



CITY OF MIAMI SPRINGS, FLORIDA

The **Miami Springs Education Advisory Board** met at 6:30 p.m., on Tuesday, March 18, 2008 in the City Hall Council Chambers.

1) Call to Order/Roll Call

The following were present:

Chair Mindy McNichols
Vice Chairman, Eduardo A. Molliner
Libby Manning
Maria Mitchell
Debra Sheridan

Also Present: Deputy City Clerk Suzanne Hitaffer

2) Approval of Minutes: February 19, 2008 Regular Meeting

Minutes of the February 19, 2008 meeting were approved as amended.

Board member Manning moved to approve and Board member Sheridan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously on voice vote.

3) Special Guest: Lisa Martinez, Director, Intergovernmental Operations, M-DCPS – Discussion regarding Compact between Miami Springs and School Board

Lisa Martinez, Director, Intergovernmental Operations, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, stated that there had been conversations with City Manager Borgmann to explore some Parks and Recreation activities and other ideas that could be included within the Miami Springs compact. She presented a very tentative draft for Miami Springs and two additional samples from the cities of Miami Beach and Miami Gardens (attached for the record). The compact for Miami Beach, which was approved in January, is a more detailed document that addresses activities, expected outcomes and specific measures.

Ms. Martinez explained that the document would be refined to make sure that everyone involved is accountable to the outcomes that are established for the youth within the municipal partners. She would like the Board to consider the two formats and decide what approach to take. She said that all compacts address core categories, including the improvement of academic programs, coordination of infrastructure and administrative planning, as well as community involvement.

Ms. Martinez stated that the following additional priorities were discussed:

- Teacher retention – making sure that teachers living in the community are teaching within the community.
- Potential reading remediation programs for students that need special assistance in learning the language and maintaining the grade level.
- The future of the Stafford Park joint use agreement between the City and the School Board.
- Magnet choice programs for schools within Miami Springs.

Chair McNichols said that the use agreement for Stafford Park comes up for renewal every ten years and there is a concern that some day the School Board will take back the park. She explained that there is limited park space for sports activities in Miami Springs and Stafford Park is very valuable. She suggested that there could be a longer use agreement or a provision in the agreement that its use is to remain as a park.

Board member Mitchell expressed her concern about following through with the items listed in the compact. She said that her daughter attends Coral Gables High School and the items listed in the Coral Gables' compact related to her school are not happening.

Ms. Martinez stated that the document is as good as the team who puts it together. She explained that there had been a great deal of progression within the elements of the Coral Gables' compact. Meetings between the municipal partners and the District staff are held every two months. She noted the difference between the Miami Gardens and Miami Beach compact is that there is clear structured language regarding outcome and measures and how success is determined.

To answer Board member Mitchell's question, Ms. Martinez said that the City of Miami meets on a regular basis with the point departments and there is one point person for the City and the District to facilitate and coordinate the pieces of the puzzle that move forward. There are different key people for each compact and at least one District representative is held accountable. She explained that there must be a collaborative effort between the District and the City because teamwork is what makes a compact successful.

Chair McNichols stated that the overcrowding at the Middle School is a major concern and the compact could include a goal for reducing the student population to 100% capacity with a certain timeline. She would like to see a link between the Middle School science and technology magnet and the High School. The High School has an award winning Math Club and she would like to see this program begin at the Middle School.

Board member Sheridan said that she would like to see the Math Club linked back to the Elementary Schools.

Chair McNichols added that the Springview Elementary School bilingual program does not extend past the fifth grade and there should be a continuation of the program that is accessible within close proximity.

Board member Manning stated that the compact should include language regarding parental involvement because it is very strong at the elementary level and drops off by the middle or high school level. She added that there is a cooperative agreement between the City and the High School for use of the tennis court facilities that could be included.

Board member Sheridan added that use of the Golf Course, pool and other park facilities could be added to the compact.

Chair McNichols stated that the plans for the Springview media center had been ongoing for five years and it has been put on hold again. She said that the current facility is a small room and she would not want to lose the new facility due to the budget crunch.

Board member Manning said that the development of a relief school for Miami Springs High had already been accomplished and a relief plan should refer to the Middle School.

Chair McNichols added that there should be a teacher recruitment and incentive plan to retain high quality teachers at Miami Springs Senior High.

To answer Chair McNichols' question, Ms. Martinez explained that P.A.S.S. is a program in which Chief Executive Officers (CEO's) of companies are matched up with schools and they work with the Principals. A certain amount of funding is committed to the program and the collaboration of the school site. She added that the program is run through the Council for Educational Change.

Chair McNichols stated that the school principals could benefit from the P.A.S.S. program.

Ms. Martinez explained that the City taps into the business community to determine those companies that would be interested in collaboration with the local schools. The Mayors of the City of Miami and Hialeah have taken a strong leadership role in recruiting CEO's for the program.

Chair McNichols said that quite a few of the cities that have compacts also have an Education Advisory Board. She asked how an Education Roundtable functions compared to an advisory board.

Ms. Martinez stated that the Education Roundtable was included in the very first compact with the City of Miami, which does not have an advisory board. She said that the purpose of the roundtable concept is informing those at the City and District level, integrating input and informing the public.

Board member Mitchell suggested involving the community in order to keep them informed of what is happening with the schools.

Chair McNichols said that she would like the compact to address the reduction of the drop out rate at Miami Springs Senior High School and the expansion of the parent academy options into the schools. She added that she likes the compacts that include the provision to ensure that all schools achieve a grade “B” or better.

Vice Chair Molliner mentioned that it is important to set high standards.

Ms. Martinez said that the Miami Beach compact includes a provision for achieving a grade “B” or better and it holds each other accountable to the process with elements that are tangibly stated. She is the lead on the City of Miami compact and they explored ways to support Holmes Elementary School by bringing in community based organizations to service the students that need the most help. They understood that after school programming was the greatest need and the City of Miami and School District applied for the 21st Century Grant to provide a free after school program.

Chair McNichols added that the law enforcement could get involved in attendance rates and trancies. The problems associated with the area in which the schools are located determine why the schools are under achieving.

Board member Sheridan commented that the City of Miami Gardens’ compact includes a section on school safety and crime prevention issues.

Vice Chair Molliner stated that there are many programs or parent academy workshops that the Community School could offer to the residents through evening classes. He added that Community School classes and after school care are fee supported, which differs from free adult education.

Chair McNichols added that priorities are reducing over crowding, continuation of the academic programs between schools and safety.

Ms. Martinez stated that the District would like to begin the process to discuss the details and implement the compact.

Board member Manning suggested that the School Principals could also address those issues they would like to consider in the compact.

Vice Chair Molliner said that even though this is a difficult economic time it should not limit the long-term goals in the compact.

4) Individual School Reports

Principal Sally Hutchings reported the following for Miami Springs Elementary School:

- NRT and FCAT testing is underway.
- The Spring Dance will be held on Thursday, March 20th for students in grades two through five.
- Gifted classes are going to the Butterfly World to study nature.
- Fourth grade is traveling to Saint Augustine as part of the Florida history curriculum.
- The traditional square dance will be held on April 18th.
- Pre-K through 2nd grades will see “Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus”.
- One fourth grade class will go to the Barnacle to study architecture as part of an art reward.
- “Jump Rope for Heart” is scheduled for March 29th.
- Third graders are going to the Cape Florida lighthouse.
- Earth Day will be held with “Reading on the Green” and “Green Gallery” and students will make art work out of recycled materials.
- The P.T.A. is planning a “Planting Day”.
- A Parent Bilingual Workshop will be held on immigration laws on April 27th.
- “Take your Son or Daughter to Work” is scheduled for April 25th for ages 9-14.
- Honor roll assemblies will begin on April 16th.
- Staff members are receiving laptops.
- The school is looking for a temporary paraprofessional.

To answer Chair McNichols’ question, Principal Hutchings stated that the school drop off and pick up is in the front of the school through the double gates, which she has requested to be widened in order to accommodate two cars. There is some concern because the area is painted as a play area and they are looking at the cost involved in order to make it safe.

Board member Manning mentioned that Principal Hutchings had implemented a Math and Science club as part of the after school program to link with advanced academics.

Principal Mayte Dovale reported the following for Springview Elementary:

- Mr. Tabsch was recognized as the Burger King Teacher of the Month and students were given tickets to the Globetrotter games.
- Several students were celebrated at the Superintendent Town Hall Meeting and students receive the Spot for Success award every week, as well as school employees in order to provide motivation for their efforts.
- A meeting was held with the construction crew to review electrical and plumbing and the portables are scheduled for removal by May 31st.
- Laptop computers will be distributed to teachers at the faculty meeting and training will be scheduled.

- The Smart Boards are ready pending electrical work.
- The School website is up and running and the Media Specialist is receiving training in order to be able to maintain the site.
- Spring activities are scheduled for Pre-K through second grade.
- Chevy's Night is scheduled for April 15th and everyone is invited to attend with proceeds going to Springview.
- Field Day will be held April 21st through April 25th.
- The school is hosting the Book Fair during the week of April 28th and Reading Under the Stars will be held on April 29th.

Chair McNichols asked Principal Dovale for her comments on the school compact.

Principal Dovale responded that she would love to participate in the P.A.S.S. program. She participated when she was an Assistant Principal at Biscayne Gardens and the CEO was Joe Arreola from the City of Miami who supported Staff and provided an avenue for teacher incentives for attendance. There were ten staff members who were able to go on a four-day cruise that he acquired through his connections. She said that it is a nice program that incorporates the community with the School system.

Miami Springs Middle School Principal Dr. Gail Quigley reported the following:

- The school raised more than \$17,600 for the Relay for Life Cancer Walk.
- Congratulations to Taylor Manning who was accepted to the New World School of the Arts.
- The after school program will continue with tutoring after FCAT with fun activities, including a talent show, Picnic in the Park and Bar-be-cue sponsored by the Hialeah – Miami Springs Rotary Club and Winn Dixie.
- The “Great Bone Bash” participants received a monetary award and will spend the night at Sea World in the shark tank.
- Career Day is April 9th.
- Chorus and selected classes participated in the “Worlds Largest Concert” last week.
- Museum Night and the P.T.A. meeting are scheduled for Tuesday, April 29th.

Miami Springs Senior High School Principal Rafael Villalobos reported the following:

- Math Teacher Delmar Wilson was named Rookie Teacher of the Year.
- The Adult Center will participate in the Springs River Festival to answer questions as part of parental involvement.
- The Band is moving on to the State competition and hopefully will place first this year.
- Drama student Ruben Carrazana won first place in the Florida High School National Shakespeare monolog competition. He will travel to New York City and possibly London.
- FCAT testing averaged 97% and the greatest incentive was offering \$25.00 vouchers toward Senior activities.

- The class size amendment will definitely impact the school.

Principal Villalobos presented information regarding the various academies, including Science, Engineering and Technology, Hospitality and Tourism, Visual and Performing Arts, Health, Science and Medicine, Education, Public Service and Security and Communications Arts. He said that due to budget restraints with secondary school reform there will be no vote on block scheduling which will create some restrictions to the academy process. He said that these academies could help to reduce the drop out rate by keeping the students interested and inspiring them to graduate.

Principal Villalobos answered questions from the Board members regarding the academy programs.

Chair McNichols stated that the development of internships related to the academies would be an item to include in the school compact.

Principal Villalobos reported that the High School will lose some teachers due to the decreased student enrollment and there will be other issues to contend with because of the budget cuts. He will make sure that instruction is a priority.

Discussion ensued regarding the lock down during the recent power outage.

Board member Mitchell was concerned that the parents were not getting proper information. She suggested that emergency information could be posted on the school website.

Principal Villalobos stated that the contingency plan involves sending a connect message to all parents that are registered on the portal.

Board member Sheridan said that it is important to get the information to the news media that the students are not being released due to an emergency or power outage.

Board member Mitchell suggested that the compact could include a provision for getting critical information to the parents when there is an emergency.

5) Region 3 Report

Regional Center 3 Director Robert Kalinsky reported that the Springview media center was delayed a couple of months because funds were needed this fiscal year and he is hoping to be able to negotiate some upgrades or additions as part of the project.

Mr. Kalinsky stated that the High School would remain open during Spring Break and most schools would be closed to save funds on utilities and twelve-month employees will be taking vacation. There have already been cuts for hourly employees and this is only the beginning of the budget crunch. The new property tax amendment on the ballot in November could make the situation even worse for public education.

5a. Miami Springs Middle School Report

Regional Center 3 Director Robert Kalinsky stated that in order to reduce Miami Springs Middle to 100% permanent capacity it would mean a reduction of 535 students and the current enrollment is 1,826 students. Of the 1,826 students, 417 live in the City of Miami Springs. He is trying to secure information as to how many students who attend public and private middle schools actually live in Miami Springs and attend school elsewhere.

Mr. Kalinsky said that there would probably be an increase in the actual enrollment next year because there are more sixth graders coming in than eight graders leaving. They are taking a hard look at the magnet program, they will keep the cap of 150 over three years and this year they will not recruit any students from outside the boundaries into the magnet program and still be able to keep the funding. The program will take on more of a global type program for the kids living in the Miami Springs' boundary.

Mr. Kalinsky stated that the good news is that the numbers show a decrease in the number of students that are feeding into the Middle School from the Elementary Schools for 2009/2010 and 2010/2011. He explained that the increase in a couple of grade levels was because of the third grade retention.

Mr. Kalinsky said that there would be upcoming issues with Lorah Park Elementary because those students finishing the dual language program next year cannot go to Miami Springs Middle if they do not live in the boundary, which means they may not be able to continue the dual language program. He explained that this is one of the good arguments for the K-8 center at Lorah Park. He said that 290 students attending Lorah Park live within the boundary and 182 live outside the boundary.

It was determined that the problem with Brownsville Middle School is that so many students who live within the boundary do not attend that school, according to Mr. Kalinsky. This is one of the schools contiguous with Miami Springs Middle School. In 2010/2011, if all students within the boundary attended Brownsville their numbers would go from 785 to 1,300.

Mr. Kalinsky stated that the address verification program had proven to make a significant difference in the enrollment in Doral. Miami Springs High School Principal Villalobos is very aggressive with address verification and the same philosophy will be adopted for Miami Springs Middle School.

To answer Board member Mitchell's question, Mr. Kalinsky explained that part of the address verification process includes a mailing to all homes and if the letter comes back without being received that is an indication that something is not right and a school official is sent to the homes.

Board member Manning mentioned that some letters might not be returned if the person living at the home is a cousin.

Mr. Kalinsky responded that the school Principal, through their counselors or Assistant Principals, knows which kids to check, because kids talk also.

Citrus Grove Middle School is contiguous with Miami Springs Middle School and it feeds into Miami Senior High School, according to Mr. Kalinsky. He said that Charles Drew is one of the smaller schools in the Region and those students go to Miami Northwestern High School, but through the next several years the numbers will not appear to rise higher than 634 students.

Mr. Kalinsky added that Henry Filer Middle School feeds into Hialeah Senior High School and Doral Middle School feeds into Doral Ronald Reagan High School. He explained that Doral Middle School will be under enrolled next year.

Board member Mitchell asked how many students are anticipated for Miami Springs Middle School after next year.

Mr. Kalinsky stated that they are expecting a reduction of approximately 50 or 60 kids the following years. He said that the enrollment is currently 1,826 and they are projecting 1,870, but factoring out the magnet students and the address verifications could reduce the number to 1,840 next year.

Discussion ensued regarding contiguous schools and the enrollment at various High Schools.

Mr. Kalinsky said that after reviewing the school compacts he found that the compact with Miami Beach is very appealing. The City of Miami Beach financially supports the schools and he hopes that the same incentives could be included in the Miami Springs' compact.

In response to the Board members' questions regarding a possible boundary change, Mr. Kalinsky said that looking at the numbers there is no realistic proposal that would alleviate overcrowding at Miami Springs Middle School without impacting other communities. He added that all Hialeah schools are tremendously over enrolled.

Further discussion ensued regarding Brownsville Middle and Miami Northwestern Senior High School.

Mr. Kalinsky stated that Miami Springs has outstanding leadership in the schools and there is nothing more important than the Principals who have the vision and make it happen. He added that the Education Advisory Board shows them incredible respect. Miami Springs Middle School will have a new Principal on July 1, 2008, through a regular interview process and Region Superintendent Nuñez is emphatic about the leadership to replace Dr. Quigley when she retires.

Vice Chair Molliner stated that a good relationship had been formed with the Region 3 District officials and the support they give to the Miami Springs' schools. He fears the recommendation presented by Superintendent Crew to reduce the six Regions to three and hopefully all schools will end up in the same region.

5b. Miami-Dade County Public Schools Budget Cuts and Impact for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009

Mr. Kalinsky said that regardless of budget cuts, the City of Miami Springs can count on the school Principals and their relationship with the Education Advisory Board. He added that there would be 120 schools reporting to the Region, which might not be manageable, but Dr. Crew is entertaining all possibilities to make sure the necessary dollars are cut.

Board member Sheridan stated that it is important for the community to write to the State Legislators during the budget process because the District schools in South Florida had experienced continuous budget cuts for the last five years.

Chair McNichols added that the tax reform proposal to replace property taxes with sales taxes is the absolute worse thing that could happen to public schools. She said that the proposed amendment includes a provision for the Legislature to make up for the shortfall, which is just like “No Child Left Behind” that has an unfunded mandate provision stating that the Federal government will pay for everything needed to comply and this had not been done. She explained that it had resulted in the school districts having to sue the Federal government and some lawsuits are going through the courts, but it is a long and tedious process.

Village of Virginia Gardens Councilman Richard L. Block asked whether or not the Village of Virginia Gardens is included in the same district boundary as the City of Miami Springs. He received a call from someone informing him that the boundary was being changed.

Mr. Kalinsky confirmed that there was no boundary change recommended for the community.

Chair McNichols asked Mr. Kalinsky to determine how many kids from Virginia Gardens and Medley attend Miami Springs Middle School.

Board member Manning clarified that anytime a question is asked about Miami Springs’ students the Board members are thinking of Virginia Gardens and Medley, but perhaps this had not been stated.

6) Old Business:

6a. Compact

This item was previously discussed under agenda item 3a.

6b. Middle School

This item was previously discussed under the Region 3 report.

6c. Construction Projects at Various Schools

Construction projects were discussed previously during the meeting.

6d. Presentation Regarding Internet Safety

Vice Chair Molliner said that he attended the Council meeting to present his proposal on Internet safety when Miami Springs Police Captain Baan informed him that they have a program for the kids and he asked him to consider a program for the parents.

Vice Chair Molliner spoke with a City of Hialeah Police Sergeant who said that someone from Miami Springs had called him, but he does not know if the City would follow through with his request. He said that it would benefit someone from Miami Springs to attend the workshop at his school on Thursday, March 20th because the Hialeah Police Sergeant has a lot of experience.

Chair McNichols suggested that the Miami Springs' compact could include a provision related to parent academies.

Board member Sheridan commented that the Miami Gardens' compact included a provision under community safety.

Virginia Gardens Councilman Block stated that as an employee of the Department of Children and Families he deals with domestic violence everyday. He asked the Board to consider a program for domestic violence for the students because they are generally the victims. He added that the State is trying to work with school districts to educate children on what they should do if domestic violence is happening in the home.

Chair McNichols mentioned that C.A.P. is a child abuse prevention project and there are plans for making presentations to the elementary school children.

7) New Business:

7a. Code of Student Conduct

Chair McNichols stated that the Code of Student Conduct is available on the dadeschools.net website.

Vice Chair Molliner said that all schools would be sending a letter in three languages with a receipt attached to show that the parents received the information regarding the Student Code of Conduct. The problem is that the Code of Conduct had not yet been translated to Spanish or Creole. The schools will advise the parents that it is on the website and that they can obtain a copy from the school.

7b. Legislative Issues

Legislative issues were discussed during the preceding agenda items.

7c. Tax and Reform Commission Proposals

The November tax reform proposal was discussed earlier during the meeting.

8) Other Business

Board member Manning stated that Miami Springs Senior High School Principal Villalobos mentioned that the “four by four” or eight classes is a dead issue because of budget cuts. She said that Mr. Villalobos feels that it is a great idea, but from a teacher’s perspective there are 180-hours in a course, which is one hour a day for 180 school days and changing to 90-minutes would mean a loss of 43 to 45 hours.

Board member Mitchell said that from a parent’s perspective she feels that it is very important for the kids to be exposed to other interests and the two additional classes should be used for art, music, drama, etc.

Board member Manning emphasized that when teaching calculus it is very difficult to lose 43 hours and block scheduling would be 90-minute classes every other day.

Further discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of block scheduling.

9) Adjourn

There was no further business to discuss and the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Hitaffer
Clerk of the Board

Approved as written at meeting of: 04-15-2008

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