

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING

KCW Administration Building

May 8, 2008

SUMMARY

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order, at 6:32 p.m. by **Roland Foulkes**, Chair. A quorum was established at 6:35 p.m.

Members Present:

Jawhar Badran	Jeanne Jusevic	Sherry Reece
Roland Foulkes	Pepe Lopez	Nancy Rogan
Phoebee Francois	Marguerite Luster	Barbara Williamson
Julian Gazzano	George Pedlar	Suzanne Yach
Patrick Jabouin	Ernestine Price	Alex Lange, Student
Bapthol Joseph	Michael Rajner	Advisor Designee

Members Absent:

Cedric Douglas	Simone Ruiz-Narcis	Zach Fertel, Student Rep.
Randy Fleischer	Alyce Zahniser	LaToya Jackson, Student Rep.
Lina Gioello		Daniel Starman, Student Rep.

Diversity & Cultural Outreach Staff:

Dr. Elizabeth Watts, Director; Jean Darius, Coordinator; Latricia Lauture; Maryse Nelson;
Dr. Mary Smith; Nancy Weintraub

District Staff:

Dr. Earlean C. Smiley, Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum & Instruction/Student Support Services;
Dr. Mark Quintana, Core Curriculum Department

Guests:

Georgia Robinson

(Prior to the meeting being called to order, **Mr. Foulkes** referred to a meeting he attended in which attorneys talked about declaring workshops when there was no quorum present. He stated that, according to **Mr. Marko**, this is not acceptable practice. Therefore, if there is no quorum, no business will be conducted and no discussions will be held.)

Prior to conducting business, the Chair asked for a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The **Chair** presented a revised Agenda (See attached).

MOTION by Mr. Rajner, 2nd by Ms. Jusevic, to reorder the meeting Agenda as follows.

- 1. Section 1 (Call to Order, Agenda Adoption, Approval of Meeting Minutes for March 13 & April 10, 2008) would remain #1.**
- 2. Director's Report**
- 3. Chair's Report**
- 4. New Business**
- 5. Old Business**
- 6. Subcommittee Reports**
- 7. District Committees**
- 8. Closing Comments**
- 9. Adjournment**

Mr. Rajner explained the purpose of the Motion was to allow for New Business to be presented while a quorum is present.

(**Mr. Badran** arrived at 6:41 p.m.)

Motion failed 6-9

(**Mr. Jabouin** arrived at 6:53 p.m.)

(**Mr. Rajner** asked that the record reflect that the meeting was begun in a hostile manner and that it is affecting the dynamics of the meeting.)

The Committee adopted the revised Agenda as presented by the **Chair**.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee approved the minutes of March 13, 2008, as submitted.

The Committee approved the minutes of April 10, 2008, with the stipulation by **Ms. Jusevic** that the following portion of the tape be transcribed verbatim. This portion would have appeared on p. 9, "**Ms. Jusevic** clarified a statement by the **Chair** regarding **DAC** representation..." **Mr. Foulkes** asked that his comments prior to that passage be included. (Since both portions were wrapped around additional comments, they, too, have been added, for continuity.)

Mr. Foulkes said he "was coming in on the end of a process that had been going on for over a year. And my question was, and I looked at the minutes, and **Ms. Jusevic** said, 'Well, we (her committee, the **DAC**) had six meetings on this.' And my question, and I haven't asked staff this, 'Why did I just learn about this, or why did we just learn about this, when it's such an important issue?' I'll just leave it at that. Why did I first only learn about this, through this body, last month? The second issue, I looked around the table. That first meeting, there were a number of students there, and it was great. A wide variety of community organizations. And, I know **Mr. Rajner** has said he's tired of hearing about the Black stuff, but I'm going to bring it up just one more time."

Mr. Rajner: “Actually, **Mr. Foulkes**, I’m going to correct you because that is not what I said. (**Mr. Foulkes** and **Mr. Rajner** both spoke at the same time...) **Mr. Foulkes**, That’s not what I had said. What I said is that if we’re going to establish policy and anything else, we look at other factors.”

Mr. Foulkes: “Fine.”

Mr. Rajner: For instance, the adolescent developmental assets. We look at the protective and the risk factors that are in that.”

Mr. Foulkes: “Fine.”

Mr. Rajner: “I am against your developing policy just based on skin color, **Mr. Foulkes**.”

Mr. Foulkes: “I am not basing, I’m not creating policy. I am recommending, and we are recommending...But my point, when I looked around the table, I was the only Black male there. The question I had was who are we targeting with respect to this bullying policy? Because, when the law passes, and it will, it will have teeth. Some people, individuals will be targeted, and, as we’ve already heard, there will be criminal actions against some students, because this law apparently will have some teeth, in respect to enforcement. And backing up with my concern about student suspensions and the faces of those who are suspended, those who receive consequences disproportionate to what others are getting for the same behaviors. I just had a question. And, again, it’s a natural question given my experiences in this country and community. So, and I’m going to ask **Mr. Amalio Nieves**, who’s organizing it, how did this Task Force come about? Who decided who would be there over the past year? And, why wasn’t there more diversity? And, **Ms. Jusevic**, just a question to you. Why didn’t you share the **DAC** was involved for over six months or meetings? Why wasn’t that information shared here?”

Ms. Jusevic: “Your information is wrong. Your perceptions are wrong. First of all, **DAC** was invited to that Task Force the same time you were. Yeah, they were. **DAC** did not meet on this issue. What **DAC** has done, over the last year, is bring forth motions dealing with the varying aspects of bullying. **DAC** may have been a driving force, but there were no clandestine meetings that the **DAC** had on this Bullying Task Force. What happened was **Shelly Heller** from the North Area got fed up with what was going on in her community in the north area, and approached...Am I not correct? And approached the **School Board** about doing something. The **School Board** had already been formulating the policy prior to this Task Force being formulated. The **DAC** was simply a parent and community organization that was being proactive in the areas: the north area, the south area, the south central area, and the north central area. All of them, over the last eighteen months, have brought motions forward from their areas, and maybe I’ll sit down and explain the area process to you, that dealt with bullying of ESE students, that dealt with bullying of all sorts of kind, to get the **District** moving on a policy. That’s what we were asking for. **DAC** didn’t sit on anything but the Bullying Task Force once it was formed.”

Mr. Foulkes: “Okay, well, that’s not the way I read the minutes. So, I had the question, if other committees had been having this conversation, prior to last month, my question simply is, ‘Why weren’t we involved, either the past Chair or whatever? So, that’s the only question I have.’”

Mr. Joseph requested that the full minutes from April 10, 2008, be verbatim. **Dr. Smiley** reminded the Committee that the District is “in the midst of a budgetary crisis.” She suggested putting the minutes on a disk and forwarded it to him. **Mr. Joseph** thanked her and withdrew his request for a verbatim transcript.

The April 10, 2008 minutes were approved, as stipulated.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT, Dr. Elizabeth Watts

The **School Board’s orientation on the CCC Settlement Agreement** was scheduled to take place on May 13, 2008. **Mary and Chris Fertig** would be presenting. **Dr. Smiley** explained that there was a time allocation for the presentation. The **Board** had requested an update of the **Settlement Agreement**. There was a misunderstanding of the word “update” in that the District believed it meant a status update on the nine conditions of the Agreement, and the **CCC attorneys** understood it to mean an update via their presentation. The issue was clarified, and **Mr. & Mrs. Fertig** were invited to present to the **Board**. The **Chair** noted that this is the first time a meeting has taken place between the **School Board**, the **Diversity Committee** and the **attorneys for the CCC lawsuit**.

A **Board** workshop on the **Diversity Committee** was scheduled for May 27, 2008.

Subcommittee meeting dates were to be turned in to **Maryse Nelson** by the end of the meeting.

Dr. Mark Quintana would make his presentation on E-Books later in the meeting. Through August 3rd Board Workshop follow-up, **Dr. Parks** had asked staff to explore, with the Committee, whether or not E-Books would comply with the requirements in **Condition 1 of the CCC Settlement Agreement**.

Mr. Darius gave an update on Motions and Information Requests.

- The Department is awaiting
 - The information requested regarding the K-12 ESOL Plan.
 - The information regarding the number of Haitian-Creole teachers that are in the District.
- The Department had not received a response from the **School Board attorneys** regarding **Mr. Fleischer’s** request relative to the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Parents v. Seattle School District.
- **Mr. Garretson** will address the Committee regarding ADA issues at the June meeting.
- The presentation on CTACE is scheduled for the August meeting.

CHAIR’S REPORT, Roland Foulkes

Mr. Foulkes went over the packet he presented to the members, which included:

- Chair’s Summary Report, January-April 2008
- FY 2008 COMMITMENT TO BROWARD COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD DIVERSITY COMMITTEE
- Stages of Group Dynamics/Characteristics and Traits
- Diversity Committee organizational chart, indicating proposed Coordinating Council on Educational Equity Compliance
- REPORT, District Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) General Meeting

- Proposed Site Visit Revisions/Updates
- Proposed STANDING RULES FOR MEETINGS OF THE DIVERSITY COMMITTEE
- Florida Local Advocacy Council: THE FLORIDA STATEWIDE ADVOCACY COUNCIL SYSTEM
- SAVE THE DATE: An invitation to the One Community Partnership Summit, May 21, 2008
- Florida's Public Charter Schools: 2008 Fact Sheet
- Understanding Inclusion and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The **Chair** attended the Broward High School Student Ethics Conference, held at the Broward County Convention Center. Alex Lange, Student Advisor Designee to the Diversity Committee, organized the event.

The **Chair** asked each of the members to determine if the **Diversity Committee** is a priority to them. If it is not, he asked that they let their appointing **School Board** member know.

The **Chair** called for the Committee to “agree to disagree” and to keep in mind the District’s 400,000 K-12 and adult learning students, which should be the primary concern of the Committee members.

The **Chair** referred to his reading portions of his packets to the members and explained that, based on his professional background in literacy education, he “stopped assuming adults can read” and “stopped assuming adults who can read, do read.”

Ms. Luster expressed concern about the recent change of meeting dates and believes that contributed to the absenteeism of some of the members. **Ms. Yach** said that the District should find alternate locations if they are going to “bump” the Committee from the Board Room on a regularly scheduled meeting date. **Dr. Watts** said staff is already pursuing this. **Ms. Luster** said there should be an “excused absence” under circumstances which should not count against a Member’s attendance record. **Mr. Foulkes** said he will look into these concerns and that the Diversity Committee will meet on the first Thursday, even if it means moving to another location. **Ms. Jusevic** pointed out that the Bylaws are not policy and suggested the **Committee** request the **Board** take another look at the attendance requirement.

The **Chair** reminded the members that their term expires in November, and then it is up to the School Board member as to whether or not they will be reappointed to the Committee.

Motion by Mr. Rajner, 2nd by Ms. Price to amend the minutes of January 10, 2008, to reflect that Mr. Lange was present.

Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

The **Chair** introduced **Dr. Mark Quintana**, who presented information about E-books.

PRESENTATION BY DR. MARK QUINTANA, CORE CURRICULUM DEPARTMENT

Dr. Quintana is a Project Manager with the Broward Enterprise Education Portal (BEEP). He said this is a “work in progress.” The District is working with publishers to put textbooks online. He explained that textbook adoption occurs every year, with a with a 6-year adoption cycle for each

core course. Since 2006, publishers must provide teacher and student editions of textbooks online. Science books were adopted in 2006. That is the first year that books in that category were adopted and placed online for students and teachers.

Dr. Quintana gave a demonstration on how to access the textbooks online via the website beep.browardschools.com and how to interact with the pages onscreen. The site is password protected for all students in the District. One example presented was a page on vocabulary. The computer read the word aloud in English. **Dr. Quintana** pointed out that there is an option for the page to be translated into Spanish. The District will be adding other languages in the future. Pages online are identical to the pages in the hard copy of the textbooks.

Dr. Quintana noted that online access to textbooks is an effective alternative to carrying heavy books back and forth. The weight of book bags has become an issue for many students.

The District has an agreement with the publishers that they, the publishers, will host the curriculum on their servers. The URL belongs to the publisher and, thus, does not affect the District's server space. In addition to hard-copy textbook use in the classroom, teachers have the option of opening the electronic version and teaching from that.

Ms. Yach referred to the "co-enrolled" programs, where students who need credits for graduation are able to enroll in an adult education program. She asked if that fits into APEX, which is a "self-contained program with its own curriculum." **Dr. Smiley** explained that APEX is a software program used for acceleration. Not all schools subscribe to APEX. **Ms. Yach** added that many students "have very fragile lives" and believes the APEX program should be accessible online to assist these students. **Dr. Smiley** responded that each school determines if it will utilize APEX and pay the licensing fee. She noted that this is one of many programs available to the schools. **Dr. Smiley** stated that the Board wants to have "24/7" access to the online textbooks and the District is working to "build that capacity" in the area mentioned by **Ms. Yach**. **Dr. Quintana** added that textbooks could be accessed via the Internet, as opposed to the District's Intranet, which makes the textbooks accessible from school and from home.

(**Mr. Joseph** left the meeting at 8:02 p.m.)

Ms. Price expressed concern about the Level 1 and 2 students who don't have access to computers. She said discarded computers should be fixed and given to students who don't have access to, or cannot afford, computers. **Dr. Smiley** advised that "refreshed" computers that are no longer being used by the schools, are part of the "digital divide" program which gives computers to students who need them. Parents and students must go through a training component prior to taking possession of the computer. **Ms. Price** emphasized again that she is very concerned about the Level 1 and 2 students and said the District must do whatever needs to be done to ensure these students get what they need.

When **Mr. Lopez** asked if the District knows how many students are without have computers, **Dr. Smiley** answered that, while the customer survey asks the question, it is hard to get an accurate count because of the response rate.

Mr. Badran asked if there is a timetable for when all the textbooks will be online. **Dr. Quintana** responded that the process started in 2006 with science textbooks. The District would have to go through a full cycle of adoptions in order for all books to be online. That would take us to year 2012, since books are on a 6-year cycle. **Dr. Smiley** reminded the Committee that the adoption cycle involves core textbooks, not electives. **Mr. Badran** asked when online books will be translated in **Haitian-Creole** and was advised that it is up to the publisher to determine which languages will be available and when. **Dr. Quintana** said he has advised the publishers that the District now translates into three languages and is working with them to see that E-books are available in those languages. **Mr. Badran** then asked how much money the District is saving by having the books available online and if the savings could be diverted to pay for refurbishing computers and other projects to support students in need. **Dr. Smiley** answered that instructional materials are “categorical fundings.” As a result, the money cannot be spent on anything but hard copy books, per State Statute. The **District** has appealed to the **State** for the past five years to permit flexibility in textbook allocations. The **State** has denied those requests. She said the District has to do a better job in the area of “percentage lost textbooks.” This amounts to \$2 million a year, because books are not being returned, for whatever reason. The **State** pays for one textbook per child for the first adoption year. They do not provide replacement dollars for subsequent years in the adoption cycle. The District has a variety of safeguards in place to help bring that number down.

Ms. Jusevic asked what the District is hoping to achieve with online textbooks and wanted to know if it plans to replace hard copies. **Dr. Smiley** answered that the District is looking to provide options, not replace books. **Ms. Jusevic** asked if students are able to access E-books through their I-pod phones. **Dr. Quintana** said they could, providing their phones have Internet access with appropriate technology and memory.

Mr. Lopez asked how many textbooks are not returned to the schools. **Dr. Smiley** did not have the actual number of books that are not returned, but stated they total \$2.8 million. The District has an obligation process in place to recover the cost of lost or unreturned books. It is a new process, and the results of its implementation are, as yet, unknown. An outstanding obligation will affect the purchase of Homecoming tickets, participation in school trips, and other extracurricular activities.

Mr. Rajner wanted to know what happens during storms and electrical outages. **Dr. Smiley** said, “In the absence of electricity, we would have limited capacity for instructional resources that were not hard-copied materials.”

To a question by **Ms. Price** about school obligations and accountability, **Dr. Smiley** advised that the District collects data “to determine if the infrastructures at schools are in place to accommodate the obligation process.” Each school pays a supplement to a staff person to act as textbook coordinator. This person monitors and oversees the process.

Ms. Luster wanted to know if the online lessons are accessible to deaf and handicapped children, many of whom are mainstreamed. **Dr. Quintana** said they are working very closely with the ESE Department. The Adoption Committee includes representatives from Multicultural, ESOL, Gifted, and ESE. **Ms. Luster** stated many of the BECON programs are not closed-captioned, thus making them inaccessible to these students. She said deaf children depend on on-screen signing or

captioning to assist them in understanding what is being said. She asked for feedback on this issue. (Please see Motions and Information Requests.)

Dr. Quintana concluded his presentation.

(**Mr. Pedlar** arrived at 8:25 p.m.)

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

ANTI-BULLYING LEGISLATION

In response to comments made by **Mr. Pedlar** concerning the status of the Bullying legislation, **Dr. Smiley** advised that the legislature actually took the work that Broward has done over the last year in order to frame a bill around anti-bullying. She said the District's Anti-Bullying Task Force drafted a policy that was scheduled to go before the **School Board** for review on May 13, the same day as the CCC Orientation presentation. The Anti-Bullying Bill that passed in Tallahassee is very close to what the District's Task Force developed. In the fall, the State should issue a Technical Assistance Paper regarding the intent of the legislation. Broward is approximately one year ahead of the State on this issue.

Ms. Jusevic suggested that the Diversity Committee be included in the discussion loop that would include DAC and PTA. She added that any time there is a major policy discussion, the Diversity Committee should be included.

The **Chair** reported that a subcommittee on data was formed. They met with Research & Development to discuss looking at data regarding Incident Reports and similar documents to identify the extent of bullying in the past. This information will help shape future curriculum and programs on bullying, as well as developing consequences. **Dr. Smiley** added that the State will be considering bullying as it relates to students and adults.

(Motion to extend the meeting for 5 minutes passed.)

Mr. Pedlar expressed concerned about "the legal imperatives that are contained in this particular document and the population it will impact."

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Rajner suggested the creation of an ad hoc committee to review the current Bylaws and make recommendations to the Committee for presentation to the School Board. **Ms. Jusevic** pointed out this would be a good opportunity to bring up the issue of excused and unexcused absences. The **Chair** noted that any changes would have to be addressed in School Board Policy 1.7, as well.

(Motion to extend the meeting for 5 minutes passed.)

Mr. Rajner reported on the recently held public forum concerning Boyd Anderson High School. He said he was "sickened and disturbed" by what he heard about the condition of the school. (See Motions & Information Requests.) He asked the **Chair** to meet with the **School Board** member in that district and ask him to retract the statement he made at the forum stating that the Diversity

Committee found no problems with the school. **Mr. Rajner** is concerned that this statement could affect the credibility of the Diversity Committee and the work it is charged to do.

(Motion to extend the meeting for 5 minutes passed.)

MOTIONS AND INFORMATION REQUESTS

- Motion by Ms. Jusevic, 2nd by Mr. Rajner: **“That Beacon (sic) implement closed captioning and sign language on all of the programming provided.”** (Verbal reading included: **“...so that it would be available to all.”**)

Motion passed 15-0

- Motion by Mr. Rajner, 2nd by Mr. Lopez: **“That effectively (sic) immediately, the Diversity Committee establishes an ad hoc By-Laws Committee.**

The ad hoc committee is to review current by-laws, policies and procedures and receive input from the Diversity Committee and sub-committees. In no more than 5 months time, the Chair of the ad hoc By-Laws Committee will present recommendations to the full membership of the Diversity Committee to consider for recommendation to the Board.

A minimum of five (5) persons are to serve on this ad hoc committee.”

Motion passed 15-0

- Motion by Mr. Rajner, 2nd by Ms. Williamson: **“That the Diversity Committee requests the Superintendent to report on the findings arising from the Thursday, May 1, 2008 evening public forum at Boyd Anderson High School to the full Diversity Committee at the next meeting (June 5, 2008) of the Diversity Committee.**

Further, the Diversity Committee requests the Superintendent to present the timeline and completion dates in which improvements will occur.”

Motion passed 13-0

- Information Request by Ms. Luster, 2nd by Ms. Price: **“Feedback regarding the use of sign language for the pre-k and k through elementary students regarding the instructional programming that is aired through Beacon (sic).”**

Approved 15-0

SUBCOMMITTEES

No reports.

BOUNDARIES, Jeanne Jusevic

HIRING PRACTICES

SITE VISITATION, Bapthol Joseph

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

STUDENT SUSPENSION, Marguerite Luster, Ernestine Price

TECHNOLOGY

DISTRICT COMMITTEES:

NOVA POLICY REVIEW, Randy Fleischer

POLICY 5000, Jeanne Jusevic

POLICY REVIEW, Julian Gazzano

See attached.

POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE, Roland Foulkes

SITE SELECTION, Roland Foulkes

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT, Jeanne Jusevic

TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE, Roland Foulkes

Meeting ended 8:59 p.m.

**The next meeting is scheduled for June 5, 2008 at 6:30 p.m.,
in the Board Room of the KCW Administration Building.**

These minutes are summarized and were recorded at the May 8, 2008 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.