

Dr. Martin Karp, School Board Member

**SUBJECT: EXTENDING CHOICE TO TRANSFORM EDUCATION**

**COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC**

**BLUEPRINT: SAFE, HEALTHY AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Choice includes offering various educational programs and school options at numerous school sites. The District should extend the concept of choice by examining the limitations of attendance boundary restrictions and allowing for more high school students to apply to any school of their choice. Increasing choice at the high school level has a greater chance of success due to high school students' ability to use public transportation or transport themselves. Giving people choice allows them to take more responsibility for the well-being of loved ones and for charting their own paths in life. Increased choice contributes to a greater sense of ownership, self-confidence, and independence.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is recognized for its leadership in providing choice for students and other stakeholders. When students can experience environments where greater opportunities to make choices are afforded, and where fewer limitations and roadblocks exist, students learn strategies to become more capable in achieving successful outcomes. Decisions reached by students along with their parents or guardians may be based on students' environments, course offerings, proximity to relatives for supervision or support, or the location of specific jobs held by family members, which may all be outside prescribed attendance boundaries.

The District must recognize that a family's ability or inability to rent or purchase property, reside in a certain neighborhood (i.e. homeless) should not preclude that family's children from pursuing an academic track or school choice option that would best suit their needs. The "school to prison pipeline" conversation is troubling. Relying less on attendance boundaries for determining where students are enrolled, and increasing efforts to provide as many choice options, students would not be limited to an environment based solely on where they reside and where they feel their best interests are not being considered. Charter schools and private schools often employ these practices. In M-DCPS, students would be afforded the opportunity to partner with the District and as a result would more likely take responsibility for their decisions.

A review of high school enrollment data is recommended with an aim towards reducing or changing attendance boundaries to create larger percentages of open spaces in each school for students who reside outside current attendance boundaries.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney for legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
DR. MARTIN KARP:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to:

1. explore, in consultation with the School Board attorney, reducing or changing attendance boundaries for high schools to create available spaces at each high school, which would make it possible for more students to attend high schools outside their current boundaries; and
2. provide a response to the School Board no later than the School Board meeting of April 2021.