

## Council for Educational Change to Receive Commissioner's Business Recognition Award for Serving Miami-Dade Public Schools

The Council for Educational Change, *Florida's Educational Think Tank*, was selected by Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) to receive the **Florida Department of Education Commissioner's Business Recognition Award** for their outstanding partnership activities spanning more than a decade.

Dr. Rudy Crew, Miami-Dade Superintendent said: *"The Council and Miami-Dade County Public Schools have enjoyed a longstanding partnership that benefits our students and our entire community. I am delighted to honor them with a nomination for these awards."*

To date, the Council has served 170 schools and 254 principals, assistant principals and teachers through its MDCPS programs. Since 2003, the Council has given approximately \$1.5 million for these activities. Prior, the Florida Annenberg Challenge (Council predecessor) funded \$33 million in programs in MDCPS.

Throughout Florida, the Council has developed and implemented innovative programs in educator leadership development that have impacted more than one million students. One of their most recent Think Tank activities is a collaboration with Florida TaxWatch to develop the *Preeminent Principal Program* which explores criteria and methods to recognize high-performing Florida principals.

This is not the first time that MDCPS has honored the Council. Last year the Council won their *Exemplary Dade Partnership District-Wide Award*. In 2006, Council Board member and PASS CEO Jeffrey Miller received the *Miami-Dade County Public Schools Exemplary Partnership Award--Business Leader*.

"The district and Dr. Crew have a clear vision of what partnering can yield in school improvement and student success," said Council President and Executive Director Dr. Elaine Liftin. "We are honored by their selection of the Council for this distinguished recognition." The Award will be bestowed in Jacksonville, April 10.

The Council was founded in 2002 by the late Leonard Miller who was the Annenberg Challenge Chair. The Miller family continues his educational improvement legacy and is actively involved in the Council's work and mission. Today, the Council is chaired by Mr. Miller's son-in-law, Steve Saiontz, Partner, Banyan Partners; Mr. Miller's wife Sue, philanthropist, Board Member and Educational Advancement Chair; son Jeffrey, President of Weeks Gas, Board Member and PASS CEO at Holmes and Hialeah Elementaries; son Stuart Miller, President and CEO of Lennar, and daughter, Leslie Saiontz, who both support the Council through the Lennar Foundation.

### Council programs serving MDCPS schools and educators

**PASS**<sup>®</sup>: CEO, Principal, and education coach work on raising student achievement; 3 years; \$100,000, from CEO; legislative funding; 16 models

**Executive PASS**<sup>®</sup>: Business leader & Principal; PASS similar; 27 models

**Municipal PASS**<sup>®</sup>: PASS, with support and leadership of mayors (Diaz & Robaina) in recruiting CEO's and supporting the teams

**Florida Leadership Academy**<sup>®</sup>: statewide learning week for teams--principal, AP, teacher--to develop instructional leadership

**Instructional Leadership Academy**: as above, tailored to MDCPS needs

**Assistant Principal Leadership Forum**: statewide, two-day leadership development for aspiring Principals

**Leonard Miller Principal Leadership Award**: \$10,000 personal use award for high-performing principal leader

**SPSnapshot**<sup>™</sup>: student performance data analysis tool for teachers, staff

**Superintendent's Urban Principal Initiative**: MDCPS program to develop urban school leadership

### Council For Educational Change Board....Florida's Educational Think Tank

Steven J. Saiontz, Chair Dr. Elaine Liftin, *President and Executive Director*

*Founder, Leonard Miller*

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The Council's Board is comprised entirely of Florida business and philanthropic leaders. Other Miami Council Board Members are: Andrew Ansin, Columba Bush, Charles E. Cobb Jr., Edward W. Easton, T. Willard Fair, Edward T. Foote II, Karen Fryd, Elsie Sterling Howard, David S. Kenin, Jonathan I. Kislak, Beth Martinez, Robert Moss and Charles Porter.

Some Miami-Dade partners who support the Council: Carlos Artime, Norman Braman, R. Kirk Landon, E. Richard Yulman, Wayne Chaplin, Rabbi Glickstein, Bill Graham, Sheldon T. Anderson, Steven Hayworth, Edward Soto, Esq., Robert B. Balogh, Bruce W. Greer, Frank M. Zohn, Jr., Carnival Cruise Lines, Greenberg Traurig, Bilzen Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod, Baptist Health South Florida, Century Homebuilders, Lennar, Edie Lacquer, American Ventures Corp., the Soffer family, Hanzman Gilbert LLP and Ferrell Law PA. The Council also has PASS and Executive PASS partnerships with the Offices of Mayors Julio Robaina, Hialeah, and Manny Diaz, Miami-Dade.

Below is a sample success story from one Council PASS (Partnership to Advance School Success) model. PASS is also the subject of a recent book, *"Pass It On...make a difference; PASS – A Successful Business and Education Partnership Model."*

### Hialeah Elementary PASS improves lives of students and parents; supports school's improvement

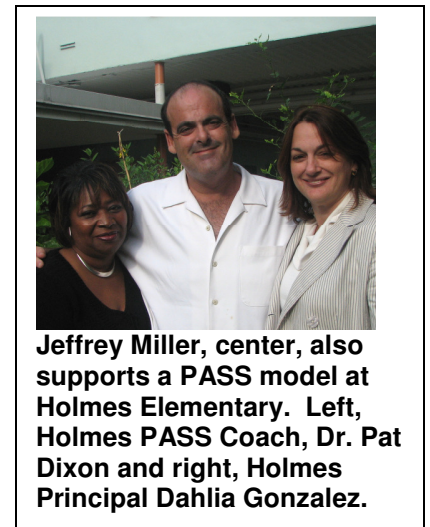
Carmen likes to talk about her school.

She is 8 years old and full of fun, dreams and expectations. Her father attended Hialeah Elementary, as do or did her 6 brothers and sisters. Carmen is proud of Hialeah Elementary and especially proud that her mother attends the school's PASS Parent Academy. Her mother goes regularly to learn English and to better help Carmen with her homework, which they now do together every day.

The Academy was funded and developed by **PASS CEO Jeffrey Miller** who donated \$100,000 in addition to the \$100,000 for the traditional PASS he sponsors. "Of course I know Mr. Miller," Carmen responds when asked. "We all do. He is at our school all the time and he loves us." She continues proudly, "he gave me awards for good attendance and *excellent* work."

Jeffrey Miller and his Weeks Gas team who volunteer at the school have made learning and student achievement a family affair, uniting the parents and community in helping students succeed and improving adult skills as well. Through PASS, Jeffrey has also sponsored a state-of-the-art computer lab for students to improve their achievement using academic and FCAT prep programs. The computer lab is also designed to help parents. It attracts parents interested in improving their technology skills and in the programs that help parents support their children's academic success. Jeffrey sponsors awards celebrations for improved student attendance, behavior and academic achievement. PASS also provides incentives and rewards for high performance of teachers and staff.

The results? Improved attendance. Decreased discipline referrals. Increased parent involvement and skills. Student performance data analysis. Additional school partners. School pride. *Achievement gains*. Through Jeffrey's holistic approach, PASS has extended its reach to the school and community, uniting them to achieve success together—Carmen, Mom, and hundreds of others.



**Jeffrey Miller, center, also supports a PASS model at Holmes Elementary. Left, Holmes PASS Coach, Dr. Pat Dixon and right, Holmes Principal Dahlia Gonzalez.**

Please visit the Council website for more information: [www.changeducation.org](http://www.changeducation.org).