



District Eight ews!

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Volume I, Number I

Welcome District 8 Residents

It is an honor to represent you. Thank you for the support and opportunity you give us. As your public servants, my staff and I work on your behalf. Since inauguration day, November 17, 1998, issues and activities of importance have surfaced that may interest you. Each school board member sits on three committees and chairs one. The assignments are listed on the opposite side of this publication.

Issues:

*"Narrowing the Achievement Gap" is a project aimed at helping Hispanic and African-American students earn higher scores. The successful findings of the Houston, Texas School Board were presented before our board, which instructed Mr. Roger C. Cuevas, Superintendent of Schools, to see how these programs and findings may be incorporated into our system. If we match Houston's success, it will be a great stride for our community.

*The "Mutual Aid Agreement," which extends the jurisdiction of school police to 1,000 feet from school property in matters dealing with students, staff and traffic violations, was approved by the School Board.

Initiatives:

- *My office proposed increases in the amount of airtime used for educational programs on WLRN-TV, Channel 17.
- *We introduced measures to simplify the election of board leadership.
- *We proposed measures to ensure school compliance with fire drills.

Activities:

*We conducted a town hall meeting at Coral Park Senior High School on February 16, 1999. The meeting was advertised in the Miami Herald Neighbors section and the Diario Las Americas. The main topic was the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). Deputy Superintendent of Schools Henry C. Fraind and Region Superintendents Neyda G. Navarro, Robert L. Thomas, and Dr. George M. Koonce, Jr. were present to help the audience of about 150 understand the implications of the test. Twenty high school and middle school students received District 8 Awards for Academic Excellence and Outstanding Effort. We hope to see you at our next meeting.

*We published a Web site that we hope you will use. Our address is www.dade.k12.fl.us/district8. We may also be reached through the Miami-Dade County School Board's home page at www.dade.k12.fl.us.

*We hosted a "Pep Rally" for Ms. Maria Llerena, the 1998 Principal of the Year. Ms. Llerena leads Fairlawn Elementary, a school in our district!!!

*We Conducted a Holiday Book Giveaway in December for over 900 students. We encouraged Santa to remember that books are valuable gifts.

*Visited over 30 schools in the district.

*Published several opinion articles in local newspapers. Our staff works hard to make our school system the best in the nation. We will continue to focus on academic excellence, thrift and accountability, school safety, overcrowding and early childhood education, among other issues. We are committed to improving our system with all our effort and might.

We welcome your comments, and again thank you for the honor of your trust.

Respectfully yours,

Marta Pérez and Staff