

April 9, 2003

Mr. Agustin Barrera, Member

SUBJECT: DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT TO CREATE A BEST PRACTICES COMMITTEE FOR THE PURPOSE OF EVALUATING AND RECOMMENDING TO THE BOARD CHANGES TO THE FACILITIES OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

COMMITTEE: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Background:

Since the inception of the Bond Program in 1988 the Miami-Dade Public Schools (District) has successfully completed numerous new schools as well additions and renovations. Much of this work was accomplished through MBE/DBE programs. The District's efforts may unintentionally have hurt the small business segment of the business community by excessively concentrating too much of the work therein. The District has management staff who worked on the Bond Program with first hand experience in the ins and outs of running a successful construction program. In addition, legislative changes have enabled the District to implement pre-qualification and debarment procedures, which combined, aim to ensure that only experienced and qualified contractors perform work in our schools. State legislation has also enabled the establishment of an in-house Code Compliance Office (CCO), which is headed by a Building Official. The CCO's role is multi-fold, however one of its main goals is to improve product quality through the plan review and inspection processes. As the Board is aware, the District currently utilizes four (4) different types of delivery methods: traditional low bid; design/build; construction management @ risk; and job order contracts.

Revised

Additional Information:

The recent creation of the School Site Planning and Construction Committee and of the Advanced Planning unit, represents a positive step towards reform. Despite these efforts, the District continues to be criticized for what is perceived as spending too much per square foot for construction, as well as for being overstaffed and operating under overly cumbersome procedures which tend to hamper the District's ability to deliver new student stations in a time-effective manner. In dealing with the cost of construction, there are two items for the Board's consideration at the April 9, 2003 meeting: the first requests that staff prepare a report comparing the District's program space requirements and prototypical square footage allocations with state guidelines and other like-size districts; and the second, requests that staff compare the District's materials criteria and specifications with state guidelines and other like-size districts. The reports are meant to provide to the public and the Board, a basis for comparison, to identify how construction dollars are spent, and to provide the Board with the type of information that is needed to optimize expenditures in the areas of facilities construction and maintenance.

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Ultimately, to truly reform the facilities management program, it is both reasonable and desirable to establish a clear and well defined process through which key individual components can be evaluated, e.g. the A/E selection process as well as the selection process for contractors, process flows, staffing and staffing alignments. The baseline will be the current Facilities Management structure. The best practices learned from the construction retreat held earlier this year will serve as a foundation for the additional work that is needed to complete total reform. To assist in this process, it is my recommendation that a Best Practices Construction and Maintenance Committee (Committee), be created. In forming this Committee, the Superintendent should meet with the Chairman of the Oversight Advisory Board, to seek that body's support for and endorsement of this initiative, as well as the support of other relevant organizations, such as but not limited to, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce (GMCC), the AGC, the AIA, the Builders Association of South Florida (BASF), the Latin Builders Association (LBA), the Black Architects Association, the Association of Women Architects and Engineers, a citizen member at large appointed by the School Board Chair, and interested members of local government serving only in an advisory capacity. The intent is for the Committee to be composed of highly qualified professionals and community stakeholders who are representative of the community's diversity and of the industry.

Revised

This item does not appear on the published agenda. The good cause for varying from the published agenda is that it is essential that the process of evaluating and recommending changes to the facilities management department be started as soon as possible.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
AGUSTIN J. BARRERA:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to do the following:

1. Create a Best Practices Construction and Maintenance Committee (Committee) to work with District staff and a professional consultant in the area of educational facilities construction, as proposed in the Superintendent's Agenda Item A-6, to review current policies and procedures impacting the construction program, as well as current and projected staffing and staffing alignments to establish an effective action plan that will meet the needs of the District in the area of construction;
2. Appoint to the Committee, a representative from relevant organizations such as but not limited to the GMCC, the AGC, the AIA, the BASF, the LBA, the Black Architects Association, the AWAE, a School Board member, a citizen member at large appointed by the School Board Chair, and as desired one individual versed in facilities construction from any one municipality desirous of participating in the Committee who would serve in an advisory capacity only, to ensure solid representation from the design and construction fields, as well as from the community at large, and to ensure the community's diversity is appropriately represented. The Superintendent or his designee(s) would serve as support, ex-officio members. Total membership would not exceed nine (9) members;
3. Bring to the Board a plan of action that incorporates the Committee's assessment and final product for Board review and action.

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