

MINUTES

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

Minutes September 16, 2015
School Board Administration Building – Conference Room 726

3:00 P.M.

Members Present

Mariana Barbara	Janet McDaniel	Elias Seife
Rosa Maria Barbara	Linda Reiter	Elaine Silny-FLASHA
Ava Goldman	Christine Reigadas	Kathy Vergara
Ernie Martinez		

Alternates Present

Jerold Blumstein (School Board Member - Martin Karp)

Honorary Members Present

None Present

School Board Members Present

Laurie Malman – Alternate Dr. Lawrence Feldman
Fanny Fierro – Alternate Ms. Lubby Navarro

School Personnel Present

Magaly Abrahante
Jill Brookner
Sue Clifford
Rosalia Gallo

Guests Present

Diane Adreon – UM NSU CARD
Eric Cintro – Applicant Student Representative
Nancy Torres Burling - Parent

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 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 on April 16, 2015 as presented as well as

the minutes of the Inclusion - Education Committee on September 8, 2015 Ms. Barbara asked for a motion to approve committee minutes. Rosalia Gallo moved to approve the minutes as presented and Chris Reigadas seconded motion. Rosa Maria Barbara asked members to approve the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Rosa Maria Barbara reviewed the Steering Committee Minutes of July 31, 2015. It was announced at the Steering Committee that supervision of Exceptional Student Education Services has been assigned to Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Magale Abrahante. Ms. Barbara welcomed Dr. Abrahante to the Panel meeting and asked her to say a few words. Dr. Abrahante said that she has enjoyed being in the school system for many years and is very excited about her new responsibilities as the leader of Exceptional Student Education Services for Miami-Dade County Public Schools. As the mother of four children, two with disabilities, she described her wonderful family. She said that her personal experiences as a mother of children with disabilities will enable her to help support the mission of the Panel.

Ms. Barbara continued to report that Committee Chairs shared their goals and gave brief report at the Steering Committee Meeting. There was also a discussion about the Panel's role on Miami-Dade County Public School Committees.

Ava Goldman announced that Kelly Hunter Sheppard, the new District Director of Exceptional Student Education Services, will work in collaboration with Liliana Salazar, District Director.

At the meeting, Jill Brookner announced that the Gift Conference would be on October 10th.

Ms. Barbara asked for a motion to approve Steering Committee minutes. Chris Reigadas moved to approve the minutes as presented and Ernie Martinez seconded motion. Rosa Maria Barbara asked members to approve the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Barbara reviewed the schedule of meeting dates for 2015-2016. School Board Administration Building Room 559 has been reserved for the meetings. Ms. Barbara asked for a motion to approve the Meeting Schedule. Ernie Martinez moved to approve the Meeting Schedule and Chris Reigadas seconded motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Report

Rosa Maria Barbara reviewed the Panel mission and said that the Panel was established more than thirty years ago for the purpose of advising the Superintendent about educational programs for students with disabilities.

Ms. Barbara asked all members to follow Robert's Rules of Order and to respect the views of other members during the meetings. She also reminded members to follow speaker guidelines. Ms. Barbara thanked Ms. Goldman for bringing copies of Robert's Rules of Order for the members.

Ms. Barbara asked Chris Reigadas to distribute the Code of Ethics forms to the membership for signature.

Ms. Barbara announced that our parent membership roster is full to date. She will review the status of a few agencies that did not had regular attendance last year.

Student Representative Application: Eric Cintron's application will be submitted to committee for review.

Ms. Barbara thanked Linda Reiter's son, Adam for his assistance in redesigning the logo. She distributed examples of the old logo updated by Sandy Segal. The updated logo clarifies the name of the Panel and will work well for the time being.

At the School Board Meeting of September 9th, Board Members, Dr. Martin Karp and Ms. Lubby Navarro, introduced Resolution 15-079 Recognizing October as Learning Disabilities Awareness Month. Ms. Barbara expressed gratitude to Dr. Karp and Ms. Navarro for supporting this Resolution. She urged members to create awareness as well as support the implementations of the Resolution.

Ava Goldman said that the District will help raise awareness through the Weekly Briefing. There are numerous activities and events happening throughout the school system in recognition of Disabilities Awareness Month. Schools are using social media to advertise events.

Committee Reports

Rosa Maria Barbara described each committee and asked members to sign up for the committees.

Awards Committee

Kathy Vergara/Jill Brookner

Kathy Vergara reported that the Awards Committee usually meets after the GIFT Conference. We have \$1,748.22 available for the ceremony and luncheon this year. We need to begin to look for a sponsor.

D/HH Committee

Lynn Miskiel/Linda Reiter

Linda Reiter reported that the committee is in the process of planning their first meeting.

Inclusion-Education Committee

Janet McDaniel/Rosalia Gallo

Dr. Rosalia Gallo distributed the minutes of the September 8th meeting of the Inclusion-Education Committee. The first topic on the agenda was the 2015 IN Ed Achievement Award, which will be presented at the Award Ceremony in May. Six schools submitted applications. After reviewing the applications, the committee selected Hammocks Middle School to receive the award this year.

In the future the committee will look at a combination quantitative data and qualitative data from each of the school applications during the evaluation process.

The committee reviewed the Proclamation issued by the School Board pertaining to Disability Awareness Month.

The committee established goals targeting 1) increased inclusion and 2) effective achievement for students with IEPs in inclusive settings.

During the meeting, Chris Reigadas expressed the need to explain inclusive practices to school security and police. Dr. Gallo is planning to invite Robin Morrison to the next committee meeting to present on police training.

Dr. Gallo is reviewing twenty-one (21) because the Education Transformation Office has created a section for Exceptional Student Education recommendations to be made to individual schools.

Ms. Ratti raised some questions about documentation for paraprofessionals at the meeting. This discussion will be continued at the next meeting.

Panel Secondary Transition Committee Chris Reigadas/Ernie Martinez/Jill Brookner

Jill Brookner announced that on Thursday, September 17th, the Transition Task Force has scheduled a meeting at JRE Lee Educational Center to talk about the grant for the Employment First Initiative. Representatives from Boston are planning to attend the meeting as well. Keisha Robinson Sparks is now working in transition and will co-chair the Transition Task Force with Jill Brookner.

The goals for the Panel Secondary Transition Committee were discussed at the Steering Committee Meeting and will target 1) expansion of transition services from ninth grade forward, 2) improved outreach to parents and 3) expansion of pilot program for employment.

Ad-Hoc Budget Committee Elias Seife/Ava Goldman/Magaly Abrahante

Dr. Abrahante said that she is looking forward to working with Elias Seife on this committee. Mr. Seife said that this committee will help all of our members understand budget a little better and learn about how our programs are funded.

Nominating Committee

No report.

Steering Committee

No report.

Committee Representation

Attendance Boundary Committee Kathy Vergara

No report.

Family and Community Rosa Maria Barbara

Involvement Advisory Committee

No report.

Rosa Maria Barbara asked if the District still had an Educational Excellence School Advisory Committee (EESAC). Dr. Abrahante said that she would investigate.

Presentations

Updates, M-DCPS Division of Special Education

Ms. Ava Goldman, Administrative Director Office of Academics and Transformation of Early Childhood Education Exceptional Student Education, Exceptional Student Education, and Title I Programs

Rosa Maria Barbara introduced Ms. Ava Goldman.

Ms. Goldman reported that there are nineteen (19) schools with programs for approximately six-hundred (600) students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The Academy at Blue Lakes that serves students with Autism Spectrum Disorders has been expanded to include students with Intellectual Disabilities. The Autism Academy at Citrus Grove Elementary School has been expanded to second grade.

Approximately, eight thousand (8,000) students have 504 Plans. Many of this students have ADHD which is a critical issue for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS). MDCPS is working with Florida International University (FIU) to develop initiatives for students with ADHD. In October, the District will dedicate two professional to teaching general education and special education teachers about ADHD. The overall goal is to build a cadre of professionals with expertise in ADHD. Ms. Goldman is very excited about this initiative. In addition, FIU provides great support for teachers many M-DCPS schools. During the summer, children from M-DCPS are referred to the FIU ADHD Summer Camp.

Funding for the Panther Life Program has been expanded by the State of Florida. Jill Brookner added that this funding will also apply to individuals over the age of twenty-two (22).

Miami-Dade County Public Schools is now a Certified APD Provider. Programs are located at Ruth Owens Kruse Educational Center and Neva King Cooper Educational Center. The goal is to expand this program to other schools.

JRE Lee Educational Center has a technical class for students with ASD. The Culinary Arts Program is outstanding. The next step is to open an advanced Culinary Arts Class.

Professional Learning has been provided for Principals, Staffing Specialists, and General Ed teachers on IEPs and Accommodations throughout the year.

GIFT Conference Update **Ms. Jill Brookner**

Jill Brookner announced that the GIFT Conference will be October 10th at Miami Senior High School from 8:30 am to 2:00 pm.

Panel members were asked to help distribute flyers throughout community. This year we will have many volunteers from FIU Honors College. Participants can register for the conference on the Miami-Dade County Public Schools web site. This year the student experience will be fantastic. There will be presentations about social media, safety, health, fitness, and etiquette for example.

Presentations will include Student Achievement, Autism, Behavior Interventions, Early Childhood, Student Experience, Title One, and Transition Services. The School Board is very supportive of this wonderful event.

The committee followed the suggestions of Panel members and made the presentation titles more parent friendly. There are a variety of Panels for parents. The conference is free. Breakfast and lunch are provided.

This is a wonderful event for parents. Please take flyers to distribute to families.

Rosa Maria Barbara announced that the Panel has registered for an Exhibitor Table. We need volunteers to sign-up and work at our table.

Other

Inclusion Expo, The Gordon School, Tikvah Center
Nancy Torres Burling

Nancy Torres Burling thanked Miami-Dade County Public Schools for helping her son. MDCPS has been working on inclusion for many years. Ms. Torres Burling said that inclusion is society's responsibility. She invited Panel members to attend the Inclusion Expo on Tuesday, October 20th at The Gordon School Tikvah Center from 8:30 am – 2:00 pm.

Diane Adreon from CARD announced that the Medical Issues and Growing Child Conference on October 30th will be held at the University of Miami Alumni Center and is sponsored by CARD's Department of Education Partnership for Effective Programs for Students PEPSA PEPSA Project.

Ernie Martinez announced that Miami Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs is sponsoring the ADA Silver Anniversary Summit on September 24th and 25th at the Adrienne Arsht Center to support accessibility and inclusion of the arts for individuals with disabilities.

Laura Malman is assisting with All Kids Included event at the Adrienne Arsht Center. The event will have two days of amazing presentations including great technology speakers.

Chris Reigadas announced that the second annual Suicide Prevention Conference will be held at Nicklaus Children's Hospital on February 26, 2016.

Chris Reigadas is now chair of the AOA Chapter in Monroe County. Ernie Martinez is assisting her. Much needs to be done to offer services for individuals with disabilities in Monroe County.

Elias Seife expressed concerns because the Florida Kid Care insurance program is being changed and is impacting families of children with disabilities. There have been dramatic rate increases for some families. His family's insurance was cancelled. Mr. Seife is working on this issue. Dr. Abrahante said that the District has tried to help some families who are MDCPS employees. This is a very serious issue.

Rosa Maria Barbara asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ernie Martinez moved and Marianna Barbara seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Next Meeting

The General Membership meeting is scheduled for **October 15th** at 3:00 pm in the School Board Administration Building – Room 559.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen C. Vergara
Secretary