

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Tuesday, August 23, 2016**

**2:00 pm**

**Conference Room D & E**

**MINUTES**

**Councilor Abbott, Committee Chair  
Councilor Parker & Councilor Rafferty, Committee Members**

**Councilor(s) Present: Abbott, Lundy, Roberson**

**I. Call to Order**

Councilor Abbott called the meeting to order.

**II. Approval of Minutes - July 26, 2016**

**Action Taken:**

**Councilor Roberson: Moved to Approve.**

**Councilor Abbott: Seconded.**

**III. Educational Update from Dr. Gacutan with Birmingham Public Schools**

**Action Taken:**

**No Action – Information Only**

1. **Do you feel the Education Committee meeting held on yesterday with Superintendent Dr. G was a great start to understanding the direction of Birmingham City Schools and what their immediate needs are? If yes, please explain.**

I was very encouraged by our meeting with Dr. G and Dr. Sullivan because our primary goal right now is to increase communications and instill a stronger partnership between the City Council and the Board of Education. We are starting at ground zero. Although it appears to be an easy task we have to engage everyone in order to have an impact, and that is not quite as easy. Meeting our new contact person at the BOE, Chanda Temple, was encouraging because now we have a single point of contact for our information requests. Dr. G, provided a snapshot of where they are regarding their Strategic Plan updates, their new Reading Initiative and their ongoing financial challenges. In addition, we were asked to help stress the need for students to enroll NOW and not after Labor Day.

2. **With the after-school programs resuming this school year, what steps can the Birmingham City Council take to ensure they will continue?**

Obviously, in order to ensure that after-school care continues, we have to continue to provide funding assistance, but we need to go further. It would be a very good idea to meet with Mayor Bell and come up with a 3-5 year plan to provide additional funding for our city schools and to ramp up our support over time. Every year we are faced with far more needs than funds and we have to prioritize, but Birmingham's schools are absolutely critical to making our city a place where people want to live. Investment in our schools can have an enormous payoff. There are three areas that newcomers to a city are concerned about: education, housing, and crime. Therefore, we must work to have an excellent education system.

**MINUTES**

**3. Any additional thoughts, comments or suggestions.**

In order for the City of Birmingham to achieve major improvements in educational outcomes, it's going to take everyone – city government, the BOE, the business community, and the community at large (even those of us with no school-age children) – to get behind the school system and push. Everyone can play a role; but for the City Council, the single most important thing to do is to be engaged and involved. That will require communication, commitment, and action. We can no longer afford to sit on the sidelines.

**IV. Old Business**  
None

**V. New Business**  
None

**VI. Adjournment**