

Office of Professional Development
Ava G. Byrne, Deputy Superintendent

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, TO ADOPT THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATION COURSE, "MEETING THE STANDARDS FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS: A RESEARCH-BASED APPROACH" AS AN ADDITIONAL OPTION FOR PARAPROFESSIONAL I EMPLOYEES TO MEET EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

COMMITTEE: SCHOOL SUPPORT ACCOUNTABILITY

In accordance with the requirements set forth in Section 1119 of the "No Child Left Behind Act," paraprofessional personnel hired after January 8, 2002, must have completed at least two years of study at an institution of higher education or possess an Associate's (or higher) degree. Paraprofessional I personnel hired prior to January 8, 2002, must comply with NCLB requirements not later than January 8, 2006, through one of the following mechanisms:

1. Complete at least two years of study at an institution of higher education;
2. Obtain an Associate's (or higher) degree; or
3. Meet a rigorous standard of quality and able to demonstrate through a formal State or local academic assessment:
 - a. Knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing and mathematics; or
 - b. Knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading readiness, writing readiness and mathematics readiness, as appropriate.

Paraprofessional I employees that fail to meet educational requirements on or before January 8, 2006, will not be permitted to remain employed in their current capacity. Affected individuals may be eligible for employment in non-instructional positions for which they are qualified, to the extent positions are available.

During the School Board Meeting held on November 18, 2003, the Board authorized the use of the Educational Testing Service's ParaPro Assessment to allow paraprofessional I employees to meet educational compliance requirements. At that time, 2,536 paraprofessional I employees needed to meet the requirements. Currently, approximately 1,150 paraprofessional I employees are attempting to meet the requirement or are in the process of submitting documentation verifying compliance with the requirement.

In a memorandum dated December 14, 2004, from the Florida Department of Education, the Department stated that completion of the American Federation of Teachers Educational Research and Dissemination course entitled, "Meeting the Standards for Paraprofessionals: A Research-based Approach," could be utilized to meet NCLB requirements. The course was

developed and copy-written by the American Federation of Teachers. Local delivery of the course will be coordinated through the United Teachers of Dade. The course includes 42 hours of instruction and assessment activities structured as follows:

- Foundations of Instruction (6 hours);
- Beginning Reading Instruction and Reading Comprehension (12 hours);
- Managing Student Behavior (6 hours);
- Thinking Math (12 hours); and
- Home-School Connections (6 hours).

Each strand features content focused on essential learning within the identified topics. In addition, each strand includes a rigorous test and/or online assessment that has been designed to satisfy the educational compliance requirements for paraprofessionals under the "No Child Left Behind Act."

In order to implement the course locally, a cadre of 12 instructors will be trained by the American Federation of Teachers/Florida Education Association during June, 2005. These individuals will be jointly identified by the Office of Professional Development and the United Teachers of Dade. The total cost for trainer registrations and materials is approximately \$17,400. Funding for this activity is available through the Title II, Part A, Teachers and Principals Training and Recruiting Fund Grant 2004-2005 budget. No local funds will be used.

The Board is requested to adopt the Educational Research and Dissemination course, "Meeting the Standards for Paraprofessionals: A Research-based Approach," as an additional option to allow paraprofessional I employees to meet educational compliance requirements established by the "No Child Left Behind Act."

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

1. adopt the American Federation of Teachers Educational Research and Dissemination course, "Meeting the Standards for Paraprofessionals: A Research-based Approach," as an additional option for paraprofessional I employees to meet educational compliance requirements established by the "No Child Left Behind Act."
2. The total cost for trainer registrations and materials is approximately \$17,400. The appropriation for this item is included in the 2004-2005 Title II, Part A, Teachers and Principals Training and Recruiting Funds Grant budget. No additional local funds are required.

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