

MINUTES

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

Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2015
School Board Administration Building – Room 559
1450 Northeast 2nd Avenue
Miami, Florida 33132
3:00 P.M.

Members Present

Marianna Barbara	Ava Goldman	Christine Reigadas
Rosa Maria Barbara	Janet McDaniel	Elias Seife
Myrna Charlton	Lynn Miskiel	Kathy Vergara
Da Silva, Odile-CCDH	Linda Reiter	

Alternates Present

Kyle Bennett (Liz Cramer)
Maria Jakoniuk Ratti (Rosa Maria Barbara)
Michelle Schladant (Lynn Miskiel)

Honorary Members Present

Vickie Burley

School Board Members Present

Dr. Lawrence Felman
Laurie Malman – Alternate Dr. Lawrence Feldman

School Personnel Present

Sue Clifford
Rosalia Gallo
Craig Siegel

Guests Present

Jennifer Durocher – UM-NSU CARD
Valerie York Zimmerman – Founder, President, and Senior Teacher of Mindful Kids Miami

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 pm.

Introductions and Welcome

After introductions, Ms. Rosa Maria Barbara, Panel Chair, welcomed members and guests. Ms. Barbara welcomed School Board Member, Dr. Lawrence Feldman and thanked him for attending the

meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Members of the Panel approved the minutes of the meeting of November 12, 2015 as presented as well as the minutes of following committees: D/HH Committee Meeting on November 4, 2015; Education-Inclusion Committee Meeting on December 1; Panel Secondary Transition Committee Meeting on December 1, 2015, and the Ad-Hoc Budget Subcommittee Meeting on December 4.

Lynn Miskiel moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Chris Reigadas seconded the motion. Rosa Maria Barbara asked members to approve the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Christine Reigadas and Rosa Maria Barbara asked Kathy Vergara to add the list of members who attended the GIFT Conference to the November minutes. Ms. Vergara asked Ms. Barbara to send her the list of attendees to add to the minutes.

Chair Report

Rosa Maria Barbara recommended that UM NSU CARD be added to the list as a member agency to replace Children's Medical Services who have not sent a representative to the committee this year. Janet McDaniel so moved and Lynn Miskiel seconded the motion. Rosa Maria Barbara called the question. The motion passed unanimously. The next steps are for Rosa Maria Barbara to send a letter to the Superintendent requesting an official appointment of UM NSU CARD to the Panel as a member agency.

Rosa Maria Barbara thanked members for their book donations to the FDLRS Book Drive.

Ms. Barbara announced that on Friday, December 11th at 11:00 AM, the Center for Independent Living (CIL) of South Florida is planning to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) at their Holiday Celebration at Tamiami Park.

Presentations

Mindfulness and Its Benefits Valerie York-Zimmerman, Founder, President, and Senior Teacher of Mindful Kids Miami

Rosa Maria Barbara introduced Valerie York Zimmerman who began by stating that mindfulness training research has been shown to help adults and is now being used with children. Research studies show that Mindfulness Training for children and teens increases attention and focus, reduces stress, improves impulse control, develops emotional regulation, and builds empathy and compassion.

In 2011, at the University of California-Davis, research "Integrating Mindfulness Training in Prekindergarten" demonstrated that the treatment group increased their ability to pay attention, initiate self calming behaviors, increased social compliance behaviors, and showing care to others.

Experts believe that the best way to teach mindfulness to children is to train their teachers to implement mindfulness in the classroom through a calm moment to moment awareness and kind presence. Mindful Kids Miami is trying to educate the community about the importance of mindfulness. The University of Miami in collaboration with Mindful Kids Miami organized "A Mindful Miami Conference" in October 2015. The conference was a huge success.

Ms. York-Zimmerman showed a video that demonstrated how extreme stress can impact physical and

cognitive development in children. She expressed gratitude to Ava Goldman, Larry Feldman, and Millie Fornell for supporting mindfulness in the educational setting. It is critical to weave mindfulness into special moments during the day. Mindfulness will set the tone for the day. For example, try it when children come back from the playground. “Frances the Bear” is used as a tool for teaching children how to breathe properly. When Frances is placed on the child’s belly, it is easy to work on breathing exercises. It is important to establish a peaceful corner or quiet corner for children who feel stressed. Children should never be sent to the corner as a form of punishment. Children need to learn to choose to go to the corner to relax. Dr. David Lee from the University of Miami is leading a research study.

Janet McDaniel asked how mindfulness was being implemented in schools. Ms. York-Zimmerman said that teachers that have completed the training are reporting how helpful mindfulness has been for teachers and children. Maria Ratti said that this would be great for children with disabilities.

Mindful Kids Miami is offering teacher training without charge. Ava Goldman explained that teachers sign-up through the Weekly Briefing. Maria Ratti commented that much of this is similar to approaches for children with autism.

Rosa Maria Barbara said that she agreed that self-regulation is very important. She continued by saying that teachers should be encouraged to participate. Ms. York-Zimmerman said that mindfulness can make a tremendous difference in the trajectory of the life of a child. Rigorous training is critical. Elias Sefie said that CARD center works on stress reduction. Laurie Malman said that parents also need this training. Ms. York-Zimmerman agreed.

Ms. York Zimmerman said that the agreement with Miami-Dade County Public Schools is for this year only. School Board member, Dr. Lawrence Feldman, said that mindfulness is a life changing system and an expensive program. Ms. York-Zimmerman is providing the training. Dr. Feldman said that he has received many positive calls about mindfulness training. It is important to write a grant to fully implement the program into Miami-Dade County Public Schools. He sincerely hopes that the program does not end at the end of this year. This is a program that should become an integral part of the day throughout the school system. Daily stress will never go away. All these problems are not going away. Mindfulness is an important life skill and should be a very important component of public education. Dr. Feldman thanked Ms. York-Zimmerman for bringing mindfulness to the school system.

Rosa Maria Barbara thanked Ms. York-Zimmerman for a wonderful presentation.

Restraint and Seclusion

Robin Morrison, Instructional Supervisor
Craig Siegel, Chair of Clinical Art Therapy Department

Rosa Maria Barbara introduced Craig Siegel presenting for Robin Morrison today. Ava Goldman said that this presentation is to address some of the concerns that were expressed last month. Mr. Siegel said that they are very interested in Mindfulness Training as well.

Mr. Siegel described Physical Restraint is implemented when there is an immediate and significant threat to the safety of students and/or others. The purpose of physical restraint is to calm the child with respect and dignity.

Safe Crisis Management requires focus on the crisis situation and not the physical aspect of the situation. Teachers try to focus on the non-physical aspect of the situation. Philosophy is to be

consistent among adults and students.

Physical Restraint Training is a three-day training for teachers. Specific members of the school staff are identified to take the training. Approximately seven to eight trainings are provided each year and schools submit the members of their staff designated to be trained. When physical restraint is implemented, parents are required to be notified. The Notification Form is completed to formally inform parents. Parents are asked to sign the Notification Form and efforts to get the parent's signature must be documented. This documentation is entered into State of Florida documentation system. Form templates are on the Department of Education website. Once in the system the form is sent to parents via certified mail.

The goal is to prevent the need for physical restraint. To date there have been zero incidents this year. Panel members were assured that every effort is made to contact the parents following an incident. Odie da Silva said that parents should be called when police are called. Ava Goldman responded that the police are only called when there is an involuntary transfer, Baker Act.

Janet McDaniel asked what procedures are in place for non-disabled students. Ms. Goldman responded that Physical Restraint is only for students with disabilities. Security is called for non-disabled students. Non-disabled students are a separate conversation.

Mr. Siegel distributed Florida Department of Education reports about Restraint Incidents by District in 2014-15. Janet McDaniel commented that M-DCPS must be doing something right with ASD students because the numbers are very good.

Rosa Maria Barbara thanked Craig Siegel for a very informative presentation.

Committee Reports

Awards Committee

Kathy Vergara/Jill Brookner

No response.

D/HH Committee

Lynn Miskiel/Linda Reiter

Lynn Miskiel reported that she attended a rule revision meeting in Tallahassee. The committee reviewed the Communication Plan and determined that the Functional Listening Evaluations has been very beneficial for gathering data. The question came up about providing professionals development workshops that allow teachers to get Master Plan points.

Education-Inclusion Committee

Janet McDaniel/Rosalia Gallo

Dr. Gallo reported that the committee finalized their goals. The group discussed the need for professional development regarding inclusion. They also discussed suspensions and brainstormed about creating a survey for program supervisors to learn about the scope of training for paraprofessionals.

Panel Secondary Transition Committee

Chris Reigadas/Ernie Martinez/Jill Brookner

Chris Reigadas reported that the committee discussed the need for a direct link to the minutes through the Panel website. Committee members felt that they needed assistance from Ms. Goldman regarding how to improve the website. The website has not been updated for quite a while. The committee would prefer a link on the main drop down menu to make it easy to access information on the website. Ms. Goldman said that she will get the minutes from Kathy Vergara to post. She emphasized that

District protocol must be followed regarding the website.

The committee would like an update on Employability First from Jill Brookner.

Ad-Hoc Budget Committee

Elias Seife/Dr. Magaly Abrahante

Elias Seife reported that the committee met on December 4th and reviewed IDEA funding formulas to determine out how much Federal money is provided to each state. Shannon Gottardi was able to produce documentation to show how each Florida School District is funded. This information will help us compare our figures with those of other Florida school districts. IDEA funding is discretionary and based on 1999 funding. IDEA funding is not automatic and must be applied for annually.

Nominating Committee

Jackie Needelman - Report as needed

No Report

Steering Committee

Report as needed

No Report

Committee Representation

Attendance Boundary Committee

Kathy Vergara

Ms. Barbara reported that Kathy Vergara represented her at the ABC Committee Meeting. Ms.Vergara reported the meeting focused on an appeal from Coral Gables regarding boundary change recommendations.

Family and Community

Rosa Maria Barbara

Involvement Advisory Committee

Rosa Maria not able to attend and they do not accept an alternate.

Transition Task Force

No Report

Other

Odile da Silva requested an additional presentation from School Police regarding restraint and seclusion. Ava Goldman stated that she can reach out but is concerned that there will be confusion between restraint and seclusion versus involuntary transfer. She will pursue presentation specifically for involuntary transfer.

The following presentations are pending to be scheduled: Accommodations, RTI, GIFT Conference feedback, and IEP development.

Chris Reigadas announced that the Association of Agencies is having an End of Year Meeting and Celebration on December 17 at 10:00 am at Goodwill Industries of South Florida.

Friends of Miami-Dade Public Libraries are having an Annual Book Sale at Main Library on December 9 – 12 from 9:00 to 5:00 pm.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15. Janet McDaniel so moved and Myrna Charlton seconded the

motion.

Next Meeting

The General Membership meeting is scheduled for January 21 at 3:00 pm. Meeting location is to be announced.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen C. Vergara
Secretary