

MEMORANDUM

April 28, 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 – SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE

As previously advised, HB 307, related to the governance structure of school districts with a population of more than 2 million, will be discussed on the floor today, Thursday, April 28, 2011. State Representative Dwight Bullard has scheduled a press conference at 10:30 a.m. this morning regarding this bill. Additionally, the attached document has been distributed to all 120 members of the Florida House of Representatives.

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

AMC:lbd
M1087

Attachment

cc: School Board Attorney
Superintendent's Cabinet

VOTE NO on HB 307!!

- This is in application a local bill that ONLY impacts The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida. This bill applies to counties that have at least 2 million residents. The next closest district is Broward at 1.7 million residents. So for all practicality it applies only to Miami-Dade.
- The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, voted unanimously to oppose HB 307 and also voted to review the best practices in governance structures.
- The Miami-Dade Delegation does NOT have a position on the bill. In fact, some members of the Miami-Dade Delegation oppose the bill.
- The current governance structure (9 single-member districts) of The School Board of Miami-Dade, Florida, is a result of a federal court settlement. In 1991 a class action lawsuit was filed against the school board alleging that the at-large system for electing board members resulted in an “impermissible dilution of the voting strength of minority voters.” In response, the Board adopted a redistricting plan **pursuant to a consent decree** approved by the federal district court.
- This bill will potentially dilute minority representation on the Board, thus disenfranchising the voice of minority groups.
- There has been no public outcry for change on the School Board. In fact, student achievement is rising in Miami-Dade, with graduation rates increasing, 75% of the schools are graded either “A” or “B”, and national accolades have been received on student achievement on the NAEP in Reading, Math, and Science.
- Miami-Dade is making great strides under the current Superintendent and Board in closing the achievement gap.
- This is a local decision and should be decided locally if there is a need for change.

VOTE NO on HB 307!!!