

August 11, 2000

Dr. Robert B. Ingram, Member

**SUBJECT: DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT TO INVESTIGATE THE FEASIBILITY OF PROVIDING NECESSARY FUNDING FOR FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS IN MEDIATION, PEACE, TOLERANCE, AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION; AND SUBMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL BOARD CONSIDERATION AT THE SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING**

As mirrors of the community-at-large, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) sites have been and continue to be settings where violent incidents occur, causing untold hardships to victims, the families both of offenders and victims, school-site personnel, and the surrounding neighborhoods. Despite noble and far-reaching attempts by the School Board, Superintendent, and M-DCPS staff to combat violence, the statistics on incidents continue to reveal serious crimes in schools and on school grounds. While research and common sense dictate that preventive measures are the most cost-effective means of tackling the issue, programs must be put into place which address all phases of antisocial behavior by students.

Consequently, I recommend that the Superintendent be directed to investigate the feasibility of providing funding for full implementation of programs in mediation, peace, tolerance, and violence prevention. Although programs are in place already across the district for preventing violent behavior, it is necessary to review the ways in which new programs might be implemented or existing programs might be expanded. Recommendations, together with funding considerations, should be presented at the September Board meeting.

As a Board member with considerable experience in law enforcement, I believe that the seriousness of the recent episode, most notably in a students-on-student racially-motivated attack, highlights the necessity of exploring all means possible for attenuating violence. I ask my Board colleagues to join me in requesting a review and recommendations for further programs to combat violence. Safety must remain the primary concern of the Board for the protection of its students and staff. Without urgent measures, schools will not be able to function as centers for learning and growth. Rather, they will function for many as contagions of fear and stress-related illnesses.

Violent incidents at schools already have caused harm, fear, and disinterest to too many M-DCPS children. However, we can work together for improvement and stop the violence from escalating. We must, if we are to succeed as the caretakers of nearly 370,000 students.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
DR. INGRAM:**

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

1. investigate the feasibility of providing necessary funding for full implementation of programs in mediation, peace, tolerance, and violence prevention; and
2. submit recommendations for School Board consideration at the September Board meeting.

RBI/mjc