

**CITY OF TEMPLE TERRACE, FLORIDA
SCHOOL SUPPORT COMMITTEE
REPORT OF MEETING**

**Monday, June 22, 2009
Conference Room – City Hall
5:00 p.m.**

The Temple Terrace School Support Committee met on Monday, June 22, 2009, in the Council Conference Room at City Hall.

PRESENT WERE: School Support Members Joseph A. Affronti, Jr., Susan Grzybowski, Cynthia Mohler, Gwen S. Mora, and Jennifer Penoyer. **ABSENT WERE:** School Support Members Abdelelah Mostafa and Inglis Wiley.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Legislative Secretary Sobeida LeBlanc, Dr. Jack R. Lamb, and Judi Duff.

The meeting was called to order at 5:08 p.m. by School Support Member Mora.

On the request of School Support Member Mora, the Committee Members introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Upon motion of School Support Member Grzybowski, seconded by School Support Member Affronti, and unanimously carried, the **REPORT** of the January 26, 2009, meeting was **APPROVED**.

A. Persons Wishing to be Heard:

Judi Duff, 6104 Grape Fern Court, introduced herself as Media Specialist at the Florida College Academy on Temple Terrace Highway. She stated her school is interested in participating in the Temple Terrace Reads event this year and is in attendance this evening to obtain information.

School Support Member Mora reported that if the Fire Department hosts their annual open house event, it will take place on Saturday, October 10th. She informed the Committee she is one of the contact persons for the Temple Terrace Reads event, in addition to the Media Specialists at Lewis and Temple Terrace Elementary Schools.

Ms. Duff stated she has heard of the School Support Committee as a parent/citizen and questioned what role, if any, the private schools in the community have on this Committee. In terms of the grants, School Support Member Mora responded they are only awarded to the public schools because it is public tax dollars. As a whole, she continued, the Committee supports all the schools in the community and would like to see more people involved. She encouraged Ms. Duff to contact the Committee should her school ever have anything going on that needs the support of the community.

Ms. Duff requested to be informed on what the Committee is doing. School Support Member Mora provided Ms. Duff with her email address for questions related to Temple Terrace Reads. The Legislative Secretary offered to add Ms. Duff to the Committee's agenda/minutes email listing.

Dr. Lamb stated the previous Governor's grading system gave the schools and principals a tough job. King High School was one of the schools listed in the newspaper as receiving a lower grade, primarily, because of the lower quartile students; one or two students can make that difference, he explained.

Dr. Lamb continued there was an excellent article written in the newspaper about King High School doing better than any other high school in the District, regarding the number of students being admitted to top colleges in the country and having received \$9.5 million worth of scholarships for their student body. He said it is unfortunate how school grades fluctuate, but he is hopeful that Governor Crist will make some changes to make it more equitable, while still being held accountable.

Dr. Lamb stated the District is exceedingly proud of Temple Terrace Elementary School, which was cited by the Commissioner for the grades they received this last year; everyone is working very hard. He reported the District is on a four-day work week this summer due to resource cutbacks; they are closed on Fridays, thereby saving large amounts of money in utilities.

School Support Member Mora agreed it was very distressful to find out that King High School's grade had dropped to a "D". She added it is unfortunate how these grades hurt a school's image. School Support Member Affronti opined that judging a school on one grade is like judging a family on one experience; it is a very unfair measure.

Dr. Lamb reported the District III Committee will be holding their first meeting in late September or early October at Riverhills Elementary School.

School Support Member Mora stated she wishes the schools would invite their School Support Committee Liaison to their different functions, so they would be better informed as to what is going on at the schools. Dr. Lamb said he would pass on the suggestion to Mr. Otero.

B. Unfinished Business:

None.

C. New Business:

1. Election of Committee Chair:

School Support Member Mora informed the Committee that everyone is eligible to run for Chair, and she asked if anyone was interested in the position. School Support Member Mohler expressed interest in furthering her responsibilities on the Committee.

Upon **MOTION** of School Support Member Affronti, seconded by School Support Member Grzybowski, Cynthia Mohler was elected Chairman of the School Support Committee. Vote on the motion: School Support Members Affronti, Grzybowski, Mohler, Mora, and Penoyer voted "aye", no "nay." School Support Members Mostafa and Wiley were ABSENT and did not vote.

Prior to turning the meeting over to Chairman Mohler, School Support Member Mora advised the Committee Members that the position of Vice-Chair should not be taken lightly, as that position takes over the responsibilities of the Chairman should anything happen to her, i.e. resigns, moves away, etc.

2. Election of Committee Vice-Chair:

School Support Member Affronti offered to take on the responsibility of Vice-Chair as long as he is guided through the process since this is only his second meeting.

Upon **MOTION** of School Support Member Mora, seconded by School Support Member Grzybowski, Joseph Affronti, Jr. was elected Vice-Chairman of the School Support Committee. Vote on the motion: Chairman Mohler and School Support Members Affronti, Grzybowski, Mora, and Penoyer voted "aye", no "nay." School Support Members Mostafa and Wiley were ABSENT and did not vote.

School Support Member Mora suggested they skip to Items #4 and #5 on the agenda before proceeding with the grant evaluations, to which the Committee Members agreed.

4. School Liaison Assignments:

Chairman Mohler asked everyone's school preference. After some discussion, the Committee agreed on the following:

- Greco Middle School - Joseph Affronti
- King High School/I.B. - Gwen Mora
- Lewis Elementary School - Inglis Wiley
- Tampa Bay Tech School - Abdelelah Mostafa and Joseph Affronti
- Temple Terrace Elementary School - Jennifer Penoyer
- Riverhills Elementary School - Susan Grzybowski
- Terrace Community Middle School - Cynthia Mohler

5. Meeting Frequency:

Chairman Mohler stated she spoke to the City Manager's Administrative Assistant, Cathy Tack, who suggested the Committee meet quarterly. School Support Member Mora stated that grants are due September 1st; therefore, if they don't meet in August they cannot review the grants together, as a group. After some discussion, the Committee agreed to meet as needed; therefore, they will meet again at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24th, and Monday, September 28th.

In response to a question by one of the new members, School Support Member Mora explained the rationale behind the two grant cycles.

3. 2008-09 School Grant Evaluations:

Chairman Mohler commented she liked the evaluations that included pictures. School Support Member Affronti questioned whether the Committee has ever seen any of the programs implemented with grant funds. School Support Member Mora explained the Committee once suggested that if something had great results they should be able to present the idea to another school for implementation. The Committee has never done that before, she said, and she agreed it is a great suggestion.

School Support Member Grzybowski asked why some of the evaluations have not yet been implemented. School Support Member Mora agreed there were quite a few evaluations showing all they have done is order, but explained sometimes the schools won't allow the teachers to order things until the funds are available, which tends to postpone things. Also, she said, sometimes the companies place items on backorder. Dr. Lamb added another factor is that schools have a deadline to meet in terms of ordering.

The Committee briefly discussed the idea of going out to the schools to get a better understanding of what works best for the teachers in terms of the grant cycles. School Support Member Mora explained the Committee recently adjusted the grant cycles timeline in accordance with the schools' needs. She further explained that every time they make changes they have to first get it approved by the City Council. She suggested the Committee first talk with the school principals, get their input, and then revisit the topic at a future meeting.

In response to a question about grant applications, School Support Member Mora stated in the past she has used well-written grant applications, whited-out certain information, copied them, and used them as samples of a format the schools could follow. She suggested Chairman Mohler contact Cathy Tack and request copies of recent applications that scored high to use as a format.

School Support Member Mora expressed concern over something that happened with the last batch of grant applications; it does not state anywhere in the guidelines that the school principal must sign the grant application. She explained she was very disturbed by that because she feels that the principals should always be aware of programs and funding coming into the school, for which they are responsible. She stated this was brought to her attention by a principal when they found a grant that was not signed by the principal and the Committee would not score it; after all that happened and the grants were scored, she continued, they found out that a full set of grants from a school had not been signed by the principal.

School Support Member Mora explained the principal was not happy when she took all the grants back to the school to get them signed, but she assured the principal the Committee would address this issue. She suggested Application Process #2 should include "all grants must be signed by the school administrator/principal". Dr. Lamb agreed that should be included in the application process.

Upon **MOTION** of School Support Member Mora, seconded by School Support Member Affronti, the Committee voted to **APPROVE** adding the sentence "all grants must be signed by the school principal" to Application Process #2. Vote on the motion: Chairman Mohler and School Support Members Affronti, Grzybowski, Mora, and Penoyer voted "aye", no "nay." School Support Members Mostafa and Wiley were ABSENT and did not vote.

School Support Member Mora informed the Committee the above request will have to officially go before the City Council for approval; she explained the process. School Support Member Grzybowski requested a copy of the updated School Improvement Grant Program Guideline be sent to the Committee Members as soon as the change takes place.

School Support Member Penoyer asked why there is an evaluation form and not an application form. School Support Member Mora explained the program was structured to be loose enough to give teachers the freedom to be creative in terms of how they wanted to present their grant application. At that time, they would only receive about 15 applications, whereas now, they are receiving 40 applications and reading all of them has become overwhelming; this could be something this Committee may want to look at and consider implementing in the future, she said.

The Committee briefly discussed several grant applications. School Support Member Mora expressed disappointment on several evaluations, in which the data was not specific or concrete. School Support Member Grzybowski stated she tries to put herself in a teacher's position and has questioned herself how she would quantify some of the results or how she would make more substance from a subjective discussion. The Committee needs stronger evidence on the evaluations, if they are to pass the information on to other schools, she added. Chairman Mohler responded everything should be "standards" based. Dr. Lamb added there needs to be some structure added to the evaluations.

School Support Member Mora explained it all goes back to the objectives on the grant; there is criteria called "evaluations" and the teachers are supposed to state how they are going to evaluate their grant. School Support Member Affronti suggested the Committee should be provided with copies of the original grant with the evaluations; he was not part of the Committee when these grants were approved; therefore, he has never seen them.

After further discussion, and upon **MOTION** of School Support Member Affronti, seconded by School Support Member Grzybowski, the Committee voted to **APPROVE** adding the underlined words to Application Process #2, thereby now reading "Applications shall include the project's description, the sponsoring person or organization, a detailed cost estimate, the complete anticipated funding source, the number of students who will benefit or participate in the project, the method of evaluation, and any other information necessary to fully describe the project's intent and its eligibility under the grant program". Vote on the motion: Chairman Mohler and School Support Members Affronti, Grzybowski, Mora, and Penoyer voted "aye", no "nay." School Support Members Mostafa and Wiley were ABSENT and did not vote.

Chairman Mohler said she would contact Cathy Tack to discuss and clarify the requested changes.

School Support Member Mora concurred with the idea of having copies of the applications along with the evaluations. She added the City keeps all the grants once they are scored and awarded; therefore, she does not foresee an issue with that, except that it may get too expensive to mail.

D. Reports:

None.

E. Announcements:

None.

F. Adjournment:

There being no further business to consider, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

Sobeida LeBlanc
Legislative Secretary