

**APPROVED  
MINUTES OF THE  
EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida  
100 North Andrews Avenue, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Cafeteria/Lounge  
Thursday, October 16, 2008, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

**Cumulative Attendance**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Dr. Elizabeth Hays, Chair	P	5	1
Phaedra Xanthos, Co-Chair	P	4	2
Laura Clark	P	4	2
Lu Deaner	P	6	1
Elaine Schulze	P	5	1
Connie Christensen	A	3	3
Edna Elijah (arr. 6:52)	P	3	0
Gloria Barr Jackson (arr. 6:42)	P	2	1
Ed Parke (arr. 6:32)	P	3	0
Jacqueline Ackerina	P	1	0

Total Members Present: 10

Current Membership: 10

Quorum: 8

**Staff**

Julie Richards, Interim Staff Liaison

Charles Webster, Broward County Public Schools

Betty Shelley, Fort Lauderdale Council of Civic Associations

Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**A. Opening – Chair Hays**

• **Attendance and Sign-in**

Chair Hays called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and attendance was taken. She thanked Ms. Clark and Ms. Deaner for conducting the September 2008 meeting, and noted that much was accomplished in that meeting.

Chair Hays requested that a second item be added to the October 2008 agenda under New/Future Business, “November Meeting Guests,” as she had some suggestions on this topic. She also pointed out that the October agenda should be corrected to reflect that she conducted this meeting’s Opening, rather than Ms. Clark and Ms. Deaner.

As a quorum was not present, the minutes and agenda could not yet be approved.

At the request of Chair Hays, the following item was taken out of order.

- **Guest Introductions**

Jonda Joseph, City Clerk, spoke on behalf of City Auditor John Herbst, who was unable to attend the meeting.

Ms. Joseph stated that on November 4, 2008, one item that will appear on the ballot is an Amendment to the City Charter, which, if passed, will clarify the authority of the City Clerk and City Auditor to appoint and supervise their own employees. At the time these two positions were added to the Charter, Ms. Joseph said, the language of the additions did not make these responsibilities entirely clear.

Passage of the Amendment, she continued, would bring consistency to the language governing the four offices included in the Charter: the City Manager, City Attorney, City Auditor, and City Clerk. She explained that the City Clerk's function was to be the official keeper of City records; being a Charter office guarantees the City Clerk's independence while working for the City Commission.

Ms. Joseph added that in addition to the candidates for office who will appear on the ballot, there will be 17 questions, of which the Amendment in question is number 17.

At this time she offered to answer any questions by the Board.

Ms. Schulze requested clarification on the Amendment's wording, asking whether a vote in its favor would be a "Yes" or a "No" vote. Ms. Joseph said a "Yes" vote would be in favor of the change.

Chair Hays thanked Ms. Joseph for attending the meeting.

Mr. Parke joined the meeting at this time (6:32 p.m.).

- **Introduce New Member: Jacqueline Ackerina**

Chair Hays welcomed Ms. Ackerina to the Board, and asked that she introduce herself briefly to the other members.

Ms. Ackerina stated that she lived in downtown Fort Lauderdale, and had learned of the EAB through Ms. Deaner. She noted that she and Ms. Deaner served on the Educational Committee Forum together and shared many of the same goals regarding educational matters.

She is originally from New York and has 28 years of experience in teaching and school administration. She concluded that she looks forward to being of service to both the Board and the community at large.

The other Board members briefly introduced themselves as well.

Ms. Jackson joined the meeting at this time (6:42 p.m.), which gave the meeting a quorum of members.

- **Approve Minutes (August and September) and Agenda (October)**

**Motion** made by Ms. Deaner, seconded by Ms. Jackson, to approve the October 2008 agenda as corrected. In a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**Motion** made by Ms. Xanthos, seconded by Ms. Schulze, to approve the August 2008 meeting minutes. In a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**Motion** made by Ms. Xanthos, seconded by Ms. Schulze, to approve the September 2008 meeting minutes. In a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

- **Announcements**

Ms. Deaner stated that the Southside School, which was being restored as a Community Center, would hold a ribbon cutting, possibly in early January 2009. She said she would keep the Board informed when a date for this event was announced.

Mr. Parke recalled the presentation by School Board member Maureen Dinnen at the September 2008 meeting, adding that he was surprised at the amount of money spent per child on education in the United States vs. the amount spent in other countries.

Chair Hays agreed that this was a problem, not only for United States schools in general but Florida schools in particular, as the state ranked 50<sup>th</sup> in the nation in this category.

Ms. Schulze noted that the United States ranked 27<sup>th</sup> in the world in school spending per child.

Ms. Elijah joined the meeting at this time (6:52 p.m.).

**B. Current Business – None**

**C. Old/Ongoing Business**

**1. Sunland Park**

Chair Hays reported that Principal Mattie Benson had thanked the Board for inviting her to the September 2008 meeting, and she had personally followed up with Ms. Benson to thank her for her presentation. She added that she had reiterated the Board's interest in working on incentives with the school.

She had also spoken with Mr. Hamilton, who had also been present at the meeting, and noted that he was Head of the School Advisory Committee (SAC) at Sunland Park. Mr. Hamilton had invited the Board to attend the next meeting of this Committee, which Chair Hays announced she planned to attend. She encouraged other members to attend as well, and added that she would send the meeting date to the Board members.

Ms. Jackson stated that her sorority has adopted Sunland Park Elementary, and its members will be volunteering at the school.

**2. Arthur Ashe**

Chair Hays said she had spoken with Mr. Luciani regarding the School Board's approval of Arthur Ashe Middle School for a Magnet program. One major concern, she pointed out, was that it was the County's only middle school without a Magnet program at the time, among other issues. It was agreed that the institution of a Magnet program would boost enrollment at this school. The EAB had advocated for such a program, which was awarded to Arthur Ashe Middle School last year, to begin this school year.

In the first year of this program, Chair Hays noted, the school currently had 100 students in grades 3-8. The Magnet program was known as Differentiated Instruction, which meant students were considered to be individuals, each one with his or her own level of needs. As a result, assignments differed between individual students and more one-on-one instruction was instituted.

She continued that the school had a number of “high-achieving” students, and educators and staff felt the Differentiated Instruction program would cross over to non-Magnet schools to some degree, once the success of the program became more widely known.

Mr. Luciani had suggested Chair Hays contact the head of the Magnet program for further information, she said. She recommended that inviting this individual to the next Board meeting for a presentation on the program become an agenda item for November 2008, so the Board can ask how they may be of more assistance to the school.

Chair Hays felt that the manner in which both Sunland Park and Arthur Ashe were reaching parents in their communities was crucial to both schools’ success, and noted that Ms. Benson had said much of this work was done through the SAC program at Sunland Park, rather than through a PTA program.

Ms. Deaner recalled that Ms. Benson had suggested that the most effective way by which the Board could be of assistance was to help provide small incentives for the students, rather than by working with students’ parents.

### **3. EAB Goals**

Chair Hays felt it was important to spend some time focusing on the Board’s continuing goals for the academic year. To this end, she gave all members copies of these pages from the May 2008 meeting minutes, as the new Board members had not participated in a discussion of goals before. As the Board’s makeup had changed significantly since these goals were first selected, Chair Hays noted that the direction the overall Board wished to take might have changed as well.

The first conversation centered on mentoring, in which older students would partner with younger students. The original intent of this program was for students at the Academy of Technology to assist high school students who were experiencing trouble in technological media; Chair Hays noted, however, that the individual who had proposed this program was no longer a Board member. She pointed out that mentoring could occur at many different levels, such as high school students mentoring middle school students, for example, and the Board could pursue a direction different from the original suggestion. She proposed that perhaps students attending the Magnet program at Arthur Ashe could even mentor students from the same neighborhood who attended Sunland Park Elementary.

Ms. Elijah suggested that high school students who chose to mentor middle school students could use this time toward their community hours requirement. While not all schools functioned at a level from which mentors could be drawn, she felt that perhaps Mr. Webster could provide the Board with a list of those schools that might have students who were able to mentor others. Students at a technical school, such as Atlantic or McFadden, would be likely to have advanced skills they could share through a mentoring program, she said.

Ms. Clarke expressed concern that mentoring for community service must be done during school hours, as the availability of transportation for all students could not be guaranteed.

Ms. Jackson pointed out that many high schools did not have high overall test scores, which might impede the implementation of a mentoring program by high school students. She clarified that this phenomenon is County-wide, not limited to Fort Lauderdale schools only.

In order to provide some perspective, Chair Hays provided the Board with the grades assigned to Fort Lauderdale high schools in 2008: Stranahan, Boyd Anderson, and Dillard were graded D, despite their respective Magnet programs. Only Fort Lauderdale High School had received a B. She pointed out that this indicated concerns that the high schools were not yet meeting acceptable standards.

Ms. Ackerina felt it was important not to lose focus on mentoring because student-to-student mentoring might not be applicable; adult mentoring was a possibility, she stated, such as the Take Stock in Children program that was based in the actual school building. This group attempted to work within the community, she said, although many individuals were not aware of its existence. She also pointed out that adults would not suffer transportation issues during the school day.

Chair Hays stated that she was in her 3<sup>rd</sup> year of participation with Take Stock in Children. She noted that she could only deal with one child, and did not always feel she was “doing what she could” with regard to the mentoring program. She also pointed out that she had recognized some organizational difficulties within the program, and that very few mentors currently participated. For example, she said, two students have not yet met with their assigned mentors so far this school year. She suggested that perhaps mentoring more than one child at a time in a group environment might be an answer to this situation.

Ms. Jackson offered that she had previously been in charge of mentoring at New River, and a group environment for mentoring had been successful there.

Ms. Ackerina stated that she had become aware of the opportunities provided by the Freedom Foundation, which Ms. Christensen had discussed at the September meeting, and the student she mentored would be attending one of the organization's seminars.

Ms. Jackson suggested that in the area of technology, perhaps the Board could reach out to local businesses with expertise in this field, which could send employees to work within schools as mentors.

Ms. Schulze agreed with this proposal, stating that one purpose of the Board was to connect students in need of help with members of the community who could offer valuable expertise. She offered that she had known individuals who wanted to mentor, but were not aware of how to become involved with a program, or how to contribute services.

Chair Hays proposed a mentor training program, which might partner a prospective mentor with a more experienced one to allow them to observe the process.

Ms. Schulze suggested asking the Civic Associations, which had been proposed some time ago but had never fully been developed. Many older citizens who did not work during the day might want to become involved, she said.

Mr. Parke expressed concern that use of the FCAT as a measurement of a school's progress, as discussed by Ms. Dinnen at the last meeting, might be doing "more harm than good," as so much of any given school year is spent in preparation for the test rather than on what seemed more necessary skills. Chair Hays agreed that this is a sentiment shared by many, and the Board has expressed its opinion on the subject more than once in its existence.

Ms. Clarke noted that each school has a volunteer coordinator, and suggested seeking out this individual at various schools, particularly at Sunland Park and Arthur Ashe. Part of the volunteer coordinator's job, she added, is to seek out members of the community to volunteer their services at the school; this is a demanding job, and perhaps the Board could offer assistance to these coordinators, she proposed.

Ms. Clarke offered to contact the Sunland Park volunteer coordinator, and Ms. Ackerina said she would reach out to Arthur Ashe.

Ms. Xanthos suggested working with the business community: for instance, asking companies to sponsor volunteers to work in schools by paying them for a few hours of this service every month.

Mr. Webster advised first contacting the principal of any school at which Board members wished to assist the volunteer coordinator, as getting the commitment and support of the school's principal would be key to the success of the endeavor. As an example, he cited the interest of the Blanche Ely High School principal in bringing the Take Stock in Children program to his school, where volunteers agreed that it had been a success.

Chair Hays asked if Mr. Webster might be more effective than the Board in reaching out to principals on the subject. He stated that he would be "more than happy" to make these first contacts.

Chair Hays summed up from the Board's discussion that mentoring would remain a major goal of the EAB.

She then asked if the Board could further discuss partnerships with the business community, noting that there could be other aspects to these partnerships besides mentoring opportunities. The schools that had fewer or no such partnerships, she noted, were generally the schools in the most need of assistance; she suggested that the Board could help by developing more partnerships for these schools.

Ms. Xanthos felt there were many opportunities to recruit the aid of companies who could partner with schools, not only as mentors but possibly with actual donated incentives. As an example, she cited companies who allow employees a "casual day" on a regular basis, with a nominal donation to be given to charity; she suggested that some companies might donate these funds to the school.

Chair Hays asked if Ms. Xanthos would put suggestions such as this one in writing for the Board to revisit later.

Ms. Deaner proposed asking companies to donate small vouchers as incentives in a partnership role.

Ms. Jackson pointed out that many businesses have been successful in giving out small incentives for children who, for example, make the honor roll. She suggested contacting the Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce for the names



of some of the community's most successful businesses, who might be interested in "buy[ing] into" a partnership program.

Ms. Xanthos offered to present this proposal at a Chamber of Commerce meeting if it was put in writing.

Chair Hays noted that another EAB goal was to bring out City employees to help, although she noted that a program of this nature had been suggested in the past at Lauderdale Manors Elementary, the Board's third adopted school, but had not been followed through.

Ms. Clarke felt the volunteer coordinators would be of great importance in bringing a program like this to fruition, as they knew what students and teachers needed at their respective schools.

Mr. Parke suggested partnering with the tourism and marine industries, which could perhaps sponsor activities that children could enjoy, such as making boats when a regatta was planned.

Chair Hays felt this was a good idea, noting that Stranahan was currently partnering with the City's Waterworks project, which had provided activities of this nature for children.

As the Board agreed that partnerships remained an important goal, Chair Hays moved the discussion on to the next item, a one-on-one reading program. She felt that this program would provide an opportunity to involve City employees with the schools. She requested that Ms. Richards inform the City Manager's office that a proposal of this nature was forthcoming.

Ms. Deaner felt this would be an appropriate action when the new City Commission was in place.

Ms. Clarke recommended asking members of the Fire and Police Departments to participate in a reading program, and that a different reader attend every week.

Chair Hays asked Ms. Clarke to write an outline of the proposed program to present at the next Board meeting for further discussion. Ms. Clarke agreed, and offered to contact the Fire and Police Departments as well.

Ms. Schulze suggested asking retired police officers to participate as well.

Chair Hays summed up by confirming that the reading program would remain an EAB goal. She then returned to the discussion of the Board's three adopted schools.

Ms. Xanthos pointed out that the Board did not have a fundraising goal, and felt that they could be helpful in organizing events that would raise money for their project schools, and other schools as well.

Chair Hays noted that the Board would need to look into the regulations placed on advisory boards to find out if fundraising was an appropriate undertaking. As so many ideas had been proposed, she encouraged the Board members to look into how they could contribute as individuals to the goals.

Returning to the three schools, she advised the new Board members that, over the past few years, the EAB had "adopted" Sunland Park and Arthur Ashe Elementary schools, and had adopted Lauderdale Manors Elementary as well, although the last has been considered "on sabbatical." She asked if any members objected to the continuation of working with these schools.

Ms. Schulze asked if anyone was aware of another school that might need the Board's assistance, noting that both Sunland Park and Arthur Ashe had made significant improvements.

Chair Hays felt although these schools had made progress, the Board should retain Sunland Park in particular. If anyone wished to suggest another school in need of assistance, she said, it would certainly be considered.

Ms. Deaner added that these schools had been adopted because they appeared to be "low on the totem pole" in the Fort Lauderdale school system. She noted that it was important for the schools to want the EAB's assistance.

Ms. Schulze pointed out that the schools must also be aware of the Board and its willingness to help.

Chair Hays reiterated the invitation to the Board that if they were aware of other schools in need of extra assistance, they should bring information to the next meeting.

Ms. Elijah felt that schools' overall scores should be a factor in consideration.

Ms. Jackson addressed the importance of the Board's not taking on so many projects that it became overtaxed. She felt it was best to remain focused on the schools already adopted.

Chair Hays stated that Sunland Park had been an "F" school in 2007-08, with a "D" for the three previous years; Arthur Ashe had received grades of "F," "D," and "C;" and Lauderdale Manors had been graded "D," "C," "F," and "I." She added that she would contact Heather H. DeVaughn, principal of Lauderdale Manors Elementary, to revive the Board's relationship with that school.

#### **4. CCC Project – Further Discussion**

Chair Hays noted that there had been some discussion of the CCC at the last meeting, and invited the Board to raise any issues or concerns.

Regarding the Diversity Committee in particular, she continued that she had discovered that there are empty seats on the Committee. The vacancies are in the Districts represented by Robin Bartleman (3 vacant seats), Jennifer Gottlieb (1), and Eleanor Sobol (1). This could provide an opportunity for interested Board members to serve on the Diversity Committee as well.

She noted that the Committee has several goals and projects, site visits being only one of these. Currently there was little information available on the CCC's work.

Chair Hays informed the Board that the next Diversity Committee meeting was scheduled for November 6, 2008, at the K.C. Wright Building from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Their regular meeting occurs on the first Thursday of each month.

#### **5. Statistics – 20-Day Counts**

Chair Hays did not have figures available on hand for 2008, but presented the Board with the 2006 and 2007 20-day counts. She noted that the figures can be confusing, and offered to spend time with any member who did not fully understand the reports. FCAT scores were included, as was the makeup of the individual schools. Chair Hays noted that some schools had a nearly 100% African-American student population.

She added she would address the increase in numbers on these figures as part of the Chair Report.

#### **6. Other Reports/Updates/Discussion**

- **Education Forum – Sub-Committee Updates**

No new information was available regarding the Education Forum, Chair Hays said.

- **Student Member to the EAB**

Chair Hays noted that this program is still “on hold” and she had not had an opportunity to follow up on it.

- **City Commission Follow-Up**

As City Clerk Jonda Joseph had addressed the Board earlier, this topic was not revisited.

- **Staff Liaison Report – Julie Richards, Interim Liaison**

Ms. Richards had nothing to report at this time.

- **Broward County School District – Charles Webster**

Mr. Webster informed the Board that Broward County did not receive the Broad Prize for Urban Education Award, although they did receive \$250,000 in scholarships for graduating seniors. It was the first time Broward County schools had competed for this award.

Mr. Webster went on to note that Ben Williams, District 5 Representative to the School Board, will hold a “Dinner for Dads” on Wednesday, October 22, 2008, at Blanche Ely High School. He also plans two additional events at Hallandale and Stranahan. Mr. Webster explained that the event is designed to further involve men in schools. He noted that the Million Father March, held earlier in the school year, had attracted roughly 28,000 participants.

The Dinner for Dads is a similar event, with school principals present to speak to attendees, he said.

Mr. Webster also noted that the current President-elect of the PTA is a male this year.

He continued that the State Legislature is considering re-forming the Bright Future Scholarship at the University of Florida. It had been noted that many

students who did not need the scholarship were able to take advantage of it, including students with a family income greater than \$100,000. According to the State Legislature, the scholarship is thought to have an effect on the tuition rate, he said.

It is expected that State funds may be cut again this year, Mr. Webster stated, as all State agencies have been asked to look into a 10% budget decrease.

He went on to note that the African-American Success Foundation will celebrate its annual Success Weekend on November 8, 2008, in the City of Fort Lauderdale. The event will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel on 17<sup>th</sup> Street.

The purpose of the organization, Mr. Webster explained, is to support original research on African-American success, with the intent of finding out what is successful and can replicate that success with children. This year's speaker, a Doctoral candidate in Math Education at the University of Illinois, will give a presentation focusing on success strategies among African-Americans who are high academic achievers, particularly at the college level in the fields of Math and Engineering.

The event begins at 9:00 a.m. and is free and open to the public, he said.

Chair Hays asked Mr. Webster to write up the event and send it to Ms. Richards, as she felt the event would be a "great endeavor" for the community.

In response to a question about the Consortium of Education Advisory Boards (CEAB), Mr. Webster did not have new information on the group at this time.

Ms. Schulze asked if statistics were available on the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) program. Mr. Webster responded that he did not know if these were available, but would look into the matter.

Ms. Schulze continued that she was concerned as to whether the program was working, and expressed concern that the funds for VPK had previously gone to Kid Care, a children's health program.

Mr. Webster said he would find this information and bring it to the next EAB meeting.

- **Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations – Betty Shelley**

Ms. Shelley stated the Council of Civic Associations will hold a Candidates' Forum for the City of Fort Lauderdale on Thursday, January 29, 2009, at 7:00 p.m., held in the City Commission Chambers. This will be before the February primary. Another Forum will be held Thursday, February 26, 2009, also in Chambers. She asked that anyone with questions they would like the candidates to hear send them to her office. The questions did not necessarily have to be related to education, and are due by December 1, 2008.

Candidates for City Commission and Mayor will attend, Ms. Shelley said.

She added that a Council Members and Board Members Party will be held Tuesday, December 9, 2008. Attendees are invited to bring a dish to the event, which will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria. The City Council will provide dishes as well. Ms. Shelley described it as a "meet and greet" for Council members.

Chair Hays recognized Ms. Shelley's work in organizing the Appreciation Day for Firefighters and Police, which took place in August 2008.

## **7. Chair Report**

Chair Hays informed the Board that six Broward County high schools had been awarded silver medals by the Best High Schools Search 2008. Two of these schools, Stranahan and Fort Lauderdale High, are located in the City.

Chair Hays said she had sent a note to the City Commissioners urging them to congratulate these two schools.

She thanked Mr. Webster for supplying the Board with copies of "News and Views," noting that she consistently found them informative and interesting.

In September, New River Middle School was recognized for its extended learning time program, she noted. Over \$7.5 million in grant money was shared among several City schools.

The 2008 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School Program named the Charter School of Excellence as a recipient of its award, she continued.

Chair Hays added that she sent notes of congratulations to Jamila Hopkins of Lauderdale Manors Elementary and Samuel Brown of Sunland Elementary, two of the 11 Broward County teachers receiving recognition by the "A Day Made Better" Program. In all, 79 Florida teachers received this award.

She noted that this is National School Lunch Week (October 13-17).

Martin Luther King Elementary participated in the Read for the Record campaign, which challenges schools to take part in the world's "largest shared reading experience."

**D. New/Future Business**

○ **Fort Lauderdale Centennial Celebration**

Chair Hays reminded the Board that the Centennial Celebration will take place on March 27, 2011. She noted that she had left messages for Ted Lawson, who is Liaison to that Board, regarding ways in which the EAB might participate, perhaps by organizing activities in schools.

○ **November Meeting Guests**

Chair Hays stated that the principal of Stranahan High School was willing to attend the November Board meeting, to discuss the plan for the renovation of that school.

She added that the November meeting would also host Claudia Monroe of the School Board's Facilities Division, who would discuss the District's Green Schools Initiative.

A third prospective guest would be a speaker associated with the Magnet program at Arthur Ashe Elementary, although Chair Hays felt this presentation could be held in January rather than November.

She added that the discussion of EAB goals would continue in November as well.

**E. Next Meeting**

The next EAB meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2008.

**F. For the Good of the Community**

Ms. Deaner addressed Mr. Parke's earlier comment regarding the FCAT, pointing out that Ms. Dinnen, at the September EAB meeting, had mentioned a lesser focus on these test scores in determining the overall performance of a school. Unfortunately, she said, it was not a subject the Board could address.

Chair Hays proposed that the Board could instead make a recommendation to the City Commission, encouraging the City to reconsider the impact of the test scores when assigning a grade to the school.

Ms. Jackson noted that FCAT guidelines are mandated by the State Legislature, which placed the tests' impact out of the reach of most advisory bodies. She also pointed out that high school students' SAT performance had suffered due to the greater importance placed on the FCAT.

**Motion** made by Ms. Schulze, seconded by Ms. Elijah, to have Ms. Deaner and Mr. Parke partner to craft a letter from the Board to the City Commission, stating the Board's views on the FCAT.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]