



**CITY OF COCONUT CREEK  
EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**

**Government Center  
4800 West Copans Road  
Coconut Creek, FL 33063**

**Date: February 16, 2021  
Time: 6:00 p.m.  
Meeting No. 2021-0216**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kenney at 6:02 p.m.

**2. PRESENT UPON ROLL CALL**

Brian Kenney, Chair  
Madeline Gordian-Diaz  
Colleen LaPlant  
Susan Sargis, Alternate

Absent: Vice Chair Robert Hurley and Patricia Trick

Student Participants: Chloe Field, North Broward Preparatory School; Savanna Kennedy, North Broward Preparatory School; Radiah Patwary, Broward College; Fred Lourenso, Deerfield Beach Middle School

Also present: Bernadette Hughes, Assistant to the City Manager; and Angel Gomez, School Board of Broward County Government Affairs (virtually)

Chair Kenney explained that Governor Ron DeSantis' Executive Order 20-52, as continuously extended, and Section 252.38, Florida Statutes, authorized all local governments to waive procedures and formalities otherwise required by both state and local law as necessary to allow local governments to continue to perform public work and take whatever prudent action is necessary to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the community. He noted that the meeting was being conducted live with a quorum physically present. Assistant to the City Manager Bernadette Hughes explained the procedures for public participation and comment for the meeting.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Hughes stated no advanced public comments were received for the meeting.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A MOTION APPROVING THE MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING(S). (2021-0112)

**MOTION:** Gordian-Diaz/LaPlant – To approve the Minutes of the January 12, 2021, meeting as presented.

**Upon roll call, the Motion passed by a 3-0 vote.**

**AGENDA ITEMS**

*Ms. Hughes requested that Agenda Item 5 be heard at a time-certain 7 p.m. and there were no objections from the Board. The item was heard after Communications and Reports.*

**5. PRESENTATION – MENTORING IN BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Angel Gomez, School Board of Broward County Government Affairs Coordinator, responded to Ms. LaPorte's comments regarding graduation-related activities. He stated no decision had been made yet, but the District wanted to do as much as they can to bring back normality to the high school seniors.

Mr. Gomez provided a brief presentation on the Mentoring Across Broward program. He started by showing the Board how to navigate the Broward County Schools website to get more information about getting involved as a mentor.

Ms. Hughes asked Mr. Gomez to confirm that mentors were still being sought. Mr. Gomez stated that they were, noting that mentoring works a bit differently during COVID-19. He noted that once an applicant is approved by the District, each school has its individual way of handling mentors. He added that there were other ways of volunteering services, and each school has a Volunteer Coordinator.

Ms. Gordian-Diaz asked if people could sign up and specifically ask to mentor at a high school. Mr. Gomez responded that they could request a specific school when applying and discussed ways in which mentors could be utilized.

Chloe Field, North Broward Preparatory School, asked if the District was looking for student mentors. She noted that her National Honor Society group was always in search of opportunities to get involved. Mr. Gomez stated that was a school-based decision, and the group's sponsor would need to reach out to the school they wanted to work with. He asserted it was a great idea and to reach out through Ms. Hughes if she came across any stumbling blocks.

Mr. Gomez reviewed mentoring programs that address social justice issues, noting students at every grade level were impacted. He explained where to find information in the parent portal regarding efforts, including discipline and equity, conversations with law enforcement in a townhall format, Courageous Conversations, and others. Mr. Gomez spoke to interactions with law enforcement, paramedics, and firefighters at each age level, noting that Coconut Creek schools are creating the environment for conversations between students and these groups in the context of world events. Mr. Gomez noted that the townhalls were virtual due to COVID-19 and led on a District level with a specific topic. Ms. Hughes stated the Teen Political Forum would be virtual this year and noted she would reach out for insight.

Mr. Gomez highlighted programs, including Mentoring Tomorrow's Leaders, Latinos in Action, PASL (Personalization for Academic and Social Emotional Learning), and Women of Tomorrow Mentor and Scholarship Program. He noted the Latinos in Action program was an opportunity for leadership not restricted to Latino students.

Chair Kenney stated that Latinos in Action had started working with students at Coconut Creek Elementary School a few weeks ago on Teams. He noted that when the program was in person, the kids would go crazy for them each time they visited.

Mr. Gomez thanked the Education Advisory Board for their efforts and encouraged them to continue hanging in through COVID-19.

Ms. Hughes noted the Board's focus this year had been on the SMART Bond program and asked Mr. Gomez to reach out if he had any other issues they could address. Mr. Gomez noted update meetings on the SMART Bond program were planned at the District level and stated he would follow up with information.

**6. DISCUSSION – SCHOOL BOND PROGRAM AND DEVELOPMENT OF REPORT TO COMMISSION**

Ms. Hughes briefly presented the draft report format she had prepared with feedback from Ms. LaPlant and asked for suggestions.

Ms. LaPlant explained the meeting backup materials included a report from Shelly Maloney, Director of Pre-Construction, Office of Facilities and Construction dated November 2020. She pointed to the updates for each Coconut Creek school and noted Monarch High School and Lyons Creek Middle School were lagging behind.

Continuing, Ms. LaPlant stated she had created a one (1) page synopsis with the highlights of each school's construction progress and funding in a simple and straight-forward format. She asked for any additional feedback from staff or the Board.

Ms. Hughes suggested adding detail to the "outstanding issues" column to explain whether the issue required additional attention.

Chair Kenney stated the gap between individual schools was depressing, and Ms. Sargis expressed concern regarding school projects still being in the design phase. She stated the School Bond Program was supposed to be a guarantee for the students and asked how the Board could support moving the projects along faster.

Ms. Hughes asserted those were the issues which needed to be raised in the report to the Commission. She asked that each of the Board members get the information on their individual schools by the end of the following week so that she could compile the information and send it back to members for analysis. Discussion ensued regarding the format for submitting reports to Ms. Hughes.

**7. BOARD MEMBER AND STUDENT COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS**

Ms. Hughes reminded the Board that Lunch Bunch was scheduled for Monday, February 22. She stated she was hoping Board members could share regarding the activities of the Education Advisory Board.

Ms. Hughes shared information on the deadline to reapply for the new term of the Board and adjustments to the student awards program due to COVID-19.

Ms. LaPlant asked for an update on the Education Foundation meeting scheduled for January 25. Ms. Hughes stated she believed the Foundation meeting was postponed to mid-February and noted she would plan to share an update with the Board at their March meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding division of topics to speak on at the Lunch Bunch. Ms.

Hughes reported she would be updating on the Teen Political Forum and the awards program. Ms. Gordon-Diaz and Ms. LaPlant agreed to update on the School Bond projects. Ms. Sargis agreed to report on the general activities of the Education Advisory Board, including stressing that the success of the Board was based on communication with the principals. Ms. Hughes stated she would ask Mr. Hurley to report on efforts to support K-9 Taylor.

Board members provided the following updates:

- Chair Kenney had no report
- Ms. LaPlant stated she had attended the January School Advisory Council (SAC) meeting at Tradewinds Elementary and the discussion was largely regarding the School Bond projects. She noted work on the new roof had started in November and would continue through May, and two (2) new playground projects were scheduled to start in early February. Ms. LaPlant noted she had also attended the January SAC meeting at Atlantic Technical High School. She stated there had been discussion regarding a drop in enrollment at the school of 2.6 percent, and the strategic plan to increase enrollment by providing additional services. She noted the Business and Economic Development Coordinator presented an interesting program on career services and partnerships through the school.
- Ms. Gordian-Diaz noted Winston Park Elementary School had an honor roll drive-thru program, which was well attended, and two (2) events were held in support of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). She acknowledged it was difficult to keep people involved during COVID-19 and offered her kudos for their efforts. Ms. Gordian-Diaz commented on online support programs available for all students in K-12 called "Ask BRIA." She noted it was available in all subject areas and for every learner, and said she thought it should be further promoted. Ms. Hughes asked the students present if they had heard of the program and they said that they had not. Chair Kenney pointed out the information was on the school's website and the student's Canvas page. Discussion ensued about promotion efforts for the Ask BRIA program and how Winston Park had coordinated their honor roll program.
- Ms. Sargis shared an update on Monarch High School, noting she attended the SAC meeting on February 9. She stated the school has about 600 students enrolled for in-person learning, but only around 275-300 attend in person. She added that 275 students remain on the list for not meeting adequate academic progress that the school has not been able to reach. She stated the administration was still reaching out. She stated sports had opened up, and the cheerleading team had finished seventh in the state. Discussion ensued regarding graduation plans in cooperation with Broward County Schools.

Ms. Hughes thanked the students for attending and invited any of them to speak.

Savanna Kennedy, North Broward Preparatory School, spoke regarding a project she wanted to initiate in Coconut Creek and asked for the advice of the Board. She stated many areas of the Butterfly Capital had a shrinking native milkweed population. She shared her past experience planting gardens and outlined her plan to partner with schools and nurseries to plant milkweed and other native butterfly plants at area schools to support the butterfly population.

Ms. Gordian-Diaz stated she was excited to hear more about the project. She noted the school she works at has a section of butterfly garden and asserted it was a great

investment in terms of education and advancing the protection of the butterflies.

Ms. Hughes listed various resources available through the City and asked Ms. Kennedy her plan and how they could best support her.

Ms. Kennedy stated she planned to reach out to the principals at Coconut Creek schools to determine their current garden situations, then reach out to nurseries and Butterfly World regarding donation of plants.

Ms. LaPlant shared details about the Arbor Day event and noted Ms. Kennedy would benefit from connecting with Urban Forester Sharon Vollmer. She noted trees and milkweed plants were free to residents at that event.

Ms. Sargis stated Lyons Creek Middle School's Ecology Club might also be a resource.

Chair Kenney noted the butterfly garden at Coconut Creek Elementary School was right outside his classroom and said he would love to see improvement.

Ms. LaPlant thanked Atlantic Technical High School Principal Vickie LaPorte for attending and encouraged the other Board members to share the agenda for future meetings with their principals.

Ms. LaPorte stated the March meeting of the Board was during Spring Break, and many principals, teachers, and students would likely be out of town. Ms. Hughes noted they could probably move the meeting date to accommodate.

Ms. LaPorte addressed questions regarding enrollment at Atlantic Technical brought up during Ms. LaPlant's comments. She stated the reduction in enrollment was mostly in the adult programs, and largely on the academic side rather than in the tech programs. She noted adjustments due to COVID-19 and stated staff worked to bring the high school back first to be sure there was capacity with social distancing. Ms. LaPorte commented on the Ask BRIA discussion, and stated Atlantic Technical promotes the program to their students but has found they feel less comfortable with teachers they do not know. She explained in response, the school had created its own tutoring program to assist students virtually. Ms. LaPorte spoke briefly about graduation plans, and stated planning was ongoing.

**8. CONFIRM NEXT MEETING DATES**

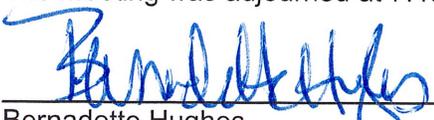
**MOTION:** Kenney/Gordian-Diaz – To move the March meeting to March 30, 2021.

**Upon roll call, the Motion passed by a 3-0 vote.**

The next meeting date was tentatively set for March 30, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

  
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Bernadette Hughes  
Assistant to the City Manager

  
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Date