

Mr. Carlos Curbelo, Board Member

**SUBJECT: SUPPORT OF THE FLORIDA TAX SCHOLARSHIP AND  
EDUCATIONAL CHOICE**

REVISED

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**

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

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) is a leading innovator in a state whose Strategic Education Plan establishes a goal to "expand choice options" to all students. MDCPS offers a rich array of learning options, including magnet and choice schools, charter schools, and career and professional academies.

MDCPS has one of the most diverse student populations in the country including a high percentage of students from low-income families who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. The Florida Tax Credit Scholarship was created in 2001 to provide a unique learning option for students from low-income families. The Tax Credit Scholarship now serves thousands of students attending numerous private schools in Miami-Dade; students who come from households with an average income below the poverty line.

According to standardized tests required by the state, scholarship students statewide are among the worst performers in their public schools when they leave them, but then once on the program they achieve learning gains similar to students of all incomes, including those from higher-income families. Independent research from Northwestern University has shown that public schools statewide most impacted by the loss of scholarship students are themselves showing significant test-score gains among low-income students.

While MDCPS has been nationally recognized for its great strides in improving the quality of education and educational choices for low-income families, other Florida school districts lag far behind. After 13 years of successful Tax Credit Scholarship operations, the Florida Education Association, Florida School Boards Association, Florida Association of School Administrators and others filed a lawsuit on August 28, 2014, seeking to shut down the program and potentially remove nearly 69,000 low-income students from the schools of their choice.

This item merits good cause due to the fact that it is imperative for The Board to address this legal action which could aggrieve thousands of low-income families in Miami-Dade County.

**Revised Good Cause<sup>2</sup>  
H-15**

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
MR. CARLOS CURBELO:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 14-115 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, opposing the lawsuit, *McCall v. Scott*, and respectfully ask the plaintiffs to consider the best interests of the students and low-income families who depend on the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship as they proceed.

DELETED

