

# School Community Relations Committee (SCRC) Meeting

## Minutes

**Date:** April 17, 2026

**Time:** 8:37 AM

**Location:** Coral Gables- Police and Fire Building – 2151 Salzedo Street

### A. CALL TO ORDER

### B. ROLL CALL

- Winnie Chang
- Cecilia Slesnick- absent
- Sandy Dimitris- **No longer a Board Member**
- Joshua Goodman
- Mary Palacio-Pike-excused
- Sam Joseph
- Ana Lam
- Miguel Vias

### Guest:

- Estelle Lockhart

Jeff Kurzner, a new board member, introduced himself to the board members. Jeff was Commissioner Lara's appointee.

All board members along with Ms. Lockhart also introduced themselves.

Jeff was briefed by some of the items the members have accomplished.

### C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – March 13, 2026

All in favor of approving Minutes for meeting held on March 13, 2026.

### D. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments provided by Marlene Hernandez via Zoom, Mari Tere Rojas's Chief of Staff- Items referenced below are those proffered by Chair Rojas during April:

- **B-2** - Resolution 26021 of the School Board of Miami-Dade County recognizing - Amigos for Kids. Organization was founded in 1991 is a trusted and long-standing nonprofit organization dedicated to the prevention of child abuse and neglect by strengthening families, educating communities, and empowering children to thrive. For more than three decades, Amigos for Kids has served as a pillar of support for the Miami-Dade County, providing comprehensive, evidence informed programs that uplift vulnerable families, promote healthy child development, and create pathways to opportunity.

- **H-2** – Matters related to the Comprehensive integrity-based selection and Appointment Process for the Next Superintendent of Schools discussed at the Scheduled School Board Workshop Tuesday, April 14, 2026.
- **H3-** Endorsement of May 1, 2026 as School Lunch Hero Day in Miami-Dade County Public School. This is a celebration to show our appreciation to the professionals who make Meals for America students, and this team includes the specialists and managers who develop and implement rigorous nutritional standards, as well as a committed cafeteria staff who ensures that every student is served each day in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.
- **H-4-** Endorsement of May 5, 2026 as National Teacher, and May 4 thru May 8, 2026, as Teacher Appreciation Week in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Teacher Appreciation Week provides an important opportunity to highlight for the Miami-Dade County community the significant contribution, since teachers make the lives of their students.
- **H-5** – Endorsement of May 5, 2026; as Mental Health Awareness Month. May 7, 2026, as National Children’s Mental Awareness Day in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. MDCPA joins mental health community to reaffirm the commitment to building and understanding of mental illness and ensuring those who are struggling to know that they are never, ever alone.
- Estelle Lockhardt, Advocacy Chair at Ponce Middle School’s PTA provided comments.

**Miami-Dade superintendent Search- comments provided by Board Member Goodman:**

- Provided a brief synopsis on the meeting and further mentioned that on April 22 the public will have an opportunity to weigh in on this matter.
- Board member Joseph indicated that typically the public has never been involved with the hiring of a superintendent in Miami-Dade County. This is an internal matter.
- It is important that parents remain active in voicing their thoughts for the benefit of the children.

**E. NEW BUSINESS**

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

- Discussion regarding the Teacher Appreciation week/rookie Teacher of the Week on May 5- this will be coordinated through the district. Staff will request at 9:30 am time certain.

## **E-2 Disability Board Recap**

- Board member Palacio-Pike was unable to attend the SCRC meeting. Board member Joseph expressed the importance of giving recognition to the outstanding teachers, especially those teachers who specialize in children with disabilities, including the facilities personnel, janitors etc. Even consider the recognition of the paraprofessionals.
- Board member Lam commented on her experience of attending the Autism Caravan and how much the children enjoyed this event. This event featured a procession of decorated vehicles starting at North Miami Police Department and ends at Crystal Academy.

## **E-3 2026 Coral Gables Family Literacy Festival Planning Update**

- Board member Joseph provides updates. Vendor applications were distributed. Approximately 40 to 55 vendors are expected to participate.
- Volunteer opportunities at the festival, free books, great day to be out with the family.
- It is crucial to notify as many families as possible to attend the festival.

## **E-4 Literacy Laureates & Education Awards Event Planning Update**

- May 16 at 11:00 am thru noon at the Youth Center- kick off.
- Additional schedules were discussed.
- Set up and additional details were discussed.
- Liaison Granell commented that it would be a good idea for Chair Mari Tere-Rojas attend the event and allow for queries parents might have.

## **F. OLD BUSINESS**

### **F-1- Coral Gables K-12 Public School Guide**

Martha Pantin, Communications and Public Affairs Director was invited to meeting and provided comments.

- Ms. Pantin's provided insights as to what her department can do on the city's webpage. She made it clear that any information posted must be provided by the respective schools. Further details were discussed.
- Ms. Lockhart provided comments related to the current draft School Guide; such Guide would be useful especially to those families contemplating moving to Coral Gables, which can provide an insight into the schools.
- The SCRC board members are asking Communications to brand the School Guide for the city.
- Further details were discussed.

**F-2- Little Libraries Service Project Update – provided by Sam Joseph**

- Little Libraries will be represented in all 11 schools; list will change though.
- Additional ideas were provided by Chairperson Chang in relation to the Little Libraries.
- Board member Joseph's daughter will be working pre-registration for the elections on May 16.

**G. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Next meeting: May 8, 2026.

Meeting adjourned at: 10:10 am