

Demetrio Perez, Jr., M.S., Member

**SUBJECT: INCLUDE REQUEST IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS STATE LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE FOR THE MANDATORY DRUG TESTING OF MIDDLE AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AS AN ANNUAL REQUIREMENT FOR ENTRY INTO SCHOOL**

Revised

The proliferation of drug abuse among adolescents, across the State of Florida, continues to pose serious threats to the health, safety and well-being of the victims, their families, and the surrounding community. Although the Miami-Dade County Public Schools district has led the State in a range of programs which address drug abuse, gaps remain in the efforts to ensure that students are certifiably drug free when they enter school at the beginning of each year.

Proposed is a request that The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, include in its State legislative package the requirement that Florida students be drug-tested, prior to entering school each year, from the sixth through the twelfth grades, commencing with the 2000-2001 school year. Under the aegis of this proposal, parents would be required, prior to the start of each school year, to supply the appropriate school site with a "drug-tested" certificate, obtained from an approved medical or drug testing physician/agency. Test results would be known only to parents. Further, it is requested that the proposed legislation include a provision which would inform parents that students producing drug-free certificates will have notations made on their report cards indicating same. Appeals would be made to the Legislature for the funding of this program.

Revised

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This legislation would assist Florida school districts in ensuring drug-free environments at all school sites. The improved climates of schools notwithstanding, parents and students would be assured that learning would be taking place in settings which neither enroll nor tolerate drugs and other harmful substances. It is anticipated that this requirement would send strong messages to parents and students about the responsibilities inherent in school safety. While the purpose of the legislation would be to ensure a therapeutic learning environment, it is fully expected also that a drug-testing requirement would deter youngsters from involvement with drugs. Definitely, we need to make valid our policy on zero tolerance for drug use part of a comprehensive approach to reducing this national problem.

Revised

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
MR. PEREZ:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to include a request in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools State legislative package for the mandatory drug testing of middle and senior high school students as an annual requirement for entry into school.

Revised

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