

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING

October 6, 2011

SUMMARY

Members Present:

Andy Ansola	Bari Goldberg	Daljit Pannu
Barbara Beasley-Williamson	Esther Mizell	Nancy Rogan
Harve Brosten	Laura Munoz	Carlos Verney
Alfred Delgado	Catherine Owens	Suzanne Yach
Roland Foulkes		

Members Absent:

Julian Gazzano	Ernestine Price	James Sparks
Shevrin Jones	Tammy Reed	
Marguerite Luster		

District Staff: Leontine Butler, Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum; Joanne Harrison, Deputy Superintendent, Educational Programs & Student Support Services; Kathrine Francis, Executive Director, Student Support Services & ESE; Mark Eyerman, Teacher, Blanche Ely High School; Sally House, Project Manager, Instructional Technology; James Kane, Distribution Facilitator, Learning Resources & Instructional Materials; Lynne Oakvick, Specialist, Learning Resources & Instructional Materials; Michele Rivera, Director, Learning Resources & Instructional Materials

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

Guests: Joanne Cherisma, Blanche Ely High School; Geneva Devaughn, Blanche Ely High School; Gina Eyerman; Clemontees Foulkes; Patricia McDougle; Ingrid Prince, Student, Blanche Ely High School

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Foulkes called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m., with a quorum.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Committee adopted the Agenda as amended.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion by Ms. Owens, seconded by Ms. Rogan to adopt the September 1, 2011 Summary Minutes as amended. Motion passed.

CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR REPORT/UPDATES

Mr. Foulkes spoke of the brochure from Comcast, which provides information on Internet access for students who receive free school lunches. He thanked members who attended the September 27th School Board Workshop and said his recommendation, along with the Citizens Concerned About Our Children (CCC) attorneys, is to keep the Diversity Committee intact, to revive the Anti-bullying Task Force and, as with other committees relating to diversity such as ESE and Gifted, to establish a new committee: the Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Committee, as an option. **Mr. Foulkes** thanked **Major Pannu** for his nomination and selection for the

United Nations Association (UNA) Man of the Year Award. The honors and award luncheon will be Sunday, October 23, 2011; all members are invited.

Ms. McDougle provided a mini-lesson in parliamentary procedure in which she gave a brief overview of Robert's Rules of Order. She discussed giving full attention to the Chair, seeking recognition from the Chair to speak, waiting until another member has finished speaking before waving his/her hand to be recognized, address only the Chair or each other through the Chair, one member speaks at a time; one subject at a time, and avoiding the use of names if possible. She said keep in mind; it is consequences of a proposed action that is the issue, not the member or his/her motives. Speak either in favor or against the motion, not the person.

DEPARTMENT AND DISTRICT UPDATES

Ms. Pope welcomed Mr. Verney back to the Committee and thanked everyone who attended the September 27th Board Workshop; the Committee was well represented. She said that people who spoke about the issues and recommendations they wanted the Board to consider did so respectfully. She noted some of the recommendations: to split the Committee and form two committees; to form a new committee to address all broad diversity issues; to maintain Policy 1.5 Diversity Committee as is and form a new committee to address all broad diversity issues; and to form a new committee that would address LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender) issues. **Ms. Pope** said follow-up work for the Department is to look at the impact on staff, funding, structure and timeline of forming a new committee(s); revising Policy 1.7 and amending Policy 1.5. **Ms. Pope** noted that September is a month close to the work of the Department, our schools had varied and wonderful events focusing on *Choose Peace, Stop Violence Week and International Day of Peace*. **Major Pannu** experienced students working along these lines with a poetry/essay contest at Westpine Middle School; he shared some of the entries with members and staff. **Ms. Pope** said that students and staff across the District are acknowledging that we need to move toward a more peaceful world. **Ms. Pope** acknowledged **Mr. Foulkes**, as a honoree of the UNA Man of the Year Award, in addition he received the 2011 International Peace Prize for practicing peace in thought, action and example locally and globally. The Chair has been working hard on behalf of the broad concept of peace world-wide.

PRESENTATION

Instructional Materials; Technology; Media Centers And Curriculum Standards

Michele Rivera and **Sally House** gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the District's digital learning vision in regard to student-learning through accessing digital resources and how to achieve access for all students. They reviewed legislative mandates; by 2015-16 all adopted instructional materials K-12 will be provided in digital format; by 2011-12 every incoming 9th grade student will complete a virtual learning course; and end-of-course tests and FCAT tests will be completed online. **Michele Rivera** discussed the Broward Enterprise Education Portal (BEEP) that leads parents, students, educators and administrators to an appropriate digital doorway www.beep.browardschools.com. **Sally House** reviewed the means the District is using to address accessibility, affordability and choice for all students. **Michele Rivera** said Broward County Schools is participating in a State authorized digital pilot program, which designates nine schools to focus on integration of digital instruction. **Sally House** spoke about the partnership with Comcast, which provides low-cost Internet access for students that are eligible for free lunch, the offer of a discounted net book computer, and providing training for eligible families www.internetessentials.com. She said since 2008, the *Digital Divide: Bridging the Gap* initiative has given approximately 2,800 refurbished computers, along with training, to eligible families www.broward.k12.fl.us/digitaldivide.

Michele Rivera spoke about the various tools, programs and resources available through current partnerships with the Broward County Public Library System and the Sun-Sentinel. **Sally House** discussed future use of mobile learning in utilizing cell phones, iPads, iBooks, Kindles, as well as, the distinction between traditional and digital learning. **Michele Rivera** introduced three seniors from Blanche Ely High School: **Joanne Cherisma, Geneva Devaughn** and **Ingred Prince**. The students reviewed various methods and benefits of accessing textbooks, information, test-preparation tools, resources and Pinnacle in the BEEP portal. The students demonstrated access to e-activities and digital flashcards for learning.

Members had various questions and comments including, but not limited to: suggesting that the expansion of the Family Literacy Program is an excellent avenue to reach the disenfranchised, impoverished, and isolated parents on the uses of BEEP; those financially disadvantaged affording even low-cost Internet service and computers; giving old/obsolete computers to students for home-use; conducting an annual survey to determine the percentage of students that have full access to technology and the Internet; and parents need access to technology training.

Dr. Butler said the District is moving forward in bridging the gap for financially disadvantaged families via partnerships, grants, and the current pilot program; then in-turn will inform the legislature of the challenges of implementing digital/technology mandates.

Motion by Major Pannu, seconded by Ms. Owens to “send the Resolution on the Digital Divide in Broward County’s Schools to the Technology Advisory Committee and on to the School Board.” Motion passed 11-0.

DISCUSSION

Racial Segregation & Re-segregation in our Schools

Ms. Owens said she is concerned that neither the State or Broward Schools has any control over charter schools and that charter schools are greatly increasing in numbers without any monitoring in regard to re-segregation. Charter schools have Race To The Top data, which Broward Schools has access to. Ideally, further data columns should be added to include: grade of the school and race/ethnicity of students, this would help the District recognize trends in charter schools using a comprehensive approach.

Mr. Foulkes said he has been told that Broward Schools has no control over charter schools. Information can be gathered if requested individually from each charter school organization, which are private entities. He said charter schools provide options for parents, they give competition to public schools; we should focus on making public schools the best they can be, promote the outstanding programs available and what this District has to offer. **Mr. Foulkes** recommended that the District’s lobbyist address the Committee at the next meeting to bring the members up-to-date on the current legislative program and then in turn voice our concerns. He noted that residential segregation is another aspect of the whole picture.

Ms. Pope said charter schools are a part of a larger choice program handed down by the State and that the discussion should be much broader to include other choice options, which may be impacting re-segregation. The Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) guidelines provide school choice; in particular, when schools do not meet AYP, sub-groups may be leaving a particular school, leaving other students whose families may not be able to afford transportation to a school of choice. **Ms. Pope** said the Committee may want to have a presentation on AYP and the impact choice structure may have on the make-up of our schools. **Mr. Delgado** said

poverty and lack of mobility are key aspects in this regard and asked if there are statistics on the subject. **Mr. Foulkes** said he would do some research and he would ask staff to research the subject as well.

Motion by Ms. Owens, seconded by Ms. Goldberg “that the Diversity Committee issue a recommendation to the Superintendent and the School Board to request an oversight committee by State Department of Education and/or US Department of Education to address our concerns about the possible re-segregation trending of charter schools and choice structure.” Motion passed 11-0.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Site Visitation

Mr. Foulkes said the following members, in addition to himself, attended the site visit at Parkway Middle School: **Ms. Owens, Ms. Mizell, Mr. Brosten, Mr. Sparks and Ms. Price.** **Ms. Owens** spoke about the site visit at Parkway Middle School. She said one of the recommendations is to build a new cafeteria, it is from 1958 and there is no air conditioning in the kitchen.

Ms. Owens said the next site visit is scheduled for October 19th. She said more members are needed for the visit and asked them to please sign-up.

Ms. Owens said one of the outcomes from the Site Visit Subcommittee meeting is to request that staff prepare a report, twice a year, for School Board members reporting the following: the attendance record of each appointee; the subcommittee(s) he/she serves on, the attendance record at subcommittee meetings he/she serves on; and the number of site visits each member attends. The Subcommittee agreed; School Board members need to know how active their appointees are. **Mr. Foulkes** noted that Parkway Middle School was the very first Diversity Committee Site Visit in 2003 and had approximately 20 members in attendance.

Meeting adjourned 9:06 p.m.

**The next meeting is scheduled for November 3, 2011 at 6:30 p.m.,
in the Board Room, Kathleen C. Wright Administration Building.**

These minutes are summarized and were recorded at the October 6, 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.