

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

**DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING  
KCW Administration Building  
February 1, 2007**

**SUMMARY**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order, at 6:33 p.m. by **Dr. Pam Brown**, Chair, with a quorum present.

**Members Present:**

Jawhar Badran	Bapthol Joseph	Ron Simon-Menéndez
Pam Brown	Jeanne Jusevic	Barbara Stuart
Randy Fleischer	Ernestine Price	Barbara Williamson
Roland Foulkes	Dane Ramson	Alyce Zahniser
Julian Gazzano	Sherry Reece	Rose Espinola,
Lina Gioello	Simone Ruiz-Narcis	Student Rep.
Gary Hensley	Bernie Schultz	

**Members Absent:**

Brian Dassler	George Pedlar	Shelby Berson,
Ellyn Drotzer	Artheus Young	Student Rep.
Angel Gomez	Brittany Stevenson,	
Marguerite Luster	Student Advisor	

**District Staff:** Dr. Earlean C. Smiley, Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum & Instruction/Student Support

**Diversity Staff:**

Jean Darius, Interim Director; Latricia Lauture; Genevieve Ponce; Florence Bastien; Nancy Weintraub

**Guests:** Thaddeus Hamilton, Levi Williams, Chris Fertig, Mary Fertig, Janice Boursiquot, Leslie Sparks, James Sparks, Ivan Baratz, Pamela Wilkes

The meeting opened with introductions of all members and staff present.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The Committee adopted the Agenda.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The minutes of January 4, 2007 were approved with the following changes.

- Page 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph. Change "Discussion ensued" to "Discussion ensued on the motion. There was no further discussion on the candidates."

- Page 2, last line. Referencing names brought forward by the Nominating Committee, remove “**Mr. Gazzano**” and replace it with “**Mr. Fleischer**.”
- Page 1, list of persons present, add “**Guest: Ms. Clemontese Foulkes**.”

**Ms. Williamson** advised the Committee that she did not know there was a meeting in January because she did not receive a meeting notice and, therefore, was marked absent. **Dr. Brown** asked that members receive an emailed meeting reminder prior to the meeting date. Members without email will receive a written reminder or a phone call.

For purposes of accurate meeting summaries, members were asked to identify themselves and speak into the microphone so that the tape could clearly pick up what is being said.

### **CHAIR’S REPORT**

The **Chair** appeared before the School Board at their regular meeting and asked for Diversity Committee representation on the District’s Technology Committee. The Chair of that Committee approached **Dr. Brown** and said that a member of the Diversity Committee would be welcomed. **Mr. Simon-Menendez** will be the Diversity Committee representative.

### **INTERIM DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

**Mr. Darius** acknowledged the passing of **Brian Dassler’s** father.

The **Committee** was advised that there is an account number and password for **Members** who would like to bring their laptops to the meetings.

The **Diversity Department** is reinstating the Motions and Requests matrices. **Mr. Darius** referred to the 12/7/06 request made by **Mr. Foulkes** for “Race/Ethnicity” data pertaining to suspensions for academic year 2005-2006. The matrix indicated there was a letter attached. In fact, that letter was not received in time for the Diversity Committee meeting. **Mr. Darius** will follow up with **Dr. Cary Sutton** and will forward the information. Matrices will be updated monthly so **Members** could monitor the progress and status of their requests.

**New Members** are asked to go to the **Security Department** to apply for and receive their badges.

**Members** were reminded to get subcommittee meeting dates to **Ms. Ponce** by the end of the meeting, for advertising, per Sunshine Law.

**Mr. Simon-Menendez** noted his badge was for “Vendor” and not “Committee Member” and wondered if this would affect access to facilities and schools. **Mr. Darius** said he believed it would not.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **AD HOC ATTENDANCE ACADEMIC CONTRACT COMMITTEE**

**Dr. Smiley** met with **Mr. Notter** the day after the December Diversity Committee meeting and relayed the **Committee’s** wish to have a representative on the Ad Hoc Committee. She said **Mr. Notter** wants to “focus internally” on outlining “strategies for a solution” and wants to have staff involved in that committee.

### PRELIMINARY CCC REPORT

**Dr. Smiley** spoke with **Dr. Blasik** regarding a February update for the **Diversity Committee** on the status of the CCC Report. **Dr. Blasik** said that would be too soon to get all the Departments involved to study all the data and report back. **Dr. Smiley** suggested to **Dr. Blasik** that she develop a Matrix of the recommendations made last year and give a status report on those items. **Dr. Blasik** is working on that now and will try to have it ready by the next Diversity Committee meeting.

**Mr. Foulkes** stated that his intent for requesting the information was to ensure the Diversity Committee gets the report before it is posted on the Internet. He would like the **Committee** to get an update in writing every month before the final report "is prepared for presentation to the **School Board**." He believes input should be given by the **Committee** before it goes to the **School Board** since the **Committee** is "assessing the compliance of the **School Board** with the CCC Settlement, and not the other way around."

**Dr. Smiley** responded that it is her understanding that, according to the terms of the Agreement, "the **Superintendent** is charged with collecting, analyzing the data, presenting those findings to the **Board**, and, as a result of that, the **Diversity Committee** then responds to the findings through the visitations, the evidence you are developing in the site visit process, collecting the data on the schools, and you look at the correlations to see if there are gaps. Then you respond..." **Dr. Smiley** said there is some confusion about the process and the **Chair** concurred. **The Chair** suggested placing this item on the Agenda for a future meeting, research what the process is and discuss it, possibly at the next meeting. **Dr. Smiley** agreed.

**The Chair** recognized audience member **Levi Williams**, who stated the process is "clearly articulated in the Agreement, itself." He said **Dr. Till** does his research, the **Committee** does its research, and the **Committee** reviews **Dr. Till's** research and findings and gives its own findings with recommendations for changes.

**Mr. Joseph** had follow-up questions/requests for **Dr. Smiley**. 1) To have **Mr. Notter** send a response in writing and 2) that the **Interim Superintendent** keep the **Committee** updated on the Ad Hoc Committee. This request was made in the form of a motion.

**MOTION by Mr. Joseph, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Foulkes: "The Interim Superintendent updates the Diversity Committee on the development of the Academic Contract Ad Hoc Committee."**  
**PASSED 17-1.**

### CCC PRESENTATION BY MARY FERTIG

**Ms. Fertig** introduced individuals who were present on behalf of CCC (Citizens Concerned about our Children): **Ernestine Price, Dr. Janice Boursiquot, Chris Fertig, Levi Williams, and James Sparks** (**Ms. Leslie Sparks** was introduced later in the meeting.). **Ms. Fertig** stated that there were a few changes to the presentation that had been previously viewed by the **Committee**.

The presentation was narrated by **Ms. Fertig** who stated that the "majority of this presentation tonight was developed in 1997 to explain the mission of the CCC...The CCC was founded in 1995 as part of a grassroots organization to address the inequities facing

children in the Broward County School System. The founding members were participants of the Desegregation Task Force. They were joined by many members of the Broward County community who believe that every child should be offered the opportunity to receive a quality education.”

**Ms. Fertig** explained that, at the time, **Ms. L. Shack**, actually **Ms. Leslie Sparks**, a plaintiff in the lawsuit, was not able to take AP or Advanced Courses at Hallandale High. They were not offered at that school. **Ms. Fertig** stated these classes were offered at predominantly White schools in other parts of the county and cited this as an example of the low expectations of Black students during that period.

**Ms. Fertig** stated that the Settlement Agreement was written to cover every child in Broward County. She said that the monitoring was left in the hands of the community and not left to the lawyers. The community “put their faith in the **Diversity Committee** to ensure all students would have equitable resources.”

**The Chair** commented at the end of the presentation that she will make a personal commitment to participate in as many site visits as she can because, in the end, “that is the legacy that we have and that’s what we should be doing.”

**The Chair** recognized **Mr. Gazzano**, who commented on the fact that the **Diversity Committee** has not invited the **Interim Superintendent** to come to a meeting for a dialogue.

**MOTION by Mr. Gazzano, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Joseph: That the Diversity Committee invite the Interim Superintendent to attend either the March or April 2007 Diversity Committee meeting for the purpose of having a dialogue and discussion over items of interest of equity issues and agendas in order to improve education of all children in Broward County.”**

**PASSED 18-0**

**The Chair** recognized **Mr. Chris Fertig**, who stated that the CCC “was very careful, when it came to the Settlement, not to be the gatekeeper with equity, because we had seen in the past what happens when you have a gatekeeper. That is, sometimes, the gatekeeper is not in touch.” He said the CCC put its trust in “each and every one of you. And that trust, we hope, is not to be taken very lightly.” **Mr. Fertig** said, according to the Settlement, it is the job of the **Diversity Committee** to continue with what the CCC did and go out to the schools, look at the data, ask the questions and talk to the people.

**Ms. Fertig** suggested to the **Committee** that they expand their efforts to include some type of public forum. She said that “visiting a school is a great way to find out what’s going on. Talking with people whose kids are in school is the best way to find out what’s going on.” She also suggested the **Committee** set up a hotline for people to use. **Dr. Brown** commented that this is an excellent suggestion and referred it to the Site Visit Subcommittee to discuss and report back at the next **Diversity Committee** meeting.

**Mr. Fertig** stated that the **Diversity Committee** is the “only body, the only committee, the only group of individuals in this county, that is mandated to monitor the school system and to report back.”

The **Chair** recognized **Mr. James Sparks**, who said he remembers one thing the federal judge said to them. They were told that they didn't have the right to petition or do anything for their children. **Mr. Sparks** said that was "one of the biggest slaps in the face I've ever heard in my life." He said they went to court and proved they do have the right, and so does the **Diversity Committee**.

**Ms. Price** exhorted the **Committee** members to be as sincere as they can. She said "when you step into a classroom and something is not going right, and you know that it wouldn't happen if it was any place else, then we need to stop it. We need to take charge and address it then." **Ms. Price** gave an emotional acknowledgement to **Mr. Fertig**, who, after 25 years of trying to find an attorney who would take their case, agreed to represent the CCC. **Dr. Brown** thanked **Ms. Price** for her commitment and her tireless efforts on behalf of the children.

**Ms. Jusevic** talked about the site visit process and asked **Staff** to ensure all schools know what data and information the **Site Visitation Team** wants to have when they arrive at the schools for the site visit.

**Dr. Janice Boursiquot** was recognized and invited to speak. She has been in the school system for 28 years and "has always been an advocate for children." She stated she has been "penalized by Broward County Schools for being an activist in the community, doing things on my own time, because I felt it was the right thing to do." She was on the Desegregation Task Force and involved with the CCC lawsuit and "had to file legal charges against the District at least 5 times." She stated that her involvement was on her own time and not during work time. She has worked as a school social worker at 30 schools during her career and at every level: elementary, middle and high school. **Dr. Boursiquot** was one of the sponsors of the META (Multicultural Education Training and Advocacy) Consent Decree for ESOL children, "considered the civil rights for bilingual children." She asked the **Committee** members to be consistent and continue to work for the children.

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

(At the end of the presentation, **Mr. Darius** advised the **Committee Members** that he had copies of the original CD, per request, minus the new additions, and would be happy to give a copy to any **Member** who requests it.)

**Mr. Levi Williams** was recognized and commented that there is much to be proud of in Broward County. He said it is a "fabulous" community. The efforts of the **Committee** affects more than education. Their work "increases economic viability. This battle the **Committee** is part of is historic; no one has won this type of battle in the country before." He said he agreed with **Mr. Gazzano's** observation that it is not necessary to be hostile with the **Superintendent** to engage in conversation, "but you do have to be stern and direct. It is a bureaucracy." **Mr. Williams** said to remember what the **Diversity Committee** is all about. It is a very specific committee with a very specific charge. He asked the **Committee** to look into the "FCAT cleansing contracts." He said, "Students have rights, including the right to fail."

**Ms. Fertig** was asked to make closing statements. She observed that issues change. The county has changed dramatically from when the lawsuit was filed. She pointed out three things she recently read in the papers. AP courses was an issue then; today it is students having to select their Majors. The **Committee's** job is to make sure that the high schools have an equitable distribution of Majors. The second issue is that 33 schools do not have good roofs. Find out where those schools are, who goes to those schools and why has it taken so long. The third issue is the contracts. State law is very clear about expulsions. **Ms. Fertig** concluded by saying the **Members** should not be concentrating solely on the issues that were, but look at what the issues are today. The **Committee** has to make sure that "every single student in Broward County Public Schools gets the opportunity to have an education, which will prepare them to live and be a contributing member of our society."

**DIVERSITY SUBCOMMITTEES**  
**BOUNDARIES, Jeanne Jusevic, Chair**  
No Report

**HIRING PRACTICES, Randy Fleischer, Chair**  
Report attached

**SITE VISITATION, Bapthol Joseph, Chair**  
Report attached.

Subcommittee will meet February 2 at 10:00 A.M. at KC Wright in the 10<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room.

**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**  
No report.

**STUDENT ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES**  
No report

**STUDENT SUSPENSIONS**  
No report

**TECHNOLOGY**  
No report

**DISTRICT COMMITTEES:**  
There were no District reports.

**DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE, Bapthol Joseph**

**NOVA POLICY REVIEW, Randy Fleischer**

**POLICY 5000, Jeanne Jusevic**

**POLICY REVIEW, Julian Gazzano**

**TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE, Ron Simon-Menendez**

**Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.**

**The next meeting is scheduled for March 1st, 2007, at 6:30 p.m.,  
in the Board Room of the KCW Administration Building**

**These minutes are summarized and recorded at the February 1st, 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.**