

Education
Joseph H. Mathos, Deputy Superintendent

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY'S HOLISTIC EDUCATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF RECREATIONAL THERAPY IN SCHOOL (H.E.A.R.T.S.) PROJECT TO PROVIDE SPECIALLY TRAINED RECREATIONAL THERAPISTS TO WORK WITH MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, DECEMBER 9, 1999 THROUGH JUNE 14, 2000

STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS:

- I - EARLY INTERVENTION**
- II - STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT/PREPARATION FOR POST SECONDARY EXPERIENCES**
- V - MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION**
- VI - EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**
- VIII - PROFESSIONAL STAFF AND PRACTICES**
- IX - COMMUNITY/HOME/PARENT/SCHOOL/ BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS**

Florida International University has expressed an interest to assist with the needs of students with disabilities in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools through the Holistic Education for the Advancement of Recreational Therapy in School (H.E.A.R.T.S.) Project.

The H.E.A.R.T.S. Project was developed by Florida International University to train twelve bachelor level recreational therapy students per year to respond to the unique needs of students with disabilities in urban, multicultural settings in South Florida. The project is specifically designed to provide a cadre of specially trained recreational therapists to work within the public school environment to enhance educational objectives and skills. The H.E.A.R.T.S. project was developed as a means to bridge the gap between professional preparation and service provision by providing the training in concert with the public schools.

The proposed recreational therapy interventions for students with disabilities provide avenues for the development of social skills, positive self-esteem, motor skills, emotional growth and personal strength. The provision of recreational and leisure skill interventions further affords students with disabilities the opportunity to participate in the typical life experiences enjoyed by their peers.

The H.E.A.R.T.S. project is funded through a federal grant awarded to Florida International University through the Department of Education. The Department of Education will fund recreational therapy students by providing both tuition and stipends for their provision of recreational therapy services to students with disabilities within the public school system.

No local funds are required.

RECOMMENDED:

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to enter into a cooperative agreement with Florida International University's Holistic Education for the Advancement of Recreational Therapy in School (H.E.A.R.T.S.) Project, to provide specially trained recreational therapists to work with Miami-Dade County Public Schools students with disabilities, December 9, 1999 through June 14, 2000.

No local funds are required.