

Dr. Robert B. Ingram, Vice Chair

**SUBJECT: THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY,
FLORIDA, DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS TO
ESTABLISH A SCHOOL TRUANCY HOTLINE**

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

The Miami-Dade County Black Affairs Advisory Board (MDCBAAB) has expressed concern with the large percentage of youths, particularly minorities that come into contact with the juvenile justice system. In an effort to address this issue, it was the consensus of various community-oriented organizations, including MDCBAAB, the Public Defender's Office, the Miami-Dade County Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Miami-Dade Schools Police Department (MDSPD), that a collaborative effort would be required. Academic achievement, discipline and quality intervention are paramount to the educational success of today's youth. The need for a campaign aimed at improving the self-image of students, reducing truancy, and emphasizing the value of an education, was recognized.

The issue of truancy continues to plague the community and our school system. In fact, there is a direct connection between habitual truancy and delinquent behavior. If unabated, this problem may be a precursor to a lifetime of drug abuse, unemployment, and incarceration. When truant, students fail to receive educational contact, and are often left unsupervised are more likely to be drawn to criminal behavior. Truancy also places a financial burden on the community, and creates a well-founded concern for the welfare of our youth.

The implementation of a truancy hotline was discussed, which will serve as an intervention tool to combat this challenge. The hotline will allow concerned members of the public to report truants to local law enforcement, using an advertised telephone number, monitored by MDSPD Communications Section. Law enforcement officials would then respond and safely transport the truants to designated facilities throughout the District. This will allow the proper tracking, assessment, discipline, and the application of other strategies required to address the unique needs of each child. The hotline will serve as the initial component in a comprehensive strategy that will involve several variants.

B-12

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. ROBERT B. INGRAM:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent of Schools to identify, implement & advertise a school truancy hotline.