

Rudolph F. Crew, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF THE PROPOSED 2006 STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMS**

**COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

As in previous years, the Board has actively advocated policy changes through the state and federal legislative process by formulating a legislative agenda. The proposed 2006 State and Federal Legislative Programs have been prepared by staff and are attached for the Board's review and approval. The development of both programs was initiated by the solicitation of proposals from School Board Members, the Superintendent of Schools, staff, school-site personnel, employee groups, and citizen groups. Additionally, a Board legislative workshop was held on July 28, 2005, when the Board was presented a state legislative framework. The resulting proposed 2006 State Program incorporates those items included in the framework, as well as those issues designated for inclusion by the Board at the workshop.

This year's proposed program focuses on four District strategic priorities: eliminating low-performing schools; raising academic student achievement for all students; reforming business practices to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and high ethical standards; and recruiting, developing, and retaining high-performing, diverse, and motivated faculty and staff. The program reflects a philosophy of fiscal responsibility yet insists on adequate and equitable funding, both operating and capital, to the District, as legally required by the Florida Constitution. The program also reflects academic concerns by addressing the need for reform at the secondary level.

Through self assessment, re-alignment of functions, and implementation of sound educational and business practices, the 2004-2005 school year brought improved student outcomes and a brighter financial outlook. More than three times the number of Miami-Dade County schools raised their state accountability grades in 2005, with the majority of schools maintaining their grades while meeting tougher standards. Eighty-five of 317 schools in Miami-Dade County improved their accountability grades under Florida's A<sup>+</sup> Plan. None of the District's middle schools or K-8 centers received an F, and the number of senior high schools receiving an F dropped to three in 2005 from four in 2004. More than half of the District's schools earned a grade of A or B for the second consecutive year.

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With regard to finances, the District's contingency was increased, which resulted in an improved Standard & Poor's bond rating. Through improved construction practices, the number of student stations increased by 18,000. Through these actions and results, Miami-Dade legislative representatives should be empowered to support District efforts. This administration will continue to achieve internal economies that will ensure that the District is an efficient and effective organization that provides high quality educational programs to all its students and a well prepared workforce to the business community.

The state legislative session is scheduled to commence on Tuesday, March 7, 2006, with interim committee meetings scheduled to begin as soon as September 2005. The proposed state legislative program focuses on a limited number of legislative priorities: Funding for Education, Capital Funding, Secondary Education Reform, Professional Development, Teacher Recruitment, Voluntary Pre-kindergarten, and Legal.

At the federal level, the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress enters its second congressional session in January 2006. As we approach the upcoming session, we urge the President and Congress to reaffirm their commitment to the nation's children by investing in public education and the hope it provides our society. The proposed federal legislative program is comprised of ongoing issues including: Medical Reimbursement, the reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, No Child Left Behind Act formula-based funding, immigration impact, school safety, school construction, technology, and secondary school reform.

**RECOMMENDED:**

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

1. adopt the proposed 2006 State and Federal Legislative Programs; and
2. authorize the Superintendent to advocate the best interest of the District on issues at both the state and federal levels that may have impending fiscal, local control, and/or governance impact on Miami-Dade County Public Schools' District operations, but does not have major policy implications, provided such issues are reported to the Board.

RFC:mgl

# MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## 2006 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

### MISSION/GOAL STATEMENT

*Provide the highest quality education so that all of our students are empowered to lead productive and fulfilling lives as lifelong learners and responsible citizens.*

### LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

**FUNDING FOR EDUCATION** (District Goal I – Ensure achievement of high academic standards by all students; District Goal II – Develop our students so that they are able to successfully compete in the global economy)

Adequately and equitably fund the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP), and fully fund the operating and capital outlay costs of implementing the class size reduction constitutional amendment, taking into account actual student enrollment, cost of living, equalizing features in the FEFP formula, inflation, increasing utility and insurance costs, and the actual cost of delivering programs to special populations. Maintain the integrity of the FEFP and equity of funding among school districts.

- Base student allocation (BSA) should keep pace with inflation;
- Equalization features in the formula;
- Oppose any further equalization of the .51-mill levy;
- Safe schools, Supplemental Academic Instruction, ESE guaranteed allocation should increase to accommodate student enrollment and inflation; and
- Higher cost of living districts should be compensated.

**CAPITAL FUNDING** (District Goal IV – Reform business practices to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and high ethical standards)

- Provide funding through a stable long-term revenue source for the actual capital outlay needs of districts based on existing student station deficits, projected enrollment growth, the need for replacement, remodeling and maintenance of facilities, providing for cost enhancements associated with varying local construction costs, state-mandated requirements and adverse environmental conditions.
- Amend the Classrooms for Kids (class size reduction capital outlay) allocation formula for capital outlay funding to reflect actual capital outlay need and the intent of the constitutional amendment.
- Repeal statutory limitations on the use of the 2-mill capital outlay levy.

- Amend state statutes requiring the cost per student station to increase by the Construction Cost Index instead of the Consumer Price Index.
- Oppose the deletion of impact fees unless replaced with another revenue source.
- Oppose any attempt to equalize the 2-mill levy.
- Support a sales tax exemption on all equipment and materials used to construct and maintain a public K-12 facility, not limited to materials and equipment incorporated directly into the building, ensuring that the savings are passed on to the school districts.

**SECONDARY EDUCATION REFORM** (District Goal I – Ensure achievement of high academic standards by all students; District Goal II – Develop our students so that they are able to successfully compete in the global economy)

Provide funding for secondary education reform that supports an extended school day and year, and encourages themed career path based academies and smaller learning communities.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** (District Goal V – Recruit, develop, and retain high-performing, diverse, and motivated faculty and staff)

Provide increased support for new teachers and competency-based professional development and alternative pathway principal preparation programs.

**VOLUNTARY PRE-KINDERGARTEN** (District Goal I – Ensure achievement of high academic standards by all students; District Goal II – Develop our students so that they are able to successfully compete in the global economy)

Modify the required instructional hours for the summer program.

**LEGAL** (District Goal IV – Reform business practices to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and high ethical standards)

Support the passage of a legislative claims relief act on behalf of the Estate of Jaime Gough.

Amend state statutes making it a felony violation for applicants and teachers who knowingly attempt to fraudulently obtain and/or maintain teacher positions.

**POLICY STATEMENTS**

Support maximum flexibility in the use of categorical funds.

Oppose the imposition of unfunded state-mandated expenditures.

Support increased accountability measures for all publicly funded school choice options.

Oppose voucher programs that lack equitable and sufficient accountability measures.

Maintain the current dual delivery system of post-secondary programs.

# MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## 2006 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

### MISSION/GOAL STATEMENT

*Provide the highest quality education so that all of our students are empowered to lead productive and fulfilling lives as lifelong learners and responsible citizens.*

As the 43<sup>rd</sup> President and the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress enter their second congressional session together, we urge the President and Congress to reaffirm their commitment to our nation's children by reinvesting in public education.

### MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT

Oppose provisions of the Medicaid Administrative Claiming (MAC) Guide that discriminate against school districts as legitimate providers of health services to all children, especially low-income, disabled students.

### WORKFORCE PREPARATION

Support public training and literacy opportunities for low-income adults under the reauthorization of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Welfare-to-Work (WW).

Enhance funding and effectiveness of public vocational training, adult education, family literacy, and career academy programs through reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act and through improved coordination with partner agencies under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) legislation.

### NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT FORMULA-BASED FUNDING

Provide funding increases leading to full funding levels authorized by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, including academic achievement of the disadvantaged (Title I), high-quality teachers and principals (Title II), limited English proficient (LEP) and immigrant students (Title III), 21<sup>st</sup>-Century schools (Title IV), and parental choice and innovative programs (Title V).

Support reform of formula funding disparities as identified by the General Accounting Office report of January, 2002, which hinder funds from reaching the nation's poorest students.

Support legislative efforts to require corrective sampling of flawed 2000 Census data to account for an estimated population undercount of at least 1.9% in Miami-Dade County.

### **IMMIGRATION IMPACT**

Address the impact of federal immigration policies on local school district funds by supporting the Entrant and Refugee Assistance Program under the Targeted Assistance and Immigrant Education appropriation serving foreign-born, limited English proficient (LEP) students and their families.

### **SCHOOL SAFETY**

Support adequate funding for safe and drug-free school initiatives and authorize school district police forces to receive Local Law Enforcement Block Grant (LLEBG) funds, based on uniform crime reports, to enhance security measures in and around schools.

### **SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION**

Support extension of the annual Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZAB) program, which provides for interest free loans to be secured by eligible school districts, and modify legislation to permit school construction and land acquisition.

### **TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS**

Support continued funding and streamline refund procedures for the Universal Service Fund Program (E-Rate) to provide schools and libraries with affordable access to state-of-the-art networking and telecommunications technology.

### **CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORM**

Support continued and additional funding for secondary education reform including themed career path based academies and smaller learning communities.