

Final

School Community Relations Committee (SCRC) Meeting

Minutes

Date: September 19, 2025

Time: 8:30 AM

Location: Coral Gables- Police and Fire Building – 2151 Salzedo Street

Roll Call:

- Winnie Chang
- Cecilia Slesnick
- Sandy Dimitris
- Joshua Goodman
- Andy Gomez
- Mary Palacio
- Sharon Watson
- Sam Joseph -arrived at 8:46 am
- Miguel Vias -newest board member

Guests:

A. CALL TO ORDER

C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – August 15, 2025

All in favor of approving Minutes for meeting held on August 15, 2025

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No Public Comments

E. NEW BUSINESS

- **E-1: Miami-Dade County Public Schools Update (Facilitated by Mari Tere Rojas, School Board Chair)**
 - Busy month for Miami-Dade County; recent attended their Board and budget meeting.
 - Enrollment in schools is being closely monitored.
- **Items Proffered by Mari Tere Rojas:**
 - **B-2: REQUEST APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 25-041 OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING MS. SALLY J. ALAYON, FORMER ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (M-DCPS).**

- Ms. Alayon was honored for her many years actively working with mental health matters.

Chair Chang elaborated on Item **B-2**, noting that all students have now received their ID cards. However, she pointed out that the crisis number printed on the back of the IDs is the County Crisis Line only and does not include the district's specific mental health crisis line that was previously shared with the group. Consider adding the two numbers in the future.

- **H-2: EFFECTIVE DATA DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE ENROLLMENT PLAN TO BRING STUDENTS BACK TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (MDCPS).**
 - Unanimously approved by her board colleagues. The number of new students has been reduced.
 - Many families cannot afford to live in Miami.
 - Not many births as years ago.
- **H-3: MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD ENDORSEMENT OF THE CELEBRATION OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2025, AS NATIONAL CUSTODIAL WORKER'S RECOGNITION DAY.**
 - It's important to recognize the custodial workers, they are always present and helping others.
- **H-4: SCHOOL BOARD ENDORSEMENT OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE THIRTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF FATHERS IN EDUCATION DAY THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2025; AND FATHERS IN ACTION AND ADVOCACY WEEK, SEPTEMBER 15 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 19, 2025.**
 - It's been proven that when fathers are involved in their children's education the children excel; their self-esteem improves. This event was very successful.
 - For children who do not have a father, a grandfather can step in or any other male figure in the child's life.

Final

- **H-5: SUCCESSION MANAGEMENT.**
 - Imperative to have strategic plans for leadership positions.

Actively working to recruit, retain, reward and respect all teachers. Will travel to Tallahassee to advocate for Miami-Dade public schools. Asking for funding.

Also met with the Commissioner of Education, Mr. Davis, who oversees the lottery in the state of Florida; the topic of children was discussed. Ninth grade children were alerted to the numerous scholarship opportunities there are for them to consider. It is important to encourage them to concentrate on academics.

Ten thousand students who qualify for full scholarships, yet they did not apply. Currently, concentrating efforts in alerting parents that this opportunity is available for their children.

Chair Slesnick shared her comments on Item **H-2**; interested in the allocation of the money since many families opted to send their children to private schools instead of public schools just because funding was available to them.

Chair Rojas addressed this point by stating that most individuals utilizing the funding are already enrolled in private schools.

Chair Slesnick shared additional comments; indicating that there is a PR crisis; it is important to advocate for public schools.

Chair Rojas invited all to Coral Gables Senior High for their 75-anniversary honoring academic excellence, community spirit and Cavalier pride; new building, new gymnasium; it will be a massive celebration. Opening to all the community for tours on October 24.

Town hall is expected to be on October 14, will be held at Ponce Middle School.

Passion Tour, highlighting this in social media.

Many families want to have their children in a Magnet program; however, there are non-packed Magnet schools that are equally fabulous, such as Coral Gables Prep. Academy, Coral Gables High School and Vespa with outstanding results.

Special funding for students including those children in the ESO program. Continue advocating for education as a priority.

Board Member Goodman asked on the new Education Foundation Initiative program and best methods on how it's being developed, however, expressed his interest on having the individual address the SCRC Board on a future meeting.

Board Chair indicated that the FTE event will be running from October 6 thru October 10.

Chair Rojas spoke on the MINT (Mentoring and Induction for New Teachers) program available to new teachers focusing on providing mentorship, professional development, and coaching to enhance teacher effectiveness.

Final

Chairperson Chang focused on the importance of retaining families and providing community support.

Chair Rojas met with Mayor Lago and highlighted the importance in recognizing the many school principals from the A schools that are at the helm of the schools.

E-2: Introduction of new member, Miguel Vias

- Miguel Vias new member to Board; brief introduction of himself.
- All Board members introduced themselves.

- **E3: Coral Gables Senior High School (CGSH) Little Libraries Literacy Service Project (Interact)**
 - Board Member Joseph provided comments; in addition, introduced one of the honorees from previous festival during May; student Gianna Figueroa is a rising star who is currently working on a mini-library project and plans to further expand within the City Beautiful.
 - Gianna's presentation was titled: Expansion of Mini-Libraries Project. Presentation was enjoyed by all.
 - Recommendations and comments were provided to Gianna.
 - Board Member Joseph elaborated on details related to this project.

- **E-4: Discussion to add Disability Board approved suggestions to the ED Compact**
 - Chair Chang briefly commented that the disability edition will be added as the last section of the Education Compact.
 - It's crucial to move the ED Compact forward.
 - Ms. Palacio indicated that the disability-related comments have been reviewed by the Disability Board. The comments were considered and shared accordingly. Further comments were discussed regarding Section 1 Paragraph 2 of the Education Compact.

Final

F. OLD BUSINESS

G. ONGOING BUSINESS

- G-1: Discussion of ED Compact to be added to Strategic Plan
 - Coral Gables Strategic Plan -2023-2025; presented by Liaison Chelsea Granell via discussion and slides.
- A discussion ensued among the board members, with several expressing enthusiasm and offering a variety of ideas and suggestions related to the topic.
- Board Members provided some direction on how they wish to proceed with the ED Compact while Ms. Granell was setting expectations realistic.
- Ms. Granell will provide more clarity and supplemental details.
- Ed Compact was approved by all board members for legal review. Team asked for a copy of the final legally reviewed ED Compact document.

H. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next meeting: October 17, 2025

Meeting adjourned at: 10:49 am