



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

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Benjamin J. Williams

Chair

School Board Member, District 5

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March 31, 2011

Dr. Eric J. Smith
Commissioner of Education
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1502
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Commissioner Smith:

On March 2, 2011, the District provided its preliminary response to the Final Report of the Nineteenth Statewide Grand Jury in the Supreme Court of the State of Florida (GJ Final Report). Within the response, the District communicated its recognition of the sense of importance and urgency regarding the concerns identified within the report. I believe the District's activity over the last month to officially pass policy and procedure, as well as provide supplemental training to staff; support its commitment to address these concerns.

Although consideration must be given to the Grand Jury's targeted process, the District continues to focus on stating its efforts to improve and create policy and procedures, increase awareness of identified issues among its staff, and conduct operations with more clarity. Some of the conclusions outlined within the GJ Report appear to be based on incomplete information or generalizations based on the acts of individuals within the organization. The GJ Report also does not take into account that these events transpired over numerous years, predating many of the current Board Members and the current administration. However, this does not negate the overarching message of the GJ Report or the District's intent to respond accordingly.

In this updated response, the District provides a status of its improvement efforts and only addresses inaccurate information outlined within the GJ Report. Over the next several months and into the future, the District will continue to audit and discuss the findings and recommendations contained within the 1997, 2002 and 2011 GJ Reports, implement measures to address the reported concerns, evaluate the effectiveness of these measures, and make necessary corrections as warranted.

The District also intends to have at minimum, biannual reviews of its response efforts to this GJ Report, as well as previous Grand Jury reports, incorporated within the formal

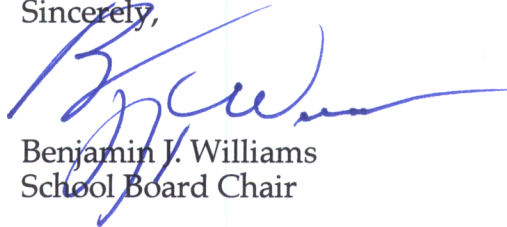
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annual audit plan of the District's Office of the Chief Auditor. This audit plan is determined and approved at a Board meeting each year, and subject to public comment.

Additionally, the District will retain the services of an independent audit firm, specializing in ethics testing, to perform comprehensive ethics testing of the District and its policies and procedures on an ongoing basis. These testing services will also be coordinated through the District's Office of the Chief Auditor and the initial testing will be conducted no later than the conclusion of the 2011-2012 school year. Subsequently, this ethics testing will minimally be conducted every three years or as requested by the Superintendent or the School Board Chair.

The District will continue to provide you, the Department of Education, and the general public with updates as to its progress with executing this plan of action as appropriate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ben Williams", is written over the typed name and title.

Benjamin J. Williams
School Board Chair

BJW/JFN:vh

Enclosures

c: School Board Members
Executive Leadership Team