

MINUTES

**Miami-Dade County Public Schools
SUPERINTENDENT'S DISTRICT ADVISORY PANEL
FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SWD)**

**Minutes
January 21, 2016
School Board Administration Building – Room 522
1450 Northeast 2nd Avenue
Miami, Florida 33132**

Members Present

Rosa Maria Barbara	Enrique Escallon	Elias Seife
Eric Cintron	Ernie Martinez	Elaine Silny-FLASHA
Myrna Charlton-ARC	Janet McDaniel	
Elsa Clarke	Lynn Miskiel-Mailman Center	

Alternates Present

Nicole Attong (Liz Cramer-FIU)
Amara Condon (Camila Rocha-Easter Seals)
Lynette Estrada (Diane Adrean-CARD)
Maria Jakoniuk Ratti (Rosa Maria Barbara)

Honorary Members Present

Vickie Burley

School Board Members Present

Laurie Malman – Alternate Dr. Lawrence Feldman

School Personnel Present

Dr. Magaly Abrahante
Jill Brookner
Sue Clifford
Rosalia Gallo
Kelli Hunter-Sheppard

Guests Present

Leyva Celia-Miami-Dade Parks
Carla Hill-Miami-Dade Department of Cultural Affairs
Marely Sanchez-Palomo Health Care

Absences

Isabel Garcia
Kathy Vergara

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

Introduction and Welcome

After introductions, Ms. Rosa Maria Barbara, Panel Chair, welcomed members and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Members of the Panel approved the minutes of the meeting of December 10, 2015 as corrected by adding the names of members who had excused absences. Also approved the January 15, 2016 minutes of the Ad-hoc Budget Subcommittee. Janet McDaniel moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Ernie Martinez seconded the motion. Rosa Maria Barbara asked members to approve the motion. The motion passed unanimously. It was noted that on today's Agenda the meeting date for the February meeting was not correct. The correct date for the next meeting is February 18, 2016.

Chair Report

Ms. Barbara requested that the Bylaws Committee address the question of who would act as meeting Chair if the Chair and the Vice-Chair were unable to attend a meeting. Who is the next in line?

Ms. Barbara also noted that planning for the Awards will be starting. The Awards Committee will begin meeting.

Presentations

All Kids Included, Tenth anniversary of All Kids Included Family Arts Festival

Carla Hill, Theater and Education Outreach Manager South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center, Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs

The All Kids Included Family Arts Festival is ten-year old initiative to make art experiences inclusive of all children. This years All Kids Included Family Arts Festival is scheduled for May 4th -7th at the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center in Cutler Bay. There is a Student Art Competition (see handout). The deadline for entries is April 10th. They are working with the library system so the art will be displayed at the library regional centers in a traveling art display. The winners will be announced during the Festival. This is an opportunity for all students to be involved equally.

The Festival organizers provide all expense paid field trips for students. Teachers need to register with Ms. Hill for the field trips but they are booking up very quickly. There is a literacy component to the Festival. Students attending the field trips will get a book to take home and any books remaining will be distributed during the public portion of the Festival. For the field trip the age range is limited to Prekg through 8th grade. The school does not have to be a part of M-DCPS to participate in a field trip. Ms. Malman stated that some groups come on the Saturday of the Festival since there are more activities that day.

Attendance at the Festival is free to the public and in the past was attended by over 6,000 people. Parking is also free and available at Southland Mall if the actual Festival lot is full. Laurie Malman has attended in the past and stated that it is an amazing event and has wonderful performances. In the effort to be appropriate for all attendees there is a quiet room available for those who might need it and it is manned by staff. Sign language interpreters are available as needed. Ms. Malman stated that the

Festival organizers are really experts in handling accommodations for all who need them. Discussion proceeded regarding how well organized the Festival is and that there are many alternative activities that will interest almost any child.

Maria Jakoniuk Ratti requested the Art Competition handout be available in Spanish and offered to translate it if Ms. Hill will send it to her. Ms. Barbara stated she would distribute it via email to the Panel.

Ms. Hill expressed her appreciation to The Children's Trust as they help fund the Festival.

GIFT Conference Report (Gallery of Information For Teachers and Families of Children receiving Special Education) Feedback, results.

Kelli Hunter-Shepard, District Director ESE

Dr. Hunter-Shepard provided a PowerPoint handout to accompany her review of data gathered from the conference. A significant outcome was that families of Haitian descent were not largely represented.

The Qualitative Data indicated that attendees liked; the use of technology, the knowledgeable presenters, and the variety of topics. They would change the start time (start the event later); they wanted more interactive sessions; they wanted longer sessions, and to have the vendors available for increased time. They suggested the following topics for future presentations:

- High stakes testing
- Behavior/achievement
- Reading and ASD
- McKay
- Parenting best practices

Discussion among the Panel that insurance and the Med Waiver are huge issues for parents. Perhaps next year's GIFT conference could provide a place for parents to complete the paperwork to sign up for the Med Waiver.

The Quantitative Data was gathered from a rating scale from 1 to 6, with 6 being the most satisfied. All the ratings were 5 or better.

A future consideration would be to additional "mini" conferences that could be presented at different locations in the County. Ms. Ratti asked if materials from the conference were available online. Dr. Hunter-Shepard said that the materials are online, the PDFs of the sessions are available. Ms. Barbara reported that she was told all the presentations would be online. There is a need for teachers to know that they can earn Master Plan Points at the conference.

Ms. Barbara asked how many attendees were at the conference. Dr. Hunter-Shepard stated that there were 352 on the sign in sheets but everyone thought that there were more people there than that. Some attendees may have come after the sign-in table was broken down. Several buses may have come later and those attendees did not sign in. Also perhaps the children were not signed in. There were over 500 people registered and there were over 100 volunteers and 67 vendors.

The next GIFT conference will be in the Fall of this year, likely in October.

Additional suggestions were discussed particularly on how to serve members of the Haitian community. Ms. Gallo suggested bringing in parents/students who are Haitian speaking in an effort to provide specific content for their needs. Mr. Escallon said activities that are presented within the Haitian community are well attended versus families having to travel outside their neighborhoods. Ms. Barbara discussed a previous program in which they reached out into the Haitian community but that she learned that there is still cultural considerations for this community regarding the stigma attached to disabilities. Perhaps inviting a Haitian radio station to come to broadcast from the GIFT conference would be useful. Nicole Attong stated that in a meeting she participated in with leaders of the Haitian community there was a discussion of which language could be used to provide access, whether it should be French or Haitian Creole. Also that additional modalities such and the use of picture and graphic methods can be very effective. Overall there was the suggestion of going to parents to ask what can the system do to help.

Ms. Barbara thanked everyone for their great effort on the GIFT conference.

Committee Reports

Awards Committee

No report. Meeting to be scheduled

Kathy Vergara/Jill Brookner

D/HH Committee

No report. Meeting to be scheduled.

Lynn Miskiel/Linda Reiter

Education-Inclusion Committee

No report.

Janet McDaniel/Rosalia Gallo

Panel Secondary Transition Committee

Chris Reigadas/Ernie Martinez/Jill Brookner

Jill Brookner reported that this committee had a great meeting with Vocational Rehabilitation personnel in attendance. The minutes of this meeting are pending. The committee goals are to gather data and to engage parents. As students get older parent participation goes down. Mr. Escallon noted that the only 'true' transition meeting, in his experience, was the last one before the student graduated. Even since though the process starts when the student is 14 years old. It is challenging to have the parents engaged in the process but the committee is looking for ways to get the parents involved and to build school capacity.

Ms. Barbara discussed how the timing of Transition has to happen in a specific sequence. The committee is looking to gather data regarding the numbers of students and the numbers of staff. Mr. Escallon stated that there are great programs but there are not enough to impact every student. The programs have a culture that support the needs.

Ms. Brookner reported that the state VR representative, Sheila Ward, did a presentation. The VR process must start with students at age 14 which will help us get the ball rolling with students.

Ms. Brookner also reported the very recent good news that The Children's Trust approved a Summer Youth Employment program. This program will target 1,300 at risk student's ages 15-18 years to be hired into employment for 6 weeks during the summer. TCT will hire the teachers to support the students, they will be paid at least minimum wage, gas or bus passes will also be paid for. Of the 1,300 spots, 10% are designated for SPED student's age 15-22 years. The students will be working for 25 hours per week. The recruitment process will be starting soon.

Dr. Abrahante stated that this will be a M-DCPS program and that TCT is a match to county funding. In the past internships were unpaid, now they will be paid. Additional funding is being sought in order to bring in more students, up to 1,500 students which will also increase the number of SPED students. Information will be distributed as it is available, approval just done last week. Elaine Sileny noted that students who are home schooled are eligible to take advantage of school activities. Students just need a M-DCPS ID number.

Ad-Hoc Budget Committee

Elias Seife

See minutes submitted by the committee. Mr. Seife presented a summary of the Budget Committee’s analysis of SPED demographics per school and across the District.

Discussion ensued regarding the purpose of this data analysis and if it supported the purpose of the committee. Ms. Barbara reviewed that the purpose of the committee as reporting to the Panel how IDEA money is applied from the State level to the District level and also how the general funds come into district. Ms. McDaniel added that she would want to understand how the Matrix of Services is used.

Mr. Seife stated that today’s presentation is a component of these questions and not the final presentation of this committee regarding the budget information. He stated that the analysis of this data is needed to make budget projections. Vicky Burley appreciated the data that was sent and that it covered multiple years. She sees a benefit in having this data in order to inform teacher training programs regarding the needs of the community so that the training curriculums can fit the needs.

Mr. Martinez, who was on this committee, asked to withdraw his participation at this time.

Dr. Abrahante reported that some of the data was counterintuitive to what we might think. Charter School SPED students are generally of a higher socio-economic status than those in public schools and that the number of SPED students in charters has increased while the number in public schools has stayed. This type of information is important to know because it impacts the budget. Dr. Abrahante would like further direction regarding the purpose of the subcommittee since this has been questioned.

Ms. Barbara reviewed that this Ad Hoc committee was formed following last year’s presentation on the budget in order to inform the Panel regarding the sufficiency of the allocations and if the Panel could assist in advocating for additional funding. The goal is always how the Panel help the District. She restated that she would like this committee to educate the Panel about how funds come to District, both the federal funds and the local funds and how the funds are distributed.

Ms. Attong suggested that it might be helpful to present the demographic information in the context of the overall purpose of the committee, to put it into the bigger picture.

Nominating Committee

Report as needed

Steering Committee

Report as needed

Committee Representation

Attendance Boundary Committee
No Report

Rosa Maria Barbara/Kathy Vergara

**Family and Community
Involvement Advisory Committee**
No Report

Rosa Maria Barbara

Other

Celia Leyva distributed a handout about the Parks and Recreation free afterschool and summer programs. She will share this information electronically. Dr. Abrahante asked if students on 504 Plans were eligible and they are. The student just needs a record of their disability.

Ms. Barbara announced that on January 27th there is a Vocational Rehabilitation Council in Tallahassee.

Ms. Barbara has fact sheets about the Medicaid waiver.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02pm.

Next Meeting

The General Membership meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 18, 2016 at 3:00 pm.