CITY OF RIVIERA BEACH
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA
MINUTES OF THE JOINT WORKSHOP
HELD IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
AUGUST 19, 2019 AT 6:00 P.M.

(The following may contain unintelligible or misunderstood words due to the recording quality.)

I. CITY CLERK CALLS TO ORDER

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Call to order the Riviera Beach Workshop, City Council meeting on August 19, 2019, 6:02 p.m. Madam, roll call.

II. ROLL CALL

CITY CLERK ANTHONY: Mayor Ronnie Felder. Chairperson KaShamba Miller-Anderson.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Present.

CITY CLERK ANTHONY: Chair Pro Tem Julia Botel.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Here.

CITY CLERK ANTHONY: Councilperson Tradrick McCoy.

COUNCILPERSON MCCOY: Here.

CITY CLERK ANTHONY: Councilperson Shirley Lanier.

COUNCILPERSON LANIER: Here.

CITY CLERK ANTHONY: Councilperson Douglas Lawson.

COUNCILPERSON LAWSON: Here.

CITY CLERK ANTHONY: City Manager Jonathan Evans.

CITY MANAGER EVANS: Present.

CITY CLERK ANTHONY: City Clerk Claudene Anthony is present. City Attorney Dawn Wynn.

CITY ATTORNEY WYNN: Here.

CITY CLERK ANTHONY: And Madam Chair, we have with us today Dr. Debra Robinson, Palm Beach County School Board, District 7.

III. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: All right. We'll have a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman McCoy.

(Everyone stood for a Moment of Silence with the Pledge of Allegiance being led by Councilperson McCoy).

IV. INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE OF WORKSHOP

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Okay. Madam -- Mr. Manager.

CITY MANAGER EVANS: Madam Chair and members of the Board. The item before you today is to discuss the status of the educational institutions we have here in the City of Riviera Beach. Uh, we have the distinct honor and pleasure of having School Member Mrs. Debra Robinson and some other faculty and staff here to, uh, provide an insight and a perspective concerning our schools here in Riviera Beach. Dr. Robinson.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Thank you. Uh, good evening.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Good evening.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: The sound is good?

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Yes. Pull it down a little bit to you -- yeah. It'll pick it up. No.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Like that?

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Pull it -- pull the whole thing down some.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Towards -- to me?

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Yeah.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Like that?

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Yeah, that's --

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: We're good?

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Yep. You're good.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay. Thank you. I'm excited. Okay. All right. Let me calm down. So I've been looking forward to this conversation for many, many months. So I'm really excited about the prospects of us working together and before I got -- go on, first let me thank you for the outstanding teacher appreciation event that was held this past Friday. So I want you to know our teachers and staff work hard, um, and I especially want to thank, um, the City Manager Jonathan Evans, um, Deidre Jacobs, the Riviera Beach

CRA, Pittman Law Group and Andrew Gillum. So now Councilwoman Lanier told me that she would like to make this an annual event and I look forward to working with you on that.

So before I get started with my presentation, I wanna try to be politically correct and name the people. Okay. So first off, no school board members, right? I don't see any other school board members. Okay. All right. And the sup's not here, deputy is not here. Our Chief Academic Officer Dr. Glenda Sheffield is here. Yay. Our Chief of Staff Ed Tierney is here. Our Regional Superintendent Dr. Camille Coleman is here. Our Instructional Superintendents Dr. Joseph Lee, Robin Brown and is Maria Bishop here? No. Okay. Thank you. And then we have a number of principals and school-based staff here. Um, principals and school-based staff, would you please stand so we can applaud you?

And as I go on, when I -- I do a brief overview of each of your schools, I would just ask that you would stand and I guess I was ignoring the Chief of HR -- I'm so sorry -- Gonzalo La Cava. Thank you. All right. Um, and so before I go on let me also thank my, um, executive right hand, Toni Bellotti who's not here but she really worked to put this together so that it was, um, a good presentation and Mr. Mark Howard, our chief of performance accountability who helped me, uh, pull together the data.

So we're gonna get started. I want you to know we have around 50 slides and so I'm gonna ask, if you would, if it's not out of order to ask you to write down your questions and then at the end of my part, then at the end of Dr. Dupont's part and at the end, very end, we'll be happy to, um, take your questions. So moving forward.

So you see our mission -- our vision and mission statement of the Palm Beach County School District. For me, the most important words in our vision include all learners reach their highest potential to succeed in the global economy. Well, that includes Riviera Beach learners, right? And then our mission is talking about excellence in equity, um, which is a very important word, uh, and I won't get into that definition now. But in addition, it includes the words "knowledge, skills and ethics required for responsible citizenship and productive careers." So I'm hoping that we will work together to make that a reality for children in Riviera Beach.

Here's the graphic of our 5-year strategic plan. Um, the Council has that in their little package because it is, um, a bit difficult to read, but you will see that under Strategic Theme, the Strategic Theme of positive and supportive climate. The second item, is to secure parent and community partnerships to support academic and social, emotional development of all students. And that is why we are here today to -- I'm hoping to enter into a long-term partnership that will benefit the students of Riviera Beach.

Now this is a graphic from the Schott Foundation's Loving Cities Report and you will note that the foundation to an outstanding -- to outstanding academic success includes physical and mental health and social and economic stability. Now moving on, the Council also has this in their package. This is the boundary map for, um, Riviera Beach elementary schools and just so the public knows, you can view the boundaries for all of our schools on the School District's website which is PalmBeachSchools.org.

Washington Elementary. I saw Carissa Battle in the house. Um, Carissa Battle is in her second year as principal at Washington Elementary School. Um, I want to say that Washington is, um, currently housed at Lincoln Elementary while the school is being modernized. The new, uh, Washington Elementary is expected to be occupied in July, um, 2021 and we will have community presentations on the plans for that facility in the near future and I count on you to hold me to that. Um, further, I want to say that Washington is a small school, um, but they had the highest, um, percent of proficient readers of the Riviera Beach elementary schools.

Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary, um, is led by Katrina Granger, the woman that some of us refer to as Mother Teresa. I have to say that she leads this school with her skills, her love and her wisdom. So Bethune has the largest enrollment of all the Riviera Beach elementary schools and they educate 3-year-olds through 5th grade. Um, they have supports for students in place from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and they have special programming for ESE students. Mrs. Granger is frustrated because the school was three points from earning a B this year and so she has every intention of getting that B next year.

Moving on, Grove Park Elementary. Now Grove Park, if you look at that boundary map, um, their boundaries includes a small portion of Western Riviera Beach. The school is led by Joanne Rogers. Um, that school is also being modernized and as the school district staff found out when they want to present plans for the new facility, they have a very involved school community.

Lincoln Elementary is led by Alicia Porter. Um, she has a school parent meeting or something today so she couldn't be here 'cause of that meeting. Um, so Lincoln Elementary is really focused on improving literacy at every level and you will see their list of after school programs and partnerships there.

West Riviera Elementary, um, is led by a brand-spanking-new principal. Okay. I'm sorry. Dr. Alisha McKnight who had been, um, assistant principal at JFK so she is, um, very familiar with Riviera Beach. Um, I have to say that I'm pretty partial to West Riviera since two of my sons attended West Riv. Their focus is on literacy, um, and -- and their focus on literacy -- now, I might get challenged on this -- but they took their eyes a bit off of math, which is what caused the school grade to drop, but they were off of the State's low 300 list and so that itself is an accomplishment and we will -- okay. And so, um, I have every expectation that that grade is gonna come back up, um, and especially as we work in partnership.

So now, let's -- let's go to some elementary school data. So the demographics, you will see, just in case you didn't know, um, that the elementary school, um, population in 33404 is overwhelmingly black and overwhelming qualifies for free or reduced lunch. So I pulled this up, uh, just before the meeting, so -- just so you know, that for a family of four, you will qualify for reduced lunch at a income level of $46,000 a year. So at this school then, uh, I mean in Riviera Beach schools, the approximately 90 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Um, now if you move over to the last set of bars, that students with disabilities and you will see for each of these bars, Riviera Beach elementaries, um,

is in blue, School District is in yellow and statewide is in gray. So you see for students with disability, it's more or less the same, um, same percentage-wise for Riviera Beach, Palm Beach County and the State.

Now this is one of my favorite slides, um, so Riviera Beach here is defined as 33404 and actually in all these slides I think it's defined as 33404. Um, so you will see here that on the slide on the left, um, so these are students -- both of these sets of bar graphs on the left, um, reflect the students that just started 5th grade. So when those students entered kindergarten on the kindergarten readiness assessment which was the fair at the time, only 8.5 percent were considered ready for kindergarten in August of 2014. So the teachers in Riviera Beach worked hard and then by the time those students were in 3rd grade, 30 percent of those students were level 3 or above, which is what we're gonna call proficiency for this conversation. Um, 30 percent were level 3 and above. Now we're not at all happy about that. 30 percent is nowhere near, uh, what I would call success. Honestly, neither is, uh, the 56 percent or 57 percent that represents the District and the State for 3rd grade reading.

But the reason I had staff answer this question for me was I wanted to show that students came in at 8.5 percent, um, ready for kindergarten and there was a 21.5 percent increase in readiness or proficiency by 3rd grade. So that was in Riviera Beach. The School District had a 22 percent increase from kindergarten to 3rd and statewide, the increase was 21 percent from kindergarten to 3rd. So as generally speaking, wherever they came in, by 3rd grade there was 20 percent more of the students were deemed proficient.

So now if we look on the right, the -- the one that's labeled "Absences," again, blue is Riviera Beach, yellow is Palm Beach County School District. Nine percent of the elementary students in 33404 missed 15 or more days of school, um, last school year. That's an adult problem, right? So district-wide, it was 5 percent and actually, if you tease out the School District's, um, data even more, you will find a awful lot of that 5 percent for the School District, uh, (unintelligible), um, and -- and we know some of the social reasons why, um, there's absences in that community.

So if you look at out-of-school suspension, the blue bar is Riviera Beach, the yellow bar, again, is Palm Beach County School District. So these are students that had at least one day of out-of-school suspension. One student could have had 15 days out-of-school suspension but it only shows up in this data count as one. So one day or 15 days is kind of the same here. So 4 percent of students had at least one day of out-of-school suspension compared to the District average of 2 percent.

Moving on. So in this chart, I wanted to look at who chooses to go to their home school. So you'll see in -- you see the names of the schools. The next column is, um, the number of, uh, students who live in 33404 that are assigned to that -- who are attending their assigned -- assigned school, excuse me. So in the first one is Dr. Bethune, um, 385 students who were assigned to that school actually attended that school. And then 270 students who were assigned to that school chose to go elsewhere. So 59 percent of the students who were assigned via boundaries to attend Bethune, attended Bethune.

For Grove Park -- and, again, this is 33404. So for Grove Park, 39 percent of 33404 that was assigned there attended. Lincoln was 56 percent; Washington, 50; West Riv, 62. Right? So we could look at why that is. It may be that these children chose to go to a different school for a Choice program or it might just be some measure of dissatisfaction or it might be some reason, um, that we have yet to identify. So that's elementary.

I'm gonna move on to middle. Here's your middle school boundaries. So you will note at the bottom there, uh, Bak Middle School of the Arts is a green dot. It's a green dot because it has no boundaries. Um, the surround -- that's actually my neighborhood and we are bounded to go to JFK. The salmon color at the far left bottom, um, is Bear Lakes. It's part of Bear Lakes' boundaries. So you'll see that, um, Bear Lakes picks up a small western, southwestern portion of Riviera Beach.

So Bear Lakes is led by Mr. Kirk Howell and our esteemed Chairperson KaShamba Miller-Anderson. Um, Mr. Howell was unable to attend, um, so I could tell you in meeting with him, he is very proud of his statistic that 50 percent of their 8th graders going to high school have one or more high school credits. Moving on, we have Howell Watkins and the new principal, Awilda Tomas is in the house. So this is, um, her first year as principal at Howell Watkins coming from elementary school and having done a outstanding job there. Um, Howell Watkins, um, amongst other things that is near and dear to me with Howell Watkins is the partnership that their pre-medical sciences program has with one of the organizations I'm a member of and that's the T. Leroy Jefferson Medical Society. And if you have not seen them, you have to see them. They do an outstanding job including the graduation where the students would get stethoscopes and have, um, breakfast in the board room at Good Samaritan and so forth. But they do a very good, um, mentoring, um, exercise with those young people.

Moving on, John F. Kennedy. Okay. So I'm a Viking. Um, my oldest son went to Kennedy. Kennedy is also near and dear to my heart. The principal, Ricky Clark, is in his second year leading that school. He is unable to attend 'cause he's dropping his daughter off at college. Um, the -- again, the grade dropped from a C to a D, uh, but note is made that they were only 3 points away from maintaining that C and the focus this year will be on tight monitoring of the instruction and focusing, um, student conversations around, um, high expectations of their learning.

All right. We have our demographics, again, here. I think, um, it's probably no surprise the pattern is somewhat similar to elementary school. Uh, I make note that here, the percentage of students identified with disabilities has bumped up a little bit when compared to the District and the State. I'm gonna be honest with you. I don't know if those students really have a disability. Right? Um, that -- how about that's work in progress and I -- I look forward to you partnering with me to make sure that there's no more, um, failures of adults to engage and prevent children from walking down this -- this road to being labeled with a disability when they might not have one.

Okay. Moving on. Middle school reading. So again, um, 3rd grade reading in Riviera Beach went from 30 percent now to 32 percent for -- in 8th grade. So that's a 2 percent gain. For the District, there was a 3 percent gain and for the State there was a 1 percent

gain. So, again, we started school behind, we made progress, but we stayed behind. The progress was just not enough. So you will also see the data for 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I. Now this, to me, is very important. Algebra I is a gateway course to all the STEM careers. Um, I would love to see every 8th grader taking Algebra I if they haven't taken it prior.

Um, this graph tells you who was enrolled. It does not tell you who successfully, um, completed Algebra I so that's another data metric that I need to pull. And you will see that there's, um -- what is that? Uh, 7 percent disparity between Riviera Beach and the State for Algebra I 8th grade participation. Moving on, then we have the absences. Five percent of middle schoolers in 33404 had more than 15 days absent. And then you see this big jump to 13 percent in out-of-school suspensions. So again, that's at least one day of out-of-school suspension. We went from 4 percent out-of-school suspension at elementary to 13 percent, um, in middle school in Riviera Beach. For the District, it went from 2 percent to 6 percent. So there's a lot of room for improvement here, right?

Now who chooses to go elsewhere? So this is the same data pattern as for elementary school so for Bear Lakes, 63 percent of the -- and these are small numbers assigned to Bear Lakes out of 33404. But 63 percent of those assigned chose to go to Bear Lakes. For Howell Watkins, it was 77 percent; John F. Kennedy was 42 percent; Watson B. Duncan -- why do I have Watson B. Duncan -- was 68 percent. Okay. So here we have, um, room for us to improve JFK's programming and reputation. 'Cause I can tell you from the phone calls I get, a awful lot of that being only 42 percent is reputation.

Moving on to high school. So, again, you will see, um -- where is it? Can you see Suncoast on there?

AUDIENCE: That's in the middle.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Yeah. It's the bottom.

AUDIENCE: (unintelligible).

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay. Yeah. 'Cause I can't see it. Oh, there it is. Okay. So Suncoast, again, is green again because it has no boundaries, uh, but it's physically located in the City of Rivera Beach.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: I don't see it Inlet Grove on here.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: You can't see it on there, either?

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Uh, she's looking for Inlet Grove.

AUDIENCE: Inlet Grove.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Oh, Inland Grove is not on there. Is Emily here?

AUDIENCE: (unintelligible).

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay. Good.

AUDIENCE: (unintelligible).

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Oh, don't tell her. Just don't tell her. Okay. All right. We're just moving on. Okay. Moving on, moving on. Okay. Um, high school students. Now this is a little bit different. So this is the -- for each of these schools, the percentage of students that live in 33404 that attend that school. No. Let me do it the other way. The percentage of the school's population that lives in 33404. Okay? So Dwyer, 23 percent is in 33404. Palm Beach Gardens, 26 percent is in 33404 and Palm Beach Lakes, only 2 percent is in 33404.

Palm Beach Gardens High School. Palm Beach Gardens High School is led by Dr. Donald Hoffman. Uh, Mr. Danforth. Thank you. He's in, um, starting his second year as principal at Palm Beach Gardens High School after, um, leading Howell Watkins Middle School. So you know, Palm Beach Gardens has a longstanding relationship with the Riviera Beach community. Um, you will see the -- the programs here that have the asterisk, um, which is the Navy Junior ROTC, I think it's just because it's, um, only in-boundary students. Am I right? Okay. So the other ones are -- have a -- a larger, um, catchment area.

Palm Beach Lakes High School. Uh, Palm Beach Lakes High School is led -- led by David Alfonso who actually was last year's -- is he here? Alfonso here? He's hiding in the back? Okay. Mr. Alfonso is here. So, um, actually Mr. Alfonso was this past school year's Principal of the Year. Um, I will tell you that I think I'm a Ram. I have a Palm Beach Lakes black student union jacket which I'm gonna wear to a School Board meeting soon. Okay. And them, um -- and I also made note on this. He's gonna laugh. So because Mr. Alfonso has heard me talk about Howard all the time, heard -- heard all the HBCU grads talk about their HBCU, he proclaimed Palm Beach Lakes a HBHS. Okay? It's a Historically Black High School. Okay. And he intends for his students -- he intends for his students to graduate from Palm Beach Lakes and go on in their lives and to brag about their Palm Beach Lakes experience just like I brag about Howard. Okay?

William T. Dwyer High School is led by Corey Brooks, his second year as principal there, formerly the principal at John F. Kennedy Middle School. Um, he is not here today but I could tell you that when Mr. Brooks went to Dwyer, um, he brought a new and welcoming climate to that campus. I'm going to specifically ask that you recruit students for the Finance Academy. That's the money handling academy, okay? Okay. Thank you. Moving on.

Demographics. So here we go. The pattern is -- is familiar. Um, actually -- and -- and it's more or less like middle school in all components. The percentage, um, that apply for free and reduced lunch tends to decrease, um, when kids get to high school, um, but the relative pattern remains the same. Okay. Acceleration of graduation. So on the left, the first two bars -- so grade 9 through 12 acceleration. So this includes students who had taken advanced placement, international baccalaureate, the ace or the dual enrollment. So these -- these are the kids that are in classes that are designed to prepare them for

college. Right? Um, so we're really lagging behind here. It's 20 percent for 33404 and 41 percent for the School District. We could not pull the data for the State.

So moving on to graduation. So the -- the one that says "Graduation Rate - All" is all. So all demographics and these are standard diplomas. These are not Certificates of Completion or any of the other variations. So we have 79 percent of students in 33404 are graduating with their cohort in the four years after entering 9th grade. 91 percent for the School District as a whole and 86 percent for the State as a whole. And so then the next one is the black graduation rate. So if you compare Riviera Beach at 79 percent; black students throughout Palm Beach County graduate at 83 percent; and, the State at 81 percent.

Then we move over to attendance. Okay. So we're skipping school, right? So that's 18 percent of high school students in 33404 had 15 or more days absent. And so you can imagine what the correlation is between missing class and graduation. Right? And so it's my theory that if we can get that, um -- that blue absence number down -- down, down, down -- we're gonna see that blue graduation number go up, up, up. And then when we look at out-of-school suspension. So it's 11 percent, again, one day or more out-of-school suspension, uh, for 33404 and 4 percent for the School District. So you will notice that both for Riviera Beach and for the School District as a whole, the out-of-school suspension rate, um, went down some. The absenteeism rate went up.

Okay. Who's going to their assigned high school? You'll see the numbers, uh, for 33404, 69 percent of those who were assigned to Palm Beach Gardens choose to go to Palm Beach Gardens; 33 percent of those who were assigned to Palm Beach Lakes go to Palm Beach Lakes --and, again, those are small numbers -- and 67percent of those assigned to William T. Dwyer attend William T. Dwyer. And so I'm gonna guess that those numbers for Palm Beach Lakes will go up when they find out about the Fire Academy. So, um, forgot to brag about that before. So --

Now schools in Riviera Beach without boundaries. So we have Suncoast, Inlet Grove and Riviera Beach Prep. So, again, this data is the percent of students attending the school that live in 33404. For Suncoast, it's 8 percent; for Inlet Grove it's 12 percent; for Riviera Beach Prep, it's 45 percent. Now I'm gonna say now that one of the things I hope we collaborate on is how to improve those numbers attending Suncoast, um, and I have some suggestions that I will share at another time. But let me say now if you have a student that lives in Riviera Beach that applies to Suncoast and meets the criteria for the program and they don't get in, I ask you to let me know. Okay? 'Cause I can't trace it with vague generalities. I can chase it with specific students.

Riviera Beach Prep. Mark Simmonds is in his second year as principal at Riviera Beach Prep. Um, the former principal, Elaine Hubbard-Williams moved up to be director of support services. So the Prep is an academic alternative ed school, um, and it's primarily for students who have been struggling in the large schools. And I must say that they -- they really give, um, these young folks the attention that they need, the coax -- coaxing, um, the push, the encouragement. Um, sometimes maybe the dragging and kicking, but you know, um, and so they do not get school grades. Um, they get an alternative rating

and so they got Commendable and Maintaining.

Suncoast, you know. Uh, Suncoast has a brand-new principal, Kathryn Koerner. She -- there she is. Okay. Um, after the Karen Wetzel, uh, moved up to be an instructional superintendent. So we all know Suncoast has a long and tense relationship with the community, in large part based upon the circumstances of its birth as a magnet school. So, again, I want us to work together so that more and more Riviera Beach children qualify to attend and are successful at completing the programs there. So you may or may not know that when Suncoast was built at its current location, the plan was to have a K-12 IB campus. So we have elementary IB in Bethune -- at Bethune Middle School, JFK and then at Suncoast. And so we have to make this vision real in terms of preparing students and supporting them so that they can march through this international baccalaureate program and, um -- and graduate and go on to do all the great things that they're destined to do.

At Inlet Grove, okay, please tell Emma I have a slide for Inlet Grove. Okay. So Inlet Grove is a shining star and you know it. Um, led by Emma Banks, the little lady that dared to dream, right, um, and we'll leave it there. Right? So Inlet Grove is a conversion charter school. Um, earned their second A, very proud of it. And so I will tell you that, you know, Inlet Grove is housed at the old Suncoast campus, um, and so we are now, um, working on plans on how we address the facility needs of both Riviera Beach Prep and Inlet Grove and that remains to be determined. Right?

All right. And so in terms of solutions as I come to the end of my part of the presentation, I just wanna show you what could happen. Now maybe this isn't the best slide of all, but -- so you may or may not know that several years ago I started the Riviera Beach Pre-K Collaborative, which, um, is a group of 10 private pre-k providers that serve the Riviera Beach community and so we've been meeting, um, under -- under the, um -- the -- with a mission of saying that we wanna provide a high quality pre-k education for every three and four-year-old in Rivera Beach. So, you know, that's -- that's a huge lift. Um, we're still working on it but we're very clear that we have to improve those numbers entering kindergarten. And so what this -- what this chart will show you --

CITY MANAGER EVANS: Did we lose our mic?

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: I lost my mic? Oh, want me to just holler?

AUDIENCE: No. 'Cause you can't get it on the --

AUDIENCE: (unintelligible).

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Don, does the other one work right there? The middle one? Um, how it dies --

CITY MANAGER EVANS: Madam Chair, do you wanna take a brief recess?

AUDIENCE: (unintelligible).

CITY MANAGER EVANS: Oh, she got it on.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Thank you. Okay. We're back in business?

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Yes.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: And so what this -- what this graph will show you, this is comparing kindergarten readiness in August of 2016 with August of 2017. And if you can see it -- I don't think I put this in your backup. I'm sorry. 'Cause it's hard to see. But what it shows is that Riviera Beach, the private pre-ks in Riviera Beach were the only segment in Palm Beach County that increased their kindergarten readiness. Okay? The only ones. Other communities went down. Everyone's running around trying to explain it. Um, so, you know, Early Learning Coalition attributes this to the Riviera Beach pre-k collaborative. And so we want to -- at this point, we had only been working together for one year so we expect the data to show, um, more and more, um, improvement and we really want to thank Senator Bobby Powell who has, um, for two consecutive years filed appropriations and so the Riviera Beach pre-k collaborative got additional monies for curriculum professional development and parent engagement. So we expect to improve the -- the readiness coming in.

And so, now, any questions on that part?

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Go ahead.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: A couple of questions. Um, thank you for your presentation. It was enlightening. I -- there are schools that I didn't know were actually serving Riviera Beach kids so it opened my eyes. Um, how many of our kids actually go to Grove Park? I -- I -- I see, uh -- I could see the percentage of -- that's the one slide I'd like to have information about. In every case, you said in that school, for example, uh, Inlet Grove has 12 percent of the -- 12 percent of the population in Inlet Grove is from Riviera Beach but what I would like to know is what percentage of our kids go to Gardens for example.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Because we started working with Gardens and -- and we were told that about 70 percent of our kids go to Gardens. That -- that's kind of something that I would love to have information about. What percentage of Riviera Beach kids go to each of the schools you mentioned. And my other question is if they're not going, you -- you had good -- good information about, uh, you know, percentages of kids, um -- um, looking for -- who choose to go elsewhere. Where do they go? Are there charter schools that are gobbling them up? And what's the relationship with any of the charters and, um, I've been very disappointed in -- when I meet some -- when I meet kids who have been at some of the charters and they're maybe in 8th grade and they're still not reading and that's not one kid. I'm talking about many kids who are particularly over at Stonybrook. So I'd like to know, you know, where do they go if they don't go to the home schools? Do they go to other -- other public schools or do they go primarily to charters?

Uh, and then, um, why do we continue to have out-of-school suspension? I mean, is there -- are schools thinking about alternatives, in-school suspension? I mean, to me it's like just another vacation day. You know? Uh, you know, I was bad so I got sent home to play on my computer or to play whatever all day at home. It just doesn't make sense to me that we continue to do this as educators. So just wondering if there's been any effort to have in-school suspension as an option to out-of- school suspension.

Um, then, um, let's see. I think that's it for now.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: All right. Do you have any answers to the questions?

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: You wanna answer? Come on. Okay. Dr. Coleman is itching to respond. Okay.

DR. CAMILLE COLEMAN: There are some offenses that require out-of-school suspension. It's not negotiable.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Okay.

DR. CAMILLE COLEMAN: Um, there are -- all of our schools have some type of in-school suspension --

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Okay.

DR. CAMILLE COLEMAN: -- in-school suspension, alternatives to suspension, but, um, for example, any type of weapon on campus. Most of the schools have a automatic, you fight, it's 10 days. Um, because it starts and then if it's in open areas such as a cafeteria where it presents danger for large quantities of students, then they are automatically suspended.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Can I follow up?

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Uh-huh.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: So those numbers for out-of-school -- out-of-school suspensions are typically for violent kind of episodes and for -- yeah. Okay.

DR. CAMILLE COLEMAN: They're level 3 or 4 offenses. Fighting could be, um --

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Repetitive.

DR. CAMILLE COLEMAN: It could be drugs. It could be, uh, weapons on campus, any of those types of things. Threats.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: So it's not just you looked at him crosswise --

DR. CAMILLE COLEMAN: Talking too much.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: -- and I'm --

DR. CAMILLE COLEMAN: No one's getting suspended for talking too much. Bring -- bring -- we like it. Talk to us.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Anyone else? All right. You -- you can go ahead and finish.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: I'm sorry. One last thing. Could we please have all of those slides?

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Yes.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: 'Cause we don't have -- yeah. It would --

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Yeah.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: -- be great to have -- thank you.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Yes. You -- yes. Um, they were sent to -- yes. You'll get them.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Okay.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: So I would like to respond, too, because it -- it triggered a thought. So the other thing is that we're moving -- we're not done yet but we're moving towards establishing a policy where children are only expelled for the offenses that by law require expulsion.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Okay.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay? So -- and let me say this. There are some children that do some very, very, very bad things. Okay?

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Yeah.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay. So we -- we are making, I think, a lot of progress, um, in terms of how we look at students. For example, I'm gonna tell you this. I am very proud of our school police 'cause over time, we have worked with them so that they -- they do not arrest students the way, um, their original training might have taught them to and they understand that part of their role is to redirect and to support and guide. Right? So we're moving away. Our numbers for out-of-school suspension are dramatically down. Um, they're not zero. And because we have put, uh -- we have layers of people to address social, emotional, um, and mental wellness issues now. It is my expectations that those numbers will go down even more because hopefully, we will address their issues before their behavior escalates.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Thank you.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Thank you.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: One -- one -- I keep saying one last but this is it. Um, I was happy to see that Washington is using AVID and I wonder if -- 'cause I've -- I'm very familiar with that program.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Uh-huh.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: I'm wondering if it's -- how successful is it being? Are you measuring those rates of succession -- uh, of -- of success -- and the programs that you find to be successful like AVID and I'm sure it probably is, how do you migrate those programs to other elementary schools in the system?

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: So let me take -- so first off, that -- it's their first year with AVID. We measure everything. There is more data in the School District than you ever want to see. We can slice it, dice it every which way, right? But let me just say this. In talking to young people who have been in AVID -- who were in AVID programs when I was talking to them, and I asked them about making AVID, like, the norm. Why don't we just do this for everybody? The students said everybody's not gonna do this. Everybody is not dedicated enough to do this, right?

So my hope is that at -- in elementary school, as we elevate the expectations and -- and entice them to respond to those expectations, that that will become the norm. But middle school and high school will tell you everybody's not gonna do that. So it tends -- it -- this is not the right word, but I'm gonna use it anyway -- it tends to be a bit of an elitist program in middle school and high school. Okay? Any other questions? Okay.

So I would like to now introduce to you, um, Dr. Mary Ann Dupont. Dr. Dupont, um -- oh, my notes are not here. So Dr. Dupont actually is my mentor. Okay? So when I'm out of line, I'm gonna just tell you, when I'm out of line, call Dr. Dupont. She'll get me straight. Okay? She's the one I will hear. If some -- if she tells me the moon is purple and green stars, I'm gonna try to figure out how come I can't see these purple and green stars. Okay? Dr. Dupont retired as assistant sup -- assistant superintendent of quality assurance, um, at the School District. I could tell you when I first came to know her before I got on the School Board, um, and before she retired, every time I saw her at the School District she had a little angel pin on which tells you what you need to do to walk up in that building. Without further adieu, I would like to introduce Dr. Dupont.

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: Need protection.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: I know, right?

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: I hear you. Uh, thank you, especially my family members back there. Uh -- uh, first of all and I have to say when I saw the marquee outside that read, uh, "Back to School, believe it and achieve it," that set the tone for this presentation, uh, the part that I have to do. Because you know that beliefs control, uh, practices. So

what we believe can determine what we achieve. And so this work, uh, the presentation I'm gonna share with you is based on Jeff Howard's work at the Efficacy Institute and when you think about children getting better, stronger and smarter, you think about well, how do we go about doing that? And also in the District mission statement when you mention the -- and -- and I know you all share that all the children, you do want them to achieve high academic and character standards. No question.

You also would love it if nobody was suspended. So you think, well, how do we go about accomplishing that? So development means how to we get better, stronger and smarter? Now there's two ways to think about it and, uh, according to the Jeff Howard group one way is this. You know, sometimes you notice as people, uh, go through age, you know, their age, some of them get better, stronger and smarter and then some people simply just get older. So there's two ways that you can look at -- there's two models of belief.

And the first one is this brains theory and this theory says there are three kinds of people: they're very smart; sort of smart; and, then kind of dumb. Now the very smart people, you know, these are the ones, even our children, we expect them to be in the international baccalaureate program, IB. We expect them to take advanced placement, AP. And then we also have, like, sort of smart. Now these are the people that we say they're smart enough to learn some things but not -- not math and science. They'll be excellent in English, social studies. And then the KDs, this theory says these are people who are just not smart enough to learn anything. And what we do, we make jokes about those people. Sometime we say they're not the sharpest knife in the drawer or their elevator doesn't go to the top floor. You know, we make all kind of, uh -- uh, comments about them.

Now according to this innate ability model, a person's ability and character are fixed at birth. That is they can't change it. Either you have it or you don't. Some groups have it. Some groups don't. And then the -- and the individual has no control over how they can improve their academics and character. We're looking at both. And so when they encounter failure or difficulty, it sets limits in their development. Now, Ziegler said, "Our children are born to win but too many are conditioned to lose." And so what happened, based on your belief, if you believe in this brains theory, you're conditioning children to lose because what this -- this theory has done, it has hurt many children over the years and led them to believe that they're not intelligent. So when people start to think that they're dumb, it's useless to try, they give up at failure or difficulty and in many cases, they just drop out of learning. And therefore, their development stops and then they become a co-conspirator in their own self-destruction.

But another way to look at this is to reject the brains theory. And what we want you to do is think about what leads to development. This is the model of belief that we want you to embrace and it's called the Efficacy Model or the Get Smart Model. And that model says that effective effort leads to development and development is based, not on innate ability but on the changeable and controllable characteristics of effort. That all those who can work, can learn. You have to do the work. You have to put forth the effort. And here, by effort, the definition we have, tenacious engagement, intense focus on feedback and ongoing strategy formulation on feedback. And what we have the young people that stand effect, you have seen this. If you see them playing video games and then you walk

in and you got, like I say, a young child at home and you say something to them, like, they're ignoring you. They're not ignoring you. They're literally engaged in what they're doing and -- and -- and so -- and they also give themselves feedback.

They're looking and thinking about it. Well, what is it that I can do better and then they also come up with a strategy formulation to do better. So when a child get -- receive a -- a, say a test paper back, and just pretend it had maybe like a D on it. Most of the time, what they would do, they take it and just crumble it up. But what we want them to be able to do, take a look at it and say to myself, What did I do well on, what did I miss and then what do I need to work on? And so that way you empower them to put forth the effort.

Another thing about effective effort, what you see children doing, that's what they're gonna be good at. Now if you see them reading a lot, they'll be good at reading. If you see them playing, uh, football all the time, they'll be good at playing football. If you see them playing basketball, they'll be good at that. And so whatever you see them doing is what they're gonna be good at. Now what is the cause of them to put forth effective effort and that's confidence. And that's the idea or knowing that I can do something or I can learn it. And what do you wanna do with, uh -- uh, young people is to make sure you build their confidence. And the confidence is so different from self esteem. It's not the same thing.

Confidence is the belief in one's ability and your capacity to learn. Self esteem is belief in one's capacity worth or value. And when I speak to the young people, what I share with them, they have the self esteem. They have it going on, you know, 'cause they have the beauty. In fact, I tell a young lady just had the weave and the lashes and all of that, they know they're looking good. I say, I'm the senior citizen. I'm the one who need the weave, uh, I need the eyelashes and all of that, you know. But the question become do they have the confidence to know that they can earn an A in algebra. They can earn A's in chemistry. And so that's what we want to do is build their confidence. That's the key. Now if you tear their confidence down, then they don't put forth the effort.

Another point we wanna make here is all children and all of us -- all of you -- you have enough intellectual capacity for challenging, complex work. You have to know and understand that they have it. And a proof of this is this. By the time a child is maybe about -- maybe 2½ or to maybe 3 or 4-years-old, they have learned a language. They have learned a language. And when I say to, um -- uh, you know, to the young people and also to the parents, say when your child was born and we carried them over to China, we go back three or four years later, what would they be speaking? Chinese. Go -- the same thing. Go to Germany, come back three or four years later, what would they be speaking? German.

And then we'll look at that child when they walk in and say, well, wow, that kid is really -- is smart. Those are your children. They have the capacity to do it. They have enough. We're not saying everybody, uh, has the same amount. But they have enough to do that. And what you have to understand, too, now if you don't believe that, now you go learn a language. You go learn something that you don't already know and you'll see what that takes.

And what we wanted to, uh, say also about this particular model is young people can develop their intellectual ability and their character throughout life. And you know you all do that all the time. Plenty of time you're encountered with a -- a new project, you might have a new idea, something that you wanna try that's different. You know, you have that sense of yes, I can do this and then not, can I do it, but how do I go about -- how can I do this? And adults who understand can build young people's confidence. Whatever you do within the City of Riviera Beach, make sure that's a part of the focus that you build their confidence, create that environment so they can put forth effective effort and you'll see that they will, um -- uh, develop.

But then for you to go on to build their confidence, that depend on your belief. Do you really believe they -- they can achieve high academic and character standards? And if you do, you do what you need, uh, to do to help them. And also, then they can see that failure and difficulty are simply feedback. You know, I told some, uh, years ago, my grandmother used to make wonderful corn bread. And I said, Wow. I wanna make corn bread like my grandmother. And you should have seen that first batch of bread that I made. It was lumpy. It was -- it had some height to it. I don't know how it got so high. And it did not come out right. The crust was all crazy. But I did not give up on it 'cause I kept checking around with different people, say, well, what to do? Some people suggest -- suggested, um -- uh, buttermilk and so eventually, I got better at doing that. And so that particular model, that's what it said. Look at failure and the, uh, feedback. Uh, that's what cause the children to get better, stronger and smarter.

And what I have here, this, uh, Booker T. Washington, uh, video. Did you see to play that? And this is a example of a young man who used the efficacy model. This young man actually embraced that model.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay. Did it -- Walter.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: The link -- you can't click on the link?

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: You click on --

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Are you able to click on that link?

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: Yeah. Yeah. What do -- gotta get it up on the screen.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: You have to click on that.

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: Good, yeah. (Video playing with no sound). Uh-oh. (unintelligible). We get it. I guess. I don't know.

(Unintelligible. Several people speaking at the same time).

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: That the right one?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. That should do it.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Does anyone have any questions for Dr. Dupont at this time, while we're waiting for the video? You do? Mr. Lawson. Oh. Your head said yes.

COUNCILPERSON LAWSON: No way.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Uh, okay.

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: You know, I -- I -- I do -- I would like to just go ahead and say since we, uh -- he's working on that, is --

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: You have to come up to the microphone.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, I'm sorry. (Unintelligible)

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: Uh, okay. What I would like to say this is part of a presentation I do called "Wake Up, Step Up for Proficiency," I do it for parents and all in the community and what you get -- just got excerpts from it. We literally have exercises that we go through so tonight, I know this -- tonight is a sit and get. So that's why I did not include those other activities as a part of it.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Is it -- I have a question. Uh, so, Dr. Dupont, I think you used to work -- have, like, a parent university or some sort of, um, program for the parents' trainings. Do you still do that?

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: No. You know what I do? And I love doing it. I go to the community, for -- for example, I just got an invitation to return to Connect to Greatness in Boynton Beach. And I literally work with the parents and then, uh, share information with them because they have to be the ones -- first of all, have -- have them understand that the targets, what the Florida Standards Assessment is, like, a level 5, period. That's a understanding. That's the target. However, what we do, I bring in information that they need. So I sort of customize to their need and, uh, so the last time I was with them, some of them actually wanted some practice exercises for the FSA --

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Uh-huh.

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: -- and I literally -- rather than telling them to go to this website, I literally have copies made and deliver that to them and so they use that. And so that's the way I work. I don't like to be a drive-by, uh, supporter.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Uh-huh.

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: I -- I go back and forth, uh, sometime like three or four times a month, like, to -- for one organization. 'Cause the parents are the ones who have to do the work. And when I work with them, I tell them, I don't wanna hear, "if the schools would do this, if the teachers would do this, if the administrators would do this." I want them to do their part. 'Cause what I want -- what I'm showing them is, like, just like the organs in your body, your heart is just as essential as your lungs, as your liver. But the point being

you got to do your part. Your part has to be done. And so that's the way I work with them. And when we go to the schools, I accompany them to schools in case, you know, some of them feel a little intimidated if they're the only one there and you know, the different District people are with them, but when we go, I make it clear to them when we leave, the schools are gonna do what it need to do and you have to do what you need to do.

And be -- first time I did -- told a -- a group of parents, they look at me sort of cross-eyed, you know. But then when they went through the experience, they understood that children need black -- backup.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Uh-huh.

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: You know, so it's -- 'cause the schools cannot do it alone. They have to -- they have to have backup. That's why I appreciate y'all so much, Dr. Robinson, in terms of the collaborative recognizing what has to be done. (Video playing).

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: (Unintelligible). Presentation then we need to go back.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: It's down at the bottom. You see it at the bottom? To the right. Oh, that side. No. This side.

DR. MARY ANN DUPONT: That's what I wanted to share, uh, with you, we -- when -- remember when I talked about the efficacy model, the reason I demonstrate, uh -- that young man to me, is timeless because he -- that model says smart isn't something that you are. Smart is something that you get. And that's what the children have to understand. You get smart. You have to put forth the work and the -- and so on the confidence, I -- because of time, I just read one of the statements that he made. Remember he said, "I embraced the challenge of several advanced placement courses." Under effective effort, remember he said, "I stayed up until the wee hours" of the night, "of the morning completing my assignments." And then under development, he mentioned he got over $1 million in scholarships. And I was fortunate several years ago to meet one young man who put the, uh, down payment on his first house with scholarship money that he earned. And those -- and that's what you wanna instill in your children.

If you put that particular model in them so they know that smart isn't something that I am. Smart is something that I get. I get smart by working hard. You have to create that environment to make that happen for them and you look at the adversities that he had. You know, he could have easily given up and he did not give up. And so with me, when I meet with my parents, that's what I had to understand. I have my own definitions about things that there's a difference between excuse and a reason. Now if you have a reason you could not, say, make it to the meeting tonight, maybe transportation or whatever, we work that out. We can take care of that. However, if you want an excuse, I can't deal with the excuses, but the reason. So that's what when I work with the parents. And so now we'll go with, uh, Dr. Robinson unless you have any questions. But the key thing is just have children understand that smart isn't something that I just am. Smart is something that I get. And I get smart by working hard, putting forth effective effort.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Thank you. Did you all have any questions for

Dr. Dupont? All right. We'll go on to Dr. Robinson.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Thank you. So each of you (mic cut out) has heard this from me before and so my request is that you consider as part of this partnership, reactivating your Education Advisory Board, creating, um, and education foundation. Because simply put, we have to invest more -- uh-oh. What's going on now? (Mic cutting out). Okay. So we have -- I'm asking you to consider creating the Riviera Beach Education Foundation so you can decide how you want to apply (mic feedback) additional investments, um, in supporting the young people on their -- on their path.

Um, there's a awful lot of attacks on public education. Um, and there's no expectation that funding is going to be increasing. Um, so there -- okay. There's -- we talk about equity and so part of equity is putting the resources where they're most needed and I hope that you will join me and add your voice to mine in terms of making that a reality. Um, I'm gonna ask you to, um, consider funding and hiring an education liaison. The model, um, is in the City of Del Ray Beach. They have a full-time education liaison for many years. Maybe it's part-time, but just somebody who could be in the schools and communicating, um, with you with a specific focus on the Riviera Beach schools. I'm gonna ask you to consider adopting -- having each councilperson adopt a school. Maybe have lunch there with some degree of regularity. Attend the events there. I'm gonna ask you to consider, um, following the lead of Councilwoman Lanier and have listening sessions with teachers at your adopted schools.

Um, I -- what a bright idea. So many of us remember the day when we were walking home from school and all the neighbors would ask to see your report card. Let's bring that back to Riviera Beach. Right? Maybe the marquee says, Report cards are out. Ask the babies. Okay? Because we have to tell them that we believe this is important and if, um -- if they need a -- assistance, we're there. You know, Dr. Dupont will tell the story about her grandmother who could not read or write but who would sit up with her in the evenings when she was doing her homework in college -- and when she was in college -- and just say, Baby, do you need anything? She couldn't help with her homework but she showed her support for her efforts to get her college degree by being there and asking if she needed anything. So we need to reengage the village, right?

Um, in my own personal thing that I'm gonna ask you to consider -- I was gonna do this privately -- but I -- I really wanna create a system where every student at least elementary and middle school in Riviera Beach, participates in after school activities until at least 6 or 7. That way, we can support them academically. We can make sure that they have, um, mind enhancing activities. We could take them on field trips. We could bring people from different career fields in to expose them. We could have, um, introduction to various -- we could do all kinds of outstanding things in -- in that space, right? Um, and so I'm hoping -- and I'm hoping to, um, to work with you on that.

And before I keep going, I want to acknowledge the principal of Lincoln Elementary has ran from her SAC meeting to join us, Miss Alisha Porter. So -- and then moving on. So petition -- potential partnership activities, um, to join the Riviera Beach pre-k collaborative. So, oh, there's my bullet on the after school. Um, the safe walk to and from school. That's

a big issue, right? Um, a lot of young people who have become affiliated with, um, cliques, tell -- will tell you that they joined their clique, um, to be safe between the bus stop and home. And then also to continue to show the educators that you care 'cause the event on Friday was outstanding.

And now, let's see if I could figure it out. Uh, one more video and then we'll be bringing this presentation to an end. So now as you're watching this, think about the data that we've looked at. Okay. What am I supposed to do to make this big?

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: To the right. To the right.

AUDIENCE: The next one over. Oh, right there.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You're welcome. (Video playing).

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay. Tell me what to do. Thank you. And so -- and so you see I titled this, Now Multiply This By Centuries. Right? So my new definition for equity is educational reparations. I need you to partner with me to make sure that we get the children of Riviera Beach where they need to be. 'Cause the School District is not gonna do it alone. I thank you for your attention and I'm open for any additional questions.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Go ahead.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: I started a education foundation a few years ago and I worked closely with Lincoln and now more recently with Washington Elementary to provide experiences for them, holiday parties and the like. Um, it's just called the Friends of the Riviera Beach Schools. How would the foundation that you would like to see developed differ from that? Um, is it something that you could -- would consider expanding upon or would you like to just create -- scrap that and create something different?

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Well, so I really think this is a conversation for the Council. Um, but since you asked my opinion, I think that should be scrapped and start all over. Um, I think that there's a lot of nuances to making this happen, um, in a way that will really work. I believe that staff has already started accumulating information from other areas about education foundations. Um, so I think that that needs to be studied.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Okay.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: I think the Education Advisory Board, um, is a relatively quick thing to get started. Uh, I intend to attend every meeting. Um, I would hope that that Board would ask for follow-up data such as what you asked for and then we analyze the meaning of that and then determine what do we do to work together, right, um, in order to improve whichever outcome we're looking at.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Can I -- and the other thing I have a question about is we're gonna be starting an after school career awareness program at JFK.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Uh-huh.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: I did not know until today -- until this evening's presentation and I thank you for that -- um, that our kids had other choices at the middle school level. Uh, I was told that, well, if you're -- if you go to public education in Riviera Beach, you're gonna go to JFK. I only recently found out and KaShamba helped me understand that, is some of our kids go to Bear Lakes. I found that out because we gave out backpacks at Stonybrook and as I gave out a backpack, I'd say, Now where are you going? Oh, Bear Lakes. I'm thinking, where's that? What happened? I thought everybody was going to JFK. So in this after school program that we wanna start, we should be thinking about the kid in other middle schools. I hadn't even been aware that they were there.

Should we be replicating that program at other middle schools or should we be busing kids to JFK to take advantage of that?

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: So, all right. So, I think we need to get it right before we start busing people in or replicating.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Okay.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Right? So, um, you know, and thank you for inviting me to the -- your upcoming meeting. I -- when we -- I pushed in at JFK two years ago, um, to, uh, basically bombard the principal with -- with my, um, vision of this extended after school program and -- and they made it work and -- and because the culinary arts teacher would cook dinner for the kids before they left -- because they didn't leave until 7. Right?

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Uh-huh.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Um, there would be, like, 100 to 125 kids there. And so we were able to bring other programs in. So -- but it has to be much more than just this career, um, programming, right? And we can work on that. I --

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Okay.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: -- I'm tell -- I got plans. Now I mean, I could sit down and tell you what I hope to see. I don't think that's appropriate at this moment, um, but -- but, yeah. I'd -- I'd be happy, um, to work on it, uh, significant portion of it would require that Parks and Rec works with us, right? Um, but, yeah. I'm -- I'm happy to -- to work on it.

COUNCILPERSON LANIER: Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Go ahead.

COUNCILPERSON LANIER: I wanted to ask what is your -- what is your definition, uh, expound a little bit on, uh, educational reparations.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay. So I think it's -- well, I use the term reparations because most people understand what reparations is and that's the concept of repaying the debt owed from, um, from the years of enslavement and the denial of opportunity and I think that that applies to education as well, right? So I think that there is -- and actually you could Google a article about -- it's about -- from the, uh, achievement gap educational debt. And it talks about how for example, if I use something simple. Both my parents went to college. Therefore, they set the expectation that I was going to college. Like, I went from kindergarten to 1st grade, I was going from 12th grade to college, right?

They also set the expectation that I was gonna do well in -- in school and they set that expectation not just for me but for my teachers and everybody in the school, right? Now -- and they felt empowered to do that. So if you have a parent who did not go to college, who themselves had a negative experience in formal education, right, then there's a gap there in knowledge and empowerment for them to pass on to their children. That's part of the debt. And I say that that debt applies over centuries, right? It's actually -- if you look at that video and then apply that over centuries, it's amazing the gaps aren't much larger than they are, right? I mean, so -- I mean, there's a whole lot of categories for the educational reparations, right? But -- and -- but let me say this. And because I use the term reparations, um, people might view it as -- as just financial but I mean -- I mean, much, much more than that, right? So the real thing that's gonna get a child, um, engaged in their own education is the caring adult that they, um, want to, um, prove themselves to, right? So -- or some -- some lure for them to be engaged in their own education, right? So my oldest son graduated from Suncoast IB program, not because he wanted to do IB, not because he had this internal motivation for learning, right? It was because I told him, Yeah. Okay. Well, you wanna dribble that basketball, you gonna do IB, right?

So he played varisty four years and he did IB and he knew that I would, like, snatch that uniform off in the middle of the game if I got a bad report, right? And so that's a lure to get him to engage because it's something that he wants. It wasn't education, right? Until he woke up, like, in his junior year and then went, Oh, wait. Maybe I do want to learn, right? But until he got to that point, it was the basketball lure, right? And the -- and for many -- the lure would change, you know, like, every three months. You might have to change your strategy, right? You know, one of my sons struggled with reading most of his academic career but he read for Mr. Moseley [phonetic] in high school. And his -- his reading performance just skyrocketed because he wanted to make Mr. Moseley proud, right? Well, he's a civil engineer now and I'm gonna credit Mr. Moseley and Dr. Crutchfield for that, right?

But -- but because I have -- I have -- I have generations of education in my family, right, and because I know how important it is, I was able -- and because -- I am so very blessed. I was able to create these lures for them, right, or to sit in the principal's office all day long until I got him in the right classroom or whatever. Everybody is not so blessed. And so for some children, for example, the kids who wanna play in the Rec football program, right? Now imagine how much attention they're gonna pay in class if there's a connection between the coach and the English language arts teacher and the English language arts teacher says, I'm gonna tell coach you did such a good job today, right? That's the kind of connection I want us to start making, right? 'Cause we have to make up for this debt

and we have to make up for it in -- in multiple ways. But the most important part is the -- the humanity in it.

But some of that humanity we can't get without an investment of dollars, right? So it's not just throwing more resource, right? If you look at our schools, if you compare the dollars going into each school and then dividing it by the number of students, some of the schools of Riviera Beach have almost twice as many dollars per student going in as some other schools. Okay? It's not dollars, right? It's the debt and the debt is -- is -- is paid through humans, but we gotta pay the humans, right? And we gotta get the kids to engage in their own education. And -- and that's -- I mean, the outstanding teacher is the one who gets you from doing this (indicating) to sitting up, leaning forward and paying attention. That's the outstanding teacher. I don't care what their credentials say. That's the outstanding teacher. Did I make sense?

COUNCILPERSON LAWSON: Madam --

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Yes. Hold on one second. Um, someone has a dark gray Honda Accord in the parking lot and the trunk is open. Dark gray Honda Accord. Um, and also, uh, Mayor Felder is not here tonight because his wife is ill, but he did text me. He wanted me to let everyone know that he wants to adopt JFK as his --

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: I think that gives --

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: -- as the mayor's school. So that one's taken.

COUNCILPERSON LAWSON: (unintelligible) bonus.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Go ahead.

COUNCILPERSON LAWSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: He beat you to the punch.

COUNCILPERSON LAWSON: I thank you for the presentation tonight. Can you give us some recommendations on who you would advise to sit on the foundation board? Uh, we have a resolution that we've actually -- the education foundation, we have a resolution that we passed in previous years, but based on your experience and what you've seen around the Board, who would you recommend to the Board for the Council?

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: The Education Advisory Board?

COUNCILPERSON LAWSON: Advisory Board, yeah.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Yeah. That was --

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: I would like to do that off --

COUNCILPERSON LAWSON: Oh.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: -- record.

COUNCILPERSON LAWSON: Absolutely. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Um, is that -- do you recall Mr. Evans, is that one where each councilperson, um, nominates someone or is it open application? 'Cause I know some of the advisory boards we do, we are allotted a person --

CITY MANAGER EVANS: Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: -- to place on the, um, Board.

COUNCILPERSON LAWSON: Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: And some of them are open.

COUNCILPERSON LAWSON: Um, I reviewed it recently. It's a -- a recommendation from every council member and the mayor, uh, two high school students and I believe a community liaison as well.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Okay. All right. So, um, that will take care of that. And we did reactivate it but we just have not, um, put the applications out and appointed anyone to it. Anyone else have any questions?

COUNCILPERSON MCCOY: Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Go ahead.

COUNCILPERSON MCCOY: So I'm clear, um, Dr. Robinson, what's the correlation between the Advisory Board and the Foundation? Are they two independent boards?

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Well, it depends on how you make it, right? But I would hope that the -- I would hope that the Advisory Board would make recommendations either directly to you or to the Foundation and you on how the Foundation would allocate their monies.

COUNCILPERSON MCCOY: And you said there's a model in a different city?

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: The -- for the education liaison is in Del Ray.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: But in terms of foundations, there are a number of schools like Suncoast, Dwyer. Are there any, um, elementary or middle schools that have foundations, do we know?

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: I think Bak might have a foundation. Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Okay.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Bak has a foundation. Inlet Grove has a foundation. But there's also a Palm Beach County, um, Education Foundation.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Right, right.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: So I'm not aware of other cities that have a education foundation. I would --

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: I've done some research on other cities, not -- not local --

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: -- in Palm Beach County, but there are quite a few of them out there where I did receive some information, um, when we were looking at it before.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Go ahead.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Yeah. I'm no longer on the, uh, Education Foundation, um, but it's now being run by four directors and, um, I think they would welcome an opportunity to sit and speak with you about what they are doing, what their plans are. So --

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Which foundation?

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: The Friends of the Riviera Beach Schools.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Oh, okay.

CHAIR PRO TEM BOTEL: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Are there any other questions or concerns?

CITY MANAGER EVANS: Madam Chair, if I may.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Go ahead.

CITY MANAGER EVANS: Um, Dr. Robinson, has there been any conversations in regards to looking at the school schedule as it relates to seeing the deficiencies or the issues as it relates to the summer, going to more of a year-round program? I -- I don't -- I didn't wanna say that with all the teachers in the room, but -- but I -- I wanted to ask the question. If -- if we see that there is some concern with respect to young folks from kindergarten all the way to the 5th grade, is there an opportunity whereby we, as a City, provide those stopgap measures to maybe you have a reading camp or a science camp as opposed to your traditional type of sports camp. And then the other side of it, have you seen any city look at it, um, at their recreational programming to say, you know, there is scholastic achievement that's tied to you participating in youth basketball. So just like

in high school you have to have a 2.0 or 2.5 GPA.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Uh-huh.

CITY MANAGER EVANS: Is there any communities that are taking that approach to say, you know what, Jonathan, if you're gonna go out there and play sports, you have to perform in the classroom. It's student first, athlete second.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: I'm not aware of cities that have taken that approach. I am aware, for example, some years ago with the City of West Palm Beach in the Rec league for the summer camps and I know because I worked it, is to -- we had the, um, the summer camp counselors get some kind of, uh, brief training on teaching reading skills and then there was a connection with the library so that they brought books, rotating books through the summer camps for the kids. And they had reading time in the summer camps. But I'm not aware of any, um -- any places that have said if you're not performing academically, you can't participate in the Rec league. Um, I don't honestly know how I feel about that. I wanna lure them into -- into performing. Um, and I think we could do that, you know, maybe we say, you know, like, you're on probation or something and next year if you don't have your grades up or something, but --

CITY MANAGER EVANS: Well, uh -- or you can -- to your point incentivizing it that, you know, if you have a certain score on your report card, the program's free for you.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Ah-ha. Ooh.

CITY MANAGER EVANS: Uh, and -- and then --

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Okay.

CITY MANAGER EVANS: -- Mom and Dad say, Okay. Well, you know, you've gotta --

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Right.

CITY MANAGER EVANS: -- we don't wanna spend the $135 to -- those kind of -- so there's probably some things that we can look at.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Yeah. That's fantastic. And just to follow up on the scheduling piece. So, um, Katrina Granger at Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune is looking at putting in a request to make Bethune a Choice school for a year-round school. So --

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Okay. Are there any other questions or comments? Well, I think the -- your requests that you, um, put forth to us are pretty reasonable and I know some of them that have been around for a very long time, um, so I know you're anxious to see a lot of this happen. Um, I know in the past -- we haven't done it in several years now -- where we used to have an academic camp for the middle school students. Um, and the City did fund that. Um, over time, it kind of faded out but maybe that's something that we can, um, take a look at from what was done in the past. That provided that, um, safe place for the middle school students who tend to not be

enrolled in any type of summer camp. Um, so there are a number of things that we can look at and I -- I'm sure we will all adopt a school. I know many of us do already provide some community benefits, monies, to a lot of the schools so we've already kind of got that going. Um, and -- and I think they benefit pretty well from that.

Um, I definitely want to thank everyone for coming out. I know how difficult it is to have to go from one place to the next. Just think, I'll still be here. You get to go home. I'll still be sitting here. But, um, definitely appreciate it and -- and wanna -- want you all to know, we really are making education in Riviera Beach a priority on the City side because we know if we don't -- we don't contribute now, we will have to deal with those kids later on in, you know, whether it's our legal system, um, and that's one of the things we wanna try to make sure that we can, um, prevent. Um, if there are no other questions or comments from the Board, Miss -- Dr. Robinson, did you have anything else you wanted to add?

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Well, since I have the opportunity and the principals are here let me just say to the elementary principals that I received your request that the elementary schools of Riviera Beach that their 5th graders going to Washington, make sure they go the National Museum of African American History and Culture. So I understand that's a schedule -- scheduling issue so, um, so just please, schedule it? Okay. But thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Thank you.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: I am really, really looking forward to this.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: We are, too. We are, too. I'm glad we were able to have this workshop.

DR. DEBRA ROBINSON: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER-ANDERSON: Okay. If there are no other questions or comments, we'll adjourn for about five minutes, well, 7:40 -- do 7:45 and then we'll come back for our budget workshop. Stand adjourned.

APPROVED:

RONNIE L. FELDER
MAYOR

KASHAMBA MILLER-ANDERSON
CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

CLAUDENE L. ANTHONY
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CITY CLERK

JULIA A. BOTEL, Ed.D
CHAIR PRO TEM

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DATE APPROVED: SEPTEMBER 18, 2019