



Broward County Public Schools

Parent/Community Involvement Task Force

Meeting Minutes

McFATTER TECHNICAL CENTER

CULINARY ARTS BUILDING - BISTRO

JANUARY 21, 2014 / 5:30 PM TO 7:30 PM

Members: Debbie Aleman, Janet Bravo, Jodi Klein, Gloria Moschella, Lew Naylor,
Laurie Rich Levinson, Cathie Starkey, Elisa Wolfe

Guests: Andrea Mathieu, Wanda Robinson, Charles Webster

Facilitator: Todd Sussman (in Mary Fertig's absence)

- **Call to Order**

Mr. Sussman called the meeting to order.

- **Welcome new members**

Ms. Rich Levinson welcomed the newest Task Force member, Debbie Aleman, appointed by Board Chair Patricia Good.

Ms. Aleman participated on the PTAs at both Chapel Trail Elementary and West Broward High. She has two children attending our District schools.

- **Update on Task Force recommendations**

Ms. Rich Levinson presented the following updates:

Emergency Contact Card - The Superintendent has instructed schools to enter new information obtained from the cards to capture parents' preferred methods of communication (for example, requesting text announcements from schools).

Academy for Parent Engagement - Wanda Robinson has initiated the events and will facilitate. (More information in next section of these minutes.)

Ms. Fertig will attend Board meetings on a quarterly basis to provide progress reports on the implementation of the recommendations. Ms. Rich Levinson will continue to meet with staff to monitor progress.

The Partners in Education (PIE) program has implemented some of the recommendations. Adriane Jackson is the new person in charge of the PIE program.

The District is developing a survey for mentorships and partnerships

Ms. Rich Levinson reported on improved communications between the District and municipalities, a positive development. She also discussed the League of Cities meeting she attended. Restoring capital millage and raising the operational budget are on the front burner.

Ms. Robinson explained the Superintendent's Screening Committee process to bring businesses on board – to partner with schools.

- **Academy for Parent Engagement**

Ms. Robinson reported on this program, also known as “The Academy” (formerly “ACE”), which is similar to “Parent University.”

Mr. Sussman showed a brief video of Ms. Robinson's latest Academy event, “Hot Food, Hot Topics,” pertaining to healthy cooking tips for parents, which was covered by NBC News on January 20, 2014. Here is the link:

<http://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/Broward-County-Schools-Try-to-Teach-Parents-to-Cook-to-Their-Kids-241179091.html>

At the event, parents received brand new crockpots.

United Way and Memorial Healthcare have supported these Academy events.

The Academy will have a framework (with “pillars”) as follows:

1. Health and Wellness
Ms. Robinson showed the groups a cookbook containing healthy recipes and tips for using a crockpot.
2. Home & School Connection
3. College & Career Readiness
4. Parent Empowerment

She is also developing a toolkit for the Academy, so schools can see the framework and prepare for events.

Mr. Webster announced he is planning a coalition of education advisory boards -- to help locate resources for the District. He also stated the "Hot Topics" events were "high energy" events -- fun for parents, in addition to providing helpful tips.

Task Force members were asked to volunteer at Academy events.

- **Non-Profit Forum**

The previous Non-Profit Forum, held November 14, 2011, was well-attended by non-profit organizations throughout Broward County. Many agencies provide valuable services to schools.

Mr. Sussman informed the group of the proposed date for the next (2nd) Non-Profit Forum, and the date was then finalized:

Thursday, March 6, 2014, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Sussman temporarily reserved the Board Room and Pre-Function Room for this event. (Update: the location has be finalized.)

Ms. Fertig and Mr. Sussman will prepare an announcement / invitations for the agencies.

The following individuals indicated they will participate at the event (which will include lunch): Ms. Moschella, Ms. Wolfe, Ms. Rich Levinson, Ms. Mathieu, and Ms. Robinson. Ms. Starkey will assist with details prior to the event.

- **High School Forum**

Ms. Fertig's office prepared elaborate binders containing the High School Forum meeting notes and survey responses. Mr. Sussman distributed these to each attendee and asked them to look through them. We then discussed the following:

What worked:

Mr. Naylor: Participants who showed up were very active (including booster clubs).

Ms. Klein: Breaking it down by groups (teachers, booster clubs, etc.) led to open conversations.

Ms. Robinson: The arrangement and setup were very friendly. People enjoyed being asked to share their feelings; parents warmed up because they were in their own groups; people didn't want to leave.

Ms. Bravo: The event was held at a respectful time and over by 8:30 p.m. Parents had to work the next day, so the beginning and end times were very helpful.

What can be improved:

Mr. Naylor: Not all schools participated.

Ms. Mathieu: What are the topics they will discuss in their groups? Give the list out sooner.

Mr. Naylor: Post on the PCITF website what prior forums discussed.

Ms. Starkey: Email the survey in advance to participants.

Ms. Robinson: Note-takers should be confirmed sooner; some did not show.

Ms. Bravo: At sign in, provide the room number – this occurred at the 2nd forum. Have greeters and escorts to direct them to the rooms.

Ms. Klein: Hold the forums at a high school; it's easier to get volunteers that way.

Ms. Rich Levinson stated Indian Ridge Middle was a central location; so the nearby Western High might be a good idea.

Data:

Ms. Rich Levinson: The purpose is to share the findings with the schools. Post it on the website and email the responders. Break the data into separate lists (best fundraisers; most successful events, etc.).

Ms. Klein: We need to address the participants' ideas and thoughts.

Mr. Naylor recommended a "Best Practices" site for administrators to see what is happening at other schools.

Ms. Wolfe: This information will help teachers (i.e. best field trip, best bus company).

Ms. Mathieu: Share attendees' contact information (email addresses) so they can contact each other (or have the attendees share it with each other).

Ms. Moschella: Provide index cards for an exchange of contact information.

Ms. Wolfe: Ask District staff to attend (one person in each room) to answer questions.

Mr. Naylor stated the person who attended from the auditor's office was helpful.

- **Middle School Forum**

Mr. Sussman distributed separate binders containing the Middle School Forum notes and survey responses, for the members to take with them and review. We will discuss the Middle School Forum at the next Task Force meeting.

- **Dates for future Middle School and High School forums.**

We would like to get the dates on the District calendar earlier.

Members liked Monday nights for the forums, less conflicts with other events.

Ms. Moschella questioned why the forums were in the fall; perhaps later in the year would be better.

Ms. Klein and Ms. Moschella felt that the same parents would attend if the forums were held annually.

Ms. Rich Levinson stated the goal of forums is to share best practices and what's working in the schools.

Ms. Mathieu suggested changing the focus each year, having different questions.

Ms. Moschella suggested informing parents of the benefit of attending the forums when they are advertised, to attract "new blood."

- **Next Task Force Meeting**

The group requested Monday, February 24, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. (Update: Mr. Sussman reserved McFatter's Bistro for this meeting.)

Mr. Sussman requested the members to email him and copy Ms. Fertig, as soon as possible, for any corrections they request to information in the High School and Middle School Forums binders that were distributed.

At the next meet; we will discuss The Academy, the upcoming Non-Profit Forum questions, and last fall's Middle School Forum.

- **Adjournment**

Mr. Sussman adjourned the meeting.