

## MINUTES

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

Minutes of January 26, 2017

School Board Administration Building – Room 559  
1450 Northeast 2nd Avenue  
Miami, Florida 33132

### **Members Present**

Diane Adreon	Ava Goldman	Lynn Miskiel-MCCD
Sandy Ames-FCC	Ernie Martinez	Linda Reiter
Rosa Maria Barbara	Janet McDaniel	Elias Seife
Elsa Clarke		
Elizabeth Cramer-FIU		

### **Alternates Present**

Jerold Blumstein (Martin Karp)  
Maria Delgado (Martin Karp)  
Maria Jakoniuk Ratti (Rosa Maria Barbara)  
Laurie Malman – Alternate Dr. Lawrence Feldman  
Michelle Schladant (MCCD)

### **Members Absent**

Magaly Abrahante  
Eric Cintron  
Myrna Charlton-ARC  
Odile da Silva-AND  
Enrique Escallon  
Katherine Fuentes  
Lauren Bustos-PTP  
Martin Karp  
Yubeda Miah  
Camila Rocha-Easter Seals  
Elaine Silny-FLASHA  
Madeline Spado-Best Buddies  
Miguel Suau  
Kathy Vergara

### **Honorary Members Present**

Vickie Burley

### **School Board Members Present**

None

### **School Personnel Present**

Sue Clifford  
Vivian Nunez  
Mary Paz  
Angel Rodriguez  
Ana Maria Sasseville

### **Guests Present**

Paul Ackerman-U.S. Olympic Committee  
Rocio de la Grana-Adv. Network on Disabilities  
Jayne Greenberg-District Director of Physical Education  
Carla Hill-Department of Cultural Affairs  
Cecilia Nieto-FDLRS South  
Rosana Onorato-Parent

### **Call to Order**

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

### **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 15, 2016 as corrected as well as the minutes of the Awards Committee, Education and Inclusion Committee, ESE Family Engagement Committee, and the Panel Transition Committee.

Ernie Martinez moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Liz Cramer seconded the motion. Rosa Maria Barbara asked members to approve the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Chair Report**

Ms. Barbara was approached by District 7 School Board Member Lubby Navarro to participate in Education Chat on Tuesday Jan 31 6:30-7:30pm. A flyer with information was provided to the Panel members. This event will provide parents and community with information from office of ESE and the Office of Assessments and testing. It will be available in Spanish.

Tax filing season is here and there are exemptions which parent of children with special needs may not be aware of. Ms. Barbara encouraged the Panel members to be aware of these. She suggested that perhaps a future presentation for parents about how to take advantage of these exemptions. Ms. Barbara will electronically share a document shared to her by Ms. Reigadas regarding this.

Ms. Barbara shared a memorandum sent from the Superintendent's office to the School Board about a Legislative update that describes accommodations for students with special needs for college entrance exams. The College Board will automatically accept District special accommodations for tests as indicated on a student's IEP. The Memorandum dated 1/23/17 was provided to the Panel.

The South Miami Dade Cultural Arts Center will have the All Kids Include Family Arts Festival May 6. Ms. Carla Hill explained that three days before the Festival there are field trip opportunities for Pre-

Kg through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. These includes transportation and all expenses and can accommodate 300 students per day. Registration is on a first come first serve basis for field trips. Ms. Barbara will send out the link and flyers about the Festival.

Ms. Barbara reminded Panel members to complete the agency/partner questionnaire if it was not completed last year. This information will help inform parents about resources.

## **Presentations**

### **Paul Ackerman, Director, Paralympic Sport Development**

*United States Olympic Committee*

Jayne Greenberg, District Director of Physical Education described that she had introduced Mr. Ackerman to Miami-Dade County Public Schools two years ago to started program to enable students to meet the qualifying requirements for Paralympics. At that time it was not accomplished but now they are making another plan to accomplish this. A benefit of this process is that it could help students go to college on athletic scholarships.

Mr. Ackerman showed a wonderful video of the Sochi Games. He shared a Power Point presentation which he will share with the Panel which explained the history of the Paralympics and what the Paralympics does currently.

What is the Paralympics? Open to physically disabled/vision impaired athletes it started as rehabilitation activity in 1944 with the first games in 1948 called the Stoke-Mandeville Games. In 1960 the Rome Paralympics followed the Olympics to make use of the venues.

Why the Paralympics? The goal is to provide sport opportunities to student-athletes with disabilities.

What can we do? In order to have more participants the goal is to increase awareness and have athletes get involved at a younger age. There is a need for equipment, to educate young people about the opportunities, to educate their parents, and the community.

How can Paralympics achieve its goals? The Craig H Neilsen Foundation benefits individuals with spinal cord injuries. This support can be used to create high school and college programs. In Miami-Dade County the plan is to starting with track and field, specifically three adaptive events; 200m wheelchair, 800m wheelchair, shot put. The Florida High School Athletic Association has loaner wheelchairs. Their website has the rules, eligibility, and how to access the wheelchairs. There is a need to connect athletes with clubs that offer Paralympic sports and to help them experience events to develop interest and confidence as well as Performance events that are competitive. Paralympics has developed the "Gateway to Gold" mobile application. This can help an athlete who is not in the location of club. There are skills test and remote help where coaches will review video and give advice to the athlete. They will connect them with a team if possible. Paralympics is also working with school athletic conferences.

What are the next steps here in Miami-Dade? Ms. Greenberg would like to see MDCPS develop programs in-house. Right now many ESE students complete their physical education requirement on-line after middle school. There is a need to strengthen programs. The clubs are available in the community but there should be in school opportunities. It is free so there is no financial burden for families. The first step is to establish eligibility and to train coaches and teachers. Right now there are no Adaptive PE teachers and a goal is to have one in the county. Then the students need to be engaged to participate actively in PE and not just online.

Elias Seife suggested that perhaps there could be magnet school for a Paralympic style athletic program. Ms. Greenberg pointed out that there is a concern with recruiting rules. Ms. Barbara asked if there is any data on the numbers of students who would be eligible to participate. Ms. Greenberg

would like to start with students in middle and high school. Angel Rodriguez suggested that the right people are needed to lead the programs in order for the program to take root and be sustainable. Ms. Greenberg discussed giving a supplement to coaches if they have even one ESE student in athletics. Maria Ratti Jakoniuk asked if there is a relationship with Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation. Ms. Greenberg confirmed that the schools system has a very strong relationship. Janet McDaniels stated that the inclusion of student with special needs in athletics is not a 'special' event but it is an obligation for schools to provide equal access, like Title 9, but in the definition "sport" has a loose definition. Another concern is that certain grades have to be achieved in order to participate in school sports. There is a concern that ESE students can't participate if they don't have the grades. The Panel members recognized that there is a passion for getting programs started in the school system that will lead to Paralympic participation. Ava Goldman stated the need to map out action steps. She will report back to the Panel the ongoing status of this process.

### **Ann Marie Sasseville, Executive Director ESE Pre K Programs**

*Updates in Prekindergarten Programs for Children with Disabilities.*

Ms. Sasseville presented information about the ESE Pre-Kg programs. She will share her Power Point slides with the Panel so that members can have access to the specific data. The slides include numbers of students, types of services and curriculum description. A new program is available for PreKg called "Waterford". It is a comprehensive online program for skill development that is aligned with iReady. Ms. Sasseville also reported that six new PreKg ESE classrooms have been opened across the County. The enrollment and transition to Kindergarten number have increased significantly. There is new normative data for the Battelle Developmental Inventory and there is a trend for more students to qualify for special education services.

Another initiative for PreKg ESE is to fill the role model positions. They have developed a campaign called "Ready Set Enroll" to encourage recruitment.

PreKg works with a number of community partners. The newest partner is the Miami Lighthouse which now has one classroom but will be expanding next year to two classrooms and will include 0-2 year olds. There is continued collaboration with Headstart programs to assist in their achieving 10% of their enrollment to be students with special needs.

There is a focus on the work with Early Steps to get students into the appropriate programs beyond home-based services. Ms. Sasseville stated that visits were made to all of B-2 agencies and they were amazed with the services that were being provided to these young students. They are looking to expand the number of seats available in the B-2s.

Ms. Ratti Jakoniuk was very complementary of the parent training she received through the PreKg department. She stated that perhaps parents, specifically school Family Support Specialists might be able to assist with recruiting students for the role model openings.

Ms. Ratti Jakoniuk also asked about the status of the single phone number for parents to get assistance in the PreKg diagnostic process. Sue Clifford reported that the number is still the FDLRS main number because it is so well established in the community. ESE and Prekg SPED are in close communication to get parents through the system efficiently. The PreKg phone number is 305-271-570.

Ms. Sasseville recognized that it is still confusing for parents to know where to call but that the professionals in the various departments are in communication and are able to get the parents to the correct department. It was discussed if there is a link to PreKg SPED within the Early Childhood website. Ms. Goldman will check on this.

Ms. Barbara inquired about what PreKg ESE services are available during the summer. Ms. Sasseville stated that services are limited as the majority of programs are for students over 5 years of age. There are Extended Schools Year services available for students that are 3-5 years and the B-2 agencies conduct programs funded through The Children's Trust. There are a number of programs in the

community and CARD sends lists of programs out through their network.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Awards Committee**

**Kathy Vergara/Ava Goldman**

See minutes. Ms. Goldman reported that their first meeting went very well and they are very excited for this year's event. They added a Champion of Inclusion for a teacher/principal and Champion of Parent Engagement Award. They are seeking donations and tickets will be available for sale.

### **D/HH Committee**

**Lynn Miskiel/Linda Reiter**

Ms. Miskiel reported. Dr. Hunter-Sheppard is working with the committee to develop a professional development activity that will take place February 13.

### **Education-Inclusion Committee**

**Janet McDaniel/Reagan Chalmers**

See minutes. Ms. McDaniel reported that the meeting was very productive. The committee has the goal to increase the number of schools participating in the Inclusion award by approaching the schools with positive inclusion rates to apply rather than waiting for them to find out about the award. They are considering a novel submission process of asking for a video submission. This would not be required as some schools may not have the resources to submit a video. The committee will also gather quantifiable data to include in the award process. Ms. Goldman reported that now schools are being held responsible for inclusion rates. It was suggested to identify one or two schools per region. Mr. Rodriguez suggested sending a "tease" to principals with the criteria. Then select schools based on data and have them complete the requirements. The invitation email can be sent by Ms. Goldman.

### **ESE Family Engagement Committee**

**Ernie Martinez/Angel Rodriguez/  
Kelli Hunter-Sheppard**

See minutes. Mr. Rodriguez reported that the Family Support Staff have been hired. They are considering adding middle schools for next year and possibly having the FSS cover 2 sites with expanded hours in order to utilize the trained staff. The committee appreciates the information forms the Panel members completed so that they can compile a directory of resources. There will be a webinar for parents on February 7 and 9 on the topic of communication. Mr. Rodriguez discussed how it is an adjustment for principals to work with an employee who is also a parent.

### **Early Childhood PreK Committee**

**Kathy Vergara/Marisol Diaz**

Ms. Sasseville presented the PreK update as reported above. Minutes from the PreK meeting will be available next month.

### **Panel Transition Committee**

**Ernie Martinez/Vivian Nunez**

See minutes. Ms. Nunez reported. The committee suggests that the "People First Language" issues be moved to the Inclusion Committee. This was agree on. Ms. Barbara suggested that People First Language be refreshed with School Board.

### **Ad-Hoc Budget Committee**

**Elias Seife/Magaly Abrahante**

Mr. Seife reported. The committee met January 20 and had a very productive meeting. They noted that

Exceptionality designation is important when looking at trends but it is tricky because of students who have multiple exceptionalities. They are considering the new implementation of the Accelify system and issues that may arise since it takes longer to execute. They are not expecting this to impact funding issues with the state due. As the committee looks at the budget they will use the framework from last year. Mr. Seife reported that the Budget Office has been very helpful.

**Nominating Committee** **Report as needed**

**Steering Committee** **Report as needed**

**By-Laws**  
No report

**Legislative**  
No report

### **Committee Representation**

**Attendance Boundary Committee** **Rosa Maria Barbara**

**Family and Community  
Involvement Advisory Committee** **Rosa Maria Barbara**

### **Transition Task Force**

Ms. Nunez reported that the Task Force met today, January 26 and she will send the minutes to Ms. Barbara. The next meeting is April 27<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Rodriguez has been added to this Task Force.

### **Other**

Mr. Martinez inquired regarding Chris Reigadas' status. Ms. Barbara reported that she requested to be now an Honorary Member.

Ms. Ratti Jakoniuk asked about Breakfast with the Experts. Ms. Goldman stated that this event will have a different name and format and she will share information as it is available.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:37pm

### **Next Meeting**

The General Membership meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2017 at 3:00 pm in the School Board Administration Building – Room 559.