roberts Rules of Order.*

Secretary

The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all Board meetings and provide typed minutes for each board member with a copy to be distributed to all Board members via email at least 72 hours prior to the next Board meeting at which the minutes are to be considered for approval. The Secretary shall then prepare a copy of the approved minutes to be kept for the permanent file. The Secretary shall keep an attendance record for all board members and shall perform such other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the most current revised edition of *Roberts Rules of Order.*

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be in charge of all monies received from any source and ensure that such monies are deposited as the Board directs. Fundraising chairs shall cause accurate records of income and expenses to be kept of the fundraising event and shall submit a report thereof within 30 days after the event. The Treasurer and Executive Director shall maintain the bank accounts, and the Treasurer shall submit a financial report for the Board’s approval at each scheduled meeting, a copy of which report shall be distributed to all Board members via email at least 72 hours prior to the next Board meeting at which the financial report is to be considered for approval. The Treasurer shall chair the Budget Committee and direct the financial audit at the end of the fiscal year. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the most current revised edition of *Roberts Rules of Order.*

Treasurer, president and exec director will create budget in September, submit to board for review. Discussion will be in October and vote in November.

Executive Director

The day-to-day administration and operation of Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut shall be managed by the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall provide a written report on the administrative and operational activities of the Center at each regular meeting, a copy of which shall be distributed to all Board members via email at least 72 hours prior to the regularly scheduled meeting.

**ARTICLE VIII**

**MEETINGS**

Section 1

Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held on such dates as determined from time to time by the Board of Directors, but in no event shall there be fewer than eight regular meetings in a calendar year.

Upon two consecutive unexcused absences from regular meetings by a Board member, the President shall contact the individual Board member to make inquiry as to the viability of their continued Board membership. In the event the member still desires to serve, but the President is uncertain as to the member’s continued commitment to the organization, the President may, at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board, call the meeting into executive session to entertain a motion to remove the Board member for cause.

At least 72 hours prior to this next regular meeting, the President shall provide notice via email to the Board member that their membership is in jeopardy as a result of their failure to attend two consecutive regular Board meetings. That Board member shall be given the opportunity to offer their excuse for the two consecutive absences from regular Board meetings. Upon motion made, the Board members shall then decide whether the excuse constitutes good cause for non-attendance by a simple majority vote by a quorum of the members present. In the event the Board determines that both of the two consecutive absences were without good cause, the Board may then next entertain a motion for the member’s removal for cause, which motion shall be determined by a simple majority vote by a quorum of the members present. All of the foregoing proceedings shall take place in executive session. Except in the event of an emergency or unforeseen circumstances, a Board member who cannot attend a regular meeting shall give notice by telephone or email to the President prior to the meeting as soon as reasonably possible.

The President shall have the authority to call special meetings of the Board, as he or she shall deem reasonably necessary. The purpose of the special meeting shall be stated in the call to the meeting which shall be sent to all members of the Board and the Executive Director by regular mail or email at least three (3) days prior to the meeting.

Section 2

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting shall be the January meeting at which time annual reports shall be presented to the Board and elections held for officer and Board positions. All reports to be considered and approved by the Board at the annual meeting shall be distributed to all Board members at least one (1) week prior to the meeting via email.

Section 3

Quorum

Except as provided for in Article XI concerning Dissolution, a majority of the members of the Board of Directors, exclusive of any vacancies, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business or for a vote at any regular or special meeting of the Board.

Section 4

Removal for Cause

A director or officer may be removed for cause upon motion made at any regular or special meeting by a simple majority vote of a quorum of the members present. However, the director or officer whose membership is in jeopardy shall be given notice by the President via email at least 72 hours prior to the regular or special meeting at which the motion is anticipated. Said notice shall include a general description of the reason that removal for cause is sought. The director or officer whose removal is sought shall be given the opportunity to be heard, should they so desire, at the regular or special meeting prior to motion for removal being put to a vote. All such proceedings shall take place in executive session.

**ARTICLE IX**

**PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in the then most current revised edition of *Roberts Rules of Order*, shall be followed at all Board meetings to the extent that such rules, where applicable, are not inconsistent with any provision of these By Laws.

**ARTICLE X**

**AMENDMENT OF BY LAWS**

These By Laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present provided there is a quorum and that the amendments have been submitted in writing to all Board members via email at least one (1) week prior thereto.

**ARTICLE XI**

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The President shall determine the order of business and shall provide an agenda at least 72 hours in advance of any regular or special meeting.

**ARTICLE XII**

**DISSOLUTION**

Literacy Volunteers of Southern Connecticut may be dissolved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board. In the event of a vote to dissolve, such dissolution will take place within sixty days after the vote was taken. The funds remaining to the credit of the organization after payment of all bills and obligations would be disbursed by being contributed either to a successor organization or to an organization of compatible intent and holding a valid tax-exempt permit. Such a disbursement would be determined following a recommendation by the Board of Directors and carried by a simple majority of the Board. None of the assets will be distributed to any member, officer or Board of Director of the organization.

Revised 3/16

**PRO LITERACY**

**National Relationships**

*Teach an adult to read. Inspire the world to change.*

ProLiteracy, the largest adult literacy and basic education membership organization in the nation, believes that a safer, stronger, and more sustainable society starts with an educated adult population. For more than 60 years, ProLiteracy has been working across the globe to create a world where every person can read and write.

### Adult literacy can change everything

Health. Gender equality. Poverty. Every important social issue is impacted by low literacy. When individuals learn how to read, write, do basic math, and use computers, they have the power to lift themselves out of poverty, lower health care costs, find and keep sustainable employment, and ultimately change their lives.

### Family Literacy

**Children of parents with low literacy skills have a 72 percent chance of being at the lowest reading levels themselves**.1 These children are more likely to get poor grades, display behavioral problems, have high absentee rates, repeat school years, or drop out.

### Poverty

https://proliteracy.org/portals/0/Images/Content_Images/Infographics/Poverty.png?ver=2016-03-15-123135-363**Of adults with the lowest literacy levels, 43 percent live in poverty**, and 70% of adult welfare recipients have low literacy levels.2 There is a clear correlation between more education and higher earnings, and between higher educational scores and higher earnings.

### Health Literacy

 **An excess of $230 billion a year in health care costs is linked to low adult literacy**.3 Nearly half of American adults have difficulty understanding and using health information. Lack of understanding impedes adults’ abilities to make appropriate health decisions and increases the likelihood that they’ll incur higher health costs.

### Unemployment/Workforce https://proliteracy.org/portals/0/Images/Modified/workforce-resize176x76-crop383x168.png?ver=2016-05-04-154005-677

Individuals at the lowest literacy and numeracy levels have a higher rate of unemployment and earn lower wages than the national average. **Low literacy costs the U.S. at least $225 billion each year in non-productivity in the workforce, crime, and loss of tax revenue due to unemployment.**4

### Education

**Every year, one in six young adults—more than 1.2 million—drop out of high school**.5 Recent data show that nearly 30 percent of adults with household incomes at or below the federal poverty line do not have a high school credential. The key to financial success is a viable career path and adequate education to seek meaningful, family-supporting wages. The value to our economy in additional wages and the reduction in costs for various support programs is estimated at more than $200 billion a year.

### ELL (English Language Learners)

**About 50 percent of the 2 million immigrants that come to the U.S. each year lack high school education and proficient English language skills.6** This severely limits their access to jobs, college, and citizenship and increases their vulnerability to living in poverty.

### Corrections

https://proliteracy.org/portals/0/Images/Content_Images/Infographics/Correction.png?ver=2016-03-15-123135-143**Seventy-five percent of state prison inmates did not complete high school or can be classified as low literate**. Ninety-five percent of those incarcerated are reintegrated into our communities. Research shows that inmates who are educated are 43 percent less likely to return to prison.7

### Government Funding and Programs in Jeopardy

Adult education is in critical need for services. A decline in federal and state funding in the past 10 years has resulted in programs serving only a fraction of the adults in need. **Currently, two-thirds of adult education programs are struggling with long student waiting lists**.8 At the present levels of public funding, less than 10 percent of adults in need are receiving services.

Low literacy is a global crisis that affects all of us. That's why it's so important to understand the issues and confront the facts head on. Only then can we can stand together to fight for change.

Sources:

1. National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER)

2. The National Institute for Literacy

3. American Journal of Public Health

4. National Council for Adult Learning (NCAL)

5. National Center for Education Statistics,

6. Center for Immigration Studies, National Commission on Adult Literacy

7. U.S. Department of Justice, Rand Report: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education

8. ProLiteracy: Member Statistical Report

**Pro Literacy Contact Numbers**

Call Us

**Phone:**  
(315) 422-9121

**Toll Free:**   
1-888-528-2224

**Fax:**   
(315) 422-6369

Mailing Address

104 Marcellus Street   
Syracuse, NY 13204

Hours

9 am–5 pm (EST)

Visit Us

415 W. Fayette St.   
Syracuse, NY 13204

