

**APPROVED
MINUTES
EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE, 1ST FLOOR CHAMBERS
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2010 – 6:30 P.M.**

Members	Attendance	Cumulative Attendance	
		Present	Absent
Dr. Magdalene Lewis, Chair	P	6	2
Laura Clark, Vice Chair	P	6	2
Chase Adams (arr. 6:39)	P	2	1
Alec Anderson	A	1	1
Shezette Blue-Small	P	6	2
William Borawski	P	7	1
Lu Deaner	P	8	0
Gwendolyn Dudley	A	0	3
Edna Elijah	P	6	2
James Howell	P	2	1
Alan Levy	P	1	1
Vialene Monroe	A	0	1
Dr. Maureen Persi, Ed.D.	P	6	1
Lillian Small	P	6	2

Appointed members to the Board: 14
 Needed to constitute a quorum: 8

Staff

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

A. Opening

- **Attendance and Sign-In**

Chair Lewis called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Roll was called and it was determined a quorum was present.

- **Approve Minutes (January 2010)**

Motion made by Ms. Deaner, seconded by Ms. Elijah, to approve the minutes from January 10, 2010 as written. In a voice vote, all voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Introduce New Members: Alan Levy**

New member Alan Levy introduced himself to the Board.

B. Communications to the City Commission – None.

C. Current Business

1. Student Members to EAB

Ms. Victoriano, Student EAB member from Stranahan High School, stated in reference to the Sunland Elementary School Project, a collection has been started. Ms. Deaner asked Ms. Victoriano to provide a report in more detail later on in the meeting.

2 School Adoptions - Updates

Sunland Elementary School

Ms. Deaner gave an update from Sunland Elementary School stating she had spoken with Mr. Borawski and Dr. Persi in an attempt to get a date for a meeting with Principal Shawn Allen. Ms. Deaner provided to Principal Allen contact information for Dr. Persi and Mr. Borawski, so they may contact each other to coordinate a meeting, hopefully sometime in the beginning of March. Ms. Deaner could not say with certainty whether or not her current health status would allow her to participate in this meeting. She also suggested that a behavioral specialist attend the meeting.

Lauderdale Manors and Fort Lauderdale High

Ms. Small reported she had gone to Fort Lauderdale High on February 3rd and was unable to meet with the Principal due to the death of a student, which had happened the day before she arrived. The Principal had been busy with the grief counselor and preoccupied with that situation and was unable to meet with her. Ms. Small left her contact information, but has not yet heard back from anyone at Fort Lauderdale High School.

Ms. Small stated she also went to Lauderdale Manors on the same day. The Principal was not there, but she did get an appointment for February 10, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. Ms. Small met with the Principal, along with the school's community liaison. It appears that, after meeting with the Principal and the liaison, their greatest need at this time is mentors for the young male students who attend their school. The Principal told Ms. Small any recommended mentors would have to go through a security background

clearance. Ms. Small asked the Board for recommendations and direction of possible places to start recruiting potential mentors for Lauderdale Manors.

Ms. Deaner suggested the Board gather possible mentors and have a Board member perform their background security clearance on-site at one of the meetings. Mr. Howell indicated that the application for security clearance is a very simple process which takes about five minutes. No fingerprinting is necessary. All that is needed is a volunteer with a laptop to submit the application to the School Board; the school is sent the results within ten days. Ms. Clark said that in the past she has coordinated events where potential volunteers would meet at a public library for guidance and assistance in filling out the volunteer application online. Ms. Clark said there are many people who want to volunteer, but do not have internet access, so this gives them a way to get involved.

Ms. Small said she was under the impression that the screening process for one-on-one mentors was more stringent than volunteering, and that fingerprinting is a requirement. The Board was advised by Ms. Blue-Small the information was correct, as fingerprinting is mandatory for volunteers working individually alone with students. Ms. Small indicated the liaison said the fingerprinting process is offered free to those who would like to be mentors. It was suggested by Ms. Clark that volunteers who would like to be mentors be invited to a breakfast where free fingerprinting could be offered at that time. Chair Lewis offered to prepare a list of security and background requirements, which can be provided to the Board members via Ms. Richards, so the process is not delayed.

Ms. Elijah asked how often the mentors are needed; Ms. Small said she forgot to bring her notes from the meeting, but will send that information to Ms. Richards to pass onto the rest of the Board. Dr. Persi asked Ms. Small to expand on the specific groups she is intending to approach to obtain these mentors, as well as clarification that Lauderdale Manors is asking specifically for male mentors. Ms. Small said she knows key people in fraternities, retired former educators currently serving as deacons at churches, and the Commissioner in her community who may be able to approach individuals in his church as well. Chair Lewis said that sounds like an "excellent step in moving forward." Ms. Blue-Small also made a suggestion to contact the group, "100 Black Men of Fort Lauderdale."

Dr. Persi inquired regarding the time of day mentoring takes place and was advised by Chair Lewis that sometimes the students are taken off campus and sometimes the students meet with their mentors at school. Ms. Small said she was told by the Principal from Lauderdale Manors that students would be mentored at the school, during school hours, probably on their lunch hour. Chair Lewis said that they will need guidelines from the school, indicating what exactly is going to be required of the mentors. Ms. Small reiterated that once she obtains her notes, she will be sending out the details of their meeting, which will answer most of their questions.

[Mr. Webster arrived at 6:58]

Dr. Persi said she received an email from Martin P. Cox on January 22, 2010 and has tried unsuccessfully to reach Mr. Cox via telephone. Dr. Persi asked to read the following email into the minutes:

Good Morning, Dr. Persi,

Thank you for your interest in our program. For 32 years I have provided free school supplies to children at no cost to the parents, or the children. Our program is sponsor-based in participation with local school boards and corporate sponsors. We provide free school supplies. Our basic program starts at \$16 per child, for every child enrolled in the participating district. The local school board usually underwrites approximately \$10 per child in the first year of the program and we jointly raise the remaining balance of \$5 per child. What sets us apart from everyone else is that we commit to 100 percent of the children in a school district. School districts fund their portion of the program using Title 1 Dollars. From 1979 until 2008, no school district incurred any cost from our program. Sponsorship paid for 100 percent of the cost from every district from 1979 until 2008. If the Fort Lauderdale district works the fundraising program, we could be at no cost to you.

Please review the attached information. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
Martin P. Cox,
President of Thirst for Knowledge, LLC
Education is a life-altering experience.

Dr. Persi reiterated that she has tried to contact Mr. Cox several times, as she has many questions, but has not been able to reach him. Ms. Deaner said clarification is needed as to whether the service Mr. Cox provides is a program the School Board needs to adopt or if it would be a partnership.

Ms. Deaner asked the student EAB members to gather as much information as they can and stay in touch with Dr. Persi and Mr. Borowski, so when the meeting is set up, merchandise can be delivered. Ms. Victoriano indicated that the drive, which was initiated by the class, was opened up to the whole school and supplies received so far include filler paper, pencils, crayons, and erasers. Chair Lewis agreed this is an excellent start.

3. Title 1 Funding

Chair Lewis asked regarding money distributions as the website is unclear in that regard. Stimulus money has doubled and only one-third has been spent. Ms. Clark would like to see how the money is being allocated.

Mr. Webster said if he is given a specific question he can try to answer it, or the Board can invite someone to the meeting who is more knowledgeable and can respond to their questions. Budget issues are very complex, especially in terms of how those dollars are allocated and decisions are made. A lot of monetary decisions are made at the school level. Mr. Webster would prefer to invite someone to speak to the Board in reference to how those funds are distributed.

Ms. Clark believed the Board needs to be educated on this matter and asked if the money is being used for free and reduced lunches.

Mr. Webster stated he thinks that the free and reduced lunch count is used as the determining factor as to whether or not the school gets additional federal funds, etc. Mr. Webster said he does not believe the money is used to fund actual lunches. The dollars for the lunches come from the Department of Agriculture program.

Ms. Clark said she hopes those funds “make it to the classroom” sharing an example of how her school now has a special math teacher as they are a Title I school. Ms. Clark indicated that 85% of the students at her school receive free and/or reduced lunches.

Mr. Webster reminded the Board that there are specific criteria that need to be met to qualify for these federal funds. For instance, teachers in particular areas need to have specific qualifications. Last year, many teachers had to be furloughed, but they were then able to return to positions created by federal funding. It was agreed that funding is a complex process and if the Board desired, Mr. Webster would invite someone to speak to them on this subject. Chair Lewis acknowledged that would be beneficial to the Board’s better understanding of funding processes.

Dr. Persi said she believes that if the Title I funding is designated to a particular school based on their free and reduced lunch count, the monies could go back into salaries for those teachers teaching in the Title I programs.

Mr. Webster said he cannot say whether or not Dr. Persi’s comment is correct and again suggested speaking to an expert on the subject, so that the Board has the correct information.

Mr. Levy noted he had just returned from Tallahassee and the budget issue is so severe that there are likely to be “horrible cuts” both this year and in 2011. Mr. Levy expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the Title I Funding program.

Mr. Webster announced that at a budget workshop he had attended recently on the subject of capital, there had been talk of having to cut 475 jobs if money was not found due to a deficit of approximately \$100 million.

Ms. Victoriano reported that she attended a meeting of the Broward County Association of Student Councils at Stranahan High School. Representatives from most of the Fort Lauderdale area schools were in attendance. There was discussion regarding money issues and the BCASC advisor said a meeting was being held in Tallahassee in March where the discussion would be about overall stabilization, instead of asking for more money.

Mr. Webster said one of the other major issues is the concern about running out of money during the school year and if nothing is done in regard to class size, they would have to find a way to continue to pay for 750 new employees, which makes for an even more complex situation.

D. Old / Ongoing Business

1. School Wish List

Lauderdale Manors

Dr. Persi asked the new members to join in taking care of items on the wish list. Chair Lewis thought that was an excellent suggestion. Ms. Deaner asked if there was a way to ask the Boys and Girls Club to adopt school wish lists. According to the minutes, Mr. Anderson had advised he would look into seeing if the Boys and Girls Clubs would be willing adopt a school.

Ms. Victoriana asked about hygiene kits for those in need, which was listed on the wish list, as well as asking what items would constitute a “hygiene kit.” Ms. Richards suggested personal items such as toiletries, including deodorant, soap, toothbrushes, etc.

Dr. Persi made a suggestion to the student representatives to start a project with their student councils gathering these toiletries. Students could bring in an empty shoebox, decorate it, and then have an after-school project to fill the shoeboxes with toiletries. The student representatives can then coordinate with Ms. Small and their respective Principals to get the boxes delivered.

Sunland Park

[Addressed by Ms. Deaner earlier in the meeting.]

Arthur Ashe

Chair Lewis asked for suggestions as Arthur Ashe is asking for school supplies. Suggestions were made including scholarship and project opportunities.

Ms. Small said it appears as though with this wish list, they are asking for supplies in bulk and suggested requesting an updated, less complex wish list.

Chair Lewis responded that their only wish is for school supplies, adding that she would be contacting the Golden Heights HOA, where she lives, to see if they would be willing to donate school supplies. Ms. Deaner said that business partnerships may be difficult due to the current economic situation, but suggested that maybe businesses would sponsor projects and have students “shadow in workplaces.”

Mr. Levy suggested bringing someone in from the Broward County Foundation to get ideas and see what they are doing to currently provide wish list items.

Ms. Clark stated her neighborhood has been very generous, paying for students to go on field trips who cannot afford to pay for themselves.

Chair Lewis brought up the subject of school supplies and indicated that was the only item the Board would be able to address immediately. Chair Lewis was in agreement with Ms. Clark that the neighborhoods will need to be brought into these efforts as well.

Ms. Clark said, in regard to field trips, if the schools inform the Board of a student field trip and how many of those students might need financial assistance, each Board member can go back to their neighborhood and ask for donations. When the students return from their field trip, it would be a nice gesture for them to then send thank you notes to their sponsors.

Chair Lewis said she would speak with the Principal of the school and report back to the Board.

Ms. Small mentioned sponsorship opportunities, asking if this was something the Board could do such as hosting a “Family Unity Night” or a “Fun Night.”

Ms. Victoriano asked who decides which students go when sponsoring field trips. Chair Lewis said she believes either the Principal, counselors, and/or teachers would decide.

Ms. Victoriano asked about a sponsoring a self-esteem initiative suggesting that if there is a way to get volunteers and mentors who are qualified to speak to the students on this subject, it could possibly make a great impact.

Ms. Clark suggested asking the high school students to put on a presentation speaking to higher grade elementary school students about them doing well in school. The Board could sponsor the event and provide food and drinks. Ms. Small alternatively suggested having high school students speak to middle school students; Ms. Clark agreed that would be an even better idea.

Ms. Shelley mentioned that, at one point, Arthur Ashe had indicated they were having a problem keeping children in school, so this would be an excellent program.

Ms. Clark offered get the “ball rolling” and bring an update on her progress to the next meeting.

2. Other Reports/ Updates/ Discussion

a. Reports and Updates

- 1) Staff Liaison, Julie Richards - None.**
- 2) Broward County Public School Liaison, Charles Webster**

Mr. Webster reported that 820 Haitian students displaced by the earthquake have been brought into Broward County Schools. In addition, the student-initiated drive, Final Numbers, has gathered more than 160 tons of food and supplies.

Broward was recently honored by the Discovery Channel for reaching one million page views on their Discovery Education website. One of the Discovery Channel stars, Philippe Cousteau, personally visited South Broward High School, New River Middle School, and the Museum of Discovery & Science. Mr. Webster pointed out that teachers utilize the Discovery Education website within their classrooms as a teaching tool.

Ms. Shelley mentioned that she and Ms. Deaner also attended the function and heard positive feedback about Broward County Schools.

Mr. Webster mentioned that he has been given to the task of focusing on school accomplishments. He indicated they are working in conjunction with initiatives the State has in terms of economic development. He further pointed out that, collectively, an educated workforce is needed to attract and support local businesses in the community. The largest number of nationally certified teachers in the United States are in Broward County and it is the largest fully accredited school district in the United States, as well as one of the top five districts in the nation.

Ms. Elijah asked how well the Haitian students are blending in with the other students and if any psychological assistance is being offered.

Mr. Webster stated that the District is working with many organizations and so far the process has been fairly seamless. Approximately two or three weeks ago there had been a webcast between different high schools, allowing victims of the earthquake to discuss their experiences with their peers. Students who speak both Creole and English have been assisting with translation when needed as well. Mr. Webster is very proud of how the new Haitian students have been received and accepted into the community.

Dr. Persi suggested presenting those statistics to the Centennial Committee. In response to Ms. Deane's question whether a representative from the Centennial Committee had been planned to attend the EAB meeting, Ms. Shelly responded that the Centennial Committee has a specific "education committee" and they prefer that individual address this Board as there is a list of items they want to speak about.

**3) Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations
Betty Shelley**

The next event coming up for the City is the St. Patrick's Day parade on Saturday, March 13th starting at 2 p.m. The City has asked neighborhoods and schools to participate and show their community spirit.

Ms. Shelley indicated the City Commission is concerned about Code issues and is working hard on getting proposals for the parade cleared and approved.

E. New/Future Business

1. Fort Lauderdale Centennial Celebration - 03/27/2011

F. Next Meeting and Closing

Chair Lewis thanked the students who participated in the meeting. She also expressed her gratitude for the work that Ms. Small is undertaking to get mentors.

Ms. Santos mentioned that Stranahan High School's band will be performing at the St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 13th.

Ms. Small passed around an article published in the February 10, 2010 edition of the *Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel* about students' lack of soap usage and stopping the spread of germs. Ms. Richards will email a copy of the article to the Board members.

Ms. Small mentioned that Gwendolyn Dudley is absent because she still not feeling very well following her surgery on January 17th, but she still wants to be involved with the Board's activities. Chair suggested sending Ms. Dudley a "Get Well" card.

The next meeting will be held on March 18, 2010.

Mr. Webster reminded everyone that the next meeting falls during Broward Days on March 17-18 in Tallahassee.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by L. Davila, Prototype, Inc.]