

Dr. Marta Pérez, Board Member

SUBJECT: POSITIONS OF SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

LINK TO DISTRICT

**STRATEGIC PLAN: IMPROVE TRANSPARENCY OF DECISION-MAKING
THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT**

According to Robert's Rules of Order, the position of Chair is primarily to facilitate the orderly flow of debate.

School Board members are elected from nine districts which should be equally represented. Most boards of trustees and advisory boards choose their officials (chairs, vice-chairs, etc.) using a rotation system whereby every member is given an opportunity to sit as chair or vice-chair.

Unfortunately, our School Board has used a method of voting for its officers and this method has served, in many instances to discredit, rather than enhance the Board's functions. Whether real or perceived, the appearance of trading votes and actions in order to achieve official positions is one of the most debilitating practices of the Board. Votes are often viewed as compromised and this makes for bad decisions and bad governance. Throughout the years, this practice has never served us well.

Several times in the past, I have asked the Board to change this very political practice to one viewed by most boards as the fair and efficient procedure. At a time when the public's confidence in the Board is extremely low, we should make necessary changes in our practices in order to restore confidence in the Board as a whole.

Mirroring procedures established by many boards of trustees, this item proposes that the Board institute a process to appoint the Chair and Vice Chair using a rotation system. Accordingly, the following rotation system is recommended for implementation by the Board commencing with the Board's organizational meeting of 2009:

1. Members appointed to either position either position will serve for one year;
2. Members who have not served as Chair or Vice-Chair will be selected in order of seniority on the Board;
3. The member appointed for the position of Vice-Chair will be appointed Chair the following year;

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4. This rotation process will continue until all Board Members who have not served in either position have had an opportunity to serve;

5. Once all Board members have served in the capacity of Chair or Vice-Chair, the positions will be rotated amongst those Board members who have already served in these positions; and

6. If two members have served for the same amount of time, then the Board will establish a process to determine the manner of appointing these members to either position. For instance, members may be selected based on the numerical system assigned to their District.

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The appointments may be either one year or six months in length, depending on Board preference in order to allow more members to use their leadership qualities to run our meetings and dissuade any one member from using excessive powers. This system would allow the membership equal access to leadership positions and assure an objective and neutral chairmanship free of allegations of political maneuvering.

The above revisions reflect changes expressly requested by Board Members at the School Board Instructional Excellence and Community Engagement Committee meeting of November 13, 2008, and the language is legally appropriate, per the School Board Attorney.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. MARTA PÉREZ:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida direct the Superintendent to initiate rulemaking procedures to amend School Board Rule 6Gx13- 8C-1.11 to include language which delineates a method of appointing the Board Chair and Vice Chair based on a system of rotation as described herein that allows all of the members to participate equally.

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