

Dr. Martin Karp, Member

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 06-27
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY,
FLORIDA, ENDORSING MAY 7-13, 2006 AS BE KIND TO
ANIMALS WEEK TO BE RECOGNIZED IN ALL OF
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

Be Kind to Animals Week recognizes people whose love of animals has led them to take action to improve animals' lives and to teach people about the amazing roles animals play whether in emergency relief efforts or as companions. For children, companion animals offer an opportunity to accept and learn the importance of responsibility.

During Be Kind to Animals Week, families are encouraged to spend more time appreciating their companion animals. Other ways to show kindness to animals include encouraging family and friends to spay or neuter their pets, creating a unique space for wildlife, reporting animal abuse or neglect, volunteering at a local animal shelter, and speaking out on the importance of respecting animals.

A number of Miami-Dade County Public Schools have programs on animal care and behavior. At the senior high level, William H. Turner Technical's Academy of Agricultural Industry has a program on animal science and services and veterinary assisting with large farm animals. Felix Varela's Veterinary Assistant Academy has a program for students to become veterinary assistants and partners with the Miami-Dade County Animal Services Division. Coral Reef has an Agriscience and Engineering Technology Academy, with an Animal Biotechnology program, including goats, lambs, chickens, and fish. Robert Morgan Educational Center's Veterinary Science program has a Veterinary Assisting Program with volunteer internship opportunities and hosts exotic animals and services stray animals. Miami Douglas MacArthur South's students work with small animals and visit elementary schools to show students how to care for these animals.

At the middle school level, John F. Kennedy's Biomedical and Environmental Agriculture Technology (BEAT) Magnet Program has a biomedical course with rabbits and chickens and works with the Humane Society of Greater Miami. At Doral Middle, students hatch duck eggs, while guinea pigs, hamsters, chickens, fish and turtles are kept at the school. At the elementary level, Redland Elementary has a Purple Martin Program. Nesting sites are built at the school and when school is not in session, the birds are sent back to South America. Statistics are recorded in a collaborative effort with the University of Pennsylvania.

Be Kind to Animals Week is not only an opportunity for Miami-Dade County Public School students to show appreciation and learn responsibility, it is a time to recognize that a correlation exists between cruelty to animals and violence against people.

Animal abusers who later turned their aggressive actions on people include some of the most notorious killers in the United States. Numerous cases of violent criminals who began abusing animals before harming people are well documented. Most specifically, serial killers in their youths were cruel to animals before turning their attention on people. Some familiar names are the Boston Strangler, Ted Bundy, Son of Sam, Jeffrey Dahmer and Andrew Cunanan.

For children who lack respect for other living things, they need to be taught kindness and compassion to prevent animal abuse. The subject of humane education is easily integrated into existing courses at the elementary and secondary levels.

Finally, discussing the importance of being kind to animals in school may enable teachers to gain insight into the lives of their students. Should any discussion ensue on animal abuse at home, students' own safety and well-being may need attention given that child and animal abuse often occurs in the same household.

Mahatma Gandhi said, "The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated." In the spirit of improved treatment and being kind to animals, the following activities should be considered:

1. Air Public Service Announcements on WLRN;
2. Encourage student volunteering at local animal shelters to earn community service hours and better understand issues facing our community; and,
3. Encourage children to read about and appreciate animals.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. MARTIN KARP:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 06-27 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, endorsing May 7-13, 2006 as Be Kind to Animals Week to be recognized in all of Miami-Dade County's public schools.

**RESOLUTION NO. 06-27
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
ENDORING MAY 7 TO 13, 2006 AS BE KIND TO ANIMALS WEEK
TO BE CELEBRATED IN ALL MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS: We have been endowed not only with the blessings and benefits of our animal friends, who give us companionship and great pleasure in our daily lives, but also with a firm responsibility to protect these fellow creatures, with whom we share the Earth, from pain and suffering; and

WHEREAS: We recognize that instilling attitudes of kindness, consideration, and respect for all living things through humane education in schools and the community helps provide basic values on which a humane and civilized society is built; and

WHEREAS: The people in this community are deeply indebted to the animal care and control agencies for their invaluable contribution in caring for lost and unwanted animals and promoting a true spirit of kindness and consideration for animals in the minds and hearts of all people; and

WHEREAS: The first full week of May has been established as the annual celebration of the philosophy of kindness to animals for the 92nd year in 2006.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The School Board of Miami-Dade, Florida, approve Resolution No. 06-27 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, endorsing the week of May 7 to 13, 2006, as Be Kind to Animals Week to be celebrated in all of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

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

Presented this eighteenth day of April, 2006

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CHAIR

ATTEST:

SECRETARY