

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Vice Chair

**SUBJECT: DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT AND THE BOARD ATTORNEY'S OFFICE TO EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY, LEGALITY AND PROCESS OF INCREASING OPERATING REVENUES WITHIN THE PROPOSED MILLAGE RATES AS TENTATIVELY APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD ON JULY 15, 2008**

**COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

**LINK TO DISTRICT STRATEGIC GOAL: IMPROVE FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Over the past several years, educational funding in the State of Florida has steadily declined. In the Miami-Dade County school district educational funding has declined even more. The elimination of the District Cost Differential (DCD) has cost the district tens of millions of dollars over the past few years. At the same time, Miami-Dade County Public Schools has experienced declining student enrollment in other than Charter Schools for the last several years, which also has negatively impacted district revenues.

Prior to an increased decline in student enrollment, our school district succeeded in adding new classroom spaces of approximately 20,000 student stations per year for several years. As a result, the district is able to do with less funding for facility construction in the near future. Conversely, the school district is in need of more revenue to fund operations primarily for teacher and other employee salaries.

Like most other school districts in Florida, the Miami-Dade County school district is already collecting the maximum amount of operating funds from property taxes permitted by the legislature without voter approval.

Therefore this agenda item proposes that the School Board direct the Superintendent and the School Board Attorney's Office to explore the feasibility, legality and process of increasing operating revenues within the proposed millage rates as tentatively approved by the School Board on July 15, 2008. Subsequently, the School Board may consider adopting a resolution requesting that the Miami-Dade County Commission place a referendum on the next county wide ballot.

The referendum may be to authorize a county wide assessment of an amount of millage of 0.25 mills, for a term of not more than 4 years, for the purpose of providing additional operating funds to be used for teacher salaries and salaries for other vital employees. The School Board would agree to reduce the 1.75 mills (formerly 2 mills) capital assessment currently authorized, by not less than the millage it assesses for this item for each year that there is an additional operating fund assessment. Therefore the total millage for public schools would not exceed the total that would have been assessed without this additional operating fund assessment.

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**ACTION PROPOSED BY VICE CHAIR  
PERLA TABARES HANTMAN:**

1. That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida direct the Superintendent and the School Board Attorney's office to explore the feasibility, legality and process of increasing operating revenues within the proposed millage rates as tentatively approved by the Board on July 15, 2008 and to provide a report at the September 10, 2008 Board meeting.
2. If feasible, the Superintendent should expedite all necessary procedures (including placement of the Resolution on the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners' Agenda for its meeting of September 2, 2008) to ensure the placement of proposal's language as *indicated* in the attached Resolution on the November 4, 2008 general election ballot.

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**RESOLUTION NO. 08-81**

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE PROPOSITION OF WHETHER THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD LEVY AN AD VALOREM MILLAGE INCREASE OF 0.25 MILL PER YEAR FOR THE FISCAL YEARS BEGINNING JULY 1, 2008, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2012 SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE ELECTORS AT THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION OF NOVEMBER 4, 2008

**WHEREAS**, The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida (the 'School Board') wishes to maintain and improve the excellent quality of education in our public school system; and

**WHEREAS**, maintaining and improving this excellent quality of education requires maximum flexibility in the use of any and all funds accruing to the School Board; and

**WHEREAS**, the state funding formula coupled with the general economic situation do not provide sufficient operating revenues to maintain and improve our high quality schools.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, in a public meeting duly called and assembled:

1. That pursuant to Section 1011.73(2), Florida Statutes, The Board of County Commissioners of Miami-Dade County, Florida is hereby directed to place on the ballot for the general election for November 4, 2008, for the qualified electors of the Miami-Dade County School Board to vote on the levy of an ad valorem millage increase for operating expenditures of the Miami-Dade County School Board as authorized by Section 1011.71(6), Florida Statutes.
2. That the School Board would agree to reduce the 1.75 mills (formerly 2 mills) capital assessment currently authorized, by not less than the millage it assesses for this item for each year that there is an additional operating fund assessment. Thus, the total millage for the public schools in Miami-Dade County would not exceed the total that would have been assessed without this additional operating fund assessment, making this a tax neutral assessment.
3. The substance of the millage referendum and the ballot title shall read:

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD**

**SPECIAL REFERENDUM**

**NOVEMBER 4, 2008**

Shall The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida levy an ad valorem millage increase of 0.25 mill per year for the fiscal years beginning July 1, 2008, and ending June 30, 2012, for teachers and other employees' salaries as necessary to enhance the quality of Miami-Dade County's public school system?

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, for the levy

\_\_\_\_\_ **NO**, against the levy

Adopted at the regular meeting of the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida on August 4, 2008.

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE  
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Agustin J. Barrera, Chairman

**ATTEST:**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of School Board of  
Miami-Dade County, Florida