


## MEMORANDUM

March 21, 2011

**TO:** The Honorable Chair and Members of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

**FROM:** Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools 

**SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – MARCH 14-18, 2011**

### **Budget**

As you may recall, the Governor's recommended budget reduced the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) by 10 percent, predicated on 3 major policy changes: not replacing the federal stimulus monies in the current K-12 budget; a reduction of .428 mills in school property taxes; and a shift of half the cost of the state pension program to the employees. The Chair of House preK-12 Education Appropriations, Representative Coley, has presented a budget proposal which provides a reduction of 7.7 percent to the FEFP, and the Senate preK-12 Education Appropriations, Chairman Simmons, is proposing a reduction of 2.28 percent after receiving its allocation. The House budget eliminates funding for New World School of the Arts, while the Senate budget reduces the budget by 25 percent.

A pivotal event last week was the Revenue Estimating Conference that indicated that all is not yet well in Florida's economic recovery by describing the state's recovery as "anemic." Since the last General Revenue Estimating Conference held in December 2010, revenue sources have displayed mixed results with overall collections running slightly above estimates. While most of the revenue sources increased, some were significantly below the official estimates. Furthermore, the pace of the housing and employment recovery has slowed. For fiscal year 2011-2012, expected revenues were decreased, resulting in the state's revenue shortfall growing slightly to \$3.75 billion. This week it is anticipated that the House appropriations subcommittees will receive their allocation for the 2011-2012.

### **Teacher Quality**

Education reform, SB 736, a priority of the Governor, Speaker, and Senate President, passed both chambers and waits to be signed into law this week. The bill requires that 50 percent of a teacher's evaluation be based on student achievement on state assessments, end-of-course exams, norm-referenced exams, or other approved assessments; compensation be based on student performance; and the elimination of continuing professional contracts or tenure for teachers.

### **School Board Governance**

HB 307, filed by Representative Logan, relating to the modification of the current governance structure for The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, cleared its first committee of reference, becoming a proposed committee substitute or PCS. The

legislation would change the current 9 single-member districts to 7 single-member districts and 2 at-large districts. In addition, the legislation would make the at-large members chair and vice-chair for the length of the term, limiting members' opportunity for leadership roles. As you may recall, the concept was discussed at the Board retreat on January 26, 2011. The Senate companion is SB 778 filed by Senator Diaz de la Portilla.

**State Revenue Limitations**

The Florida Senate passed SB 958 providing for a constitutional amendment to Florida's Constitution, establishing a new revenue limitation for the state tied to inflation and population growth. The current revenue limitation is based on personal income growth. If the legislation passes both chambers, then Floridians would vote on this provision in the 2012 general elections.

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

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cc: School Board Attorney  
Superintendent's Cabinet  
Ms. Carolyn Nelson-Goedert  
Ms. Darla March