

Ms. Ana Rivas Logan, Board Member

**SUBJECT: REQUEST APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 08-40 OF THE
SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,
PROCLAIMING APRIL 2008 AS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH IN
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**LINK TO DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLAN: ACTIVELY ENGAGE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO
BECOME OUR PARTNERS IN RAISING AND MAINTAINING HIGH
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

The Autism Society of America (ASA), founded in 1965, established National Autism Awareness Month in 1972 to increase public awareness, to advocate for appropriate services, and to provide the latest information regarding treatment, education, research, and advocacy. During the 2007-2008 school year, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) created an Autism Spectrum Disorder Task Force to review current programs and identify and recommend best practices. M-DCPS collaborates with UMCARD, AutismSpeaks, and the Autism Society of South Florida in an effort to increase awareness and support students and their families.

The Center for Disease Control reports that 1 in 150 people have autism. Based on statistics from the U.S. Department of Education and other government agencies, autism is growing at a startling rate of 10-17% per year. The ASA reports that "autism knows no racial, ethnic, or social boundaries, family income levels, lifestyle choices, or educational levels, and can affect any family and any child."

National Autism Awareness Month provides the perfect opportunity for individuals and organizations to educate their communities about autism. In its effort to increase awareness, the M-DCPS Autism Support Team has provided 55 autism awareness trainings to teachers and support staff. District staff also participate annually in the AutismSpeaks Miami-Dade Walkathon to raise awareness about and funds for autism research. This year, school teams were once again a strong presence among the nearly 10,000 walkers with the Miami-Dade Walk and raised more than \$475,000.

The M-DCPS Office of Special Education and Psychological Services recognizes the importance of early identification and intervention. Staff provide a wide range of developmentally appropriate learning opportunities and services in a variety of programs for more than 2,000 students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

MS. ANA RIVAS LOGAN:

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 08-40, proclaiming April 2008 as Autism Awareness Month in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

**RESOLUTION NO. 08-40
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,
PROCLAIMING APRIL 2008 AS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH
IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS, the Autism Society of America established National Autism Awareness Month to increase public awareness, to advocate for appropriate services, and to provide the latest information regarding treatment, education, research, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) established an Autism Spectrum Disorder Task Force to review current programs and best practices and to develop a report to make recommendations for change; and

WHEREAS, Autism Awareness Month provides an opportunity for individuals and organizations to educate their communities about autism; and

WHEREAS, the M-DCPS Office of Special Education and Psychological Services recognizes the importance of early identification and intervention and provides a wide range of developmentally appropriate learning opportunities in a variety of programs for more than 2,000 students with Autism Spectrum Disorder; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to increase awareness and further support students and their families, the Autism Support Team provides autism awareness trainings to teachers and support teams;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 08-40, proclaiming April 2008 as Autism Awareness Month in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

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

Presented this sixteenth day of April, A.D. 2008

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CHAIR

ATTEST:

Secretary