

Dr. Robert B. Ingram, Member

SUBJECT: SIGNAGE

Within the parameter of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the purpose of this Board Item is to encourage the effective use of signs located in close proximity of Miami-Dade County Public Schools to promote a healthy educational climate while protecting the cultured view of our children.

To accomplish this goal, this recommendation is intended to: (A) Promote the safety, comfort and well being of school children who use the streets, roads and highways to and from their school sites; and (B) Reduce distractions and obstructions from signs which would adversely and negatively affect the intellectual, social and moral development of our children, and to alleviate negative influences caused by signs projecting unwholesome images.

Advertising in its various forms has had a significant impact on contemporary behavior and attitudes. Commercial outdoor advertising, like other forms of mass communication, has at times addressed subject matter and/or contained visual depictions which may be inappropriate for young children. These images and messages are often inconsistent with certain standards as conveyed by the family and schools. As recent events have demonstrated, all parties involved in the education of our children must guard against influences that negatively impact their intellectual, social, and moral development.

It is recognized that an overwhelming majority of businesses utilizing commercial outdoor advertising to promote their products and services have done so in a responsible manner. In some instances however, the content of certain advertisements (billboards) have raised concerns regarding their compatibility when located in close proximity to school sites. The issue here is solely one of location. Most businesses whose advertising campaigns include billboards will likely be responsive to appeals to consider school site when deciding on a location. Only where such appeals fail should there be regulations that provide reasonable protection for our children.

RECOMMEND: That the Superintendent of Schools direct staff to explore, in conjunction with appropriate staff of Miami-Dade County, the feasibility of amending pertinent ordinances to control the location of commercial outdoor advertising such that it is compatible with school-sites.