

# City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, FL 33134  
[www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com)



## Meeting Minutes

Friday, January 28, 2022

8:30 AM

Draft

Police and Fire Headquarters, Community Meeting Room

### School Community Relations Committee

*Chairperson Ariel Fernandez*  
*Vice Chairperson Sam Joseph*  
*Board Member Erin Anding*  
*Board Member Winnie Chang*  
*Board Member Sandy Dimitris*  
*Board Member Carmen Manrara Cartaya*  
*Board Member Cecilia D. Slesnick*  
*Board Member Jennifer Ward Sando*  
*Board Member Sharon Watson*

The School Community Relations Committee will be holding its Regular Meeting on Friday, January 28, 2022, commencing at 8:30 a.m. While the Committee is back to live in-person meetings, members of the public may participate in person but are also able to participate via the Zoom platform. Members of the public may join the meeting via Zoom at (<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83893614478>). In addition, a dedicated phone line will be available so that any individual who does not wish (or is unable) to use Zoom may listen to and participate in the meeting by dialing: 786 635 1003 Meeting ID: 838 9361 4478.

To speak on an Agenda Item, please "Raise your Hand" or send a message to one of the meeting hosts using the Zoom Platform. If you joined the meeting via telephone you can "Raise your Hand" by pressing \*9.

Draft

## CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 8:37 a.m. Quorum achieved at 8:42 a.m.

## ROLL/QUORUM CALL

**Present:** 5 - Watson, Joseph, Chang, Fernandez and Board Member Ward Sando

**Absent:** 3 - Slesnick, Dimitris and Manrara Cartaya

**Excused:** 1 - Anding

## A. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

School Community Relations Committee Meeting of December 17, 2021.

**Attachments:** [Cover Memo](#)  
[SCRC Dec. 17 Draft Meeting Minutes](#)

A motion was made by Joseph, seconded by Chang, that this matter be approved. The motion passed by the following vote.

**Yeas:** 5 - Watson, Joseph, Chang, Fernandez and Board Member Ward Sando

**Absent:** 4 - Slesnick, Dimitris, Manrara Cartaya and Anding

## B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments from the public.

**C. NEW BUSINESS**

**C-1 Miami-Dade County Public Schools Update (Facilitated by Mari Tere Rojas, School Board Member)**

School Board Member Mari Tere Rojas started her update by wishing the outgoing superintendent Alberto Carvalho luck on his new endeavors.

School Board Member Rojas announced the Miami-Dade County Public School Board's selection of a new superintendent of schools - Dr. Jose Dotres. The school board member proceeded to give a brief review of the incoming superintendent experience and familiarity with Miami-Dade, Broward and Collier County Schools. School Board Member Rojas also stated some issues the M-DCPS is experiencing.

- Budgetary Concerns
- Lack of human capital
- Reapproval of referendum

School Board Member Rojas informed the SCRC of five schools that now are in her district due to the redistricting process.

- Olympia Height Elementary School
- Banyan Elementary School
- Emerson Elementary Schools
- Rockway Elementary School
- Rockway Middle School

School Board Member Rojas announced the Miami-Dade County Teacher of the Year and Rookie Teacher of the Year Ceremony will be held on Thursday February 3, in person.

The School Board Member informed the SCRC of two agenda items that she will be presenting to the School Board in February.

1. The Endorsement of Read Across America Day – March 2, 2022.
2. Directing the superintendent to initiate a student/parent campaign, to inform the community of the consequences of being in possession of a counterfeit driver's license.

The School Board Member volunteered to read at the Farmers Market on Read Across America Day on March 2.

School Board Member Rojas provided a clarification on the enrollment for students with ASD as well as the process of program expansions. The School Board also stated that district staff met with city staff after the resolution passed to discuss self-contained classrooms as well as the possibility of opening a project victory program in the City of Coral Gables.

**C-2 Discussion on schools listed on the City website (Facilitated by Ariel Fernandez, Chair)**

The City's website will be transitioning to a new platform starting in March, 2022. Chairperson Ariel Fernandez requested a parent friendly page dedicated to Coral Gables Schools. The Chairperson also suggested including a map of the City of Coral Gables with the boundaries of each school specified.

**C-3 Discussion on the Cavaliers Future Leaders Fellowship Program (Facilitated by Ariel Fernandez, Chair)**

Chairperson Ariel Fernandez stated that he met with Commissioner Menendez and the Commissioner stated that the SCRC will be creating the essay prompt to be included in the Cavaliers program application as well as conducting the interviews.

Special Needs component to be added for next year.

Question selected by SCRC members to be asked:

1. Tell us about a time you had to ask for help?

Board Member Chang moved to select question, Vice Chair Joseph seconded. Motion passed.

**C-4 Update on the Coral Gables Family Literacy Festival (Facilitated by Sam Joseph, Vice Chair & Carolina Vester, Assistant Director of Community Recreation)**

The Literacy Festival will be held at the Coral Gables War Memorial Youth Center, 405 University Drive. Alternative parking for this event is being scouted. Mitchell Zuriarrain from Community Recreation will be the point person for this event. Dates in the summer will be explored and a survey will be circulated to vendors. Every City summer camp program had a book fair component in 2020. Looking at including Transportation and Teacher of the Year Awards at event through sponsorships.

Vice Chairperson Sam Joseph suggested the Miami Dade Public Schools reading list books be highlighted at the Literacy Festival. Assistant Director Vester also mentioned the Financial Literacy aspect of the Literacy Festival. Vice Chairperson Joseph stated that he would like to present the Teacher of the Year Award at the Literacy Festival. Vice Chairperson stated that he would like to call the awards the "Education Awards" due to this board's future recognition of school personnel.

The Assistant Director of Community Recreation Carolina Vester expressed concern about the teacher's ability to physically show up to retrieve the award. Assistant Director Vester provided alternative methods acknowledging the teachers who are unable to attend via a billboard with pictures of the teachers.

Chairperson Ariel Fernandez suggested incorporating a literacy component to Farmers Market and recognizing teachers/schools each week there versus in a big event.

Incorporating an adult book and cultural aspect to the Literacy Festival.

Honoring Edwina Prime from the McFarlane District and Congresswoman Meek at the Coral Gables Museum or at the McFarlane Community Center.

**D. OLD BUSINESS**

**E. ONGOING BUSINESS**

- E-1 Continued discussion regarding SIP consolidation (Facilitated by Ariel Fernandez, Chair)**

A motion was made by Vice Chair Joseph, seconded by Board Member Ward Sando, that the SIP assignments be consolidated into the following three: City Beautiful Schools Initiatives, Special Needs Initiative, and Relationship Building Initiative. The motion passed by the following vote.

**Yeas:** 5 - Watson, Joseph, Chang, Fernandez and Board Member Ward Sando

**Absent:** 3 - Dimitris, Manrara Cartaya and Slesnick

**Excused:** 1 - Anding

- E-2 SIP Committee Member Assignments Review (Facilitated by Ariel Fernandez, Chair)**

With the consolidation passed in item E-1, this assignment list is no longer active.

**Attachments:** [SIP Descriptions](#)  
[SIP Descriptions 2022 Updates Proposed by Vice Chair.docx](#)

- E-3 Discussion regarding West Lab and previous negotiations between the City and MDCPS (Facilitated by Ariel Fernandez, Chair)**

The attached frequently asked questions were read out and briefly discussed.

**Attachments:** [West Lab FAQ SCRC.docx](#)

**F. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- F-1 Next SCRC Meeting - Friday, February 11, 2022**

Questions/Comments: [scrc@coralgables.com](mailto:scrc@coralgables.com)

F-2 Join a local PTA or subscribe to their newsletters using the following links.

**Sunset Elementary**

<https://www.sunsetpta.org/membership>

**Coral Gables Preparatory Academy**

<https://coralgablespreppsa.membershiptoolkit.com/whyjoin>

**GW Carver Elementary**

<https://gwcarverelem.memberhub.com/store?category=PTA%20Memberships-%20JOIN%20TODAY>

**GW Carver Middle School**

<https://carvermiddle.memberhub.com/store>

**Ponce de Leon Middle School**

<https://ponceptsamemberhub.memberhub.com/store>

**Coral Gables High School**

<http://gablespta.org/join/>

**International Studies Preparatory Academy High School**

<https://ispa-ptsa.com/join-ptsa/>

**West Lab -**

<https://www.westlabpto.org/pen>

F-3 Farmers Market - Saturday's 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

F-4 Burgerliscious - Thursday, Feb. 3 - 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

F-5 "Goldfinger" Film Showing - Sunday, Feb. 6 - 1 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 10:12 a.m.

**NOTE**