

pattern schools with a check for them to purchase supplies during this time of crisis. Dr. Feldman then extended his holiday greetings to everyone.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/  
DISCUSSION/NEW  
BUSINESS CONT'D.



Upon motion being duly made and seconded, the A-agenda items were moved to the floor for discussion at this time.

MOVED A-ITEMS  
TO FLOOR

## **A-1 SUPERINTENDENT'S INFORMATIONAL REPORTS TO THE BOARD ON SELECTED TOPICS**

112,165  
HEARD SUPT.'S  
INFORMATIONAL  
REPORTS

- **Recognition of PTA Leadership**

Superintendent Carvalho presented Ms. Karen Brown, the newly-elected president of the Florida PTA, with a certificate in honor of her distinguished achievements. Ms. Mendez-Cartaya in recognizing Ms. Brown stated that at her recent installation Ms. Brown declared her administration's theme to be "Without Barriers and Without Boundaries," a profound expression of her commitment to advocate for all children.

[The Chair relinquished the gavel to the Vice Chair at this time.]

Ms. Brown came forward to receive her certificate and to express her gratitude to the School Board and the Superintendent.

- **Legislative/Potential Special Session Update**

Upon Superintendent Carvalho's introduction of this topic, Ms. Mendez-Cartaya reported that information from the most recent Revenue Estimating Conference, held on November 21<sup>st</sup>, indicated that Florida's economy continued to weaken. The revenue shortfall was revised downward to a \$1.4 billion deficit for this fiscal year, 2008-2009. The potential impact to Miami-Dade County Public Schools would be another \$65 million. It was anticipated that a Special Session would be held early next year, in January. The legislature has options of mitigating the shortfall using other state funding, trust funds, finding other revenues or additional cuts. For 2009-2010, the revenue shortfall has been revised to be approximately \$5 billion. For the last three years, the state's recurring General Revenue has declined by 17 percent.

Ms. Mendez-Cartaya then relinquished the floor to Dr. Hinds who provided the Board, through a slide presentation, with an analysis of the District's finances and the potential impact of another holdback. [A verbatim recording of this presentation is on file with the Office of the Recording Secretary.]

Dr. Hinds' presentation highlighted the following points:

- The district's current financial status, under which fell outstanding liabilities, e.g., collection of property taxes, the first state holdback, and technical errors.

- Today's Agenda Item A-3 which referred to liabilities which "may be avoided" (engaging in litigation against certain state of Florida agencies which effectively applied a change in legislation, retroactively). [See Pages 56-57 for discussion of this item.]
- The second state holdback of \$1.4 billion and its financial impact on the district.
- Employee raises and its financial impact on the district (which translated to an additional \$65 million in deficit).
- The Board being faced with tougher choices: cutting whole programs, salaries, the work year, or benefits.
- Maintaining the District's minimal reserves, currently totaling \$39 million, which may be needed should the suit against the state of Florida prove unsuccessful.
- A comparison of the total potential per FTE for fiscal years 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08; and 2008-09.

In conclusion, Dr. Hinds informed the Board that in the near term and probably even next year, a whole series of bad choices would have to be made. At present, the district would not be able to recover its reserves, because of its battle against a deteriorating revenue base statewide. He added that the district's recovery would come, but unfortunately not soon enough.

Superintendent Carvalho, in his follow-up remarks, stated that the figures reported were confirmed by the state's economists. Thus, the district was facing not only a reduction mid-year but also a reduction going into next year which would be twice as dramatic. Failure to recognize the headlines being made across the country of companies folding, people being laid off or being fired, because of the economy, would put the district in a position perhaps worse than it was in on June 30<sup>th</sup> of this past year, should the appropriate steps not be taken at this time. Consequently, continued resolutions would be presented to the Board in January and February in order to rectify this situation. In closing, the Superintendent declared that the totality of the problem reflected a much larger problem than that created by the human deficiencies built into the budget and that was the dramatic decrease in the FTE value statewide.

- **Differentiated Accountability Update**

In prefacing his introduction of this topic, the Superintendent stated that the Board was previously provided with a presentation that basically imparted the options the district would face should these Intervene and Correct II schools not improve. Today, the Board would be presented with the exact plan being implemented in the schools. He recognized Mr. Jeffrey Hernandez from the Florida Department of Education who he announced was present for today's meeting, and then relinquished the floor to Ms. Ellen Wright, Ms. Millie Fornell and Mr. Freddie Woodson who led the discussion.

Through a slide presentation, Ms. Ellen Wright provided the Board with specifics about the following: the Human Resource Investment; the

Differentiated Accountability Services; the Success Academy; and Community Partnership. [A verbatim recording and annotated version of this slide presentation is on file with the Office of the Recording Secretary.]

ITEM A-1 CONT'D.

Mr. Woodson and Ms. Fornell, in their comments, assured the Board that this was a unified effort, not only from School Operations, and Curriculum and Instruction, but a total commitment by all involved to getting the job done. Mr. Woodson explained that unlike the Zone, which was an entity unto itself, this venture was integrated throughout and committed by the members of staff involved with its implementation.

Dr. Feldman was pleased with the positive initiatives, the progress and the vision, and commended staff on an excellent job.

In response to Dr. Pérez's question about the role of an interventionist, Ms. Fornell explained that in most cases, they are certified teachers who are brought to schools to work with pullout students based on their individual deficiencies. She also explained that the use of an outside expert in analyzing student data, as required by the Differentiated Accountability, was to provide each school with the individual support needed in examining the student data and explaining how to improve each individual student's data so as to move the student forward. Ms. Fornell informed the Board that the expert in data analysis and use of the Continuous Improvement Model was pre-approved by the state and was being funded through Title I.

In response to Dr. Pérez's question regarding the paying of students as an incentive to attend classes through the Success Academy, Superintendent Carvalho responded that this was in an effort to compete for the students' attention, as they are prevented from staying after school for tutoring because they have to work. He stated that research has been done in this regard and that this type of opportunity was being utilized in New York schools which have been strongly endorsed by a number of philanthropists, inclusive of Mr. Eli Broad. This idea, he added, has also been supported by the local philanthropic and business communities. He then informed the Board that an amount of \$600,000 was budgeted to support the entire program, and through the generous contributions of local citizens and business entities \$550,000 had already been acquired. He added that the intent was to acquire far in excess of the budgeted amount.

Dr. Pérez then thanked staff for their presentation.

- **Revision in Florida's High School Accountability System – School Performance Grade for High Schools**

The Superintendent expressed to the Board that this work in progress was being conducted by the Commissioner of Education and his staff, and a final product was not yet available. However, he thought it necessary to make the Board and community aware of the implications associated with the new grading policy that the state was contemplating for the 2009-10 school year. He then relinquished the floor to Ms. Gisela Feild who led the discussion.

Ms. Feild reported that in June of this past year, the Senate approved

Bill 1908, which was comprehensive in nature and looked at a rewriting of the Sunshine State Standards, the reorganization of some parent involvement issues, and largely a change in the way that the school grades would be computed for senior high schools. The proposed and approved bill would have 50 percent of the grade based on the FCAT and the other 50 percent based on a series of new indicators. She then presented the Board and its audience with a slide presentation in this regard. [A verbatim recording and annotated version of this presentation is on file with the Office of the Recording Secretary.]

[At this point the Vice Chair relinquished the gavel back to the Chair.]

Following the presentation, Dr. Pérez asked that staff provide the Board with a copy of the presentation and then asked staff how the graduation rate would be calculated.

Responding, Ms. Field stated that the rate would be calculated in a very similar method as the longitudinal rate computed for the district. It would track a cohort of children starting in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade taking into consideration the mobility rate within the district.

Dr. Pérez then asked how the at-risk students and the technical schools or vocational programs would be included in the 1600 points.

Ms. Feild explained that for the at-risk students a general school graduation rate would be created and then a subset of the 9<sup>th</sup> graders who scored Levels 1 and 2 the prior year as 8<sup>th</sup> graders. For the technical and career students there would be an acceleration component whereby successful completion of a course with a final grade of "C" or higher would afford the school getting credit for that student. She then continued to explain how schools would receive credit through dual enrollment, advanced placement, and inter-baccalaureate courses, as well as industry certification.

The following persons appeared before the Board to address this topic: Ms. Helen Williams, The Rilya Wilson Advocacy Project, Inc., Ms. Karen Aronowitz, United Teachers of Dade; Mr. Alan Rigerman; and Ms. Eileen Segal, Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA.

**SPEAKERS**

After thanking Ms. Feild for her presentation, Dr. Feldman asked if there was a difference in how each county calculated its dropout rate and graduation rate versus the state's, to which she responded in the negative.

At this time, members of the Board then engaged staff in discussion on the topics previously presented.

Upon Dr. Feldman's inquiry regarding the Board's receipt of an actual report before March on the Differentiated Accountability, Mr. Hernandez informed the Board that as required through the process, a daily report is submitted to the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent on Differentiated Accountability, and the Regional Superintendents, and contained items of a confidential nature specific to the individual school site. He cautioned the Board that the report was primarily for the Superintendent to be able to deploy services through the schools to meet the needs that were identified. He then offered to provide members of the Board with an update on the support services which have been given to the schools on a monthly basis.

Dr. Stinson requested that the schools receive the report directly.

ITEM A-1 CONT'D.

Dr. Holloway raised deep concern and voiced his frustration with regards to the "Revision in Florida's High School Accountability System," as headlined in this morning's *Miami Herald*.

Superintendent Carvalho in his explanation to the Board stated that because *The Miami Herald* filed a Freedom of Information Act with the Department of Education, they were able to obtain the simulation data beforehand. He further stated that upon being contacted by the media with this information, he contacted the Commissioner of Education and expressed his concern in this regard, specifically that the premature release of such information could damage the communities' impression and perception of the quality of the high schools. The Commissioner conveyed that the original intent of Senate Bill 1908 was to depart somewhat from the FCAT determination for high school grades and assured the Superintendent that it was not a done deal. The Superintendent further remarked that he had made a number of suggestions and recommendations to the Commissioner and would continue to do so, as other superintendents have, being hopeful that it would lead the state to accept a grading policy that is more global, more transparent, more objective and not solely reliant on the FCAT.

## A-2

Mr. Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools, recommended that The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida:

112,166  
RECEIVED ANNUAL  
REPORT OF TREASURY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. receive the annual report of the activities of the Treasury Advisory Committee for 2008; and
2. recognize the significant contributions of the Treasury Advisory Committee during 2008.

After his introduction of the item, Superintendent Carvalho relinquished the floor to Dr. Hinds to present the report.

Dr. Hinds remarked that the Board's Treasury Advisory Committee was probably one of the least well-known committees, but probably one of the most valuable committees to the Board in assisting staff and safeguarding the cash assets of the district. He then introduced Ms. Susan Racher, Chair of the Treasury Advisory Committee to address the Board and its audience.

Ms. Susan Racher in her presentation to the Board explained the makeup and role of the committee, summarized events of the year, and showed the deliverables that the team brought to the school district. Ms. Racher then read the letter from the committee to the Superintendent and members of the Board. [A verbatim recording of this presentation is on file with the Office of the Recording Secretary.]

In closing, Ms. Racher recognized members of the Finance Team and the Treasury Advisory Committee.

Dr. Pérez then thanked everyone for their hard work.

Ms. Susan Marie Kairalla appeared before the Board to address this recommendation.

SPEAKER