

Mr. Agustin J. Barrera, Member

**SUBJECT:           REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE LOGISTICAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF CONVERTING J.R.E. LEE OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL INTO AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**COMMITTEE:       EDUCATION AND SCHOOL OPERATIONS**

A feasibility study to address the logistical and financial implications of converting J.R.E. Lee Opportunity School into an elementary school is requested. Opened originally in 1924, located at 6521 SW 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, South Miami, the present building was constructed in 1955. J.R.E. Lee was named for a prominent African-American educator who was a mathematics professor and later President of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College (1924-1944).

J.R.E. Lee was built as an elementary school to serve students in the South Miami area. For more than three decades, this site has served students at risk in grades six through eight and is the only alternative middle school in the south end of Miami-Dade County. It provides placement for children who are expelled from traditional Miami-Dade County Public Schools in the areas served by ACCESS Centers 4, 5 and 6.

The Honorable Horace A. Feliu, Mayor of South Miami, and other local community leaders have requested that J.R.E. Lee be converted back into an elementary school. While J.R.E. Lee historically was an elementary school, the question of placement for middle school children in the south end of Miami-Dade County who have been expelled remains a critical issue. The current boundaries of J.R.E. Lee extend from south of Flagler Street to the Miami-Dade Monroe County line. If J.R.E. Lee were converted back to an elementary school, alternative placements for disciplinary students in this wide geographical area would need to be addressed.

It is recommended that staff conduct a feasibility study to address the requests of major stakeholders in the South Miami area, while considering the implications of removing the only alternative disciplinary school for middle school children in the south end of Miami-Dade County.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY**

**MR. AGUSTIN J. BARRERA:**       That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve a feasibility study on the logistical and financial implications of converting J.R.E. Lee Opportunity School into an elementary school.