

Recommendation	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Reduce Teachers on Special Assignment	\$0	\$2,704,000	\$2,704,000	\$2,704,000	\$2,704,000

4.4 School Management

4.4.1 Innovation Zones in the Broward County School District

CURRENT SITUATION

The Broward County School District is subdivided into three regional areas for administrative purposes. These are the North Area, the Central Area and the South Area. The three areas are divided into 23 clustered groups of schools who share a common feeder pattern. These cluster groups are called Innovation Zones.

It is the district's responsibility to raise student achievement. The Broward County School District has organized itself into Innovation Zones to accomplish this purpose. Each zone creates a K-12 "district within a district," and is designed to facilitate K-12 curriculum articulation and monitor student achievement.

The Board policy on Innovation Zones describes the zones, their purpose in the educational system, and the rules for how they should operate. Some of these aspects of the policy are paraphrased in Exhibit 4-26.

EXHIBIT 4-26 OVERVIEW OF POLICY 1402: INNOVATION ZONES

<p>In order to accomplish a more decentralized, personalized educational system, schools shall be organized and realigned into Innovation Zones to focus and enhance student/staff improvement initiatives. Innovation Zones are learning communities with a focus on individual student achievement and school effectiveness. Groups of schools are empowered to plan and work in a more collaborative manner, and to better analyze, align and implement educational programs designed to meet the needs of all students, pre-K to adult.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Superintendent designates one principal from each zone to serve lead zone facilitator. ■ Each Zone has a Zone Team, made up of area director, principals, community school assistant principals, high school students, teachers, parents, business and community partners, district liaisons and Nova Links. The parent members include one parent from each school's improvement team, and parents who represent regular education students, exceptional students, and students who speak a first language other than English. ■ Zones may apply for waivers in order to innovate. ■ There will be Innovation Team Support Teams who will look at ways to support the zone educators in: training, needs assessment, planning, math, technology, parent education, budget, data analysis, reading, writing, behavior management, school to work, personnel, grant applications, and diversity assessment. ■ Zone work centers on these major areas student achievement, professional development, safe and orderly learning environment, school parent and community partnerships, family and student support services, effective leadership, and strategic planning.
--

Source: Quoted and paraphrased from School Board Policy 1402, 1998.

In the 1998-99 school year, two positions were added to the Zone -- the Zone Coach and a Zone Behavioral Support Teacher.

FINDING

There is a strong alignment emerging between the Board's major system priorities, the School Board's policy on Innovation Zones, the Innovation Zone organization, and the initiatives of various divisions and departments within the Broward County School District. There is nearly a one to one correspondence between the Board's "Major System Priorities" and the areas named in the policy for Innovation Zones as the priority action areas. The evidence of linkage is shown in Exhibit 4-27. This alignment at the policy level is critical when administrators and teachers are working to raise student achievement.

There is clear evidence throughout the system that a major restructuring of many aspects of governance and service delivery is underway in the Broward County School District. Looking at the alignment, through the school improvement process, the finding was similar. All of these efforts are aimed directly at improving student achievement. Evidence of the evolving structure of the Broward County School District's alignment of personnel, plans, and dollars with student achievement targets is shown in Exhibit 4-28.

In looking at the Innovation Zone organization through a variety of lenses, the overall finding was that there is growing enthusiasm for and commitment to the concept and its unfolding practices. One administrator provided some perspective on this issue when he said that for educators who have come into the large Broward County School District from smaller K-12 districts where all schools feed into one high school, the Innovation Zone idea is a natural idea which fits into their thinking. For those who have always worked in a more centralized system, without clear feeder patterns, it has taken time and will continue to take time to understand the power of K-12 articulation for students.

Originally, the Innovation Zone initiative began as a grassroots initiative. The Superintendent took a systemic approach which has since begun to show up in many other services and structures throughout the school district. Despite the presence of policy and supporting structures and services which make this a more top down initiative, each principal and area director interviewed envision the concept as a grassroots initiative, where educators have the ability to show something unique to their schools and communities.

The Innovation Zone is well supported by the educators who participated in this performance review. When asked if the Zone facilitator position should be paid, or should have assistance which allows the principal to work more at facilitating the zone, the response was uniformly no. No principal wanted the Zone to become one more layer of administrative bureaucracy. They see the Zone as an instructional initiative which is meant to help support improvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment for students. If it succeeds, they said, it will be because of the collegial model set up at present.

COMMENDATION

The School Board, Superintendent, and senior administrators of the Broward County School District are commended for the development of the complex, well-aligned systems approach to the Innovation Zones concept.

**EXHIBIT 4-27
A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE SCHOOL BOARD'S
MAJOR SYSTEM PRIORITIES AND THE SCHOOL BOARD
POLICY 1402 OUTLINE OF PRIORITY OUTCOME AREAS**

SCHOOL BOARD'S MAJOR SYSTEM PRIORITIES	POLICY 1402 INNOVATION ZONE PRIORITY OUTCOME AREAS
1. Improving student achievement and school effectiveness.	a. Student achievement Develop a system to define a common commitment to rigorous performance outcomes, analyze and disaggregate data, diagnose gaps, and formulate plans to address standards of service and increase achievement for all students.
2. Addressing growth.	g. Strategic Planning g-5 Address growth/boundary/diversity issues
3. Embracing, celebrating, and demonstrating diversity.	
4. Improving student/staff safety and security.	c. Student learning environment Maintain a safe and orderly learning environment in which teachers can teach and students can learn.
5. Increasing student and staff accountability.	g-6 Develop an assessment/accountability process to evaluate initiatives.
6. Expanding partnerships.	d. School, parent and community partnerships Develop school, parent and community partnerships which support readiness to learn and provide enhanced learning opportunities.
7. Attracting, retaining, and training the best teachers, principals and support staff.	f. Effective Leadership Establish effective leadership that develops ownership in Zone initiatives for all stakeholders and improves student achievement and school effectiveness.
8. Utilizing technology to improve student achievement, teaching and staff productivity.	g-2. Maximize the use of technology/facilities and other resources through shared use of services.
9. Empowering parents and community through participation.	d-1 Involve parent/community/businesses directly in the development and implementation of Innovation Zones.

Source: Statement of Board's Priorities, Principal Handbook, p. iii and Board Policy 1402, 1998.

**EXHIBIT 4-28
ALIGNMENT OF IDEAS, RESOURCES, AND ACTIONS
FROM DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS TO THE
INNOVATION ZONE ORGANIZATION**

SOURCE	ALIGNMENT
<p>What does it mean to be a standards-driven system chart?</p>	<p>The chart defines the roles and responsibilities of 12 groups, one of which is the Innovation Zone Leadership Team. This is a complex chart, which the Superintendent identified as the beginning of Phase III of his reform and accountability agenda. The focus of this phase is to "institutionalize world-class standards for students and staff, implementing results-driven staff development and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in a standards-driven system.</p>
<p>The District's "roll-out plan" for the new standards-based system of curriculum organization includes a significant zone team.</p>	<p>For each of the 23 zones, a district-level coordinator, director, supervisor or teacher on assignment has been assigned to each school in the zone. An additional director from central office has been assigned to coordinate the roll out within the zone. Training is going on at this time in the standards and assessments, for these administrators.</p> <p>The prediction from some of them is that now that they will spend more time in schools, with a specific charge of ensuring successful roll-out, their perspectives and ways of working with schools in general, will evolve. They will have first hand experiences which will help them to re-direct their own efforts and the efforts of those within their departments.</p>
<p>Policy # 1403: School Improvement and Accountability</p>	<p>Section 8b states:</p> <p>"In order to assist schools in their accountability efforts, Innovation Zones have been established to enhance school improvement initiatives already begun by individual school communities. Through defining groups of schools empowered to work in a collaborative manner, schools can better analyze, align, provide continuity, and implement innovations designed to meet the needs of all students, (pre-K - adult.)</p>
<p>The NESS (new educator training) is restructuring.</p>	<p>The New Educator trainers out of HRD are being assigned to the job by Zone. This is a departure from the traditional, centralized way of providing support to new teachers. HRD is allowing schools and zones to organize their new teacher support as needed. All of the training and support for new teachers will eventually be through the zones.</p> <p>The NESS trainers from HRD are instructional coaches for every new teacher. Instructional coaches in turn train and support veteran teacher mentors within the school and zone. At every school there is a liaison with HRD. There are four HRD trainers for about 1500 new teachers.</p>

**EXHIBIT 4-28 (Continued)
ALIGNMENT OF IDEAS, RESOURCES, AND ACTIONS
FROM DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS TO THE
INNOVATION ZONE ORGANIZATION**

SOURCE	ALIGNMENT
<p>The use of District Liaisons and "Nova Links" as members of the Innovation Zone Teams, as explained in the Innovation Zone Communications Loop document 6/24/98, and the "Nova Link Innovation Zone Reporting Information," for 2/18/98 and 6/15/98, taken from the Nova Link Database.</p>	<p>District Liaisons represent the Division of Educational Programs, Student Support, and HRD at zone meetings. Their role is to provide curriculum expertise and to share current information on district, state and national initiatives. this sharing allows the liaisons to support zone initiatives which positively impact student achievement.</p> <p>Nova Links (these are professionals from the Nova Professional Development Center) attend each Zone meeting and act as the communications link with professional development and research throughout the county. In addition, they have the responsibility to track the activities in their assigned Zone for district dissemination. The Nova Center has established a database which contains up-to-date information on Zone activities that may be accessed through HRD's Clearinghouse located on the District's Intranet.</p>
<p>Superintendent meets with Zone facilitators and Area Directors, e.g. agenda from the August 28, 1998 meeting.</p>	<p>The Superintendent meets with the Zones' Lead Facilitators and the Area Directors to update them on vital issues, listen to their needs and concerns, and to use them as a district leadership group.</p>
<p>Two positions were created to build Zone infrastructure this year.</p>	<p>The position of behavior specialist was a direct result of the success zones had in pooling resources from their student support services monies and teachers.</p> <p>The position of Zone Coach is related to one of the specific targeted areas under policy 1402, which stipulates Professional Development as one of its main areas.</p>
<p>Grants Development Pilot Project of the Grants Administration Department.</p>	<p>A proposal has been put out to schools with the following description included:</p> <p>A recent survey to measure grants development experience in Innovation Zones was administered by the Grants Administration Department. The results show that although many zones received some level of grants development training, most zones feel only somewhat experienced with developing grant proposals and on average, zones submitted only two proposals over the past year. Therefore, to improve training effectiveness and respond to district-led initiatives, the Grants Administration Department proposes to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Restructure grant development training to incorporate results-driven professional development. 2) focus this training on Innovation Zones; and 3) extend the technical support function by establishing an IZ Grant Resource Team in each Innovation Zone.

**EXHIBIT 4-28 (Continued)
ALIGNMENT OF IDEAS, RESOURCES, AND ACTIONS
FROM DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS TO THE
INNOVATION ZONE ORGANIZATION**

SOURCE	ALIGNMENT
	In order to be accepted, the chance to be a part of the initiative, which will pay participants for the training time, all Innovation Zone principals from a given zone had to sign the application to be included in the pilot.
Quality Pathways Initiative (described in a September 25, 1997 letter and cost proposal to Dr. Frank Petruzielo)	District Administrators, school administrators, lead facilitators, zone coaches and members of IZ teams are being trained in a long term training program with the Arthur Andersen firm. This is an HRD initiative, to "create a common language and process for implementing and sustaining continuous quality improvement in the District, to solve problems of a significant nature and to initiate desirable change." There are active projects underway in each Innovation Zone which are tied to developing capacity within the zone to make structured, measured, accountable change, and to further develop trainers within each Zone. One goal is to have the capacity to provide ongoing training to all zone employees, once the 2% permeation by Arthur Andersen has been completed.
Broward Schools of Excellence Conference held: August 28, 1998	The theme of this year's back-to-school conference for educators was "Innovation Zones Catalysts for Learning Communities." The program shows a day filled with presentations from nearly all of the Innovation Zones. Each presentation focused on one practice currently in place within the zone, which was seeing success.
Area Directors' Site Visits: Part C. (Principal's) Responsibility for Overall Administration and Supervision of the School.	The document requiring that each principal sit down with his/her Area Director, and show evidence a list of documents and plans, includes the following: 1. The principal's written plan for each of the following: Item 'I': Detailing the principal's and school's role and responsibility for involvement within innovation zone activities and collaborative efforts between and among innovation zones.
Pyramid model of professional development, in use by HRD.	Each strategic training which is designed, is designed with a "pyramid approach." This means that professionals from each Zone are invited to participate, given the content of the training, alongside 'train the trainer' practice. The purpose is to use the one or two people to train others in the Innovation Zone.

**EXHIBIT 4-28 (Continued)
ALIGNMENT OF IDEAS, RESOURCES, AND ACTIONS
FROM DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS TO THE
INNOVATION ZONE ORGANIZATION**

SOURCE	ALIGNMENT
<p>One Zone through documents and Interviews:</p> <p>School Improvement Plans (2 elementary, 2 middle and 1 high school from one Zone)</p> <p>Action Planning: Zone established cadres of teachers within the zone to meet in the four identified areas of math, reading, writing and technology</p>	<p>Each had objectives in the four identified zone goal areas of reading, writing, math and technology. Some action strategies were common as well.</p> <p>Minutes indicate that teachers make and recommend decisions to their schools in the area of curriculum articulation, instruction, and assessment.</p> <p>Minutes also show that teachers' commitment to this zone is strong in the belief that it will help to improve student achievement.</p> <p>Documents show improved student achievement from 1995 to 1998 in the Florida Writes assessment.</p>
<p>Creation of the Zone Coach Position</p>	<p>It is the responsibility of the 23 Zone Coaches to act as consultants in professional development for schools within their zones, to facilitate excellent communication in curriculum and instruction matters, and to assist in the garnering of needed resources to improve curriculum, instruction and assessment.</p>

Source: Created by MGT from documents cited above, 1998.

Within the past three years, the Superintendent has been facilitating a major initiative in systems alignment. The vehicle for that alignment has been the Innovation Zone organization. There is significant evidence, as detailed previously in Exhibit 4-28, to show that the major departments of curriculum, instruction, human resources development, grants, student services, and technology have been focused directly on raising student achievement. This is a major accomplishment, achieved in short amount of time --- a conclusion made even more impressive by the support of more than 200 schools in the Broward County School District. The Broward County School District should continue to strengthen the infrastructure of the Innovation Zone organizational plan under the new Superintendent.

FINDING

Some areas of concern arose about the development of the Innovation Zone concept in the course of interviews with teachers, principals, and district-level administrators. In addition, about 20 teachers participated in a focus group. Comments included a frequently voiced concern that the zone principals have no part in the hiring process for new administrators. Some administrators believe that this would strengthen the principal cadre, given the strong thrust the district priorities are taking towards K-12 collegiality, and continued gains in K-12 student achievement.

An additional concern was voiced on behalf of the special education and vocational centers by administrators and teachers who participated in focus groups. The concern was that they do not feel a clear sense of identification with either the Zone to which they have been assigned, or the separate 'area' organization into which they have been placed. The innovations and programs, they reported, are K-12, with centers being seen as an after thought, and often times excluded from communications altogether. A concern arose frequently around the need to realign the budgets, so that some of the centralized monies available for different departments start to become available to the Zones. There is a strong feeling among some interviewed, that until monies outside of school and grant funds start to flow through the Zones, the system will not be really or fully aligned.

Finally, there was a concern expressed by teachers, who were not directly involved in Zone leadership meetings or in zone cadres. The enthusiasm for the zone concept has not yet reached every classroom. During interviews, teachers discussed the pros and cons of the current zone development. Exhibit 4-29 provides a summary of their written comments.

**EXHIBIT 4-29
COMMENTS BY TEACHERS FROM ACROSS THE DISTRICT
ABOUT INNOVATION ZONES**

PROS	CONS
Provides cohesion within a neighborhood district.	May not meet at opportune times.
Sharing of resources and personnel.	Little influence on each other's schools.
Common goals.	Communicate more with individual school faculties.
Innovation Zone Coach (new position).	Limited participation by only a few people who do not always share with all.
Provides continuity for so many of our children as they move from school to school.	High schools seem to be 'left out' because the number of elementary schools is so much greater.
Our IZ is doing teacher inservice as our quality project and the zone has provided opportunity to band together and do more than one school could offer.	Value vs. time?
Some direct influences for students are happening.	Crossovers where the middle school students are split up, with some going to high school "A" and some going to high school "B".
Principal collegiality.	

Source: Created by MGT from interviews and written notes, 1998.

As with any innovation, the implementation of Innovation Zones falls on a continuum of development at this stage. Differences were attributed both positively and negatively to Zone leadership, turnover of principals, the pilot support given to some zones through the Panasonic assistance, the burden of extra meetings, and the view of some teachers and principals that their knowledge base centered around their individual schools.

Included in the documents provided for this performance review was a *Zone Improvement Plan (ZIP) Matrix*. The document was provided as part of the Zone Improvement Plan, 1996 - 2000 from the Coral Springs Innovation Zone. The matrix

was set up as a rubric, with categories for assessing the following four different stages of development:

- awareness
- acceptance
- ownership
- internalization

Each stage has a clear definition. Exhibit 4-30 shows the categories which are divided into these four stages and which are defined.

The matrix provides descriptors in each of the categories listed in Exhibit 4-30, which define development at each stage. The tool is a useful one for Zones to use for self-assessment and may also be useful as a research and evaluation tool for the Department of Research and Evaluation as part of an ongoing study of the evolution of this initiative. An examination of the table of contents from the evaluation report books published by the Research and Evaluation Department for the past four years, as well as an interview with a researcher, indicated that no formative evaluation has begun to support the Innovation Zone initiative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4-20:

Appoint an ad hoc committee to continue to develop the Innovation Zone organization plan.

The committee should study the role of Special Education and Vocational Centers in the Innovation Zone organization, the funding of Innovation Zones with a Zone Budget, and a role for principals within a given zone in the recruitment and hiring of new principals within the zone.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1. The Deputy Superintendent should appoint and oversee cross functional ad hoc committee to work on further development of the Innovation Zone organization. May 1999
2. The ad hoc committee for development of the Innovation Zone organization should consider the areas of concern raised in this performance review report, and make recommendation to the Deputy as to their resolution. December 1999

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished within existing resources.

**EXHIBIT 4-30
CATEGORIES ASSESSED BY THE ZONE IMPROVEMENT PLAN MATRIX**

<p>1.0 Professional Development and Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Commitment to high standards and rigorous performance outcomes■ Time for collaboration, staff training, curriculum development and improvement of structure and practice■ Use of research/Zone innovations to improve practice■ Mutual respect and common commitment <p>2.0 Student Achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Data analysis and diagnosis of gap between vision and reality■ Effective assessment and accountability as a zone and as zone schools■ Effective structures, practices, policies and relationships impact teaching and learning■ Shared assessment of Zone practice and effectiveness of learning environments in zone schools <p>3.0 Student Learning Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Alignment of Zone resources with Zone needs and practices including the maximum use of technology, facilities and other learning resources■ Innovative learning environments through increased staff capacity to create effective structures, practices, policies and relationships that impact teaching and learning■ Assessing Learning Strategies■ Opportunities for regular and effective communication and collaboration by general classroom, special class, exceptional education and other staff through the use of a variety of strategies <p>4.0 Parent/Community Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Involvement of parents, community and business in development, implementation and assessment of zone work■ Use of community resources including health, safety and social services■ Shared commitment to content standards, performance standards, learner outcome and authentic learning assessments■ Establishing community relations procedures <p>5.0 Communication and Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Collaboration, mentoring, and peer coaching■ Applying systems thinking to improve practice to include a communication and feedback process and stakeholder management <p>6.0 Strategic Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Standards for collaboration■ Collaboration on review of resources (fiscal and human)■ Deliberate, reflective planning■ Assessment and accountability as a Zone and as individual schools

Source: Taken from Coral Springs Innovation Zone, "Zone Improvement Plan, 1996 - 2000," ZIP Matrix, 1998.

Recommendation 4-21:

Design and implement an ongoing, formative evaluation plan to support the development of the Innovation Zone initiative, so that each of the 23 Zones has a benchmarking system for looking at progress within the zone, and so that the Broward County School District as a whole has an overall picture of the development of the zones.

Each of the 23 Zones should have a benchmarking system for looking at progress within the zones, and the schooldistrict as a whole should have an overall picture of the development of the zones. The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure progress and growth within each zones, while not attempting to homogenize or centralize the grassroots and unique nature of each zone. The instrument developed by the Coral Springs Innovation Zone provides a useful template for the formative evaluation. The evaluation plan should call for input from all sources within the zone as well as from the district professional involved with the Zone.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1. The Deputy Superintendent, working with the Directors of Human Resource Development and Research and Evaluation, should oversee the design of a formative evaluation plan for the Innovation Zone initiative. | September 1999 |
| 2. The Director of Human Resources and the Director of Research and Evaluation should oversee the training of Zone Coaches and Lead Facilitators, using the training trainer model now in place in the implementation of the Zone evaluation process. | Summer 2000 |
| 3. The Deputy Superintendent should ensure that all zones are ready to (and are using) the evaluation process. | Fall 2000 |
| 4. The Deputy Superintendent should oversee the preparation of a reporting schedule of the results of the formative evaluation of the Innovation Zone initiative to the School Board of Broward County. | Spring 2001 |

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented within existing resources.

4.4.2 School Improvement

CURRENT SITUATION

The "Accountability and School Improvement System of Broward County," is found in School Board Policy #1403, "School Accountability and Improvement." This is the policy that guides the work done in the district on school improvement. The policy has been revised four times since its original adoption in March 1995, with the most recent board level revision completed in July 1998.