

Merrett R. Stierheim, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL LEAVE FOR EMPLOYMENT

At its February 13, 2002 meeting, the School Board approved Agenda Item J-5, which directed the Superintendent to review the School Board Rules and labor contract provisions regarding extended professional leave; and provide recommendations to amend them in order to establish clear guidelines for the granting or denial of extended professional leave to employees who will be employed with firms doing business with the Board. Subsequent to the Board meeting, Dr. Marta Pérez, School Board Member, requested that staff contact the seven largest school districts, other than Miami-Dade County Public Schools, regarding their professional leave policies as they pertain to employees who accept positions with private sector employers. All districts responded that they do not grant leaves of absence for employees to work in the private sector. Further, staff contacted three additional large school districts in Florida to determine their leave policy regarding the granting of leave for outside employment. Two of these districts responded that leave may be granted to work for Department of Defense schools overseas, and one indicated that leave may be approved to work as a teaching assistant, professor or administrator at a college or university.

Provisions dealing with extended professional leave are contained in Board Rule 6Gx13-4E- 1.09 (Professional Leave), Board Rule 6Gx13-4D- 1.022 (Manual of Procedures for Managerial Exempt Personnel), the United Teachers of Dade contract, and the Dade County School Administrators' Association contract.

Staff from Personnel Management and Services, Labor Relations, and the School Board Attorney's Office have reviewed the Board Rules and applicable contracts, and are recommending that our School Board Rules be amended to either prohibit extended professional leave for employment, or to approve it only for public sector employment when deemed by the Superintendent or designee to be in the best interest of the Board. Subsequent to the revision to Board Rules, changes to the affected labor contracts will be addressed through the collective bargaining process.

The Board's direction is requested in determining the policy to be adopted in this matter.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, provide direction to staff to amend Board Rule 6Gx13-4E- 1.09 (Professional Leave) and Board Rule 6Gx13-4D- 1.022 (Manual of Procedures for Managerial Exempt Personnel) to either:

1. prohibit extended professional leave for all outside employment;

OR

2. prohibit extended professional leave for all outside employment except for public sector employment when deemed by the Superintendent of Schools, or designee, to be in the best interest of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools system.

MRS/mca