

Financial Affairs
Richard H. Hinds, Chief Financial Officer

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH FLORIDA SCHOOL SERVICES, INC. TO PROVIDE GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS SERVICES TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Miami-Dade County School Board has had a tradition of developing and forwarding its own legislative program in the legislative process. Its successes have been unparalleled, using a participatory process that incorporates broad-based input and an aggressive lobbying team which has included School Board members, the Superintendent of Schools, staff members, employee representatives, and citizen/parent groups. Over the years, the Board has helped to initiate and pass major legislative reforms with positive impact on all aspects of the educational programs and the business and legal operations of the school system.

Mr. Thomas A. Cerra, former Deputy Superintendent, Legislative and Labor Relations, Professionalization and Policy Development, had been the staff member responsible for state government relations for more than 20 years. During this time, he worked closely with other local, state, and federal education associations, employee organizations, and interest groups as the chief lobbyist for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS). Since July 1, 1996, Mr. Cerra has continued to serve as a consultant to Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS). His work has been exemplary.

Authorization is requested to enter into a contractual agreement with Florida School Services (FSS), Inc. to assist MDCPS staff lobbyists in Tallahassee for the legislative process and also with state associations such as the Consortium of South Florida School Boards and the Florida School Boards Association for an additional four months commencing July 1, 2002 through October 31, 2002.

The appropriation for this contractual agreement will be included in the 2002-2003 Tentative Budget to be recommended for adoption by the board in July 2002 under Fund 0100, Function 7730, Program 7920, Object 5310, Location 9128.

The Professional Services Contract Committee established by School Board Rule 6Gx13-3F-1.021 reviewed this contract on April 26, 2002, and recommended that an exception to the rule regarding bids or Requests for Proposals be granted as the contractor has specific expertise as determined by the committee based upon past performance. The

Committee recommended that the contract be awarded for a duration of four months to provide continuity while a Request For Proposal (RFP) is issued and resulting proposals are reviewed with an expected award date at the October 23, 2002 Board Meeting.

A copy of the agreement will be transmitted to the Board under separate cover and will be placed on file in the Citizen Information Center and the Office of the Board Recording Secretary.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida:

- 1) enter into a contractual agreement with Florida School Services, Inc. beginning July 1, 2002 through October 31, 2002 at a cost not to exceed \$40,000 or \$10,000 per month; and
- 2) grant an exception to School Board Rule 6Gx13-3F-1.021.

The appropriation for this item will be included in the 2002-2003 Tentative Budget to be recommended for adoption by the Board in July 2002.