

Office of Professional Development  
Ava G. Byrne, Deputy Superintendent

**SUBJECT:           REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA APPROVE THE DISTRICT PLAN, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$405,000, TO COMPLY WITH FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 1003.03 IMPLEMENTING TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHERS PARTICIPATING IN TEAM TEACHING AS AN OPTION TO MEET CLASS SIZE REDUCTION REQUIREMENTS**

**COMMITTEE:       SCHOOL SUPPORT ACCOUNTABILITY**

Florida Statutes section 1003.03 was recently amended by the Florida Legislature to authorize the use of co-teachers in order to calculate class size averages that adhere to class size reduction requirements. The statute requires districts to set reasonable limits on the number of students in a classroom to avoid overcrowding. In addition, teacher-to-student ratios within a curriculum area or grade level cannot exceed constitutional limits and at least one co-teacher must have not less than three years of teaching experience. Similarly, at least one co-teacher must also be teaching in his/her field. The amended statute also mandates that co-teachers complete training in team-teaching within one year following placement in a co-teaching classroom. M-DCPS has approximately 2,700 teachers currently employed throughout the district that must undertake team teaching training in order to meet the statutory requirement.

To expand the range of options available for schools and teachers, the Office of Professional Development has identified several strategies that will facilitate compliance with statutory requirements. The proposed options outlined below include online and face to face training as well as regional professional learning sessions.

1. **ONLINE COURSEWORK:** Teachers may complete a 10-hour online course entitled *Foundations of Team Teaching* that has been approved by the Florida Department of Education. The course explores the roles and responsibilities of co-teachers in effective team teaching models and analyzes various team teaching methods. Participants may complete the course within approximately 6-10 hours depending upon each participant's pace. The course is offered through the Bay County Public Schools' BeaconEducator program at a cost of \$50 per participant. Accordingly, in the event that all teachers elect to complete the online course, the anticipated fee will total \$135,000. In addition to this expense, a one-time stipend in the amount of \$100 will be provided for teachers that complete the course beyond regular school hours. Although stipends are typically not provided to teachers that complete online professional development, stipends must be awarded in the event that the training is statutorily mandated.

2. FACE-TO-FACE SESSIONS: Teachers may select a district developed course entitled *Collaborative Teaching: Working Together* that supports the goals of team teaching. Upon completion of the course, evidence of participation through in-service records would provide adequate proof of compliance with the statutory requirement. Teachers that choose to complete this course will receive a one-time stipend in the event that the course is completed after regular school hours.

3. REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SESSIONS: Regional Centers may create a professional development course addressing team teaching. Through the recent addition of a component to the district's Master Inservice Plan entitled *Cooperative Planning and Team-Teaching Strategies*, Component Number 2-406-323, each region may design and deliver a professional learning activity that complies with the statutory requirement. Staff from the Office of Professional Development will work with regional staff in developing appropriate coursework. Teachers that choose to complete these courses will receive a one-time stipend in the event that they complete the course after regular school hours.

Teachers that complete the online, face to face or regional professional learning sessions will earn 18 Master Plan Points. Substitute coverage will be provided to schools for teachers that complete face to face or regional sessions during the regular school day. In the event that all teachers complete the online, face to face or regional courses beyond regular school hours, the anticipated stipend expense to be incurred will total \$270,000.

The appropriation to fund the online course option, in addition to the anticipated cost for substitute coverage and/or stipends that will be incurred for the online, face to face or regional courses is included in Other Contracted Programs under Fund 0420, Location 9017, Object 5390, Program 3412 and Function 6400.

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

1. approve the district plan to comply with Florida Statutes Section 1003.03, in an amount not to exceed \$405,000, implementing training requirements for teachers participating in team teaching as an option to meet class size reduction requirements;
2. authorize the Office of Professional Development to expand its existing partnership with BeaconEducator in order to provide access to the online course for teachers participating in team teaching; and
3. authorize the Office of Professional Development to continue exploring additional options to be implemented during the 2007-2008 school year.

The appropriation for this item is included in the Adopted Budget of Other Contracted Programs.

AGB/DBC/cm