

Milagros R. Fornell, Associate Superintendent  
Curriculum and Instruction

**SUBJECT:                   REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT  
OF SCHOOLS TO ENTER INTO A COOPERATIVE  
AGREEMENT WITH SELECTED BUSINESS SITES TO  
FACILITATE THE OPERATION OF PROJECT SEARCH, A  
SCHOOL-TO-WORK PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH  
DISABILITIES, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2009, THROUGH JUNE  
30, 2010**

**COMMITTEE:               INSTRUCTIONAL   EXCELLENCE    AND   COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**

**LINK TO DISTRICT  
STRATEGIC PLAN:       DEVELOP OUR STUDENTS SO THAT THEY ARE ABLE TO  
SUCCESSFULLY COMPETE IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY**

Authorization is requested for the Superintendent of Schools to enter into a cooperative agreement with selected business sites to facilitate the operation of Project SEARCH, a school-to-work program for Students with Disabilities, effective July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010.

Project SEARCH is a one year, full-time, high school transition program which provides training and employability education for students with disabilities pursuing a special diploma that have met all graduation requirements and have employability skills as their transition goal and employment as their post-secondary outcome. Project Search was awarded the 2004 New Freedom Initiative Award from the U.S. Department of Labor. This award recognizes businesses and individuals who have demonstrated exemplary and innovative efforts in furthering the employment and workplace environment for people with disabilities.

This program is designed for 12 students per site, ages 18 – 22, and involves a total immersion in non-paid work and training at the designated business locations. Students will receive course credits in employability skills while participating in this teacher-directed field experience.

**C-15**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) will provide FTE generated teachers, paraprofessionals, instructional materials, equipment and supplies. The business sites, along with their partners, will provide the worksites, job coach services support from their employees at the training sites, and an opportunity for employment following the training year. All requirements relative to the Jessica Lunsford Act (JLA) have been met.

This program is supported and evaluated by administrative and support staff from the Division of Special Education. The evaluations include site visits and monitoring student records and program delivery requirements.

There is no cost to the District.

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

1. enter into a cooperative agreement with selected business sites to facilitate the operation of Project SEARCH, a school-to-work program for students with disabilities, effective July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010; and
2. extend each cooperative agreement for a maximum of two additional one-year periods.

MRF/las