

**CORAL GABLES SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2015 – 8:30 A.M.
CITY HALL
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**

MEMBERS	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul. 24	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	APPOINTED BY
Ruth Martinez				P	-	E	E						Mayor Cason
Andria Hanley				P	-	A	P						Vice Mayor Quesada
Aileen Ortega				P	-	A	P						Commissioner Keon
Samuel Joseph				P	-	P	P						Commissioner Lago
David Bianchi				P	-	P	P						Commissioner Slesnick
Nan Markowitz				P	-	P	P						City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark
													Commission-as-a-whole

A = Absent
E = Excused Absence
P = Present
- = No meeting

STAFF:

Naomi Levi, Government Affairs Manager

GUESTS: Ms. Iraida Mendez-Cartaya, Dr. Jacques Bentolila

RECORDING SECRETARY:

Naomi Levi, Government Affairs Manager

The following represents a summary of the items discussed during the Committee meeting.

- MEETING AGENDA -

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:30am

II. ROLL CALL

All members were present except Ruth Martinez, who had an excused absence.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Nan moved to approve the minutes from July and September. Andria seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. *Mission Statement Review & Adoption*

Nan moved to approve the mission statement as written. Andria seconded the motion. The mission statement was approved unanimously. The Committee's mission statement is:

"To provide oversight of the City's educational landscape; making sure the City is fulfilling its education commitments, and assuring that the needs of students and families are being adequately served. To assist and advise the City of Coral Gables' elected leaders in their efforts to ensure excellent educational options and high performing schools within the City, essential elements to the quality of life for City residents."

V. SCRC COMMITTEE BUSINESS

A. *2016 Priorities & Scope*

Nan moved to approve the priorities and scope as suggested by the Chair. Aileen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. *School improvement projects*

Board members provided short updates on their respective initiatives

1. "City Beautiful" Schools Initiative-Aileen Ortega

Aileen contacted the garden club regarding beautification efforts at schools and received positive feedback. She also discussed some thoughts with Iraida during the meeting, who encouraged the Committee to work with her office to identify specific projects.

2. "Community Schools" Project- Nan Markowitz

A joint use agreement was discussed. The City can put one in place with the School District so the community can have use of fields, tracks, buildings and other school facilities during off hours. This process will likely be pursued once MDCPS staff provides information as to form and process.

3. Financial Literacy Initiative -David Bianchi

David is taking a "top down" approach to get his book, "Blue Chip Kids", into the hands of students. He donated several thousand copies to the school district free of charge and has been making significant progress.

4. Mentorship/Service Programs- Andrea Handley

MDCPS staff was very interested in partnering with the Committee to facilitate internship opportunities for students.

5. Coral Gables History Tours- Ruth Martinez

School board staff seemed interested in working with the City to facilitate field trips for 4th and 5th graders to local historical sites.

6. Community Education Initiatives- Sam Joseph, Chair

Sam stated that he believes this initiative to be the Committee's most important mandate. He informed MDCPS staff that the Committee welcomes ideas on how it can help educate and inform the community on MDCPS issues.

7. Special Needs Services/Programming Initiative

Sam discussed the need for local, accessible school services for special needs students. He also briefed the Committee on his discussions with the University of Miami's Center for Autism and Related Disorders (UM CARD) and their willingness to host a future meeting.

VI. MDCPS REPORT

MDCPS staff addressed pre-submitted questions about school populations, controlled choice, physical conditions of schools and GOB capital projects funding. More information will be provided on bus routes impacted by controlled choice.

VII. DISCUSSION

Open discussion, questions and answers, and input from community members during public hearing section.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:30am

Next Meeting:

Next meeting will be on November 20th at City Hall.