

Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON FLORIDA'S WAIVER TO THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND (NCLB) REQUIREMENTS AND ITS IMPACT ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

LINK TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: EDUCATION

Last year the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) initiated rulemaking related to changes to Florida's Accountability system in order to secure a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) from certain requirements under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. Some of these changes included modification to the manner in which the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) performance of English Language Learners (ELL) would be incorporated into school grade calculations.

There were strong objections to this methodology across the state resulting in the State Board of Education (SBOE) directing that a Task Force be created to review the issue and take input from all stakeholders. Superintendent Carvalho was appointed to serve as a member of this group which ultimately issued a number of recommendations. It is our understanding that though very few of these recommendations were accepted, the FLDOE transmitted a final waiver application to the USDE.

To date, school districts have not received an indication as to whether the state has been granted a permanent waiver from NCLB, nor what the implications are for students and teachers. It is important that the interests of ELL students and districts with disproportionately high ELL enrollments are fully and fairly considered in the state's accountability rulemaking process. Therefore, it is important that we as a Board support the Superintendent as he continues to actively advocate for accountability methodology which measures the academic progress of students and the effectiveness of schools, but that is fair, reasonable, and which does not unnecessarily penalize students who have not had sufficient time to acquire academic linguistic proficiency.

This item does not appear in the published agenda. There is good cause to vary from the agenda because it is critical that the Board have information regarding this important issue as soon as practicable in the event that we may wish to advocate for modification through available mechanisms.

**GOOD CAUSE
H-22**

ACTION PROPOSED BY CHAIR

PERLA TABARES HANTMAN:

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida:

- 1) support the Superintendent's efforts to advocate for reasonable and fair accountability methodology; and
- 2) request that the Superintendent update the School Board regarding the status of Florida's No Child Left Behind waiver, and its implications for English Language Learners in terms of testing and accountability, as information becomes available.