

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

giving our students the world

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Alberto M. Carvalho

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February 9, 2011

The Honorable Carlos Lopez-Cantera
Office of the Chair
Miami-Dade County Legislative Delegation
2300 Coral Way, Suite 111
Miami, Florida 33145

Dear Chairman Lopez-Cantera:

On behalf of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, students, parents, and employees, I am writing to express our serious concerns with the pending budget cuts to Florida's public schools. I am sure that you, too, share these concerns. While I appreciate the need to balance the state budget and to make necessary reductions, I firmly believe that in keeping with Florida's constitutional mandate that the education of its children is of paramount importance. For this session, education funding must be protected since education is the cornerstone of businesses and an investment in tomorrow's workforce.

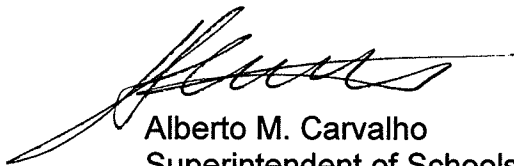
Therefore, in an effort to collaboratively find ways to accommodate the need to cut budgets but not to negatively impact classroom instruction for the 2011-2012 school year, we would like to proffer some recommended budget reductions to mitigate reductions to core programming funded through the Florida Education Finance Program as follows:

- Sunset School Recognition for Fiscal Year (FY) 2011-2012, \$129 million;
- Teacher Lead Program, \$33 million;
- Merit Award Program; \$20 million; and
- Transfer the following Categoricals to the Base Student Allocation (BSA):
 - Instructional Materials - \$216.9 million;
 - Safe Schools - \$67.1 million;
 - Reading Allocation - \$101.7 million; and
 - Lottery - \$7.4 million.

All of these proposed reductions focus on preserving the BSA, which is the foundation of our day-to-day classroom instruction funding and does not reflect the merit of the item. We strongly recommend delaying the creation of any new initiatives for the 2011-2012 school year and the elimination of the penalties associated with class-size reduction non-compliance.

If you need additional information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 305-995-2940, or Ms. Iraida R. Mendez-Cartaya, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Grants Administration, and Community Engagement, at 305-995-1497.

Sincerely,



Alberto M. Carvalho
Superintendent of Schools

AMC:lbd
L723

cc: School Board Members
School Board Attorney
Superintendent's Cabinet
Governor Rick Scott
Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives
President of the Florida Senate