ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & DIVERSITY COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT
SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SCHOOL BOARD REPORT
NOVEMBER 9, 2022
Regular School Board Meeting

Good morning, Superintendent Cartwright, Chair Alston, Board Members, and staff. My name is Brian Farrell, and I am an At-Large Member of the Small Business Advisory Committee, also known as SBAC, managed by the Economic Development & Diversity Compliance Department. My role as an at-large member is to be a voice for small, local suppliers in the commodities space.

At the October 27th meeting, we welcomed our newest and final appointee, Ms. Marie Compas, appointed by Board Member Rupert. Marie jumped right in, and under the umbrella of Board Member Communication, reported Board Member Rupert's interest in an update on Disparity Study implementation.

In response, Mr. Ballou shared that to date, EDDC has executed all Board approved recommendations from the 2015 Disparity Study. He also informed us the contract for a Disparity Study update was approaching, and it's actually **Item OO-25** on today's agenda. Therefore, with Board approval today, the Disparity Study update will occur from November 2022 – November 2023. As a committee, we collectively support this contract and look forward to engaging in the process to assess the District's progress and carve a path forward to greater diversity and inclusion in District procurements across all business categories.

The Disparity Study update was also one of two key topics our Chair, Carolyn Jones, discussed with Superintendent Cartwright at the Annual Chair's meeting on Oct. 14th. The other key item shared with Superintendent Cartwright was EDDC's staffing resources allocation. We all look forward to a future review of the department's overall staffing and resource plan to advance necessary economic change for local businesses in the marketplace.

We continued the meeting with a granular conversation on the District's diversity spend. Robert reported the FY22 aggregate diversity spend, with certified prime contractors, was $230M (or 16%) of $1.49 billion. That was across all categories. In the governmental sector, the normal range is 15% – 20%.

In Construction, the norm is 20% – 25%, and most agencies land below 20%. Last fiscal year, BCPS achieved 22% in Construction spend, including SMART projects, and commodities spend was approximately 8%.

Based on the data, EDDC is focused on finding and doing more business with African American contractors, and Robert appealed to us to recommend any to him to connect with. SBAC remains committed to rolling up our sleeves with emphasis on the following objectives:

1. To increase the commodities spend to the 20% level.
2. To make BCPS a more compelling place to do business for African American firms that want to do business with Broward Schools.

EDDC will tap industry experts, respectively, because they know the norms, roadblocks, and appropriate percentages. EDDC also plans to create a review panel for the *Affirmative Procurement Initiative (API)* review process with the aim to apply more aggressive percentage goals on contracts, and to review for restrictive language.

Furthermore, Mr. Ballou asked us to notify him, immediately, if we see restrictive language in a bid. At which point, the process will pause, and an addendum will be issued.

Robert assured us that Procurement & Warehousing Services is 100% engaged, and EDDC works closely with each Purchasing Agent in the API Assignment process.,

In the sub-contractor space, EDDC is very robust with 29% goals on all construction contracts. SBAC highly anticipates reviewing the data on subcontracting spend from the B2G system. With all contracts monitored electronically through the system, the team has a high level of visibility on contracts, making compliance more efficient and resolution of payment issues more prompt.

Speaking of increasing E/S/M/WBE firms, this week, EDDC launched the *B2Gnow Reciprocal Certification*. The process is paperless and fast. And the system provides access to Dade and Palm Beach schools' certified supplier list. EDDC will invite them to get certified and do business with Broward Schools. As a group, we are excited about the progress and prospects for the Supplier Diversity Outreach Program since EDDC was established as a department.

In closing, we will review the new Policy 1070 – District Committees & Their Membership, and create new Bylaws accordingly. Also, we applaud BCPS certified firm *The Blue Tree Café* on the grand opening of its restaurant located at 612 NW 9th Ave. in Fort Lauderdale, and for an amazing feature story on *Deco Drive* recently. And by the way, Chef Sharon attended Sheridan Technical College.

Thank you for your time.