

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

SUBJECT: REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE STATUS OF DISTRICT FOCUS ON STUDENT-ORIENTED SCIENCE RESEARCH AND PARTICIPATION IN SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS, AND ENGINEERING COMPETITIONS

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

At the School Board meeting of February 15, 2006, Dr. Martin Karp, Member, proffered Agenda Item B-14, Declining Focus on Student-Oriented Science Research and Participation in Competitions, which was approved by the full Board. Within this Board item, six recommendations were to be addressed by staff from the Office of Curriculum and Instruction: (1) the examination of supporting and providing incentives to school site personnel who encourage students to participate in science, mathematics and engineering clubs and competitive events; (2) encourage the review of the number and quality of high school science laboratories and demonstration rooms; (3) review current dissemination of information concerning competitive events; (4) explore the establishment of a high school specific to science, mathematics and engineering; and (5) examine the establishment of a District Priority budget in support of competitive events and (6) the development of a high school research course.

In response to the six recommendations, staff from Curriculum and Instruction has restructured its efforts and developed the following strategies: (1) a new award, the "Regional Science, Mathematics, and/or Engineering teacher of the Year" will be created; (2) seminars by renowned scientists, mathematicians, engineers, and researchers will be available to schools; (3) information will disseminated more uniformly through direct mailings to schools, the District's calendar, weekly briefings, the Office of Curriculum and Instruction website, and an email campaign to teachers; (4) knowledge, information, and awareness of competitive opportunities will be disseminated through coalitions with The Parent Academy, *Univision*, and *Cable Tap*; (5) District funds will be utilized to support competitive events; (6) The Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and Grants Administration will assist in finding additional funding sources to support mathematics, science, and engineering competitions; (7) the Administrative Director for Secondary Education, two Curriculum Support Specialists and part-time instructional hourly personnel will maintain oversight and monitoring of competitive events; (8) support to administrators of secondary schools will be provided to assist with the development of methodologies to compensate for the reduction of laboratories and demonstration classrooms; (9) a proposal for a 6 through 12 secondary school with a focus on science and mathematics has been developed in partnership with the University of Miami and the Miami MetroZoo/Zoological Society; and (10) secondary

schools selecting to offer an elective course in Laboratory Research class will receive assistance with the purchase of material and equipments through state science laboratory funds. District funds allocated to Elementary and Secondary Education in the tentative 2006-2007 budget to be adopted will be utilized to support these restructured efforts.

Authorization is requested to accept the report, *Status of Science and Mathematics Student-Oriented Activities*, developed by staff from Curriculum and Instruction. The report delineates a plan to address the six recommendations listed above.

Copies of the report 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 Office.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to accept the report, *Status of Science and Mathematics Student-Oriented Activities*

AD/MF:aa