

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair

SUBJECT: ETHICS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY & GOVERNMENTAL
RELATIONS**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK: SCHOOL/DISTRICT LEADERSHIP**

At its meeting of June 21, 2001, the Board approved the creation of an ethics commission that would be advisory in nature until such time as the law would permit the establishment of an ethics commission for the school district, similar to the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics. In accordance with its rules at that time and state law, the School Board established an Ethics Advisory Committee ("EAC") with its stated purpose being "to serve as the guardian of the public trust by, among other things, informing the public, and educating candidates for the election to the School Board, members of the Board, and employees of the District as to the required standards of ethical conduct and interpreting and applying those standards of conduct." This mission has been codified in School Board Policy 0158.

Within the past several months, the offices of EAC Chair and Vice-Chair have been vacated and the Chief Auditor resigned from his role as the school district's liaison to the EAC. In light of these developments, it may be prudent to investigate the feasibility of entering into an Interlocal Agreement with the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics ("Commission") to serve as the School Board's ethics advisory body. Currently, the county's Commission of Ethics and Public Trust is staffed by Mr. Joseph Centorino, Executive Director, as well as a full investigative team. The Commission provides a number of services which may be beneficial to the District including the provision of legal opinions, training for employees and elected officials, and established mechanisms for members of the public to file a complaint. In the spirit of ensuring transparency, while increasing efficiencies and reducing duplications of effort, it makes sense to take the opportunity to initiate conversations with Mr. Centorino, or other appropriate county staff, to determine if the public would best be served by adopting the Commission as the District's ethics advisory body.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY CHAIR
PERLA TABARES HANTMAN:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Chair and School Board Attorney to initiate conversations with appropriate representatives of the Miami-Dade County Ethics Commission regarding the appropriateness and logistical feasibility of it serving as the School Board's ethics advisory body.