

Financial Services
Mr. Ron Y. Steiger, Chief Financial Officer

**SUBJECT: APPROVAL AND AUTHORIZATION TO PUBLISH THE
UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL – PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN
BARRY UNIVERSITY AND M-DCPS**

COMMITTEE: FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
PLAN: EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONAL PRACTICES**

On March 14, 2025, Barry University Secondary Academy submitted an unsolicited proposal for approval as a qualifying project with The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida in accordance with F.S. 255.065 and School Board Policy 6327. The proposal centered on a strategic partnership with Barry University and Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) to create a private school that not only prepares students for success in higher education and future careers but also nurtures ethical leadership and community engagement.

The unsolicited proposal review committee reviewed the criteria delineated in the policy and determined based on the criteria and oral presentations from the submitting firm that the definition of a qualifying project was met:

1. There is a public need for or benefit derived from a project of the type that the private entity proposes as the qualifying project and that the proposed qualifying project supports the mission of the District.
2. The estimated cost of the qualifying project is reasonable and beneficial to the Board in relation to similar facilities.
3. The private entity's plans will result in the timely acquisition, design, construction, improvement, renovation, expansion, equipping, maintenance, or operation of the qualifying project.

The submitting firm has also undergone the initial application process.

Pursuant to Policy 6327, § V., this item seeks approval to proceed with the qualifying project without engaging in a public bidding process because the following criteria have been met:

1. The proposed project supports the educational mission of the Board:

The proposal outlines a comprehensive plan to create a private school that not only prepares students for success in higher education and future careers but also nurtures ethical leadership and community engagement. A strategic partnership with Barry University and Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) will serve as the cornerstone of this initiative, ensuring that the institution meets both current educational demands and future workforce needs. The partnership can facilitate the development of joint programs, internships, and research opportunities that benefit both high school and university students

2. The proposed project is in the public's best interest, taking into consideration the benefits to the public, the financial structure of and the economic efficiencies achieved by the proposal, the qualifications and experience of the private entity that submitted the proposal and such entity's ability to perform the project, and the project's compatibility with regional infrastructure plans:

The proposed project will leverage Barry University's longstanding tradition of academic excellence and its innovative programs to create a secondary school that is both competitive and deeply rooted in community values. The partnership between M-DCPS and Barry University offers a unique opportunity to enhance educational offerings, address the challenges of school choice, and set a precedent for innovative public-private collaborations. The partnership can reflect the innovative nature of M-DCPS's commitment to providing high-quality educational opportunities while adapting to the evolving educational landscape.

3. The proposed project is for a facility that is owned by the Board or is for a facility for which ownership will be conveyed to the Board:

A partnership with Barry University could facilitate the leasing or shared use of selected facilities for academic programs, allowing both entities to optimize resources.

4. The proposed project has adequate safeguards in place to ensure that additional costs or service disruptions are not imposed on the public in the event of a material default or cancellation of the comprehensive agreement by the Board:

The proposed project has adequate safeguards and the following economic advantages: Cost-sharing arrangements for program development and resource allocation, increased funding opportunities through joint grant applications and vouchers, and efficient utilization of underutilized student seats.

5. The proposed project has adequate safeguards in place to ensure that the Board or private entity has the opportunity to add capacity to the proposed project or other facilities serving similar predominantly public purposes:

As more parents opt for private schooling options, public school districts like M-DCPS face the dual challenges of retaining students and adapting to increased

competition. By leveraging combined resources and expertise, the proposed project can ensure that every child in Miami-Dade County continues to receive a high-quality education that prepares them for success.

6. The proposed project will be owned by the Board upon completion, expiration, or termination of the comprehensive agreement and upon payment of the amounts financed:

A partnership with Barry University could facilitate the leasing or shared use of selected facilities for academic programs, allowing both entities to optimize resources. The agreement(s) will have provisions that safeguard the Board's property interests.

In accordance with this policy and F.S. 255.065(3)(c), the Board is responsible for determining whether the unsolicited proposal will be published without engaging in a public bidding process, published with other proposals for the same project being solicited, or rejected. If the Board approves this item's recommendation that the unsolicited proposal be published without engaging in a public bidding process, the project will be published in accordance with Policy 6327 § V.D.2, and a second public meeting addressing public comments on the unsolicited proposal will be held pursuant to Policy 6327 § V.F.

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

1. **APPROVE** staff's recommendation that the unsolicited proposal submitted by Barry University Secondary Academy, meets the criteria of School Board Policy 6327; and
2. **AUTHORIZE** the Superintendent to issue a publication stating that the Board has received an unsolicited proposal, determined it is a qualifying project, and determined that it is in its best interest to proceed without engaging in the public bidding process.
3. **REQUIRE** that the proposal be presented at a subsequent public meeting of the Board, and that any resulting comprehensive agreement be brought back to the Board for its approval or rejection.