

School Operations
Dr. George M. Koonce, Jr., Associate Superintendent

**SUBJECT: STUDY ON THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF HAVING
DOUBLE SESSIONS, ESPECIALLY IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**

At the Board meeting of February 13, 2002, School Board Member Ms. Betsy H. Kaplan requested staff to conduct a study on the advantages and disadvantages of having double sessions in the secondary schools.

The implementation of double sessions at the secondary school level has long been touted as a remedy for school overcrowding. Under this model, students are scheduled to attend school on shifts, thereby reducing the total number of students in attendance at any given time. In implementation, the total student population at the school is divided, with one group placed on a morning shift and another group placed on an afternoon shift. Alternatives to this split shift model are variations that involve overlapping student groups. In both instances, the length of class time may vary depending on factors such as whether the school follows a traditional or block schedule.

During the recent audit by OPPAGA, a recommendation was made to consider implementing double sessions as a cost effective solution to school overcrowding in Miami-Dade County. This recommendation was based solely on financial issues related to high construction costs and expensive land purchases and did not address the other potential implications of double sessions, i.e., student achievement, personnel issues, transportation costs, and other variables. Therefore, it seemed pertinent to conduct a preliminary study that would assess and evaluate the full impact of double sessions prior to any formal consideration of this concept by the School Board.

The *Report on the Potential Impact of Double Sessions in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools*, submitted under separate cover, is the product of a small-scale research study conducted by School Operations staff to assess the potential impact of double sessions at the middle and senior high school levels. Using survey responses and opinions from educational professionals, students, parents, and business supporters, a holistic perspective of the impact of double sessions on the educational process, school operations, the family structure, and the local community provided a meaningful assessment of this proposed initiative.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, accept the *Report on the Potential Impact of Double Sessions in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools*.

GMK/lou