

Mr. Renier Diaz de la Portilla, Board Member

**SUBJECT: LOCAL-VENDOR PREFERENCE POLICY**

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

**LINK TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: STUDENT, PARENT, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

In difficult economic times, a community must come together to support its residents and local businesses. There is no better "stimulus plan" than one which is based on promoting local industries by providing business opportunities for local firms. Several government entities across Florida, including Leon County and Orange County Public Schools, have established local vendor preference policies. As recently as 2009 Martin County joined St. Lucie and Indian River counties in giving a slight edge to businesses from the Treasure Coast and Palm Beach County, specifically on competitive bids worth \$25,000 or more. Given the current economic climate in our community, the school district should strongly consider the implementation of its own comprehensive local vendor preference policy.

A district policy on local-vendor preference should consider:

- Miami-Dade County's policies on their Community Workforce Program and Local Business Preference, with specific regard to competitive bids, requests for proposals/qualifications, and professional service contracts;
- A definition of what constitutes a "local business";
- Provisions establishing preference based on local vendors being awarded the contract at their price if their bid is within 5% of the lowest bid (if that bid is made by an out-of-town company); and/or
- The feasibility of enabling a local company whose bid is within 5% of the lowest bid – when the lowest bidder is not a local business – to match that offer and win the contract.

In light of current economic conditions, it is imperative that the Board take action to help provide local companies with opportunities that stimulate local business. By establishing a local vendor preference policy, similar to that of the County and other government entities throughout the state, this Board would help strengthen the local economy and foster economic growth at a time of critical need in our community.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY**

**MR. RENIER DIAZ DE LA PORTILLA:** That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to work in collaboration with the District's Audit Committee to explore the feasibility of establishing a local vendor preference policy for Miami-Dade County Public Schools.