

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

**JAMES F. NOTTER
SUPERINTENDENT**

Telephone (754) 321-2600

Facsimile: (754) 321-2701

Signature on File

**JOINT MEETING WITH THE BROWARD LEAGUE OF CITIES
AND THE
SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA**

The School Board held its annual joint meeting with the Broward League of Cities (BLOC). This annual meeting provides an opportunity for the Superintendent and School Board Members to meet with mayors, commissioners, League staff and community members to discuss ways to work together.

The Chair, Maureen Dinnen, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone. The Chair stated that we live in interesting times and face similar circumstances, such as budget cuts and erosion of citizen confidence. The Chair stated that we will move beyond this economic time and lack of confidence cloud that hangs over us and will continue to do our jobs, which we all do very well. We do make a difference. The Chair continued by saying we must find those areas where we can work cohesively together. The BLOC and the SBBC serve the same citizens and we must keep our relationship solid and the lines of communication open. The Chair then introduced the Superintendent, Jim Notter.

The Superintendent welcomed everyone and stated we live in a "new normal" and will have to depend on each other much more. Property values and State taxes are going in a direction that we do not like. There is a new dimension to the words partnership and collaboration. We know our students will be here and we must prepare for the "new normal," so we can continue to offer the best quality of life that anyone can offer in the State of Florida.

The Superintendent stated that the School District's buildings could be used more efficiently and offered the use of school facilities for the municipalities use.

Gary Resnick, President of the Broward League of Cities and Mayor of Wilton Manors, gave his opening remarks and agreed that it is important to work together to improve the quality of life for our communities and residents, who we all serve, and to create more partnerships between the municipalities and the School District. The Mayor of Wilton Manors priority is to develop partnerships with the schools. Wilton Manors Elementary has an award winning character education program. A civics committee has been created to extend this program to the entire city so that residents will have an opportunity to learn about the character traits and practice them in their lives with their families. The Mayor also goes out to middle and high schools to speak about the community. The Mayor went on to say there are issues that still have to be discussed such as, SROs, crossing guards, and boundaries. Aside from those issues, this is a time where we see what we have in common and must work on those issues together. One thing that is in common with all the municipalities is to improve on the lines of communication with the School District to reach our students and residents.

Debbie Eisinger, Chair of the Broward League Education Committee and Mayor of Cooper City, welcomed everyone to the meeting and echoed everyone's sentiments. The Education Committee feels that our goals are exactly the same and want our schools to be successful. The

League is made up of 31 municipalities and we must work hand in hand on the legislative plan, school policies and the Interlocal agreement.

League of Cities 2010 Action Plan

Mayor Eisinger presented the draft Legislative Action Plan of the BLOC and stated how it reflects the Schools District Legislative Plan in many ways.

- Class Size Amendment - the municipalities feel strongly that it should stay.
- Funding of capital outlay needs.
- Restoration of the Norm Reference Test (NRT). The State must provide funding.
- Supports the integration of Florida History and Civics in K-12 curriculum.
- Defines adequate funding as having appropriate resources to insure the education of Pre-K-12 students.
- Restoration of the School Board's local 2 mill capital outlay levy authority.

2010 Broward County School District Legislative Agenda

Georgia Slack, SBBC Legislative Lobbyist, presented the Broward Schools' Draft Legislative Plan. The focus of the Legislative Plan is to request no further funding reductions. Schools are feeling the cuts and the stimulus money will be ending. The question is how much we can reduce funding and still produce students who will flourish. The School District is a direct reflection of the quality of life in Broward County. If we cannot educate students, how can we expect businesses to come to the County? Our goals are the same. If we do not succeed, the municipalities will not succeed.

The School District's Legislative plan does have similarities to the BLOC plan.

- The Board would like the NRT reinstated, but the State must provide funding.
- The Board does support class size with 3-5 extra students being allowed, due to extenuating circumstances, such as a new student to the area.
- The School Board does not want anymore unfunded mandates. To date, the total cost of unfunded mandates to the School District is \$91million.

Georgia Slack stated there is a bill that would allow School Boards and municipalities to advertise their meetings by use of their websites. Websites are there forever and newspapers are gone the next day. This is something that the municipalities and the School District could work on together and would save everyone a substantial sum of money.

Al Jones, BLOC Member from the City of Dania Beach, recommended that retirees should be able to be reinstated after one month. It was always one month until it was changed last year to six months. Mr. Jones suggested that retirees do not have to be reinstated at the payroll rate when they left the system, but could come back in at a starting wage.

Amended Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning

The next topic on the agenda was the discussion regarding the Amended Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning. Leslie Brown, Director of Educational Programs, gave a brief review of the recent laws, which have impacted school boundaries. The laws are: Class Size Amendment, State Plant Survey, the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) and Level of Service, the use of portables, and No Child Left Behind, which have come all together at this time. The biggest detriment of all the above mentioned is the State Plant Survey, which does not allow the School District to build schools or additions. Therefore, due to the ILA students will have to be moved from their boundary school to another school. These schools will then become over crowded and those students will have to be moved, creating an almost countywide domino affect.

There were good intentions when the ILA was written. The hope of the School District is the municipalities will understand this boundary crisis and will amend the ILA as proposed by the School District. This is an extremely complex situation, which needs more time than was allotted at today's meeting. The BLOC requested that the School District finalize their recommendation and then present it to the municipalities.

School Board Policy Regarding the Distribution of Municipal Communication through the Schools

Next on the agenda, was the discussion regarding the distribution of municipal communication through the schools. Merrie Meyer-Kershaw informed the BLOC members of the process in place. The municipalities have information about events in their cities that they would like to get out to the parents via the school. The process in place does have a time restraints. It was suggested that the school websites have a link to the municipalities and the municipalities have a link to the schools in their area. Ms. Meyers-Kershaw will send the municipalities quick and easy ways to get their messages to the schools.

League of Cities Newly Formed Scholarship Plan

Debbie Eisinger, Mayor of Cooper City, was pleased to announce the newly established 2010 Scholarship Program to promote and provide financial assistance to those pursuing areas of study that benefit municipal government professionalism. BLOC's focus is to get out a positive initiative. The scholarship is a great avenue to help our youth in the community and publicize local government. The new scholarship program, now available to students, will be offering four individuals \$1,000 scholarships. For more information, please contact the BLOC office at 954-357-7370 or email bloc@bellsouth.net. Mayor Eisinger made a request for public donations and requested that the scholarship be announced at a School Board meeting.

Board Member, Stephanie Kraft, asked that in the future the scholarship be extended to students who will be attending out of state colleges and universities. BLOC will consider this for next year's scholarship.

Making the Communication Process More Effective and Efficient

The last item on the agenda was regarding the best source of communication between the municipalities and the School District. The question is: How can we collaborate to make the communication process more effective and efficient?

The idea of linking our municipalities and our schools on their websites is an excellent idea. The BLOC suggested the schools' Innovations Zones are a great way to get information. It was further suggested that partnerships with schools is a wonderful avenue to benefit schools and municipalities. Municipalities can get on the school's newsletter mailing list to get updated information regarding activities and events and can be sent electronically. Another suggestion is to have a local official go to a high school civics class and talk about local government.

The common thread of this meeting by both BLOC and the SBBC is to create better communication between the municipalities and the School District. Everyone agreed that some very good suggestions were made to accomplish this at today's meeting. The School Board Chair and the president of the BLOC thanked everyone for attending this meeting and looked forward to future collaboration.

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