

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: RECONVENE THE AD HOC MULTILINGUAL TASK FORCE

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

During the 1997-98 and 2001-02 school years, the Ad Hoc Multilingual Task Force was convened in order to design and implement a plan to improve the delivery of bilingual programs district wide. The recommendations of the Ad Hoc Multilingual Task Forces were received by the School Board. These recommendations focused on: (1) increased amount of instructional time in a language other than English, (2) application of a language other than English in content area learning, and (3) sustained study of a language other than English with opportunity for program continuity from kindergarten through grade 12. As a result of these recommendations, there has been a major expansion of these programs throughout the district.

The 2000 census revealed that more than 50% of our community is foreign born and speaks approximately 106 different languages. Many major corporations have established their international headquarters in the area. The future of Miami-Dade County and the economic development of South Florida depend on our ability to graduate students that are bilingual and biliterate. Students that can communicate professionally, both orally and in writing, in English and in a language other than English have greater opportunities for academic growth and employment. Through this program students will be prepared to be cultural ambassadors and be able to navigate the global economy that is such an important part of this community.

In order to reassess the district's progress towards meeting this goal, it is recommended that the Ad Hoc Multilingual Task Force be reconvened and that a plan be presented to the Board at the School Board meeting of April 18, 2007.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

VICE CHAIR PERLA TABARES HANTMAN: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to:

1. reconvene the Ad Hoc Multilingual Task Force following the configuration of representatives previously established;
2. explore the feasibility of making a foreign language a requirement starting from kindergarten through grade 12;
3. present to the School Board, at its meeting of April 18, 2007, a status report on implementation of the new action plan.