

Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Vice Chair

**SUBJECT: PROM SAFETY INITIATIVE**

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: STUDENT, PARENT, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Each year, spring school rituals – prom and graduation – begin with excitement and promise yet end in tragedy for hundreds of teen drivers and their passengers, schools, and families. According to a national survey of more than 2,500 eleventh and twelfth graders, 90 percent of teens believe their peers are more likely to drink and drive on prom night and 79 percent believe the same is true for graduation night. However, that belief does not translate to concern as only 25 percent of these same teens believe that driving on prom night and graduation night, comes with a high degree of danger. The findings from this research conducted in 2010 by Students Against Destructive Decisions and Liberty Mutual Insurance, serves to remind us that other distractions such as cell phone use and texting also add an element of risky driving behaviors that teens may engage in.

Ad campaigns and education initiatives throughout the country have contributed to a 70 percent reduction of the number of fatalities in car accidents involving alcohol during prom season weekends since 1982, according to the National Center for Statistics and Analysis of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation. The Miami-Dade Schools Police Department typically seeks opportunities to engage the community-at-large, and students in particular, in education and safety awareness campaigns. The success of their recent “Slow the Roll” campaign, which sought to educate drivers about school speeding zones, is an example of a proactive and community-based initiative that enhanced both student safety and a safe learning environment. This item seeks to request the Superintendent direct the Miami-Dade Schools Police Department to initiate a safety and education campaign geared towards deterring unsafe driving behaviors among teens during this prom and graduation season. } Revised

**ACTION PROPOSED BY VICE CHAIR**

**DR. LAWRENCE S FELDMAN:**

That the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida direct the Superintendent to initiate a safety and education campaign geared towards deterring unsafe driving behaviors among teens during the 2011 prom and graduation season. } Revised