

Education Alert

Legislation of Vital Concern to Miami-Dade County's Students

Memorandum

Date: June 12, 2001

To: Florida Congressional Delegation
From: Roger C. Cuevas, Superintendent of Schools
Re: Title I Supplemental Appropriations

As you know, the House Appropriations Committee is expected to markup a supplemental appropriations package for FY 2001 on June 14, 2001.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools supports the inclusion of \$160 million in the supplemental to fulfill last year's Title I "hold-harmless" agreement. **If funding is made available for this purpose, Miami-Dade County Public Schools would receive an additional \$1.5 million in Title I funds for upcoming school year (2001-02).** Overall, Florida would receive an additional \$ 7.5 million under the proposed request.

BACKGROUND: The Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2000 (P.L.166-554) included \$8.6 billion for Title I grants to school districts. The bill also contained a "hold-harmless" agreement in attempt to ensure that school districts receive no less money in FY 2001 than they did in the prior year. The agreement stated that two figures would be compared in determining each district's allocation:

1. the amount the school district would receive using the existing Title I formula; and
2. the amount the district received in FY 2000

The greater of these two figures would be used to determine the district's allocation for FY 2001. This mechanism was used in order to preserve funding for districts that had seen a drop in the number of Title I eligible children, while also providing the proper amount of funds due to districts that saw a rise in their number of eligible children.

At the time that the FY 2001 appropriations bill was under consideration, updated census poverty data was not available. However, once new poverty data became available this January, it was clear that the amount appropriated was too low to fully fund the hold-harmless agreement. In April, Miami-Dade County Public Schools reviewed preliminary information on our estimated Title I grant award for FY 2001. We learned that our Basic and Concentration Grants had been ratably reduced from their proper levels, by 2.29% and 0.09% respectively. (This reduction was experienced by every other school district receiving Title I funds as well).

It is our hope that Congress will include the missing \$160 million in the upcoming supplemental appropriations bill. The Miami-Dade County Public Schools respectfully requests your advocacy in support of this supplemental request. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.