

Merrett R. Stierheim, Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT:           AWARD REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS NO. 028-CC10 –  
STATE LEGISLATIVE CONSULTANT (REBID)**

**COMMITTEE:       FINANCIAL AFFAIRS**

Given the extremely critical state legislative issues confronting the District, it is recommended that the Board approve the execution of a contract with a state legislative lobbying team formed by Ron Book and Associates, including Florida School Services, Inc. In addition, Mr. Rick Rodriguez Pina will join the team under Mr. Book's direction.

In the past, the District has engaged one firm for an annual fee of \$120,000. The upcoming legislative session and those in subsequent years may be the most challenging and crucial ever to the funding and operation of public schools state-wide and Miami-Dade in particular. For this reason, it is essential that the District obtain a highly qualified Team in Tallahassee.

This Team will be comprised of:

- Ron Book and Associates: Mr. Ron Book, Mr. Mike Abrams, Mr. Al Lorenzo, Ms. Yolanda Cash-Jackson, Mr. Rick Rodriguez Pina. Florida School Services, Inc.: Mr. Thomas Cerra and Ms. Georgia Slack.

This Team will work under the day-to-day direction of Dr. Richard H. Hinds who will be in Tallahassee on a regular basis during the session. I intend to be in Tallahassee frequently to advance our issues and concerns, as well.

For the first year (January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003) the consulting team will receive \$295,000 (inclusive of all fees and expenses) to be paid in equal monthly installments commencing in January, 2003. The contract may be renewed for two additional annual terms with the same or modified terms, as may be mutually agreed upon and approved by the School Board. While \$295,000 per year is significantly higher than the prior year outlay for outside lobbying assistance, the District is investing in a much needed service.

Costs for the current fiscal year [six months of the contract (\$147,500)] will be provided from the current budget for state legislative consulting services (\$90,000), and the Superintendent's Priority Needs Account (\$57,500). Funds required for the next fiscal year will be included in the Fiscal Year 2003-04 Proposed Budget.

Insurance requirements and other terms and conditions will be consistent with the requirements specified in RFP No. 028-CC10, State Legislative Consultant (Rebid).

**RECOMMENDED:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida approve the execution of a contract for State Legislative consulting services with a lobbying team formed by Ron Book and Associates from January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003, at a cost of \$295,000 as outlined in the above report.

MRS:ca