# MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(22)

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| **TO:** | Honorable Chairman Dennis C. Moss and Members, Board of County Commissioners | **DATE:** | February 2, 2010 |
| **FROM:** | R. A. Cuevas, Jr. County Attorney | **SUBJECT** | Resolution urging the Florida Legislature to restore funding in FY 2010-11 for School Readiness and Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) programs to at least the levels funded in the FY 2008-09 state budget; further urging the Legislature to provide additional funding to address the anticipated growth in the number of children eligible for the VPK Program |

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan.

R. A. Cuevas, Jr.
County Attorney

RAC/jls

# MEMORANDUM
(Revised)

**TO:** Honorable Chairman Dennis C. Moss and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**DATE:** February 2, 2010

**FROM:** R. A. Cuevas, Jr. County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item No. 11(A)(22)

**Please note any items checked.**

_____ **"3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised**

_____ **6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing**

_____ **4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing**

_____ **Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget**

_____ **Budget required**

_____ **Statement of fiscal impact required**

_____ **Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Manager's report for public hearing**

✓ **No committee review**

_____ **Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's ____, 3/5's ____, unanimous _____ ) to approve**

_____ **Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required**

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(22)
2-2-10

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO RESTORE FUNDING IN FISCAL YEAR 2010-11 FOR SCHOOL READINESS AND VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN (VPK) PROGRAMS TO AT LEAST THE LEVELS FUNDED IN THE FISCAL YEAR 2008-09 STATE BUDGET; FURTHER URGING THE LEGISLATURE TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO ADDRESS THE ANTICIPATED GROWTH IN THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN ELIGIBLE FOR THE VPK PROGRAM

**WHEREAS**, the Office of Early Learning in the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation (the Agency) serves as the lead office in administering early learning and child care programs in Florida, including the School Readiness Program under Chapter 411, Florida Statutes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Agency supports the state's early learning programs through grants for services to 31 local early learning coalitions, which ensure families have access to high-quality child care programs throughout the state; and

**WHEREAS**, early learning programs help strengthen Florida's families by allowing parents to meet their goal of achieving economic self-sufficiency and break the cycle of poverty; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Legislature has not increased funding for the School Readiness Program since the Agency first became responsible for the School Readiness Program in July, 1999, more than 10 years ago; and

**WHEREAS**, the Fiscal Year 2010-11 proposed budget for the School Readiness Program is anticipated to be approximately $112 million for Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, which is nearly $6 million less than the Fiscal Year 2008-09 budget; and

**WHEREAS**, the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties provides services to more than 48,000 children, and any reduction in funding would impact children who are at the greatest risk for future school failures; and

**WHEREAS**, not restoring funding for the School Readiness Program to at least the 2008-09 level will affect the state's ability to draw down federal dollars to support school readiness programs in Miami-Dade County; and

**WHEREAS**, the impact of these additional cuts especially will be felt by low income families that are at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level in our community and will prevent the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade County and their contracted agency, the Miami-Dade County, Department of Human Services Child Development Services, from serving between 1,700 and 2,500 children in Miami-Dade County; and

**WHEREAS**, Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) programs also face serious budget challenges in the upcoming fiscal year; and

**WHEREAS**, the Fiscal Year 2010-11 proposed VPK budget for Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties is anticipated to be approximately $40 million, which is nearly $9 million less than the Fiscal Year 2008-09 budget for VPK; and

**WHEREAS,** an additional $28.6 million in non-recurring funds is required statewide to cover the Fiscal Year 2008-09 shortfall in the VPK program, which carried over to Fiscal Year 2009-10, and the shortfall that is projected for Fiscal Year 2009-10; and

**WHEREAS**, an additional $42.8 million in recurring funds is needed statewide to address the projected growth of 15,774 eligible four year-old children in the 2010-11 VPK program year; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed Fiscal Year 2010-11 state budget shortfall could result in the elimination of approximately 1,700 subsidized child care slots in Miami-Dade County, further placing these children at high risk; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida economy needs employees for growth and sustainability and parents need high-quality child care as an essential service in order to maintain employment; and

**WHEREAS**, early care and education providers in Miami-Dade County will be faced with losses of income in an industry that is dependent upon these grant funds, which could further exacerbate the economic health of these families and our community; and

**WHEREAS**, the failure to restore the budgets to the 2008-09 levels and add funding for the projected growth of the VPK program would be detrimental and contrary to maintaining a reasonable quality of life for the children in Miami-Dade County and the State of Florida,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,** that this Board:

**Section 1.** Urges the Florida Legislature to restore funding for the School Readiness Program and Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten to at least the Fiscal Year 2008-09 budget levels and appropriate additional funds to address the anticipated growth of eligible children in the VPK program to maintain the services to the state's most vulnerable children.

**Section 2.** Requests that the Miami-Dade State Legislative Delegation take a lead role in restoring funding for School Readiness Program and Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten.

**Section 3.** Directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit certified copies of the resolution to the Governor, the Senate President, the House Speaker, and the Chair and Members of the Miami-Dade State Legislative Delegation.

**Section 4.** Directs the County's state lobbyists to advocate for the issues identified in Section 1 above, and authorizes and directs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to include this item in the 2010 state legislative package.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan. It was offered by Commissioner , who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Dennis C. Moss, Chairman
Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Vice-Chairman

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| Bruno A. Barreiro | Audrey M. Edmonson |
| Carlos A. Gimenez | Sally A. Heyman |
| Barbara J. Jordan | Joe A. Martinez |
| Dorrin D. Rolle | Natacha Seijas |
| Katy Sorenson | Rebeca Sosa |
| Sen. Javier D. Souto | |

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 2nd day of February, 2010. This resolution shall become effective ten (10) days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK

By:_____
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency. JMM

Jess M. McCarty