



# Broward County Public Schools

## Parent/Community Involvement Task Force

### Meeting Minutes

**KC WRIGHT ADMINISTRATION BLDG.  
10<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**

**OCTOBER 25, 2011 / 5:30 PM TO 8:00 PM**

Chair: Mary Fertig

Facilitator: Jeffrey Moquin

Present: Janet Bravo, Bernie Kemp, Jodi Klein, Doug Kruse, Andrea Lubell, Gloria Moschella, Lew Naylor, Scott Neely, Linda Nestor, Melodee Putt, Laurie Rich Levinson, Elisa Wolfe

- [Call to Order](#)

Ms. Fertig called the meeting to order.

- [Approval of Meeting Minutes](#)

The August 25, 2011 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

- [Task Force Updates](#)

Ms. Fertig distributed two documents:

- (1) A transcript of the comment cards returned from the October 6, 2011 Parent Forum at Plantation High.
- (2) The format (outline) for the written report of findings and recommendations for submission to the School Board.

Laurie Rich Levinson, School Board Member, stated the findings of this Task Force will be used to review and revise existing policies.

Ms. Fertig announced a one-month extension will be requested to complete the report. She stated the idea is to utilize the data and research to arrive at recommendations. Mr. Moquin indicated this would be a layered process. We are still in the data gathering phase, which will lead to recommendations for a final report.

Doug Kruse stated there is not a “one size fits all” paradigm for parent involvement. It will vary by school.

- [Sub-committee Reports](#)

#### Business Outreach

Andrea Lubell and Elisa Wolfe reported conducting a survey to learn what schools are doing well. Broward Alliance was invited to address this subcommittee on November 9, 2011. Members are looking at increasing the District’s revenue through advertising and will integrate some of the ideas discussed at a recent School Board workshop on this issue.

Mrs. Rich Levinson stated a District-wide Business outreach forum is in the works, to gather as much data as possible and discuss ways businesses can get involved. The target date is December 7, 2011, and the new Superintendent plans to attend.

#### Community Outreach

Although no sub-committee co-chairs were present at tonight’s meeting, Ms. Fertig indicated they are planning to hold a non-profit fair in November 2011 to discuss the community’s relationship with the District.

#### Municipal Relations

Lew Naylor reported this subcommittee developed a questionnaire to give to advisory boards and municipalities. More than half of the cities have already provided feedback. He contacted Broward League of Cities and will attend their November 3, 2011 Executive Director’s meeting in Hollywood. Ideas garnered from the questionnaires and subcommittee members will be fleshed out at the meeting.

Mrs. Rich Levinson reported efforts to increase attendance at the third, forthcoming public forum.

Elisa Wolfe would like to hear from more involved parents, including Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and School Advisory Council (SAC) members, at the public forums. She also hopes for parents to present constructive solutions and recommendations at the forums, in addition to discussing challenges they face. Ms. Fertig framed the grievances voiced at recent forums as a lesson that people want their grievances heard.

Mr. Kruse stated the District phone blasts are sometimes lengthy. He recommended they be more succinct to get the message across, for example, when informing parents about a public forum. Mrs. Rich Levinson indicated the phone blast for the third parent forum, November 10, 2011, will occur a week prior to the event.

### Communications

Mr. Kruse stated the fundamental philosophy of customer service needs to be operationalized at schools. Communications from the schools (directly from principals, for example) may be more effective than District phone blasts.

This committee will invite an Area Superintendent to come to a meeting and discuss ways schools can make parents feel more welcome.

Mr. Naylor recommended the District use its Twitter account to advertise the parent forums. Mr. Moquin indicated some schools have their own, individual Twitter accounts. Ms. Lubell suggested Facebook communications to parents. Linda Nestor, PTA President, stated many people are getting their information from Facebook more than TV news because it is instant and brief.

Ms. Fertig suggested distributing fliers advertising the November 10, 2011 parent forum at high schools football games. She will provide the paper for the fliers.

A master list of parents' preferred methods of communication was requested. Mr. Moquin reiterated communication is personal to the individual. The District maintains information on students. It should also maintain information on parents' preferred methods of communication.

Utilizing School Board secretaries' mailing lists was also recommended.

Mr. Moquin announced a public information officer position is being created in the District.

Several members indicated the style and language of the parent forum invitation should be more user-friendly and inviting.

### Research

Bernie Kemp, PTA Representative, stated his sub-committee was asked to review the prospect of advertising on school buses. A new bill on this topic is being proposed. In addition, it was recommended the Research sub-committee look into a cell phone application to reach parents.

Although Mr. Kemp reported not receiving research requests from the other subcommittees, Mrs. Rich Levinson requested his sub-committee research parent involvement models in other Districts and areas.

Gloria Moschella referred to comedian Bill Cosby's model encouraging high school students to graduate. She asked Mr. Kemp to research this model, which has been covered by the national media.

Ms. Fertig asked Mr. Kemp to research other school district's effective means of communication.

### School Outreach

Melodee Putt stated the District's website is trying to cover all bases and added she observed a resistance to paper communications as they are expensive. However, for many people, that is their preferred method as they may not have access to technology.

Jodi Klein stated the age of a child plays a role in the parent's preferred method of communication. Parent of elementary school students often prefer messages sent home in their children's backpacks, whereas high school often do not like this method.

Mr. Naylor suggested utilizing the District's online student grading system, Pinnacle (through a splash page) as a vehicle for messages.

Janet Bravo suggested printing two parent forum invitations per page to save on paper costs.

Ms. Nestor stated some school principals view the parent survey as a higher priority than other principals, and that message gets passed on to the students, who in turn communicate the importance of completing the survey to their parents. Several members indicated a deadline for the survey is needed.

Ms. Putt announced the School Outreach sub-committee will begin school visits. Mrs. Rich Levinson confirmed Ms. Putt may use the parent task force introduction letter from Donnie Carter as well as the video when reaching out to schools. Ms. Putt indicated the school visits will be coordinated by subcommittee member Mary Margaret Langton. To sign up for a school visit, task force members should email Ms. Langton at [mmlangton@hotmail.com](mailto:mmlangton@hotmail.com) to sign up for a school visit.

Ms. Moschella recommended utilizing schools' top students to assist with distributing the surveys. In turn, they would earn community service hours or

extra credit. Mr. Naylor reminded task force members to get the principal's permission before visiting any school.

Scott Neely, Principal, reminded the task force of the District's zones, each with a head principal. He recommended conveying task force messages at their monthly meetings as an effective communication method.

Ms. Fertig suggested holding a focus group with the principals to solicit their views on improving parent communication. In addition, she stated the task force can learn from charter school parents. She asked the School Outreach sub-committee to talk to parents of charter school students to obtain their views on parent and community involvement. Finally, she recommended meeting with chairs from existing District organizations (including DAC, PTA, the Audit committee, Diversity, and Facilities).

Mr. Naylor added the District has its own parent involvement department, the Office of Parents, Business and Community Partnerships. Mr. Kruse stated a representative from that department, Paul Gress, attended a Communications sub-committee meeting and discussed parents' viewpoints. Mr. Naylor also recommended attending a Parent Involvement Communication Council (PICC) meeting. The next one is Monday, October 17, 2011.

Ms. Fertig discussed the issue of sub-committee co-chairs voting if they do not attend the meetings. Mr. Naylor suggested they should send a representative when they cannot attend.

Ms. Wolfe recommended creating a District-wide forum, online, where people can voice their opinions and share success stories.

- [Adjourn](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

- [Future Meetings](#)

- Wednesday, November 2, 2011 – Middle School Forum at Indian Ridge Middle School, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
- Thursday, November 10, 2011 – Public Hearing (Parent Forum) at Coconut Creek High School, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
- Monday, November 28, 2011 - Task Force Meeting at KCW, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM