

**APPROVED  
MINUTES OF THE  
EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida  
100 North Andrews Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Chamber  
Thursday, April 16, 2009 – 6:30 p.m.**

**Cumulative Attendance**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Jacqueline Ackerina, Chair	P	6	0
Laura Clark, Vice Chair	P	8	3
Lu Deaner	A	10	2
Edna Elijah	P	6	2
Dr. Maureen Persi, Ed. D.	P	4	0
Derek Kelmanson	A	1	2

As of this date, there were 6 appointed members to the Board, which means 4 would constitute a quorum.

**Staff**

Julie Richards, Interim Staff Liaison  
Charles Webster, Broward County Public Schools  
Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**A. Opening**

- **Attendance and Sign-In**

Chair Ackerina called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll was called and it was determined a quorum was present.

- **Approval of Minutes (March 2009) and Agenda (April 2009)**

Mr. Webster noted two corrections to the March 15, 2009 minutes:

- P. 11, paragraph 3: change “School Board recommended” to “City Manager recommended”
- P. 13, paragraph 5 was also reworded for clarification.

**Motion** made by Ms. Elijah, seconded by Dr. Persi, to approve the March 2009 minutes as corrected. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

- **Guest Introductions**

Chair Ackerina asked the guests representing the North Side Elementary School project to introduce themselves.

Frank Alfieri of the Broward County Public Schools Facilities Department, will be the project manager for the construction project planned at North Side Elementary School. He introduced Camille LaChance, Principal, and Amy Winder, Assistant Principal, from North Side Elementary.

The project's consultants and architects from Cubellis and Associates were Jorge Gutierrez, Dory Khater, and Peck Sukphisit.

Mr. Gutierrez described the project as an addition of several classrooms and a renovation of the school's historic building, which was constructed in 1927 and has been designated a historic landmark. He added that the project will be presented to the City's Historic Preservation Board as well, and will go before the City Commission for final approval in May. A PowerPoint presentation displayed the proposed plans for the school.

The project will add 15 classrooms. An existing building, constructed in 1957 and now in disrepair, will be demolished. In 2002, an addition to the school that is compatible with the historic building was built, including a cafeteria and a multi-purpose wing.

Mr. Gutierrez advised that the project calls for the addition of 11 classrooms to an existing building constructed in 1998. Along with the demolition of the non-historic building, this will create a new courtyard that is compatible with the character of the historic building. The project will also increase landscaping on the school's campus.

He pointed out that some of the school's windows were removed and "filled in" during the 1960s. The renovation plans will install new windows and restore the original look of the historic building. A new building will "wrap around" the existing building constructed in 1998 and create a second floor.

He showed several views of the existing buildings and the planned changes to the campus, describing the project as a "complete transformation" of the character of the school.

Some features of the renovation will "green" the campus, Mr. Gutierrez stated, including the proposed use of solar panels on the roof of the addition to bring electricity to the building. He added that this may be used as a teaching tool for the students. Inside the building, electronic displays would show the electricity generated by these panels each day.

Solar power would also be used to heat water that is circulated to the roof area. Once heated, it would be delivered to the addition's restrooms. Another feature harvests rainwater collected in containers, which will then be filtered and distributed for irrigation of the new courtyard and the landscaping. This can help the students learn about conservation and sustainability of natural resources, he explained. The rainwater will also be treated for use in the school's restrooms, so as little potable water as possible is used in the addition.

He noted that while the solar panels are "very expensive" and still under consideration, the water harvesting system is likely to be incorporated by the contractor.

Mr. Gutierrez continued that the school hopes to use Warfield Park to house portable classroom units during renovations to replace those classrooms that must be vacated during construction. A total of 14 classrooms will be affected. The school has recently been granted the approval of the Parks, Recreation, and Beaches Advisory Board for this request, and he added that the support of both the EAB and the Historic Preservation Board would be helpful as well. Allowing these portable units means the students will not have to attend schools other than North Side during the expected 24 months of construction. If the students cannot be moved to temporary classrooms, then construction would extend up to 36 months.

Mr. Gutierrez stated that the students will be using the Park during school days. At the end of the construction phase, the School Board hopes to give Warfield Park a new soccer field, hopefully including a green lighting system that uses less electricity than standard systems.

Chair Ackerina opened the floor to questions at this time.

Dr. Persi asked when the project is expected to begin. Mr. Gutierrez explained that they are currently presenting to the necessary City Boards for approval, and no construction documents will be started until this phase is complete, hopefully by the end of June 2009. Construction would begin in January 2010.

Dr. Persi asked if the building constructed in 1998 has a flat roof, and whether the new addition will have a flat roof as well to accommodate the proposed solar panels. Mr. Gutierrez confirmed that this is the case. The new flat roof would contain several drains that are equipped to handle "emergency overflow" of rainwater.

In response to a follow-up question, he continued that this building contains colonnades outside its walls. The need for larger classrooms on the second floor generates a greater width on this floor, which allows construction to come down outside the existing walls for support.

Ms. Elijah asked how much of Warfield Park's play area would be occupied by the portable classrooms, and how much would remain for neighborhood residents to use. Mr. Gutierrez replied that this had been discussed with both the Park Supervisor and the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, and roughly one-third of the Park would be occupied by portable units.

Ms. LaChance added that North Side Elementary students are the Park's primary users, and the basketball courts, which are most often used by neighborhood residents, would "not be touched."

Chair Ackerina asked if the school has held a community forum to present residents with this plan. Mr. Gutierrez stated that the plan was presented to the school community in March, and have reached out to the Middle River Community Association as well. He described their response as "enthusiastically supportive."

Chair Ackerina also requested clarification of an open area shown on renderings of the campus. Mr. Gutierrez explained that this area would allow for circulation between the school's buildings, and would serve as an "exterior loggia." The renovations will also create a covered play area. Ms. LaChance added that there is an existing sidewalk in this area.

Vice Chair Clark asked if the walkways will be covered. Mr. Gutierrez confirmed this.

Ms. Elijah asked if Mr. Gutierrez could elaborate on safety and security precautions for the students during construction. He referred to a remodeling of the school's administration suite that will create a single point of entry for students, which will feature a reception area.

Regarding the construction itself, the School Board requires that all construction must be completely separated, by fencing, from all areas used by students. He pointed out the planned fencing on a graphic rendering of the campus.

Once construction documentation is underway, he continued, the contractor is provided with specifications that require him to water the construction area to minimize airborne dust during the entire construction period. The area must also be swept daily to ensure it is kept clean.

Chair Ackerina asked how many students are served by North Side Elementary, and how the project will be funded. Ms. LaChance stated there are approximately 500 students at the school; Mr. Alfieri added that the project is 100% School Board funded.

Chair Ackerina also asked if, should the solar panels or water harvesting equipment not be installed during initial construction, they could be added at a later time. Mr. Gutierrez advised that the rain harvesting system must be incorporated from the beginning, so the system of pipes could be installed from this equipment. The potable tank system, however, may be retrofitted.

Dr. Persi asked who will be responsible for the portable classrooms. Mr. Gutierrez stated that the contractor must provide these units, installed with clocks, intercom and fire alarm systems, as part of the project. Because the portable units will be placed closely together, he felt they might be entirely new units.

Dr. Persi requested the "total price tag" of the project. Ms. LaChance replied that it will cost \$12.5 million.

Chair Ackerina thanked the North Side Elementary and Cubellis representatives for their presentation, and informed them that when all presentations have been completed, the Board will discuss the issue and inform them of their decision on how to advise the City Commission, as well as any other feedback.

Heather Hedman-DeVaughn, Principal of Lauderdale Manors Elementary, and Myralynn Tutwiler, Guidance Counselor, gave the Board a presentation about their school and its history.

Ms. Hedman-DeVaughn advised that Lauderdale Manors is roughly 50 years old, and is a "true neighborhood school," serving many students whose parents attended the school as well. Their theme for this school year is "Exceeding Expectations."

Their school grade for 2008-09 was a C, which Ms. Hedman-DeVaughn stated was their first C since 2001. She noted that this year's grade superseded the scores from previous years with regard to the students' accomplishments, which include 48% of students with high standards in reading and 58%-59% with high standards in math. These students are at or above grade level, she explained, and these scores are still low.

The highest level of achievement came from students with high standards in writing, which was 94%, she added. Science performance has been a challenge, and the school is working very hard to improve these scores. Ms. Hedman-DeVaughn pointed out that the science test is "conceptually based," which can

be difficult for the students, as a great deal of time is spent on reading and math. They are attempting to incorporate science into the students' reading skills to rectify this, and are using "learning games" as well.

While many students may not be performing at grade level, she continued, it is important to consider whether or not they are making progress – for example, by moving from Level One to Level Two. She added that it is often a challenge to work with the students whose performance is in the lowest (25%) percentile; however, 56% of students in this category made progress in reading, and 67% in math.

97% of Lauderdale Manors students receive free or reduced lunches, and the minority rate of the school is 100%.

Ms. Hedman-DeVaughn asserted that they are very proud of this year's results and look forward to improving still further in the future.

She provided the Board with copies of the school's monthly newsletter, which communicates school events and dates to remember to the school's parents. Another sheet lists the needs on which the school would like to partner with the Board. Ms. Hedman-DeVaughn showed a PowerPoint presentation to the Board as well, featuring photographs of the school's students.

She noted that the school is always looking for opportunities to extend their resources through community partnerships, which is of great benefit to many students. The school is in need of mentors, particularly for boys; listeners for student readers; hygiene kits; support for Parent Nights; and any ideas the Board might wish to share, such as programs that have been successful in other schools.

She added that this is the first year in the history of Lauderdale Manors that the school has 100% faculty participation in the PTA. The school's faculty is "fully committed" to working with the PTA. She added that it is a very solid organization, and has many members who no longer have students attending the school, but still attend meetings in support. The student population is "very transient," she explained, and this level of consistency is beneficial to many of the children.

Ms. Hedman-DeVaughn offered to answer any questions from the Board at this time.

Dr. Persi asked how many students attend Lauderdale Manors. Ms. Hedman-DeVaughn replied that there are roughly 560, attending pre-K through fifth grade. She is in her third year as Principal of the school.

Chair Ackerina thanked Ms. Hedman-DeVaughn for her presentation, particularly for letting the Board know how they can help the school meet the needs of its students. She explained that the EAB had previously adopted Lauderdale Manors, so they are committed to assisting the school to the best of their abilities.

She advised that the Board would discuss the partnership further, and will keep in communication with Ms. Hedman-DeVaughn on a regular basis to ensure that their needs are heard and addressed wherever possible.

Ms. Hedman-DeVaughn added that Staff Appreciation at Lauderdale Manors is coming up, and while they wished to be able to give teachers "a pat on the back," there is no funding for this program. Staff Appreciation is May 3 through May 9, 2009. There will also be a year-end celebration on June 5, the last day of school.

She thanked the Board for inviting them to give a presentation, and asked how the school might best communicate with the EAB. Chair Ackerina explained that, as she worked with the School Board, she would maintain communication through that venue; should any information need to go through City representatives, it could be sent through Ms. Richards' office.

At this time, Chair Ackerina distributed the "Questions and Answers" sheet the Board had received following the presentation given by representatives of Arthur Ashe Middle School at the March Board meeting.

Dr. Persi stated that she would like to visit the school, as she had found the presentation to be "very intriguing," and asked if there was a possibility of a Board visit. Chair Ackerina agreed, and added that the Board could visit on their own.

She noted that another possibility was arranging a visit by the City Commissioners to Arthur Ashe. Once she had pursued this idea further and learned at what point such a visit would be best for the school, this item could be placed on a future agenda. She suggested that perhaps September 2009, the beginning of the next school year, would be an appropriate time, and perhaps the Board could plan to "draw in" the City Commissioners and Mayor by holding an event at the school.

She offered to contact the Principal of Arthur Ashe and find out the best possible time for the Board and/or City Commission to plan such a visit.

- **Announcements**

There were no announcements at this time.

**C. Current Business**

- **North Side Elementary – Presentation of North Side Plan**

Chair Ackerina asked if the Board would like to make a recommendation to the City Commission in support of the North Side Elementary project.

**Motion** made by Ms. Elijah, seconded by Vice Chair Clark, to approve a recommendation of support for the North Side Elementary plan to the City Commission. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

- **Lauderdale Manors Elementary – Presentation**

Chair Ackerina referred to the list of items suggested by the Lauderdale Manors representatives as ways in which the Board could aid the school.

Regarding mentors for the school's male students, Chair Ackerina proposed identifying businesses within the school's neighborhood and finding out if some of their owners and operators, specifically men, would be interested in contributing 30 minutes to an hour each week or two weeks to mentor students. She asked the other Board members for feedback on this idea.

Dr. Persi asked if there is a local high school, through which upperclassmen could mentor in exchange for community service credits. Ms. Elijah suggested that male students from Dillard High School, who have "stable" grades, might be interested in participating. Regarding businesses, she noted that there are several businesses in the area, primarily located on Sunrise Boulevard.

Chair Ackerina pointed out that when students are involved, issues with transportation and/or academics often arise; in addition, many of the students with high grades are in Advanced Placement classes with schedules that do not allow for flexibility. A high school's hours are also different from an elementary school's, she cautioned. While mentoring by high school students remains a possibility, she noted that "there are a lot of barriers."

Ms. Elijah added that many high school seniors are required to perform community service hours, although she was not aware of whether or not Dillard had adopted this program. She felt transportation and scheduling were viable but not insurmountable concerns, as students have volunteered with community events in the past.



Dr. Persi asked if fingerprinting would be necessary, should local merchants become involved in a mentoring program. Mr. Webster confirmed this, and Ms. Ackerina noted that should they volunteer as mentors, she might be able to waive the fee for fingerprinting.

Vice Chair Clark asked if volunteers required fingerprinting if they would be in the presence of teachers, affirming that they were required to apply and be screened for volunteer positions. Should they accompany students on field trips or be alone with the children, she understood that they would be fingerprinted.

Mr. Webster explained that Level One background checks, which are limited, are done when anyone enters a school; for those volunteers who may be alone with students, Level Two background checks are necessary, including fingerprinting. He agreed that the fee could be waived as an incentive.

Chair Ackerina felt mentoring would place students and volunteers in “one-on-one” situations, which would require Level Two background checks for certain Board members as well, such as Ms. Deaner, Ms. Elijah, and Dr. Persi.

Returning to the list of needs provided by Lauderdale Manors, she stated that the Board should decide whether they should make an effort to line up mentors for the school at this time, or if that endeavor would best be left for later on.

Vice Chair Clark recommended that whatever they work on should have the goal of beginning the next school year, as only a month remained in this year; however, she felt they should begin planning for these goals right away.

She added that the local Fire and Police Departments might be able to provide the school with mentors, particularly males; her only concern was that school representatives, such as the volunteer coordinator or the Principal, would need to follow up periodically to ensure participation, and the responsibility for this should not lie solely with the Board. Chair Ackerina agreed, noting that the Board would keep in touch with the school to encourage communication, and to remind the school that “we’re still there for them.”

She offered suggestions on how to keep in contact with the school, such as allowing one member to take on this responsibility or working on a “rotation basis.”

Ms. Elijah noted that representatives from the Police Department might not be able to participate on a weekly basis, and perhaps they could attend once a month or on another revised schedule, as their availability allowed.

Dr. Persi felt that while mentoring, listening, and community participation are all excellent ideas, the Board is “out of time now” with the school year coming to a close. She suggested using the summer to come up with a viable plan for establishing these programs, and focusing on the “easier” requests at the moment.

Ms. Elijah proposed participating in Staff Appreciation and/or PTA meetings, such as providing refreshments, as Ms. Hedman-DeVaughn had mentioned. Chair Ackerina felt the Board could do this for the year-end celebration or for one of the Staff Appreciation days, either by giving a gift or donation to the school or going into the community to solicit gifts or donations.

Dr. Persi recommended helping plan a breakfast for the school’s staff during Staff Appreciation. Ms. Elijah noted, however, that asking corporations for donations of goods or money could be “very time-consuming,” and pointed out that the Staff Appreciation dates were not far away. She suggested that June 5 might be a more suitable date for this effort.

Chair Ackerina agreed, and proposed that each Board member try to accumulate some of the items necessary for a continental breakfast, perhaps by asking local businesses if they could donate these. She offered to find out the number of employees who would be served at a breakfast, and asked Ms. Richards how the Board might best communicate with the school on this project.

Ms. Richards stated that she was aware of no restrictions on communicating directly with the schools, but recommended that the Board send their suggestions to her and she would share these emails with the Board at large.

Vice Chair Clark noted that June 5 is a “planning day” for school employees, which would allow time in the morning for a breakfast. Chair Ackerina added that the Board will meet once again before this date, which will allow them to coordinate their efforts.

Dr. Persi volunteered to deliver the items the Board would provide to the school. Ms. Elijah agreed to help with this effort as well. Perishable items could be delivered the night before the breakfast.

It was noted that the Board would provide breakfast items and set up for the event, although they would not necessarily attend a staff breakfast.

**D. Old / Ongoing Business**

- **Sunland Park Report from April 15 Visit**

Chair Ackerina advised that this meeting will be rescheduled for a later date. She will let Ms. Richards know when this date is set, so any interested Board members may attend a tour of the school.

Vice Chair Clark felt Lauderdale Manors had listed their needs in “a great way,” and hoped Sunland Park might present the Board with a similar list.

Chair Ackerina noted that Principal Mattie Benson will be retiring at the end of this school year, and they might want to address the school’s needs with its incoming principal, who may have a different vision for the school.

- **Arthur Ashe Follow-Up**

Chair Ackerina asked if there were any further questions the Board would like to be passed on to Arthur Ashe Middle School. She also noted that she would ask Principal Andrew Luciani if he was interested in scheduling a meeting before the end of the school year.

Ms. Elijah counseled that Principals are very busy at this time of year, and she felt the best course of action might be to ask other school representatives if they could suggest ways the Board might be of assistance. It would also provide the Board with time over the summer to discuss the direction they wished to take for the new school year. She offered to help get in touch with one of the adopted schools if necessary.

- **Chair Report**

Chair Ackerina advised that a “National Testing Day” is scheduled at Nova Southeastern University, and 550 students from Broward County will take the ACT and SAT exams for free. The event is sponsored by the *Princeton Review*.

A jazz concert and art exhibit are scheduled for the Old Dillard Museum on June 19, 2009.

She noted that she had spoken with the Director of the Community Hope Center, and they will most likely send a representative to present to the Board in June, after the school year is concluded. She reminded the Board that the Center has a mentoring program at Dillard High School.

Chair Ackerina added that the “Student Member to the EAB” will be moved to the category of “Future Business” on subsequent Agendas, so the Board may discuss what they would like to see from a student member. She suggested that Dillard and Stranahan High Schools, which have active student governments, might be able to recommend a member to the EAB.

She proposed that each Board member be responsible for bringing forward one new prospective member. After speaking with the area superintendent for Fort Lauderdale schools, she stated the superintendent will also have her area director place any interested Board members on the agenda at their “innovation zones” meetings, so they may present, to Assistant Principals who are interested in moving up in their leadership positions, the benefits of being appointed to the Fort Lauderdale Education Advisory Board.

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

Mr. Webster encouraged the Board to participate, in person or via television or the internet, in an upcoming Town Hall Budget Meeting, and provided the Board with a handout on this effort.

Phyllis Hope, School Board member from District 6, will hold her annual Safety and Security Summit on May 7, 2009, at Western High School from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. This year’s agenda will cover cyber-bullying, safe schools, children and families in crisis, and prescription drug abuse.

Groups of students from Stranahan and Fort Lauderdale High Schools, in conjunction with the Fort Lauderdale Garden Club, will participate in an event on April 24, Arbor Day, at the Esplanade by the Museum.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

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