

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recommendation to Approve First Amendment to Agreement 58-044B – “Cook for Kids” Nutrition and Wellness Education Program Agreement

The Florida Department of Agriculture (FLDOA) identified and funded the “Wellness in the School” (WITS) initiative during the 2015/2016 school year. At that time, two Title I schools were selected to pilot the program based on their proximity to the Miami-Dade County line (Miami-Dade was also asked to participate in the program). The location parameter provided for ease of travel for FLDOA and WITS staff. Food & Nutrition Services staff contacted principals utilizing this criterion, explaining, and presenting the opportunity to participate in the pilot. The first two (2) schools responding positively to the opportunity were identified and forwarded to FLDOA: McNicol Middle and Watkins Elementary Schools.

In June 2016, FLDOA contacted Food & Nutrition Services to inform that FLDOA could only continue to fund the program if the pilot program, moving forward, was open to all sponsors. FLDOA made the decision to shift funding to other programs and WITS was no longer funded by FLDOA for the 2016/2017 school year.

WITS secured private funds to continue the efforts in the identified pilot schools for the 2016/2017 school year and also for the 2017/2018 school year. The School Board approved the WITS agreement on February 22, 2017, with the program implementation in March of 2017.

The School Board of Broward County, Florida (SBBC), approved the agreement between WITS and SBBC on August 8, 2017, for an eleven (11) month term from August 9, 2017 through June 30, 2018. Through this Agreement, WITS provides a “Cook for Kids” and other related programs that include nutrition and wellness education at the schools at no cost to the District.

WITS secured private funds to continue the efforts in the identified pilot schools for the 2018/2019 school year.

A WITS chef/wellness professional works in the school for a minimum of twenty-five (25) hours per week to facilitate initiatives such as:

1. Culinary training to cafeteria personnel to enhance visibility and presentation of healthy menu choices.
2. Introduce new menu items at the school.
3. Offer nutrition and wellness education to connect students with healthy food choices.
4. Partnerships with chefs and local restaurants in support of the program with food tastings, cooking classes, and events.

The Principals at McNicol Middle and Watkins Elementary were contacted regarding the opportunity to provide continuity of the program and reported positive responses to continue hosting the programs for the 2018/2019 school year.

Food & Nutrition Services is requesting School Board approval to continue with the program at McNicol Middle and Watkins Elementary Schools for the 2018/2019 school year.