

Frank J. Bolaños, School Board Member

**SUBJECT: TEACHING OUR CHILDREN THE TRUTH ABOUT CUBA
BY REMOVING THE BOOK "VAMOS A CUBA" FROM
ALL OF OUR PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARIES &
REPLACING THEM WITH HISTORICALLY ACCURATE &
EDUCATIONALLY RELEVANT BOOKS**

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

The selection of books for our school libraries as delineated in School Board Rule 6Gx13-6A-1.26 includes standards that make it the responsibility of the district to "provide materials that are free of bias, stereotypes, distortions and prejudices, and information that "represents the many religious, racial, ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups in our society and reflect their contributions to the heritage and culture of our civilization." The book in question clearly does not meet this standard.

The book "Vamos a Cuba" published by Heinemann Library and carried in 34 of our libraries (according to the administration) includes content and pictures that erroneously depict life in Cuba. Superintendent Crew acknowledged this in a memo dated April 4, 2006. This book and its errors of commission and omission should not remain in the hands and minds of innocent five to nine year old children.

In April 2006, Juan Amador, a parent at Marjory Stoneman Douglas Elementary filed a protest with the School's ad-hoc Materials Resource Committee (SMRC) which decided on April 17th to maintain the challenged material. On April 19, the School Board decided not to remove the book from all school libraries following a lengthy discussion during which time most board members felt such a decision at that time would circumvent the formal appeals process.

On April 21, 2005, Amador appealed the decision of the SMRC with the Superintendent of Schools who opted to appoint a 17 member District Materials Resource Committee (DMRC).

**Replacement
B-13**

Prior to the initial meeting of the DMRC on May 22, the Superintendent pre-empted the outcome of the committee by making both public and private comments stating his opposition to removing any material from school libraries. Yet, in at least two meetings with appointed members of the DMRC, the Superintendent and Staff agreed with the existence of distortions and inaccuracies, even proposing that a placard accompany these books stating: "some of the information provided in this book about life in Cuba under that nation's communist dictatorship is incorrect or incomplete enough to be inaccurate."

At its final meeting on June 5, the DMRC voted 16 to 1, recommending the book remain in the library. This agenda item requests that the School Board right the wrong that was committed when School Board Rule 6Gx13-6A-1.26 was not applied in the selection of this book and direct the Superintendent to remove the book "Vamos a Cuba" from all Miami-Dade County public school libraries.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MR. FRANK J. BOLANOS:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida direct the Superintendent to immediately remove all copies of the book "Vamos a Cuba" from all Miami-Dade public school libraries due to non-compliance with the pedagogical standards delineated in School Board Rule 6Gx13-6A-1.26, such as its historical distortions, inaccuracies and stereotypical content and images.