

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: COMMEMORATION OF THE 106TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF CUBA FROM SPAIN – MAY 20, 2008

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

LINK TO DISTRICT

STRATEGIC PLAN: WORK WITH COMMUNICATIONS TO EDUCATE AND ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS ON DISTRICT INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS

The struggle for Cuban independence ended on May 20, 1902, after a long and courageous battle against Spain and a brief occupation by the United States following the Spanish-American War in 1898. Throughout the late 1800s, Cuban patriots, including Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, Antonio Maceo, Máximo Gómez, Calixto García, Tomás Estrada Palma and José Martí, fought for Cuban independence from Spain's colonial rule.

Martí, the most well-known voice for Cuban independence, organized the Cuban Revolutionary Party. He, along with several other patriots, garnered support for the cause from around the island colony and throughout Latin America, the U.S. and Europe. Martí paid the ultimate price for freedom with his life during a battle against Spanish troops at Dos Ríos, Cuba, on May 19, 1895 – seven years and one day before Cuba achieved independence. Martí's death served as inspiration to the cause for freedom and inspired feelings of nationalism throughout the island.

In commemorating the 106th anniversary of Cuban Independence from Spain, we also celebrate Cuban culture and the strong historical ties between Cuba and the United States. Following the Spanish-American War, the United States assisted Cuban nationals in their efforts to develop a strong and independent country. The U.S. contributed to Cuba's economic recovery and to the restructuring of Cuba's judicial and educational systems. Since 1959, the United States has offered refuge and protection to Cuban patriots and has promoted the preservation of democratic values and principles in the island nation.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools is also proud of its efforts to support the Cuban-American community. Students at all grade levels are taught democratic principles to ensure that they understand the value of liberty and freedom. Through strong instructional and support programs, Cuban-Americans and all members of our community have the opportunity to fulfill their educational and professional potential. As we approach the 106th anniversary of Cuban independence from Spain, Miami-Dade County Public Schools honors the Cuban-American community and extends hope that freedom and democracy soon will be a reality for Cuba and its people.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

VICE CHAIR PERLA TABARES HANTMAN: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, joins the Cuban-American community as it commemorates May 20, 2008 as the 106th anniversary of the Independence of Cuba from Spain.