

Mr. Danny Espino, Board Member

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SUBJECT: COLLABORATION BETWEEN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (M-DCPS) AND THE TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE TO STREAMLINE STUDENT DRIVER'S LICENSING PROCESS

COMMITTEE: FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: EFFECTIVE & SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONAL PRACTICES

According to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' (FLHSMV) 2023 data, Miami-Dade County has thousands of 16 and 17 year-olds applying for learner's permits and driver's licenses annually¹. However, many students face challenges such as long wait times, limited access to transportation for DMV visits, and financial constraints. As a result of a recent constitutional amendment, the Miami-Dade Office of the Tax Collector is assuming responsibility for the county's nine driver license offices, previously managed by the FLHSMV. By implementing an accessible licensing program, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) can help mitigate these barriers and ensure that students receive proper driver education and licensing support.

In M-DCPS, 12 schools currently offer "Behind the Wheel" instruction. This program teaches students the dangers of distracted driving, the consequences of driving while intoxicated, and the general rules of the road. However, due to the course's needs, having this program at every high school is not feasible. Therefore, a collaboration between M-DCPS and the Tax Collector's Office for alternative student driver programs would benefit students district-wide.

By exploring a collaboration with the Tax Collector's Office, M-DCPS can create a streamlined and student-friendly pathway for high school students to obtain their driver's licenses. Below are examples of possible collaboration opportunities. This initiative aims to provide accessible, efficient, and educational opportunities that will benefit students and their families while promoting safe driving habits.

1. On-Campus Licensing Services

- Establish mobile DMV units or pop-up offices at high schools to process learner's permits, driver's licenses, and renewals.
- Offer scheduled visits where students, teachers, and parents can complete vision tests and submit necessary documents on-site after school.

¹ <https://www.flhsmv.gov/pdf/driver-vehiclereports/2023annuallicenseddriverreport.pdf>

2. **Integrated Driver's Education & Licensing**

- Expand existing driver's education programs to include official testing, allowing students to complete the written exam as part of their coursework.
- Provide hands-on driving instruction with school vehicles and certified instructors, culminating in on-campus road test opportunities.

3. **Fast-Track Appointments for Students**

- Establish priority DMV appointment slots specifically for M-DCPS students to minimize wait times at local offices.
- Develop an online portal where students can conveniently schedule appointments and review requirements.

4. **Financial Assistance & Scholarships**

- Offer fee waivers or discounts, on the Tax Collector's Office fees, for low-income students who require financial support for licensing costs.
- Partner with local businesses and organizations to sponsor driver's education and licensing fees for eligible students.

5. **Driver Safety & Education Campaigns**

- Organize workshops on safe driving, insurance policies, and the consequences of distracted and impaired driving, featuring guest speakers from law enforcement and insurance agencies.
- Introduce a peer mentorship program where experienced student drivers guide younger students on road safety.

This item seeks to ask the Superintendent of Schools to explore the feasibility of a collaboration between M-DCPS and the Tax Collector's Office to implement a student-focused driver's licensing initiative. The Superintendent should also explore potential funding sources and community partnerships to ensure the program's sustainability and effectiveness. This initiative would enhance access to driver's licenses for M-DCPS students, reduce logistical barriers, and reinforce essential driver safety education. By integrating licensing services with educational programs, students will benefit from a comprehensive approach to learning road safety while ensuring a more seamless and efficient process for obtaining their licenses.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the General Counsel's Office as to form and legal sufficiency.

ACTION PROPOSED BY MR. DANNY ESPINO:

That the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, request that the Superintendent of Schools:

1. explore the feasibility of initiating the development of a partnership between M-DCPS and the Tax Collector's Office for implementing a student-focused driver's licensing initiative;
2. explore potential funding sources and community partnerships to ensure the program's sustainability and effectiveness; and
3. present possible collaboration opportunities on how working with the Tax Collector's Office could provide accessible, efficient, and educational opportunities to benefit students and their families while promoting safe driving habits to the Board at the Fiscal Accountability & Government Relations Committee Meeting on May 7, 2025.