



Miami-Dade County Public Schools

giving our students the world

Superintendent of Schools
Alberto M. Carvalho

Miami-Dade County School Board

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May 15, 2017

The Honorable Rick Scott
Plaza Level 05, The Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Scott:

On Monday, May 8, 2017, the Florida House and Senate passed their proposed 2017-2018 Florida budget and pertinent conforming bills. Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) urges you to veto HB 7069, the Education conforming bill. This 278-page education package, which affects everything from charter schools to recess in public elementary schools, emerged late Friday from the budget process but was mostly agreed to behind closed doors without being vetted by members of either chamber. There are provisions in the bill that were never even heard in the Senate and a provision that was defeated by the Senate.

There are several provisions within HB 7069 which would be extremely detrimental to students in Florida's public schools, but among the most egregious are the following:

- **Sharing Capital Outlay:** The financial impact of this policy change on our school district alone is estimated to be over \$20 million in year one. This number will grow as enrollment in charter schools increases. If this language becomes law, M-DCPS will be forced to redirect funds from a capital revenue source that has already been significantly diminished due to a previous 0.50 millage reduction mandated by the Legislature. A continued redirection of capital millage revenues will compromise M-DCPS' ability to provide maintenance to more than 420 school buildings. M-DCPS could even be forced to shift operating dollars from educational programs to fund critical maintenance to publicly-owned buildings. This policy sacrifices the integrity of taxpayer owned buildings for fewer privately owned buildings.
- **Dilution of Title I funds:** The one-size-fits-all changes to the allocation and distribution of federal Title I funds proposed by HB 7069 will have a significantly detrimental impact on Miami-Dade's ability to sustain the level of academic performance our students have demonstrated in recent years. M-DCPS currently serves 312 schools with areas of highly concentrated poverty and 75 percent or more economically disadvantaged students in the Title I Program. Some of the critical initiatives for which Title I funds are reserved in Miami-Dade that would be eliminated with this language include:
 - a. Education Transformation/School Turnaround Support
 - b. Transformation/Instructional Coaches
 - c. Secondary School Reform (8-period day)

- d. Summer Services
- e. Supplemental Educational Materials

Of greatest concern are the limitations imposed by legislation on our district's nationally-recognized Education Transformation Model. Miami-Dade's school turnaround efforts have consistently yielded positive results that have changed the overall academic performance of our district and the state. This critical work with our lowest-performing schools has been accomplished through the use of Title I funds to target these students and schools' unique needs. In Miami-Dade County, the number of "D" and "F" schools has been reduced significantly and, despite our size, the percentage of low-performing schools is below the statewide percentage.

- **Usurps Local School Board Control:** The bill requires the use of a standard contract when sponsoring a charter school. Furthermore, the bill states that any term or condition added by a district to the standard contract for a charter school will be presumed to be a limitation on charter school flexibility. This provision limits a School Board's constitutional authority to negotiate charter contracts to address the specific needs of each district. In addition, the bill establishes charter schools as local educational agencies for the purpose of receiving federal funds and grants them sovereign immunity, a right reserved only for public entities under state law.

For all of the aforementioned reasons, we respectfully request that you veto 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,



Alberto M. Carvalho
Superintendent of Schools

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

Dr. Kim McDougal