

Education
Joseph H. Mathos, Deputy Superintendent

**SUBJECT: REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE DISTRICT TO PARTICIPATE IN
A PILOT PROGRAM WITH PEARSON EDUCATION IN THE USE OF
ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks are the basic classroom tool for students and teachers; however, the textbook industry is currently beginning to assess how emerging technologies will impact their industry. At the same time, educators around the country are looking at how technology can transform and expand textbook content in order to address different learning modalities of students. Based on the District's reputation for innovation and staff's request at the state level regarding our interest in piloting electronic textbooks, Pearson Education approached the District regarding the feasibility of a joint pilot program.

Therefore, this is a request for authorization for the district to initiate a pilot program in the use of electronic textbooks. The purpose of this pilot program is for M-DCPS to conduct research on how various e-Learning devices can enhance educational content with dynamic media and sound presentation. Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) will enter into a nonbinding, no charge pilot program with Pearson Education that will provide the interactive, electronic format of their state-adopted textbook materials to selected schools.

Pearson Education and selected technology vendors will partner with M-DCPS to deploy a variety of e-Learning devices, state-adopted instructional content, and classroom management and instructional applications in approximately six schools across Miami-Dade County during the spring of 2002.

Staff from the Division of Instructional Technology and Media Support Services will work with staff in the Office of Evaluation and Research in designing the research criteria. The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) has indicated that they would like to participate in the research project as an observer and consultant.

The pilot program will focus on the use of three technologies: laptop computers, hand-held devices such as Palm Pilots, and clamshell devices such as the V-Slate and/or Dreamweaver.

Prior to the placement of hand-held or laptop devices at the schools, Pearson Education, their hardware partners, and M-DCPS staff will provide training for teachers and appropriate instructional technology personnel. Pearson Education will also design the content and participate in the research design and analysis. M-DCPS would identify the classrooms that will participate in the project, provide substitute days for teacher training, and participate in the research design and analysis.

Currently, Brentwood Elementary School has a class set of laptop computers, and G.W. Carver and South Miami middle schools have class sets of Palm Pilots. All three schools have indicated their willingness to participate in the pilot program.

Three additional schools: one elementary and two senior high schools will be selected and receive equipment on loan from Pearson Education and their hardware partners for the duration of the study. Selection of these schools will be based on the following criteria:

- Previously purchased instructional materials from Pearson Education or one of their subsidiaries;
- Willingness and commitment of school administrator and teacher to participate in the pilot program; and
- Demonstrated limited student access to technology.

At the conclusion of the pilot program, schools will return the loaner equipment. The pilot program will commence after completion of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) and will end May 24, 2002.

The only cost to the district will be substitute coverage for the six teachers participating in the pilot program.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to participate in a pilot program with Pearson Education in the use of electronic textbooks.

The only cost to the district will be substitute coverage.

JHM:cm