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Curriculum and Instruction

**SUBJECT: SUPERINTENDENT'S TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN
INITIATIVE AND DESIGNATION OF MAY AS
TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN MONTH**

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK: STUDENT, PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is spearheading a Transition to Kindergarten Initiative for the 2012-2013 school year that focuses on strengthening bonds between early learning centers/programs and elementary schools; establishing transition planning teams; and enhancing the relationship between families and schools.

The entrance to kindergarten is a point of considerable change and adjustment for children, families and staff. A child's transition to kindergarten requires the shared responsibility of many individuals and institutions in order to be successful. It is important to recognize the transition to kindergarten as a process that all stakeholders experience rather than an event that happens to a child.

Research indicates that successful transitions from home to school or from an early learning center/program to kindergarten can contribute to long-term school success. A successful adjustment to kindergarten will often influence the child's perceptions, attitudes, and performance in subsequent school years. Children who enjoy their first school experiences are more likely to participate in classroom activities, comply with school rules, and accept school responsibilities and behaviors that contribute to achievement in later grades.

To further support the Superintendent's Transition to Kindergarten Initiative, the month of May will be declared as Transition to Kindergarten Month. Schools will be asked to plan the following activities:

- Announce the designation of May as Transition to Kindergarten Month.
- Provide families with information, expectations and resources to support a successful transition to kindergarten, at the time of registration and ongoing throughout the school year.

- Coordinate school site visits and parent workshops on Transition to Kindergarten issues for children and parents enrolled in Head Start, private early learning centers/programs, Prekindergarten Students with Disabilities Program, and Title I/Fee-Supported Voluntary Prekindergarten Programs.
- Offer professional development to kindergarten lead teachers on current research and resources to ensure each child's successful transition to kindergarten. Lead teachers will then share information with the school's grade level team.
- Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Teachers will exchange teaching roles for a day "Teach In My Shoes for a Day".
- Schools will create a navigation link on their websites for Transition to Kindergarten activities, information, and teacher and parent resources.
- School administrators will encourage families to register for the College Bound free online parent education program. The program offers ways for parents to help their children do well in school.
- Community Involvement specialists at Title I Schools will conduct home visits to incoming kindergarten children/families, as appropriate.
- The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe's staff will meet quarterly with early learning providers to review transition to kindergarten activities and plan for scheduling of public school visits. Early learning providers will encourage parents to register children early. Information will be provided to parents through various means, such as community-wide meetings, mail-outs, news alerts, robo calls, parent newsletters and through the use of the media. The information will be presented in three languages.
- Early learning providers will contact Principals to schedule and discuss a collaborative transition plan. Principals will have the option of scheduling meetings with Early Learning Providers individually or as a group.

The Office of Early Childhood Programs will serve as the liaison between early learning centers/programs and elementary schools to facilitate a smooth and successful transition to the kindergarten experience for children and families. Furthermore, the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe will support the Office of Early Childhood Programs in its work with private early learning providers.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida:

- a) endorse the Superintendent's Transition to Kindergarten Initiative; and
- b) designate May as Transition to Kindergarten Month.