

Personnel Management and Services
Dr. Magaly C. Abrahante, Chief Personnel Officer

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND TEACH FOR AMERICA, INC., FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TEACH FOR AMERICA PROGRAM DURING THE 2003-2004, 2004-2005 AND 2005-2006 SCHOOL YEARS, AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$300,000 OVER THE THREE-YEAR PILOT PERIOD

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL SERVICES, MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING.

On December 11, 2002, Dr. Solomon C. Stinson, School Board Member, proposed, and the School Board authorized the Superintendent to explore the feasibility of implementing the Teach For America Program in Miami-Dade County Public Schools during the 2003-2004 school year. Teach For America, Inc., is the national corps of outstanding recent college graduates of all academic majors who commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools and become lifelong leaders in expanding educational opportunity. Through aggressive recruitment, a rigorous selection process, intensive pre-service training, and extensive ongoing support, Teach For America, Inc., builds a corps of teachers who ensure their students make significant academic gains and who, in the long run, become effective educational leaders. Teach For America currently operates in 18 urban and rural areas nationwide, including the New York, Los Angeles, Washington, DC, Houston, Chicago, Atlanta, Baltimore, New Orleans, Newark, and Phoenix school districts. Teach For America, Inc., is interested in establishing a program in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

At the direction of the Superintendent, staff in the Office of Human Resources and Staff Development completed a review of the feasibility of implementing the Teach For America Program and staff recommends the implementation of the program as a pilot collaborative agreement, with emphasis being placed on hiring individuals into schools that serve economically disadvantaged and/or predominantly minority student populations with a demonstrated need for teachers in the critical shortage areas (e.g., exceptional student education, secondary mathematics and science).

Authorization is requested to enter into a collaborative agreement between Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) and Teach For America, Inc. to implement the Teach For America Program during the 2003-2004, 2004-2005, and 2005-2006 school years.

As a result of this pilot collaborative agreement, Teach For America will:

1. assist the district in identifying and hiring highly qualified teachers, from an ethnically and racially diverse corps of highly sought-after college graduates recruited by Teach For America, Inc.;

2. provide the district 50 teachers in 2003-2004 and 50 teachers in 2004-2005, identified by Teach For America, Inc., as having demonstrated outstanding achievement, strong critical thinking skills, the ability to influence and motivate others, organizational ability, respect for others including high expectations for students and families in low-income communities, and a desire to work relentlessly to close the achievement gap;
3. modify the standard Teach For America, Inc., implementation timeline by reducing the duration of implementation from five to three years; and
4. provide staff development and related support services to Teach For America teachers in the areas of instructional leadership, instructional planning and delivery, classroom management and culture, and literacy development.

In conjunction with the local Teach For America office, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the pilot program will be conducted by the Office of Evaluation and Research during the 2004-2005 school year. Pending the outcome of the evaluation, and the availability of funding, consideration will be given to extending this collaborative agreement beyond the 2005-2006 school year.

The district will provide \$1,500 per teacher per year to Teach For America, Inc., in support of staff development and ongoing support services provided to each teacher hired through the program. Teach For America will secure additional funding from additional sources to fully support program implementation. Participants in the pilot implementation will be afforded access to the district's Alternative Certification Program. The total cost of this pilot collaborative agreement, excluding teacher salaries and benefits, will not exceed \$300,000. Funding for this collaborative agreement will be provided through the Title II Teacher and Principal Quality Program grant.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to enter into a collaborative agreement between Miami-Dade County Public Schools and Teach For America, Inc., for the implementation of the Teach For America program during the 2003-2004, 2004-2005, and 2005-2006 school years, at a cost not to exceed \$300,000 over the three-year pilot period.

MCA/gpq