

Sonia E. Díaz, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent  
Curriculum and Instruction

**SUBJECT:            PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF SCHOOL BOARD RULE: INITIAL  
                              READING 6Gx13- 6A-1.48, K-8 CENTERS**

**COMMITTEE:        INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

K-8 Centers are one part of a coherent district effort to provide consistent, high-quality educational experiences for students by combining elementary and middle grades in a seamless articulation path. There are currently seven K-8 Centers operating in Miami-Dade County and there are an additional seven approved for construction or conversion.

Although research regarding the superiority of the K-8 configuration over the traditional middle school is not definitive, it is no longer clear that middle grade students should be segregated from primary and intermediate students in separate schools. In addition, there is research indicating that a configuration that allows students to experience high-quality instruction consistently over at least a 3-year period promotes higher academic achievement at every level of schooling, including the early adolescent years. Nevertheless, a K-8 Center middle grade experience is not meant to be the equivalent of a traditional middle school environment. The K-8 Center offers a streamlined curriculum for grades six through eight that emphasizes the core academic subjects, but limits the possible range of electives, honors, and high school level courses available at the traditional middle school. The rule provides that parents of all students enrolled in grade five at an established K-8 Center shall choose to allow their children to continue at the K-8 Center for grades six through eight or to enroll them in the traditional middle school to which they would otherwise have been assigned.

At the School Board Meeting of February 16, 2005, the Superintendent committed to present a revised procedure for considering conversion of a school to a K-8 Center at the March 16, 2005, School Board Meeting. The proposed revisions alter the basis for considering conversion by requiring that the process be initiated by District and/or Region Center staff and based on the following underlying principles:

- a sound curricular basis, such as the extension of a unique academic program being successfully implemented at the elementary level;
- the provision of equitable support for successful transition to senior high school across the District in underserved communities;
- meeting the demands of anticipated population growth;
- providing equitable access to suitable facilities; and
- a Region Center proposal with community and school level support.

Attached are the Notice of Intended Action and the proposed amended Board rule. Changes of the current rule are indicated by underscoring words to be added and ~~striking through~~ words to be deleted.

Authorization of the Board is requested for the Superintendent to initiate rulemaking proceedings in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act for the amendment of School Board Rule 6Gx13- 6A-1.48, K-8 Centers.

**RECOMMENDED:** That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to initiate rulemaking proceedings in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act to amend School Board Rule 6Gx13- 6A-1.48, K-8 Centers.

RKF/MB:msm

## NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, announced on March 16, 2005, its intention to amend School Board Rule 6Gx13- 6A-1.48, K-8 Centers, at its meeting of May 18, 2005.

**PURPOSE AND EFFECT:** To revise the process for converting schools to K-8 Centers.

**SUMMARY:** To revise Board Rule 6Gx13- 6A-1.48, K-8 Centers, which defines a process for establishing K-8 Centers, including steps, timelines, and approval levels.

**SPECIFIC LEGAL AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH RULEMAKING IS AUTHORIZED:**  
1001.41(1)(2); 1001.42(22); 1001.43(10), F.S.

**LAW IMPLEMENTED, INTERPRETED, OR MADE SPECIFIC:** 1001.41(3); 1001.42(9)(b)(3)(7)(8); 1001.43(4)(5); 1002.20(6)(a), F.S.

IF REQUESTED, A HEARING WILL BE HELD DURING THE BOARD MEETING OF May 18, 2005, which begins at 1:00 p.m., in the School Board Auditorium, 1450 N.E. Second Avenue, Miami, Florida 33132. Persons requesting such a hearing or who wish to provide information regarding the statement of estimated regulatory costs, or to provide a proposal for a lower cost regulatory alternative as provided by Section 120.541(1), F.S., must do so in writing by April 11, 2005, to the Superintendent of Schools, Room 912, at the same address.

ANY PERSON WHO DECIDES TO APPEAL THE DECISION made by The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, with respect to this action will need to ensure the preparation of a verbatim record of the proceedings, including the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. (Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes)

A COPY OF THE PROPOSED AMENDED RULE is available to the public for inspection and copying at cost in the Citizen Information Center, Room 158, 1450 N.E. Second Avenue, Miami, Florida 33132.

Originator: Dr. Sonia E. Díaz  
Supervisor: Dr. Rudolph F. Crew  
Date: May 2, 2005

Instruction – Elementary and Secondary**K-8 CENTERS**

In the interest of broadening public school choice providing the best and most supportive environment for education, Miami-Dade County Public Schools provides offers K-8 Centers, which are configured to include students from kindergarten through grade eight, as an alternative to well as the traditional elementary and middle level configuration. A K-8 Center middle grade experience is not meant to be the equivalent of a traditional middle school environment. The K-8 Center offers a streamlined curriculum for grades six through eight that emphasizes the core academic subjects, but a tightly aligned curriculum for grade six through eight students that includes, in addition to the traditional core academic subjects, required foreign language for all students and an integrated subject alignment infusing technology, career path skills, real world projects, ethics, and character development. The K-8 Center also offers an extensive safety net to ensure that all students are ready for the transition to ninth grade, including a support team for every child who will follow his or her progress from grades six through eight. A K-8 Center middle grade experience is not, however, meant to be the equivalent of a traditional middle school environment. limits †The possible range of electives, honors, and high school level courses available at the traditional middle school may be limited at a K-8 Center because of the smaller number of students in grades six through eight. Physical education and athletics are may also be limited. The parents of all students enrolled in grade five at an established K-8 Center shall choose to allow their children to continue at the K-8 Center for grades six through eight or to enroll them in the traditional middle school to which they would otherwise have been assigned. that has been designated as an option.

The conversion of a school campus to a K-8 Center should be made primarily for the purpose of improving educational services, including the relief of overcrowding, the prevention of enrollment decline at the middle school level, the provision of curricular continuity, the provision of optimum academic and social support, the relief of overcrowding, and such factors that might be unique to a particular conversion.

Creation of K-8 Centers or conversions of schools to K-8 Centers may occur as follows:

- I. The Deputy for Curriculum and Instruction may plan such schools for the purpose of:
  - A. providing or extending a unique curricular program, or
  - B. providing equitable support for successful transition to senior high school across the District.
- II. The Chief Facilities Officer may plan such schools for the purpose of reducing overcrowding, meeting the demands of expected population growth, or providing equitable access to suitable facilities.

III. A proposal for conversion may be submitted by a Region Center with local community and school site support including, but not limited to: a school's Educational Excellence School Advisory Committee (EESAC) or Parent Teacher Association/Parent Teacher Student Association (PTA/PTSA). The process for proposing conversions of schools to K-8 Centers shall consist of the submission of a written proposal, analysis of the proposal by a K-8 Center Technical Committee (which will include a district-level study of facilities-related and curricular aspects of the conversion, if necessary), review by a K-8 Center Administrative Committee, and recommendation to the School Board. The following procedures for submission and review shall be followed.

IA. Proposal Submission

~~A. Proposals for conversion shall be initiated by the Educational Excellence School Advisory Committee (EESAC), Parent Teacher Association /Parent Teacher Student Association (PTA/PTSA), or the Assistant Superintendent of the ACCESS Center.~~

B1. Proposals must adhere to the Miami-Dade County K-8 Center Application Format and must, at minimum, address the following factors: curricular provisions, including the method by which parents will choose between the two middle grades options; staffing implications; initiating entity (source of the request); rationale for the request; current school enrollment and capacity; projected increase in student enrollment with the added grades; projected impact on the enrollment and diversity of the neighboring schools; curricular provisions, including the method by which parents will choose between the two middle grades options; staffing implications; school site acreage and current usage; and evidence of community support.

C2. ~~Proposals must be received in the appropriate administrative office no later than 4:30 p.m. on or before the second Tuesday of September for consideration during the fall review process and no later than 4:30 p.m. on or before the second Tuesday of January for consideration during the spring review process.~~ Proposals may be submitted to School Choice and Parental Options at any time during the school year. Proposals reviewed in the fall will be considered at or prior to the December School Board Meeting, and those reviewed in the spring will be considered at or prior to the April School Board Meeting, unless extenuating circumstances intervene. The proposal for any conversion proposed to take place in a given school year must be submitted during the first submission cycle of the previous year or earlier.

HB. Proposal Review

- A1. A K-8 Center Technical Committee shall examine all proposals and, by majority vote, take one of two actions on each proposal. It may request a district-level study of facilities-related and curricular aspects of the proposed conversion, including its standing within the district plan for such conversions, or it may forward the proposal to the next level of review without additional analysis.

The K-8 Center Technical Committee shall be comprised of the senior administrators of the following areas, or their designees, who must also be administrators:

Curriculum and Instruction;  
ACCESS Region Center in which the school is located;  
 Attendance Boundary Committee;  
 Civil Rights and Diversity Compliance;  
~~Evaluation and Research;~~  
Student Services;  
 Transportation;  
~~Business Operations;~~  
School Facilities;  
 Employment and Staffing; and  
 Food and Nutrition.

Additional Committee membership will include parent representatives from the following:

PTA/PTSA at the initiating school; and  
 PTA/PTSA at the affected middle school.

The Assistant Superintendent of School Choice and Parental Options will act as chair of the K-8 Center Technical Committee, and the ~~Assistant~~ Region Superintendent of the ACCESS Region Center in which the school is located will present the proposal.

- B2. A K-8 Center Administrative Committee shall review each proposal, along with the district-level study requested by the K-8 Center Technical Committee and district-wide plans for the establishment of K-8 Centers, if applicable, and, by majority vote, make a recommendation for acceptance or denial of the proposal to the Superintendent of Schools. At least one (1) representative of the initiating entity must be available to answer questions from the K-8 Center Administrative Committee when the proposal is reviewed.

The K-8 Center Administrative Committee shall be comprised of the following persons, or their equivalent:

Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction,  
or designee, who will act as chair;  
~~Chief Business Officer, or designee;~~  
Deputy Superintendent, Business Operations, or designee;  
Chief Financial Officer, or designee;  
Chief Personnel Officer, or designee;  
~~Associate Superintendent, Instructional Operations, or  
designee;~~  
Associate Superintendent, Management Operations, or  
designee;  
Assistant Region Superintendent of the ACCESS Region  
Center in which the school is located, or designee;  
Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum Development and  
Instructional Support, or designee;  
Principal from an established K-8 Center;  
One representative from the Attendance Boundary  
Committee;  
One representative from the Diversity Equity and Excellence  
Advisory Committee;  
One representative from the Schools of Choice Advisory  
Committee;  
One member of the United Teachers of Dade, selected by  
the Executive Vice President of the United Teachers  
of Dade; and  
President of the County Council of PTA, or designee.

- G3. All proposals shall be submitted to the School Board, by the Superintendent of Schools with a recommendation for acceptance or denial.
- D4. The School Board must, by a majority vote, approve or deny each proposal that it receives.
- E5. If the proposal is denied, the School Board shall direct the Superintendent of Schools to articulate in writing the specific reasons based upon good cause supporting the denial of the proposal. If a proposal is denied, the originator may resubmit a revised proposal to the appropriate administrative office for review during subsequent submission cycles.
- F6. An approved proposal will be referred to the School Site Planning and Construction (SSPC) Committee for inclusion in the next regular cycle of facilities planning as outlined in Section III of

School Board Rule 6Gx13- 2C-1.083, ~~Section (III)~~, Educational Facilities Planning, Site Selection and Acquisition, and Construction.

- G7. Once the construction is completed, and prior to the facility being occupied by the additional grade level(s), the K-8 Center will be included in the Attendance Boundary Committee (ABC) process for a grade configuration change.

Specific Authority: 1001.41(1)(2); 1001.42(22); 1001.43(10) F.S.

Law Implemented, Interpreted, or Made Specific: 1001.41(3); 1001.42(9)(b)(3)(7)(8); 1001.43(2)(f)(4)(5); 1002.20(6)(a) F.S.

History

New: 8-18-04

Amended:

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA