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**School Board Workshop**  
**April 28, 2009**

**Town Hall Meeting**

The School Board Members thanked everyone connected with the April 27, 2009, Town Hall meeting and the superb job that was done. Being the first time that such a meeting was produced, it was extremely well planned, delivered smoothly, and it was well received and attended by the public. Not only could the community attend the meeting at one of the seven sites, but it could also be also viewed on TV, BECON channel 19, and web streaming at the browardschools.com website. The Superintendent informed the School Board that 250 people used the web streaming for the entire meeting. For a first time venture, this was excellent. The School Board and Superintendent plan to have more of these meetings.

Many questions from the community were answered during the meeting, but there were many questions that time did not allow responses. In order not to lose all the wonderful community participation, School Board Members requested that all questions be collected from the high school sites and the KCW Administration Building and have appropriate staff send responses. It was also requested to place all the questions and responses on the browardschools.com web site so everyone can view them. Board Members also requested that thank you letters be sent to all those who signed in and attended the meeting.

**District Advisory Council**

The District Advisory Council came before the Board with a presentation regarding the Advisory's process. Starting with an issue of concern, which arises at the school level at a School Advisory Forum (SAF) meeting, the issue goes to the Area Advisory, then to the District Advisory, and then to the Superintendent and the School Board Members.

The School Advisory Forum (SAF) is the primary communication link between the school and the community and follows a process that can link with other schools through the Area Advisory and District Advisory. The School Advisory Forum can address local, district wide and global issues, such as booster clubs, traffic problems and dress code. Their authority is derived from School Board Policy.

The School Advisory Council (SAC) writes and oversees the implementation of the school improvement plan. Issues must relate to the school improvement plan and is also responsible for school safety issues, discipline strategies, and the school's budget. The Florida State Statute governs their authority.

Board Members wanted to know how there can be more parental participation in SAF and SAC. One suggestion, made at a previous DAC discussion, was to combine SAF and SAC into one unit. The consensus of the schools was not to do this, but the underlying question of how to have more parental participation still remains regarding how to engage more people. This is something that must be continually worked on at the school level by principals and teachers.

Administrators must be trained to be pro parent and parent friendly. There is a perception about SAC regarding the membership, and not all members can vote. Because of this voting makeup, parents get disenfranchised and are not involved in important decisions at the school level. That is where we are losing parental involvement. Board Members want to redo SAC so parents are involved and heard. When schools and parents collaborate there is a higher level of achievement. When you do not have the parent buy in it is harder to communicate.

There was a discussion regarding voting on issues at the school level forums and District Advisory and the possibility of not having a vote at all. All suggestions made by parents would be collected and brought to the Board for their information, which could then be used to help them vote on an issue, such as uniforms or policy.

The Superintendent was requested to create an ad hoc parent committee, to include parents whose students are grown and have gone through the school system, new parents whose children are beginning, and those parents who have been in the system. This committee would report back to the Superintendent on how the school advisories work and their suggestions to increase parental involvement. There is an existing Parent Involvement Committee. Board Members would like to know what their charge is, how they link with the existing parent groups, and where they are now. Area Offices are requested to supply the Board with a matrix of all the parent groups in their area, including booster clubs, their purpose, responsibility, and whether or not they have a Board Member appointment.

DAC is conducting a survey regarding the advisory process. This survey may be accessed on [www.browardschools.com](http://www.browardschools.com).

The District Advisory Council bylaws will come back at a later date, once the conversion of the three areas is completed.

Material for this topic can be found on the eAgenda for the April 28, 2009 workshop.

### **Graduation Task Force**

The School Board Members requested that the goal of increasing the District's graduation rate be addressed. Staff meeting for several months with a wide range of stakeholders, such as the United Way, proposed a plan of collaboration with school, home and community to positively impact the graduation rate, and was accepted by the Board at a workshop on October 16, 2009.

The proposed plan focuses on four innovation zones, one in each geographic area: Boyd Anderson, Coconut Creek, Dillard and Hallandale zones. This collaborative will focus on the underlying issues of poverty, family stability, community support, school culture and ethnicity as they impact student achievement.

The Task Force updated the School Board on the status of the focus groups. Results from the focus groups will be analyzed for gaps and needs that will lead to the development of strategies to be implemented in 2009-10 school year.

Parent involvement is crucial to improve the graduation rate. Focus groups are looking at what factors are within the school community that affect the graduation rate, what the causes are for poor attendance, and what is out there that is hindering or helping the school community.

The preliminary results of the community providers and social workers are being gathered.

Where the community providers are geographically is very important and whether they are in the areas that need them the most. Certain areas do not have community support groups and must go to neighboring communities for these services.

Board Member explained that one group that is being concentrated on in his District is the black male students and the fact that their graduation rate is very low. A focus group has been organized to talk about this. One of the things that this group did was go out into the community and work with the parents of students at the elementary level. Also the dropout black males were contacted by the Broward County Housing Authority and some have been hired and placed into an apprenticeship program.

The innovation zones have been found to be very effective. By having a strong innovation zone, and working together with the community, there should be higher graduation rates working from elementary, middle to high school.

Endocrine in a student's mindset at the elementary school level where they will be going to middle and high school, this pathway of education helps enormously on their outlook of education and helps to give them a sense of community. We should look at best practices such as mentoring programs and duplicate that across the district. Staff was requested to use Knowledge is Power (KIP) in our schools. At the elementary level endocrine the thought that the student will go to college, that this is the only option, and that it cannot be negotiated. We must catch those students whose light starts to dim on education and infuse it so they stay interested in school.

Board Members are concerned on how the budget cuts will impact our efforts. Cutting programs that students have a passion for makes it more difficult to keep them interested in school.

Staff is requested to look at the base line numbers now on the graduation rate and monitor them so we will be able to show the success of this task force in increasing the graduation rate.

Material for this topic can be found on the eAgenda April 28, 2009 workshop.

### **Impacts to Capital Revenue**

The Chief Financial Officer came before the Board to update them on the possible further reduction of the millage by .25 now at 1.75. The estimated impact will be \$450 million to the School District's 5-Year Plan. This reduction would completely halt the existing 5-Year Plan passed by the School Board last year. There will be no available funding for capital projects, technology, equipment, buses and maintenance vehicles. This reduction will make it difficult to meet the existing debt service, contractual obligations, and critical fixed capital outlay needs for the next 5-years.

The reduction in millage will reduce the current 5-Year Plan by 50% and the School District's credit line will be reduced so projects that are previously budgeted can no longer be done. All future projects will have to come out. The reduction in the millage will also reduce the district credit rating and borrowing power, thus not being able to issue any more Certificates of Participation (COPs). There is an option, in 2009-2010 only, to shift 0.25 mills back to capital equaling 1.75 mill cap. After 2009-10 the 1.5 mills for capital will be permanent.

Board Members stated this was devastating and every promise that has been made for improvement to schools will not be done. Staff will memorialize the 5-Year Plan and capture this information, so that if the school District is successful in restoring the 2 mills the 5-Year Plan projects can be revived.

Existing contracts will be completed, but the District is looking at the previously budgeted projects to determine which projects are not financed.

Staff informed the Board of Federal stimulus dollars for construction through interest free tax subsidized school construction bonds. They are:

- Qualified School Construction Bonds (Interest Free)
- Build America Bonds (Tax credit)

The School District's financial advisors recommended taking advantage of the new Federal financing options. Staff asked for the Board's direction and the School Board agreed to take advantage of these interest free and tax credit programs.

Material for this presentation is available on the eAgenda April 28, 2009 workshop.

### **The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Choice and Supplemental Education Services (SES)**

Update for 2009-10 was presented to the School Board regarding regulation changes. NCLB Choice must be provided for schools not making AYP for 3 or more years. SES begins at schools not making AYP for two consecutive years.

In March 2009, 55 schools distributed choice letters. The letters gave parents a menu of school choices and SES providers if eligible. Parents will prioritize their choices and they would be based on seats available at each school.

In July 2009, up to ten new schools based on AYP score results, will have letters mailed out to parents.

The first week of school information and brochures explaining SES will be mailed to all eligible parents that selected SES at their boundary school in lieu of Choice with transportation. There will be SES provider fairs in all areas. At this time approximately 8,000 SES student applications will be entered into a database and released to SES providers. Student services must begin no later than October 15, 2009 and will end May 2010. Over 8,000 invoices for the SES providers will be processed per month for services rendered, and after completion of all payout to private providers a report must be sent to the state.

Board Members would like to get ahead of this Federal game and get schools ahead. Each year the NCLB programs raise the bar so schools can't get ahead. There are "A" schools, not Title I schools, that cannot meet AYP and those students could be bused to another school.

NCLB is not just for needy schools. Schools in affluent areas might not make AYP.

The transportation costs are huge and the State does not fund this cost. This is another unfunded mandate. As a matter of fact, the State has reduced funding for transportation this year. It is the desire of the Board to get the NCLB program changed at the Federal level and they will continue to get this message heard.

Material for the presentation can be found on the eAgenda April 28, 2009 workshop.

### **Security Clearance Department**

The Security Clearance Department is responsible for insuring that all employees, volunteers and vendors meet the State mandated legislation found in the Jessica Lunsford Act and the Ethics in Education Act.

The Jessica Lunsford Act requires background screening for all employees in direct contact with students.

The Ethics in Education Act is a set of requirements for employment and certification of educators, disciplinary actions, and reporting of educator misconduct.

All employees are fingerprinted and are submitted electronically to FDLE and the FBI. This process generally takes 72 hours. There is a fee for the fingerprinting.

Supervised Level 1 Volunteers are checked against the sexual predator/offender database and the Broward County Clerk of Courts. Level 2 Volunteers are those who go on field trips and they also have a stringent requirement check and are fingerprinted.

Parents must have proper identification for security purposes. A Florida driver's license is the best identification. The Superintendent asked about parents coming in from another country and if a passport would be accepted as identification. The Security Chief will look into that.

Board Member asked if high school students, who tutor other students, needs to be fingerprinted. In this case, a volunteer form is filled out. Board Member would like to know what does that form look like and who has that form.

Board Members requested that the School Board of Broward County, Florida, badge is changed. School Board of Broward County, Florida, on the new badge, is very small and they would like that print larger. Also the employee's name is very small on the new badge and it makes it hard to see the persons name. Board Members would like that print to be larger. The old badges did have larger print.

Board Members asked what is a reasonable time to close an employee case. Board Members are requested to contact security with any questions they have on a particular case so they can research it.

There is a list of personnel hiring guidelines put out by the state. This list does not include "child abuse;" the School Board's original list did. Board Members ask General Counsel to look into this to see if child abuse should be added to the State's list.

Material for this topic is on the eAgenda for the April 28, 2009 workshop.

**JFN:jd**