

Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Board Member

**SUBJECT: SUBSTANTIVELY PRIORITIZING THE I-PREPATORY
ACADEMY AND MDCPS' STUDENTS AND PARENTS IN
FORMULATING A STRATEGIC REDEVELOPMENT
FRAMEWORK FOR THE FULL DOWNTOWN ASSEMBLAGE**

COMMITTEE: FACILITIES AND CONSTRUCTION

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

Recently, a process of meaningful neighborhood changes has taken place in District 2, with a significant increase in demand for residents to move into urban, high-density neighborhoods, leading real property prices to substantially rise, and physically transforming urban areas through new higher-end construction and building upgrades.

A strong and growing demand for central city living has driven up housing prices in District 2's central neighborhoods—which have become the epicenter of both the housing crisis and development opportunities, creating broad-scale demographic shifts and increased density. City planning, economic development initiatives, and tax incentives fostering redevelopment in central neighborhoods are additional factors.

Neighborhoods impacted by increasing property values make it important that institutions with an education mission of providing services to all students, regardless of their economic background and means, assess how to build and provide public school facilities that meet the evolving needs of the residents of District 2. These neighborhoods' enhanced zoning density, location in the urban core near good jobs and transit, and historical and cultural character, which are all factors that are making them more attractive to redevelopment, can also present opportunities to construct new, modern school facilities to accompany this redevelopment at little or subsidized cost to the Board.

In light of a series of recent Board actions, discussions and concerns raised addressing development, purposing, and repurposing District-owned property throughout the County—consistent with School Board Policy 6327, it has become apparent that any and all activities being planned for District-owned properties in District 2 must be assessed to determine if there is a genuine focus and priority for meeting the education and school-focused mission of the Board, as articulated in School Board Policy, the District Strategic Plan, any and all relevant procedural frameworks, and other previous and related Board Items and discussions. Tepid commitment to education and school-based priorities is woefully insufficient. In an environment where focus and priorities can be lost, it is imperative that any and all development, redevelopment, purposing and repurposing

plans presented, recommended and discussed not only state the educational priorities of the District and those of the impacted School Board voting district, but all plans must materially and substantially reflect those priorities in a major, meaningful and material way.

1. History and Background (2019-2024)

Over a series of meetings from 2019-2022, the Board reviewed, discussed, and approved a comprehensive plan regarding the relocation and expansion of iPreparatory Academy PK-12 (iPrep) which was critical to the full realization of the School Board Administration Building Redevelopment Plan that includes the seven Board-owned parcels depicted in this map:



A vital principle of the redevelopment plan was sustaining and expanding the District's educational presence in the downtown area. The District, the Omni Community Redevelopment Agency (Omni CRA), and the City of Miami worked closely for several years to implement this strategy inclusive of critical milestones and legislative action

achieved together. This strategy would have kept iPrep in the area at 150 Northeast 19th Street, Miami, Florida, a location also known as “Biscayne Park.” If implemented, the plan would have doubled the number of students served and enhanced the educational experience of the current iPrep students and families with a new facility and access to outdoor recreational space.

The City of Miami Commissioner Miguel Angel Gabela brought forward a resolution to be considered by the City of Miami Commission that could reintroduce the opportunity for the District to work with the City of Miami and the Omni CRA and get the collaborative plan back on track. Commissioner Gabela’s resolution, Agenda Item RE2, was scheduled for consideration by the City of Miami Commission on February 8, 2024, and then deferred to March 14, 2024. The item was proposed to terminate the revocable lease agreement with a private school and would have once again enabled the District, the City of Miami, and the Omni CRA to work on the previously established iPrep relocation and expansion plan. Prior to the City Commission meeting, the District provided a presentation of the iPrep relocation and expansion plan to iPrep parents and other stakeholders with a detailed overview of the District’s progress and challenges related to the relocation and expansion plan. The relocation and expansion plan for iPrep was well-received by parents and stakeholders.

On March 13, 2024, the Board approved Agenda Item H-8, sponsored by Dr. Bendross-Mindingall, and unanimously co-sponsored by the entire Board, formally supporting City of Miami Commission Agenda Item RE2 regarding Biscayne Park. That item also authorized the Superintendent to enter into discussions with representatives of the City of Miami and the Omni CRA, as appropriate, regarding the iPrep expansion and relocation components with the City of Miami and the Omni CRA, and to prepare a report with recommendations for the Board.

The following day, parents from iPrep Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and other community stakeholders went to the City of Miami Commission meeting and spoke in favor of moving iPrep to Biscayne Park. On March 14, 2024, the City of Miami Commission unanimously approved Resolution 8 seeking to terminate the revocable license agreement with Love L Trust, LLC, for the development of a recreational facility on city-owned property located at Biscayne Park (150 Northeast 19th Street). District staff then stated that they would initiate discussions with the City of Miami and Omni CRA the following week “to expedite the start of negotiations concerning the iPrep expansion and relocation components.”

Following the March 14, 2024, City of Miami Commission meeting, District staff indicated that they would ensure that parent stakeholders are updated on the District’s efforts to relocate and expand iPrep.

2. Board Actions and Related Developments (2025-Present)

At the October 1, 2025, Fiscal Accountability & Government Relations Committee meeting, the Superintendent presented the Strategic Redevelopment Framework for District-owned properties within and adjacent to the Omni CRA. This framework suggested a coordinated approach across the District’s full downtown assemblage in

District 2, including the approximately 10.5-acre School Board Administrative Building (SBAB) assemblage, the Phillis Wheatley Elementary School campus, and the City-owned Biscayne Park site that had previously been identified for a future iPrep school facility. Following that presentation, Item F-1 was approved by the Board at the November 19, 2025, Meeting. Some of the key points approved were:

Strategic Redevelopment of District-Owned Downtown Properties: The School Board is pursuing a coordinated redevelopment of its downtown Miami properties—including the SBAB assemblage, Phillis Wheatley Elementary School, and the Biscayne Park site—to support educational and community revitalization goals.

Negotiation of Key Agreements: The Board seeks authorization to negotiate redevelopment terms with 1370 NE 2nd, LLC (Crescent Heights affiliate) for the property at 1370 N.E. 2nd Avenue, and to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Omni CRA to secure funding, sequencing, and infrastructure commitments for the entire downtown assemblage.

Public Benefits: Education, Housing, and Community Assets: The redevelopment will deliver significant public benefits, including a new iPrep facility, a reenvisioned Phillis Wheatley Elementary School, new workforce and affordable housing for District employees, and a modern administrative center with structured parking. These initiatives aim to eliminate blight, provide community-serving assets, and enhance neighborhood stability.

Financial Impact and Tax Increment Financing (TIF): Activation of these properties will return portions to the tax roll, generating new taxable value and TIF revenue for the City and County. The MOU will define how this TIF is allocated and bonded to support educational facilities, housing, and infrastructure, leveraging the CRA's extension through 2047 for a stable, long-term funding stream.

Improved Value Proposition and Timing: The value of the District's Parcel 7 has increased from \$20.6 million (2018) to \$27.5 million, and the total value of the project has grown to over \$78.5 million. The timing is critical due to increased property values, available public incentives, and the CRA's extension, presenting a unique opportunity to maximize public value and advance the District's education mission.

Following the November 19, 2025, Board meeting, no further updates or information were provided regarding the relocation of iPrep, although the Board made it clear that iPrep is a priority, and any development moving forward should prioritize iPrep, as well as Phillis Wheatley Elementary School, and that District staff should inform iPrep and its parents of any development plans.

3. June 2026 Committee Meeting and Board Actions

On June 17, 2026, the Board approved Agenda Item F-2, a Transaction and Development Agreement and SBAB Conveyance Rider with 1370 NE 2ND, LLC, an entity associated with Crescent Heights, for District property referred to as Parcel 7, for the building of administrative office space, shared parking garage for the District, and phased

redevelopment aligned with educational priorities, ***with no expenditure of District funds***. In addition, the Board agreed to authorize the Superintendent to engage in future discussions and/or negotiations with the Omni CRA, Crescent Heights and the City of Miami that will focus on TIF, possible interlocal agreements, and site coordination for iPrep Academy, Phillis Wheatly Elementary School, and infrastructure, maintaining District oversight and emphasizing long-term value, community benefits, and phased implementation.

Through this item, however, the Board was informed for the first time that the City of Miami no longer intended to provide Biscayne Park for the relocation of iPrep, but instead wanted to provide a property that is currently serving as Miami Fire Station 2, located at 1901 North Miami Avenue, and adjacent to Biscayne Park as a potential place for relocation. The Miami Fire Station 2 parcel appears smaller than the parcels currently owned by the Board, and does not appear to provide the necessary square footage needed for a new modern high school with double the capacity of the existing iPrep, and poses safety concerns for students. In addition, relocating iPrep to the Miami Fire Station 2 location will likely add additional years of delays before the District can start constructing a new iPrep school facility. Moreover, parents of the iPrep PTSA, who advocated for years for a new, modern facility, were never consulted about the possibility of relocating to the Miami Fire Station 2 parcel, which appears considerably much less desirable than the current location, fronting Biscayne Boulevard.

Although the iPrep relocation proposal was concerning, Agenda Item F-2 was critical in getting the redevelopment started in the downtown area and it accomplished the following objectives:

Strategic Redevelopment Framework and Educational Priorities: The District has established a comprehensive redevelopment framework for its downtown properties, prioritizing its educational mission. Central outcomes include a new iPrep facility and a reenvisioned Phillis Wheatley Elementary School. The framework ensures that educational needs remain the primary focus throughout all redevelopment phases.

Phased and Coordinated Redevelopment Approach: The redevelopment will proceed in coordinated phases, starting with Parcel 7. This phased structure allows the District to address immediate priorities (like administrative modernization and parking) while maintaining flexibility to adapt to changing needs, market conditions, and funding opportunities.

Leveraging Public Assets for Long-Term Value and Community Benefit: The District aims to activate underutilized, publicly owned assets to generate long-term economic value, including future TIF. This approach is designed to support not only educational facilities but also workforce and affordable housing for District employees, community infrastructure, and broader public benefits.

Governance, Oversight, and Intergovernmental Coordination: The plan involves multiple agreements, all of which, including the implementation steps require School Board approval, ensuring oversight and alignment with Board-approved

priorities. Intergovernmental coordination is essential for site planning, public facilities, and infrastructure improvements.

Safeguards, Milestones, and Accountability: The agreements include clear milestones, pre-development obligations, closing conditions, and termination provisions. Regular updates and workshops are mandated to keep the School Board informed and to reassess strategies as needed. This is to ensure transparency, accountability, and the ability to pivot if negotiations or implementation do not proceed as planned.

These points collectively highlight the District's commitment to educational excellence, community benefit, prudent asset management, and transparent governance throughout the redevelopment process. There is still a need to further refine the District's priorities, redevelopment parameters, and sequencing before any future CRA/TIF agreements, interlocal agreements, or site-specific negotiations proceed. A phased approach, starting with Parcel 7 as the initial implementation phase, allows the District to address immediate needs (like administrative modernization and parking) while planning for future phases based on evolving priorities and opportunities. It allows for parallel workstreams (e.g., Parcel 7, iPrep site planning, Fire Station relocation) that inform each other but are not strictly linear, giving the District flexibility to adapt sequencing as needed. Any future interlocal agreements, CRA/TIF agreements, or other major implementation steps must be brought back to the School Board for approval. This maintains oversight and ensures that sequencing decisions remain aligned with Board direction. The iPrep facility and Phillis Wheatley Elementary School can advance, with future agreements and site solutions to be negotiated and approved as part of the ongoing sequencing process.

4. Recommended Approaches to Prioritize Education Mission

For the Downtown Assemblage, the Strategic Redevelopment Framework should center on the Board-approved priorities, strategic objectives, and implementation guardrails. The Framework must be designed to ensure that redevelopment of downtown properties directly advances the District's core mission to provide high-quality K-12 education for students in Miami-Dade County, as well as the associated long-term planning and operational goals that support this mission. These are the key District priorities supported by the Strategic Redevelopment Framework:

1. **Advancing the District's Educational Mission:** The Framework places the District's educational mission as the primary priority. This includes ensuring that all redevelopment activities are aligned with the goal of improving educational outcomes and facilities for students.
 2. **New iPrep Facility:** A central outcome of the redevelopment effort is the creation of a new iPrep Academy facility with expanded student capacity. The Framework supports site planning, coordination with the City of Miami and the CRA, and the development of a modern, urban Pre-K–12 school environment, with a priority to begin construction as soon as practicable. Parents, employees and community stakeholders of iPrep should be consulted regarding significant plans and issues. Relocating iPrep at the Miami Fire Station 2 parcel does not appear to meet the parameters established by the Board through previous items. If Biscayne Park is
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no longer an option, and/or if the Miami Fire Station 2 is the only option offered by the City as a relocation of iPrep, the District should consider a plan for locating or relocating iPrep at Parcels 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6, within the District-owned downtown assemblage.

3. **Reenvisioned Phillis Wheatley Elementary School:** The redevelopment plan should also continue to prioritize a new, modernized Phillis Wheatley Elementary School facility. This is considered a central outcome and must be integrated into the sequencing and planning of the overall redevelopment.
4. **Workforce and Affordable Housing Opportunities:** The Framework supports leveraging District-owned assets to create workforce and affordable housing. This is intended to benefit District employees, families, and the broader community, and can be coordinated with the Omni CRA and other partners.
5. **Modernization of District Administrative Operations:** The initial phase (Parcel 7) focuses on delivering new, modern administrative space and structured parking for District use and at no cost to the Board. This modernization is intended to improve operational efficiency and support future growth.
6. **Strategic Asset Activation and Long-Term Economic Value:** The Framework is designed to activate underutilized, publicly owned assets to generate long-term economic value, including future TIF that can be reinvested in District priorities.
7. **Broader Community and Infrastructure Improvements:** The plan includes improvements to parking, mobility, public facilities, and infrastructure, benefiting both the District and the surrounding community.
8. **Coordinated, Phased Redevelopment with Board Oversight:** The Framework establishes a phased approach to redevelopment, ensuring that all major decisions, agreements, and implementation steps for all Board properties located within District 2 are brought back to the School Board for consideration and approval. This maintains transparency, public participation, accountability, and alignment with Board direction.

In summary, the Strategic Redevelopment Framework supports the District's priorities of educational excellence, facility modernization, affordable housing, operational efficiency, community benefit, and prudent asset management, and reinforces that it should all be under the direction and oversight of the School Board.

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

ACTION PROPOSED BY

DR. DOROTHY BENDROSS-MINDIGALL: That the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent of Schools to:

1. prepare a report identifying iPreparatory Academy and other school facilities as a priority, specifying ways to expeditiously and efficiently replace the iPreparatory Academy K-12 school facility, and with workforce
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housing and other commercial ventures playing an important but subsidiary role to building modern school facilities for our students;

2. Develop a plan to address the relevant Parent Teacher Student Association associated with the replacement of iPreparatory Academy K-12, as well as other relevant stakeholders regarding the location, size and other dimensions envisioned for iPreparatory Academy K-12;
 3. review the feasibility of using property currently owned by the District, and identified as Parcels 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, which could serve as a superior location or relocation for a new, attractive, modern iPreparatory Academy K-12 school facility, with increased student stations;
 4. engage the School Board member of the impacted voting member district, in this case District 2 to discuss both short and long range plans and proposals regarding District-owned parcels within School Board voting District 2, prior to engaging with potential private and/or public partners;
 5. As required by Agenda Item F-2, approved by the Board at the June 17, 2026, Board meeting, following input by the District member, provide a report to Parent Teacher Student Association associated with iPreparatory Academy K-12 before entering into further discussions with the Omni Community Redevelopment Agency and the City of Miami regarding implementation of the iPreparatory Academy K-12 concept within the targeted area, including issues such as, relocation, infrastructure coordination, redevelopment sequencing, and related implementation activities, and bring such agreement back to the Board for consideration and approval, in a manner that honors the prior iPreparatory Academy K-12 commitments made by the Board;
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6. Following consultation with the District Board Member, Parent Teacher Student Association, and relevant stakeholders, call a workshop within 120 to 180 days as required by Agenda Item F-2, approved by the Board at the June 17, 2026, Board meeting, to inform the formulation of a strategy for the remaining District-owned properties within the downtown assemblage, to discuss recommended sequencing, procurement approach, redevelopment priorities, and alignment with the Board-approved Framework; and
 7. Provide an initial status report at the Facilities and Construction Committee Meeting of September 2, 2026.
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