Broward County Public Schools
North Area Advisory Council
General Meeting Minutes

Monarch High School 5050 Wiles Road Coconut Creek, FL 33073
November 21, 2024, 6:15-9:00pm

Email: NorthAreaAdvisory@gmail.com   Website: http://northareaadvisorycouncil.ch2v.com/
Chair- Cynthia Dominique   Vice Chair- Karla Figueroa   Recording Secretary- Danielle Dunfee Corresponding
Secretary- Lucie Dicapua   Communications Chair- Nicole Kearney

Attendance:
Exec Board: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1H6xlB-9uEM-Y8fX9GS5Elaq52uss6Geo/view?usp=sharing
Guest & SAC: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zfRTVtnrLRrI-Xl7bvYDsCaGSUNZLnMk/view?usp=sharing
Leadership: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Tmsf1vQBo9GtrclW_zrvlf_ckAxJ3Slm/view?usp=sharing
Principal: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JdrJMJZ6UMGsHakOW9D6und-liYOKKcL/view?usp=sharing
SAF: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O3adP6s7rIfCxvLQyotIcdcpiYrU3ri1/view?usp=sharing

A. **Call to Order**
   The meeting was called to order at 6:47 PM.

B. **House Keeping:**
- Nicole Morst will be filling in for Karla Figueroa this evening.
- Members are reminded to sign in to ensure their attendance is recorded. Attendance is required to remain in good standing.
- Meeting etiquette:
   - Each person may ask one question or make one comment until all members have had the opportunity to speak.
   - Guests may speak if time permits.
   - Please maintain respect throughout the discussion.

C. **Approval of Minutes- October 2024**
   One correction: Page 3 – Change "By-Law" to "SAF Policy".
   Motion to approve the minutes with the correction by Nancy Fry
   Seconded by Tai Quay Bogle
   Motion passed, no opposition.

D. **Call to Action**
Presentation by Lori Ramsey, North Area Suicide Prevention Specialist

   - Acknowledged the tragic loss of a Monarch High School student to suicide.
   - Emphasized the importance of nurturing, listening to, and supporting students.
   - Encouraged members to recognize warning signs and ask direct questions if concerned about someone's safety, noting that asking will not push someone to act.
   - Shared that the district experienced two suicides last year and stressed the availability of resources for prevention and support. Lori Ramsey has resources for those impacted and for prevention.
   - Highlighted that October is Selective Mutism Awareness Month and encouraged awareness of this condition.

E. **Introduction to Broward Schools Superintendent - Dr. Howard Hepbur**
   1. Educating Parents:
      a) Dr. Hepburn emphasized the need to better communicate the programs and opportunities available to parents and students.
      b) Example: A 7th grader who scores a Level 4 on the FAST assessment is eligible for Algebra.
      c) Initiatives like the Middle School Expo and events at Deerfield Beach Elementary School were mentioned as effective ways to showcase positive programs.

2. Collaboration and Support:
   BCPS employs over 30,000 staff members – "We're like the biggest cruise ship in the state. Like the cruise ship, we cannot turn on our own power. We are the tug boats that move that ship in the right direction. But we need to rely on our partnerships with our non-profits, our municipalities, our communities to ensure we're all doing what's right for our students."

3. Equity and Excellence:
   a) Cynthia Dominique re-iterated that even in "A-rated" schools, not all student demographics achieve at an "A" level. The Excel program was discussed as a tool to address disparities.
   b) Lucie Dicapua raised concerns about delayed identification of gifted students, particularly those scoring high on assessments like PM1 being disadvantaged because their "gift" isn't identified until September. This delay impacts schools' ability to allocate staff and resources.
   c) FAST Testing Benefits: Immediate access to data enables early identification of students' needs. This gives us leverage to identify students with talents early on when Master Schedules can be amended.

4. Autism Awareness and Teacher Training:
Question asked: Is there a plan to train teachers to be aware of the signs for autism?
- Plans for professional development to help teachers identify autism signs are underway, though finding time for training remains a challenge.

Question Asked: The school has 90 days to be in compliance for IEPS, but why is it 90 days?
- A parent at Everglades Elementary shared frustrations about delays in receiving services despite early identification of a child's needs. Her student will take the PM2 days before his IEP meeting and parent is concerned with her student's test taking abilities. A child should never be struggling and not getting services. Dr. Howard Hepburn reminded that we also have capacity issues.

5. **Commitment to Leadership:**
   Dr. Hepburn assured attendees of his long-term commitment to his role and the community.

6. Focus on Students:
   - Walkthroughs are now centered on evaluating student outcomes and addressing root causes. The evidence is in what students are producing. "And this is when we peel back the onion and to discuss what coaching needs to be in place."
   - Feedback to teachers and staff focuses on improving instruction based on student needs while pouring into support and support staff for our teachers.

7. Academic Pacing and Support:
Question asked: With the Student First mind-set what are we doing about pacing? If students don't grasp content, teachers are forced to continue moving on.
- Parents were encouraged to engage with school administration about Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO), tutoring, Study Hall, and online resources to address students' pacing concerns
- Schools are working toward implementing small group instruction to better support struggling learners.

8. Competitive High School Admissions:
Question asked: What advice do you give a 7th Grade Parent trying to get into one of the more competitive High School's? ELA PM scores are extremely important into getting into the better schools. What do you say to that student that is struggling to show a gain to meet that PM 3 criteria when their teacher is clearly out of field, not certified, just out of their capacity?
- Dr. Hepburn recommended communicating with school administration, regional offices, or using virtual course options for additional support.

9. Behavioral Challenges:
- Nicole Morst highlighted a "behavior epidemic," including vaping in schools.
    - Coming soon - A pilot program for vaping detectors in middle schools will also include keyword detection in bathrooms that students may say to then alert staff & security.
    - So much has to do with what's going on at home. Unfortunately, the schools are dealing with SYMPTOMS.

10. Legislation on School Start Times:
- If that legislation happens, it will impact the 26/27 School year.
- Upcoming legislation mandates high schools to start no earlier than 8:30 AM and middle schools no earlier than 8:00 AM.
- A workshop in February will explore options, with surveys planned for community input. We're pushing our legislators to just take this off the books. Palm Beach has already started with surveys about this.
- Problem is, we're too big we will have a major transportation issue. It's very costly for us to do this right.

11. Teacher Shortages:
- The district is working to address teacher vacancies and to recruit, especially in critical areas like ESE, high school math, science, and gifted education (many teachers don't go through this endorsement anymore).
- Problem is, teachers will move here and then realize they can't afford to live here.
- We're hovering over the 2% vacancy rate.
- Solutions include "evolving" with the times - offering flexible schedules to attract and retain talent, reflecting practices in the corporate world.
- Custodial Staff Concerns: Staffing levels are determined by school square footage rather than population, creating challenges for maintenance and budgets.

12. Customer Service for the Community:
- Focus on improving how the district interacts with students, parents, and community members.

13. Digital Literacy:
- Equipping primary-grade students with typing and digital literacy skills is a priority.

F. School Transformation Office (STO) - Purpose and Strategies
Presentation by Dr. Francine Barr-Stewart – STL Director overseeing all of the three elementary schools in North Area
- Focus on schools with historical academic challenges to stabilize and improve outcomes.
- We have 20 schools. The bulk of our schools are C schools, but no D and F schools.
- Address chronic attendance issues and the recruitment and retention of educators.
- Provide strategies to challenge students performing well and support those with challenges.

Key Strategies and Initiatives:
Partnerships:
- Collaboration with Florida Atlantic University (FAU) for research-based strategies to improve schools.
- Use of technologies like Varsity Tutoring, enabling tutors to work on teacher-provided content within classrooms.

Professional Development:
- Foundation in *Relay* methodology:
    - **Conditions for Learning/Learning Environment**
    - **Academic Excellence**
    - **Data-Driven Instruction** (in STO one of the things we're looking at is LEADING data. This is how we can make immediate changes in our small group instruction)
- Focus on administrators, principals, assistant principals, and teachers.
- Immediate, on-the-spot feedback for educators to enhance their practices.

Boots-on-the-Ground Support:
- **Instructional Facilitators:**
    - 6 facilitators work directly with 20 schools to support teachers, coaches, and administrators.

- Provide professional development and address facility concerns to ensure high-quality instruction and optimal learning environments.
  - o Regular, twice-monthly round-table calls for STO staff:
    - Immediate response to concerns in schools.
    - Coordination with dedicated HR and Facilities representatives. They're on call to us at all times.
- **Retention and Longevity:**
  - o Retain resources and support in schools even after they achieve improved ratings (B or A levels).
  - o Provide continuity and prevent regression by phasing out STO support over 2-3 years.
- **Focus on Early-Career Teachers:**
  - o Target professional development for teachers with 0–3 years of experience with direct, on the spot feedback.
  - o Ensure they receive tailored, actionable feedback to improve classroom effectiveness.
- **Inspired Practices:**
  - o Utilize approaches from *Uncommon Schools* and Relay's *Get Better Faster* program to guide professional development and instructional methods.

Ongoing Goals and Monitoring:

- Achieve "Spirit of Excellence" by maintaining clean (yes – looking at facility concerns), well-resourced schools and fostering high-quality instruction.
- Ensure consistent feedback loops through data-driven instruction and professional learning.
- Sustain STO support to achieve stability before transitioning schools off the program.

G. **District Attendance Office Summary of North Region Data, BTIP, Attendance Incentives**
   Presented by: Ascellia M. Arenas, M.S. Coordinator, District Attendance, Student Services Department
   Overview of Attendance Data and Reporting:
   1. Data Integrity:
      - o Two types of data used: there are certain pieces of data that are not public-facing because we have two types of data we use daily.
        - Static Data: Fixed, non-changing.
        - Dynamic Data: Real-time, constantly updated.
   2. School Performance Statistics:
      - o A Schools: 11%
      - o B Schools: 8%
      - o C Schools: 15%
      - o D Schools: 1%

Attendance Impact & School Improvement Plans:
   1. SIP Goals (School Improvement Plan): We use the school's data to provide attainable goals. The SIP has 4 Attendance Goals:
      a) Parent Engagement:
         - o Monitor if parents are calling in absences. At the end of the day, this is telling us that the school is TALKING to parents more often than not. The students not being called in are the parents that we need to connect with.
         - o Schools are encouraged to engage parents who are not reporting absences.
      b) Attendance Rate:
         - o Goal: Achieve 90% or more attendance across 180 school days. We want this number to increase.
         - o Current average for elementary schools: 50.62% of students attend 90%+ of days.
      c) Chronic Absentees:
         - o Students missing 10% or more of the school year. These are the numbers we want decreasing.
         - o Current elementary school average: 27.47%.
      d) Severely Chronic Absentees:
      - o Students missing 20% or more of the school year. These are the numbers we want decreasing.
      - o Current elementary school average: 5.79%.

2. Current Attendance Data (Dynamic) for TODAY:
   North Area: 94%
   Central Area: 93.6%
   Noted as a success for the week before Thanksgiving.

Strategies and Recommendations:
1. Data Transparency:
   - Advocate for a public-facing dashboard to enable parents to view their school's attendance data.
2. Principal Involvement:
   - Principals should present quarterly attendance data during SAC meetings.
3. Understanding Poor Attendance:
   - Poor attendance is viewed as a symptom of deeper issues rather than the root problem.
4. Dedicated Social Workers:
   - Every elementary school has an assigned social worker.
   - Flex arrangements may apply for bilingual service support.
5. Attendance Lines:
   - Reporting attendance is not user-friendly.
   - Schools should clearly list attendance reporting instructions under the **Contact** section of their websites.

National Survey Insights on Attendance Barriers:
- Reasons for absences include:
   - 48%: Depression.
   - 17%: Serious mental health conditions.
   - 16%: Anxiety.
   - 16%: Other reasons.

H. Overview of Policy 4900 Audio and Visual Recording of Self-Contained ESE Classrooms

Policy 4900 outlines procedures for audio and visual recordings in self-contained ESE (Exceptional Student Education) classrooms, specifically designed for students in "Autism clusters." The policy ensures transparency while balancing parental rights, privacy, and logistical feasibility. If Parents want footage pulled, there needs to be criteria on what we show, when we pull footage, etc.

Key Proposed Policy Updates:
1. **Retention of Video Recordings:**
   - Current retention: **30 days.**
   - Proposed change: Extend retention period to **90 days.**
2. **Parent Request Deadlines:**
   - Current requirement: Parents must submit a form within **5 calendar days** of an incident.
   - Proposed change: Strike this deadline for parents.
3. **Availability of Recordings:**
   - Current timeline: Requested recordings must be made available within **5 calendar days.**
   - Proposed change: Extend timeline to **30 days** to accommodate processing.

Motion and Outcome:
- **Motion:** The North Area Advisory Council recommends the Board adopt all proposed changes to Policy 4900.
- **Proposed by:** Cynthia Dominique.
- **Seconded by:** Peter Turso.
- **Outcome:** Passed unanimously.

Discussion Points from the Motion:
- **School Union Barriers:**
   - Initial opposition from the school union delayed progress.

- **Feedback from ESE:**
  - Comprehensive feedback was gathered and enshrined into the proposed policy updates.
  - We have 1100 ESE classrooms and only about 90 classrooms with them. This program has not be implemented yet. The District said they would do it, but only once a policy was put in place. ESE Classrooms are "self-contained" classrooms – what we call an "Autism cluster".
- **Transparency and Parental Rights:**
  - Cameras are only in ESE classrooms at a parents' request. Parents' statutory rights to request cameras are central to the policy. If one parent makes a request, the rest of the parents in that classroom don't get to object.
  - A parent's request for camera needs to be submitted annually.

I. **Old Business**
  1. 2025-2026 Calendar Option 1 , Option 2; Option 3; Calendar Survey Results
     a) Option 1: Additional 8-10 minutes added to the Middle School day.
     b) Option 2: Takes away two days from Thanksgiving break.
     c) Option 3: Specific details not provided but includes adjustments for recognizing dual observances (e.g., Islamic religious holiday).
     Next Steps: A survey will be conducted to gather feedback on these options.

  2. School Choice- Window Opens Dec 2nd at 8am

  3. Academics
     a) Are School's giving student's grades for iReady in Focus?
        1. Many of the ES are getting credit for TIME.
        Examples:
- **Margate Elementary:** Provides grades for iReady based on time spent.
- **Forest Glen Elementary:** Grades reading assignments based on:
  - **45 minutes** of time.
  - Completion of **two lessons.**

Follow-up Action: Dr. Fleming will send further communication to schools in the region to clarify and standardize iReady grading practices.

J. **Announcements**

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING ON TEAMS	**DECEMBER 2ND 9:30-11:30AM**
BOUNDARY COMMITTEE AT NOVA MIDDLE SCHOOL	**December 2nd 6pm-8pm**
NORTH AREA STEERING MEETING ON TEAMS	December 3rd 8:30pm-9:30pm
SCHOOL BOARD workshop	**December 10th 8am- Until**
DISTRICT ADVISORY GENERAL MEETING AT KCW	December 11th 6:15pm- 8:45pm
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING ON TEAMS	December 9th 8:00pm-9:30pm
***NORTH AREA GENERAL MEETING AT MONARCH HIGH	**December 19th 6:15pm-8:45pm**
MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPO AT POMPANO BEACH HIGH	January???? TBA

K. 9:03 Meeting Adjourn
   Motion to Nancy Fry
   First: Cynthia
   Second: Jessica Benner

Submitted respectfully,

Danielle Dunfee

Recording Secretary

Notes:
Due to the late arrival of the Recording Secretary, the initial notes were taken by Nancy Fry. The Recording Secretary resumed note-taking upon arrival 6:40pm.

Links and Resources Discussed During Meeting

- **Ethics Training**: http://browardschools.com/Page/41329
- **Advisories and Committees:** https://www.browardschools.com/Page/32049;
- **Broward Schools Policies**: https://www.browardschools.com/Page/37754
- **School Board and Leadership Staff Directory:** School Board & Leadership Staff Directory / School Board Members (browardschools.com)
- **Board Meeting Public Comment:** Broward County Public Schools (granicusideas.com)
- **BCPS Attendance: https://www.browardschools.com/attendance**
- **FLDOE Attendance and Enrollment: https://www.fldoe.org/how-do-i/attendance-enrollment.stml**
- **FLDOE Truancy Program: https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7506/urlt/DPTTI.pdf**
- School Transformation Office: https://www.browardschools.com/Page/75636
- Draft of Policy 4900: Draft_Policy_4900_with comments.pdf
- ESE Camera Matrix: ESECameraMatrix.pdf