

Dr. Martin Karp, Member

SUBJECT: ADOPT AS A LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVE FOR THE 2006 LEGISLATIVE SESSION THE NEED FOR STATE LOTTERY FUNDS TO BE USED TO PROVIDE INCENTIVES TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THE TEACHING PROFESSION

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

A historic turnover is taking place in the teaching profession. While student enrollments are rising rapidly, more than a million veteran teachers are nearing retirement. Experts predict that overall we will need more than 2 million new teachers in the next decade. This teacher recruitment problem, which has reached crisis proportions in some areas, is most acute in urban and rural schools and for high-need subject areas such as special education, math and science, and for teachers of color.

Much has been said about the need to bring more young people into the teaching profession, but far too little has been done. Competitiveness for teacher candidates does not simply exist between states and school districts but also within occupational choices for young adults contemplating their careers of which teaching is only one potential choice, a less desirable choice it seems. We must make the occupational choice to teach a more desirable one.

We must first think about recruiting future teachers as high school graduates. We need vastly increased numbers of high school graduates choosing teacher preparation as their collegiate experience. We need to encourage more and more of these young men and women to major in education if we have any hope of filling our ranks into the future. If we do not improve both the quantity and the quality of young men and women attracted to teaching as a profession, then we will have no applicant pool from which to recruit and retain qualified teachers. It sounds simple, but it is a real challenge. Talented, energetic and committed young men and women interested in making their respective mark in today's world have so many options from which to choose. Unless we can make teaching more attractive we simply will not be able compete for their talents.

Some ideas include: incentives or supplements for teachers to lead groups and assist in appropriate activities and events to support and encourage student interest in the teaching field; scholarships for highly qualified high school graduates interested in teaching as a career; scholarships for highly qualified junior/senior college students who will agree to teach for a number of years; college loans for interested/qualified students with forgiveness provisions for those who teach in Florida's schools; and incentives for corporate sponsors and others to facilitate recruitment of teachers such as relocation assistance, reduced home loans, or waiver of fee.

Lottery funds should be used to attract high school graduates to the teaching profession by providing students with scholarships and other incentives when they enter the college of education and upon completion of their course of studies to gain employment with a Florida school district. The established mission of the Florida Lottery is to use lottery funding to significantly contribute to Florida's overall system of public education. A noteworthy method to ensure that funding to the education system makes an impact on future generations is to provide incentives to the brightest and most passionate students for them to explore majoring in an education field and becoming a teacher.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY:
DR. MARTIN KARP**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida include in its 2006 state legislative program the need for lottery funds to be used to provide incentives to recruit and retain young people into the teaching profession.