

Dr. Martin Karp, Member

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO ADOPT THE COMPREHENSIVE DISTRICT-WIDE BULLYING AND VIOLENCE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE 2006-2007 SCHOOL YEAR

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The State of Florida, like 40 other states, lacks comprehensive anti-bullying/anti-harassment policies. This legislative session, two state laws are being proposed addressing the issue of bullying and harassment. These bills will require all Florida school districts to adopt statutes prohibiting bullying and harassment for the 2006-2007 school year.

Research on the effects of bullying and harassment has demonstrated the following results:

- Sixty-six percent of youth are teased at least once a month, and nearly one-third of youth are bullied at least once a month.
- An estimated 160,000 children miss school every day out of fear of attack or intimidation by other students.
- One out of every 10 students who drops out of school does so because of repeated bullying.
- Victims of chronic bullying often develop health, emotional and social adjustment issues, perform poorly in school, and are five times more likely to be suicidal.

Effective programs must also be developed to reduce bullying in schools. All children are entitled to courteous and respectful treatment by students and staff. Educators have a duty to ensure that students have a safe learning environment. The collaboration of students, staff, parents and the entire community is necessary to ensure that schools are a safe haven for our students.

The Division of Student Services has taken the lead by coordinating district and community resources and convening a Stakeholder's meeting consisting of Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) staff and community based organizations including: Amigos for Kids, The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Child Assault Prevention Project of South Florida, Jewish Community Services, Miami -Dade Community Task Force for Bullying Prevention, M-DCPS Police, Non-Violence Project USA, Peace Education Foundation, PTA/PTSA, The Melissa Institute, Switchboard of Miami, and Youth Crime Watch. A comprehensive plan for PK-12 was developed to address the issue of bullying and violence prevention for Miami-Dade County Public Schools, which earmarks the following benchmarks:

B-5

- Benchmark I: Create a process for schools to address violence and promote the reculturing of their environment to a safe and supportive community for all students and staff through the development of a school site bullying and violence prevention plan.
- Benchmark II: Develop and implement a standardized curriculum PK-12 for bullying and violence prevention to be delivered via the academic, personal/social, health and community awareness, and career domains of the Student Development Framework.
- Benchmark III: Establish and institutionalize a process for parents and community members to provide services, support, and recognition to the bullying and violence prevention initiatives through participation in community task force meetings.

During April 2006, the Division of Student Services coordinated six regional professional development sessions for an administrator and counselor from every school. These all-day sessions defined bullying behaviors and provided school-based prevention strategies.

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

That the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida direct the Superintendent to:

1. adopt the comprehensive district implementation plan to address bullying and violence prevention affecting Miami-Dade County Public School students for the 2006-2007 school year; and
2. support collaborative initiatives that create a safe and violence free learning environment for students in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

PLEASE REPLACE UPDATED PLAN B-5

<u>ACTION STEPS</u>	<u>TIMELINES</u>	<u>RESPONSIBLE OFFICE/DEPARTMENT</u> <u>Primary/Secondary</u>	
Provide community services and support to school site PTSA's so that parents are taught the role family plays in the development of bullying behaviors.	2006-2007	Division of Student Services	Community Parents M-DCPS Stakeholders Parent Academy PTA/PTSA

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