

Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY
 ENGAGEMENT**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK: FINANCIAL EFFICIENCY/STABILITY**

Throughout the country, public school districts have entered an unprecedented era of competition created through the availability of expanded educational options to parents and consumers. In 2012-13 alone, just over 63,000 students in Miami-Dade County opted out of the traditional public school offerings. This resulted in the loss of over \$400 million to our school district. To compact that loss, the 2014-15 state budget is projected to offer a total decreased education funding where most new funds are earmarked and not available for discretionary use. Additionally, a less than adequate and inequitable base student allocation for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) students continues to exist. Student membership and enrollment, in this financial climate, can have a significant impact on budgetary, personnel, and curricular decisions.

As some large urban districts throughout the nation experience declining student enrollment and corresponding decreased discretionary operating dollars, it is important to note M-DCPS has, through the efforts and dedication made by this Board, our employees, and nationally-recognized Superintendent, been able to increase student achievement, raise graduation rates, reduce the achievement gap, close the digital divide, and pass a \$1.2 billion bond referendum with a 70% approval rate. All of this in spite of the shrinking state and federal allocations and declining revenue from property taxes.

Educational choice has created an entrepreneurial condition under which the role of marketing and public relations becomes more vital to maintaining and/or increasing student enrollment through promoting greater community awareness of programmatic offerings, specialized educational opportunities, enriched curriculum and student achievement. Hence, the opportunity exists to further develop clear and proactive marketing strategies that seek to promote M-DCPS as a viable, high-quality educational product and, as a direct outcome of this positioning, secure funding through increased student retention and enrollment. A renewed look at marketing strategies should aim to not only retain students, but also focus on informing an influx of newly transplanted foreigners. It is important to note that many immigrants and newcomers arrive with preconceived notions about the public school system and often opt for private or charter options without considering local public schools.

M-DCPS has, perhaps more than any other institution, proven it is creative and accountable in the face of difficult economic conditions, and this developing program of marketing and public relations should prove to be another challenge that can be conquered. Ideally both systemic District initiatives, along with regional and school/feeder pattern grassroots efforts, can work to enhance student enrollment, inform our community and its newcomers of its progressive and academically advanced programs, and engage in creating new revenue opportunities to enhance our core mission.

It is the intent of this item that direction be given to the Superintendent to provide the Board with detailed recommendations that aim to increase enrollment and retention figures, address outreach efforts to the community, particularly Miami-Dade County newcomers of school-age children, and address any additional revenue producing marketing efforts and policies.

ACTION PROPOSED BY VICE CHAIR

DR. LAWRENCE S. FELDMAN:

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida direct the Superintendent to provide the School Board with recommendations related to the creation of a marketing and public relations campaign and policy with the objectives of:

1. Increasing student enrollment and retention; and
2. Driving greater local, national, international community awareness of Miami-Dade County Public Schools programs, offerings and student/school achievements, particularly to Miami-Dade County newcomers; and
3. Developing ongoing revenue streams to supplement diminished state and federal funds; and
4. Providing a district structure to make the above operational and productive with benchmarks and accountability established through the Public Relations department.
5. Supporting the Beacon Council, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, and other area chambers in off-setting the expenditures of corporate and economic entities.

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Review and recommendations to be brought to the Board by no later than the August 2014 School Board Meeting.