

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT AND THE BOARD ATTORNEY'S OFFICE TO EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY, LEGALITY AND PROCESS OF INCREASING OPERATING REVENUES WITHIN THE PROPOSED MILLAGE RATES AS TENTATIVELY APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD ON JULY 15, 2008

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

LINK TO DISTRICT STRATEGIC GOAL: IMPROVE FINANCIAL SERVICES

Over the past several years, educational funding in the State of Florida has steadily declined. In the Miami-Dade County school district educational funding has declined even more. The elimination of the District Cost Differential (DCD) has cost the district tens of millions of dollars over the past few years. At the same time, Miami-Dade County Public Schools has experienced declining student enrollment in other than Charter Schools for the last several years, which also has negatively impacted district revenues.

Prior to an increased decline in student enrollment, our school district succeeded in adding new classroom spaces of approximately 20,000 student stations per year for several years. As a result, the district is able to do with less funding for facility construction in the near future. Conversely, the school district is in need of more revenue to fund operations primarily for teacher and other employee salaries.

Like most other school districts in Florida, the Miami-Dade County school district is already collecting the maximum amount of operating funds from property taxes permitted by the legislature without voter approval.

Therefore this agenda item proposes that the School Board direct the Superintendent and the School Board Attorney's Office to explore the feasibility, legality and process of increasing operating revenues within the proposed millage rates as tentatively approved by the School Board on July 15, 2008. Subsequently, the School Board may consider adopting a resolution requesting that the Miami-Dade County Commission place a referendum on the next county wide ballot.

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The referendum may be to authorize a county wide assessment of an amount of millage not to exceed .50 mills, for a term of not more than 4 years, for the purpose of providing additional operating funds to be used for teacher salaries and salaries for other vital employees. The School Board would agree to reduce the 1.75 mills (formerly 2 mills) capital assessment currently authorized, by not less than the millage it assesses for this item for each year that there is an additional operating fund assessment. Therefore the total millage for public schools would not exceed the total that would have been assessed without this additional operating fund assessment.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY VICE CHAIR
PERLA TABARES HANTMAN:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida direct the Superintendent and the School Board Attorney's office to explore the feasibility, legality and process of increasing operating revenues within the proposed millage rates as tentatively approved by the Board on July 15, 2008 and to provide a report at the September 10, 2008 School Board meeting.