



**VIRTUAL EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
CITY HALL
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33301
THURSDAY, November 19, 2020 6:30-8:30 PM**

Members	Attendance	July 2020 – May 2021	
		Present	Absent
Dr. Allen Zeman, Chair	P	5	0
Ruchel Coetzee	P	4	1
Lisa May	A	2	3
Amy Ellowitz, Vice Chair	P	5	0
April Jeff	A	2	3
Dr. Heather Munns	P	5	0
Tina Jaramillo	P	5	0
Colleen Lockwood	P	5	0
Sarah Owen DelNegri	P	5	0
Vickie Melus	P	4	1
Christopher Relyea	P	5	0
Lillian Small	P	2	3
Rory Sponsler	P	4	1
Betty Shelley	P	3	2
Dr. Michele Verdi-Knapp	P	5	0
Yolanda B. Francis	A	2	3
Tomislav Lukic	P	5	0

Staff/Guests

Zoie Saunders, Chief Education Officer, City of Fort Lauderdale
 Elizabeth Van Zandt, Downtown Development Authority
 Joseph Beck, Broward County Public Schools
 Jill Young, Broward County Public Schools
 Danielle Smith, Principal of Bennett Elementary School
 Angel Gomez
 Jamie Opperlee, Prototype, Inc.

- **Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance – Dr. Allen Zeman, Chair**

This meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Attendance and Roll Call, 17 appointed members; 10 needed for quorum

As of this date, November 19, 2020, 14 of the 17 appointed members were present, which constituted a quorum.

Vice Chair Ellowitz thanked Wendy Gonsler and Jennifer Lovell who both resigned from their service on the Board.

- **Chair's Minute**

Chair Dr. Zeman reported that the Board continues to work on Bennett Elementary School, Joint Use Parks, Early Learning Centers, and Strategic Initiatives. Over the last month, confirmation was received that Superintendent Runcie and Mayor Trantalis would attend the December meeting. Someone from the Parks Advisory Board may attend as well as people from the community including the Downtown Development Authority and many other groups. He questioned if the December meeting would be live or virtual.

Ms. Saunders advised they have the option to do either. Given the size of these meetings, if an in-person meeting were held, it would have to be hybrid because they would not be able to accommodate everyone.

Chair Dr. Zeman received a few emails that said two-hour Zoom meetings are too long and a break was requested in the middle. During this meeting, he would like to discuss hybrid versus live or 100% virtual to find consensus towards the end of this meeting.

Old Business

- Strategic Initiatives
 - Bennett Elementary School
 - Preparation for December planning session with Superintendent Robert Runcie, City Representatives

Principal Danielle Smith thanked everyone for sharing to make Bennett Elementary a better school.

Ms. Saunders mentioned the reference document shared in a previous email, which contains data that has been reviewed over the last couple months to give a better sense of the programs at Bennett Elementary School and some data regarding enrollment and the overall Fort Lauderdale High School zone. Since the last meeting, the Communication to the Commission went before the Mayor and City Commission, which was related to Bennett Elementary School, and the Mayor and Vice Mayor expressed support for this initiative. She thanked Ms. Coetzee and Mr. Lukic for their availability to answer questions.

Staff is looking to create more opportunities to engage the community in providing input in as many ways possible before a School Board Workshop is developed. In the reference document, a high-level timeline is shown, which is very tentative, but she is

working with Broward County Public Schools to align the Board's efforts as to when their Smart Team and Superintendent is looking to bring this back in front of the School Board.

Critical points mentioned by Chair Dr. Zeman are that the Mayor and Superintendent will participate in the December meeting and the Board is looking to host several community forums in January or February. The intent is to gain as much participation as possible from community members to create support for this project to demonstrate the need in the community for Bennett Elementary School. This will be brought back to the Commission Conference Meeting.

Ms. Saunders met with the Superintendent and he is very much focused on this project and sees it as a great opportunity to bring innovation to the City and the County. He is open to exploring possibilities and is excited to be part of the planning session with this Board next month.

Key highlights in terms of progress from the last meeting including conversations in the business community and Ms. Saunders thanked Elizabeth Van Zandt with the Downtown Development Authority for participating in this meeting. It was noted that they have reached out to the Fort Lauderdale Alliance. The intent is to engage as many stakeholders as possible; community members, businesses, and organizations that have a vested interest in public education in the community and at Bennett Elementary School.

Chair Dr. Zeman questioned what fits with the campaigns Principal Smith is on and how these things would come together to help the most.

Principal Smith stated that one of the most important things for children is to have great role models and she foresees volunteerism as a way to help the students. The Board could help by reaching out to different community members to determine what specific things they want from Bennett Elementary School and why some families choose not to come to Bennett Elementary School and choose private or charter schools and magnet programs. The Cambridge Program was implemented, but with the pandemic, it is not as fully implemented as she would like. She had an opportunity to speak with Ms. Saunders and to attend one of the Homeowner's Association meetings, which she thought might be an outlet for those who are zoned for Bennett Elementary School to determine their needs. Principal Smith is fortunate to work with many other Elementary School Principals, so she knows some of the other programs available at North Fork, specifically, the reading program they do with the City. This is a program that could possibly be implemented at Bennett Elementary School. She hosted the Summer Academy through Broward Schools and noted that Bennett Elementary School does not have a summer camp, but that is something they could consider with some help. She wants the Board to have an opportunity to share their ideas and what they can do together so they can move forward.

Chair Dr. Zeman thought an interesting idea to think about would be that the City convert from a recreation-based summer camp program to an academic based summer program. There is ample evidence that the summer slide is going to be pervasive; there are serious equity issues in west Fort Lauderdale where there is less opportunity to hire out academic growth during the summertime. This is something that should be placed on the agenda for the December meeting to introduce the idea to the Mayor and Superintendent. The City runs a summer camp program with over 2,000 students, which is mostly recreation-based to keep the kids organized during the summer. There is a real opportunity to do something different while fighting against Covid. Instead of having recreation camps, perhaps we should have academic camps. The Board wants to discuss what they and the City of Fort Lauderdale can do as far as near-term things. One advantage of an academic camp is that kids who live in the neighborhood and do not attend Bennett Elementary School would get introduced to the school in a different and positive way over the summer months.

The Board needs to think about what they need to do next month in terms of gathering new data to show the Mayor and Superintendent and at the same time find out what the business community and real estate people think and get information from Homeowner's Associations. Volunteers are needed over the next three weeks, excluding Thanksgiving, to help design questions in a survey and to call businesses, Homeowner's Associations, residents, and other groups that have been identified. The second thing to think through is what populations need to be reached. County data and stories are not going to be as effective as providing new information to the Superintendent and Mayor. He thought a package with new data would put this issue where it needs to be.

Vice Chair Ellowitz advised that she would organize and go door to door and Principal Smith said she would help, except with the door to door.

Chair Dr. Zeman requested Vice Chair Ellowitz and Principal Smith create questions to vet. He suggested five populations with three or four questions with a one to ten rating and a couple of open-ended questions to make sure the same questions are being asked. He asked Principal Smith to be the reviewer of those questions to make sure they are most compelling.

Mr. Relyea indicated that he has 270 students between grades 9 and 12, who could help.

Ms. Coetzee suggested asking students what they would have liked if they were starting school all over again.

Chair Dr. Zeman thought the students were the staff needed to build a compelling case for the December meeting. He questioned what criteria they would tell parents to use. He noted that Mr. Relyea could challenge the students and ask them to make phone calls.

Mr. Relyea advised that the students could execute any plan given to them whether it is phone calls, data hunts, survey collection, etc.; they are capable.

Chair Dr. Zeman commented that Vice Chair Ellowitz could describe what Ms. Coetzee suggested and ask high school students to write what really mattered to them in elementary school that would tell their parents what criteria to use in selecting an elementary school. The Board could pick five emails and have the students make a video and record themselves talking about it and then the videos could be shown to the Mayor and Superintendent during the December meeting.

Ms. Coetzee spoke to Bob Swindell with the Broward Alliance and asked him to help fund a videographer to assist during an interview of some of the students. Mr. Swindell was on board to do so, as he would like to use some of the video for a promotional video he is working on for the Broward Alliance.

Chair Dr. Zeman requested Ms. Coetzee send that specific idea on the video to Ms. Saunders to make sure the City can give approval.

Vice Chair Ellowitz liked the video idea and questioned if it would be beneficial to have videos of teachers with students at Bennett Elementary School to show a one-year gain, not just in learning, but emotionally.

Ms. Saunders liked that idea and thought there was real value in tapping into families at Bennett Elementary School, making it an authentic video and experience. She also thought there was value in connecting with the families who live around Bennett Elementary School but choose to send their children elsewhere.

Dr. Verdi-Knapp stated that recent elections have taught that door knocking, being face to face, and phone calls are something Mr. Relyea's students could do. She thought it would be a great opportunity for Mr. Relyea's students if they have some sort of script.

Mr. Relyea agreed and thought the voices should come from the community, not from his students.

Mr. Lukic questioned if any of Mr. Relyea's students are currently enrolled in the Aice Diploma or Cambridge classes. He thought it would be interesting if the students could speak about if they had a Cambridge formulated education from so early on to high school and how it could have prepared them to do even better. Completion of the Cambridge Diploma is direct access to Bright Futures and four years of undergraduate degree paid for and he thought it would be something to capitalize on.

Mr. Relyea stated that he teaches 100 of the students himself and there are probably 350 to 400 students in the school currently in the Cambridge Program.

Mr. Sponsler questioned what the Board is advocating and what the meeting with the Superintendent is for. He also questioned what the Board is building this propaganda for.

Chair Dr. Zeman indicated that he would not answer a question about propaganda, that is not an appropriate word to describe what the Board is doing. The Board is gathering information to form a conversation with the Mayor and Superintendent about a Strategic Initiative they have adopted, which is about educational excellence at Bennett Elementary School and about the Board's advocacy for a new facility there as well.

Ms. Saunders stated that from a City perspective, the Board is looking at where under-enrollment is seen citywide. There is a need for the City to engage the community in understanding how to create attractive school options in every neighborhood across the City of Fort Lauderdale. Bennett Elementary School was brought to the Education Advisory Board as a school that is under-enrolled, but it has a unique opportunity because of the Smart Bond. Because of the timing of the Smart Bond, the School Board is making different decisions around the future of that school and they have decided to move forward with a two-phase approach. Moving forward there is a timing and level of importance because there is an opportunity to reimagine that school and create a great appeal for residents. There are other schools to focus on and if successful in engaging the community in this way, they will be able to do so with other schools across the City. She is trying to engage more people in the conversation of what they want to see in public education. They talked a little more about background and this is more of a global effort to increase engagement in public schools and to learn from the community what they would like to see in their schools along with educating them on what is available, so they can create world class schools and an understanding of what is available in the City.

Mr. Sponsler believed in the mission, but City of Fort Lauderdale residents had a perfect opportunity to speak when the Smart Bond and construction associated with the Smart Bond was presented. He has taught Cambridge for many years and has had successes and failures with it. Cambridge at the high school level does not meet the rigor equivalent to College Board programs; they are competitors. Cambridge has its benefits, but it does not meet the academic standards of the College Board.

Chair Dr. Zeman reiterated the five populations identified: Homeowner's Associations, real estate agents, neighbors who attend Bennett Elementary School and those who do not, businesses, and high school students and their response.

In response to Ms. Lockwood and Chair Dr. Zeman, Principal Smith thought teachers would like to talk to Board members, whether positive or negative. It would be interesting to hear their thoughts; they have a strong voice and want what is best for Bennett Elementary School. There are many teacher assistants because of the ESE programs and they also have a strong voice. If staff were included, she would like to have both if possible.

Chair Dr. Zeman questioned if anyone on the Board had an objection to including teachers and teacher assistants in the population.

Ms. Coetzee suggested parents.

Chair Dr. Zeman stated that parents could be called neighbors. There has been some discussion that neighbors may be a better category because there are parks neighbors could use. There are schools in Broward County where neighbors use the facilities to have neighborhood meetings, etc., so there may be more than just parents who would like to say what they would like to see at Bennett Elementary School. There are also restrictions about getting to actual student parents. Student PTA is one way to do so; perhaps all the PTA parents could be interviewed to get enough information. Getting neighbors is not easy unless Board members want to knock on doors, which they could do. He questioned if there were any restrictions about going door to door.

Ms. Saunders did not think there were any restrictions about going door to door as long as members are not together.

Chair Dr. Zeman clarified that one EAB member and someone else could go door to door to meet neighbors, but not a Broward County School Board employee.

Ms. Lockwood thought essays and videos would come from teachers, parents, and students. She was not clear, because she was thinking about neighboring Homeowner's Associations that surround Bennett Elementary School. There will be a handful of parents, but there will be a lot of people who have nothing to do with the school. She questioned why they were working with a list of parents at Bennett Elementary School and why they were bothering with Homeowner's Associations.

Chair Dr. Zeman stated that one of the issues they are hoping to learn from Homeowner's Associations is a longstanding perspective of what the community thinks about the school. One of the groups they would like to know about is people who thought about moving into the neighborhood and chose not to because Bennett Elementary School is a C school, a small school, or a school that needs a new facility. Homeowner's Associations have a collective history of the area around Bennett Elementary School, so those were the kinds of questions they were hoping to learn.

Ms. Lockwood commented that rather than Homeowner's Associations around Bennett Elementary School, they should visit the ones that host Bayview and Harbordale. We need the contrast of education at the top priority for moving to the neighborhood and the benefit of Bennett Elementary School, which has potential and is a more affordable part of the City to live in. Knocking on doors is great, but they could be productive by a targeting emphasis, so Mr. Relyea's students would have a curated list from the Board, which is specific people in specific locations. Talking more about filtering through the list of people, the phone numbers they will be calling, or doors they will be knocking on,

making sure that is as productive and efficient as possible by limiting it to parents of Bennett Elementary School and then highlighting a few residents in other neighborhoods that tell you education was the reason.

Chair Dr. Zeman questioned if Ms. Coetzee agreed with Ms. Lockwood on getting the list of parents and trying to contact them or going to other Homeowner's Associations.

Ms. Coetzee indicated that parents are going to give their true feelings. She would like to hear from parents who have students in A schools because they will say why they moved there in non-certain terms and that makes a big impact.

Chair Dr. Zeman questioned if anyone had any objection to the Board reaching out to a handful of Homeowner's Associations at A rated elementary schools. He stated that would be added to the list.

Ms. Verdi-Knapp thought they could be missing a component of people to survey because the neighborhood in Poinsettia Heights is less expensive than the Bayview or Harbordale District. She suggested gathering information to determine who has kids in private schools who live in Poinsettia Heights. She thought hearing from other populations as well would be good to get a sense, but unfortunately, people want an A school.

Chair Dr. Zeman thought everyone would like to talk to parents who send their kids to Bennett Elementary School. He questioned if it was possible to get a phone list of parents or if County permission was needed.

Principal Smith advised that she could have staff call if necessary, but she did not think she could give out information.

Ms. Saunders questioned if Principal Smith was able to reach out to parents who might be interested and set up Zoom meetings so there would be times to join either in a focus group style or schedule sessions most convenient for the parents.

Principal Smith was sure parents on her staff would be interested in participating.

Chair Dr. Zeman stated he would talk to Principal Smith whenever she is available to discuss this. He was concerned that there are only a few weeks to get the data together. He mentioned the PTA and thought it would be more difficult to find people who live in the boundary district and do not send their children there. He questioned if anyone had any ideas how to find them.

Vice Chair Ellowitz questioned if they would be permitted to use NextDoor.com. She has found that to be a good resource in her community and it seems that a lot of parents are active. She could pose the question and narrow it to the Poinsettia Heights community and one or two other surrounding neighborhoods and ask whatever questions they come

up with as to why they attend or do not attend Bennett Elementary School. She has done a lot of phone banking the last few months and people do not answer the phone. If there was access to the PTA email list and to the PTA's at other schools, a survey list could be created that could be sent via email, so there would be a hard collection of data to graph or to create questions, then compile the data in a different way based on responses, which could be sent to various PTA's including a few of the local private schools.

Mr. Relyea thought they would be looking for people who have reassigned their children to either A or B schools. A third of the kids at Harbordale are reassigned and there is a huge number of kids; reassigned families are the ones we are looking for. Those people made a conscious decision to change the school their child is at and it would be good to talk to them.

Chair Dr. Zeman questioned if Mr. Beck knew how many reassignments there were in Bennett Elementary School and how many students in the area were assigned to other public schools.

In response to Chair Dr. Zeman, Mr. Beck referenced last year's data regarding reassignments in Bennett Elementary School. There were 327 students at Bennett Elementary School last year, which was about 49% of students in that boundary, so slightly more than half did not attend Bennett Elementary School. Students who did not go to Bennett Elementary School went to VSY, Wilton Manors, Floranada, and Harbordale. There is a total of 264 boundary students, which means there is not enough students attending public school in the boundary to fill the school; 130 students go to Bennett Elementary School. There are 197 out of boundary students and the top schools are North Side, North Fork, Thurgood Marshall, and Sunland Park.

Ms. Saunders questioned if those are students within Broward County Public Schools. If so, that does not capture the total number of children who live in the zone.

Mr. Beck stated that was correct. Through Census Data, it is known that a significant portion of some of the neighborhoods in the Bennett Elementary School boundary attend private schools, but that number does not include those kids; private school and homeschool kids are not on their radar.

Chair Dr. Zeman commented that those children are on their radar when talking about 7,000 new homes being built downtown in the next five years.

Mr. Sponsler mentioned restrictions on political activity on Next Door.

Chair Dr. Zeman advised that people use Next Door all the time and he did not think it was political. Next Door is an interesting source of information.

Ms. Saunders thought part of the unique opportunity is the localized approach. Getting input from the community about what is compelling at Bennett Elementary School. There may be a way to frame those questions to show what the actual true demand might be in the community.

Chair Dr. Zeman stated that the next meeting is on December 17, 2020, so the data must be in by December 11, 2020.

Chair Dr. Zeman confirmed the following:

- Vice Chair Ellowitz will draft the questions.
- Ms. Saunders will review the questions.
- Principal Smith will connect with people.
- Mr. Lukic will help any way he can.
- Ms. Jaramillo and Ms. Coetzee will help create questions and interview teachers and teacher assistants at Bennett Elementary School.
- Ms. Munns will talk to parents and the community and help with questions or outreach.
- Dr. Verdi-Knapp will speak with five real estate agents.
- Mr. Lukic volunteered to create the email survey or help wherever he can.

Chair Dr. Zeman thought it might be more practical to gather email addresses, have students send emails to people, and then enter data received.

- Vice Chair Ellowitz will reach out to Homeowner's Associations.

Chair Dr. Zeman commented that he would contact the Homeowner's Associations adjacent to the schools if Vice Chair Ellowitz would contact the ones not directly adjacent to the schools.

Ms. Lockwood mentioned a list of Homeowner's Association Presidents, which is the outreach; name the neighborhood you want, go to the Homeowner's Association or Civic Association President and ask who you should speak to in the community. She will provide the list to Vice Chair Ellowitz.

Chair Dr. Zeman stated they would like to reach out to three to five businesses in the area that might be likely to sponsor a school or a big employer in the area inherently interested in the quality of education.

Ms. Munns commented that the idea of going to businesses is that they want the same information from a corporate entity about their feelings, importance, and priority of education and good schools. Perhaps the way to do this would be working through the Alliance, as their mission is economic development in the region and they woo businesses to relocate to Broward County, specifically to the Greater Fort Lauderdale area.

- Ms. Munns indicated that she and Ms. Coetzee would talk to Mr. Swindell with the Broward Alliance, and Susan Kleinman, who heads education initiatives for the Alliance, and figure this out for the interview part of the process.

Mr. Relyea commented that large companies have people in their Human Resources Departments that are the head of relocation.

- Ms. Melus commented that she knows Susan Kleinman and would be happy to work with her again.

Chair Dr. Zeman questioned if Ms. Munns would be the volunteer who does the interview with people identified in the businesses. She could use Vice Chair Ellowitz's interview and get the information back to Ms. Saunders.

Ms. Munns questioned what types of businesses they are targeting.

Chair Dr. Zeman stated that would be up to Ms. Lockwood and Ms. Coetzee. His view was more localized because this was all about Bennett Elementary School.

Ms. Coetzee advised that whatever is done for Bennett Elementary School would be a great model for other schools in the future.

Chair Dr. Zeman stated this is a proven method for a Citizen Advisory Group like ours to have impact. The more you learn, the more information can be provided to the decision makers.

Ms. Melus indicated that she could volunteer for anything and suggested the Board come up with a unified script so there is a clear unified message.

Chair Dr. Zeman advised that it would be helpful to write a paragraph describing what the Board is doing in general. The script would be helpful and might be used at a presentation next month, so they reinforce with the Superintendent and Mayor the approach they took with everyone.

Ms. Melus stated she could work on the unified script and she is also available to help wherever needed.

- Discuss broad engagement strategy, near-term data gathering

Chair Dr. Zeman explained that the Board is trying to do what they can in terms of educational programming and facility improvement. Educational improvement could be done this year and the Board could help with possibly having a summer camp at that location sponsored by the City. He wants to make sure the facilities goal is a long-term goal, so there is not a lot of money for facilities every year and that is why so much money

is spent through the Bonds. The Bond was a lot, but it did not cover all requirements for the facilities the City has, so there will either be more Bonds or other sources of funds and when they get to those, the City has made it clear that they would like Bennett Elementary School to be prioritized very highly on the list. The nearer term goal is helping leaders in Broward County Schools improve educational quality and gathering this information could be helpful to those who are trying to do the heavy lifting and they will know more about these various populations.

- Joint Use Parks Initiative Update

Ms. Saunders advised that staff is transitioning into a project design and implementation phase, so they are reconvening the Joint Use Working Group and adding additional membership to help streamline approval processes necessary in this next phase. A list of short-term projects has been identified, which require a minimal investment; it is more establishing fencing required that can be accomplished through operational dollars to make those sites available. They are working with the School District to review those and approve the fencing schematics to make those available to the public as soon as it is allowable. Currently, due to Covid-19, this Board is not making playground spaces available, so they will be coordinating, and once fencing is up and allowed, those sites will be open for community access. At the last meeting, there was discussion about a ribbon cutting ceremony at Bennett Elementary School park; however, that has been delayed, so they can be sure that once the ribbon is cut, neighborhood kids can come in and use the facilities. They will be working and engaging with the community through community forums to get further input on the project design.

Chair Dr. Zeman attended the Parks Advisory Board meeting and there was a lot of discussion about the process and robust acknowledgement of the Joint Use Initiative Ms. Saunders has led for the City.

Ms. Saunders stated that the Parks Advisory Board identified a new liaison who she will be working with closely. She noted that internal work has been done to see how dollars can be stretched as they move through the Parks Bond to make improvements to additional sites that have been identified through the Joint Use over the past year.

Chair Dr. Zeman mentioned Pickleball and stated they will be all over the City.

- Early Learning Initiative Update

Ms. Saunders met with Dr. Rosalind Osgood. As previously mentioned, the City provided a Letter of Support to expand their Head Start Program and they are continuing to engage. That may be another opportunity for community conversations to understand what Early Learning options would look like. There has been some conversation about replicating the Gulfstream model, which she thinks has been incredibly successful. The Board might want to consider as they look at the model in Fort Lauderdale. Perhaps they want to

consider building Early Learning into several schools, so families who walk to school might have that access, creating continuity from those Early Learning stages into Kindergarten. She encouraged those interested to study and research those types of models as a collective group and community.

- **Equity in Education**

Chair Dr. Zeman pointed out that is easy to get animated about opportunities in individual schools as opposed to two system opportunities; smaller opportunities are more likely to be successful. Several years ago, the Board started off trying to work on a training issue that existed for a long time between the City and the County and they helped get it resolved. The Board has helped in terms of setting strategy and they are clearly working on some broad issues related to Joint Use across the entire City and on the Early Learning Initiative. There is a bigger issue in terms of Equity in Education in the central part of Fort Lauderdale with some schools that are statistically under-enrolled, whose academic performance is not as good as in other schools; they have long histories with their neighborhoods and communities and there is lots of talk and discussion about them, both amongst people who live there and some who would like to live there but have chosen not to. There is a long-term issue with Equity and Education in this City, and it is a worthy topic and one the Board should discuss. This topic will be discussed at the December meeting in front of the Superintendent and Mayor as well as a tactical long-term approach about the facility. There will be a discussion about what the Board thinks is happening with all 30 schools, all 20,000 students, all 7,000 new residential units being built in Downtown.

Ms. Jaramillo commented that parental involvement is a big key. Sometimes in under-enrolled schools, parents are not involved for a variety of reasons whether it is work related, language barriers, or other things. It would be wonderful to build that engagement with teachers and parents in a meaningful way and create programming that allows parents to become more engaged in their schools. There needs to be more buy in from the parents and parents need to feel safe and welcome in the school spaces, having a real relationship other than interim reports and a once a year parent teacher conference.

Dr. Verdi-Knapp invited everyone on the Board to listen to the podcast, "Nice White Parents". It is critical and highlights what can and does happen, negative and positive, when parents become involved. She mentioned interviews conducted a few years ago when the Board was doing the Swat Analysis, and noted the thing that came up consistently among those schools who were considered to be underperforming or lacking the same resources as more of the east side schools, was parent involvement and the quality of teachers. She also mentioned Job Fairs for teachers; there were long lines for high performing schools and lower performing school Principals were trying to encourage potential teachers to visit and consider their schools as an option. She questioned if there was any way to make this more equitable; perhaps becoming a teacher for Broward County Public Schools and getting assigned to schools, that way there would be some

equity consistently. It was noted that North Side does not have a PTA, which is disturbing, because the PTA makes such an impact on the school.

Ms. Lockwood stated this is not a new problem. There is a department on diversity, equity and inclusion within the School District headed by David Watkins. Equity liaisons have been appointed at every school and they have started “Young Voice Matter” student forums. They are funding the “No Cost Application” process for HBCU’s among many other initiatives. The Board cannot solve a problem without understanding the context, the history of racism, and the understanding of implicit bias. She has talked to Ms. Saunders and training can be offered to Board members if they are interested. She challenged the Board to think more strategically about this at a systemic level looking at the identified resources and gaps in those resources across the schools in Fort Lauderdale. The most beneficial in terms of this work moving forward is having a clearly defined scorecard. Achievements must be measured a year from now and we need to be clear, set goals, and objectives, and come up with a set of metrics by which we will be held accountable.

Chair Dr. Zeman indicated that we live in an area where equity is a positive political issue. There are clear educational metrics about what good looks like, but unfortunately, all those metrics are not improving. Measurable outcomes in education in Broward County and Fort Lauderdale show a tremendous disparity based on income, and yet the goal of the education system is to provide positive outcomes for everyone. In any measure of education in our City, there is a radical difference based on income. That has a different racial component, different ethnic component, and different number of years in the United States component. This is work in progress and it is going to take a long time to get it right.

Ms. Lockwood thought when talking about a good metric for education there is also an opportunity to do something the School District cannot do. Tallahassee, the Florida Department of Education, and even the United States Department of Education is saying this is what is good and what counts and matters, and this is what is needed, but she thinks some of those metrics are wrong. This can lead to a higher level advocacy conversation that would benefit schools in the long run by saying the way you allocate certain things and the way you test students; we could drive systemic changes that are desperately needed and we could tackle income level. To change resource gaps in education based on race and ethnicity, we need to be specific and help our School District. Metrics that are currently defined are not often the ones that matter in terms of students getting ahead.

Vice Mayor Ellowitz mentioned hybrid versus virtual for the December meeting.

Chair Dr. Zeman tabled this issue for now but advised that Board would continue bringing it up. This Board needs to educate, inform, and train to learn more about this; we need to figure out how to advise our City to build a more equitable education system, not one

that is equitable in resourcing, but equitable in outcomes. Next month's meeting in December will probably have 50+ people in attendance. He questioned how many people preferred the hybrid option, live only, or virtual only and noted that about 75% preferred the hybrid option.

Ms. Lockwood thought a hybrid model is challenging because you forget who is present; she believed the meeting should be all virtual or all live. To Ms. Saunders' point, with 50 people, she would vote for this being all live or all virtual and she is not a fan on all live based on Covid.

Mr. Relyea stated that hybrid stinks.

In response to Chair Dr. Zeman, Ms. Saunders did not think there was a chance that attendees would be lost if the meeting were all virtual.

Mr. Jaramillo agreed with Mr. Relyea and Ms. Lockwood.

Chair Dr. Zeman commented that we are not past Covid and he did not think live or hybrid was the safe option; therefore, the meeting is going to be virtual.

- **Approval of Last Meeting Minutes:** October 15, 2020

Motion by Vice Chair Amy Ellowitz, seconded by Christopher Relyea, to approve the October 15, 2020 minutes. **Motion** passed unanimously. (14-0)

- **Closing**

Principal Smith thanked everyone for all their work and knowledge. She will continue to join these meetings because she learns a lot and is excited the Board is going to continue with their equity talks.

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

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