



**MINUTES FOR BOARD APPROVAL
EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD**

Meeting Minutes for September 28, 2006 - 6:30 P.M.

Fort Lauderdale City Hall

100 North Andrews Avenue

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

Eighth Floor Cafeteria

<u>Members</u>	Cumulative Attendance		
	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Michael Bacigalupi	P	3	2
Aaron Bass	A	2	2
Jacquelyn Bradley	P	3	0
Pam Brown, Co-Chair	P	4	1
Brian Dassler, Co-Chair	P	3	2
Jacquie Gross	P	3	0
Paula Haliczner	A	2	1
Elizabeth Hays	P	1	0
Pearl Maloney	A	3	2
Leola McCoy	P	3	0
Janice Olson	A	2	3
Frances Payne	A	0	5
Elaine Schulze	P	4	1
Niara Sudarkasa	P	4	1
Judy Zinn	A	3	2
Total Members Present	<hr/> 9		

Current Membership: 15 Quorum: 8

Leslie G. Carhart, Staff Liaison P
Charles Webster, BCPS Liaison A
Betty Shelly, CFLCA Liaison A
Jamie Opperlee, Recording Secretary

Guests

Lu Deaner, Past EAB Chair
David Jett, Downtown Academy
Jim Di Sebastian, downtown Academy
Tom Andrew, Riverside Park Residents Association
Dave Marshall, Riverside Park Residents Association
Helen Landers, Downtown Academy
Dr. R.L. Landers

EAB September 2006 Agenda

A. Opening - B. Dassler and P. Brown

- Attendance and Sign-in
- Announcements
- Approve Minutes (August) & Agenda (September)
- Introduce New Members: NA

B. New Business

1. Downtown Academy of Technology and Arts - Jim Di Sebastian, Principal,
2. Continuing Discussion on EAB 2006-07 Objectives – Implementation Strategies and Initiatives
3. Follow-up Discussion on City Clerk Advisory Board Training (September 21)

C. Old/Ongoing Business

1. Chair Reports – Brown/Dassler
2. Other Reports/Updates/Discussion -
 - a. City Commission/Manager Follow-up: Handout
 - b. Regular Reports & Updates:
 - 1) Staff Liaison Report –Carhart
 - 2) Broward County School District Reports – C. Webster
 - 3) Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations Report – Hays
3. Board Elections

D. Other Matters – (TBD) - For the Good of the Board

E. Next Meeting and Closing

- Agenda Items: TBD:
- Location: Breakthrough Fort Lauderdale
- Date: October 19th
- Motion to Adjourn

Opening – Co-chairs Pam Brown & Brian Dassler - Attendance and Sign-in

The meeting was called to order by the Co-Chairs at 6:30 and the attendance sheet circulated.

Announcements/Introduce New Members

Co-Chair Brown announced that former Board member Ms. Betty Shelly would now be the liaison to the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations, and Dr. Hays had been appointed to the EAB.

Approve August 2006 Minutes, September 2006 Agenda

Motion made by Dr. Hays, seconded by Ms. Schulze, to approve the minutes of the August 2006 meeting. Board unanimously approved.

Co-Chair Dassler explained that there were differences in the agendas that were sent out to Board members. He therefore wanted to move Item 3, Board elections, to their October agenda. Also, two members of the Riverside Park Residents Association were present and wished to address the Board.

Motion made by Co-Chair Dassler, seconded by Ms. Schulze, to move item 3 to the Board's October agenda, and to allow the Riverside Park Residents Association members a few minutes to address the Board under the item "Other Matters". Board unanimously approved.

Motion made by Ms. McCoy, seconded by Dr. Hays, to approve the agenda of the September meeting as amended. Board unanimously approved.

New Business

Presentation: Downtown Academy of Technology and Arts [DATA] - Jim Di Sebastian, Principal, David Jett, Assistant Principal

Mr. Di Sebastian explained that the small, public charter middle school had been located in the First Methodist Church building for three years, and now had approximately 100 students. The school was begun specifically to serve the downtown area. Mr. Di Sebastian stated that in its first year, the school had been rated "F" but was now rated "A." Mr. Di Sebastian distributed copies of a presentation on the school, and a CD with the presentation to Board members.

Mr. Di Sebastian described the school:

- School of Art
 - Full-time art classes, Annual trip to Italy, Dedicated art room
- School of Technology
 - 85% of curriculum is technology-based , Dedicated computer lab, Filtered/monitored high-speed Internet access
- Location
 - Serves the Downtown fort Lauderdale area, Within walking distance of library, museums, parks, Encourages community involvement and participation
- School of Choice
 - Additional help/tutoring and FCAT prep, Programs personalized to students' needs, After-school enrichment program
- Student Population
 - 80% Black, 15% White, 5% Hispanic, 60% Title 1 students

Mr. Di Sebastian said he had asked parents what they wanted in this school, and they responded that they wanted:

- A school that would challenge and take care of their children
- School uniforms
- An environment that would encourage discipline and respect
- Parental involvement

Mr. Di Sebastian said they were now rated #2 of all middle schools and #3 of all schools in the state for student achievement improvement.

Mr. Di Sebastian explained to Dr. Hays that in order to maintain their level of success, they must keep doing what they had been doing, and continue offering help that was tailored to individual students. He noted that each child was tested to determine exactly where his/her strengths and weaknesses were.

Regarding the students' community involvement, Dr. Hays suggested they participate in the Fort Lauderdale Citizens Volunteer Corps projects. Co-Chair Brown said this was one way for kids to earn community service hours.

Mr. Di Sebastian explained that both parents and students were required to volunteer a specific number of hours each year. He explained to Ms. Schulze that students at the Charter School of Excellence had "first crack" at attending DATA.

Mr. Di Sebastian stated that their turnaround from an "F" to "A" was due to hard work on behalf of the staff, students, teachers and their board. He explained to Ms. McCoy that many of their students' parents worked downtown, but any resident of Broward County could attend the school for free.

Mr. Di Sebastian stated that they received approximately half the funds of a regular public school. They must also pay 5% back to the Broward county School Board for their work on behalf of the school. The school also got "last dibs" on school furniture and used text books.

Regarding his background, Mr. Di Sebastian explained that he and his wife had worked in international schools in many countries.

Mr. Di Sebastian noted that they could not select their students, since they were a public school, and they met with students and parents prior to their attending, to be sure they were aware of what the school was like and what the expectations were.

Ms. Landers said she had been on the DATA Board since its inception and invited the EAB to send a representative to their next board meeting, and perhaps become a member. Ms. Landers said the board was very proud of the school.

Dr. Sudarkasa felt the barriers between charter schools and other public schools must come down. She asked if Mr. Di Sebastian would consider partnering with another public school that was having difficulty bringing up its students' performance levels. Mr. Di Sebastian said he was in favor of breaking down barriers, and felt the teachers would welcome communication with other schools.

Mr. Jett explained to Ms. Carhart that parents were required to volunteer 20 hours of their time per year; failure to do so could result in forfeiture of the student's right to attend. So far, this situation had not arisen. Mr. Jett agreed that the small scale of the school substantially contributed to their success.

Continuing Discussion on EAB 2006-07 Objectives – Implementation

Co-Chair Brown reported that she and Co-Chair Dassler had met with School Board Chair Williams and various partners who had agreed to help Sunland. She felt there was a real commitment to have the dry cleaner property bought, declared a Brownfield site, and cleaned up. Ms. McCoy stated that the environmental problems at Sunland had been common knowledge for a very long time, and the reason the problems had never been addressed was because an influential family owned the dry cleaner chain. She felt they must first do some soil and air testing at the school to measure the impact from the dry cleaner.

Co-Chair Dassler asked which Board members had a particular interest in a continued commitment to Sunland Park, noting that he, Co-Chair Brown and Ms. McCoy had already indicated their intent to do this. Ms. Deaner said she wanted to conduct a horticulture program for kindergarteners and first graders, but were awaiting approval from the principal.

Co-Chair Brown agreed to follow up on the City employee mentoring program. Co-Chair Dassler felt they should reach out to the new principal at Arthur Ashe, now that school had started.

The Board agreed that parental involvement was a key element in students' success, and felt that finding ways to encourage this must be a priority. Co-Chair Dassler felt there were physical, informational, and cultural barriers interfering with parental involvement. He felt they had experts in their midst upon whom they could call to create a panel to devise a set of best practices for parental involvement. This panel could include Dr. Dixon and Mr. Dawkins and other interested parties and take place at their November meeting. Then could then contact school volunteer coordinators and provide them with the results of their discussions. Ms. Bradley suggested Ms. Coffman from Bayview be invited as well.

Co-Chair Dassler reminded the Board that they planned to visit Mr. Bass and Breakthrough Fort Lauderdale in October. He said they could request that Mr. Bass's presentation concentrate on parental involvement, and invite Dr. Dixon, Mr. Dawkins and Ms. Kaufman to this meeting. Co-Chair Dassler agreed that they must be selective about presentations they invited and attended to ensure that they these presentations stayed consistent with the Board's priorities.

Follow-up Discussion on City Clerk Advisory Board Training

Co-Chair Dassler distributed a packet of information from the Advisory Board training session.

Old/Ongoing Business

Chair Reports

Co-Chair Dassler proposed that Ms. Deaner be named Chair Emeritus of the EAB and that as such, she would be a non-voting member with access to all materials and communications, and would be afforded the ability to provide input at meetings.

Motion made by Co-Chair Dassler, seconded by Dr. Hays, to name Lu Deaner Chair Emeritus of the EAB. Board unanimously approved.

Other reports and Updates

City Commission/Manager Follow-up: Handout

Co-Chair Dassler distributed a packet of information compiled by the Riverside Park Residents' Association and sent to the Broward County School Board and the School Board's response regarding Stranahan High School. Co-Chair Dassler reminded the Board of their recent letter to the Superintendent of Schools regarding the EAB's support for a phased replacement at Stranahan High School.

Mr. Dave Marshall, president of the Riverside Park Residents' Association, asked the Board to keep the Riverside Park Residents' Association notified of any items the Board discussed that were located in their community. Mr. Marshall said they had some concerns about the impact the renovation would have on the neighborhood and they had had discussions with many groups regarding these concerns.

Mr. Tom Andrew, vice president of the Riverside Park Residents' Association, drew the Board's attention to the neighborhood map and noted how this helped to illustrate the school in the context of its neighborhood. Mr. Andrew explained that they had requested a holistic traffic study to assess the impact of construction traffic and bus service in the area.

Regular Reports and Updates

Staff Liaison Report – Ms. Carhart - Ms. Carhart reported that she was in the process of updating the database to incorporate the new 20-day count data. In the future she hopes to also include information about volunteer coordinators, parent group contacts, etc.

Broward County School District Reports – Mr. Webster - Mr. Webster was not present.

Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations Report – Dr. Hays - Ms. Schulze and Ms. Carhart agreed to help Dr. Hays prepare for the Education Advisory Boards' November Best Practices workshop.

Other Matters/For the Good of the Board

Ms. Schulze wanted the Board to address truancy issue at Arthur Ashe on their October agenda. She had discovered that statistically, 20% of the school was absent more than 21 day per year. Co-Chair Dassler asked Dr. Sudarkasa and Ms. McCoy to prepare a brief report on this issue for the October meeting.

Next Meeting and Closing

- **Agenda Items:**
- **Location:** Breakthrough Fort Lauderdale
- **Date:** October 19

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Handouts:

1. Downtown Academy of Technology and Arts [DATA] presentation
2. Packet from the Riverside Park Residents' Association regarding the Capital Plan for Stranahan High School
3. Packet from the Advisory Board training session