

January 7, 2002

Dr. Michael M. Krop, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: USE OF COUNTY PARK LAND FOR PRIMARY LEARNING CENTERS

Every resident of Miami-Dade County is painfully aware of the serious problem of overcrowded schools throughout our community. Our efforts to find relief for the children in these schools have been thwarted by the unavailability of suitable land.

A possible partial solution would be an agreement with the County to dedicate small parcels of underutilized park land to joint use with the School Board. Small learning centers could be constructed on as little as two acres. The school building and playground could be made available to the public when school is not in session. This mutually beneficial arrangement would be in line with previous agreements with the County, which provide for public use of various school properties for recreational programs.

For example, I present the situation that exists at Haulover Park. Every day about 500 of our students who presently attend the extremely overcrowded Ruth K. Broad Bay Harbor Elementary School, are transported through Haulover Park. Anyone who passes through this park, as I do nearly every day, can see that on weekdays, much of the park is unused. Because plans for extensive improvements to Haulover Park are currently underway, time is of the essence if we wish to pursue this issue.

It appears necessary under Miami-Dade County's Home Rule Charter for the public to approve this use of park land. While several County Commissioners have expressed interest in this concept, the School Board should first agree that this may be one viable solution to our problem, and condone the further investigation of the process.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

DR. MICHAEL M. KROP:

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, instruct the Superintendent to explore the feasibility of requesting joint use of certain park lands with the County for primary learning centers, and return with information and a plan of action at the meeting of February 13, 2002.