

Mr. Danny Espino, Board Member

SUBJECT: EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY OF ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL BOARD ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

COMMITTEE: FACILITIES & CONSTRUCTION

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: EFFECTIVE & SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONAL PRACTICES

The School Board's discussions about maximizing Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (MDCPS) property assets have received positive attention from different segments of our community supportive of that endeavor, including, but not limited to, other government agencies, which are looking to collaborate to expand access to government services, leverage combined financial resources, and find efficiencies in co-locating. The most recent conversation about the future of the School Board Administration Building (SBAB) has similarly drawn sudden interest, when the possibility of exiting the Downtown assemblage has been discussed. With that in mind, Miami-Dade County Commissioner Natalie Milian Orbis approached our office with the possibility of developing a co-located facility at Miami Freedom Park that could combine SBAB, a public library, and a center for additional County government services in a central, accessible location.

SBAB has served as the District's central administrative headquarters for decades. Originally chosen when Downtown Miami represented the civic and commercial heart of the County, the site provided proximity to key governmental and institutional partners and was well situated relative to the population distribution of that time. Over the past few decades, however, Miami-Dade County's demographics, economy, and transportation patterns have changed dramatically. The County's population and student enrollment "center of gravity" has shifted west and southwest, areas that now encompass a substantial portion of the District's students and workforce. Considering these demographic changes, the County has expanded to additional government facilities like the West Dade and South Dade Government Centers, providing services close to population centers. Commissioner Milian Orbis is continuing that effort by leading the conceptual development of a potential library and service center at Miami Freedom Park. Commissioner Milian Orbis's concept capitalizes on Miami Freedom Park's large-scale civic and infrastructure developments, which include the City of Miami's planned relocation of its municipal offices to the new Miami Freedom Park, which is redefining the region's civic geography. Miami Freedom Park, adjacent to Miami International Airport and the Miami Intermodal Center (MIC), will integrate new municipal offices, a major public park, and mixed-use development, creating a new civic and transportation hub within the County's 836/826/112 mobility corridor.

In this evolving regional landscape, it is prudent for M-DCPS to examine whether its existing administrative headquarters remains the optimal location for accessibility, efficiency, and long-term sustainability. The Downtown site offers symbolic and historical significance, as well as connectivity via Metrorail and Metromover, yet it is increasingly constrained by congestion, aging infrastructure, limited expansion capacity, and higher operating costs.

A modern educational enterprise requires facilities that are centrally accessible, multimodally connected, fiscally responsible, and operationally efficient. Evaluating potential alternative locations can identify opportunities to:

- Improve drive-time accessibility for staff, families, and community partners;
- Enhance proximity and coordination with civic and governmental partners;

- Increase operational and technological efficiency through modernized facilities;
- Support sustainable design, resiliency, and multimodal transportation goals; and
- Leverage the strategic value of the existing SBAB property through sale, lease, or redevelopment options.

To ensure that future administrative functions align with the County's changing geography, infrastructure, and economic realities, the feasibility of alternative locations is recommended to inform a long-term facilities strategy for the District's central operations.

This item asks the Superintendent to assess the feasibility of evaluating potential alternative locations for Miami-Dade County Public Schools' central administrative headquarters within Miami-Dade County, which preliminarily includes, solely as an example and without limitation, the co-located facility conceptualized by Commissioner Milian Orbis at Miami Freedom Park. This effort should consider regional drive-time and transit accessibility; parcel availability and development feasibility; potential for shared or joint-use facilities with other public agencies; infrastructure and resiliency conditions (e.g., flood risk, elevation, stormwater capacity, etc.); construction, operating, and transition costs; and community, employee, and stakeholder input. Relevant stakeholders, including Miami Freedom Park and Miami-Dade County (inclusive of Commissioner Orbis's office and Public Libraries), and other relevant entities should be addressed. The findings, including cost comparisons and analyses, shall be presented at the Facilities & Construction Committee within 120 days of approval of this item.

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

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MR. DANNY ESPINO:**

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

1. Explore the feasibility of evaluating potential alternative locations for Miami-Dade County Public Schools' central administrative headquarters within Miami-Dade County, which, solely as an example, preliminarily includes, but is not limited to, the co-located facility conceptualized by Commissioner Milian Orbis at Miami Freedom Park;
2. If deemed feasible, include in the analysis regional drive-time and transit accessibility; parcel availability and development feasibility; potential for shared or joint-use facilities with other public agencies; infrastructure and resiliency conditions (e.g., flood risk, elevation, stormwater capacity, etc.); construction, operating, and transition costs; community, employee, and stakeholder input (e.g., relevant stakeholders, include Miami Freedom Park and Miami-Dade County, inclusive of Commissioner Orbis's office and Public Libraries), and other relevant entities; and
3. Present findings, including cost comparisons and analyses, at the Facilities & Construction Committee within 120 days of approval of this item.