

MEMORANDUM

March 7, 2016

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

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

SUBJECT: 2016 LEGISLATIVE SESSION WEEK #8 – FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 4, 2016

The Florida Legislature has completed its eighth week of the 60-day 2016 regular legislative session that began on Tuesday, January 12, 2016.

On Friday, February 26, 2016, the Florida House of Representatives and the Florida Senate announced they had reached an agreement on the budget framework, known as allocations. As a result, Senate Chair Lee and House Chair Corcoran met late that night and held the organization meeting of the Conference Committee. House Speaker Crisafulli and Senate President Gardiner reached an accord on all of the essential elements to produce a budget, specifically the level of tax relief that would be provided.

The budget agreement between the two chambers contradicts the Governor's proposed budget on two fronts: tax relief and economic incentives to attract businesses to the state. As you may recall, the Governor had requested \$1.0 billion in tax relief and \$250 million for economic incentives, but the agreed upon level is approximately \$400 million and zero for economic incentives. Immediately following the announced agreement between the two chambers, the Governor's communication office began notifying cities across the state that there will be no funding to recruit businesses to the state unless the legislature reversed its position. The Governor has line item veto power, and no doubt this sets up situations that could potentially jeopardize member projects in the final budget passed by the legislature.

BUDGET CONFEREES INCLUDE:

At-large members – Senators Lee (Chair), Benacquisto, Flores, Galvano, Grimsley, Joyner, Margolis, Richter, Simmons and Smith, and Representatives Corcoran (Chair), Boyd (Vice-Chair), Adkins, Albritton, Baxley, Cruz, J. Diaz, Gaetz, M. Jones, Moraitis, Oliva, O'Toole, Pafford, Raschein, Richardson, Stafford, Trujillo, Williams, Wood, Workman and Young.

Education members – Senators Gaetz (Chair) Bullard, Galvano, Legg, Montford, Simmons and Stargel; and Representatives Fresen (Chair), Adkins, Clarke-Reed, B. Cortes, Costello, Fitzenhagen, Fullwood, M. Jones, Lee, O'Toole, Perry, R. Rodrigues, Slosberg, Stone, and Taylor.

The District is fortunate to have the Chair of House Education Appropriation as a member of its delegation. Chair Fresen will lead the negotiations with the Senate on education

funding. Also on the Education Conference is delegation member Senator Bullard. At-large members of the conference can participate on any committee. Here too, the District is fortunate to have several of our delegation members representing our interests. All the members have received the District's budget priorities, which have been attached for your information. The District's lobbying team will monitor the discussions and will provide updates as they become available.

As a result of conference negotiations, at this point, there is agreement to increase the K-12 funding by \$458 million or 1.0 percent per student. The amount approved in the House and Senate Education Conference Committee is far less than the proposed increase approved by both chambers. The House budget proposal passed on the House floor on Thursday, February 11, 2016. It provided a total funding increase of \$601 million or approximately 3%, average dollars per student of \$7,231, and per student increase of \$124 or 1.75%. The Senate budget proposal passed on the Senate floor on Thursday, February 11, 2016. It included a total funding increase of \$651 million or approximately 3.3% (\$50 million more than the original House proposal), average dollars per student of \$7,249, and per student increase of \$142 or 2%.

The House and Senate Budget Conference agreement on Sunday, February 28, 2016, is a:

- **REDUCTION of \$143 million from the approved House budget proposal;**
and
- **REDUCTION of \$193 million from the approved Senate budget proposal.**

Staff and the District's team advised the members of the Miami-Dade Delegation and are advocating for increased funding above the current level. The education budget committee has not met since Sunday, February 28, 2016, when the issues were bumped to chairs Senator Lee and Representative Corcoran.

As of the time of this report, the education budget had not been finalized with the exception of the allocations for Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO). Pursuant to the agreement, traditional public schools have been allocated \$75 million and charter schools have also been allocated \$75 million. If the Legislature is to conclude the session as scheduled, the budget must be on members' desks by Tuesday, March 8, 2016, to adhere to the 72 hours cooling off period prior to a vote.

BOARD'S PRIORITY BILLS

HB 499, sponsored by Representative Avila, modifying the value adjustment process, has passed the Florida House of Representatives and is currently in the Florida Senate. The bill has been referred to committees. The Senate companion, SB 766, sponsored by Senator Flores, passed Senate Appropriations. The lobbying team is working to get it on the Senate calendar.

As previously reported, HB 119, sponsored by Representative Bileca, regarding providing limited flexibility on how educational facilities are built and maintained, passed the Florida House of Representatives by a vote of 111-1. The companion bill, SB 442, sponsored by

Senator Flores, was heard in Senate Appropriations, passed unanimously, and has been placed on the Senate calendar on second reading.

SB 704, related to the Florida Building Code, was heard in Senate Fiscal Policy, its last committee of reference, passed, and has been scheduled for Special Calendar on Tuesday, March 8, 2016. This bill is an omnibus bill and includes language that facilitates the continuation of the District's iSwim program. The companion bill, HB 535, passed the Florida House of Representatives and is now waiting for action by the upper chamber.

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.

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cc: School Board Attorney
Superintendent's Cabinet