



Health, Public Safety & Intergovernmental Committee
June 11, 2009

Prepared by: Mary Smith-York

EXHIBITS LIST

NO.	DATE	ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
1	6/11/2009	1E2	Prospectus, Two (2) Letters from Miami-Dade County Public Schools; Letter from Michele Rivera, Broward County Schools; CD & DVD entitled Stand and StandUp
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Prospectus

Hypothesis: The level of crime and violence, and the apathy toward and tolerance of it, can be appreciably reversed through proactive intervention.

Background: We have experienced a wave of violent crime and murder which there seems to be little outrage over. The lack of direct and proper supervision is one of factors contributing to youth crime and violence. At any given moment there are nearly 144 young people incarcerated in the Juvenile Justice Center. Clearly, one of the avenues in dealing with this condition has to be centered in prevention; and getting young people, who have had minor encounters, to turn their behavior around.

Methodology: Murderer, the book, is designed to get the attention of the reader, promoting an understanding that trouble is easy to get into and hard to get out of, and should be avoided. It is designed to compel the reader to take a serious look at, and continuously be mindful of, one's behavior (see various reviews in this package).

The Music project is designed to galvanize us into taking part in making our community a safe place to live. It also serves as heralding that we will cooperate with authorities to keep law and order. The music project is also designed to inspire pride, hope and desire.

Murderer has multiple use options; Adult and Juvenile Jail Systems, Juvenile Assessment Center, community youth programs and schools.

The Music Cd is a specific and general use item. The commercial quality of the production will accommodate its use in major-market radio and television. A Cd, with sing-a-long version will be available for youth programs and schools. A video will be made of the title selection, Stand Up.

Budget: Music Project: \$75,000.00

Murderer: To be determine by quantity



Superintendent of Schools
Alberto M. Carvalho

Superintendent of North Regional Center
Dr. Marcos Moran

Miami-Dade County School Board
Dr. Solomon C. Stinson, Chair
Dr. Marta Pérez, Vice Chair
Agustin J. Barrera
Renier Díaz de la Portilla
Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman
Perla Tabares Hantman
Dr. Wilbert "Tee" Holloway
Dr. Martin Karp
Ana Rivas Logan

June 1, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

The students at Lake Stevens Elementary had the pleasure of reading two books that were written by Abraham Thomas "Skeeter and Murderer." As the principal, rarely you see students so excited about reading books however; students were engaged and developed a love for the written word. It addresses the importance of key foundational themes of making good choices and in turn reaping the benefits of hard work.

On May 15, 2009 students performed an Intervention of Violence presentation singing songs from Abraham J. Thomas CD STANDUP. The audience and guest speakers danced and sang to the lyrics STAND UP TO VIOLENCE. The lyrics promoted a positive message about speaking up when you see something wrong in your neighborhood.

I strongly feel that this book and CD should be in the hands of all students in Miami Dade County Public Schools. As you know, students learn many negative things from rap artist and singers in which they emulate their lyrics. The STANDUP CD will promote a positive message especially during these rough economical times.

As a result, there was a decline in the number of students who were sent to the office for disciplinary actions relating to fighting and bullying behavior. It is of my opinion, that there is a correlation with the two books read "Skeeter and Murderer".

Abraham J. Thomas is to be commended for his literary and musical talents in promoting positive life choices.

Sincerely,

Stephanie D. Goree, Principal
Lake Stevens Elementary





Miami-Dade County Public Schools

giving our students the world

Superintendent of Schools
Alberto M. Carvalho

Superintendent of North Regional Center
Dr. Marcos Moran

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To whom it may concern,

Abraham Thomas has written several books that will inspire young adults and children to think twice about the decisions they make. In these books, Mr. Thomas discusses several issues that children living in this community are familiar with; therefore they understand his concerns and can empathize with him; thus, creating an impact on the student. My students have enjoyed reading these stories and have understood what the message being given is. Additionally, Mr. Thomas has written songs that my students cannot stop singing, such as Stand Up. Stand Up is a song that discusses dreams that Mr. Thomas has for the community. This song, as well as others he has written, conveys the same message as his books do; violence is not okay, and we all need to do our part to put an end to it. It would be beneficial for students who live in communities where there is high crime and violence to read these books and hear his songs, as they will be inspired not to fall into the same domino effect.

Sincerely,

Deborah Arca



March 17, 2009

A copy of the novel, *Murderer*, written by Abraham J. Thomas, was forwarded to me for review. The story builds upon Thomas' personal anguish in committing a murder and turning himself into authorities that turns out to be only a dream. Additionally, he describes the 'real' stories of individuals who have committed heinous crimes and the ramifications of their behavior. *Murderer* underscores the importance of restraint, the fact that life is about making choices, and anyone could voluntarily or involuntarily commit murderer. The consequences of those choices can be life changing for those directly or indirectly involved.

The author takes his time in explaining to the youth that trouble is so easy to get into. Many offenders can be dissuaded from committing crimes given stronger parental and educational support. Mr. Thomas suggests that in addition to the role education provides in building confidence and character, extracurricular activities and physical education play an important role in team building, establishing positive interrelationships, and channeling behavior productively.

While the story presents very real and authentic situations that many young people could relate, Mr. Thomas sometimes rambles, especially toward the end of the novel. Despite the rambling narrative, the essence of Thomas' message can serve to enlighten troubled or "hard to reach" youth and provide them with alternative challenging situations. He makes it clear that prison is real for individuals, young or old, who make inappropriate, irrational decisions. The examples that the author uses let us know that there are people who do bad things and bad things do happen to good people.

This book will appeal and benefit the adolescent and teen reader, particularly at risk students in alternative education or juvenile detention centers. Guidance counselors or teachers could utilize the book as a vehicle to help facilitate student self-reflective conversations and stir discussion on ways students might approach challenging or difficult situations. The instructional value of the book would have greatest impact in guided reading situations with the targeted students noted above to help generate responsible, decision making and positive life choices.

For further information please contact:

Michele Rivera, Director, Learning Resources and Instructional Materials, Broward County Schools





MEMORANDUM

TO: Joe Rasco, Director of the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

DATE: June 18, 2009

FROM: The Honorable Sally A. Heyman, Chair of the Health, Public Safety and Intergovernmental Committee

SUBJECT Washington D.C. Intern Program

During the June 11, 2009, Health Public Safety and Intergovernmental Committee, the Committee voted to have your office administratively fund a \$100.00 per week stipend for each intern in the Washington D.C. office.

It has come to my attention, that there is a special index budget code that may be used for said purpose. According to this index code, the intern would be placed on the County's payroll but would not be taxed or be required to have a W-2 form. Jackie Anghel-Novick, of Assistant County Manager Alex Munoz's office, is handling these types of requests.

You can contact Jackie Anghel-Novick to expedite the Committee's request.

- CC: Honorable Carlos A. Alvarez, Mayor
- Honorable Chairman Dennis C. Moss and
- Members of the Board of the County Commissioners
- George M. Burgess, County Manager
- Alina Hudak, Assistant County Manager
- Robert Cuevas, County Attorney
- Diane Collins, Acting Division Chief- Clerk of the Board
- Jennifer Glazer-Moon, Special Assistant and Director, OSBM
- Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor

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 DADE COUNTY, FLA.
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