

APPROVED
EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE, 1ST FLOOR CHAMBERS
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2011 – 6:30 P.M.

Members	Attendance	APRIL 2011-APRIL 2012	
		Present	Absent
Dr. Magdalene Lewis, Chair	P	5	0
Katie Leach, Vice Chair	A	3	2
Theresa Bucolo	P	4	1
Vincent Cella	A	4	1
Catherine Cirillo	A	4	1
Laura Clark	A	2	3
Joseph Discepola	A	2	3
Edna Elijah (arr. 6:42 p.m.)	P	3	2
Roland Foulkes	P	5	0
Nancy Green (arr. 6:32 p.m.)	P	3	2
Trisha Halliday	P	4	1
Cici Kelly	P	1	1
Dr. Maureen Persi, Ed.D.	P	5	0
Franco Ripple	P	4	1
Lillian Small (left 7:20 p.m.)	P	3	2

Appointed members to the Board: 15
 Needed to constitute a quorum: 8

Staff

Julie Richards, Staff Liaison
 Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Students

Hayley Gearheart
 Rebecca Jules

Communications to City Commission

None.

A. Opening

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

- **Attendance and Sign-in**

As of this date, there are 15 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

Following roll call, it was determined there was a quorum in attendance.

- **Approve Minutes (August '11)** (not addressed at this time)
- **Introduce New Member(s): Cici Kelly**

Ms. Kelly introduced herself.

Chair Lewis asked the two student members to introduce themselves: Rebecca Jules (Fort Lauderdale High) and Hayley Gearheart (Fort Lauderdale High).

- **Approve Minutes (August '11)**

The following correction was noted by Mr. Foulkes:

- p. 4, 3rd paragraph from the bottom, "Coral Springs Charter was ranked 1,002 in high schools..." should read, "Coral Springs Charter was ranked amongst the top 1,000 high schools..."

Motion by Mr. Foulkes, seconded by Mr. Ripple, to approve the minutes of the August 2011 meeting as amended. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

- **Guest Introductions: Michaelle Pope, BCPS**

Mr. Ripple said that Ms. Pope could not be attendance.

Mr. Foulkes requested that the Board send congratulations to Vice Chair Katie Leach on her selection as a School Board member. He reported that she can no longer serve on this board due to conflicting governmental entities.

[Nancy Green joined the meeting at 6:35 p.m.]

Ms. Richards commented that she will check and verify if Ms. Leach could no longer serve as a result.

B. Communication to City Commission

Mr. Foulkes asked Ms. Richards if there was an update from the Commission on the Board's communication on the charter school meeting. Ms. Richards reported that at the last City Commission meeting, the source of interest in charter schools was identified as Commissioner Rogers, who wanted the Board to discuss charter schools as they relate to middle schools, to see if the school system needed help, and if the level of education in the middle schools was adequate, needed to be raised and looked at comprehensively.

In addition, Ms. Richards reported that Vice Mayor DuBose felt that the entire school system (all ages) should be looked at and looked at more comprehensively. The Mayor felt that the focus should be on making the Broward County School system better.

The City Auditor was asked by the Commission to research (including the financial viability of) the charter schools in Coral Springs and Pembroke Pines and to report back to the City Commission. She continued that it may go to a Conference agenda for discussion. Mr. Foulkes requested that the Board receive copies of the Auditor's reports when available.

[Ms. Elijah joined the meeting at 6:42 p.m.]

C. Student Members to the Education Advisory Board

Ms. Gearheart said she is a junior, taking five AP classes and is the President of the Junior Class.

Neither student had any issues to discuss with the Board.

D. Current Business

1. Co-applicability of the site-based, school-based management system; Broward County School System's Code of Conduct and Policies – Franco Ripple

Mr. Ripple reiterated that Ms. Pope will not be present, but still hoped to discuss the agenda item.

Mr. Ripple thought that the co-applicability of the site-based, school-based management system with the School Board's Code of Conduct is the ability of Principals to act as a CEO of their schools, creating rules that are necessary. He said that has led to some instances involving same gender couples where some of the site-based rules have been in violation of either the letter or spirit of the School Board's Code of Conduct in certain areas. While acknowledging the cited instances happened in Pompano, he said that this situation applies across the entire Broward School Board system.

Mr. Ripple stated that the Board's Code of Conduct is sent home with students at the beginning of the school year to be signed by students and parents, and then returned. It is readily available on every school's website as well.

He continued that the site-based, school-based system is not as readily available; it is not required for students/parents to see or sign. An online random search conducted at his office failed to turn up school-specific rules posted anywhere.

Mr. Ripple remarked that seven of nine of the County Commissioners sent letters to the School Board suggesting that the site-based rules should be made available in a public forum, such as on a website. He also thought that the schools should send a copy of their rules home for signature. Mr. Ripple relayed that Ms. Pope thought the most appropriate thing would be to have this issue be brought up to the School Board as a proposed policy change.

Mr. Ripple asked for consensus of the Education Advisory Board that the site-based school-based specific rules should be publicly available and should be sent home, if possible, with students and parents to be signed just like the Code of Conduct. He noted that if this Board agrees, the item could be brought before the School Board as a concrete policy suggestion on behalf of the Education Advisory Board.

Chair Lewis commented that she wanted to know what the rules are.

Dr. Persi wondered if the rules were approved by the District Superintendent, and why they were not sent home. She recommended, in addition, having the rules posted in accessible places in appropriate languages. She asked Mr. Ripple if he has a list of the schools whose rules were not posted on the internet. Mr. Ripple replied that he does not know who approves the rules, and he said he wants to ensure that students know the rules.

Mr. Foulkes wondered why the two (County) Commissioners did not sign the letter and wondered if there had been a response by Mr. Williams. Mr. Ripple said he did not know why the two did not send letters, and reiterated that the letters were sent in a personal capacity. He said a statement was made by the County Attorney that the letters were sent in their personal capacity. He did not know if any responses had been made.

Ms. Elijah thought this Board should table the matter until they hear from a representative from the School Board.

Mr. Foulkes noted the School Board had a mandatory budget meeting this evening, and the whole week has been unusual for the School Board.

Mr. Foulkes heard that the Code of Conduct was only online, and wondered if hard copies had been sent home this year. Ms. Gearheart replied that she did not recall getting the packet.

Ms. Kelly wondered if the original Code gets voted on if the Principals choose to change it and, if so, are the Principals allowed to discriminate.

Mr. Ripple reiterated that he is not attempting to change the School Board's code, nor change any site-specific policies. He said the discussion was intended to suggest to the School Board that they need to make plainly available to

parents/students/faculty/administration/staff and interested parties, the school-specific rules. He also acknowledged that there are difficulties getting a School Board representative to attend these meetings, through no fault of their own.

Dr. Persi asked if anyone on the Board had seen the School Board's Code of Conduct, and wondered how many rules there are. She was informed there are many rules and she thought perhaps there are too many.

Ms. Bucolo, speaking as a school principal, mentioned that the Code of Conduct book is online and the online address had been sent out to parents multiple times. She said a signature sheet was sent home separately. She received 30 hard copies of the policy to hand out to students who do not have internet access. She offered to bring a copy to the next meeting.

Ms. Bucolo mentioned that at Harbordale, the school based rules are rather simple, such as "enter the building quietly." She said they are not posted online, although she has no issue doing so. Most teachers have posted them in the classroom.

Ms. Elijah brought up a dress code issue with "saggy pants," and Ms. Bucolo said her school has uniforms. Mr. Foulkes clarified that the "saggy pants" law is a State law.

Motion by Ms. Elijah, seconded by Mr. Foulkes, to table the matter until a person who handles the Code of Conduct from the School Board can attend a meeting. In a roll call vote, the motion passed (8-2) as follows: Mr. Foulkes, yes; Ms. Green, yes; Ms. Halliday, yes; Ms. Kelly, yes; Dr. Persi, yes; Mr. Ripple, no; Ms. Small, no; Ms. Bucolo, yes; Ms. Elijah, yes; Chair Lewis, yes.

Mr. Foulkes described the discipline matrix which he helped create for the District. He said he also helped create a video which goes along with the Student Code of Conduct. He said that it is broadcast to schools via BECON at the beginning of the school year. The student members said they never viewed the video. Ms. Kelly also commented that she had never known there was a video that accompanied the hard copy.

[Ms. Small left the meeting at 7:20 p.m.]

Dr. Persi wondered how much a parent would read of the policy manual. Mr. Foulkes commented that the manual was online in several languages.

Ms. Bucolo said her school is required to show the video every year. She said that in all instances they refer to the discipline matrix when a referral is written.

Dr. Persi asked Ms. Bucolo if her school rules are approved by the District Superintendent, and Ms. Bucolo said they were not. She added that the rules she was referring to are fairly universal rules that most schools would have such as those related to cleanliness, noise levels, etc.

Dr. Persi asked about the matter of public displays of affection in the Code. Mr. Foulkes relayed that he brought up public displays of affection at a meeting regarding the discipline matrix, and was told by District personnel that there is no reference to that in the Code.

Mr. Foulkes also said that as far as he was aware, all the “school rules” are consistent with the Code of Conduct. He felt it is necessary for principals to “finesse” the Code’s rules to fit their own school. He stated that site-based management is an acceptable practice nationwide in the educational system. Dr. Persi asked about the role of the Area Superintendents, and Mr. Foulkes said they oversee schools, but do not direct what goes on in the school.

Mr. Ripple agreed with Mr. Foulkes in that schools are like small corporations and they have to have a culture that matches its workforce (students). He said, however, that a school’s culture should not engender discrimination or create prejudice.

Mr. Ripple reiterated that his whole purpose was to ask for transparency on this issue. He said that he will inform Ms. Pope and Mr. Webster that this Board cannot take further action until they provide a School Board representative to address the matter.

E. Old/Ongoing Business

- 1.
2. **Other Reports/Updates/Discussion**

a. Reports & Updates:

1) City Staff Liaison – Julie Richards

Ms. Richards said she already covered the information on charter schools that would have been in her report.

She mentioned that she had conveyed to former Board member Ms. Deaner that Board members have been asking about her, and that Ms. Deaner thanked the members who have her in thought.

2) Broward County School District – C. Webster

Not present.

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

Ms. Shelley reported that the Council met the past Tuesday. She said that the main topic of discussion was code issues and neighborhood compatibility. She said some Committee members were not happy with the findings of the City's consultant.

She said the Major from the Police Department talked about a new program, Raids Online, where residents can find out police issues in their neighborhood.

Ms. Shelley reported that the Visioning Committee will have workshops in each district, the first to be October 3 in District 3 at the Beach Community Center at 4:00 p.m. She said Centennial events are ongoing as well.

She announced that Pat Mayer had passed away, and provided information about a ceremony honoring her with a monument inscription.

Mr. Foulkes brought up the declining numbers of students in the District, and mentioned possible reasons for this:

- More charter schools
- More home schooling
- More private schooling
- Foreclosures (possibly the biggest cause)

He asked Ms. Shelley how serious the foreclosure problem was, but Ms. Shelley said that the consultant did not discuss it at the last meeting.

Ms. Shelley said that some residents wondered why the City would be thinking about charter schools in this economy.

There was a discussion on the prevalence and consequences of foreclosures, with Ms. Elijah mentioning that there are many foreclosures (10-15 boxes full) in her area, Lauderdale Manors. Mr. Foulkes commented that the foreclosures affect the students in the classroom and also negatively impact property tax dollars (that support the schools).

Mr. Ripple mentioned that the County has started a Neighborhood Stabilization Program, which has a federal grant that cities and city/county collectives can apply for to purchase foreclosed properties, rehab them and put them on the market. Ms. Richards said the City of Fort Lauder is doing that as well.

Ms. Gearheart mentioned that there was an update about cell phones in the Student Conduct Code, and she was never informed of it except by word of mouth. She wondered if teachers have updates to distribute to students. Mr. Foulkes replied that all the changes are worked out the year before and the accumulated update will be ready in the fall when school starts. Usually the updates that occur during the year (which would be considered urgent) should be communicated by the PTA, PTO or student government. He said those updates may be announced through BECON.

Ms. Kelly stated that if the updates are being announced in the classroom, then those updates are not getting to the parents, unless a signature is required for the updates. Mr. Foulkes pointed out that parent organizations are available such as the PTO, if parents have the time to attend. Ms. Bucolo said her school uses email, the internet and phone calls for parent notifications.

Mr. Foulkes clarified that the Code of Conduct per se is not changed, but prepared a year in advance for the following year. Sometimes modifications are required mid-year. The modifications can be made online and the notices are supposed to go out. Normally the policy committees that create the Code make their recommendations to the School Board. It is the School Board that accepts or rejects the changes, and it is up to the School Board to get the modifications out to the schools in the District.

In reference to an earlier example mentioned by Mr. Ripple, Ms. Jules thought that not allowing same-gender couples to attend a prom goes against the idea of tolerance in school. Mr. Foulkes agreed that it would be, but he had not heard of it. Mr. Ripple clarified there was such an instance at Coconut Creek High, and he stated it goes against the School Board's own Code of Conduct, which outlaws discrimination on sexual preference, identity, and orientation. Ms. Kelly said that instance arose from the principal's site-based rules.

Ms. Jules asked if any measures were taken against the principal in that instance, and Mr. Ripple replied that nothing happened to his knowledge. With the other incident involving same-gender hand-holding at Blanche Ely High, there was an investigation where the principal was cleared of wrong-doing as far as he knew. Mr. Ripple emphasized that having the rules readily available would make it much easier for everyone to discern when something is being done against the Code.

Ms. Jules wondered if there was any way to report incidents like that in their schools. Mr. Foulkes answered that a student could report it to SIU (Special Investigative Unit) 1-800-Silencehurts. The report can be anonymous, but specifics must be given. A student can also give the information in the Public Comments part of the School Board meeting. He said to contact Ruth Lutz, 754-321-2005, to be added to the list of public speakers. Each person has three minutes to speak.

Ms. Elijah brought up the matter of the student speaking to his/her parent before speaking to the School Board. Mr. Foulkes said that most likely Ms. Lutz would ask the student if they have parental permission, as the student would have to miss school to attend. Mr. Foulkes stressed that students have a right to speak to the School Board – the Board is there because of the students. He hoped the students would educate themselves, speak for themselves and defend themselves as students.

Ms. Bucolo added that there is an Area office - each school has an Area Director and Area Superintendent, and that could be an intermediate step. Ms. Kelly noted that if a

student does not want their principal to know what they are doing, to not go through that route. She said they will not call the student back directly, but will call the principal back to have a conversation with the student.

F. New/Future Business

1. Announcements

G. Next Meeting and Closing

- **Location and Date: City Hall, October 20, 2011**

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

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