



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**DRAFT**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD**  
Thursday, February 20, 2025, 6:00 p.m.  
101 NE 3rd Ave  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

June 2024 - May 2025

<b>Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Chair Janet Gualtieri	P	8	0
Pamela Aiken	P	5	3
Heather Brinkworth	P	8	0
Kristina Dever	P	6	2
John Gillen	P	5	3
Erin Gohl	A	6	2
Juliet Gray-Williams	P	6	2
Denia Perloff	A	3	5
Deborah Rosenbaum, Vice Chair	P	5	3
Kristin LaFleur	P	2	0
Pamela Vance	P	1	0
Cary Tabora	P	1	0

**Also Attending**

Susan Leon, Chief Education Officer  
K. Cruitt, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc

**Guests**

Claudette Lavoie, Program Director, Broward Education Foundation

**Call to Order and Determination of Quorum**

Roll was called and it was determined a quorum was present. The meeting began at 6:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of the January 16, 2025 Minutes**

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Rosenbaum, seconded by Mr. Gillen, to approve the January 16, 2025, with spelling corrections as noted. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Current members of the Board introduced themselves and welcomed the two new members.

Pamela Vance introduced herself expressing interest in advisory roles following involvement in the School Advisory Council (SAC) committees at Wilton Manors Elementary, Parkway Middle School, and Dillard High School, adding that she currently works as a Human Services Manager for the Homeless Services Department (HOSD). Ms. Vance resides in Melrose Manors within Commissioner Beasley-Pittman's district. Ms. Vance concluded by stating she is motivated by a deep concern for children's well-being and a desire to contribute at the city level.

Another new Member, Cary Tabora, was appointed by Vice Mayor Glassman from District 2. He stated he was previously a middle school teacher and instructional leader in New York. Mr. Tabora has been working in higher education, teaching teachers, and is currently a doctoral candidate at Columbia in adult learning and leadership.

### **Old Business**

- **Scholarship Presentation to Commission**

Ms. Aiken presented an update on the Scholarship Program presentation to the City Commission, which took place on Tuesday prior to the EAB meeting, reporting positive feedback and support from the Commissioners and community members. Ms. Leon, Chair Gaultieri and Ms. Gray-Williams were also in attendance. Although the Commissioners had been briefed prior to the meeting, they did ask additional questions regarding funding sources for the scholarship program, the application review process, and if the scholarship would be ongoing into a second year.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Broward Education Foundation representatives would review the applications.
- The program would cover trade schools, technical schools, and post-secondary education institutions.
- Program continuation would be contingent upon continued funding from the City Commission.
- The need for a scholarship program in Fort Lauderdale was discussed, emphasizing its absence and the Education Advisory Board's commitment to establishing one.
- The Board's dedication to developing an action plan for scholarships.
- The schools included in the scholarship program proposal are Sheridan Technical High School, Fort Lauderdale High, Stranahan High, Dillard 6-12, Whiddon-Rogers Education Center, and Seagull Alternative High School.
- The initial funding request was for \$12,000, leveraging a matching program to be discussed later.

## **New Business**

- **Broward Education Foundation**

Ms. Claudette Lavoie from the Broward Education Foundation provided a detailed explanation of the scholarship program and the proposed partnership with the City.

She explained the scholarship structure with the City contributing \$1,000 per student for 12 scholarships which would be matched by the Foundation, resulting in a 30-credit-hour Florida Prepaid in-state tuition scholarship for each recipient. The total value of the scholarships would be approximately \$38,000.

Ms. Lavoie explained that the scholarships would prioritize well-rounded students with un-met needs, considering factors like community service and financial aid status. The program aims to support students who may not qualify for traditional academic scholarships but demonstrate strong community engagement and financial need.

The application process, selection criteria, and award disbursement were discussed in detail. Key points included:

- The application is available online and has been open since November, with a final deadline of April 1st.
- The application includes sections for student information, essays, and uploading supporting documents such as FAFSA forms and financial aid award letters.
- Ms. Lavoie and her team actively work with students and BRACE advisors to ensure applications are complete and accurate.
- A scholarship committee vets the applications and creates a shortlist for each donor.
- Selected students are notified and must sign a contract agreeing to certain terms, including sending thank-you letters, providing grades and schedules, and maintaining a drug-free status.
- The Florida Prepaid scholarships are valid for six years, and students are encouraged to begin using them in the fall or spring semester following high school graduation.
- The scholarships are non-transferable.

The Board clarified that the Broward Education Foundation's scholarship committee, not the EAB, would be responsible for selecting recipients.

Further discussion included strategies for promoting scholarship opportunities to students, including media outreach, social media posts, communication with schools, and leveraging existing relationships with BRACE advisors.

Ms. Lavoie offered to include specific information about the City of Fort Lauderdale scholarship on the Broward Education Foundation website and application materials.

The online application and highlighted customization options were demonstrated, including the ability to add specific criteria and information relevant to the City of Fort Lauderdale scholarship.

The Board discussed the possibility of inviting scholarship recipients to a City Commission meeting for recognition. Ms. Lavoie also suggested exploring opportunities for recognition at individual school award ceremonies.

### **Chief Education Office Update**

- **Redefining Schools Update**

Ms. Leon provided an update on the School District's Redefining Initiative explaining that Phase Two of the initiative is scheduled to begin around May/June 2025. Phase One concluded with the recent School Board meeting.

An outline of potential projects under consideration for Phase Two, include a sports academy at Bennett Elementary and Sunrise Middle School and a police and fire training school, potentially located at Stranahan High School.

There have been ongoing discussions regarding the Barrington Irving Technical Training School at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport, as well as the repurposing of Broward Estates Elementary School into an early learning center.

Ms. Leon further noted that the aviation program collaboration, agreed upon in Phase One, is moving forward, with ongoing work to secure funding and finalize plans.

Ms. Leon mentioned the recent school board vote to repurpose Broward Estates Elementary into an early learning center but noted that details about this transition are still forthcoming.

- **Fortify Lauderdale and Underwater Project**

Ms. Leon provided an update on Fortify Lauderdale and the Underwater Project informing the Board that Dr. Gassman, who leads Fortify Lauderdale, is currently on leave due to a health issue. Further collaboration with Fortify Lauderdale will resume upon Dr. Gassman's return.

### **Member Discussion**

- **Amendment to Remote Participation Policies**

Chair Gaultieri read aloud a Resolution from the City Commission amending remote participation policies for City Commission, board, and committee meetings, summarizing the key changes in the resolution which adds military service as an exception for remote participation, reduces the minimum time required to provide written notice of an absence, and rescinds the previous resolution (20-214).

The Board requested clarification from the City Attorney regarding the implications of the amendment for EAB meetings, specifically regarding quorum requirements and the process for conducting hybrid meetings.

- **Discussion of Residents for Resilience Presentation**

There was discussion of the Barrington Irving Technical Training School at the Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport. Ms. Leon clarified that this was not a traditional flight school but a comprehensive technical training program focused on aviation maintenance, repair, and related skills. She noted that students in this program would learn through a condensed 12-week course, with opportunities to earn micro-credentials that are eligible for college credit through existing articulation agreements.

Chair Gaultieri introduced Residents for Resilience (R4R), a group working with the University of Miami to promote conservation and water safety education in schools.

**Motion** made by Ms. Rosenbaum, seconded by Ms. Gray-Williams to invite Residents for Resilience and the University of Miami to present at the next Board meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

- **Meeting Schedule Adjustment**

Due to conflicts with spring break and teacher workdays, the Board discussed adjusting the March meeting schedule.

Motion made by Ms. Rosenbaum, seconded by Ms. Brinkworth to cancel the March 20th meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting was scheduled for April 17th at 6:00pm in the same location.

[The invitation to Residents for Resilience and the University of Miami was amended to be for the April 17th meeting.]

Mr. Tabora raised a question about the finalization of the scholarship selection criteria and process, noting that it had not been formally decided in the previous meeting.

Ms. Leon clarified that the only outstanding question from the City Commission presentation was who would be responsible for selecting the scholarship recipients.

**Motion** made by Ms. Gray-Williams, seconded by Mr. Tabora, to formally delegate the selection of scholarship recipients to the Broward Education Foundation's scholarship committee. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

All participants were thanked for their insightful contributions and active engagement which reflected commitment not only to expanding financial support for students through

innovative scholarship models, but also to reimagining the educational landscape to meet the community's evolving needs.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

**The next regular meeting is scheduled for April 17, 2025.**

[Minutes prepared by L. Tayar, Prototype, Inc.]