

Dr. Marta Pérez, Member

SUBJECT: DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT TO ESTABLISH A BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE TO EXPLORE ALTERNATE FUNDING SOURCES FOR TEACHER SALARIES AND EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENTS

COMMITTEE: BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

Our teachers are a critically important component of this school system. All can agree that teachers certainly deserve to be compensated commensurate with the value they bring to our children's lives. Though the 2003 Florida Legislature did allocate an additional \$240 per pupil over last year, those resources must be utilized to meet the demands of increasing enrollment, class size reduction, inflation, and other costs to school districts in addition to teacher salaries. This fact, however, does not diminish the need for better pay for teachers. Because of their dedication to the children, teachers routinely use personal funds to purchase supplies for their classrooms and students.

In recognition of these issues and in the spirit of bringing together the community to resolve issues impacting education, it is recommended that the Superintendent establish a blue ribbon task force to explore alternative sources of funding which could be allocated for teacher salary increases and classroom enhancements such as educational materials and supplies. Such a task force should include a membership composed of a variety of business and community members as well as education stakeholders. In addition, at least 60 percent of the membership should be made up of individuals external to Miami-Dade County Public Schools to ensure that the product of this task force is one that shatters our existing paradigm of education funding provided only by governmental entities.

Following the lead of national reform movements that look to vouchers from corporate citizens to move students to private schools, public educators should begin to look to corporate and philanthropic organizations to provide funding sources which can directly impact the classroom by improving conditions for our teachers. The proposal for this task force is intended as an experiment in enlightened social engineering that asks the local community to place our public educators high on their list of priorities.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. MARTA PEREZ:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent of Schools to establish a blue ribbon task force to explore alternate funding sources for teacher salaries and educational enhancements, with at least 60 percent of the membership external to Miami-Dade County Public Schools.