

# EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

## 2022

**Vacant – Chair**  
**Vacant – Vice Chair**

Ellen Davis  
Carol Fischer  
Roland Garcia  
Jacqueline Grant  
Wyatt Lohse – Student  
Vincent Newman  
Gabrielle Resnick  
Ellen Suppa  
Rodney Velez



## **MISSION**

The mission of the Education Advisory Committee is to obtain and review information regarding educational matters, advise the City Commission regarding such matters, and support and promote quality education in order to make the educational opportunities in Hollywood the best available in the State of Florida.

*- from the Citizens Boards and Committees Handbook, 2020*

## **COMMITTEE'S UNDERSTANDING OF ITS MISSION / PURPOSE**

The Education Advisory Committee fully understands its mission and intended purpose. The Committee believes that engaging in the following practices will enable it to achieve its mission.

- Promote the many outstanding accomplishments and improvements of Hollywood schools.
- Enhance and promote communication between the City and the School District and local schools.
- Collaborate with other City advisory boards / committees on educational issues.
- Participate in the Broward Coalition of Education Advisory Boards (CEAB), South Area Advisory Council, and BCPS Gifted Advisory Committee.
- Encourage community members to make suggestions for the improvement of Hollywood schools.
- Encourage community member (parent organizations and civic associations) suggestions for improvement of Hollywood schools, and their participation in city sponsored events and projects.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

One or more of our committee members:

Hosted the Broward County School Board District 1 and Countywide At-Large Candidate Forum.

Coordinated with the Broward Education Foundation to evaluate grant proposals submitted by Hollywood teachers and recommended funding in the amount of \$20,000.

Participated in numerous meetings of countywide Coalition of Education Advisory Boards (CAEB), South Area Advisory Council (SAAC), and BCPS Gifted Advisory Committee.

Conducted discussions of goals and objectives, accomplishments and improvements, needs, priorities, issues, and information exchange with invited guests, including district staff.

Attended school meetings and events, and volunteered at various Hollywood schools. Activities included reading to classes including Broward Reads for the Record, Reading Pals program, math tutoring, and mentoring individual students.

Initiated correspondence with the principals of all Hollywood public schools for their input for inclusion in the City's public information publications and on the city's website.

## 2021 SUMMARY OF MEETINGS

**January 25:** EAC members reviewed and discussed the Broward Education Foundation Teacher Grant Program with Coco Burns, Program Director for the Broward Education Foundation. Ms. Burns said that the main criteria for funding is innovation. Ms. Burns said that 72 teachers applied for the grants and 35 were awarded. Of those 35, 1 grant was from a teacher in Hollywood. Chair Cheree Liebowitz asked why there was only 1 grant awarded to a Hollywood teacher since approximately one third of the applicants were from Hollywood. Members of the Committee asked to be involved in the review of grant applications in the future. Shea Ciriago, CEO of Broward Education Foundation stated that there was a lack of grant applicants. Chair Cheree Liebowitz stated that the BEF Teacher Grant Subcommittee did meet to evaluate the grant applications and make recommendations to the full committee. The subcommittee needs to meet again to explore possible changes to the grant award process. Lavonne Spry, Community Liaison for Attucks Middle School, was in attendance and introduced herself. The 2021 Annual Report was submitted to the City Clerk's Office on January 17<sup>th</sup>. Joel Levine reported on the

Schools Web Page Project and reviewed the updates to the site. He commended Anthony Grisby, Peggy Eads and Angel Gomez for their help with the project. Joel spoke about the importance of marketing the site. Ellen Suppa shared the difficult task in getting schools to respond. During Member Comments, Ellen Suppa gave an update on the Recycle Book program after speaking with Donna Greene. The Committee agreed to revisit the discussion on whether or not they should continue with the program. Anthony Grisby shared the Staff Report and provided information about the Black History Month celebration on February 17, 2022.

**February 28:** Chair Cheree Liebowitz introduced Renee Jaffe, CEO of the Early Learning Coalition (ELC) of Broward County, who shared an overview of the Coalition. the ELC is the local administrator of state and federal funding for early childhood education. There are three major components to the ELC program. The first is the School Readiness program, which is a childcare subsidy program for low-income families. The second program is the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten program for all four-year-old's in the state of Florida. The last program is the Quality Education Services program, where 30 staff members are tasked with coaching, training and mentoring childcare educators. Renee shared that there are 80 children from Hollywood are on the waitlist for the program. Joel Levine, Schools Web Page Subcommittee Chair, stated there are three goals for the program – get information from the schools, improve the website, and utilize marketing plans to let residents know about the webpage. Anthony Grisby stressed the importance of the schools having a personal relationship with their contact member on the committee.

**March 21:** Anthony Grisby provided an update on the Early Learning Coalition of Broward County. He met with Renee Jaffe and they decided that he would send out information on the program to approximately 35 non-profits and possibly the New Horizons publication, and depending on the response, consider posting it on the Schools Web Page. He was concerned with the long waitlist. Peggy Eads updated the members on expiring/vacant positions. She said that the five members whose terms are expiring would need to get their application submitted to the City Clerk's office by April 14, 2022. There are also 2 vacancies currently on the Committee. A special City Commission will be held for board appointments on June 8, 2022, at 3:30 pm in room 219 at City Hall. Joel Levine provided an update on the Schools Web Page project. Anthony Grisby shared that he reached out to Angel Gomez again for assistance with getting the schools to respond. Anthony stressed that the city wants more focus on school accomplishments for the publication and establishing a relationship with the school liaisons is a good way to obtain the information. Cheree Liebowitz announced that Beachside Montessori was recognized as a School of Excellence. During Member Comments, Mitch Anton asked if the Committee would be hosting a candidate forum for those running for the School Board. Dan Derrico made a motion to appoint a subcommittee with Mitch Anton as the Chair and Carol Fischer and Cheree Liebowitz as members. Ellen Suppa seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**April 18:** The Candidate Subcommittee met just prior to the meeting. Cheree said that the date set for the forum is June 20, 2022 at 6:00 pm in room 219. A meet and greet will be held from 6:00-6:30 pm, and the forum will begin at 6:30 pm. There are seven candidates running for 2 district 1 and at-large positions. The committee will come up with questions for the candidates. The subcommittee will vet questions for the forum. Cheree Liebowitz announced that Joel Levine resigned and she is also resigning on June 30, 2022. Cheree asked how the committee would proceed with the Web Page project. Anthony stated that he and Peggy would reach out to schools. Anthony showed the members the webpage on the City website.

**May 16:** Meeting was held, but unfortunately, due to staff changes the minutes are not available.

**June 21:** The Education Advisory Committee hosted the Broward County School Board District 1 and Countywide At-Large Candidate Forum on Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. The Forum was moderated by Mitch Anton, Vice Chair of the Education Advisory Committee.

**July 18:** Vice Chair Catherine Palmer called the meeting to order. Staff Liaison Anthony Grisby suggested that the New Member Orientation be held at the August meeting. The members discussed the Candidate Forum, which was held on June 20<sup>th</sup>. The feedback was positive. Lessons learned included allowing the audience to ask questions of the candidates. Also, the cowbell should be replaced with a less intrusive timing device. During Member Comments, Carol Fischer stated that the following items needed to be addressed: the focus for the coming year, the webpage needs to be updated, the committee should reach out to the school principals to possibly update the webpage and assign board members to the schools. Catherine Palmer shared that even as a teacher, she had issues getting information from the principal and magnet coordinator for the Committee. Catherine Palmer also suggested hosting a meet and greet with local school principals. For Staff Comments, Anthony Grisby shared Mitch Anton's resignation letter. He also announced the resignation of Chair Cheree Liebowitz. Merry Kaye was announced as the Administrative Assistant who will be supporting the Committee. Anthony Grisby then announced that he will be retiring in the coming months. A new staff liaison hasn't been confirmed. Ellen Suppa made a motion to resume face-to-face meetings starting in September. Carol Fischer seconded the motion. The motion passed with 5 yes votes and 2 no votes.

**September 19:** The meeting was not officially called to order due to lack of quorum. Assistant City Attorney Damaris Henlon presented the Sunshine Law to Committee members. The Sunshine Law is designed to keep the members ethical and truthful to the community in which they represent. She continued with the Sunshine Law, which simply states that when two or more members of the board are together, they cannot speak about topics that will become business with this board. Anthony reminded the committee that in the last meeting, the Committee voted to have in-person meetings. Since that meeting, the City Attorney's office has informed all the City Staff Liaisons that all Board and Committee meetings must return to in-person meetings.

Therefore, further discussion is no longer necessary. Members introduced themselves. Anthony introduced Alison Saffold as the new Staff Liaison and Merry Kaye who will continue to assist the EAC. Mr. Grisby notified the Committee that (2) new members were recently appointed: Roland Garcia and Wyatt Lohse and (2) members recently resigned: Sofia Mukamal and Catherine Palmer. The recent vacancies can be addressed with the City Clerk. However, it is a timely process as the positions need to be advertised, applications accepted and collected, then it needs to go before the City Commission. The members discussed working diligently with the schools to get information for the website. The Committee discussed hosting an event that would invite principals and vice principals to introduce themselves. Anthony spoke about the Annual Report, and he focused on the 2022 goals and objectives. He also announced the upcoming meeting schedule.

**October 17:** The meeting was not officially called to order due to lack of quorum. The five members who were in attendance discussed the lack of participation since the COVID pandemic. Several members resigned, and it has been difficult to get the pre-COVID momentum back. The Committee previously secured guest speakers, principal visitation and other events. Alison Saffold will evaluate the member roster and reach out to those who have missed an excessive number of meetings. Members have been unable to build a relationship with their assigned school. Ms. Suppa, who volunteers at a Hollywood school, has been unable to make contact with a source that would provide the information needed for the website update. She and others said this was a frustrating task. The City's school website has not been updated for this reason.

**November 21:** The meeting was not officially called to order due to lack of quorum. Unfortunately, the Committee hasn't been able to hold an election for Chair and Vice Chair due to the lack of quorum. The members who held these positions resigned in July.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2023

The Education Advisory Committee has identified the following goals and objectives. Specific objectives have been identified for each goal.

Goal 1: Support and promote student literacy and opportunities for student growth.

- Objective 1a – Support implementation of the Broward Reads campaign in Hollywood schools, in person or virtually.
- Objective 1b – Continue EAC Recycle Books program to provide used children’s books in Hollywood schools.
- Objective 1c – Serve and encourage the recruitment of community members as tutors and mentors in Hollywood schools, in person or virtually.

Goal 2: Continue to support and promote the accreditation of Early Childhood Centers in Hollywood.

- Objective 3a – Collaborate with BCPS staff and designees of the Early Learning Coalition and designated Broward Commissioners and/or City Commissioners.
- Objective 3b – Continue to attend various meetings (local and state) conducted by the school board of Broward County and the Early Learning Coalition, regarding this issue.

Goal 3: Advocate for additional funding, grants, and donations for Hollywood schools.

- Objective 4a – Support the City’s relationship with the Broward Education Foundation to provide city-funded grants to teachers in Hollywood schools by evaluating grant proposals in conjunction with the City’s Achieving Excellence in Education Grant Program.
- Objective 4b – Seek out additional funding and donation opportunities for Hollywood schools, especially with local businesses and civic associations.

Goal 4: Make recommendations to the Hollywood Commission on ways to advocate with the Broward County School Board on ways to improve Hollywood public schools. These may include the following.

- Objective 7a – Improving the physical appearance of the schools.
- Objective 7b – Implementing new and innovative academic programs.
- Objective 7c – Obtaining more business and community support in funding, supplies and equipment, specialized staff, tutoring, mentoring, and other resources.
- Objective 7d – Providing additional positive public relations support.
- Objective 7e – Providing additional funding for teacher innovative activities and grants.

**The Education Advisory Committee is concerned with the following issues:**

1. The lack of A-rated high schools in the City of Hollywood.
2. The complete and radical change of testing requirements. Students are being tested more now than ever, and teachers must spend a significant amount of time prepping for tests.
3. The need to better promote the accomplishments of Hollywood schools, their programs, and awards and achievements of their students, faculty, and staff.
4. The impact of charter schools on the enrollment and funding of traditional K-12 public schools in Hollywood.
5. The concern posed by state legislative action to local control of schools, and how schools are evaluated at the state level.
6. The need for greater involvement of the business community to support public schools via mentoring, tutoring, and financial support for needed supplies, equipment, and technology.
7. The relatively high teacher attrition rate and its negative impact on the quality of education.
8. The negative educational and financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and how our Hollywood schools are recovering from this dire emergency. This will require continued federal, state, and local government support, and private sector assistance.
9. The learning loss of students who received remote learning and are failing to make adequate progress or performing below grade level.
10. The overall mental health and well-being of students, faculty and staff, especially as a result of the pandemic.
11. The enrollment decline and attrition of students in the Broward County Public School system.

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Chair signature

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Date