

Dr. Martin Karp, Vice-Chair

SUBJECT: REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT TO EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY OF IMPROVING JOB TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN RECOGNITION OF EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION WEEK, SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 6, 2007, AND DISABILITY MENTORING DAY, OCTOBER 17, 2007

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**LINK TO DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLAN: IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN A HIGH-QUALITY WORK
ENVIRONMENT**

The Governor and Cabinet of the State of Florida have issued a resolution proclaiming September 30 - October 6, 2007, as Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Week and the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) is sponsoring Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) October 17, 2007, as part of National Disability Employment Awareness Month. ESE Week is dedicated to the recognition of exceptional students and their families, teachers, and related personnel, and DMD is a nationwide effort to promote career development for students with disabilities through job shadowing and hands-on career exploration. DMD is a national partnership between AAPD and the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools' teachers provide quality educational programs and services to the District's 66,433 students with disabilities and students who are gifted. During ESE Week, the Office of Special Education and Psychological Services, Division of Advanced Academics, Regional Centers, and schools will be sponsoring special events and activities in recognition of ESE students and their families, as well as teachers, staff, and volunteers who enrich District ESE programs and showcase their accomplishments. The theme of ESE Week is *Step into the Spotlight*. During ESE Week schools will be encouraged to coordinate job shadowing opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in DMD.

Disability Mentoring Day promotes and encourages local communities around the country to organize their own activities that bring students and employers together for informational sessions about career opportunities and one-on-one mentoring with volunteers at public and private places of employment. Students and jobseekers spend part of the day visiting a business or government agency that matches their interests and have one-on-one time with volunteer mentors, which can result in an internship opportunity with the host employer, function as a first interview on the way to a part-time or full-time employment offer, or even lead to an on-the-spot firm job offer. Public and private employers are provided with an opportunity to recruit interns, tap a pool of potential future employees, and develop lasting relationships with disability community leaders.

Beyond the current educational services and programs, the District needs to work with the local business community to promote career development. M-DCPS' goal is to develop our students so that they are able to successfully compete in the global economy. Students with disabilities are no exception. We need to ensure we empower these students and provide the proper training so they can live their lives to the fullest and reach their full potential.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. MARTIN KARP:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to explore the feasibility of improving job training and employment opportunities for students with disabilities in recognition and support of Exceptional Student Education Week, September 30 - October 6, 2007, and Disability Mentoring Day, October 17, 2007.