



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2018–12:00 PM-1:30 PM**

May 2018 – April 2019

Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Austin Scott, Chair	P	4	0
Dr. Allen Zeman, Vice Chair	P	4	0
Robert Audet	P	2	3
Linda Barnett	A	2	2
Maureen S. Dinnen	A	1	4
Amy Ellowitz	A	2	2
Thomas Harrison	A	0	5
Deniece Jones	A	4	1
Terry Large	A	4	1
Jennifer Lovell	P	5	0
Dr. Heather Munns	A	1	4
Sarah Owen DelNegri	A	2	2
Lincoln Pastuer	A	2	2
Dr. Maureen Persi	A	3	2
Christopher Relyea	A	3	2
Betty Shelley	A	1	4
Lillian Small	A	1	4
Dr. Michele Verdi Knapp	A	3	1

Staff/Guests

Junia Robinson, Staff Liaison

I. Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Austin Scott, Chair

II. Attendance by Roll Call, 18 appointed members; 10 needed for quorum

As of this date, October 26, 2018, 4 of the 18 appointed members were present, which did not constitute a quorum.

III. Current Business

A. Discussion for Fort Lauderdale Gap in education

Chair Scott explained that the Board has been on the record talking about major changes in the fundamental structure of education in Fort Lauderdale including Public

Charter Schools. This is an issue that Commissioner Moraitis is going to continue advocating as long as she is on the Commission.

There was a suggestion to get people together to discuss what gap is going to be persuasive to the City Commission; what data should be found compelling to the gap, and what conclusion or analysis is needed so it could be used in the most effective way to provide information to make those choices.

It was noted that State grades are provided largely based on test scores and a new set of State grades came out two months ago with the 2017/2018 scores. Perhaps those scores could be updated and a five to ten-year trend by each of the schools in Fort Lauderdale could be put together on a map saying, "Here is a historical performance of schools as measured by the Standard Test Scores of Fort Lauderdale". When doing an analysis, there is East Fort Lauderdale and West Fort Lauderdale, with A and B schools east of U.S. 1 and C, D, and F schools to the west. There is little variance out west regarding elementary schools.

Dr. Zeman believed that a 10 to 15-minute presentation could be made to the Commission with a picture of the City and grades on a trend line on Slide #1. At that time the Commission could be told that schools east of U.S. 1 in Fort Lauderdale are similar to the best schools in the east Counties and schools in west Fort Lauderdale are similar to average schools in other Counties. Dr. Zeman proposed that as the first gap. Data would be the Florida Department of Education grades based on test scores and the analysis would be to compare obvious divisions in the City compared to other Counties so there is some reference point for whether Fort Lauderdale schools east are as good as the quadrant of Dade County or Seminole County. This leads to whether people are going to private schools or to different public schools, which makes the schools look worse than they are as far as actual operations.

Out of boundary attendance was mentioned and Dr. Zeman pointed out that another definition gap would be when students and families decide to attend schools outside of their home district. Data is available from the Broward County Public Schools that shows the magnitude and variance in out of boundary school attendance. The point is the effect of involved parents making the gap more dramatic between the good and bad schools. Kids can go to out of boundary schools if schools are under-enrolled. Data shows there were no under-enrolled grade schools.

Ms. Lovell commented that the parents want to be involved in a lot of schools, but parents in the west do not care. She questioned what outcome Chair Scott was looking for even if the statistics came back that people are driving to other schools.

Chair Scott thought data would show where the residents were going. Numbers are not as bad as they could be, but there are numbers that unfairly hurt the schools. To him, it shows the downward spiral after the other metrics.

Mr. Audet questioned how children get to go to different high schools when they live in a certain district.

Chair Scott understood that there is basically open schooling if a school is under-enrolled. There is a department that will explain magnet programs, other creative academic programs, hardship applications, etc.

Dr. Zeman stated another way that effect gets perpetuated is if one kid in a family figures out a way to get into a school through Air Force JROTC, then the siblings get to go because one sibling is there.

Chair Scott commented that it is an interesting statistic, but it is something that should be on file because it throws off the numbers.

It was noted that the number of kids living in the Stranahan High School District that do not go to Stranahan could be shown. The has a capacity for 2,000 students and there are 1,200 students this year. This information could be put in a slide so if needed it could be pulled.

Dr. Zeman mentioned the following proposals:

- Interviews be conducted between an EAB deputized member and Principals in every school in Fort Lauderdale where an interview script would be generated with five or six questions; data could be brought back within a month.
- Put together, based on zip code information and other information, a supply and demand for every school. Data should be obtained for any school that has open enrollment as well as any school that is under-enrolled.
- Get the rules for enrollment on paper.

Bayview Elementary School was mentioned. It was noted that the City owns a lot of land nearby and the City might think ahead of time about making a deal on a land swap with the County to extend what would be a remarkable school for 50-60 years, so it has more capacity for a proven system.

Chair Scott advised that the School Board has creative ideas and it would be nice if they would share how that works. There could be restrictions that could save the Board time.

Dr. Zeman indicated that a single request letter would have to be done. A motion could be made at the next meeting to make that request.

Chair Scott questioned why money is not spent on a new school until there is a hard demand and why money cannot be found for creative new buildings.

Dr. Zeman stated there is a process and a bureaucracy behind thinking through populations at schools. Broward County Schools own and maintain a lot of properties that used to be schools that were converted into offices. It is very easy to kick people out of the offices and reopen the buildings as schools if needed. An easy question to ask would be what alternatives the School Board has and what process would allow Broward County to open a new school in Fort Lauderdale.

Ms. Lovell questioned the status of the money that Northeast High School was supposed to get.

Chair Scott advised that Northeast High School was originally slated for a total campus replacement. When this Board was asked to suggest that to the City Commission for endorsement, they were told what the school needed and that was half the money needed; the other half would be determined later. Air conditioning work has started as well as roof repairs. It sounded like they have come to an agreement on what to do for a new cafeteria, locker room, and a field house, but it was unknown if people would be excited enough to affect enrollment numbers.

Ms. Lovell has heard different things, but was not aware that the HVAC was getting repaired; the last she heard, the roof was still caved in.

Chair Scott stated that the plan was approved a month ago.

Ms. Robinson indicated that Betty Shelly attends a lot of the Northeast High School meetings; she will attempt to get updates, so the Board could get a status.

Dr. Zeman commented that the Superintendent shook up the people when doing the execution of those things dramatically and took some business actions that put the contractor on notice regarding their performance. Dr. Zeman thought it would be smart to have the Broward County employee who was supervising the contractor come to the December meeting prepared with a presentation of what is being done for Fort Lauderdale schools in detail. This Board should know what is being done to the City schools. The person in charge should be invited back to a meeting a year from now to review the list and have discussion.

Ms. Robinson mentioned that she would look for that person's name. At the last meeting, there was a request to invite the Superintendent to a meeting, which she is working on. In addition, the person in charge would also be invited.

Ms. Lovell clarified that Dr. Runcie was for the November meeting and the other person was for the December meeting.

Chair Scott mentioned the press and their story about the land at the Executive Airport. That affects the Board's discussions a little and there will be public feedback. The City is looking at an aviation themed Charter School at the Executive Airport and they are going to respond to pressure at some point, so it would be something to monitor. The name of the bond is SMART bond; Science, Art, Math, and Technology.

Ms. Robinson commented that she found a name on the School Board website of Leo Bobadilla, Chief Facilities and Construction Officer.

Chair Scott stated that the person was in charge of Facility Maintenance.

Dr. Zeman questioned how hard it would be to get a one-page graphic out of the School Board that shows how many programs in the Fort Lauderdale schools throw off statistics. It is not fair to judge the public schools because of stereotyping.

Chair Scott indicated that the population of Fort Lauderdale has many characteristics, such as language and other challenges. There is a substantial amount of evidence that the Superintendent is right about regarding the next big wave in education, which is the idea that schools have become the emotional wellbeing for kids; they have taken over the role of the family. The best performing schools academically are going to figure out how to take care of the kids and keep them in school through dinnertime. That model is a way to overcome the challenges for a lot of people. The problem is that the focus is on teacher quality or student teacher ratio and it turns out the kids are coming to school hungry. Chair Scott did not think the City of Fort Lauderdale Commission needs to get too far away from the central issue of what the problems are, what the City could do, or what the County should be asked to do. One very clear option for the City is to get a Public Charter School.

Dr. Zeman stated there are potential solutions. There could be a League City funded extracurricular program that helps the neighboring school.

Ms. Lovell felt the Board could easily get distracted looking at different things; perhaps there could be three main things to address.

Dr. Zeman suggested gathering information available and what should be presented to the Board. Five to ten things might be found, and the Board may wish to share four or five with one or two in the background, dropping the others. Dr. Zeman reiterated that a hard hitting 10 to 15-minute presentation should be made to the Mayor and Commission saying, "This is Your City". The Commission should be told about the East West divide, the lack of a Public Charter School, and about interviews conducted with Principals saying there is no plan to get better, that they see threats far more than opportunities. The Board does not have an answer other than the Public Charter School for the big issue, which the City might want to straddle U.S. 1 so it could draw from both sides and focus on technology or leadership or something that matters to kids and demonstrate that the City can develop and educate kids in a new and different way. There could even be Charter Schools where teachers rotate between the schools, so they get to see what excellent looks like; several things could be recommended. The Board is requesting 10% of the City's growth in revenue to fund a Public Charter School, should that be an option to any of the gaps.

Ms. Lovell liked the SWAT analysis idea of meeting with the Principals. Sending a letter about creative ideas the School Board was also mentioned as well as their special programs.

Dr. Zeman advised that another piece of data the Board already has was collected by Dr. Verdi-Knapp. Dr. Zeman thought that information should be included because some parts of the City are close to 100% and other parts are closer to 50%. It would be useful to know where the drop off is from fifth to sixth grade and from eighth to ninth grade.

Chair Scott stated that all four members agreed if budget or costs come up at the next Board meeting that is not the Board's problem. If there is a sense of scope of the money, that could be shared. As advisors, the Board should tell the Commissioners how much things cost.

Dr. Zeman requested that Board members volunteer for these proposals and report back. The next meeting is November 15, 2018. Dr. Zeman noted that he could do the zip code search. He questioned if Chair Scott could do survey results of the City of Fort Lauderdale and asked who could take the first draft at an interview for a SWAT analysis. Dr. Audet volunteered.

Ms. Robinson believed she had information regarding the survey and education portion because it was requested at the last meeting.

Dr. Zeman commented that Ms. Verdi-Knapp had the flow information and questioned if anyone had time to pull the supply and demand together. Mr. Audet volunteered but had no idea where to start.

Dr. Zeman advised that he would send the Board the point of contact at Broward County Schools that does statistics, Leslie Joseph. Ask Ms. Joseph for the demand of each school that is an open enrollment school in Fort Lauderdale and enrollment numbers; it is called FISH Capacity Usage.

Ms. Lovell suggested that rules for enrollment also be gathered.

Dr. Zeman questioned if Mr. Audet could ask for the rules for enrollment while getting the FISH scores.

Dr. Zeman questioned if Chair Austin could draft the language for the process of opening a new school, which could be proposed at the next meeting since it would be a Board action. Dr. Zeman believed a motion was needed for the EAB to send something. He also asked if a paragraph could be drafted on considerations. It basically would be asking what the process would be when a new school opens other than the population driven allocation of schools and the other draft would be what some of the alternatives are that have been considered in the past that seem to have been most feasible given all the constraints with new school construction.

Dr. Zeman clarified that he would do the Department of Education grades and the zip code work; Chair Scott would do the survey results; Ms. Robinson would take a record of the Principal interview and the two-part request to the School Board; and Mr. Audet would do the supply and demand and rules for enrollment. Dr. Zeman clarified that the supply and demand is school based.

Dr. Zeman had information that Frank Gerardi was Leading the SMART program and noted that he would like Mr. Gerardi to be invited to one of the meetings prior to the end of the year. It was noted that the December meeting is on December 20, 2018, which is the third Thursday, a couple of days before the weekend and holiday.

Ms. Robinson stated that the Power Point presentation from the consulting firm who did the City survey, specifically education, was being forwarded to the Board. If anything is needed, contact her directly. The link to the survey results was also being attached.

Dr. Zeman questioned what, if anything, should be done to attempt gaining from private schools.

Ms. Lovell believed they should focus on the public schools because that is where they can make an impact.

Chair Scott hoped that someday this Board could think about City private school ventures the same way as City public school ventures are thought about. Chair Scott

mentioned that Public Charter Schools are treated like an infection as opposed to saying, "Those are our kids too". The City should care just as much no matter what parents decide is the best way to get an education.

Ms. Robinson requested a month's notice when the Board wants to have a presentation in front of the Commission so a Workshop could be scheduled. If the Board will be ready in February or March she needs to know by December.

Dr. Zeman indicated that the Board is looking for a Workshop the first week of January.

Ms. Robinson advised that she would have that conversation with the Clerk's Office the end of November.

Dr. Zeman advised that the title of the Workshop is "The State of Education in Your City".

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:19 p.m.

[Minutes transcribed by C. Guifarro, Prototype, Inc.]

Attachments: