

January 29, 2001

Personnel Management and Services
Nelson E. Diaz, Deputy Superintendent

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS TO EARN A MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN READING EDUCATION

At the School Board meeting of January 14, 1998, the Board approved the Comprehensive Reading Plan which included funding for selected elementary teachers to participate in a master's degree program 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 teachers in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS).

Three cohorts of teachers were selected to participate in the original program, with the third cohort scheduled to graduate in Summer 2001. The implementation of the program has been very successful. The program is being formally evaluated by the Office of Evaluation and Research as an integral part of the professional development activities of the Comprehensive Reading Plan.

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

This collaboration offers a program which:

1. offers practicing K-5 teachers the opportunity to obtain a Master of Science Degree in reading education from Florida International University while teaching full time;
2. equips Miami-Dade County teachers with the ability to connect content and pedagogy with practice;
3. enhances the abilities of participating elementary school teachers to deliver instruction in reading that is consistent with the Comprehensive Reading Plan;
4. provides a curriculum consisting of 33 credit hours of part time study beginning May 2001;
6. provides current teachers with a program whose only cost is textbooks, materials, and additional fees;

7. provides a Master's Degree program which is considered to be in-field for advanced credential payment; and
8. requires teachers participating in this program to deliver instruction to students for three full years in Miami-Dade County Public Schools after the completion of the master's degree.

Authorization is requested to enter into a contractual agreement with Florida International University to continue to provide a master's degree program in reading education for a total of 30 M-DCPS elementary teachers. The cost per graduate credit is \$151.19. Funding in the amount of \$130 per graduate credit is available through the District Tuition Reimbursement Fund, with an additional \$21.19 per graduate credit available through the Title II Eisenhower Professional Development Program. Increases in tuition will be funded by the Title II Eisenhower Program. The total cost of this program will be \$149,678.10.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to enter into a contractual agreement with Florida International University to provide an advanced degree program in reading education for 30 elementary teachers beginning in May 2001 through August 2003 for a total cost of \$149,678.10.

The appropriation for this item is included in the District Tuition Reimbursement Fund and the Title II-Eisenhower Professional Development Program budget.

NED/gpq