

Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Board Member

SUBJECT: REGION CENTERS

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
BLUEPRINT: EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES**

At the School Board meeting of April 5, 2017, the Board approved Agenda Item H-6 Revised titled *Miami-Dade County Public Schools Regional Centers*. This agenda item, proffered by the maker of this item, directed the Superintendent to review, analyze, and present to the Board any restructuring, organizational, operational and financial options as may be needed, for the District's Regional Centers. Currently, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has three geographic Region Centers: North, Central, and South. Each region supports an average of 110 schools and specialized centers. Region Centers cover areas from Hialeah and Miami Lakes to Miami Beach, from Key Biscayne to Doral, and from Kendall to Florida City.

A staff follow-up was submitted on May 23, 2017 informing the Board that district staff had developed a plan to increase the number of Region Centers from three to four. Additionally, the memorandum stated that "Staff from School Operations has conducted research on effective principal supervision and benchmarked M-DCPS against other large urban school districts. All findings suggest that a smaller supervision-to-principal ratio would greatly enhance M-DCPS's ability to meet the needs of all schools." It also provided a number of benefits for the proposed configuration based on four regional centers. These benefits included "the average number of schools supported by each Region Center would decrease from 109 to 83. This reduction of roughly 24% would enable support staff at each Region Center to provide a higher quality service to schools and parents; the average number of students represented by each Region Center would reduce from 96,000 to approximately 73,000. The highest-populated Region would represent 77,215 students and the lowest-populated Region would represent 65,857; the total number of support personnel for Region Center would essentially remain consistent. Each Region Center would have a total of four Region Directors, representing an overall increase of one Region Director position."

However, during the 2017-2018 budget process, the District was not able to implement the plan to increase the number of Region Centers from three to four. Nevertheless, with additional responsibilities related to the implementation of enhanced safety and security measures in the schools, the implementation of mental health initiatives, the continuous development of choice programs, parental engagement, and appropriate review of school improvement plans, among others, it is appropriate for a fourth Region Center to be considered and possibly established in M-DCPS at this time.

It is important to note that while Miami-Dade County Public Schools continues to accomplish outstanding student achievement gains, the human and business elements involved in the operation of region centers must be considered. For example:

- ✓ A Region Center may cover over 260 square miles.
- ✓ Working parents may have to drive long distances to access region personnel.
- ✓ Traffic distress within the County presents a great concern for region staff driving around to assigned schools.
- ✓ Each region supports an average of 110 schools including specialized centers.
- ✓ Feeder patterns assigned to each region may vary from nine to 13.
- ✓ Budget conferences are held three times a year. With the number of schools per region, these conferences may take up to two weeks for each budget session.
- ✓ It is a challenge, with all the different responsibilities a region director may be assigned, for him or her to be able to visit schools on a regular basis and provide adequate support and supervision.

Furthermore, a review of some of the largest school districts decentralization efforts in Florida show that regions/areas/learning communities range anywhere from three to seven supporting less schools and smaller student populations. Nationally, the decentralization efforts of large urban school districts have organized their schools reporting to local districts, boroughs, neighborhood networks, areas, or community zones, ranging anywhere from seven to 17.

This agenda item directs the Superintendent of Schools to develop an action plan for consideration and the possibility of establishing a fourth Region Center to include staffing patterns, assignments of feeder patterns, responsibilities, location, financial impact, and a probable implementation date, as appropriate, to be presented to the Board at the Personnel, Student, School & Community School Board Committee of August 7, 2019.

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, direct the Superintendent of Schools to develop an action plan for consideration and the possibility of establishing a fourth Region Center to include staffing patterns, assignments of feeder patterns, responsibilities, location, financial impact, and a probable implementation date, as appropriate, to be presented to the Board at the Personnel, Student, School & Community School Board Committee Meeting of August 7, 2019.