

MINUTES

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

Minutes of December 13, 2012
School Board Administration Building – Room 916
3:00 P.M.

Members Present

Rosa Maria Barbara	Stephanie Mintz	Miguel Suau
Lourdes Bravo	Lynn Miskiel	Kathy Vergara
Elsa Clarke	Christine Reigadas	
Elizabeth Cramer	Linda Reiter	
Ava Goldman	Elaine Silny	

Alternates Present

None

Honorary Members Present

Jacqueline Needelman

School Board Members Present

None

School Personnel Present

Jill Brookner
Sonja Clay
Rosalia Gallo
Kathy Maguire
Mary Paz

Guests Present

Rose Painson, Parent/PLC Haitian Board

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:20 pm.

Introduction and Welcome

Following introductions, Ms. Chris Reigadas, Panel Chair, welcomed members and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Reigadas asked members of the Panel to review the minutes of the meeting of November 15, 2012. Lourdes Bravo moved to approve the minutes as presented. Elsa Clarke seconded the motion. Ms.

Reigadas asked members to approve the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Awards Committee

Kathy Vergara/Jill Brookner

Kathy Vergara distributed the minutes of the December 4, 2012 meeting. Mary Paz has been working on revising the Award of Excellence for Students with Disabilities Application Form. She distributed copies of the latest draft to be reviewed by the members. Ms. Paz asked members to e-mail their comments to her by January 7, 2013. Our plan is to distribute the Application Form throughout the District via the M-DCPS Weekly Briefing in January 2013.

The Awards Committee agreed that the application evaluation process will be conducted through Parent to Parent of Miami. As a member of the Board of Directors of Parent to Parent, Jill Brookner will represent Miami-Dade County Public Schools SPED on the evaluation team. The Awards Committee recommended that two Panel members represent the Panel on the committee. Elizabeth Cramer and Stephanie Mintz volunteered for this role.

The committee would like to recognize and thank Will Gordillo for his years of service to the Panel. In addition, the committee would like to recognize Angel Rodriguez. Ava Goldman recommended that the Panel recognize Alex Lopes, Florida Teacher of the Year, as well. Panel members were in agreement with these recommendations.

Several suggestions were made about advertising and marketing the Awards Ceremony. Discussion followed. The next meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, January 16th, at 2:30 pm at Ruth Krusé Educational Center.

D/HH Committee

Lynn Miskiel/Linda Reiter

Lynn Miskiel reported that the next meeting has been scheduled for January 23, 2013. She continued by stating that last year the committee concentrated on professional development and how to address the zero to three (0-3) population, especially those children needing sign language. It was determined that the responsibility falls under the umbrellas of the Part C Programs (Early Steps North and South).

This year the committee is planning to focus on student placement and gathering data regarding students with hearing loss who are enrolled in M-DCPS. Their discussion about possible objectives included concerns about student placement including transitions from Prekindergarten to Kindergarten to Elementary to Middle to High School, concerns about mentors/role models for students with hearing loss, and concerns about the need for after-school programs for students with hearing loss.

The committee would like to gather data regarding students with hearing loss enrolled in Miami-Dade County Public Schools who are deaf or hard of hearing to assess current and future needs.

Members also discussed the importance of participation on other Panel committees to represent students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Sonja Clay added that she concurred with Lynn's summation of the meeting.

Laurie Malman asked Ms. Miskiel to report that Ms. Malman attended the Dolphin Mall Signing Santa with School Board Member Dr. Lawrence Feldman. The restaurant Cool de Sac sponsored the breakfast. Sign language students from Palmetto, Killian and Braddock Senior High Schools were part of a wonderful program. Everyone had a fabulous time and there is an article about the event in today's Neighbors section of the Miami Herald.

Rosa Maria Barbara added that there are signing presentations at the Adrienne Arsht Center and Playground Theater. Ava Goldman noted students with hearing loss will participate in performances at the Peacock Theater. The students have the opportunity to shadow professional actors. The next performance is scheduled for May 13th.

Education/Inclusion Committee

Trini Lora

No report. Ms. Reigadas will call Trini Lora about the status of the committee.

Panel Secondary Transition Committee

Lourdes Bravo/Jill Brookner

Jill Brookner reported that last year the committee accomplished their goals and that this year they have three new goals. She continued to state that one of the goals is to focus on opportunities for students when they leave M-DCPS. Miami-Dade County Public Schools now has a brochure to address opportunities for students who are over twenty-two years of age.

At their meeting Anthenisia "AJ" Jackson summarized Adult Education and Career Tech Programs. At the present time Adult Education opportunities are Career Tech oriented. Students are required to take a Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), which is on the fourth or fifth grade level. Students who test below the grade level have the opportunity to enter dietetic aide, face, and nails programs. Student must have a high score on the test to qualify for the technology curriculum. Modifications are available but not accommodations. Adult Basic Educations students work on basic education to get their diploma or certificate. Evening classes are provided at twenty centers located in community high schools.

Most students with disabilities are now eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. Grant dollars for the Adults with Disabilities Grant Program are provided through VR and are individualized and target personal outcomes. Reportedly, the funds are currently depleted. Ms. Brookner said that the committee would like to find out what could be done about this. The grant money is used to pay the salary of M-DCPS adult teachers. Miami Springs Adult Education Program and Good Will have teachers funded through this program. The goal is to assist individual students with personal outcomes. Lourdes Bravo commented that this grant program is similar to the programs provided with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities Med Waiver Program. Ms. Bravo said that the committee would like to review the wording of the Adults with Disabilities Grant Program.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools needs a partner to develop the Superintendent's Strategic Plan for students with disabilities who are over twenty-two years of age. Robert Gornto will be able to assist. Perhaps M-DCPS could partner with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities. Ms. Brookner said that that they are going to meet with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities on Tuesday to explore this possibility.

Ms. Goldman announced that M-DCPS is working closely with UM-NSU Card to explore training opportunities for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) who are over the age of twenty-two.

Ms. Goldman emphasized that they are looking at the full spectrum of students with disabilities who are on a regular diploma track. Rosalia Gallo agreed that this is very important. Another important issue is the difficulties students have once they enter higher education.

Discussion followed about Medicaid. Rosalia Gallo clarified that M-DCPS is a Medicaid provider. Ava Goldman clarified that M-DCPS bills Medicaid for fee for service and administrative services. Medicaid dollars bring in approximately eleven million dollars on an annual basis.

Chris Reigadas asked about the video. Ms. Brookner responded that the DD Council completed a video. Members of the DD Council heard about the great work in Miami and made several videos that were vignettes highlighting specific students with disabilities and their journey. The committee will build from DD Council videos. There is an online link to download the videos.

Ms. Reigadas asked for updates on Naturelinks, a program for young adults with disabilities. Ms. Brookner replied that they are currently working on ironing out legal details with M-DCPS and City of Miami. As of yesterday, the City of Miami and Naturelinks are going to work together without M-DCPS. As a result, the program will now have to be fee based. It will be located at Simpson Park and the price is \$24 per day.

Ms. Brookner reported that the program set up with TJ Max is going very well. Ms. Brookner thanked Chris Reigadas for her assistance in setting up this program. She also reported that a graduate from Project Search now has a job with benefits at a local restaurant.

Ava Goldman provided an update regarding college fairs, College Advisory Placement (CAP) advisors, and college preparation presentations. Rosa Maria Barbara said that her daughter, Marianna, had been meeting with a CAP counselor at her school. Jackie Needelman offered to assist Ms. Barbara with the process. Discussion followed. Everyone agreed that a checklist would be very helpful. Elaine Silny suggested that graduating students write a letter to younger students. Stephanie Mintz said that her son, Kevin Mintz, included much of the information in his presentation to the Panel last spring. Students really have to learn to be advocates for themselves.

Family and Community Involvement Advisory Committee

Chris Reigadas

Miguel Suau reported that the Family and Community Involvement Advisory Committee discussed the "I Care Initiative" led by Paul Wilson to change the culture in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. This program is very similar to a customer service program where video vignettes will be produced. In order to be effected the initiative will be implemented system wide for all employees. They are consulting with Miami-Dade College regarding this initiative.

Ms. Reigadas commented that this initiative began several months ago. Everyone agreed that customer service is critical. Mr. Suau said that Panel members will also be asked to participate in the initiative.

In addition, there is a surplus projected next year. This depends on sequestration, which may create a nine percent budget cut. Personnel hired after 2007 are now required to make a three percent contribution to State of Florida retirement system.

Attendance Boundary Committee

Yolanda Herrera

No report.

Other

Ms. Reigadas reported briefly about the Bylaws Meeting that took place on November 29, 2012. Question was raised at the meeting if individuals who had represented an agency for many years could become Honorary Members. Chris Reigadas would like to offer Jane Blake the opportunity of becoming an Honorary Member. Ms. Blake served on the Panel as the representative of the Florida Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists (FLASHA) for many years. Everyone agreed that Ms. Blake should be invited to be an Honorary Member.

Ms. Reigadas announced that Doris Shorkey will represent Children's Medical Services (CMS) on the Panel in the future. Ms. Shorkey is a Senior Community Health Nursing Supervisor.

Ms. Barbara announced that the Family Care Council is in the process of approving a new member to represent the Family Care Council on the Panel.

Ms. Reigadas wished everyone Happy Holidays. She asked Steering Committee Meeting members to remain for a brief meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:09 pm.

Next Meeting

The General Membership meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2013 at 3:00 pm in Room 916 of the School Board Administration Building.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen C. Vergara