

November 7, 2002

Dr. Marta Pérez, Member

SUBJECT: PROPOSED 2003 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA CONSORTIUM OF SCHOOL BOARDS

The South Florida Consortium of School Boards is a coalition of eight school boards which have joined to assist each other in advancing educational issues of mutual concern. The members include: Broward, Collier, Hillsborough, Indian River, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Orange, and Palm Beach.

On October 9, 2002, representatives of the Consortium met in Tampa, Florida to finalize the draft of their proposed 2003 Legislative Program. The draft program includes only those items which were approved by the School Board representatives in attendance. Further, it adheres to the Consortium's policy of including only a select number of issues in order to ensure maximum cohesiveness in the program and concentration of the Consortium resources on its priorities.

All eight Consortium school boards are being asked to review the draft program and to take official action on it. Each issue must be supported by all Consortium members to be included in the final adopted program. Once all eight boards have officially adopted the 2003 Legislative Program, the Consortium will print and distribute the document to the Governor, State Cabinet, all legislators, and interested citizen groups.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. MARTA PÉREZ:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida adopt the proposed 2003 Legislative Program of the South Florida Consortium of School Boards or modify as deemed appropriate.

PROPOSED

THE SOUTH FLORIDA CONSORTIUM OF SCHOOL BOARDS

2003 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

Improving student achievement and insuring that students become productive members of society are the responsibilities of school boards. To meet these responsibilities, boards must be given adequate resources that enable them to offer competitive salary schedules to attract highly qualified teachers and support programs and services that facilitate high academic achievement.

The South Florida Consortium of School Boards supports:

District Cost Differential

Continuing the use of the District Cost Differential (DCD) in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) formula as the funding mechanism to address variations among districts in the costs of delivering programs.

Adequate Funding

Protecting the funding for the current basic education programs and not reducing or capping it in order to shift funding to support new constitutional initiatives, such as class size reduction and/or universal pre-kindergarten programs.

School Construction

Establishing a long-term stable funding source to meet school districts continuing need for more classroom space and school renovation, including: bringing portable classrooms up to the new safety standards; school maintenance; and, emergency shelter requirements.

Safe School Programs

Increasing state funding for **Safe Schools Programs**.

Health and Hospitalization Insurance

Providing state programs to assist districts in meeting the cost of health care benefits for employees, including **optional participation in the state health and hospitalization benefits program** and **establishing a state prescription benefits program**.

Property and Casualty Insurance

Providing a **state-funded property and casualty insurance program** or allowing districts to use proceeds from their two-mill capital outlay levy to fund the cost of this insurance.

Funding Caps

Eliminating the funding caps on Exceptional Student Education (ESE) (Levels 4 and 5) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs since school boards are legally required to serve all of these students.

ESE/SAI Funding

Establishing the enrollment growth and inflation factors in the annual calculations of the Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Minimum Guarantee Allocation and the Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI) categorical.

Health Care Professionals

Identifying new funding sources and maximizing those already available to support placing a **health care professional in every public school**.

Charter School Construction

Insuring that **charter schools receive only their proportionate share** of Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) dollars.

Governance

Opposing any legislation that erodes the **constitutional authority of school boards** to govern K-12 public school education and Workforce Education.

Local Control

Giving school boards **maximum local control** in determining how to spend their dollars, including setting their own salary schedules.

Limit Charter Schools

Continuing the current **cap on the number of charter schools** authorized for each school district until there is sufficient data available to **determine their educational effectiveness**.

Workforce Development

Increasing performance-based funding for Workforce Development Programs (adult and high school vocational) by **enhancing the base funding** and including a **factor for student enrollment**.

Career and Technical Education

Increasing the program weights for Secondary Career and Technical Education (Grades 6-12).