

Frank J. Bolaños, Member

SUBJECT: TAKING A STAND AGAINST BULLYING

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc., the makers of the *Grand Theft Auto* games, which have been linked by law enforcement officials to numerous copycat acts of violence by teens, is set to release this year a Columbine simulation game called *Bully*. In this game, a teen can bludgeon his classmates and teachers with bats, fists, and slingshots, even engaging in "white on black" crime.

Miami-Dade Public Schools continues to take bullying prevention in our schools seriously. In our Code of Student Conduct, activity relating to bullying is outlined as Group II offenses and specific disciplinary actions are prescribed. The District currently restricts the downloading of unauthorized software. In our Network Security Standards, games are specifically prohibited unless there is a legitimate educational purpose. We have included professional development programs for employees and continue to restrict objectionable material from our computers that may inspire such bad behavior.

It is judicious for the School Board to send a clear message to parents, retailers, and the entire community regarding the potential harm this game may have on our children. The School Board, by approving this item, would also request that local and national retailers not sell this simulation game and ask parents not to buy it or let their children play it at home.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MR. FRANK J. BOLAÑOS:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida:

1. Direct the Superintendent and Staff to add the simulation game *Bully* to the list of prohibited software and restrict access from our school computers.
2. Approve a resolution 06-20 requesting that retailers not sell *Bully* and that parents not buy it or allow it to be played at home.

**REPLACEMENT
B-12**

**Resolution No. 06-20 of the
School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida**

Whereas, the American Psychological Association has determined, as it formally reported in August 2005, that play by teenagers of violent video games leads to increased aggression and violence, and

Whereas, the FBI and the Secret Service found, in doing separate threat assessments after the worst school massacre in American history at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, that all of the then-recent school shooters were immersed in violent entertainment, with Columbine's Klebold and Harris having trained on the violent game *Doom*, and

Whereas, numerous acts of violence, including murder, have been linked to the violent *Grand Theft Auto* games made by Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc., including the worst school massacre since Columbine, by a Red Lake, Minnesota student who killed ten in March 2005, and

Whereas, Take-Two, the maker of the *Grand Theft Auto* games has announced that it will release in 2006 a violent video game entitled *Bully* which allows students in a virtual school, whose slogan is "Dog Eat Dog," to bludgeon their classmates and teachers in schools, with bats, fists, slingshots, body slams, and even dunking their heads into toilets to "settle scores," and

Whereas, experts in the dynamics of bullying are predicting that the game *Bully* will lead to more teen violence, including in schools, because it will serve as a violence rehearsal simulator on which teens will prepare, either wittingly or unwittingly, for acts of violence in schools,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 06-20 in the interest of our students' safety to raise awareness of the harmful effects of violent video game entertainment, and

Requests of the video gaming industry to use restraint in the development of video games that are proven to lead to increased aggressive behavior by students, and

That the video game *Bully* not be released to the public, or if released, that local retailers not sell it and that parents not buy it.

A copy of this resolution is placed in the permanent records of this Board.

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CHAIR

ATTEST:

SECRETARY