

# MINUTES

**District and School Budget Priorities Parent Subcommittee  
Family and Community Involvement Advisory Committee  
Miami-Dade County Public Schools  
1450 N.E. 2 Avenue, Room 916  
Miami, FL 33132  
Monday, May 19, 2014**

**Members Present:** Mr. Orlando Arronte, Mr. Eddy Barea, Mr. Joseph Gebara, Ms. Belkis Gutierrez, Ms. Sandy Baker Hoover, Mr. Don Kearns, Ms. Stephanie Keime, Ms. Minthra Moodley, Ms. Jennifer Moon, Ms. Rose Painson, Ms. Jacqueline Perez, Ms. Alice Mensch Raval, Ms. Karen Rivo, Mr. Elias Seife, Mr. Thomas Spaulding, Mr. Charles Viscito, Mr. John Watson, Ms. Jennifer Wollmann.

**Members Excused Absent:** Ms. Beatriz Alonso, Ms. Isabelle Exume, Ms. Melby Gonzalez, Ms. Susan Marie Kairalla, Ms. Lorraine Real.

**Alternate Excused Absent:** Ms. Maria Norton.

**Members Absent:** Ms. Nagib Aboud, Ms. Frances Effio, Mr. Enrique Escallon, Ms. Rosie Felipe, Ms. Christi Gonzalez, Mr. Jay Jefferson, Ms. Michelle Johnson, Mr. Nelson Rodriguez, Ms. Naomi Pinera Simon.

**Others Present:** The Vice-Chair of the School Board Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Ms. Judith Marte, Ms. Iraida Mendez-Cartaya, Ms. Patricia Lee, Ms. Viviana Jordan, Ms. Lelany Barea, Student Mr. Jovan Joseph, Ms. Angela Jones.

**I. Welcome:** Mr. Eddy Barea, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m. He gave a heartfelt welcome to the Vice-Chair of the School Board Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, committee, staff and guests. He then asked for the introductions and they were made.

**II. Minutes:** The Chair Mr. Barea asked for a review and the approval of the April 7, 2014 minutes. They were voted on, seconded and accepted to be filed.

**III. Update on Legislation Session:** Ms. Mendez-Cartaya explained that the legislative session ended as scheduled and we can characterize the FY 2013-14 sessions as successful, though it could have been better. Now as we get ready for the FY 2014-15 these are the legislature highlights as follows:

- **Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO)** – For PECO the legislature changed the way it is funded. They reduced the funding from the sales tax that is levied for energy, moving the sales tax and tax receipt on energy to fund PECO educational facilities in the state of Florida.
- **Value Adjustment Board (VAB)** – Bringing resolution to the VAB, was nailing biting, it went down to the last minute in the legislature. The ruling now in place allow districts, if their property appraiser does not certify their roll by July 19<sup>th</sup>, they will be able to access the funding, that otherwise would not be available until the following year. Another issue is that the Appropriations Bill requires school districts to have a certain amount of revenue from the VAB, but when the property appraiser does not finish the tax roll, districts do not receive the appropriated generated revenue.
- **Charter Schools** – For the first time since 1996 there has been no substantial changes in the legislature that passed regarding the charter schools.
- **In-State Tuition** – Students that have graduated from a Florida High School with a diploma will be able to access in-state tuition. In the past students had to pay out-of-state tuition which made secondary education much more expensive.
- **Accountability System** – We asked for a three year freeze on the school grading system, though they did not accept this, the legislation did state that for a one year there will be no consequences associated with a grade D or F that was added. They are shifting our standards and the assessment test for next year, no FCAT. The other issue that relates to students is for the special educational programs, there will be a waiver process that students may be exempt from

state assessment tests for one year or even be permanently exempted and this is pending the Commissioner of Education approval. For ELL students that have been in the country for two years their grades/performance on the statewide assessment will be counted towards their school grade. This ruling that the Commissioner created has now been modified from a one year residency back to two years.

- **Dual Enrollment** – We did not get all the funding that we asked for, but we did get some of the funding. The funding is as follows 1) the Florida Legislature did appropriate \$10 million for Dual Enrollment textbooks, 2) they also clarified for the summer term that the school district is not responsible for paying tuition to the post-secondary institution and 3) if the post-secondary or dual enrollment classes are offered on school's grounds and taught by school district teachers, then the school district does not have to pay anything to the post-secondary institution.
- **Scholar Designation** – For high school seniors, there was a requirement that if you wanted to get a scholar designation on your diploma the student had to have passed the End-of-Course (EOC) exam for both history and biology. The department of education had ruled if the student had taken AP or IB US history and biology and passed, it did not count, that they needed to pass the regular history and biology exams. Now in HB 7031 which states that if they take the higher level exams and pass, it will be counted.

Those were the legislature highlights for the FY 2014-15. The following points are our budgetary highlights that we are addressing in the legislature, Ms. Mendez-Cartaya emphasized. Our main objective is to receive our fair funding from the state for our children. The budgetary highlights are as follows:

- The Voucher Bill, amended SB 850 to include the Florida Corporate Tax Scholarship Program, it increased the income thresholds for eligibility and they eliminated the requirement that the student had to attend a public school to be eligible. They also created a personal learning account for disabled students with special needs, like Cerebral palsy, Autism, Down syndrome and other special needs that were defined in the statutes. The school district would have to provide the IEP for each student. The monies would go into an account for allowable expenditures which includes tuition and provides curriculum. If a parent is homeschooling their child, they would be able to access different types of therapies.
- Traditional Public Schools will receive an allocation of \$50 million out of Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) dollars. For the first time in 3 years that traditional public schools are receiving PECO funding.
- School districts across the state share in an increase of \$574 million or 3.14%.
- On student base the increase is \$176.
- Our specific increase is \$78.3 million or 3.29%, that is slightly higher than the statewide average.
- In the budget there is a requirement to provide an additional hour of instructions to the 300 lowest performing Elementary schools. They are exploring the results of whether extending the instructional day by one hour or extending the school year is a better policy for student learning and student achievement. We are hoping to proffer a recommendation, assuming that the Education Board approved flexibility to the local school districts, whether they want to have an extended day or extended year for the low performing Elementary schools.
- New World School of the Arts is receiving an increase in funding of \$150,000.
- Digital Classrooms Allocation statewide was \$49 million.

Now that you have heard the legislative session updates of our allocation from the state, the budget development is the next step and this is Ms. Marte expertise. Despite the good news that we had a decent Florida Legislation Session and education has received an increase of \$78.3 million, it will still be a very difficult budget balancing year, with the high rising costs to factor in.

Ms. Mendez-Cartaya then thanked the parent committee and the chair, Mr. Barea for their dedicated work in the schools, as well as being advocates in Tallahassee. She thanked them for being active throughout their communities, for this the school district is ever so grateful. After discussion was made and questions answered, Mr. Barea and Ms. Marte thanked Ms. Mendez-Cartaya for the updates on the legislative session.

**IV. Committee' Recommendations:** Ms. Mare turned this portion of the meeting over to the chair; Mr. Barea. He advised the committee and Ms. Marte that he has a prior engagement and has to excuse himself from the rest of the meeting. He turned the meeting over to the vice-chair, Mr. Viscito. Mr. Viscito gave greetings and then read two recommendations to be reviewed and discussed. The two recommendations were reviewed and discussed extensively by the committee as a result one recommendation was accepted and converted to motion as follows:

Motion #1

The recommended recommendation converted to a motion that was made by Mr. Charles Viscito and seconded by Ms. Karen Rivo, a friendly amendment was added by Ms. Jennifer Wollmann and seconded by Ms. Karen Rivo, the motion reads "The DSBPAS recommends that the Superintendent establishes and funds a task force or similar initiative to re-evaluate M-DCPS secondary reform practices in our school district to determine."

1. The successes and failures of the previous plan.
2. The community interest in further implementation of a reform initiative.
3. The cost for full expansion to an 8 period schedule at all high schools.
4. The cost for expansion to a 7 or 8 period schedule at all middle schools and all K-8 centers.

The motion was passed by the committee unanimously.

Mr. Viscito thanked the committee and staff. He stated as we move forward with our collective recommendations that our next meeting will be with the principals to compile our recommendations as to be presented to the Superintendent. He then turned the meeting back to Ms. Marte.

**IV. Presentation of Data:** Ms. Marte explained to the committee that we have a couple of variables still floating in developing the budget. One of the variables is the tax collection that is about \$40 million shortage this year. A variable is whether the legislature will enable us to level two prior adjustments for the tax roll that the county has not closed. It will not include a tax increase to our taxpayers. A variable is the debt service millage which is slated to go down, because of the sun setting of the 1988 General Obligation Bond (GOB) tax assessment. Another variable is, if the tax roll in Miami goes up and everyone else across the state goes down, this will be an estimate of \$23 million that we cannot levy. The district will lose the funding; it will not be known until this July. So as we talk about how to balance this budget with these variables to take into consideration. Our new budget is \$78 million; \$18 million is already earmarked, leaving a balance of \$60 million.

Ms. Marte told the committee in our Executive Summary that there is a section which shows the line for the tax redemption that is budgeted for \$15 million, because until this year we were able to put tax revenue in from the tax redemption. The way the county has started this year, we are just receiving the regular revenue stream in the budget of 96%. The cost increase include as follows: 1) the healthcare insurance is estimated at \$22 million; 2) the grants estimated at \$13 million; 3) utilities will be increasing in the millions starting next year; 4) for those unions that received raises they will need to be paid an estimate of \$4 million for next year; and 5) the agreement with DSCMEC micro system technicians that was made three years ago to work at 80% of their value salary, has sunset, this cost is \$2.2 million automatically July 1<sup>st</sup>. These mentioned are some of the variable expenses that we are looking at next year. We will take these into consideration as we make our recommendations. Ms. Marte mentioned that the principals have already voted on to support a reduction to central office by 3%, which is equivalent to \$5 million.

Ms. Marte said that we are estimating our shortfall is somewhere around \$30 million, after we revisit it over the summer and the certification of the tax roll. The revisit will consist of the delivery of the world language with the inclusion model in K-1; where we had a one year freeze, as for next year is scheduled for an increase of a million dollars. Another is for the technology categorical to receive \$3.1 million. That categorical can be used for any technology needs in the school that is related to assessment tests, textbooks and purchasing new laptops. The School Board voted eight months ago to go with the Bank of America for leasing program of purchasing laptops. In the general fund there is \$138 million for maintenance eligible expenditures which consists of the maintenance contracts, maintenance workers and instructional technology contracts. The current maintenance transfer is \$128 million, what that means is that the general fund is subsidizing the maintenance transfer by \$10 million, but because there

are more eligible expenditures already built in the general fund, then what is already covered. The Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funds of \$6 million that is coming in may be used to assist in the coverage. The principals have not voted on this issue. The principals want to balance the budget with the class size ratio based on the Florida Statute 1003.03 compliance for class size. They are requesting for core classes to be K-5 18:1, 6-8 22:1 and 9-12 25:1. Ms. Marte stated these are key points to also take into consideration 1) that over the past decade, the district has spent over \$3.5 million in an attempt to comply with the F.S. 1003.03; 2) schools classified as "choice" need to meet class size at school-wide average; 3) \$781.5 million is currently spent on basic teachers; and 4) \$11 million is spent on class size supplements in secondary grades; because cutting of programs is not a consideration. The floor was then opened for discussion, after extensive discussion, questions were asked and answered. The following motions were made as a result as follows:

#### Motion #2

A motion was made by Ms. Karen Rivo and seconded by Ms. Jennifer Wollmann "To support implementation of Florida Statute 1003.03, if needed, on a one year basis sun setting June 30, 2015 to be opened for re-evaluation and to provide the parent committee with a detail list of where we are with class size as of today." The motion was passed by the committee unanimously.

#### Motion #3

A motion was made by Ms. Karen Rivo and seconded by Ms. Jennifer Wollmann, after much discussion a friendly amendment was added by Ms. Sandy Baker Hoover and seconded by Ms. Jennifer Wollmann. The motion reads "To support the reduction of central office by an additional 3% for an estimated savings of \$5 million, with the exclusion of the Parent Involvement office". The motion passed, but opposed by Mr. Charles Viscito and Mr. Don Kearns.

#### Motion #4

A motion was made by Ms. Alice Mensch Raval and seconded by Ms. Karen Rivo "To support administration being allowed to use the textbook category that is allowed by state statute." The motion was passed by the committee unanimously.

#### Motion #5

A motion was made by Ms. Sandy Baker Hoover and seconded by Mr. Don Kearns "To allow administration to increase the maintenance transfer to the amount of actual expenditures in the general fund." The motion was passed by the committee unanimously.

#### Motion #6

A motion was made by Ms. Sandy Baker Hoover and seconded by Mr. Karen Rivo, after much discussion a friendly amendment was made by Ms. Sandy Baker Hoover and seconded by Mr. Karen Rivo, "I move that the Superintendent increases the staffing of the Parent Involvement Office to the level that it existed four years ago." The motion passed and but opposed by Ms. Stephanie Keime, Mr. Charles Viscito and Ms. Jennifer Wollmann.

Ms. Marte thanked the committee for their devoted work and advocacy for the school system. She expressed to the committee all that you do is appreciated by the Superintendent, staff and schools. She then reminded them that our **joint meeting will be June 9<sup>th</sup>**, the same place and **starting at 5:00 p.m.** Mr. Viscito thanked the Vice-Chair of the School Board Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Ms. Judith Marte, Ms. Iraida Mendez-Cartaya, parents and staff for coming, he then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, a motion was made and accepted by the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.