

August 29, 2001

Education
Joseph H. Mathos, Deputy Superintendent

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT TO ENTER INTO A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH THE MENNINGER FOUNDATION, A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION IN TOPEKA, KANSAS, FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PEACEFUL SCHOOLS PROGRAM AT CYPRESS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND NATURAL BRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AT NO COST TO THE DISTRICT, FROM OCTOBER 1, 2001 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2002

Authorization is sought for a cooperative agreement with the Menninger Foundation, a nonprofit organization in Topeka, Kansas, for the establishment of a Peaceful Schools Program at two Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) elementary school sites, Cypress Elementary School and Natural Bridge Elementary School. The selection of the two schools was based primarily upon interest and participation in and philosophical commitment to the Peaceful Schools Program mission and objectives. On July 19, 2000, the Board previously authorized entering into this agreement for the 2000-2001 school year. Due to funding issues, this project had to be postponed until the 2001-2002 school year. There will be no cost to the district for the implementation of this pilot program.

The Peaceful Schools Program is an innovative violence preventive program which is targeted for elementary school children. Its aims include prevention and crisis intervention. These objectives support the Board's Strategic Goal II, Effective Learning Environment and the Division of Student Services' objectives to provide support and training to schools for creating a climate of respect.

Significantly, this project is evaluated on a continuing basis by researchers from the Menninger Foundation. M-DCPS district and school-site staff will be informed at regular intervals of the research findings. The Menninger Foundation and M-DCPS will share and retain a non-exclusive right to data collected from the participation in the project.

Key staff from the selected schools will receive extensive training. The staff to be included are principals, counselors, two teachers from each site and physical education teachers. During the first semester of the school year, staff from the Menninger Foundation will come to Miami to provide technical assistance. Periodically at selected future intervals, Foundation staff will make visitations to the two piloted programs. The Menninger Foundation will underwrite expenses for the travel and training of M-DCPS employees.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Menninger Foundation is Dr. W. Walter Menninger.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Menninger Foundation, a nonprofit organization in Topeka, Kansas, for the establishment of a Peaceful Schools Program at Cypress Elementary School and Natural Bridge Elementary School from October 1, 2001-June 30, 2002.

There is no cost to the district for the implementation of this program.