

Office of Superintendent of Schools
Board Meeting of February 14, 2001

February 9, 2001

Office of School Board Attorney
Johnny Brown, Board Attorney

SUBJECT: CONTRACT WITH OUTSIDE FIRM FOR EMINENT DOMAIN MATTERS

In 1996, the School Board entered into a contract with the Miami-Dade County Attorney's Office to represent the School Board in Eminent Domain cases. This contract provided that inasmuch as it is possible that the County Attorney's Office may, at times, be carrying a caseload of County work which is too heavy to permit it to take on additional work, the School Board would have the ability to obtain another eminent domain firm for those occasions. The County Attorney's Office has advised that its current caseload is too heavy to permit taking on additional work. Therefore, the School Board needs to retain another eminent domain firm to pursue the acquisition of property for State School "JJJ" and other acquisitions.

The Board Attorney has been interviewing outside law firms which may be able to represent the Board's interests in eminent domain matters and related fields. The Attorney's Office has been particularly impressed with the firm of Ruden McClosky Smith Schuster & Russell, P.A. and now recommends employment of that firm, as set forth below. The firm profile has been forwarded to School Board members under separate cover.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, employ the law firm of Ruden McClosky Smith Schuster & Russell, P.A. to represent the Board's interests in cases arising out of Eminent Domain matters and other related fields as may be assigned by the Board Attorney, with compensation not to exceed \$160 per hour.

JB:pr

**REPLACEMENT
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