



Miami-Dade County Public Schools

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Superintendent of Schools

Alberto M. Carvalho

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August 24, 2017

The Honorable Joe Negron
Florida Senate
409 The Capitol
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear President Negron:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, respectfully requests that a special session be called for the purpose of reviewing the impact of HB 7069 on Florida's 67 school districts and making statutory modifications to address certain provisions. We have consistently expressed strong support for school choice, as well as most of the provisions included in HB 7069, many of which we advocated for, including the changes in teacher evaluation and the expansion of virtual education.

However, there are a few provisions we believe infringe on school boards' constitutional authority and have a negative impact on the operations of school districts. We have consistently expressed concern regarding those provisions that will negatively impact the ability of the School Board to carry out its constitutional responsibilities. Among the most challenging provisions of HB 7069 for school districts are the following:

- 1) the language mandating sharing of ad valorem tax revenue with private entities or financing private enterprises and diverting millage revenue for non-district purposes. While we support capital funding for charter schools, it should not be at the expense of publicly-owned buildings that tend to be older facilities. We had proffered the concept of state-guaranteed loans, which is a best practice and currently used in the state of Colorado;
- 2) requiring the use of a standard contract that reduces the School Board's role to a ministerial one and undermines its constitutional authority;
- 3) provisions related to the approval of Schools of Hope that deprive the School Board of its constitutional authority to supervise, operate, and control public schools within district boundaries; and
- 4) restrictions imposed on Federal Title I allocations by school boards to address school improvement as federal regulations stipulate.

As you may already know, our School Board voted on August 9, 2017, to join litigation challenging the specific provisions of HB 7069 that raise constitutional and legal issues. However, the School Board has expressed the desire to exhaust all other avenues of negotiation that would provide a reprieve prior to entering into such litigation. Therefore,

on behalf of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, we would like the opportunity to discuss this urgent matter with you and request that a special session be called to address these issues. We urge the Governor, Speaker of the House, and Senate President to make a call to enter into Special Session B prior to the commencement of the 2018 Session in order to discuss and provide some resolution for the challenging provisions contained within HB 7069.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Ms. Iraida R. Mendez-Cartaya, Associate Superintendent, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Grants Administration, and Community Engagement, at 305 995-1497.

Sincerely,



Lawrence S. Feldman, Ph.D., Chairman
The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida



Alberto M. Carvalho
Superintendent of Schools

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cc: School Board Members
School Board Attorney
Superintendent's Cabinet