

### **Miami-Dade County Public Schools**

**Protect school district operational funding by mitigating any FTE enrollment declines experienced by districts and any impact of state budget shortfalls by fully funding districts based on the 2019-2020 fourth FTE calculation and minimally providing per student funding at 2020-2021 levels.**

Background: COVID-19 has had an impact on student enrollment. MDCPS is asking to maintain prior year funding in order to mitigate enrollment declines based on the variability in daily enrollment.

**Continue the Funding Compression and Hold Harmless Allocation formula established during the 2020 legislative session to address inequities of the current District Cost Differential calculation.**

Background: The 2020 budget included \$13.8 million (requested by Rep. Aloupis) to address the inequity in the DCD for MDCPS. As it was a one-time request, MDCPS is requesting this allocation be extended.

**Support funding to offer an extended school day and year beyond 180 days for all students to address learning loss as a result of required school closures due to COVID-19.**

Background: The lack of traditional school during 2020 has created what has been termed the "COVID slide" and has impacted the amount of content teachers have been able to present to students. MDCPS is requesting funding to offer summer programming to students identified as experiencing learning loss.

**For 2020-2021, waive the sanctions related to the statewide assessments such as third grade promotion, end-of-course calculations, graduation test requirements, and performance evaluations of school site-instructional and administrative staff.**

BACKGROUND: For each statewide assessment, there are sanctions related to test low scores. MDCPS is requesting that the sanctions related to these assessments be waived for the current school year. Many standardized tests cannot be given to students attending school online and the impact of the "COVID slide" on educational attainment will impact students' scores.

### **Early Education**

**Support funding for Early Learning Providers to mitigate increased costs due to lower classroom ratios, increased staffing and PPE requirements.**

BACKGROUND: The State<sup>i</sup> and CDC guidelines<sup>ii</sup> for child care centers have shown to keep children and staff safe and limit exposure to COVID.<sup>iii</sup> These strategies do not come without cost. Centers have decreased enrollment, reduced hours or hired additional staff in order to keep the same teachers with one group of children all day. Funding for PPE and increased costs in staffing was included in the State distribution of CARES Act money but the need for support has not decreased as COVID continues.

## **Support funding for Early Learning Providers have allowed for funding to be based on enrollment (and not attendance) for certain programs**

BACKGROUND: With recognition that many child care centers and schools had a reduction in enrollment and transitioned some services to virtual, some programs adopted waivers allowing funding to be based on enrollment and not in-person attendance. We support funding programs in this way with the knowledge that they are continuing to provide services to some families virtually, and wide fluctuations in attendance due to COVID exposure is likely.

### **Health**

#### **Support access to telehealth options for health care and mental health, including for children attending school on-site and virtually**

BACKGROUND: While the Consensus Agenda supports “targeted funding for prevention and treatment services for all behavioral health services” this has historically referred to substance abuse and suicide prevention services for adults. COVID-19 has highlighted the need for access to mental health services for children, including children attending school online. Oftentimes, these services can be provided at school. A 2020 change in the Medicaid law allows all students with Medicaid coverage to receive school-based services - previously only students with an Individualized Educational Plan could pay for school-based services with Medicaid. Allowing services to be provided through telehealth would not only allow online students to access these services but also increase access to mental health providers by students who live in an area with limited access to providers.

#### **Support for solutions aimed at decreasing disparities in Black maternal health care and birth outcomes for Black babies**

BACKGROUND: Speaker Sprowls identified the disparity in Black women’s and children’s outcomes during pregnancy in his Organization Speech<sup>iv</sup> He said, “I have been looking at the data on the disparities that Black women face in maternal health care. Poor prenatal care can result in poor health outcomes for infants, which can, in turn, impact their development. Every baby should have the opportunity to be born healthy.”

In Florida, the preterm birth rate among Black women is 53% higher than the rate among all other women.<sup>v</sup> In Miami, maternal death in Black women was three times higher than the rate of White women, including Hispanic women.<sup>vi</sup> Indeed, nationally, the rate of maternal mortality is lower for Hispanic or Latino women than all other women.<sup>vii</sup> Black babies are more than three times as likely to die from complications related to low birthweight as compared to white babies in the U.S.<sup>viii</sup>

### **Financial Stability**

#### **Support revisions to the Unemployment Insurance system**

BACKGROUND: As the Unemployment Insurance system was tested this year, it not only failed to handle the number of applicants, it became clear that the State did not have a structure in place to manage the sudden increased need for staffing or flexibility within the system to accept applicants outside of the traditional work structure (gig economy). While we agree that revisions are necessary,

we are not recommending any specific solutions until public discussions begin during Committee weeks and Session and we are able to analyze the proposed solutions.

**Support policy change that would smooth benefits cliffs that exist in subsidized childcare and health insurance programs due to the upcoming annual increase in the minimum wage.**

BACKGROUND: Eligibility for State managed programs, such as School Readiness, Nutrition Programs (SNAP), and Medicaid are based on the applicant's wage in relation to the Federal Poverty Level. Currently if a client's wages increase above the limit, their benefits end. We would advocate for a phased-out approach instead of a "cliff." These qualifying limits will need to be changed in order to continue to provide access to programs as the minimum wage increases to \$10 in 2021 and then by \$1/year until it reaches \$15/hr in 2026.

**Veterans/Mission United**

**Support for Veterans access to permanent and affordable housing solutions**

BACKGROUND: One of the largest barriers to accessing permanent housing in Miami-Dade County is the practice of landlords requiring three months' rent (typically first, last and security deposit) in order to sign a lease. While this is problematic for most people, Veterans have particular difficulty due to the upheaval that occurs when they leave military service. Additionally, their income typically disqualifies them from traditional affordable housing programs. Through working with Mission United clients, community housing partners, and participating in the South-Dade Chamber Military Affairs committee, the need for additional supports or advocacy has been identified.

**Support programs that aim to close the gap in access to STEM education/training programs for African American Veterans**

BACKGROUND: 41% of Veterans reported that their military specialization is STEM related and of those veterans in the STEM workforce, 8% are African American. However, there has been a decline of almost 1% per year in African American Veterans participating in STEM since 2012. The average earnings of an African American Veteran is \$58,351, compared to about \$38,000 for non-Veteran African Americans and about \$77,217 for non-minority Veterans. Statistics show that the average earnings for African Americans in STEM are 40% higher than non-STEM at \$81,942 per year.<sup>ix</sup>

Due to the potential impact on the Veteran's economic stability after leaving military service, the Public Policy Committee and Mission United Staff recommend that UWMD should support any opportunity to increase access to STEM job opportunities or educational opportunities for African American Veterans.

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- <sup>i</sup> Florida Office of Child Care Regulation GUIDANCE FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS June 5, 2020  
<https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/docs/GUIDANCE%20FOR%20CHILD%20CARE%20PROVIDERS.pdf>
- <sup>ii</sup> Centers for Disease Control, Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html#SocialDistancing>
- <sup>iii</sup> Study: Working in child care not linked to COVID-19 risk early in pandemic, Melissa Jenco, AAP News. 10/14/2020  
<https://www.aappublications.org/news/2020/10/14/covid19childcare101420>
- <sup>iv</sup> Florida House Speaker Chris Sprowls' Inaugural Address; Remarks as Prepared for Delivery 11/17/2020  
<https://unitedwaymiami.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/House-Speaker-Sprows-Speech.pdf>
- <sup>v</sup> Healthy Moms. Strong Babies, March of Dimes 2020 Report Card  
[https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/tools/ReportFiles/HMSB/Healthy%20Moms%20Strong%20Babies\\_Florida.pdf](https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/tools/ReportFiles/HMSB/Healthy%20Moms%20Strong%20Babies_Florida.pdf)
- <sup>vi</sup> Florida Health Charts  
<http://www.flhealthcharts.com/charts/DataViewer/InfantDeathViewer/InfantDeathViewer.aspx?indNumber=0392>
- <sup>vii</sup> Pregnancy-Related Mortality Ratio by Race/Ethnicity: 2014-2017 [https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternal-mortality/pregnancy-mortality-surveillance-system.htm?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Freproductivehealth%2Fmaternalinfanthealth%2Fpregnancy-mortality-surveillance-system.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternal-mortality/pregnancy-mortality-surveillance-system.htm?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Freproductivehealth%2Fmaternalinfanthealth%2Fpregnancy-mortality-surveillance-system.htm)
- <sup>viii</sup> Centers For Disease Control Pregnancy-Related Deaths  
<https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/pregnancy-relatedmortality.htm>
- <sup>ix</sup> Maury, R.V.; Zoli, C., Fay, D.; Armstrong, N.; Boldon, N.Y.; Linsner, R. K; Sears, K. Cantor, G.; & Keville, M.R. (2020, February). African American Veterans: From Service to Civilian Life. Syracuse, NY: Institute for Veterans and Military Families, Syracuse University. <https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/article/african-american-veterans-from-service-to-civilian-life/>