

Instruction – Elementary and Secondary

K-8 CENTERS

In the interest of providing the best and most supportive environment for education, Miami-Dade County Public Schools offers K-8 Centers, which are configured to include students from kindergarten through grade eight, as well as the traditional elementary and middle level configuration. The K-8 Center offers a tightly aligned curriculum for grade six through eight students that may include, in addition to the traditional core academic subjects, required foreign language for all students and an integrated subject alignment infusing technology, career path skills, real world projects, ethics, and character development. The K-8 Center also offers an extensive safety net to ensure that all students are ready for the transition to ninth grade, including a support team for every child who will follow his or her progress from grades six through eight. A K-8 Center middle grade experience is not, however, meant to be the equivalent of a traditional middle school environment. The range of electives, honors, and high school level courses available at the traditional middle school may be limited at a K-8 Center because of the smaller number of students in grades six through eight. Physical education and athletics may also be limited. The parents of all students enrolled in grade five or six at an established K-8 Center shall choose to allow their children to continue at the K-8 Center or to enroll them in the traditional middle school that has been designated as an option.

The conversion of a school campus to a K-8 Center should be made primarily for the purpose of improving educational services, including the provision of curricular continuity, the provision of optimum academic and social support, the relief of overcrowding, and such factors that might be unique to a particular conversion.

Creation of K-8 Centers or conversions of schools to K-8 Centers may occur as follows:

- I. The Deputy for Curriculum and Instruction may plan such schools for the purpose of:
 - A. providing or extending a unique curricular program; or
 - B. providing equitable support for successful transition to senior high school across the District.
- II. The Chief Facilities Officer may plan such schools for the purpose of reducing overcrowding, meeting the demands of expected population growth, or providing equitable access to suitable facilities.
- III. A proposal for conversion may be initiated by a Regional Center, an Educational Excellence School Advisory Committee (EESAC), or a Parent Teacher Association/Parent Teacher Student Association (PTA/PTSA). The process for proposing conversions of schools to K-8 Centers shall begin with the submission of a completed feasibility worksheet to Specialized Programs – School of Choice (Schools of Choice). This worksheet shall be comprised of data on the rationale for the request, current school enrollment and capacity, projected increase in

student enrollment with the added grades, projected impact on the enrollment and diversity of the neighboring schools, and school site acreage and current usage. Concurrent with the review of the application(s) worksheets by Schools of Choice, the Office of School Facilities (Facilities), shall also review the application(s), specifically as it relates to the facility implications of the proposed conversion, including its standing within the district plan for such conversions and any anticipated traffic impact on the neighboring communities, as determined by a detailed traffic analysis.

If the reviews by both Schools of Choice and Facilities show the proposed conversion to a K-8 Center to be feasible, the entity that submitted the feasibility worksheet will be invited to develop a complete, written proposal to the respective Regional Center for review as detailed in Section III A. below. After a thorough evaluation of each proposal, the Regional Superintendent shall attach a recommendation to approve or deny. Each proposal shall then be forwarded for analysis by the K-8 Center Technical Committee, review by the K-8 Center Administrative Committee, and recommendation to the School Board as detailed in Section III B. below. The following procedures for submission and review shall be followed.

A. Proposal Submission

1. Proposals must adhere to the Miami-Dade County K-8 Center Application Format and must, at minimum, address the following factors: curricular provisions, including the method by which parents will choose between the two middle grades options; staffing implications; initiating entity (source of the request); rationale for the request; current school enrollment and capacity; projected increase in student enrollment with the added grades; projected impact on the enrollment and diversity of the neighboring schools; school site acreage and current usage; and evidence of community support, including evidence that the community has had an opportunity to review and discuss the traffic impact analysis prepared in connection with the application for K-8 conversion, including the conclusions in that analysis and any traffic improvement options proposed therein, if applicable.
2. Proposals may be submitted to Schools of Choice at any time during the school year. Proposals reviewed in the fall will be considered at or prior to the December School Board Meeting, and those reviewed in the spring will be considered at or prior to the April School Board Meeting, unless extenuating circumstances intervene. The proposal for any conversion proposed to take place in a given school year must be submitted during the first submission cycle of the previous year or earlier.

B. Proposal Review

1. A K-8 Center Technical Committee shall examine all proposals and, by majority vote, forward the proposal to the next level of review with a recommendation to approve or deny the conversion.

The K-8 Center Technical Committee shall be comprised of the senior administrators of the following areas, or their designees, who must also be administrators:

Curriculum and Instruction;
Regional Center in which the school is located;
Attendance Boundary Committee;
Civil Rights and Diversity Compliance;
Student Services;
Transportation;
School Facilities;
Employment and Staffing; and
Food and Nutrition.

Additional Committee membership will include parent representatives from the following:

PTA/PTSA at the initiating school; and
PTA/PTSA at the affected middle school.

The Assistant Superintendent of School Choice and Parental Options Specialized Programs will act as chair of the K-8 Center Technical Committee and the Regional Superintendent of the Regional Center in which the school is located will present the proposal.

2. A K-8 Center Administrative Committee shall review each proposal, along with the district-level feasibility study and districtwide plans for the establishment of K-8 Centers, if applicable, and, by majority vote, make a recommendation for acceptance or denial of the proposal to the Superintendent of Schools. At least one (1) representative of the initiating entity must be available to answer questions from the K-8 Center Administrative Committee when the proposal is reviewed.

The K-8 Center Administrative Committee shall be comprised of the following persons, or their equivalent:

Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum, Instruction and School Improvement, or designee, who will act as chair and will only vote in the case of a tie;
Deputy Superintendent, Business Operations, or designee;

Chief Financial Officer, or designee;
 Human Resources Officer, or designee;
 Associate Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction,
 or designee;
 Regional Superintendent of the Regional Center in which the
 school is located, or designee;
 Assistant Superintendent, Secondary, Curriculum and
 Instruction, or designee;
 Principal from an established K-8 Center;
 One representative from the Attendance Boundary
 Committee;
 One representative from the Diversity Equity and Excellence
 Advisory Committee;
 One member of the United Teachers of Dade, selected by
 the Executive Vice President of the United Teachers of
 Dade; and
 President of the County Council of PTA, or designee.

3. All proposals shall be submitted to the School Board, by the Superintendent of Schools with a recommendation for acceptance or denial.
4. The School Board must, by a majority vote, approve or deny each proposal that it receives.
5. If the proposal is denied, the School Board shall direct the Superintendent of Schools to articulate in writing the specific reasons based upon good cause supporting the denial of the proposal. If a proposal is denied, the originator may resubmit a revised proposal to the appropriate administrative office for review during subsequent submission cycles.
6. A Board-approved proposal shall be included for funding in the Five-Year Capital Plan, as part of its next regular annual update, unless otherwise directed by the School Board.
7. Once the construction is completed, and prior to the facility being occupied by the additional grade level(s), the K-8 Center will be included in the Attendance Boundary Committee (ABC) process for a grade configuration change.

Specific Authority: 1001.41(1)(2); 1001.42(22); 1001.43(10) F.S.

Law Implemented, Interpreted, or Made Specific: 1001.41(3); 1001.42(9)(b)(3)(7)(8); 1001.43(2)(f)(4)(5); 1002.20(6)(a) F.S.

History: THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

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