

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

**DIVERSITY COMMITTEE WORKSHOP**

**KCW Administration Building**

**October 2, 2008**

**SUMMARY**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The workshop was called to order, at 6:33 p.m. by **Roland Foulkes**, Chair.

**Members Present:**

Jawhar Badran	Phoebee Francois	Michael Rajner
Dr. Veda Bailey	Julian Gazzano	Regina Santiago
Cedric Douglas	Lina Gioello	Suzanne Yach
Randy Fleischer	Bapthol Joseph	Alyce Zahniser
Roland Foulkes	Ernestine Price	

**Members Absent:**

Patrick Jabouin	George Pedlar	Nancy Rogan
William Knight	Sherry Reece	Barbara Williamson
Marguerite Luster		

**Diversity & Cultural Outreach Staff (Diversity):**

Dr. Elizabeth Watts, Director; Mercedes Hardisson; Terri Jones; Maryse Nelson; Nancy Weintraub

**District Staff:**

Dr. Joanne Harrison, Deputy Superintendent, Education Programs & Student Support; Dr. Katherine Blasik, Associate Superintendent, Research Development & Assessment; Jack Ciminera, Specialist, Research & Evaluation

**Guests:**

None present

The **Chair** called the workshop on the Committee's Response to the CCC Settlement Agreement Annual Status Report 2007-2008 to order. **Mr. Foulkes** read the following statement, "The CCC put into the hands of the Diversity Committee a great power and a great responsibility. They also put their faith in the Diversity Committee to ensure that all students would have equal access." He read the following Conditions: "Equity and Accountability; Parity in Technology Training; Standards of Service; Advanced Placement and Honors Courses in all High Schools; Parity in Athletic Facilities and Equipment; Equal Allocation of and Equal Access to Media Center Materials; Equity in Administration of Student Discipline; and Parity in School Facilities."

The **Chair** added, “The most significant and historic piece to this is the accountability piece. ‘Diversity Committee Annual Reports on Compliance with Agreement Settlement Terms’.”

The **Chair** said that, although the Committee is charged to present a formal report in response to the Superintendent’s report, this is the first time the Committee would present that report. “Any of your observations and responses to any aspect of the Report, concerns, and recommendations will be included in our Report to the School Board, and to the CCC attorneys, and to the public.”

**Mr. Foulkes** announced that the Conditions would be presented in order. There would be a 10-minute limit for each of the Conditions. There would be no discussion or questions. The **Chair** commented that, “Members had a chance over the past two months to read through the report from the Superintendent.” **Mr. Joseph** was asked to be the timekeeper and to signal when time was up.

Referring to a PowerPoint document emailed to Members by **Mr. Douglas** regarding Charter Schools, **Mr. Foulkes** commented that this is “an area to be included in our oversight in next year’s report. The other is the Adult Community School System, which has, again, roughly a quarter of a million students who are really not acknowledged in the District data, etc.” He said those were two general recommendations that could be made for next year.

The **Chair** then opened the floor for discussion of the Report.

(Ms. Gioello arrived at 6:40 p.m.)

(Mr. Douglas arrived at 6:45 p.m.)

### **Condition 1 – Availability of Textbooks**

**Mr. Fleischer:** “There is so much money out there in textbooks that have not been returned.” The **District** has made “huge gains” in ensuring every student has a textbook to take home. The big issue is what is the system doing to “recap” the money in missing textbooks? Some schools have very large outstanding balances. He noted Boyd Anderson, with a balance of \$88,000, Plantation with \$158,000, and South Broward with \$127,000 in obligations and books. He said this may not be a diversity issue, but it is certainly an accounting issue.

**Mr. Joseph:** This is the fourth year he has heard of the money issue as related to textbooks. This has nothing to do with diversity or equity. It has to do with School Board administration.

**Mr. Badran:** Are they actually taking a physical count of the textbooks or are they going by some type of record? This question was in reference to the job of the textbook coordinator at each school.

**Ms. Francois:** Regarding 1.2, “The school assigned a set of *printed or electronic* textbooks, which students can also take home, for each of their courses that use a textbook,” if that statement is true, why did only 53.1% of teachers and 69.1% of parents agreed with it? **Mr. Foulkes** said this statement actually comes from the Customer Survey, Appendix P.

**Ms. Price:** When do schools actually start collecting books at the end of the school year?

### **Condition 2 – Technology Analysis**

**Mr. Joseph:** How do you know when a status has been met? Is it based on a certain percentage? He would like benchmarks set to measure the degree of compliance.

**Dr. Bailey:** The focus appears to be the number of computers in a school and not the “infusion of use in the curriculum.” 2.3 refers to “instructional staff is competent/proficient in the use and application of technology and software.” It does not refer to the extent to which technology is used in the curriculum.

**Mr. Fleischer:** The “Met” status is ambiguous. It is hard to determine how many schools and what percentages are being referenced to determine “Met”. He would like a more definitive benchmark. However, from the site visits he participated in, he was impressed with the number of computer carts and the use of Smart Boards. He said it is a “huge breakthrough” that so many of the Indicators have been “Met”.

**Ms. Gioello:** Often, operating systems were not up to date. She would like to see Digital Learning Programs as a magnet program. She would encourage laptop usage being integrated daily in classroom studies.

**Mr. Douglas:** Technology has changed a lot. Schools offer programs using a variety of equipment. Are all items included in the technology plan, for instance iPods, or is it strictly limited to computers? **Mr. Joseph** advised that some of this technology was the result of grants schools applied for and not equipment supplied by the District.

**Ms. Price:** The District should make sure that schools that have low parent participation and community support have the same level of technology as other schools.

**Mr. Fleischer:** Schools should do a better job of sharing funding information and opportunities with other schools. All schools should know about available grants and programs.

**Mr. Douglas:** Partner schools that have successful programs with schools that are struggling.

### **Condition 3 – Standards of Service**

**Ms. Gioello:** “I would be remiss if I did not point out that this Condition has never really been ‘Met’ here in this District, or even attempted to be ‘Met’ for ESE students in regards to academic achievement.”

**Mr. Joseph:** Have benchmarks and data to support the findings.

**Dr. Bailey:** Expressed concern with the use of “summative”, and to a lesser extent, “formative” evaluations. She asked, again, if there is a minimum number of tests or grades that is allowed. It was noted that she asked this question at the September meeting.

#### **Condition 4 – Advanced Placement and Honors Courses.**

**Mr. Joseph:** Would like a baseline indicating the number of schools that were part of the study. **Mr. Foulkes** stated that a list of the schools appears in the Appendix, Sections D-H. **Mr. Joseph** asked if there was a performance indicator for the District.

**Ms. Price:** Referring to 4.4, **Ms. Price** expressed a concern about all students having access to, or getting information about, these classes. She said this Indicator has not been “Met”. Some students are left out all the time, particularly the quiet student, shy students. **Mr. Douglas** commented that the District has a partnership with the Urban League of Broward County and Kaplan University. He said any student who wants to take the PSAT or SAT can take those tests outside of school, in the community.

**Mr. Fleischer:** Appendix D shows the advanced placement core courses at every high school and every AP course is available at every high school. He said he is sure that was not the case ten years ago. Mr. Fleischer said “this is a benchmark that has been met and you have to give the system credit where credit is due.”

In response to **Mr. Rajner’s** request for clarification, **Ms. Price** said there are some students who may not get the information or see a Guidance Counselor. She would recommend that all students receive hands-on personal attention and encouragement.

**Ms. Gioello:** If a student does not have access to a computer at home, the student might not be able to participate in distance learning. All students, including ESE students, should have access to distance learning.

**Ms. Francois:** Instead of relying on a letter going to parents about AP/Honors classes, perhaps Guidance Counselors could meet with each of the students in addition to sending the letter.

**Mr. Joseph:** Expressed concern about those students who do not see a Guidance Counselor while they are in high school, from 9-12 grade. He said he knows for a fact that this happens. Consequently, he questioned the validity of 4.4, *Evidence from Guidance staff that students are being provided with information that encourages enrollment in AP/Honors classes* as having been “Met”. **Mr. Rajner** requested this issue be placed in the *Parking Lot* for future discussion.

#### **Condition 5 – Athletic and Extra-Curricular Activities**

**Mr. Fleischer:** A lot of work has been done in this area, much of it spurred by the work of the Diversity Committee and the Site Visit Subcommittee.

**Ms. Gioello:** Regarding gender equity in athletics, there is a great deal of disparity in the locker rooms, shower areas, and playing fields. She expressed concern about equity with ESE students participating in athletics, in particular GPA requirements and reasonable accommodations. **Mr. Rajner** suggested reasonable accommodations be placed in the *Parking Lot* for future discussion and recommendations.

**Ms. Price:** Expressed concern about ESE students and students with behavior problems who are not encouraged to participate in sports. She said they are not taught how to deal with problems.

**Mr. Joseph:** Regarding Indicator 5.3, *Schools identified as offering core extra-curricular activity*, **Mr. Joseph** wanted to know when there will be a mechanism in place to ensure 100% compliance. Currently, it is at 78.9%.

**Mr. Douglas:** Schools are given the standard choices in athletics. He would like parity in the purchasing of materials for athletics so that other activities, such as lacrosse and golf, would be available at all schools.

**Ms. Price:** Would like training for all school staff on how to work with all types of students to encourage greater participation and equity.

**Mr. Foulkes** asked **Dr. Blasik** if the Appendices I-K, having to do with the 5-Year Capital Plan, were intentionally placed where they are. **Dr. Blasik** said that, while they are part of the 5-Year Plan, they pertain directly to Condition 5.

**Ms. Gioello:** Do all schools now have lightening detectors? **Dr. Harrison** answered that they do.

(**Ms. Zahniser** arrived at 7:28 p.m.)

#### **Condition 6 – Media Center**

**Mr. Fleischer:** Based on site visits, it appears that most libraries and media centers are pretty well stocked with books. A lot of schools have problems with older international and reference books, some of which are 10 years old, including books on geography and dictionaries. Schools in the east and west appeared to be good overall.

**Mr. Douglas:** Would like to see more information on the partnership with the County Library System and SEFLIN (Southeast Florida Information Network). He recommended increased partnerships with County resources and assets.

**Ms. Price:** Expressed concern about students having to pay for photocopies and computer printouts. She recommended this be addressed so that it does not impact students who cannot afford it.

**Mr. Joseph:** Regarding Indicator 6.6a, *Results from Fourteenth Annual Customer Survey Report, 2006-2007 and 2007-08: My/My child's/The school all the adequate resources needed for learning/teaching*, **Mr. Joseph** expressed concern about the low level of agreement by students, parents, and teachers at the high school level.

**Mr. Douglas:** Does the District have any responsibility to provide basic classroom materials to the schools? If so, that would address the issue of costs for making copies.

**Dr. Bailey:** Recommended that an “n” value be shown throughout the document whenever percentages are used.

#### **Condition 7 – Disciplinary Actions**

**Mr. Joseph:** Stated this is one area where the District has “done a wonderful job in giving accurate information.”

**Mr. Foulkes:** Expressed concern that the Discipline Matrix, 7.3, was not uniformly applied. Only 38.3% of the schools have used it. The Report indicated the Matrix is still being revised. **Mr. Foulkes** recommended Administration emphasize its importance and that its use is mandatory.

**Ms. Price:** Regarding 7.7, *The school provides access to alternative resources that promote positive student behavioral changes...*, **Ms. Price** acknowledged the work being done by Area offices on this issue.

### **Condition 8 – 5 Year Capital Plan**

**Mr. Foulkes:** Noted that there has been a big improvement in the amount of information contained in the Report on issues related to ADA. He acknowledged **Ms. Gioello's** efforts in this area.

**Ms. Gioello:** There still is a gap in equity between older eastern and the newer western schools, especially in regards to ADA compliance.

**Mr. Joseph:** Thanked **Dr. Blasik** and staff for “making this Section a very comprehensive one.”

**Ms. Yach:** Asked if all 5-year capital plans are subject to public review and if they include the Adult & Community Schools. **Dr. Blasik** responded in the affirmative.

**Mr. Foulkes:** “There is a disparity built into this process.” The **Committee** has not visited every school, yet the Report contains information about every school. He said, “What we see could be very accurate, and that’s where we make recommendations. Even though the School District gives us this panoramic view, when you drill down to the ground, there are disparities, still. And that’s where our observations come in, for those schools that may not be part of that pretty painted picture.”

**Mr. Badran:** To a request for **Ms. Gioello** to give examples of items not addressed, **Ms. Gioello** mentioned locker rooms that have been remodeled and yet the mirrors had not been switched out for safety glass. That is an example of items that are easy to fix, but had “fallen through the cracks.”

**Ms. Gioello:** Schools modeled before or after 1993, fall under the 1993 Rule and are treated differently. Many eastern schools were built prior to that year and have bathrooms that are not ADA compliant. **Ms. Gioello** recommended visiting schools that have been remodeled to see if there are concerns related to ADA. **Mr. Foulkes** suggested **Ms. Gioello** send a list of suggestions and concerns to Diversity staff.

**Mr. Fleischer:** Many bathrooms are not ADA compliant. For instance, sinks are too high and stalls are too narrow for a wheelchair. He agrees that these schools should be revisited for ADA compliance.

**Chair:** **Mr. Garretson** provided a great deal of information on ADA remodeling. He will be invited to a future meeting to discuss this.

### **Condition 9 – Student Assignment/Reassignment**

**Mr. Fleischer:** Demographics on the breakdown of race, ethnicity, and national origin of students, teachers, and administrators are needed on a school-by-school basis. He recommended that these

numbers be part of the Report. **Mr. Douglas** advised that this information could be found on the District's website. **Mr. Foulkes** suggested that the Committee could use some of the data that already exists in its report, if it were formatted properly. **Mr. Ciminera** suggested establishing a link to that site from the Diversity Department's website. He added that this information already exists for students, and that they will get the information related to staff.

**Ms. Price:** Many of the schools do not have staff that mirrors the demographics of the student population.

**Mr. Joseph:** Recommends the District track school-specific demographics based on the breakdown recommended by **Mr. Fleischer**. He stated that, when he requested this data two years ago, he was told the District does not track this information. **Dr. Blasik** said data is not collected on ethnicity. They do have demographics based on race. **Mr. Joseph** said information based on race does not provide enough data on the needs of students. He said there is a difference between the needs of students who come from the Caribbean and students who are African-American, though both are classified as Black. **Dr. Blasik** said she would look into this and see what data is available.

**Mr. Rajner:** Is it correct that this information is optional for staff, that it is not required that it be provided to the employer? He said that if the number provided is not accurate, it should be noted for clarification purposes, something to indicate that the data is incomplete. (There was a great deal of background noise on the tape, rendering this portion inaudible.)

**Ms. Yach:** It seems reasonable to assume there would be some way to collect data on something like "Family Country of Origin". **Mr. Foulkes** referred to the ESOL Department's data on the number of countries represented and languages spoken by the students and wondered if the process they use would be something that would benefit the Committee. He recommended exploring the possibility.

**Ms. Gioello:** Cautioned that often, when minorities are subdivided, the main issues are diluted. She spoke against clustering students with disabilities and recommended the District move towards mainstreaming, not "segregation."

**Ms. Yach:** Are time and distance factors in student assignments? **Mr. Foulkes** said that this should be a recommendation for next year's report.

**Mr. Rajner:** Referring to the issue of clustering students with disabilities, he recommended the District do an analysis to determine if clustering could be a positive in some cases. "Being in your own community, no matter what that community may exist, is sometimes a strength and a better resource because you have other people to help you cope through that, whatever it is, or learn how to adapt."

The discussion of the 9 Conditions ended. **Mr. Foulkes** thanked the Members and stated this is the first time the Diversity Committee developed a formal response to the Superintendent's Report. He said in the past, staff noted the Members' comments and brought them to the attention of **Dr. Blasik's** office. **Mr. Foulkes** said the lawsuit's written agreement requires the Committee to send a formal written report. He said once the report is written, the Committee must determine if the District is in compliance with the Settlement Agreement. The Committee would not be voting

to accept or reject the Superintendent's Report. The Committee would be voting on whether or not the District is in compliance.

**Mr. Joseph** said he would like to address the question of whether or not the District is in compliance. He is very comfortable with the fact that, for the first time since he has been on the Committee, there would be a written response to the **Superintendent's** written report. He is not sure if the Committee could say "yea or nay" regarding compliance. "I, more or less, see a report that is going to be very objective based on the analysis of the data received and also our concern and recommendation. It would, more or less, be a recommendation of what we see. What will determine if the School Board is or not in compliance is when we have performance indicators that goes with the nine conditions."

**Mr. Rajner** concurred with **Mr. Joseph** and commented that he doesn't believe the Committee has the researcher capability to determine if the District is compliance. The Committee does have the ability to have input, observations, and recommendations to help make things better.

After some discussion about the Committee's responsibility to determine whether or not the District is in compliance, **Mr. Foulkes** read a portion of the Settlement Agreement as it relates to the charge of the Committee. **Mr. Badran** said the Committee is charged with stating that the School Board is or is not fulfilling its obligation under the CCC Agreement.

**Mr. Fleischer** said he added up the numbers in the report as to what was "Met" or "Not Met". He said 39 Indicators were "Met", 8 Indicators were "Not Met". That comes to 83% having been "Met". He said that the School Board, if graded, should receive a B and an E for Effort. Three areas in need of improvement are Conditions 5, 6, and 7 (Athletic & Extracurricular Activities, Media Center, and Disciplinary Actions). The School Board is making "huge progress."

**Ms. Yach** asked for clarification on what constitutes compliance. Is it 100%, 85%, showing progress? On what variables should the Committee base its decision on whether or not the District is in compliance? Whose formula does the Committee use? Is it subjective? **Dr. Blasik** responded that, based on mathematics, if it is not 100% evident, it is "Not Met". In the spirit of the Agreement, there should be equity across all schools in order for an Indicator to be "Met". If an Indicator is not "Met", it is not in compliance.

(**Mr. Joseph** left at 8:13 p.m.)

Prior to the end of the workshop, The **Chair** made the following announcements.

- **Mr. Darius** was accepted into a doctoral research program at the Institute for International Education in Belgium. He is one of only 14 individuals world-wide to receive this honor.
- **Mr. Rajner** was selected to receive the 2008 Disability Awareness Award as Volunteer of the Year from the Broward County Advisory Board for Individuals with Disabilities.

**Ms. Price** asked that the record reflect that the bathrooms at KC Wright are not ADA compliant.

## **SUBCOMMITTEES and COMMITTEES**

There were no reports.



**Workshop ended 8:20 p.m.**

**The next meeting is scheduled for November 6, 2008 at 6:30 p.m.,  
in the Board Room at the KC Wright Administration Building.**

**These minutes are summarized and were recorded at the October 2, 2008 Diversity Committee workshop. 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.**