

MEMORANDUM

April 3, 2018

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

FROM: Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools 

SUBJECT: FY 2018 BUDGET INCREASES FUNDING FOR DISTRICT PRIORITIES

Congress passed a final FY 2018 budget that is expected to result in significant increases to education funding for Miami-Dade County Public Schools while averting harmful cuts that had been proposed during the budget process. The omnibus bill included a number of additional items, such as school safety legislation supported by the District, but did not address the legal status of young, undocumented immigrants under the expiring Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 (H.R. 1625) was a product of compromise to resolve a budget impasse dating to last September and passed both chambers of Congress with large bipartisan majorities.

February's Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 paved the way for compromise by lifting spending caps for both military and domestic spending for two fiscal years. The latest in a series of stopgap extensions gave Congress until March 23, 2018, to finalize the FY 2018 budget. The final negotiations were resolved on Wednesday, March 21 despite objections by some members of Congress for its large scope and cost, the short timeline for review, and the prospects for large federal deficits due to higher spending in combination with tax cuts. Nonetheless, the House voted to approve the bill 256-167 on Thursday, and the Senate overcame delays to approve it 65-32 early Friday morning. Despite threats by the President to veto the legislation, due to the lack of a deal on DACA and the border wall, the bill was signed into law on March 23, 2018.

In total, the U.S. Department of Education budget increased by \$3.9 billion to \$70.9 billion. The budget will positively impact many of the District's legislative priorities, including the following high-priority grant allocations:

- **1.9% increase in Title I grants** to support low-income students in high-need schools (raising budget to \$15.76 billion);
- **Level funding in Title II grants (instead of program elimination)** to support teacher training and class size reduction (maintaining \$2.056 billion);
- **175% increase in Title IV grants** to support improvements in schools through block grants that had been funded well below the authorized level of \$1.6 billion (raising budget to \$1.1 billion); and
- **2.3% increase in IDEA grants** to support students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (raising budget to \$12.278 billion).

Other District priorities receiving increases include the following programs, many of which had been targeted for cuts earlier in the budget process:

- **21st Century Community Learning Centers:** +1.7% to \$1.2 billion;
- **Safe Schools:** +32.4% to \$90 million;
- **Full Service Community Schools:** +75% to \$18 million;
- **Magnet Schools:** +7.5% to \$105 million;
- **Career Technical Education:** +6.7% to \$1.193 billion;
- **Adult Education:** +5.9% to \$631 million;
- **Homeless Education:** +10.4% to \$85 million; and
- **Head Start:** +6.6% to \$9.863 billion.

School readiness was also enhanced with an 83% increase (to \$5.226 billion) in Child Care grants. Charter schools saw an increase of 16.9% (to \$400 million), but private voucher programs advocated in the President's proposed budget were not included in the bill.

Finally, the legislation incorporated new measures outside of the U.S. Department of Education budget that may benefit the District. The STOP School Violence Act of 2018 is a repurposed U.S. Justice Department program to enhance school safety, which was supported by the District and co-sponsored by South Florida congressional representatives. The Act authorizes \$75 million annually in competitive grants for training and physical school safety improvements.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Ron Y. Steiger, Chief Financial Officer, Financial Services, at 305 995-1958.

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cc: School Board Attorney
Superintendent's Cabinet
Ms. Melissa Latus