ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & DIVERSITY COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT
SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SCHOOL BOARD REPORT

SEPTEMBER 12, 2023
Regular School Board Meeting

Good morning Superintendent Licata, Chair Alhadeff, Board Members, and staff. My name is Marie Compas, Small Business Advisory Committee member, appointed by Board Member Rupert. The Small Business Advisory Committee, also known as SBAC, is managed by the Economic Development & Diversity Compliance Department.

The committee serves, in partnership with the District, to help grow the economic base of Broward County for the benefit of our students, families and the business community.

At our August 28th SBAC meeting, we held a preliminary discussion regarding our goals and objectives for this fiscal year. We talked about some of the previously adopted SBAC goals, including Affirmative Procurement Initiatives for Commodities and the #1 goal of increasing spend with small, minority, and women-owned firms.

In the past, we have reviewed solicitations and revised restrictive language. We are planning to incorporate the practice of reviewing solicitation language for additional scope opportunities for small businesses.

In preparation for our next meeting, we will do a thorough review of previous SBAC goals, send suggestions for new or revised goals, and work to develop more specific objectives to increase participation and District diversity commodity spend.

At the August meeting, the Task Assigned EDDC Officer Jasmine Jones provided a Disparity Study update. She reported that the consultant, Keen Independent Research has analyzed BCPS Procurement & EDDC data and conducted in-depth interviews with small businesses and regional trade organizations.

EDDC is in the process of planning a community outreach event to share information and obtain feedback that will be incorporated in the Disparity Study. EDDC is also preparing for a School Board Workshop Item to present the Disparity Study in October 2023.

Ms. Jones also reported that EDDC is discussing with Executive Leadership changes for the Board agenda to reflect, at a glance, the respective EDDC assigned API, prime S/S/S/M/WBE commitment and participation attainment, as applicable.

To assist in increasing S/S/M/WBE participation, we were excited to learn how to access the current list of District Contracts to assist firms with potential forecasting of opportunities. The EDDC Marketing Team will disseminate the list throughout the Tri-County and will include diverse trade organizations, community stakeholders, parents, and students.

In closing, Mr. Brian Farrell, SBAC member and owner of Phone and Pad Warehouse, shared his experience of being awarded a BCPS Continuing Contract, and trying to perform work under the contract. He attributes part of the delay to the misconception of government agencies, in general, that small businesses cannot do the work, despite a successful track record with other agencies. Ms. Jones has since followed up with him, Executive Leadership and the user department.

As a way of engaging all District and school-based staff with purchasing power, Brian mentioned the Dade County Public Schools awards program that recognizes staff as small business advocates, for those who have achieved their small business spend goals. He added that meeting small business spend goals is a part of staff evaluations in Dade Schools, and fellow SBAC members agree with the idea of making staff accountable by linking performance evaluations to the department's S/S/M/WBE spend Goals.

Thank you so much for your time.