

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Member

**SUBJECT: CONVENE A BROAD-BASED TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE
INHERENT ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH OUTDOOR
SUSPENSION**

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

**LINK TO DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLAN: ENSURE SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SCHEDULES
MEET THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS AND
ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING**

At the School Board meeting of March 14, 2007, I announced that I would be bringing an item at the next School Board meeting proposing a task force to study the inherent problems of attendance, such as outdoor suspensions and review alternatives to this disciplinary practice. We recognize that discipline is an integral component for an educational system to achieve success and that unacceptable behavior must have consequences. However, the issue of outdoor suspension is whether it is the best practice to achieve disciplinary goals which then lead to educational success.

A Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) article of June, 2004, referred to in agenda item A-4 at the last School Board meeting, offers a quote under "Attendance Policies" about outdoor suspensions: "Actively discharging students pushes students out the door." The same article further states that "In-school suspensions, where students are provided academic support and are kept engaged in school rather than sent home, are a better solution, suggests the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children (2002)."

In January of 2000, I brought to the Board Agenda Item B-2, authorizing the Superintendent to enter into a cooperative agreement with the City of Hialeah Police Department to open a Center for Outdoor Suspension to accommodate students who had been suspended from school and provide them with educational and counseling services from January through June, 2000. Although the program was conducted for only a short period of time, it was very successful and a worthwhile alternative to outdoor suspension for our students.

This agenda item proposes that a broad-based Task Force made up of school district and community representatives be convened to review alternatives to outdoor suspensions and provide a report to the School Board. The agenda item additionally recommends that the Superintendent propose the composition of this Task Force for approval of the members at the next School Board meeting.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

MS. PERLA TABARES HANTMAN: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida:

- 1) convene a broad-based Task Force to study the inherent issues associated with outdoor suspensions, review alternatives to outdoor suspensions and report its findings to the Board at the July 11, 2007 School Board meeting; and
- 2) recommend that the Superintendent propose the composition of this Task Force for approval of the members at the next School Board meeting of May 16, 2007.