

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Vice Chair

Co-Sponsors: Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair } A
Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall } D
Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman } E
Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas } D

SUBJECT: EXPLORATION OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE EQUITY ASSISTANCE CENTER

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is committed to the provision of high quality, equitable, and rigorous educational opportunities and programs for all students. In doing so, it recognizes and embraces the ethnic and cultural diversity of the community and student population it serves, and that a significant number of U.S. born language minority and foreign-born families and their children rely on education as a pathway to freedom, opportunity, and life-long success. M-DCPS also recognizes its commitment and dedication to supporting and educating U.S. born children with limited English, as well as their families, and engages in and leverages partnerships to provide resources to achieve learning and life-long goals.

The education of immigrant students is guaranteed by the *Plyler vs. Doe* decision, and certain procedures must be followed and supports provided in the education of children. School Board Policy 2226---*Foreign Languages*, establishes proficiency in English as a primary educational goal and affirms that the District “shall provide the opportunity to study in and through their native language until they can participate fully in the regular program in English...and that parents of ELL students shall also be offered opportunities and encouragement to increase their facility in English.” This is consistent with research and evidence-based practices and recognizes the critical value that students’ and parents’ proficiency in English have in the learning and academic success of students.

At the School Board Meeting of September 1, 2017, School Board Member Maria T. Rojas proffered School Board Agenda Item H-14, *Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) Student Immigration Influx Plan*. This item which was passed by the School Board, was also co-sponsored by Ms. Susie Castillo, Dr. Steve Gallon III, Ms. Lubby Navarro, Dr. Lawrence Feldman, Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, and Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall. This item, which addressed policy, planning, and preparation relating to immigrant students affirmed the Board’s recognition and commitment to educational access, equity, and opportunity for immigrant students.

In addition, at the School Board Meeting of June 20, 2018, the Board unanimously approved School Board Agenda Item H-3 Revised, *Educational Services for Immigrant Students* proffered by School Board Member Dr. Steve Gallon III and co-sponsored by Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Ms. Susie Castillo, and Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas.

**Revised
H-16**

The above reflects the commitment of M-DCPS in the education and provision of equity of all students. Such commitment should include the exploration and expansion of partnerships with local, state, and national organizations.

One such organization that has been a leader and voice in the area of educational equity for issues involving students is the Equity Assistance Center (EAC). EAC is a part of the Intercultural Development Research Association, an independent, non-profit organization whose mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college. Specifically, its EAC, with roots in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the four federally-funded equity assistance centers help school districts build capacity to confront educational problems occasioned by race, national origin, sex and gender, and religion.

Upon request, the IDRA EAC-*South* works with local education agencies to create asset-based solutions that result in equitable educational opportunities for all students. Collaborative technical assistance and training leads to successful results. Samples of their work include:

- Eliminating segregative schooling practices
- Reducing disproportionate school discipline
- Increasing access to advanced courses for all students
- Improving teaching quality for English learners
- Addressing bullying and sexual harassment
- Creating positive school climates and reducing bias
- Building sustainable family engagement and leadership
- Countering opportunity gaps and resource inequities
- Enacting integrated schooling practices

It is recognized that the expansion of partnerships may require contemplating additional resources. However, because this important work is subsidized by the federal government, these services are often available at no-cost to school districts.

This item seeks to direct the Superintendent to review M-DCPS's relationship, where it exists, with IDRA EAC-*South* and to explore and/or expand a partnership to provide where eligible, no-cost support to U.S. born children with limited English, as well as foreign-born students and their families within the District, and provide an update to the Board no later than April 29, 2020.

This item has been reviewed by the School Board Attorney for legal sufficiency.

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

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

1. review M-DCPS's relationship, where exists, with IDRA EAC-*South* and explore and/or expand, where feasible, a partnership to provide where eligible, no-cost support and access to U.S. born children with limited English, as well as foreign-born students and their families within the District; and
2. provide an update to the Board no later than April 29, 2020.