

Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Board Member

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 11-145 OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, COMMEMORATING JANUARY 1, 2012, AS THE 208TH ANNIVERSARY OF HAITIAN INDEPENDENCE

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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

January 1, 1804, marks the conclusion of years of struggle for independence by the people of Haiti. This day brought freedom for more than half a million Africans in the Americas from French colonists, as well as the world's first black republic. Haitian Independence is observed throughout the world on January 1, as a celebration of freedom, liberty, and national pride for the Haitian Diaspora.

The Haitian Revolution started in 1791 when French colonists refused to honor a law that would make some privileged Africans citizens of France. This caused many to rebel against the colonial government. The island remained entrenched in conflict even after France abolished slavery in 1794. General Toussaint L'Ouverture managed to unite most rebel forces and become governor of the island of Hispaniola when Spain ceded its claims for the eastern half in the late 1790's. General L'Ouverture and other military leaders, such as Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henry Christophe, helped lead a final effort to defeat colonial forces when evidence was uncovered that General Napoleon Bonaparte was planning to re-institute slavery on the island in 1801. This final campaign culminated in victory on January 1, 1804, when Haiti declared its independence from France.

It is a Haitian tradition for all to eat soup joumou, a hearty squash soup, to commemorate this historic event. French colonists prohibited Africans from eating soup during slavery, and eating the famous soup became a symbol of empowerment and equality after they won their independence.

The story of Haitian Independence is an important lesson in history that highlights the importance of human rights. The first day of school following January 1, 2012, is to be observed as Haitian Independence Day in Miami-Dade County Public Schools in recognition of the many contributions Haitians have made to the culture and history of South Florida and the world.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. DOROTHY BENDROSS-MINDINGALL:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 11-145 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, commemorating January 1, 2012, as the 208th anniversary of Haitian Independence.

**Replacement
H-12**

**RESOLUTION NO. 11-145
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,
COMMEMORATING JANUARY 1, 2012, AS THE 208TH ANNIVERSARY
OF HAITIAN INDEPENDENCE**

WHEREAS, January 1, 1804, marks the conclusion of years of struggle for independence by the people of Haiti. This day brought freedom for more than half a million Africans in the Americas from French colonists, as well as the world's first black republic; and

WHEREAS, Haitian Independence is observed throughout the world on January 1, as a celebration of freedom, liberty, and national pride for the Haitian Diaspora; and

WHEREAS, The Haitian Revolution started in 1791 when French colonists refused to honor a law that would make some privileged Africans citizens of France. This caused many to rebel against the colonial government. The island remained entrenched in conflict even after France abolished slavery in 1794; and

WHEREAS, General Toussaint L'Ouverture managed to unite most rebel forces and become governor of the island of Hispaniola when Spain ceded its claims for the eastern half in the late 1790's. General L'Ouverture and other military leaders, such as Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henry Christophe, helped lead a final effort to defeat colonial forces when evidence was uncovered that General Napoleon Bonaparte was planning to re-institute slavery on the island in 1801. This final campaign culminated in victory on January 1, 1804, when Haiti declared its independence from France; and

WHEREAS, it is a Haitian tradition for all to eat soup joumou, a hearty squash soup, to commemorate this historic event. French colonists prohibited Africans from eating soup during slavery, and eating the famous soup became a symbol of empowerment and equality after they won their independence; and

WHEREAS, The story of Haitian Independence is an important lesson in history that highlights the importance of human rights. The first day of school following January 1, 2012, is to be observed as Haitian Independence Day in Miami-Dade County Public Schools in recognition of the many contributions Haitians have made to the culture and history of South Florida and the world;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 11-145 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, commemorating January 1, 2012 as the 207th anniversary of Haitian Independence.

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

Presented this fourteenth day of December, A.D. 2011

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CHAIR

ATTEST:

Secretary