

Dr. Marta Pérez, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: ELECTRONIC VOTING

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**LINK TO DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLAN: IMPROVE TRANSPARENCY**

The use of technology to enhance the effectiveness of District operations should be pursued whenever possible. We have made significant strides in providing the community with valuable information, i.e., electronic access to minutes of School Board meetings, launching of the Online Check Register in 2007, and recently the District initiated a Twitter page, all at negligible expense to the District. An enhancement that is sorely necessary is the use of electronic voting to register the votes of Board members during Board meetings.

At the August 2009 Board meeting there was disturbing and significant confusion in reference to some crucial votes. The fact that we did not have an electronic method of registering our votes created delays and disorder during and after the meeting. This is not the first time these problems have happened, and each time the results are disruptive. Staff must devote many hours in order to evaluate and record the votes correctly.

Voting electronically would record votes accurately and eliminate the need for roll calls, hand votes, or even a voice vote. As elected officials, our constituents could have access to our precise votes contained in the minutes. Right now, it is practically impossible to know who may have been absent from the dais during a vote and often who voted for what. Properly recorded votes will reflect clearly and transparently the intent of every Board Member on each and every issue.

Recording votes electronically will not only be more efficient and save money in the long run, but will also foster transparency. The public has a right to know how their representatives vote on issue. Our County Commission and many other bodies have used electronic voting for some time, and the difference is striking as far as the access to records and ease of retrieving information that it brings them.

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

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to explore the use of electronic voting and report to the Board by the next School Board meeting.