

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Board Member

SUBJECT: STATUS UPDATE ON SCHOOLS THAT RECEIVED AN "F" LETTER GRADE BASED ON THE SPRING 2016 STATE ASSESSMENT

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, EVALUATION, AND TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: RELEVANT, RIGOROUS, AND INNOVATIVE ACADEMICS

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), as a whole, has seemingly done well with respect to student learning and achievement. State and national awards, accolades, and recognitions have served to evidence M-DCPS' success in several areas related to educational achievement, innovation, and reform, and shone a bright, positive light on the school district. However, in certain sectors of the school district and community, there remain children who attend schools that consistently and persistently underperform based on mandated annual state assessments.

Consistent and persistent underperformance is a stark contrast, runs counter to, and appears to have been recently excluded from the broader narrative and policy discourse of M-DCPS. This underperformance is based on assessments that have consequences for students that impact proficiency, promotion, graduation, and a student's overall realization of learning and life-long success. As such, it must be a focal point of the Board and Superintendent's dialogue about school and student performance.

Research has concluded that the most critical function of a local school board is to set policy for improving the educational outcomes for its students. Consequently, the local school board serves a pivotal leadership role in ensuring that all students in the district have fair and equitable access to a quality education.

The School Board has a statutory, educational, social, and moral duty and responsibility to ensure that every student has an opportunity for learning and life-long success. It is held accountable for improving the academic performance of all students and for identifying and improving schools that fail to meet accountability standards. In fact, Pillar 1 of the District's Vision 20/20 Plan notes under Priority 2 its plan and intent to "decrease the number of low-performing schools as evidenced by Florida's School Accountability Program by at least 10 percent over the next five years." This is a critical metric that focuses on closing the achievement gap and of which the School Board should monitor and measure on an ongoing basis.

In addition, the State Board of Education holds the School Board accountable for student performance. In doing so, it must maintain a system of school improvement and educational accountability, and annually approve and require the implementation of a new, amended, or continuation school improvement plan for each school in the district. This is especially requisite in cases where a school:

- Has a significant gap in achievement on statewide, standardized assessments administered pursuant to s. 1008.22; and
- Has not significantly increased the percentage of students passing statewide, standardized assessments; and
- Has not significantly increased the percentage of students demonstrating Learning Gains, as defined in s. 1008.34 and as calculated under s. 1008.34(3)(b).

The state further provides clear and specific provisions for schools that receive letter grades of D or F, as outlined in 1008.33. Presently, there are several schools in M-DCPS that are consistently and persistently underperforming. In fact, one school has received five consecutive letter grades of F.

As the school year progresses and the annual state assessment cycle approaches, it is incumbent that the School Board has a clear understanding of the status of its most fragile schools, specifically, those schools that currently have a grade of F. This understanding should include, but not be limited to:

- School improvement planning; and
- Intervention and support strategies; and
- School leadership quality improvement; and
- Educator quality improvement; and
- Professional development; and
- Curriculum alignment and pacing; and
- Continuous improvement and monitoring; and
- Resource allocation; and
- School climate and culture; and
- Parental, family, and community partnership/outreach.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. STEVE GALLON III:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to:

1. Provide a status update on the District's F Schools that includes information regarding school improvement planning, intervention and support, leadership, teacher quality and support, professional development, curriculum, resource allocation, technology, and parental and community partnerships at its Meeting of February 15, 2017; and
2. Provide a status update on F schools regarding same to the Board in writing on a monthly basis; and
3. Initiate a framework and process to establish a District Advisory Board to provide input and support to schools that earn two (2) or more consecutive letter grades of F based on required annual state assessments.