



The Florida House of Representatives

Office of the Speaker

Jose R. Oliva
Speaker

February 26, 2019

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair
Mr. Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent
Miami-Dade County Public Schools
1450 NE 2nd Avenue
Miami, FL 33132

Dear Chair Hantman and Superintendent Carvalho:

When the voters of Miami-Dade County voted overwhelmingly last November to tax themselves in order to “improve compensation for high quality teachers,” they probably did not know that more than 1800 teachers responsible for educating 68,000 students would be automatically excluded from receiving higher salaries. Excluded—not because they are not high quality teachers, but because they work for charter schools.

Charter schools are public schools. They are supported by tax dollars distributed by the school district. They educate students whose taxpaying parents chose those charter schools as the best educational opportunity for their children. The school board’s refusal to share new revenue places charter school students in a separate category—separate and unequal. High quality teachers of charter school students (almost 20% of all Miami-Dade students) do not deserve any improvement in compensation according to the Miami-Dade School Board.

Before the vote in November and before district officials went behind closed doors to negotiate with the union, an illusion was created that the additional taxes would be used to benefit all schools. “We’re doing this for everybody”, Superintendent Alberto Carvalho asserted. Nothing in the ballot language dispelled this illusion or clarified the real intent of the referendum sponsors. Such deception by elected officials is simply intolerable.

But it is not too late to rectify the problem. The school board can and should reassess the planned distribution of new revenue. Including charter schools in the use of these funds would

provide an allocation that is fair to all Miami-Dade students and consistent with the plain language that the voters approved. I urge you to take immediate action on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Oliva', with a period at the end. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jose R. Oliva, Speaker

CC:

Richard Corcoran, Commissioner of Education
Oscar Braynon III, State Senator
Manny Diaz Jr., State Senator
Jose Javier Rodriguez, State Senator
Jason Pizzo, State Senator
Anitere Flores, State Senator
Annette Taddeo, State Senator
Joseph Geller, State Representative
Sharon Pritchett, State Representative
Cindy Polo, State Representative
Ana Maria Rodriguez, State Representative
Barbara Watson, State Representative
Dotie Joseph, State Representative
James Bush, State Representative
Bryan Avila, State Representative
Nicholas Duran, State Representative
Michael Grieco, State Representative
Javier Fernandez, State Representative
Vance Aloupis, State Representative
Daniel Perez, State Representative
Kionne McGhee, State Representative
Anthony Rodriguez, State Representative
Juan Fernandez Barquin, State Representative
Holly Raschein, State Representative