

**APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE
EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
100 North Andrews Avenue, 1st Floor Chamber
Thursday, August 20, 2009 – 6:30 p.m.**

Members	Attendance	Cumulative Attendance	
		Present	Absent
Jacqueline Ackerina, Chair	A	2	1
Laura Clark, Vice Chair	P	3	0
Lu Deaner (arr. 6:40)	P	3	0
Edna Elijah	P	2	1
William Borawski	P	3	0
Mary Foster	A	0	3
Katie Leach	P	2	1
Lillian Small	P	2	1
Shezette Blue-Small (arr. 6:54)	P	2	1
Linda Cooke	P	2	1
Dr. Magdalene Lewis	P	1	1
Dr. Maureen Persi, Ed.D.	P	2	0
John Sykes	A	0	2

Appointed members to the Board: 13
Needed to constitute a quorum: 7

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.

Communications to the City Commission

None at this time.

A. Opening

- **Attendance and Sign-In**

Vice Chair Clark called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. and roll was called. It was determined a quorum was present, and the Board members introduced themselves.

Ms. Deaner joined the meeting at this time (6:40 p.m.)

- **Approve Minutes (May and June 2009)**

Mr. Borawski noted a correction on p.5 of the May minutes; he asked that his name be added to the list of individuals who attended the Sunland Elementary meeting.

Dr. Persi advised that she would abstain from approving the May minutes, as she had not yet been re-appointed to the Board. She also requested that in the June minutes, her title be corrected to "Dr." rather than "Ms."

Ms. Cooke noted two corrections to the June minutes:

- P.8: "2011" should be changed to "2010"
- P.2: the name of Ms. Cooke's company is the Habilitation Center for the Handicapped.

Motion made by Ms. Elijah, seconded by Ms. Leach, to approve the minutes of the May 2009 meeting as corrected. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried 10-0 (Dr. Persi abstaining).

Motion made by Ms. Elijah, seconded by Ms. Deaner, to approve the minutes of the June 2009 meeting as corrected. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

Mr. Webster joined the meeting at this time (6:47 p.m.).

- **Guest Introductions: John Casbarro, Learning for Success, Inc.**

Vice Chair Clark introduced John Casbarro, representing his company Learning for Success, Inc., to present to the Board at today's meeting.

Mr. Casbarro stated his company is a nonprofit organization. Since 1992, he has been developing managing partnerships for a national program, "Kids and the Power of Work," or "KAPOW." The program brings volunteers into elementary schools, and students into the workplace, to help them "connect with their futures." This is accomplished through a series of lessons in which volunteers and teachers are trained.

The lessons have two main themes, Mr. Casbarro explained: they create awareness as well as workplace skills. Students learn about various jobs, what it takes to perform these jobs, and how their lessons in school are applied to them. The awareness lessons emphasize skills necessary to any job, such as communication, decision-making, positive work habits, and teamwork. Once a year, the students take a field trip into the workplace so they can see these jobs firsthand.

Mr. Casbarro advised he manages partnerships with 63 elementary and K-8 schools in the area, including 10 schools in Broward County and one in Fort Lauderdale (Northside Elementary). He hopes to add more schools in fall 2009. The program serves roughly 6500 students and involves 450 volunteers and teachers.

Mr. Casbarro stated he is seeking the Board's endorsement for a proposal he has submitted to the City for funding support to broaden the program at North Side Elementary, as well as to begin the program at Lauderdale Manors Elementary. He distributed copies of this proposal, adding that he will make a presentation at the City Commission's upcoming budget hearing on September 9, 2009. He hoped the Board will encourage the expansion of the program in the City.

Vice Chair Clark asked Mr. Casbarro to share some details about his education background. He replied that he has a teaching degree, although he has not taught full-time in the past. His first experience with a program such as KAPOW was as a Manager of Community Affairs at Burger King Corporation's world headquarters. The program was first developed by the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC), whose purpose is to support students' relationships with the workplace. Since leaving Burger King, he first expanded the program at the request of the NCLC before forming his own nonprofit.

Dr. Lewis asked how the schools are selected. Mr. Casbarro advised the program is "a significant commitment" for schools: all teachers on one grade level are required to participate, and must attend training along with the volunteers. Each of the program's seven lessons requires approximately two hours of classroom time to prepare students for the volunteers' lessons. Any school is eligible with the approval of the principal and the commitment to the program. Volunteers are then recruited and funds are raised. The cost is \$5000/year per school, including curriculum for teachers and volunteers, students' classroom materials, monitoring and assessment of the program, and evaluation.

He added that the program is often done in Title I schools, primarily because there is a feeling that their students "might need the program the most."

Ms. Blue-Small joined the meeting at this time (6:54 p.m.).

Ms. Deaner asked why the program has not gone before the Board of Education. Mr. Casbarro explained that it was presented to the Broward County School Board in 2002, and has a "partnership agreement" that was approved by that body, although they have not been able to assist in funding the program.

Volunteers are recruited mainly through business networking events, he added. Mr. Casbarro has developed a network of business contacts throughout the Broward County community, and invited any interested Board members to participate as volunteers. A one-time three-hour training session is required, and the lessons given to students are seven one-hour lessons throughout the school year. Volunteers partner with one teacher and one class.

The curriculum is for grades 1-6, he continued, although there have not been partnerships with grade 1 thus far. The decision regarding which grade level will participate is left up to each principal. He distributed a copy of a curriculum book for the Board to review, as well as a "correlations book," in which teachers provide input on how the lessons and activities correlate to State standards. There is an emphasis on students discovering why they are being taught particular information.

Dr. Lewis asked if the programs begun in elementary school are carried over to middle or high schools. Mr. Casbarro responded that they have not, although they have been asked to do so. He felt it is an issue of resources and funding, and that the next step of the program should be to make the curriculum available to, and recruit volunteers for, every elementary school.

Dr. Lewis explained she had asked because it would be years before elementary school students would be employed; she felt it would be a more effective and beneficial program if it were applied at higher grade levels. Mr. Casbarro agreed that carrying the program forward would be a positive step.

Ms. Elijah asked how the figure of \$15,000, cited in Mr. Casbarro's proposal, had been arrived at. He explained that this is the sum for which KAPOW is asking in order to "develop and sustain both partnerships" in the City of Fort Lauderdale; the program's budget elaborates on the uses for these funds.

Ms. Elijah commented that she would like to see the program implemented in more Fort Lauderdale schools. She disagreed with Dr. Lewis with regard to the use of the program in elementary schools rather than in higher grades, pointing out that the program can provide students with incentives to stay in school from the elementary grades up.

Mr. Casbarro agreed, noting that "you can't start too early" to instill a work ethic in children, as well as a desire for success in both school and life.

Dr. Lewis clarified that she does not disagree with the program's beginning in elementary school; her intent was to point out the program should carry over into higher grades.

Ms. Small observed that she had experienced a similar program to this one when she was teaching, and felt it was a very good program. She also felt the program could expand to higher grades, and applauded Mr. Casbarro for implementing the program in so many schools.

Mr. Borawski asked if the \$15,000 would be divided by the two schools into \$7500 apiece. Mr. Casbarro advised that the sum is flexible; the 200 students, as listed in the proposal, would be roughly 100 participating students per school, at roughly \$15 per student.

Mr. Borawski asked how students are selected for the program. Mr. Casbarro explained all students on a particular grade level are required to participate.

Mr. Borawski asked if the curriculum is taught separately, or if it is incorporated into the lessons taught throughout the school day, such as language arts, math, and others. Mr. Casbarro acknowledged that one challenge the program faces is convincing teachers that the program will not be "something extra to do." The activities include applications to the existing classroom curriculum; he described them as "simply a set of resources" to reinforce the program's lessons on a daily basis.

Mr. Borawski suggested that the most important means of promoting the program may be the recommendation of the principals in whose schools the program has been implemented. Mr. Casbarro agreed, noting that the principal of North Side Elementary has submitted a letter of recommendation for the program.

Dr. Persi asked for clarification regarding the volunteers, specifically which businesses were represented by the volunteers at North Side Elementary. Mr. Casbarro replied that two of North Side's four volunteers were City employees, while the other two were an accountant and a bank manager. They commit to one lesson per month for seven months throughout the school year, he added. In addition, their companies are asked to host work site visits for the students, although this is not a requirement. The site visits often show students the inner workings of a company that are not open to the general public, he pointed out; in addition, most companies are pleased to participate.

Ms. Deaner complimented Mr. Casbarro on his efforts to improve education, and advised him that Lauderdale Manors is one of the Board's adopted schools. She pointed out, however, that she would need to study the program more closely, perhaps through the curriculum and correlations books, to allay her concerns.

She noted that while older students may often ask why they are taught a particular subject, this is not a common question from younger students, and would want to see some of the activities for students in lower grades. She

concluded that she would “need a little time” before she would feel comfortable recommending the program to the City Commission.

Ms. Blue-Small asked if there are students who have gone through the program who can speak to its success and usefulness. Mr. Casbarro stated he knows several students who have completed the program, and hopes they can attend the upcoming City Commission meeting and attest to KAPOW’s benefits. He acknowledged that it is more difficult, however, to attribute present-day success specifically to the program, as this would mean separating KAPOW from other positive influences.

Ms. Small commented that it is “not too early” to start a program in elementary school, as it is important to positively influence a student early. She added that at a young age, students can learn without realizing that they are learning.

Vice Chair Clark asked for clarification of the date of the upcoming City Commission meeting. Mr. Casbarro reiterated that the public budget hearing is set for September 9, 2009, although approval of the budget will come at a later date.

Vice Chair Clark also recommended that he consider bringing KAPOW to Sunland Elementary in the future. Mr. Casbarro proposed a “cooperative venture” with the Board in recruiting volunteers for schools, and asserted that he would be open to adding a third school in Fort Lauderdale.

Ms. Leach asked if Mr. Casbarro has had success in grant writing as a means of underwriting the program. He explained that funding for KAPOW comes directly from the proposals that he writes.

Vice Chair Clark thanked Mr. Casbarro for his presentation, and advised that the Board would discuss the program further.

B. Communications to the City Commission

None.

C. Current Business

1. EAB Purpose and Objectives

Vice Chair Clark noted that this issue had been discussed at some length at an earlier meeting.

2. Student Member to the EAB

Ms. Deaner recalled that there had been discussion of this Item at a prior meeting as well, and the Board had reached the decision that a high school junior, rather than a senior, would be a better choice, as seniors “are already interested in leaving.”

She also noted that some members had proposed selecting a member of each of the three Fort Lauderdale high schools, although Ms. Deaner noted her personal view is that three students at a time would be “almost impossible.” She suggested rotating among the high schools, and perhaps asking the principals to recommend prospective students and/or conducting interviews.

She added that contact numbers for the schools’ principals would be needed to follow through on this plan.

Vice Chair Clark shared that she had viewed School Board meetings and had seen two different student advisors at these Board meetings, which had “seemed to work fine.” Ms. Deaner noted that the Board must determine the “job description” for a student member and provide them with information on some of the Board’s goals as well as asking that they gather information on their own.

Mr. Borawski reminded the Board that his main issue was “how to get these students here,” adding that he was uncomfortable with selecting only one student from one school. He felt students from all three schools could attend meetings in rotation.

He also felt the job descriptions should be “very specific,” so the students would have a job other than listening to the Board. Ms. Deaner agreed this would be a good compromise.

Ms. Leach suggested that the member be each school’s Student Council President, as these students have already been elected as school representatives by the student body. She pointed out that student leaders are often more comfortable with adults, and they would be likely to have a good idea as to what is going on in their school. Mr. Borawski agreed with this proposal, noting that it would save the Board the difficulty of selecting a member.

Ms. Leach offered to reach out to the school principals or the teachers who advise the Student Councils. Ms. Elijah agreed that the appropriate procedure would be reaching out to the principals first.

3. School Adoptions – Board Follow-Up / Update

Ms. Deaner also recalled there had been discussion of establishing committees made up of volunteers to work with specific schools. For example, she had volunteered to chair a committee to work with Sunland Elementary, and

proposed visiting that school's principal with the other committee members to determine when they could host a breakfast, sponsor an evening meeting for parents, or contribute in another way the principal felt would be productive. Vice Chair Clark added that she would be interested in volunteering with Sunland Elementary as well, as she had a history with the school.

Vice Chair Clark stated that at the previous meeting, the Board had agreed to adopt Sunland Park Elementary, Lauderdale Manors Elementary, and Arthur Ashe Middle School for the 2009-10 school year, observing that they are all Title I schools that "could use our help." Referring to Ms. Deaner's earlier offer to chair a committee for Sunland Park, and her own offer to be part of this group, she asked if there were additional volunteers. Mr. Borawski also offered to be part of the Sunland Park committee.

Vice Chair Clark suggested that the other Board members select an adopted school as well, and when these selections had been made, they could break up into committees.

Ms. Deaner reminded the Board that Lauderdale Manors had previously provided the Board with a "wish list" of their needs, and emphasized that they should follow through with some of that school's requests.

The list is as follows:

- Mentors for boys;
- Listeners for readers;
- Hygiene kits for those in need;
- Money/gifts for staff appreciation;
- Support for parent nights (such as cookies or punch);
- Ideas for improving community and staff involvement.

Dr. Lewis stated she would like to work with Arthur Ashe Middle School, and requested "specific directions" regarding that school's needs and what the Board members are expected to do.

Mr. Webster informed the Board that the new principal at Arthur Ashe is Deborah Peebles, former principal at Lauderdale Lakes. He added that she is aware the Board is interested in having her address a meeting. Vice Chair Clark suggested asking Ms. Peebles to the next meeting.

Ms. Elijah offered to work with Lauderdale Manors, also requesting specific direction. Ms. Small and Ms. Blue-Small also volunteered to work with this school, with Ms. Small agreeing to chair the group.

Dr. Persi and Ms. Cooke each requested to work with Sunland Park.

Ms. Leach advised that she is on the board of the Junior League, and they are interested in participating in a “done-in-a-day” program, such as “hands-on” volunteering. She felt they would be interested in helping one or more of the schools, noting that they had recently landscaped SOS Children’s Village with donated plants. She offered to be a liaison between the Board and the Junior League going forward.

D. Old / Ongoing Business

• **Other Reports / Updates / Discussion**

○ **Staff Liaison – Julie Richards**

Ms. Richards advised she had nothing to report at this time.

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

Mr. Webster informed the Board of the recent loss of 15-year-old Davion Bishop, a student from Stranahan High School.

He stated that on August 12, 2009, the Coalition of Education Advisory Boards had met at the K. C. Wright Building. He explained the intent is to facilitate meetings with the District-wide advisory boards from each city to exchange ideas, best practices, and other information. The meeting was well-attended and voted to meet on a quarterly basis at the minimum; they plan to choose how they will govern themselves. The next meeting is scheduled for September 30, 2009, at 3:00 p.m.

He continued that the third annual Million Father March is coming up, reminding the Board that 300 cities nationwide participate in this “attempt to get dads involved” by bringing their children to school on the first day of classes or picking them up from school on the last day. Mr. Webster added that Chuck Sailor, President of the national PTA, will be in the City to participate in this initiative once again. The intent is to involve men more deeply in their children’s education.

For the second time, Fort Lauderdale is a finalist for the BROAD Award, which has a minimum prize of \$250,000 in scholarships for students; the winner receives \$1 million in scholarships. The City has also been named a finalist for the Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE) Award, which is given through the National School Boards Association. He stated he would forward more information to Ms. Richards for distribution among Board members.

Mr. Webster noted that the Census will take place next year, and School Board member Beverly Gallagher chairs the K-20 Educational Subcommittee for the

County-wide census project. He emphasized the importance of an accurate count, as this will affect the distribution of funding. Both Nova University and Broward College will be partners in the effort.

He explained that schools will serve as “safe zones,” or areas for those who are uncomfortable with the census process at their homes. It is hoped that this, as well as the information that census data is not shared with other organizations, will result in a more accurate count. Mr. Webster promised further information as the time for the census draws nearer, in March or April 2010.

He concluded that the School Board has re-hired approximately 250 of the 394 teachers who had been dropped due to funding issues.

Dr. Lewis asked what methods are being used to get fathers involved in the Million Dad March. Mr. Webster explained that flyers, signs, and local news coverage are all means of distributing information about the event. He added that principals in particular are being encouraged to engage students’ fathers – for example, “Dinners for Dads” have been held to facilitate meetings between school staff, teachers, and fathers. He offered flyers and stickers to any members who might wish to distribute information about the upcoming event.

Dr. Persi asked if Broward County was taking any particular action, given the state of the economy, to encourage parents to fill out forms for free lunches for students. Mr. Webster responded that he would find out this information by the next meeting.

He recalled that in the past, the District has always fed children without requiring forms, although the forms were encouraged, as they would mean the program was federally funded.

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

Ms. Shelley reported that the previous Saturday, the Council sponsored a Citizen Volunteer Corps (CVC) project that focused on Croissant Park Elementary School, cleaning and improving the grounds. The principal was very grateful for the effort.

She added that she had learned of an effort in which the Broward County administrators planned to “help out in the schools,” which she thought was a very positive step. She agreed to email a newspaper article on this to Ms. Richards for distribution among the Board members.

Mr. Webster explained that this was part of a “suggestion program,” and is expected to save the District approximately \$200,000 in the first year. Any administrators who are also certified teachers are asked to assist in the

classrooms. Ms. Blue-Small added that administrators such as herself would be substituting for teachers.

Dr. Persi recalled hearing of the program, and asked how the District could justify placing high-paid individuals in the classroom instead of having them “[run] the School District.” She concluded she would need to see more information on the program to convince her of its value.

Ms. Blue-Small advised the administrators select two days per month to participate; in addition, the administrators are from the District rather than school principals or other administration. She asserted that the savings in question are significant.

Mr. Webster added that the administrators’ jobs will still be performed, most likely on their own time, such as nights and weekends. Dr. Persi felt she would need to see the savings “on paper” before she is convinced of the program’s worth.

Vice Chair Clark suggested the program be extended to administrators in the schools themselves, even if it was only for one hour per day doing reading groups, similar to the way Cresthaven Elementary does it. Ms. Leach agreed, declaring that she would have appreciated the opportunity for administrators to teach for a day, as it would help “make them more aware of what they’re working for.”

At this time Vice Chair Clark asked that the Board briefly reflect on the Learning for Success presentation from Mr. Casbarro, pointing out that the budget hearing will occur before the next scheduled Board meeting.

Mr. Borawski stated he could support the program, as he is in favor of integrating experiences from outside the classroom. He felt \$15,000 is a reasonable price to pay for the program; Vice Chair Clark reminded the Board that Mr. Casbarro had affirmed three schools could be funded for this amount.

Ms. Leach pointed out that the application of classroom skills to the real world is “huge,” and added that the principals are in support of, and asking for, the program. She felt they are in touch with the schools’ and students’ needs.

Ms. Deaner advised that she is in favor of “whatever works,” but has not often been a proponent of individual programs such as KAPOW. She did not see the significance of the program’s impact throughout a school year, and concluded she would like to hear more from the principals, as well as time to read the material, before she could make a recommendation.

It was noted that the program is proposed for North Side Elementary, which is already participating, with the addition of Lauderdale Manors Elementary. Vice

Chair Clark reminded the Board that she had also suggested adding Sunland Park Elementary, although Ms. Deaner pointed out that the principal of Sunland Park would have to ask for the program. She again recommended taking more time to get firsthand information before they could make an “educated statement.”

Dr. Persi felt Mr. Casbarro could make a presentation to the principal of Sunland Park. She pointed out, however, that he had been unable to clearly answer Ms. Elijah’s question regarding how the funds would be used.

Ms. Deaner suggested interested members could visit North Side or Lauderdale Manors to hear directly from the principals, and email their findings to the rest of the Board. Ms. Elijah reminded them that the budget hearing will be September 9, which is insufficient time to gather more information.

Vice Chair Clark proposed a motion to include the discussion as an Agenda item in September, with the explanation that more information was needed before the Board could endorse the program.

Ms. Shelley pointed out that North Side is a “small, contained school,” and very different from some of the schools the Board might feel would benefit from the program. She reminded them that KAPOW had been presented to the Board before, and they had not recommended it at that time. She noted that there were differences in the program.

Mr. Borawski felt he could support the program “as long as it includes the three schools” for \$15,000.

Dr. Lewis stated she had not heard “soundness” in the program, and reminded the Board that there are other, more important skills required, as well as the need for students to pass the FCAT. She did not feel she could vote for it.

Ms. Leach did not believe this is a new kind of program, but instead one that brings some aspects of special education to another classroom; she pointed out, however, that such a program is not implemented in special education until “late middle school [or] high school.” She asserted that they need more time, as well as references and budget details.

Motion made by Vice Chair Clark to table the issue for further discussion at the next scheduled meeting.

Ms. Blue-Small offered to contact the principal of North Side Elementary for more details on the program, although she recalled the principal has already written a letter in support.

Ms. Deaner stated she also questions the young age of some students, such as first or second grades, participating in the program.

Ms. Leach noted that the principal of Sunland Park should be contacted to find out if he or she is interested in participating.

Vice Chair Clark withdrew her earlier **motion** and stated the item would be tabled until Ms. Blue-Small could provide more information.

E. New / Future Business

Ms. Cooke observed that there had been discussions of involvement in the upcoming Fort Lauderdale Centennial in 2011, in which the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce had been mentioned. She informed the Board that the Chamber will celebrate its own Centennial in 2010, and will work closely with the City on both celebrations. The Chamber will begin its celebration in February 2010. She proposed that the Board think about how they would like to be involved in these upcoming celebrations, and discuss them at the September meeting.

F. Next Meeting and Closing

Vice Chair Clark advised the next meeting is September 17, 2009.

Mr. Borawski recalled that there had been discussion of doing something for the teachers of the adopted schools on their first in-service day. He proposed that the committees consider providing doughnuts and introducing themselves.

Ms. Deaner presented brochures that the Board had produced at an earlier time, which could be updated for the Centennial. She asked that the members borrow copies for review and consider them as a possible project.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.