

Antoinette Dunbar, Deputy Superintendent
 Curriculum and Instruction

SUBJECT: REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT TO ENTER INTO SEPARATE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS WITH FAIRCHILD TROPICAL BOTANIC GARDEN (\$285,000); HAITIAN HERITAGE MUSEUM (\$198,750); HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA (\$225,000); MIAMI SCIENCE MUSEUM (\$175,000); MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART (\$380,000); SMITHSONIAN EARLY ENRICHMENT CENTER (\$257,500); AND DR. ADELA BECKERMAN (\$105,000)

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LINK TO DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN: INCREASE PARENTAL CHOICE OPTIONS WITHIN DISTRICT TO PROVIDE DIVERSE AND HIGHER QUALITY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

On November 20, 2007, The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorized the Superintendent to accept a grant award from the United States Department of Education (USDOE) for funding under the Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) to implement the grant program, entitled *Choices*², at William J. Bryan Elementary, North Miami Middle, North Miami Senior High, and South Dade Senior High schools.

In order to facilitate implementation of the project, authorization is requested for the Superintendent to enter into contractual agreements with the following organizations, identified in the grant proposal, for a period of three years, not to exceed the stipulated amounts:

	YEARLY CONTRACT AMOUNT			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden	\$60,000	\$112,500	\$112,500	\$285,000
Haitian Heritage Museum	\$56,250	\$67,500	\$75,000	\$198,750
Historical Museum of Southern Florida	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$225,000
Miami Science Museum	\$45,000	\$60,000	\$70,000	\$175,000
Museum of Contemporary Art	\$90,000	\$140,000	\$150,000	\$380,000
Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center	\$73,500	\$86,500	\$97,500	\$257,500
Dr. Adela Beckerman	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$105,000
TOTAL:				\$1,626,250

William J. Bryan Elementary, North Miami Middle, and North Miami Senior High schools will implement museums magnet programs. As essential partners, museum providers (Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Haitian Heritage Museum, Historical Museum of Southern Florida, Miami Science Museum, and Museum of Contemporary Art) will collaborate with school site instructional personnel to develop specially designed thematic units that integrate the standards-driven curriculum with the objects, artifacts, and collections of their respective museums. This integrated curriculum, focusing primarily on object- and project-based learning, emphasizes problem-solving, communication, exploration, invention, and inquiry through on-going *learning expeditions* to museums and cultural institutions.

The decision to employ object-based learning as the central teaching and learning framework in the museums magnet design is based on the shared experiences of the M-DCPS teachers at Southside Elementary and Shenandoah Middle schools who were involved in the 2004-2007 MSAP grant. In these settings, where object-based learning was employed, teachers reported that it promoted and encouraged student observation, inquisitiveness, and reflection in learning. Therefore, objects are expected to be the central focus of instructional activities in museums magnet programs, and serve as a motivator, engaging students in looking at immediately evident features of an object, as well as less apparent traits of the object.

The Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center (SEEC), selected through a Request for Information (RFI) process, will provide rigorous professional development in object-based learning for approximately 135 teachers in the museums magnet programs at William J. Bryan Elementary, North Miami Middle, and North Miami Senior High schools. As a nationally-recognized model program with experience in museum-based education and object-based approach to teaching and learning, the SEEC provides leadership within the educational community and extends its expertise through national seminars, conferences, curriculum licensing, and consulting. To support the District's initiative to create and sustain an effective learning environment, the SEEC also will prepare a cadre of approximately 25 master teachers and interested local museum professionals with a model for continued training in this methodology, once Federal funding terminates.

In accordance with the terms of the grant application, Dr. Adela Beckerman, who is an external evaluator included in a pool of pre-qualified consultants approved by The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida on April 18, 2006, will conduct an annual evaluation for all four schools in order to assess whether the goals and objectives specified in the grant proposal are met through the implementation of the *Choices*² program. At the end of the first two years (2007-2008 and 2008-2009), interim annual reports will be issued to the USDOE summarizing the data with respect to planning and implementation. At the end of the third year of the project (2009-2010), a final report summarizing the project's outcomes in each of the four *Choices*² schools will be submitted.

In addition, Dr. Beckerman will conduct a separate, rigorous evaluation entitled *An Assessment of Object-Based Learning in a Museums Magnet Elementary School*, at William J. Bryan Elementary School. This quasi-experimental, non-equivalent control group design will evaluate the impact of the infusion of object-based teaching and learning strategies in the museums magnet program on student achievement at this school. This evaluation will involve the collection and analysis of pre-test and post-test scores for these elementary students and a carefully matched virtual control group of students who do not experience the object-based learning approach to learning.

The Professional Services Contract Committee established by School Board Rule 6Gx13- 3F-1.021, reviewed this Board Item on the remaining contracts on November 29, 2007, and recommended that an exception to the rule regarding bids or Request for Proposals be granted as follows:

CONTRACTOR	REASON
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden	Sole Source
Haitian Heritage Museum	Sole Source
Historical Museum of Southern Florida	Sole Source
Miami Science Museum	Sole Source
Museum of Contemporary Art	Specific Expertise

The appropriation for this item is included in the MSAP grant for Specialized Programs – Schools of Choice.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to:

1. grant exceptions to Board Rule 6Gx13- 3F-1.021, for the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Haitian Heritage Museum, Historical Museum of Southern Florida, and Miami Science Museum, based on sole source; and for the Museum of Contemporary Art, based on specific expertise;
2. enter into separate contractual agreements, not to exceed the amount of \$1,626,250, for the contract period of February 4, 2008 through June 30, 2010, with:
 - a. Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden not to exceed the amount of \$285,000;
 - b. Haitian Heritage Museum not to exceed the amount of \$198,750;
 - c. Historical Museum of Southern Florida not to exceed the amount of \$225,000;
 - d. Miami Science Museum not to exceed the amount of \$175,000;
 - e. Museum of Contemporary Art not to exceed the amount of \$380,000;
 - f. Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center not to exceed the amount of \$257,500;
 - g. Dr. Adela Beckerman not to exceed the amount of \$105,000; and
3. extend these contractual agreements through June 30, 2011, as authorized through official notification from the granting agency in order to complete the goals of the program.

LCR/MB:msm