

September 11, 2000

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair

SUBJECT: REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE ALL KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE STUDENTS WITH A PEDESTRIAN/SCHOOL BUS SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM

According to statistics from the University of Florida, Florida Traffic and Bicycle Safety Education Program, young children face the greatest likelihood of death or disability through traffic related injuries than from any other single cause. Students who learn safe traffic and pedestrian safety skills and concepts at an early age are more likely to apply these skills throughout their entire lives. At the present time, the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department (Fire Department) sponsors a voluntary safety program known as 'Risk Watch' that includes a series of pedestrian and other safety issues. Currently, these safety series are made available on a voluntary basis to schools that may elect to participate in this program. Due to limited Fire Department instructional staff and funding constraints, not all schools have been able to participate in this program, leaving many children without the benefit of pedestrian safety education.

In order to provide primary students with an opportunity to benefit from pedestrian and school bus safety skills, it is necessary that all kindergarten and first grade students participate in a pedestrian/school bus safety program. The University of Florida, Florida Traffic and Bicycle Safety Education Program, has developed a pedestrian/school bus safety program designed to reduce juvenile pedestrian accidents involving motor vehicles. District staff has reviewed and modified this program in order to establish a pedestrian/school bus safety program for all District kindergarten and first grade students. The program consists of five lessons to be delivered by the classroom teacher. This plan will be cost neutral to the District and will provide the opportunity for every kindergarten and first grade child to acquire lifesaving skills that they may not receive elsewhere.

The pedestrian/school bus safety program, as developed by the University of Florida, has been reviewed by the Division of Life Skills, and the Bureau of Elementary, Secondary, and Workforce Development Education. The Deputy Superintendent for Education recommends implementation of this program.

No additional funds are required.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

MS. PERLA TABARES HANTMAN:

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to provide all kindergarten and first grade students with a pedestrian/school bus safety education program.

No additional funds are required.