

August 3, 2005

Antoinette Dunbar, Deputy Superintendent
Curriculum, Instruction, and School Improvement

**SUBJECT: REQUEST SCHOOL BOARD APPROVAL OF THE APPLICATION
 TO CONVERT ADA MERRITT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO A K-8
 CENTER**

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Following the procedure established in School Board Rule 6Gx13- 6A-1.48, K-8 Centers, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and Educational Excellence School Advisory Committee (EESAC) of Ada Merritt Elementary School submitted an application to convert the school to a K-8 Center on January 31, 2005. The Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) K-8 Center Technical Committee (KCTC), which is comprised of regional and District administrators and the school's PTA representative, met on February 18, 2005, to review the application. The KCTC voted 7 to 2 in support of requesting that Advance Planning conduct a feasibility study. On July 7, 2005, the M-DCPS K-8 Center Administrative Committee (KCAC), which is comprised of senior level District administrators and community representatives, met to review the application and the feasibility study. By a unanimous vote, the KCAC made a recommendation for approval of the application to the Superintendent of Schools. Since no construction is necessary to carry out this conversion, it will not be necessary to refer this project to the School Site Planning and Construction Committee.

Ada Merritt Elementary School served 331 students in grades K through 3 during the 2004-2005 school year. The students are from throughout the county, since the school primarily serves students whose parents work in the downtown area. In 2005-2006, the school is slated to expand to grade 4, and in 2006-2007 to grade 5. Should the conversion to a K-8 Center be approved, the school would add grade 6 in the 2007-2008 school year and grades 7 and 8 in subsequent years. The maximum projected population for the proposed K-8 Center, taking into account class size reduction, is 728; thus, Ada Merritt would be a small K-8 Center.

The plan for converting Ada Merritt Elementary School to a K-8 Center provides for the continuation of the school's unique International Studies/International Baccalaureate programs into the middle years, furthering the District's extended foreign language initiative. Additionally, this conversion will provide a middle school option for the children of parents who work downtown.

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Copies of the application will be transmitted to the School Board Members under separate cover and are available for inspection by the public in the Office of Board Recording Secretary, Room 924, and the Citizen Information Center, Room 158, 1450 NE Second Avenue, Miami, Florida, 33132.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve the application to convert Ada Merritt Elementary School to a K-8 Center.

LCR/MB:msm