

Education
Joseph H. Mathos, Deputy Superintendent

SUBJECT: REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE DISTRICT TO PARTICIPATE IN A VALIDATION STUDY OF READ 180 AT TWO MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN COOPERATION WITH THE COUNCIL OF GREAT CITY SCHOOLS, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY, AND SCHOLASTIC, INC.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS: II - STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT/PREPARATION FOR POST SECONDARY EXPERIENCES
VI - EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
VIII - PROFESSIONAL STAFF AND PRACTICES
IX - COMMUNITY/HOME/PARENT/SCHOOL/ BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS**

Over the past four years, 4,000 middle school students in Orange County, Florida, have used intervention-reading strategies designed to improve student literacy. These materials were co-developed by district staff and the faculty of the Peabody Learning Laboratory at Vanderbilt University. The students involved in the Orange County Literacy Project demonstrated substantial reading gains in both the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) and the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test.

Based on the success of the project in Orange County, Scholastic, Inc., has enhanced the product. In addition, they have entered into a cooperative agreement with the Council of Great City Schools, and Vanderbilt University to pilot Read 180 in two middle schools in each of the following districts: Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, San Francisco, and Miami-Dade. Read 180 will provide additional support for the Comprehensive Reading Plan's middle school strategies.

The districts will also participate in a two-year validation study conducted by an independent research team selected by the Council of Great City Schools, Scholastic, Inc., Vanderbilt University, and research staff from the districts. Staff from the Office of Management and Accountability will participate in the design of the validation study and the selection of the research team.

As part of the Read 180 pilot, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) will receive:

- four full packages of Read 180 software, as well as substantial print materials including books and audio tapes, all of which are Lexiled, to be used in two middle schools where there are significant numbers of low achieving students; and
- staff training and ongoing support for administrators and teachers at the two selected schools.

The two middle schools will be selected based upon the following criteria:

- administration and faculty interest as demonstrated by the school completing a Request for Proposal; and
- large number of students in greatest need as determined by standardized test results.

The cost to the district will be for travel to the training session held in Orlando for a maximum of four teachers and two administrators at a cost not to exceed \$10,000. The model used so successfully in Orange County Public Schools was a 90-minute instructional block with a maximum of 20 students per block thereby decreasing the teacher/pupil ratio. Therefore, the two selected schools will need to use discretionary, Title I, or another funding source to cover the cost of the reduced teacher/student ratio.

The appropriation for this item is included in the 1998-99 Adopted Budget under Program 8600, Location 9629, Object 5331, Function 5100 and in the existing budget of the two selected schools.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to participate in a two year validation study of Read 180 at two middle schools in cooperation with the Council of Great City Schools, Vanderbilt University, and Scholastic, Inc.

The appropriation for this item is included in the 1998-99 Adopted Budget.

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