

Education
Joseph H. Mathos, Deputy Superintendent

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY TO COVER THE COST OF TUITION FOR UP TO 100 TEACHERS CURRENTLY PARTICIPATING IN THE PROJECT READS MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM, AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$164,450, FROM MAY 8, 2000 THROUGH AUGUST 30, 2001

The Comprehensive Reading Plan, as approved by the School Board at its April 14, 1998, meeting, includes funding for selected elementary teachers to participate in a master's degree in reading education. The **READS (Reading to Energize and Accelerate Developmental Strategies)** master's degree program was specially designed in collaboration with Florida International University (FIU) and the United Teachers of Dade (UTD) for elementary Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) teachers.

Three cohorts of teachers were selected to participate in the program. Cohort I graduated in May 1999, Cohort II will finish in August 2000, and Cohort III in August 2001. The contractual agreement will cover the cost of tuition and allow all teachers in either Cohort II or III to complete the program.

The program appears to be very successful based on participating teacher reactions and almost 100 percent retention. The success of the program is also formally being evaluated by the Office of Evaluation and Research as an integral part of the staff development activities of the Comprehensive Reading Plan.

The Comprehensive Reading Plan identifies FIU as the collaborative agency to provide this program. Therefore, the contract being recommended here does not require submission to the Professional Services Contract Committee for a waiver from School Board Rule 6Gx13- 3F-1.021.

Authorization is requested for the Superintendent to enter into a contractual agreement with FIU to provide a master's degree in reading education for a total of 100 M-DCPS elementary teachers currently participating in the program as part of Cohorts II and III. The total cost of this contractual agreement will not exceed \$164,450. The contract will consist of multiple partial payments to cover the cost of tuition for the different FIU registration cycles through August 30, 2001.

A partial appropriation of \$69,450 for this item is available from the 1999-2000 Adopted Budget under Fund 0420, Object 5310, Location 9702, Program 4675, Function 6400 and Fund 0100, Object 5290, Location 9608, Program 9000, Function 5101. The remainder of the appropriation in the amount of \$95,000 will be included under Fund 0100, Object 5290, Location 9608, Program 9000, Function 5101 in the 2000-2001 Tentative Budget to be recommended for adoption in July 2000.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to enter into a contractual agreement with Florida International University to cover the cost of tuition for up to 100 teachers currently participating in the Project READS master's degree program, at a cost not to exceed \$164,450, from May 8, 2000 through August 30, 2001.

A partial appropriation for this item is available from the 1999-2000 Adopted Budget. The remainder of the appropriation in the amount of \$95,000 will be included in the 2000-2001 Tentative Budget to be recommended for adoption in July 2000.