

Iraida R. Mendez-Cartaya, Associate Superintendent
Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Grants Administration, and Community Engagement

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF THE PROPOSED 2015 STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMS

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

LINK TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: FINANCIAL EFFICIENCY/STABILITY

As in previous years, the Board has actively advocated policy changes through the state and federal legislative process by formulating a legislative agenda. The proposed 2015 State and Federal Legislative Programs have been prepared by staff and are attached for the Board's review and approval. The development of both programs was initiated by the solicitation of proposals from School Board Members, the Superintendent of Schools, staff, school-site personnel, employee groups, municipal and county governments, and citizen groups. The proposed 2015 State Legislative Program and the 2015 Federal Legislative Program have been streamlined to include priority action items and policy items that provide direction to the Board's legislative team, comprised of staff and legislative consultants. New issues are highlighted with underscores.

The state legislative session is scheduled to commence on Tuesday, March 3, 2015, with interim committee meetings starting in January 2015. The proposed 2015 State Legislative Program focuses on a limited number of legislative priorities: Funding; Accountability Reform; Capital Funding; School Readiness; Charter Schools; Teacher Preparation/Compensation; Safety; Facilities; Workforce Development; Virtual Education; and Policy Statements. Staff is recommending that the priorities focus on right-sizing the state's accountability system to ensure that assessments are used to improve instruction and learning and obtaining a long-term statutory solution to the property value assessment process, the basis of the majority of school district funding.

Florida's system of assessment and accountability has been in a state of perpetual flux for the last several years and now with the implementation of an entirely new test, uncertainty and angst is high among teachers, students, parents and community members. The frequent changes have caused some to call for the elimination of state testing all together. The School

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Board of Miami-Dade County and this administration support accountability, such that it effectively improves teaching and learning. Reasonableness in testing and the fair calculation of accountability grades have long been at the forefront of the District's discussion and advocacy efforts.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (M-DCPS) biggest fiscal concern is its inability to access the full budgetary increase (total available) in property tax revenue due to a statutory requirement to use the final certified roll issued by the local property appraiser for the purpose of determining school funding. Unfortunately, Miami-Dade is one of a few counties where the property appraiser does not finish the property valuation by the required date of July 19th. Additionally, Miami-Dade's taxable values have been historically overstated by 3 to 4 percent. These two factors create a significant funding problem for M-DPS. As a result, this past year the loss in actual revenue in comparison to projected revenue to M-DCPS was approximately \$47.6 million. Finding a permanent solution to the property valuation process that both protects the taxpayer right to appeal the value of their property but also ensures that the children of Miami-Dade County timely receive their equitable share from the education funding formula on a timely basis which is critical to long-term budgetary stability.

At the federal level, the 114th Congress enters its first congressional session in January 2015. As the upcoming session approaches, the District will urge the President and Congress to reaffirm their commitment to the nation's children by investing in public education and the hope it provides our society by fully funding the cost of implementing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and avoiding potentially damaging reductions in education funding and services.

The proposed 2015 Federal Legislative Program is comprised of ongoing issues including: Federal Education Resources; Elementary and Secondary Education Act; Early Childhood Education; Immigration Impact; School Nutrition; Medicaid Reimbursement; School Construction and Renovation; Technology in Schools; Workforce Preparation; Health Care; Personnel; and Student Safety.

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

1. adopt the proposed 2015 State and Federal Legislative Programs; and
2. authorize the Superintendent to advocate for the best interests of the District on issues at the state and federal levels that may have fiscal, local control, and/or governance impact on Miami-Dade County Public Schools' operations, but does not have major policy implications, provided such issues are reported to the Board.

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MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2015 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

GOAL STATEMENT

The Florida Legislature should establish a five-year strategic plan to restore, stabilize, and increase funding through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) to achieve at least the national average in per pupil expenditures to provide the highest quality education and to enable all of our students to be empowered to lead productive and fulfilling lives as lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

2015 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY POSITIONS

FUNDING:

Restore the state's investment in K-12 education by increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to at least pre-recession levels of \$4,163.47 and the total per student funding of \$7,307.90.

Revise the Value Adjustment Board proceedings to include:

- Proof of the property owner consent/knowledge of an appeal;
- Limit appeal rescheduling to only one for good cause;
- Payment of interest at the market rate; and
- Require the property appraiser to finish all appeals by June 30th of each year.

Amend state statutes to allow school districts to levy the Prior Period Funding Adjustment Millage based on the property appraiser's estimate of the prior year gross taxable value.

Modify the penalty for non-compliance with the constitutional class size requirement to be based on the school-wide average for *all* public schools.

Conduct an impartial third-party study to develop a cost of education Index which focuses on cost differences integral to K-12 public school district operations reflecting such costs as average teacher salaries, health insurance for employees, property insurance per FTE, and transportation costs per FTE.

Increase funding for Safe Schools and revise allocation formula so that each district's allocation is equal to fifty percent of prior year eligible district expenditures.

Fully fund the infrastructure cost and the acquisition of computers for the mandated expansion of computer-based administration of statewide testing, and the digital content conversion required by 2015-2016.

Provide school districts funding to cover the full cost of offering dual enrollment courses through incentive funding to school districts/schools that offer such programs and have successful completion of dual enrollment courses by students.

Fully fund and allow school districts to determine locally how to ensure the lowest performing schools/students receive additional instructional time by either extending the school day or extending the school year.

Amend F.S. 1011.61 to fully fund programs taken by students beyond the 1.0 FTE cap or 25 hours a week such as virtual classes outside the traditional school day and year.

Eliminate the statutory provision requiring the passage of end-of-course assessment for funding purposes.

Amend F.S. 1008.36 related to Florida School Recognition Program requiring FLDOE to distribute funds to eligible schools only after all school letter grades are released.

Fully fund the development of end-of-course (EOC).

Oppose the imposition of unfunded, state-mandated expenditures.

ACCOUNTABILITY REFORM:

Revise the current assessment system and accountability system to:

- Provide proper field testing in Florida of the entire new state assessment, not simply sample questions, ensuring the statistical requirements of validity and reliability;
- Provide a two-year transition of grading districts and schools to allow for field testing and setting appropriate baseline assessment data;
- Authorize alternate methods for assessing learning and achievement for special populations such as ESE and English Language Learners (ELL) students;
- Ensure two years of language acquisition for ELL students;
- Suspend accountability consequences for another year;
- Provide Florida's statewide assessments in multiple languages as allowed by federal regulations;
- Eliminate the practice of using student performance on a single standardized test as the sole basis of student and school performance; and
- Perform a comprehensive review of the entire assessment program.

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Reinstate a special education diploma for students with disabilities.

Ensure charter and private schools receiving public monies adhere to the same teacher certification, student placement, and progression policies to ensure compliance with federal and state accountability requirements.

CAPITAL FUNDING:

Establish a long-term, stable, and recurring revenue source sufficient to fulfill the state's educational facility needs.

Restore the allowable discretionary voted capital outlay millage by .10 mills annually until restoration of the full 2 mills.

Oppose any diversion of Local Discretionary Capital Outlay levy revenue from traditional public schools to charter schools.

Fully fund the Public Education Capital Outlay Program that involves construction and maintenance programs for public school districts and ensure that school districts receive their fair share.

SCHOOL READINESS:

Support state funding for a high-quality, full-day Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) program.

CHARTER SCHOOLS:

Repeal the requirement to use the standard charter contract.

Oppose any changes to current requirements regarding charter conversion of traditional public schools that dilute the role of parents, teachers, and community stakeholders.

Support capital funding for charter schools that:

- Creates neither a reduction of funding to traditional public schools in operating or capital funding nor a requirement for additional taxing mandate on the local school district;
- Requires public input; and
- Protects taxpayers' investment ensuring that capital funding be spent only on assets that can be returned to the public school district.

Establish a level playing field for traditional public schools by extending the current statutory flexibility such as the exemption from State Education Required Facilities (SREF), categorical funding, accountability, class size reduction compliance and related penalties assessed on charter schools.

Clarify that a charter school contract automatically terminates after a charter school has exhausted all of its administrative appeals after receiving two consecutive grades of F or upon voluntary closure.

Allow school districts with charter school enrollment exceeding 15 percent to limit approvals of charter school applications through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to locate in areas of highest need or through the formulation of district/charter collaborations.

Allow charter schools to weight low-income and educationally disadvantaged applicants in admissions lotteries as recommended by the U.S. Department of Education guidance to create more integrated schools.

Improve safeguards of tax payer investments and transparency between traditional public schools and charter schools, including, but not limited to, implementing the following safeguards:

- Require charter school applications and lotteries be monitored by the local school board, or an appropriate independent entity, to ensure a fair, equitable, and transparent process for all students;
- Allow local school districts to negotiate an appropriate usage fee based on market comparables;
- Require funding to follow the student when transferring between charter and traditional public schools during the school year;

- Establish financial disclosure standards and requirements for charter school officers and related parties involved in financial decision making, similar to traditional public school standards;
- Require the state to create a pre-qualification process for charter school applicants; and
- Require the same standards of governance, conduct and ethics for public officials to apply to charter school governing board members, charter school corporate officers and employees.

TEACHER PREPARATION/COMPENSATION:

Require teacher certification to meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and align state standards to ensure that teachers are highly qualified in content areas as well as in pedagogy.

Educational program needs must include the ability for instructional staff to be qualified in order to certify students in vocational areas for industry-certified programs.

Amend state statutes related to the Student Success Act to clarify that:

- Only one annual evaluation is required for teachers; and
- Provide for annual supplements in lieu of base salary increases for highly effective teachers only.

Provide a three-year transition for student growth measures to become part of the teacher evaluation system as the Florida State Assessment (FSA) and local end-of-course exams are developed and implemented.

Allow districts to use FSA Reading/Math and/or school-wide data for instructional staff with no assessment until such time as local valid and reliable assessments have been developed.

SAFETY:

Require that the Florida High School Athletic Association make literature available to parents on the importance of having a cardiovascular assessment such as an EKG performed on student athletes and pursue mandatory screening prior to participation in any organized sports.

FACILITIES:

Provide local school districts the flexibility to use the Florida Building Code in lieu of the State Requirements for Educational Facilities.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

Support legislation that attempts to strengthen the role of technical centers in the development of a skilled workforce.

Include representatives from the secondary schools' career and technical education programs in the state's Articulation Coordinating Committee.

VIRTUAL EDUCATION:

Modify the requirement to offer three different virtual offerings to students.

POLICY STATEMENTS:

Funding

Fully fund class size reduction requirement while providing increases to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) and other components of the FEFP.

Examine Florida's tax structure and phase out sales tax exemptions for non-essential goods and services; ensure that internet sales remit necessary sales tax to Florida.

Support maximum flexibility in the use of categorical funds.

Maintain the integrity of the FEFP and equity of funding among school districts.

Oppose any prescribed expenditure such as the "65 percent solution" as a mandate in the Florida Constitution and further oppose any such legislation, unless established as a spending goal with the definition of expenditures to include all instructional support expenditures.

Oppose compression of the Discretionary Millage.

Support equivalent supplemental funding for the participation and the attainment of a diploma for Advanced Placement, Cambridge (AICE) and International Baccalaureate programs.

Maintain the current required employers' contribution rate to the Florida Retirement System by absorbing any planned increase in local employer's contribution.

Oppose legislation that increases the sovereign immunity liability limits on governmental agencies.

Commit to long-term funding stability for teacher performance pay and teacher evaluation systems.

Provide maximum flexibility with the funds appropriated.

Allow school districts to locally establish contract provisions inclusive of cost structures with postsecondary institutions related to the delivery of dual enrollment.

Increase ESE per pupil funding to account for both student growth and inflationary cost particularly in level 254 and 255 to provide early identification and intervention services for students with autism.

Support grant funding to create new and innovative programs and academies.

Capital Funding

Provide adequate school construction funding to support new and existing facilities, technology, maintenance, land acquisition and class size reduction needs through the establishment of long-term, stable and recurring revenue sources to fulfill the state's educational facility needs.

Oppose any further reduction in capital millage available to school districts for the purpose of balancing the operating budget.

Oppose any attempt to equalize the capital outlay levy.

Oppose the deletion of impact fees unless replaced with another revenue source.

Expand the allowable use of a locally voted upon sales tax to include operating expenses that maintain, renovate, or repair existing school facilities or maintain, secure, or upgrade school technology equipment.

Governance

Oppose legislation that subverts district governance of constitutionally elected local school boards and elected or appointed superintendents.

Oppose legislation that modifies the governance structure of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Oppose legislation that breaks up large school districts.

Choice

Support increased accountability measures for all publicly funded school choice options.

Oppose all publicly funded programs that lack equitable and sufficient accountability measures.

Oppose implementation of additional or any increases in funding for voucher programs while requiring more accountability from schools receiving Florida Tax Credit Scholarship (FTCS) funding.

Academics

Support legislation that will require high-quality training in reading and English language development for teachers responsible for instructing English Language Learners (ELL).

Support the development of high-quality English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards.

Oppose legislation that would limit offering gifted programs to eligible high school students.

Support legislation that delays Academic Scholarship Signing Day until May of each year.

Support legislation that ensures that Florida State Assessment (FSA) testing not be administered during religious holidays.

Require the state to provide a minimum of one-year lead time on new state requirements for school districts.

Maintain the current dual delivery system of post-secondary programs.

Support amending F.S. 1009.534 and 1009.535 adding the attainment of the Advanced Placement Capstone diploma as one of the eligibility requirements for Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

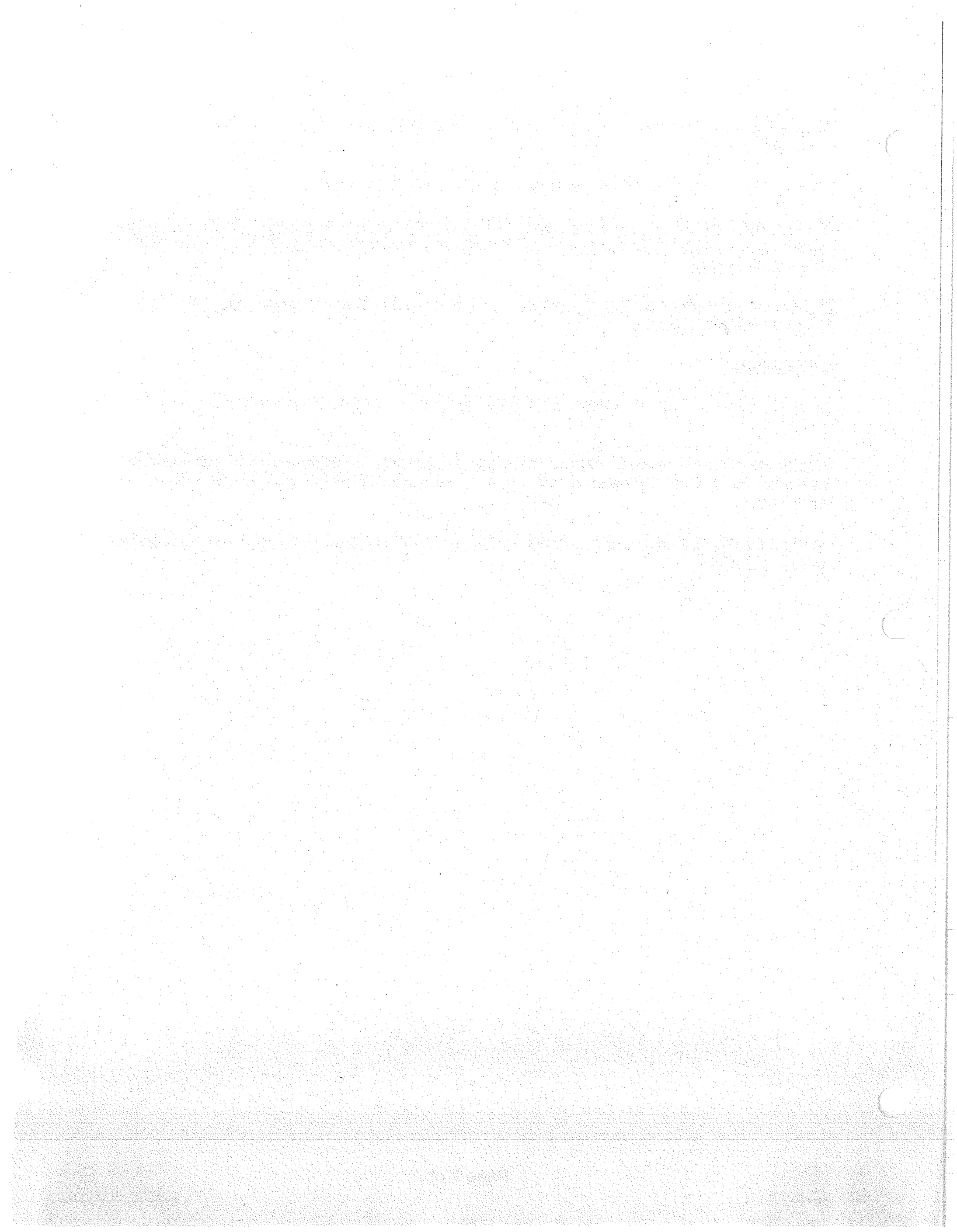
Create a statewide taskforce for Hispanic Heritage Education modeled after the African-American History taskforce.] ADDED

Student Safety

Support legislation that proposes a "slowing down zone" within an area prior to entering a school zone.

Support funding to provide training for students, parents, teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and volunteers to learn how to recognize behaviors that lead to bullying and harassment.

Ensure any casino authorized in Florida is at least 1,000 feet from a school or land designated for school purpose.



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2015 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

MISSION/GOAL STATEMENT

Provide the highest quality education so that all of our students are empowered to lead productive and fulfilling lives as lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

As the first session of the 114th Congress convenes, we urge the President and Congress to reaffirm their commitment to our nation's children by reinvesting in public education.

FEDERAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

Increase the federal investment in public education to fully fund the implementation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Increase federal entitlement funding to school districts such as Title I appropriations for disadvantaged students, Title II for improving teacher and principal training and recruiting, or Title III for English Language Learners (ELLs).

Support reform of formula funding disparities which hinder resources from reaching the nation's poorest students.

Support the reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (TRIA) ensuring that the federal government would share some of the losses with the insurance market should a significant event occur ensuring insurance coverage affordable and available to local governments.

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND)

Reauthorize and modify the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind Act 2001) to:

- recognize student progress in lieu of the current all-or-nothing approach and recognize degrees of progress for schools;
- allow state flexibility to provide two years of language acquisition, prior to ELL students' performance be included in the state accountability results;
- eliminate sanctions associated with not meeting adequate yearly progress;
- ensure fair accountability by providing flexibility for special education and ELLs and other formula adjustments and by requiring identical tests for Title I and Title III students in non-public schools;
- include other indicators for accountability such as dual enrollment industry certification and Advanced Placement (AP) courses, graduation rates, and

dropout attendance suspensions in determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and align accountability standards with those in the School Improvement grant;

- reward and retain quality teachers by supporting measures that raise pay for teachers in fields with shortages and/or in high-need communities; that create career ladder paths; and that assist with rising housing costs;
- establish new qualification requirements for teachers and paraprofessionals to ensure that teachers be highly skilled in content areas, as well as in pedagogy;
- allow districts to use Supplemental Education Services (SES) funds to provide tutoring to eligible students, as well as pay for monitoring and other implementation costs out of the required 20% set-aside, and ensure that public schools not be unfairly prevented from providing remedial services to students;
- require that funding to SES private providers be contingent on outcomes on norm-referenced assessments developed and administered by the state and/or the district; and
- allocate immigrant funds under Title III based on the number of recently arrived foreign-born students.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Support increased funding for the Head Start Program and appropriate early education standards for Head Start that are aligned with state academic content standards designed to ensure school readiness.

Support federal funding to develop, expand, and enhance quality voluntary preschool programs while ensuring the adoption of developmentally appropriate early education standards that are aligned with state K-12 academic content standards.

Support the Early Learning Challenge Fund or similar legislation that encourages states to develop effective, innovative child care delivery models that promote high quality childhood education programs and ensure school readiness.

IMMIGRATION IMPACT

Address the financial impact of federal immigration policies on local school districts for increased demand for immigrant education and integration programs by supporting the Refugee and Entrant Assistance Program's under the Targeted Assistance and Immigrant Education allocation serving foreign-born students and their families.

Support federal funding directly to school districts to address the burdensome costs of serving the needs of unaccompanied children arriving at our schools to ensure districts operational readiness.

Support provisions of a comprehensive immigration bill that supports English language literacy, and technical training as well as the DREAM Act or similar legislation that would provide immigration relief to a select group of students who grew up in the United States, who have good moral character, and who are pursuing a college education or have enlisted in the military.

SCHOOL NUTRITION

Support increased federal reimbursement rates to more accurately reflect the cost of producing a healthy school meal, including making the six cent certification permanent.

Provide program funds to support the costs of food service employees receiving training and professional development to adhere to and enhance the effective implementation of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act and Nutrition Education and Wellness Plans.

Support a tiered system of income eligibility guidelines and reimbursement rates by taking into account the varying costs of living in communities throughout the nation.

MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT

Oppose any policy revisions to restrict school-based reimbursement for administration expenditures and certain transportation costs for services provided to low-income children with disabilities.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION/RENOVATION

Support supplemental allocations for large school districts with high levels of free and reduced-price lunch participants to implement "green" sustainable projects, including upgrading technology infrastructure, replacing school buses or maintenance vehicles to improve operational efficiency and to reduce the carbon footprint, and extending the useful life of existing school buildings by eliminating adverse indoor environmental conditions that are not conducive to learning.

TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS

Support increased resources with local flexibility and expand eligible expenditures to include educational linkage beyond the school for the Universal Service Fund Program (E-Rate) and streamline refund procedures to provide schools and libraries with affordable access to state-of-the-art networking and telecommunications technology.

Increase E-Rate funding to help school districts and libraries achieve and maintain universal broadband service.

WORKFORCE PREPARATION

Support increased funding to meet the demands for workforce skills development under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), — the Carl T. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act, and new federal workforce initiatives that minimize barriers to service coordination, and safeguard the needs of all US workers, including low-literacy and disadvantaged populations.

Preserve the role of district-operated adult education and job training programs.

HEALTH CARE

Retain tax-advantaged status of employee and employer contributions for healthcare premiums and costs including Health Savings Accounts (HSA) and Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRA) as well as Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA).

PERSONNEL

Enhance resources to recruit, develop, and retain highly qualified teachers in fragile or low-performing schools.

STUDENT SAFETY

Support legislation that provides supplemental resources to assist school districts in deferring internet crime and cybercrime through awareness and promotion prevention to our students, teachers, and parents.

Support federal funding to local law enforcement and school districts to ensure that schools have well-trained and equipped police personnel to protect children while in schools.

Increase funding for safe and drug-free school initiatives to implement and expand interventions that focus on reducing disruptive and aggressive behaviors and strengthen students' emotional and behavioral competencies.