

Mr. Agustin J. Barrera, Member

**SUBJECT: REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS TO ESTABLISH AN AD-HOC TASK FORCE TO REVIEW THE TOOL KIT ADOPTED BY THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CLASS SIZE REDUCTION AMENDMENT AND TO REPORT TO THE BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPLICATION WITHIN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**COMMITTEE: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**

The State Constitution, amended in November 2002, establishes a maximum number of students per core-curricula classes in each of the following grade groupings:

- 18 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 3;
- 22 students in grades 4 through 8; and
- 25 students in grades 9 through 12.

The Florida Department of Education's 2003 baseline data indicates that the district's class size averages in the following groupings are:

- 30.14 in grades pre-kindergarten through 3;
- 29.26 in grades 4 through 8; and
- 25.29 in grades 9 through 12.

The Florida Legislature has enacted Senate Bill 30-A to implement the class size amendment. This reduces the number of students in each classroom by at least two per year, beginning in the 2003-2004 fiscal year, until the number of students per classroom does not exceed the 2010-2011 maximum. If a district's class size, as indicated in the baseline data, does not currently meet the constitutional maximum, then each of the grade groupings must be reduced by at least two students per class per year as follows:

- 2003-2004, 2004-2005, and 2005-2006 at the district level;
- 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 at the school level; and
- 2008-2009 at the classroom level.

The implementing legislation includes options, collectively referred to as the Tool Kit, which districts may use to reduce class size. These options include the following:

- encourage participation in dual enrollment courses;
- encourage participation in courses from the Florida Virtual School;
- require no more than 24 credits for high school graduation;

- maximize use of instructional staff;
- implement innovative methods to reduce school construction costs;
- explore joint-use facilities;
- adopt alternative methods of class scheduling;
- redraw school attendance zones;
- operate school beyond normal operating hours; and
- utilize year-round schools or nontraditional calendars.

These options, referred to as "tools", assist the district in meeting its class size reduction requirements. However, in a county as large and diverse as Miami-Dade, it is clear that there can be no one size fits all approach.

In order to ensure that a broader cross section of the community has a voice in reducing class size, it is recommended that the Superintendent establish an ad-hoc task force to study and make recommendations on implementing the Tool Kit. Such an ad-hoc task force could include a representative from the Parent Teacher Student Association, the United Teachers of Dade, the League of Cities, the Builders Association of South Florida and/or the Latin Builders Association, Miami-Dade County Government, the charter school community, the Land Acquisition and Facilities Maintenance Operations Advisory Board, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, and a School Board member appointed by the Chair.

It is recommended that the Superintendent assign appropriate staff to work with this task force to ensure that recommendations are based on a full compilation of available information. This task force should be established as soon as possible and a list of members should be provided to the School Board at its September 10, 2003 meeting.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY**

**MR. AGUSTIN J. BARRERA:**

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

1. establish an ad-hoc task force that includes a representative from the Parent Teacher Student Association, the United Teachers of Dade, the League of Cities, the Builders Association of South Florida and/or the Latin Builders Association, Miami Dade County Government, the charter school community, the Land Acquisition and Facilities Maintenance Operations Advisory Board, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and a School Board member appointed by the Chair, to review and provide recommendations regarding the Tool Kit adopted by the Florida Legislature for the implementation of the class size reduction amendment; and
2. report to the Board the membership of the ad-hoc task force at its September 10, 2003 meeting.

AJB:nt