

Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Board Member

SUBJECT: SCHOOL CLOSURES

COMMITTEE: SCHOOL SUPPORT ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Recent issues related to school achievement highlighted the considerations and process for the closure of schools. Deliberations by the State Board of Education (SBOE) and the possible recommendations resulting therefrom instigated a maelstrom of activity. This issue quickly became a hotbutton topic, and it garnered a large amount of community and media attention.

Schools are held in high regard and viewed in a similar light to religious sanctuaries due to their role as bastions of education. Many stakeholders expressed concern that decisions made by groups not directly related to a local school or community can have an effect on the closure of a school. However, the action of the SBOE cannot directly close a school. This fact is not clear to some community members.

Florida Statute 1001.42(4)(b), relating to **Powers and duties of district school board**, specifies that the elimination of schools and the consolidation of school centers is expressly a power of district school boards. District school boards can and should deliberate on the recommendations of the board of education; however, the local school boards have the responsibility of making decisions about the operation of schools.

While the statute is clear on the duty of district school boards, there is not a board rule that expressly relates to the closure of schools during the normal course of operations. Moreover, if a school is closed it is not delineated what advice or actions that the School Board must take to ratify that action, if any at all.

It is critical that we capitalize on recent developments as an opportunity to review school closures and the role of the School Board in the process.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. DOROTHY BENDROSS-MINDINGALL:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to review the process for school closures and initiate rulemaking proceedings in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act to specify the role and powers of the School Board as it relates to the same, in the absence thereof.

**Replacement
H-10**