

Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Board Member

SUBJECT: TEACHER COMPENSATION

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS, LEADERS, AND STAFF

As public attention continues to grow on the subject of improving teacher quality and teacher compensation, many states, including Florida, have explored and mandated pay-for-performance programs as possible ways to inspire and reward high-quality performing teachers. However, questions persist about the effectiveness, design, and comprehension of these programs, as well as the positive and negative effects on student achievement.

Inquiries related to performance pay, holding teachers responsible for their students' performance on state achievement tests (regardless of the many variables that influence students' performance on these tests), teacher satisfaction, teacher retention, and the overall respect and recognition for the job teachers perform are topics which the educational community continue to debate. Teachers throughout Miami-Dade County Public Schools have proven to be outstanding professionals, highly dedicated to their students and always willing to go the extra mile. For years, they saw more responsibilities and demands being placed on them with no changes to their base salaries.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools, under the leadership of the School Board and the Superintendent has always placed teacher compensation as a top priority as additional dollars may be allocated to the District. On January 25, 2017, Agenda Item A-2, submitted by the Superintendent of Schools, included a recommendation to provide legislative solutions that modify or replace the current Florida Value Added Model (VAM). Additionally, on March 15, 2017, Agenda Item H-3, Support for Teacher Recruitment and Retention Initiatives, which also included teacher compensation, was offered by this Board Member reaffirming the Board's support of teacher recruitment and retention initiatives. Most recently, at the January 17, 2018 School Board Meeting, Agenda Item H-6 was proffered by Dr. Steve Gallon III and Agenda Item H-7 was proffered by Ms. Lubby Navarro, both addressing the matter of exploring alternate available funding sources and solutions to improve teacher salaries. The Superintendent will be scheduling workshops to respond to the recommendations made on the last two agenda items.

An effective teacher is the most important school-based determination of education outcomes. Therefore, it is crucial that school districts recruit and retain high-quality teachers. This is increasingly challenging given that the supply of teachers has been greatly affected by high early to mid-career turnover rates, other career opportunities, annual retirements of longtime teachers, and a decline in students opting for a teaching career. At the same time, many factors are increasing the demand for teachers, including shrinking class sizes and the need to meet higher accountability requirements. The demand for teachers is mounting while concurrently the supply of teacher candidates is uncertain.

As policymakers, we should remember that teacher pay models ought to be designed and/or reformed to recruit and retain the highest quality teachers in a cost-effective manner. Furthermore, improving and/or reforming teacher compensation should have real and significant benefits, since teaching is the most important factor that ultimately affect student learning and achievement.

This agenda item is submitted to the Board in order to continue the conversation about issues embedded in enhancing and/or reforming teacher compensation and benefits and include the outcomes of these discussions in the upcoming workshops approved by the Board. The topics of discussion could be general in nature but will provide the Superintendent further guidance related to the themes which may be discussed at the workshops. While alternate funding sources may or may not be viable solutions, we must continue the discussions and be creative in finding solutions to compensate teachers. Possible items for discussions, with continued collaboration with the United Teachers of Dade (UTD), may include the State's pay-for-performance program (VAM); how the District can simplify this program in order for everyone to understand it and benefit from it; how this program affects those teachers who may not have a clear or direct impact on student performance as determined by the state's assessment program (media specialist, counselors, vocational education, others); how a reformed teacher compensation package based on innovative staffing model(s) with a strong accountability practice at each school level - elementary, K-8, middle, and high school - may present different venues to support and enhance teacher compensation and career ladder; how the utilization of technology may impact school staffing; possible School Board action to request that the Governor call a special session to address teacher compensation in the State of Florida; initiation of a joint meeting of the School Board and the Dade Legislative Delegation specifically to address teacher compensation; providing all employees with correspondence delineating the full compensation package offered by the Board, including salaries and benefits; and other discussion items as determined by School Board Members and the Superintendent of Schools.

Throughout the years, the School Board and the Superintendent have reaffirmed their commitment to all stakeholders that Miami-Dade County Public Schools is faithfully dedicated to ensure that we recruit, retain, reward, and respect all instructional personnel.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney's office as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. MARIA TERESA ROJAS:**

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

1. include in the upcoming workshops approved by the Board the strategies outlined in this agenda item and/or those presented and discussed by Board Members at its meeting of April 25, 2018; and
2. continue to ensure that teacher compensation is a priority, as safety and security, for the 2018-2019 school year.