

Office of School Board Members
Board Meeting of October 7, 2014

October 1, 2014

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK: EDUCATION**

Over the past several years, the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) has been engaged in the implementation of a series of changes to our state's assessment and educational accountability systems. Many of these changes have been challenging and have led educators and parents alike to question the fairness and reliability of the performance data generated as a result of their implementation.

At its meeting of September 3, 2014, the School Board acted to amend Agenda Item C-1, regarding approval of the District's 2014 testing calendar, to include the adoption of the Superintendent's five recommendations to the State regarding Florida's system of assessment and accountability. Those recommendations included: support efforts to allow two years of language acquisition for English language learners; require proper field testing of the new assessment in Florida, abandon the use of 2014-2015 baseline performance data to assign school grades; allow two years for transition before the implementation of accountability consequences; and exclude the use of inconclusive and statistically unreliable achievement data from teacher evaluations. Further, the Board asked that I bring forth an item with additional recommendations.

Several Board Members expressed concerns that the District has and will continue to incur substantial costs associated with the development and deployment of state mandated End-of-Course exams, as well as costs related to the infrastructure required to transition to computer-based testing. In as much as these are state mandated, it follows that the state should provide adequate funding commensurate with the requirements. Per pupil funding remains below pre-recession levels, while at the same time new requirements have continued to be adopted, necessitating a myriad of expenditures on the part of local school systems. It is therefore paramount that a call for the elimination of unfunded mandates, as well as full funding for existing mandates be included as a legislative priority.

**Revised
H-2**

Further, in light of the high cost of test development and deployment, as well as the time needed to administer mandated assessments, it would be prudent for the Florida Department of Education to conduct a comprehensive scan of their entire assessment program. Each test should be reviewed based on its merits, analyzed for duplication and its value as an instrument to inform instruction, before it is included in the state's testing program.

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

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

- 1) include in the Board's 2015 Legislative Program as a priority, the reform of Florida's system of assessment and accountability in accordance with the recommendations adopted September 3, 2014 and in the best interest of the students and teachers of Miami-Dade County Public Schools;
- 2) include in the 2015 Legislative Program as a priority the elimination of unfunded mandates;
- 3) request that the Superintendent update the School Board regarding developments in the assessment and accountability debate as information becomes available; and
- 4) authorize the Superintendent to send correspondence to the representatives of the State Board of Education communicating the Board's request for a comprehensive review of the entire assessment program.

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