

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

**DIVERSITY COMMITTEE
Kathleen C. Wright Administration Center
June 4, 2009**

SUMMARY

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order, at 6:38 p.m. by **Roland Foulkes**, Chair, with a quorum.

Diversity Committee Members Present:

Dr. Veda Bailey	Cynthia Oliver	Barbara Williamson
Randy Fleischer	Ernestine Price	Suzanne Yach
Roland Foulkes	Michael Rajner	Student Representative
Phoebee Francois	Nancy Rogan	Graham Rabinowitsch
Julian Gazzano	Regina Santiago	Alyce Zahniser
Bapthol Joseph	Leslie Sparks	
Marguerite Luster		

Members Absent:

Yvette Colbourne	Patrick Jabouin	George Pedlar
Stephanie Desir-Jean	Andrew Lewis	

Diversity & Cultural Outreach Staff:

Dr. Elizabeth Watts, Director; Jean D. Darius, Coordinator; Terri Jones; Maryse Nelson; Marion Williams; Nancy Weintraub

District Staff:

Jeffrey Moquin, Executive Director, Support Operations; Robert Waremburg, Director, Supply Management and Logistics

Guests:

Kwame K. Afoh, Substitute Teacher; Thaddeus Hamilton, Chair, SAC, Sunland Park

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Committee adopted the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee approved the April 2, 2009 minutes with the following changes:

Ms. Sparks' name is to be added as a member present.

Page 5: AP Potential: "Guidance counselors ... it's not considered to be accurate."

The Committee approved the May 7, 2009 minutes with the following changes:

Page 5, ADA Priorities: **Mr. Fleischer:** “ADA compliance issues need to be reprioritized to determine whether there is an actual need in the school for the ADA retrofit.”

Page 9, BCASC = Broward County Association of Student Councils

CHAIR’S REPORT, Roland Foulkes

Newest Diversity Committee member, **Ms. Oliver**, appointed by School Board Member Ann Murray, announced that she has a non-profit organization called Tina’s Vision that works with substance abuse and women and children living in detention. Their purpose is to bridge the gap between individuals leaving those facilities and employment assistance. The traditional form of education is used and instilled into the workplace.

Mr. Foulkes announced that the Second Annual High School Black Male Baccalaureate event took place on Sunday, May 31, 2009, at the African American Research Library & Cultural Center. He commented that despite the dire numbers of young black males that are not graduating, he wanted to express his pride in those that have succeeded. **Mr. Foulkes** congratulated **Ms. Yach** and the adult students at Fort Lauderdale Community School, for their wonderful performance on Thursday, May 28, 2009. Their presentation, *Two Sides of Seeing the Power of Playback*, focused on diversity and inclusion. The group has been invited to perform at Nova Southeastern University on November 7, 2009, as part of a Diversity Summit. Recently, a coalition of Universities and Colleges in the tri-county area created the South Florida Diversity Council, which will be launched the weekend of November 7, 2009. Both events will be funded by the Broward County Cultural Arts Division. **Mr. Foulkes** suggested that the group be allowed to present a portion of their performance to the Diversity Committee. **Ms. Yach** stated that Play Back Theater is an art form that was developed in New York. It combines the individual story of audience participants and the student actors in an art and theater style format. Famous mime, Darby Hayes, produced the show.

MOTION by Mr. Gazzano, 2nd by Mr. Joseph: “To invite the ESOL Play Back players to appear and perform at the August 13, 2009 Diversity meeting at 6:00 p.m.”

Passed 17-0

Mr. Foulkes congratulated the following members:

Mr. Rajner for receiving a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work, and for his appointment to the Sheriff’s Council on Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Ms. Santiago for receiving Volunteer Broward’s “Volunteer of the Year” award

Mr. Rabinowitsch for being appointed as the new Chair of the Civic Involvement committee at McFatter Technical High school.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT, Dr. Elizabeth Watts

Dr. Watts reported on the Board Workshop for Policy 1.5, Textbooks, and the Diversity Committee Annual Report, which took place on May 26, 2009. The Diversity Committee adopted the educational equity definition below at the March 5, 2009 meeting, to provide input to the educational equity definition for Policy 1.5:

Educational equity shall be defined as the educational policies, practices and programs necessary to (a) eliminate educational barriers based on gender,

race/ethnicity, national origin, color, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other protected group status; (b) provide equal educational opportunities; and (c) ensure that historically underserved or underrepresented populations meet the same rigorous standards for academic performance expected of all students (K-Adult). Equity strategies are planned, systemic and focus on the core of the teaching and learning process (curriculum, instruction and school environment/culture). Educational equity activities promote and adhere to the CCC Agreement and implement strategies that allocate resources to ensure parity for all schools.

After reviewing the educational equity definition adopted by the Committee, School Board Attorney **Ed Marko** recommended the following definition at the May 26, 2009 School Board Workshop. This is the same definition adopted by the Executive Leadership Team in November 2008 for the SACS two-year update for District accreditation:

Educational equity shall be defined as cultivating an environment that provides equal opportunity and equal access in all student, employment, and business programs, activities, resources, services, and operations.

- School Board Member **Mrs. Gottlieb** suggested that “sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression” be included in the diversity definition.
- School Board Member **Mrs. Bartleman** recommended the words “acceptance” and “respect” be added to School Board belief statements.

Mr. Fleischer indicated that the School Board did not include any of the recommendations made by the Committee regarding the definition of Educational Equity. He stated that the School Board Attorney ignored the work, effort, and input the Ad Hoc Committee produced by request of the Board. He said he is very unhappy with the lack of respect they received, based upon the time the Committee invested. **Ms. Price** was concerned about the time, travel, work, and energy that came from the Committee to not have any of their input taken into consideration. She said that equity includes developing the minds, souls, and bodies of the children, and therefore nurturing should be included in the definition of equity and parity. She stated that too much is being excluded from the definition presented by **Mr. Marko’s** office. **Mr. Foulkes** reminded the Committee that the definition adopted by the Committee in March 2009 is located on page 8 of the May 7, 2009 minutes. **Mr. Joseph** stated that the role of the Diversity Committee is to review all policies. He said that by simply rejecting the complete definition approved by the Committee shows that the School Board does not respect the time and effort Committee members put into reviewing the Policy and providing a definition. **Mr. Gazzano** asked if there was any legal recourse to object to the decision and wanted to know if the School Board’s and **Mr. Marko’s** words are final. **Mr. Foulkes** responded that at the workshop, School Board Member Gallagher stated that she wanted the Diversity Committee to play a bigger role in policy making. **Mr. Foulkes** sent a letter to **Mr. Notter**, Superintendent, **Dr. Harrison**, Deputy Superintendent, and **Mr. Williams**, School Board Member, sharing his concerns regarding the new definition. In the letter, he stated that he found it disrespectful to the Diversity Committee to reject the entire definition. **Mr. Foulkes** said that a recommendation could have been made to combine both definitions. He was personally offended by the fact that they totally ignored the Committee’s input.

Ms. Yach expected “all children and youth” to include language for the adult population. Once a sixteen or seventeen year old student enters an adult program, they are considered an adult and no longer governed by the Student Code of Conduct, but instead by the Adult Code of Conduct. **Mr. Foulkes** reminded the Committee that the educational equity definition previously approved by the Diversity Committee included language for the adult population, which has not been included in **Mr. Marko’s** definition. **Mr. Rajner** suggested that, instead of rejecting the new definition provided by the attorney, the Committee send a statement stating what they feel is wrong with the definition and provide an explanation as to why an in-depth definition is necessary. He feels that communication would help and also explain to the School Board what the Committee would like. **Mr. Foulkes** will send a letter on behalf of the Diversity Committee.

MOTION by Mr. Joseph, 2nd by Ms. Luster: “To reject definition of equity and parity provided by School Board Attorney and to reconsider definitions provided by Diversity Committee’s Ad Hoc committee.”

Passed 17-0

Dr. Watts thanked the Committee for their feedback.

Dr. Watts noted that **Mr. Foulkes** and **Mr. Joseph** were asked to give input at the May 26, 2009, School Board Workshop regarding the CCC Annual Report. “Compliance” was discussed. Board Members asked for the definition of compliance. The definition offered by **Dr. Blasik** was that compliance is whether or not a condition has been 100% met. The Board discussed whether or not compliance would be achieved if indicators were not met at 100%. **Dr. Watts** pointed out that some current indicators, such as those for Media Centers, would be impacted by the current economic conditions.

Mr. Joseph suggested that, for communication to start, the School Board and/or the Executive Leaders should first read the Diversity Committee Annual Report. The Analysis and Findings sections have made it clear that the School Board did not do a good job of establishing goals to meet the requirements of the CCC agreement. **Mr. Joseph** suggested that the School Board return to the drawing table to redesign specific, but reachable, goals that would advance parity and equity in all schools for all students. He said it is irrelevant to define 100% or 90%, if the goals are not reachable. **Mr. Rabinowitsch** suggested that, if the compliance definition is changed, that it be noted in the next Diversity Committee Report, that the major contribution for change is due to budget constraints. **Mr. Joseph** stated that budget is not a major issue when it comes to setting reachable goals. The School Board is supposed to be correcting wrongs. As a member of the Site Visitation Subcommittee, he observed schools that were in need of better leadership more than they needed funds for improvement. **Ms. Price** stated that they do not visit 100% of the schools. Some schools she has visited have been in compliance, and others have not. Schools know if they are in compliance. So does the Committee.

Mr. Foulkes stated that until the 2009 year, there had not been a definition for “compliance”. Previously, the School Board was either not in compliance or in compliance. He said that School Board Member **Phyllis Hope** wanted to know the source of the definition used by the Diversity Committee. The Committee asked **Dr. Blasik** for a mathematical definition for compliance. **Mr. Foulkes** shared the definition with the CCC Attorneys. He said they were comfortable with it.

The Superintendent said it is good to have 100% as a goal because it is something to look forward to. **Mr. Foulkes** stated that perhaps not all School Members had the opportunity to read the Diversity Committee Report, in spite of receiving it a week prior to the May 26, 2009 workshop.

Dr. Watts presented the CCC Online Tool. The Tool allows staff to set specific dates throughout the school year for review of indicators and supportive documentation. Staff is able to engage in corrective action planning and provide the Committee with indicator progress updates. The Committee is encouraged to provide input regarding action planning. The Tool lists each condition and its indicator, the department responsible, the status, findings, and the actions if an indicator has not been met. Some indicators have supporting documents uploaded to that page, while some documents apply to the entire condition. The Tool is a live document. There has been discussion about aligning the indicators with the Educational Equity Act Plan that goes to the State because the Report includes elements for AP & Honors, and School Athletic Facilities, etc. The CCC Report will be presented at the August 13, 2009, Diversity Committee meeting. In September, members will begin on the Diversity Committee Annual Report, which will be presented to the Board at the December 8, 2009 Workshop. This will be an annual process.

OLD BUSINESS

PRESENTATION, JEFF MOQUIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SUPPORT OPERATIONS & ROBERT WAREMBURG, DIRECTOR, SUPPLY MANAGEMENT & LOGISTICS

Mr. Moquin reported that the District was to purchase a new textbook tracking system in order to better manage its instructional materials and provide information regarding the issuance of textbooks to students, while identifying material needs. The textbook tracking software would be implemented district-wide. After pilot testing, discussion and negotiations with vendors occurred. Unfortunately, the current budget situation necessitated an interim, lower cost solution. Consequently, an in-house online tool was developed.

In March 2009, textbook coordinators at all schools completed online instructional materials surveys for core subject classes. Data was aggregated by school and level. Preliminary district-wide results based on the core class categories showed that a total of 29,562 courses were involved in the survey, with 98.1% compliance in one textbook assigned per student.

Mr. Moquin stated that there were definite limitations with the data that came back because the student database information in Virtual Counselor is in real-time, while the textbook counts are “static”. Each time a report is run, the numbers change due to the migration of students between classes (influx of new students and students who move out of the District). Counts provided reflect quantities of materials assigned to students, not necessarily total quantities on-hand. Coordinators were having issues with quantity interpretation. Schools may have reported material quantities differently for break-out classes, which resulted in issues of whether they were counted more than once. There were also issues with classroom sets and how the textbook coordinator may have infused them into the count.

Mr. Moquin informed the Committee that there has been an increase in both student and teacher users of online textbooks.

The process moving forward will incorporate end of year physical inventory with information on upcoming school year course offerings and projected enrollment in order to identify gaps in instructional materials and address them prior to the beginning of the new school year. Currently, schools are required to complete an end-of-year inventory of all instructional materials on site. The current annual physical inventory for the 2008-2009 year-end counts will be aggregated, imported electronically, and incorporated with other systems data. Materials will be redistributed or purchased to address anticipated gaps prior to the start of the 2009-2010 school year. The report will be run again after the 10-day enrollment counts to ensure there are sufficient instructional materials for the actual enrollment. The new process will proactively provide data to drive the instructional materials allocation process.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Gazzano asked for the School Board's definition for textbooks. He wanted to know if e-books, the big book in first grade, or a leapfrog program are considered textbooks. **Mr. Waremburg** responded that the core curriculum courses have assigned instructional material, whether it is a book or an online resource through the BEEP portal. **Mr. Gazzano** asked if it is correct to say that the hard covered textbooks are what's included in the textbook report and that other materials are found on an instructional materials acquisition list. **Mr. Waremburg** stated that this is correct. The core materials are part of the textbook survey.

Mr. Joseph asked if they are aware of any hard copy books that have an e-book companion. **Mr. Waremburg** stated that all new book adoptions require the online book to be available through the BEEP portal. The students have the option to use the hard copy or the e-book for the same material.

Ms. Yach asked if there are any monitoring processes in place for the adult ESOL student, adult GED, and adult basic education. Is there a policy concerning the quality, quantity, or distribution of textbooks and materials for the adult students? **Ms. Yach** stated that there is an enormous population of adult students who have no textbooks in the community schools and adult centers. She also asked where the funding dollars are. **Mr. Waremburg** was not sure if there is a tracking mechanism for standardized instructional materials list. The instructors presenting the material to the adult student populations select the instructional materials. **Ms. Yach** stated that this is only true when it comes to the fee supported courses, such as water coloring. She asked that consideration be given to the kind and type of distribution. **Mr. Moquin** stated that he would take the information back to see how they can infuse it and provide data for the adult population. **Mr. Joseph** thanked the presenters and informed them that the School Board would see changes in the Diversity Committee's Report due to the revisions that have been made to the Site Visitation instrument. He said there will be an area for the adult population because they are as important as any other student.

Ms. Oliver asked that consideration be given to whether or not the children are being given too many books. It seems that they are getting three sets of books; one for the classroom, one to take home, and one for the online version. **Mr. Moquin** informed the Committee that under the new textbooks adoption, free copies would be provided for the classroom sets. Publishers make their books available online through a license, which schools have access to once they purchase the hard copy book.

Ms. Luster asked if e-books are available in sign language for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. She stated that not all DHH children have parents that are fluent in sign language. **Mr. Moquin** said

that he can get clarification from the Educational Technology Services Department and will have the information forwarded to **Dr. Watts**.

SITE VISITS

Mr. Foulkes announced that the year end sabbatical from site visits ended today. School site visits will resume in August 2009. During the May 2009 Workshop, it appeared, through comments made by certain School Board Members, that the Site Visitation Subcommittee would not be allowed to resume school site visits as planned. **Mr. Foulkes** reminded the Committee that part of the CCC Settlement Agreement is for schools to be visited. The School Board's blessing was sought in the Diversity Committee's decision to take a year off from school site visits in order to revise the Site Visit Instrument and complete the first Diversity Committee Report. He said the School Board's permission is not needed when it comes to visiting schools. **Ms. Sparks** asked about the process for school site visits. **Mr. Joseph** stated that staff is involved in the procedure and that site visit participants are all trained in the procedure prior to the school visits. **Ms. Yach** asked that the Site Visitation Subcommittee visit an adult school.

Mr. Joseph thanked **Mr. Fleischer** and the members of the Ad Hoc Committee for a job well done. **Mr. Joseph** provided background information regarding the Site Visit Instrument that is used for school site visits. He said that the purpose for taking the year off from site visits was because the instrument did not serve the purpose of monitoring equity and parity, and, as a result, needed to be redesigned. The data collected from the instrument will be put into a system where the information can be quantified. **Dr. Bailey** asked if she missed a meeting when the final suggested changes were discussed because there are some structural changes that should be made to the document. **Mr. Joseph** responded that the final form of the first draft was adopted to move it to the Research Department after which the instrument will again be presented to the Diversity Committee. **Mr. Fleischer** indicated that on the last page, the bullets will be put into a, b, c form so that it would correspond to the CCC agreement, which would make it easier to pinpoint areas of discussion.

Mr. Rajner apologized for not making it to any of the Ad Hoc Committee meetings due to health issues. He is concerned about school violence, which is a major issue in Broward County. He works with a group called Safe to Be Me, which focuses on the needs of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) students in middle and high school. He wants to see cultural competency and protected factors, especially bullying, incorporated into programs. For example, under extra-curricular activities, the School Board is looking at Gay/Straight Alliances (GSA) in high schools. Ambassador and other programs are being looked into for middle schools. Another idea is to have a safe place in schools with a teacher certified through the Office of Prevention to help counsel children or refer them to resources in the community. **Mr. Rajner** said there were many situations that could have been prevented or minimized. **Mr. Joseph** said that all this can be considered once the Instrument returns to the Committee for final input and acceptance. **Mr. Rajner** will forward the information to **Ms. Weintraub**. **Mr. Foulkes** reminded the Committee that the Site Visit Instrument is geared towards the nine conditions of the CCC Settlement and agreed that **Mr. Rajner's** suggestions could be included under the extracurricular section. **Ms. Yach** said that in many schools, the Peer Counseling programs have a safe zone approach built in.

MOTION by Mr. Rabinowitsh, 2nd by Mr. Fleischer: “to accept the revised instrument for site visitations (Diversity Committee Site Visitation Form) to send to the School Board department which will review the form”.

Passed 17-0

Dr. Watts informed the Committee that the subcommittee membership list would be circulated again for those who wish to sign up.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

AD HOC JOINT MEETING OF DIVERSITY COMMITTEE & BROWARD COUNTY DIVERSITY ADVISORY COUNCIL, Alyce Zahniser

No Report.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON SITE VISIT INSTRUMENT REVISIONS, Randy Fleischer

No Report.

AP & HONORS, Dr. Veda Bailey

No Report.

ASSIGNMENT & REASSIGNMENT, Julian Gazzano

No Report.

ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES, Andrew Lewis

No Report.

DIVERSITY, Michael Rajner

No Report.

FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN, George Pedlar

No Report.

HIRING PRACTICES, Randy Fleischer

No Report.

MEDIA CENTERS, Nancy Rogan

No Report.

SITE VISITATION, Bapthol Joseph

Mr. Joseph reported that the Ad Hoc Committee on Site Visitation Instrument met today. There was discussion about taking into consideration recent technological changes in order to close the gap in the digital divide. **Mr. Joseph** asked the Committee to support a motion that would accept e-books as being equivalent to a hard copy textbook for the purpose of site visits. **Ms. Yach** is concerned about equal access. Not all children have transportation or access to libraries. **Ms. Francois** agreed. **Mr. Rajner** agreed and said e-books are great for those students that have access to computers. He is concerned with homes that do not have computer or high speed access. **Mr. Rajner** stated that there

would be even less access for students during a hurricane where there is an interruption in electrical power. **Mr. Joseph** clarified that he is not referring to online books. E-books can be online and in electronic form, which will free up money for hard copy books for those students who do not have computer access. Attached to this, the students have the option of choosing an e-book or a hard copy book. **Mr. Gazzano** said that his understanding is that when the School Board purchases books on a five or six-year renewal process, the new requirement in the bid process is that there be e-books available. He said the District should find out what percentage of books are still being used that are not e-book compatible. **Mr. Foulkes** stated that there is State Legislation that requires payment for the online books the same as hard copy. Students have the option of choosing one or the other. Many families with computer access choose the e-book. However, that does not preclude the student from choosing a hard copy book if they own a home computer. In addition to the hard copy or the e-book, the students have access to the online book. **Mr. Joseph** stated that the motion is not to do away with hard copy books, nor is it a substitute. It is for the express purpose of finding a school not in compliance or in compliance regardless of having access to e-books or an online version. The language in the Site Visit Instrument pertaining to the availability of core course textbooks is limited to whether or not the textbook is available as a hard copy or as an e-book. Electronic books have not been defined as textbooks on the instrument. Included in the revision of the instrument is an area for the school to provide evidence that they have access to e-books. **Ms. Price** asked if there is a difference between the e-book and the online book. **Mr. Joseph** responded that an e-book is an electronic book on a CD or tape. But an online version can only be accessed online. The information can be sent electronically via a flashcard, CD, DVD, or a cassette tape. **Ms. Price** said that someone told her that all textbook producers have to have an online book. She asked if the online book could also be an outdated book. **Mr. Foulkes** stated that if the hard copy is being replaced, then the online version is also replaced. He said that it is possible for a company to allow access to an expired license as a resource.

Mr. Rabinowitch said that students have the choice of choosing the CD or the hard copy textbook. Although not every student has access to technology, students who choose the CD option are affirming that they have computer access. **Ms. Oliver** expressed concern about the School Board paying extra money for e-books, considering that they are in an economic crisis. She said that more money would have to be spent if the CD is damaged. **Mr. Rabinowitch** informed the Committee that the obligations card they receive for the textbook states that the cost of the CD is the same cost as the physical textbook. It was assumed that the cost of a CD would be considerably less.

Mr. Joseph again clarified that the motion is for the Site Visitation Subcommittee. The purpose of the motion is to have all books accepted as books, providing the flexibility in responding to the question on whether or not the school has hard copy books, CD books, and electronic books. The school would be required to provide proof that students have access to them.

Mr. Rabinowitch said that on the obligation card, both the hard copy textbook and the CD are counted as a book when being checked out. The online textbook is provided as a supplement to the hard copy textbook and the CD. **Ms. Price** stated that it is the same thing if a student destroys the CD or the hard copy book. **Mr. Foulkes** asked, "If a CD breaks, is there a replacement cost to the student or does the company or school replace it at no cost?" **Mr. Rabinowitch** responded that the student is responsible for the CD in the same capacity as a hard copy textbook. Students are financially obligated to pay for damages to any CD or hard copy textbook.

Mr. Rajner stated that access and equitable access need to be defined because although a student may have access to a home computer, it would be considered limited access if that student has to share it with other siblings. The county budget has affected library-closing hours, which affects access. **Mr. Rajner** said that a CD is easier to corrupt than a textbook and asked what is in place to protect it. He expected it to be cheaper to replace a CD since the license is the only thing being paid, and it costs a penny to produce it. He added that he is concerned about hurricanes and the lack of power that can occur and asked if there are going to be bus routes to take children to libraries in the afternoons and evening hours.

Ms. Yach stated that all Broward County night school classes use the APEX software program, which is totally online. She said for the underachieving student, instead of the computer being a beneficial program, students have problems with the online program, which has created a hindrance for learning. Teachers have indicated that adult students are struggling with the software.

Mr. Joseph again reiterated that the motion is strictly for the purpose of checking off on the Site Visit evaluation form whether or not the school has hard copy, online, or e-books. Currently the Diversity Committee only accepts hard copy as a book. **Mr. Foulkes** stated that the motion is a way to facilitate the work of the Site Visitation Subcommittee for the express purpose of visiting schools. **Ms. Francois** is concerned about compliance if e-books and online books are counted as hard copy textbooks because of limited access to students. **Mr. Rabinowistch** asked if the Diversity Committee would have to define what it considers an e-book for visitation purposes. **Mr. Foulkes** responded that it would be the decision of the Ad Hoc Committee on Site Visit Instrument Revisions.

MOTION by Ms. Williamson, 2nd by Ms. Luster: “To accept e-books as an equivalent to hardcopy textbooks for site visit purposes”.

Passed 12-5

STUDENT DISCIPLINE & SUSPENSION, Phoebe Francois

Ms. Francois announced that the Student Suspension subcommittee is scheduled to meet on Monday, June 8, 2009.

TECHNOLOGY, Suzanne Yach

No Report.

DISTRICT REPORTS

Mr. Foulkes announced that the District Technology Advisory Committee has a new Chair and Vice Chair. The focus of their meetings is to get as much of the software and equipment repaired before their current warranty expires.

Ms. Williams stated that the Discipline Matrix had already gone forward. It will be printed in the Student Code of Conduct book. One area of concern was making sure elementary students could not be externally suspended.

(Motion to extend the meeting for 10 minutes approved.)

Mr. Foulkes reported on the Discipline Matrix and its connection with Florida Senate Bill 1540. The Bill will reverse Zero Tolerance policies with its changes to student behaviors and the consequences of their action. **Ms. Francois** requested that a copy of the bill be sent to her prior to the June 8th, Student Discipline and Suspension subcommittee meeting. **Mr. Foulkes** read a portion of the letter he received from **Levi Williams, Attorney**. The letter stated that “Zero Tolerance policies may not require the reporting of petty acts of misconduct and misdemeanors to a law enforcement agency, including but not limited to disorderly conduct, disrupting a school function, simple assault or battery, theft less than \$300, trespassing, and vandalism less than \$1,000. Each school district will adopt a cooperative agreement with the Department of Juvenile Justice, which establishes guidelines for ensuring that any “No-Contact Order” entered by a court is reordered and enforced and that all of the necessary steps are taken to protect the victim of the offense.” At the last Discipline Matrix meeting **Mr. Foulkes** asked, “How are they going to change and modify the matrix based on this law?” **Ms. Williams** pointed out that the Discipline Matrix lists the consequences of each action. The Discipline Matrix was designed to make sure that consequences are equitable across the District. The State policy defines crimes and actions, which is what dictates where a person is placed in the Matrix. **Mr. Foulkes** stated that, at some point, there should be a discussion about the new Bill and how it relates to the Discipline Matrix. **Mr. Gazzano** asked if the new policy would preclude a principal from externally suspending a student from the school. **Ms. Williams** stated that the goal of the policy is to keep elementary students in school as much as possible. If it is an external suspension, the student should be sent to an external suspension location. **Mr. Gazzano** asked if a precocious student pulls a fire alarm or hits a teacher, whether or not the principal is allowed to suspend that student. **Ms. Williams** responded that secondary consequences are different from elementary consequences. The main concern is for the same action to receive the same consequence across the District. Furthermore, that before a student is put out of school, all necessary measures must be taken to help him or her. **Mr. Foulkes** suggested that the Discipline Department be invited to present at the September or October meeting. This would give them enough time to incorporate the legal changes into the Matrix. Staff will email a copy of the Bill to the Committee.

GRADUATION RATE TASK FORCE

Ms. Oliver volunteered to be the Diversity Committee representative on the Graduation Rate Task Force committee.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Thaddeus Hamilton, Chair, Student Advisory Council at Sunland Park Elementary, asked the Diversity Committee to help the school. He said the school system has failed the students at this school. Too much focus is being given to high achievers, when there are schools such as Sunland Park that are not treated fairly, funded, and supported. In 2006, Sunland Park scored a “C” grade on the FCAT. Administration reduced the grade to “D”. Due to reconstitution, the majority of teachers were removed, leaving approximately six to deal with the student body. This resulted in the school getting an “F” grade. From that point on, the school has continuously received an “F” grade. He stressed that Sunland Park is in dire need of help, in spite of having made some progress. They have mold, mildew, and lack many things. He asked that the Diversity Committee focus on helping minority and “F” schools. Two weeks ago, Channel 7 News reported that the “F” schools were going to be reconstituted. The Communications Director of the school system stated, “It was a misunderstanding.” But to date, nothing has been sent out by Channel 7, stating the report was incorrect. **Mr. Foulkes** reminded the Committee that Sunland Park was one of the last schools to receive a site visit in 2008.

(Motion to extend the meeting for 5 minutes was approved).

Mr. Foulkes informed **Mr. Hamilton** that Sunland Park Elementary was listed as one of the schools that the Site Visit Subcommittee plans to revisit and asked that he list his major concerns and provide them to staff.

Kwame Afoh, Substitute Teacher and member of the Charter Schools Task Force, stated the following:

1. The textbook initiative education goal is despicable. In spite of having projects, students show up to school when they feel like it and are not being educated properly.
2. He spoke to a teacher who stated that she is clearly aware that there exists a lot of disparity in the schools located in the east and the west. He was shocked because he thought that the Committee was doing site visits.
3. He has witnessed students sharing books at several schools in 2009.
4. In some schools, classroom management is deplorable because of the lack of support from administration, and the students are allowed to get away with too much.

Meeting ended 8:45 p.m.

The next Diversity Committee meeting is scheduled for August 13, 2009 at 6:00 p.m., in the Board Room at the Kathleen C. Wright Administration Center.

These minutes are summarized and were recorded at the June 4, 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.