

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING

November 3, 2011

SUMMARY

Members Present:

Andy Ansola	Shevrin Jones	Ernestine Price
Barbara Beasley-Williamson	Marguerite Luster	Tammy Reed
Harve Brosten	Esther Mizell	Franco Ripple
Alfred Delgado	Laura Munoz	James Sparks
Roland Foulkes	Catherine Owens	Carlos Verney
Julian Gazzano	Daljit Pannu	Suzanne Yach
Bari Goldberg		

Members Absent:

Nancy Rogan

District Staff: Katherine Francis, Executive Director, Student Support Services & ESE; Charles Webster, Coordinator, Public Relations & Governmental Affairs

Diversity, Cultural Outreach & Prevention Staff: Michaelle Pope, Director; Terri Jones; Amalio Nieves; Carolyn Salters; Marion M. Williams

Parliamentarian: Patricia McDougle

Guests: Latrinsha Greaves; Natasha Osilaja; Kimberly Williams

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Foulkes called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., with a quorum.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Committee adopted the Agenda as presented.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

October 6, 2011 Summary Minutes were approved as presented.

CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR REPORT/UPDATES

In his Chair's report **Mr. Foulkes** spoke of his seven-point pledge to the Committee, the requirements of the Committee and the Diversity Committee Annual Schedule. He noted that this was the last meeting of this Diversity Committee cycle. In the month of November, School Board members will select their new and/or returning appointments to the Committee. **Ms. Pope** presides over the December meeting and elections for the Diversity Committee will be held in January 2012. **Mr. Foulkes** said Superintendent Runcie would address the Committee at the February 2012 meeting. He said The South Florida Diversity Alliance Summit "Peacing it Together, Uniting Leaders for a Better World" will be held on November 18th and 19th, 2011 at Nova Southeastern University's main campus. The School Board of Broward County is a co-sponsor of the event. The Friday event is geared toward middle and high school students and that all are welcomed to attend.

www.nova.edu/cah/studentaffairs/diversity-summit/index.html

Mr. Foulkes said the Superintendent is holding Community Listening Tours, which will be held through January 19, 2012. The Superintendent recently spoke at the Credentialed by 26 Community Forum. Credentialed by 26 is a program that assists students in moving seamlessly to obtain all their credentials by age 26 so they can be fully functioning in the community. **Mr. Foulkes** said there would be an event on November 14, 2011, regarding the "Send Your Sales Tax To School Program" which generates funds for technology in our schools. He asked Committee members to share the information with community members. Information about the program can be found at www.browardschools.com home page.

PARLIAMENTARIAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Ms. McDougle said the purpose of a committee is to investigate, consider, and take action. It is important for every member to participate and that there is full and free discussion. The Committee was reminded to seek recognition from the Chair to speak and wait until another member has finished speaking before waving his/her hand to be recognized. **Ms. McDougle** said "a second" after a motion merely implies that the seconder agrees that the motion should come before the Committee. She said that routine business can be accomplished by the procedure "unanimous consent", such as adoption of the minutes and agenda or extending the meeting.

DEPARTMENT AND DISTRICT UPDATES

Ms. Pope welcomed new member Franco Ripple, appointed by School Board member Katherine Leach. On behalf of the Department, the Division and the District she thanked members for their service, during the past year, in which the Committee addressed diversity, parity, equity, inclusion, as well as, informing the School Board on critical issues through the Diversity Committee Annual Report. Through the site visits the Committee has generated positive action at district and school levels for students and district staff. **Ms. Pope** said School Board members would appoint their Diversity Committee members at the Organizational Meeting on November 22, 2011. A nominating committee will be appointed at the December 1, 2011 Diversity Committee general meeting. The nominating committee will review resumes and letters of interest, develop and recommend a slate of candidates for chair and vice-chair. With the assistance of the Parliamentarian, elections will follow Robert's Rules of Order at the January 2012 Diversity Committee meeting.

Ms. Pope said the Advanced Education Accreditation process begins as a five-year self-study. Submissions are reviewed then verified via a team District visit. The District fared well and has preliminarily been accredited for another six years.

Mr. Foulkes said, on a previous visit of the Advanced Education Accreditation team, the Diversity Committee had direct influence on a recommendation brought forward regarding establishing a district wide, broad definition of equity that the District adopted. The District is the largest fully accredited district in the Nation.

PRESENTATION

Legislative Update

Charles Webster said the State is looking at a 1.2 billion dollar shortfall for next year based on a reduction of property tax of approximately 254 million dollars state-wide, an increase of 31,000 retained students and the lost of 555 million federal dollars received last year with the Jobs Act. He said the District saved approximately 65 million dollars on contributions it previously made into the Florida Retirement System (FRS); State employees now pay 3% of their salary toward the FRS. **Mr. Webster** said there is talk that the Governor wants to take the savings and re-route it from the Districts to fund the FRS to a 100% level. It is currently

funded at approximately 87%, which is considered good in financial terms. **Mr. Webster** said Senator Bogdanoff has filed a Bill to elevate class-size funding penalty. He said the State was supposed to provide adequate funds for the implementation of class-size reduction, funding did not come through, now the District is getting penalized. Not all districts want to get rid of the penalty because they benefit directly from the penalties that are paid. **Mr. Webster** said the proposal to include BECON in the group of public television and radio stations that receive State funding has recently moved forward in the Legislative Program.

Mr. Foulkes noted that it is not in the Diversity Committee By-laws or Policy to lobby state officials but individuals can lobby School Board members who pay lobbyists to go to Tallahassee and Washington to represent the District. **Mr. Webster** encouraged individuals to contact their State Legislators to share their opinions.

Mr. Webster and **Ms. Pope** discussed current challenges and issues with meeting the unfunded class-size reduction requirement, how best to serve students in overcrowded classrooms, and the proposal to eliminate the funding penalty associated with class size reduction. **Ms. Goldberg** requested a list of districts that are in compliance with class-size reduction so the Committee can research how they are achieving compliance. In addition, she suggested that a demonstration of how to pull up a bill be provided to the Committee.

Mr. Webster said charter schools are considered part of the public school system and the District is looking more toward equity and parity than “us verses them” mentality. There is a proposal to authorize school boards to serve as the Board of Governors to establish their own charter schools. **Mr. Webster** spoke briefly about the issue of the State never identifying an adequate, dedicated source of revenue to support education as mandated in the constitution.

Ms. Yach said last year the Legislature passed a bill, which affects the most isolated, impoverished adults who attend community schools. Community school students now have to pay forty-five dollars to register or if they cannot prove residency they have to pay two hundred dollars.

Mr. Ripple said schools are woefully under-funded. Lottery dollars are designed to be “on top of” constitutional mandate of school funding. He also inquired about requirements of administrators for charter schools. **Mr. Webster** said he would inquire and get the information back to the Committee.

PRESENTATION

Behavioral and Academic Support Information System (BASIS) Overview

Amalio Nieves introduced a brief video about BASIS and discussed the history; necessity and planning that brought the data system forward to the development stages. He said BASIS will provide timely, meaningful, comprehensive data pertaining to each student for school administrators and select staff via Virtual Counselor. Academic, behavioral, counseling, and psychological data will be accessible in BASIS. **Mr. Nieves** said, he is proud that in creating our own district-wide database system, the District has saved valuable dollars that would have gone to purchase and/or lease software from an outside company.

Ms. Pope said District saves significant time and money in serving students who may move from one school to another, or one class to another. Administrators have immediate access to pertinent information to assist students in achieving the best education attainable. She said the Department and staff is receiving great reviews from staff members who have attended training, they are excited about utilizing BASIS at their schools.

Mr. Nieves, in addressing questions and concerns, noted that referrals and discipline will continue to be handled using the Discipline Matrix process but data will be accessible in BASIS. He said, in the future when limited access is available for parents and students training will be provided. **Mr. Nieves** said data available in BASIS is data currently being collected within the District and that all existing safeguards and mechanisms to protect students' privacy and data are in place. He said that there would be a tab in BASIS to look at grades entered into the Pinnacle system. In the future, there may be a possibility of looking at the school culture/climate and/or what incidents may or may not be occurring at a particular school.

Ms. Pope and **Ms. Francis** addressed concerns about access, backing-up the data, and accessibility to paper-data. The "system" is backed-up daily on a server and that phasing-out paper cumulative folders will be a transitional process, not an over-night course of action. Phases will be piloted in a controlled environment with feedback leading to enhancements that will assist schools in looking at the whole student before making certain decisions. **Ms. Francis** said any assessment data on an individual child is available to those who currently have access to those students' records. **Mr. Foulkes** thanked **Mr. Nieves** for the presentation.

Mr. Foulkes said that concerns about the digital divide are being kept in the forefront. He gave an update on the Digital Divide Resolution passed by the Committee. The Resolution was taken to the District's Technology Committee, who in spirit agreed but would rephrase the language. He said he gave the Resolution, that the full Committee approved, to the School Board at his Chair's Report and it will come up again at the November 28th Board Workshop during the Technology Report presentation.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Site Visitation

Ms. Owens said to-date site visits have been conducted at Parkway Middle, Oakridge Elementary, and Nova High Schools. The final draft of the Parkway Middle School Site Visit Report will be provided at the next meeting. She noted that the three schools visited are very old and portions were due to be demolished but work was postponed. She said that no one "raises the flag" for Nova High School; a School Board member does not represent it because the school is a research and development facility. She said "the visiting Diversity Committee team for Nova High School were underwhelmed with what they saw, felt as if they were a bother, the visit was rushed, and unwelcoming."

Motion by Ms. Price, seconded by Ms. Luster that the Site Visitation Committee re-visit Hallandale High School ASAP. Motion passed 19-0.

Mr. Verney inquired as to the criteria or standards used to select a school for a re-visit. **Ms. Price** stated "there are equity and parity standards, Hallandale High School along with three or four other schools were named in the lawsuit, in ten years none of those items were taken care of." **Mr. Foulkes** said there has to be some serious structural or curriculum issues for a revisit. Only one or two schools have been revisited. Boyd Anderson High School had many follow-up meetings after the first site visit. **Ms. Owens** and **Mr. Sparks** noted that the principal and staff at Hallandale High School have done an amazing job with what they have, made great improvements, and the graduation rate is high. Progress has been made but the science lab is not functioning, they have been working around the issue with an Ocean Marine Biology partnership.

Ms. Owens said the next site visit is scheduled for November 16, 2011. She requested that more members sign-up for the visit and volunteer assistance in writing site visit summary reports. **Ms. Owens** said students and their families from Sunland Park Elementary had extensive flooding recently; donation of clothes is needed, contact the school for more information. Upcoming site visits are: December 8th, January 11th and 25th, February 15th, May 2nd and 16th. **Mr. Foulkes** stressed the importance of Diversity Committee site visits and asked that all members attend one visit per year, at minimum.

Ms. Yach said, in response to hearing there is a lack of toilet tissue and paper towels in schools, this is unacceptable and deserves immediate attention.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Foulkes briefly spoke about re-segregation in relation to charter schools, magnet schools, and residential communities. **Ms. Luster** said, in terms of re-segregation use of textbooks, busing, and teachers needs to be looked at.

Mr. Foulkes said International World Aids Day is December 1, 2011. He asked that **Ms. Pope** provide a brief informational item for the next meeting on this topic.

Meeting adjourned 8:48 p.m.

**The next meeting is scheduled for December 1, 2011 at 6:30 p.m.,
in the Board Room, Kathleen C. Wright Administration Building.**

These minutes are summarized and were recorded at the November 3, 2011, Diversity Committee meeting. If any Committee member, or other interested party, would like more detailed information as to the contents of this summary, contact the Diversity, Cultural Outreach & Prevention Department at 754-321-2090.