


# MEMORANDUM

July 13, 2009

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

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

**SUBJECT: CLOSE OF THE 2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR: CHALLENGES AND PROGRESS**

The close of the 2008-2009 school year marks a turning point for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS). When we began the year public education in Miami-Dade was at a critical crossroads. When I accepted the role as Superintendent, I did so with the understanding that our District administration was facing unprecedented financial and academic challenges and had lost, in many ways, the confidence of the community and the Board itself. I believed then, as I do now, that nothing less than a thorough transformation of the District would be acceptable either to the Board Members or the community at large. Therefore, I committed that through an honest and transparent process major changes would occur leading to increased academic achievement, reduction in administration, improved efficiency of operations, enhanced communication with community stakeholders, and improved financial stability that would ensure the sustainability of the District.

As we close 2008-2009, having received the complete School Accountability picture from the State, I wanted to take the opportunity to engage in a self assessment of the achievements of my administration and to thank the Board for your support and guidance during this critical time. Together we faced a budget situation far worse than was expected, necessitating deep and painful cuts, as well as a realignment of personnel and functions. We faced threats of school closures and other sanctions for our struggling schools, as well as the need to re-engage with and re-establish trust within the community and our M-DCPS family. I believe that we have met each of these challenges through hard work, creative thinking, and a willingness to work together across all barriers.

Our successes have been significant starting with the improved performance of our students on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). In spite of major budget cuts, we made it a priority to maintain a culture of high expectations for all students and high demand of all teachers, parents, extended family, business, civic, and industry leaders. We focused the attention of students on the educational substance that is critical to the community's future, as well as their own. We taught skills beyond academics, such as communication and cultural literacy, and illustrated for our children the powerful connection between effort and achievement through Saturday and holiday break tutorial sessions.

Our efforts paid off. More than 206,000 M-DCPS students participated in the Spring 2009 FCAT administration, and I am proud that our students' Reading and Mathematics scores improved from 2008 to 2009 at most grade levels, with growth also seen in elementary Science scores. In addition, record numbers of tenth grade students passed the Reading and Mathematics graduation tests on their first attempt.

These scores were reflected in our District Accountability Grade which was a "B", just four points shy of an "A". In fact, 57 percent of our schools earned an "A", up from 49 percent in 2008; and over 90 percent of our schools earned an "A", "B", or "C", while "D" and "F" grades decreased across the District. Further, of the nine selected Differentiated Accountability (DA)

Intervene and Correct 11 schools, seven of the eight with sufficient numbers of students to receive a grade, improved by at least one letter grade from 2007-08 to 2008-09. This number includes five of the six selected DA senior high schools, defying trends statewide which saw 49 percent of all high schools decline at least one letter grade. Comparatively, 26 percent of our high schools declined; however, the majority maintained or improved their performance grades. This achievement is significant and much of the credit goes to our teachers and support staff who found a way to stay focused on our singular goal of student achievement in spite of the economic conditions and uncertainty surrounding them. While I am proud of these successes, we will work harder in 2009-10, particularly focusing on high school achievement. We will draw on the lessons learned and implement those strategies which were proven successful in our DA schools this year.

We were also faced with unprecedented budget challenges. To meet my commitment to transparency and to get a full understanding of the District's financial condition I brought in independent Chief Financial Officers to review our financial records and invited the District's Chief Auditor and Inspector General to participate in the budget planning process. When conditions were found to be worse than originally anticipated, we responded with a plan that protected the classroom while boosting efficiency and streamlining operations. Through this approach, we reduced the central office budget, including positions and non-salary expenditures by 27.6 percent, consolidated overlapping functions, and trimmed or froze non-classroom expenditures. We were also able to protect jobs while absorbing mid-year cuts in revenue from Tallahassee by implementing a program of shared sacrifice through the Employee Partnership Plan.

To truly succeed, all of our efforts depend on a supportive community; to achieve this, we have made a concerted effort to re-affirm the District's commitment to engage all of our stakeholders, establishing partnerships across the county in support of our District. We established the Superintendent's Business Advisory Council, as well as the first ever parent subcommittee to the School Allocation Plan Committee to give the community and stakeholders a voice in the direction the District's budget. I have, and will continue to maintain, a true open-door policy with parents, community members and business leaders. I have made it a priority to maintain a personal presence in our schools and to visit and hear from community and faith-based groups, for I believe that to serve the community, we must be engaged in the community.

This has been a year of building, hard work, and difficult decisions. However, every decision has been weighed against four guiding principles: improving student achievement, protecting the integrity of the classroom, protecting our work force, and ensuring the fiscal viability of the District into the future. I am attaching for your review a summary document entitled *Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks*, which outlines some of this year's activities and accomplishments.

#### **Looking Forward to the 2009 – 2010 School Year**

Although together we have accomplished much this past year, I have already transitioned my staff forward to innovation and development, albeit in a fiscally conservative fashion. Following the direction provided by the School Board at the retreat held on July 8, 2009, staff is fully engaged in the implementation of the fall launch of the Millennial Access Platforms (MAPs) including:

- The Center for Students with Autism at Blue Lakes Elementary School
- The International Edu-Plex at Miami Edison Senior High School
- The Educators in Residency Program

- The Cultural Passport
- The Posse Foundation Partnership
- The Superintendent's Benefit Events
- The Green Education-Zero Carbon Footprint Project
- "Everybody Teaches" program
- Beyond the Bell Virtual Learning
- Values-based Budgeting

Attached for your review is a chart designating these and the other initiatives. A website has been established which provides details of each in greater detail. The address is <http://osi.dadeschools.net/DSP/DSP-WebSlide2.htm>

I am proud of what we have accomplished as a District in just over nine short months. As I have said to each of you individually, I believe that there is no greater honor than to be entrusted with the responsibility of educating a child. I can truly say that I am honored to share with you this responsibility and I am grateful, once again, for the faith, support and willingness to work together that you have shown during this very difficult time as we strive to guide the academic lives of our students, while ensuring the fiscal stability of our District.

Though the District will certainly face another challenging year, my staff and I stand ready to meet those challenges, and to continue to raise student achievement, improve educational opportunities for students, and to further stabilize our financial position to ensure sustainability of our commitments to the community far into the future. Once again, it has been a privilege to serve you as Superintendent of Schools.

Thank you for your support during 2008-2009, and I look forward to working with each of you as we move forward into 2009-2010. Please feel free to contact me at 305-995-1429, if any additional information is required.

AMC:cpi  
M1383

Attachments

cc: Superintendent's Cabinet



# **Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks**

## **I. Improve Academic Achievement**

### **Academic Achievement Improvement (as measured by FCAT)**

#### **Overall**

- Improvement in all three subject areas (reading, mathematics, and science) was seen for District elementary school students in grades 4 and 5, with sizeable increases in the percentage of students scoring in Levels 3 - 5
  - The percentage of the District's students in grade 3 scoring in Levels 3 – 5 in mathematics increased from 2008 to 2009, but declined slightly in reading
- The performance of District middle school students was mixed, with marked improvement in the percentage of students in grade 6 scoring at high levels from 2008 to 2009 in both reading and mathematics; less consistent results were evident in grades 7 and 8
- Overall, the FCAT Reading and Mathematics results for the District's senior high school students improved substantially from 2008 to 2009, outpacing state gains in the percentages of ninth and tenth grade students scoring at Levels 3 - 5

#### **Reading**

- District students' mean Scale Scores and Developmental Scale Scores improved in reading in all grades 4 through 10 from 2008 to 2009
- Fifty-one percent of the District's tenth grade students passed the FCAT Reading graduation test on their first attempt in March 2009, exceeding 50% for the first time and closing in on the overall percentage of the students passing statewide

#### **Mathematics**

- District students' mean Scale Scores and Developmental Scale Scores improved in mathematics in all but grades 7 and 8 from 2008 to 2009
- Seventy-eight percent of the District's tenth grade students passed the FCAT Mathematics graduation test on their first attempt in March 2009, closing the gap in the overall percentage of the students passing statewide

#### **Science**

- Mean Scale Scores improved in science for District students in grade 5 from 2008 to 2009; the scores declined slightly for students in grades 8 and 11

#### **Writing**

- The percentages of M-DCPS' 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students who scored 4.0 or above on the FCAT Writing assessment increased steadily each year from 2007 to 2009
  - The percentages of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students who scored 3.5 or above also increased or remained stable
- The percentage of M-DCPS' 10<sup>th</sup> Grade students who scored 3.5 or 4.0 decreased slightly from 2008 to 2009, paralleling State trends
- Changes in the percentages of M-DCPS' students scoring high on the FCAT Writing assessment are comparable to those of students statewide

## **Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks**

- The mean essay scores on FCAT Writing remained stable for M-DCPS students at each tested grade (Grades 4, 3.9; Grade 8, 4.2; and Grade 10, 3.8)
  - In Grade 4, M-DCPS students' mean essay scores on the expository prompt increased, from 3.8 in 2008 to 4.0 in 2009, and the mean score for the narrative prompt remained stable at 3.9
  - For students in Grades 8 and 10, the 2009 mean essay scores did not differ across prompt types, 4.2 for both the expository and persuasive prompts in Grade 8, and 3.8 for both the expository and persuasive prompts in Grade 10

### **Academic Achievement Improvement (as measured by school grades)**

- Fifty-eight percent of district schools received a performance grade of "A" for the 2008-09 school year. This year 39 more M-DCPS schools received "A's" than last year
- Over 90 percent received a school performance grade of "A," "B," or "C." This represents an increase of 17 schools
- Overall, 23 percent, or 80 of the District's 345 schools improved by at least one letter grade. Improvement was seen at all three school levels: elementary/K-8 centers, middle, and senior high schools
- Of nine selected Differentiated Accountability (DA) Intervene and Correct II schools, seven of the eight with sufficient numbers of students to receive a grade improved by at least one letter grade from 2007-08 to 2008-09
  - Five of the six selected DA senior high schools improved their school performance grades, defying senior high school trends statewide.

### **Strategic Analysis of Educational Delivery**

- Conducted formal evaluations of the efficacy of instructional programs and initiatives, including the following:
  - School Improvement Zone (report released)
  - Secondary School Reform (report released)
  - Success Academy (ongoing)
  - "I Choose" grant (ongoing)
  - Programs funded by Title I and Title III
- Examined the efficacy of educational initiatives in operation or under consideration by the District, with regard to nationwide trends, including virtual schools, homework, and the implementation of data-driven decision making
- Conducted Instructional programmatic reviews at 100% of the District's lowest at all schools by State laws performing schools (school accountability grades of "D", "F", and "FF"). Instructional programmatic reviews resulted in action plans addressing curricular pacing and instructional strategies targeting all student populations

## **Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks**

- Administered the District Interim Assessments in the core academic areas of reading, mathematics, and science in 100% of DA Schools. Tiered targeted support was provided to selected schools based on interim assessment results
- Ensured staff effectively analyzed data resulting from interim and other district assessments to maximize impact of educational delivery for schools
- Expanded implementation of Math in Career Technical Education (CITE) Model, including data analysis of CITE student results on standardized math assessment instruments
- Carried out analyses of students' parents' and teachers' attitudes regarding schools' educational programs, via the School Climate Survey
- Administered parent involvement survey to determine levels of parent satisfaction with district and school communication effectiveness

### **Use of Data in Decision-Making**

- Provided Interim Assessment Tests (all Differentiated Accountability schools) and access to the Benchmark Assessment Item Bank (all schools) to provide benchmark level data for teachers to guide classroom instruction
- Provided support to schools in the reporting and interpretation and use of assessment data, including consolidated reports of longitudinal trends, student and school level Interim Assessment results, and FCAT
- Provided support to schools in the use of data to guide instruction, including webcasts for school staff, and presentations for school administrations
- Provided immediate results for a new measure of reading achievement for Grade 3 students in danger of retention that could be used as documentation for "good cause" promotion to Grade 4. (Implemented as a result of the state's discontinuation of the FCAT NRT program)
- Conducted analyses to assist M-DCPS divisions in implementing instructional programs including: enrollment trends, alternative schools, and advanced placement student recruiting
- Conducted analyses for schools to provide appropriate services to students, including:
  - Predictions for student risk factors (i.e., grade 3 retention, high school graduation success, postsecondary readiness, dropout and graduation rates)
  - Summaries of services provided to special educations
  - Eligibility and selection procedures for school choice and magnets
- Provided schools with trend analyses and predictions for school accountability
- Provided electronic tools, including item banks and scoring tools, which support data analysis for classroom teachers and schools

## **Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks**

- Utilized student data to provide tutoring/remediation for industry certification exams and CPT
- Utilized workforce forecasts and Annual Targeted Occupations List for the review and alignment of career academy offerings
- Developed strategies for CTE teachers to improve the reading performance of their students as reported on the state's annual Perkins Accountability Measures chart

### **District School Support**

- Reassigned over 200 district personnel to direct support positions within the DA schools, including the Saturday Success Academy for students at targeted schools during the 2008-2009 school year
- Provided on-site Response to Intervention support to low performing elementary schools. As a result, 73% of the 51 schools receiving District support through Student Teacher Support Team (ST-2) demonstrated learning gains in reading and mathematics
- Provided targeted tiered support to the nine Intervene and selected Correct II schools during the second semester resulting in 88% of the schools making progress in reading and 77% of the schools making progress in mathematics
- Provided high quality instructional materials, technology tools, and library media resources to all district schools
- Provided electronic delivery of curriculum materials to reduce distribution time and costs and to increase teacher access
- Provided technical assistance on school improvement and DA requirements to schools participating
- Conducted technical assistance sessions for All Title I SINI 4, 5, and 6 schools designed to assist schools with the development of restructuring plans for submission to the State

### **Future Initiatives for Student Success**

- Implement Cultural Passport Program
- Explore alternative school governance models
- Implement the Educational Council for International Cities project
- Implement Saturday Success Academy for students at targeted schools
- Expand curricular tools available to schools to include pacing guides, instructional focus calendar template, and additional resources to be posted on the Learning Village



## Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks

- Strengthen the capacity of the instructional workforce through ongoing professional development aligned to core curriculum
- Summer Leadership Academy for Principals and Teachers
  - Increased monitoring for compliance with state and local requirements to ensure highly qualified instructional coaches
  - Back to School Academy for DA school faculty and leadership teams
  - Site-based mentoring and induction for new and early career teachers
  - On-going professional development on research-based best practices (K through adult)
  - Professional Development and Technical Assistance to implement standards-based education in the adult ESOL program
- Establish a model center for students with Autism and Specific Learning Disabilities
- Implement ELL/Bilingual Grant Initiatives (mentoring/coaching, supplemental resources, tutoring, case management, behavioral/mental counseling services, parental workshops, and technology)
  - Title III
  - Project BETMI (Bilingual Education Through Mandarin Instruction)
  - Project RYSE ((Refugee Youth Succeeding in Education)
  - EL/Civics (English Literacy for Adults)
- Expand transition program services for students with special needs
- Develop initiatives to address the needs of emotionally at risk students through enhanced prevention services
- Expand the use of effective technology based interventions to all district schools
- Establish video gallery of video-taped lessons demonstrating best practices, professional development activities, and video-streaming via the district intranet
- Offer full-time virtual instruction programs for students in grades K-12 and expand digital textbook offerings
- Promote postsecondary readiness by increasing the number of students who transition to postsecondary institutions
- Increase internship and dual or concurrent enrollment possibilities for students
- Increase the number of schools eligible for Title I resources with anticipated outcomes to include:
  - Enhance Supplemental Educational Services (SES) through ARRA funds for Title I schools and students
  - Increase access for Title I high school students to college preparation through online resources for schools, students, and parents
  - Increase support to Title I schools in the area programmatic and SES compliance monitoring
  - Expand the role of the Title I Community Involvement Specialist to enhance services and deliverables available to parents

### II. Ensure the Financial Stability of the School District

#### District Budget Management

- Conducted a forensic analysis of the District's financial position immediately upon being appointed
  - Convened a workgroup of highly-respected school district Chief Financial Officers, Corporate Chief Financial Officers, state education finance experts, and key district staff as part of the process. The findings:
    - The 2008-09 budget as adopted had \$158M of unresolved liabilities, including \$68M in technical deficiencies
    - \$46M mid-year cut from the State
    - \$34M of unbudgeted liabilities
  - Enacted a reduction of expenditures larger than any before in the District's long history
  - Worked with our legislative delegation to resolve prior state actions that were profoundly unfair to the children of Miami-Dade County
  - Reestablished trust with community and staff
- Brought in Council of Great City Schools to review District operations in the areas of:
  - Transportation
  - Food Service
  - Construction
  - Maintenance
- Established four guiding principles that would govern the decision making process while making necessary budget adjustments to address the district's financial crises in order to ensure that that our functions and stakeholders would be protected: 1) improve student achievement, 2) protect the classroom, 3) protect the workforce, and 4) plan for long term fiscal sustainability of the District
- Established Board and community confidence in all numbers presented
  - Brought on three retired CFOs of Florida's largest districts
  - Created an independent budget advisory council of local business leaders
  - Tasked the Chief Auditor and Inspector General to review the entire budget process as well as past budget preparation practices. Once transparency throughout the process was assured, the following difficult, yet necessary, budget reduction decisions were made to ensure the District close the 2008-09 fiscal year on strong financial footing
  - Transformed the Central Office by identifying inefficiencies (i.e., redundancy & misalignment), overhauling organizational charts, de-layering middle management, and eliminating positions and related salary costs. Savings: \$22.8M
  - Identified budget flexibilities that have minimal operational impact but may have not yet been thoroughly explored. Savings: \$35.3M
  - Cut Central Office and other non-school locations in as many areas as feasible without endangering core controls and student achievement. Savings: \$44.6M
  - Cut non-classroom expenditures at school sites. Savings: \$50.0M

## Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks

- Minimized layoffs through a program of shared sacrifice by implementing a shift of workdays from 08-09 fiscal year to 2009-10. Successfully negotiated full participation in the Employee Partnership Plan with all employee organizations and unions Savings: \$18.0M
- Realigned the Department of Transportation resulting in a \$5.8 million in budget reduction
- Implemented cost control measures and revenue generating initiatives enabling the Department of Food and Nutrition to eliminate a projected operating budget shortfall in the 2008/2009 school year, and projected to end the year in the black
- Directed staff to negotiate a 20% reduction in all contracted amounts

### Personnel and Labor Relations

- Established hiring freeze
- Negotiated a Contract Amendment Plan with UTD in order to reduce the work year for employees
- Negotiated the 2009 Health Insurance agreement for all employee groups
- Revised MEP Compensation Plan to include:
  - Decrease of promotional percentage from 9% to 5%
  - Provision for reduction in salary under a reorganization when pay grade is reduced
  - New salary schedule eliminating pay grade 28
- Reduced annual salaries for non-school site administrators from 5.8% to 8.7% (cumulative percentage inclusive of work year reduction approved at the June 15, 2009, School Board Meeting)
- Reduced number of MEP employees earning base salaries at or above \$100,000 by 28%:
  - \$200,000 + reduced by 6 (no one remains at this salary range)
  - \$150,000 - \$199,999 reduced by 11
  - \$100,000 - \$149,999 reduced by 129
  - Total** **146**
- Revised Confidential Exempt Manual was approved at Initial Reading at the May 20, 2009 Board Meeting and included:
  - Decreased promotional percentage from 7.5% to 5%
  - Eliminated Longevity Stipend
  - Eliminated Good Attendance Stipend
  - Eliminated early dismissal before a Holiday
- Negotiated an Early Retirement Incentive Program with UTD in order to create District savings and save jobs. First Incentive, E-68, Board Meeting of January 14, 2009, saved approximately \$2.4M

## **Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks**

- Conducted Special Magistrate Hearing on the issue of step advancement for the 2008 school year with a favorable recommendation for the School Board
- Reduced the number of Assistant Principal positions to reflect ratio of other similar districts
- Implemented furlough days for MEP employees in order to create savings
- Implemented mandatory direct deposit and elimination of paper checks initiative as approved by the School Board, Agenda Item E-25, September, 2008; resulting in an estimated \$185,000 savings annually

### **Future Initiatives for Continued Financial Stability**

- Continue the process of streamlining the District to ensure a lean, yet highly efficient central office
- Continue strong working relationships with labor unions to develop shared decision-making in achieving sound fiscal goals which protect the workforce *and* the classroom
- Expand revenue generating sources
- Continue practices for ensuring complete transparency and stakeholder input in budget development planning

## **III. Improve Community Relations and Public Perception of M-DCPS**

### **Community Engagement**

- Conducted surveys of parents for District and Title I parent involvement evaluations
- Conducted a survey for community input in strategic planning
- Participated in over 220 meetings in the district office with members of the community
- Conducted a strategic planning survey open to all members of the community to give our stakeholders a voice in the future direction of the District

### **Dade Partners/Internships**

- Partnered with Adopt-A-Classroom to provide over \$339,000 in classroom supplies and materials to teachers
- Partnered with Macy's Spring Charity Event to raise \$38,400 for classroom supplies and materials

## **Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks**

- Partnered with National Geographic to provide \$25,000 of Kids Explorer magazines to Title I Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students
- Secured \$50,000 partnership from Merrill Lynch for "Principal for a Day" with business leaders participating at every school in the district
- Secured businesses as internship providers for 550 Honors and Executive Internship Program students and 460 School Secondary Reform/CEO Internship Program students

### **Communications (including media)**

- Wrote Superintendent's Corner, a monthly column placed in GMCC and other business/community publications
- Strengthened partnerships with chambers of commerce and other community groups throughout the county including support for District's Legislative Agenda as well as Keynote Addresses by the Superintendent (ex: GMCC, Chamber South, Doral Business Council, West Kendall Business Association, Kendall Federation of Homeowners, etc.)
- Launched the Foundation for New Education Initiatives, Inc.
- Assisted with messages to community and employees concerning legislative agenda, budget crisis and workforce impacts
- Coordinated district recognition events involving school and community attendees: Teacher of the Year, School Volunteer/Dade Partner Awards, and The Eddies
- Conducted a series of regional Community Forums in November and December to explain Differentiated Accountability and introduce the Superintendent's Success Academy to the community
- Utilized more than 70 hours of radio time in English, Spanish and Haitian-Creole, to inform the community about tax issues, FCAT scores, and the recess days plan and published at least 16 newspaper columns on the same topics of importance
- Prepared and distributed more than 89 press releases to keep the public informed of important District news and developments. All of these press releases are posted in the District's online newsroom for easy access
- Established a Twitter site to enable the community to keep instantly informed of District News and during emergencies
- Established and expanded the District's on-line Video Gallery, to provide on demand opportunities for the public to view import Board and administration messages
- Produced 45 Connect-ED messages to apprise parents and employees of important issues including Success Academy, swine flu, millage issue, and budget developments

## **Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks**

- Provided Ready-to-Learn services through WLRN to the community, partnering with City of Miami and Homestead Police Department to provide parent workshops. The stations recently received a grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to provide basic family financial workshops in Haitian-Creole and Spanish

### **Parental Involvement**

- Developed the Parent Plan for Success in support of the Superintendent's Success Academy in nine lowest performing schools. Implemented over 11 weeks, 290 individual parents participated in the series; 56 parents attended every workshop
- Revised and published online the 2008-2009 Parent Resource Guide
- With the support of a grant from Target, organized the third annual Family Involvement Day with 14 schools actively participating
- Established and implemented the Certified Parent Advocate (CPA) program workshops for 70 parents
- Supported the municipal compacts, developing a model parent portal login day for the Miami Springs compact, and initiating plans with the cities of Coral Gables, Homestead, and Miami Beach
- Established and supported the work of the Family and Community Involvement Advisory Committee and developed an Action Plan with the Superintendent for ongoing inclusion of parents in decision-making and recognition of parental involvement
- Established a School Allocation Plan Parent Advisory Subcommittee, providing support through a three-month series of meetings which resulted in formal recommendations to the Superintendent
- Supported the Miami-Dade County Council of PTAs/PTSAs to promote programs, develop an effective advocacy campaign, and increase membership
- Implemented the 2009 Parent Involvement Survey
- Established a Parent Academy Curriculum Task Force to support the alignment and development of parent curriculum
- With the support of corporate sponsors, implemented a Family Involvement Festival day at the Fair to honor 08-09 Very Involved Parent and Family of the Year Awards
- Conducted ten Family Learning Events at the Historical Museum of South Florida, Metro Zoo, Miami Children's Museum, Miami Art Museum, and Science Museum, as well as dozens of free cultural events

## **Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks**

### **School Volunteers/Service Learning**

- Processed and cleared 24,024 school volunteers
- Conducted 5 Certified Volunteer trainings totaling 120 Certified Volunteers
- Conducted 7 Florida Department of Education Five Star Community Involvement Workshops throughout the District as well as Fall Leadership Conference for 800 attendees including administrators, teachers, staff and community representatives
- Successfully designed and piloted new web-based school volunteer portal in 12 schools
- Implemented mentoring initiatives with community-based organizations (i.e., BBBS, Take Stock in Children, City Year Miami, Women of Tomorrow, etc.) serving 4,993 students

### **Resource Development**

- Secured over \$700,000 in donations for student incentives in support of the Success Academy
- Held monthly CEO Briefings with business and community leaders
- Administered District's United Way Campaign resulting in employee donations of \$1,564,786 and student donations of \$677,481 totaling \$ 2,242,267
- Implemented Community Blood Centers of South Florida blood drives raising \$443,120 in student scholarships
- Continued the District's involvement in The Fair via exhibits, field trips, Youth Hall of Fame Awards resulting in \$110,000 in scholarships for students

### **Open Door Policy - Level of Availability**

- First memorandum issued as Superintendent announced and established an open door policy for the Office of the Superintendent and permanently unlocked key access doors to the superintendent's suite
- Regularly attended community and District functions hosted by a cross-section of stakeholders

## Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks

- Participated in a total of 1,150 internal and external meetings (as of June 1, 2009) broken down as follows:

School Board Members	110
Staff	379
Department of Education	62
Community (Businesses/ CEO Briefings/Parents)	223
Higher Level Institutions	23
School-based (Teachers/Principals)	144
Local Government	115
Media	40
Labor Unions	42
Faith-Based	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,150</b>

- Regularly invited and encouraged suggestions for improvement and comments on District performance from employees, students and community members

### Written Communications

- Broadly increased written communication with all constituents, evidence by the issuance of 305 personally signed letters, memos and emails to date vs. an annual total of 81 for the previous administration. An increase of 276% over last year
- Provided regular personal briefings to Board Members prior to each meeting, and in relation to all critical issues
- Provided regular written communication to staff and the public regarding critical district issues to ensure the accuracy of information
- Regularly addressed the community via public forums to ensure that critical issues are explained and the community has an opportunity to have their questions answered. An example of this practice includes the town hall meetings held to address the communities impacted by the designation of various schools as Intervene and Correct II by the State
- Provided regular written communication to Board Members on legislative, financial and educational issues
- Implemented a practice of responding to all community/parent/student concerns or comments with either a verbal or written response from appropriate District staff
- Increased District representation/participation in community events and/or forums
- Regularly and actively engage the print, television, and radio media to communicate and carry the District's messages concerning critical issues to ensure accuracy and timeliness of information provide to the public and stakeholders



## **Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks**

### **Relationship with School Board Members**

- Established monthly one-on-one briefings with every Board member
- Increased level of access between staff and the Board office to ensure timely information sharing
- Increased the number of Board Member meetings (both internal and external) attended by the Superintendent and senior staff
- Consistently provided timely responses to Board initiated referrals, requests for information and assistance
- Attended all Board Committee meetings and all School Board Audit Committee meetings with one exception.
- Attended and participated in Board Member sponsored Town Hall meetings whenever possible

### **Role in School Board Meetings**

- Provided an active voice at all Board Meetings ensuring that accurate information is always provided
- Expanded types of information presented at meetings (guest presenters, student performances)

### **Effectiveness of Sharing Core Beliefs and Vision**

- Ensured a consistency in message in all correspondence, speeches, media presentations
- Initiated a strategic planning process that includes significant input from staff and community
- Defined early and often the guiding principles for budget recovery to be first about protecting the classroom
- Initiated the development of a comprehensive media plan to ensure that the messaging of the District was clear and consistent that student achievement is paramount

### **Contribution to District Morale**

- Ensured that all correspondence and phone calls to the Superintendent's office are promptly responded to

## Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks

- Increased the level of transparency in decision making by expanding external access (e.g. community, parents, business, school staff) to previously closed district functions
- Regularly solicited input and feedback from rank and file employees (both school site and non-school site)
- Regularly communicated with staff, acknowledging individual and collective achievements across the District; acknowledges the value added that each employee group brings to the table in support of student achievement; and actively seeks to ensure that accurate information is provided to all employees concerning the District's financial condition and decision-making processes
- Consistently visited schools and district offices to greet and thank staff for jobs well done

### Future Initiatives for Continued Community Outreach

- Increase media presence (sharing good news) in multiple outlets
- Expand use of technology to maximize community connections (e.g. virtual town hall meetings, streaming video)
- Continue the use of external advisory groups to assist in decision making and strategic planning
- Expand the number of school visits for all senior staff
- Expand compacts to include other school districts (e.g. Puerto Rico Department of Education, New York City Schools)

## IV. Build Capacity for the Future

### School Board Policies, Practices, and Structures

- Established the 501C3 The Foundation for New Education Initiatives, Inc.
- Revised Managerial Exempt Personnel/Confidential Exempt Personnel policy manuals

### Legislative Advocacy

Initiated national conversation around a Federal bailout for education.

#### Federal level

- Advocated for a federal "bailout" of public education. Resulting in:
  - \$ 39.8 billion in State Stabilization Funds- \$2.2 billion for Florida
  - \$10 billion for title I \$96.5 million for M-DCPS for next 2 years

## Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks

- \$11.3 billion for IDEA \$89.1 million for M-DCPS for next 2 years
- Competitive grant opportunities received already \$6.1 for SFWB for Summer Youth employment; \$2 million for MPACTI; submitted at least 5 competitive grants from ARRA
- Additional allocation of \$1.4 billion for QZAB (Qualified Zone Academy Bonds for \$22 billion for new construction
- Earmark of \$143,000 for establishing global standards (formerly ECIC)

### State level

- Delayed the implementation of the class size reduction at the classroom level until 2010-2011
- Advanced a reduction in the School Recognition Awards to partially mitigate the shortfall in education
- Achieved a no reduction status on the per student funding (slight increase) since the January 2009 Special Session A (albeit using federal stimulus monies (\$907 million statewide; our share \$119 million) and construction monies the .25 mill)
- Addressed continued flexibility to use capital funds to pay for property casualty insurance
- Addressed flexibility to shift back the .25 mill for capital purposes; provided school districts the flexibility to levy an additional .25 mill
- Provided a methodology of mitigating revenue loss due to the decreased property tax assessment
- Obtained unprecedented parental and community support for the Board's state advocacy initiatives

### **Organizational Efficiency**

- Implemented a Central Office Transformation
  - Downsized district staff by 27%
  - Flattened the organizational structure
- Implemented efficiencies throughout the organization with fewer staff. The changes to the downtown offices are well known, however the transformation was wide-spread. An example:
  - Stores & Mail Distribution (S&MD)
    - Maintained a 96% performance level for the delivery of classroom materials
    - Maintained a 99.37% inventory accuracy level of inventory value during the cycle count process
    - Property controlled a total of \$ 23,927,447 worth of items purchased
    - Processed and delivered over 3.3 million items in 592,000 cases making over 20,600 delivery stops

## **Overview of 2008-2009 Progress Benchmarks**

- Maintained an average productivity level of 71.9% of total hours paid, (NOT WORKED) including sick, vacation, etc.
- All the above was accomplished with a 28% reduction in personnel

### **Openness to Opportunities for Improvement**

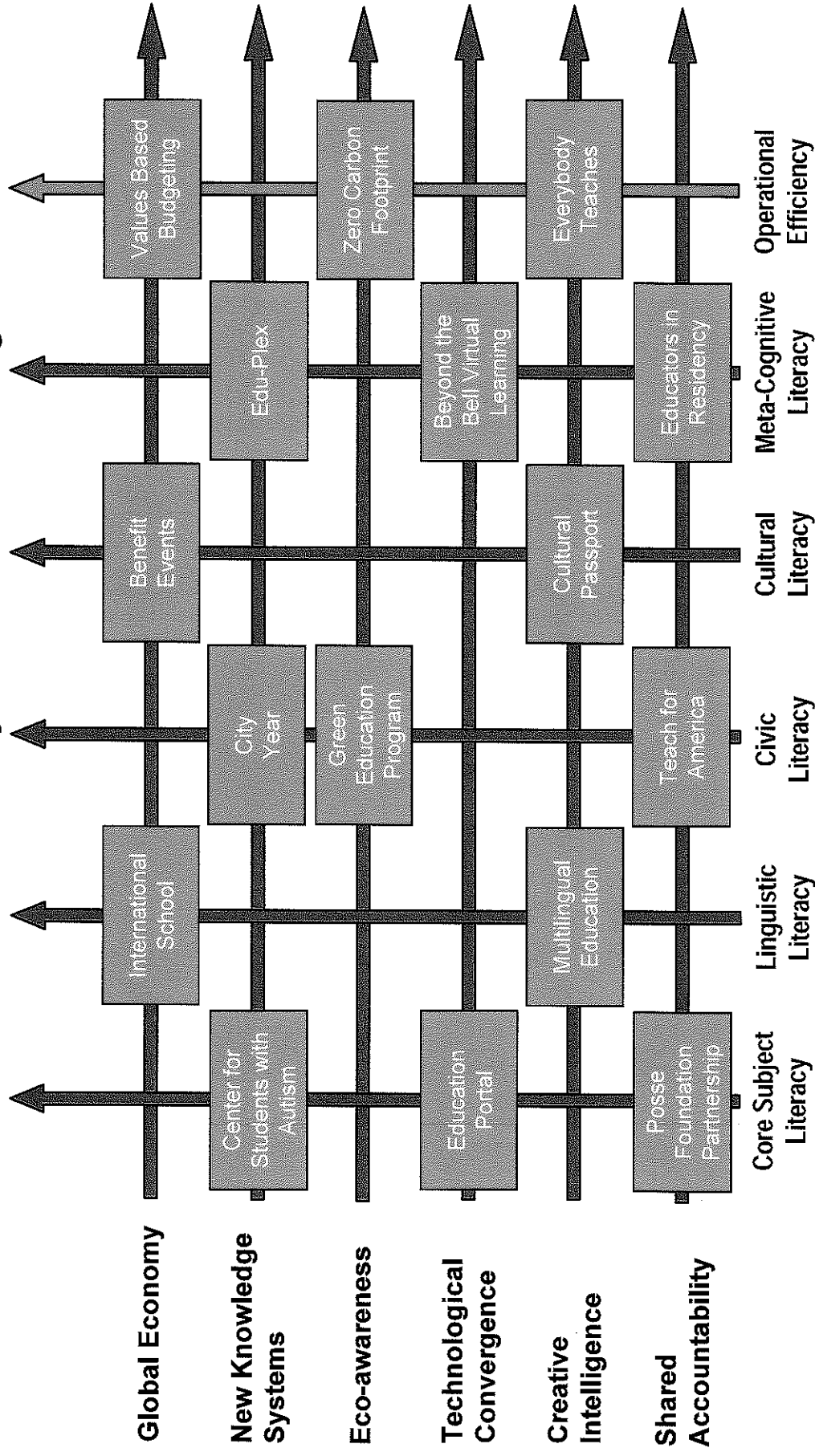
- Regularly requested feed back regarding programs, performance and policy in order to ensure a program of continuous improvement across all functions.
- Sought to gain knowledge from the experience of others as evidenced by:
  - Establishing Business Advisory Council
  - Establishing CEO Briefing
  - Frequent communication with other Superintendents within Florida and other large urban system superintendents
  - Inviting experts through the Council of Great City Schools to conduct operational reviews
  - Including the Chief Auditor and School Board Attorney in all cabinet meetings

### **Future Initiatives for Capacity Building**

- Develop and implement the 2009 – 2014 Strategic Plan
- Implement the Administrative Residency Program
- Continue and expand national level exposure for District priorities (e.g. participation in federal think-tank groups)

# A Radically Different World

The future of education calls for entirely new kinds of learning environments



**Millennial Access Platforms (MAPs) to Third Millennium Learning**

