



Statistical Profile of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools

The mission of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools is to support the improvement of student achievement by strengthening instructional leadership, by launching innovative systemic initiatives, and by disseminating resources that enhance curriculum and instruction.

County Profile

Miami-Dade County is located along the southeast tip of the Florida peninsula. It is bounded by Biscayne Bay and the Atlantic Ocean to the east, Everglades National Park to the west, the Florida Keys to the south, and Broward County (Ft. Lauderdale) to the North. The County’s total land area is 1,946 square miles and is larger than the states of Rhode Island and Delaware.

The total population of the County (in the year 2000) was 2,253,362. Of this population approximately 933,700 reside in one of the County’s 31 municipalities. The City of Miami is the largest municipality, followed by Hialeah, Miami Beach, North Miami and Coral Gables. The remaining population lives in unincorporated areas of the County.

As Exhibit 2-1 shows, the preponderance of County citizens are either white or African American. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin comprise 57.3 percent of the population.

Exhibit 2-1

The Preponderance Of County Citizens Are Either White Or African American

Race	Percent
White	69.7%
Black or African American	20.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.2%
Asian	1.4%
Person reporting some other race	4.6%
Persons reporting two or more races	3.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

A significant percentage of the County’s population (24.8 percent) is school aged (under 18 years old) while an additional 6.5 percent are less than five years old. In addition, 39.0 percent of County households have persons under 18. By contrast, a relatively small percentage of the County’s populations (13.3 percent) are 65 years old or older.

While the County’s median household income (based on a 1997 model) is \$30,000, 21.1 percent of the County’s population is below the poverty level and 29.6 percent of the County’s children are below the poverty level.

School District Profile

This section presents general information on the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) and compares the District with other large Districts in the state. The Districts with which MDCPS is compared in this section are the Broward County Public Schools, the Hillsborough County Public Schools, the Palm Beach County Public Schools, and the Orange County Public Schools.

General Information

With close to 370,000 students the Miami-Dade County Public Schools is the largest school District in the state and the fourth largest District in the nation. Its student population is much larger than the other large Districts used for comparison, however its rate of growth between the 1996-97 school year and the 2000-01 school year was less than that for the comparison Districts (see Exhibit 2-2).

Exhibit 2-2

MDCPS Services Significantly More Students Than The Comparison Districts

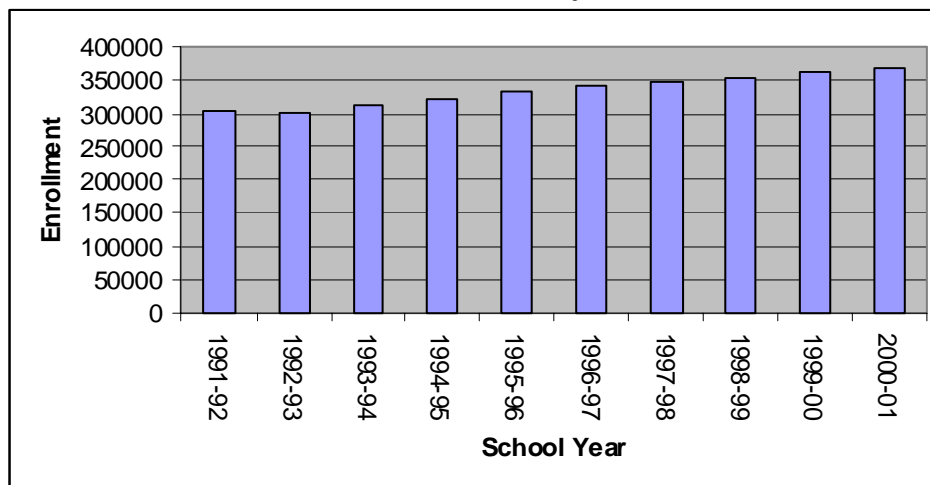
District	Student Population		Percentage Growth
	1996-97	2000-01	
Miami-Dade	341,115	368,393	8.0%
Broward	215,557	251,116	16.5%
Hillsborough	147,897	164,294	11.1%
Palm Beach	137,663	153,800	11.7%
Orange	129,137	150,984	16.9%
State	2,239,411	2,431,521	8.6%

Source: Florida School District Profiles.

While its overall growth rate is lower than for the comparison Districts the rate of growth has been steady (see Exhibit 2-3).

Exhibit 2-3

Enrollment Growth Has Been Steady



Source: MDCPS Statistical Abstract (2000-01).

The District operates 411 schools of which more than half are elementary schools (see Exhibit 2-4). The number of schools operated is significantly more than the number of school operated in Broward County (240), Hillsborough County (240), Orange County (185) and Palm Beach County (201).

Exhibit 2-4

The District Operates 411 Schools Of Which More Than Half Are Elementary Schools

Type	Number
Elementary Schools	208
Middle/Junior High Schools	48
Senior High Schools	46
Combination Schools ¹	12
Adult Schools	27
Vocational Centers	6
Other Types of Schools (includes Alternative Schools and ESE Centers)	35
Charter Schools	14
Department of Juvenile Justice Schools	15
Total	411

Source: MDCPS.

School District Financial Information

The adopted budget for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools for the 2001-2002 fiscal year is \$2.468 billion. The District receives revenues from federal, state and local sources. Most (88.3 percent) of the revenue the District receives from the state is from the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). This fund source, established by the Legislature, annually prescribes state revenues for education as well as the level of *ad valorem* taxes (property taxes), which can be levied by each school District in the state. It also includes restricted funding called “categoricals” which are funds specified by the Legislature for selected District services, such as instructional materials. Exhibit 2-5 shows the District’s sources of funds for the General Fund for the 2001-02 fiscal year.

Exhibit 2-5

District Funds Include Federal, State and Local Sources

Source	Total (Millions)
Federal	\$ 10.24
State	1,442.22
Local	721.50
Transfer From Capital Outlay	127.11
Non-Revenue Sources	0.03
Fund Balance	167.20
Total Revenue and Fund Balance	\$2,468.30

Source: Citizen’s Guide to the MDCPS Operating Budget.

According to the District’s audited financial statements, in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2001 60.8 percent of the District’s expenditures were for instructional services. Operation and maintenance of the physical plant comprised the second greatest portion of District expenditures followed by instructional support services and school administration (see Exhibit 2-6).

¹ Schools with both elementary and middle school grades or middle school and high school grades.

Exhibit 2-6

60.8 Percent Of District Expenditures In The 2000-01 Fiscal Year Were For Instructional Services

Category	Total (Millions)	Percent
Instructional Services	\$1,371.85	60.8%
Instructional Support Services	197.89	8.8%
Pupil Transportation Services	78.57	3.5%
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	301.88	13.4%
School Administration	142.46	6.3%
General Administration	90.77	4.0%
Other	28.66	1.3%
Capital Outlay	42.96	1.9%
Debt Service	.64	0.0%
Total	\$2,255.68	100.0

Source: MDCPS Audited Financial Statements (2000-01).

Miami-Dade County Public Schools expenditures per FTE for 1998-99 (the last year for which comparative information was provided by the State) are similar to those of the Districts used for comparison. Expenditures per student were lower than those in Palm Beach County and Hillsborough County but higher than those in Broward County and Orange County (See Exhibit 2-7).

Exhibit 2-7

MDCPS Expenditures Per FTE Are Comparable To Its Peers

Category	Unweighted FTE	Expenditures (1998-99)	Expenditures Per FTE
Palm Beach	146,175.06	\$886,340,340.88	\$6,064
Hillsborough	157,622.93	935,092,568.11	5,932
Miami-Dade	361,614.58	2,133,599,616.06	5,900
Broward	231,425.78	1,274,911,687.87	5,509
Orange	140,140.88	753,479,070.17	5,377
Average Without Miami-Dade			5,721
State Total	2,335,600.58	13,141,468,926.01	5,626

Source: Florida Department of Education, Profile of Florida School Districts, Financial Data.

Student Characteristics

This section presents information on the student population of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, as well as information about four other Districts.

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools serves a much higher percentage of minority (i.e., Non-White Non-Hispanic) students than the Districts used for comparisons. While Black Non-Hispanic and Hispanic students comprise 86.8 percent of the students served by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Black Non-Hispanic and Hispanic students comprise 55.2 percent of the Broward County Public Schools, 44.7 percent of the Hillsborough County Public Schools, 51.8 percent of the Orange County Public Schools and 47.0 percent of the Palm Beach County Public Schools (see Exhibit 2-8).

Exhibit 2-8

MDCPS Serves A Much Higher Percentage Of Minority Students Than The Districts Used For Comparison

	Broward County	Miami-Dade County	Hillsborough County	Orange County	Palm Beach County
White Non-Hispanic	40.4%	11.2%	50.2%	43.7%	48.2%
Black Non-Hispanic	36.0%	31.0%	23.6%	29.2%	29.6%
Hispanic	19.2%	55.8%	21.1%	22.6%	17.4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.7%	1.2%	2.2%	3.5%	2.1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.3%	0.1%	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%
Multiracial	1.4%	0.7%	2.6%	0.7%	2.2%

Source: Profiles Of Florida School Districts, 2000-01.

In addition, as Exhibit 2-9 shows, a much higher percentage of Miami-Dade County Public Schools students are eligible for free/reduced price meals than students in the District used for comparison. Indeed, 17.7% more students are eligible for free/reduced price meals in MDCPS than the average percentage of students in the Districts used for comparison.

Exhibit 2-9

The Proportion Of Miami-Dade Students Eligible For Free/Reduced Price Significantly Exceeds The Proportion In The Districts Used For Comparison

District	Students Eligible For		
	Enrollment	Free/Reduced Price Meals	Percent
Miami-Dade	368,393	217,594	59.1%
Orange	150,984	71,557	47.4%
Hillsborough	164,294	75,544	46.0%
Palm Beach	153,800	59,466	38.7%
Broward	251,116	91,676	36.5%
Average (Excluding Miami-Dade)	180,049	74,561	41.4%
State Average	2,431,521	1,068,609	43.9%

Source: Profiles of Florida School Districts (2000-01).

In addition, a much higher percentage of MDCPS students are limited English proficient than students in the Districts used for comparison. As Exhibit 2-10 shows, the percentage of limited English proficient students served by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools is 7.5 percent higher than the average of the Districts used for comparisons and is more than double the percentage in the state as a whole.

Exhibit 2-10

The Proportion Of Miami-Dade Students Who Are Limited English Proficient Significantly Exceeds The Proportion In The Districts Used For Comparison

District	Enrollment	LEP Students	Percent
Miami-Dade	368,393	67,736	18.4%
Palm Beach	153,800	18,606	12.1%
Broward	251,116	27,287	10.9%
Hillsborough	164,294	17,191	10.5%
Orange	150,984	15,281	10.1%
Average (Excluding Miami-Dade)	180,049	19,591	10.9%
State Average	2,431,521	188,834	7.8%

Source: Profiles of Florida School Districts (2000-01).

By contrast, the percentage of Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students in the MDCPS is lower than all the Districts used from comparison but one – the Broward County Public Schools. In addition, the percentage of students who receive ESE services in the District is lower than the state average (see Exhibit 2-11).

Exhibit 2-11

The Proportion Of Miami-Dade Students Who Receive ESE Services Is Lower In The MDCPS Than For All But One Of The Districts Used For Comparison ²

District	Enrollment	ESE Students	Percent
Orange	150,984	29,201	19.3%
Hillsborough	164,294	31,319	19.1%
Palm Beach	153,800	28,856	18.8%
Miami-Dade	368,393	62,686	17.0%
Broward	251,116	36,809	14.7%
Average (Excluding Miami-Dade)	180,049	31,546	17.5%
State Average	2,431,521	467,200	19.2%

Source: Profiles of Florida School Districts (2000-01).

Student Performance

The effective delivery of educational services is the first and most important aspect of all school District missions. Critical to the delivery of these services is how Districts can maximize student performance while keeping within budget constraints. This section profiles student achievement in the Miami-Dade County public schools and also presents comparative information on a number of dimensions of student performance: an independent evaluation of schools serving disadvantaged students, test scores, graduation rates, drop-out rates, college placement tests, and post graduation activities.

² ESE includes students identified as eligible for either gifted or special education services

Independent Evaluation Of Schools Serving Disadvantaged Students

An independent evaluation of schools nationwide indicates that the performance of some MDCPS schools in serving disadvantaged students is exemplary. The Washington D.C. based Education Trust, Inc. recently released a national study of schools identifying 180 high-poverty and high-minority schools nationwide that have high student performance of which 65 are located in Miami-Dade County. The report, *Dispelling The Myth Revisited, Preliminary Findings From A Nationwide Analysis Of "High Flying" Schools*, provides a preliminary look at where such "high flying" schools are and what they look like. The analysis identified a total of 4,577 schools nationwide in the year 2000 that met the following criteria:

- Students' reading and/or math performance was in the top third among all schools in the state at the same grade level, and
- The percentage of low-income students in the school was at least 50 percent and ranked in the top third of schools at that grade level *and/or* the percentage of African American and Latino students in the school was at least 50 percent and ranked in the top third of schools at that grade level.

Test Scores

Comparing Miami-Dade County Public Schools to peer districts in Florida, the District's performance is comparable on some measures. Despite the fact that the District serves a significantly larger disadvantaged population than the Broward County Public Schools and the Hillsborough County Public Schools, writing scores on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) exceed FCAT scores in Broward County and match Hillsborough County's FCAT scores on the Grade 4 test. In addition, writing FCAT scores exceed average state FCAT scores for all three grades tested (see Exhibit 2-12).

Exhibit 2-12

FCAT Writing Scores For The Miami-Dade County Public Schools Exceed Average State Scores And Also Exceed The Scores For One Peer District

Writing	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 10
State	3.4	3.7	3.8
Miami-Dade	3.6	3.8	3.9
Broward	3.5	3.6	3.8
Hillsborough	3.6	4.1	4.0

Source: Department of Education. District FCAT Writing Scores, 2001.

On a number of measures, however, the performance of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools lags that of other Districts. As Exhibit 2-13 shows, for example, District FCAT reading scores are lower than state averages and for the Broward County Public Schools and the Hillsborough County Public Schools.³

³ It should be noted that the average percentage difference between MDCPS reading scores (for all three grade levels) and reading scores in the Broward County Public Schools (2.9 percent) and the Hillsborough County Public Schools (4.3 percent) is far less than the difference in the percentage of students eligible for free/reduced price meals between the Districts (24.1 percent for the Broward County Public Schools and 11.8 percent for the Hillsborough County Public Schools).

Exhibit 2-13

FCAT Reading Scores For The Miami-Dade County Public Schools Lag The Performance Of Peer Districts

Reading	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 10
State	298	295	304
Miami-Dade	297	286	294
Broward	301	297	304
Hillsborough	302	302	311

Source: Department of Education. District FCAT Reading Scores, 2001.

Likewise, MDCPS mathematics scores on FCAT are lower than the average FCAT scores for the State and are also lower than scores in the peer districts (see Exhibit 2-14).⁴

Exhibit 2-14

FCAT Mathematics Scores For The Miami-Dade County Public Schools Lag The Performance Of Peer Districts

Mathematics	Grade 5	Grade 8	Grade 10
State	314	308	323
Miami-Dade	319	301	314
Broward	323	313	325
Hillsborough	321	319	332

Source: Department of Education. District FCAT Mathematics Scores, 2001.

In addition, District students have consistently performed below state and national averages on the College Board Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT).⁵ Over the past three years, these scores have been fairly stagnant at the District, state and national levels. As Exhibit 2-15 indicates, the District’s scores for both the Mathematics and Verbal portions of the SAT for the 2000-2001 school year were much lower than state and national average. The percent of Miami-Dade County 12th graders opting to take these sets is also below the state average, but slightly above the national average.

⁴ Again, the average percentage difference between MDCPS mathematics scores (for all three grade levels) and mathematics scores in the Broward County Public Schools (2.9 percent) and the Hillsborough County Public Schools (4.1 percent) is far less than the difference in the percentage of students eligible for free/reduced price meals between the Districts (24.1 percent for the Broward County Public Schools and 11.8 percent for the Hillsborough County Public Schools).

⁵ A word of caution should be made regarding test interpretation for the SAT: Average scores are based on approximately 41 percent of the graduating class and therefore do not reflect the performance of the overall class of graduating seniors. In addition, the socio-economic status of the populations being compared is not similar. Minority students comprise about one-third of the nation’s test takers but about 80 percent of the District’s test takers.

Exhibit 2-15

Average SAT Scores For The District Are Considerably Lower Than State And National Averages

	SAT-Math	SAT-Verbal
National	511	505
State	498	499
Miami-Dade, FL	461	461
Broward, FL	490	484
Hillsborough, FL	500	501
Houston, TX	467	469

Source: Berkshire Advisors

When considering these test scores it should also be stressed that over the past three years District schools have achieved substantial improvements in their state school grades. During this period 112 District schools have improved their state school grade and the improvement has been equally dramatic for both low and high performing schools. As Exhibit 2-16 shows, the over the past three years the District has improved from having 24 schools rated as “F” by the State of Florida to currently having no “F” schools. In addition, during this same period the number of “D” schools has been reduced from 116 to 93 (a reduction of 19.8 percent). Moreover, the total number of “D” and “F” has been reduced by more than one-third (33.6 percent).

The increase in the number of District schools rated “A” and “B” has been even more dramatic. As Exhibit 2-16 shows the number of “A” schools has increased by 366 percent over the past three years while the number of “B” schools has increased by 46.6 percent. Moreover, the total number of schools rated as “A” and “B” has increased by 166% over this period.

Exhibit 2-16

Over The Past Three Years, The Number Of Schools Rated “D” And “F” Has Declined By More Than One-Third While the Number of Schools Rated “A” and “B” Has Increased By 166 Percent

	Number Of Schools Rated “F”	Number Of Schools Rated “D”	Total “D” and “F” Schools	Number of Schools Rated “A”	Number of Schools Rated “B”	Total “A” and “B” Schools
1998-99	24	116	140	9	15	24
1999-00	3	120	123	34	19	53
2000-01	0	93	93	42	22	64

Source: Florida Department of Education.

Graduation Rates

The District’s graduation rate is also significantly lower than both the state and the benchmark Districts. As indicated in Exhibit 2-17, the District’s current graduation rate of 53.9% is well below the state average of 62.3 percent. Moreover, the District’s graduation rate lags that of the peer districts by an even greater percentage.⁶

⁶Comparisons of graduation rates with non-Florida benchmark school District were not made as the criterion for graduation among state can vary dramatically based on the state’s graduation credit requirements and any statewide competency test that must be passed to graduate.

Exhibit 2-17

The District's Graduation Rate Is Much Lower Than The State Average And For Florida Peer Districts

District	Graduate Rate
State	62.3%
Miami-Dade	53.9%
Broward	63.9%
Hillsborough	71.4%

Source: Florida Department of Education.

Drop-Out Rate

Moreover, the District's dropout rate exceeds the state rate and is significantly higher than the benchmark Districts. As Exhibit 2-18 shows, the District's dropout rate for the 2000-2001 school year is 5.4 percent or 0.8 percentage points higher than the average dropout rate in the State. In addition, the District's dropout rate greatly exceeds the dropout rate in peer districts. However, one must be careful and not draw many conclusions from other states' dropout rate data. It is not uncommon for each state's application of dropout rate criteria to be flawed and for different states to interpret dropout rate standards differently.

Exhibit 2-18

The District's Dropout Rate Is Much Higher Than The State Average And Dropout Rates In Peer Districts

District	Dropout Rates
State	4.6%
Miami-Dade	5.4%
Broward	2.3%
Hillsborough	2.6%
Houston, Texas	3.9%

Source: Berkshire Advisors, Inc.

College Placement Test

The performance of Miami-Dade County Public School students on placement tests at Florida public community colleges also lags that of other Districts. Section 240.118, *Florida Statutes*, requires every freshman in a public community college or university in Florida to demonstrate basic skills before beginning college level courses. Students who achieve minimum scores on the Elementary Algebra, Reading Comprehension, and Sentence Skills portions of the Florida College Placement Test (CPT) are considered "ready" for college-level math, reading and writing, respectively. As illustrated in Exhibit 2-19, the performance of District graduates who achieve minimum scores on all three tests is consistently lower than for the two peer Florida District's and is lower than the statewide average.

Exhibit 2-19

A Lower Percentage Of Miami-Dade County Public School Graduates Are Considered “Ready” For College-Level Math, Reading And Writing Than Peer District Graduates

Percent Of Graduates Receiving Minimum Scores In Math, Reading And Writing	
Miami-Dade	51.1%
Broward	63.5%
Hillsborough	68.0%
State	63.0%

Florida Department of Education.

Post Graduation Activities

In addition, information on what District graduates do after graduating from high school suggest that MDCPS graduates are as employable and as ready to continue their education as graduates of the peer districts. As Exhibit 2-20 shows, the percentage of graduates who work or continue their education after graduation is comparable to the two Florida peer districts while somewhat less than the state average.

Exhibit 2-20

The Percentage Of Miami-Dade County Public School Graduates Who Are Employed Or Continuing Their Education Is Comparable To The Percentage Of Graduates Who Are Employed Or Continuing Their Education In Two Peer Districts

Percent Of Graduates Continuing Education Or Employed	
State	63.0%
Miami-Dade	55.2%
Broward	56.3%
Hillsborough	55.1%

Source: Florida Department of Education.

Staff Characteristics

This section presents information on the personnel employed by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools and makes comparisons with other large Florida school Districts.

As Exhibit 2-21 the percentage of administrators and instructional staff are somewhat higher in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools than in the Districts used for comparison while the percentage of support staff (as a proportion of the District’s total staffing is lower).

Exhibit 2-21

Administrators And Instructional Staff Comprise A High Percentage Of The Total Staffing In The Miami-Dade County Public Schools As Compared To The Districts Used For Comparison

District	Full-Time Staff						Total
	Administrators	% of Total	Instruction	% of Total	Support	% of Total	
Broward	669.0	2.9%	13,235.0	57.2%	9,226.0	39.9%	23,130.0
Hillsborough	558.0	2.7%	11,371.0	55.8%	8,447.0	41.5%	20,376.0
Miami-Dade	1,408.0	3.8%	21,198.0	57.8%	14,088.0	38.4%	36,694.0
Orange	504.0	3.0%	9,351.0	55.3%	7,058.0	41.7%	16,913.0
Palm Beach	560.0	3.3%	9,402.0	55.8%	6,879.0	40.8%	16,841.0
Average (Excluding Miami-Dade)	572.8	3.0%	10,839.8	56.1%	7,902.5	40.9%	19,315.0
State	9,470.0	3.4%	150,551.0	54.7%	115,068.0	41.8%	275,089.0

Source: Profiles of Florida School Districts (2000-01).

The percentage of minority (i.e., Non-White Non-Hispanic) staff is much higher in the MDCPS than for the Districts used for comparison. In particular, Black Non-Hispanic and Hispanic staff make up 71.1 percent of the MDCPS. As Exhibit 2-22 shows, in the Districts used for comparison Black Non-Hispanic and Hispanic workers make up a much lower percentage of the total workforce – 39.9 percent of the Broward County Public Schools workforce, 32.3 percent of the Hillsborough County workforce, 35.0 percent of the Orange County workforce, and 34.9 percent of the Palm Beach County workforce.

Exhibit 2-22

A Higher Percentage Of Minority Staff Are Employed By MDCPS Than By The Districts Used For Comparison

	Broward County	Miami-Dade County	Hillsborough County	Orange County	Palm Beach County
White Non-Hispanic	58.6%	27.7%	66.7%	63.5%	64.1%
Black Non-Hispanic	31.7%	35.7%	16.8%	21.0%	24.0%
Hispanic	8.2%	35.4%	15.5%	14.0%	10.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.8%	0.7%	0.6%	1.2%	0.8%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.7%	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%

Source: Profiles Of Florida School Districts, 2000-01.

In addition, as Exhibit 2-23 shows the percentage of the work force that is male is higher in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools than it is the Districts used for comparison.

Exhibit 2-23

MDCPS Employs A Higher Percentage Of Male Employees Than The Districts Used For Comparison

District	Percent Male	Percent Female
Miami-Dade	30.1%	69.9%
Broward	25.2%	74.8%
Palm Beach	25.1%	74.9%
Orange	23.8%	76.2%
Hillsborough	20.7%	79.3%

Source: Profiles of Florida School Districts (2000-01).