

Mr. Danny Espino, Board Member

CO-SPONSORS: Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Chair
Ms. Monica Colucci, Vice Chair
Mr. Roberto J. Alonso
Mr. Joseph S. Geller
Ms. Luisa Santos

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SUBJECT: ENHANCING DISTRICT PREPAREDNESS TO SUPPORT NEWLY ARRIVED STUDENTS FROM CUBA

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS, LEADERS, & STAFF

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has long served as a primary entry point for students and families arriving from Cuba, reflecting the deep historical, cultural, and familial ties between the community and the island. Throughout its history, the District has demonstrated its ability to respond to changing conditions by ensuring that newly arrived students are enrolled, supported, and integrated into the educational system in a timely and effective manner.

More recently, the District experienced a significant increase in newly arrived immigrant students, requiring the expansion of enrollment, instructional, and support systems across multiple schools. While these enrollment trends have begun to stabilize and, in some areas, recede, this recent experience underscores both the District's capacity to respond and the importance of maintaining readiness.

Current conditions in Cuba continue to evolve, and while the timing and scope of any potential impacts remain uncertain, changes in circumstances could result in an increase in newly arrived students requiring immediate access to educational services. Given the District's geographic location and longstanding ties to Cuba, it is prudent to proactively assess readiness for such scenarios.

An increase in newly arrived students may present operational considerations related to enrollment processes, language acquisition services, instructional placement, student records evaluation, transportation, and access to mental health and social supports. Advance planning will help ensure continuity of instruction and minimize disruption to both newly arrived students and the broader student population.

While the District has established systems to support English Language Learners (ELL) and immigrant students, there is an opportunity to review and strengthen these systems to ensure they are aligned, scalable, and responsive to changing needs.

This item directs the Superintendent of Schools to conduct a comprehensive review of current District protocols for enrolling and supporting newly arrived students from Cuba, including intake procedures, language assessment, and placement processes; evaluate the capacity of existing English Language Learner (ELL) programs, newcomer supports, and bilingual services to accommodate potential increases in enrollment; assess the availability of instructional personnel, including ESOL-certified teachers, bilingual support staff, and school counselors, and identify strategies to address potential staffing needs; review current processes for the timely transfer and evaluation of academic records, including procedures for students arriving with limited or incomplete documentation; evaluate the District's ability to provide wraparound services, including mental health supports, social services referrals, and family engagement

resources; explore coordination protocols with local, state, and federal agencies, as well as community-based organizations, to ensure a unified and efficient response; identify facilities, transportation, and resource considerations to ensure that schools can effectively absorb changes in student enrollment; develop contingency planning scenarios for varying levels of enrollment increases and establish a framework for monitoring relevant indicators; provide recommendations, including any associated costs, staffing considerations, and implementation timelines, to ensure District readiness; and report determinations and policy updates to the Board at the Personnel, Student, School, & Community Support Committee Meeting on June 10, 2026.

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, authorize the Superintendent of Schools to:

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of current District protocols and Student Influx Guide for enrolling and supporting newly arrived students from Cuba, including intake procedures, language assessment, and placement processes;
2. Evaluate the capacity of existing English Language Learner (ELL) programs, newcomer supports, and bilingual services to accommodate potential increases in enrollment;
3. Assess the availability of instructional personnel, including ESOL-certified teachers, bilingual support staff, and school counselors, and identify strategies to address potential staffing needs;
4. Review current processes for the timely transfer and evaluation of academic records, including procedures for students arriving with limited or incomplete documentation;
5. Evaluate the District's ability to provide wraparound services, including mental health supports, social services referrals, and family engagement resources;
6. Explore coordination protocols with local, state, and federal agencies, as well as community-based organizations, to ensure a unified and efficient response;
7. Identify facilities, transportation, and resource considerations to ensure that schools can effectively absorb changes in student enrollment;
8. Develop contingency planning scenarios for varying levels of enrollment increases and establish a framework for monitoring relevant indicators;
9. Provide recommendations, including any associated costs, staffing considerations, and implementation timelines, to ensure District readiness; and
10. Report determinations and policy updates to the Board at the Personnel, Student, School, & Community Support Committee Meeting on June 10, 2026.

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