

Roger C. Cuevas, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: POST UNITARY STATUS PLAN OF ACTION REPORT

On June 21, 2001, Judge William P. Dimitrouleas of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida issued a 46 page opinion granting unitary status to this school district and relinquishing court supervision effective June 30, 2002. At the following School Board meeting of July 11, 2001, the Superintendent and the School Board Attorney informed the Board of the Court's decision. At that meeting, the Chair expressed the Board's continued commitment to the enactment of policies that will ensure, after the termination of Court supervision, that all students in Miami-Dade County regardless of their race or ethnicity have equal opportunities to participate and excel in educational programs. The School Board directed the Superintendent and the Board Attorney to provide the Board, at its October meeting, with a post-unitary status plan of action to ensure that this school system moves forward with fewer disparities and greater equality of access and participation for all students regardless of race or ethnicity. It was requested that the Bi-Racial Tri-Ethnic Advisory Committee and the Attendance Boundary Committee assist with this report. A copy of this report was provided to these committees for comment and is provided to the Board under separate cover. Additional copies of the report will be placed on file in the Citizen Information Center and the Board Recording Secretary's office.

As set forth in the report to the Board, the testimony of the School Board's experts, the survey conducted by researchers from the Civil Rights Project of Harvard University, and the experience of this Board clearly show that diversity and the avoidance of racial isolation are compelling governmental interests in this school system. For this reason, the administration and the Board Attorney's office are developing revisions to Board Rules relating to attendance boundaries, magnet programs, and student and staff assignments which will encourage diverse school enrollments and staffs and seek to avoid racial isolation within the parameters of the law.

At this time, the Superintendent and the School Board Attorney request that the Board adopt the strategies to improve parity set forth in the report and conclude that it wants to pursue its compelling governmental interests to the extent practicable in avoiding racially isolated schools and in promoting the educational benefits of diverse school enrollments and faculties. This conclusion will allow the Superintendent to proceed with the rulemaking process in the areas of student and staff assignment.

- RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida:
- 1) receive the Report entitled The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida Post-Unitary Status Plan of Action Report;
 - 2) adopt the strategies to improve parity set forth in this report; and
 - 3) conclude that it wants to pursue its compelling governmental interests to the extent practicable in avoiding racially isolated schools and in promoting the educational benefits of diverse school enrollments and faculties.