

Merrett R. Stierheim, Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT: REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD ESTABLISH AND CLASSIFY
THE POSITION OF EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

I am requesting that the Board formally establish and classify the position of Executive Assistant, Strategic Initiatives. Previously, at the Board meeting of February 13, 2002, the Board received and reviewed the organizational chart associated with my reorganization and restructuring of selected District offices. At that time, I indicated on the organizational chart the position of Executive Assistant, Strategic Initiatives, with Dr. Ralph G. Lewis serving in that capacity on a pro bono basis. Dr. Lewis has served since that time in that capacity on loan from Florida International University (FIU) and I wish to formalize his position and continue his status with the School Board.

As the Board is aware, FIU is currently facing significant financial challenges much the same as Miami-Dade County Public Schools and it has indicated that it cannot continue to extend the pro bono services of Dr. Lewis as a Professor on Special Assignment to the District. FIU has agreed to grant Dr. Lewis an unpaid leave of absence for the 2002-03 fiscal year. Further, Dr. Lewis is currently in his last year of FIU's DROP Program and it would be disadvantageous for him to amend any of the provisions of that DROP Program. Accordingly, he has agreed to accept a leave of absence from FIU while continuing to serve in a paid capacity with the School Board.

I am recommending that the Board authorize the establishment of this position and request that the Board Attorney prepare a one-year employment contract effective July 1, 2002, between the Board and Dr. Lewis at an annual salary of \$125,000. This contract will be brought back to the Board for confirmation at the next Board meeting in order for the Board to fully review all pertinent provisions to that contract.

This item does not appear in the regularly published agenda. There is good cause to vary from the published agenda in order that this position coincide with the District's 2002-2003 fiscal year and Dr. Lewis' FIU DROP Retirement Program.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, establish the position of Executive Assistant, Strategic Initiatives, and authorize the Board Attorney to prepare a one-year employment contract effective July 1, 2002 between the Board and Dr. Ralph G. Lewis at an annual salary of \$125,000.