

Office of Strategic Planning & Initiatives
Ms. Tiffanie A. Pauline, Chief Strategy Officer

SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) BETWEEN THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, AND MIAMI-DADE COUNTY TO GET MIAMI-DADE COUNTY TO 30% TREE CANOPY.

COMMITTEE: FACILITIES AND CONSTRUCTION

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: EFFECTIVE & SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONAL PRACTICES

Guided by the School Board's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan and aligned to the District's sustainability initiatives, inclusive of the Board-approved February 15, 2023 School Board Agenda Item H-7 – Beautification Task Force proffered by Board Member Roberto Alonso, and the mission of The 2030 Clean Energy Task Force, the District desires to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Miami-Dade County, Florida (County) to support their countywide goal to achieve 30% tree canopy. Tree canopy is the area that is shaded by leaves or branches of a tree. Through this collaboration with the County's Office of Resilience, Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources, and the Department of Environmental Resources Management, the District will endeavor to enhance tree canopy coverage and improve campus beautification at District school facilities.

The County and the School Board have a long history of working together on tree canopy efforts. Some of these collaborations have been at Turner Technical Arts Senior High, John F. Kennedy Middle (JFK Middle) and Air Base K-8 Center for International Education. Miami-Dade County has also helped provide grants to nonprofit organizations, such as Citizens for a Better South Florida and the Education Fund that have worked with schools on tree planting and education efforts. Through these collaborations, JFK Middle School was the first school in Miami-Dade County designated as a "Tree Campus K-12" by the Arbor Day Foundation – making JFK Middle one of only three schools in the State of Florida to receive this recognition. Starting this month, the County's Division of Environmental Resource Management will be providing training to the District on their full suite of services, including support for tree selection, planting, and maintenance practices.

The MOU delineates that the County will provide up to 50% of the costs associated with the acquisition, installation, and maintenance of trees to be utilized on District properties in an amount up to \$200,000 for the first year of the agreement. For the subsequent two, three-year renewal periods, future amounts will be negotiated annually

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The agreement will also establish training and support for District staff; tracking of our progress through annual monitoring and reporting; opportunities for student, parent and community involvement; and possible curriculum connections. Subsequent to enactment of the MOU, both parties will develop a detailed maintenance plan which will include school site selections for newly planted trees. Tree selection will be focused on low-intensity, native species requiring little to no maintenance following the initial planting period. The maintenance plan will also address procedures and estimate future costs for watering, mulching, pruning, fertilizing, disaster preparation/recovery, pest and disease control, and inspections.

District staff is actively seeking additional grants for acquisition of plants and support for planting and maintenance.

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

1. negotiate, finalize and execute documentation necessary to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between the School Board and Miami-Dade County, Florida, and Miami-Dade County, Florida, to support the enhancement of tree canopy coverage at District school facilities for an initial term of one year; and
2. negotiate, finalize and execute documentation necessary to enter into subsequent contract extensions within the Memorandum of Understanding between the School Board and Miami-Dade County, Florida.