

**City of Hollywood
Education Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2023, 6:00 pm
Hollywood City Hall, Room 215**

- In Attendance:** Lauren Azoulai, Candace Beeber, Jeffrey Freeman, Jacqueline Grant, David Liebowitz, Wyatt Lohse, Brooke Manasse, Ellen Suppa, Vincent Newman, Valorie Weldon
- Absent:** Roland Garcia, Marelise LeClerc, Allain McGuffie, Waldo Mirambeau, Richard Petrovich
- Staff:** Tymira Mack, City Manager’s Office, Grants Administrator
Merry Kaye, Community Development, Administrative Assistant
- Guests:** Daniel Foganholi, Broward School Board Representative, District 1
Dorone Manasse, Parent
Rozalia Williams, Education Consultant

1. Call to Order

Chair Jeffrey Freeman called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. And invited everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Review of the July 17, 2023 Meeting Minutes

The minutes were sent via email ahead of the meeting.

***A motion was made by Ellen Suppa to approve the July 17th meeting minutes and was seconded by Vincent Newman. The motion passed unanimously. ***

3. Change of the Agenda

Chair Jeffrey Freeman requested that a change be made to the agenda. The listed guest speaker, Daniel Most, Principal from Hollywood Hills High School was unable to attend. However, Daniel Foganholi, District 1 Representative from the Broward School Board was in attendance.

***A motion was made by Valorie Weldon to amend the agenda to change the guest speaker and was seconded by Lauren Azoulai. The motion passed unanimously. ***

4. Daniel Foganholi, Broward School Board Representative, District 1

Chair Freeman introduced Mr. Foganholi to the members.

Mr. Foganholi expressed his appreciation for being invited to the Education Advisory Committee meeting. He spoke briefly about himself and how he wanted to attend as many meetings as possible and be involved. He invited everyone to take his contact information and reach out to him as they felt necessary. Then he opened the floor to questions.

Mr. Newman was recognized and asked whether Mr. Foganholi had any thoughts on a prior conversation they had regarding new funding for the district.

Mr. Foganholi acknowledged he remembered the conversation and said that many other cities across the country were utilizing unique approaches to funding their school districts. He referenced that Dallas/Fort Worth was using landing and take-off fees from their airport to fund their school district. He also shared that he spoke with the new Superintendent of Schools and other staff members to begin researching such airport and seaport fees as possible avenues of additional funding for Broward schools.

Mr. Newman also remarked about construction at his school, McArthur High School. He stated two new buildings were being constructed on their campus and recommended that Broward Schools should consider solar energy or other green energy sources to reduce the electricity costs at schools.

Ms. Grant was recognized and asked what the Broward Schools plan was for providing Sex Education and combatting sexual abuse in and out of schools.

Mr. Foganholi advised that sexual education is a very tricky subject because there is a fine line between educating our children to arm them with knowledge and giving them too much information. He further stated that there are laws with requirements allowing for parents to opt in or out of the education. He assured the Committee that the Broward School Board members are working diligently to remain within the law and teach children the necessities to keep them safe.

Chair Freeman asked the the three Student Members on the Committee how they felt about mandatory sex education.

Mr. Lohse said that his experience was a single day in elementary school dedicated to sex education. He felt that the subject should be discussed in upper elementary school and definitely in middle school. He also felt that by middle school most kids are talking about it and need to have a solid education instead of learning from their friends.

Mr. Liebowitz agreed with Mr. Lohse stating that his education began as a single day of instruction in third grade, with each subsequent year adding on to the previous year's discussion. He felt that every student should be opted-in to the education, with the parents opting-out if they don't want the education.

Ms. Manasse also expressed a similar one-day experience. And she also agreed that every student should be opted-in, with the parents' ability to opt-out.

Ms. Manasse's mother was in the audience and commented that she has three children who are all high school students. She said all of her children had taken a half-year class on health. However, the health class which she expected to encompass body system functions and sexual health, was not taught. Instead, the class included financial literacy, some sex education, methods for identifying signs of suicide, and life management skills.

Ms. Weldon was recognized, and she inquired about the school district's programs for students to stay out of trouble and on the right track.

Mr. Foganholi thought the question was very important. He said that in a lot of schools students are pushed towards sports; but not everyone is an athlete. However, since students are now more engaged in video games, he advocates E-Sports. He expressed he didn't find anything wrong with kids coming together to play video games in school, if that is their interest. The idea is to keep students engaged. He stated he also believed that tutoring is very important. Students need one-on-one time and tutoring offers that with learning too.

Mr. Lohse added that school honor societies and clubs offer free tutoring in exchange for community service hours.

Mr. Foganholi asked the students which schools they attended. All three Student Members indicated they attend private schools. As a follow up question, he asked the students why they chose private schools over public schools.

Mr. Lohse said that his mom, dad, and various other members of his family attended Chaminade-Madonna and it was his decision to continue the tradition. He had an option to attend a public school and felt he would get a better education at the private school.

Mr. Liebowitz said that he moved from public school to private school during the pandemic. It was decided that the online learning was far superior at the private school.

Ms. Manasse said that she attended St. Thomas because her brother had switched there from public school prior to her attendance. She further advised that her parents thought the education was better at the private school.

Other reasons that were offered by members in response to choosing private schools over public schools were security, facilities, sports, and uniforms. Ms. Azoulai also shared her own experience of educating two of her children in public high schools and one in private school, emphasizing one size doesn't fit all students.

Mr. Foganholi stated that he always asks students attending private schools why they chose that route. He feels the more information he has, the more he can apply to the public school system.

Chair Freeman thanked Mr. Foganholi for his time and invited him to stay for the remainder of the meeting.

5. Determination of the 2023-2024 EAC Areas of Focus

Ms. Mack distributed the list of compiled focus issues that were submitted by the committee members. She stated that the list was summarized into seven categories.

Ms. Mack and the Committee Members reviewed and discussed each focus area. It was decided that after the discussion the Committee would vote on 3 focus areas for the year.

After discussion and review, the members decided on the following:

2023-2024 Areas of Committee Focus:

- Funding the Broward Education Foundation for Hollywood Teacher Grants. This program has been successful in past years and the City has pledged \$20,000 for this school year. (Listed Issue #1)
- Increasing community involvement in the schools. (Listed Issue #3)
- Addressing loopholes in the charter school system. (Listed Issue #9)

Areas noted as capable of accomplishment through guest speaker invitations on an EAC Meeting Agenda:

- Invitation to school principals to discuss their successful programs and share how their students, teachers, and parents can be better served. (Listed Issue #2)
- Invitation to the Children's Services Council to discuss Early Childhood Education programs. (Listed Issue #4).

A motion was made by Vincent Newman to accept the areas of focus and additions to future EAC agendas, and it was seconded by Valerie Weldon. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Member Comments

Mr. Liebowitz commented that the Stirling Road Library is hosting a banned book week. He distributed flyers to interested members.

Mr. Newman added that he is a member of the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts Advisory Board and they have agreed to speak to the City Commission to add an outdoor mini library for banned and other donated books at every park in Hollywood.

7. Staff Report

Ms. Mack expressed her gratitude to member Jacqueline Grant on behalf of the Education Advisory Committee for her service as the previous Chair.

Ms. Mack also reminded the members of the Sunshine Law, advising that she serves as the conduit of official communication and information between the Committee members.

Ms. Mack informed the Committee that Mr. Martin Khoury declined his appointment to serve on the EAC. And she also reminded the members of the meeting attendance rules; four absences for any reason is grounds for removal from the Committee.

Ms. Mack advised that the next meeting of the Education Advisory Committee is Monday, October 16th. However, the November meeting is scheduled for the Monday of Thanksgiving week. With schools being closed the week of November 20th – 24th, she recommended that members consider moving the meeting to Monday, November 13th in order to ensure a quorum.

A motion was made by Vincent Newman to move the November meeting to Monday, November 13th and it was seconded by Jacqueline Grant. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Kaye addressed the Members regarding the Community Survey that is now posted on the City of Hollywood website, hollywoodfl.org. She advised that the survey is centered around activities that residents feel need to be addressed in their neighborhoods. The survey is related to Community Development's work on their five-year plan in which they advise HUD of their plans for use of federal funds. She emphasized that input from all residents and business owners would be appreciated.

8. Adjournment

A motion was made by Vincent Newman to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 pm. It was seconded by Jacqueline Grant. The motion passed unanimously.

The next scheduled committee meeting is at 6:00 pm on Monday, October 16, 2023, in person, City Hall Room 215.