

Ms. Evelyn Langlieb Greer, Board Member

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL RECOGNIZING APRIL 15
THROUGH APRIL 22, 2007 AS DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE OF
THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST TO BE OBSERVED IN ALL
OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

**LINK TO DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLAN: INCREASE STUDENT EXPOSURE AND UNDERSTANDING
OF GLOBAL ISSUES AND ECONOMY**

The deliberate and systemic extermination by Germany and other European countries during World War II of six million people, from babies to the frail elderly, solely because they were born Jewish and the murder of millions of other people simply because they were considered "unworthy" to live is one of the most horrifying events in human history. It is an event as to which civilized people around the world say "Never Again."

Each year, the Miami-Dade County Public Schools recognize and study the Holocaust in order to understand how people justify committing "crimes against humanity". The purpose of such study is to teach children tolerance so that such hate crimes are not repeated against any group.

This year Holocaust Remembrance Day is Sunday, April 15, 2007. The theme of this year's observance is "*Children in Crisis: Voices from the Holocaust*". When World War II ended in 1945, six million European Jews were dead, including more than one million Jewish children. As part of the "Final Solution", which was the German plan to murder every Jew in the world, the Nazis targeted children for death as so-called "useless eaters," too young to work for the Germans as slave laborers. Children were frequently among the first to be murdered when the Germans and their collaborators sought to destroy a Jewish community. Upon arrival at Auschwitz and other killing centers, most children were torn from their parents' arms and sent straight to their deaths in the gas chambers.

Only a small fraction of European Jewish children survived the Holocaust, many because they were hidden. With identities disguised, and often concealed from the outside world for years, these young people faced constant fear and danger. Theirs was a life in shadows, where a careless remark, the murmurings of inquisitive neighbors, or a denunciation could lead to discovery and death. Most of these "hidden" children survived the Holocaust because they were protected by people and institutions of other faiths. In France, almost the entire Protestant Huguenot population in the village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon hid Jewish children. Seven-year-old Gavra Mandil and his five-year-old sister Irena, as well as their parents, were saved by their Muslim neighbors in Albania.

During the Holocaust, Jewish children channeled their suffering into creative expression. Teenagers in hiding, like Anne Frank, kept diaries of their experiences; unfortunately, Anne Frank and her family were discovered in their hiding place and murdered. Their voices are evidence of their lives and tragically premature deaths, of hope and of cruelty. And their drawings and words are evidence that testifies to what they experienced.

During this year's observance, individual and community acts of heroism and resistance to evil during the Holocaust serve as powerful examples of how our nation and its citizens can--and must--respond to acts of hatred and inhumanity. In 1963, the museum of the Holocaust in Israel, Yad Vashem, began a worldwide project to recognize non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. These non-Jews are called the Righteous among the Nations. The Righteous program and the trees planted on the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations in Israel has honored more than 21,000 non-Jews who stood up to evil even when they themselves were not threatened. It serves as a reminder to the hundreds of millions who stood by, watched genocide and did nothing.

In the challenging times of today's world, this remembrance is more important than ever.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. EVELYN LANGLIEB GREER:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve the recognition of April 15 through April 22, 2007 as Days of Remembrance of the Victims of the Holocaust to be observed in all of Miami-Dade County's public schools.