

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair

SUBJECT: SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION OF THE TOBACCO-FREE WORK GROUP, CREATED BY THE CONSORTIUM FOR A HEALTHIER MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FOR THEIR EFFORTS TO ENHANCE THE DISTRICT'S YEAR-ROUND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN PROMOTING "TOBACCO-FREE KIDS" VIA STUDENTS WORKING AGAINST TOBACCO (SWAT) CLUBS

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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

At its October 10, 2012 meeting, the School Board endorsed a year-round awareness campaign to promote a tobacco-free society, which began with the "Great American Smoke-Out" in November. The Tobacco-Free Work Group (Work Group), organized under the Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade County, is partnering with the School District to help enhance this initiative at the middle and high school levels. In this regard, the Work Group is sponsoring Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) Clubs at our schools to help reduce and prevent tobacco use among our youth.

Cigarette smoking is the single most important preventable cause of premature death across the globe. Statistics show that tobacco use is directly responsible for 1 out of every 5 deaths in the United States each year. Data focusing on young adults shows that one out of four high school seniors are smokers. Alarming, every day nearly 4,000 children between the ages of 12 and 17 will naïvely try their first cigarette. Approximately 1,000 of them will become habitual daily smokers. The vast majority of Americans who begin daily smoking during adolescence are addicted to nicotine by young adulthood. SWAT members, ranging in ages from 11 to 17, have become Florida's youth tobacco prevention organization to help reduce these staggering statistics. SWAT develops leadership skills in youth through training in tobacco issues, media literacy, policy development process, and presentation skills to advocate for laws and ordinances on a local and state level.

The SWAT Clubs will be actively participating in the following upcoming events:

“Kick Butts Day” on March 20, 2013 – is a national day of activism that empowers youth to stand out, speak up and seize control against “Big Tobacco”. It is anticipated that approximately 1,000 events will be held in schools and communities throughout the nation. On this day, teachers, youth leaders and health advocates will organize events to raise awareness of the problem of tobacco use and staying tobacco-free. It also urges elected officials to take action to protect kids from tobacco. Kick Butts Day is organized by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and sponsored by the United Health Foundation.

World No Tobacco Day on May 31, 2013- sponsored by The World Health Organization (WHO), it highlights the health risks associated with tobacco use and advocates for effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption. The theme for 2013 is: ban tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

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

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognize the Tobacco-Free Work Group, created by the Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade County, for their efforts to enhance the district’s year-round awareness campaign promoting “tobacco-free kids” via Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) Clubs.