



# City of Coral Gables

## Agenda

### School Community Relations Committee

Friday, May 9, 2025

#### ROLL CALL

##### A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

All Board Members approved minutes.

##### B. PUBLIC COMMENT

Comments provided by Sam Joseph:

- This year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of end of Controlled Choice systems for school assignments. At the time of this change, there was a significant debate within the community regarding how this shift might impact the academic performance and overall environment of the schools. There has been a close involvement with the schools. A detailed report evaluating how schools have performed since the policy change is being prepared and will be shared with the community. The report will provide valuable information on student outcomes, school climate, and any notable trends or disparities.
- Many changes have been viewed as positive, especially regarding student experiences and outcomes. It is important to quantify these improvements through a comprehensive comparison report. This report will include a

grade-level evaluation to get an understanding on how students are performing across different academic stages.

- With micro-schools, private schools, and traditional school programs all playing a role, it's important to assess the broader educational landscape. There is a partnership with Barry University to create a private magnet school, which will give a holistic view of the current educational landscape.
- Such report will identify areas where improvements are needed and how much has already been done.
- Public schools serve as the foundation for providing universal access to education, regardless of a student's background or geographic location.

Board Member Goodman commented:

- Obtained current public records result on enrollment data for the past three years. This data will serve as a foundational component of the analysis, providing insights into trends, shifts in student populations.
- Provided general overall feedback from report.
- Overall results are positive.
- Number of students attending Coral Gables has dropped.
- Census data from 2024 indicates that overall, a 50% of Coral Gables families attend public schools.
- For a more in-depth analysis, the full report will be sent to Board Members for a more detailed review.

## C. NEW BUSINESS

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

School Board Chair Rojas was unable to attend; Ms. Hernandez' Chair Roja's Chief of Staff read proffered items:

- B-5- Request Approval of Resolution No. 25-021 of the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, Recognizing the Walksafe Program at the Kidz Neuroscience Center, Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, including the 2025 Walksafe Statewide Poster Contest Winners.
- H-3- School Board Endorsement Commemorating the 123<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Independence of Cuba – May 20, 2025.

- H-4- Recognition of the Florida Seal of Biliteracy Program in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS)
- H-9- Follow-up to the Feasibility of Establishing a School Choice Concept of Districtwide Centers for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Updates from the District, provided by Chief of Staff Ms. Hernandez:

- Parent Volunteer for instructional materials. For additional information please refer to the school's website.
- Wellness event will be held on Saturday, May 17 at the Miami-Dade College North campus. They will have free EKG registration.
- Parent School Climate Survey, its purpose is to gather feedback from parents about their perceptions of the school environment and to identify areas where they can improve.
- Life streaming the AI (artificial intelligence) in the schools scheduled on May 12.
- For any questions contact Ms. Hernandez – Board Members have email contact information.

Additional comments from Maria Palacio-Chairman of Crystal Academy:

- Excited about item H-9 pursuant to establishing a comprehensive school choice concept and further awareness for autism spectrum disorders. Although she expressed her gratitude about the program, she also acknowledged that much work needs to be done.

Board member Goodman inquired about the budget workshops.

Carlos Pichardo commented: Rod Steiger indicated that their team is unaware about revenues and tax rates. It is a work in progress.

Further discussion was made pursuant to budget cuts in Tallahassee. In fact, the proposed tax cuts will impact on schools.

Carlos Pichardo further commented on the importance to advocate for schools and children's education with those elected officials.

Board Member Goodman spoke about a Townhall on May 22 with Senator Calatayud. Important to be an active part of this event.

## C-2 Update on the Coral Gables Family Literacy Festival (Facilitated by Sam Joseph)

Updates also provided by Carlos from recreation department who was in person at meeting:

- This year there are additional resource members.
- In preparation for the upcoming event the parking lot at University Drive has been closed off and tents are being set up.
- At the event there will be food vendors, petting zoo area, live music and much more.
- Special Guest readers such as Vice Mayor Anderson, Mayor Lago, Commissioner Fernandez, Commissioner Castro.

Sam Joseph offered additional comments:

- May 17 -11:00-3:00 pm Literacy event.
- This is the 5<sup>th</sup> annual event. It's expected to be one of the biggest events yet.
- Opening Ceremony will be introducing the commission.
- Honoring the Literacy Row laureates and a posthumously Literacy Row honoring Jeannett Slesnick for all her work.
- Little Carver and Carver high school will be in attendance among others.
- Many free books.
- Book drop depot for those donating gently used books.
- Excess books will be donated to the Children's Trust and the Miami-Dade grade level reading program and to the little libraries.
- A special thanks to Marlene, Barbara Swain and Dr. Michael Lewis who have been instrumental working on this event.
- Richard Blanco the poet although he will be able to attend the event, he has been promoting it in social media.
- This event is about the schools and for the schools.

Members discussed and decided on what times the Board members ascertaining the times they will be present at the Literacy event.

### C-3 Discussion on the Scope and Intent of History Miami Tours

Key aspects on budget need to be made for the history tours.

Board members deferred discussion regarding Scope and Intent of History Miami Tours.

### D. OLD BUSINESS

### E. ONGOING BUSINESS

#### E-1 Education Compact Workshop

- After a brief review of the proposed Education Compact document, it is essential to revise or annotate the document to clearly define roles and responsibilities for each task or proposed initiative. This will add clarity and will ensure accountability and smoother implementations.
- Further edits were mentioned, and additional edits will be done.

Sam Joseph commented:

- The Education Compact is intended to serve as an aspirational document, a written expression of collective vision, goals, and commitments to improve educational outcomes for all students. It reflects the shared wishes and values of the participating stakeholders, outlining a framework for collaboration, innovation, and progress in public education. This document does not represent a binding contract, but rather a starting point for formal discussions and negotiations. It will be refined through a collaboration among the city manager's office, the city attorney's office, the Intergovernmental office, and the school board attorney.
- Allow yourselves to be creative and think ahead, this will ensure a robust educational landscape.

Richard Pichardo commented:

- When reviewing document, look far into the future such as five to ten years.

## F. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Coral Gables Literacy Festival – May 17, 2025- opening ceremonies will begin at 11:00 am.
- On May 20 City Commission meeting will be honoring Teachers of the Year and Rookie Teacher of the Year. Currently waiting on a time certain for this

### F-1. Next SCRC Meeting

Friday, June 6, 2025- 8:30 am – Public Affairs conference room – 2151 Salzedo Street – Police and Fire building.