



**EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
 FORT LAUDERDALE HIGH SCHOOL
 LECTURE HALL, 3RD FLOOR, BLDG. 21
 1600 NE 4TH AVENUE
 FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33305
 THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2019—4:00 PM-6:30 PM**

Members	July 2018 – April 2019		
	Attendance	Present	Absent
Dr. Allen Zeman, Vice Chair	P	10	0
Robert Audet	P	7	4
Linda Barnett	P	6	4
Maureen S. Dinnen	P	5	6
Amy Ellowitz	P	9	1
April Jeff	A	3	3
Deniece Jones	A	6	5
Terry Large	A	7	4
Jennifer Lovell	P	9	2
Vickie Melus	A	2	2
Dr. Heather Munns	P	6	4
Sarah Owen DelNegri	P	6	4
Lincoln Pasteur	P	7	3
Christopher Relyea	A	8	3
Betty Shelley	P	5	5
Rory Sponsler	P	1	0
Dr. Michele Verdi Knapp	P	9	1

Staff/Guests

Junia Robinson, Staff Liaison
 See attached sign-in sheet for guests
 Jamie Opperlee, Prototype, Inc.

I. Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance – Dr. Allan Zeman, Vice Chair

This meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Fort Lauderdale High School ROTC.

II. Attendance and Roll Call, 17 appointed members; 9 needed for quorum

As of this date, April 25, 2019, 12 of the 17 appointed members were present, which constituted a quorum.

III. Welcome newly appointed EAB Board member – Rory Sponsler

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman welcomed Mr. Sponsler.

IV. Current Business

- Announce Meeting Objectives
 1. **Gather Principals' assessment of EAB candidate recommendations prepared for City Commission.**

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman indicated that Principals who provided interviews should receive a form, which is the objective to this meeting. Principals were requested to fill out the forms to let the Board know their thoughts about the recommendations.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman introduced Junia Robinson, Board Liaison.

2. **Finalize set of EAB recommendations to deliver to Mayor/Commissioners at May 7th Commissioner's Workshop on Education.**

Vice Chair Zeman indicated that the Board would be presenting recommendations to the Commissioners on May 7, 2019. He stated that he would like to take 10-15 minutes at the end of the meeting to discuss how the Workshop could be facilitated, whether it be done with ten ideas and ten presenters or in writing.

- Summary of 2019 Education Gap Analysis

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman explained that this analysis involved interviews with all Principals in the City of Fort Lauderdale and gathering of data from people within the school system. He recognized Austin Scott, who has been the Chair of this Board for many years and who made huge contributions. The Board intends to repeat this effort every year for as long as there is a strategy involved. The analysis is intended to end with a Workshop with the City Commission, asking them for a commitment to do something about education for the citizens of Fort Lauderdale. Gaps were identified that the Board felt were most important as well as ways to close those gaps. The goal is to help the Commissioners make decisions about the recommendations and get them to move forward in a different partnership with the County than they had in the past.

Priscilla Ribeiro, Principal of Fort Lauderdale High School, welcomed everyone. She is looking forward to partnering with the City.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman stated that the Board is looking at the quality of education in the City of Fort Lauderdale where there are 24 schools and 19,000 students. The Board

spent 12 months looking at different facets and have identified six specific gaps; behind those gaps are ten recommendations for what the City can do in partnership with the County. Each of the recommendations will be presented by a Board member, and then each recommendation will be opened to hear from the guests. The critical objective is for Principals to let the Board know which of the recommendations they support and which ones they do not support, and any comments can be added to the sheet. Any critical comments about the presentation or presenter should be sent to Junia Robinson.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman provided a brief Power Point Presentation and made the following comments:

- There is a system in Florida that is run and funded by the Counties and policies are generated by the Counties.
- One key question is why a City would invest in school education. The Board has worked very hard to talk around that and the thing talked about a lot was that you cannot have a great City without great schools. To the extent that the City wants to be a great City, and these five City Commissioners rally around that theme, it is appropriate and useful to think about investments to improve the quality of education and quality of the schools.
- The Boards' analysis was done under a gap analysis because it is important to think about where we are versus where we want to be. Research was conducted, and data was gathered, which will be presented to the City Commissioners on May 7, 2019 for their support.
- Private schools were asked for data, but nothing was received. A different technique will be tried next year, so transitions from public to private schools can be included.
- The City of Fort Lauderdale has never chartered a Public Charter School; therefore, no data could be gathered.
- There are residents of Fort Lauderdale who go to Public Charter Schools.

The basis of the gap analysis is where are we now, where do we want to be, and what is the big gap in the middle?

- There are 24 schools, four of which are "A" schools and have been for the last five years; seven improving; nine staying the same, and three declining.
- As a Board, no judgement was passed on whether there are good, bad, or others, but these are the facts for our schools.
- "C", "D", or "F" school do not meet the Boards standards. It is believed that any school in the City of Fort Lauderdale should be resourced and supported between the City and County, so all schools are at least an "A" or a "B".
- Gap #1 – improvements. The Board did not think improvements should stop.

- Gap #2 - geography. Schools were split between east and west Fort Lauderdale and it was two to one, which is not acceptable. There is a major gap; schools west of U.S. 1 are half the letter grade of schools east of U.S. 1 in Fort Lauderdale. It was decided that this would be addressed with the Commission.
- Gap #3 - the letter grade system. During Principal interviews, a disproportionate number of Principals said it would be very difficult if not impossible to move from their current letter grade to a better letter grade. When asked why, each school had their own story. One of the unintended consequences of the current grade system is that it has created some degree of discomfort and despondency in terms of getting better and that is not what a measurement system is supposed to do; it is supposed to inspire people to get to higher levels of education. Many of the Principals in "C", "D", and "F" schools said that this grade system is making it very difficult, partly because people assess the school grade as the experience of every individual in that school, when that is not the case. As analysts, the Board looked at the learning gains and in looking at "A" through "F" scores, it looked like there was a wide range of individual education experiences, which was exposed. Some "A" schools were low in learning gains, so the same grades were taken. There was a school near the top of learning gains that was a "C" and there was a school below average in learning gains and it was an "A". The lowest learning gains school was looked at in Fort Lauderdale and it is a "B" school. There is a school in Fort Lauderdale where 58% of the students progressed for one year of study and it is a "B" school. It was decided to make a recommendation to the City to be more serious about how education achievements are measured, and the Board is going to recommend that Fort Lauderdale be the first City in Florida to adopt one-year learning gains, not under the rules the State uses for learning gains, but under a very simple rule; one year of school, one year of progress. Effective perceptions of our school system cannot be obtained if the system tells things that are not the full story.
- Gap #4 - utilization. There are three schools that have significantly lower utilization than the other 21 schools; they are in the 50% to 62% range. The Boards' recommendation is to look at this and think about whether those facilities are being used to better the overall education achievement in the City of Fort Lauderdale.
- Gap #5 - high school graduation rates. Fort Lauderdale is not doing as well as they would like, and Broward County is not doing as well as the State of Florida. The Board believes that is a gap and they do not think Broward should be behind the State of Florida in anything. In 2011 and 2012, Broward County was better than Florida's High School graduation, but somehow over the next four years, it got worse in the State of Florida. The Board does not find that acceptable.
- Gap #6 - FLKRS results, which said that 57% of the kids in Fort Lauderdale start Kindergarten and are not prepared. Florida Kindergarteners are at 53% and Broward County is 52%. As a Board representing the Commissioners who represent the City of Fort Lauderdale, part of their job is to say that this is not

acceptable. The most extensive recommendation and the one that would take the most work to get done is geared directly at that. We must think about birth through age 5 if in fact from age 5 through grade 12 we are going to be successful as an educational institution.

- Gap #7 – perception. There is a perception that people would stay in public schools through grade 5 or through grade 8 and then race off to private schools; however, over the past four years, more and more people in public schools have stayed in public schools. Fort Lauderdale is about 10% higher on people going from middle to high school or from elementary to middle schools.

A lot of information was collected from Board member, Christopher Relyea, who teaches at Nova High School. He has 200 students throughout the day and has challenged all of them to find a way that a City in Broward County was paying for education, primarily funded by the County. There was one City with some significantly expensive things including School Resource Officers and scholarships. Fort Lauderdale has never paid for anything in education, but many other cities are doing something. Part of the Boards' job is to get the Commission to think about investing in the kids within our City.

- Presentation of Top Ten "Candidate Recommendations"

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman advised that the Board came up with 17 ideas for filling the gaps and two were done. The City of Fort Lauderdale hired Zoe Saunders, Chief Education Officer. It was decided that the Board needs to be more involved in the schools, so a Board member will represent each school. The Board members will be a contact, plus a full-time employee to deal with City related issues.

A Principal of an Alternative High School mentioned that he did not see anything reflecting Centers or what they are doing and noted that they contribute to the graduation rate and have many achievers. He was disappointed that alternative schools were not on the list because they matter. He noted that alternative schools include Seagull High School and Whiddon Rogers Educational Center.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman advised that those schools do need to be counted and they do matter tremendously. It was the Boards oversight; they did the best they could. Interviews were conducted with Alternative schools, but there was not enough time to pull all the data together. He apologized on behalf of the Board.

Mr. Pasteur indicated that the schools were not identified individually but were a part of the aggregate.

Todd Hruschra, with Sheridan Tech High School, commented that everyone needs to remember that it is Pre-K to adult, not Pre-K to 12th grade.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman stated that the Board is very impressed by the technical colleges the Broward County system runs, of which many Fort Lauderdale residents attend. The average age of those in college is 26. The risk is that the Board is trying to get a very wealthy City to do things.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman indicated that about half way through the year, the Board asked the County what else they should gather, including Principal interviews. It took a while to get a response, but eventually they received a very positive response and Mark Strauss was a huge help. Vice Chair Dr. Zeman questioned if the Board should talk to Principals at the beginning of the year instead of at the end of the year and noted that the Board would like to meet with Principals half way through next year to present everything that has been heard.

Rendolyn Amaker, Principal of North Fork Elementary, saw the 17 options to target and stated that she would probably look at them differently if this path had been walked together. Instead of having a piece of paper saying this is what the Board has decided, it would have felt a little different for her.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman stated that part of their charter is to get this done when the budget is being assigned so there is some pressure.

Roberta, with New River Middle School, advised that she does not get a lot of parent support, but gets enough to hear their voice. Many parents are concerned about Gap #10, as it was brought up in the last SAC meeting.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman indicated not to vote on any ideas if someone is uncomfortable supporting or not supporting. The Commissioners were so persuaded by the answers to the Principal interviews, so how Principals vote on these ideas will also be compelling.

Mary Fertig, community activist, mentioned consolidation of underutilized schools. The enrollment trend has been reversed and enrollment in the City of Fort Lauderdale has gone up, which consultants said would never happen. If the programs and excellent staff are added, the enrollment will come back, which has been seen in the east and she suggested talking about ways to use schools differently. She has every confidence that when the new building is at Stranahan and when the programs come to maturity, Stranahan will be like Fort Lauderdale High School.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman mentioned Idea #1. The City of Fort Lauderdale passed a Bond Initiative that allocated \$200 million over the next five years for Parks and Recreation and the Board has put a claim on part of that money.

Ms. Ellowitz advised that 20% of the Bond dollars is being set aside for schools. The Board is looking at improving 14 school parks at a cost of approximately \$40 million, which is 20% of the total bond. They accounted for almost \$27 million in 14 schools and then another \$13 million in additions and improvements was added after hearing from the Principals. If the additions and improvements were added to the schools in Fort Lauderdale, it would affect potentially 8,178 students, which is 43% of the total student body. After hours, neighbors and families could use the playgrounds on the school property. The cost would be 26 cents a day when looking at a homeowner that has a property worth \$300,000, which is \$95 per year for 30 years to pay back the Bond. She is still researching the quality of playgrounds at 11 additional schools. Ms. Ellowitz mentioned the obesity rate among kids is 20% and stated that they need to improve physically and emotionally. More time on the playground will improve physical stamina as well as many other things. Studies show there is a high correlation between kids who spend time outdoors, whether in the wilderness, urban landscape, or a playground, and that they have lower incidents of mental health issues. Test scores would go up if the kids would focus. Even if the kids play in isolation and not in a group, they are going to be focusing on the kids around them and observe how the others problem solve and converse.

Theresa Bucolo, Principal of Harbordale Elementary, saw their name on the list and questioned if Ms. Ellowitz was speaking directly about the school property.

Ms. Ellowitz clarified that the existing playground would be improved and additional lighting, seating, etc. would be added.

Mrs. Winston-Davis, Principal of William Dandy Middle School Principal, commented that they do not have a playground; they have sports fields.

Ms. Ellowitz stated that there would be improvements to what is currently existing.

Ms. Lovell presented Idea #2 regarding Early Learning Centers and noted that 57% of new Kindergartners are not ready. A map was put together, which showed the difference between the east and west schools. She stated that an Early Learning Center on the west side would make a bigger impact, so children would learn from birth through Pre-Kindergarten. She toured Gulfstream Learning Center, which has a training center for teachers to learn the practices that need to be put in place so there is consistency with the different programs. Numbers from Head Start were shown.

Lori Milam, Executive Director with Head Start was mentioned and it was noted that while working with the Early Learning Coalition Center, the overall participation in the performance funding project was observed, which is a quality support project going out to early childcare providers. They have 69 childcare providers they support throughout

Broward, but only four are supported in Fort Lauderdale. There are 96 licensed childcare providers including Family Childcare Homes throughout Broward and this would be an opportunity to help support them. It was also mentioned that the number of children receiving subsidized funding is over 11,000 throughout Broward County, with over 1,700 specifically in Fort Lauderdale. The number of children on the wait list Countywide are over 2,000 with 436 for subsidized funding in Fort Lauderdale. Many schools have VPK and Pre-K children at their site and there are 427 in Fort Lauderdale with 222 on a wait list. There is a significant wait list that shows there is a need for additional childcare funding. The goal would be how they could help add more seats to Fort Lauderdale Schools, but provide it with a comprehensive network to serve families through adult education and family strengthening, so they can meet the needs of their children, so they are ready when they enter school.

Ms. Lovell commented that children have more knowledge and the parents have the ability to take their children somewhere rather than Grandparents or neighbors watching them, which keeps them from getting the fundamentals needed at an early age. The proposal is to establish five Early Learning Centers in west Fort Lauderdale to serve 400 students by 2020. They have spoken with a lot of organizations to help fund some of this and a chart was shown proposing to serve 128 students and how many would be impacted with the City of Fort Lauderdale paying towards it, as well as the School Board and other funding sources. The next steps would be to get a property, hire staff, and work with partners to put the program in place. The exact impact is unknown, but it was imagined that it would have higher literacy rates and that the school systems would be better.

Layne Polakoff, Curriculum Supervisor with the Early Learning/School Readiness at Broward County Public Schools, clarified that Head Start classrooms are generally in the public schools where the school readiness is generally in the private schools. The plan does not show how those are going to work together because all those children feed into the elementary schools. He questioned how to combine public schools working with Head Start and private schools working with subsidized children.

Ms. Milam stated that they were looking at the network and noted that it would not just be a Learning Center, it would be a network that could help bring all of those 96-community providers, family childcare homes together, where there would be a site for professional development for support, but also outreach to those Centers to make sure standards are set that say, "Here are the best practices recommended for children to enter school ready". The Early Learning Coalition already has that with their performance funding project, but many of the Fort Lauderdale Schools have said they do not need that support. This would be a community-wide impact where they would work together with the Education Advisory Board, Broward County Public Schools, and all the community partners, not to say this is what needs to be done, but to work together, so it becomes a

shared collaborative vision; all of us working throughout the community to ensure children are ready.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman advised that when this idea about the general education results in West Fort Lauderdale was presented, Dr. Osgood's request was that this be thought about as a network, rather than a building approach. There is a lot of influence in that area beyond just schools and the vision she has of the Early Learning Center.

Pablo Calvin, Director at Early Learning Coalition in Broward County, commented that they fund childcare centers, which range from small home-based locations to large Centers with 100 to 150 students.

Mr. Pasteur questioned if there was anything that was mandatory when reviewing the Centers.

Mr. Calvin referenced House Bill 1091, which passed last year and comes into effect this year. As of July 1, 2019, every Center in the State of Florida that wants to receive funding from an Early Learning Coalition such as theirs in Broward County, must be evaluated by using the class assessment, which is essentially an assessment that focuses on the quality of teacher/student interaction. Scored will be available sometime in the summer.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman presented Idea #3, which was funding full-time positions for people to work in school facilities and for students to take advantage of the breaks and continue learning. He noted that positions would be available to existing teachers. The idea is to have positions that have funding available to pay teachers for that time period; school Principals would provide the curriculum.

Ms. DelNegri presented Idea #4, consolidating underutilized schools and repurposing Early Learning Centers, particularly in west Fort Lauderdale schools that have major gaps. The intent is to capitalize on the strengths of existing schools with successful programs and facilities; teachers and staff have not been given the tools necessary for the best learning experiences. Broward County needs to provide for all students and especially the student population that is struggling. We need to help them thrive and feel valuable within their school and empower them to take that mindset out into the community. School Board 5000 outlines the school boundary process and part of that review process considers consolidation. It is understood that consolidating is a very sensitive topic and it does not necessarily mean new additional buildings or construction. Evaluating consolidation is recommended with the intent to make it a smart move forward. The decision should be that all residents would want their children to attend any of the public schools within our City. If a school is determined as underperforming, then the link falls not only with the School Board, but with the City community as well. This must be accomplished for all children no matter what area they live in. Great success has been

seen with the Learning Centers and possibly consolidating underutilized facilities might provide an opportunity for the Center to evolve in that facility. Closing a public-school facility would appear to be a major cost savings; however, for students to benefit from this course of action, the cost savings must be transferred to the schools where these needed programs would be. School consolidation would be supported if the needs of the students would better be served within the City of Fort Lauderdale.

Ms. Fertig commented that there is no more difficult topic than boundaries. There are many ways to use the school facilities, but the natural course is when a facility is closed and after a few years it is suggested that something else be done with it. The schools may find themselves losing seats that could better be used for another program in the interim until it is seen through. She encouraged the Board to look at the fact that there are two middle schools, Sunrise and New River, Fort Lauderdale High School, and several elementary schools that are over capacity. Many of the schools are over capacity and by necessity, that is going to create need. She believed this was an area that needed to be discussed a little further and suggested that other possibilities be looked at. She would be happy to volunteer on this and noted that the impact of closing a school is overwhelming.

Ms. DelNegri stated that perhaps the topic should change to reutilize the schools in a different way. Maybe there could be different types of programs where kids from two schools come to one. There are many ways to use school facilities; seats can be used for another program awaiting growth.

Leslie Brown, with Broward County School Board, mentioned that Arthur Ashe Middle closed and is now a vibrant Atlantic Tech; Sunset Learning Center closed and is now a vibrant Sheridan Technical High School; and the Southwest Bus Facility that never opened is a thriving Sheridan Technical College West Campus, so there are lots of ways to repurpose the facilities and make them into what schools and communities need. Sometimes it is a matter of moving District staff. Owning all this property around the District can be reutilized, it just needs to be looked at on a global basis.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman advised that part of this idea is the City and County working together. There must be a way to use all the public goods and as many private goods we can get for people to donate, which would help close the Kindergarten gap. The Board is thriving to improve the performance of the overall system and are uninspired by whose name is on the title of the property. A letter grade cannot be put on a school without understanding the students that are ingested in the very beginning and the transient nature of some of the schools with students starting and stopping.

Idea #5 was about opening K-8 schools, but the Board has not come to a strong consensus because after the Principal interviews, they were reminded of the immense difficulties; transportation issues, parent issues, and middle school facilities being

different than elementary school facilities. They were persuaded that this was something to keep on the list. There is not a strong case to be made because the Board does not understand the challenges involved in K-8 schools, but it is something they would like to continue to discuss.

Dr. Munns presented Idea #6 regarding City adoption of volunteer programs. The Boards' recommendation is to establish a full-time City of Fort Lauderdale position to ensure volunteer programs and to personalize the direct needs of our kids. Within the schools the liaison would work with the school Administration to set goals and monitor programs including student related success outcomes and work with PTA and school departments to assess specific needs and health. This can be achieved through a network with existing community and volunteer organizations. There is a significant discrepancy of the number of volunteers in schools. Through research, lack of volunteers negatively impacts quality education by the students and community involvement. To our City's credit, although there has been a great effort in some schools with volunteer involvement, direct feedback from schools indicate that additional volunteers are needed to fill critical gaps in all areas of education from elementary through high school and beyond. It is believed the City can afford this, that there is value, and that there would be positive results. It was estimated that this position would be an annual salary of about \$35,000 to \$45,000 plus benefits. The City and Broward County Public Schools should work together to identify potential City and Federal grants to support this position. This position is seen as a one-year appointment with potential for a renewable base with an increase in volunteers. The goal is to close the gap between all schools and make sure there is a consistent bond.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman presented Idea #7, new ways to measure educational achievement. A "C" school does not mean every individual in that school gets a "C" level of education and by the Mayor's estimate, the last ten companies that applied and went through the economic development process to come to Fort Lauderdale did not come and cited education as the reason they did not. This is a serious issue for economic development and is a fact where the school grade system has secondary effects that are causing great pain to our City. The Board is going to recommend that we move forward in a City specific definition of learning gain, which is one year of school for one year of proficiency. The data is available, and it looks like the City has "A" through "F" schools, which is often perceived as an "A" through "F" experience for every individual in the schools. The reality of learning gain is a much tighter distribution. There are no schools in Broward County that have a 90% learning gain as calculated by the State; it is between 68% and 80%. The City would like to reward teachers that grow every year, so there will be a Reward Recognition for all teachers in the City of Fort Lauderdale, which will be administered through the Education Advisory Board member connected with that school. No one in the State of Florida has ever told the State Department of Education that their efforts are appreciated, but there is a better way to assess or another way to assess education that makes more sense to the residents of Fort Lauderdale. Each level has different standards

and the City's proposal is a metric that anyone can understand. If a school was a level one or level two, they had to have a higher sub-score by one point than the year before. It is the same exam used for assigning letter grades to schools.

Michael Walker, Principal of Sunrise Middle School, commented that standards and rules change, so everyone is a little skeptical and nervous. It was noted that it levels the playing field because every child can make a learning gain.

Ms. Barnett felt that the celebration is underrated and to showcase is an important movement forward.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman mentioned feedback from Principals and noted that the immediate reaction is why can't a measure be developed that keeps people trying to make marginal improvements every year if some leaders find it so difficult to go up an entire letter grade. The Board wants the City to celebrate every grade, every teacher, and every capability that moves people forward a point or two. The reason it is difficult is because the rules are complicated; the test is not. Assigning a level and a sub-score is not difficult, that is basic testing; it is the rules on top of that.

Ms. Dinnen commented that the test varies per year as well as the use of the test and the number of computers needed to take the test. There are a lot of variables that go into this every year, which makes people very nervous because it is not always an accurate picture of change from one year to the next; sometimes it is radically different.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman advised that the Board would work with the Principals to determine what one year of learning gain is and the best way to measure it, then they will find a way to spread that to all teachers in Fort Lauderdale and everyone that improves the standard will be celebrated.

Ms. Fertig liked that the Board was getting away from school grades. Fort Lauderdale High School has accomplished many things and they want to get away from the report card. The most important person to talk to is a consumer and let them know the incredible things that are happening in each of the schools.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman advised that the Board has spent 20% to 30% of their time over the past year talking about the miscommunication with the community and about the quality of what happens in the individual classrooms and with the teachers; experiences that are extraordinary positive and the lack of that message getting out. Part of this learning gain idea is a publicity system in place and that was enabled by a member of the Board working with each individual school. Vice Chair Dr. Zeman was embarrassed that the City of Fort Lauderdale had an Awards ceremony last month and not one education award was presented.

Ms. Dinnen presented Idea #8, coaches and mentors for school Administrators. She recommended that the City provide consultants, people from the City staff and City Commission, to work with the leaders and school staff members. Sometimes students are looked at as the schools' problem or the parents' problem, but they are the City's problem as well; not just a problem, they are our glory as well. If anything is going to be achieved economically, there must be focus on education. She mentioned public relations and suggested that everyone work together because it benefits the City and the schools. There are two major gaps; the east/west divide has been around a long time and it is still a problem; the City and schools need to work on this together. Another problem with the east/west divide is the perception that Fort Lauderdale schools are not high quality, but there are great things happening in our schools. There must be a way to highlight success stories in our schools; the personnel, the leadership, the programs, etc. and the City could help with that feature. She mentioned I-zones and suggested putting a small working group together of City people and school people, to come up with ideas to address difficulties. The Commissioners should be responsible for adopting schools in their respective Districts.

Mr. Pasteur presented Idea #9, underperforming teachers. Learning gains are being approached because that is what the Board understands as an approach to determining what children are learning and to address effective and ineffective teachers. He conducted nine interviews and every Principal talked about ineffective teachers and lack of parental participation in their schools, so that is something that needs to be addressed. At a standard or metric, learning gains could be identified to identify effective teachers as well as underperforming teachers. The expectation would be that each student would make learning gains equivalent to one years' growth. The Florida Standard Assessment, through the BAM score models, provide for the examination of student growth and teacher accountability. The question is how effective the model has been, but a survey of Principals might shed some light on this. The second recommendation is to substantially increase parental participation in other performing schools. Schools would be adopted by Education Advisory Board members, who would assist the Principal in developing a program that meets the needs of their school and to help parents see the school and home in a partnership. The members responsibility would include engaging with parents and keeping parents united with the schools. The District would provide a Principal who has had success in increasing participation in their school to give advice and best practices for getting parents more involved. In order to close the gap between a student and his or her peers in a high performing school, identifying teachers making learning gains would help assure the students have effective teachers and that the students are progressing. The goal being all students would be reading on grade level by third grade. Research shows that when there is meaningful participation of parents, the child's grades improve and there is an uptake in the overall school grade. Over 2,500 students would be positively affected by increased learning gains and parental participation. Parents

would receive in measurable terms the progress being made by their child and the Education Advisory Board adoptees would give advice on how to address any issues there might be regarding their child's progress. There would be no cost to monitor the progress in teachers or being an assistant to parents. The City could set aside \$2,000 per year to purchase incentives in the form of prizes for parents participating in PTA, SAC, or other special training. No parent should come to the school and not have something measurable put in their hand that says, "This is the progress your child has made" and they have the right to ask why they are not making progress.

Mr. Sponsler, Fort Lauderdale High School teacher and new Board member, mentioned that a lot of his neighbors in the northwest community are asking how they can get their kids into another school, not their local school. In the last presentation about teacher accountability, that is a four-way street between Administrators, the School Board, the teachers, and the parents. If teachers are going to be accountable, everyone else needs to be held accountable, and that includes facilitating the needs of the teachers to be able to do their best work. He hoped that all areas of accountability would be looked at and cautioned everyone not to use it as a carrot and stick approach.

Philip Bullock, Principal of Walker Elementary School, commented that there is so much more to a school than the grade; it does not measure the atmosphere and culture or how many opportunities there are for children. Principals do control underperforming teachers; it is their job as Administrators to get the bad out and the good in. As an elementary school Principal, he has been in many different schools and Fort Lauderdale was the first municipality that did not invest in SRO's, which is a critical need, especially now. It is unconscionable to think that the elementary schools are being left in some of the most difficult areas where crime is rampant. Some things are controlled, and some are not; that is something Principals do not control at all, but the City does, and they really should invest. He noted that his children fear the Police, but perhaps if there was a Police Officer on site as a mentor and role model, the kids would see them in a different light and maybe things could be prevented before they happen. If you really want to make an impact, the kids need to be productive and the rest can be controlled. He agreed with Mr. Pasteur and stated that by the end of the day he evaluates his Assistant Principal and if they are not effective it is his job and duty to let them know to make sure they either get better or go.

Mr. Pasteur commented that the perception about Fort Lauderdale schools, particularly the schools on the west side, is not just the public who fear it. His experience as an ex-Principal, is when people are at hiring halls the perspective teachers are walking around with two things in their hands, a map showing where the school is located and the school grade. Teachers do not want to be in certain schools, so if they have that perception what do you expect the public to have?

Dr. Verdi Knapp presented Idea #10, free Wi-Fi for all students. All students within the City of Fort Lauderdale should be afforded the same access to learning tools that are intended to increase their success and mastery of their education. Most schools have Wi-Fi within the classrooms, so students can work while in school, but there is a problem when kids go home and cannot do their homework. The amount of expectation of all this digital learning and online learning has increased and this causes a homework gap as many kids must submit homework online; this is a real issue for many families in Fort Lauderdale. The schools either keep moving forward with digital learning, meaning that some kids will be left behind, or homework assignments are kept offline, which holds back students who might otherwise be able to grow. It was noted that this disproportionately affects under-represented minorities and students in rural areas. The percentage of students with no internet access or only dial up access are consistently higher for students living below the poverty threshold. The City of Fort Lauderdale has a 19.27% poverty rate, which is directly associated with the education level and is tied to employment rates. It was noted that 15,656 students out of 20,016 students in the City of Fort Lauderdale are eligible for free or reduced lunch; that is 78.2% of the students. Through research, Dr. Knapp found that Broward County offers Wi-Fi hotspots, so she wants to talk to the County about expanding that program. This is a work in progress because that seems to be one of the easy routes to go. In speaking to her own IT people about putting hotspots in the schools, there is a lot involved. Miami-Dade has implemented this as well and this is one possible solution; there is a company called Kajeel SmartSpot, specifically for students. The cost is \$100 to \$150 per device and \$19.97 per month for day usage. It is a hotspot that students can check out and take home and this is being done in libraries for certain students who have a need at certain schools. Another option is the Smart Bus, in which school buses are being outfitted with Wi-Fi so students can work on their homework while on the school bus if they want to. In some rural areas and urban settings, school buses are being parked overnight in neighborhoods, so people in the area can tap into the hotspot. The cost is \$1,000 to \$1,100 per router, per bus, and \$44.97 per month for the data usage or \$66.97 per month, which eliminates the upfront cost per bus of \$1,000 and the router would be used. All the options are compliant and filtered like Broward County schools. The bus can service 64 devices at one time.

- Fort Lauderdale Principals and Community Discussion

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman requested that the Principals hand in their forms before they leave. He noted that the Workshop with the City Commission is on May 7, 2019 at City Hall from noon to 1:30 p.m.

- Gallery Walk Exercise: Principals indicate their highest priorities

This was not discussed.

- EAB members discuss and select final 2019 recommendations

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman questioned how many people could attend the May 7, 2019 Workshop. The Commission has already seen the gap analysis, so the idea is to provide ways to close that gap, give them the votes from the Principals, and give them recommendations.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman mentioned priorities and noted that Wi-Fi was last on the list. The first priority was the \$40 million from the Bond and the second priority was ELC. He questioned if there were any adjustments to the list or if #1 through #10 were all right. He requested that any thoughts be provided by Sunday night, May 5, 2019, so staff could put together a presentation.

Ms. Dinnen mentioned the portfolio idea.

A suggestion was made to bring the rehabilitation of the school with the next ELC presentation because they blend together. There were no objections.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman stated that a park and ELC consolidation would be done.

Ms. Barnett mentioned Ms. Fertig's suggestion for retitling; it was more of a positive spin than negative; instead of consolidating and closing, it was more of repurposing and utilizing. There were no objections.

Ms. Barnett questioned if something should be written that would be more suitable to the Commission.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman advised that the child approach and how important it is to have time and nature is a perfect political persuasion; they already have the money. He thought the Early Learning Center presentation has the ability to get there as well as asking the Commission if they care about the kids in west Fort Lauderdale. Perhaps some of the shell statistics should be pulled about poverty. He noted that the learning gain would be much tighter, so the Commission would understand the formula recommended.

Ms. Barnett agreed, but stated that the whole student needs to be looked at. There are things that need to be celebrated that do not come in the form of a learning gain; there are families who are interested in things happening in schools. Sometimes the higher performing schools are void of some of the richness and culture that other schools offer and that is a component that appeals to some people.

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman advised that everything would be explained to the Commission on May 7, 2019.

Ms. Dinnen suggested putting in some verbiage to indicate that the Board would be doing some work on alternative schools.

- Discussion of Workshop Facilitation

Ms. Robinson advised that she would be sending an email to all Board members. She needs a final count of those attending the May 7, 2019 Workshop from noon to 1:30 p.m. and noted that the Board would still be meeting on May 16, 2019. The Commission requested that the survey be presented, so that will take place during the May 16, 2019 meeting. It was noted that Zoie Saunders would share and speak with the Board at that meeting.

Dr. Verdi Knapp, Ms. Lovell, Ms. Shelly, Ms. Dinnen, Mr. Pasteur, and Vice Chair Dr. Zeman committed to attending the Workshop.

V. Approve minutes (March 21, 2019)

Vice Chair Dr. Zeman advised that the minutes would be approved at the May 16, 2019 meeting.

ELECTIONS:

Motion made by Mr. Audet, seconded by Ms. Dinnen, to nominate Dr. Zeman as Chair. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously. (12-0)

Motion made by Dr. Zeman, seconded by Mr. Audet, to nominate Ms. Ellowitz as Vice Chair. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously. (12-0)

VI. Closing

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

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

Attachments: