

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

**DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**KCW Administration Building**

**May 3, 2007**

**SUMMARY**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order, at 6:35 p.m. by **Randy Fleischer**, Vice Chair, with a quorum present.

**Members Present:**

Jawhar Badran  
Pam Brown  
Ellyn Drotzer  
Randy Fleischer  
Roland Foulkes  
Julian Gazzano  
Lina Gioello

Gary Hensley  
Bapthol Joseph  
Jeanne Jusevic  
Andrew Lewis  
George Pedlar  
Ernestine Price  
Bernie Schultz

Ron Simon-Menéndez  
Barbara Stuart  
Barbara Williamson  
Alyce Zahniser  
Rose Espinola,  
Student Rep.

**Members Absent:**

Brian Dassler  
Cedric Douglas  
Marguerite Luster

Dane Ramson  
Sherry Reece  
Simone Ruiz-Narcis

Brittany Stevenson,  
Student Advisor  
Shelby Berson  
Student Rep.

**Diversity & Cultural Outreach Staff:**

Dr. Elizabeth Watts, Director; Jean Darius, Coordinator; Florence Bastien; Nancy Weintraub; Terri Jones

**Mr. Fleischer** asked for a moment of silence in memory of **Mr. Joseph's** wife, **Jennifer**, who recently passed away.

**Mr. Foulkes** advised the Committee that it was the Annual Day of Prayer, a day recognized by this country for over two centuries, and asked for another moment of silence in recognition of the students and faculty who were murdered at Virginia Tech and at other schools.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The Committee adopted the Agenda.

## APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of April 12, 2007, were approved with the following changes:

- On page 8, paragraph 1: “**Ms. Drotzer** was confused about why the district advisory committee was following up on a facilities matter and inquired if it would be more appropriate to refer the matter to the Facilities Task Force.”
- On page 9, New Business, Paragraph 1, add: “**Mr. Foulkes** distributed printed materials describing each event.”
- Page 9, paragraph 2: “The Broward Education Foundation holds an annual Expo for teachers at Nova Southeastern University in February. **Mr. Foulkes** presented a workshop...”

## CHAIR’S REPORT, Dr. Pam Brown

**Dr. Brown** apologized for arriving late and explained that she was at the University to receive the award for the Outstanding Student of the Year and announced that her dissertation was designated as the Outstanding Dissertation of the Year. Congratulations to **Dr. Brown**.

**The Chair** expressed condolences to **Mr. Joseph** on behalf of the Diversity Committee.

**The Chair** was not able to attend the Board Retreat due to a conflict. **Ms. Jusevic** attended the Retreat and was asked by **the Chair** to give a brief report to the Committee. **Ms. Jusevic** advised that the **School Board** selected the 36<sup>th</sup> Street site in Weston for the location of high school MMM.

**Dr. Brown** met with **School Board Members Mr. Williams** and **Ms. Dinnen** earlier in the day. They are co-hosting a forum for Fort Lauderdale schools and are inviting community representatives to participate. **Dr. Brown** said she was invited to be a participant because she chairs Fort Lauderdale’s Education Advisory Board and is an advocate for community involvement in schools. The forum will be held on May 21 at 6:30 at Fort Lauderdale HS. **Dr. Brown** will facilitate one of the groups at the Forum and encouraged Diversity Committee members to attend. **Ms. Gioello** pointed out that a community forum to meet **Mr. Notter** is also scheduled for that night. **Ms. Espinola** suggested Fort Lauderdale High School’s Public Affairs Class be invited to participate. **Dr. Brown** commented that this group was mentioned as a good source for community input and requested that **Ms. Espinola** give her the contact information.

## DIRECTOR’S REPORT, Dr. Elizabeth Watts

**Dr. Watts** attended the meeting of the Discipline Matrix Committee. The matrix is being updated to align with the State and with the changes to the Student Code of Conduct for 2007-2008.

Regarding the Academic and Behavior Contracts, **Mr. Tony Ash** informed **Dr. Watts** that the report will be discussed at the May 29 School Board retreat. Once it is approved by the Board, a copy will be forwarded to the **Committee**.

In response to a previous request, **Mr. Darius** advised that he is working with **Mr. Dan Traeger** to schedule a presentation on high school reform at the June meeting.

The Diversity & Cultural Outreach Department was a co-sponsor of the Pan African Bookfest and Cultural Conference, coordinated by the Broward County Library. A plaque acknowledging department participation was shown to the Committee.

Representatives from the NAACP will meet with District staff, to include **Mr. Notter** and **Dr. Watts**, regarding their Call for Action. Some of their priorities do align with the CCC Settlement Agreement, i.e. reducing the number of suspensions and expulsions and over-representation of minority students in special education classes. **Dr. Watts** will forward the NAACP Call For Action to the Committee.

**Dr. Watts** and **Mr. Darius** will meet with **Dr. Blasik** to discuss the Superintendent's Status Report. Research Services' timeline for meeting the deadline, as stated in Policy 1.5, is as follows.

- June 11 – Submission of rough draft to Senior Management
- June 18 – Submission of final report to Senior Management
- August 10 – Report forwarded to School Board
- August 14 – Report discussed at School Board Retreat
- August 28 – Report forwarded to Diversity Committee
- September 6 – Research Services to present Report to Diversity Committee

The only Committee request remaining is for the 2000-2007 student census data related to ethnic breakdowns for Middle Eastern students, teachers and administrators. That information is still being researched.

**Ms. Jusevic** asked if the people working on aligning the Discipline Matrix with state law would have a copy of the state law with them at the time. She further asked if the District's diversity training is mandatory...(There was a great deal of interference on the tape making this portion unintelligible.) **Dr. Watts** responded that diversity training is not mandatory and does not necessarily address teacher expectations in the classroom. The Diversity & Cultural Outreach Department is currently developing an action plan for diversity/sensitivity training that will be implemented next year. **Dr. Watts** said she wants to make sure that, "everyone owns that, not just this Department. It is in the works. It is a burning issue for me."

**Ms. Jusevic** asked for clarification on the timeline for the Superintendent's Report. It was her understanding that the **Committee** would receive the report before it is finalized by the **School Board**. **Dr. Watts** stated that, according to the Policy, the Report goes to the **Board**, is presented at the **Board** workshop, after which the **Diversity Committee** has the opportunity to view it and respond to it. **Ms. Jusevic** stated, for the record, that, "I do have a problem with Research Services aligning, not a policy, but creating a timeline in which the **Diversity Committee** does not get a look at that report before the **Board** finalizes it. I have a problem with that."

**Mr. Foulkes** stated that, in the past, the **Committee** received the preliminary version of the Superintendent's Report in February and in previous years, received it several months in advance, as well. It is his hope that **Mr. Notter** and **Dr. Blasik** will reconsider this timeline, based on practice and not on policy.

**Mr. Foulkes** referred to the meeting with the NAACP and stated “graduation numbers for Black students needs to be #1.” He added that NAACP nationally has been focusing on this issue.

**Mr. Foulkes** would like an update on his request, from last fall, for information regarding high school reform. He referenced a report he had viewed on BECON related to a bill that was passed on high school reform. It showed **Governor Bush** at McFatter, possibly signing the legislation. He would like a copy of the video, in addition to the oral presentation on high school reform.

**Mr. Badran** asked when he might expect the breakdown for Middle Eastern students, teachers and administrators. **Mr. Darius** responded that the information the Department received was not complete. **Mr. Darius** expects to receive the balance of the data within the next two weeks.

**Ms. Espinola** asked if there is an ethnic breakdown of the top 20% of students who are college-bound, referred to as the Talented Twenty. This program was created after Affirmative Action was ended in the state college system. **Ms. Espinola** explained that Talented Twenty refers to the top 20% of students in Florida high schools who are guaranteed admission to at least one state university. She asked if this is something the **Diversity Committee** would be interested in. **Dr. Brown** answered that it would be of interest to the **Committee** because it concerns which students are actually going to college. **Mr. Foulkes** said the Talented Twenty was part of former **Governor Bush’s** One Florida Initiative and suggested **Ms. Maggie Zalamea**, Government Relations, might be able to give the **Committee** information on this initiative.

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: “School-by-school breakdown of students eligible for the ‘Talented Twenty’ program (created under the One Florida Initiative), beginning with 2000-2001 school year. Statistics should show the ethnic breakdown (by White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and Multicultural) and also ESE designations in all categories of the top twenty percent (based on state GPA) the students eligible for the ‘Talented Twenty’ program at each Broward High School.”**

Approved by the Diversity Committee 17-0

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **SITE VISIT REPORT 2005-2006**

**Ms. Schultz** wanted to know where the site visit checklist came from. **Ms. Jusevic** answered that the checklist is based on the nine points of the CCC Settlement Agreement. The **Committee** developed the matrix. **Dr. Brown** said the **Committee** is not completely happy with the checklist and is committed to trying to make it better. That will be the next undertaking of the Site Visitation Subcommittee. **Ms. Gioello** added that monitoring the CCC Agreement is the **Committee’s** primary function. Site visits were implemented to monitor improvements and compliance regarding the Settlement. Over the years, the matrix was enhanced to include ADA Compliance. She said the **Committee** does have the opportunity to enhance the matrix, through motions, regarding things having to do with equity that fall within the nine points.

**MOTION by Mr. Joseph, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Hensley: “That the Diversity Committee approve the 2005-2006 Site Visitation Subcommittee Report as presented.”**

PASSED 17-0

## **SUBCOMMITTEES**

### **SITE VISITS, Bapthol Joseph, Chair**

**Mr. Bapthol** reported that the Subcommittee met and is presenting a new design for the cover of the 2005-2006 Site Visit Report for consideration by the full **Committee**.

The subcommittee proposed 13 dates for site visits during 2007-2008.

**MOTION by Mr. Fleischer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Gazzano: “To approve the dates for school visitation in 2007-2008 as proposed by the Site Visitation Subcommittee.”**

PASSED 17-0

Mr. Joseph advised that the list of schools recommended for a site visit was revised. He said that the Subcommittee realized that each **School Board** member had at least one school on the list, with the exception of **Ms. Hope**. For this reason, the Subcommittee recommended that Dillard Elementary be removed from the list and Fox Trail Elementary be added. When **Ms. Gioello** asked why Dillard was removed from the list, **Mr. Joseph** said it was to make room for a school in District 2.

**MOTION by Ms. Williamson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Fleischer: “To make a change in the list of schools to be visited 07-08 by deleting Dillard and adding Fox Trail.”**

PASSED 14-4

A suggestion was made to put Dillard Elementary back on the list. **Mr. Joseph** said that would not be a problem if the **Committee** committed to extending their visits to include an additional school.

**MOTION by Ms. Gioello, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Gazzano: “That we add one more elementary school to the list for next year so that we can still include Dillard Elementary and its unique programs.”**

PASSED 18-0

**Dr. Brown** echoed **Mr. Joseph’s** concern about member participation on site visits and asked that members who can get to the schools during the day put at least one school on their calendars.

**MOTION by Mr. Joseph, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Fleischer: “To accept and approve report cover design.”**

PASSED 18-0

### **HIRING PRACTICES, Randy Fleischer, Chair**

The Subcommittee did not meet, but **Mr. Fleischer** did give a status update on the two Requests for Information. He did not receive the information on the breakdown for Middle Eastern students, administrators and teachers. He did get the information on the Jessica Lunsford Act and its impact on vendors from **Ms. Patricia Eckert** and **Dr. Joe Melita** of Professional Standards and SIU. (Please see attached Personnel Hiring Guidelines.)

The next Subcommittee meeting will be held prior to the next **Diversity Committee** meeting in June. At that time, they will review this information, as well as the Middle Eastern data. **Mr. Fleischer** stated his belief that the vendor information should be monitored to determine its impact.

**Dr. Brown** asked staff if the **Committee Members** are copied on responses to their Information Requests. **Mr. Darius** responded that they are not copied on subcommittee requests. They are copied on **Diversity Committee** requests and on any subcommittee requests that are approved by the full Committee. Subcommittee requests are sent directly to the subcommittee.

**Mr. Foulkes** wondered which groups are included when the **Committee** refers to “Middle Eastern”. The term is seldom “unbundled”, and he wanted clarification. He said, “In this community, it includes a large number of people who may not identify themselves as Middle Eastern but, in fact, have that in their heritage.” **Mr. Fleischer** said that the District doesn’t have a breakdown for Middle Eastern and believes this population is included in “White, Non-Hispanic”. What data does exist is based on self-identification. He reminded the Committee that **Mr. Badran** is the person who had previously raised the question. **Mr. Foulkes** pointed out that Israel is in the heart of the Middle East. He asked if Jewish people are to be included in the Middle Eastern breakdown, or is the Committee interested in the number of Muslims in the District. **Mr. Badran** clarified his request by stating that the word “Muslim” had been dropped from this conversation. He said the information being sought is for “Arab-speaking, Middle Eastern and Muslim only.” **Mr. Darius** advised that “Muslim” was not part of the original request. **Mr. Badran** said that it was his intent. **Mr. Fleischer** pointed out that the District does not ask questions regarding religious affiliation. **Mr. Foulkes** said he believes the Multicultural Department might have the data on people who have self-identified. **Dr. Brown** suggested that this topic be referred to the Subcommittee and a decision be made on exactly what information is being sought.

**Ms. Price** commented that the same issues relate to the Haitian community. Many children were born here, but their parents were not, and they might not be able to speak English at all. The families were considered “Haitian households”, but the District considered them American because of the children.

**Ms. Espinola** stated she was never asked to fill out a survey asking her cultural background. She feels that kind of questioning is too intrusive, especially regarding religious affiliation.

**Dr. Brown**, again, referred this discussion to the Subcommittee and invited all Committee members to participate on June 7 at 5:30 at K.C. Wright. She said she would check into what demographic data is already being collected by the **School Board**. **Mr. Gazzano** suggested that the first step might be to look at what data the federal government’s guidelines collect regarding this type of information. Then follow that with state and county guidelines.

**Mr. Foulkes** referred again to the term “bundling” and used “Black” as an example where many cultures are included in this category. Asking for the categories to be “unbundled” would assist in identifying “cultural-specific responses” to addressing issues. He said the federal government collects all sorts of data concerning race, ethnicity, religion, etc. He commented, again, on the information reported by the Multicultural Department on countries of origin and languages, indicating that the District is collecting information that the Committee could use. He suggested asking the District to expand the data being collected.

**Mr. Joseph** stated that the system does not provide services to many Haitian students because they identify themselves as Black and, therefore, are not recognized as ESOL students. They do not receive the assistance they need to learn English and to develop reading skills.

**DISTRICT COMMITTEES:**  
**DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE, Bapthol Joseph**  
No report

**NOVA POLICY REVIEW, Randy Fleischer**  
No report

**POLICY 5000, Jeanne Jusevic**  
No report

**POLICY REVIEW, Julian Gazzano**  
The meetings were cancelled. No information to report.

**TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE, Ron Simon-Menendez**  
No report

**NEW BUSINESS**

**INCREASE THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

**Mr. Simon-Menendez** wants to “push” the Committee into using more technology. He would like to use laptops for recording motions. If there were a printer nearby, the motions could be printed and signed by the Members right then, thus avoiding the use of electronic signatures, which some Members are uncomfortable with. He said the Committee shouldn’t be looking at the schools and complaining that they don’t use technology while not utilizing technology themselves. Become more “green-wise” and lead by example. **The Chair** suggested **Mr. Simon-Menendez** meet with staff to see what could be done and then come back to the Committee with a series of recommendations. **Mr. Foulkes** suggested **the Chair of the District’s Technology Committee** might be willing to share what plans they have discussed to help the District become less paper-dependent and more “green”. He commented that the District has launched its “One Broward Broadband Initiative”, linking everyone in the District. Perhaps the **Committee** could get an update on that. The information might be of help as it considers becoming more technological.

**INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT**

**Mr. Simon-Menendez** referred to the community forums being held to meet with **Mr. Notter**, Acting Superintendent.

**MOTION by Mr. Simon-Menendez, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Joseph: “A Resolution that the Diversity Committee hereby fully endorses the permanent appointment of Interim Superintendent James Notter to the School Board of Broward County as School Superintendent.”**

**MOTION by Mr. Foulkes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Pedlar: “That we table the motion made by Mr. Ron Simon-Menendez that the Diversity Committee adopt a resolution in support of Mr. Notter being selected as the next permanent superintendent.”**

PASSED 14-4

## **SITE VISIT NOTIFICATION**

**Mr. Joseph** raised the question of increasing the notification time for schools prior to site visits by the **Diversity Committee**. At present, schools received 48 hours notification. **Mr. Joseph** believes it is not the amount of time that reveals most information about the schools, but the questions asked at the time of the site visits. He said schools are now more comfortable with the site visits and see them as opportunities to improve the schools. Thus, they are more inclined to present their needs, in addition to the data requested on the forms. **Mr. Joseph** suggested two weeks' notice prior to site visits.

**Ms. Gioello** pointed out that schools know well in advance that they are scheduled for a visit. They don't know the exact date until 48 hours prior. **Ms. Gioello** gave the history for the decision to give schools the two-day notice. The **Committee** wanted to see the schools on a "typical" day, not on a well-rehearsed day with two-weeks notice.

**Mr. Lewis** asked if the Committee knows the exact date of the visits. **Mr. Joseph** responded that the **Committee** voted to approve the dates for site visits. **The Chair** further clarified that the **Committee** knows the schools and the dates. The schools, however, don't know which schools will be visited on which dates. The **Subcommittee** and the **Chair** have that information.

**MOTION by Mr. Joseph, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Simon-Menendez: "Schools selected to be visited by the Site Visit Subcommittee be given a two-week notice prior to a visit by the Site Visit Subcommittee."**

After further discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

**Ms. Espinola** asked for a clarification as to whether or not letters are sent out to all Principals advising of the site visits. **Dr. Watts** clarified by stating that, once Senior Management approves the list of schools and dates, then the list is submitted to the **Board**. In the beginning of the school year, her predecessor, **Ms. Popler**, sent a memo that was posted: To All Principals. The memo listed all the schools slated to be visited, along with the dates. Thus, all principals are notified of which schools are slated for site visits.

**Ms. Gioello** advised the Committee that, if a school is scheduled for a visit on a Monday, that school is advised of the visit prior to the 48 hours. This is done in an endeavor to be fair to all concerned.

During discussion, reference was made to the Site Visit form and suggestions were made by **Members** to have the Site Visit Subcommittee review the form and come back with suggested changes to make it a more satisfactory tool that will elicit more of the information the Committee needs.

## **ALTERNATIVE TO SUSPENSION**

**Ms. Price** stated that **Mr. Joel Smith**, Middle Schools Director & School Reform, had promised that the new Alternative to Suspension programs would be better. **Ms. Price** said several parents came to her from the south end of the county, in Miramar, to say that there has been no change in that area. Things are still bad in the north end of the county, as well. It is her belief that children who have been suspended "are being treated as 4<sup>th</sup> class citizens." **Dr. Brown** suggested this be referred to the Suspension Subcommittee. Subcommittee members will gather at the end of the Diversity Committee meeting to select a meeting date, at which time a new chair will be selected.



**Ms. Price** asked for a copy of the information that was given to **Mr. Gazzano** and the Student Achievement Subcommittee in response to their request.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S ANNUAL STATUS REPORT**

**Ms. Drotzer** commented that she had read Policy 1.5 and expressed her concern that the **Committee** will be out of compliance if that timeline is followed. She referenced the part of the Policy that requires the Committee to submit its Annual Report to the School Board at the first Board workshop in August. She quoted Page 2, Section 4.j. as stating that, *“The Diversity Committee shall: Prepare an annual report which: incorporates a review of the Superintendent’s Annual Status Report to the School Board.”* It ends with, *“The report shall be presented to the School Board no later than the first Board Workshop in August.”* **Dr. Watts** responded that the Policy is referencing the Superintendent’s report. **Mr. Darius** clarified by stating that the original Policy stated that the report was to be presented in February with the prior year’s data. For instance, 2005-2006 data would be presented in February of the following year. Research Services wanted to correct that by having the current year’s data presented in August. **Ms. Drotzer** commented that the draft of the report is due in June. That would be a good time to let the Committee see it so it could draft its review in time to submit it in August.

**MOTION by Ms. Drotzer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Gioello: “That the Diversity Committee be given the opportunity to review the draft Superintendent CCC Annual Status Report during the month of June consistent with Policy 1.5, Section 4.j, which requires the Diversity Committee to incorporate the review into the Diversity Committee Annual Report and submitted to School Board the first Board workshop in August.”**

PASSED 18-1

**MOTION by Mr. Foulkes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Price: That Interim Superintendent Notter accompany his preliminary and final CCC Settlement update for dialogue with the Committee.”**

PASSED 18-1

**Meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.**

**The next meeting is scheduled for June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007, at 6:30 p.m.,  
in the Board Room of the KCW Administration Building**

These minutes are summarized and recorded at the May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007 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.