

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair

SUBJECT: SCHOOL BOARD ENDORSEMENT OF NATIONAL POISON PREVENTION WEEK, MARCH 18-24, 2012 AND RECOGNITION OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL SAFETY POSTER CAMPAIGN FOCUSING ON THE DANGERS OF IMPAIRED DRIVING

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of National Poison Prevention Week, to be held March 18-24. The initiative was established by President John F. Kennedy in 1962, and for the past five decades has made tremendous strides in preventing deadly poisonings of small children nationwide. Data from the National Center for Health Statistics and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that during this timeframe the number of child poisonings has been reduced by nearly 90 percent. This public health success was achieved through education, implementing laws related to safe product packaging, creating the poison control center system, improving emergency response systems and treating child poisonings in the hospital setting.

The Florida Poison Information Center-Miami proudly serves the South Florida community in partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the Miami-Dade County Injury Prevention Coalition to continue this important work of educating our students, parents, and grandparents about poison hazards in our environment. In celebration of the success of these collaborative efforts in combating childhood poisoning, the health partners recognize the need to heighten outreach to the teenage population. Poisonings related to substance abuse, including misuse of prescription drugs, continue to rise in the adult and young adult populations, and is now the #1 ranked cause of injury related death among Florida residents in this age group.

In an effort to bring awareness to vulnerable teenagers, the school district has partnered with the Florida Poison Information Center-Miami and Jackson Memorial Hospital to launch the first annual Senior High School Safety Poster Contest, highlighting the dangers of teen driving while impaired. Over 800 students district-wide entered the contest, and the winners will be announced this month. The first place poster will be displayed on a prominent billboard in the community to continue spreading this important safety message.

Although celebrated during March, the following safety tips should be followed year-round to protect against impaired driving and accidental poisonings.

- Ask your doctor whether medications you are prescribed can impair your ability to drive. Check with your doctor, pharmacist or poison center for specific advice about your medications.
- Keep track of medications in the home, particularly those that can be abused, such as painkillers.
- Call the Poison Help Line at 1-800-222-1222 if you have concerns that a medication mistake or side effect may be affecting your ability to drive safely. The poison information specialists will be able to assess your situation immediately. The call is free and confidential.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY CHAIR
PERLA TABARES HANTMAN:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, endorse National Poison Prevention Week, March 18-24, 2012 and recognize the winners of the 2012 Senior High School Safety Poster Contest, highlighting the dangers of teen driving while impaired.