

March 10, 2003

Merrett R. Stierheim, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM FOR THE FIRST YEAR OF THE 108TH CONGRESS TO SUPPORT CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS CONSISTENT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE ASSOCIATION, AND AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS TO ADVOCATE THE BOARD'S BEST INTERESTS ON ISSUES NEW TO THE FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM THAT HAVE AN IMMINENT FISCAL IMPACT ON SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATIONS BUT DO NOT HAVE MAJOR POLICY IMPLICATIONS, PROVIDED THAT SUCH ISSUES ARE REPORTED TO THE BOARD AT ITS NEXT MEETING

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COMMITTEE: LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PERSONNEL SERVICES

The Federal Legislative Program for the first year of the 108th Congress was adopted by the School Board on December 11, 2002, and amended on January 15 and February 12, 2003. The Program is based upon recommendations forwarded to Federal Legislative staff by School Board Members, the Superintendent, staff, interested citizen groups, community agencies, and employee organizations.

As noted in the Board item of December 11, 2002, the Board may be asked to consider additional recommendations as the 108th Congress progresses. Staff are periodically alerted to legislative issues that may have policy implications or fiscal impact on school District operations.

An issue that has emerged since the last solicitation of recommendations is the 2004 reauthorization of Child Nutrition Programs (Women, Infants, and Children, Commodity Distribution, State Administrative Expense, The National Food Service Management Institute, and Summer Food Service Program), which may impact the operation of District food service programs.

The American School Food Service Association (ASFSA) has adopted a legislative program that would ensure that all children have access to nutritious meals; that high standards and integrity are maintained in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs; and that schools are able to help address the challenges of obesity, and establish lifelong, healthy habits.

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As a result, it is recommended that the School Board amend the current Federal Legislative Program to address federal support for child nutrition programs consistent with the recommendations of the ASFSA.

Furthermore, in order to expedite urgent additions to the Federal Legislative Program and avoid opportunity costs due to a delayed Board approval, it is recommended that the Board authorize the Superintendent of Schools to approve those additions to the Program that have an imminent fiscal impact on school District operations but do not have major policy implications.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida:

1. amend the Federal Legislative Program for the first year of the 108th Congress in order to support child nutrition programs consistent with recommendations of the American School Food Service Association; and
2. authorize the Superintendent of Schools to advocate the Board's best interests on issues new to the Federal Legislative Program that have an imminent fiscal impact on school district operations but do not have major policy implications, provided that such issues are reported to the Board at its next meeting.

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MRS/AMC:nt