

**APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE
EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
100 North Andrews Avenue, 8th Floor Cafeteria/Lounge
Thursday, March 19, 2009 – 6:30 p.m.**

Cumulative Attendance

Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Jacqueline Ackerina, Chair	P	5	0
Laura Clark, Vice Chair	P	7	3
Lu Deaner	P	10	1
Elaine Schulze (arr. 6:42)	P	7	3
Edna Elijah	P	5	2
Dr. Maureen Persi, Ed. D.	P	3	0
Derek Kelmanson	A	1	1

As of this date, there were 7 appointed members to the Board, which means 4 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

Julie Richards, Interim Staff Liaison
Charles Webster, Broward County Public Schools
Betty Shelley, Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations
Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

A. Opening

- **Attendance and Sign-in**

Acting Chair Ackerina called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. The Board observed a moment of silence in honor of Chair Elizabeth Hays.

- **Approval of Minutes (October and November 2008, January and February 2009) and Agenda (March 2009)**

Acting Chair Ackerina noted corrections to the February 2009 minutes, and Board members noted corrections to the January 2009 minutes.

Motion made by Ms. Elijah, seconded by Ms. Deaner, to approve the October and November 2008 and January and February 2009 minutes as corrected. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

Ms. Schulze joined the meeting at this time (6:42 p.m.).

- **Guest Introductions**

Acting Chair Ackerina advised that a guest speaker would address the Board about the Magnet Program at Arthur Ashe Middle School.

B. Current Business

- **Elect EAB Chair and Vice Chair**

Chair Ackerina noted that her current position is Acting Chair, and she would leave all decisions regarding the election of a Chair and Vice Chair up to the membership.

Motion made by Dr. Persi, seconded by Ms. Deaner, to nominate Acting Chair Ackerina as Chair of the EAB.

Motion made by Ms. Deaner, seconded by Dr. Persi, to nominate Ms. Clark as Vice Chair of the EAB.

Motion made by Ms. Schulze to nominate Ms. Elijah as Vice Chair of the EAB. Ms. Elijah declined to accept the nomination.

In a voice vote, Acting Chair Ackerina was elected Chair and Ms. Clark was elected Vice Chair.

C. Old / Ongoing Business

1. Sunland Park

Chair Ackerina reiterated that the Board's guest speaker would discuss the Magnet Program at Arthur Ashe Middle School, which is one of three schools the Board has adopted. She noted that Sunland Park and Lauderdale Manors are schools adopted by the Board, and asked that they discuss how they could best serve these schools.

She recalled that Vice Chair Clark had been instrumental in establishing a program at Sunland Park in which police officers or firefighters participate in a reading program with students. She asked that the Board look at other ways in which they could assist these schools, and what it means to adopt a school.

Ms. Deaner recalled that Principal Mattie Benson of Sunland Park had suggested that the Board contribute vouchers or other small items that could be used as incentives for students. These could be given to the school for distribution to students as rewards.

Chair Ackerina suggested approaching local businesses with a letter drafted by the school's principal, as any donated materials could then be used as a tax write-off by that business.

Ms. Elijah noted that, since most businesses are corporations, they should seek out an individual responsible for donations of this nature before approaching that person. Many of these corporations require that the Board contact their corporate offices, she pointed out.

Chair Ackerina stated that many area businesses are locally owned and operated, citing the businesses on Las Olas Boulevard as examples. She recalled that these businesses are willing to donate for other charitable causes, provided they are given a copy of the request in writing. She added that requests to a corporate office also require a longer time for that business to process and respond to a request.

Dr. Persi felt it was "a wonderful idea" to have a school's principal give a presentation, such as the principal of Arthur Ashe Middle School, who would address the Board at this meeting. She recommended reaching out to Sunland Park and Lauderdale Manors to invite these schools' administrators to the April 2009 Board meeting, so the Board would develop a "more current feel" for the direction the schools were taking. It was noted that Ms. Benson from Sunland Park had addressed the Board at a recent meeting.

Vice Chair Clark noted that the Police Department at her local school had been able to replace stolen bicycles for students, which had been a popular program with the students.

Ms. Elijah stated that, as the Board had contacted Sunland Park and Arthur Ashe, they should focus on reaching out to Lauderdale Manors Principal Heather DeVonne to learn what direction that school planned to take moving forward.

Ms. Schulze advised the Board at this time that tonight was her last meeting as a Board member, and it was necessary for her to leave at this time (7:00 p.m.).

- **Arthur Ashe Magnet Program**

Arthur Ashe Middle School Principal Andrew Luciani stated that for three years, Arthur Ashe representatives had discussed the Magnet Program with Board members, beginning when the Program was in its planning stage. In April 2008, the School Board had approved the Program, which was put together between April and July. The school recruited students, and the Magnet Program became active in the 2008-09 school year.

The school brought approximately 120 students into the Magnet Program, he continued. The Program, entitled CITY (Center for Intellectually Talented Youth), is currently nearing the completion of its first full year in operation. Mr. Luciani felt it has “exceeded our expectations” by student and parent interest, by the teachers recruited, by the curriculum developed, and by the support of the School District. He noted the School Board’s Area Office and Advanced Academic Office as having been particularly helpful. However, he felt the most praise should go to the Staff of Arthur Ashe Middle School.

Enrollment at the school has increased, and a new curriculum and strategies for instruction have been introduced; Mr. Luciani noted that these are all criteria for bringing in a Magnet Program. Following the first year of operation, he asserted that the school hopes to take these instructional delivery systems and the results gained from them and implement them into the school’s wider population, so all students can reap the advantages of having a Magnet Program.

He introduced Terence Hart, Assistant Principal and Intern Principal at Arthur Ashe. Mr. Luciani explained that when an Assistant Principal becomes an Intern Principal, he is eligible for a principalship at his own school. Sabrina Tobias-Carey is the Magnet Facilitator, and has worked with Mr. Luciani since the beginning of the Magnet Program, from processing applications and interviewing students and parents to developing the curriculum and hiring teachers. Christopher Gates is the school’s technology expert, and assists teachers in implementing technology into their classrooms. Mr. Luciani noted that some CITY classrooms are among the most up-to-date, state-of-the-art classrooms to be found in Broward County.

In addition to these Staff members, a team of six or seven teachers also work with the Magnet Program’s students. Mr. Luciani explained that students at “a variety of levels” are served by the Program; he added that Arthur Ashe is the only area Middle School to accept students in the third grade. The school serves students in grades 3-8, although Mr. Luciani pointed out that intellectually, many Arthur Ashe students are in much higher grade levels, and take courses such as algebra, geometry, or higher maths and other courses.

He noted that this can present a challenge to keep students excited about learning, as many are much more advanced than their classmates. While a common generalization about gifted and talented students is that they are bright and motivated, they can also be difficult to deal with, as they are often easily bored or distracted. Teachers in this field must be “at the top of their game,” he advised.

Mr. Luciani informed the Board that he is finishing his third year at Arthur Ashe, and recalled that one of the first things he had learned at this school was that the EAB was “on their side.” He remembered that the Board had been an early

proponent of the Magnet Program, and had continually prompted the School Board to look into the possibility of such a Program's development. He added that the rest of the School District was now seeking ways to duplicate Arthur Ashe's program at other schools.

He continued by noting that Arthur Ashe was once a "struggling" school, and still faced difficulties from time to time. Many of its students come from economically challenged homes and struggle academically. However, the Magnet Program has turned the school's culture around, and is setting an example for the School Board to consider for other institutions as well.

Mr. Luciani turned the presentation over to Mr. Gates, who distributed information packets to the Board and showed a PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Gates advised that there are two programs available within the school: the CITY Magnet Program, which is school-wide and available to all students, and a specialized program, CITY Academy, which is District-wide and for gifted or "high-intellect" students.

Programs include Broward Virtual High School, which partners with Arthur Ashe, as some of the Middle School's students are sufficiently academically advanced that they can excel at this higher level. Ms. Tobias-Carey cited the example of an eight-year-old student who is studying Algebra, a course traditionally reserved for 9th-grade or older students, and an 8th-grade student who is taking Algebra II online through Broward Virtual High School. She described this as "the best of both worlds," as these students learn what the school system feels they should be taught at their age, but there are no limits on how much they can accelerate.

The Magnet Program establishes a profile of each participating student, which provides an assessment of every child's primary, secondary, and tertiary areas of interest. This helps teachers to differentiate within their classrooms, he stated, explaining that a teacher of a specific subject may tailor what is asked of each student according to his or her interests.

In addition, if a child's performance in a particular area is above grade level, the Program offers alternatives that may keep a student from becoming bored in the classroom, such as providing students with work tailored to their specific levels in that subject.

Mr. Gates moved on to Synergistics, which he described as the only lab of its kind in Broward County, and similar to the lab used by the Tiger Woods Learning Center. This is a science/math/technology-based program. Extended learning opportunities may be made available through Broward Virtual High School, he added, such as a program that partners with the Cardiovascular Institute. Ms. Tobias-Carey described one aspect of this program as a chance for students to

witness an actual open-heart surgery, which is another example of allowing students an opportunity that meets their interests and learning styles.

Mr. Luciani added that distance learning allows the school to “hook up” with other classrooms, or with experts in various fields, anywhere in the world, and that this is done on almost a daily basis at the school.

Mr. Gates stated that the Magnet Program is recruiting county-wide to fill its 125 seats for the 2009-10 school year. He noted that their recruitment is primarily about change, and what makes Arthur Ashe’s Magnet Program different from any other such Program in Broward County.

Ms. Tobias-Carey pointed out that Mr. Luciani had implemented Magnet Programs at different schools before coming to Arthur Ashe. Parents of gifted students had stated that there was a need for a program for these students, who were not receiving all the instruction they could at traditional schools. Parents were told from the beginning that there would be no “cap” on the students’ learning, but that instead children would be engaged and motivated to learn.

The biggest challenge so far, she continued, was that roughly 20% of the students’ parents had felt the curriculum moved too fast and that they were unused to the program.

There were additional concerns about having, for example, eight-year-old children sharing a building with 14-year-olds. There are students who work at a high school level although they are chronologically very young.

Ms. Deaner asked what socialization a very young child might experience if he or she learned at a much higher level. Ms. Tobias-Carey explained that this child might be with other young children most of the day, but would also spend time with older children in some of his more advanced classes.

Mr. Luciani described the entire Program as “a laboratory,” stating that Arthur Ashe was breaking new ground in the Broward County educational system; however, they were not the first school on a national level to implement a program of this nature. Traditionally, the District has dealt with gifted students by pulling them out of their own age group for additional instruction, sometimes during multiple periods of the day. The Arthur Ashe program places a gifted student with other students who have similar IQs to his, which are not always groups of children the same age as that student. They will then be returned to their own age groups for other kinds of activities.

He noted that parents are not necessarily “resistant” to the practice, but are often curious and/or concerned. Mr. Luciani described parents who have brought their

children to the Program as brave, as they knew their children needed “more than what they [were] getting.”

When the Magnet Program was being put together, he stated, the team “had a vision” of what they hoped to achieve, although none of the participants had a proven track record. He clarified that this did not mean they created the Program in the absence of solid knowledge. They had consulted world-renowned educators of gifted children, who had advised the team of what “true gifted programs need to have.”

Despite this, there had been some early concern regarding whether parents would send their students to a Program such as this one, as Mr. Luciani described it as “very experimental.” In addition, Arthur Ashe had traditionally been known as a “low-achieving” school. He felt this could be explained by the fact that parents were not happy with the level of education their children were currently getting.

While the Magnet Program has exceeded its team’s expectations, Mr. Luciani asserted that they also had “a long way to go,” as they had learned even more about what needed to be done. He continued that a survey of participating students had been conducted, and out of all participants, only two have opted not to return for the 2009-10 school year.

He reiterated that Arthur Ashe is currently reviewing applications for its next group of students. Additionally, while the school is generally perceived as an improvement for most students, parents also do not hesitate to inform the school’s team when they feel something is not being done correctly. Mr. Luciani felt that some 75 percent of the time, there is merit to this input from parents, as they know what they want for their children and what the children need. He felt administration is a business in which one could “never stop listening,” as administrators need to know what a community wants for its children.

He continued that the CITY Academy had greatly changed the culture of Arthur Ashe Middle School overall. Five or six years ago, the school faced great challenges, Mr. Luciani affirmed: there were issues of violence, mismanagement, and other difficulties. He stated that the school is trying to improve these issues as well as build a successful Magnet Program. He asserted that, in his third year at the school, he had seen gradual change in “the big picture” over each year, but the most growth had occurred with the addition of the Magnet program, and its students with IQs of 130 and higher, who “changed the culture of the building.” This meant the CITY Academy is not only a meaningful program for the students who are part of it, but for the students who are in the school and watching its effects.

Mr. Gates added that many parents ask about private schools in the area, and pointed out that three students left one of the area's private schools to attend the Magnet Program.

Mr. Luciani stated that he felt many programs begun at Arthur Ashe would eventually be duplicated throughout the District's other schools, particularly struggling schools in needier communities.

Dr. Persi asked what the enrollment was at Arthur Ashe. Mr. Luciani responded that there are roughly 760 students, just over 100 of whom participate in the CITY Academy. They are expected to grow to approximately 825 students next year, as they add to the Magnet Program. The school's capacity is for 1050, which he felt they would reach within two to three years. He noted that prior to the addition of the Magnet Program, the school had been under-enrolled.

Ms. Deaner asserted that she was "amazed" at how the school had been turned around, recalling that at one point there had been discussion of combining Arthur Ashe with another nearby school; however, the Magnet Program had been the change the school needed, and the school attracted students from all over Broward County.

Ms. Deaner asked what Mr. Luciani felt were the "best practices" at Arthur Ashe that he felt could encourage success elsewhere.

Mr. Luciani replied that their success demanded a unique group of parents as well as students, who were willing to take a risk because they felt more was needed. While he did not feel the entire Magnet Program would be successful for all students, he felt some of its programs would benefit all students.

It is crucial, he explained, to find out exactly where students academic levels lie, and then let them progress at their own pace. This means teachers are not teaching one specific curriculum to a group of students who are "all over the spectrum" for a subject, but move those students who already know the material up to the next level.

He noted that it takes students with a particular interest level and intellectual capacity to make this a success; in addition, there must be educators who can provide that higher level for the students. This requires a specific kind of teacher as well as a specific kind of student.

When dealing with the "regular population" of students at Arthur Ashe, Mr. Luciani felt they should provide instruction to teach critical thinking about problems and issues. This can stimulate students to become "self-directed" in their learning. If a classroom concentrates solely on teaching a set of skills, he pointed out, it can become boring instead of fun and exciting.

He noted, however, that Arthur Ashe still has a “large population” of students who need constant drilling on basic skills: just as there are eight-year-old students who do high school work, there are older students who read only at the most basic level. Mr. Luciani acknowledged that the school has a broad spectrum of students at many different levels.

He described the CITY Academy Program as “in its infancy,” and noted that the Staff had not been certain that it would catch on. In 1985, Mr. Luciani recalled for the Board, he had started the Performing Arts School at Bethune Elementary, which is now one of the better-known magnet schools in Broward County, with an enrollment of 1100 or more. In 1985, however, there were 300 students, and only 17 in the magnet program. In two years, the school’s enrollment neared 1000, and the Performing Arts magnet program is still thriving.

He pointed out that not every day is a good experience, and sometimes the school faces many challenges; however, he felt these experiences helped them achieve their best. He encouraged the Board members to visit the CITY Academy wing, and recognized the role the EAB had played in getting the Program started.

Dr. Persi asked what the average class size was at Arthur Ashe. Mr. Luciani replied that this probably averages 12-13 students, although sizes vary, and some classes might have only four or five students at a particular level, with others having 21-22 students at another level.

Dr. Persi felt this was particularly telling, as this class size was probably not the case in other schools throughout Broward County. She asked if corporate sponsors work with the schools.

Mr. Luciani explained that there is “corporate assistance” in some ways that are “outside the classroom experience.” They do not, however, have corporate sponsors whose contributions affect teachers or instructional materials. He asked Mr. Gates to describe a program in which he had partnered with a technology corporation.

Mr. Gates stated that PBS&J partners with an engineering firm, and noted that Mr. Webster had helped set up two programs of this nature. PBS&J held a field trip once a week for six weeks and allowed engineers to show students what their jobs were like, including teaching students some basic skills, such as running a PowerPoint presentation. He noted that the participants volunteered their own time to work with the students. At the end of the program there was a graduation ceremony, at which the volunteers gave the students new computers free of charge.

The other program Mr. Gates described was Dell Techno, which was a 48-hour course held after school. Students were taught how to open up computers, learn all their parts, and rebuild them, after which they were tested and new applications were added. Students completing this program also received computers free of charge. The District's Congressional Representative issued a proclamation praising both Arthur Ashe and Dell for the success of the program.

Ms. Shelley asked how Mr. Luciani managed his time in such a diverse environment. He replied that "the day starts early" and usually doesn't end until late in the afternoon. There are also evening meetings. He asserted that time management is key, and that he works specifically with the CITY Academy Program for a large part of each day. Mr. Hart also spends a great deal of time with the school's lower-achieving students, and heads up the Extended Learning Opportunities Program, which is an after-school and weekend program that works with underachieving and academically struggling students to bring their academic performance to a higher level.

Mr. Luciani stated that he "could not do it without an excellent staff," and noted that the school is a "multifaceted operation" due to its diversity. He affirmed that the school's work is a "total team effort."

He felt that what has happened in a traditionally difficult school in one year is "remarkable," and that the school's culture is moving in the right direction. The school has moved from an F to a D school, and Mr. Luciani felt this year they could move up to a C or possibly a B.

Ms. Deaner asked if the CITY Academy could be described as "a school within a school." Mr. Luciani confirmed this, and added that the program's practices spread to the rest of the school from within. He noted that the Academy's belief is what is good for high-achieving students can also be good for struggling ones, particularly the diverse instructional strategies rather than "drilling" information.

Regarding what the Board could do for the school, Mr. Luciani reaffirmed that the EAB had played an important part in developing the program at Arthur Ashe. He invited them to visit the school and see what is going on firsthand, and felt other schools could visit the CITY Academy as well.

Chair Ackerina stated that she had questions she would email to Mr. Luciani at a later date. She added that, as Arthur Ashe is one of the Board's adopted schools, the Board wanted to provide them with any assistance they could. She praised the work that he and his team had accomplished and would continue to accomplish in the future.

Ms. Shelley suggested that the new Mayor and City Commissioners should be shown the presentation the Board had just seen. Dr. Persi proposed inviting the

Mayor and City Commissioners to Arthur Ashe and having them “shadow” students for a day to learn how the school operates.

The Board thanked Mr. Luciani, Mr. Hart, Ms. Tobias-Carey, and Mr. Gates for their presentation.

Dr. Persi asked how she might direct more questions to the Arthur Ashe team. Ms. Richards recommended that Dr. Persi send these questions directly to her office, and she would email them to Arthur Ashe.

Ms. Deaner felt that the CITY Academy employs basic concepts that are proven to work, and which should become more prevalent. Dr. Persi felt the smaller class size was key to the program’s success.

Ms. Deaner recalled that she had felt “the most critical aspect for success in education” was the student-teacher ratio; she noted, however, that the parents’ input was a major factor as well. If a child has not been prepared for school, they would have difficulties even in a small group.

Vice Chair Clark stated that “average” students need smaller groups and greater individualized attention, perhaps more so than gifted students at times. Ms. Elijah agreed, pointing out that struggling students would benefit greatly from learning in smaller classes.

2. Lauderdale Manors

Chair Ackerina directed the discussion back to the ways in which the Board could assist their adopted schools, noting that Arthur Ashe planned to get back to them on this subject. She recalled that Sunland Park had requested incentives at the Board’s November meeting. Chair Ackerina suggested that the Board reach out into the community, noting again the importance of a letter from the school. She asked if anyone would like to reach out to Lauderdale Manors’ principal and ask them to come to a Board meeting, perhaps giving a presentation similar to the ones given by Ms. Benson and Mr. Luciani. Ms. Elijah volunteered for this responsibility.

Chair Ackerina continued that she had asked the Community Hope Center to speak to the Board at their April meeting, but could reschedule them for May if Lauderdale Manors could make a presentation in April. Ms. Elijah agreed that she would ask the principal of Lauderdale Manors if she would be available on April 16, and pass this information along to Ms. Richards.

Mr. Webster mentioned that renovations are underway at Northside Elementary, and the City Manager has recommended that the construction team appear before the EAB to get the Board’s approval for their plan. He planned to consult

the project manager to find out when this might be scheduled. Part of the plan, he noted, is to “borrow” part of a park during the staging phase of construction for portable units.

Chair Ackerina suggested that if the team could not appear at the April or May meeting, perhaps the Board could find out ways in which they could be of assistance with the project.

3. EAB Goals

Chair Ackerina stated that she would like to move the discussion of EAB Goals to the April 2009 meeting.

4. CCC Project – Further Discussion

No new information was available at this time.

5. Statistics – 20 Day Counts

Mr. Webster advised that these counts are used for a variety of purposes, primarily funding. They may also be used by the State for facility planning, or to change school boundaries.

Chair Ackerina added that the counts provide information regarding the District itself. There are approximately 255,000 students, an enrollment which has declined from last year. There are 284 schools in the District, and three new elementary schools that are planned.

The counts also list the number of teachers and administrators applying for positions, the racial makeup of the District’s students, and the number of instructional staff in schools (as opposed to clerical staff). Three appendices to the report list the annual counts of pre-K, elementary (K-5), middle school (6-8), and high school (9-12) students.

Chair Ackerina drew the Board’s attention to high schools, noting that there are three in the Fort Lauderdale area. She noted their graduation rates, which are as follows:

- Dillard: 70%
- Fort Lauderdale: 83%
- Stranahan: 74%

She felt the Board should take particular note of these, as they might be able to have some input into helping raise the graduation rate.

Vice Chair Clark asked where the new elementary schools would be located. Mr. Webster replied that these were in Sunrise, Parkland and Hollywood. He was not aware if they were being constructed to alleviate overcrowding, although he noted that in the new boundary process, the State would not approve new construction unless the existing schools were at capacity.

Dr. Persi asked for clarification of some of the terms used in the counts, which Chair Ackerina provided:

- ELL: English Language Learner
- ESE: Exceptional Student Education (which may refer to either gifted or challenged students)
- FRD: Free & Reduced Lunch

Chair Ackerina noted that the “Centers” listed in the report refer to students with severe physical or emotional disabilities who would find it difficult to function in a traditional environment.

She pointed out the statistics in reference to the Board’s three adopted schools, mentioning the schools’ overall grades, demographics, male-to-female ratios, and general trends. Chair Ackerina asked that the Board review this information in the interim between meetings so they could discuss it further at their April meeting.

6. Chair Report

Chair Ackerina explained that she had looked through several items available from the District, the State, and the Federal Department of Education in preparation for her report. She distributed handouts to accompany her report.

She advised that many families are not aware that students may be eligible for free and reduced lunches, and asked the Board members to share this information. There are also waivers available for some fees, such as the SAT fee, which is particularly important, as students often take this test multiple times to attempt a better score. Discounts are available online for some SAT preparatory courses, and waivers are available for college application fees.

Ms. Elijah asked if a family must fall within a certain income bracket to apply for fee waivers. Mr. Webster confirmed this, but pointed out that there are other criteria that affect eligibility for fee waivers. Chair Ackerina referred to an information number on the handout, which could provide more details.

She informed the Board that she had spoken to the Community Hope Center, an education group, and explained that at an earlier date they had accidentally gone to the wrong location to attend a Board meeting. Representatives of the Center will speak at the Board’s April 19 meeting; however, Chair Ackerina reiterated

that if Lauderdale Manors agrees to speak at that meeting, she will ask the Community Hope Center to reschedule for May.

Ms. Richards believed the Center has a mentoring program, as they had given a presentation to the City Commission on this topic.

7. Other Reports / Updates / Discussion

- **Student Member to the EAB**

Chair Ackerina continued that she is in the process of finding out the requirements for a student member to the EAB. The student must live in or attend school in Fort Lauderdale; Chair Ackerina is looking into whether the student must apply for this position or must be appointed by the City Commission. She added that she hoped the Board would discuss what they expect from a student member at their April meeting. As the School Board has two student advisors, she felt strongly that the Board should have a student member as well. If the student she had in mind was not eligible, Chair Ackerina stated that she would look within the City's three high schools for another potential student member.

- **City Commission / Manager – Follow-up**

Ms. Richards stated that the new Mayor and City Commission were sworn in at the previous Tuesday's City Commission meeting. She advised that one of the new City Commission's major priorities was to empower the City Boards to bring information to them. She suggested that at each meeting, if the Board wished to emphasize a particular topic, it could be ensured that this item would be on the Agenda and in the minutes.

She also explained the recent ordinance affecting a quorum, which allows for a majority of the current membership to constitute a quorum. For instance, as there are currently seven members on the Board, the quorum for this meeting would be four members.

It was noted that the new City Commissioners might know individuals interested in serving on the Board. Members must live or work in Fort Lauderdale to qualify for membership.

Chair Ackerina stated that because of budget cuts in the District, there are several changes being made, including five or six principals retiring, which will affect the "pools" of assistant principals. She invited any interested members to attend a meeting of these individuals and represent the Board.

- **Broward County School District – C. Webster**

Mr. Webster advised that he had attended a meeting with the architects responsible for restorations at the Old Dillard Museum, where the Board had held a “field trip” meeting the previous year. He stated that he was impressed with their progress, and they hope to break ground on the project in the fall. It was hoped that the project would be completed prior to the City’s Centennial.

Rallies were recently held in Tallahassee in support of educational funding. Mr. Webster hoped that these would successfully send a message to the State Legislature.

Boundary hearings will be held on March 25, 2009, at Plantation High School. He noted that Fort Lauderdale is not an area potentially affected by changes.

Dillard High School will host a Pride Event at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 21. The event will be open to the community, including students and alumni, and there will be guest speakers and walks around the campus.

- **Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations – B. Shelley**

Ms. Shelley reported that there is a new Board for the Council, and they will meet on Monday, March 23 with the outgoing Board. Regular meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

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