

Ms. Luisa Santos, Board Member

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON FOCUS SCHOOL SOFTWARE SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION AND TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: EFFECTIVE & SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONAL PRACTICES

To give our students the world, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) remains dedicated to advancing 21st-century systems. Through this mission, M-DCPS has continuously invested in leveraging modern, cloud-based technology to enhance administrative efficiency, protect data integrity, and support the operational needs of hundreds of thousands of students and employees.¹ As the nation's third-largest school district, M-DCPS requires a robust and highly advanced digital infrastructure system to manage critical student demographic, academic, scheduling, discipline, and auxiliary operations.

In May 2024, M-DCPS initiated a strategy towards modernization of our school systems by awarding ITN-22-039-CM for a new Student Information System (SIS) to replace our legacy systems, including but not limited to District Student Information System (DSIS), Follett Aspen Student Information System (SIS), and Wazzle Solutions.² Through the unified cloud interface proposed and provided by Focus School Software, M-DCPS aims to integrate critical modules, including gradebooks, schedules, attendance, discipline, registration, administrative functions, state-level reports, and student/parent/employee portal access.

As a critical, high-impact tool used daily by employees, Focus School Software directly aligns with the *2026-2031 Strategic Plan*, specifically Objective 2, Key Result 3: improving key employee-facing systems by July 2029. The real-time incorporation of new data through a modern interface will drastically reduce the time employees spend processing and receiving critical information. In doing so, full implementation of Focus will help the District meet two specific strategic goals: achieving at least an 80% stakeholder satisfaction rating scores of 9 or 10 out of 10 and reducing end-to-end processing time by at least 30%.³

Since the project's initiation, M-DCPS' School Leadership and Performance and Information Technology Services Departments have achieved key milestones in transitioning the SIS:

- Decoupled legacy mainframe workflows and completed the core technical builds for the Discipline Module.⁴
- Led initial testing of enrollment platforms with school-site registrars to gain critical feedback and insights.⁵

¹ Dotres, Dr. J. L., Diaz, L., & Riaz, Dr. O. (2026, May). Statistical Highlights 2025-2026. Miami; Miami-Dade County Public Schools. <https://api.dadeschools.net/WMSFiles/171/MDCPS%20Highlights/SH2526.pdf>

² Miami-Dade County Public Schools. (2024, May). Agenda Item E-141: Award Invitation To Negotiate No. Itn-22-039- Cm - Student Information System (Sis). Retrieved from http://procurement.dadeschools.net/bidsol/pdf/agenda/a_2024_05_03_ITN-22-039-CM_E141.pdf

³ Miami-Dade County Public Schools. (2025, June). Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

https://pdfs.dadeschools.net/Bdarch/2026/Bd051326/agenda/Strat-Plan-Landscape_2026-2031.pdf

⁴ J. Fernandez, personal communication, September 8, 2025.

⁵ J. Fernandez, personal communication, November 3, 2025.

- Established a secure data-sharing agreement and Application Programming Interface (API) integrations for external applications, such as Ellevation (ELL) and Exceptional Student Education-Electronic Management System (ESE-EMS).⁶
- Initiated an ongoing intensive “Sandbox Testing” session in Summer 2026 to engage site administrators, central office teams, and sub-groups in rigorous system testing before deployment.⁷

Pursuant to Memorandum 0840, issued on June 6, 2026, the districtwide implementation of the Focus School Software System is slated for the 2027-2028 school year.⁸ Following the Board's approval of a \$10 million investment of ESSER funding for this transition in 2021, a comprehensive operational update is requested to ensure proper oversight of implementation for this high-impact, employee-facing system.⁹

This item seeks to direct the Superintendent to provide a comprehensive update on the progress, sandbox diagnostic findings, stakeholder feedback, and full implementation timeline for the Focus School Software System SIS transition.

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

ACTION PROPOSED BY LUISA SANTOS:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida directs the Superintendent to:

1. Provide a comprehensive update on initiatives and progress aligned to the transition to the Focus Student Information System (SIS), including but not limited to:
 - a. A summary of the diagnostic findings and stakeholder feedback from implementation activities conducted to date, including testing and any subsequent deployment sessions;
 - b. A detailed implementation timeline identifying completed milestones, current activities, upcoming phases, and key deliverables for the full deployment of the Focus Student Information System;
 - c. An overview of the rollout strategy, including modules planned for deployment, implementation phases, school and department readiness, training activities, risk mitigation efforts, and contingency planning;
 - d. A layman’s terms summary of benefits and operational efficiencies that will be realized by the District, regions, local schools, staff, teachers, students, and families of system transition;
2. Provide the anticipated end dates for the full deployment of the Focus Student Information System (SIS); and
3. Provide an update to the Board at the Academics, Innovation, Evaluation and Technology Committee Meeting of November 10, 2026.

⁶ G. Arazoza, personal communication, May 22, 2026.

⁷ G. Arazoza, personal communication, April 6, 2026.

⁸ Miami-Dade County Public Schools. (2026, June 5). *Board Update #5: Implementation of the New Focus Student Information System (SIS)* (Memorandum No. 0840). [Memorandum].

⁹ Miami-Dade County Public Schools. (2021, June 28). *Presentation Materials for School Board Budget Workshop on June 30, 2021 – ESSER II & ESSER III Draft Spending Plan Discussion* (Memorandum No. 1404). [Memorandum].