

# Children, Education and Community in Key Biscayne

A message from the Key Biscayne High School Steering Group

Recently child-development professionals have been rethinking their relationship to each other in the pursuit of raising the whole child. Although their opinions may present slight variations they agree, to do it well, it does take more than parents and schools effort. It takes a whole community to raise our children, and children to raise a sustainable village.

Today's globally connected and competitive world requires an education well beyond academic excellence. It entails other complements that will allow our children to exercise leadership and civic engagement that can only be put into effect within the context of a mentoring community.

However, we have failed to provide our estimated 3,000 children of our village with the opportunity to attend secondary school within their community at some of the most crucial years of their educational and social development. We are a village of international representation and education which chooses to force our high school student out of their community to obtain an education.

The ensuing result is either an economic hit to the family forced to pay tuition to a private academy. Or the child takes an academic hit by accepting a below average to fair public education in what is typically at minimum a 25 mile round trip daily voyage to what may be a sub-standard learning environment. Not only academic performance is impacted but also the social development of our children enduring an education outside of the community they live in.

We then expect these kids to magically become community-minded residents and to exhibit positive, nurturing responsible behavior. Furthermore, we expect them to re-enter the community at a later age as leaders of our village and represent our future economy and neighborhoods. How about local economy? Certainly, it is also our expectation that these families patronize our local businesses -while they potentially spend the majority if not all of their day off the Key. For an isolated island bordering one of the largest and most cosmopolitan cities in the country, sending our own retail business away from the village is cause to wonder from what school of

economics have we been educated?

If we turn our backs on our kids in our homes, can we expect them to raise themselves well? Does this model work with our businesses? Why then have we convinced ourselves that it will work with the education of our children?

For our future and for theirs, this village needs to raise civic minded and engaged leaders so they can continue to raise and sustain Key Biscayne for generations to come. If we continue to turn our backs as they receive their education, we need to accept that when these kids do become doctors, fire fighters, politicians, chefs, hoteliers, coaches, teachers, artists, entrepreneurs, home and business owners, they will take their talents and investments to a community that has invested in them.

Let's work together, building bridges among generations and points of view, to address this opportunity and enhance the quality of life of our entire community.

Key Biscayne High School,  
Steering Group