

Milagros R. Fornell, Associate Superintendent
Curriculum and Instruction

SUBJECT: REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS TO ENTER INTO A TWO YEAR CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY TO FUND PARTICIPATION IN A MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM BY A COHORT OF M-DCPS SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$75,000 EACH YEAR

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LINK TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: EDUCATION

Authorization is requested for the Superintendent of Schools to enter into a two year contractual agreement with Nova Southeastern University to fund tuition expenses for a cohort of up to 22 M-DCPS speech language pathologists that will complete a specialized Master's degree program in an amount not to exceed \$75,000 each year. Each eligible participant will receive up to \$3,400 in covered tuition costs through this contractual agreement.

The nationally recognized Master's degree program in speech and language pathology offered through Nova Southeastern University Fischler School of Education and Human Services is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Speech Pathology and Audiology of the American Speech-Language Hearing Association. The program will provide specialized training that will facilitate the District's ability to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel serving in a critical need area. Through a collaborative effort aimed at addressing chronic shortages of speech language pathologists, the Master's degree program will establish a pipeline targeting the immediate and future availability of qualified professionals that can provide speech language pathology services for M-DCPS students. The program will also assist speech language pathologists in meeting state requirements to enroll in a Master's degree program within two years following their hiring date.

To facilitate cohort participation, Nova Southeastern University will offer coursework through a blended approach involving online classes and face-to-face sessions conducted at a north and south campus location. In addition to receiving partial funding through M-DCPS, participants will also be eligible to defray a portion of their tuition expenses by applying for funding directly from the university through a grant awarded to Nova Southeastern University by the Florida Department of Education that will enable participants to apply for funding three times during the academic year. Participants will pay remaining tuition expenses and additional costs to the university for books and applicable program fees incurred over the length of the program.

Funding for the Master's degree program is budgeted through the IDEA ARRA federal grant from the following budget structure: Fund 0432, Location 9615, Object 5310, Program 3249, and Function 5205.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent of Schools to enter into a two year contractual agreement with Nova Southeastern University to fund participation in a Master's degree program by a cohort of M-DCPS speech language pathologists in an amount not to exceed \$75,000 each year.