

Merrett R. Stierheim, Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT:           REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, VOTE TO ADOPT THE DISTRICT'S RESPONSE TO THE ACTION PLAN RECOMMENDED BY THE OPPAGA REPORT ENTITLED *ACTION PLAN OF BEST FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT***

**COMMITTEE:       LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

As directed by the 2001 Legislature the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) has conducted a Best Financial Management Practices Review of the Miami-Dade County School District, pursuant to the Sharpening the Pencil Act (HB269). OPPAGA has provided the District with its report entitled *Best Financial Practices Review, Miami-Dade County School District, April 2002*; it included an action plan detailing how the District could meet the prescribed best practices within two years. The Board ruled to accept the OPPAGA report at the Special Board Meeting of May 22, 2002.

In accordance with Florida Statute 230.2305, an advertised public forum was held on Tuesday, June 25, 2002, at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of accepting public input regarding the OPPAGA report, as a prelude to approving implementation of the recommended action plan.

House Bill No. CS/CS/HB 269 (13) stipulates the following:

- (a) The School Board must decide by a majority plus one vote within 90 days after the receipt of the final report, whether or not to implement the action plan, and pursue a Seal of Best Financial Management, awarded by the State Board of Education to qualified school districts. If a district fails to vote on the action plan within 90 days, School Board members may be required to appear and present testimony before a legislative committee, pursuant to s.11.143.
- (b) The School Board may vote to reverse a decision not to implement an action plan, provided that the action plan is implemented and there is still sufficient time, as determined by the School Board, to meet the best practices within two years after issuance of the final report.
- (c) Within 90 days after receipt of the final report, the School Board must notify OPPAGA and the Commissioner of Education in writing of the date and outcome of the School Board vote on whether to adopt the action plan. If the School Board fails to vote on whether to adopt the action plan, the Superintendent must notify OPPAGA and the Commissioner of Education. The Department of Education may contact the school district, assess the situation, urge the School Board to vote, and offer technical assistance, if needed.

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At the direction of the Superintendent, staff has reviewed those best practices for which OPPAGA has cited the District as not being in compliance.

Copies of the OPPAGA Status Report dated August 8, 2002, will be forwarded to School Board Members under separate cover prior to the School Board meeting of August 21, 2002, and will be available for inspection by the public in the Office of Board Recording Secretary, Room 924, and the Citizen Information Center, Room 158, 1450 N. E. Second Avenue, Miami, Florida 33132.

**RECOMMENDED:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, adopt staff's proposed implementation of the action plan recommended by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) in the report entitled Action Plan Of Best Financial Management Practices, Miami-Dade County School District.