

Office of Professional Development and Educational Services
Ava G. Byrne, Associate Superintendent

SUBJECT: REQUEST AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH BERTHA ABESS CHILDREN'S CENTER, INC., (BACC) FOR THE PERIOD OF AUGUST 5, 2008, THROUGH JUNE 30, 2009, TO PROVIDE SPECIALIZED CLINICAL THERAPY AND PSYCHIATRIC CONSULTATION SERVICES IN A BACC DAY-TREATMENT PROGRAM AT PALMETTO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIORAL DISABILITIES WITH INTERNAL FACTORS

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**LINK TO DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLANS: GENERAL OPERATIONS**

Since 1981, the Bertha Abess Children's Center, Inc., (BACC) has had a cooperative agreement with Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) to provide day-treatment programs for students with emotional/behavioral disabilities (E/BD) at no cost to the District. In light of a reduction in Medicaid revenue that BACC had been receiving for clinical services provided to M-DCPS students, the cooperative agreement, which expired on December 31, 2006, was converted into a contractual agreement through Agenda Item C-22 presented at the School Board meeting held on December 13, 2006. The contract allowed BACC to continue providing services, as designated on student Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), through June 30, 2007. The contract was subsequently renewed at an amount totaling \$600,000, for implementation in six elementary schools during the 2007-2008 school year. In light of the fiscal impact of reductions for the 2008-2009 budget, M-DCPS can no longer maintain the BACC program at six school sites.

Authorization is requested to enter into a cooperative agreement with BACC to provide a school-based day-treatment program at Palmetto Elementary School for students with emotional/behavioral disabilities with internal factors. Specialized clinical therapy and psychiatric services, as designated by student IEPs, will be offered to students from August 5, 2008, through June 30, 2009.

Through a separate contractual agreement, BACC will provide a school-based day-treatment program at Miami Park Elementary School. In addition to these two day-treatment programs that will be administered by BACC in the northern and southern portions of the county, services will also be provided by M-DCPS personnel for E/BD students at the four remaining school sites that had been part of the 2007-2008 BACC

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contract. In particular, counselors, social workers and school psychologists will apply a consultative team approach to offer counseling services mandated by student IEPs. The ability to offer these services in-house was also facilitated by the reinstatement of twenty five (25) surplus school psychologists that will participate in specialized professional learning aimed at enhancing their skills in providing E/BD counseling support.

In compliance with student IEPs, BACC will provide specialized clinical individual and group therapy, parent education and family therapy, behavior management programming, crisis intervention services and psychiatric consultation services for E/BD students within the least restrictive environment (LRE). BACC has been recognized by the American Association of Psychiatric Services for Children for its exemplary therapeutic programs. Students that have participated in BACC programs have demonstrated positive academic and behavioral achievements as measured by FCAT developmental scale scores and low suspension rates. BACC programs administered in M-DCPS schools are regularly evaluated by the Division of Special Education through site visits and routine monitoring of student records and program delivery models to insure compliance with requirements set forth in the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

There is no additional cost to the District associated with this item.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to:

1. enter into a cooperative agreement with the Bertha Abess Children's Center, Inc., (BACC) for the period of August 5, 2008, through June 30, 2009, to provide specialized clinical therapy and psychiatric consultation services in a BACC day-treatment program at Palmetto Elementary School for elementary students with emotional/behavioral disabilities (E/BD) with internal factors; and
2. extend this cooperative agreement on an annual basis for up to two additional one-year periods.

AB/WG/jf