

Merrett R. Stierheim, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, RECEIVE AND TAKE ACTION ON THE STATE-MANDATED ANNUAL "SAFETY AND SECURITY BEST PRACTICES" SELF-ASSESSMENT AND AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT THE SELF-ASSESSMENT RESULTS AND SCHOOL BOARD ACTION TO THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION BY JULY 1, 2002

Governor Jeb Bush signed into law HB 267, Safe Passage Legislation, which requires school districts to use the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability's (OPPAGA) "Safety and Security Best Practices" to conduct a self assessment of their current safety and security practices. The Safe Passage Act was a product of the 2001 Legislature to ensure every child a safe passage through Florida's education system.

Specifically, Section 40 of this bill states:

1. The "Safety and Security Best Practices" developed by OPPAGA and approved by the Commissioner of Education shall be reviewed annually by OPPAGA and the Partnership for School Safety and Security established in s. 229.8347, Florida Statutes, and each entity shall make recommendations to the Commissioner of Education for the addition, revision, or deletion of best practices.
2. Each school district shall use the "Safety and Security Best Practices" to conduct a self-assessment of the school district's current safety and security practices. Based on these self-assessment findings, the superintendent of each school district shall provide recommendations to the school board which identify strategies and activities that the school district should implement in order to improve school safety and security.

By July 1, 2002, and annually thereafter, each school board must receive the self-assessment results at a publicly-noticed school board meeting to provide the public with an opportunity to hear the school board members discuss and take action on the report findings. Each superintendent shall report the self-assessment results and school board action to the Commissioner of Education within 30 days following the school board meeting.

The self-assessment considered safety in the broadest sense. The "Best Practices for Safety and Security" include physical security and facilities, fire and casualty safety, regulations associated with safety or risk management departments, violence prevention and other activities usually linked to law enforcement and security departments and the all-hazards approach to critical incidents that is the basis of emergency management.

The "Safety and Security Best Practices" self-assessment will be transmitted to Board Members under separate cover and will be available for inspection in the Office of the Board Recording Secretary, and in the Citizen Information Center.

RECOMMENDED:

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida:

1. receive the "Safety and Security Best Practices" self-assessment results;
2. take action on the report findings; and
3. authorize the Superintendent of Schools to report the self-assessment results and School Board action to the Commissioner of Education by July 1, 2002.