

Dr. Marta Pérez, Board Member

SUBJECT: REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT TO PROVIDE A STATUS REPORT AT THE SCHOOL BOARD MEETING OF MARCH 17, 2010, ON THE FEASIBILITY OF CREATING A PILOT PROGRAM THAT INCORPORATES BABY CARE (0 TO 3 YEARS) FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AT SCHOOL SITES AND DISTRICT BUILDINGS

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LINK TO DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN: IMPROVE STAFF SATISFACTION AT ALL LEVELS

On March 15, 2006, I proposed and the Board approved Agenda Item B-3, that directed the Superintendent to study the feasibility of creating a pilot program that incorporates baby care (0 - 3 years) for employees of the school district at school sites and district buildings. The pilot program would consider the following:

1. School sites and buildings that have available space and may be suitable for such a program
2. Applicable building codes and regulations
3. Essentials necessary to run such a program

Research overwhelmingly supports a child's critical need for nurturing during the first three years of life in order to grow to his or her maximum potential. Many of our employees who have newborns must leave their children in the care of babysitters far from where they work, sometimes not allowing for the best possible scenario for the child and the parent. Often, working parents who are teachers or other employees of the district are unable to return to work after a baby is born because of the inability or hardship of finding proper baby care.

Currently, the District operates 14 high school and technical centers with on-site child care centers licensed by the Florida Department of Children and Families for students Birth to Five (0 - 5). A total of 102 students ages birth through 3 attend the on-site child care centers. These centers serve high school students who are parents, school faculty, and staff. The on-site child care centers provide supervised work experience for high school students interested in pursuing a career in the early childhood education field. By the end of the course of study, these students can apply for the Florida Department

of Education Early Childhood Professional Certificate (ECPC) which is one of the acceptable minimum credentials for employment as a Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten instructor in a private setting and as an early childhood paraprofessional in public schools. These childcare facilities are staffed by certified teachers who supervise the high school students providing the on-site child care services.

Additionally, 408 eligible children, ages Birth through 2, are eligible to be served in contracted agency programs through the district-wide Pre-Kindergarten Program for Children with Disabilities in partnership with the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Miami, Inc., University of Miami Debbie Institute, Association for Retarded Citizens of South Florida, Inc., Easter Seals South Florida, Inc., and University of Miami Linda Ray Intervention Center.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

DR. MARTA PÉREZ: Request that The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to provide a status report at the School Board Meeting of March 17, 2010, on the feasibility of creating a pilot program that incorporates baby care (0 to 3 years) for employees of the school district at school sites and district buildings.