

**APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE
EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
The City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida
100 North Andrews Avenue, 1st Floor Commission Chambers
Thursday, October 15, 2009 – 6:30-8:30 P.M.**

Cumulative Attendance

Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Jacqueline Ackerina, Chair	A	3	2
Laura Clark, Vice Chair	P	4	1
Lu Deaner	P	5	0
Edna Elijah	P	4	1
William Borawski	A	4	1
Katie Leach	P	3	2
Lillian Small	P	4	1
Shezette Blue-Small (6:39 arr.)	P	4	1
Linda Cooke	A	2	3
Dr. Magdalene Lewis	P	3	1
Dr. Maureen Persi, Ed.D.	P	4	0
John Sykes	A	1	3

Appointed members to the Board: 12

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 City Commission

Motion made by Ms. Elijah, seconded by Ms. Leach, to recommend the City Commission recommend student representatives assist on the Education Advisory Board. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

A. Opening

- **Attendance and Sign-In**

Vice Chair Clark called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

- **Approve Minutes (September 17, 2009)**

Correction P.7: change "he" to "she"

Correction P.8: change BROAD Award from \$500,000 to \$250,000

Motion made by Ms. Leach, seconded by Ms. Deaner, to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2009 meeting as corrected. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

- **Guest Introductions**

Vice-Chair Clark introduced Giselle Santos and Kyra Cedeno from Stranahan High School and welcomed them to the Board. The members of the Board introduced themselves to the students.

Vice-Chair Clark explained that in order for the students to become official Board members, they would need the approval of the City Commission. Meanwhile, the students could attend as guests. There would be a City Commission meeting on the following Tuesday [October 20, 2009]. Ms. Elijah inquired if the Board would follow the same format each time additional students were recommended to the Board.

Ms. Blue-Small arrived at 6:39 p.m.

Ms. Richards suggested in their Communication to the City Commission that the Board communicate their desire to have "a student" or "students" as members of the Educational Advisory Board (EAB).

Motion made by Ms. Elijah, seconded by Ms. Leach, to recommend the City Commission recommend student representatives assist on the Education Advisory Board. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

Motion made by Ms. Elijah, seconded by Ms. Leach, to place the above **motion** under Section B. of the next agenda, Communications to the City Commission. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

Ms. Leach stated she had attempted to reach two principals and left messages communicating she would be contacting the Student Council Coordinators to seek a student representative from Lauderdale and Dillard.

Vice-Chair Clark inquired if a member would volunteer to attend the October 21st meeting of the City Commission. Ms. Leach stated she would attend the 1:30 p.m. meeting.

Giselle Santos introduced herself. She is in the Medical Magnet Program and is Vice President of the Junior Class at Stranahan High. The principal chose her to attend the EAB. She was born in New Jersey and moved to Florida when she

was nine. She plans to work in the medical field. Her interest in serving on the Board was to give input from a student's point of view. Ms. Clark pointed out that Ms. Santos would receive service hours for her involvement.

Kyra Cedeno introduced herself. She is a junior at Stranahan High and is in the Medical Magnet Program and the U-Tech Program. She is majoring in business and aspires to work in education. She sees her involvement as an opportunity to voice her opinion and to observe what goes on inside the meetings.

Dr. Lewis inquired what issues the students were interested in voicing their opinions on relative to school. Ms. Cedeno responded that the classroom experience could be boring and she would like teachers to come up with better lesson plans and address learning problems. She mentioned the block schedule.

Regarding the block schedule, Ms. Santos added that she would rather listen to the teachers speak. Ms. Clark recognized there are different learning styles and it is up to teachers to try and meet those needs.

Ms. Small inquired what middle school the students came from. Ms. Santos came from New River Middle and Ms. Cedeno from Parkway Middle.

Ms. Clark stated that during the three-month cycle of meetings, she hoped the students would attend the EAB two more times before students from other high schools have the chance to attend. She inquired if the students had any concerns they would like the Board to be more involved in or needs the Board could help the school with. Ms. Cedeno mentioned that activities have been "cut down" as a result of budget cuts and the economy.

Dr. Lewis suggested the students make a list of items they would like to discuss at the next meeting so the Board could work with them.

Dr. Persi suggested that Ms. Deaner give the girls a synopsis of the Board's directive.

Ms. Deaner explained the EAB is an advisory board to the City of Fort Lauderdale. They give advice and offer resolutions to the City Commission. There are three high schools serving Fort Lauderdale – Fort Lauderdale High School, Stranahan High School and Dillard High School -- which is why the Board has made efforts to get representation from the three high schools. The Board wanted to be equitable by having each of the three high schools attend for a three-month period for equal representation. She explained that following their Board participation, students were welcome to attend the meetings as part of the audience and give input.

Ms. Deaner stated the Board would not be responsive to complaints about teachers, unless there were extreme circumstances. She encouraged the students to express to the Board their feelings and needs on different issues. If the students had an idea of an item for the agenda, they could send an email to Ms. Richards who would forward to the Board members ahead of time.

Dr. Persi inquired if a motion was needed regarding where on the agenda to place the students' requests for agenda items. Ms. Richards responded it was up to the Chair what to include on the agenda.

Dr. Lewis suggested the students read the Fort Lauderdale newspapers and "keep up" with what is happening within the City of Fort Lauderdale and gain understanding regarding the operation of the City officials and commissioners. She added that another reason for the students' presence was to understand City Government.

Ms. Deaner clarified with Mr. Webster her correction to the minutes regarding the BROAD award. He stated the \$500,000 figure had been for combined awards.

B. Communications to the City Commission

Motion made by Ms. Elijah, seconded by Ms. Leach, to recommend the City Commission recommend student representatives assist on the Education Advisory Board. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

C. Current Business

1. Student Members to EAB Follow-up by Mr. Borawski, Dr. Persi, and Ms. Small

Dr. Lewis stated that one student, Christopher Gates, had been selected from Arthur Ashe.

Dr. Persi stated she had not heard from Principal Stanley following Dr. Persi's two extensive emails outlining what the Board was requesting. If she did not hear back from the principal, she would reach out to the Guidance staff instead.

Ms. Small had called Fort Lauderdale High to make an appointment, but she had not heard back from them.

2. School Adoptions – Committee Updates

Ms. Deaner wanted to address members of Sunland. She stated that Dr. Persi, Ms. Cooke, Mr. Borawski and Ms. Clark had volunteered [for the committee]. Sunland would be having a Literacy Carnival on Thursday, October 29, 2009 at

2:30 p.m. in the form of a workshop and [the committee's] role would be to host the event and to set-up, provide libation, cookies and popcorn. Through the Parks & Recreation Department, Ms. Deaner was able to obtain a popcorn machine. She expected to receive a call on the 21st regarding how many people were expected to attend. Sunland would distribute a flyer describing homework procedures, which the committee members were to read to the visiting parents. Set-up should be completed by 1:30. Ms. Shelly, Dr. Persi and Ms. Leach volunteered to help with set-up.

Ms. Deaner spoke at a prior meeting regarding recognizing Danielle Coleson who had been "very instrumental" in getting backpacks, clothing, food, books and supplies to Sunland. Ms. Allen, the principal, wanted Ms. Coleson to receive recognition. Danielle Coleson's tape was being forwarded to Beacon and to Mr. Williams who represented Sunland Elementary at the Board of Education. Those were two avenues they had tried so far. Ms. Deaner asked the Board members to share suggestions regarding other ideas for recognition. She added that one idea would be going before the City of Fort Lauderdale to receive recognition at the City Commission meeting.

A wish list had been presented which Ms. Deaner had read to the Board in the past, but nothing had been done. Token supplies were needed so students could receive credits for work done and turn the credits in for items such as yo-yos or pencils. Ms. Leach agreed to bring the list to the Junior League Board meeting in November.

Regarding committee meetings and the Sunshine Law, Vice-Chair Clark stated the Board should be receiving the requirements for EAB sub-committee meetings. Ms. Deaner shared what she had learned. In order to comply with the Sunshine Law, a sub-committee could go to the school to gather information and meet with someone; however, discussion among the Board members could only take place at the EAB meeting. All communication, brainstorming and decision-making must take place at the full Board meeting where professional minutes are taken and then submitted to the City Commission. She added that it is important when sending emails to one another, to include a reminder for members not to respond to another member's email, but instead send their responses to Julie Richards.

Ms. Richards stated she had emailed the information she received from the City Attorney's Office to the EAB members regarding the Sunshine Law. Information may be presented to members, but should not be discussed outside of a Board meeting. She reminded members to refer to their handbook as a refresher course that would help answer questions regarding the Sunshine Law. Training would take place early next year and Board members were encouraged to attend.

The members discussed the supplies needed for hosting the Sunland Carnival and ideas for what to serve. Ms. Elijah pointed out that requesting donations for food supplies should be done through the corporate offices of businesses, such as Winn Dixie, Publix or McDonalds.

Ms. Blue-Small suggested finding out if the school had a partnership with a business in the area. She said that most elementary schools do, and the Reading Specialist would know if the school has a partnership. Vice-Chair Clark mentioned that Walmart was a good business to attempt receiving a donation from.

Ms. Deaner planned to contact Linda Cooke with the Chamber of Commerce for a donation. Another possibility she mentioned was having a Junior Ambassador from a parochial school volunteer for service credit. If the members need help with a project, she would find out if he were available.

Vice-Chair Clark thanked Ms. Deaner for all of the work she had been doing for the Board.

3. Educational Reform Discussion

Vice-Chair Clark stated that an article on educational reform had been in the Sun Sentinel and had been provided by Ms. Richards. Vice-Chair Clark said that "A lot had been going on" with the School Board and as a teacher and taxpayer, was very discouraging. She thought the Board should have a conversation and discuss the issue.

Ms. Leach had lived in California, and she shared that Beverly Hills had formed their own school district and kept their own tax dollars, rather than sending them to the State. She wondered if Boca was planning to do the same to have highly-funded schools. Eventually, there was a lawsuit involved, and Beverly Hills had to send all of their money to the State, because it was considered "completely inequitable." At that point, their schools "really suffered."

Dr. Persi stated that the charter schools "are rampant" in New Jersey. A corporation or group of people would get together and purchase a building that had to be up to Code according to the standards of the State. However, they would receive all of the benefits but not have to follow all of the rules and regulations of the Department of Education in New Jersey. The charter schools were prominent in the late 1990s and early in the new millennium. There were parents who were disenchanted with the public schools and would send their children to the charter schools. She stated the enrollment was lower but they did not have the quality of teachers. She added there is "nothing like public education no matter where you go as far as the offerings."

Another concern Dr. Persi had about the charter schools was the Special Education and Special Needs students. New Jersey has stringent standards regarding reaching out to Special Needs children. She added that New Jersey also has "takeover districts." The first district that was taken over by the State was Jersey City, second was Patterson and the third was Newark, the largest city in New Jersey. None were success stories, even though they were "taken over by the State itself." When the State takes over a district, they have to "fire" all of the personnel in the central office. In those three districts in northern New Jersey, staff went back and ran for the Board.

Ms. Deaner responded that Pembroke Pines has a group of charter schools. She had visited them in the past with EAB members and stated they were clean, well furnished, and seemed to have thousands on the waiting list." She suggested they might be more successful than what Dr. Persi described. Ms. Deaner added that Coral Springs had started a charter school. She expressed it was an interesting concept. She felt that if the Board members were interested, they should take time to visit some of the area charter schools. She stated that currently Pembroke Pines is suing the Broward Board of Education for money owed to them. The charter schools are funded by the Board of Education. They do have a specific Charter and were designed with certain goals. She concluded that some of them are working very well.

Mr. Webster clarified that charter schools are funded through the State, which comes from public education funding. He believed the suit had to do with "construction dollars" that were allocated to the capital plan for construction that charter schools feel they should receive a portion of, and was still being litigated.

Regarding construction, Vice-Chair Clark shared that she had attended a football game recently at Ely High School. There had been an article in the Daily Pulp regarding the School Board building a new \$7 million football stadium at Ely High School, which she did not understand since sports and "so much" inside the schools had been cut. The article stated on October 6th there was a \$6.8 million contract to renovate athletic grounds at Blanche Ely High School in Pompano Beach.

Mr. Webster stated that Mrs. Dinnen was able to negotiate a cheaper price on other projects in her district. She took the cost savings and allocated the dollars for the pool for Fort Lauderdale High School because it had been promised for so long.

Ms. Deaner stated there are two budgets at the schools and one is capital for construction. Mr. Webster added the capital budget also covers technology and computers. He stated that the Board needed to look at whether the State is adequately funding education. He felt [education] had been "last" for "quite some time."

Regarding charter schools, Ms. Blue-Small pointed out that they do not have to “answer” to the same level of standards as the public schools do. She added they also had to look at the demographics of the areas surrounding the charter schools. She mentioned a New York article she would bring to the next meeting regarding an ad for teachers to teach at one of the toughest inner city schools in New York. The pay was \$125,000 for four years. “Every teacher nationally was applying for that position.” Ms. Blue-Small stated the pay was linked directly to the progress of the students. At the end of the four-year-study, they felt the kids improved significantly. Improvement was linked directly to the quality of the teachers in the classroom and had nothing to do with the students background or what level they were on when the teacher arrived. She stated that what made the difference was not the charter school itself, but the quality of teaching that was occurring within those sites. If quality teachers were brought into the schools and compensated, education would “take a turn for the better.”

Ms. Deaner added that the results had to do with other aspects as well, such as the student body. An exceptional teacher could bring a student “from here to there.” She expressed that it is a complicated issue and in the current economic times, an implementation of Fort Lauderdale doing its own charter school set-up would not be appropriate. However, those who were interested could begin to explore the concept.

D. Old/Ongoing Business

1. Schools’ Wish Lists: Lauderdale Manors, Sunland Park, Arthur Ashe

No additional updates.

2. Other Reports/Updates/Discussion

- **Staff Liaison – Julie Richards**

None.

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

Mr. Webster stated the H1N1 vaccinations would start at six schools on Monday [October 19, 2009]:

1. Wilton Manors
2. West Pine Middle
3. Tamarac Elementary
4. Coconut Creek High School

5. Dania Elementary
6. Pembroke Pines Elementary.

He added that as the vaccine became more available it would be “rolled out” to additional schools. He believed Broward was the only district giving the vaccine at all of the schools. Miami Dade was giving the vaccine in selected schools. He added the four regional Health Departments were meeting for a press conference the following day [October 16, 2009], and it would be the first time the separate districts and counties “have cooperated in this manner in light of a serious threat.” The Superintendent had made the vaccine available in every one of Broward’s schools to “make things easier” for parents.

When the vaccine becomes available, the Health Department and the Board would identify the schools and parents would be notified via Parent Link. Permission forms would follow. Due to logistics, the process was expected to take five to six weeks to complete. Staff would also have the opportunity to participate.

The Coalition of Advisory Board meeting was held at K.C. Wright on “the 30th.” He mentioned Ms. Deaner had been present. The next meeting was scheduled for the first week of December.

Regarding the CUBE Awards (The Council of Urban Boards of Education), which is part of the National School Boards Association, the Broward District “was number two” behind Atlanta. He stated number two was “very good.” He added that Ms. Deaner’s comments regarding teaching staff was “right on the money and what happens in the classrooms has to do with the teachers.” He recalled a bumper sticker: “If you can read this, thank a teacher.”

Mr. Webster stated there had been a joint annual meeting between the School Board and the League of Cities. They reviewed the legislative program, and the school district lobbyist Georgia Slack presented a draft proposal. He observed many common areas on the two different agendas for the cities and the municipalities. He added that Ms. Slack did an excellent job aligning the interests of the municipalities as well as the School Board. Cities and counties were trying to attract economic development, families, and businesses to the area which works hand-in-hand with a good education system that provides an adequate work force.

Mr. Webster added that Ms. Slack spoke on local agreement between all of the cities in the County and the School Board regarding concurrency issues in terms of building and how many chairs were provided for new students. The boundary changes are affected by local agreement, class size reduction and excess capacity on the east side. A school could not be built without State permission. Since there is capacity east, they would not “be allowed to build anything.” He

added that boundary issues are a complex problem to solve, including having to bus students from west to east. The League was very interested and asked the School Board to give a presentation so they would have a better understanding of what Broward was trying to do. There are eight variables and it is challenging for the planners and demographers to put something together that would work for everybody.

Mr. Webster stated that a scholarship would be provided, which is wonderful for high school seniors with an interest in government and public administration. He encouraged members to view the Superintendents blog which could be found by a link on the website.

Ms. Small inquired if the schools still had a clinic. He said they do, but the problem is staffing the clinics with nurses.

Regarding the vaccines, Mr. Webster stated there is concern about disrupting class time. Each school could decide the best scheduling system for their school. The Health Department would provide the vaccine and medical personnel.

Dr. Lewis inquired if the vaccine is mandatory to which Mr. Webster responded no. The opportunity was being provided as a convenience and as a cost savings.

Ms. Leach asked about liability. Mr. Webster said the Student Support Services group worked diligently with the Health Department and the legal team had worked out an agreement with "blanket protection" against liability issues in a time of emergency.

Ms. Elijah wanted to know what the school district would be doing to have households and parents participate in the Census 2010. She stated there were many families that have moved in to one household together, many people without green cards, and other issues and concerns.

Mr. Webster responded that the district is part of the Complete Count team in Broward County and one of the Board members is heading up the K-18 Education Committee in partnership with the schools as well as Broward College, Nova and universities. They are working closely with the Census and the County. He advised the members they would be hearing more about the Census and that funding would have a lot to do with the result of the Complete Count.

Mr. Webster informed them it is against the law to divulge any information received during the Census process, which does apply to Census workers. At this time there is a designated Census liaison in every school. The liaison would

report directly to the School Board members. There would be a big event in all of the schools and information would be sent home with the students

Ms. Leach had attended a training the day before and Senator Atwater and Congressman Hasner had representatives who attended. The Census was discussed and they believe approximately \$13,000 is lost for the State for every person who goes unidentified. There are children in the schools who are not being counted. She expressed she was glad the School Board would be trying to get the complete numbers.

Ms. Elijah informed the members of the Census 2010 office on Las Olas Boulevard. There would be testing sites and the Census would start in March. Enumerators were needed to help spread the word and increase the count. She added that property taxes could go down if the count were high in an area.

Ms. Small stated that the same people who “duck the Census and kill our dollars” are the same people who look for those dollars at Social Services. Ms. Blue-Small pointed out that people need to be educated so they understand that being counted will bring more dollars to the State.

Dr. Persi was concerned about the schools not having certified nurses on duty and how emergencies would be handled.

Ms. Deaner mentioned the meeting of the Coalition of the EABs she had attended. The area she thought was of interest to the Board was a Proclamation of Oakland Park.

Mr. Webster stated that the City of Oakland Park had asked the school district to issue a resolution on the Safe Haven Program for newborns. Since 2000, 137,000 newborns have been saved in the City of Oakland Park. The school district would like to find a way to get the information about the Safe Haven Program to middle and high school students in the City.

Ms. Deaner stated the Proclamation was included in the minutes. She asked Mr. Webster to provide a copy to Ms. Richards so that the Board could decide if they would like the City of Fort Lauderdale to support the proclamation. Mr. Webster stated, “it is a wonderful program and it is working.”

3. Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations – B. Shelley

Ms. Shelly stated she had attended the meeting Tuesday night and gave the Association a report of the EAB’s last meeting. They were very interested and asked a lot of questions. They were especially interested in the three schools. Last Saturday was the Citizens Volunteer Corp at Carter Park, which was well received. A lot of people were there, and over 50 students attended and did

digging, planting and mulching. The Mayor and Commissioner DuBose attended. During the last Parks and Recreation meeting a commendation was given to "Honeybun" and some of his staff. She stated it was great to have so many young people attend. Many local neighborhood residents were in attendance wearing t-shirts and working. The students had a form signed while they were there in order to receive credit for community service.

Ms. Shelly continued that the next Civic Association meeting would be November 14th at Tarpon River Park. They would be cleaning the Park and helping with whatever was needed. She added that all of the projects are worthwhile and take place at schools and parks where students can go and receive credit for community service and communicate with other students.

Ms. Leach stated that the students present from Stranahan might want information to take back to Stranahan High regarding the projects for community service hours.

Ms. Elijah added that it would also be an opportunity for Neighborhood Associations to get points for Neighborhood Capital Improvement Programs (NCIP).

Ms. Shelly said the points go toward NCIP grants. She emphasized the forms should be filled out and sent to the City to receive points toward becoming a "recognized neighborhood." She is on that committee, and pointed out that some neighborhoods were ready to lose points because they had not filled out the forms.

E. New/Future Business

1. Fort Lauderdale Centennial Celebration – 03/27/2001

Ms. Cook was not present to give a report.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by J. Picinich, Prototype, Inc.]