

Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Board Member

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY FORUM ON THE DISPARITY STUDY

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is the fourth largest school district in the nation, a truly global community; M-DCPS students also speak 56 different languages and represent 160 countries. This diverse community is disproportionately impacted by national economic and social changes. M-DCPS has the added challenge of influences of surrounding Latin American and Caribbean countries. These unique circumstances require a resourceful District and an array of community partners who share in educating, maturing, and socializing our students. M-DCPS has been able to join with numerous public and private entities to share information and resources to help enrich the educational experience of our students.

It is through these partnerships that M-DCPS has determined the will of the community on multiple issues. Every year the School Board approves a budget that has been developed and reviewed by our senior staff, school principals, and multiple advisory committees before being presented to the public in two budget hearings and a televised town hall meeting. M-DCPS' 222 General Obligation Bond campaign included a town hall meeting in each Board Member's voting district and several meetings with community organizations that took place before and after the bond's passage. Also, M-DCPS reviews its school attendance boundaries annually in a process that involves its review by a community advisory board and informational meeting at each school affected. These are examples of how the community's intent guide's the District's actions.

All of these issues have in common the potential impact to the student experience in M-DCPS, so it is vital that the District's inclusiveness and transparency provide valuable discourse that enhances our decisions. It is with that intent that this item requests that the community be given another opportunity to openly discuss the District's disparity study.

The District's disparity study is a means of correcting the inequality in its procurement and contracting practices. A draft report of Phase 1 which covers construction and construction related services was released in November 2013 at the School Board's Workshop on the Disparity Study. At this meeting it was announced that the document will be reviewed by our internal auditors and an economist hired by the School Board Attorney before it becomes final. This period of waiting has prompted many from our community to review the nearly 300 page document for themselves, because there has been no indication that these reviews are near completion.

Therefore, in an effort to engage the community and to bring them up to date on an issue of extensive importance this item request that a community forum regarding the disparity study be organized by the district.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. DOROTHY BENDROSS MINDINGALL:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to organize a community forum on the District's disparity study.