

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Kathleen C. Wright Administration Building  
December 3, 2009**

**SUMMARY**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order, at 7:00 p.m. by **Dr. Katherine Blasik**, Associate Superintendent, Research Development & Assessment, with a quorum.

**Diversity Committee Members Present:**

Roland Foulkes	Catherine Owens	Barbara Williamson
Julian Gazzano	Michael Rajner	Suzanne Yach
Bapthol Joseph	Graham Rabinowitsch	Alyce Zahniser
Jeanne Jusevic	Student Representative	
Raphael Lopez		

**Members Absent:**

Andy Ansola	Patrick Jabouin	Ernestine Price
Randy Fleischer	Vinod Kulhari	Nancy Rogan
Phoebee Francois	Marguerite Luster	Leslie Sparks

**Diversity & Cultural Outreach Staff:**

Nancy Weintraub; Marion M. Williams

**District Staff:**

Dr. Katherine Blasik, Associate Superintendent, Research Development & Assessment; Leona Miracola, Director, Innovative Programs; Jill Young, Director, School Boundaries

**Guests:** Shevrin Jones, L.E.A.D./Broward County Diversity Advisory Council

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The Committee adopted the Agenda.

A moment of silence was observed to recognize **Lina Gioello**, former Diversity Committee member, who passed away on Tuesday, November 24, 2009.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The Committee approved the minutes of November 5, 2009, as amended.

- Page 3, fifth paragraph, fourth line, “position paper on charter schools...” Insert the words *as in Ben Gamla* after the word *schools* and continue the sentence as is.

- Page 4, second paragraph, second sentence, “She announced that a new accountability program would...” Change the word *would* to **could**, and make this the last sentence of the paragraph.
- Page 7, after **Mr. Fleischer** and before NEW BUSINESS add: “**Chair, Roland Foulkes** thanked Diversity Committee Members for their service over the past year. He distributed a letter of thanks, and his Chair’s Report, together with a *Certificate of Recognition*, to each Diversity Committee member and each Diversity Department Staff member and Senior administration.”

PRESENTATION BY LEONA MIRACOLA, DIRECTOR, INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

**Ms. Miracola** began her presentation by explaining that Policy 5004.1 came as an outgrowth of three policies: 5000.1 Reassignments, 5003 Nova, and 5004 Magnet Programs. School Board Members recommended this change at the August 11, 2009 School Board Workshop, with the rationale that it would enable the District to create a unified policy that aligns new Innovative Programs, Choice Policies for Nova Schools, Magnet Programs/Schools, Reassignments, and *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB).

IDENTIFYING HOW THE POLICIES ARE INTERRELATED

Essential Components of the Policies:

Rationale: Choice, Access, Equity, Diversity, and Quality Education

Common Definitions: Siblings, Employees, Program Descriptions

Rules: Admissions, Criteria, Random Selection Process, Withdrawals, Appeals, and Monitoring

Timelines: Application Dates, Seats Identified, and Reports

Transportation: Area Zones or Parents Provide

STRUCTURE OF A UNIFIED INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS/CHOICE POLICY

- The format of the new policy will be the same as identified in Policies 5001, 5003, and 5004.
- All components regarding Reassignment, Nova, Magnet and Innovative Programs will be easy for stakeholders to find and use.

**Ms. Jusevic** opposes Policy 5004.1 because they “have repackaged something that has not worked to repopulate under-enrolled schools.” There is no data in the District that supports rationing higher education and theme programs into under-enrolled schools would solve underlying enrollment issues. **Ms. Jusevic** commented that Magnet Reassignment and the Nova policy do not support taking away programs in existing schools that are at capacity or over-enrolled. She said it is like “rubbing salt in the wounds” when a program is faded out in three years and the principal who lost the money and the teachers are allowed to mentor other students, who receive funding for the same programs that previously existed at schools that compromised their funding. **Ms. Jusevic** indicated that the four schools that have been targeted are schools that have had existing programs for more than five years. Thus far, she has not seen supporting data that indicates that the new structure will be better than the old one. **Ms. Jusevic** said the problem has nothing to do with the program itself. “The underlying problem is that the District has failed to fix the problems that are going on at the under-enrolled

schools.” She feels that putting IB, Environmental, or other programs into under-enrolled schools would not encourage parents to transfer their children from the western to the eastern schools, because safety and security will still be a major factor. **Ms. Jusevic** said, until something is done, the program would have the same success as magnet programs.

**Mr. Foulkes** said one major concern, shared by both Diversity Committee members and School Board members, is lack of involvement during the early stages of creating and revising policies. **Mr. Foulkes** is uncertain whether or not the Committee was given the opportunity to participate at the beginning stages of Policy 5004.1. Moving forward, he suggests the Diversity Committee and other District Committees be given the opportunity to participate from the onset.

**Mr. Gazzano** reminded everyone that he was the Diversity Committee representative for the Policy Review Committee. He is of the opinion that good contributions were made during his participation. **Mr. Gazzano** did not participate in providing input on policy 5004.1.

**Ms. Owens** said, although it is great to raise program levels and enrollment numbers for low profile schools, it will be ineffective if the “bottom portion” of the school is not brought up to par along with the Innovative Programs. Many of these schools deal with security issues during and after school hours. **Ms. Owens** feels that until that is handled, parents will not risk sending their children to at-risk schools. She suggested consideration be given to how Innovative Programs will integrate with other programs already at a particular school, when policies are developed.

**Ms. Williamson** is concerned about the students already enrolled. She asked if these students would be required to reapply. **Ms. Miracola** said they would not. Once a student is accepted at Nova, they will complete the K-12 term. There is no need for students to reapply.

**Ms. Owens** asked if successful programs such as the Nova program could be duplicated and implemented within other regions of the School District. **Ms. Miracola** stated that this strategy is already being implemented by the Montessori schools. Based upon data results and availability of funds, the Innovative Programs Department considers these opportunities.

#### PRESENTATION BY JILL YOUNG, DIRECTOR, SCHOOL BOUNDARIES

**Ms. Young** began her presentation by giving an overview of the Boundary process. Broward County is the sixth largest school system in the United States. Sometimes it is necessary to change the geographic area a school serves in order for schools to serve student populations effectively. This is called the “boundary process.” Parents have the opportunity to give input at the time that school boundaries are being considered for a change.

Boundaries are set a year in advance, either to open up schools or change enrollments via attendance. The first driver affecting the Boundary process is the *State Plant Survey*. By law, the District must submit to the State how the School Board utilizes every one of its classrooms. The state identifies, in every building, which classrooms can be used for classroom space. Then they determine how many students can be placed in those classrooms. The State Plant Survey determines the number of seats that are available at every school in Broward County. Due to declining enrollment, even though some schools are extremely crowded, there are other schools that are under-enrolled. The District is no longer permitted to build additions and/or portables because the Survey indicates that there are schools

with available seats. The State says that the School Board must move the children until they find available locations. The problem is that, in some locations, none of the neighboring schools have any seats available.

The second driver is *Class Size Reduction*. In 2007, the Superintendent established the Class Size Reduction Action Committee (CSRAC) to address compliance and prepare the District for period-by-period implementation. While state budget issues have forced the Legislature to reconsider the cost, and delayed, for yet another year, full implementation of class size reduction, efforts to put a proposed constitutional amendment on the ballot to make school level class size average permanent, did not pass.

In May 2009, the Florida State Legislature, in Senate Bill 1676:

- Continued class size compliance at the school level for 2009 - 2010 and delayed implementation at classroom level until 2010 - 2011 school year;
- Revised the compliance calculation beginning in 2010 - 2011 to be a reduction in the noncompliant district's class size operating categorical for each student that is over the maximum allowed; and
- Requires that the revised compliance calculation be simulated in 2009 - 2010.

Following the approval of the Inter-local Agreement and the Five-Year Capital Plan, the third decision driver is *Level of Service School Concurrency*, which prevents schools from maintaining enrollments above 110% of Permanent Capacity at each individual school boundary attendance area.

#### POTENTIAL OUTCOME OF AMENDING THE ILA

It is important to keep aware that any potential changes to the Inter-Local Agreement (ILA) will not stop all future boundary changes from occurring. Equity in educational resources may be the future need for the realignment of student enrollment.

Proposed boundary changes for the 2009 - 2010 school year are:

- Open New School *C Montessori* – Pre-K through 8
- Wedge Annexation
- Decrease enrollment at Pioneer Middle School

**Ms. Young** indicated that the boundary process has eleven steps, which is a 9 - 10 month long process. Four School Board Workshops were scheduled during the month of November for the express purpose of reviewing school data based on projected and twenty day enrollment, in addition to changes that occurred throughout the county during the 2009 year. These Workshops also gave the public several different opportunities to share their concerns and provide input. At the December 8, 2009, School Board Workshop, the Superintendent is expected to submit his final boundary recommendations for the 2009-2010.

**Ms. Jusevic** inquired as to why copies of the information that was presented to the School Board on Monday, December 1, 2009, were not shared with the Diversity Committee. She requested information be provided regarding concurrent service areas.

**Ms. Jusevic** asked, “Why aren’t we discussing the ILA, which is what you told at least four communities last year in the boundary process? It was one of the reasons why you forced them to go through the boundary process that **Mr. Notter** is now recommending to hold in advance for the southwest area. So where is that information?” **Ms. Young** reminded the Committee that she is the Director of School Boundaries. She was invited to present the Boundary process and its impact for the 2009 - 2010 school year. **Ms. Young** suggested the Committee invite **Chris Akagbosu**, Director, Growth Management, to do a presentation on Inter-Local Agreement, Growth Management, and School Concurrency. That is his area of expertise.

**Ms. Jusevic** said the information **Ms. Young** presented is inaccurate. She was only able to get information about school boundaries by reading newspapers such as the *Sun Sentinel*, *Orlando Herald* or *Miami Herald*. **Ms. Jusevic** announced that **Mr. Notter** informed her that Pioneer’s Middle School boundaries will be placed in abeyance for a year, during which time the School Board will make attempts to get an amended Inter-Local Agreement. **Ms. Young** said, regardless of what is written on paper and/or in news articles, the District follows the official boundary process adopted by the School Board, which includes the discussion of new occurrences.

For the benefit of newly appointed Diversity Committee member Raphael Lopez, **Mr. Foulkes** pointed out that Boundaries falls under one of the nine conditions of the CCC Settlement Agreement, which the Committee monitors. He thanked **Ms. Young** for the presentation and recommended that, when moving forward, the Committee be allowed to participate at the beginning stages of the boundary process.

**Mr. Gazzano** has observed under-enrolled populations in the vicinity of Martin Luther King Elementary, Westwood Heights Elementary, and Broward Estates Elementary. He asked if the School Board has considered merging schools in demographic areas as a means of addressing capacity issues. Some schools could be closed while others could serve the community for a different purpose. **Ms. Young** said, at the November 30, 2009 School Board Retreat, **Mr. Notter** specifically stated that closing schools would not be considered at this time. She announced that the Facilities Department is currently looking at how to better utilize existing facilities.

**Mr. Rabinowitsch** said he downloaded a copy of the final boundary recommendations from the *Sun Sentinel* website. **Ms. Young** informed the Committee that any materials posted on the School Boundaries website in connection to a Workshop serves as a preview to what will be discussed with District Staff and the Superintendent. Once finalized, the Superintendent releases a memo stating his final recommendations. **Ms. Young** thanked the Diversity Committee for inviting her to the meeting.

## **DISTRICT REPORTS**

**Ms. Weintraub** recognized **Lina Gioello** for all the work she has done as a Committee member, in addition to contributions she made to the community. **Lina Gioello** was a hard worker, dedicated to all the children in Broward County. Although special needs students were her main focus, she worked on behalf of all students. She was instrumental in developing the Site Visitation Instrument document and was an active participant during school site visits. **Mr. Gazzano** acknowledged and expressed appreciation of the memorial written and distributed by **Mr. Foulkes** (See Attachment). **Roland Foulkes** attended **Ms. Gioello’s** funeral repast and gave each family member a copy of the memorial written and distributed by him.

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

**SITE VISITATION, Bapthol Joseph**

**Mr. Joseph** said, in lieu of a report, he wanted to keep the Committee informed about the revised Site Visitation Instrument. Although progress has been made, the Instrument is still not yet complete. The Subcommittee is currently in the process of reviewing information and recommendations presented from the District. **Mr. Joseph** announced that membership is still open.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

**Ms. Weintraub** asked for volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee, which must meet sometime between December 4, 2009 and January 7, 2010. The following Members will serve: **Ms. Jusevic; Ms. Luster; Ms. Price; Ms. Rogan; and Ms. Williamson.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**2008-2009 DIVERSITY COMMITTEE ANNUAL RESPONSE REPORT**

Staff distributed copies of “Version A” The Diversity Committee Annual Response Report which reflects changes approved by the Ad Hoc Annual Report Subcommittee on October 22, 2009, and “Version B” The Diversity Committee Annual Response Report, presented to Committee members at the November 5, 2009 Meeting, which reflects the inclusion of additional information not approved by the Subcommittee.

The Committee thanked **Dr. Blasik** and Staff for the hard work and effort they put into providing both versions of the 2008-2009 Diversity Committee Annual Response Report for comparison.

After discussion, no action was taken on accepting either “Version A” or “Version B” of the 2008-2009 Diversity Committee Annual Response Report.

**MOTION by Ms. Jusevic, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Rajner: “That the Diversity Committee consider version A of the Diversity Committee Response CCC Settlement Agreement Status Report, 2008-09.”**

**Motion failed 5-6**

**Meeting ended 8:15 p.m.**

**The next meeting is scheduled for January 7, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.,  
in the BECON MGM Room.**

**These minutes are summarized and were recorded at the December 3, 2009 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 Department at 754-321-2090.**